Handbook for Rhetoric Instructors

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**QUICK REFERENCE: IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Situation** | **Call or Email** | **At** |
|  Acceptable\* sub neededfor a planned absence from class (e.g. conference).\*Rhetoric listserv or UI instructors who have completed PDP | The Rhetoric listserv | Rhet-instructors@list.uiowa.edu |
| Unexpected absence withoutarranged sub |  Kris Bevelacqua and Barb Pooley\* Email Kris and CC Barb and your Teaching Mentor. No exceptions. | kristine-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu barbara-pooley@uiowa.edu  319-335-0178 |
| Need administrative help | Barbara Pooley | barbara-pooley@uiowa.edu  319-335-2684 |
| Student concerns | Cinda Coggins Mosher, Interim DEO |  sarah-coggins@uiowa.edu 319-335-0178 |
| Suspected plagiarism | Consult Teaching Mentor and, if approved, submit report to CLAS | <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-academic-fraud>  |
| Need something beyond the scope of this list | Your Teaching Mentor, then Cinda Coggins Mosher | sarah-coggins@uiowa.edu |



## Rhetoric Courses & Curriculum

### Our Role in the University Curriculum

Rhetoric is a foundational course in the General Education curriculum. It prepares students for engaged participation in university life through practice in critical thinking, reading, research, writing, listening, and speaking skills that future courses will build on, regardless of major. The same skills that prepare students for academic life also prepare them for adult civic life in a democracy. Rhetoric courses aim to foster development of receptive and assertive literacy skills, through practice in interpreting and composing spoken and written texts. Because written and spoken language are central to academic and professional life, Rhetoric courses emphasize development of these verbal literacy skills while acknowledging the important rhetorical uses of multiple media, often in combination with writing and speaking.

The Rhetoric curriculum presumes that consequential questions of public import generate diverse responses. Our major assignments ask students to the purposes that motivate diverse perspectives, the media used to convey them, the occasions on which they take place, and the values they appeal to. After practicing these receptive skills, students craft their own thoughtful and informed responses to important public controversies, taking into account the socio-cultural contexts in which they occur and the knowledge, interests, and concerns of an intended audience.

### Courses & Characteristics

Most entering students take RHET 1030, the four-semester credit hour (s.c.h.) course, but the department offers other versions of the course, Rhetoric 1060 (Speaking and Reading) and Rhetoric 1040 (Writing and Reading) for students who have completed partial requirements.

**RHET 1030**

**Rhetoric (4 sch)**

* The standard General Education Rhetoric course includes college-level reading, writing, speaking and listening in its curriculum.
* Requires two major writing assignments and two major speaking assignments.

**RHET 1040**

**Writing and Reading (3 s.c.h.)**

* A General Education Rhetoric course for students who have fulfilled the public speaking requirement but have not yet completed a college-level course in writing.
* Requires three major writing assignments.

**RHET 1060**

**Speaking and Reading (3 s.c.h.)**

* A General Education Rhetoric course for students who have fulfilled all college-level writing requirements but have not yet completed a college-level course in public speaking.
* Requires three major speaking assignments.

**Honors:** The Department Executive Officer [DEO = Chair] may designate some RHET:1030 sections as "Honors," with enrollment limited to students in the Honors program.

**Courses in Common:** Courses in Common is a program that allows first-year students to enroll in a shared set of courses with the same group of classmates in order to facilitate strong social and intellectual bonds among students. Some CIC cohorts are students who have declared majors in a specific field, e.g., Business or Engineering. For more information on CIC, please see their flyer (https://advisingcenter.uiowa.edu/sites/advisingcenter.uiowa.edu/files/2021-05/CIC%20Handout.pdf) and their groupings of common courses (https://myui.uiowa.edu/my-ui/courses/one-click-courses.page?showListing=&oneClickTypeNaturalKey=COURSES\_IN\_COMMON).

**Special Topics**: Some Rhetoric sections are designated as special topics courses, focusing on conversations in STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), law, business, social sciences, or health. Special topics courses are normally proposed and taught by faculty members or advanced graduate instructors.

**Rhetoric Minor:** Rhetoric also offers a Minor, Minor Courses are generally taught by faculty members on a rotating basis: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/rhetoric-minor>

## Curriculum Sequence

Rhetoric is the art of persuasion within social and material contexts. A Rhetorical perspective seeks to understand and use the available means and mechanisms of persuasion in particular times and places, and among particular participants. In its academic context, Rhetoric is foundational to the critical thinking necessary in any academic discipline or profession. Rhetoric courses also apply to the critical thinking demands of everyday life beyond the academy, helping students develop media awareness, participate in volunteerism, activism, and other forms of civic engagement, refine decision-making skills, conduct thoughtful relationships, make scientific choices, and network for a variety of purposes). As an example, examination of consumer culture in a Rhetoric course might illuminate how our understanding of adolescent identity is informed by advertising for products and experiences (e.g., music, clothing, adventure) that become representative of teens and teen culture.

We begin with the premise that all utterances and acts can be considered rhetorically: some texts are obviously persuasive (an ad, blog, editorial, or political speech); others are less obviously argumentative but just as available for rhetorical analysis (research reports, personal essays, architectural spaces, fashion designs, dietary guidelines, Tweets, Facebook pictures, comedy routines, music). In analyzing such rhetorical “texts,” we ask students to identify such elements of the situation as the following:

* *rhetor* (e.g., writer, speaker, designer, artist)
* *audience* (e.g., readers, listeners, viewers)
* *message* (e.g., (e.g., “buy this,” “do that,” “think this way,” “consider this”)
* *medium* (e.g., written or spoken language, images, film, public space, paint and canvas, music)

*context* (the social and material situation in which the message is composed, conveyed, received, interpreted)

*appeals* (efforts to persuade through reason, emotion, morality, etc.)

Assignments asking students to practice the skills of describing and analyzing rhetorical acts call attention to relationships among *what* is communicated, *how*, to *whom, when, where* and *why* it is communicated. These assignments and related activities help students think about how form (e.g., argumentative structure, medium, imagery, language choices) creates meaning.

Rhetoric emphasizes to students the need to withhold judgment and delay committing to a position until they have understood, analyzed, and evaluated potential alternatives. Responsible research plays a key role in our instruction and is taught through multiple means. Beyond learning to use resources available through the University of Iowa Libraries, research activities in Rhetoric courses may include methodologies such as observation, experimentation, interviews and surveys, and ethnographic description.

Rhetoric teaches information literacy skills that help students evaluate the quality and relevance of all information they encounter. Librarians sometimes collaborate with instructors to develop effective research assignments, locate resources to advance learning objectives, and discuss plans for information literacy integration. University Libraries has developed a Subject Guide for Rhetoric Instructors (<http://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/rhetoricinstructors>) which features exercises designed to help instructors to use, adapt, and integrate library resources into their lessons and assignments. Instructors interested in collaborating with librarians can submit a collaboration request form provided on the subject guide, optimally in the first weeks of the semester so that the information literacy instruction can be integrated throughout the semester. The library also has a Rhetoric Subject Guide for students as they learn about and conduct research. Instructors are encouraged to make the Rhetoric Subject Guide link (<http://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/rhetoric>) available to their students from course web pages and syllabi.

