AS&E Academic Policies
2023-2024

The document below outlines policies for AS&E courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. Questions on these policies can be sent to Marcy Kraus (marcy.kraus@rochester.edu) in the Dean's Office (undergraduates) or Trevor R. Nelson (trevor.nelson@rochester.edu) in Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (graduates).

General Academic Policies

Academic Calendar and Instruction

Full semester courses:

Instructors are expected to teach according to their assigned meeting schedule. Asynchronous online activities are permissible, but the course must continue to meet contact hour requirements for the course. See the AS&E Credit Hour Policy for an explanation of these requirements.

Half-semester courses:

Instructors of half-semester courses must meet the same expectations regarding teaching schedules and contact hours as noted for full semester courses above. All half-semester courses must follow the AS&E Credit Hour Policy regarding contact hours.

Academic Deadlines

Graduate and undergraduate academic deadlines can be found at this site.

The add-drop period will be through the first four weeks of the semester. Students may not add a course in the third week of the semester, or later, without the instructor's permission. For undergraduates, the last date to add an independent study course is the fourth week of the semester.

The withdrawal deadline will be in the eleventh week of the semester for undergraduate and graduate students.

The deadline for satisfactory-fail grades for College undergraduates will be the thirteenth week of the semester for all undergraduate students. See the section on "Policies on Course Grades" and this site for information on past modified S/F and P/F policies for undergraduate students.

Interim Grading (Mid-Term Grades)

Instructors are highly encouraged to use the Interim Grade Warning system for students experiencing difficulty in a course due to excessive absences, illness or other issues. When a student's name is submitted by the instructor, an email warning is sent to the student encouraging them to discuss their performance with their instructor and access appropriate resources. Additionally, the student's advisor

is notified. The Registrar's Office will communicate on use of this system several weeks into the semester.

Course Evaluations

AS&E will conduct course evaluations for instructors and teaching assistants during the 2023-24 academic year. These will occur during the last week of the semester and during reading period. As in past semesters, instructors will have an opportunity to contextualize the results of these evaluations in relation to any disruptions caused by COVID-19 or other circumstances in the annual Faculty Activity Report.

Course Syllabi and Management

Generally Required and Recommended Syllabus Elements

Instructors are encouraged to review the syllabi requirement page for information about required and recommended syllabus elements.

Suggested Syllabus Additions

Communication with Students:

Instructors should specify how students can communicate with them. Specific information to include:
- How you would like to be addressed (e.g., Dr. Brown, Mark, Professor Brown)
- How you prefer to be contacted and what your response time is likely to be
- Online only or online/in-person office hours (best practices from The Teaching Center can be found here)
- Office hour locations for in-person and online meetings
- For in-person meetings, provide any safe-interaction instructions if relevant (e.g., use good judgement in physical distancing especially in crowded spaces, use sanitizer before entering)
- For virtual meetings, include technology platform (e.g., Zoom), access information (e.g., meeting ID), instructions for requesting a meeting, and instructions for accessing meeting room (e.g., you will first enter a waiting room, and then I will let you in).

Recording of office hours by instructors is **not encouraged** due to student privacy concerns. Students may record one-on-one office hour sessions with the instructor for their own personal use. Instructors may provide written summaries of common questions asked during office hours when useful for other students.

Attendance policies:

Please see the section below under "Instructional Policies" for information on attendance policies.

Instructors must accommodate students with disabilities related to attendance and remote learning per guidance from the Office of Disability Resources. (See this link for general information on accommodations and this link specific to online teaching.)

Students may experience a range of mental health and physical health conditions that may negatively impact their academic performance and ability to participate in day-to-day activities. Instructors may consider adding the information below as a resource to students.

The following confidential and private resources exist to help students:

- University Health Service: https://www.rochester.edu/uhs/
- University Counseling Center: https://www.rochester.edu/uhs/ucc/
- University Health Promotion Office: https://www.rochester.edu/uhs/healthpromotion/
- RESTORE Sexual Assault Services 24-Hour Crisis Line: https://restoresas.org/
- Title IX Office: https://www.rochester.edu/sexualmisconduct/index.html
- Public Safety: https://www.rochester.edu/public-safety/
- CARE Network: https://www.rochester.edu/care/
- Mindful University Project: https://www.rochester.edu/mindful/

Online Learning:

See sections on "Instructional Policies" below and information here for specific recommendations about online learning.

