

# COURSE POLICIES

## Course Registration Policy

Students must register for courses in RamPortal, an online tool available to all active students at West Chester University.

### Registration Order

The Registrar's Office assigns students scheduling times in compliance with the University's Priority Registration Policy (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/enrolling-in-withdrawing-from-courses/>). Students are not eligible for enrollment into courses prior to their enrollment time.

### Registration Timeline

Students are expected to register at their assigned registration time. All semester registrations should be completed prior to the start of the semester. Final registration must be completed by the add/drop deadline for the semester.

### Waitlists

If there are no seats available in a course, students may add themselves to the waitlist if one is available. Students are permitted to waitlist up to 7 credit hours. Students are not officially registered in the class when on the waitlist nor are they guaranteed enrollment into waitlisted courses.

### General Policies

- Students can only attend courses for which they are registered. Individuals not registered for a course may attend classes on a temporary basis at the discretion of the faculty member. \*For students requesting in-classroom support, contact the Office of Educational Accessibility (OEA).
- Students are financially responsible for all courses in which they are registered. To reduce or eliminate financial responsibility, students must officially drop courses prior to the add/drop deadline or completely withdraw from the University for the term in accordance with the University's Policy on Adjustment of Tuition and Fees (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/general-information/tuition-fees-financial-aid/refund-information/>).
- Students must meet all course prerequisites and co-requisites to register for courses. Exceptions may be considered by the Department chairperson.
- Students with a hold on their records will not be allowed to register until the hold is cleared.
- Students should discuss course registrations with their academic advisor. Undergraduate students will have an Advisor Hold applied each semester, which will prevent registration until they have consulted with their academic advisor.

### Workshops

The number 598 following the departmental prefix indicates an "open" workshop that allows the departments to offer a variety of short-term seminars in specific subjects under this designation. Such workshops may or may not carry credit in a graduate degree program.

### Course Credit by Examination

Credit by examination may not be taken for graduate course work.

### Pass/Fail Grades

The pass/fail option is not available to graduate students for graduate or undergraduate courses.

### Course Repeat Policy

Graduate students may repeat up to two courses, which are being applied to their degree. Courses may be repeated only once. Both grades earned for a course will remain on the student's record; however, the

most recent grade (whether it is higher or lower) will be used in the GPA calculation.

This policy also applies to courses taken at the undergraduate level and applied to the graduate degree or certificate or teacher certification program, or taken as a prerequisite for the program.

### Graduate-Level Course Numbering System

- 500 - 600 series graduate-level courses
- 700 - 800 series doctoral-level courses

Course numbering within a series is at the discretion of the department offering the course.

### Graduate Students Taking Undergraduate Courses for Graduate Credit

Some departments have identified selected undergraduate courses that may be taken by graduate students (under departmental advisement) for graduate credit. No more than six credits of specifically designated 400-level courses may be applied to the awarding of the graduate degree. See departmental listings (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/general-information/index-course-prefix-guide/program-index/>). All undergraduate credits, even those applied towards a graduate degree or certificate or certification program, will not be certified as graduate credit by The Graduate School for any reason (e.g., notification to employer, or transfer of credits to another institution). Students must also file the proper form with The Graduate School via the school's website (<http://www.wcupa.edu/Grad/>).

### University-Excused Absences Policy

#### Policy Statement

Undergraduate and graduate students with a university-excused absence will be allowed to make up, at an alternative time to be determined by the professor, scheduled examinations or quizzes that will be missed. The professor will designate such times prior to the event and the make-up should be as soon as possible following the missed class. Professors can provide a fair alternative to taking the examination or quiz that will be missed. Students must recognize that some activities cannot be directly made up (e.g., a laboratory, group presentation, off-campus experience), and faculty will arrange a fair alternative to the missed work. Students in programs with external accrediting bodies must also be aware that there may be attendance requirements that cannot be made up.

#### Examples and Implementation

The following are examples of university-excused absences:

I. Students participating in university-sanctioned events, such as the Marching Band and NCAA athletic events, will be granted an excused absence(s) by the respective faculty members for class periods missed. Students must submit university-excused absence documentation on university letterhead signed by the activity director, coach, or advisor detailing the specifics of the event in advance.