Rhetoric is essentially a skills course, not a content course. Rhetoric courses focus on teaching students *how* to think, not *what* to think. Once students have done their homework and learned about the breadth and depth of conversations that interest them, they are well-positioned to contribute to those discussions deliberately, persuasively, and with multiple interests in mind.

## Process Pedagogy

Throughout the semester, instructors guide students through an extended and layered process of preparation, consultation, collaboration, revision and reflection to improve the clarity and effectiveness of their reading, writing and speaking. The Rhetoric curriculum engages process pedagogy by sequencing assignments to draw students’ attention to their own thought processes as they describe, analyze, interpret, and argue in oral and written forms.

Because students may have little prior experience with the academic composition process, Rhetoric classes feature writing and speaking assignments that call attention to steps or stages in the process—e.g., brainstorming (invention) activities; drafting or rehearsal sessions; conferences, workshops and other feedback opportunities; debriefings and reflections.

Rhetoric classes also call attention to the *process* of critical thinking. The major assignments guide students through a thinking process by interrupting the impulse to argue without fully understanding the question. The general purpose of the assignment sequence is make the critical thinking process deliberate by examining and describing controversies and carefully considering what is at stake before offering one’s own argument. The process approach to composition foregrounds students’ critical thinking processes by calling attention to their own and their classmates’ written or spoken thought through multiple iterations. Rhetoric classes therefore feature a number of formal workshopping and consultation experiences during class time.

Rhetoric 1030 and 1060 courses also give students academic experiences that help them gain confidence and develop skill as public speakers. The Writing Center (https://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/) offers students tutorial help with all stages of the writing and speaking process, through enrollment in weekly sessions, appointments, or on-line responses to student writing.

## Digital Rhetoric and Technology in the Classroom

Because the Rhetoric classroom attends closely to the forms, modes, and media of communication, the Rhetoric Department is a site where students both consider and craft Rhetoric across media. Some Rhetoric classes, for instance, ask students to reflect on the “digital age” by calling attention to its interpenetration with more traditional media or by asking how current communication technologies affect our understanding of Marshall McLuen’s claim that “the medium is the message.” Asking students to compare the forms and functions of ancient and “smart” tablets or to reflect on their own multimodal participation in public and private life are examples of the department’s rhetorical approach to communication technology.

The Rhetoric classroom supports sustained, critical attention to technologies. By considering communication in such terms as medium, mode, context, and audience, Rhetoric classes invite students to contemplate how technologies shape what “literacy” means and how it functions over time and across cultures.

## Pedagogical Goals and Learning Outcomes for Rhetoric

At the end of the course, students should be able to do the following:

**Gain and Employ Rhetorical Understanding**

* Recognize and employ an array of rhetorical concepts and persuasive strategies.
* Articulate rhetorical purposes.
* Analyze and accommodate the needs of different audiences.
* Craft and deliver oral and written texts appropriate to different occasions and rhetorical situations.

**Engage in Critical Thinking, Reading, Writing, and Information Literacy**

* Use writing and reading for inquiry and communication
* Understand and complete Rhetoric writing and speaking assignments as a series of tasks that may include locating, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources.
* Organize and document research.
* Use syntax, diction, punctuation spelling appropriate to academic writing and speaking.

**Compose in multiple modes and media**

* Compose multiple drafts to revise and refine oral and written communication.
* Use multiple strategies to discover stories or arguments, revise, edit, proofread, and deliver written and spoken compositions.
* Understand writing and speaking as social activities.
* Thoughtfully critique their own and others' written and spoken work.
* Develop credible research-based support for arguments.
* Deliver timed speeches and respond to audience questions.
* Prepare and use effective visual or audial aids to enhance or extend written and spoken messages.

## Designing Your Course

### Essential Academic and Civic Literacy Skills: Reasoning, Inquiring, Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking

Students come to Rhetoric variously prepared for the language demands of university life. Our job as Rhetoric instructors is to help our students understand these demands and develop the skills they need to meet them. The main responsibility in designing a course is to guide the development of students’ cognitive skills (inquiring, reasoning, reflecting) in concert with the communication skills, both receptive (reading, listening) and assertive (writing, speaking), required for college success and responsible citizenship.

### Assignments: Informal and Major Skills Practice

Through activities and assignments, Rhetoric teachers design “informal” (or low stakes) and “major” (higher stakes) opportunities for students to practice and apply essential academic literacy skills. In designing exercises for your classes, you should begin by assessing the academic literacy skills your students bring with them at the start of the semester. Accordingly, informal class activities in the first week or two might take the form of getting-to-know-you exercises, questionnaires, interviews, and autobiographical as well as analytical assignments. Once you have a general sense of your students’ strengths and weaknesses in reading, writing, listening, speaking, inquiring, and reasoning in relatively informal settings, you can begin designing formal assignments to guide and test the development of those skills in isolation and in combination. As the semester progresses, exercises and assignments should build one upon another, asking students to practice familiar skills with increasing rigor, adding new skills to their repertoire, or practicing both new and familiar skills in increasingly complex combinations.

You should share your assessments with students in a timely fashion, offering frequent feedback to help them understand how to invest their time and effort to improve their critical reading, thinking, writing, and speaking skills as they complete the work for the course.

### Major Assignments

The backbone of the Rhetoric class consists of the four major assignments (two essays and two speeches) in the 1030 course. In 1040, this “backbone” is a series of three major writing assignments, and in 1060 it is a series of three major speaking assignments. These assignments are important assessment points for students and teachers, as student performance on these relatively “high stakes” assignments count at least 60% toward final grades in the course. Instructors should regard students’ performances on these assignments as demonstrations of their best efforts and as indicators of skills that require further explanation and practice.

### Informal Assignments

All Rhetoric courses also feature numerous small-scale writing and speaking assignments that serve as stepping stones toward the completion of major assignments. These may include such activities as brainstorming sessions, reading discussions, reading responses, impromptu speeches, small group exercises, and workshops. Informal assignments tend to be exploratory and improvised rather than polished and formal, and instructors should evaluate students’ performances on them in such terms as content development, experimentation and discovery, and potential for further development. Although they may be included in calculation of final grades, they should not collectively weigh more heavily than any one of the major assignments.

Instructors should observe the following rules when designing and presenting major assignments:

1. Students receive a **written, detailed assignment sheet** (hard copy or electronic).
2. All student work (papers and presentations) must undergo *more than one revision*,
3. All Rhetoric classes conduct **in-class, guided workshops for composing the major assignments**, in which students give and receive written feedback on their paper and speech drafts.
4. At least one major assignment must explicitly involve research.
5. Students must pass all major assignments to earn a passing grade in the class.

## ICON Powered by CANVAS

ICON (powered by CANVAS) is a course management system offered by the University of Iowa with a full range of customizable options, which can enhance your Rhetoric teaching. ICON features most relevant to Rhetoric instructors include the following:

* An area for you to post course materials.
* Secure and private discussion boards.
* A "drop box" for electronic submission of assignments.
* Group email to all members of the class.
* A constantly visible gradebook that allows you to set weights for categories and track holistic evaluation measures (check/check plus).

