

**PRC INSTRUCTOR HANDBOOK, 2024**



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## About the Program in Rhetoric and Composition

The Program in Rhetoric and Composition (PRC) develops and manages writing courses that help students become better writers, thinkers, researchers, and rhetoricians. These courses emphasize the development of the reading, writing, thinking, and research skills and processes necessary for student success in the University and beyond. In addition to first-year writing, the Program offers undergraduate courses in developmental writing, advanced composition, essay writing, and technical writing. A Focused Study in Rhetoric and Composition is also available as a secondary emphasis for students working towards the Ph.D. in English or the M.F.A. in Creative Writing.

In addition, the PRC is responsible for scheduling all Composition and World Literature I & II courses, the evaluation of Transfer Credit Petitions for Composition courses, the approval of credit by examination petitions, the managing of the Jessie O'Kelly Freshman Essay Annual Award, the periodic assessment of courses taught in the program, and the regular updating of the curricula for the courses under our purview.

The Program currently boasts the largest teaching staff at the University of Arkansas, regularly employing over 100 teachers at the various ranks of Instructor and Graduate Assistant. As part of our commitment to providing pedagogical support for graduate teaching assistants and instructors, we train our teaching staff in pedagogy through courses, workshops, and peer and faculty mentoring programs.

## First-Year Writing Curriculum

The main purpose of the curriculum in first-year composition is to help students with the reading, thinking, and writing processes associated with academic discourses and to explore the resources the campus offers to help them develop as writers. As students receive instruction in critical reading, writing, and research, they learn and practice intellectual and rhetorical strategies (such as analyzing complex issues for an audience). Our curriculum (including our grading contract) de-emphasizes sentence-level issues, including editing for Standard American English.

First, most students take one of the following Composition I options:

- ENGL 10103: Composition I: A course designed to teach students how to conduct primary and secondary research, and to teach them to draft, revise, and edit their researched texts to demonstrate sound argumentation, development of ideas, clear organization, effective analysis, and an awareness of writing conventions. (We do offer some sections of honors Composition I, ENGL 10103H, which serves students also enrolled in the Honors College.)
- ENGL 10103: Composition 1 + ENGL 0001: Writing Lab: A pair of linked courses that cover the material for ENGL 10103 as described above with an additional 1-hour per week writing lab that allows students to receive additional support and feedback.

Some first-year students arrive with credit or an exemption for Composition I; for those students, they'll enroll only in Composition II.

After completing one of the Comp I options above, students take one of the following:

- ENGL 10203: Composition II: A course designed to continue to teach students the research and writing strategies and processes emphasized in Composition I but with an emphasis on writing in specific genres. (We do offer some sections of honors

Composition II, ENGL 10203H, which serves students also enrolled in the Honors College.)

- ENGL 10303: Technical Composition II: A course designed to teach students the process of planning, drafting and revising basic technical documents, such as extended definitions, business correspondence, technical reports, process descriptions, end-user instructions, and proposals. Any student who completes ENGL 10103 is eligible to take ENGL 10303.

### **One Book, One Community**

The One Book, One Community project at the University of Arkansas brings together faculty, staff, and students to share a common reading experience. As part of the initiative, this year, Composition I courses will include the 2024 selection, *Rising Class*, as part of inclusive access.

The PRC will provide materials to support the integration of this text into Composition I classes, and all Composition I instructors will receive a copy of the book.

### **Courses Beyond First-Year Writing**

In most cases, instructors will first teach ENGL 10103 or ENGL 10203 at the beginning of their tenure with the PRC; however, as needed instructors may also ask to teach the following courses offered by our office:

- ENGL 20003: Advanced Composition: A course designed to teach students additional research and writing strategies and processes by focusing on a variety of document genres, media, and discursive conventions. Students engage in rhetorical analysis, stylistic analysis, and adapting their rhetorical and stylistic choices to suit differing rhetorical situations. Prerequisites: ENGL 10103/10103H and ENGL 10203/10203H/10303.
- ENGL 20133: Essay Writing: A course designed to teach students strategies for analyzing and writing creative nonfiction. Special attention will be given to certain forms, such as memoir and personal reportage.
- ENGL 30503: Technical and Report Writing: A course designed to teach students the content and formatting of technical documents including formal proposals, researched reports, and revised researched reports.

If you are interested in teaching World Literature (ENGL 11103 or ENGL 11203), please indicate that on your teaching preferences form and reach out to the Director of Graduate Studies. Please note: Instructors must first teach ENGL 10103 and 10203 before they are eligible to teach ENGL 11103 or ENGL 11203.

### **Thinking Rhetorically about Audiences, Cultures, and Experiences**

The goal of our writing courses is to help students develop processes and strategies for composing in a variety of writing situations and for a variety of audiences. To best support that goal, we believe it is vitally important that students read and think about a wide range of experiences and cultures. We include the statement below on all Comp I and Comp II syllabi to help students understand our curriculum and course goals.

