

# PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

## DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

### INSTRUCTOR HANDBOOK

## Introduction

The Department of Mathematics offers the Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics, as well as Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics with the following concentrations: Actuarial Mathematics, Applied Analysis, Computational Mathematics, General, Graduate Studies, Systems Analysis and Teacher Certification (see our [Undergraduate Handbook](#)). The Department emphasizes excellence in all aspects of teaching. The major educational objectives are to provide an appreciation for mathematics and its applications to other disciplines, to encourage the development of higher-order thinking and problem solving skills, and to prepare students for further study and employment. Student learning focuses on the interdependence of theory and application, and is enhanced by the appropriate use of technology.

Mathematics, as a core discipline in the arts and science, is essential to many fields of study. As a result, offerings of the Department are essential to a variety of programs throughout the University. Mathematics courses are also important components of the general education curriculum.

## Calendars and Scheduling

Courses offered during the fall and spring semesters at Penn State last for 15 weeks. Classes are offered daily, Monday through Friday, throughout each semester except during university breaks. Courses offered during the summer are six or eight weeks in length. Classes are not held on Independence Day (July 4).

The academic calendar can be found at Penn State's Registrar's Office [calendar website](#).

The [schedule of courses for the Mathematics Department](#) is also available.

## Class Periods

Classes at Penn State last either 50 or 75 minutes. Fifty-minute classes begin at 8 a.m., and proceed throughout the day with 15-minute breaks between each scheduled class period. The 75-minute classes also begin at 8 a.m., but proceed throughout the day with either 15 or 30 minute breaks between each scheduled class period. No classes are scheduled during the dinner hour, namely, between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. (excluding special topic courses and/or seminars, which may fall during these times.)

## Teaching Assignments

Teaching assignments are made by the Scheduling Committee. Confirmation of the assignment or any changes in the assignments will be sent out as soon as possible. It is very difficult to place the many individuals in the desired time. An attempt will be made to accommodate the many needs of those that teach for our department. However, it is the responsibility of those teaching to inform the Scheduling Committee of any conflicts immediately via email at [scheduling@math.psu.edu](mailto:scheduling@math.psu.edu). If you are a graduate student, it is very important that you schedule your own courses of study early so that we may assign teaching schedules to fit in the times that you are not taking a course. Once assignments are made, it is very difficult to juggle changes.

## Student Enrollment and Registration

There are three ways in which a student can be enrolled in a course, namely taking the course for graded credit, auditing the course, or just visiting the course. Registration procedures depend on which of the three ways that a student wants to take a course.

## Taking a Course

To take a course for graded credit, students must officially register by the tenth calendar day of the semester. Students can register (or "add") courses at their college's advising center, at the Registrar's Office, the Undergraduate Mathematics Office, or online through [eLion](#). An instructor need not be involved in the registration process, unless a course is full (and the instructor has not replied to the department's memo regarding going over the class limit) or a student wants to add a course after the tenth calendar day. In these cases, instructors must sign either item #2 ("course is full") or item #3 ("after tenth day") on the Drop/Add Form. To add a course that is at the enrollment limit, students must register by seeing the Undergraduate Office. It is impossible to override any student into a class that is at its room capacity. (Note that a course's enrollment limit is not usually the same as room capacity. Indeed, the course's enrollment limit is usually set by the department to a number lower than the actual room capacity. The enrollment limit for a course is an upper bound on the number of students that the department deems appropriate for the course.)

A student who is officially registered to take a course may drop the course up to the tenth calendar day without penalty. Students may still drop a course after the tenth day and up to the end of the twelfth week, but are penalized with late drop credits. (Bachelor's degree candidates are only allowed 16 late drop credits, while Associate's degree candidates are only allowed ten.) Instructors need not be involved with student drops, other than to perhaps assist individual students in their decision to drop. Students who do not drop by the end of the twelfth week must be assigned a letter grade. Students new to the Penn State system may not be aware that they must drop courses no longer desired. Therefore, during the twelfth week, instructors should remind students of the late drop

deadline, the specific date of which is published in the Penn State Calendar. Using a Drop/Add Form, students may drop at their college's advising center, at the Registrar's Office, or the Undergraduate Mathematics Office. Students may also perform drops online at [eLion](#).