Specific requirements include the following:

1. Responsibility for meeting academic requirements rests with the student.
2. Students are expected to notify and provide the required documentation to their professors as soon as they know they will be missing class due to a university-sanctioned event.
3. Students are expected to complete the work requirement for each class and turn in assignments due on days of the event prior to their due dates unless other arrangements are made with the professor.
4. If a scheduled event is postponed or canceled, the student is expected to attend class.
5. Students are not excused from classes for practice on nonevent days.

The following are specifics for the student athlete:

1. The student athlete is expected, where possible, to schedule classes on days and at hours that do not conflict with athletic schedules.
2. Athletes are not excused from classes for practice or training-room treatment on non-game days.

II. West Chester University recognizes required service in the United States military, including but not limited to the Pennsylvania National Guard, as a legitimate reason to miss up to 2 weeks during a 15-week semester, or the equivalent. Service members must submit a copy of their orders to the Registrar's Office (<https://www.wcupa.edu/registrar/>). The Registrar's Office will communicate with respective faculty members and the student will be granted a university-excused absence(s) for the class period(s) missed. Service members required to miss more than 2 weeks during a 15-week semester, or the equivalent, can withdraw from the term in a non-punitive manner in accordance with Pennsylvania state law. Students are expected to work closely with faculty and the Registrar's Office to ensure their academic success.

III. In the event of a student's medical emergency, including serious health conditions as outlined in the Family and Medical Leave Act, or the death of a student's immediate family member, faculty members are expected to provide, within reason, an opportunity for students to make up work. Students are responsible for contacting Student Assistance ([https://www.wcupa.edu/\\_services/STU/health-and-wellness/student-assistance.aspx](https://www.wcupa.edu/_services/STU/health-and-wellness/student-assistance.aspx)) for documentation as soon as possible to facilitate make-up course work.

IV. Consistent with guidelines set forth by the Family and Medical Leave Act, students who become parents of new children or have children with serious health conditions that require the student-parent to miss up to 2 weeks during a 15-week semester, or the equivalent, will be given a university-excused absence for the courses that are missed. Students are responsible for contacting Student Assistance ([https://www.wcupa.edu/\\_services/STU/health-and-wellness/student-assistance.aspx](https://www.wcupa.edu/_services/STU/health-and-wellness/student-assistance.aspx)) for documentation as soon as possible to facilitate make-up course work. Students required to miss more than 2 weeks during a 15-week semester, or the equivalent, can withdraw from the term up until the term-withdraw deadline.

V. West Chester University acknowledges excused absences in accordance with federal and state legal statutes, including but not limited to compliance with jury duty, subpoenas, and notices of deposition. Students are responsible for contacting Student Assistance ([https://www.wcupa.edu/\\_services/STU/health-and-wellness/student-assistance.aspx](https://www.wcupa.edu/_services/STU/health-and-wellness/student-assistance.aspx)) for documentation as soon as possible to facilitate make-up course work.

## Closed Captioning Policy

West Chester University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities as defined by Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with hearing deficits or other documented disabilities can contact the Office of Educational Accessibility (OEA) (<https://www.wcupa.edu/universityCollege/OEA/>) to set up alternative forms of classroom assistance.

The University recognizes that the most efficient means of providing equal access to video media is through use of products with open or closed captioning and/or subtitles. When faculty utilizes essential video material, they should ascertain if a captioned version is available. If such a version is available, the faculty member is required to use it.

## Disruptive Classroom Behavior Policy

1. Definition of disruptive classroom behavior
  - a. Disruptive behavior is defined as an act that is disorderly, that might include but is not limited to that which disrespects, disrupts, harasses, coerces, or abuses, and/or might threaten or

harm property or person, so that it interferes with an orderly classroom, teaching process, or learning function.