Academic Honesty

Faculty should keep in mind that academic honesty rules apply to courses and work completed by all AS&E students—and *that faculty are required to call attention to this policy*, as well as any additional rules or expectations they may have set for their courses, **during the first two weeks of the semester**.

Collaboration and groupwork, authorized vs. unauthorized materials, and authorized vs. unauthorized use of materials are some of the areas in which faculty may wish to consider giving specific guidance beyond what is specified in the policy (or accompanying documentation such as proctoring with Zoom policies and guidance).

A copy of the policy itself can be found on the academic honesty website, and a list of tips for encouraging honesty in online teaching and learning can be found on the instructors' resources page of the site as well. Further queries can be directed to either the Academic Honesty Liaison or the Chair of the Board on Academic Honesty (see the contact us page of the honesty website).

Updates to the Course Syllabus Over the Semester

Instructors should keep their syllabi up-to-date over the course of the semester, and notify students when an updated version is available. Syllabi should reflect current assumptions about course content,

assignments, and grading, especially if circumstances surrounding the course change. Students often depend on syllabi as the "document of record" to understand the instructor's current expectations for the course. Other course materials updated over the semester should also be easily accessible to students, and students should be instructed on how to find these materials.

Instructional Policies

Student Arrival & Beginning of the Semester

The AS&E Dean's Office sends out a "First Day of Class" memo prior to the start of each semester. This document contains important information about the start of the semester, related administrative matters, and any important updates.

Instructors are encouraged to show short-term flexibility in attendance and access to course materials for students indicating travel difficulties that are outside of their control, as they return to school.

Accommodations for Remote Learning

Students will not be allowed to learn remotely except as outlined below. **Instructors who receive requests directly from students to learn remotely for all or part of the semester should not approve these requests.** Please direct undergraduate students to their College advisor or an advisor in the College Center for Advising Services, and graduate students to the Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs office, to obtain assistance.

Students who believe that they have a medical condition preventing them from attending in person may submit a request for an accommodation with Disability Resources. Students should follow the procedures outlined at the Disability Resources [website](#), including the submission of supporting documentation. *All requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; as with all requests, this does not guarantee that an accommodation will be granted*.

Graduate students who have completed their formal coursework may petition the Dean of Graduate Education for *in absentia* status according to the normal procedure described [here](#). Please note that the support of the advisor and a clear plan for facilitating dissertation research are required for a petition to be successful.

Course Modality

All AS&E courses will be conducted in person.

As in past semesters, there may be some instructors interested in adding an online element to their courses. This may be due to the structure of the course or based on successful online learning techniques from previous semesters, i.e., when there is evidence of positive effects on student learning from previous semesters or pedagogical studies. **The Dean's Office supports these innovations as long they do not exceed 33% of the contact hours for the course, and with the approval of the instructor's**

department or program. "Contact hours" are defined as faculty-led instructional time, i.e., the time that instructors (or other instructional staff) spend in direct engagement with students in the course.

Note that blended learning techniques such as "flipped classrooms" will also be allowed without Dean's Office approval. In contrast to the above, these techniques typically re-organize traditional course activities (lectures, discussions, reading, etc.) without replacing in-person class time with solely online content.

The standard above is considered a minimum standard at the school level. Departments and programs can set more stringent standards if desired. Instructors should contact their department or program chair if unclear on departmental or program expectations.

Instructors who feel that they have a strong pedagogical reason to teach more of their course online beyond the standards set above must receive permission in advance of the semester. The Dean's Office requests that these instructors first contact their department chair or program director to obtain their support. If the chair/director supports the request, they should forward to Elaine Sia (elaine.sia@rochester.edu) for review by the AS&E deans. These requests should clearly outline the educational benefit to students of exceeding the standard for online content.

Instructors who believe that they have a medical condition that prevents them from providing in-person instruction should request a disability accommodation through the Office of Disability Resources. Information on this process can be found at [this link](#).

