



COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

BUFFALO STATE • The State University of New York

# **Faculty Handbook**

## **2018-19**

## ***INFORMATION FOR COMMUNICATION FACULTY***

This information on how we do what we do is provided for full- and part-time faculty. It was last updated by the Communication Department's Faculty Concerns Committee, May 2018.

### ***DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION***

**Website.** The department maintains a website at <http://communication.buffalostate.edu>. The site includes information useful to faculty and students. Direct students here for scholarships, graduation requirements, and resources for ethics, diversity, writing, professional organizations and online media. Banner provides lists of faculty advisers for communication majors.

**Chair.** Deborah Silverman (878-3606, Buckham B-120) is accessible to every faculty member, both full-time and part-time. If you wish to meet with her, contact the department secretary to select a time convenient for your schedule.

**Secretaries.** Wynne Barron Osiadlo (878-6008, Buckham B-119) maintains department and student records, handles purchasing, coordinates the office suite, supervises work-study students, creates the master schedule for every semester and makes changes to the master schedule as needed, keeps track of the chair's appointment schedule, and assists with other tasks as needed. Lynn Bennett (878-5136, Buckham B-221) is the Philosophy Department secretary, but also assists the Communication Department with personnel reappointments, faculty attendance, travel and some purchasing. Neither acts as the personal secretary for individual faculty members.

**Instructional Support Associate/Technical Assistant.** Brian Milbrand (878-3513, Savage 102) coordinates media equipment checkout from the Equipment Room in Savage 102, and oversees work-study students in the Equipment Room. He maintains all broadcast equipment, editing suites and computer labs in the Donald Savage Building (Savage 110 and 111) and Buckham Hall (B-141, Stripes Media Lab (B-142), and B-144) as well as the one-button studio (Buckham B-143) and audio booth (Buckham B-137). He is available to assist faculty and students with technical questions and training on equipment, and conducts equipment/software workshops in classes if requested.

**Work-Study Students.** Student workers, located in Savage 103, assist in the equipment room under the supervision of Brian Milbrand.

**Mail Room.** All faculty have access to Buckham B-113, which houses the faculty mailboxes, copier, scanner, fax machine and supplies. See the department secretary in Buckham B-119 to obtain the entry punch code.

**Part-Time Faculty Office.** An office for adjunct faculty members is located in Buckham B-115. All part-time faculty members have access to the office. The office has lockers so that faculty can put their personal belongings there on a daily basis. However, no one has a permanent locker assigned.

**Employment.** The department makes every effort to notify part-time employees of their intended employment for upcoming semesters. However, sometimes the decision must be made to cancel a low-enrolled class. After a part-time instructor has served at Buffalo State for six

consecutive semesters, the college is bound by union contract to give 45 days' notice of any cancellation.

**Compensation.** Faculty pay is based on contract negotiations, which result in uneven compensation between colleges and university centers. The department has no flexibility in pay. Part-time instructors receive union-negotiated raises if they are teaching during the semester when raises go into effect. Paychecks are sent every two weeks.

**Direct Deposit.** Direct deposit is available through Human Resources. Direct Deposit forms are available here:

<http://hr.buffalostate.edu/sites/hr.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/Documents/directdepositform.pdf>

**Union Membership.** Bruce Bryski (878-5805, Buckham B-128) is the Communication Department's UUP (United University Professions) union representative. Union membership is optional. Union membership gives you the ability to vote on collective bargaining agreements, elect union leaders, choose representatives at the state and national levels, hold union office and attend union meetings. For more information, or to join, see: <http://uup.buffalostate.edu/join-uup>.

## ***COMPUTERS, AV EQUIPMENT, ONE-BUTTON STUDIO & AUDIO BOOTH***

**RITE Support Desk.** The RITE Support Desk (878-4357, Bulger Communication Center, room 200) provides technical assistance with account/login issues, Banner, email (including Outlook, Entourage, OWA, student webmail), wired and wireless network connectivity, PC and Mac OS and applications support, network and local printing, equipment/software purchases, software support and user account requests for new faculty and staff. RITE also provides audio/video recording services, classroom equipment support, and equipment loans. More information is available at: <https://rite.buffalostate.edu>

**Smart Classrooms.** Buffalo State has numerous smart classrooms available for classes needing presentation technology. Information on these rooms along with photos and instructions for using the technology can be found at <https://rite.buffalostate.edu/classroom.html>. Rooms can be reserved through Events Management (878-6114).

**Computer Hardware.** For equipment associated with departmental labs (Savage 110 and 111, Buckham B-141, B-142, and B-144), contact Brian Milbrand, the department technical assistant, at 878-3513 to report the need to repair any equipment.

**AV Equipment.** To schedule the use of audiovisual equipment, contact Technology Support Services Equipment Loan (Bulger 205) at 878-4535, send an email to [irloan@buffalostate.edu](mailto:irloan@buffalostate.edu), or use the web form to place a request: <http://libcal.buffalostate.edu/reserve/tech>. Each building with classrooms has an on-site inventory of equipment, including legacy technology devices such as slide projectors and audio cassette players. Every classroom should have a working overhead projector. Most classrooms are now "smart rooms" with computer access, DVD/VCR players, document cameras and projectors. Details are available at: <https://rite.buffalostate.edu/equipment-loan.html>.

**One-Button Studio and Audio Booth.** Faculty are encouraged to use the Communication Department's one-button studio (Buckham B-143) and audio booth (Buckham B-137) for their

classes. The one-button studio enables students to record presentations or green-screen stand-ups for courses, or for faculty to record lectures for uploading to Blackboard. The audio booth has four microphones and a call-in telephone line for recording podcasts and radio programs. Contact Brian Milbrand at 878-3513 for training on how to use both facilities.