- b. Such behavior originates in a classroom, faculty member's office, or other site so long as it is related to the academic classroom or classroom function.
2. Limitation of Policy
  - a. This policy addresses only student classroom behavior as defined here. Nonacademic student behavior is addressed in the Student Code of Conduct and the Judicial Board process as outlined in the *Ram's Eye View*.
3. Classroom Management
  - a. This policy acknowledges the need for protection of academic freedom in the classroom, for faculty authority in classroom management, and for faculty and student safety in the classroom.
4. Due Process
  - a. This policy respects faculty and student rights to due process in any event emanating from disruptive student behavior in the classroom.

## Process

1. Any instance in which disruptive behavior appears to compromise the safety of or is threatening to a faculty member or student(s) shall result in immediate removal of the student from the classroom by the faculty member. In the event of imminent danger to person or property, Public Safety will be called and immediate removal shall result. Extreme or severe behavior can result in removal from the course and not merely from the immediate class. ***In this instance, the Office of Student Conduct should be notified in writing of the student's behavior.***
2. The first instance of disruptive behavior shall result in an immediate verbal warning by the faculty member. The faculty member shall advise the student of the existence of the Disruptive Classroom Behavior Policy and where it is published.
3. A second instance of disruptive behavior shall result in the removal of the student from class for the remainder of the class period. ***The faculty member should document the behavior and report the incidence to the Office of Student Conduct.***
4. A third instance of disruptive behavior shall result in permanent removal of the student from the class.

## Temporary Removal

1. A student who has been asked to leave the classroom must meet with the faculty member prior to returning to the next class.
2. A student may, as the result of removal from the classroom and having met or tried to meet with the faculty member without success, request a third party agreeable to both the faculty member and themselves to assist in resolving their difference with the faculty member. They can do so by applying to the chairperson of the department housing the course in which the event occurred.

## Permanent Removal

1. In the event of permanent removal from the class, the faculty member shall notify the chairperson of the department in which the course is housed, who shall then notify the dean of their college, the dean of students, and the chairperson of the student's major department.
2. A student who has been permanently removed from the classroom shall be assigned a grade consistent with course requirements depending upon the point in the course at which the removal took place. A written statement of the reason for permanent removal shall be provided to the student by a review panel, in the event of an appeal by the student, or by the faculty member, in the event there has been no appeal. The review panel shall be the only venue for a hearing on permanent removal from the classroom.

## Appeal Process

1. The student may, within five University calendar days of removal, appeal permanent removal. That appeal shall be made to the review panel which shall be constituted and charged by the dean of the college, or their designee, in which the event occurred. The panel shall include an academic manager, a faculty member, and a student. It shall, within five University calendar days, conduct fact finding and make a written recommendation to the dean who shall provide copies to the faculty member and the student. Extension based on compelling circumstances may be granted by the dean or their designee.
2. A student who appeals removal shall be given an opportunity to keep up with classroom assignments during the time it takes the review panel to reach its decision.
3. In the event that the student's behavior was perceived as sufficiently threatening or severe, either party may invoke the right to a separate interview or may submit written testimony to allow for fact finding by the panel.

## Auditing Privileges

Graduate students must declare "audit" status by the course's withdrawal deadline and may only audit one course per semester. Students must obtain approval from the course instructor, enroll in the course through the Office of the Registrar, and pay the regular course fees. Faculty may refuse to grant auditor status. Credit is not given for audited courses. The auditor status may not be changed after it has been declared. The grade of Audit (AU) is recorded on the student's transcript. An audited course will not fulfill any requirement for a graduate degree or certificate.

## Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses Policy

### Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines requirements and expectations for undergraduates seeking to take graduate level courses that are not part of an accelerated program.

### Policy Statement

An undergraduate student who is pursuing a bachelor's degree and has completed 90 credits may enroll in up to six (6) credits of graduate-level course work with approval. Applications require an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.00, permission of the major advisor, course professor, course department chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School, and must be filed in the Registrar's Office before the end of the Drop/Add period. Students are considered undergraduates until the undergraduate degree is conferred. They are thereby held to policies in the undergraduate catalog, and all fees will be charged at the undergraduate level. Students not meeting University or departmental standards will not be permitted to enroll. If a student is admitted to a graduate program at WCU, up to six (6) earned graduate-level credits may be applied to the degree program subject to the approval of the graduate department.

