



Expectations of Faculty Teaching for the Graduate School

All Graduate School faculty members, whether teaching online or face-to-face, use UMUC's online course delivery system, WebTycho. This document outlines Graduate School expectations of instructors, including their use of WebTycho, to achieve UMUC's goal of providing the highest-quality education to its students.

Faculty should contact their program directors with all non-technical questions and should work closely with them to comply with additional individual program expectations and practices.

UMUC is committed to providing its faculty with the technical, pedagogical, and administrative resources to utilize WebTycho and teach effectively. Among these resources are the program directors, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) (umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla), and the Center for Support of Instruction (CSI). CSI publishes the *DE Oracle@UMUC*, an online learning "ezine" for UMUC faculty, at info.umuc.edu/de/. CSI staff can assist with classroom setup, course design, and course enhancements. The *DE Oracle* lists CSI contacts.

I. After appointment but prior to teaching for the Graduate School for the first time, all faculty members are required to earn certification in the *Teaching with WebTycho* training course. Information about faculty WebTycho training is available at umuc.edu/facdev.

II. All faculty members are expected to be familiar with and to adhere to established UMUC and Graduate School policies and procedures. UMUC's *Policy Manual* is available at www.umuc.edu/policy. The UMUC Stateside Faculty Handbook is available at umuc.edu/faculty. In particular, faculty should ensure they comply with the following:

- Faculty with students who have been granted an accommodation by the office of Disabled Student Services must comply with the agreement. Further information is available at umuc.edu/studserv/dss.
- Faculty must accommodate students who have legitimate reasons to miss assignment and/or examination deadlines in their classes.
- *At the end of the semester*, faculty must submit final grades online according to the UMUC grade submission policies and schedules within 72 hours of the last day of class.

III. *By one week prior to the first day of class*, **all faculty members** are expected to provide the following in their WebTycho classroom(s)

- Accurate email address
- A welcoming announcement
- A complete syllabus, including grading information and course schedule. Faculty must use the approved syllabus provided by their departments; they may not alter boilerplate information and should consult with the program director on any changes.
- How and when they may be contacted and guidelines for individual consultation
- Complete Gradebook setup including all assignment titles, due dates, and weights, totaling 100%.
- The Graduate School's "Read Me First" document, info.umuc.edu/de/faculty/rmf

Online faculty have additional requirements for classroom setup by one week before the semester starts:

- An up-to-date biography
- Classroom management/"housekeeping" information about the class, including such information as the instructor's preferred file formats, naming conventions for assignment files, location(s) for assignment submission, introductory information about the course, and any required departmental information
- An introductions conference where students are able to post and interact with each other informally. (In cohort programs, only the first course need include introductions.)
- A clear location where students can ask administrative questions throughout the term about the course and the instructor's expectations. This can be in a dedicated conference or part of another conference.

IV. *Throughout the semester, all faculty* are expected to

- Respond to student inquiries within two business days, even if it is just to let students know that the instructor is working on the inquiry and will reply fully as soon as possible.
- Clearly state the criteria or create rubrics to manage student expectations regarding grading of all course requirements, including assignments, projects, and class participation.
- Provide for student diversity (learning styles, culture, physical ability) in planning and managing the class:
 - Present key content in more than one format such as by providing lectures, written discussion summaries and/or media-based content along with actively managing the weekly discussions.
 - Provide an appropriate variety and number of assessments (exams and assignments) to ensure that students can adequately demonstrate knowledge and skill in the subject.
 - Consider students' range of visual capabilities when choosing font colors and sizes, layout, etc.
 - Provide transcripts for audio/video materials. (While not always necessary, this is good practice.)
- Build use of library resources into class assignments, in terms of reserved readings and/or research assignments, and promote student use of UMUC's Information and Library Services (umuc.edu/library).
- Provide timely and adequate feedback on all exams and assignments that acknowledges strengths and offers recommendations for improvement and growth
- Post all grades promptly in the Gradebook, even if hard copies are being returned in face-to-face classes. On minor or weekly assignments (e.g., problem sets), return grades/comments to students prior to the next lesson; on major assignments (e.g., term papers, exams), return grades/comments within two weeks.
- Contact the Assistant Director, Student Relations at graduateschool@umuc.edu if they suspect academic dishonesty or plagiarism in student work.
- Immediately notify both the students and the Program Director or Department Associate Chair or Department Chair if they will be absent from a face-to-face class or be unable to participate in an online class for more than a few days.

Online faculty have additional requirements throughout the semester:

- Be "visible" and active in the classroom several times a week to let students know they are involved and "listening." Activities should include the following:
 - Postdated class announcements at least weekly.
 - Post content materials (e.g., text-based and/or media-based lectures) and conference topic threads on a pre-announced and consistent schedule.
 - Contribute to classroom conferences
- Manage conferences actively to promote critical thinking, community-building, and idea and experience sharing, treating the conference area as the heart of the WebTycho classroom. To this end, faculty should: – Create at least one content-focused conference for each week or unit of the course. – Provide deadlines and clear guidelines for conference participation.
- Bring their knowledge into class discussions, such as by initiating open-ended conference topics, interjecting as appropriate during the week, and/or providing summary comments.
- Organize class activities to take place mostly in the online classroom, rather than by email, phone, or mail.
- Remain aware of all students' activity levels and privately contact students who are not participating actively. Report no-show students to the Assistant Director, Student Relations.
- Bring their professional expertise and experience into the classroom in terms of the substance and currency of both course content materials and conference discussions.
- Ensure accuracy in all written materials, i.e., they should be of exemplary quality, free of grammatical and spelling errors, and include accurate due dates and content.