

December 12, 2023

To: Brooklyn College Faculty

From: James T. Eaton
Associate Dean for Faculty and Administration



Re: Spring 2024 Obligations of the Faculty and Guidance for Syllabus Preparation

In planning for the upcoming semester, take note of the following information regarding your teaching assignments. In addition to what is included in this memo, the [Faculty Handbook](#) is a key reference for policies and practices related to faculty life.

Resources and Support for Teaching and Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning website (www.brooklyn.edu/CTL) contains many resources:

- CTL and AIT Workshops and Other Training Opportunities
- Inclusive and Anti-Racist Pedagogy Resources; Accessibility for Students with Disabilities; Trauma-Informed and Healing Centered Pedagogy Resources
- Classroom Practices, Student Engagement and Active Learning
- [Brooklyn College Self-paced Blackboard Basics course](#)
- [Teach in Ten: 10 Steps for Effective Online Pedagogy](#)
- Sample Teaching Resources from BC Faculty

If you have questions or have an idea for professional development or other helpful resources, contact the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at ctl@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Faculty Attendance and Conformance to Class Schedules

Faculty must meet all classes at the time and place scheduled, for the prescribed number of hours. The following regulations govern classroom teaching responsibilities:

1. In accordance with New York State Education Law (Title VIII, Chapter II, Section 145-2.1), all undergraduate and graduate classes must meet for the full term (a period equivalent to 15 weeks) as indicated in the college calendar.
 - Undergraduate final examinations must be held in the 15th week of the semester at the specified time and place during the scheduled examination period.
 - Graduate final examinations, if conducted, will be held in their regular assigned time and place at their last class meeting during the 15th week unless instructed otherwise.
 - Final examinations for weekend courses will remain in their regular assigned place and will be administered at the regular class time on either May 18 or 19.
 - Additional information will be posted on the Office of the Registrar's [website](#).

2. Classes must meet on the days and at the times assigned in the college course schedule. In-person classes and synchronous distance learning sessions must begin promptly at the designated start times and run for the duration of the scheduled meetings.
 - Deviations from this schedule for any reason must receive prior approval of the department chairperson and dean.
 - Repeated delays constitute a *de facto* deviation from the college course schedule and, therefore, are not permissible without prior approval.
3. All classes must have an established mode of delivery—in-person, online, or hybrid. Any class not delivered in-person must clearly identify the delivery method, such as Blackboard, Zoom video conferencing, Microsoft Teams, and so on. In addition to sharing this information clearly with your students prior to the start of the course, you must ensure your department chair is also informed.
4. Independent library assignments or written assignments are not acceptable substitutes for a class meeting. Furthermore, the mode of instruction (in-person, hybrid, fully online, etc.) cannot be modified to differ from what is noted in the schedule of classes.
5. Office Hours: [Adjunct paid office hours](#) must be formally established, held at regularly scheduled times, be clearly communicated to students on the course syllabus and elsewhere as appropriate, and occur at a set location corresponding to the delivery mode of the course. The meeting method should be explicitly stated and may be different from how you conduct your classes (*e.g.*, you use Blackboard for your course, but schedule Zoom meetings for your office hours).

“Office hours by appointment” are not an acceptable substitute for regularly scheduled office hours. If you need to cancel office hours due to an emergency, you must inform your students about when your make-up hours will be held.

As noted in the *Faculty Handbook*, full-time faculty are asked to set aside two or three regular office hours each week throughout the academic year—following the same formal scheduling and modality guidelines described above.

Similarly, graduate assistants and graduate fellows should establish at least one regular office hour each week per class section during the semester—following the same guidelines described above.

6. Faculty members who wish to miss an in-person class or synchronous online session for professional reasons, such as attending professional meetings, must obtain prior approval from the chairperson. Provisions must be made to have the class taught by another faculty member. Brooklyn College has a tradition of collegiality in which, in most departments, faculty have covered each other's classes on a basis of mutual accommodation. Such reciprocity is encouraged but must be cleared with the department chairperson in advance.
7. In cases of personal emergency or illness, the chairperson (or a deputy chairperson, if appropriate) must be notified. Faculty members should be given the mobile and/or home telephone numbers of the department chairperson and the deputy chairperson(s) to facilitate prompt reporting of unexpected absences. In cases of anticipated or actual absences of more than five consecutive calendar days (exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, authorized holidays and recesses) due to illness, faculty must file a Temporary Disability Leave form accompanied by a physician's report.

