UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

# Office of the Provost

Dear colleagues,

Welcome back for the 2024-2025 academic year. This message reminds you of required academic policies (including new policies) and offers you resources to help you prepare your course and syllabus.

Please read this email in its entirety. We've attempted to review new and ongoing policies that place requirements on all UO classes.

## Resources

The Teaching Engagement Program (TEP) and UO Online provide resources meant to help you prepare and launch your classes. You'll find adaptable Canvas modules that orient students to the course, streamline absence reporting, and define and emphasize academic integrity.

There is a Syllabus 'Starter' that incorporates all UO-required policies as well as many sample course policies, including attendance, artificial intelligence (AI) use, and all instructors' new designated reporter status. Instructors also are encouraged to consider the teaching impacts of national and international contexts in the new Teaching in Turbulent Contexts Resource Guide.

## Policies for Undergraduate Courses

The following policies and updates apply to undergraduate courses, and Instructors of Record are responsible for ensuring they are followed. See the Office of the Provost library of academic policies for other relevant policies and guidance.

**CANVAS:** A published Canvas site is required by the first day of class. Ideally, the Canvas site would be published at least a few days before classes start. Note that Canvas sites for core education courses will contain an automatically generated new page titled "Course Information" that contains relevant course information such as learning outcomes and course descriptions. This information is pulled from CourseLeaf and represents the approved features of the course that are true for all sections of the course.

**COURSE ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY:** The parameters for course attendance and engagement policies address "common student absences or late work over the course of a term. Note that it requires a "no excuse" policy, meaning that there is no distinction between "excused" or "unexcused" absences for common student absences or late work. It also outlines the only circumstances under which reasons or documentation are required of students.

There are also newly defined rights for pregnant students and military students, some of which will affect course attendance policies. Finally, the policy treats emergency or extraordinary circumstances as outside a course's regular attendance policy. See interpretation and guidance for ways to incorporate these elements into your policy.

**NEW! STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY:** Students have a new policy for filing grievances. Please note that this new policy situates the process within the schools/colleges for grievances that students file in the context of academic programs. See the formal grievance review process in the policy library. Further guidance from Student Life and school/college specific information is being produced in fall 2024 and will be widely distributed.

**STUDENT PROGRESS:** Instructors of Record are to provide up-to-date student progress information on Canvas, such as grades recorded on Canvas for assignments, quizzes, etc., by at least two points in the term: by the end of week six and prior to the final exam. This should be done in all courses where progress is not communicated individually to students through other means.

## Policies for Undergraduate and Graduate Courses

The following policies and updates apply to all undergraduate and graduate courses, and Instructors of Record are responsible for ensuring they are followed.

**SYLLABUS:** A syllabus must be available to students on Canvas by the first day of class. Ideally, the syllabus would be available at least a few days before classes start. The syllabus must include the information listed in the Syllabus Requirement policy.

There are newly defined rights for pregnant students and military students that call for specific allowances from faculty for those students in their courses.

**COURSE MATERIALS REPORTING:** Consider if you can report course materials now for fall 2025 term. Course materials must be reported through the Duck Store system by April 8, 2024. All courses must report all materials students are required to purchase, or report that there are no materials required, by that date.

**UO STUDENT CONDUCT CODE AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Please familiarize yourself with the Student Conduct Code and policies for academic misconduct. Note that university policy requires instructors to report suspected academic misconduct to the Dean of Students if the instructor intends to impose a penalty.

**FERPA-COMPLIANT APPLICATIONS:** Only university-approved, FERPA-compliant applications should be used for course activities that include non-directory student information. These include Canvas, UO email, UO Microsoft 365 tools (Teams, Outlook, SharePoint), and UO Zoom. For a complete list, see the UO Service Portal.

**COURSE MODALITY AND DELIVERY:** Courses should be delivered as scheduled unless otherwise approved. For instance, IORs or lab/discussion leaders shall not switch an in-person course to remote instruction without approval. Any changes to modality or location of a course from what is on the course schedule must be approved by the dean through the department head. Shifting a course to synchronous online requires additional approval by the Office of the Provost. Requests for changes to synchronous online should be sent from the dean to Ron Bramhall at rcb@uoregon.edu.

