

PENNSTATE

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# UNIVERSITY HANDBOOK

FOR

# PART-TIME FACULTY

And General Resource Book for All Faculty

2011-12

UNIVERSITY HANDBOOK FOR PART-TIME FACULTY  
2011-12

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**Message from the Provost  
The Pennsylvania State University**

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and administration at Penn State, I'm pleased to welcome you to our faculty ranks. At Penn State, we are dedicated to providing an outstanding learning environment where every student can reach his or her potential for success. Faculty who are committed to creating exciting and effective learning outcomes in our classrooms, labs, and out-of-class experiences are the backbone of every great university.

Because part-time faculty members come to Penn State with varying levels of experience working with students and backgrounds in different college/university settings, this orientation handbook was developed several years ago in collaboration with the University Faculty Senate and recently revised. Please read the document carefully to learn about Penn State policies and procedures governing the educational experience and the expectations of faculty for providing the quality of education that our students expect and deserve.

I want to express my gratitude to you for undertaking the instructional assignment(s) that you have accepted. You have been selected because your credentials meet the high expectations we have for Penn State faculty members. Our success in providing the quality education we promise our students depends in large part upon your efforts. I know you will enjoy the experience of working with our students and your faculty colleagues.



Rodney A. Erickson  
Executive Vice President and Provost

## **Penn State's Mission Statement, Values, and Vision Statement**

### **Mission Statement**

Penn State is a multicampus public research university that educates students from Pennsylvania, the nation and the world, and improves the well being and health of individuals and communities through integrated programs of teaching, research, and service.

Our instructional mission includes undergraduate, graduate, professional, and continuing education offered through both resident instruction and online delivery. Our educational programs are enriched by the cutting edge knowledge, diversity, and creativity of our faculty, students, and staff.

Our research, scholarship, and creative activity promote human and economic development, global understanding, and progress in professional practice through the expansion of knowledge and its applications in the natural and applied sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and the professions.

As Pennsylvania's land-grant university, we provide unparalleled access and public service to support the citizens of the Commonwealth. We engage in collaborative activities with industrial, educational, and agricultural partners here and abroad to generate, disseminate, integrate, and apply knowledge that is valuable to society.

### **Values**

1) Education is the foundation of an enlightened, productive, and prosperous society; 2) The best education produces knowledgeable, critical, creative, and ethical students; 3) The quality of the intellectual life of the University is fundamental to success; 4) The integration of teaching, research, and service enhances all three and the capacity of the University to serve the needs of communities—local, national, and global; 5) The dignity of all individuals is affirmed, equality of opportunity is pursued, and diversity is fostered; 6) Tradition is honored, innovation is embraced, and positive change is valued; 7) The efficient and effective use of limited University resources benefits everyone associated with Penn State and those we serve; 8) Environmental sustainability is researched, taught, promoted and practiced; 9) The safety and security of all members of the University community are essential to a positive educational, workplace, and residential environment; and 10) Faculty, staff, students, and administration working together create a foundation for greater accomplishment, including our commitment to the concept of “one university, geographically dispersed.”

### **Vision Statement**

Penn State will be a global university, committed to excellence, with a passion for creating knowledge and educating students to be leaders for a better tomorrow.

## **Fixed-Term II Appointments and Benefits**

The primary role of part-time faculty is teaching, and contracts are awarded each semester based upon college instructional needs. Although the number of individual course assignments varies each semester based on department or campus needs, under no circumstances will Fixed-Term II faculty members be assigned more courses for a year than customarily assigned to Fixed-Term I faculty. Limited benefits may be available to those on a Fixed-Term II appointment as follows:

- Part-time employees who have two or more years of continuous University service (working both fall and spring semesters), working at least 750 hours each year (15 credits), are eligible to participate in a University healthcare plan.
- Pennsylvania state law requires employees to participate either in the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) or an approved alternate plan (in our case, TIAA-CREF, the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association College Retirement Equities Fund) after teaching 14 credit hours in one calendar year. In addition, such faculty may participate in a University sponsored tax deferred annuity plan. Additional information, including details regarding deductions and payments, is available from the Employee Benefits Division (814-865-1473 or <http://www.ohr.psu.edu>).

To enable you to do your job as a part-time faculty member, you should be supplied with office space and have access to a telephone and computer. Every effort should be made to give you notice of a pending assignment at least a month in advance so that you will have time to accommodate your schedule and prepare for any course you will be teaching. At the same time, since part-time faculty are often appointed to meet unexpected demands for courses this may not always be possible. There also may be occasions when a course you anticipated teaching will have to be dropped because of low-course enrollment.

