

A&S - Students and Teachers Working Together

“Civility is not a sign of weakness.” John F. Kennedy

At a good university, good student/teacher relationships come from mutual respect, trust, and honesty. Learning takes place when teachers and students treat each other with politeness and civility, rather than with anger, ridicule, or confrontation. Indeed, a classroom conducive to teaching and learning is the right of all University of Wyoming students and faculty, and it is the responsibility of both parties to achieve and maintain it even though specifics will vary from course to course. This document, Students and Teachers Working Together, provides some guidelines for carrying out that responsibility.

Learning in College

Students must be prepared for class. They cannot expect good grades in courses without putting in several hours of studying for each hour of scheduled class time. Extracurricular activities, including jobs, should not be allowed to interfere with a student’s preparation.

The ultimate responsibility for learning lies with the individual student. Although faculty members will teach and guide and university staff will assist and encourage, learning is the responsibility of the student. Learning is hard work, and full-time students should consider “studenting” to be a full-time job.

A teacher should do his or her best to provide a disciplined yet comfortable and supportive classroom environment. Teachers’ materials should be well organized, their procedures clear and fair. They should encourage questions and questioning, although students should remember that insight often comes from struggling with a problem rather than being given the answer.

Course Syllabus

University Regulations (Unireg 29, <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/Uniregs/ur029.htm>) require that a teacher provides a syllabus for each class taught. A syllabus is a contract between the student and the teacher that makes clear the expectations and requirements the parties are expected to fulfill.

Students

1. It is the students’ responsibility to understand the syllabus.
2. Students should keep their course syllabus handy so that they can refer to it on matters of course policy.
3. Students are responsible to find out any changes made to the syllabus during the semester.

Teachers

1. At the beginning of the semester the teacher should provide students a syllabus.
2. A syllabus is a written record of the course’s requirements and should include the teacher’s office hours, contact information, grading, attendance, and academic dishonesty policies as well as the course’s purpose, scope, content, expectations, schedule, assignments, readings, and other policies outlined in this document.
3. Teachers have the right to modify the syllabus, but all revisions should be clearly announced in class.

Attendance

Students

1. Students should attend all required meetings of their courses.
2. UW-authorized absences for UW-sponsored activities are accepted, and the teacher will re-schedule the missed homework and exams without penalty. Refer to the University regulation at <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/Uniregs/ur713.htm>
3. Teachers identify what constitutes an excused absence beyond the UW-authorized absences. Leaving early for vacations or breaks does not constitute a valid reason for absence.
4. If a student must be absent from a class or cannot complete assigned work on time, the student should consult beforehand with the teacher if at all possible.
5. The student should not expect the teacher to re-teach the class because of the student's absence. It is the student's responsibility to obtain notes from a fellow classmate.
6. Students should come to the class prepared.
7. Students should be familiar with the dates of scheduled exams and other assignment deadlines.

Teachers

1. Teachers should set an attendance policy for their classes that should be announced to students and included in the course syllabi.
2. UW-authorized absences for UW-sponsored activities are accepted, and the teacher will re-schedule the missed homework and exams without penalty. Refer to the University regulation at <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/Uniregs/ur713.htm>
3. Teachers should identify what constitutes an excused absence beyond the UW-authorized absence. Leaving early for vacations or breaks does not constitute a valid reason for absence. Refer to the University regulation at <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/Uniregs/ur713.htm>
4. If canceling a class, the teacher should inform students well beforehand or, if unforeseen, a message should be posted in the classroom.

Classroom Department

Students

1. Students should bring to the classroom thoughtful and relevant comments for discussion in appropriate classes.
2. Students should come to the class prepared having completed the reading or other assignments.
3. Students should keep the content of their discussions relevant and be tolerant of and open to exploring differing points of view.
4. Unsanctioned talking, use of cell phones, eating, sleeping, and reading unrelated materials during classes are rude and disruptive behaviors.
5. Abusive language and behavior are unacceptable and do not encourage a useful learning environment.

Teachers

1. Teachers set the tone in the classroom to encourage discussion and questions where appropriate.
2. Teachers should answer questions in a respectful and courteous manner.
3. Teachers should encourage an inclusive environment where all people can engage in the discussion process.
4. Abusive language and behavior are unacceptable and do not encourage a useful learning environment.

Phone and E-Mail

Students

1. Students can expect from the teachers clear phone and e-mail protocol to be followed, including:
 - whether or not the teachers accept calls at home.
 - weekend or evening phone policies.
 - whether they return calls to students.
 - whether or not e-mail is the preferred method of communication.
 - time frame students can expect an email or phone response.
 - policies regarding leaving messages in the departmental office.
2. Students should use their UW email accounts or forward their private accounts to the UW system.
3. Students should not use e-mail or phones to request grade information from their teachers.

Teachers

1. Teachers should be clear about phone and e-mail protocol and indicate the preferred method.
2. Teachers should respect the students' need for a variety of methods of contact (other than stopping by during office hours or before/after class) that will get a response in a timely manner, for example:
 - message boards outside office.
 - leaving messages in the departmental office
 - notes in faculty mailboxes.
3. Teachers are not required to solicit non-UW email accounts.
4. E-mail and phone may not be used to transmit grades to students (there are a few exceptions to this; contact the FERPA officer in the Office of the Registrar for details).

