

INSTRUCTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRICULUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Refer to the *Directory of Policy Statements (DOPS)* for further information on topics below. A copy of *DOPS* is available in each dean's office and also online at www.buffalostate.edu/academicaffairs/x560.xml. Most entries below are covered in detail in the *Curriculum Handbook* (2008) developed by the College Senate Curriculum Committee and available at www.buffalostate.edu/collegesenate/documents/curriculumhandbook.pdf. Faculty should become familiar with the content.

Unit of Credit

The unit of credit used at Buffalo State is the semester hour. Consistent with the traditional "Carnegie Unit" accepted by most American colleges and universities, 1 credit represents completion of one 50-minute class period per week for one semester. The college generally expects two hours of student preparation for every hour in class. Activity supervised as a group, such as studio, laboratory, and shop classes for which little outside preparation is expected, usually earns 1 credit for each three hours of attendance. Where such activity involves substantial outside preparation by the student, 1 credit for each two hours of attendance is earned. For further clarification, refer to "College Policy on Credit/Contact Hour Relationship" in *DOPS*.

Courses

Course offerings are listed in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Undergraduate courses should be offered at least once in each of two successive academic years. Graduate courses should be offered at least once in every three academic years. Academic and Student Affairs maintains a list of courses actually offered (excluding independent study, project, and thesis) and will delete from the next catalog those courses not offered. A list of classes offered is posted by semester at www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/x473.xml.

New course proposals are initiated at the department level and are approved by the dean or faculty curriculum committee, the College Senate, and the president. Upon approval, the new course will be announced in the *Bulletin*. Guidelines for submitting new courses are provided in the *Curriculum Handbook*.

Course revisions are expected periodically to reflect changes in the discipline and literature. Course revisions include any change that relates to the content, level (first year to third year, etc., or vice versa), or learning outcomes and must take place via the regular course proposal procedure. *Certain prerequisite changes, and changes of number only within a level* (first year, second year, etc.) need only a memo from the department to the dean's office. The dean then reports in writing to the Academic and Student Affairs Office and to the College Senate Curriculum Committee.

A proposed **course challenge** may be initiated within 15 academic days of the date a course proposal is presented to the campus through publication in the *Bulletin*. All challenges are

administered through the College Senate Curriculum Committee and must be forwarded by the chair of the challenging department to the chair of the curriculum committee. Procedures for new courses, course revisions, and course challenges are listed in *DOPS*.

Course numbers are originally assigned by the department proposing a course. Changes in number sequencing *within a level* (i.e., level means lower division or upper division) (e.g., LIB 100 changed to LIB 250) may be done by notifying the dean's office, which in turn notifies the Academic and Student Affairs Office. Once a course is inactivated, that course number should not be reused for a different course, to avoid confusion. Content or level changes must be proposed to the College Senate Curriculum Committee using the Course Approval Routing Sheet and following the course proposal and revision procedures.

Course title changes *that do not* reflect a major shift in course content must be approved by the dean. Inform the Academic and Student Affairs Office via memo and copy the chair of the Senate Curriculum Committee. *Title changes that do* reflect a shift in course content must be proposed to the Senate Curriculum Committee using the Course Approval Routing Sheet and following the course proposal and revision procedures.

Programs

New program proposals are initiated at the department level and require approval both locally and by SUNY System Administration. New program proposals must conform very specifically to the requirements outlined in Section IV:01:00 of *DOPS*, which outlines the selection criteria for new undergraduate and graduate programs, the administrative procedures, and the required supportive materials to be included in proposals. Each dean's office can provide information about the latest SUNY guidelines for new programs. *DOPS* also includes the procedures for proposals for topics courses, internship courses, academic minors, graduate certificates, special undergraduate courses, and special graduate courses.

Program revisions *that involve major changes* in program content require consultation with the dean for the appropriate SUNY application process. *All other program revisions* can follow the Course Proposal Submission Policy of 2002, along with additional requirements as detailed in the *Curriculum Handbook*.

BACHELOR'S GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Goals

The general education requirement is based on the belief that all students who graduate with bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degrees should be required to take a significant number of courses outside their major areas in order to gain breadth of knowledge and experience. Through the general education requirement, and, in particular through the careful arrangement of a limited number of courses in selected categories, the college strives to provide students with a general framework for understanding the complexity and diversity of human experience, and an intellectual context from which to evaluate critically their own values as well as the values of society.

Students Entering Fall 2006 and later – Intellectual Foundations

www.buffalostate.edu/intellectualfoundations

Students who entered fall 2006 and later are required to complete the newer Intellectual Foundations requirements for graduation. See the above Web site for approved courses, and refer also to the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

Intellectual Foundations Required Credit Hours

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| • BSC 101: Foundations of Inquiry | 3 credits |
| • Arts | 6 credits |
| • Basic Writing: CWP 101&102** | 0–6 credits |
| • Basic Oral Communication | 3 credits* |
| • American History | 3 credits |
| • Western Civilizations | 3 credits |
| • Non-Western Civilizations | 3 credits |
| • Diversity | 3 credits* |
| • Foreign Language | 0–6 credits |
| • Humanities | 6 credits |
| • Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning | 3 credits* |
| • Natural Sciences | 6 credits |
| • Social Sciences | 6 credits |
| • Technology and Society | 3 credits* |
| • Writing Across the Curriculum | 6 credits* |

*These courses may satisfy multiple requirements.

**These courses replaced ENG 101 and 102 effective fall 2007 (same courses with new catalog abbreviation).

Note: Students must satisfy the requirements with courses in two different academic disciplines in the following areas: arts, humanities, natural sciences, social sciences.

Students Entering Prior to Fall 2006 - General Education 2000

www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/documents/ge2000.htm

First-time freshmen admitted to Buffalo State for the fall 2000 semester and continuing Buffalo State students who took courses as 8100 (non-matriculated) prior to fall 2000 and were accepted as degree-seeking for the fall 2000 semester are subject to meet the degree requirements as established under the Buffalo State General Education 2000 (GE2K) guidelines, instituted in fall 2000. All other students having entered prior to fall 2000 are subject to the requirements outlined in the *Undergraduate Catalog* under which they entered Buffalo State.

See the above Web site for criteria and approved courses. Refer also to the current *Undergraduate Catalog*. Under the GE2K requirements, students must complete the requisite number of credit hours in the following 10 categories.

Note: Students must satisfy the requirements with courses in two different academic disciplines in the following areas: applied science and technology, math/science, social sciences, civilizations, humanities, arts.