Support and training for ICON are available through ITS. Go to [icon.uiowa.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CSteve%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CFLZRH0XG%5Cicon.uiowa.edu) to log in (and then choose the Instructors tab for training and support) and go to <https://its.uiowa.edu/support/article/104903> to find links for training sessions, online support, and contacts.

CLAS Policy states that all instructors must post their syllabi to ICON.

## Textbooks

**Required: Texts to Help you Teach College-Level Reading**

Every Rhetoric class uses non-fiction texts to support the reading component of the course. Instructors in their first semester of teaching Rhetoric choose reading texts from an annually updated list of approved “readers” (anthologies of essays) and trade books. **Readers, articles, trade books, and visual materials appropriate for Rhetoric are nonfiction print and visual texts, featuring investigative journalism, academic deliberation, political advocacy, and various kinds of argumentation.**

The reading text options open to first-semester Rhetoric instructors (as well as to more experienced instructors), as delineated on the Book Order Form, <https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/instructors/book-order-forms>, include:

* one reader from the approved textbook list
* one reader plus a trade book from the approved list
* two (or in rare cases three) trade books from the approved list

Graduate instructors who have successfully completed the Professional Development Program [PDP] and at least one semester of Rhetoric teaching may incorporate other texts for analysis. Experienced TAs who want to order reading materials for students to purchase outside the approved list must petition their TM in advance of the textbook order due date. The petition process entails filling out a Textbook Application form (available from the department’s webpage, or from Kris) and providing the TM with copies of the books or course pack readings.

**Optional:**.

In addition to reading texts, instructors may choose to use “rhetorics,” “style guides,” or “handbooks” to help them teach college-level thinking, speaking, and writing skills. First-semester Rhetoric teachers may select these from the list of departmentally approved optional texts. After their first semester of teaching, instructors may petition to use other such texts not included on the list. (Note that along with the featured readings readers often contain instructional material of this sort.) Online sites such as the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) offer excellent resources as well at no cost.

Instructors also frequently use supplementary materials that support critical engagement with written texts. These may include pictures, graphs and charts, podcasts, interviews, videos, blogposts, film clips, editorials, etc.

## Syllabi

### Departmental Syllabus

Rhetoric, as a course in the General Education (GE) Program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), must adhere to syllabus requirements of the College and the University as well as the Rhetoric Department. CLAS requires all teachers to present and discuss an electronic or hard copy syllabus on the first day of class, informing students of the institutional rules and objectives that govern the course in general and the particular rules and objectives that distinguish individual sections of the course. The Rhetoric Department provides a [*Departmental Syllabus*](http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/instructors/syllabus-templates) containing universally required syllabus information (<http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/instructors/syllabus-templates>). The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requires the following to be included in all syllabi: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-syllabus-insert>. All instructors should familiarize themselves with the information in these documents before classes start and should then share it with their students on the first day of class. **Instructors should post a copy of their syllabi, including the common syllabus information, on their class ICON sites.**

### Section Syllabus Template

Rhetoric instructors should use the departmental template (available at [http//:clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/for-instructors/sample-syllabus](file:///%5C%5Chome.iowa.uiowa.edu%5Cbneyland%5CDocuments%5CSyllabi%20and%20Handbook%20Templates%5CFor%20AY%202015-16%5Chttp%5C%3Aclas.uiowa.edu%5Crhetoric%5Cfor-instructors%5Csample-syllabus)) to design syllabi for their own sections; these should include a class policy statement and a calendar informing students of scheduled class activities and due dates for assignments. Instructors must release a draft of this calendar to their students at the start of semester. While instructors may revise the calendar as events unfold throughout the semester, the **due dates announced for all major assignments** are not changeable.

When designing a course calendar, instructors should try to distribute the major assignments throughout the semester rather than crowding them all into the final half of the semester. Note that according to Department policy at least one major assignment must be completed and **returned to students, with feedback**, **by midterm.**

**Process for approving and posting Rhetoric syllabi:**

* Section syllabi must be approved by a Teaching Mentor and/or the DEO before they are released to students or posted on ICON.
* All graduate instructors must send a draft of the section syllabus to their Teaching Mentor by the Friday before the start of the semester.
* All instructors must send an **approved** final copy of the section syllabus to their Teaching Mentor (in the case of graduate instructors) and to Kris Bevelacqua on or before the Friday of the first week of class. The College requires us to have these on file.
* **Approved** syllabi must be posted to ICON before the start of classes.

## Responding to And Evaluating Student Work

### Responding to Student Work

Instructor responses to student work take different forms and serve different purposes. Formative feedback, often in the form of marginal comments or an endnote, supports a student’s work in-process and helps them further develop and improve their work on the assignment before the final version is due. Summative feedback, by contrast, responds to a completed assignment––generally along with a grade––usually in the form of marginal/end comments, a rubric, or some combination thereof. Summative feedback serves an evaluative function, helping students understand their grades, recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their work, and improve skills in future assignments.

Instructors often opt to offer more extensive feedback early on in the process, when the student can make immediate use of it, and to limit feedback on final drafts and presentations to a rubric or brief endnote that accompanies the grade. Frontloading feedback emphasizes student learning in concert with evaluation.

### Evaluating and Grading

Instructors employ a range of methods for evaluating and grading student work. Teaching Mentors and fellow instructors can offer useful models of these methods. Most Rhetoric teachers grade individual assignments throughout the semester, using points, letter grades, or percentages. Other teachers favor a holistic or portfolio method, periodically evaluating students’ overall performances. Many teachers use some combination of these approaches. Most teachers develop rubrics or descriptors that establish expectations and evaluative criteria for assignments and other coursework. ICON has a gradebook option that many Rhetoric teachers find useful.

### Student Portfolios

In the Professional Development Program (PDP), faculty leaders will collect sample portfolios from each PDP participant that include copies of student work demonstrating forms of feedback from peers and the instructor along with evidence of students’ substantive revision. These portfolios are the focus of a required midterm meeting and/or letter in which mentors help graduate instructors and new faculty assess and adjust their pedagogies, feedback methods, and teaching strategies for the second half of the semester. Many instructors, after they complete PDP, continue requiring all students to keep portfolios of their class work to chart their progress over the course of the semester. Teaching Mentors in subsequent semesters may ask for such portfolios as well.

Regardless of the grading system, no student should be surprised by their final grade, and all students must receive a midterm grade on at least one assignment, with feedback, at midterm.

### Midterm and Final Grades

Midterm and final grades are based primarily on the major assignments (at least 60% of the grade if you use percentages). Since Rhetoric is a performance course, most teachers also evaluate students’ classroom participation as part of their overall performance in the class. When instructors include participation, their syllabi must define specify criteria for evaluating it; participation typically accounts for no more than 10-15%, and never counts more than 20% toward the final grade.

At midterm, all students must receive a midterm grade estimate in writing or on ICON. All midterm grades below a C- must be reported to the Registrar via MAUI. The department administrators will send an email reminding all instructors of the time and method for submitting these reports. ***Before*** *releasing any grades to students or entering low grades on MAUI*, graduate instructors must review their class grade distributions with their Teaching Mentors. For new instructors, this process is part of the midterm folder review meeting, which offers an opportunity for discussion, reflection, and adjustments to the grading approach. Students who are not doing well should receive instructor guidance for improved performance in the second half of semester. All instructors should have returned at least one major assignment (and preferably two) by midterm, **complete with feedback and assessment guidance**.