Sometimes, students may have been officially enrolled in a course, but then never actually attended the course or make any demand on the instructor's time. In these cases, students may request an Administrative Course Registration Cancellation up to one semester beyond the semester in which the error occurred. To request a cancellation, the student must go to the Undergraduate Mathematics Office and complete the Course Cancellation Form (students should not have access to these forms as forgery has occurred too often). Then the Undergraduate Office will contact the instructor to verify that the student has never attended, taken quizzes or exams, etc. Once the instructor verifies this, the Undergraduate Director will sign the bottom portion of the form and return it to the Registrar's Office.

Note that deadlines on such actions vary for the summer semester sessions.

## Auditing a Course

To officially register for a class without earning credit or a letter grade, i.e. to audit a course, students must process a Drop/Add Form in the Registrar's Office or at the Undergraduate Mathematics Office before the tenth day of classes. (In the "Course Credit" column, students should indicate "AU".) The instructor and the student at the start of the semester should agree upon the course requirements for the audit, which may range from just "sitting in" to participating fully. A course can be dropped for credit and added for audit, or vice versa, only during the first ten calendar days of the semester.

## Visiting a Course

Currently registered full-time students may request permission from the instructor to "visit" a course without officially registering. It is purely up to the instructor, depending on course enrollment, course support, workload, etc., to accept or deny the student's request. If the instructor grants permission, he/she should immediately convey his/her expectations to the student. Generally, students who are not currently registered full-time at Penn State should not be permitted to visit classes. An exception may be the occasional visit by a friend of an enrolled student, as long as the visitor does not disrupt the class in any way.

## Obtaining Class Lists

Instructors can either obtain current enrollment numbers or an up-to-date electronic version of their class list at any point in the semester. If the instructor is experiencing problems obtaining this list, they should contact the Undergraduate Mathematics Office. The electronic class list provides enrolled student names, majors, semester standings, ID

numbers, and email addresses. To request a class list, the instructor must have a valid Penn State Access Account and be listed on the University's employee and student records databases.

Class lists can be obtained online through the [eLion](#) system. Once you have gone to the link for [eLion](#), click on the Faculty link in the left-hand column. Enter your CAC account userid and password, and then click on Class Lists in the left-hand column of the page. Simply follow the directions on the web page that appears.

## Departmental Support

The departmental staff provide a number of support services, which include assisting instructors in the preparation of course materials, as well as handling course administration.

## Office Staff

Currently, the Mathematics Department has the following staff members who help with the coordination/planning of the classes.

**Ann Brunner, [brunner@math.psu.edu](mailto:brunner@math.psu.edu), 5-7528**

Provides information to students and faculty regarding the Undergraduate Program. Process add/drop forms, solve student problems. Contacts textbook publishers, orders, and distributes textbooks. Prepares and distributes teaching evaluation forms. Serves as mail back-up.

**Flossie Dunlop, [dunlop@math.psu.edu](mailto:dunlop@math.psu.edu), 5-8462**

Assists the Director of the MASS Program and REU Program. Assists with recruiting efforts. Provides information, procedures, and requirements for the MASS Program and REU Program. Coordinates MASS seminars and all departmental seminars and colloquia. Assists with departmental lectures.

**Linda Fisher, [ldf@math.psu.edu](mailto:ldf@math.psu.edu), 5-7528**

Supervises the Undergraduate Office Staff. Secretary to the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Provides information and requirements regarding the Undergraduate Program. Works closely with math majors. Assists with recruiting efforts. Distributes and collects grade sheets. Updates Undergraduate Handbook, Undergraduate Baccalaureate Degree Programs Bulletin.