- Applied Science and Technology 6 credits
- Arts 6 credits
- Basic Communication 0–6 credits
- Civilizations 9 credits
- Diversity 3 credits
- Foreign Language 0–6 credits
- Humanities 6 credits
- Mathematics 0–6 credits
- Math/Science 6 credits
- Social Sciences 6 credits

Upper-Division Course Requirements

All students must complete a minimum of 33 credits of upper-division coursework (300- and 400-level) to be eligible for graduation. An exception is made for 200-level foreign language courses. Major departments provide specific degree program requirements.

Academic Minors

An academic minor is an optional study program available to undergraduate students with a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA). Each minor consists of 18–21 semester hours of course work, and at least three of the courses must be completed at this college. A complete listing of all minors is published in the *Undergraduate Catalog*. Currently, students must inquire with individual departments for specific requirements for minors. Each dean's office has a copy of the 2006 *Minors Handbook*, listing specific requirements.

Additional Degree Requirements

In addition to the general education coursework described above, all undergraduate degree candidates must meet the following collegewide graduation requirements:

- Successful completion of required coursework in the declared major.
- Successful completion of two writing-intensive (W) courses.
- Successful completion of at least 120 credit hours, of which at least 33 must be upper-division, and at least 32 must be taken at Buffalo State, including the last 16.
- Final minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.0.
- Final minimum major GPA 2.0.
- Successful clearing of all I, N, or X grades.

MASTER'S AND C.A.S. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/graduation.xml

A master's degree or a certificate of advanced study (C.A.S.) will be awarded once the following minimum requirements are met.

- Successful completion of a minimum of 30 graduate hours.

- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) in all graduate coursework.
- Successful completion of all coursework and degree requirements within a six-year period immediately preceding the date of graduation.
- Successful completion of a minimum of 15 credit hours of 600- or 700-level coursework.
- Approved candidacy and completion of all required coursework exactly as specified on the candidacy form. Changes in approved candidacy must be submitted in writing and approved by the adviser, department chair, and faculty dean.
- Submission of official transcripts to the Graduate School Office of approved transfer credit as listed on the candidacy form. Transfer credit must meet all requirements as defined under the “Transfer Credit” section of the *Graduate Catalog*.
- All graduate and undergraduate courses with grade status of I, X, or N must be completed and appropriate grades submitted prior to graduation.
- Completion of the Application for Graduation, submitted to the Graduate School Office by the specified deadline, as listed in the “Student Deadlines” section of the current *Graduate Class Schedule*. Failure to apply by the deadline date may result in the student’s name being precluded from the Commencement program and may delay the granting of the degree.
- All financial obligations to the college must be met, and all college property must be returned.

Students who do not meet the requirements for graduation by the semester for which they applied must submit a new application for graduation, in accordance with established deadlines (printed in the academic calendar for each semester and available on the Graduate School Web site), for the semester in which the requirements will be completed.

GRADUATE CANDIDACY

Candidacy is a written agreement outlining the courses necessary to receive a degree or certificate. All students pursuing a master’s degree, graduate certificate, or a certificate of advanced study must apply for and be admitted to candidacy after the completion of 6, but before the completion of 12, graduate-level credit hours at Buffalo State. A degree candidacy application must be approved by the adviser, department chair, and school dean. Degree candidacy applications for multidisciplinary studies students must be approved by the principal adviser, advisory committee, and graduate school dean. Failure to develop an approved program and be admitted to candidacy before the completion of 12 graduate-level credit hours at the college could restrict further registration.

Applications for degree candidacy are available from the academic department. The degree candidacy for multidisciplinary studies students is available from the Graduate School Office, or online at www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/forms.

The current requirements for admission to candidacy are:

1. Completion of at least 6 credit hours of graduate-level coursework at Buffalo State.
2. Completion of all required prerequisite courses.
3. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B grade) in all graduate-level coursework. No grade lower than C is acceptable to meet degree requirements.

4. Removal of all deficiencies and incomplete (I) grades.
5. If requesting transfer credit, the Graduate School must receive an official transcript from the regionally or nationally accredited institution where the graduate-level coursework was completed. Only grades of B or better will be accepted for transfer credit.
6. A minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework at the 600- or 700-level is required in all degree programs.
7. A maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study (XXX 590) may be included in a degree program.
8. Coursework taken to fulfill degree requirements for one master's degree or certificate of advanced study may not be applied toward another master's degree, graduate certificate, or certificate of advanced study.
9. A maximum of 6 credit hours of workshops, conferences, and micro) courses (XXX 594, 596, 598) may be included in a degree program.

STUDENT AUDIT SYSTEM (DEGREE NAVIGATOR)

For Faculty and Staff: www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/dn4facstaff.xml

For Students: www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/dn4student.xml

Buffalo State's computerized student degree Audit System, Degree Navigator, is designed to show individual student status and progress toward degree-specific and collegewide graduation requirements in an easy-to-comprehend format. Each undergraduate degree program has a data structure within Degree Navigator. Student information appears within the data structure for the major program. This combination of student information and major program data structure produces the audit sheet.

Through Degree Navigator, Buffalo State faculty and staff can access current audit sheets for undergraduate students, model temporary program changes, and access information about departmental programs and courses. Undergraduate students can access their own audit sheets using the Degree Navigator program. Full graduate program functionality is pending. For additional Degree Navigator assistance, contact audit@buffalostate.edu.

AUDIT SYSTEM (DEGREE NAVIGATOR) DEPARTMENTAL ACCOUNTS

Each department has its own administrative account on the audit system. Each departmental account is maintained and updated by a designee from the department, the audit administrator. The departmental audit administrator works with the Registrar's Office to ensure that student, course, and major information in the audit system is kept accurate and up-to-date. Your departmental audit administrator is your best source for answers to questions about individual students and departmental requirements.

A guide for faculty and staff, "An Introduction to Buffalo State's Degree Navigator 5" is available online at www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/x481.xml. If you have further questions about using Degree Navigator or about individual student audit sheets, see your departmental audit administrator, contact the Registrar's Office at 878-4811, or e-mail audit@buffalostate.edu.

A guide for students, “A Student’s Introduction to Buffalo State’s Degree Navigator 5” is available in the Registrar’s Office and online at www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/x481.xml.

COURSE MANAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTION POLICIES

See the *Undergraduate Catalog* (available online at www.buffalostate.edu/undergradcat.xml) and *Graduate Catalog* (available online at www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/graduatecatalog.xml) for more information on the following topics. A sample course syllabus is included in this section also for your reference in developing your course materials. See *DOPS* for more information.