#### **Syllabus Statement**

Writers write for audiences, and those audiences are almost never made up of people who think in the exact same ways that they do. Part of being an effective writer is understanding who your audience is and what their expectations are. As the semester progresses, you will write in a range of genres and for a number of different audiences. To help you learn how to do so



effectively, we will read and engage with texts written by authors with a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.

We will begin each major assignment with a reading that allows us to practice one or more of the skills we focus on in this course while also learning about the cultures and experiences of the author. For each of these texts, we'll consider how the writer's own experiences and their audiences' expectations shape the decisions they make as writers. These texts will center cultural perspectives that help us better understand how all writing is grounded in lived experiences of the cultures we all come from and how those things impact our ability to communicate with our readers.

### **AI and Writing Courses**

The purpose of our first-year writing classes is to support students as they develop writing processes and skills that will help them become better critical thinkers, more thoughtful readers, and more rhetorically aware communicators. To achieve those goals, students need to engage in all the parts of the writing process using their own skills, ideas, and approaches. ChatGPT can't help them with that. It can't think for them. It can't practice the process for them. It can't reflect on their choices for them. That's all work that we need students to do.

However, we should not turn to additional forms of surveillance or create punitive policies about ChatGPT and other tools like it. Universities (including ours) will soon invest or have already invested in detection tools that claim they can identify AI-generated texts. In general, though, I (Meghan) am suspicious of detection software because

1. It contributes to a sense of mistrust between students and teachers.
2. It exploits the intellectual property of users – particularly student users – without any sort of real consent process or any compensation; if students are required to use detection software like SafeAssign or a Turnitin, we are also requiring them to give up rights and control over their intellectual property without consent.
3. It doesn't work nearly as well as it promises to. (In the case of ChatGPT, for example, Turnitin has claimed that it has a 98% confidence rate in detecting AI-generated writing. However OpenAI, which created ChatGPT, has noted that their own detection software is [only about 26% accurate, with a 9% false positive rate](#). In fact, as of July 2023, OpenAI removed their AI classifier from the market “due to its low rate of accuracy.”) And, even more importantly for our purposes as writing teachers, AI text detectors are often [biased against](#) multilingual writers.
4. Further, using AI text detectors outside of UArk Single Sign On (SSO) coverage is not FERPA compliant, and your students' data are not protected in these systems.

For these reasons, the Program in Rhetoric and Composition has largely discouraged the use of detectors; Turnitin remains available in each of your Blackboard assignments, but it is not turned on by default in your Blackboard shell. As of August 2024, the University of Arkansas has purchased Turnitin software that includes AI detection. Although we do not recommend detector use, this tool is the only detector that is FERPA compliant.

Instead of turning to additional surveillance, I want us to talk to students about the goals of our classes (the development of processes and skills to help them become better readers, writers, and thinkers) and how the use of ChatGPT and similar software doesn't help them achieve those goals. We can talk to students about the fact that ChatGPT [isn't trustworthy](#); in fact, it is often [casually \(or blatantly!\) racist and sexist](#). That's because a

chatbot [can't think critically](#); it functions based on correlations it finds in its huge corpus of web-scraped material. Based on the examples of racist and sexist outputs, the inputs include materials that are also racist and sexist. As Anna Mills and Lauren M. E. Goodlad [argue](#), "large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT are sophisticated statistical models that predict probable word sequences in response to a prompt even though they do not 'understand' language in any human-like sense." Students should know that relying on a system that is built the way ChatGPT was built may mean unintentionally relying on sources they would never trust if they weren't using ChatGPT.

Given all this, **you may not require** students to use ChatGPT in the classroom even if you leave it open to them as a possible tool at certain points during the semester. **You also may not use ChatGPT to generate feedback** on your students' writing, and you should never paste student work into ChatGPT/another chatbot or any ChatGPT/AI detector for any reason without first consulting with the PRC.

### **Addressing Suspected ChatGPT/AI Use in Writing Courses**

If you suspect a student may have used ChatGPT or another chatbot to complete work for which its use is not permitted, please contact the PRC.

### **Syllabus Statements**

#### *Using ChatGPT for Your Work in This Class* **(USE PROHIBITED)**

This is a course that asks you to work through the writing process and develop your own strategies for how to tackle each step of the process, from idea generation to drafting to revision to reflection. For this reason, I ask that you do not use artificial chatbots like ChatGPT to complete assignments for this class.