Accommodations for Students Experiencing illnesses or Other Personal Circumstances

The AS&E dean's office encourages instructors to practice flexibility around any students reporting illness from influenza, colds, COVID, or other infectious diseases. We have placed a high priority on reducing the transmission of illness between instructors, students, and staff, and as such, ill students should be discouraged from attending class or course-related activities.

Although continuing to encourage flexibility on the part of instructors, instructors are allowed to set parameters around illness notifications (e.g. requiring prior notification whenever possible), excused and unexcused absences, and to request documentation or other evidence of illness from students. However, instructors should also be aware that UHS will not necessarily be in a position to offer verification of illness, limiting the ability of students to provide official documentation in some cases.

In addition, instructors are no longer required to provide Zoom access and recording of lectures for students who are experiencing illness or are in isolation. However, instructors should be prepared to provide alternative options for students to obtain missed course materials in those situations.

Instructors may continue to offer Zoom access or record courses for pedagogical reasons or to accommodate student illness. These recordings should continue to follow the best practices outlined on [The Learning Center](#) website.

On occasion, students may reach out initially to CCAS, the Title IX Office, CARE, or the Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs office regarding illness or other personal circumstances. Depending on the situation, these offices may request that instructors consider offering flexibility to those students. The Dean's Office encourages instructors to support these requests when reasonable and possible.

Please note that COVID-related illness will not generally be considered an official disability requiring accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This will typically be the case even if the student has an existing approved disability accommodation through Disability Resources. As a result, students should be referred to CCAS or the Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs office. These offices will be able to assist students and refer students to the Office of Disability Resources in those rare cases that it might be appropriate.

In a small number of cases, instructors will need to provide remote instruction for students with approved medical accommodations through Disability Resources. Instructors will receive direct notification from Disability Resources for those students needing this accommodation.

Masking and Vaccination Requirements for Instructors and Students

The University revised its rules regarding masking on campus on October 4, 2022. The new policy removes the requirement for masking on University campuses and/or University transportation/shuttles. The full policy can be found at this link.

As such, instructors must follow University rules for masking and are not allowed to create class rules for students that deviate from this policy.

Effective June 5, 2023, the University ended their COVID vaccination mandate for students, staff and faculty. This decision was made in accordance with the end of the federal COVID public health emergency.

Accessibility and Closed Captioning of Lectures and Other Course-Related Activities

As a best practice, AS&E encourages all instructors to caption course materials, including recorded lectures, when possible. Captioning resources and best practices for developing inclusive courses can be found on the Office of Disability Resources' webpage on digital accessibility. Computer-generated captioning is available for videos uploaded through Panopto but should be manually added and edited for accuracy.

Instructors of students with disabilities who require captioned media as an accommodation will be notified via a student accommodation letter sent from the Office of Disability Resources. For instructors of students who require this accommodation, support for captioning and transcription will be available through the Office of Disability Resources.

Off-Campus Course Activities

University travel guidance is outlined at this site.

The University has developed [guidance](#) for community-engaged learning that addresses broader issues of off-campus course activities. Instructors are expected to follow this guidance and should reach out to the Dean's Office with any questions (elaine.sia@rochester.edu).

Policies on Examinations and Other Assessments

Timing of Mid-Term Exams

Mid-term exams are expected to take place during normal class times. Exams should not exceed the scheduled time for the class, since this may cause conflicts with student attendance in other courses. Instructors may schedule exams outside normal class times, but must determine a suitable time with students and accommodate any student conflicts with exams or class sessions in other courses.

Common Exam Times

The College will continue to offer a common exam period for highly subscribed introductory courses during the 2023-2024 academic year. The Registrar's Office has reviewed the common exam schedule with the relevant departments and should be contacted with any questions.

End of Semester Communications

The AS&E Dean's Office sends out a formal communication to all instructors at the end of each semester regarding final exams, assignment of course grades, and other related matters. The deadline for submission of final grades is available [here.](#)

Reading Period

AS&E will continue to offer a reading period at the end of each semester. As in past semesters, this period may not be used for final exams, papers, projects, or presentations. Students use this period to prepare for their finals. Instructors should contact the Dean's Office if they have questions..

