



Academic Affairs
Provost and Vice Chancellor

TO: Deans
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FROM: Johannes Britz
Provost and Vice Chancellor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Britz".

DATE: August 16, 2016

RE: Important Class Information

Welcome to the fall 2016 semester! As we begin a new academic year, I would like to remind you about several important items:

1. Course Syllabus Policy

Faculty Document No. 1895 states that "At the first class session, each student in each course will be supplied a syllabus that contains essential information about the course and department policies that affect the conduct of the course." At the request of the Faculty Senate, the Academic Policy Committee prepared a summary of recommended items for each course syllabus. This summary is available in printed form from your department chair and at:

https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/faculty/1895R3_Uniform_abus_Policy.pdf. See also http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/news_events/upload/Syllabus-Links.pdf. Instructors are encouraged to upload the syllabi for their upcoming courses to the online Schedule of Classes. Please go to www.schedule.uwm.edu, click on the appropriate semester, and then on the first link in the left-hand column "Upload Syllabi (Instructors Only)."

To meet federal Department of Education requirements on credit hours, the revised syllabus policy includes the following: "A.1.i. Specific information on the investment of time by the average student necessary to achieve the learning goals of the course in accordance with the campus credit hour policy, Faculty Document # 2838." The credit hour policy states: "Study leading to one semester credit represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 hours for class contact in lectures, for laboratories, examinations, tutorials and recitations, and for preparation and study; or a demonstration by the student of learning equivalent to that established as the expected product of such a period of study." Examples can be found at

<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/faculty/standing/apcc/upload/Workload-Statements.pdf>.

I wish to draw particular attention to the issue of academic misconduct and ask that you include a statement in your syllabus clarifying both UWM's and your expectations of appropriate student academic conduct. Student academic misconduct procedures are specified in Chapter UWS 14 and Faculty Document No. 1686 and can be found at

<http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/>.

2. Course Reserves

The general deadline for placing Course Reserve requests is at least 5-7 working days prior to the first day of classes. Requests for Course Reserve materials received later are put in a queue and addressed on a "first come, first served" basis and, therefore, may not be processed prior to the first day of classes.

Important considerations:

- To place new book or video requests for items not held by the Library - use the Libraries' purchase recommendations form at <http://uwm.edu/libraries/crm/purchase-recommendation/>.

- Course Reserve requests may be made any time throughout the semester.
- You may submit your requests online at <http://uwm.edu/libraries/media/reserve-form/> or in person at the Media and Reserve desk.

Questions?

- Contact the Media and Reserve Library at 229-4673 or libmedia@uwm.edu. See the Media and Reserve Library website at: <http://guides.library.uwm.edu/mediaandreserve>.

3. **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

In the pursuit of equal access and in compliance with state and federal laws, the University is required to provide accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is expected that a statement be placed on your syllabus informing students to contact you to arrange needed accommodations. See the recommended statement at <http://uwm.edu/arc/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2015/08/Recommended-Syllabus-Statement.pdf>. Students are to provide a copy of their Verified Individual Services and Accommodations (VISA) to you to indicate the accommodations they may need in your class. If a student requests accommodations, but does not have a VISA, please direct him/her to the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC).

Additionally, please provide early information on course reading materials and syllabus information with a schedule of readings, so materials can be converted to alternative formats in a timely manner for students with print impairments.

ARC's Post Production Captioning Program will work with you to ensure that media for your course will be captioned for students with a captioning accommodation on their VISA. Please make requests using this online form <http://uwm.edu/arc/media-captioning-request/>. If you are unable to send ARC your recorded lectures or other media, you may use the UW-System approved outside vendors. Please be aware that the department is responsible for the costs associated with use of outside vendors.

If you need assistance or have questions, please contact ARC at x5822.

