

# Conduct of Courses

Course Catalog 2016-2017

## Academic Rights and Responsibilities

*Academic freedom of students.* Students are guaranteed academic freedom; they make known their views, confident that these will be judged by their instructors only with regard to their academic merit.

*Specification of course requirements.* So that students may be protected from sudden and unexpected shifts in requirements, instructors will provide at an early class meeting a written statement of all academic responsibilities (such as the attendance policy and the number of tests and papers) and will give the class reasonable advance notice of dates when requirements are to be fulfilled.

The instructor must explain how the final grade will be determined, describing the relative weights to be given performance on the final examination, papers, tests, and so on, and whether the final grade will be influenced by participation in class discussion, class attendance, and the like. In making assignments, instructors will have in mind the accessibility of materials or equipment and will be considerate about requiring students to leave Gambier to carry out their academic work. However, this must not be so narrowly construed as to preclude, for example, honors students from obtaining material from other libraries or from doing occasional research off campus, or art students from going to Mount Vernon to obtain materials.

## Examinations

*Grace periods.* Grace periods. The College provides grace periods during the year to ensure that 1) students have adequate time, free from extraordinary pressures, to prepare for final examinations, 2) students have winter and spring breaks free from substantial assignments, and 3) the routine work in classes during the final week of the semester is not disrupted. During grace periods, instructors may not offer final examinations. Also, instructors should not require assignments beyond what is necessary for normal daily participation in classes, seminars and laboratories during grace periods. Instructors may only schedule more ambitious assignments during grace periods if there is a pedagogical rationale for doing so, and they must inform the class of these assignments at the beginning of the semester. The grace periods are seven calendar days before the beginning of the final examination period in each semester and two days following winter and spring vacations.

*Reading periods.* Reading periods. The College provides reading periods at the end of each semester prior to final examinations. The dates of the reading periods are part of the official College calendar established by the Calendar Committee and supervised by the registrar. The purpose of reading periods is to provide time for preparation for final examinations. Instructors

may not hold required meetings of classes, give tests, assign work, or schedule alternative final examination times during these periods. An exception is made in the case of honors examinations, which may be scheduled during reading periods.

*Final examinations.* Final examinations in semester courses are typically two or three hours in length. Examinations may be three hours in length if the instructor has specified such at the beginning of the semester. Final examinations in year-long courses are given in the spring and are three hours in length.

Instructors may not accept for credit work submitted after the last day of the semester unless the student has been granted permission by the dean for academic advising and support for an incomplete. The last day of the semester is specified on the College calendar.

*Scheduling of final exams.* When an instructor examines all members of a class simultaneously, he or she must do so at the time and place announced by the registrar, except by permission of an associate provost. If an instructor wishes to cancel the original time of the examination and substitute another time, even if the entire class agrees, the permission of an associate provost must be obtained.

Instructors may schedule an alternative final examination time for the entire class as long as it falls within the final examination period, excluding reading periods. In such cases, the instructor must give the examination twice, at the time originally scheduled and at another time. Instructors who wish to schedule alternative final examinations are encouraged to indicate this on the course syllabus. If an instructor chooses to allow one student to take the examination at a different time, the entire class should have that option, even if the rescheduling occurs late in the semester.

However, if the dean for academic advising and support, in consultation with the instructor, gives a student permission to take an exam at an irregular time in accordance with established guidelines - for example, if he or she has more than two exams on one day or is experiencing health problems or a personal crisis - there is no obligation on the part of the instructor to offer the option to the entire class.

*Rescheduling exams for health or personal issues.* The dean for academic advising and support, in consultation with the course instructor, may reschedule examinations for individual students in instances involving the health of students, personal or family crises, or other extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis. However, the examination schedule is published well in advance so that students may plan accordingly. Therefore, problems arising because students plan travel without accounting for the examination schedule are not sufficient grounds for setting special examinations. If the dean for academic advising and support, in consultation with the course instructor, gives a student permission to take an examination at an irregular time in accordance with established guidelines, there is no obligation on the part of the instructor to offer the option to the entire class.