## **Faculty Paychecks**

Faculty at Penn State are paid monthly. Paychecks are deposited on the last working day of the month directly into the account designated by the employee at the time of hiring.

## **Getting Access Account**

All faculty are provided with an Access Account with a Web Access UserID and password to access Penn State e-mail and web-based class lists. With this account you will be able to receive e-mail information from your department and the University, communicate with your colleagues and your students, and access the Web. That will enable you to access the various Penn State policies on the Web referred to below.

## **Penn State Policies on the Web**

Be familiar with University policies pertinent to part-time faculty. These include Human Resource policies, such as HR-05 (“Regular” and “Nonregular” University Employees); HR-61 (Faculty Contracts); HR-21 (Definition of Academic Ranks); and HR-40 (Evaluation of Faculty Performance) can all be found on the web ([http://guru.psu.edu/policies/index.cfm#HUMAN\\_P](http://guru.psu.edu/policies/index.cfm#HUMAN_P)). In addition, the *Administrative Guidelines for HR-23: Promotion and Tenure Procedures and Regulations*, Section V.E (<http://www.psu.edu/vpaa>), deals with promotion procedures for fixed-term faculty. All faculty should also be aware of policies AD-47 (General Standards of Professional Ethics); HR-76, which describes the use of an ombudsman for conflict resolution, and AD-41, 42 and 29 on sexual harassment, nondiscrimination and harassment, and intolerance, respectively.

The policies mentioned in this handbook concerning students can be found in the *Policies and Rules for Undergraduate Students*, located at <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/index.html>. The *Faculty Handbook* is located at <http://www.psu.edu/provost/FacultyHandbook>.

## **Teaching**

### **Teaching Resources**

Do not hesitate to seek help from colleagues and administrators in designing your courses and improving your teaching. There are also a number of resources dedicated to helping faculty improve their teaching that are available to you, but you must seek them out. Many colleges and campuses have their own learning centers for that purpose. In addition, the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence, and Teaching and Learning with Technology, both housed at University Park, are available for faculty members at all locations who seek guidance concerning any aspect of their teaching. Each of these units has a Web site where you will find information about their current offerings as well as a variety of printed resources. These Web sites can be easily accessed at <http://www.psu.edu/ur/facstaff.html>.

ANGEL, A New Global Environment for Learning, (<https://cms.psu.edu>) is the course management system (CMS) available for use by instructors, students, and staff at Penn State. ANGEL is software that enables faculty, instructors, and teaching assistants to use the Web to enhance their courses without any knowledge of HTML. ANGEL is designed to be used in any academic discipline without imposing a particular teaching methodology on instructors and students.

If you teach a class at Penn State as a faculty member, instructor, or teaching assistant, you can use ANGEL to:

- Make course materials such as syllabi, schedules, announcements, lecture notes, quizzes, and multimedia resources available on the Web from one location.

- Manage the administrative aspects of your courses more efficiently by automating repetitive tasks.
- Introduce exciting new learning opportunities to your students using its communication features.

If you are the instructor of record for a course, once you go to <https://cms.psu.edu/> and log on using your Web Access UserID and password, you will see the course name listed under “My Courses.” The name will be greyed out, indicating that it is not yet visible to students. You may develop the course, then activate it for students whenever you choose.

### **Class Lists**

You can obtain up-to-the-minute class lists using the eLion system (<https://elion.psu.edu>). To use this service, you must be recorded as the instructor of record and have a valid Web Access Account.

On-line class lists are also available using the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS) using screen ARICC. (If you need help accessing ISIS, ask your department’s staff assistant or the staff assistant in your college’s Office of Academic Affairs.)

### **The Syllabus**

A written syllabus must be distributed to students in each course within the first ten calendar days of a semester or its equivalent. In addition to course content and expectations, the syllabus must include the course examination policy, basis for grades, and academic integrity policy for the course. Changes to the syllabus shall also be given to the student in writing (electronic distribution of the syllabus meets the intent of the legislation). (Senate Policy 43-00, Syllabus, <http://www.senate.psu.edu/policies>.)

The course syllabus serves several functions. It enables students to plan ahead, to understand course goals and specific requirements, and to be made aware of the principles and practices that underlay your course design. It should include the class name and number, your name, campus phone number, e-mail address and, as appropriate, voice mailbox number and web page address. It should also include your office hours, a list of required books and other necessary materials which the student must acquire independently. There should be a calendar with dates of class meetings and exams and the due dates for written, oral, and reading assignments. It is helpful to indicate to students the amount of time you will need, and the reporting form you will require to accommodate special absences necessitated by religious holidays and the like.