4. **Religious Observances**

From time to time, students who are observing religious holidays or other days of special religious significance will find it necessary to be absent on a class day. While it is undoubtedly impossible to avoid the scheduling of tests and other major activities without conflicting with some religious observance, Wisconsin law (Chapter 36.43) and UWM Faculty Policy (Document 1918) require that we provide a reasonable accommodation of a student's sincerely held religious beliefs with regard to all examinations and other academic requirements. Please make every effort to accommodate students who face conflicts between their academic responsibilities and religious commitments. A copy of the policy is located on the web at <https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm>. In addition, links to the current religious calendar can be found at <http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2014/12/calendar.pdf>.

5. **Policy on Teaching Evaluation Procedures**

Faculty Document No. 2019 outlines the policies regarding teaching evaluations. The policy states that all departments/instructional units will conduct end-of-the-semester student evaluations in every section of every course, including UWinterIM and summer session courses. Since the department/instructional unit determines the format of its course evaluations, please consult your department chairperson if you have any questions. The policy can be found at <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S52.5.htm>.

6. **FERPA Reminder**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 requires that you be knowledgeable of students' rights concerning their educational records, and of certain categories of public information that the University has designated "directory information." For more information on understanding what UWM faculty and staff are required to do to protect the privacy of students, go to <http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/ferpa.cfm>.

If you have not already done so, you are also strongly encouraged to complete the on-line FERPA training and quiz found at <https://www4.uwm.edu/academics/ferpa-facultystaff.cfm>. See also sections 6 and 7 below for additional information about the confidentiality of student grade information.

7. Grading and Grade Records

Faculty Document No. 1927 outlines the policies on grading and grade records. This document is available from your department chair and at <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S29.htm>. The campus policy on assigning F-Grades to students is available at <http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/f-grade-policy/>. Please consult these documents for information on responsibilities for evaluation, grade and record changes, record keeping, and special consideration. Information on grading functionality within PAWS can be found at <http://uwm.edu/registrar/faculty-staff/instructor-grading/>. Under no circumstances may individual student grades be shared with other students, nor should grades be emailed to students.

8. Posting of Student Grades

Posting a list of students' names and grades represents a violation of the provision regarding release of a student's education record without written authorization, and is not allowed. Be aware that social security numbers, UWM student ID numbers, or any parts of them, may not be used to identify grades whether they be final course grades, exam, or assignment grades. This does not preclude your posting grades as long as the procedure used ensures student anonymity. Posting grades with a unique identifier known only to the student and instructor is acceptable. In such cases, do not order the list alphabetically.

9. Drop /Withdrawal/Repeat Policies

UWM Academic and Administrative Policy S-19 details the Drop/Withdrawal/Repeat policies. A student may drop a full-term course(s) through the end of the eighth week of classes. (Deadlines for shorter session courses are prorated.) One factor in students' decisions to drop courses might be their perception of course performance. I encourage you to provide some form of feedback about their academic performance to each of your students as soon as possible, but certainly prior to the drop deadline, so as to help students realistically assess their prospects for success in your course.

10. Early Warning System for Selected Students

While feedback by the drop deadline may help students assess whether they should remain in a class, it may be too late by then for students to turn around unsatisfactory performance. Understanding course expectations and knowing their progress is especially important for freshmen and others who may be less well prepared academically. Faculty and instructional staff with freshmen, AOC, and Life Impact program students enrolled in their classes will be asked to use the "Early Warning System" to inform students (and their advisors) by the end of the **fourth** week about classroom performance to date. More specific information on this will be provided to appropriate faculty/staff early in the semester.

11. Helping Students Cope with Stress

Given the many demands college students face today, stress is unavoidable. The simplest words or actions from an influential adult can have a significant impact on how students succeed. For students struggling to balance the stressors in their lives, resources are available. Close friends, relatives, clergy, coaches – anyone who is seen as caring and trustworthy may be a potential resource in times of trouble. In your position as faculty or staff member, students may also view you as someone who listens and offers guidance. I hope that we all would offer caring support and guidance to our students who may be struggling with excessive stress as well as those students who are experiencing more significant emotional or health problems. By expressing interest and concern, you have an opportunity to help a student in need find appropriate assistance.