At the end of the semester, Teaching Mentors again review new and experienced graduate instructors’ grade distributions. Once instructors have calculated their students’ final grades, they must enter and save them on MAUI; graduate instructors should then inform their Teaching Mentors that the grades are ready for review. Grades approved by the Teaching Mentor are submitted to the DEO on MAUI. The DEO then reviews all departmental grades before they are released to students on MyUI/MAUI.

**Instructors should never release grades to students or make promises about grades until the grades have been reviewed and approved.**

### Grade Distributions

Final grades are determined on the University’s A-F grade scale, with A as the highest possible grade. There is no final examination in this course.

All instructors must include on their syllabus one or other of the below statements:

“Grades are calculated using the UI computational scheme that assigns letter grades according to an agreed university-wide formula. Results will NOT be rounded up arithmetically. Hence, for example, 79.99 is a C+ not a B-.” **OR**

“Grades are calculated using the UI computational scheme that assigns letter grades according to an agreed university-wide formula. If a grade is in an arithmetical grey zone (for example, 79.50 which would be rounded up arithmetically to 80) then I will use the arithmetical rules for rounding up: For example, 79.49 would remain at C+ but 79.50 would round up to B-).”

For more information on CLAS grading guidelines and practices, see

<http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-grading-system-and-distribution>

*NOTE*: Instructors may periodically receive forms from other University offices asking them to evaluate the performance of particular students in their classes. As participants in various university programs, including Athletics, these students receive extra monitoring and support through the Academic Advising Center. The information provided by instructors is submitted only to university officials, who use it to enable student success, and it is protected by FERPA.

### Participation & Late Work

Any student whose total absences from class exceed three weeks of course meetings (9 hours for 1040 and 1060 or 12 hours for 1030) may be failed by the instructor for the whole course.

Because Rhetoric is a performance-based course that emphasizes active participation, absences can have a negative effect on a student’s grade. Participation isn’t possible if the student doesn’t show up––but attendance alone does not denote active student engagement. Because "active participation" can be interpreted in different ways, instructors should clearly explain in their syllabi what it means in their sections.

"No late work, no exceptions" is not an acceptable policy in the Rhetoric Department. CLAS requires that we accommodate excused absences, which in Rhetoric generally means allowing students to make up a reasonable amount of work without penalty if circumstances allow.

Excused absences are caused by such unavoidable circumstances as illness, family emergencies, mandatory religious obligations, or authorized University activities. Absences that can be predicted (university activities, religious obligations) should be officially documented in advance. For unpredictable absences, such as those caused by accidents, illness or other crises, teachers may ask students to complete the “Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class” form available from Student Health Services and the Registration Center. For further information, see <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-student-absences>

CLAS also directs teachers to excuse another sort of absence: “While students remain responsible for learning class material and completion of course requirements, faculty should respect reasonable decisions by students, based on their exercise of their own intellectual freedom, to not attend part or all of a particular class session” (UI Operations Manual III.15.2f and at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/professional-policies-faculty-responsibilities-professional-ethics-academic-responsibility>). If a student decides to be absent for such reasons, the teacher may (but need not) require the student to complete an alternative assignment or activity.

Students sometimes ask to skip an evening Rhetoric section to attend a review or take a test for another class, not realizing that these are not excused absences. Scheduled classes always take precedence over exams administered outside of class time, so teachers who schedule such out-of-class exams must offer students “reasonable options without penalty.” For details, see the CLAS policy on night exams at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-examination-policies>.

### Incompletes

In extremely rare cases, a grade of "I" or Incomplete may be given to a student with preapproval from the DEO. An Incomplete is considered only if 1) the unfinished portion of the student's work is small, 2) the rest of the work is satisfactory, and 3) the reason for not finishing is legitimate and documented (e.g., serious illness). Graduate instructors must consult their Teaching Mentor, who then consults the DEO, to discuss this grade option. Typically, instructors and students must collaboratively arrange and report a new due date (usually within two weeks of the end of semester) by which the Incomplete work must be turned in. Any "I" automatically becomes an F if the instructor does not change it (via the usual MAUI procedure) by the end of the next full semester. See the CLAS Handbook at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/grading-system>.)

## Policies and Procedures

### Administrative Home

Rhetoric is a department within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and is governed by their policies. Learn more at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty>.

### Drop-in Hours (Formerly Office Hours)

All instructors are required to hold three office hours per week in a designated departmental office or via Zoom.

* Instructors must post office hours on syllabi and on or outside their office doors each semester and be in their office or in a virtual meeting room, available for student drop-ins.
* Instructors must also indicate availability for meetings “by appointment” for students whose schedules conflict with designated office hours.

### Course Registration

 If a student shows up for class but is NOT registered for the class, the instructor should have the student contact their academic advisor for help. At no time should instructors allow more than 20 students to enroll in their Gen Ed Rhetoric classes.

### Absences from Teaching

According to the Operations Manual, instructors must "meet classes as scheduled and, when circumstances prevent this, they must arrange equivalent alternative instruction." Please refer to section III-15.1 of the Operations Manual at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/professional-policies-faculty-responsibilities-professional-ethics-academic-responsibility>

* "As scheduled" means at the assigned time and place for every session.
* Exceptions may be made for visits to the library or other campus facilities for specific course purposes. Occasional class meetings via Zoom, when attendance in person is not possible in on-campus courses, are permitted with DEO approval.
* Instructors may not cancel class meetings for conferences with individuals or groups.

When instructors know in advance that they will be missing class, they must:

* Notify the main office (Kris), the DEO (Cinda), and—in the case of graduate instructors-- the Teaching Mentor.
* Arrange for an approved sub (who has taken or is taking PDP) as quickly as possible by emailing the rhet-instructors listserv or obtaining the help of someone who has previously taken PDP. Often, instructors who know they will need subs at a scheduled time (e.g., to attend conferences) can arrange with other instructors in advance to swap sections.

Graduate employees who have questions about maternity leave or other long-term leave issues should consult the graduate employee contract at the COGS website (cogs.org) and be in touch with the main office, DEO, and the Teaching Mentor as soon as possible.

When instructors must miss class unexpectedly, they must notify the Department Office (Kris) and make a "good faith" effort to arrange for an approved substitute.

* Email or call Kris ASAP (kristine-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu and CC Barb (barbara-pooley@uiowa.edu) on the email.
* Email the rhet-instructors listserv requesting a sub. Be sure to include the date, time, and meeting place of your class and provide a description of the class plan.
* While instructors often offer incentives for substituting (baked goods, etc.), instructors aren't expected to compensate other people for covering their classes.

When instructors unexpectedly have to miss class and have not been able to arrange for a sub, they should call 319-335-0178 and then email Kris and cc Barb and (in the case of graduate instructors) the Teaching Mentor. No exceptions.

kristine-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu

barbara-pooley@uiowa.edu

These are contractual obligations. Unreported absences may result in financial or other penalties, up to and including withholding of pay and loss of position.