**Marileona Royer, [royer@math.psu.edu](mailto:royer@math.psu.edu), 5-7527**

Assists Department Head and Administrative Assistant with various projects including all types of dossiers and sabbatical leaves. Assists with award nominations. Processes J1 and H1 visa paperwork for new hires and long-term visitors. Maintains some departmental databases and informational lists. Schedules appointments for Department Head.

**Becky Halpenny, [halpenny@math.psu.edu](mailto:halpenny@math.psu.edu), 5-7529**

Assists the Director of Graduate Studies. Assists with recruiting efforts. Provides information and requirements regarding Graduate Program. Assists with the scheduling of 500-level and special topics courses. Prepares and processes letters of recommendations for graduate students. Processes key requests and maintains key files.

**Tammy Coval, [coval@math.psu.edu](mailto:coval@math.psu.edu), 5-7528**

Provides information to students and faculty regarding the Undergraduate Program. Maintains schedule of classes, course offerings, room assignments, and enrollment figures. Process add/drop forms, solve student problems. Works with the disenrollment process. Maintains Undergraduate Web pages.

**Mary Anne Raymond, [raymond@math.psu.edu](mailto:raymond@math.psu.edu), 5-7527**

Responsible for the general management of the department offices. Act as personnel coordinator for the department. Oversees faculty recruiting, hiring, visas, promotion and tenure dossiers, second and fourth year reviews, leaves of absence, faculty activity reports, departmental committees, and departmental communications. Coordinates departmental events and departmental development efforts.

**Hope Shaffer, [shaffer@math.psu.edu](mailto:shaffer@math.psu.edu), 5-7527**

Secretary to Anatole Katok, Jinchao Xu, and Andrew Belmonte. Coordinates departmental conferences. Assists with journals. Coordinates office space and other details for visitors. Works with the Commonwealth College faculty. Serves as backup for the receptionist.

**Amy Stover, [stover@math.psu.edu](mailto:stover@math.psu.edu), 5-4350**

Maintains financial records and prepares financial reports. Prepares and processes fixed term appointments and paperwork. Processes faculty leave paperwork. Assists faculty in the preparation of research proposals. Coordinates building maintenance and repairs. Coordinates telecommunication requirements and property inventory tagging of equipment.

## Obtaining an Office

To obtain an office, see Mary Anne Raymond. For office keys, see Amy Stover.

## Updating Departmental Directory

If you need to update information for the Office Directory, please see the staff in 107 McAllister.

## Office Supplies

To obtain office supplies, instructors should go to 107 McAllister for assistance. To order special office supplies that would typically not be stored in large quantities, such as calendars, desk trays, and computer diskette holders, speak with the staff in 107 McAllister.

## Computer Accounts

Everyone working in the Mathematics Department should obtain two kinds of computer accounts. One of these is the PSU Access account. For this account, you will need to go to CAC (Center for Academic Computing) in 2 Willard Building or 215 Computer Building. Forms can be obtained from Mary Anne Raymond (for faculty, postdocs, and those holding fixed term appointments) and Becky Halpenny (for graduate students).

The second type of account is the Mathematics Network Account. This will give you access to our computers. To apply for this, you may obtain a form from [http://www.math.psu.edu/account\\_app.pdf](http://www.math.psu.edu/account_app.pdf) and submit your application. It is recommended that you do this prior to your arrival to PSU so that you may start to receive email from the department giving you important information regarding your teaching or research.

## Computer Staff

- Mike Dunne, Systems Administrator
- Andy Youstic, Systems Programmer
- John McNitt, Windows Administrator

In general, instructors who are having computer-related problems should contact the computer help desk, describing specifically what assistance they need. This can be done by sending email to [help@math.psu.edu](mailto:help@math.psu.edu).

## Tip on Managing Math and Access Accounts

It is recommended that you have your Access Account email forwarded to your Mathematics Department email. To do this, go to <http://www.work.psu.edu/> to set the forwarding information. You may also change your University Directory settings from

this page as well. But please note a change to the University Directory does not change the information maintained by the Mathematics Department. Contact the staff in 107 McAllister to update our directory information.