## ***SCHEDULING***

**Semester Schedule.** The department chair develops the semester/term schedule, based on input from faculty about courses, times, locations, etc. It is expected that full-time faculty will be on campus for classes and a minimum of five office hours per week. Scheduling is done far in advance: June for the spring semester, January for the fall semester and summer term. Part-time instructors should notify the chair as far in advance as possible if they will be unavailable during a semester in which they previously have taught.

**Classrooms.** Faculty members may request particular classrooms, without guarantee. The department can only schedule classes in the computer labs in Buckham B-141, B-142, B-144, and Savage 110 and 111, as well as the production studio (Savage 103) and the viewing room (Savage 121). Other classrooms may be requested by the department based on technology and space needs but are assigned by the college. The college has numerous smart classrooms with a full range of computer and AV equipment built in. Be sure to request a smart room in advance when arranging your schedule with the department chair. However, there is no guarantee that specific rooms will be assigned.

**Final Exams/CEP Meeting.** All faculty are required to conduct a CEP week (Critique and Evaluation Period) class meeting, holding an exam or other significant culminating activity during the scheduled time. Faculty should not schedule exams during the final week of classes. The CEP schedule is available at [registrar.buffalostate.edu/courses](http://registrar.buffalostate.edu/courses).

## ***TEXTBOOKS***

**Ordering.** The campus Barnes & Noble bookstore sends an email to all faculty at mid-semester with an order form for class textbooks for the following semester. Faculty also can order textbooks on the bookstore website, <https://buffalostate.bncollege.com>, or by calling the bookstore's textbook manager at 878-5509.

## ***FACULTY GOVERNANCE***

**Department Meetings.** Faculty meetings are held several times each semester, usually on Friday mornings every third week. The meetings can be cancelled at the discretion of the chair. The bylaws call for at least monthly meetings, but there may be more during the reaccreditation process or in other busy semesters. Part-time faculty may attend and participate, without voting privileges. Exception: Portions of meetings dealing with personnel issues are held in executive session. Contact the department office if you are interested.

**College Senate.** The College Senate (phone 878-5139) is a consulting body of representatives responsible for reviewing college policies and procedures and making recommendations on such matters to the college president. The Senate has eight standing committees. Senate meetings, generally held monthly on Friday afternoons, are open to all; only senators have voice/vote. The Senate office is located in Cleveland Hall 211.

**United University Professions.** 878-5732. UUP is the union that represents nearly 30,000 faculty and professional staff at 29 state-operated SUNY campuses, including Buffalo State. The UUP office is located in the Classroom Building, Room A-104 (878-5732). The campus UUP chapter has a part-time concerns representative.

## ***STUDENT ISSUES***

**Health/Medical Issues.** Weigel Health Center (<http://weigel.buffalostate.edu>, phone 878-6711) offers shots, health education and some treatment to all registered students.

**Emotional/Psychological Issues.** The Counseling Center in Weigel Health Center (<http://counselingcenter.buffalostate.edu>, 878-4436) helps students deal with issues ranging from homesickness and test anxiety to depression and suicide. The center's work is confidential and free. If you sense that a student is in crisis and needs to talk with a professional, please refer him or her to the Counseling Center.

**Learning Disabilities.** The Office of Student Accessibility Services in South Wing 120 (<http://sas.buffalostate.edu/>, phone 878-4500) assists students who have been diagnosed as having a learning disability. Such students have a right to, as a matter of law, special accommodation in testing situations. These accommodations vary according to individual student needs.

They may include additional time for tests, a quiet location for test taking, and/or a reader to present questions orally. Students should arrange accommodations at least one week prior to any tests. At the beginning of the semester, instructors should invite students to notify them confidentially of any diagnosed learning disabilities. The Student Accessibility Services director will provide written notice of what accommodations the student will need. Note that some students are sensitive about the LD label. Please respect a student's wish for privacy in such matters.

Here is an appropriate note for syllabi: "Students with disabilities or special needs should make these known to the instructor. More importantly, they should contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services (South Wing 120, 878-4500). Based on recommendations from that office, students may receive needed assistance or accommodation in this course."

## ***CANCELING CLASSES***

**Canceling Classes (by instructor).** In your syllabus, inform students that the only legitimate cancellation is an email from you, your announcement on Blackboard, or a posted formal class cancellation notice. Contact the department office at 878-6008 if you would like to have an official class cancellation notice placed on the classroom door if you need to cancel a class. Also, please notify students by email and/or an announcement on your Blackboard class website, if you have a Blackboard class website.

If you will be unable to teach your class due to illness or another emergency for more than one week, please contact the department chair, Deborah Silverman, at 878-3606 or [silverda@buffalostate.edu](mailto:silverda@buffalostate.edu) so that the department can arrange for a substitute instructor for your class.

If you know in advance that you will be missing classes for any reason besides medical or other emergencies, please fill out this Faculty Planned Absence form and submit it to the department chair one week in advance of your absence:

**Canceled Classes (by college).** Announcements are made on the college website and through major radio and television stations. An early decision to close the college and cancel classes will be relayed to the stations by about 6 a.m. In addition, the College Relations Office will send a message via the NY-Alert system to all students, faculty, and staff members who have chosen to participate in this emergency notification system. Information also is available at the college information line, 878-5000.

**Class Meeting Times.** Instructors are expected to meet their classes each scheduled time during the semester, including during CEP. Students cannot be faulted for leaving the classroom if the instructor fails to arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled start of class, unless the instructor has given specific instructions.

**CEP Classes.** During the final days of each semester (Critique and Evaluation Period – CEP), day courses operate on a special schedule to allow extended time for final exams. As a matter of college policy, every course is expected to meet during the assigned time during CEP. Faculty members must schedule a class meeting during the assigned CEP time. Appropriate activities for this time include exams, presentations, student feedback, and other meaningful academic activity.

