

BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

DIRECTORY OF POLICY STATEMENTS

Policy Number: I:16:00

Date: March 2016

SUBJECT: Course Procedures and Grading Policies

Faculty must provide some basic information to students during the first week of classes (course syllabus). The statements in the syllabus should be clear, concise, and appropriate to the specific course for which they are intended. If the same procedures apply to several courses, you may use one syllabus and indicate the multiple sections/courses. Copies of the syllabus must be supplied to the department chair and dean during the first week of classes. The following topics are universally pertinent to effective classroom management and communication with students, and must be included in the syllabus. Instructors will add to the content or modify the format of their syllabi as individual courses, disciplines, departments, or accreditors require.

ATTENDANCE

1. Indicate what constitutes attendance and/or active participation within your course (see Appendix 1).
2. Indicate the specific consequences of unexcused absences and/or inactive participation from the course (e.g., lower grades, request for explanation, expectation that the work will be made up, or action consistent with the total course performance, etc.).

COURSE FORMAT

1. Indicate course format (e.g., lecture, discussion, group work, field work, etc.).
2. Specify course requirements (e.g., texts, software, hardware, equipment, prerequisite skills, assignments, field work, etc.).
3. Include a description of course assignments and a tentative schedule of topics and due dates.
4. Indicate instructional method (e.g., traditional, hybrid, hybrid plus online—synchronous and/or asynchronous sessions).
5. Indicate when the course meets.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specify the learning outcomes for the course as specified in the course proposal as approved by the College Senate.

EVALUATION

Indicate the basis on which the grade in the course will be assigned and the relative weight of each (e.g., tests, number and frequency), course work, written work, performance of outside activity (number of hours and location), instructor assessment, etc., as appropriate. Further, indicate a grading scale (i.e., A–E) including +/- grades, if appropriate.

Regardless of the instructional method of your course (traditional, online, hybrid), consider including language that addresses evaluation components that go beyond those listed above (i.e., tests, written work). For example:

1. Academic integrity and how it may be assessed can be accessed via [DOPS Policy No. I:17:03](#) (PDF, 13.6 KB)
2. The format and submission process for assignments (quizzes, tests, papers, discussions, projects, etc.)
3. The process for how missed or late work is addressed, whether it is due to illness, technical difficulties, etc.
4. The procedure for announcing course changes
5. The process for grade distribution, including the use of a learning management system (e.g., a Blackboard “gradebook”), in compliance with FERPA
6. Grading/evaluation rubrics or assignment guidelines

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Include here any other information that will help the student understand what is expected of him or her and what may be expected of the course and instructor. For example:

1. Religious holidays
2. Military leave
3. Medical absences
4. Technical issues (e.g., what students should do if the learning system is down or currently not available)
5. Alternative materials (Where students might purchase alternative materials and the availability of alternative resources on the Open SUNY Affordable Learning Solutions website)
6. A statement about procedures regarding disruptive students [[See Faculty Handbook Section 5 Instruction Policies and Procedures](#) (PDF 733 KB)]
7. Ethical standards
8. A statement on students with disabilities (e.g., If you have a disability or suspect that you have a disability that requires any type of accommodation to fulfill the requirements of a course, please contact the Disability Services Office at 716-878-4500)

Appendix 1—Academic attendance and attendance at an academically related activity

The definition of attendance as defined by the 1998 amendments to the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 (Section 484B) and subsequent regulations issued by the United States Department of Education are reported in the Federal Register as follows:

34 CFR 668.22 “Treatment of title IV funds when a student withdraws” defines what is considered as attendance in order for institutions of higher education to keep federal tuition moneys:

(7)(i) “Academic attendance” and “attendance at an academically related activity”

(A) Include, but are not limited to

- (1) Physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students;
- (2) Submitting an academic assignment;
- (3) Taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction;
- (4) Attending a study group that is assigned by the institution;
- (5) Participating in an online discussion about academic matters; and
- (6) Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course; and

- (B) Do not include activities where a student may be present, but not academically engaged, such as
- (1) living in institutional housing;
 - (2) participating in the institution's meal plan;
 - (3) logging into an online class without active participation; or
 - (4) participating in academic counseling or advisement.