DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES HANDBOOK

For questions about instructional policies, contact:
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INTRODUCTION

OSU Sociology is a preeminent department in terms of faculty research and the quality of our graduate and undergraduate programs. According to the 2021 Shanghai Rankings, we are recognized as the 8th best Sociology department in the world. Our Ph.D. program is ranked 18th in the nation, and 8th among public universities, in the 2022 U.S. News and World Report listings. Our undergraduate program is one of the largest on campus, with more than 800 Sociology, Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies, and Public Health Sociology majors. Our faculty have research expertise in diverse areas with strengths in stratification and inequality, community and urban sociology, criminology, population and health, education, family, occupations and work and political sociology. Among 118 National Research Council-ranked sociology programs nationwide, we are in the top 10% in publications and grants per faculty.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

This handbook outlines guidelines, expectations, best practices, and helpful resources related to instruction in the Department of Sociology. In addition to these instructor responsibilities, the department affirms the university's commitment to academic freedom, as described in Section 3335-5-01 of the Rules of the University Faculty:

3335-5-01 Academic freedom and responsibility.
(A) The Ohio State University endorses full academic freedom as essential to attain the goal of the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom and academic responsibility are twin guardians of the integrity of institutions of higher learning. This integrity is essential to the preservation of a free society and explains the willingness of society historically to accept the concept of academic freedom and, in addition, to protect it through the institution of academic tenure.

(B) The principal elements of academic freedom include the freedom of faculty to:

1. Teach, conduct research, and publish research findings;
2. Discuss in classrooms, in their own manner, any material that is relevant to the subject matter as defined in the course syllabus;
3. Exercise their constitutional rights as citizens without institutional censorship or discipline;
4. Seek changes in academic and institutional policies through lawful and peaceful means.

(C) Academic freedom carries with it correlative academic responsibilities. The principal elements include the responsibility of faculty to:

1. Meet their defined teaching, research, and service obligations;
2. Pursue excellence, intellectual honesty, and objectivity in teaching, in conducting research, and in publishing research findings;
3. Encourage students and colleagues to engage in free discussion and inquiry;
4. Evaluate student and colleague performance on a scholarly basis;
5. Refrain from persistently introducing matters that have no bearing on the subject matter of the course;
6. Work with appropriate individuals and bodies to provide optimal conditions conducive to the attainment of the free search for truth and its free exposition;
7. Differentiate carefully between official activities as faculty and personal activities as citizens, and to act accordingly.

The Campus Free Speech policy elaborates on some of these policies for students, faculty and staff.

In addition, to these general responsibilities, this handbook describes in greater detail more specific university and departmental guidelines and policies.

DEPARTMENTAL INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

• Be aware of your instruction mode and corresponding schedule and create your course accordingly.

• Develop and provide a syllabus to students within the first week of class. Submit electronic version to the department the first week of each term at wilson.1028@osu.edu.

• Publish your course on CarmenCanvas. We recommend using the Carmen course template to organize your course.

• Attend all scheduled class sessions. In the event of illness or emergency, provide alternative learning opportunities for students to satisfy credit hour requirements. Immediately notify Vice Chair of more than one unscheduled class absence per course per term.

• Hold office hours for at least 3 hours per week. Office hours may be held in-person and/or online.

• Treat students with respect and professionalism; be consistent and fair in assigning grades and implementing policies.

• Do not post grades by name or social security number and do not place graded work in a public location or give students access to graded work of other students.

• Post a final grade for all students by the grade posting deadline (which is earlier for graduating seniors).

• Respond to emails and other requests from the department and university offices in a timely manner.

• Order textbooks on time. Provide course-related material needed for program- and course-level assessment as requested.

•Plan to work from the first day of classes through the submission of final grades, including final exam week.

• All courses must have a final examination and it can be held/due ONLY during the university-scheduled final exam period and location.

• Retain a copy of your grade book and graded student work that is not returned for at least one year.

• Be aware of and adhere to all university policies.

CLASS MEETING REQUIREMENTS

For standard 3-credit hour in-person courses, skipping one 1.5-hour or 1.0-hour regular class meeting(s) without providing an alternative means of instruction still meets state credit hour requirements. The Vice-Chair should be immediately notified of instructor absences greater than

requirements can be implemented.

CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS

The Ohio Department of Higher Education guidelines state, "One semester credit hour will be awarded for a minimum of 750 minutes [i.e., 12.5 hours] of formalized instruction that typically requires students to work at out-of-class assignments an average of two hours for every hour of formalized instruction [i.e., 25 hours]. The instructor bears primary responsibility for formalized instruction, which may be delivered in a variety of modes." Further, "credit hours may be awarded on a different basis for other types of instructional activities," but in all cases the foundational assumption is that one semester credit is the equivalent of approximately 2,250 minutes [i.e., 37.5 hours] of coursework, combining formalized instruction with out-of-class work.

Note that the amount of out-of-class work described is that which would be normally required of the average "C" student. Given that semester courses meet for 14 full weeks (excluding final exams and holidays), the following applies to a 3-credit hour in-person course:

- Class meetings average: 2.7 hours per week
- Out of class work for average "C" student: 5.3 hours per week

In sum, the standard 3 credit hour course requires a total of 37.5 hours of formalized instruction, typically fulfilled via in-class meetings. Distance or hybrid courses may use alternative modes of formalized instruction depending on their designation as distance only, distance enhanced, or hybrid courses. Note that even distance only asynchronous courses are required to provide an average of three hours per week of instructional contact, typically accomplished through recorded lecture videos. Instructors who do not use recorded lecture videos must ensure they are meeting these contact hours.

Regardless of mode, the average student who expects a grade of C should plan to devote approximately 8 hours per week in total on formalized instruction and out of class work throughout the semester. Please use these guidelines in assigning work, planning classes, and communicating to students about general expectations. Of course, time spent on a course is no guarantee that students will receive a specific grade.

PARTICIPATION ROSTERS

To comply with Federal Title IV regulations, all instructors are required to complete a "participation roster" during the first week of classes. The roster allows you to either answer "yes," the student has attended or participated in some way, or "no," the student has not attended and has not participated. This link provides more information.

TEXTBOOK ORDERS

To comply with federal and state laws, instructors are asked to submit textbook orders at least ten days prior to the date of priority registration for a given term. Typically this means that textbook orders should be submitted by early March for autumn semester, early October for spring semester, and early February for summer semester (see the University Registar's webpage for registration dates).

CarmenBooks is part of the affordable learning exchange program and provides digital access to textbooks at lower prices than hard copies. To order hard copy textbooks, go to Barnes & Noble (AIP) Orders and follow the instructions.

When a textbook order for a class is not submitted by the deadline, the bookstore will "auto-adopt" the most recent prior textbook order for that class. More specific guidance is available from the Office of Undergraduate Education or the bookstore (email Erin Sandona at Barnes & Noble) Auto-adopted titles for each course will include a custom message on the bookstore website: *"Textbooks are listed for information purposes only. Please do not order textbooks without first verifying with the instructor, as textbooks may be subject to change."*

IN-PERSON AND ONLINE PROCTORING

The OSU online proctoring tool is now Honorlock (Proctorio was deactivated on May 3rd, 2024). See the Getting Started with Honorlock resources if interested in using. Instructors using online proctoring tools such as must also provide students an in-person proctoring option, examples of which can be found here. Faculty should include this option in the syllabus. Sample language: *Students may request an in-person proctoring alternative to online proctoring. The student is expected to contact the instructor early in the term to coordinate the accommodation. Students will not be permitted to take*

remotely proctored exams in their homes or residence halls unless they are willing to conduct a room scan. By choosing to take the exam in their home or residence hall, the student is consenting to the room scan of the area in which they take the exam.

RECORDING AND PROCTORING WAIVER FOR MINOR STUDENTS

Students under the age of 18 must have a waiver on file signed by a parent or guardian to allow them to interact with instructional tools that use a student's web camera and microphone, as well as tools that require consent to download and install on a student's device. If you are teaching a course with at least one student under the age of 18 who does NOT have this waiver on file, you will receive an email from the Registrar's office with further instructions and considerations.

WEATHER OR OTHER SHORT-TERM CLOSING

Following Policy 6.15 (Weather or Other Short-Term Closing), faculty are to notify students of alternative teaching methods when in-person classes are canceled. Alternative teaching methods can include virtual synchronous class meetings or asynchronous activities, including but not limited to videos, podcasts, supplemental readings, or discussion posts. The alternative method of teaching used when in-person classes have been canceled is at the instructor's discretion. Faculty are to discuss their continuity plan with students and include in the syllabus the weather/short term closing statement described below.