*Failure to appear for a final exam.* When a student fails to appear for a final examination, the instructor may prepare and administer a special examination. In such cases, a fee of \$35 is charged by the Registrar's Office, and the instructor is obliged to exact a grade penalty on the examination, unless the absence is excused by a dean for extenuating circumstances.

*"Take-home" final examinations.* When an instructor requires a "take-home" examination, it must be due at the scheduled time of examination set by the Registrar's Office. Instructors who wish to reschedule the due date for a take-home examination must follow the procedures described above under "Scheduling of final examinations." As is the case for other examinations, instructors may offer alternative due dates in addition to the time scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Take-home examinations may not be due during grace periods or on reading days.

*Other assignments during exam week.* Instructors may assign work other than examinations and take-home examinations (such as papers, projects, or presentations) during examination week, but these assignments must be due at the scheduled time of examination set by the Registrar's Office. In instances where the scheduled three-hour time slot is not sufficient to accommodate a final assignment (such as presentations, performances, and individual oral exams and critiques), instructors may schedule additional times without obtaining permission of the associate provost so long as they avoid creating conflicts with the regularly scheduled exams of students in the class. As is the case for examinations, instructors may offer alternative due dates in addition to the time scheduled by the Registrar's Office. As is the case with all other paper and project assignments, instructors may also grant extensions to individual students where appropriate and fair.

*Multiple exams or assignments on the same day.* Students who are scheduled for three or more examinations on the same examination day (or two examinations at the same time) are entitled to relief. Students who have three or more total assignments (exams and/or other assignments) on an exam day may be entitled to relief. In both cases, students should first notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance of the conflict to make arrangements. For additional assistance, they should contact an Associate Provost.

## **Class Attendance**

*Attendance policies.* Faculty members are responsible for announcing their attendance policy at the first meeting of the course or including such a statement in the course syllabus. Students are subject to attendance regulations as determined by the instructor of each course. Excessive absence is a valid reason for an instructor to expel a student from a course. Students receiving financial assistance from the Veterans Administration are required by law to attend all classes unless excused.

Students are expected to attend all lectures, laboratories, and other scheduled course meetings. Faculty members are expected to monitor the regular attendance of first-year students and those on conditional enrollment. Absence from a class meeting is inevitably a loss both to the student

and to classmates. Students who are absent from a class meeting bear full responsibility for minimizing such loss.

It is especially important for students to attend classes in a regular manner for the first two weeks of each course; during this period instructors must develop accurate class rosters in order to allow additional interested students into their courses. Students who do not attend classes during the first two weeks may be expelled by the instructor (see Expulsion). Instructors will define "regular attendance" to suit their individual circumstances, and students must know that many faculty members will remove those who do not attend from the very first class meeting. Students who have been so removed from a course roster will still need to drop the course from their schedule as they add another in its place at the registrar's office.

*Absences.* Policies and practices with regard to class absences are generally defined, communicated to students, and enforced by individual course instructors. Instructors will receive notification of student absence due to the following reasons: 1) curricular or extracurricular activities sanctioned in advance by the College, 2) infirmity as determined by the College Health and Counseling Center, or 3) compelling and unavoidable personal circumstances as determined by the Dean of Students or the Dean for Academic Advising. In these cases, students may not be penalized for the absence, but they should be held responsible for all course assignments. The rescheduling of examinations or assigned work must be initiated by the student.

## **Expulsion from a Course**

An instructor may expel a student from a course for cause at any time provided that, a reasonable time beforehand, he or she has given the student written warning and has, by copy, informed the dean of students, an associate provost, and the registrar and dean for academic advising. Valid causes include excessive absences and disturbances in class. Poor performance in a class or failure to submit written work does not constitute reason for expulsion. If a student is expelled from a course, X is recorded on the permanent record and is treated in the same manner as an F.

## **Student Appeals of Academic Policy**

Occasionally, students may encounter situations in which a policy in a course is apparently in conflict with the academic policies of the college. In some of these circumstances, students may be permitted relief from the course policy. For advice about these situations, students should consult their faculty advisors and/or the Dean of Academic Advising. When students believe that a course policy is not in compliance with the academic policies of the college, they should discuss the matter with the instructor first, then the chair of the department or program that lists the course, and finally a member of the administration (an Associate Provost or the Provost).