### Transfer of Credits

Credits earned through previous graduate study at another college or university may transfer credit under certain circumstances. Application forms for transfer of credit may be obtained on The Graduate School (<http://www.wcupa.edu/grad/>) website. The following conditions are the minimum requirements for acceptance of transfer credit:

1. The credits must have been earned at an accredited graduate school.
2. The courses taken must be approved by the department or program in which the applicant intends to enroll at West Chester and by the Dean of The Graduate School.

3. The maximum number of transfer credits that may be applied to a student's degree/program shall not exceed one-third of the total credits required for the degree.
4. The grade earned for courses to be transferred must be B or better.
5. An official transcript and a course catalog description or syllabus must be submitted. Transcripts must be sent directly to The Graduate School by the institution that granted the credits, and they must clearly indicate that the courses to be transferred are graduate courses for which graduate credit was given.
6. Current WCU students who wish to take course work at other institutions for credit at West Chester University must obtain approval from their chairperson or graduate coordinator and the Dean of The Graduate School prior to enrollment.

## Distance Education Course Definitions

### Definition of DE at WCU

**In Person (IP):** Face-to-face instruction at scheduled times and in scheduled room; may include less than 15% of instruction via distance (which may be synchronous or asynchronous).

**Blended (BL):** Combination of in person and between 15-79% of instruction via distance (which may be synchronous or asynchronous).

**Distance Majority (DM):** Combination of in person (1-19%) and between 80-99% of instruction via distance (which may be synchronous or asynchronous).

**Distance Synchronous (DS):** fully remote (100% distance) with at least some synchronous instruction.

**Distance Asynchronous (DA):** fully remote (100% distance) with no synchronous instruction.

The approved method of delivery indicates the highest allowable percentage of distance instruction; however, a course approved at a particular level of distance instruction can be taught at a lower percentage. For example, a course approved as blended may be taught in face to face or blended formats, but not in Distance Majority (DM) format or higher. A course approved to be taught 100% distance can be taught via in person, blended, or distance majority formats.

## Recording of Classroom Activities Policy

### A. Purpose

To establish university policy on recording of classroom activities including notetaking.

### B. Policy on Course Materials

Copyright protection (Copyright Act; 1976, Section 102) applies to original works of authorship fixed in tangible mediums of expression. Works of authorship include the following categories: literary works; musical works, including any accompanying words; dramatic works, including any accompanying music; pantomimes and choreographic works; pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works; motion pictures and other audiovisual works; sound recordings; and architectural works. These categories include dictionaries, directories, computer programs and databases. Copyright protection does not extend to ideas, procedures, processes, systems, methods of operation, concepts, principles, or discoveries.

An original, tangible work of authorship prepared by a faculty member is subject to copyright protection. The Copyright Act prohibits the unauthorized reproduction and/or sale of original, tangible works of authorship prepared by a faculty member, and presented, offered, or distributed during a class lecture or via official course delivery methods (e.g., a learning management system such as D2L). A faculty member's oral lecture presentation generally is ephemeral, and not subject to copyright protection. However, a faculty member has a privacy interest over the unauthorized recording of their lecture presentation, and the faculty member may generally prohibit the unauthorized recording of lecture presentations (see Exceptions section of this policy for more information about required student disability accommodations).

## C. Policy on Recording of Classroom Activities

Student-Initiated and Faculty-Initiated Recordings include audio and video recordings of classroom lectures, activities, and course material. This includes closed captioning and audio transcripts as well as any communication technologies of instructional content or communications between faculty and students. If recordings include student activities, in advance the faculty member should inform anyone whose activity is being recorded and explain the use of the recording.

### 1. Student-Initiated Recording

All student recordings in classrooms or other instructional settings must be authorized in advance by the faculty member responsible for instruction of the course. Student-Initiated Recordings may be used only for the education of the students enrolled in the class during the period in which the student is enrolled in the class. Authorized Student-Initiated Recordings are not available to anyone other than the students enrolled in the class without the written consent of the faculty member responsible for the course or university administrator.

### 2. Faculty-Initiated Recording

When the faculty member responsible for a course initiates the recording of lectures or other classroom activities in that course, and when such recording does not require university resources in excess of what would normally be allocated in similar instructional settings, the faculty member shall have copyright ownership rights to and plenary control over the subsequent use of the recordings subject to the university's authorization.