SHORT-TERM LEAVE FOR MILITARY STUDENTS

Military-connected students may receive orders that require them to miss class for short periods of time. It is recommended that instructors make reasonable accommodations for military-connected students who are required to attend military duty. More specific guidance is available from the Office of Undergraduate Education or from Military & Veterans Services.

STUDENT LIFE DISABILITY SERVICES

Instructors are required to promptly comply with student accommodations established by Student Life Disability Services. Providing accommodations including creating a "flex plan" if requested is required. If you believe a request is unreasonable, you must work with SLDS to agree on a solution. Contact the Vice Chair if you have concerns about this process.

The SLDS office provides resources and consultation for managing accommodations and best practices. See also the Drake Institute resources on Universal Design for Learning, which describes best practices for providing accessible materials and other inclusive teaching guidelines.

CHANGES TO COURSE DELIVERY MODE

Faculty must have the formal approval of the department chair, ASC, and OAA to change the overall delivery mode of a course (e.g., changing a course from in-person to hybrid or distance learning) after students have registered for the course.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students face distinct policies and procedures at the university, state, and federal levels compared to domestic students. The Office of International Affairs describes some of these policies. However, given the diversity of laws and regulations, students face distinctive policies depending on their country of origin, visa status, and personal circumstances. Instructors should also be aware that international students often are ineligible for opportunities open to domestic students (including US federal fellowship programs) and must follow different rules governing employment and travel.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The OSU Student Code Conduct includes provisions that affect classroom behavior including academic misconduct.

2024 ELECTION

The University Senate passed a resolution calling for a university-wide day of asynchronous learning on Nov. 5, 2024, as a one-time trial to support student participation in the general election. Instructors whose classes would otherwise have met in person or virtually on Nov. 5 will, in lieu of meeting, assign asynchronous classwork (e.g., reading, writing, a problem set, an asynchronous online lab, or other homework) to be determined by the instructor.

While it is expected that most classes scheduled to meet that day will proceed asynchronously, instructors may elect to have labs and clinical classes continue to meet in person or virtually if necessary for compliance or other compelling educational purposes, as determined by the instructor. **Instructors choosing to hold class synchronously on Nov. 5 for one of these exceptions will highlight this meeting requirement on their syllabus and will notify their respective academic unit leader (department chair or college dean) by the first week of autumn semester.** Graduate exams (e.g., preliminary, candidacy, and thesis/dissertation exams) may also continue to meet as scheduled on Nov. 5.

The university has also provided guidelines on political activity and encourages engagement with OSU Votes in the Office of Student Life.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The development of generative AI is a rapidly changing frontier of technology that we are all learning about. OSU is evolving policies and procedures, some of which were mentioned above related to academic misconduct. For additional issues, see the university's new webpage on AI. The OSU Translational Data Analytics Institute also often provides programming and resources related to AI.

Faculty Rule 3335-8-19 states, "Each course as defined in rule 3335-8-01 of the Administrative Code will have a syllabus to be provided to each student explaining how the student's performance will be assessed. University policy further requires that it be made available to students at the beginning of, and throughout the conduct of the course."

REQUIRED SYLLABUS ELEMENTS

Required syllabus components are outlined below and also listed at the Arts and Sciences Required and Recommended Syllabus elements page. For additional best practices see this guide from the Drake Institute:

- **Instructor Information** – Instructor name, office location, phone, e-mail, and office hours.
- **Basic Course Information** - Course number, title, meeting days and times, room address for class meetings, mode of delivery).
- **Format of Instruction** (lecture, recitation, lab) and number of contact hours per week
- **Instruction Mode** (in-person, hybrid, distance-enhanced, distance learning synchronous, distance learning, asynchronous). See descriptions here.
- **Course Overview** – Course description, goals, desired learning outcomes & expectations,
- **Required Materials** – Any required and recommended texts or other materials and where they can be located.
- **Course Calendar –** A weekly topical outline of course meetings including topics to be covered, readings, film screenings, homework, exams, and due dates as well as a statement indicating how you will notify students of any changes to the original calendar.
- **Course Components** – Information about the length and format of all papers, homework, assignments, and examinations
- **Grading Information –** Grading standards and criteria, including the value assigned to various requirements and the grading scale used, any policies regarding S/U, I, W, etc. marks (see Rule 3335-8)
- **Attendance Policy –** include your class attendance policy even if you have no specific attendance requirements.
- **Other Course Policies -** Any other firm policies in your course (late assignment policies, etc.)