Posting Course Material Information

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 mandates that all course material information be posted online well in advance of the start of the term. Having this information makes it possible for our students to acquire materials at lower cost. Our mechanism for posting this information is our online bookstore, which updates the class information in CUNYfirst.

Go to www.brooklyn.textbookx.com and use your CUNYfirst credentials to log in. All information submitted to the online bookstore will be transferred to CUNYfirst within 48 hours. The adoption process takes a few minutes to complete and, in following semesters, if you are using the same materials, it is under a minute to update. **No Cost / OER / No Course Materials? This must also be indicated online.**

If you haven't already, take the time to complete this important task. Failure to do so harms our students and puts the college out of compliance with Federal law.

Syllabus Preparation and Vital Information for Students

Please post your current syllabi on [BC WebCentral](#) ("Post My Syllabus" under the My Info tab) at least one week prior to the start of class and tell your students where to find the syllabus at the first class meeting. The syllabus should include the following:

1. A statement of course goals and learning objectives (that is, what do you want your students to know and be able to do by the end of the course?);

Syllabus Policy for Pathways Courses: Listing Student Learning Outcomes

Are you teaching a [Pathways course](#)? All syllabi for Pathways courses must list the student learning outcomes (SLOs) specified by Pathways for the relevant Pathways category. Review the curriculum map of the [Pathways SLOs](#) for your course.

2. A statement and timetable of all required learning activities that will enable students to achieve, and to demonstrate their achievement of, the course's objectives (for example, research projects, essays, exams, lab reports, presentations, portfolios);
3. An indication of whether the final grade will be based on a curve or scale;
4. An explanation of how the final grade for the course will be determined with specific weights indicated for each of the components of the course, including the mandatory final examination (except for those courses exempt from this requirement);
5. An indication of whether students will be given the opportunity to revise and resubmit essays or other assignments;
6. Information about your office hours, including times, location (established video conference meeting space), your office telephone number and/or department telephone number where messages can be left, and your e-mail and web addresses. (*See above for more guidance on office hours*);
7. The following statement on the University's policy on Academic Integrity:

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College

procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.edu/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation. Students should be aware that faculty may use plagiarism detection software.

8. The following statement about the Center for Student Disability Services:

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS). Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability (physical or mental condition which substantially limits one or more major life activity) are invited to call the Center at (718) 951-5538 or visit us in 138 Roosevelt Hall. If you have already registered with the CSDS and submitted necessary forms, you will receive your course accommodation letter to provide to your professor and these specific accommodations can be discussed when appropriate.

9. Reference to the [Student Bereavement Policy](#).

10. Reference to the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs, noted in the front matter of the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and *Graduate Bulletin*. These may be found on the [Bulletins page](#) of the Registrar's website.

11. Your class policies (attendance, participation, etc.) and required class readings. Faculty may establish classroom behavioral guidelines. Refer to the [Faculty Handbook](#) or the [Adjunct Faculty Handbook](#) for additional guidance.

12. Faculty Council's Library Committee urges you to provide a link to the library website on your syllabus so that students who are new and returning to campus are aware of the library's services: <https://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/resources>

Important Dates to Include in Syllabi

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| - Thursday, January 25 | First day of Spring 2024 classes |
| - Wednesday, January 31 | Last day to add or swap a course |
| - Monday, February 12 | College Closed – No classes scheduled |
| - Monday, February 19 | College Closed – No classes scheduled |
| - Thursday, February 22 | Conversion Day – Classes follow a Monday schedule |
| - Wednesday, February 28 | Conversion Day – Classes follow a Monday schedule |
| - Friday, March 29 <i>through</i>
Sunday, March 31 | College Open – No classes scheduled |
| - Monday, April 22 <i>through</i>
Tuesday, April 30 | Spring Recess – College Open – No classes scheduled |
| - Wednesday, May 15 | Last day to withdraw from a course with a “W” grade |
| - Thursday, May 16 | Final Exams Begin |
| - Wednesday, May 22 | Final Exams End / End of Spring Semester |

The full academic calendar, including many other important dates, is available on the [Office of the Registrar's](#) website.

Sexual and Gender-based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX

Brooklyn College is committed to fostering a safe, equitable and productive learning environment. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment on or off campus can find information about the reporting process, their rights, specific details about confidentiality, and reporting obligations of Brooklyn College employees on the [Office of Diversity and Equity Programs](#) website.

All reports of sexual misconduct or discrimination should be made to Michelle Vargas, Title IX Coordinator (718.951.5000, ext. 3689), and may also be made to Public Safety (719.951.5511), the New York City Police Department (911 or a local NYPD precinct), or Melissa Chan, Associate Director of Judicial Affairs, Division of Student Affairs (718.951.5352), as appropriate.