FERPA (<https://registrar.uiowa.edu/ferpa>)

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) grants students certain rights and places certain obligations on the University. The most important thing to remember is that student records are highly confidential. To preserve confidentiality, instructors should observe the following rules:

* Never post grades in a public place, even with names removed.
* Never leave student work in halls, the mailroom, or the Dept. office.
* Never discuss a student's performance with anyone who is not authorized: parent, roommate, classmate, etc. When parents contact instructors, instructors should direct them to the DEO, whom they must notify immediately, and politely decline to discuss the matter. Graduate instructors may confidentially discuss these matters with their Teaching Mentors or other Department or University officials when they need help.] Instructors should be careful to observe the confidentiality rule when holding office hours with the door open or with another person present in the same room.

Instructors should not talk about students and grades publicly. Thanks to the magic of Google, it is easy for students to find out if instructors have mentioned their performance on Facebook, for example. Instructors should consider ways to protect their own and their students’ privacy and should never use names or identifying information. Be discreet.

The only exception to the rule is that instructors may share confidential information with university officers who need it to perform their jobs (e.g., academic advisers or Teaching Mentors).

Student folders are also confidential. If instructors do not return student folders, papers, or other graded assignments at the end of the semester, the College requires them to keep these materials for the next full semester and maintain grade records for five years (ICON makes this less daunting).

### FERPA Online Training

To ensure the University of Iowa community is in compliance with FERPA regulations, instructors are required to complete the online FERPA training module within the first two months of hire (<https://provost.uiowa.edu/files/provost.uiowa.edu/files/ferpa.pdf>). After completing the training, they must attest to an Annual Certification Notice in subsequent years.

### Sexual Harassment Prevention Education (SHPE)

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold the University’s mission by contributing to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI [Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator](http://osmrc.uiowa.edu/) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

The University of Iowa is committed to the creation of a positive work environment for all. Toward this goal and per the University of Iowa’s Policy on Sexual Harassment (<http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/ii/04.htm>), instructors are required to successfully complete an approved sexual harassment prevention education course during the first six months of employment and then at least every three years thereafter. They may satisfy this requirement by completing an approved instructor-led or online course. Registration for these courses is through UI Employee Self Service (<https://login.uiowa.edu/uip/login.page?service=https://hris.uiowa.edu/portal/>). Further information about the education requirement and login instructions is available at: <http://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod/sexual-harassment-prevention-education-resources-0>.

### SHPE and Reports of Assault

#### **Responding to Student Disclosures about Sexual Assault**

Students may disclose to Rhetoric instructors information about their experiences or observations of sexual harassment or assault. Because Rhetoric instructors are not acting in the capacity of counselors or therapists, they must heed important protocols and guidelines. Before responding to such disclosures, instructors should be mindful that:

* + College students often avoid revealing their experiences of sexual assault to their parents, which means that they may lack support during these crises.
	+ Survivors are far less likely to share their experiences with others if they feel the first person they contacted failed to support them. Accordingly, an instructor’s response to a student disclosure could have a significant impact.
	+ Faculty and graduate instructors are **not** mandatory reporters unless they have administrative responsibilities as a departmental executive officer, a departmental director or coordinator of undergraduate or graduate studies, or a director or coordinator of any departmental, collegiate, or university off-campus academic program.
	+ Mandatory reporters according to the list above are obligated to 1) inform the student of the services available through the Rape Victim Advocacy Program 2) refer the student to the Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator (OSMRC) 3) notify OSMRC of the disclosure within two business days. **Instructors who meet the criteria should make their students aware of their mandatory reporter status at the beginning of the semester.**
	+ Most disclosures reportedly occur in the instructor’s office; many occur via email, and some occur in a writing response or other class assignment. Each of these should be handled differently. The suggestions below do not apply to every situation, and instructors should use them only as far as they are comfortable or able to.

#### **Suggestions for Receiving Student Disclosures**

1. For in-person disclosures, listen carefully, using active listening techniques such as paraphrasing what the person said, maintaining eye contact, nodding etc.
2. When the student has finished talking, or conveys a disclosure in an email, respond with a statement of support such as, “I’m glad you talked to me about this, and I want to make sure you are getting the help you need.”
3. Instructors might ask the student if they are getting help from their family, friends, or a therapist, and if they have gone to the police or the hospital following a sexual assault. When asking questions, however, it is important to gauge the student’s reaction and not pressure them to reveal something they do not wish to.
4. Have ready a list of campus resources for student mental health as well as survivor advocacy and support (see attached list at the end of this packet).
5. For disclosures in an assignment, consider following up with an email connecting the student to campus resources.

### Equal Opportunity and Diversity

The Department shares the University's belief that the diversity in our classes enhances the quality of education. The Rhetoric course offers students an opportunity to learn with diverse peers, and we are especially mindful to establish for first-year students the importance of respect and open-mindedness in the college classroom.

The Rhetoric classroom is a particularly important site for engaging students in practices of intellectual exchange and mutual respect, and often involves open discussion about politics, gender, race, sexuality, ability, religion, class, citizenship and other categories of identity and difference.

We aim for our classrooms to remain spaces where students feel comfortable exploring ideas and doing their best work. We strive to sustain a classroom environment where discrimination and harassment do not occur. Because Rhetoric assignments require students to write and speak, Rhetoric instructors must be sensitive and responsive to students’ different language backgrounds as these have been shaped by ability, history with the English language, cultural values, etc. Finding ways to enhance students’ abilities to write and speak standard English, without devaluing other modes of expression, is a challenging and important part of Rhetoric pedagogy.

Formal policies governing diversity are built into the syllabus template, and more information is available at <http://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod/>. Teaching Mentors, PDP co-leaders, or the DEO (faculty) are all resources to instructors with concerns about fostering an inclusive classroom. The Teaching Commons also includes materials about teaching about and with diversity in the Rhetoric classroom.

### Relationships with Students

Instructors should not date or discuss dating with their students while the students are enrolled in their classes (and preferably, instructors should not date them at all). Dating students creates conflicts of interest and potential abuses of power. *Any* romantic and/or sexual relationship between an instructor and a student in an instructional context is *prohibited* at the University of Iowa, as the Operations Manual states (<http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/ii/05.htm>). Additional information can be found in the training module you are required to complete as an employee of the University of Iowa.

### Course Evaluations

Mandatory student evaluations at the end of the course are administered electronically by central administration. Instructors also have the *option* of giving students an opportunity to write a midterm evaluation of a course, using the Rhetoric Department’s customized prompts. Instructors who use midterm assessments should assure students that these are optional and ask them to provide their feedback anonymously (CLAS policy: Optional Mid-term Evaluations at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-student-evaluation-teaching>).

Some instructors have a mid-term or earlier evaluation for their own use and may devise their own evaluation instruments or may work with EES [Exam and Evaluation Services] to design them. Instructors who choose to do such evaluations should assure students that these evaluations are optional and must develop ways to preserve the anonymity of their responses. Final, required classroom assessments are conducted on-line, with evaluation forms typically released to students on ICON during the last two weeks of semester. On ICON instructors can monitor how many students have completed the evaluation before the end of the semester, and they can have the system send an anonymous reminder to those who have not done so. Instructors cannot see the students’ evaluations until students’ final grades have been published by the Registrar. Instructors must leave the room if they give students time in class to fill them out.