Faculty who plan to record portions of their class shall include the following statement in their syllabus:

*This class or portions of this class will be recorded by the faculty member for educational purposes. Recordings in which student activity is included may be subsequently performed, displayed, or made available online only via official course delivery methods (e.g., a learning management system such as D2L) or only with the informed written consent of the recorded students or if all student activity is excised. A Faculty-Initiated Recording that includes student activity may be retained by the faculty member only for their individual use.*

All decisions regarding current and subsequent use of recordings should further the university's purpose of developing graduates that succeed personally and professionally and contribute to the common good. Faculty-Initiated Recordings may be archived by the university and made accessible to the university community for internal use. Before any recordings are used in subsequent classes or made otherwise available, the recorded faculty member must give permission/consent to ensure academic quality and to verify the currency of the recorded content.

## D. Policy on Student-Initiated Notetaking

Only students that are formally registered for the course in question may take original hand-written or typed notes during an oral lecture presentation and may sell those notes in the free marketplace. The notes may be subject to copyright protection, provided the notes represent an original, tangible work. Such copyright would not impact the faculty member's ownership of the material presented orally, nor the tangible materials presented and/or distributed during the lecture. Audio or video recordings of classroom activity by students for the purposes of notetaking are subject to the rules governing Student-Initiated Recordings in this policy and multi-party consent laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The following statements have been developed from an interpretation of the federal Copyright Act and university policy, to serve as a guide to faculty rights on notetaking issues:

1. Any reproduction of a faculty member's original work(s) of authorship is prohibited by the Copyright Act and subject to a copyright infringement action brought by the faculty member, as

copyright owner; or by the university, as copyright owner, in the case of works for hire.

2. Notes taken during an oral lecture presentation should be an interpretation of, and not a verbatim transcript of the lecture material. Such notes generally are construed to be original. Students have no copyright ownership of verbatim transcripts or substantially verbatim notes.
3. If notes taken during an oral lecture presentation can be shown to be original, they may be copyrighted by the notetaker/notetaking service and sold to third parties, but this copyright does not transcend the ownership rights of the faculty member to the original lecture material, nor the future uses of that subject material.
4. Only students that are formally registered for a course may attend class and qualify as a notetaker. The policy basis of excluding non-registered students, or non-students, from attending class is two-fold:
  - Such individuals are not contracted for the educational services provided in the class, and
  - University policy prohibits the use of university facilities and/or property for commercial sales activities by individuals or non-university organizations.

Nothing contained in this policy is intended to restrict a faculty member's right to conduct a class as they deem most appropriate, such as electing to distribute class notes, the use of recorded lectures, etc.

## E. Privacy Policy

Implementation of this policy shall be in keeping with WCU's Student Privacy and FERPA Policy (<http://www.wcupa.edu/policies/documents/Student Privacy and FERPA Policy.pdf>) and shall recognize the University's obligation not to infringe upon the reasonable privacy expectations of faculty, staff, and students in classrooms and other instructional settings, subject only to applicable state and federal laws and University regulations.

Student-Initiated and Faculty-Initiated Recordings of student activity online, in classrooms, or in other instructional settings may be used by the faculty member and registered students for class purposes and only by the students during the period in which the course is being offered. Recordings in which student activity is included may be subsequently performed, displayed, or made available online only via official course delivery methods (e.g., a learning management system such as D2L) or only with written consent of the recorded students.

## F. Exceptions

Any accommodations for a disability, granted as a result of engaging in the interactive process with the Office of Educational Accessibility (OEA) as required by federal, state, or local law or University Policy shall be an exception to the foregoing policy requirements. Contact the OEA for current legal requirements and details on the services provided for such students. Faculty are not required to provide accommodation in the absence of a current accommodation letter.

## Syllabus Requirements and Course Evaluation Policy

### Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines syllabus requirements and expectations for student evaluation required within a course.