**Finals Week (CEP Week) Classes.** During the final week of each semester (Critique and Evaluation Period – CEP), day courses operate on a special schedule to allow extended time for final exams. As a matter of college policy, every course is expected to meet during the assigned time during CEP week. Faculty members must schedule a class meeting during the assigned CEP time. Appropriate activities for this time include exams, presentations, student feedback, and other meaningful academic activity. If you cannot meet with students during the CEP time, you must obtain permission from the department chair and, if necessary, from the dean.

## ***ACADEMIC FORMS & MATERIALS***

**Permission to Add Students to Full Classes.** Faculty can give permission for individual students to register, up to the total allowable by the room quota or the amount of available equipment (e.g., computers). Faculty can do this by logging into Banner, locating the course, and granting the appropriate course override to the student, using the student's Banner ID (searchable by name). Then send an email to the student to remind him/her to register for the course. Be sure to order additional textbooks.

**Class Roster.** Instructors obtain class rosters via the online Banner system at the college website. This list is updated daily until the end of the drop-add period. The roster allows instructors to communicate via email to any student individually or to all students.

**Course Proposals.** Each course taught by the department has an official course proposal that has been endorsed by the department, school and senate curriculum committees and approved by the provost and president. The proposal lists learning outcomes and prescribes course content. While individual instructors are free to teach the content in their own way, they are responsible for covering the material. This should be reflected in the syllabus (see below) and will be part of faculty performance reviews.

## ***SYLLABUS***

Each student should receive a syllabus and course schedule (on paper, on the instructor's website or on the class Course Management System, Blackboard) on the first day of class. The course schedule should include assignments and their due dates. The School of Arts & Humanities encourages faculty to develop their syllabi based on an established template of required components. See appendix.

## ***ADVISEMENT & REGISTRATION***

**Advisement.** Advisement each semester is required for all students. Full-time faculty members can find a list of their assigned advisees on Banner. They are encouraged to communicate with their advisees about the advisement process, which can begin as early as the start of the semester. In the weeks prior to registration, full-time faculty typically publicize their availability for advisement through email, online calendars, and/or schedules posted outside their offices. Advisers document advisement meetings through the use of notes in the Degree Works audit system ([registrar.buffalostate.edu/degree-works](http://registrar.buffalostate.edu/degree-works)) for each student. Every semester, the School of Arts & Humanities assigns Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) to students to unlock their Banner registration process. Students can receive their PINs from their adviser or the department secretary only after they've been advised. Students may select a different adviser by using the change-of-adviser forms available at the department office. Part-time instructors are encouraged to offer advisement and career preparation assistance on an informal basis to students but they should make it clear that the students need to meet formally with their faculty adviser.

**Registration.** Students register for classes online through Banner, which can be accessed at the college website. The date on which they can begin registration also can be found on Banner.

**First-Day Attendance.** The department requires that all enrolled students must attend class on the first day of the semester or term, or their seat may be given to another student. Instructors can enforce this, but should do so judiciously because sometimes, especially in winter, students cannot make it to the first class (e.g., if flights to Buffalo are cancelled due to bad weather). Instructors should notify their students in advance if they intend to enforce the first-day attendance policy. Students who want to join a class that has been filled and closed to registrants should contact the instructor, ask to be put on a waiting list, and come to class on the first day to claim any empty seat. This is the only process for students not initially enrolled to follow in order to enter the course.

## ***BUTLER LIBRARY***

Instructors should take advantage of the services available to faculty through Butler Library, which include the following:

### ***Equipment, Facilities, and Services***

**Equipment Loan.** Check out cameras, laptops, projectors and more from the Application Support Desk in Butler Library 157 (<http://libcal.buffalostate.edu/reserve/equipmentloan>).

**Professional Development Center.** A center designed to provide a campus-wide forum for faculty to share their ideas and expertise with regard to teaching, scholarship and service. (BUTL 181B)

**Printing & Photocopying.** Networked printers and copiers, located throughout the library, are operated with Buffalo State ID cards. They do not take cash.

**Photocopy privileges:** Faculty and staff are entitled to \$25 in print/photocopy funds, which can be added as needed onto their ID cards at the Circulation Desk. The funds are restricted to printing and photocopying library materials and can't be used for exams, syllabi or other class materials or snack-bar purchases.

Information regarding prices and locations can be found at:

<http://ic.buffalostate.edu/printing.html>

**Library Instruction Classes.** Faculty may bring classes to the library for instruction in library research. More information: <https://buffalostate.wufoo.com/forms/request-for-library-instruction/>

**Book Order Requests.** Faculty can recommend that the library purchase a book or media item by using an online order form available at: <https://buffalostate.wufoo.com/forms/library-purchase-request-form/>

This also can be accomplished through the Communication Department by forwarding the title, author, publisher, ISBN (if any) and order information to the faculty member serving as department librarian.

**Creating Persistent URLs to Online articles.** Persistent URLs are Internet addresses to full-text articles, useful in course management systems such as Blackboard. More information at: <https://library.buffalostate.edu/purl>

**U.S. Copyright Law and Fair-Use Guidelines for Books and Periodicals.** This guide is available at:

<http://www.arl.org/storage/documents/publications/code-of-best-practices-fair-use.pdf>

**Technology Appointment Request Form.** Assistance with any educational technology, such as video and audio recording and editing or mobile computing, is available. See request form: <https://buffalostate.wufoo.com/forms/technology-appointments/>

## ***FACULTY RESEARCH RESOURCES***

**Scholarship and Research.** Interlibrary loan -- This free service is offered to faculty, staff and students if the item can't be found in Butler. For more information: <https://library.buffalostate.edu/home/interlibraryloan>

**Summon.** Summon is a library-specific search engine that provides results from our library catalog and various databases at once. A tutorial on how to use Summon is available at: <http://54.144.29.87/tutorial/bsc-summon-basics>