#### *Using ChatGPT for Your Work in This Class* **(USE PERMITTED WITH CITATION)**

This is a course that asks you to work through the writing process and develop your own strategies for how to tackle each step of the process, from idea generation to drafting to revision to reflection. However, writing and technology are inextricably connected to one another. For this reason, I ask that if you use ChatGPT or other artificial chatbots at any point in the process you identify the ways it was used and cite any chatbot-written content that you quote, paraphrase, or summarize.

#### *Providing Course Materials to Course Hero, ChatGPT, and Other Sites*

Please do not provide my course materials or your peers' work to ChatGPT, Course Hero, Chegg, or similar sites. I also strongly recommend that you not provide your own work to any of these sites.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

As an employee of the University of Arkansas, you will most likely encounter confidential student information in the course of your everyday work. You have a responsibility to protect educational records in your possession even if you don't directly work with this information on a regular basis as part of your job duties.

This listing of confidential information is protected by FERPA and includes, but is not limited to:

- Transcripts
- Applications
- Personnel files
- Personal information



- Financial information
- Records or other forms of individually identifiable information
- Conversations about personal matters pertaining to a student

### **FERPA at a Glance**

A federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records. It also provides guidelines for appropriately using and releasing student educational records. It is intended that the student's rights be broadly defined and applied. Therefore, consider the student as the "owner" of the information in his or her academic record and the University as the "custodian" of that record.

### **Special Exceptions**

Generally, schools must have written permission from the student to release information from a student's record. However, FERPA allows schools to release them without consent to the following parties:

- School officials with a legitimate educational interest
- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Accrediting organizations
- Compliance with judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- State and local authorities within a juvenile justice system pursuant to specific state law

### **FERPA FAQ for Faculty and Instructors**

#### *Posting Grades*

Since grades can never be directory information, it is inappropriate to post grades in a public setting. An instructor may, however, post grades if the grades are posted in such a manner that only the instructor and the individual student can identify the individual and his/her grade. Grades should never be posted by any portion of the SSN. Additionally, it is recommended that such a posted list should not be in the same order as the class roster or in alphabetical order.

#### *Web-Based Tools to Support Classes*

Courses supported by class websites and/or discussion groups must take extra precautions to not inadvertently release non-directory student information. Only directory information can be available to the general public and other class members, so it is recommended that Web-based tools employ a security layer so that only class members and instructors can access appropriate information. If you use UArk email and Blackboard, this security layer is built-in through login and verification procedures.

#### *Students Opting for No Release in the Classroom Setting*

Students cannot choose to be anonymous in the classroom setting. If a student has chosen "no release" for his or her directory information, that does not mean that an instructor cannot call on him or her by name in class or that the student's e-mail address cannot be displayed on an electronic classroom support tool such as a discussion board, blog or chat feature.

#### *Return of Assignments*

Personally identifiable information about a student may not be disclosed without the student's express written permission. Extreme care should be used to protect such information when returning assignments to students.

### *Letters of Recommendation*

Writing a letter of recommendation may require express, written permission from the student to allow you to (1) access the student's educational records and (2) disclose confidential information about the student to a third party. A faculty member may access a student's educational records without the student's written permission only if specific job duties, such as the duties of an academic advisor, require access to these records. However, a faculty member, or any other appropriate university official, may not disclose confidential information from a student's educational records to a third party without express written permission from the student. Personal observations about a student may be disclosed without the student's consent.

### *Disposal of Confidential Information*

Dispose of all material containing confidential information, such as tests, papers or class rosters by shredding or placing them in a receptacle intended for the collection of material to be disposed of in a secure manner. We recommend you keep physical records for a full academic year prior to destroying and disposing of them.

### *Accessing Confidential Student Information*

Access to personally identifiable information contained in educational records may be given to appropriate University administrators, faculty members or staff members who require this access to perform their legitimate educational duties. Faculty members do not have access to student academic records unless their normal job duties specifically require access. This type of access is termed "legitimate educational interest."

## **Title IX**

Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

The Title IX Coordinator oversees the university's compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The Title IX Coordinator works with university administration, departments, students, faculty, staff, campus police and other support services to ensure that university policies and programs foster a campus community free of illegal gender discrimination and sexual violence.

For incidents of abuse or neglect of minors, Arkansas law requires reporting of abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-482-5964) established by the Department of Human Services. University employees and volunteers must also report such instances to the University of Arkansas Police Department at 479-575-2222.

When you learn information that a student or employee was involved in any incident that may have included acts of sexual misconduct, you should contact the Title IX Coordinator immediately. If you are unsure if an incident falls into these categories, please contact the Title IX Coordinator immediately.