Electronic Course Management

See “Section 6: Library, Technology, and Instructional Support,” page 6.4 for information on Electronic Learning, Angel, and Turnitin. The policy statement regarding textual similarity software use (e.g., Turnitin.com) is provided on page 3.12.

Class Rosters

Class rosters are available online via Banner (www.buffalostate.edu/banner). This list is updated daily until the end of the drop-add period. This roster allows instructors to communicate via e-mail to any student individually or to all students.

Textbooks and Supplies

Contact the Barnes and Noble at Buffalo State Bookstore for textbook and supply ordering information or visit the bookstore’s Web site, www.buffalostate.bncollege.com, for online ordering. The deadlines for ordering for each semester are:

- October 12 for the spring semester.
- March 7 for Summer Session.
- April 4 for the fall semester.

Receiving textbook information by these dates allows the bookstore to deal with common problems, such as out-of-stocks, out-of-prints, edition changes, and vendor changes. Also, this enables the bookstore to pay higher prices to students for their used textbooks during buy-back season and increases the supply of used textbooks available to students for the upcoming semester.

Class Meeting Times

Instructors are expected to meet their classes each scheduled time during the semester, including scheduled time during CEP (Critique and Evaluation Period). Students cannot be faulted for leaving the classroom if the instructor fails to arrive within a reasonable time. Instructors are to meet their classes for the full allotted time scheduled.

Canceling Classes Unexpectedly

Should an instructor need to cancel a class meeting time unexpectedly, he/she should notify the department office as soon as possible so a note can be placed on the classroom door. In addition, the instructor should, if possible, attempt to notify students via e-mail or Angel.

Change of Room

Instructors may not change their assigned meeting rooms without official notification to the Registrar through their department offices.

Once an official change has been effected, notes should be placed in the old room directing students to the new room (once the semester has started).

Course Withdrawal

A student may withdraw from a course without academic penalty at any time prior to the tenth week of a semester or prior to the completion of two-thirds of the days in a summer session. If a student does not officially withdraw from a course and fails to continue with the course, a grade of E should be submitted. Exceptions may be made in unusual circumstances; procedures for Waiver of Academic Regulations then apply.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are assigned by the instructor in Banner. For purposes of required financial aid reporting by the college, it is important that Incompletes be assigned ONLY for students who have been attending class. A grade of E (with Last Date of Attendance left blank) should be recorded for students who never attended. The Financial Aid Office should then be notified by sending an e-mail or memo or copy of the grade roster with non-attendeess indicated.

The instructor judges how much work must be completed successfully by the student (e.g., 50 percent, 60 percent) to justify an Incomplete, although departments are encouraged to discuss this issue and decide on guidelines. There is no college requirement for documentation of students' reasons for requesting or needing an Incomplete—instructors can use their best judgment. New faculty should check with their department chairs about department guidelines.

College policy stipulates that if for any reason an instructor is unavailable to supervise the completion of an Incomplete grade (e.g., instructor becomes ill), it is the responsibility of the department chair to do so. For this reason, some schools at Buffalo State have developed a form to be kept on file in the department office to provide the information that the department chair needs to carry out this duty.

Other Grading Issues

Faculty must submit grades for every student by the semester deadline. If no grade is submitted, the student will be assigned a grade of X by default. An X grade blocks graduation and may interfere with financial aid. Appropriate grades of E or I should be assigned instead.

Dealing With Disruptive Students

Sample Syllabus Text for Disruption in the Classroom. See “Syllabus” section below for statement to include in syllabi.

Classroom procedures for dealing with disruptive students

Our faculty and staff are expected to conduct classes or other activities and to perform their assigned responsibilities without disruption. Accordingly, a faculty or staff member has the right to ask any individual who is disruptive or menacing to leave the classroom or vacate the area in which he or she is misbehaving.

The college maintains a “Code of Student Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities” that governs the conduct of students on this campus. The code is available at www.buffalostate.edu/studentaffairs/x527.xml. This code, in concert with New York State Education Law, strictly prohibits students from physically harming, verbally abusing, or intimidating anyone, or intentionally interrupting a class for purposes of stopping a speaker. All individuals, students or non-students, are subject to legal recourse under the New York State Penal Code articles concerning criminal trespass or disorderly conduct and harassment.

Since considerations of due process and an assumption of innocence guide the student judicial system, faculty and staff should be aware of the precautions and procedures necessary to minimize the risk of personal or college liability for violation of an individual’s rights. Formal proceedings are required for students to be prohibited from attending or returning to class or other college functions. Misconduct adjudicated through the college judicial system or the conviction of a criminal charge under the Penal Code may result in temporarily or permanently barring individuals from campus activity.

The following is a guide for faculty and staff

When a student or other individual is deemed to be acting in a disruptive or threatening manner:

1. In situations where a person is perceived to be a clear danger to himself/herself or to others, the University Police Office, 878-6333, should immediately be called. The University Police Office should always be contacted if the person displaying the behavior is believed to be a non-student. The responding officer will determine whether an arrest should be made, or, in the case of a student, whether a referral to the Counseling Center, and/or a formal complaint with the College Judicial Board should be filed. If a student is perceived to be a danger to himself/herself or to others, the dean of students has the right under the Buffalo State code to recommend that the president impose an interim suspension until the case can be brought to a hearing.
2. Any student, faculty, or staff member may file a charge and refer a student to the college judicial system with or without intervention by a University Police officer. The College Judicial Board can be contacted through the Dean of Students Office, 878-4618.
3. A faculty or staff member alleging misconduct of a student should be prepared to document that the student was asked to stop inappropriate behavior. When the faculty or staff member files charges of alleged misbehavior through the judicial system, documentation such as a description of the behavior, attempts made (if any) to stop the behavior, and any other relevant corroborating evidence must be provided.
4. In some cases, a course of action, short of a referral to the college judicial system, is a voluntary referral to the college Counseling Center, Weigel 219, 878-4436. Counselor-client information remains confidential unless the student is deemed to be a danger to herself/himself or others.

Concerned faculty and staff members have several campus resources to assist them in dealing with disruptive students, including department chairs, the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Office, and the University Police. Additional guidance regarding procedural and due process considerations, including advice on documentation, is available from the Dean of Students Office, Campbell Student Union 306, 878-4618.

The dean of students recommends the following suggested action steps for dealing with disruptive students using a progressive discipline procedure.