## Graders

You will receive a memo at the beginning of each semester asking if you wish to have a grader. The amount of grader time is based upon the number of students registered for each section. For more information about guidelines for and qualifications of departmental graders, please see the following:

<http://www.math.psu.edu/ug/resources/grader>

## Student Computing Facilities

Instructors should assume that students have easy access to internet-connected computers at one of the numerous computer labs on campus or, in many cases, in their own residence. The CAC Computer Labs are equipped with PCs, MACs, and/or Unix machines, as well as laser printers. At least one on-campus computer lab is open to students from 8:00a.m. to 11:30p.m. Software available to the students is extensive. The CAC Computer Lab Page outlines the specific types of hardware and software that is currently available in the computer labs, as well as the location and hours of each of the computer labs.

## Classroom Technology

To assist in making classes flow smoothly, instructors are encouraged to use the classroom technology equipment that is available in many classrooms. The Center for Academic Computing's Multimedia Technology Classroom Group has equipped many Penn State classrooms and lecture halls with permanent technology equipment, such as computers, VCRs, overhead projectors and document cameras. Classrooms that are not equipped with permanent technology equipment typically can be equipped with a mobile technology cart containing an IBM or Mac computer with CD-ROM and Zip drives.

The type of equipment available depends on the particular classroom. Classrooms equipped with multimedia technology typically have a fixed podium containing a VCR/DVD player and an IBM and/or Mac computer with a CD-ROM, 3.5" diskette and Zip drives. Classrooms typically also contain one or two overhead projectors and screens. Large lecture halls, or auditoria, equipped with multimedia technology typically contain the same equipment as the classrooms, but also permit access to a wireless or corded microphone and a document camera that allows instructors to project paper documents on a large screen. In either case, Unix machines can be accessed from any multimedia technology classroom or lecture hall with an IBM-compatible computer using Hummingbird's EXCEED software on the network.

## Access to Multimedia Technology Facilities

If, at the beginning of the semester, an instructor finds that his/her classroom does not have the necessary technology equipment, she/he should ask Tammy Coval or Linda Fisher to contact the University Scheduling Office immediately. On the other hand, instructors assigned to use mobile multimedia technology carts in Chambers, Thomas or Willard Buildings must still confirm their schedule through Audio-Visual Services (AVS) even though the classroom technology requests were originally completed and sent to the University Scheduling Office. Contacts for technology cart scheduling are:

- Chambers Building: AVS is in 26 Willard, phone 814-865-5400
- Thomas Building: Ken Boonie (AVS), 108 Thomas; phone 814-863-8505; e-mail [kab9@psu.edu](mailto:kab9@psu.edu)
- Willard Building: Chris Opall (AVS), 252 Willard; phone 814-865-2788; e-mail [cao@psulias.psu.edu](mailto:cao@psulias.psu.edu)

All users of computing facilities in the technology classrooms--whether equipped with permanent technology installations or mobile technology carts--have to logon and are authenticated using their Penn State Access Account userids and passwords for each class session. Instructors who do not have Access Accounts can apply for one at the Center for Academic Computing's Accounts Office in 227 Computer Building (phone 814-865-4772).

For security purposes, the computer podiums and computer and Audio-Visual Services cabinets in multimedia technology classrooms have combination locks. There is also a code combination that disarms and rearms the fiber-optic alarms to Police Services on the computer podiums and cabinets. There are several ways that instructors can get the necessary codes, including going to one of the Multimedia Technology Classroom Orientation sessions, going to the Audio Visual Service's Equipment Desk in 26 Willard, or asking Donna Kemper in 122 Computer Building.

## Arrival at PSU

There is no policy on when those teaching are to arrive to PSU, but the department recommends that you arrive at least 5 days prior to the start of classes. This is important if schedule changes are required. It also helps to get valuable information to you and get you set up with an office, etc. We have many people in our department and it is hard to make changes and see that everyone has up-to-date information if you delay your arrival.