Students will perform best when you clearly define what you expect of them in terms of performance, behavior, and relevant policy areas. The syllabus is a good place to reinforce these messages. Each instructor is expected to provide clear policy statements on academic integrity, grading policy, and attendance (all discussed below). You can help students to learn the

importance of academic integrity to the learning process, and on the flip side, that the University will not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty, and that you will take such offenses seriously.

You cannot assume that students know your policies prior to attendance in class, even things that may seem obvious. Providing clear policy statements in or with your syllabus can ease the resolution of any complaints raised by students over grades, absences, etc. The clearer the information that is provided to students (especially in written form), the easier it will be to prevent, or later resolve, student disagreements. The syllabus is the primary document (along with grade and attendance records) consulted in grade disputes. Many units will ask you to keep a copy of your syllabus on file in the main office responsible for academic affairs. Such a file of past syllabi for the courses you have been asked to teach is a good resource for you as you design your own syllabus.

If your syllabus is available as a Web document, you will want to associate your syllabus with the Web Schedule of Courses published by the Registrar's office. Go to <https://elion.psu.edu>, choose "Faculty," and follow the instructions of the "Course Syllabus/Vita URL's" application.

The Office for Disability Services recommends that the following statement be included on the syllabus: "Note to students with disabilities: Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) located at 116 Boucke Building, 814-863-1807 (V/TTY). For further information regarding ODS, please visit their web site at <http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods>." Instructors will be notified as early in the semester as possible regarding the need for modification or reasonable academic adjustments. Since many students have disabilities not readily noticeable, this announcement or statement encourages students to identify their needs early in the semester so timely adaptations can be made.

## **The First Class**

You will want to use your first class to go over your syllabus carefully with your students. This will give you an opportunity to discuss the course and what your goals and objectives in it are, in other words, what you would like them to come away with from having completed the course. You will want to engage and excite them as they commit to a semester of study with you, and you want them to understand your commitment to help them to achieve the goals you have set for them.

At the same time, you want to make sure that students understand what is expected of them in performance and behavior. Clear and specific information on content, form, and criteria for evaluation can assist students in responding to course expectations, and can also assist in resolving student disputes about grades. Some instructors, depending on the nature of the course and the size of the class, use this first period to begin to get to know their students and their names, which if possible should be one of your goals—and to engage them in a discussion of what their expectations are for the course.

## **Informing Students of Progress and the Mid-Semester Evaluation**

One of the most important services instructors provide to students is to keep them well informed of their progress. Students should receive feedback before the course drop dates to help them to evaluate their progress when options are still available. Return graded exams and assignments on a regular and timely basis so that they can mark their own progress. (As a general guideline, if at all possible work should be returned within a week of its submission.) In addition, University policy mandates that at the end of the sixth week of classes during both fall and spring semesters, each instructor shall evaluate the performance of each first- and second-semester degree candidate or provisional student.

The Registrar's office will identify such students and supply you with Mid-Semester Grade Report forms for this purpose. If any such student has a grade of less than C, you are required to notify the Registrar who will then notify the student and his or her advisor that the performance is unsatisfactory.

## **Office Hours and Accessibility**

List your office hours in your syllabus and announce them in your class. Encourage students to see you if they need help or advice. You should have at least one office hour per week for each course that you teach. If you have several office hours each week, it is a good idea (and some units require) that you stagger them so that they are not all within the same class period, thereby reducing the possibility that a student will not be able to make your office hours because of a class conflict. You should also make yourself available by appointment and be willing to extend your office hours during times of stress for your students, particularly at the beginning and end of the semester and preceding and following exams. Inform your students where your mailbox is located, and regularly check your mailbox (and, if you have told your students that you are available by e-mail, your e-mail inbox). Some instructors actually also set up e-mail hours, so that students know when you will be checking your messages for student queries. E-mail availability, however, is not a substitute for keeping regular office hours, which should be held on campus in your office.

## **Cancellation of Classes and Changing Class Times or Locations**

It is your responsibility to meet all classes as officially scheduled and to arrive on time for all classes. If you know in advance that you will not be able to meet a class, you might arrange with a colleague to cover that class for you, or arrange with the students for an alternate date for that class, but a class time should be moved only if every enrolled student is able to attend the alternate time. If you must cancel or postpone a class because of illness or other crisis for which you did not have lead time, tell the appropriate contact person in your unit so that your students can be informed. If bad weather requires the University to cancel classes, the radio and television stations will be informed. Encourage your students to register for PSUTXT. PSUTXT is a system that lets you know via cell phone when classes are canceled due to weather conditions

or if the campus has an emergency closure or other schedule alteration. To register, visit <http://newswires.psu.edu> and click on the PSUTXT REGISTER button at the bottom of the page.