**Research Appointment Request Form.** Reference librarians are available to offer individualized assistance to students, faculty, and staff who would like to learn how to use the



library more efficiently and take advantage of the many resources available. Librarians are also available to provide guided tours of the library, including an overview of library services. The form is available at:

<https://buffalostate.wufoo.com/forms/research-appointments/>

## ***PEDAGOGY***

All Buffalo State College programs are grounded in the liberal arts tradition. The college's mission statement (available in its entirety at: <http://suny.buffalostate.edu/strategicplan>) states, "Buffalo State is a diverse and inclusive college committed to the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Our mission is to empower students to succeed and to inspire a lifelong passion for learning. Buffalo State is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, service, scholarship, creative activity, and cultural enrichment." Toward this end, our teaching emphasizes not just skills, but more importantly, knowledge. Our commitment to "the rigors, joys and fulfillment of intellectual discovery" is a core value of the college, as is "respect for diversity and individual differences," and "social responsibility." Please keep our mission and values in mind when developing your classes. As professors, we go beyond teaching a set curriculum, ultimately striving to create a classroom dynamic that stimulates critical inquiry as a foundation for lifelong learning. Toward that end, we expect our classes to go beyond teaching testable facts. Our goal is to stimulate an intellectual environment where old ideas are challenged, and new ideas emerge.

## ***CLASSROOM DECORUM***

**Respect/Disruption.** College classrooms are dynamic environments where professors and students sometimes discuss conflicting ideas and truths. At Buffalo State we strive to maintain an environment where respect is paramount and where students are comfortable voicing their ideas, experiences and theories in a respectful manner to equally respectful peers. Professors should allow (and defend) the space for students to voice their ideas, but not tolerate personal attacks or any other rude behavior directed against either students or faculty.

Professors have the right to ask aggressive, disrespectful or disruptive students to leave the classroom. In the unlikely event of a student refusing to leave, or otherwise being extremely disruptive, professors have the option to summon the University Police by dialing 6333 from a classroom phone or 878-6333 from a cell phone.

**Food and Drink.** The Communication Department requests that professors enforce a ban on snacks and open drink or food containers in labs and studios housing computers, audio and video equipment. In other classrooms and campus spaces, it is the professor's prerogative whether to set policy regarding food and beverages in the classroom.

**Networked Devices/Cell Phones.** Individual professors are free to articulate their own policies regarding the use of networked devices and cell phones during classes. It is imperative, however, that professors state their policy in their course syllabi.

Such policies should articulate the penalties for violating the policy (i.e. grade reduction). Professors do not have the right to confiscate student property. Be aware that some faculty have reported cheating incidents involving text-messaging during quizzes and exams.

## ***TEACHING EVALUATIONS & ASSESSMENT***

**Student Evaluations.** At the end of each semester students should complete online (Blackboard) surveys evaluating their course experience. Please remind students, at the end of the semester, to take time to complete these surveys.

**Departmental Use of Student Evaluations.** The Communication Department uses the data provided by the aforementioned student evaluations as contributing components in a larger body of data when reviewing courses and faculty performance. The department will make student evaluation data available to individual professors after the semester ends. The Communication Department invites professors to comment on evaluations, for example, by offering information addressing student complaints or reflecting on changes individual professors plan to implement in response to evaluation data. This feedback will become part of a faculty member's personnel file.

**Peer Evaluations.** At least once every four semesters, classes taught by part-time professors will be observed by members of the full-time faculty. Full-time professors assigned by the department's Personnel Committee will contact their part-time colleagues and arrange for a mutually acceptable time to observe a class. The evaluator will prepare a written report to the department chair and/or Personnel Committee. The evaluator or the Personnel Committee will supply a copy of this report to the part-time professor under review. Full-time professors will be reviewed when they are up for contract renewal or promotion.

**Assessment.** Both the college's accreditation to confer degrees, and the department's ACEJMC accreditation, require that we actively assess the efficacy and outcomes of our programs. Toward that end, the Communication Department has formed an Assessment Committee that, from time to time, will ask faculty to help with programmatic assessment by administering surveys or compiling other data, such as copies of class assignments. The Communication Department generally uses this data not to assess specific professors, but to assess the program as a whole, often comparing student work submitted by incoming students to that completed by graduating seniors. Each request for your participation in this data collection will include information about how the Communication Department will use this data.

**Student Portfolios.** Communication majors are required to maintain online electronic portfolios containing work they have completed in many of their communication classes. The Assessment Committee will contact instructors and inform them about the types of assignments students in their classes should archive in their portfolios. It is the responsibility of the students, and not the professor, to physically add data to student portfolios.

## ***GRADING ISSUES***

**Rigor.** The Communication Department expects that faculty members will set and maintain high standards in all of their courses, while conducting their classes in a manner that both encourage students to strive to do their best work and help them achieve their goals. The Communication Department expects that students who earn passing grades will be competently prepared for the next level of instruction. Since courses are meant to be developmental, faculty should apply

standards that are appropriate for the level of instruction that they are teaching. Hence, students should possess grade-level appropriate skills (literacy, etc.) that are required to successfully participate in a class. Faculty are responsible for teaching toward a course's learning outcomes and should not lower course standards when a student does not possess the basic skills to participate in a class. Situations where students appear to lack basic skills often evidence the improper assignment of a passing grade either here at Buffalo State or at a prior institution. Hence, such situations are of interest to the department and should be referred to the department chair for investigation.

**Stated Grading Criteria (Syllabus).** Professors must clearly outline their grading criteria and include it in their course syllabus. This document will serve as a contract between a professor and student. In the event of any grade disputes, the Communication Department will refer to this document, which professors should make available to students electronically (via Blackboard) by the first day of class. Faculty should not alter grading criteria once a semester is under way.