## Course Syllabus

The University Faculty Senate requires that instructors distribute, within the first ten days of class, a course syllabus, which at minimum describes the course requirements, grading policy, academic integrity policy, and anticipated dates for exams and major assignments. Every instructor additionally must give a copy of his or her syllabus to the Undergraduate

Office (either in paper form or electronically), so that it can be placed in a public file in the main office.

The dissemination of a well-written syllabus is extremely important. While a course syllabus can certainly contain only the basic requirements, it can also serve to communicate the most important aspects of a course to the students.

For those instructors teaching multi-section courses, the course syllabus is often constructed and distributed by the course coordinator. You should check with such a course coordinator to see what is being provided by them. For information on course coordinators, contact Linda Fisher.

## Office Hours

As a guideline, the department strongly suggests that you hold at least one office hour per week for each section of each course that you teach. So, for example, if you are teaching two sections of a course, or if you are teaching one section each of two different courses, then the department recommends at least two hours of office hours per week of classes.

## Exams

Instructors must notify their students, in writing, in the first ten calendar days of the semester about how the instructor will examine the students throughout the course. Possible exam formats include quizzes, in-class written or multiple-choice exams, take-home exams, oral exams, term papers, and/or computer projects. For additional information regarding scheduling and administering exams, see the Student Guide to University Policies and Rules on exams.

Note that it is departmental policy that instructors must be available to proctor their own examinations.

## Evening Exams

The department schedules examinations for undergraduate courses under the 400-level that have evening examinations. The Undergraduate Office will provide each instructor with a listing of the evening examination dates on the first day of classes. The students must be notified of the evening exam schedule during the first week of the semester. Each course, through a coordinator, should decide on a makeup date for those students who provide a legitimate reason for missing the regularly scheduled examination. Policies regarding examinations must be included on the syllabi. For information on how students should sign up for makeup examinations, please contact the staff in 104 McAllister or talk with your course coordinator. Do not send the students to 104 McAllister for assistance unless the staff in 104 McAllister indicate that it is appropriate for your course. Evening examination locations will be distributed later in the semester.

Students who have conflicts between course work (exams, quizzes, papers, etc.) and University-approved activities (field trips, debate trips, choir trips, athletic events, etc.) must be allowed to make up the course work without penalty. Although not specifically mentioned in the Student Guide to Policies and Rules, instructors should also allow students to makeup exams when they conflict with students' religious holidays. (To minimize conflicts with major religious holidays, instructors can consult a current religious holiday calendar before scheduling the semester's required course work.)

## Final Exams

Instructors are encouraged to give students final written examinations, in order to allow students to integrate the course's material. The Office of the Registrar publishes the official final examination schedule around the eighth week of classes. The preliminary schedule is only for those courses that do not give "common" finals (single section courses). University policy states that instructors are required to give their final exams only during their officially scheduled final examination period. In particular, with the exception of quizzes and narrowly limited tests, **an instructor should not give major exams during the final week of classes.**

In spite of the Registrar's best efforts, some students will still have scheduling conflicts with some of their final exams. There are two types of exam conflicts--a direct conflict and an overload conflict. A direct conflict occurs when a student has two or more final exams scheduled at the same time, while an overload conflict occurs when a student has three or more final exams scheduled in a 15-hour block of time from the beginning of the first exam to the beginning of the third exam. Students with direct conflicts are required to file for a conflict exam with the Office of the Registrar. Students with overload conflicts can either opt to take all of their exams as originally scheduled, or they can also file for a conflict exam. Students must file all conflict exam requests during the period established by the Registrar's Office. Instructors are strongly encouraged to announce the final examination schedule, as well as the conflict exam-filing period, to their classes.

The Mathematics Department requires all students to be present for the final examination based on the schedule determined by the Registrar's Office. This should be made clear to all students from the beginning of the semester. Only emergency cases such as verified deaths in the family, or medical verification, etc. are acceptable excuses from the set dates. In such cases, a deferred grade should be submitted. Travel plans are not a legitimate reason for missing a final examination.

