

**College of Health and Human Development**  
**Online Instructor Performance Best Practices and Expectations**

1. **Follow the established course schedule and teach within the scheduled timeframe.** If schedule adjustments are needed to meet deadlines for graduating students and others with special circumstances, make sure Penn State policies are followed.
2. **Communicate with the class on a regular basis (at least weekly) using announcements and/or messages.** Use this class-wide communication to remind students about upcoming events, reinforce deadlines, clarify potential points of confusion, highlight interesting parallels between class content and current events, etc. If you are using prewritten announcements, personalize them so that your students know that they are hearing directly from you.
3. **Actively engage with your students** by being creative in how you share your own teaching style and presence in the course. You can create a valuable educational experience for your students by facilitating their learning of the material.
4. **Establish a regular schedule for yourself to be present in the course, preferably on a daily basis, and communicate this schedule to the class at the start of the semester.** Bear in mind that many online learners are more active in their coursework on weekends. Therefore, your presence in the course on weekends will be important to them.
5. **Respond to all communications from students within 24 hours.** Be sure to address inquiries as clearly and completely as possible.
6. **Notify your class at least one week in advance if you expect to be unreachable via email or Canvas messaging or unable to respond to inquiries within 24 hours for a period of time.** (Please also notify your department lead contact for World Campus courses and the HHD Outreach Office if you must be away from your course for an extended period of time.)
7. **Grade all regular assignments in a reasonable amount of time.** “Reasonable amount of time” depends on the assignment, but for most short assignments (e.g. discussion forums, short papers, quizzes), grading within a week after the due date is reasonable. Determine what is most reasonable for the course and assignments and let your students know upfront what your typical timeframe for grading assignments will be. Also, inform them of any unanticipated deviations from that timeframe. It is very important to ensure that students have grades and feedback on previous assignments in time to make improvements in future assignments.
8. **Share feedback on assessments like quizzes and exams with students** by offering individual meetings (via phone, Zoom, or Canvas conference) and/or sharing something class-wide through announcements, message, or video about the most common mistakes. Being able to learn from past mistakes is an important part of learning. These strategies allow you to provide helpful feedback while reducing risk of students sharing answers with other students.
9. **Submit final grades in a timely manner.** Many critical processes that impact students regarding graduation checks, academic warning or suspension status, prerequisite checking for the next semester, etc. depend on submission of final grades within 2 business days following your final evaluative assignment. Instructors submit final grades via LionPATH, unless notified otherwise due to special circumstances.
10. **Provide early feedback to all students who are not meeting course expectations.** Instructors are expected to provide this feedback by participating in the Early Progress Report, a Starfish function integrated into LionPATH. Provide mid-semester feedback so that students can make important decisions about dropping courses, scheduling for next semester, etc.

11. **Ensure the security and tracking of class communication and all interactions with students** by using communication tools within Canvas and through Penn State email.
12. **Contact the HHD Outreach Office regarding any issues in your course**, such as broken links, inaccurate content, typos, or technical problems.
13. **Ensure that you have reliable and sufficient access to the same technology required for your students.** A complete description of World Campus technical requirements can be found at: <https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/general-technical-requirements>.

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

The University's ability to achieve its mission depends upon the quality and integrity of the intellectual work performed by all of its faculty and students. All members of the University at all times must take full responsibility for the integrity and basic honesty of the expression and communication of their thoughts. Accordingly, individual faculty and students are never permitted to take credit for or represent as their own work anything that in fact is the work of other persons, whether classmates, published authors, or anonymous contributors on the Internet.

Academic dishonesty encompasses a wide range of activities, including but not limited to all forms of fraud, plagiarism, any failure to cite explicitly all materials and sources used in one's work, cheating, lying, deception, and directly harming the work of others.

A statement about academic integrity is included in the syllabus of each course offered by the College of Health and Human Development via the World Campus. As an instructor, you are expected to hold students accountable for academic honesty and academic integrity violations. You must give students due process in suspected cases of academic dishonesty. In other words, you must clearly inform students of the problem and allow them the opportunity to either accept or deny responsibility for the charges no matter how strong the case is against them.