In addition, departments and faculty are responsible for ensuring that online courses meet the university and federal requirements for online courses.

**ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION CENTER (AEC) ACCOMMODATIONS:** Instructors are required by federal law to make reasonable accommodations to students as determined by the AEC. Students with approved accommodations should present instructors with a notification letter from the AEC. Notification letters are initiated by each student for selected classes through AEC's online portal and emailed from AEC. If a student requests an accommodation but does not have a notification letter, refer them to the AEC. Absences related to an approved accommodation should not count in a course attendance policy.

Instructors should not determine on their own whether to grant these accommodations; the AEC has the final decision-making authority on accommodations. If instructors believe an accommodation is unreasonable, they should consult with the AEC.

**RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE ACCOMMODATIONS:** The University of Oregon is committed to compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, and regulations relating to religious accommodations of its stakeholders and respects the right of all students and employees to observe their religious holidays. The religious accommodation policy says that the "the university will make reasonable accommodations for students who are unable to attend a class due to a religious observance." Students are responsible for completing a request for such accommodation by the end of the second week of the term by using the form on the registrar's website. These absences should not count in a course attendance policy. For instance, if a course policy allows three absences before a grade penalty and a student misses two due to religious observance, they still have three allowable absences. You can use the Religious Observances Calendar to identify events, classes, exams, or UO activities that may intersect with religious observances.

Instructors should not determine on their own that a religious observance request is unreasonable; they should contact the Office of the Provost for guidance.

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED EVENTS:** Student participants (student-athletes, cheerleaders, band members, students attending academic events, etc.) in university-sponsored events may miss class during the term. This is particularly true in terms when certain sports are in season. Because they are missing class for university-sponsored activities, faculty are strongly encouraged to make pedagogically sound and justifiable accommodations that will enable the students to be successful in the classroom. However, this request has limits and conditions:

- Students are to share with instructors at the beginning of every term a letter from a university employee that reports what events they are participating in and when they will be absent from class. It is the student's responsibility to share this letter with their instructors and to discuss attendance conflicts in time to arrange for appropriate accommodations.
- In classes with substantial class participation, project or lab work, appropriate accommodations may not be possible. In those instances, the student should be informed that the course is not a good fit in a term with significant projected absences.
- Under no circumstances should the instructor offer an accommodation that is pedagogically unsound or that would be unavailable to other students. It is especially important that student-athletes in NCAA governed sports are not provided academic extra benefits.

**INCOMPLETE POLICY:** The policy (revised in 2022) defines when an incomplete is appropriate and the process for students and instructors to request an incomplete. There is now an option for faculty to complete the required form if a student is unable to. That form can be found at the bottom of the policy page on the provost's website.

**DEAD WEEK:** Faculty legislation controls assignments that may be required during the last week of regular classes, commonly known as Dead Week. Make sure your syllabus clearly specifies any project that will be due during Dead Week.

In the week preceding final examinations during fall, winter, and spring terms:

- No examination worth more than 20% of the final grade will be given, with the exception of make-up examinations.
- No final examinations will be given under any guise.
- No projects will be due unless they have been clearly specified on the class syllabus within the first two weeks of the term.
- Take-home examinations will be due no earlier than the day of the formally assigned final examination for the class in question.

**FINAL EXAMS:** Final examinations must be given during the scheduled final examination period. Faculty legislation prohibits the early administration of final examinations. Final examination week is considered to be a part of the regular term, and to end the term prior to its scheduled date reduces instructional days to which students are entitled.

Students scheduled for more than three examinations within one calendar day may take the additional examination later in the week. The Instructor of Record for the course beyond the third examination, counting in the order the examinations are scheduled, will arrange for a makeup examination.

In the event that a student is scheduled for two or more exams at the same time, the following policies assist with resolving the conflict:

- For regular courses with examinations scheduled at the same time, the course with the largest enrollment must provide an alternate examination.
- For conflicts between regular courses and combined examinations, the combined examination course must provide the alternate examination.
- For combined examinations with conflicts, the largest combined enrollment course must provide the alternative examination.

Sincerely,

Office of the Provost

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