

Everything to Know

<http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/>

Syllabi Requirements

Policy #: 43-00: Syllabi must be distributed on first day of class in either electronic or paper form. They must include course content, expectations, location of class, instructor contact info, course examination policy, grade breakdown, required course materials, and course goals (broad) & objectives (specific skills & knowledge), academic integrity, and info on CAPS, Report Bias, Office of Student Disability Service. If any of this is missing or changes throughout the semester, including meeting times (policy # 34-83), your professor must let you know by sending a revised syllabus to the class.

The most common issue students face are not receiving a syllabus with a grade breakdown and schedule of assignments, or a revised syllabus when their syllabus is changed.

Examination Policy

Professors have almost total control of the assessments they provide in class, but all assessments' structures must be made known in the first ten calendar days of a semester. No assessment more than 10% of a total grade can be given the week before finals week. Final examination substitutes (papers, projects) cannot be due before the Monday of finals week. If you have 3 or more finals on one day, you have the right to contact your advisor and have one moved to a different day.

Policy #: 44-45 (**Examinations for Failure Elimination**) If you failed a course due to an extraordinary circumstance, you may qualify for a special examination if approved by the Head of the Department & Dean of College, but the highest grade you can get is a D.

The most common issue students face are assignments worth 10%+ of their grade being given before finals week. If you students have more than 3 finals in one day, tell them to contact their advisor to have one moved. At least one must be moved.

Grade Basis

Policy #: 47-20: Any changes in grading basis should likewise be presented to students in writing. Instructors also should provide evaluations of student progress in advance of the late-drop deadline in order for students to make an informed decision about ways to improve their performance or, as a last option, to late drop the course.

Students should have the most updated version of their grades before the late-drop deadline.

Course Repetition

Policy #: 47-80: A student is limited to attempt any given course a maximum of three (3) times. Attempts are defined as earning a grade in a class or late-dropping the class. Any exceptions to the three-attempt limit must be approved by the appropriate academic official within a student's college of enrollment.

Students can repeat a course a maximum of three times.

Deferred Grades

Policy #: 48-40: Under emergency conditions during which the instructor is unavailable, authorization is required from **one of the following**: the dean of the college in which the candidate is enrolled; the executive director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies if the student is enrolled in that division; or the campus chancellor of the student's commonwealth campus.

Serious Issue with Professor Grading

Policy #: 20-00: A student who believes that the instructor in a course in which she or he is currently enrolled has acted beyond the limits of academic freedom may seek a faculty conference and mediation in 3 steps:

1. The student should make an appointment to discuss in person, by phone, or relying on another mutually agreeable medium, her or his concerns with the instructor.
2. If a student is uncomfortable approaching a faculty member directly, or in which a student and instructor fail to resolve the student's concern through informal means, the student may request that the head of the academic program offering the course act as a mediator.
3. A student may initiate a final request to intercede to the campus chancellor or college dean to whom the instructor reports by filing a Classroom Freedom of Expression Mediation Form only after completing steps 1 and 2. This form may be reached at this link: <http://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/R-6MediationForm06.pdf>

Examples of invalidated grades include lack of information for grade calculation, straying from the stated method of grade calculation, an error in grade computation, or "the student, through no fault of his or her own, was not provided with the same opportunity to complete the requirements for the course in terms, for example, of time, access to materials, or access to the instructor as the other students."

In summary, the professor did not follow the syllabus he provided. If the professor doesn't come to a resolution, a student can reach out to the head of the academic program. This is a serious step and should not be taken lightly.

Course Add & Drop

Policy #: 34-87 Course add period ends at 11:59 on the Sunday after the first week of classes. (7 days after the midnight of the first day of class)

Policy #: 34-89 Course drop period ends at 11:59pm on the first Saturday after classes start. (6 calendar days after the midnight of the first day of class). Late Drop period for a course begins with the first calendar day after the Course Drop period and ends on the day when 80 percent of the duration of the course is attained. An annotation indicating late drop is added to your academic record (transcript), regardless of when the late drop occurs. If you find yourself struggling with a class, you may attempt it up to 3 times. **An attempt means you earned a grade or late dropped a class, but does not include a class dropped before the course drop period ends.**

Excused Absences

Policy #: 42-27: Students can make up work if they miss class for the following: illness, injury, military service, family emergency, religious observance, field trips, athletic contests, employment and graduate school interviews. If instructors are not notified before the event, they are able to not accept the absence.

Instructors violate the employment & graduate school interviews the most.

Skipping Courses

Policy #: 42-50: If you feel like you can skip a prerequisite, concurrent, or co-requisite course for a course that requires them, just talk to an instructor or department head and the academic department will determine your fitness. Students who demonstrate full capability in the subject may be able to skip them.

It's important to stress that the administration has full control over the ability to offer this opportunity, but the opportunity should be pursued the

Developing a 3-6-9 Sequence

In consultation with an adviser and the student's appropriate dean's representative, a sequence of 9 credits may be developed in the arts, humanities, or social and behavioral sciences by substituting 3 credits from one of the other two areas. For example, a student might develop a 9-credit sequence of courses in social sciences (GS) with SOC 1 (GS), PSYCH 100 (GS), and HDFFS 249 (GS) and deduct 3 credits from arts (GA). In other words, this student's 3 credits in Arts (GA), 6 credits in humanities (GH), and 9 credits in Social Sciences (GS) would fulfill requirements in these three areas.

Downtown Student Book Store Book Return Policy

Even if you missed the initial return policy (usually the first week of school), stop by and talk to them about returning or exchanging it! They work with students very often to make life as easy as possible, and that includes a potentially late return.

Recent UPUA Initiative

Remember to mention the recent UPUA resolution to add an academic rights link on Lionpath! This could be a great resource for students to browse their rights as situations arise. Any and all student support can show administration how important this is for students!