Suggested Actions for Dealing with Disruptive Students

1. Publish criteria, standards and expectations. Include a statement in the course syllabus defining the criteria for grading and standards for student conduct in the classroom, including grade penalties that may apply for disruptive behavior. Examples of disruptive behavior can be provided, such as use of cell phones or text messaging, but any conduct the professor determines to be disruptive to the class can be considered disruptive behavior.
2. First Offense: Provide notice of disruptive conduct. At the first instance of disruptive behavior notify the student, orally at least but preferably in writing, of the date, time and description of the disruptive conduct and review the conduct standards and expectations described in the syllabus.
3. Second Offense: Assign the grade penalty (if applicable). At the second instance of disruptive behavior, notify the student in writing of the date, time and description of the disruptive conduct and inform the student of the grade consequence applied, if provision for a grade penalty is included in the syllabus for the course. If not applicable, file a judicial complaint, as described under “Third Offense,” below.
4. Third Offense: Refer the incident to student judicial for informal resolution. At the third instance of disruptive behavior, refer the student to student judicial in the Dean of Students Office and provide a written complaint detailing the immediate instance and any preceding disruptive behaviors, including information about any prior corrective notices issued to the student. The Judicial Affairs Office will seek:
 - Informal resolution, if responsibility for the disruptive conduct is accepted by the student. The minimum penalty is a warning that repeated disruption will result in a formal hearing and the possibility of suspension.
 - Formal hearing, to be held if responsibility is not accepted. A judicial hearing board will determine whether the disruption is a violation of the Code of Conduct and, if so, what penalty under the Code should be applied.

Additional Offenses: Refer the student to student judicial affairs for a formal hearing. If additional instances of disruptive behavior occur, refer the student to student judicial and provide a written complaint detailing the immediate instance and all previous incidents of disruption. A formal hearing will be held and the hearing board may recommend suspension of the student from the college; removal from only one course is not an option.

Syllabus

A syllabus is among the materials an instructor will distribute to students during the first week of classes each semester. It provides an outline of instructor/student/course learning outcomes/expectations and requirements. Syllabi are kept on file in department and deans' offices each semester.

Required and sample syllabus topics are included here for your reference in developing syllabi for your courses. These topics are universally pertinent to effective classroom management and communication with students. Instructors will add to the content of their syllabi as individual courses, disciplines, and departments require. Department chairs should provide further guidance and requirements for syllabi content as part of the chairs' training for instructors.

“Writing a Syllabus” (Howard B. Altman, University of Louisville; William E. Cashin, Kansas State University) is the primary source for the following syllabus topics. Their article has been abridged to selected topics and topics added to meet Buffalo State expectations and recommendations for faculty.

Syllabus statements

The following sections list major content areas that Buffalo State faculty are expected to include in their syllabi.

Course descriptions/objectives/learning outcomes

Altman and Cashin state that the treatment of this area, variously called course description, content, goals, objectives, differ more than any other in the publications they reviewed. The bare minimum would be to repeat the description in the college catalog, certainly a paragraph describing the general content of the course would not be excessive. Information about instructional methods, e.g., large lecture with small discussion sections, may also be included here.

Learning outcomes for each course are found on the Senate-approved course proposal, and are to be included on the syllabus. Additional learning outcomes for Intellectual Foundations should be included for IF-designated courses.

Some instructors who have developed detailed instructional objectives include them in their syllabi. Such inclusion may result in information of general course goals (e.g., the learning and application of the general principles of..., or the development of the skill..., or the development of a more positive attitude toward...) can help orient the student to the purpose of the course, the instructor's expectations, etc.

Purpose of course/course description. At Buffalo State, often a one-sentence statement, e.g., This course will initiate students into all phases of the writing process and prepare students for College Writing II.

Procedures regarding disruptive individuals

Buffalo State faculty are urged to use the following sample text in their course materials distributed to students at the start of each semester. The following is written from the perspective of the instructor.

“Procedures Regarding Disruptive Individuals: Disruptive behavior by students in my class will not be tolerated. Whenever I deem a student to be acting in a disruptive or threatening manner, I

will exercise my right to ask that individual to leave the classroom. If refused, I will exercise my right to notify University Police. The responding officer will determine whether an arrest should be made or whether a referral to medical or counseling staff is appropriate. If a student is perceived as a danger to himself, herself, or others, the dean of students may propose an interim suspension until a hearing is held. Any student removed from class will have the right to a hearing.”

(Source: *Bulletin*, November 30, 2000)

Students with disabilities

www.buffalostate.edu/offices/disabilityservices/fac-syllabus.htm

Buffalo State faculty should use the following statement in their course syllabi. See also “Services for Students with Disabilities,” page 5.8 for directing students for assistance.

Statement:

“Any student who requires accommodations to complete the requirements and expectations of this course because of a disability is invited to make his or her needs known to the instructor and to the director of the Disabilities Services Office, 120 South Wing, 878-4500.”

Academic dishonesty

This topic is often treated as a separate topic area. The syllabus should address questions related to cheating and plagiarism. At Buffalo State, it is sufficient for the syllabus simply to refer students to the official policy on academic misconduct, available online at www.buffalostate.edu/academicaffairs/x607.xml. Many students actually do not know what constitutes plagiarism. We owe it to students to explain what is considered to be plagiarism or cheating.

At Buffalo State, the *Student Handbook and Calendar* (published and distributed to all students annually by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs) includes the Academic Misconduct Policy on page 26 in the 2008-2009 edition. A statement outlining formal college policies and procedures to be followed in cases of alleged academic misconduct will be on file in each dean’s office, in the Academic Standards Office, and in the Student Life Office.

Textual similarity detection software

Buffalo State has a campuswide license to Turnitin for unlimited submissions of student papers for plagiarism detection. See section 6, page 6.5.

In May 2007, the President approved the Senate Recommendation that the following statement be included in the college catalog and also in the *Handbook*. Faculty are advised to include the following statement in syllabi of all courses using textual similarity detection software.

Statement:

Faculty may require students to use textual similarity detection software (e.g. Turnitin.com) in courses at Buffalo State College. Textual similarity detection software compares submitted student text to a database of millions of previously published documents, including those on the public Internet, a proprietary collection of published articles, as well as every student paper previously submitted to the detection service. When similarities between student text and an existing document are found, the software identifies those similarities for instructor and/or student review. (Similarity alone is not evidence of academic misconduct, as such material may be correctly cited.) This software may be used as an educational tool to assist

students in learning how to properly cite resources, to decrease instances of academic misconduct, and/or to assist in the identification of acts of academic misconduct.