## Scheduling Review Rooms

An instructor may consider scheduling additional classrooms for review sessions before. To schedule rooms for reviews, the instructor should email Tammy Coval sufficiently in advance to schedule the necessary room(s). To schedule the rooms, the following information will be needed:

- the date and time when the room(s) are needed
- how many seats are needed in each room, and
- the course for which the room is needed

Instructors are encouraged to use the following web form to reserve a review room:

<http://www.math.psu.edu/ug/resources/reservations>

The instructor is responsible for ensuring that the rooms are left in good order.

Note: Rooms for daytime review sessions may not be requested until AFTER the first week of classes.

## Changing Class Location

Instructors may request a room change AFTER the first day of classes. Requests must be emailed to [undergrad@math.psu.edu](mailto:undergrad@math.psu.edu). Please be certain to include instructor name, course and section, days and times and if there is a preferred location or type of room. In case the preferred location or type of room is not available, be sure to include a statement as to if the class is to be moved to any available or not.

For a map of the campus, see the following: <http://www.campusmaps.psu.edu/>

## Final Grades

Final grades must be submitted within 48 hours of the course's final examination. Under no circumstances may the instructor submit their final grades later than the university-wide deadline that is officially announced at the end of each semester.

When posting final grades in public places, be sure that the listing is in numerical order based on the last four digits of the ID numbers. Do not send the students to the Undergraduate Office for final grades as the students can obtain them using [eLion](#).

## Academic Dishonesty

To learn various other methods around campus on minimizing cheating, read the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching's large class discussions on cheating and on ensuring test-takers are enrolled in the course. For additional information on handling cheating, see the Student Guide to University Policies and Rules on academic integrity and dishonesty.

If you suspect that a student in one of your classes is guilty of academic dishonesty, you have the authority to award a penalty grade. But you must carefully follow the procedure laid down in the College's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found at

<http://www.science.psu.edu/academic/Integrity/Policy.html>. It is a good idea to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies at an early stage for advice on this procedure.

## Special Needs Students

Every semester, an instructor may have a student who has been evaluated by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as requiring special circumstances for taking exams. For some students, such as those needing a reader or twice as much time to take an exam, ODS will make arrangements with the student to proctor the exams for the instructor. For other students, especially those only requiring time-and-a-half to take the exam, the instructor is responsible for either proctoring the exam or for making arrangements within the department to have the exam proctored by a teaching assistant. See the staff in the Undergraduate Mathematics Office for more details.

At the beginning of the semester, each "special needs student" is required to give his/her instructors a letter from the Office of Disability Services which documents the student's special needs. The student should also bring a copy of the letter to the Undergraduate Mathematics Office in 104 McAllister. The staff will work on making the necessary arrangements. For more information, the Office of Disability Services is located in 105 Boucke Building and can be contacted by calling 814-863-1807. You may also visit their website: <http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/>

## The Schreyer Institute

At the request of an instructor, [The Schreyer Institute](#), located in 301 Rider II Building, provides a number of testing services, including grading multiple-choice exams, creating test banks and, on an experimental basis, offering computerized testing. Instructors who are interested in any of the testing services provided by The Schreyer Institute should plan to meet with someone from The Schreyer Institute in the beginning of the semester to discuss their needs. Most of the time, The Schreyer Institute is prepared to meet with instructors on a drop-in basis.

The department must buy each sheet for 5 cents, but there is no additional charge when the sheets are graded. When the instructor submits the exams for grading, the instructor must complete a job request form, which indicates how the instructor wants the exam graded. Options include using a test unscrambler for different test versions, allowing for more than one correct answer, weighting items differently, and/or eliminating items. Once the exam is graded, the instructor will receive a summary of the results by e-mail. Then, if the instructor desires, The Schreyer Institute can also forward the results directly to each individual student.

The Schreyer Institute also provides a grading service, as described below.

## Grading

The following summarizes the grading system at Penn State. For additional information regarding handling final student grades, see the Student Guide to University Policies and Rules on grading.