Faculty members may not terminate a class before the scheduled end of the semester, cancel classes before or after holidays or semester breaks (even though students may request it), or move the regular time and place of the course as listed in the class schedule, without the consent of the department head<sup>1</sup> or, in the University College, the director of academic affairs (DAA).

### **Class Attendance and Excused Absences**

Students are expected to attend class and are held responsible for all work covered. You should identify students who begin to show a pattern of absences early, and let them know that these absences will make it difficult to grasp the material of the course. Students should also know that, according to University policy (Senate Policy 42-27, Class Attendance, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>), “A student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, may run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade than the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance.”

At the same time, our policy says that instructors should provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who miss class for regularly-scheduled, University-approved curricular and extracurricular activities (such as the United Way Day of Caring, field trips, debate trips, choir trips, athletic contests, and religious observances). However, if you consider such a scheduled trip to be hurting the student’s scholastic performance, then you should present evidence for the need to restrict such activity to your department head or DAA, who may want to discuss the issue further with the college dean or chancellor if necessary. You should provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who are obliged to miss classes for other legitimate reasons.

### **Defining and Maintaining Academic Integrity**

*Academic integrity*—the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception—is an educational objective of Penn State. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating or falsifying information or citations, facilitating acts of

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<sup>1</sup>When we refer to colleges throughout this *Handbook*, we include The Dickinson School of Law and the University Libraries. Fifteen of these “colleges” divide their disciplinary units into departments. Of these fifteen, thirteen use the term “department head” for the administrative officer; the other two use the term “department chair.” Five of our colleges are divided into divisions or schools and use the term “division head” or “school director.” For ease of reference, we use the predominant terms, “department” and “department head,” throughout the *Handbook*, but these terms refer to all such comparable terms as described above. The Dickinson School of Law, College of Information Sciences and Technology, School of Nursing, and School of International Affairs have no subdivisions, and the University College has chancellors and directors of academic affairs (DAA) who oversee each campus. (The *Handbook* indicates where the DAA has certain responsibilities that in other units are assigned to the department head.) Your units will inform you if these general guidelines need to be adjusted for your locations.

academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting the work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. At the beginning of each course, it is the responsibility of the instructor to provide a statement in the syllabus clarifying the application of academic integrity criteria to that course. A student charged with academic dishonesty will be given written notice of the charge by the instructor.

When you are confronted with a case of student dishonesty, discuss the infraction face-to-face with the student. However, such matters must be handled in a prudent manner in order to prevent a student's right from being abridged, and accusations should not be made on suspicion alone. Before proceeding with a case of academic dishonesty you should review the University policy on violations of academic integrity (Senate Policy 49-20, Academic Integrity, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies> and AAPP M G-9). Do seek advice from your department head.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Institutions of higher education must ensure accessibility of courses, programs, and activities to students with disabilities. Students with a disability must be provided with reasonable academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and services in their academic activities. Instructors may receive a request for an academic adjustment from the Office for Disability Services in the form of a letter. An accommodation letter is a letter written by staff from the Office for Disability Services, or the Disability Contact Liaison (DCL) at other Penn State locations. The accommodation letter is given to students who are officially considered to be an individual who is covered under the Rehabilitation Act, 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 (ADA) and are eligible for reasonable academic adjustments at Penn State. Every student seeking classroom accommodations is required to obtain a new accommodation letter at the beginning of each semester. In addition to the accommodation letter, instructors will receive a second form called "Responsibilities for Requesting and Providing Academic Adjustments at Penn State." This form outlines the responsibilities in regard to providing classroom accommodations. For more detailed information regarding this process, please visit the Faculty Information and Student Information section of the ODS site at <http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods>.

### **Disruption of Classes by Students**

If you are having difficulty with a student who is disrupting your course, you should ask the student to meet with you after the class, or, if the disruption continues, to leave the class and meet with you in your office afterwards. At that time you should explain to the student the appropriate behavior that you expect in your classroom. If a student persists in being disruptive in the class setting, discuss the problem with your department head or DAA. Avoid getting into disciplinary discussions with individual students in front of other students in the class.

## **Final Exams**

The final examination schedule is developed by the Registrar's office based on both instructor preferences and student registrations. If you will be offering a final examination, please be sure that your department or DAA's staff assistant is aware of your intentions. Personalized faculty final examination schedules are available on eLion approximately the sixth week of the semester (Senate Policy 44-20, Final Examination, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>).

Comprehensive final exams must be given only during the final exam period, not earlier. There are to be no tests during the last week of the semester, other than quizzes and narrowly limited tests. Students may request that the Registrar's office provide rescheduling of final exams if there is a direct time conflict of two or more examinations, or if more than three examinations are scheduled within a 15-hour period of time (Senate 44-25, Conflict Final Examinations, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>).