(Source: *Bulletin*, May 3, 2007)

Class attendance policy

At Buffalo State, class attendance policy is established by the individual instructor. Syllabi should indicate whether regular attendance is required, requested, optional, etc., and indicate the specific consequences of unexcused absences from class, e.g., lower grade, request for explanation, expectation that the work will be made up, or action consistent with the total course performance, etc. The instructor is required to distribute copies of his or her attendance policy to each student within the first week of class. Copies must be filed with the department chair and dean. See *DOPS* for more information.

Sample additional syllabus topics

Course information (in heading of syllabus)

- Course prefix, catalog number, title, category under General Education requirements, advisement code (writing intensive, where appropriate; diversity, where appropriate; e.g., CWP 101, College Writing I)
- Any prerequisites.
- Meeting location, times (e.g., Bacon 205, MWF 10:00–10:50 a.m.), lab/studio requirements.

Instructor/department information

Instructor full name, title, office location (where to leave assignments), office hours, phone, e-mail and Web address. Identify the academic department with which the instructor is affiliated, as well as the academic school (e.g., Communication Department, within the School of Arts and Humanities).

Text, readings, materials

College-level instruction is heavily dependent upon the use of print material; if not a required textbook, then a variety of readings. These are becoming increasingly costly. The syllabus should provide students with detailed information about the following:

Textbook(s). Include title, author, date (and edition), publisher, cost, where available. Often it is appropriate to indicate why the particular text was chosen and/or how extensively it will be used.

Supplementary reading(s). In addition to the detailed bibliographic information about the readings, the syllabus should indicate whether the readings are required or only recommended, and whether the readings are on reserve in the library or available for purchase in the bookstore. Sometimes instructors make their own books available to students. If this is the case for the given course, that information might be included in the syllabus along with whatever conditions apply to their use.

Materials. Although many courses use only print material, some courses require additional, and sometimes expensive, materials, e.g., lab or safety equipment, art supplies, special calculators, etc.

Units to be studied by topic and dates

This section may include assignments and due dates.

Course calendar/schedule

Some instructors are concerned that, if they include a daily or weekly schedule of topics to be covered, they can be held legally liable if they depart from it. One remedy for this is to state that the schedule is tentative and subject to change depending upon the progress of the class. If we expect students to meet our deadlines, to plan their work, we must give them the information needed for such planning.

The calendar or schedule should also include the dates for exams, quizzes, or other means of evaluation. (We are not implying that all evaluation of students must be in groups and at the same time. A course in college teaching might require that the students be videotaped while teaching a class, so the syllabus could say “to be scheduled individually.”)

The calendar should also include due dates for major assignments. For example, when papers are due; if topics have to be approved and when; if/when outlines or drafts are due as interim steps, etc.

Finally, any required special events need to be included in the calendar, e.g., a lecture by a visiting speaker, a dramatic or musical performance, a field trip.

Course policies (suggested topics)

Attendance/lateness. (See “Class attendance policy” above.) The syllabus should include some statement about attendance (Is it required? Will students who attend regularly be given a break if the grade is borderline?) and about lateness, at least if it is penalized. (Students who arrive late disturb the class, but on some campuses it is not possible for a student to get from one part of the campus to another within the allotted time; sometimes our colleagues do not let students leave promptly.)

Class participation. If active participation is expected, the syllabus needs to say so. It also needs to explain if/how participation will be graded.

Missed exams or assignments. Since these affect grades, they are of interest to students. Syllabi should inform the students whether exams and assignments can be made up. Statements regarding earning extra credit should also be included if that is an option.

Lab safety/health. In some courses these issues can literally be a matter of life or death. Even if detailed materials are distributed early in the course, the syllabus should include a short statement about the importance of these issues and indicate that more detailed information will follow.

Grading

This topic, even more than academic dishonesty, is often treated as a separate area. Each syllabus should include specific details about how students will be evaluated: what factors will be included, how they will be weighted, and how they will be translated into grades. Information about the appeals procedures is also appropriate.

Available support services

Most college courses have available to the students a considerable variety of instructional support services. The library is probably the oldest resource, and perhaps still the richest. Therefore, it would be appropriate to include a brief statement in the syllabus identifying collections, journals, abstracts, audio or video tapes, etc. that the library carries that are relevant to the course, as well as the library Web site (www.buffalostate.edu/library) and electronic resources. Making students aware of the services of the Academic Skills Center

can be of real benefit to students, as can be identifying computer labs and technology resources available to them. Many courses have other support services unique to them. Briefly describe in the syllabus what is available, or tell students where they can get detailed information.

This *Handbook* includes an entire section devoted to providing faculty with a list of student support services. Please take the time to review Section 5, “Your Students: University College, Student Assistance, Recognizing Student Excellence” and refer and recognize your students appropriately.

DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT INFORMATION, STUDENT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

See Section 4, “College Policies.”

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

www.buffalostate.edu/academicaffairs/x571.xml

See page 4.3.

New York State Social Security Numbers Law

See page 4.4.

MILITARY OBLIGATIONS (STUDENTS WITH)

Buffalo State College policies regarding students who are called to military duty are modeled on New York State employment law concerning employees who have military obligations. The college makes every effort to respond to the needs of such students, including tuition refunds, granting of incomplete grades, etc.

“Procedures for Students Called to Active Military Duty” is available in the Registrar’s Office, Moot Hall 210.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS POLICIES

See Section 4, “College Policies.”

Discrimination Based on Religion (Policy on)

See page 4.26.

Students Unable Because of Religious Belief to Attend Classes on Certain Days

www.buffalostate.edu/academicaffairs/x568.xml

See page 4.26.

EVALUATION AND GRADING POLICIES

Notification of Grading Policies

Each instructor is fully responsible for evaluating the achievement of his or her students and is expected to utilize the best professional techniques and procedures for such evaluation. Grading policies must be distributed within the first week of each class informing the students in writing of the academic requirements necessary for completion of the course and criteria used for assigning grades. The statement should be clear, concise, and appropriate to the specific course for which it is intended. Copies must be supplied to the department chair and dean during the first week of classes.

Grades awarded to a student must reflect the faculty member's best judgment of the student's performance in course work without regard for other considerations. Students who believe they have been graded arbitrarily, capriciously, or punitively are encouraged to discuss the matter first with the faculty member and then with the department chair and dean if the matter is not resolved. (See "Academic Grievance Procedures for Students," page 3.23.)

Mid-Semester Evaluations

Mid-semester appraisal of students regarding their academic standing is required. This must be done no later than the ninth week of a semester or two-thirds of a summer session or intersemester. These dates correspond to dates for course withdrawal and thus give students the opportunity to withdraw without academic penalty.

