

Getting Started with Your Courses: Academic Policies
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
New Faculty Orientation in the College of Arts and Sciences
Fall 2017

Contact

Feel free to contact Abigail Panter, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education (panter@unc.edu, 919-843-7773) if you have any questions. She will be glad to help you.

Key Information

1. Undergraduate Catalog: <http://catalog.unc.edu>.
2. University Policy Memorandums (UPMs) from the Registrar: <http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/policies-procedures/university-policy-memorandums>.
3. The number of contact hours, the course syllabus, and class locations are important and *monitored!*
4. Center for Faculty Excellence: <http://cfe.unc.edu>.

Course Syllabus

- **Your syllabus is due on the first day of class.** What you need to include is outlined here: http://faccoun.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Res2012-11OnSyllabusGuidelines_v1.pdf Let us know if you want to see sample syllabi from UNC-Chapel Hill.
- **You need to upload your syllabus to the central Online Syllabus Management (OSM) system by the first day of class.** The OSM system can be accessed here: <https://osm.oasis.unc.edu/osm> (ONYEN and password required).

Drop/Add Policies

- Students can **add** a course through the 5th day of the semester (week 1).
- Students can **drop** a course through the 10th day of the semester (week 2). For other sessions, the drop days are different (Maymester = 2nd day; Summer School = 3rd day).
- **Old Drop Policy:** Students who started before Fall 2014 are required to see an academic advisor to get a course drop approved after the online registration period (weeks 3 through 8).
- **New Drop Policy:** Students starting after Fall 2014 also need to see an academic advisor to get a course drop approved (weeks 3 through 8). A dropped course for these students will show as a “WC” grade (“withdraw by choice; shows as a “W” on the transcript). Students are limited to 16 total credits with a grade of WC across their entire undergraduate career.
- On very rare occasions, a student can get the instructor’s permission to add a course outside the regular registration period (“late add”). The student should have been attending class regularly and doing all assignments.

Classroom Absence Policies

- There is a new attendance policy that is coming soon.
- There are “excused” and “unexcused” absences. Students and instructors need to work together to accommodate “excused” absences.
- **Final Exams.** Only academic advisors from the Academic Advising Program can provide an official final exam excuse. Here are some reasons students can get an official excuse: Three exams offered in 24 hours; two exams offered at the same time; an exam scheduled on a day of religious observance; student has a serious illness; student has a personal or family emergency.
- If a student gets an official final exam excuse, the make-up is held at a mutually agreeable time. The Undergraduate Testing Center provides a proctored, secure environment for students to make up work. Starting in fall 2017 testing administrations will occur every week and on reading days

during the exam period. Arrangements have to be initiated by the professor (Testing_Center@unc.edu).

- There is a University policy about absence due to religious observance.
- To learn more about class attendance policies, see the relevant section in the Undergraduate Catalog: <http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination>.

Final Exams

- Please consult UPM 8, the Examination System, at <http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/policies-procedures/university-policy-memorandums/upm-8-examination-system>.
- **Final examinations are required for all undergraduate courses (courses numbered 100 to 699).** The final exam schedule is published well in advance, so all students in your class should be aware of that date.
- UPM 8 states:

“Undergraduate courses taught on campus must include a final assessment (i.e., final examination) unless the Provost grants an exception. A traditional final examination is written, is administered at a predetermined time as specified in the final examination schedule, and takes place at a designated location. Only the Provost can grant exceptions to the scheduled time and location of a traditional examination after review and approval of the appropriate department head and the dean. For graduate and professional-level courses, final examinations, which may or may not be written, may be given at the option of the college/school dean and the instructor.”
- **Make sure to include the official final exam date and time on your syllabus.** Check the final exam schedule (twice) to make sure you list it correctly on the syllabus. Please contact your department’s Director of Undergraduate Study (DUS) if you have questions. Students often register for classes by considering the official exam schedule (published at registration time) in advance of the beginning of classes.
- **You have up to 72 hours** after giving the final exam to submit your grades electronically. Please comply with this standard, as grades affect student eligibility (continuation status).

Independent Study

- Undergraduates benefit greatly from close contact with a faculty member and often participate in undergraduate research/creative activities, write honors theses and seek independent study. As a faculty member, you can decide to have undergraduate students working with you at any time.
- Faculty members are limited to **two** independent study students per semester. If you have a large and active research lab (e.g., one receiving federal funding), exceptions may be granted.
- Each learning contract is completed by: (1) the student, (2) the faculty member, and (3) the Director of Undergraduate Studies in your department.
- If you have an independent study student for Fall 2017, the completed learning contract needs to be finalized and submitted by **Monday, August 28, 2017**.
- See <http://registrar.unc.edu/files/2014/02/Independent-Study-Learning-Contract-Sample-EPC.pdf> for the learning contract. Soon this process will be electronic!