## **Evaluation of Teaching**

The University requires all faculty members to have students evaluate their teaching, and your college or campus has determined the frequency of reviews. Each college and campus determines the frequency of reviews, but many require fixed-term faculty to be evaluated each time the course is taught. The offering period for the SRTEs is the last two weeks of regular instruction in a traditional semester-long course. The SRTE offering period cannot overlap with final exams.

Some units recommend that instructors develop teaching or course portfolios, which can serve as evidence of serious efforts by faculty to improve teaching and learning. Portfolios typically include a teaching or course philosophy and evidence of how that philosophy is put into practice in the instructor's courses. Portfolio evidence might include syllabi, learning objectives, and assignments, which are aligned with specific teaching strategies and examples of student work. Teaching and course portfolios also may include documentation that provides an historical overview of efforts to monitor and improve instructor teaching and/or students' learning. Many portfolios also include additional student feedback gathered throughout the semester. Portfolio formats vary depending on the purpose and aims of the faculty member. Guidelines and examples for developing portfolios, as well as varied strategies for gathering student feedback, are available from the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence through consultations or from the online resource library available at <http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/Tools>.

All faculty are expected to undergo peer review. Each academic unit has developed a peer review process, but many units ask faculty to conduct classroom or online course observations. Observation resources are also available at the above website. When evaluations lead to the conclusion that a faculty member's teaching is not satisfactory, fixed-term faculty can expect that their contracts will not be renewed.

## Grading and Grading Policies

### Determining Grades

Written notification of the basis for grades should be provided within the first ten calendar days of a semester or its equivalent. This information is included in the course syllabus. Any changes in that basis should be presented to the students in writing (Senate Policy 47-20, Basis for Grades, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>).

The grades that you give your students should reflect their achievement in attaining the objectives of the course that you have presented to them. The University's grading policy (Senate policies 47-40, Grading System, and 47-60, Definition of Grades, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>) is that grades shall be assigned to individual students on the basis of the instructor's judgment of the student's scholastic achievement according to the following definitions: A (EXCELLENT) indicates exceptional achievement. B (GOOD) indicates extensive achievement. C (SATISFACTORY) indicates acceptable achievement. D (POOR) indicates only minimal achievement and that the student may be seriously handicapped in carrying a more advanced course for which this course is a specific prerequisite. F (FAILURE) indicates inadequate achievement, necessitating a repetition of the course. Furthermore, for undergraduates, grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, and F must all be available and used as appropriate, including the final grade.

The syllabus should contain a detailed explanation of your grading practices, especially how the final grade will be determined. If you will compute the final grade on the basis of a formula involving percentages or points, describe the formula specifically. Students have a right to hold you to your statements on the syllabus concerning how you will grade them, and they will if they receive a lower grade than they expect, so it is important to think carefully about your policies ahead of time, to express them clearly in the syllabus, and to reinforce them orally and perhaps on individual assignment sheets as well. There are ways to retain some flexibility in grading for those cases where you think a student's performance is not fully measured by a mathematical calculation of grades, such as by indicating that you will also take into account other factors, such as class participation (if that is not part of your formula) and improvement.

If you are new to the classroom or to Penn State, don't hesitate to discuss grading and other issues related to instruction with other faculty who are in a position to advise you. You might want to ask them to share their tests and their grading policies to compare with your standards so that you have a better sense of what other faculty members are requiring of students in similar courses. Instructors are not asked to be untrue to themselves; however, they are encouraged to work out the dilemma of aligning their standards with those of their colleagues after receiving advice from more experienced colleagues.

### Registration, Course Add/Drop, and Late Drop

Registration is a continuous process at Penn State. While circumstances may necessitate the need to process schedule changes after classes begin, students are encouraged to finalize all

registration changes prior to the first day of the semester. Once the semester begins, the process of changing the student's course schedule is referred to as course drop or course add (Senate Policy 34-87, Course Drop, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>).

Students who have completed their registration by paying tuition and fees are permitted to add and drop courses during the drop/add period. This period is the first ten calendar days of the semester or proportional time frames for courses that are not full-semester courses. Students who have not completed their registration are not allowed to add courses, nor are they permitted to register for the future semester.

Courses dropped during the first ten calendar days of the semester are not recorded on the student's academic record. Courses dropped after the first ten calendar days and 80 percent of the duration of the course is attained are considered late drops, and are recorded on the student's academic record. There are limitations on the number of late drop credits (baccalaureate degree - 16 credits; associate degree - 10 credits; nondegree - 10 credits).

Students may late drop courses in person or by using the eLion system. Dropping courses will likely reduce student ability to maintain normal degree progress, possibly delaying graduation. There are also financial issues to consider when dropping courses since dropping a course may affect the financial aid being received by the student.

