



University Policy Statement

UPS 230.020

POLICY ON OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are an opportunity for students, campus staff, faculty, administration, and individuals external to the campus to interact with instructors. Therefore, instructors should attend their scheduled office hours on a weekly basis.

This policy applies to all instructors teaching credit-bearing courses or released from teaching credit-bearing courses. This applies to faculty early retirement (FERP) faculty during their semester(s) of active employment. Teaching associates shall hold office hours as specified in their appointment. Departments are encouraged to follow similar guidelines for teaching associate office hours as for part-time faculty.

I. Scheduling and Number of Office Hours

- A. Instructors on full-time approved university leaves (professional or personal) shall not schedule office hours.
- B. During any semester in which a faculty member is appointed full-time, they shall hold a minimum of three (3) office hours per week. Faculty members appointed part-time, on partial leave, or FERP faculty teaching in both semesters shall hold office hours on a pro rata basis; however, a minimum of one (1) hour per week is required.
- C. During summer and winter session, three (3) hours per week are required for faculty teaching credit-bearing courses, regardless of the number of WTUs taught.
- D. When the campus final examination schedule is in effect, office hours may be “by appointment only.”
- E. Office hours are held in the instructor’s office or virtually at a time that is likely to be accessible to the students. Office hours shall be outside of scheduled class time.
- F. Instructors teaching online or hybrid courses are recommended to schedule an appropriate mix of in-person and/or online hours determined in consultation with the department chair.
- G. Since the purpose of office hours includes interactions with colleagues, instructors should have at least one office hour per week on campus. If instructors are teaching in study-away or abroad programs, they should arrange for an appropriate place/time to facilitate faculty-student interactions.
- H. Instructors should also attempt to accommodate students who are unable to meet the instructor during scheduled office hours on a “by appointment” basis or via email.

II. Posting of Office Hours

- A. Office hours, including schedule, location, and contact information, shall be listed on the syllabus for each course.
- B. Department offices shall provide instructors with door cards for posting office hours outside of their offices. Departments shall also post a listing of all instructor office hours in a public location near the department office and/or on the department website.
- C. Instructors shall provide office hours to the department office no later than the second class meeting. Departments shall post the office hours by the end of the second week of instruction during the fall and spring. For summer and winter sessions, departments should make every effort to post office hours during the first week.

III. Cancellation of Office Hours

- A. Instructors shall notify their department office (e.g., by e-mail, phone, or in person) in the event that they are unable to attend scheduled office hours.
- B. The department shall post a notice when office hours are cancelled.
- C. For online office hours that cannot be honored, the instructor shall send a message via e-mail to all enrolled students and/or post a message on the learning management system (LMS).
- D. Repeated failure to adhere to this policy is a breach of professional responsibility.

IV. Exceptions

- A. Periodic exceptions (e.g., professional travel) to this policy shall be subject to the approval of the department chair, after consultation with the instructor.
- B. Exceptions for an entire semester (e.g., no office hours) shall be subject to the approval of the dean (appropriate administrator) in consultation with the department chair and instructor.

Source: Faculty Affairs Committee

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