The [CUNY Equal Opportunity and Non-discrimination Policy](#) includes additional information regarding reporting discrimination and/or retaliation.

CUNY Guidelines: Requiring the Use of Cameras during Online Classes

Faculty utilizing Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate and other digital technology to deliver course curriculum and materials must be sensitive to issues of privacy. Faculty offering classes through web conferencing cannot require students to turn on their cameras during classes unless there is a pedagogical need to do so.

If an instructor has determined that there is a pedagogical need to require the use of cameras: (1) the requirement for students to be visible on video must be communicated to students in advance of registration and enrollment, and (2) students who do not have access to cameras and therefore are unable to comply with the requirement must be accommodated. These rules must also be followed if an instructor plans to use a technology that requires students to turn on their cameras during test-taking.

Consideration of Religious Observance

Please bear in mind that due to religious holidays and related religious observances, some students will not be able to attend classes or take examinations. New York State Education Law (Title I, Article 5, Section 224-a) requires that we “make available to each student who is absent from school, because of [their] religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which [they] may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.”

The University of Michigan maintains a helpful [list of religious holidays](#) for the 2023-2024 academic year, which may be useful when planning your activities. Note that students may adhere to religious traditions, or have other religious obligations, not reflected in this list; the list should not be taken as exhaustive. If you have specific questions regarding granting a student’s request to miss class or reschedule an examination on religious grounds, seek guidance from the [Office of Diversity and Equity Programs](#). Students may also be directed to Ronald Jackson, Vice President for Student Affairs, if they have questions about accommodations for religious observance. Faculty who must miss a class session for religious reasons should arrange for another faculty member to cover the class, as discussed above.

Other Important Considerations

- The deadline to submit Final Grades is **Tuesday, May 28, 2024** for the Spring semester.

- Resolution of incomplete (INC) grades will be accepted only if the missing work was made up prior to the deadlines published by the [Office of the Registrar](#). Exceptions to this policy require the approval of the Committee on Course and Standing and must be supported by clear documentation of the reasons for the request. It is your prerogative to establish an earlier deadline to give you time to grade the missing work.
- During the first class meeting, confirm that the name of every student in attendance appears on your roster. Students who claim to be registered but are not on your roster should be referred to the Enrollment Services Center. Please download a roster from [CUNYfirst](#) on the first day of class so that your roster will accurately reflect drops for non-payment and other adjustments prior to the start of classes.

Regardless of whether attendance is a component of your course grades, it is vital to ensure that all students appear on the roster, and to keep an accurate record of student attendance. Faculty are required to submit official “Verification of Enrollment” (VOE) through CUNYfirst indicating those students who have never participated in an “[academically related activity](#)” for your course. Failure to submit accurate attendance records jeopardizes the students’ financial aid and puts the college at risk for federal penalties.

Spring 2024 Verification of Enrollment (VOE)

- VOE Rosters available starting Thursday, February 1
- VOE Rosters due by Wednesday, February 14
- Please remind students that “late adds” will not be accepted after the deadline to add a class (except for acknowledged College error).
- Please mention that all students should read the section entitled “Academic Regulations and Procedures” in the Brooklyn College *Undergraduate Bulletin* or *Graduate Bulletin* for a complete listing of academic regulations of the College. These may be found on the [Bulletins page](#) of the Registrar’s website.
- Video and/or audio recording of class lectures and review sessions without the advanced consent of the instructor is prohibited. Upon written request, the instructor may grant in writing permission for students to record course lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Students with approved accommodations from the [Center for Student Disability Services](#) permitting the recording class meetings must present the accommodation letter to the instructor in advance of recording. On any days when classes will be recorded, the instructor will notify all students in advance. Distribution of recordings without written permission of the instructor is a violation of educational law.
- **Finally, Brooklyn College faculty are expected to check their official college e-mail on a regular basis, and to use their college account for all college business.**

Your assistance in this effort to inform our students of key academic information is greatly appreciated. Thank you and best wishes for a successful spring semester!

cc: President Michelle J. Anderson
Provost and Senior Vice President April Bedford
Vice President Lillian O'Reilly
Vice President Ronald Jackson
Dean Qing Hu
Associate Dean Carol M. Connell
Dean María Scharrón-del Río
Dean Philip Napoli
Dean Peter Tolia
Dean Stephanie Jensen-Moulton
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Sarah Luke, Esq.