Critique and Evaluation Period (CEP) and Study Day

Critique and Evaluation Period (CEP) is scheduled at the end of each semester. CEP is designed to provide a single class meeting during which the instructor and students have an extended period of uninterrupted time to conduct appropriate end-of-course activities. The CEP is designed for classes that meet more than once a week during the semester. Classes (evening or day) meeting only once a week have sufficient time for final evaluation; therefore, they will follow their regular schedule (exams to be scheduled during CEP).

The following regulations govern the CEP:

- A study day will occur the weekday immediately prior to the start of CEP. Evening classes meeting only once per week will not have a study day.
- All instructors are expected to meet their classes at the scheduled time during CEP and to prepare an appropriate activity that reflects the academic goals of the course and the intent of CEP. An instructor may choose, should he or she prefer, to hold a final exam, review, critiques of papers, course summations, individual presentations or demonstrations, etc.
- Instructors will not schedule a final exam prior to CEP. Instructors may not change the date and time of their final class periods during CEP. In the event of an emergency, instructors should confer with the appropriate dean and notify the vice president for academic affairs.
- CEPs will be scheduled for one-hour and fifty-minute periods. Instructors are not to increase or decrease the scheduled CEP time.

- In the event of an emergency that closes the school, CEPs scheduled for the time of the closing will be rescheduled as appropriate. An emergency CEP day is available for this purpose.
- Faculty members must post office hours during which they will be available during CEP week to meet with students.

Exam Scanning and Scoring

Exam scanning and scoring services are available through Computing and Technology Services, Production Services in Twin Rise C-3. Please call 878-5122 for details.

Exam and Final Grades Posting

Final grades must be submitted via Banner (www.buffalostate.edu/banner) for every student appearing on the class roster in accordance with the instructions of the Registrar. It is exceedingly important that grades be submitted promptly. Ordinarily, grades must be submitted within 48 hours after the CEP scheduled for a course. Students may access final grades in Degree Navigator (see “Student Audit System, Degree Navigator,” page 3.6).

Grading (Internal Controls)

The Internal Control Act of the State of New York establishes certain standards that define a minimum level of quality acceptability for internal control systems. These internal control standards apply to all operations and administrative functions.

Among these standards is the one for execution of transactions and events. Specifically, transactions and other events are to be authorized and executed only by persons acting within the scope of their authority. Another standard provides that all transactions and other significant events must be clearly documented and that the documentation be readily available for examination.

Grading and grades constitute administrative functions that are subject to the internal control standards. The advent of online grading makes it all the more important that these standards be explicated and followed.

Therefore:

- The entry of grades for students taking any coursework at Buffalo State College or any subsidiary thereof must be carried out by the faculty member in whose course the student is registered.
- In the event the faculty member is for any reason unable to personally enter these grades, a delegate must be named. This delegation must be approved in advance by the faculty member’s department chair and dean. The process for this approval will be as follows:

The faculty member shall, no later than two weeks prior to CEP (Critique and Evaluation Period), petition in writing to the dean via the department chair for permission to delegate to a specific individual. If approved, the faculty member and the delegate shall be advised in writing. The original request to delegate grading and a proven copy of the approval shall be retained in the dean’s office for inspection as needed. The two-week deadline may be waived by the dean in emergency situations.

- Under no circumstances may a faculty member delegate grading entry responsibility to an employee who is a student at the college.

(Source: *Bulletin*, April 10, 2008)

Grading System

Buffalo State uses letters (including plus/minus) to indicate the quality and status of student achievement. All grades are awarded at the sole discretion of the instructor. A grade must be submitted for every student on the course roster at the end of the semester. Grades will be converted to P or F for students who have submitted a pass/fail request.

Undergraduate grading system

A = Superior	D+
A-	D = Below Average, but passing
B+	E = Failure or unofficial withdrawal from a course
B = Above Average	S = Satisfactory
B-	U = Unsatisfactory
C+	P = Pass
C = Average	F = Fail
C-	

The following letters are used to indicate a student's status:

I = Incomplete	X = Grade not submitted
N = Grade delayed	W = Withdrawn

Explanation of undergraduate grades. S (Satisfactory) and U (Unsatisfactory) grades are reserved for student teaching or other field experiences that are not readily evaluated by the normal letter grades in basic skills courses.

P (Pass) F (Fail) grades are given for courses taken on a pass-fail basis at the request of a student. Undergraduate students may enroll for a maximum of one course each semester or summer on a pass-fail basis. Intention to take a course on a pass-fail basis must be declared by the end of the tenth week of classes in any semester or by the end of two-thirds of a class in the summer. The student must have accumulated 15 credit hours, have a cumulative GPA of 2.0, complete a declaration of intent to take a course on this basis, receive approval from his or her adviser, and file the approval with the Registrar's Office. Any course, except English composition 100-level courses or any course required for completion of a major or minor, may be taken on a pass-fail basis. For further information on the Pass-Fail system, refer to the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

The original grade submitted by the instructor will be posted if the instructor, with the student's written consent, submits a Substitute for Pass/Fail Form.

A W (Withdrawn) may be submitted only when a student has formally withdrawn from a course.

An I (Incomplete) may be submitted only when the department chair or program coordinator has been properly notified.

An N (Grade delayed) may be given when coursework normally carries over from one semester to another and when it is necessary to delay grading to a subsequent semester. This is intended for graduate theses/projects and internships. The N may be submitted only with the permission of the department chair or program coordinator.

Graduate grading system

At the graduate level, grades of C or higher may be applied toward credit requirements for a master's degree. Grades of C- or lower are not used to satisfy degree requirements. Grades of C- or lower may be repeated (See "Repeating a Course," page 3.20). Typically, no more than 9 credits of C work are accepted toward the master's degree. However, some degree programs may permit fewer than 9 credits of C work. Graduate students are required to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all graduate coursework.

A = Superior

A- = Above Average

B+ = Above Average

B = Average (required)

B- = Below Average, may be used to meet degree requirements

C+ = Below Average, may be used to meet degree requirements

C = Below required average, may be used to meet degree requirements

C- = Below required average, may not be used to meet degree requirements

D+ = Below average, may not be used to meet degree requirements

D = Below average, may not be used to meet degree requirements

E = Failure or unofficial withdrawal from a course

S = Satisfactory

U = Unsatisfactory

The following letters are used to indicate a graduate student's status:

I = Incomplete

N = Grade delayed

X = Grade not submitted

W = Withdrawn

Explanation of graduate grades. S (Satisfactory) and U (Unsatisfactory) grades are reserved for student teaching or other field experience that is not suitably evaluated using standard letter grades. S and U grades may be given only for courses so designated.