### **Duty to Report**

To enable the University to respond effectively and proactively stop instances of sexual harassment, employees must, within 24 hours of receiving information regarding a *potential* violation of this policy, report information to the Title IX Coordinator using the form available here: [https://uarkf-gme-advocate.symplicity.com/titleix\\_report/index.php/pid049921](https://uarkf-gme-advocate.symplicity.com/titleix_report/index.php/pid049921). Any

employee who fails to promptly report a matter to the Title IX Coordinator may be subjected to disciplinary action for failing to do so. There are two categories of employees who are exempt from this requirement:

1. Licensed health-care professionals and other employees who are statutorily prohibited from reporting such information, and
2. Persons designated by the campus as victim advocates

#### *Other reasons to report*

- Reporting the incident to the Title IX Coordinator ensures the victim has access to all available resources, including supportive measures.
- You may be helping to identify those in the campus community who are displaying prohibited patterns of conduct.
- Reporting allows campus officials to identify trends and systemic problems.
- Reporting keeps the University campus community safe.

#### *What to do if someone reports they have been sexually harassed or assaulted*

- Always consider the person's health and safety above all else. Individuals requiring medical care should be escorted to the nearest emergency room. If you believe the person is in immediate danger or may pose a threat to themselves or others, contact the UAPD at or dial 911.
- If you have been told that someone has been harmed by or has experienced sexual harassment:
  - Be attentive, supportive and listen carefully.
  - Explain the limits of confidentiality and your reporting responsibilities. Be direct about your obligation to submit a report to the Title IX Coordinator.
  - Express interest, care, and concern. Keep in mind that although what is being shared may not seem like a crisis to you, it may feel like it to that person.
  - Avoid asking questions such as "why haven't you reported this before now?" or "why didn't you call the police?"
  - Inform the individual that resources and supportive measures are available from the Title IX Office, regardless of their decision to file a formal complaint.
  - Report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator or submit a report using the form available here:  
[https://uarkf-gme-advocate.symplicity.com/titleix\\_report/index.php/pid049921](https://uarkf-gme-advocate.symplicity.com/titleix_report/index.php/pid049921).

If you have questions regarding your obligation to report under the Title IX Policy, consult with the Title IX Coordinator at (479) 575-7111 or email [titleix@uark.edu](mailto:titleix@uark.edu).

#### **Examples of when to report**

- A student tells you in "confidence" that he believes he was sexually assaulted by a fellow student.
- You ask about a staff member's bruised eye and he informs you that his partner struck him.
- A faculty member tells you a former student is stalking her and leaving her threatening voice messages.
- A student complains that a classmate often makes "sexist" comments about women.
- A student-employee tells you she is uncomfortable with an external contractor because he tells crude sexual jokes and offers to rub her shoulders.
- An employee tells you she is missing work to avoid a co-worker who had sex with her after she blacked out at a party.

- A student is concerned because a faculty member will not allow her to make up an exam after she was on bed rest for a pregnancy-related condition.

For more information, please visit the [University of Arkansas Responsible Employee Guide](#) or the [UArk Title IX website](#).

## **COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve. If there are program-wide changes to the delivery of our courses, the PRC will communicate them immediately. Please consult the University's COVID-19 information page for up-to-date information: <https://health.uark.edu/coronavirus/>.

## **Instructor Responsibilities**

The following are the responsibilities of all instructors under the supervision of the PRC. While mainly related to teaching, your responsibilities also include participation in training programs and activities, and submitting information and materials to the PRC when requested.

### **Using Blackboard to post course documents and give feedback**

All instructors are expected to use Blackboard to post course documents (including syllabi, major assignments, and grading and assessment policies/information). In addition, **you must give assignment grades and formative feedback via Blackboard**. For all courses in our office, Blackboard shells will be provided.

### **Give timely and thoughtful feedback to student work.**

Giving substantive feedback on drafts and assignments is your primary responsibility as a writing teacher. For drafts of major assignments, students should receive substantive, formative feedback on their work via Blackboard within 1-2 weeks (in most cases). Failure to give feedback may lead to an instructor's termination.

### **Meet with your class at the time and in the location assigned.**

All instructors are expected to teach their classes in the designated room at the designated time, as it appears in UAConnect. In cases where an instructor is unable to teach for various reasons, the Dean of Fulbright College requests that any instructor of record report and record their absence within one week of that absence. Please consult the PRC for this form; completed forms should be returned to the PRC via email or in person. Failure to hold class regularly can lead to an instructor's termination.

### **Hold office hours.**

You must announce to your students the **three hours per week** when you will be in your office, and you must keep the announced schedule. If possible, do not use only the MWF or the TTh sequence for your office schedule. Try to vary the days and the hours.

You will also have to make special appointments for some students, but urge them to see you during regular office hours. Don't collect too many appointments; your graduate work may suffer. If a student doesn't appear on time, don't wait. Because we expect you to be a conscientious teacher and student, you must allot only a reasonable amount of time for personal conferences with students. Try to have at least two conferences with each student during the semester.