**Grading Equity.** Each professor is free to develop grading criteria as s/he sees fit. Once developed, however, grading standards must be applied equitably to all students.

**Grading Criteria (Individual Assignments).** In developing class assignments, professors should use language that is as specific as possible, citing the criteria that they will use to evaluate the paper, project or presentation. This requires that the professor distill his/her thinking about what is expected for an assignment into something that is easy to articulate. Sharing grading rubrics or criteria with students allows them to develop their own checklists outlining the requirements for an assignment. Such advance planning makes grading easier; it also reduces both the anxiety that students feel about grades and the incidence of complaints about grades. When there are grading complaints, they are more easily resolved when such criteria is available.

**Mid-Term Grades.** College policy mandates that students must have an indication of their standing in class at the mid-point of the semester. Instructors should provide students with this information either as a progress report or as feedback in the form of graded assignments and examinations. Students are entitled to this feedback prior to the course withdrawal deadline listed in the academic calendar (this deadline is usually about 10 weeks into the semester). In other words, professors should develop course syllabi that allow for some assignments to be completed and graded before the 10th week withdrawal date. Failure to provide students with this information by the withdrawal date may result in student petitions for late withdrawal from courses and documentation that the professor has violated college policy on providing mid-term grades. Professors have the option to post mid-term grades via the Banner system (see below). Professors will receive notice regarding students who are experiencing an academic intervention (probation, etc.), for whom it is strongly requested that you post mid-term grades on Banner. Posting grades for other students on Banner is currently at the discretion of individual professors.

**Final Grade.** At the end of the semester, instructors file final grades online via the Banner system. Students will receive a letter grade from A to E, including plus and minus grades (but no A+ or D- grades). "E" signifies course failure. Incomplete and pass/fail grades also are options (see below).

**Minimum C Grades.** Department policy states that communication students cannot use a grade lower than a "C" when completing a communication requirement that would be counted toward earning a communication degree. This means that a student receiving C-, D+, D or E grades in a communication course will either have to repeat the course or, if the course is not specifically required in their program (is a COM/SPC elective), use it as a general education elective outside of the major.

**Writing Quality.** All written assignments should reflect level-appropriate writing skills. All professors share responsibility to evaluate student writing. Grading for all assignments should reflect an assessment of the quality of writing, even in non- writing courses.

**Writing Assignments in Studio/Lab Courses.** All instructors are encouraged to incorporate student writing into every course, with the exception of large (55+) lecture sections. In addition to formal research papers or creative writing exercises, such assignments may include written observations related to course topics (for example, lighting techniques in a television program, news coverage of a sporting event, or analysis of a political speech or a website). Professors should be clear in dissuading students from erroneously concluding that studio or lab courses are “easier” because they don’t require student insight or analysis.

**Literacy.** Students are expected to possess grade level appropriate literacy skills when they register for classes. Hence, not being able to read or understand course texts and readings is not an acceptable excuse for not completing assignments (see “rigor” above).

**Plagiarism.** Professors sometimes discover cases of plagiarism where a student passes off someone else’s written, graphic, digital, etc. work as their own (as in, without proper acknowledgement). Plagiarism can be intentional fraud, or can result from incompetence when a student fails to document or acknowledge sources. In either event, the student is responsible for material that they turn in. Each professor should articulate a plagiarism policy in each course syllabus. Such policies usually involve automatic course failure for any instance of plagiarism during the semester, with some faculty opting to issue a failing grade for only the assignment in question, and others opting to petition for judicial action. Details about Buffalo State’s plagiarism policies are available at:

<http://catalog.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate/academic-probation-and-dismissal.htm>.

Buffalo State also subscribes to turnitin.com, which is a tool faculty can access via their course Blackboard sites and use to check written assignments for plagiarism. It is up to faculty to determine whether a student has committed intentional plagiarism or sloppy source citation, for which s/he would be penalized in a different manner.

**Plagiarism Procedure.** Professors who assign a failing course grade due to plagiarism should notify the chair in writing when the grade is filed. The professor should also notify the student of the charge (either in writing, in person, or via email) at the time s/he determines that the student has committed plagiarism. Professors should adequately document all instances of plagiarism, as the student may contest the charge.

**Academic Misconduct.** In addition to plagiarism, Buffalo State also recognizes other forms of academic misconduct, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Prior acquisition or possession of an examination.
- Submission of false or fabricated data (i.e. fabricating data).
- Performance of work in a course for another individual while registered in the same course.
- Failing to demonstrate academic integrity by not upholding the individual's basic share of responsibility for collaborative course work and/or assignments.

**Pass/Fail Grade.** Students with a GPA of 2.2 or higher may take one course outside their major on a pass/fail basis each semester. Students do not need a professor’s permission in order to

exercise the pass/fail option, but must have a pass/fail form signed by their adviser. When professors submit grades via Banner (see below), the system will automatically redesignate any passing grade (D or higher) as a “P” grade. Professors may, at their discretion, allow a student who has opted for the P/F option to substitute a letter grade for the “P” grade. Students must initiate this request. Agreeing to such substitutions can encourage students to continue trying to do good work in the class rather than merely aiming for a passing grade. Students cannot exercise the P/F option for courses within their own major or minor.

**Incomplete Grade.** Students may receive an incomplete grade (“I”) only if circumstances beyond their control prevent them from completing their assigned work during the semester. Generally, this requires a medical excuse or other similar documentation. Professors must email the chair with a justification for the incomplete grade, noting progress on work completed and clearly indicating the remaining work due. This email will be placed in the student’s academic file. Students may be given until the 10th week of the following semester (excluding summer) to complete the work. If work is completed, the professor, after grading it, submits a change of grade form. If work is not completed, the “I” grade automatically becomes an “E.”