For more information about how you can help UWM students manage stress, please see the UWM Mental Health website at www.uwm.edu/mentalhealth. Students can be referred to Norris Health Center's Counseling and Consultation Services and Norris staff can provide consultation to faculty and staff about individual student issues. Norris' Office of Health Promotion and Wellness can provide class presentations on stress and coping. Both services can be reached at (414) 229-4716.

12. The Campus Assessment, Response and Education (CARE) Team

UWM is dedicated to creating a caring environment where individuals are free to learn, teach, and work without fear of threats of intimidation or exposure to potentially harmful/disruptive situations. The CARE Team includes a team of professionals from across campus with a mission to provide a timely response to individual behavior deemed disruptive or at-risk to themselves or others, and determine the most appropriate steps to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the individual and members of the UWM community. If you have concerns about an individual's distressing, disruptive, or at-risk behavior, you may contact the CARE Team via the Dean of Students office at 229-4632 or fill out an incident report at www.care.uwm.edu. CARE does not replace other classroom management

responsibilities, supervisory workplace duties, or disciplinary processes. It is designed to supplement these efforts, and acts in a proactive manner to identify, assess, manage, reduce, and educate the campus community as to the risk of potentially harmful or threatening behavior.

The team addresses incidents involving anyone (student, employee, non-affiliated persons) who may pose a threat or concern to the UWM Community. An incident, in this context, is an event that raises concerns but is not an emergency that warrants immediate intervention. CARE is not an emergency response team; incidents that require immediate attention are handled by UWM Police. If there is an emergency, or you need immediate assistance, call 9-911 from a campus phone.

13. The S.A.F.E. Campaign

Safety Awareness for Everyone describes initiatives to increase campus-wide awareness of how to stay safe. One of UWM's S.A.F.E. campus goals is to create a culture of awareness among students, faculty, staff, and parents. The Campus Health & Safety Web site at www.campusafety.uwm.edu (and link at the bottom of the UWM home page) centralizes emergency and routine safety information and communications. All faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to enroll in the S.A.F.E. Alert system to receive emergency-information text message alerts. Sign up at the above site.

14. Students Called to Military Service

I would also remind you that UWM and the UW System have in recent years put in place a number of policies and procedures designed to accommodate students who must temporarily interrupt their studies when called to active duty military service. Go to <http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm> for more detailed information. Students in this situation do have some options not generally available under our usual academic and administrative policies, so if you have not done so recently, I encourage you to review this document.

15. Schedule of Final Exams

UWM Academic and Administrative Policy S-22 is the policy that governs the scheduling of and/or exemption from final examinations. With rare exceptions, the final examination shall be given during the regular examination period. The time of a final examination for an individual or a class may be changed only with the prior approval of the dean. An approved change can only be a postponement to a later date and must be clearly communicated to students early in the term.

Final exams may not exceed two hours in length, even for courses that have met only once per week during the semester for longer than two hours. The academic department, in consultation with the appropriate dean or director, is authorized to exempt particular courses from the final examination when it is determined that no essential education purpose is served by conducting a final examination. Here is the link to the policy: <https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm>. Questions regarding the policy should be directed to the Secretary of the University.

Your cooperation in all these matters is greatly appreciated. Have a wonderful semester!

c: Mark Mone, Chancellor
Jim Hill, Interim Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
Phyllis King, Vice Provost
Dev Venugopalan, Vice Provost
Robert Beck, Chief Information Officer
Trudy Turner, Secretary of the University
John Reisel, Chair, University Committee
Robin Weigert, Chair, Academic Staff Committee
Stanley Yasaitis, Chair, Classified Staff Advisory Council
Seth Zlotocha, Registrar
Michael Doylen, Interim Director, UWM Libraries
Tim Opgenorth, Director, Financial Aid
Katherine Miota, Interim Director, Undergraduate Admissions
Colin Daly, Director, New Student Programs
Kay Eilers, Director, Student Success
Barbara Simon, Director, Accessibility Resource Center
Sandy Humes, Assistant Director, Records and Grades
Emily Bilicki, Classroom Assignments
Sarah Rothman-Mandl, Classroom Assignments
Tracy Buss, Academic Programs Coordinator, Center for International Education