### **Maintain professionalism in office spaces.**

As soon as office assignments are made, the English Department office staff will inform you of the office you will occupy. (For the issuance of your office key see the Key Policy page in this

handbook.) If your office assignment is changed or if you leave the department, please be sure to remove all of your belongings and return your key to the Key Office.

All staff members must help create an atmosphere of courtesy in the office. Instructors will be sharing desks and office space, so it is imperative that instructors respect each other's belongings, demonstrate professional behavior, and coordinate their use of the shared space. Professional courtesy and decorum must be observed particularly when undergraduates engage in required conferencing with instructors or otherwise make use of the latter's office hours. Grievances regarding inappropriate behavior may be brought to the attention of PRC administrators.

When your office is empty, please make it a habit to close and lock your office door to protect your belongings and those of office mates.

Please do not use nails, glue, etc. to put up pictures and posters or otherwise deface the walls of your office.

You will be asked to remove your belongings from office spaces at the end of each academic year.

### **ADA Accommodations at the University**

As noted in Policy 203.1, the University of Arkansas takes the accommodation of students and employees seriously: "It is the policy of the University of Arkansas (University) to provide equal access and opportunity to qualified persons with disabilities in compliance with Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. The University prohibits discrimination based on disability in all services, programs and activities, aspects of the application process and employment relationship. The University will make good faith efforts to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants, employees, students, visitors, and participants in programs and services." Employees may access these accommodations through two routes: the Center for Educational Access and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance. See below for specifics on contacting each office.

### **Center for Educational Access Student Accommodations related to ADA**

University of Arkansas Academic Policy Series 1520.10 requires that students with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If a student has a documented disability and requires accommodations, please have them contact you privately to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, students must first verify their eligibility for these through the Center for Educational Access (contact 479-575-3104 or visit <http://cea.uark.edu> for more information on registration procedures).

### **Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance Policy Related to ADA**

The OEOC website states the following regarding accommodations for employees: "To request a reasonable accommodation for a disability, including pregnancy related disabilities, to perform the essential functions of the job, to gain access to the workplace, or to enjoy equal access to benefits and privileges of employment (e.g., trainings, office-sponsored events, travel, etc.), an employee should submit a reasonable accommodation request. Note that, in order to assess any request for a reasonable accommodation, the University may require a written document from a licensed physician or other health care provider certifying the

nature and type of physical or mental disability of the employee prior to making any decision regarding the request for reasonable accommodation.”

### **Religion and Faith Based Accommodations at the University of Arkansas**

The University of Arkansas takes faith-based accommodations seriously, based on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The OEEOC website states the following on the matter: “Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination based on religion. This includes refusing to accommodate an employee’s sincerely held religious beliefs or practices unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship (more than a minimal burden on operation of the business). A religious practice may be sincerely held by an individual even if newly adopted, not consistently observed, or different from the commonly followed tenets of the individual’s religion. A religious accommodation is any adjustment to the work environment that will allow an employee or applicant to practice his or her religion. The need for religious accommodation may arise where an individual’s religious beliefs, observances or practices conflict with a specific task or requirement of the position or an application process. Accommodation requests often relate to work schedules, dress and grooming, or religious expression in the workplace. If it would not pose an undue hardship, the employer must grant the accommodation.”

### **PRC Policy Regarding Instructor Absences**

In the PRC, we realize that instructors may have various reasons they are unable to teach on any given day. To respond to such instances, we have the following policies that teaching assistants and instructors of record must follow:

#### *Conferences, University Events, and Religious Observances*

In cases where an instructor will be attending a conference, attending a University-sponsored event, or will need to observe a particular facet of their religion, the PRC asks that impacted instructors furnish the Office with a list of the dates that will be covered within the first two weeks of the semester. On such days, unless there are specific reasons to avoid the following, instructors are expected to create alternative instruction for their classes online. These do not have to be synchronous classes. Students should simply be given an appropriate amount of work for the day and some method of assessing student work for those days should be implemented.

#### *Sickness and Unexpected Emergencies*

In cases where an instructor suddenly falls ill or is unable to hold classes due to an emergency in their life, the instructor should reach out to the PRC to request a substitute. The PRC will either substitute the class when possible, depending on availability, or coordinate cancellation of that class session.

### **Teaching Online Courses for the Program in Rhetoric and Composition**

Online versions of all of our courses exist and may be assigned to you as part of your teaching load. Prior to teaching online for the PRC, you are required to complete both Global Campus training and the PRC’s Online Teaching Workshop (held in April or May each year). And in every subsequent year (if you’d like to continue teaching online courses), you will be expected to participate in the Online Teaching Workshop. All online courses are asynchronous, which means contact with students occurs almost entirely through Blackboard.