I (Incomplete) grades may be submitted only when the department chair or program coordinator has been properly notified. An instructor may submit a grade of I only when circumstances leading to a student's failure to complete course requirements are known to be beyond the student's control, e.g., serious illness or unavailability of material. The student must complete course requirements and the instructor must submit a grade change by the tenth week of the following spring or fall semester or the grade automatically converts to an

E (Failure). Should the instructor who granted the I grade be unable to evaluate whether the student has fulfilled the course requirements during the stipulated time period, the chair or program coordinator takes responsibility for evaluating the student's work and changing the grade.

N (Grade delayed) may be submitted in the case of thesis/project, research work, or an internship that carries forward from one semester to another, e.g., a two-semester project. This letter indicates that the student has devoted an adequate amount of time to the work scheduled, but gives no indication as to the quality of work. When the work is completed, the instructor submits a grade change, replacing the N with a final grade.

W (Withdrawn) may be submitted only when a student has formally withdrawn from a course.

Quality Point System

The Quality Point System is used for determining all cumulative averages. A student receives four quality points for each hour of A earned, three points for each hour of B earned, two points for each hour of C earned, one point for each hour of D earned, and zero points for each hour of E or F. No other letters carry quality point value. The instructor may choose to assign plus and minus grades as well. The possible grades and corresponding quality points are as follows.

A = 4.0	B- = 2.67	D+ = 1.33
A- = 3.67	C+ = 2.33	D = 1.0
B+ = 3.33	C = 2.0	E = 0.0
B = 3.0	C- = 1.67	

For further information on how GPA is calculated, see "GPA" in the index of the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

Change of Grade/Appeals

Grades submitted at the end of the semester are considered final and may be changed only under these special circumstances. (1) In the event of a clerical error resulting in an incorrect grade, the instructor must submit a written request to the office of the appropriate faculty or graduate dean requesting a grade change. The appropriate dean must approve all grade changes. (2) Any other requests for a grade change will be considered by the appropriate dean only if accompanied by a full written justification from the instructor. Grades also may be changed upon recommendation of the Academic Appeals Committee.

Repeating a Course

Undergraduate course repeat policy: A student may repeat a given course once for which a C-, D+, D, or E grade was earned. The course must have the same prefix, number, title, and credit hours. The repeated course must be taken at Buffalo State. Only the second grade and those semester hours completed will be used in determining the GPA. A student may not repeat a course for a third time.

All grades remain on the permanent record. Students may not use pass-fail to repeat a course for which a C-, D+, D, or E grade was earned. A passing grade will not replace an F or U grade, since F and U are not computed in the GPA. Courses with letter grades above C-

cannot be repeated. Courses that were illegally repeated will not be used in computing the cumulative average. Practicum courses may differ. Students should consult the department that offered the course. Repeating courses affects financial aid. Students should consult the Financial Aid Office for the current policy.

Once a student has completed a bachelor's degree, a final average for that degree is computed. Courses from that degree may not be repeated, and that final average is not affected by any subsequent coursework at Buffalo State.

Graduate course repeat policy: A student may repeat a given course once for which a C-, D+, D, or E grade was earned. The repeated course must have the same prefix, number, title, and credit. The repeated course must be taken at Buffalo State. Only the passing grade and those semester hours completed will be used to calculate the GPA. Graduate students may repeat a maximum of two courses of the total degree program.

All grades remain on the permanent record. A passing grade will not replace a U grade, since the U is not computed in the GPA. Courses with letter grades A through C cannot be repeated. Illegally repeated courses are not used to calculate the cumulative GPA.

Practicum courses may differ. Students should contact the academic department that offered the course.

Repeating courses affects financial aid. The Financial Aid Office will provide current policy.

Once a student has completed a master's degree or certificate of advanced study, a final average for that degree or certificate is computed. Courses for that degree or certificate may not be repeated, and that final average is not affected by any subsequent coursework completed at Buffalo State.

PROBATION, ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, AND DISMISSAL

Good Academic Standing

The term "in good standing" means that a student is eligible or has been allowed to register for and undertake academic coursework at the college for the term in question.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

Undergraduate

Academic probation applies to any undergraduate student whose cumulative average falls below a 2.0 at the end of a semester or has failed one-half or more of the semester's coursework while still having a cumulative average above 2.0. The student on probation will have until the completion of the next regular semester to raise his or her cumulative average to 2.0 and pass more than one-half of the semester's coursework. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the college. Further information about probation can be obtained from the Academic Standards Office.

Academic dismissal is possible for failing one-half or more of a semester's work, failing any course for the third time, failing to satisfy academic probation requirements, or failure to complete the basic skills requirements by the end of the sophomore year (or after 45 hours for transfer students). An undergraduate student who has been academically dismissed must wait one full year from the time of dismissal before being considered for readmission. If

readmitted, all course work taken previously will be considered in computing cumulative average. Dismissal appeals boards are available for those students seeking to challenge their dismissals if documented extenuating circumstances that explain their poor academic performance exist.

Graduate

Academic probation and dismissal

All graduate students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (4.0 scale). A student is automatically placed on probation if the GPA falls below 3.0.

Matriculated students. Full-time students are given one semester, and matriculated part-time students are given 9 credit hours to achieve a 3.0 GPA, provided total credit hours do not exceed the degree program by more than 6. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA within the specified time results in academic dismissal. In addition, failure to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation results in academic dismissal.

Pre-major (undeclared) students must have a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 or more credit hours. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 or more credit hours of graduate-level coursework results in academic dismissal. A student with fewer than 12 credit hours automatically is placed on academic probation should the GPA fall below 3.0. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 credit hours results in academic dismissal. In addition, failure to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation results in academic dismissal.

Non-degree students have until the completion of the next semester in which enrolled to bring his or her GPA to 3.0 after being placed on academic probation. Failure to do so renders the student ineligible for further registration.

A student who had been academically dismissed must wait one full year from the time of dismissal before applying for readmission.

A student may be readmitted to the college only once after an academic dismissal. If readmitted, the student is automatically returned to academic probation if his or her cumulative GPA is still below 3.0. The student then has one full-time semester or 9 credits of part-time study to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA and must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation. Failure to do so results in final academic dismissal.

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct refers to plagiarism or cheating on examinations or assignments, as well as failing to display academic integrity. A description of academic misconduct is included in the *Undergraduate Catalog* and *Graduate Catalog*, and a statement outlining college policies and procedures to be followed in cases of alleged academic misconduct is on file in each dean's office, in the Academic Standards Office, and in the Student Life Office.