### Research Studies

A researcher must receive Departmental permission before approaching teachers about using a Rhetoric class in a study. The DEO reviews initial requests to ensure that the project is relevant to the Department, does not demand excessive time, and allows students to give informed consent. Participation by instructors and students is always voluntary.

Instructors who want to conduct research or collect data in the Rhetoric Department should talk to their Teaching Mentors (in the case of graduate instructors) and the DEO. All classroom researchers must obtain the appropriate Human Subjects Research approval through the University's IRB (Institutional Review Board) and, depending on the project, may be required to obtain consent forms from students. Learn more at <http://hso.research.uiowa.edu/>.

### Sale of Materials

University policy forbids instructors to collect money from students for any reason, including the sale of educational materials (e.g., books or other supplies).

## Rights, Resources, and Obligations As Members of the Department

Reappointment for a second year as a Rhetoric TA is common but should never be taken for granted. First-year graduate instructors must make adequate progress towards a degree and satisfactorily fulfill their teaching obligations, as explained in the letter of appointment (e.g., attending the August PDP workshop), in this Handbook (e.g., grading policies and timely submission of grades and required syllabi), and in occasional memoranda (e.g., completing midterm requirements in a timely manner).

* Appointments beyond the second year are less common, but may occur, depending on the needs of the Department.
* Onlyhalf-time assistantships [=1HTE] are generally available.
* TAs should not apply for or accept other contracts without first receiving a release from the Rhetoric department.

When extra sections are available to TAs (e.g., summer session courses), the DEO typically gives preference to experienced graduate instructors with outstanding records of teaching and service, who have made progress in their degree programs, and have not previously benefitted from extra employment assignments.

As a precondition of an offer of summer employment, instructors must have signed a contract to return to teach in Rhetoric in the following fall semester. Those who decide to break their fall Rhetoric contract after accepting summer support must forfeit the summer employment offer.

### Graduate Employees

The general contract for *all* graduate employees is negotiated by the graduate student employee union, COGS (Committee to Organize Graduate Students). Graduate TAs can view the contract, their rights as a graduate employee, information about grievance procedures, and other issues that affect them as a graduate employee (health insurance, for example) at <http://cogs.org>.

Because Iowa is a "right to work" state, no one is automatically made a member of the graduate student union. For more information on membership and the union, contact COGS.

### Graduate Instructor Dismissal

According to the Operations Manual, grounds for dismissal include:

* 1. Loss of student status: A TA may be dismissed by the Dean of his or her college during the term of appointment if the TA's status as a student or degree candidate is suspended or terminated.
	2. Other grounds – an assistant may be dismissed by the Dean of his or her College during the term of appointment(s) for any reason sufficient to dismiss a faculty member, or for failure to follow or implement, properly and adequately, reasonable instructions of his or her supervisor when such instructions are within the proper scope of the supervisor's duties.

For more detail on this issue, consult section 12.4 of the Operations Manual at <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/termination-appointment/graduate-assistant-dismissal-procedure>.

## Professional Development Program (PDP)

Rhetoric's Professional Development Program (PDP) supports all graduate instructors and faculty during their first semester of teaching and serves the goal of promoting instructors’ long-term growth as educators. New graduate instructors’ attendance and satisfactory performance in the August workshop and Thursday afternoon Colloquium are conditions of employment.

PDP begins with a mandatory, three-day orientation workshop in August, the week before classes begin. Advisory groups of new teachers are team-taught by experienced graduate instructors and faculty leaders. During this workshop, PDP participants begin developing a course schedule for the semester and design detailed lessons for the opening weeks of class.

Focused teaching discussions continue through the fall semester in the required PDP colloquia, RHET:5350, which meets 3:30-5:20 on Thursday afternoons.

* All new graduate instructors must enroll in the assigned section of RHET:5350 colloquium.
* The colloquium is graded Pass/Fail.
* Instructors cannot enroll in any course that conflicts with the Colloquium, including any course that meets from 2:30-3:45pm on Thursdays.
* Regular attendance in the colloquium is mandatory and a contractual requirement.

PDP balances discussions of larger issues in pedagogy and instruction with practical support in developing teaching materials and troubleshooting classroom challenges. Teaching style, topics, assignments and learning activities can differ from section to section, but all PDP participants receive guidance in crafting their own particular versions of the course while adhering to the same general course description and performance standards. Once first-year instructors have completed PDP, the Department offers graduate-level courses that provide further opportunities for professional development (e.g., courses on service learning, advanced pedagogy, teaching with multimodal texts and instructional technology, teaching in a writing center).

### Mentoring

All graduate instructors have assigned faculty Teaching Mentors (TMs), or “Course Supervisors,” who guide them in course design, grading, dealing with student concerns, etc. Teaching Mentors also foster advisees’ development as pedagogues and approve course materials, with special attention to the four major assignments. . During an instructor’s first semester teaching Rhetoric, the Teaching Mentor is a PDP leader, but in subsequent semesters, other TMs may be assigned.

**Instructors are required to provide the following materials to Teaching Mentors on time:**

* Syllabus draft by the Friday before classes start, including a course schedule listing due dates for all major assignments, drafts and workshops.
* Assignment sheets for major assignments for approval before they are given to students
* Final syllabus (cc: kristine-bevelacqua@uiowa.edu) by the first day of classes.
* Final grades before the Friday of Exam Week.

 *NOTE*: If graduate instructors feel they cannot productively discuss teaching matters with their assigned Teaching Mentors, they should contact the DEO for possible reassignment.

## Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC)

GAC represents graduate instructors in departmental discussions. GAC meets regularly with the DEO, and at least one member sits in on faculty meetings to represent the graduate instructor perspective on policy, curriculum, etc. Often, GAC communicates with instructors via the listserv to respond to questions, provide information, express concerns or solicit feedback. GAC is made up of a small group of volunteer members who typically serve two years. Members of the committee must be available for regular meetings and discussions with faculty.

GAC is a professional development opportunity that allows graduate instructors to serve the department, and to influence Departmental policy. An email about GAC is circulated via the listserv early in the Fall semester; all interested graduate instructors are encouraged to respond.

## The Writing Center And Libraries

The **Writing Center** (110 EPB) supports any member of the University needing assistance with writing. The Center operates via enrollment tutoring, tutoring appointments, and on-line tutoring. Check out the website for a complete description of Writing Center services, including a section devoted entirely to support for instructors: http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/

* At the start of the semester, Rhetoric instructors may request that a representative of the Center visit their classes to explain the Center's services. These services are free, and Rhetoric students get top priority. Faculty may not, however, *require* students to visit the Writing Center for help on papers. The sooner students sign up, the better.

Instructors interested in tutoring in the Writing Center must take the RHET:5375 Teaching in a Writing Center course. The course offers instruction in one-on-one tutoring, working with second-language students, and providing focused assistance to inexperienced writers and readers. Those who are interested should contact the Director, Carol Severino, at carol-severino@uiowa.edu.

**The Libraries:** Librarians offer support to students working on library-based research. Students can drop by the Consultation Space near the Service Desk at the Main Library from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. [Subject specialist librarians](http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/services/subspecialists/) are also available by appointment. (See list of subject specialist librarians and contact information here: <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/services/subspecialists>). For quick questions, the Service Desk or Chat Reference service are available.