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## Policy Statement and Framework

### Syllabus Requirements

By the first scheduled day of class for the semester, all faculty must post a course syllabus to the WCU learning management system. A course syllabus must include the following information:

1. Official (catalog) course name and number
2. Instructor's name, office location, office telephone number/ department contact number, email address, and scheduled office hours
3. Statement of course mode of instruction (e.g., in person or distance education; if distance, the nature of the distance instruction, including percentage synchronous and/or asynchronous). Distance courses must follow the expectations outlined in the '**Distance Education Course Policy**'.
4. Time and location of courses taught in person and distance synchronous
5. Course description that aligns with the catalog description (does not need to be verbatim, but must include the key information from the catalog)
6. Required and/or recommended textbook(s) and other materials
7. Course student learning outcomes that articulate what students should be able to do, achieve, demonstrate, and/or know upon completion of the course. Course-level student learning outcomes in required courses must also show connection to programmatic student learning outcomes.
8. Information about the activities and/or assignments that will contribute to the development and assessment of these competencies/student learning outcomes -- i.e., outcomes and assessments must be explicitly aligned. For more information refer to the policy on '**Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes within Academic Programs at West Chester University**'
9. For approved General Education and Additional Baccalaureate Requirement courses (<http://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/general-education-requirements/>), the syllabus must include the following:
  - a. A statement that identifies the type of General Education or Additional Baccalaureate Requirement the course meets
  - b. A listing of the relevant General Education goals and student learning outcomes to which the course contributes (as previously approved by CAPC), and information about the class activities and/or assignments that will contribute to the development of each of these goals. Outcomes and assessments must be explicitly aligned at the level of the General Education Student Learning Outcomes, not at the Gen Ed Goal level. Visit CAPC General Education Program (<https://www.wcupa.edu/deputy-provost/capc/genEd/default.aspx>) for information about the requirements for all General Education courses.
10. Instructor attendance policy that complies with the '**Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy**' (for undergraduate courses) and the '**University-Excused Absences Policy**' (all courses)
11. Course Evaluation Policy, including reference to the university grading scale. The course evaluation policy must include an explicit breakdown of how final grades are determined and should follow the requirements listed in the next section of this policy.
12. Tentative course schedule that is compliant with the academic calendar for that term and the '**Pre-Course Assignment Policy**', and that does not assign coursework beyond the last day of the term
13. Statements common to all WCU syllabi:
  - a. Statements Common to All WCU Syllabi (Undergraduate) (<https://www.wcupa.edu/deputy-provost/facultyStaff.aspx>)
  - b. Statements Common to All WCU Syllabi (Graduate) (<https://www.wcupa.edu/deputy-provost/facultyStaff.aspx>)

feedback may come from approved site supervisors. For courses below the 400-level that use a limited number of major evaluations, students must be notified of the results of each major evaluation prior to the next scheduled major evaluation. In all courses, at least one major evaluation or substantive feedback must be provided to students no later than one week before the end of the course withdrawal period for that session (i.e., assessments delivered and graded, and grades provided to students, e.g., using D2L grade book) so that they can make an informed decision about continuation.

2. Faculty must publish the nature and number of evaluations in their syllabus by the first scheduled day of instruction for the semester.
3. Faculty are required to retain the results of all evaluations, including final examinations, for a period of one full semester before discarding them.

#### **B. Final Examinations**

1. Courses with any synchronous meeting pattern (in person or distance) are assigned a final examination time.
2. Individual faculty members may not change officially published final examination times.
3. No final examination may be given outside of the scheduled final examination time; no final examination time can be extended by individual faculty members.
4. Any course not having a final examination will meet as directed by the instructor during the scheduled examination time for a continuation of the regular class work.
5. Fully asynchronous courses are not assigned a final examination time. Asynchronous courses that include a final examination will indicate so on the syllabus and will administer that assessment asynchronously during the final examination period for that term.
6. Any student who has three or more final examinations scheduled for the same day may, no later than one week prior to the scheduled final exam time, work with the individual instructors to arrange alternative examination times.

## **Course Evaluation Requirements**

### **A. Nature and Timing**

1. Students should be provided with on-going evaluations and feedback throughout the term so they can assess their learning progress. This includes courses such as off-campus internships, field experiences, independent study, and research courses where such