Waiver of Academic Regulations

Students are expected to adhere to all regulations of the college. However, unusual and extenuating circumstances may warrant a modification of certain regulations. Decisions on

requests for waivers of academic regulations relating directly to a student's major are made by the appropriate department chair in accordance with procedures established by the department or area faculty. Decisions on requests for waivers not relating to a student's major are made by the assistant to the dean of academic standards and intervention after consulting with the Academic Appeals Committee. Two to four weeks are necessary to process academic appeals. Petitions must be submitted with supporting documentation of the extenuating circumstance in order to be considered. Please refer to the Academic Standards Website, www.buffalostate.edu/academicstandards, for more information and to access petition forms.

Academic Grievance Procedure for Students

www.buffalostate.edu/academicaffairs/x570.xml

Buffalo State complies with New York State Education Department regulations requiring that campuses have in place procedures for filing complaints and seeking resolution of perceived problems. Full text of the procedure is available to students in the *Undergraduate Catalog* and through the *Student Handbook* and the *Record*. Additional copies may be obtained in the Academic and Student Affairs Office. The procedures below, abstracted from the full policy, pertain to alleged violations or misapplication of college and/or course policies including grading. They also are directed at a student grievance alleging that he or she has been treated unfairly, in violation of established academic policy or practice. The procedures below reflect the college commitment to a fair and prompt resolution of student academic grievance.

The process includes the possibility of hearings at two levels: the department, and the school.

1. At the department level, a student with a complaint should attempt to resolve the complaint *informally* with the faculty or staff member involved no later than five weeks into the following semester. The assistance of the chair may be sought to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of both parties.
2. The student who is not able to achieve resolution with the instructor may initiate a *formal* grievance or grade appeal process no later than 10 weeks into the following semester by preparing a written statement to the department chair.
3. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction at the departmental level, he or she may request a hearing at the school level by writing to the dean of the school and forwarding the documentation to that office within 10 academic days of the receipt of the recommendation of the department chair.

INDEPENDENT STUDY, COURSE BY CONTRACT, AUDITING COURSES

Independent Study/Project

Undergraduate. Independent study (XXX 499) enables students to study subjects that are otherwise unavailable through Buffalo State's existing courses. To arrange independent study, a student selects an instructor with an expertise in his or her particular interest area, and they mutually decide the various aspects of the work to be completed and how the work

will be evaluated. The description of proposed study must be authorized by the chair of the appropriate academic department.

There are several requirements. Students must be at least sophomore level, with sufficient background and above-average grades in their selected areas. They may receive as many as 30 credit hours through independent study. No independent study may be undertaken for fewer than 3 credit hours.

Through an independent project (XXX 495), upper-division students may undertake projects related to required courses for up to 3 credit hours per project. No more than 6 credit hours of academic project work are allowed. Application forms are available in the academic department and the Registrar's Office and must be filed with that office by the deadline date published in the class schedule each semester.

Graduate. Independent study (XXX 590) provides an opportunity for a graduate student to pursue a topic that may be covered only briefly or not at all in a regular course offering. Independent study is never a substitute for a regular course.

Independent study may be offered by any member of the college's graduate faculty. All independent study is listed by the appropriate content area prefix and the number 590, e.g., EDF 590. A maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study may be included in a graduate student's program.

Students must register for graduate-level independent study by completing the Individual Graduate Study Application, available from academic departments, the Graduate School, or www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/formsandpolicies.xml. The application must include a written paragraph describing the proposed course, including the purpose, objectives, method of instruction (e.g., readings, individual consultations with instructor, etc.) The application must be signed by the instructor, the department chair, and the school dean by the Individual Study Application deadline. Consult the Academic Calendar for appropriate deadlines at www.buffalostate.edu/academics.xml (click on Academic Calendar).

Course by Contract

Undergraduate. Taking a course by contract is a way for Buffalo State students to take an existing course independently. It is useful for students who prefer to study independently in consultation with an instructor who works with them and is a means to enhance scheduling flexibility. As with independent study, the student and the instructor mutually decide upon conference meetings and method of evaluation. Courses offered by contract are not offered in the same semester in which the same course is offered through normal scheduling procedures.

Graduate. Students who have been accepted into a graduate degree program and are in good academic standing may request to take a course by contract by contacting the department offering the course. The instructor must be a member of the college's graduate faculty and the course must be among those already approved by the college.

Under this option a faculty member provides the student with a course outline, bibliography, and a statement of responsibilities, as well as the dates by which these are to be met. The number of student-instructor conferences, the type of evaluation, and the culminating activity are determined by the faculty member and the student prior to course registration. These requirements must be filed with the department chair.

The student must register for the course using the Individual Graduate Study Application form, obtained from the department office, the Graduate School, or www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/formsandpolicies.xml. This form must be signed by the instructor, the department chair, and the school dean by the Individual Study Application deadline. Consult the Academic Calendar for appropriate deadlines, online at www.buffalostate.edu/academics.xml (click on Academic Calendar).

Auditing Courses

Faculty may permit Buffalo State students to audit courses without earning credit, provided they have the approval of the department chair. A person auditing a course will attend without formal recognition, not be on the official class list in the Registrar's Office, not be required to meet the requirements of the course, and not be charged tuition or fees for the course.

Exception. Auditing is not permitted for students in any study-abroad program.

Special Audit. Persons more than 60 years old may audit courses if there is space available. They may make arrangements through the Admissions Office, Moot Hall 110.

Culminating Activity – Master's Thesis, Project, or Comprehensive Exam

Graduate degree programs require a thesis, project, or comprehensive examination as evidence of mastery of the chosen field. Each program determines the required culminating activity.

To undertake a master's thesis or project, the student must register either online if the course is offered or complete and submit an Individual Study Application if the course is not in the course schedule. These forms are available in department offices, in the Graduate School Office, or at www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/formsandpolicies.xml. In addition, students registering via individual study must submit a written paragraph describing the proposed course including purpose, objectives, how it will be presented, e.g., research paper, and how it will be evaluated along with the application. The instructor, department chair, and dean of the school each must sign the application.

Workshops

Workshops (XXX 594), conferences (XXX 596), and microcourses (XXX 598) are graduate courses that are offered at variable times and places on particular themes outside the usual semester schedule of classes. These courses also carry variable credit. A maximum of 6 credit hours of workshops, conferences, and microcourses may be included in a master's degree.

Workshops emphasize process and implementation of theory, and they involve participants in the accomplishment of individualized objectives on a specific theme. Conferences emphasize a unique, one-time experience on a given theme. Microcourses offer intensive instruction with a specific, limited objective.