Courses added during the first ten calendar days do not require any special permission. To add a course that is full requires permission of the instructor; the student must add this course in person. Courses added after the first ten calendar days require your permission; students must late add courses in person.

Students must register for the course in the same semester that they participate in the course. Faculty are not permitted to allow a student to participate in one semester, and then allow the student to register for the course (without participation) in a following semester.

## **Withdrawal**

A student who is unable to complete the semester may choose to withdraw from the University. The withdrawal action may occur at any time up to and including the last day of classes. Withdrawal will delay normal degree progress and may affect academic programming and have financial aid implications. A student considering this action should first consult with an academic advisor. A student may complete the withdrawal process without consulting or informing you, but you need not worry about erroneously giving a regular grade to a student who has withdrawn without your knowledge since the computer automatically converts any grade to a W (Senate Policy 56-30, Withdrawal, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>).

## **Submitting Grades**

You are encouraged to submit end-of-semester grades to the Registrar's office using the eLion system. Grade sheets are also produced by the Registrar's office and provided to each course instructor during the last week of the course. Your final grades are to be submitted to the Registrar's office within forty-eight hours of the final exam.

Students receive their grades by accessing two web sites or by calling a toll-free telephone number, 800-876-0354. Students may also request the Registrar's office to mail a copy of their grade report. If you wish you may permit students to provide you with a stamped, addressed envelope to secure their final grades as quickly as possible.

## **Deferred Grades**

Students may request to defer their final semester grade. (There is no such thing as an "incomplete" grade in the Penn State system.) You may approve the request if, in your judgment, the student has a good and sufficient reason. Deferred grades should be approved only in unusual circumstances and never because a student failed to complete course work without good reason (Senate Policy 48-40, Deferred Grades, <http://www.psu.edu/dept/ufs/policies>).

To assign a deferred grade, choose the grade symbol of DF from the drop-down box on the eLion Faculty Grade Entry application. This action will provide the student with the normal six-week period to complete their course work. If you wish that this period of time be less than six-weeks, you will need to complete an "Approval of Deferred Grade form" which is available from your department staff assistant.

Students must complete the course prior to the end of the sixth week of class of the following semester (except summer), whether or not the student is enrolled for the following semester. Deferred grades that are not changed to a quality grade are automatically recorded as an F grade at the end of this six-week deadline.

## **Grade Correction**

Grade changes are appropriate if a final grade has been assigned but a miscalculation on the part of the instructor has occurred. Grade changes should not be used to allow a student to do additional work or revise work after the semester has been completed and a grade has been submitted. Use the eLion Grade Change application to report the corrected grade. If the original grade was assigned more than a year ago, you will need to complete a Grade Change Authorization form (Senate Policy 48-30, Corrected Grades, <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies>).

## **Keeping Records**

Keep good records of grades, attendance, and other factors used to compute the final grade. Grade books should be retained, as should final exams and syllabi, for at least one calendar year.

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

Educational records are kept by University offices to facilitate the educational development of students. Faculty and Staff members may also keep informal records relating to their functional responsibilities with individual students.

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 identifies the rights of students and their families with respect to student educational records kept by institutions. As part of the requirements of FERPA, the University has a policy on Confidentiality of Student Records (*University Policy of Confidentiality of Student Records*, AD-11).

Information from records, files, and data directly related to a student may not be disclosed by any means (including telephone) to individuals or agencies outside the University without the prior written consent of the student.

When the student reaches the age of 18 or begins attending a postsecondary institution, regardless of age, FERPA rights transfer from the parent to the student. Parents may obtain access to their student's education record (grades, GPA, etc.) by obtaining consent from their student. Students may provide consent for their parents to view grades and other portions of their education record through eLion. Once access has been granted by the student, the parent may log into eLion Parent/Other and select any of the approved functions.

Information contained in such records may be shared within the University with "university officials" having "legitimate educational interest" in such information. It is important for instructors to protect student confidentiality when listing class exam grades, returning class papers or projects, and writing letters of recommendation.

For more information, please refer to the Confidentiality/FERPA web page on the Registrar's web site, [http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/ferpa\\_tutorial/ferpa\\_tutorial.cfm](http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/ferpa_tutorial/ferpa_tutorial.cfm), and read *Faculty and FERPA* brochure. If you have questions, you may contact the Registrar's Office in 112 Shields Building at 814-865-6357.

## **Other Resources**

Departments and campuses located outside University Park provide more specific guidance on some of the topics described above. Often this information is provided in a campus handbook. Ask the person who handled the procedures when you were hired for a copy of these materials.