As part of teaching an online, asynchronous course, teachers are expected to:

- Post weekly announcements giving students directions for the weekly work of the class.



- Record and post video messages or lessons as needed (including introductory and explanatory video messages that help students navigate the course).
- Use Blackboard Groups and Blackboard Discussions to build community with students and allow students to build community with one another.
- Give timely, substantive, individual feedback to students regularly. You should give students a clear idea of your feedback policies in your course materials. In almost all cases, feedback for major assignments in online courses should be provided within one week.
- Hold conferences via Blackboard Collaborate or Zoom.
- Hold weekly office hours via Blackboard Collaborate or Zoom.
- Respond promptly (within 24 hours in most cases, unless the initial communication occurs over a weekend or holiday) to student communications, including those you receive via Blackboard messages and via email.

Please note that the expectations above follow the requirements set out in Academic Policy 1200.50 and echo the following section of your syllabus (beginning in Spring 2025):

### **Regular and Substantive Interaction policy**

Regarding [Academic Policy 1200.50](#), this course meets the regular and substantive interaction requirements for online courses. I will do the following:

- monitor your academic engagement and success and will contact you regarding your progress via your UARK email.
- post office hours in the syllabus and in the course along with the link to the online meeting room.
- post weekly announcements in the course regarding weekly course content and expectations.
- provide detailed and personalized feedback on your papers and projects. Feedback on assignments will be given within 7 days unless notified.
- respond to your questions via UARK email or other method in a timely manner. M-F within 24 hours and Sat. – Sun. within 48 hours.

Course-specific expectations can be found in the online Blackboard shells for each course.

### **Circumstances for Suspension or Termination**

Regarding terminations for cause, instructors are governed by [Board Policy 405.1](#), quoted partially below:

#### **Cause**

Cause is defined as conduct that demonstrates the faculty member lacks the willingness or ability to perform duties or responsibilities to the University, or that otherwise serves as a basis for disciplinary action. Pursuant to procedures set out herein or in other University or campus policies, a faculty member may be disciplined or dismissed for cause on grounds including, but not limited to, (1) unsatisfactory performance, consistent with the requirements of section V.A.9 below, concerning annual reviews; (2) professional dishonesty or plagiarism; (3) discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, prohibited by law or university policy; (4) unethical conduct

related to fitness to engage in teaching, research, service/outreach and/or administration, or otherwise related to the faculty member's employment or public employment; (5) misuse of appointment or authority to exploit others; (6) theft or intentional misuse of property; (7) incompetence or a mental incapacity that prevents a faculty member from fulfilling his or her job responsibilities; (8) job abandonment; (9) a pattern of conduct that is detrimental to the productive and efficient operation of the instructional or work environment; (10) refusal to perform reasonable duties; (11) threats or acts of violence or retaliatory conduct; or (12) violation of University policy, or state or federal law, substantially related to performance of faculty responsibilities or fitness to serve the University. Nothing in this provision is intended to inhibit expression that is protected under principles of academic freedom, or state or federal law.

For more on instructor appointments and terminations, please see Board Policy [405.1](#) and [405.4](#).

### **Student Absences**

You must have a clear attendance policy. The University expects students to attend class regularly; if possible, students should report to you if they are to be absent. Please tell your students to email you personally.

The University has not spelled out its policy on the number of absences permitted each student, but every instructor is required to have an attendance policy. This policy must be clearly detailed in the written Policies and Procedures portion of your syllabus. For instructors teaching 10103 or 10203, the attendance policy is spelled out on the syllabus in the Grading Contract. Here are reasons for excused absences as stated in the Faculty Handbook: "Examples of absences that should be considered excusable include those resulting from the following: 1) illness of the student, 2) serious illness or death of a member of the student's immediate family or other family crisis, 3) University-sponsored activities for which the student's attendance is required by virtue of scholarship or leadership/participation responsibilities, 4) religious observances (see Students' Religious Observances policy above), 5) jury duty or subpoena for court appearance, and 6) military duty. The instructor has the right to require that the student provide appropriate documentation for any absence for which the student wishes to be excused."

Although students who have missed class will sometimes bring you medical slips from a doctor or the Health Center, and although you will sometimes be notified by coaches or band directors that students were absent because they participated in a University activity, there is no University policy requiring an instructor to permit students to make up work except for religious holidays. You will have to use common sense and **compassion** in designing your attendance policy.

Furthermore, you must have an inclement weather policy. If the university remains open while the roads are somewhat hazardous, your students need to know your expectations. Some instructors have a set of back-up assignments for students to complete from home on inclement weather days. More and more students live off-campus and even outside Fayetteville, so consider how you will deal with this in your policy. The policy should be clearly spelled out in your syllabus.