Office Hours

Teachers are required to hold three office hours per week. These should be on two different days.

Students

1. If not specified, students should inquire as to any specific office hour policies.
2. Students can expect to meet with their teachers during the teachers' office hours or make arrangements for alternate appointments if there is a conflict with the posted hours.
3. The student should notify the teacher in advance to cancel or re-schedule an appointment.
4. Stopping by during the posted times does not necessarily guarantee the availability of a teacher (e.g., there may be numerous students waiting).

Teachers

1. Teachers should have clearly posted office hours.
2. Teachers should announce their office hour policies.
3. Teachers should make clear their preferences for scheduling appointments if students have conflicts with the posted times.
4. If they are unable to keep their office hours at any time, teachers should announce this in class, if possible.
5. Last minute cancellations should be posted on the teacher's door, and the departmental office associate notified.

Grading and Assessment

It is the teacher's prerogative to set policies regarding grading and assessment. Each teacher may have different policies. It is important to be clear and consistent in grading policies and standards.

Students

1. Students can expect a clear description of the teacher's methods of grading and assessment and a prompt return of their graded assignments.
2. Students should be aware that there is no automatic right to make up missed assignments; students should inquire as to the specific policies of each teacher.
3. If concerns over grading arise, students should respectfully discuss the situation with their teachers.

Teachers

1. Teachers should be clear about their methods of grading the assignments as well as their criteria for overall course grades.
2. Teachers have a responsibility to grade and return assignments within a reasonable time.
3. Teachers should be clear about their policies regarding accepting late work.
4. Teachers should grade equitably, so that comparable work receives comparable grades.
5. Teachers should be prepared to give appropriate feedback on assignments.
6. Teachers should be open to student concerns over grading.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected, and dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to expulsion from the College and the University. The University Regulation, 802 rev 2, at <http://www.uwyo.edu/legal/Uniregs/ur802.htm> discusses academic dishonesty in detail. The College of Arts and Sciences procedure guidelines are at http://www.uwyo.edu/a&s/Appeals_Dishonesty/Guidelines_Dishonesty. Students and teachers are strongly advised to read these regulations.

Students

1. It is expected that the academic work the students perform for their courses will be their own work
2. If students are unsure of acceptable practices, such as how to handle cooperative work with other students, they should inquire of the teacher.
3. If the policy regarding educational aids is not specified, students should assume that no aids are permitted on exams.
4. Students should neither receive nor give unauthorized assistance on any assignment, exam, paper, or project.
5. All quotes and ideas from other sources should be properly attributed.

Teachers

1. Teachers should make clear their policies on matters of:
 - documentation.
 - cooperative work with other students.
 - educational aids such as calculators and note sheets.
2. Teachers are expected to report suspected violations of academic dishonesty policies to the appropriate authority.

Advising

Advising should be viewed as a cooperative activity between the student and the advisor, but the final responsibility for meeting requirements resides with the student.

Students

1. To prepare for an advising session, the student should:
 - know the requirements for the degree (at the university, college, and departmental levels).
 - check the online progress report to determine remaining requirements.
 - compile a preliminary list of courses for the upcoming semester.
 - be aware of and respect the prerequisites for courses.
2. Students should refer to the class schedule on the web for any changes or cancellations.
3. Students must schedule appointments during the advisor's available posted times for Advising Week to determine the next semester's courses and get the Permission to Register number (PERC).
4. Students should learn how to use the printed copies or the up-to-date online versions of the UW Bulletin, Class Schedules, and the College of A&S and departmental websites for course descriptions and prerequisites, degree requirements, and rules and regulations of deadlines for class withdrawals, course repeats, etc.
5. Students should consult with advisors during the semester, not just at next semester's class scheduling session. These more relaxed advising sessions are opportunities for advisees and advisors to get to know each other, to discuss their goals, future study, and careers. When necessary, the advisor will make referrals to the career services office or other appropriate help centers

Teachers as Advisors

1. Advisors should be knowledgeable of requirements and use the online progress report for advising. Advisors should also refer to the class schedule on the web for any changes and cancellations.
2. Advisors should make sure that any exemptions or substitutions to the student's academic requirements in the major are posted to the online progress report.
3. For Advising Week, advisors should post available times for advisees to sign up for appointments.
4. Advisors should take time to orient new advisees to the use of the information in the UW Bulletin, Class Schedules (hard copy or up to date information online), and the College of A&S and departmental websites to learn about course descriptions and prerequisites, degree requirements, and rules and regulations of deadlines for class withdrawals, course repeats, etc.
5. Advisors should encourage advisees to visit with them at other times during the semester, not just at next semester's class scheduling session. These more relaxed advising sessions are opportunities for advisees and advisors to get to know each other, to discuss the advisee's goals, future study, and careers. If necessary, advisors should make referrals to the career services office or other appropriate help centers.