## **Department and Campus Policies**

In addition to the general information about guidelines listed here, each department and campus has its own set of procedures for implementing basic policies concerning teaching. Some units and locations have tailored handbooks prepared specifically for part-time faculty members that contain essential information concerning local procedures. Whether or not such information is readily available to you in such a handbook, you will want to familiarize yourself with local policies and procedures, including the following:

- Ordering textbooks (including due dates for book orders)
- Filing copies of syllabi
- Copying, phones, and mailing
- Establishing office hours
- Reserving audiovisual teaching tools or aids
- Canceling classes
- Evaluating teaching

## **Department, Campus, and College Resources**

Also familiarize yourself with what resources are available to you in your department and at your location. You will want to know, for example:

- The staff assistants in your unit and their range of responsibilities, so that you know who to go to for help and advice;
- How to find relevant files that may help you in designing your courses and examinations;
- The opportunities for being mentored by other faculty, and any faculty discussion or support groups that can assist you in your teaching and your scholarship;
- Any resources that are available to fixed-term faculty in your position for the development of your teaching and scholarship. For example, is there any opportunity for travel funds for such purposes?
- The expectations and opportunities there are for you in the area of service. Are you encouraged, for example, to meet or attend presentations of job candidates when they make campus visits?
- What is available on your campus or in your college by way of learning centers for faculty or academic support for your students who need extra help.

## **University Libraries**

The University Libraries constitute a major resource for students and researchers in all fields of study. The Libraries rank among the top ten research libraries in North America by the Association of Research Libraries and contain more than 5.4 million volumes, more than 3.5 million microforms, more than 109,000 serial subscriptions, plus 565 databases and 125,000 e-books.

The Libraries include a central facility and five other libraries at University Park campus, plus libraries at 22 Penn State locations throughout the state, including the Dickinson School of Law and Penn State Hershey, the George T. Harrell Health Sciences Library. At University Park, the Arts and Humanities, Business, Education and Behavioral Sciences, Social Sciences, Maps, Life Sciences, Special Collections, and News and Microforms libraries are maintained in Pattee Library and Paterno Library. Other Libraries at University Park include the Architecture and Landscape Architecture Library, Earth and Mineral Science, Engineering, Law, and Physical and Mathematical Sciences libraries.

In addition, Pattee Library houses Course Reserves Services, the Extended Hours Study Area, and Library Services for Persons with Disabilities. The Special Collections Library in Paterno Library includes Historical Collections and Labor Archives, Rare Books and Manuscripts, and the Penn State University Archives.

Among special collections of national importance are those on Arnold Bennett, Kenneth Burke, Jean Giraudoux, Edward Gorey, John O'Hara, Vance Packard, Joseph Priestley, Conrad Richter; the Allison-Shelley collection of Anglo-Americana-Germanica; and materials on Utopian literature and on Australia. The Historical Collections and Labor Archives contain a wide variety of documentary sources, including the papers of Pennsylvania leaders and businesses and records of labor unions. The most notable of these documents are those of Richard Schweiker, William Scranton, the United Steelworkers of America, and the United Mine Workers of America. The Penn State University Archives houses an extensive collection of materials about the University and the surrounding community.

Faculty members may recommend books and other library material purchases by contacting the Libraries directly at <https://secureapps.libraries.psu.edu/questions/ask.cfm> or through the faculty member in their department who serves as the library representative. Libraries subject specialists are listed on the Web at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/colldev/selectorsinfo.html>. Faculty at locations other than University Park can also contact their head librarian.

Access to holdings is obtained through The CAT, a computerized catalog, available on the Web at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu>. The CAT is a dynamic, integrated information system that provides electronic access to a great variety of materials in many subject areas. LionSearch, available on the Libraries' homepage offers a single search box function for library resources, including books, articles, newspapers, databases and more.

The Libraries maintain a comprehensive program of general and specialized reference and instructional services. Libraries faculty teach credit courses as part of the Library Studies Program and offer a variety of topical seminars. Introductory sessions, offered by Library Learning Services, are scheduled on a regular basis to familiarize faculty, students, and other library users with library resources. Class sessions designed for specific courses can be arranged in the library to help students learn how to find, use, and evaluate relevant books, articles, Web sites, and other information resources. Assistance is available to help design assignments that use library resources to enhance student research skills and critical thinking. Library instruction rooms (hands-on labs or traditional classrooms) can be reserved for on-site instruction in the use of library resources. For information, go to: <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/lis.html>.

Penn State holds membership in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Research Libraries Group, the Committee for Institutional Cooperation (CIC), and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). Participation in these organizations provides faculty and students with access to the collections of more than 2,500 libraries across the United States and internationally, including major research libraries. Penn State's Libraries are the largest research library in Pennsylvania and one of four resource libraries that provide service and collections to all other libraries and citizens of the Commonwealth.

