

SECTION III

PLANNING AND MANAGING ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

A. ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(See WC Statutes, Section III)

B. CURRICULUM REVISIONS

Changes in (or additions to) the curriculum may be initiated by individual faculty members, ad hoc committees within divisions, Division Chairpersons, the Vice President and Dean of Academic and Student Services, or by the President. Curriculum matters are studied by the Academic Policies Committee, who make recommendations for curriculum changes to the Executive Council.

Changes in the Core Curriculum must be in accordance with the guidelines established by the Council on General Education. Development of new programs must follow the procedures outlined in the Policy Manual Board of Regents, Sec. 306.

C. COURSE SYLLABUS

The purpose of the syllabus is to aid the teacher and students in progressing through a course in a planned, informed, systematic manner. Course syllabi should be reviewed and updated each semester.

During the first week of classes, syllabi should be distributed in all classes. While there may be some variation, essential components of the syllabus are:

1. General information, such as course name and number, required textbook(s), teacher's name, academic semester and year;
2. Realistic objectives of the course, basic concepts and skills to be learned;
3. Tentative course outline and schedule, including number of tests, deadlines for work to be turned in, date and time of final exam (if known);
4. Resources, such as books and periodicals students will need to consult;
5. A specific plan for student evaluation, including number and point value of tests, special projects, final exam, etc.;
6. A final examination should be given for each class at the end of each semester.
7. Policies regarding class attendance (see attendance policy in Catalog), make-up tests, meeting deadlines, writing standards required, etc.
8. Definition of Plagiarism - Plagiarism is prohibited. Plagiarism is defined by Webster as the stealing and passing off of the ideas or words of another as one's own. Further, the MLA Handbook states, A plagiarism may take the form of repeating another's sentences as your own, adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own, or even presenting someone else's line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. (p. 4)

For further information about plagiarism, see Lester, Writing Research Papers, pp. 49-51. Alleged violations involving plagiarism and other academic misconduct will be handled according to the procedures outlined in the Waycross College Student Handbook.

9. Each faculty member should file two (2) copies of the syllabus with his/her Division Chairperson. When library work is required, send two (2) copies to the library.

D. DROPPING COURSES/WITHDRAWAL

A student who secures the necessary approval may officially drop a course without academic penalty by the designated date published in the Academic Calendar and receive a W grade for the semester. The W grade is not computed in the student's grade point average but is considered a performance grade for financial purposes.

A non-punitive grade for courses dropped after the published deadline can be assigned only with the approval of the Vice President and Dean of Academic and Student Services and in cases of extenuating personal hardship. No refunds are allowed for reduction in hours unless such is the fault of the College.

Students who stop attending classes without processing Withdrawal Forms (Appendix A-5) or Drop/Add Forms (Appendix A-9) will automatically receive a grade of F or WF for each course in which they are enrolled.

In order to officially drop a course without penalty, a student must obtain and fill out a Drop/Add Form (See Appendix A-9) from the Registrar's Office, acquire appropriate signatures, and return the completed form to the Registrar's Office before the designated date published in the Academic Calendar in the Waycross College Catalog.

E. GRADES AND GRADE REPORTS

Waycross College follows the Uniform System of Grading described in the Catalog. However, each faculty member is responsible for developing his/her own procedure for evaluating student performance. The following guidelines should be followed:

1. The final grade should be derived from several grades earned throughout the semester, preferably on several kinds of projects.
2. Procedures for evaluation should be clearly outlined in the course syllabus distributed to students during the first week of classes.
3. Final grades should be recorded on the grade sheets provided and turned in to the Student Records Office no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the final exam for the course.
4. Grades may not be posted nor given to students by telephone.
5. Before recording W, WF, or I grades, review Catalog policies on dropping and adding courses, and the grading system. The W or WF grade may be recorded only when an official schedule change or withdrawal form has been processed. The I grade requires the written approval of the Division Chairperson. (See Appendix A-1 for Request for Incomplete Grade Form.)
6. Grades that have been recorded in the Office of Student Records may be changed to remove an Incomplete, or to correct an error. In such cases, the instructor must complete a Request for Change of Grade Form (See Appendix A-2), get written approval from his/her Division Chairperson and the Vice President and Dean of Academic and Student Services, and file the form with the Office of Student Records.

F. FINAL EXAMS

A final exam should be given at the end of the semester at the time indicated on the exam schedule. Any deviations from this schedule must be approved by the Division Chairperson and/or the Vice President and Dean.

G. REGENTS' TESTING PROGRAM

Waycross College and other institutions in the University System are committed to teaching basic skills, especially in reading and writing. This commitment is reflected in the requirement that a student who receives a degree from a state-supported college must successfully complete a competency examination in reading and writing. (See Catalog for official policy.)

H. TEXTBOOK ORDERS

Textbooks are usually selected by full-time faculty members in consultation with the Division Chairperson. If you have suggestions, please share them with your Division Chairperson. Textbook orders are made by the Division Chairperson following procedures established by the Vice President and Dean of Academic and Student Services and the Vice President for Business Affairs. A textbook should be used for a minimum of three (3) semesters before a change is requested. Textbooks may be purchased in the College Bookstore in person or by mail or at off-campus sites at registration.