## Grading System

The possible grades assigned to students depend on their enrollment status. Students who are officially enrolled in and have completed the course should be assigned one of the following letter grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, or F. Instructors are free to determine the appropriate cut-off for each letter grade. However, the following table illustrates a common cut-off scheme:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
93	90	87	83	80	77	70	60	0

The nine possible letter grades correspond to the following grade point equivalents:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.00	0.00

More information regarding the interpretation of these letter grades can be found in Penn State's [Undergraduate Bulletin](#).

The remaining possible grades depend on the student's enrollment status. Students who have audited a course should be assigned an AU (if attendance has been acceptable) or a W (if attendance has been unsatisfactory). Typically, instructors assign students who have late-dropped a course a WN (for no grade to report at time of withdrawal). But, instructors can instead assign a late-dropped student a WP (for passing at time of withdrawal) or WF (for failing at time of withdrawal). Students who have officially withdrawn from the university are automatically assigned a W (for withdraw) by the Registrar.

In extenuating circumstances, a student may ask an instructor before the beginning of the final exam period to defer his/her final grade. Typically instructors approve the request only if the student has completed the majority of the course work and/or the student can document an extreme situation that prevented the student from completing the course. In general, instructors should not approve deferments for students merely interested in delaying the completion of the course without good reason. If the instructor does approve the request, the student should be assigned a final grade of DF (for deferred). The student then has six weeks into the next semester in which they are enrolled to complete the course work. A deferred grade that is not changed to a passing grade by the instructor before the end of this period is automatically changed to an F by the Registrar. In extenuating circumstances, students may receive approval to complete the course by the end of the next semester, rather than the standard six-week limit.

For additional information regarding handling final student grades, see the Student Guide to University Policies and Rules on grading.

## Deferred Grades

According to University Policy 48-40, if, for reasons beyond the student's control, a student is prevented from completing a course within the prescribed time, the grade in that course may be deferred with the concurrence of the instructor. Under emergency conditions during which the instructor is unavailable, authorization is required from one of the following: the dean of the college in which the candidate is enrolled; the director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies if the student is enrolled in that division or is a provisional student; the executive officer of the Commonwealth Campus if the student is enrolled at a Commonwealth Campus. Permission for filing a deferred grade should be requested by the student before the beginning of the final examination period.

In certain courses where normal work of the course extends beyond the scheduled period, deferment may be granted routinely for all students in the course if prior approval of the Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs has been obtained.

The period during which a grade may be deferred shall not extend, without further approval of the dean of the college, the director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies, or the executive officer of the Commonwealth Campus concerned, beyond the end of the sixth week of the next semester in which the University is in session. A deferred grade that is not changed to a passing grade by the instructor before the end of this period automatically becomes an F. If the next semester is a summer session, this rule shall not apply unless the student is enrolled for that session. If the student is not enrolled for that summer session, the period during which the grade may be deferred shall not extend, without further approval of the dean of the college or of the director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies or of the executive officer of the Commonwealth Campus, beyond the end of the sixth week of the succeeding fall semester. For courses taken through Continuing Education, the grade must be changed no later than sixty days after the last class; otherwise, an F will be recorded.

To request approval for a deferred grade, a student first obtains an approval of a deferred grade form or college/campus petition from the student's Dean's Office, signs it, and takes it to the course instructor for concurrence and signature. The student then takes the form back to the student's dean, the director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies, or the executive officer of the Commonwealth Campus, whichever is appropriate, for approval, signature, and distribution as indicated on the form. When a deferred grade has been authorized, the instructor shall enter the symbol DF instead of a grade when completing the grade-reporting forms.

A deferred grade may be extended beyond the six-week deadline only for an extenuating circumstance. The grantor completes a second approval of deferred grade form and gains the concurrence of the instructor/department. The date the deferral expires must be

indicated. Deferred grades should not be extended beyond the end of the semester following the semester when the deferred grade was originally granted.