Grades

- The Grading System (UPM 24) is explained here: <http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/policies-procedures/university-policy-memorandums/upm-24-the-grading-system>.
- Grades are assigned electronically on your class rolls in ConnectCarolina.
- The Registrar’s website provides additional information about grades, including how to access grade rolls and how to post grades, at: <http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades>.
- Before you can assign grades, you need to complete a short FERPA training module on ConnectCarolina (<http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/uncferpa/ferpa-instructions>).

- Grades at UNC have clear definitions (e.g., C = “A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The C grade states that, while not yet showing unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.”) Please read the descriptions, think about them, discuss them with colleagues, and use rubrics to help you grade assignments during the semester.
- You can assign **permanent** grades (A, B, etc. with plus and minus signs; Note: At UNC, A+ and D- are not recognized). This includes:
 - FA (even with a final exam of A, it’s a fail) = The student did not take the final exam, but even if s/he earned an “A” on it, s/he still would have failed the course.
- You can assign **temporary** grades.
 - IN (incomplete) = The student took the final exam, but did not complete some other requirement. Undergraduates are allowed up to 8 weeks into the next regular term to finish the outstanding assignment. If not completed, the IN grade changes to an “F*” grade (administratively awarded F grade).
 - AB (absent from final exam) = The student did not take the final exam. Do not manage final exam excuses yourself; the academic advisors in Steele Building do that. If the student has an official exam excuse, you are required to give a final exam (generally after you give it to the rest of the class). Undergraduate students are allowed until the next regular semester to take the final exam (provided an official exam excuse has been issued) before the AB grade changes to an “F*” grade (administratively awarded F grade).
 - NG (no grade) = The student is involved in a pending honor court case.
- Students who declare a course on the Pass/Fail option receive a PS (pass) grade when a letter grade of A through D is recorded on the official grade roster, and an F when the course is failed. You will not know who is taking your course Pass/Fail unless the student self-discloses.
- There is a different grading scale for graduate students (H, P, L) and different rules concerning IN and AB grades.

Course Records

- Keep all records concerning grading and the course for at least **two** years. After two years, you can send course documents to be recycled (using the process for recycling confidential information).
- In the case of grade protests, grade records and related materials are very important.
- Transcripts are sealed, never to be changed again, exactly one year after the student’s graduation.

Students Who Need Help

- We have a variety of resources and student services to help students who need academic assistance.
- Academic Progress Reports are distributed at the beginning of the semester and are a good way to let a student know how you think s/he is performing and provide suggestions for improvement.
- If you find that a student is not attending your class consistently or is showing signs of unusual or troubling behavior either inside or outside of the classroom, contact the Office of the Dean of Students (dos@unc.edu). They will reach out to the student and consult their other campus partners as needed (e.g., Counseling and Psychological Services [CAPS]; Department of Public Safety). The Dean of Students is the central place for monitoring student non-academic behavior. You also may want to let your department chair and Dean Panter (panter@unc.edu) know.
- Personal safety sessions are conducted at the beginning of each semester for those who want to attend or brush up on emergency procedures related to teaching, academic work with students, and general awareness being on campus. You should attend in fall 2017.

Definitions

- **Academic Advising Program.** Located in Steele Building and some other locations on campus (Hardin Hall, Loudermilk Center for Excellence), full-time academic advisors provide assistance to students in the General College and throughout the four-year undergraduate span; they verify that all degree requirements are met. Academic departments provide advising – mainly concerning major requirements and graduate school and/or career options – to juniors and seniors.
- **Census Date.** A “snapshot” is taken of all registration and matriculated students after the 10th day of the semester. The census is the basis for all official University reporting and funding from the UNC General Administration. Any student registered for a course after the census date is not counted.
- **General College.** The administrative “home” for ALL first- and second-year students at the University. It is part of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- **General Education Curriculum (“Gen Ed”).** This phrase refers to a set of requirements that reflect what the faculty believe all Carolina graduates should know and be able to do for their liberal arts education. A major is often referred to as *study in depth*.
 - All undergraduates are subject to a set of Gen Ed requirements known as the “Making Connections” curriculum, implemented in 2006.
 - We are currently revising the general education curriculum and hope to implement the new curriculum in Fall 2019.
- **Professional Schools.** They are: Kenan-Flagler School of Business, Dentistry, Education, Government, Information and Library Science, Media and Journalism, Medicine, Nursing, Eshelman School of Pharmacy, and the Gillings School of Global Public Health.
- **Student Affairs.** Within the auspices of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, this office is where you can receive assistance in disciplinary matters from the Dean of Students. Judicial Programs (Code of Student Conduct) are also housed in Student Affairs.
- **Tar Heel Tracker.** Undergraduates have access to Tar Heel Tracker, an electronic advising tool that reveals which Gen Ed and major requirements have been satisfied and which still need to be fulfilled. Directors of Undergraduate Studies in each unit are familiar with this program. Tar Heel Tracker is not completely accurate, so degree requirements must be verified with the Academic Advising Program.