## Troubleshooting

### Department Procedure for Handling Problems and Concerns

Graduate instructors’ first point of contact for problems and concerns is their Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors) or the DEO (all faculty).

* Our Complaints Officer, appointed by Cinda Coggins Mosher, handles student and instructor complaints (sarah-coggins@uiowa.edu). Except in unusual circumstances, students with complaints about class materials and procedures or about others in the classroom should first consult with their instructors. Only if the instructor and student cannot resolve the problem should the complaint move up the chain of command.
* The Interim DEO, Cinda Coggins Mosher, handles any unresolved problems at the Departmental level (sarah-coggins@uiowa.edu)

The Office of the Ombudsperson is a resource for any member of the university community-- including students, faculty, and staff - with a problem or concern. This Office provides informal conflict resolution, mediation services and advocacy for fair treatment and fair process. The services are confidential, neutral, informal, and independent. For more information, see <http://www.uiowa.edu/ombuds/>.

## Student Concerns

If you have concerns about an undergraduate student, please first discuss the issue with your Teaching Mentor if you are a Graduate Instructor and the DEO if you are a faculty member.

If the concern warrants administrative involvement, it may need to be brought to the attention of Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, Cornelia Lang. The Associate Dean’s office administrators are available to consult with you about behavioral issues in the classroom, including issues about respect and civility, concerns about a student’s mental health, and family emergencies. They also handle undergraduate academic misconduct and consults on issues related to undergraduate students and CLAS teaching policy and procedures.

The [Office of the Dean of Students](http://dos.uiowa.edu/assistance/) also lists important resources for helping students, and the Assistant to the Dean for Student Care Initiatives at <http://dos.uiowa.edu/assistance/> is also available to help.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism, a form of academic misconduct, is the unattributed recycling of others’ words or ideas and constitutes intellectual theft. CLAS has a uniform policy for proceeding when students plagiarize in any way, from purchasing papers to failing to cite sources or use quotation marks to indicate language imported from a source. That policy can be found in the academic honesty code, available here at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code>.

Plagiarism poses nuanced challenges for instructors working with first-year students and international students. Some students are uncertain of the rules about knowledge production and attribution. While learning to use sources properly, students often misuse them by paraphrasing too closely or citing inaccurately. Therefore, it is a good idea to spend some time early in the semester, and again when assignments are due, discussing the nature of plagiarism and answering student questions about it. All Rhetoric instructors are required to address with students “what counts” as plagiarism at some early point in the semester. Usually, this work is yoked to an assignment so that the lesson is not abstract but involves working responsibly and efficiently with sources as part of composing a paper or speech.

### Preventing Plagiarism

Rhetoric classes, with their focus on the process of crafting written and spoken texts over time, typically offer students guidance in locating appropriate sources, tracing where ideas come from, and creating work that is distinctly one’s own, even as it emerges from an existing discussion.

Preventing plagiarism is most effective when instructors observe the following advice:

* Design distinctive assignments connected closely to your course's themes and objectives.
* Break assignments down into stages and include checkpoints, so that by the time students turn in a final draft, you are familiar with their writing and have had ample opportunity to provide feedback concerning proper citation and attribution.
* Devote an early class session to responsible citation of resources consulted.
* Ask students to “authenticate” their research by, for instance, turning in copies of their sources or creating annotated bibliographies or other documentation of research efforts.

Instructors should not ignore plagiarism in their classes, and they should strive to use their best judgment to determine if plagiarism is intentional. Minor cases, such as forgetting to include quotation marks once, can be handled through instructor feedback and student revision. Major cases of plagiarism, such as borrowing swaths of prose from an Internet source without attribution, are an entirely different matter, and their handling is governed by College and University policies on academic misconduct. CLAS academic fraud policies that govern Rhetoric courses are as follows.

* 1. Document suspected plagiarism carefully:
		+ Scan or download a copy of the student's assignment. (You can ask the Main Office to scan a hard copy.)
		+ If you are able to locate the plagiarized sources, download or scan them.
	2. Graduate instructors should contact their Teaching Mentors immediately, **before** contacting the student or responding to the assignment, and they should share their documentation with the Teaching Mentor.
		+ When instructors cannot adequately document suspected plagiarism, they should grade the assignment according to its success in responding to the prompt and explain their concerns about proper attribution, or use of sources in their feedback or comments during a conference without accusing the student of plagiarism. *Instructors should not accuse someone of plagiarism without documentation.*
		+ If, together with their Teaching Mentor, the Complaints Officer, or the DEO, an instructor determines that the plagiarism was intentional or constitutes a major offense (students’ intentions are sometimes unclear), the following CLAS reporting procedures are in order.
	3. The instructor should send the student an email from the instructor’s uiowa address to the student’s uiowa address asking to discuss the situation in person. Guidelines for the email can be found online at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-academic-fraud>. Instructors must adhere to these guidelines!
	4. The instructor should discuss the situation with the student face-to-face and take notes to document the student’s response.
	5. After, and only after, the student responds and/or an in-person discussion takes place, the instructor should complete the online reporting form for academic fraud, which can be found at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/report-academic-fraud>. The form automatically copies the DEO, Associate Dean, and the student.

Consequences:

* Any assignment containing intentional academic fraud must be graded as F. (Instructors can fail a student for the course, but they must first consult with their Teaching Mentor, the DEO, and the CLAS Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum).
* For the first offense of fraud, students are typically placed on disciplinary probation.
* For a second offense, the student is suspended for a semester.
* For a third offense, the student is expelled.

Thus, it is crucial that *all* instances of intentional plagiarism be documented and reported. Otherwise, it may falsely be assumed that a student has only plagiarized once.

### Other Academic Misconduct

Students should be informed that resubmitting work for which academic credit has already been given is another form of academic fraud. It does not matter where or when the work was previously submitted (re-use of high school essays is plagiarism under this definition).

Instructors have widely divergent, often confusing policies on student collaboration and where such collaborations cross over into academic misconduct. When instructors assign group projects or assignments that require collaboration and/or group work, they should clearly delineate what is permissible collaboration.

### Disruptive Behavior

If an instructor notices a pattern of misbehavior emerging, it is helpful to discuss it individually with the student. Graduate instructors should discuss persistent or alarming behavior problems as early as possible with their Teaching Mentors, who can usually provide effective guidance or intervene before it escalates.

In the unusual instance that a student refuses to stop the offending behavior, instructors are authorized to tell the student to leave. If an instructor dismisses a student from class, the instructor should immediately report the incident to their Teaching Mentors (for graduate instructors) or the DEO (for department faculty).

In cases of dangerous disruption, instructors should call the UI Department of Public Safety and request that the student be removed from class: 319-335-5022 (Instructors may want to program that number into their phones). *This option should not be used lightly and is very seldom necessary.* The instructor should immediately report the incident to the DEO, Rhetoric Office, and Teaching Mentor (graduate instructors).

### Student Health

If a student needs first aid in class or during an office visit, instructors should contact Kris, who has a First Aid Kit in her office.

