

<b>Policy Name: Instructional Policies</b>	<b>Date Approved: 4/1/2024</b>
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<b>Approval Authority: Provost</b>	<b>Date Last Reviewed: 2/3/2022</b>
<b>Responsible Office or Official: Provost</b>	<b>Recommended Review Cycle: 12/12/2026</b>

## **I. Purpose/Policy Statement/Applicability**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures regarding absences, class rosters, course syllabi, field trips, final exams, grade reporting, grade changes, class meetings, midterm deficiency grade reports, and office hours for full-time and contingent faculty at Missouri Western State University (MWSU). These policies aim to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective communication between faculty, students, and administrative departments, thereby promoting academic integrity, student success, and institutional efficiency. This policy applies to all faculty members employed by MWSU, governing their responsibilities and obligations regarding attendance, academic assessment, administrative procedures, and student engagement. It is binding upon faculty across all departments and colleges within the university. Additionally, students enrolled at MWSU are subject to the provisions outlined in this policy regarding attendance, examinations, and interactions with faculty members. Compliance with these regulations is essential for maintaining the academic standards, integrity, and operational efficiency of the institution.

## **II. Definitions and Procedures**

### **A. ABSENCES: FACULTY**

If a faculty member finds that it is necessary to be absent, the department Chairperson must be notified. The department Chairperson shall notify the Dean of the College's office on or before the day the absence occurs. In case of emergency, the faculty member shall immediately call the department Chairperson if it is impossible to meet a class. If a faculty member misses a class, they must complete an absence report to document time missed.

### **B. ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK FOR STUDENTS**

Regular class attendance is considered an essential part of the student's educational experience and a requirement for an adequate evaluation of student academic progress. Each instructor will determine and make known to the class the requirement for attendance. When an announced examination falls on the day a student is absent, instructors are not required to prepare or give a make-up test. Consideration will be given to students in the case of genuine illness, emergency, or when acting as an official representative of MWSU. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the class instructor prior to the absence and if possible, meet the instructor upon the student's return to discuss the material missed.

### **C. CLASS ROSTERS**

Class rosters are available online through the faculty member's portal. Rosters should be reviewed often during the first week of school as schedule changes are taking place. A student not appearing on the roster should not be allowed to attend class. All faculty must submit an Attendance Verification Report at the end of the enrollment period as a requirement for Student Federal Aid Eligibility. The report must be accurate and reflect student attendance during the enrollment period.

## D. COURSE SYLLABI AND LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

All faculty must use the Missouri Western State University standard syllabi template. Department Chairpersons are responsible for seeing that course syllabi are on file and up to date. A course syllabus shall be made available to students in each course prior to the start of the semester via the institutional learning management system.

Common expectations and requirements for LMS usage is based on the review of literature around best practices (developed by Faculty Senate, May 2024) and consists of the following:

- Organize course content using the Modules landing page so students have clear access to:
  - Due dates for all assignments in the course
  - The course syllabus (utilizing the required syllabus template)
  - Class handouts and assignments
- Assuring navigation links are working to simplify and clarify the course page
- Keeping the student Gradebook up to date
- Ensuring an introduction/orientation module, file, or video is available to all students in 100% online and hybrid courses.
- Making instructional materials associated with lectures available (including power point slides or videos). This is an expectation for 100% online and hybrid courses.

## E. FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are encouraged to furnish the student with knowledge and educational experiences not available in the classroom. The following steps shall be completed prior to scheduling of field trips.

- Approval of each trip must be secured from the department Chairperson and Dean of the College.
- When transportation is to be furnished by the University, the request shall be made at least two weeks in advance by using the procedure outlined under “Use of University Vehicles” in Chapter VII.
- Students are not permitted to drive University automobiles.

## F. CLASS DEFINITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Faculty members are required to meet all scheduled classes and test periods to which they are assigned. Advance notice must be given to the department Chairperson if the faculty member will be unable to meet a class. The department Chairperson will notify the Dean of the College’s office. Dismissal or rescheduling of any class session, including final examinations, is not left to the discretion of the faculty member; approval must be obtained through the proper channels.

According to the Department of Education (effective July 1, 2021), a 100% online course must have all portions of the course delivered online (either synchronously or asynchronously), including assessments. It is also important to note that a 100% online course (distance education) must include substantive and regular interaction. Courses must be developed by the institution’s faculty, and publisher-developed curriculum should be used to enhance, not run, the course.