### **Office Hours**

You must announce to your students the **three hours per week** when you will be in your office, and you must keep the announced schedule. If possible, do not use only the MWF or the TTh

sequence for your office schedule. Try to vary the days and the hours. You will also have to make special appointments for some students, but urge them to see you during regular office hours.

### **Offices**

As soon as office assignments are made, the English Department office staff will inform you of the office you will occupy. (For the issuance of your office key see the Key Policy page in this handbook.) If your office assignment is changed or if you leave the department, please be sure to remove all of your belongings and return your key to the Key Office.

All staff members must help create an atmosphere of courtesy in the office. Many Instructors will be sharing desks and office space, so it is imperative that we respect each other's belongings, demonstrate professional behavior, and coordinate use of the shared space. Professional courtesy and decorum must be observed particularly when undergraduates engage in required conferencing with instructors or otherwise make use of the latter's office hours. Grievances regarding inappropriate behavior may be brought to the attention of PRC administrators.

When your office is empty, please make it a habit to close and lock your office door to protect your belongings and those of office mates.

Please do not use nails, glue, etc. to put up pictures and posters or otherwise deface the walls of your office.

### **Teaching Materials**

Desk copies of required texts and syllabi, policy, and assignment templates will be provided for all the courses you teach. Course materials can be found online at the AER Wiki:

<http://aer.uark.edu/doku.php?id=pedagogy>.

At the beginning of the semester, submit an electronic copy of the complete syllabus for the course or courses you're teaching to the PRC office, at [rhetcomp@uark.edu](mailto:rhetcomp@uark.edu).

At the end of the semester, you will be required to submit an electronic copy of your gradebooks as well. We keep these on file to more easily deal with disputes students might raise after they are out of your class, or even after you have left the program.

Failure to follow curricular guidelines can result in the suspension or termination of an appointment.

### **Library and Research Assistance**

According to a [2018 survey](#), only 28% of students begin college with adequate preparation to do research.

The University Libraries has created comprehensive asynchronous information literacy tutorials to help students with their research at every step in the process. The five tutorials, which span choosing a topic, using the library, searching for and evaluating information, to citations are all available to embed directly into your blackboard course for convenience, and can be assigned at the relevant stages in the research process to help contextualize lessons for students.

Still need additional help or have questions? Kim Larsen, the Undergraduate Engagement Librarian, can be reached at [kiml@uark.edu](mailto:kiml@uark.edu) to answer questions and troubleshoot issues with you. She also provides office hours every week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-12 in

MULN 418 for any instructors or students that need help. For other English, Communication, and Journalism classes, contact Molly Boyd at [mdboyd@uark.edu](mailto:mdboyd@uark.edu). For more information on library resources for your classes, you can also reference the [ENGL 10103](#) and [ENGL 10203](#) Library Research Guides.

## Writing Studio Support

Looking for a sub for class? Interested in guided peer-review sessions? Could your students use a second set of eyes on their drafts before turning them in? With a plethora of resources available to help both students and instructors, The Writing Studio is your new best friend!

For students, The Writing Studio offers:

- [Online and in-person writing consultations](#) for individual students or groups
- Walk-in sessions (no advance scheduling required)
- In-Studio spaces where students can write individually or in groups
- [Online writing guides on a plethora of topics](#)

For instructors, The Writing Studio also offers:

- [Class presentations and workshops \(a good option if you are looking for a sub\).](#)
- [Online writing guides instructors can utilize while teaching](#)
- [Guided class tours](#)
- [In-Studio class write-ins with on-site writing support](#)

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Writing Studio Coordinator Dr. Chris Borntagier ([clborotr@uark.edu](mailto:clborotr@uark.edu)).

## Classrooms

Unless instructed to do so, please do not change the room in which your class meets.

Do your best to leave your classroom in a neat condition: ask students to arrange chairs in a row, deposit garbage in wastebaskets, and place recyclables in recycling containers. Be sure to erase the chalkboard/whiteboard, turn off the projector if you used it, and log out of SMART electronic equipment.

## Keys

### Key Issuance

You will be issued keys to KIMP 331, your office, and Kimpel Hall. To get these keys, pick up key authorization cards from the English Department office staff and take them to the Key Office in the Facilities Management Building (Service Center entrance on Mitchell Street and Razorback Road), where you will need to present your UA ID.

### Key Return

Upon termination, graduation, or transfer, keys must be promptly returned to the Key Office, **not the department**. Keys are not transferable.

### Lost or Stolen Keys

If a key is lost or stolen, you should notify your dean or department head immediately. The individual losing the key and the department who authorized the issuance of the key will be assessed a five-dollar charge as well as any necessary building re-keying charges.

### **Re-keying/Lock Repairs**

All lock repairs, re-keying, and duplication of keys will be performed by Physical Plant personnel. The use of non-University locksmiths or the attempted repair or relocation of locks by faculty, staff, or students is expressly prohibited. Requests to re-key facilities, rooms, etc., must be submitted to Physical Plant for review and approval.