**Grade Change.** A professor can change a grade after it has been filed if s/he made a mistake either in calculating or filing the grade. To change such a grade, professors should obtain a change-of-grade form from the department office. No stigma is attached to such changes, and the department encourages changes that are justified.

**Grade Grievances.** Students may challenge grades they consider to be assigned unfairly. The Communication Department mandates that students first, before filing an official grievance, contact the professor who assigned the grade, and engage them in respectful dialog questioning the grade. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of that dialog, s/he can then file a written grievance detailing the complaint. The student must produce documentation supporting her or his complaint, such as copies of assignments that the student contends were graded unfairly. The complaint, and the supporting documentation, should be filed with the department chair. Professors must produce records indicating how they calculated the student’s grade. Such calculations should be in accordance with the criteria that the professor outlined in the course syllabus. The chair will study the complaint and the supporting documentation, may consult with an ad hoc panel of professors, and issue a non-binding recommendation regarding the grade. Students who are not satisfied with the process can file an appeal with the office of the Dean of Arts and Humanities. The college policy regarding grade disputes is available at: <http://catalog.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate/student-complaints-grievances-and-appeals.htm>.

**Privacy.** Federal privacy laws (FERPA) mandate that faculty and staff safeguard student data, including grades. Faculty and staff members are prohibited from discussing student performance, attendance, or any other information with anyone, including the student’s family, who is not a college employee. Exceptions are made for family members when the family documents that the student is a financial dependent. A student can also file a written privacy waiver to allow a faculty member to speak with another party. For more information, see: <http://catalog.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate/notification-of-rights-under-the-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa.htm>.

## ***PARKING***

**Permits.** Newly hired full-time and part-time professors can obtain permits at nominal cost (currently \$3.25) from the Campus Parking Office on the first floor of Chase Hall. These permits, which are valid in faculty/staff and student lots, can be renewed by mail each year. There are also lots with pay stations available for the general public.

**Guest Speakers.** Faculty can request parking permits for campus guests by visiting the campus parking office on the first floor of Chase Hall. Faculty members can also obtain a guest permit to use on a loaner vehicle.

## ***COMPUTER ACCESS***

Buffalo State's Resources for Information, Technology, and Education (RITE) Division has an informational website for faculty at <https://rite.buffalostate.edu>.

**Faculty Computers.** The college assigns one computer (faculty choice: Apple or Dell PC) to each full-time faculty member. The Communication Department provides part-time faculty with access to department computers. College policies governing the use of college owned computers and networks are online at <http://adminpolicylibrary.buffalostate.edu/search-category>.

**Faculty email.** Both full- and part-time professors have campus email addresses that should be used when corresponding with students or conducting college business. Such business-related email messages should be sent from a college account to another college account. Please be aware that messages sent or received using faculty email accounts are not private. These messages can be publicly discoverable, for example, via a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request or in a judicial discovery proceeding. If you need help accessing your faculty email account, contact the RITE Support Desk at (716) 878-4357 or [rsd@buffalostate.edu](mailto:rsd@buffalostate.edu). Faculty should check their campus email regularly since students and colleagues will be using it to get in touch with them. Student email. Students also have Buffalo State College email accounts that are hosted by Google's Gmail system. College policy states that students are responsible for checking their Buffalo State email accounts regularly, hence the college encourages faculty to use these email addresses when sending official correspondence regarding classes and grades to students. Faculty can access student email addresses through the online student directory (faculty login required), or can send email to individual students and select groups of students by using the communication function in faculty Blackboard accounts. Faculty can also access student email addresses using the Banner system.

**Banner Access.** Banner is our online records and registration system that faculty use to file grades, monitor enrollment and file overrides to allow students into restricted courses. Students use the system to register for courses. Both full- and part-time professors have Banner accounts. The college requires faculty to use Banner to file midterm and semester grades. Private student information accessible via Banner is protected by state and federal (FERPA) privacy laws. Access Banner via: <http://bscbanner.buffalostate.edu/faculty-and-staff>. For Banner support please contact RITE Support Desk at (716) 878-4357 or [rsd@buffalostate.edu](mailto:rsd@buffalostate.edu).

**Blackboard.** The Communication Department expects all instructors to utilize Buffalo State's online learning management system to post syllabi and course information and resources. As of this writing, that system is Blackboard. Private student information accessible via Blackboard is protected by state and federal (FERPA) privacy laws. Blackboard training is available. Info is available at <https://rite.buffalostate.edu/blackboard.html>.

**Degree Works.** Degree Works is our online student records audit tool. Faculty use Degree Works when advising students and when checking student records to verify that students have met the prerequisite requirements for advanced courses. Private student information accessible via Degree Works is protected by state and federal (FERPA) privacy laws. Faculty should only access student records in conjunction with performing official duties.

**Turnitin.com.** Turnitin.com is a service that Buffalo State subscribes to for online submission of student papers and plagiarism detection. Faculty can access Turnitin.com via their course Blackboard sites. Info at <https://rite.buffalostate.edu/turnitin.html>.

**Communication Department Webpage.** The Communication Department’s webpage contains links to a comprehensive array of information for faculty, students and prospective students. See <http://communication.buffalostate.edu>.

**Communication Department Facebook Page.** The Communication Department maintains a Facebook group (<http://www.facebook.com/groups/119898730310/>). This social media presence allows the Communication Department community to share information about employment opportunities, upcoming events, ongoing projects, etc. We encourage faculty to join this group, post events, and encourage students to join as well.

**Digital Commons.** Full-time and part-time faculty have access to the Digital Commons system, which houses the faculty information pages that are linked to the Communication Department website. Use your faculty username and password to set up an account (click on “My Account”) <http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/>. The department strongly encourages full-time faculty, and invites part-time faculty, to actively maintain and update their Digital Commons pages. These pages can contain samples of faculty scholarship, creative activity (links to video or audio clips), faculty CVs and other related information. It is important for faculty members to keep these sites up to date since they also supply the department chair with data for the department’s annual reports and faculty assessment activities.