Information regarding policies and procedures for the University and the College of Health and Human Development regarding academic integrity can be found at:

<http://hhd.psu.edu/Policies-and-Procedures/academic-integrity>

**HHD Academic Integrity Contact:** As soon as you think you may have identified an academic integrity violation, you should contact Dennis Shea, Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Outreach Programs (814-863-2901, [dgs4@psu.edu](mailto:dgs4@psu.edu)) to discuss the process. This will ensure that you understand the steps involved.

**Turnitin.com:** As part of our efforts to improve the climate for academic integrity, Penn State has licensed a tool from Turnitin.com that will help faculty prevent or detect plagiarism. Turnitin performs originality checks on submitted papers, checking against searches of billions of pages from both current and archived instances of the Internet, millions of student papers previously submitted to Turnitin, commercial databases of journal articles and periodicals, and approximately 120,000 papers submitted by Penn State students. If a student's paper has strong similarities to materials in any of these searches, the software indicates the sources. For more information about Turnitin and to create an account, visit <http://turnitin.psu.edu/>.

**Ghosting:** An increasingly common problem in online courses is students hiring third-parties to complete portions of or even entire courses for them. Watch carefully for the signs of ghosting. Check file properties to see if the author name is the same as the student name. Inconsistencies in quality of writing between low value writing assignments (e.g., discussion forums) and higher stake assignments can often be a sign of ghosting. If you suspect ghosting, contact the HHD Outreach office, and we can work with you and Penn State to identify patterns of logging in and computer use that may reveal ghosting, too.

### **DEFERRED GRADES:**

If a student is prevented from completing a course within the prescribed amount of time, it may be possible for a final grade to be deferred until a later date. Please familiarize yourself with the policies and guidelines related to deferred grades by going to the following sites:

- University Registrar: <http://www.registrar.psu.edu/grades/deferred.cfm>
- Undergraduate Advising Handbook: <http://advising.psu.edu/>

In the event that a student requests a deferred grade:

- Direct the student to the information in the links above.
- Contact the individual listed below in your academic department as soon as possible for help with procedures and establishing a plan for the student.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

#### **Academic Department Contacts:**

BBH: Marc Dingman, [mad193@psu.edu](mailto:mad193@psu.edu), 814-865-5658

CSD: Navin Viswanathan, [nxv175@psu.edu](mailto:nxv175@psu.edu), 814-867-4340

HPA undergraduate program: Jennifer Deutsch, [jill955@psu.edu](mailto:jill955@psu.edu), 814-863-8514

HPA iMHA program: Chris Calkins, [cxc20@psu.edu](mailto:cxc20@psu.edu), 814-863-4791

HDFS: Shannon Corkery, [sac301@psu.edu](mailto:sac301@psu.edu), 814-863-5910

KINES: Michele Duffey, [mlp127@psu.edu](mailto:mlp127@psu.edu), 814-865-2418

NUTR undergraduate courses:

- NUTR 251: Mary Dean Coleman-Kelly, [mdc15@psu.edu](mailto:mdc15@psu.edu), 814-865-2138
- Other NUTR undergraduate courses: Lynn Parker Klees, [lgp2@psu.edu](mailto:lgp2@psu.edu), 814-863-6103

NUTR master's program: Gina Pazzaglia, [gps3@psu.edu](mailto:gps3@psu.edu), 814-865-1857

RPTM: Brian Soule, [bjs48@psu.edu](mailto:bjs48@psu.edu), 814-863-2924

#### **HHD Outreach Office Contacts:**

Susan LeWay, Director, [srl10@psu.edu](mailto:srl10@psu.edu), 814-863-7252

Mattea Derr, Administrative Support Coordinator, [mkd20@psu.edu](mailto:mkd20@psu.edu), 814-863-2212

Paul Humphreys, Financial Coordinator, [plh153@psu.edu](mailto:plh153@psu.edu), 814-863-7596

Ravi Patel, Assistant Director of Learning Design, [rep129@psu.edu](mailto:rep129@psu.edu), 814-863-7549

Louise Sharrar, Instructional Designer, [iys2@psu.edu](mailto:iys2@psu.edu), 814-865-1095

Jennifer Gray, Instructional Designer, [jlg65@psu.edu](mailto:jlg65@psu.edu), 814-863-6707

Helen Hu, Instructional Designer, [huh162@psu.edu](mailto:huh162@psu.edu), 814-863-2212