## **The English Department Office**

### **Mail & Mailboxes**

Your campus mail, United States mail, and various announcements will be placed in a mailbox provided for you in KIMP 331. Please check it regularly, especially at the beginning of the semester, and do not have personal mail delivered to it.

You also need to activate your UARK email account as soon as possible and to check it at least once per day for important notices.

### **Maintenance Problems**

Please report such things as leaks, broken window shades, missing office furniture or personal belongings, and temperature aberrations to the office staff in KIMP 331.

### **Office Staff**

Office personnel are here to assist you, but they may not always be able to attend to your requests immediately or provide the answers you would prefer. You are to be as courteous to them as you would be to any other University official. The abuse of support staff and of the material resources they provide to you is intolerable and will result in suspension of privileges and possibly the rescinding of your assistantship.

## **Teaching Assignments**

Each semester, you will be asked for information to help determine your teaching assignment for the following semester. Scheduling is determined well ahead of the target semester, so when the call for scheduling preferences goes out, be mindful that your reply is needed by the deadline. Please note that you will be asked for preferences regarding the courses and times you would like to teach—while the PRC's administrative staff does its best to accommodate these preferences, there are no guarantees that you will get your choices in either scheduled times or courses. Assignments are tentative and dependent on adequate enrollment in each section, and changes may happen up until the semester begins. You will be notified of your teaching assignments as soon as possible. Typically, you will know your tentative assignment for the spring semester before the end of fall, your summer assignment by the end of spring, and your fall assignment as early in the summer as possible

This is the information required:

- Name:
- Any updated contact info:
- Courses you're taking:
- Course releases:
- Course preferences\*\*:
- Previously taught courses:
- Teaching time preferences\*\*:
- Unavailable times (and why):

After you've taught ENGL 10103 and 10203 at least once, possible courses include:

- ENGL 00001, Writing Lab
- ENGL 10103, Composition I
- ENGL 101H3, Honors Composition I
- ENGL 10203, Composition II
- ENGL 102H3, Honors Composition II (1 section)
- ENGL 10303, Technical Composition II
- ENGL 20003, Advanced Composition
- ENGL 20133, Essay Writing
- ENGL 30503, Technical and Professional Writing
- ENGL 11103, World Literature I
- ENGL 111H3, Honors World Literature I (1 section)
- ENGL 11203, World Literature II
- ENGL 112H3, Honors World Literature II (1 section)

\*\*Again, though, please note that we may not be able to honor preferences for courses beyond ENGL 10103 and ENGL 10203.

**You must provide us with scheduling options on both M/W/F and T/TH, and include an early morning time (M/W/F 7:30, 8:35, or T/ TH 8:00) or a late afternoon/evening time (M/W/F 3:05, T/TH 3:30 or 4:30, or M/W 3:05 or 4:35, or later).** Those who are assigned an early morning time will have priority of assignment times in the subsequent semester. If you taught an early schedule in the current semester and prefer not to do it again, please note that in your preferences. (Some people prefer these times so we don't want to automatically disqualify you from teaching early again.) Do let us know if you have conflicts with certain days and times, like childcare, commuting distances, or other jobs, and we will take these into consideration. But your teaching responsibility is also a priority, and we have to cover all sections in the schedule, even those offered M/W/F 7:30. Also, please note that we have fewer T/Th sections during prime time because of room availability.

Please list the required number of course preferences in case your first few choices are not available. Otherwise, we will place you wherever there is need.

#### **A Note on Creative Writing Courses**

Please do not list creative writing courses in your preferences since we do not make those decisions. Decisions about staffing of creative writing courses are made by the Creative Writing Program.

#### **A Note on Technical Writing Courses**

You must first teach ENGL 10303 Technical Comp II before you are qualified to teach ENGL 30503 Technical and Professional Writing. We encourage you to gain experience in this type of writing course, and we think you'll enjoy it.

#### **A Note on Summer Teaching**

Enrollment is so low during the summer that we have very few courses to offer. Priority may be given to international students who must remain employed on campus, and to TAs still completing coursework for their degrees who need tuition waivers to take courses during the summer. Only one section is assigned to each person teaching in Summer; all summer courses are offered during the Summer 8-week session.



**A Note on Online Teaching**

After you have taught for us for at least two semesters, you may apply to teach one of the online versions of the PRC courses. Before doing so, you must first complete the online teaching training workshops; please inquire with the PRC if you'd like to complete this training. More and more colleges and universities are seeking candidates with online teaching experience, so those looking to enhance their CVs should seriously consider attending these workshops and applying to teach online for at least one semester.

You must have taught a course in the classroom before you teach that course online.