Online courses should aim to contain at least one hour of active faculty-student interaction per credit hour, per week – ideally spread out during multiple sessions. These may include: assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework, providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency, facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency, or other instructional activities approved by HLC or the program's accrediting agency. The following codes are used to identify course modality:

L, N = Lecture/100% in classroom: All course delivery is conducted synchronously and in the classroom. Homework and assessments can be delivered using the Learning Management System.

H, N = Hybrid: Course delivery, not including assessments or homework, is at least 30% online (ex. 30% online 1 credit hour class = 4.5 hours online per semester).

O, N = 100% Online: Course delivery and assessment is 100% online, either synchronous or asynchronous and with regular and substantive interaction between student and instructor. Synchronous sections must have published meeting times.

## G. FINAL EXAM POLICY

The final exam schedule will be published by the Registrar's Office prior to each semester and the designated period will be used either for administration of a final exam or for other appropriate course terminating activities. All courses, including 1 and 2 credit hour courses, will have final exams in their regular classrooms during final exam week according to the published schedule. It is the responsibility of both students and faculty to comply with the final exam policy. Final exam guidelines are listed below:

- Final exam periods are 2 hours with 1 hour between periods.
- Final exam information will be documented in the course syllabus.
- Classes which begin at a time not listed on the final exam schedule will observe the final exam time of the closest previous class time listed.
- Classes which meet at different hours (for example, 9:00am on Monday/Wednesday and 10:00am on Thursday) will hold the final exam based on the first hour and day listed. Classes with linked lecture and laboratory sections will observe the final exam period based on the section that carries the credit hours.
- Classes which meet at 4:30pm or after will hold final exams at their regular class time during the final exam week. Those evening classes with two meetings per week will use the first meeting for the final exam with the second meeting used at the discretion of the instructor.
- Hybrid courses which have weekly meeting times will hold final exams in their regular classrooms according to the published schedule.
- 100% online classes will hold final exams during the final exam week according to the course syllabus.
- Saturday classes will hold final exams at their regular class time during the final exam week.
- Off-Schedule classes will hold final exams on the last scheduled class meeting. First 8-week classes will hold final exams on the last scheduled class meeting. Second 8-week classes will hold final exams according to the designated time during the full-semester final exam week.
- Summer classes will hold final exams on the last scheduled class meeting.
- Any student who has three or more final exams scheduled on the same day may make arrangements with instructors of those courses to reschedule one final exam to another day during the final exam week. The student may appeal to the appropriate dean for assistance, if needed. That appeal should be made no later than one month prior to the last day of the final exam week.
- If a final exam is canceled for inclement weather every effort will be made to make the exam up prior to the end of the published final exam week. Communication regarding any final exam schedule adjustments will be made via the Missouri Western website and through the Griffon Alert system.

Faculty are expected to use the final exam period assigned for their classes as published in the Registration Guide. Any deviation must have prior approval of the department Chairperson and Dean of the College or School.

## H. FINAL GRADE REPORTS

Faculty will have access to post final grades online through their portal at least one week prior to the date that final grades are due. Grades will be due by 10:00 am on the second business day after the last day of finals. If needed, an exception to this will be granted where final grades will be due by 10:00 am on the first business day after the last day of finals, in order to allow the Registrar's Office two full business days to process final grades and academic standing before the campus is closed. The final grade due date will always be published in the current year academic calendar.

Grade records (computer records or hard copies) should be kept for a minimum of three years. Class materials that have not been returned to students, and that might be useful in case of a grade appeal, should be kept through the completion of the following regular semester.

## H. GRADE CHANGE

A course grade change must be initiated by the instructor and be approved by the chairperson and Dean of the College or School. The approved grade change must be submitted to the Registrar's Office prior to the end of the next regular (fall/spring) semester after the close of the semester in which the original grade of incomplete was awarded. After this time period, a grade change must be approved by the Admissions and Graduation Committee.

## I. MIDTERM DEFICIENCY GRADE REPORTS

Mid-term grades are assigned to all students enrolled in classes for the Fall and Spring semesters. Faculty will have access to post mid-term grades online through their portal at least one week prior to the date that mid-term grades are due. Grades will be due by 10:00 am on the mid-term grade due-date listed in the current Academic Calendar.

## J. OFFICE HOURS

Faculty members are expected to maintain a minimum of ten office hours per week at a time convenient for student conferences (and in alignment with the course modality as defined above). At least five of these weekly hours shall be posted on a designated bulletin board and filed with the department Chairperson and Dean of the College. The additional five hours may be used for individual student appointments.