## **Appendix**

### **Syllabus Template**

#### **Syllabus Overview**

The School of Arts and Humanities has developed a syllabus template suggested for use in all courses. This template has been vetted by department chairs and the A&H curriculum committee.

The purpose of this optional template is to make it easier for faculty to ensure that their syllabi include required information, within a flexible format to tailor syllabi to individual course/section needs. This template will help faculty document that they are addressing each learning outcome and teaching each element of the course content as these have been developed by departments and ultimately approved by the college. Thus it will show that we are teaching what our curriculum says we are teaching. Such documentation is needed in working with curriculum development, SUNY assessment, ACEJMC assessment, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and (where relevant) other accreditation bodies.

The template also helps departments create syllabi that fulfill the dual role of such documents:

- The course syllabus is a contractual document between the instructor and the student. As such, it provides students with information on what the instructor requires in terms of texts, attendance, and other policies. It also outlines the instructor's grading criteria and other course expectations and requirements. As a contract between instructor and student, the syllabus provides the basis for resolving any appeal the student may initiate concerning grading or course requirements. This template allows instructors to tailor such information for their specific needs and preferences.
- The syllabus also is an assessment document for the department and the college. As such, it provides students with information on learning outcomes and course content as approved by the department, school, and senate and ultimately endorsed by the provost and president. Each syllabus must align with the course proposal, and this template provides a format for showing such an alignment. SUNY guarantees that faculty have academic freedom to address and comment on relevant subjects in their courses, and they have flexibility in how to present content specified in the course proposal. However, instructors are obligated to teach what the department, school, and college have approved for the course through the curriculum process.

Here is a template for instructors. The syllabus resulting from this template can be uploaded into Blackboard. Instructors also should include a course schedule as part of their syllabi; a sample schedule is included below, along with an optional student acknowledgment form

## **SYLLABUS**

**Course Number:** Insert      **Course Name:** Insert

**Semester:** Insert      **CRN:** Insert

**Instructor:** Insert



**Instructor's email:** Insert

**Office Location:** Insert or indicate departmental office

**Office Hours:** Insert or indicate n/a or by appointment

**Catalog Description:** Insert

**Prerequisite Courses:** Insert verbatim from catalog

**Enrollment Restrictions:** Insert as needed (majors, junior-senior, GPA, etc.) or indicate n/a

**Course Overview:**

**Optional:** Insert information on course format, teaching philosophy, professional base, or other information the instructor wishes to provide

**Text:**

**Required:** Insert name of text(s)

**Recommended Supplemental Materials:** Insert as needed, or indicate n/a

**Professional Materials and/or Fees for This Course:** Insert as needed, or indicate n/a

**Blackboard:** Students have access through Blackboard for all courses in which they are enrolled.

**Optional:** Instructors may add information on how students can use Blackboard for this course; i.e., to obtain assignments, find reading material, participate in discussion forums, turn in work, exchange email with instructor and other students, see posted grades, read course announcements, etc. Alternatively, instructors may include a statement in this space that they do not use Blackboard for this course.

**Learning Outcomes for this Course:** On completion of this course, students will be able to:

Insert learning outcomes verbatim from approved course proposal, available from the Communication Department website at: <https://communication.buffalostate.edu/course-proposals>. Include Intellectual Foundations learning outcomes for IF courses, available at: <https://intellectualfoundations.buffalostate.edu/learning-outcomes-0>. If the department's course proposal does not list IF learning outcomes, insert them verbatim from the same URL.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Following is a tentative course outline for this semester/term. The instructor may adjust content, assignments, and due dates to accommodate changing needs during the semester. Revisions will be announced in class. If students miss a class, they are responsible to ensure that they have the most up-to-date course information including assignments and deadlines.

(Insert a detailed day-to-day outline with assignments and due dates. The format must show course content to be consistent with the approved course proposal on file in each department. This section will be used for course/program assessment and accreditation.)

**Sample content:** Date/Topic/Assignment or activity/Readings prior to this class /Quiz or exam / Work due this day in class. Cut & Paste: Instructors can type the schedule in this block or create the schedule in a separate document and then copy it into this block.

In addition to the above information, all course syllabi must include the instructor's attendance policy and grading criteria for the course.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

**Participation:** By enrolling in this course, each student makes the tacit commitment to participate. Class participation involves more than mere physical presence. Students are expected to be actively involved in the class. Students are encouraged to ask relevant questions and contribute to the over-all learning environment of this course.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is expected for every class. The School of Arts and Humanities allows instructors to consider attendance and participation in calculating the student's final grade. In general, attendance policies do not reward class attendance but rather they may penalize non-attendance. Students are expected to come to every class meeting on time and prepared to participate. Working on an assignment for this or any other course is no excuse for missing class or arriving late.

**Missed Assignments:** If students miss class for any reason, they are responsible for obtaining notes and announcements from another student. The instructor will provide handouts if the student requests.

**Penalty for Non-Attendance:**

**Penalty for Arriving Late or Leaving Early:**

**Excusable Absences:** The School of Arts and Humanities allows instructors to excuse absences that are related to personal illness or medical emergency, death or critical illness in the immediate family, jury duty, military duty, religious observances, or participating in college-related activities such as varsity sports. Students should notify instructors prior to missing class for excusable absences or within 24 hours after the class meeting.

**Non-Excusable Absences:** The School of Arts and Humanities does not consider the following as excusable reasons for missing class: vacation, job-related responsibilities, working on class assignments, activities sponsored by other departments or classes, child-care responsibilities, or extended personal leave. Students should schedule activities that do not justify excusable absences – such as job or internship interviews, or non-emergency medical appointments – outside of class times.