- **University Syllabus Statements:** OSU prefers that faculty include statements on academic misconduct, student life disability services, etc. directly in your syllabus: Arts and Sciences Required and Recommended Syllabus elements.
- **Weather/Short-Term Closing Statement** – Faculty teaching in person should Include this statement: *If in-person classes are canceled, I will notify you of the alternative methods of teaching that will be offered to ensure continuity of instruction for this class. Communication will be via [Indicate CarmenCanvas, email or other mode of communication].*
  Faculty teaching online are encouraged to include the following: "*Unless otherwise announced by the university, online or distance-learning classes will occur as scheduled.*"
- **GE Courses** – If your course satisfies a general education requirement), you must include a statement that describes: (a) the relevant GE category or categories that it fulfills, (b) the associated goals and learning outcomes, which can be found here, and (c) a brief statement that explains how your specific course will satisfy the stated learning outcomes. To see which, if any, GE categories your course satisfies, you can search on this page which allows you to filter for courses that fulfill a legacy GE (GEL) or new GE (GEN) category.
- **BSPH/Public Health Courses –** Courses that satisfy a requirement for the BSPH (Bachelor of Science in Public Health) must include the following required statement: *The BSPH core and specialization competencies covered in this course are listed on the CPH website: https://cph.osu.edu/students/competencies.* This page lists curriculum guides with courses included in the BSPH program.

GRADING AND A

GRADING

The definition of grades at Ohio State as approved by the Ohio Board of Trustees is specified in Faculty Rule 3335-8-21 Marks. This rule states that the instructor is expected to judge the extent to which the student achieved the stated objectives of the course "based upon a comparison with other students in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor's personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course, based on the instructor's experience and expertise."

Thus, grades are not based on effort. Students should not expect that completing all course requirements will result in a specific grade. The instructor's assessment of the quality of the work as related to the stated objectives of the course is what determines the final course grade. Instructors should assign a range of grades and should not assign a common grade for all students in the course.

OFFICIAL MARKS AND COMMONLY USED SCALE

		A	93-100	**A-**	90-92.9
B+	87-89.9	**B**	83-86.9	**B-**	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9	**C**	73-76.9	**C-**	70-72.9
D+	67-69.9	**D**	60-66.9	**E**	<60

*Alternative grading scales are permitted but must be clearly defined on the syllabus. Final course grades, however, must correspond to the letter grades shown above.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Syllabi must indicate the proportion of final course grade that is represented by each course requirement.

ASSESSMENT

The College of Arts and Sciences requires departments to complete an annual Program Assessment Report for each major program. In addition, OAA requires periodic assessment of all GE courses. The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) is responsible for coordinating all department assessment activities. Instructors are expected to respond to requests for assessment activities or information in a timely manner. In some cases, this may require administering short examinations to students or presenting a report summarizing students' achievement of course objectives via a standard rubric. The DUS will work with instructors to communicate expectations and requirements for assessment on an ongoing basis.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

All suspected cases of academic misconduct (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) must be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). Click this link to view the procedures for instructors.

- COAM recommends that you notify the student that you suspect they may have engaged in academic misconduct. This notification is not mandatory. This can be done via a private conversation (a witness is recommended) or via the OSU e-mail.
- Compile your evidence. In possible plagiarism cases, read *Preparation of Evidence for Cases Involving Alleged Plagiarism*.
- Notify your administrator: Email Rachel Dwyer, Vice Chair with the details of the case and ask them to send you a letter acknowledging that they are aware of the case.
- Submit all documentation to the Academic Misconduct Incident Reporting System
- If it is the end of the term, assign a course grade of Incomplete. The alternative grade is the grade the student would receive if there were NO academic misconduct.