I. LIBRARY MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES

Faculty members will assist the Library staff in selecting library resources for their discipline by completing the appropriate request forms found on the Library web page (www.way.peachnet.edu/Library/). Trained library personnel are available to provide bibliographic instruction to classes upon request by faculty members. Faculty members are also asked to supply course syllabi for course assignments requiring use of library resources and materials. Requests for instructional equipment should be made through the Instructional Technology Support Specialist.

J. APEAL OF GRADE

A student who believes that the grade received in a course does not accurately reflect efforts and achievements should follow the procedure prescribed below.

The first step is for the student to confer with the instructor to determine the basis for the grade received. If an instructor's error is detected, the instructor files a Request for Change of Grade Form, following the procedure described under Grade and Grade Reports.

If no error is detected and the grade remains in dispute, the student may petition (in writing) the instructor's immediate supervisor (Division Chairperson) for a review of the situation. The petition should give relevant information regarding the course, title, number and section, instructor's name, grade received, and grade anticipated. The petition must be filed with the supervisor within three weeks after final exams.

If, after conferring with the student and the instructor, the supervisor has not resolved the issue to the student's satisfaction, the student may appeal the case, in writing, to the Vice President and Dean of Academic and Student Services, who may present the case to the Academic Policies Committee. The Committee shall make its recommendation to the Vice President and Dean, who shall notify the student and the instructor of the decision.

K. STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is the student's responsibility, and he/she is accountable for the material presented in all classes. At the beginning of each semester, all instructors shall inform their classes of college policies regarding class absences. Instructors are also responsible for advising their students regarding the consequences of absences from classes or laboratories. Instructors are also asked to keep regular attendance records for all their classes and to turn in these records with their class grade reports at the end of each semester.

An instructor may drop a student from any class with a grade of WF when a student has missed twenty percent of the regularly scheduled class meetings. If such excessive absence is the result of extenuating personal hardship, the withdrawal grade will be a W. When excessive absences make this provision applicable, the instructor must notify the student in writing that the student is subject to involuntary withdrawal. (See Appendix A-3, Notification of Excessive Absences Form, and Appendix A-4, Request for Drop for Non-Attendance Form.)

L. OUTSIDE SPEAKERS

A faculty member who wishes to use outside guest lecturers should complete the appropriate form (See Appendix A-6, Approval for Guest Speaker Form) and get approval from the Division Chairperson at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled appearance.

M. OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

The following procedures govern college-sponsored off-campus trips and meetings, including field trips, club meetings, and social events:

1. Each event must be authorized in writing by the Division Chairperson, and the Vice President and Dean at least one week prior to the scheduled event (See Appendix A-7, Off-Campus Activity Form).
2. Each event must be attended by one or more faculty members or administrative officers.
3. Events that require students to be absent from classes must be justifiable on grounds consistent with the educational programs of the College. When off-campus activities result in students missing classes, the person in charge of the event or the Vice President and Dean will notify the instructors of participating students.

N. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

Academic regulations are published in the Catalog. Faculty members should thoroughly understand academic regulations in order to give accurate guidance to students. If there is a problem regarding interpretation, a faculty member should consult the Division Chairperson or Vice President and Dean of Academic and Student Services.

O. EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

The Early Warning System is a way to identify at risk students early each semester in order to help them succeed at Waycross College. Referral forms are made available during the third week of classes. These forms offer identifying items and comments that are completed by the instructor, discussed with the student, and then sent to the Student Life Office for follow-up. Copies of the form are found in the Division Offices.

P. ADA AND SECTION 504 COMPLIANCE – STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and obligates colleges and universities to make certain adjustments and accommodations to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in all education programs and activities.

Compliance with ADA and Section 504 requires that:

1. No student may be excluded from any course or any course of study solely on the basis of disability.
2. Modifications or waivers in degree or course requirements may be necessary to meet the requirements of some students with disabilities (e.g., the laboratory portion of the science requirement for a blind student).
3. Auxiliary aids must be permitted in the classroom when they are required to ensure the full participation of students with disabilities.
4. Alternate testing and evaluation methods for measuring student achievement will be necessary for students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those are the skills being measured).
5. Special equipment or devices used in the classroom (and in some cases teaching techniques that rely upon sight, hearing, or mobility of students) may require adaptation in individual cases.
6. It is discriminatory to counsel students with disabilities toward more restrictive careers than non-disabled students, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession.

The Office of Student Life assists the instructors who have students with disabilities in their classes. The Office administers tests and provides readers and copying services for the students. The Coordinator of Guidance and Testing, in the Office of Student Life, serves as the 504 Coordinator and the ADA Compliance Administrator.

Should a student suspect that he/she has a learning disability, refer that student to the Student Life Office immediately.

Q. SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT (see Faculty Handbook)

R. COMPUTER USE POLICIES (see Faculty Handbook or Waycross College website - www.waycross.edu)