The publication, Guide to the University Libraries, offers additional information on services and programs and is available at Libraries service desks and by calling (814) 863-4240. More information is also available at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu>.

Media and Technology Support Services (MediaTech), <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/mtssa>, division of the University Libraries, has a collection of more than 24,000 films and videotapes and more than 5,000 pieces of technology and audio-visual equipment available to faculty, staff, and students. Titles in the Media Tech collection are listed in The CAT, the Libraries' online catalog and in the MediaTech database at <http://www.medianet.libraries.psu.edu>.

Services include:

- Consultation for purchase of technology or audiovisual equipment: 814-863-0665
- Equipment scheduling: 814-865-5400, 26 Willard Building and 7 Wagner Annex, e-mail to: [mtsseq@psulias.psu.edu](mailto:mtsseq@psulias.psu.edu)
- Preview facilities: 814-863-3202, Wagner Annex
- Program scheduling: University Park, 814-865-5400 or e-mail to: [mtssmed@psulias.psu.edu](mailto:mtssmed@psulias.psu.edu)
- MediaTech Repair and Installation Services: 814-863-4389

Another important service of MediaTech is the MediaTech Info Line. This audio information service includes current weather forecasts as provided by the Campus Weather Service, open house schedules for the Department of Astronomy, and construction barriers on or around the University Park campus. This service may be accessed from any touch-tone telephone at 814-863-1234.

For more information about services available from MediaTech, e-mail to: [mtssmed@psulias.psu.edu](mailto:mtssmed@psulias.psu.edu) or visit <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/mtss>.

## The Penn State Principles

The Pennsylvania State University is a community dedicated to personal and academic excellence. The Penn State Principles were developed to embody the values that we hope our students, faculty, staff, administration, and alumni possess. At the same time, the University is strongly committed to freedom of expression. Consequently, these Principles do not constitute University policy and are not intended to interfere in any way with an individual's academic or personal freedoms. We hope, however, that individuals will voluntarily endorse these common principles, thereby contributing to the traditions and scholarly heritage left by those who preceded them, and will thus leave Penn State a better place for those who follow.

- **I will respect the dignity of all individuals within the Penn State Community.**

The University is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that respects the right of all individuals to participate fully in the community. Actions motivated by hate, prejudice, or intolerance violate this principle. I will not engage in any behaviors that compromise or demean the dignity of individuals or groups, including intimidation, stalking, harassment, discrimination, taunting, ridiculing, insulting, or acts of violence. I will demonstrate respect for others by striving to learn from differences between people, ideas, and opinions and by avoiding behaviors that inhibit the ability of other community members to feel safe or welcome as they pursue their academic goals.

- **I will practice academic integrity.**

Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at Penn State University, allowing the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. In accordance with the University Code of Conduct, I will practice integrity in regard to all academic assignments. I will not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception because such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.

- **I will demonstrate social and personal responsibility.**

The University is a community that promotes learning; any behaviors that are inconsistent with that goal are unacceptable. Irresponsible behaviors, including alcohol or drug abuse and the use of violence against people or property, undermine the educational climate by threatening the physical and mental health of members of the community. I will exercise personal responsibility for my actions and I will make sure that my actions do not interfere with the academic and social environment of the University. I will maintain a high standard of behavior by adhering to the Code of Conduct and respecting the rights of others.

- **I will be responsible for my own academic progress and agree to comply with all University policies.**

The University allows students to identify and achieve their academic goals by providing the information needed to plan the chosen program of study and the necessary educational opportunities, but students assume final responsibility for course scheduling, program planning, and the successful completion of graduation requirements. I will be responsible for seeking the academic and career information needed to meet my educational goals by becoming knowledgeable about the relevant policies, procedures, and rules of the University and academic program, by consulting and meeting with my adviser, and by successfully completing all of the requirements for graduation.

This handbook is intended for use as a general reference rather than the official source of University policies and guidelines. The *Part-Time Faculty Handbook* is not intended to be definitive on policy matters, nor does it grant substantive contractual rights to University employees. Nothing contained herein shall negate the right of the University to augment or change its policies applicable to University employees. If you have questions about a particular issue be sure to consult your department head, human resources representative, director of academic affairs, or director of business services. You can obtain from them the most recent copy of the relevant University policy.

We hope that this handbook will be useful to you. Suggestions for future editions are welcome and should be forwarded to the vice provost for academic affairs, 201 Old Main, University Park.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, genetic information, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park PA 16802-2801; tel. (814) 865-4700/V; (814) 863-1150/TTY.

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