GRADING AND ASS

GRADE GRIEVANCE POLICY

Students may submit a grade grievance by meeting with an advisor in Undergraduate Student Services

(USS) and completing a required form. USS submits the grade grievance to the Director of Undergraduate Studies who acts on behalf of the department Chair to review all grade grievances. The Grade Grievance subcommittee of the Undergraduate Studies Committee reviews the case and respond to the student within 30 days via the student's @osu.edu email address or written letter, as indicated by the student on the grade grievance form.

Students should be aware that according to University Rules, grades can be changed only if a "procedural error" in grading has occurred.

The following language can be helpful in responding to student complaints about grades:
In making decisions about grade changes, The Department of Sociology is bound by University Rule 3335-8-23 "Alteration of Marks," which states: A mark filed in the office of the university registrar is part of the official records of the university. It is subject to change only when a procedural error has been discovered in the evaluation or recording of a grade. Action to change a grade must be initiated before the end of the second succeeding quarter. In no case will a grade be revised in accordance with criteria other than those applied to all students in the class.

In sum, ONLY **procedural errors** (e.g., miscalculations) in grading justify a grade change. The student must submit documentation showing evidence of a procedural error. Note that, according to Rule 3335-8-21, marks are defined by the instructor's judgment. This means that, in the absence of a procedural error, disagreeing with the instructor's evaluation is not a sufficient criterion for the initiation of a grade change.

and email return of completed exams. Access forms for scheduling these exams with the Forms (staff only) tab in the red left hand menu. Email esue-testing@osu.edu or call 614.292.2241 for more information.

Note that courses designated as 100% Distance Learning cannot require students to take exams on campus, including at the testing center. Students must be able to complete all course content including exams from a distance. However, instructors may provide students with the option to take exams at the testing center as an alternative to the remote testing option.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

MAKEUP EXAMS AND HYBRID COURSE EXAMS

Makeup exams and exams for hybrid courses may be scheduled with the University Testing Center which offers expanded time availability, online scheduling,

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES (USS)

Advising Staff are available to meet with undergraduate majors and minors. As their primary responsibility is advising our majors, they are not able

to assist instructors in delivering course content or administering exams. However, they are an excellent resource for instructors having difficulties with a student or who have questions about course and grading deadlines or the grade grievance process. Advisors in USS report to the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), Doug Downey, who can provide more information about their services.

TEACHING AND CLASSROOM RESOURCES

For extensive additional resources on teaching, see this guide on teaching strategies and resources curated by Deb Wilson, Associate Professor of Teaching and Instructional Coordinator in Sociology. Instructional staff are also encouraged to take advantage of additional university resources described below. Deb Wilson and Rachel Dwyer (Vice Chair), are both available to discuss specific teaching concerns.

Teaching & Learning Resource Center
- Acts as the new centralized location for offering resources to enhance teaching
- Includes toolsets such as instructional guides for using CarmenCanvas, CarmenZoom, and Top Hat
- Offers best practice information for a wide variety of teaching topics
- Presents teaching and learning opportunities through many different sessions and workshops

Office of Distance Education and eLearning (ODEE)
- Promotes the effective use of technology in learning environments across campus.
- Offers classroom services that involve technology setup and trouble-shooting information.
- Provides teaching and learning resources and workshops,

- Provides general introductions to Canvas and Zoom and a syllabus template for online and hybrid courses.

Michael V. Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning

- The Drake Institute offers extensive instructional support, research support to enhance instructional best practices, and myriad teaching tools, resources, and workshops. This is the primary university resource for guidance on effective teaching and teaching improvement.
- Professional teaching consultants are available to discuss any aspect of teaching, such as designing courses, enhancing classroom techniques, developing course materials, and documenting teaching effectiveness.
- Provides teaching endorsements to instructors who participate in their professional learning programs, including the Course Design Institute.
- Provides resources on emerging issues in teaching, including for example their new guidance on Artificial Intelligence and instruction.

Classroom Services
- Provides support for classroom equipment and technology.
- Responds quickly to classroom issues at: 614-688-4357 (HELP), option 4.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Younkin Success Center (academic services & tutoring)
- IT Service Desk 24-hour 7-day technology support
- Student Advocacy (students in crisis)
- Student Life Disability Services
- Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Committee on Academic Misconduct
- University Policies
- Safe and Healthy Buckeyes (COVID-19 response)
- Keep Teaching

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