If students express concerns about their mental health, including references to suicidal thoughts, graduate instructors should contact their Teaching Mentor and the DEO, who will contact the student’s advisors. If it is an emergency, contact 911. Instructors must respect the student’s right to privacy by not discussing such matters with other TAs or students.

Consider, too, the following suggestions offered by University Counseling Services [UCS]:

#### What Can You Do?

The options you choose depend upon the urgency of the situation. For students who are having difficulty but seem able to cope, you may choose not to intervene, to limit your interaction to the academic issue, or to deal with it on a more personal level. If you judge a situation to be more urgent, you might decide that more active and timely involvement on your part is appropriate. Don’t forget that a lot of undergraduates experience significant homesickness when coming to college and this may surface around weeks three and four. The transition to college should not be minimized nor exaggerated: confirm for the individual that anxieties and a sense of displacement are very common reactions and do not in themselves indicate any general inability to cope.

#### How Do You Make a Referral?

When you have decided a student might benefit from counseling, it is usually best to express your recommendation in a matter-of-fact manner. Make it clear that this represents your best judgment based on your observations of the student. Be specific regarding the behavior that has raised your concerns and avoid attributing anything negative to the individual's character.

Except in an emergency, the option must be left open for the student to accept or refuse counseling. If the student is reluctant for any reason, simply express your acceptance of those feelings so that your relationship with the student is not jeopardized. Give the student room to consider alternatives by suggesting that maybe you can talk after the student has had some time to think it over.

Once the student has agreed that counseling might be useful, there are several possible steps to take, depending on the urgency of the situation and how committed the student is to follow through on the referral. You can give the student information about the UCS and urge the student to call for an appointment. Another option is to accompany the student yourself. The UCS staff would appreciate your calling ahead if a student is being brought over or sent directly in an emergency, so that plans can be made to have a counselor available.

In emergency involving students who are unwilling or unable to seek help on their own, staff and faculty members may call the UCS at 335-7294. For any referral, whether the student accepts it or not, follow up with him or her later to show your continuing interest.

#### What Happens at the UCS?

Once the student contacts the UCS, an appointment is made for an initial interview. This is usually within a few days from the time of contact but can often even happen the same day. In an emergency, the student will be seen that day.

Information forms are completed before the student is seen. During the first meeting, a counselor assesses the student's needs and the ways the UCS may be able to help. Options the counselor considers include individual counseling, groups or workshops, or referral to private or community counseling services. Some students may leave the initial appointment feeling able to handle their concerns without further assistance.

Counseling services provided at the UCS for students are free and confidential. Information is released only with a student's written permission. This means that a counselor cannot discuss the student's situation with anyone unless the student provides written permission. Exceptions to confidentiality may occur if there is clear danger to self or others or in the case of court-ordered subpoenas.

#### Consultation Is Available to You

If you have concerns and questions about a student, staff members at the UCS are available to help you:

* Assess the situation, its seriousness, and potential referral.
* Learn about on- and off-campus resources so you can suggest the most appropriate help.
* Learn the best way to make a referral if appropriate.
* Clarify your feelings about the student and consider the ways you can be most effective.
* Other Important Information

University Counseling Service is staffed by licensed psychologists and predoctoral interns. Their office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Visit their website (<http://www.uiowa.edu/ucs/>) for more information about their services and agency. Their phone number is 335-7294. If an emergency occurs after hours, you are encouraged to call the Crisis Center at 351-0140; Department of Public Safety at 335-5022; or UIHC Emergency Room at 356-2233. If you have concerns about another staff or faculty member, Faculty and Staff Services can be reached at 335-2085.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation in order to participate in these programs, please contact University Counseling Service in advance at 335-7294.

Also consider offering the student the following information:

* Crisis Center of Johnson County 319-351-0140
* National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1800-273-8255
* Iowa Crisis Chat with free instant messaging at IowaCrisisChat.org (sometimes preferred by students who are already in counseling)
* University Counseling Service 319-335-7294 or go to counseling.studentlife.uiowa.edu

For more information, see University Counseling Services <https://counseling.uiowa.edu/self-help/helping-students-in-emotional-distress-guide-for-faculty-and-staff/>

### Student Complaints

The syllabus explains the proper recourse for complaints about class policies and personnel.

* 1. First, they should talk to their instructor to try to resolve the complaint.
	2. If they are dissatisfied with their instructor’s response or if they feel unable to consult with the instructor, they can ask for help from the Complaints Officer (students of graduate instructors), or the DEO (students of Rhetoric faculty).
	3. As a last resort, they can contact the College.

This chain of steps should be followed, although some students and parents may attempt to go straight to the College. Instructors should emphasize Step One and make it as easy as possible for students to approach them with concerns.

During Step 2, this is what happens:

* The Complaints Officer handles concerns for courses taught by graduate instructors. [The DEO handles concerns for full-time faculty members.]
* The Complaints Officer or DEO establishes that the student has spoken with the instructor or has a valid reason for feeling uncomfortable approaching the instructor.
* The Complaints Officer or DEO decides how to proceed, based on type of complaint.
* When appropriate, the student should address their concerns to the instructor in writing.
* Instructors have an opportunity to write a response, and the Complaints Officer or DEO will consider this written exchange in determining next steps.

Most complaints are resolved at the Department level; students seldom file complaints with the College, and the Rhetoric Department’s policies for internal management respect the many kinds of issues that arise. Time and low-level intervention resolve most issues without escalation.

Complaints must remain confidential unless the Complaints Officer needs to consult with another official. Documents related to complaints are rarely placed in teachers' personnel files and never without the teacher being informed.

**Appendix A: Grading Methods**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Method** | **Some Benefits** | **Some Drawbacks** |
| **Points** | * Simple and straightforward.
* Importance of assignment reflected in its total point value.
* Makes it clear where quality of work was present and where it fell short.
* Easily calculable.
 | * Easy to unintentionally inflate grades by having many small assignments for which students get full (or nearly full) credit.
* Little wiggle room: sometimes a student may earn a grade based on points that doesn't line up with your judgment about the quality of work.
* Students can obsess over points instead of focusing on the aspects of their work that need development.
* Students count points and challenge grades on decimal places rather than quality.
 |
| **Percentages or****"Weighted" Grades** | * No matter how many assignments are in a category, you can control how much they count toward the overall grade by determining the category's weight.
* Points on individual grades makes it clear where quality of work was present and where it fell short.
* Easily calculable (especially using ICON).
 | * Students may be confused when dozens of 10/10 on small assignments don't yield an A because the category is weighted less than major assignments.
* You have to predetermine a category for every assignment you will ever use.
* Because individual assignments are typically graded by points, you still have some of the above drawbacks.
 |
| **Holistic or****Portfolio-****Based** | * Grading is based on meeting objectives, not "getting points:" totally different conversations with students.
* Grading is based on individual student growth and improvement over time.
* A portfolio method can attend to diversity in background and ability in a way that benefits students.
* You have more control over grading and may feel that students are more accurately assessed for their abilities.
 | * Requires a strong rubric and firm conviction so that you can explain exactly why students earned the grade they did.
* Requires intensive feedback.
* You'll need a good system for recording your evaluations and assessments. ICON can be configured for holistic grading, but it can't calculate final grades for you based on +/-, etc.
 |