Final Exam Period

Instructors will be expected to generally adhere to the final exam schedule when giving final exams. (Schedules are posted on the [Registrar's Office final examinations page](#).) As in previous semesters, no cumulative assessments of any type may be given during the reading period or the final week of classes. Instructors should clearly explain the nature of the final exam and rules associated with taking the exam in the syllabus. Instructors should also discuss plans for the final exam early in the semester.

Exam Times and Exam Substitutions

Instructors should generally expect students to complete exams in-person. However, instructors may need to provide students with colds/flus and other illnesses with an alternative exam time. These can take place in-person or online and can be arranged so that multiple students who need to take the exam can take at the same time. However, instructors must be flexible in arranging the alternative exam time so that it does not conflict with class times for other courses or holidays.

Instructors may also substitute other assignments (e.g., a paper) in lieu of a missed exam. However, as much as possible, these replacement assignments must be of equivalent difficulty and percentage of the overall course grade as the original exam.

Policies on Course Grades

Grades (Major, Minor, Cluster)

For undergraduates, the general policy can be found at this site. Grading policies for graduate students can be found at this site.

Satisfactory/Fail Policy for College Undergraduates

Per existing policy, courses counting towards majors, minors, clusters, and the primary writing requirement must be taken for a letter grade. If the student initially completed the course S/F, this grade will need to be uncovered before graduation per College rules. More information on the policy can be found on the satisfactory/fail (S/F) option page.

Modified Satisfactory/Fail Policy from Fall 2020 and Spring 2021

Policy information can be found at this site.

Incompletes from the Modified Satisfactory/Fail Policy in Spring 2020

Information on the modified policy can be found at this site.

Technology Requirements for Courses

Minimum Technological Requirements for Online Courses
Recommendations are available here.

Non-supported Course Software and Teaching Tools

The College recognizes that many different educational technologies and teaching tools are available to instructors. University IT has an active program to review security and privacy issues for software and works with UR Counsel to evaluate potential liability around data breaches. Software and services that

satisfy University IT's criteria in these areas are considered "supported" and are available for instructor use.

The College actively discourages instructors from using any non-supported software or teaching tools. In particular, instructors must not use non-supported software when the following conditions apply:

- The software has not been vetted by AS&E IT and University IT and passed the necessary Information Security Program requirements.
- The software imposes additional costs on students outside those collected by the University bookstore. Up-front course costs processed by the bookstore ensure that these costs can be covered by financial aid.

Available Course Technologies

Thematic lists of supported software and teaching tools can be found at the following webpages:

- University IT's teaching and learning page
- University IT's software page
- University IT's blackboard online discussions page
- IT resources' learning management page
- Teaching Center's education technology tools page

Computing software currently licensed for student use in AS&E computer labs and remote access to AS&E computer labs can be found at:

- ECM's windows software page

Instructors may contact Jason Wagner (jason.wagner@rochester.edu) for questions on instructional software and to discuss the possibilities and process for approving new software.

Recording of Class Sessions and Use of Web Cameras

Course Elements Requiring Recording

If students are learning remotely, all formal course elements must be recorded on Zoom and uploaded for the use of students learning remotely, except in the case of class discussions on politically charged or sensitive topics. In this case, instructors should make students aware that this information may not be available for the duration of the course (or longer) and clearly communicate when this material will be removed. Instructors should also carefully consider when such material should be assessed by examinations or other means, given reduced access. See this site for more information.

For tutorials on how to record in Zoom and upload into Panopto, please see the following video tutorial: Central IT tutorials.

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Student Notification of Recording

University counsel has issued guidance that instructors should notify students when course sessions are being recorded using one or more of the following methods:

- Syllabus statement (sample: "Please note, all classes will be recorded.")
- Verbal statement at outset of first several class sessions
- One-time email to all students

Among these options, the best practice is to provide this notification in writing on the syllabus.

Deletion of Video Recordings

Video recordings may be removed only once every student in the course has a resolved final grade, including the final resolution of all N and I grades. For most courses, this will be a minimum of six months and may be longer depending on the nature of the incompletes in the course (with the possible exception of class session recordings of politically charged or sensitive conversations per section above on "Course Elements Requiring Recording").