## Correcting Grades

If an error in calculating or recording a grade is brought to an instructor's attention, the instructor may change the student's grade by obtaining a grade change form from the Undergraduate Office. The instructor must assign the corrected grade, sign the form, and return it to the Undergraduate Office for processing. If it is for a graduate student, a memo as to why the grade change is taking place must also be provided. A grade cannot be changed more than one year after the end of the semester in which the course was taken. For additional information regarding correcting grades, see the Student Guide to University Policies and Rules on grading.

## The Schreyer Institute Assists in Submitting Grades

At the request of an instructor, The Schreyer Institute will store individual student grades in a computerized file. The grades can be processed either directly from The Schreyer Institute "bubble" score sheets or from work graded by the instructor. For the last job of the semester, The Schreyer Institute calculates an overall number grade for each student based on the instructor's planned grading system. If the instructor then tells The Schreyer Institute his/her desired grade cutoffs, The Schreyer Institute will translate each number grade to a letter grade, and transfer the final grades directly to the Registrar. (This is a nice way for instructors to avoid having to fill in the web-based forms for final grades!)

## Textbooks

For courses under 400-level (with the exception of honors sections, MATH 312, and any special topic), the textbook is determined by a committee formed by the department. For all other courses, the instructor is to provide to the Undergraduate Office the title, edition, author, publisher, and ISBN of the text desired before the set deadlines.

The Undergraduate Office will provide desk copies for courses. This means that each instructor is provided with one copy of the text for use that semester. The department will also try to make an attempt at obtaining grader copies, but that is not always possible due to policies of the publishing companies.

## Course Web Sites

If you are not familiar with how to put your syllabus on the web, please contact [webmaster@math.psu.edu](mailto:webmaster@math.psu.edu) for further information.

The University also provides a lot of web space and instruction on how instructors may make use of web space for courses. They provide easy steps to help you create a

functional web site with them. Refer to the "Other Useful Teaching Resources" section at the end of this manual.

## Promoting Excellent Teaching

The Department maintains a comprehensive program to maintain and improve teaching quality through student and peer evaluations. The results of these evaluations are an important resource for us as we continue to refine the content and delivery of our courses. For faculty on the tenure track, the results of evaluations also form a significant component of your eventual tenure case.

When your students complete evaluation forms, you must allow sufficient class time for this purpose. Appoint a reliable student to be responsible for the procedure; you should leave the room while evaluations are being completed. Moreover, the appointed student must collect the completed evaluations and return them to the Undergraduate Mathematics Office in the envelope provided; Eberly College of Science policy does not allow the instructor to handle the evaluation forms once they are completed.

The Undergraduate Office will supply evaluation packets to all instructors as required.

1. For graduate teaching assistants, the evaluation program is administered by the GTA Oversight Committee. It comprises
  - a classroom visit by the mentor (a faculty member), with subsequent opportunity for feedback and discussion,
  - a special "GTA Evaluation Form", which your students will complete in the fourth or fifth week of the semester; the results will be made available to you by midsemester, and
  - an open response evaluation to be completed during the last week of classes.
2. For fixed-term instructors and pre-tenure faculty, your students will complete two forms in the final week of classes, a standard Penn State computer-scored evaluation form ("the SRTE form") and an open response evaluation. Be sure to leave time for your students to complete both forms. In addition, senior faculty members will visit your classroom, normally once per semester or year. The visiting faculty member will contact you before scheduling the visit, and it is a good idea to arrange a discussion with him/her afterwards.
3. Tenured faculty members are required to administer SRTE evaluations during the final week of classes, and may request open response evaluations in addition. Those faculty members who still await promotion are advised to request open response evaluations. Senior faculty visits will normally continue while the faculty member holds the rank of Assistant or Associate Professor.

# Other Useful Teaching Resources

[Search Penn State University WWW](#)

[University Faculty Senate Policies for Students](#)

[Department of Mathematics Web Page](#)

[Undergraduate Mathematics Web Page](#)

[Graduate Mathematics Web Page](#)

This page is maintained by Penn State University Undergraduate Mathematics Office.  
Last modified by James A. Sellers, July 2011

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