**Preponderance of Absences:** Even when specific absences may be excused, there may come a point at which too many absences make it impossible for students to meet the course requirements. The instructor thus may advise students with many absences (regardless of the reason) to withdraw from the course – not as penalty for having missed class but simply as recognition that the student is unable to complete class assignments.

**Mutual Respect:** Students can expect to be treated with respect by the instructor and other students. Likewise, anyone enrolled in this course is expected to treat the instructor and fellow students with respect and to act in a dignified manner at all times. Class discussions are to be conducted in an environment of respect and tolerance for both people and their ideas.

**Classroom Behavior:** The instructor will not tolerate student behavior that is disruptive of the educational environment. Improper classroom behavior includes arriving late and/or leaving early; using cell phones and computers in activities unrelated to class work; any type of harassing, intimidating, belligerent, or abusive language or action; or any behavior that is

distracting to the instructor or other students. Instructors may remove students who they determine are disrupting the educational process.

**Grievances:** Students should be aware of the appropriate processes for complaints, grievances, and appeals. University policy is outlined at <http://catalog.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate/student-complaints-grievances-and-appeals.htm>.

**Food and Drink:** In general, students should not expect to snack during this course. Any beverages brought into class should be in containers. Under no circumstances may food or drink be used around computers or other equipment.

**Technology:** Students should silence cell phones during class. Texting and use of headphones is prohibited. Use of computers and other digital devices unrelated to course material is prohibited.

**Safety:** Buffalo State wants all students to feel safe on campus. Be alert and exercise reasonable caution. Become familiar with campus safety services. Departments may have particular procedures for operating equipment and for working in campus spaces outside of class meeting times. It is at the discretion of course instructors to determine if students are capable of operating equipment safely. For campus emergencies, contact University Police at 878-6333.

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

**Workload:** Each student begins every class with the presumption that s/he is an average student capable of working at this level. Students will determine their grade from this basis according to their academic performance. For students to be academically successful, the School of Arts and Humanities recommends the standard of two hours out of class for every hour in class. Students should expect to spend adequate time in reading, researching, writing, working on projects, preparing homework, studying for exams, and so on. This is known as independent learning, a hallmark of an educated person.

**Academic Integrity:** The School of Arts and Humanities expects the highest level of integrity from every student. Each student enrolled in this course is expected to make an honest effort in this class and to be scrupulous in maintaining academic honor and integrity. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. University guidelines on academic misconduct will be enforced.

**Special Needs:** The School of Arts and Humanities is committed to providing necessary and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities or special needs. Students should inform their instructor at the beginning of the semester if they request accommodations in the course. Based on input from the Office of Disability Services (120 Twin Rise South, 878-4500), students may receive needed assistance in class and in testing situations, though they will be expected to reach the same performance level as other students.

**Academic Assistance:** Students needing assistance with writing, reading and/or study skills may contact the Writing Help Center sponsored by the College Writing Program; the center is located in 214 Butler Library (878- 3655). Tutoring and other assistance also is available through the Academic Skills Center in 330 Twin Rise South (878- 4041), English Department Writing Center in 323 Ketchum (878-5409), and EOP Academic Resource Center, 730 Twin Rise South (878-6024).

**Late Assignments:**                      **Make-Up Work:**

**Extra-Credit Work:**

## **Grading Criteria for This Course:**

## **Grading Scale for This Course:**

**Standard Grading Criteria:** Following are guidelines for the School of Arts and Humanities on grade standards:

Grades that are calculated in the GPA:

A – Superior. Student works at an excellent level. Work is complete, well presented, and reflective of exceptional standards of superior quality. This grade indicates a student who has mastered the subject; it is not an impossible grade to achieve, but it is rare and difficult to come by.

B – Good. Student works at a commendable level. Work is generally complete, adequately presented, and reflective of above-average standards. This grade signifies solid accomplishment and generally indicates a student whose work is of consistently high quality.

C – Average. Student works at a minimally satisfactory level. Work is relatively competent, adequately presented, and/or reflective of minimally acceptable standards. This grade signifies work that is average and suggests an understanding sufficient for continued study in the discipline. It is considered a borderline grade for courses in a student's major.

D – Unsatisfactory. Student works at a substandard level. Work is incomplete and poorly presented. This grade indicates inferior work, demonstrating only a negligible level of understanding.

E – Failure. Student works at an unacceptable level, generally indicating a clear lack of effort or interest. It also may be the result of cheating, reflecting student behavior that violates guidelines for academic integrity.

Grades that are not counted in the GPA:

P – Pass/Fail. Students with a 2.0 GPA may request a pass/fair grade instead of a letter grade for one course a semester in a course not used to satisfy degree work in their major.

I – Incomplete. Students may request a temporary grade of “incomplete” if they (1) have completed most of the work associate with the course, and (2) can document serious medical, legal or similar last-minute obstacles to completing course requirements. Such obstacles must be beyond the student's control. Incompletes cannot be given because a student has procrastinated and fallen behind in his/her work. Students must submit work to satisfy the incomplete or the course grade will change to “E.”

W – Withdraw. Students may withdraw from this course through Banner online at any time prior to the withdraw deadline, generally about the 10th week of the semester. By withdrawing, the student will receive no grade for the course. Withdrawing does not negatively affect a student's GPA.

Note: While effort and hard work are encouraged, they do not guarantee high grades. Rather, for most students, they are the means to achieving grades. In this course, students are evaluated on the basis of their academic output, not the effort they put into the course.

## **STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Each student should print this page, sign it, and give it to the instructor.

- I have received and read a copy of this syllabus for .
- I understand that I will be held accountable for following the procedures and meeting the standards outlined in this syllabus.

Student Name (printed)

Signature

Date

Student contact information: Phone Email