

Syllabus—Appendix II

METHODS OF COMMUNICATING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR, AND OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Guys/People/Folks:

Please go through this document carefully. *You will not receive responses to questions about information that has already been covered in this document.* **NOTE: University policies and regulations take precedence over any policies outlined in this document.**

Material in this document has been divided into these sections:

1. Policy on E-mails (and other Methods of Communicating with the Instructor)
2. Policy on Electronic Devices (phones, portable computers, etc.)
3. Policy on Classroom Sitting Arrangement
4. Policy on Complaints
5. Policy on Academic Freedom
6. Policy Concerning Academic Dishonesty
7. Policy on Student Responsibility and Classroom Conduct
8. Policy Concerning Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment
9. Grading Policy
10. Policy on Disability
11. Policy on Attendance and Missed Tests/Late Work
12. Policy on Incompletes
13. Policy on Coverage of Course Content
14. Policy on Office Hours
15. Policy on Requests for Letters of Recommendation
16. Miscellaneous Matters

1. Policy on E-mails (and other Methods of Communicating with the Instructor)

A. E-mails

1. This is not an online class. So, do NOT use e-mails as a substitute for talking to the instructor in person concerning matters that are NOT urgent (in other words, in this course, e-mails should always be used *as a last resort*).
2. Class-related e-mails are usually read on weekdays during normal work hours (for obvious reasons)—not on weekends or school breaks. I access my e-mails only through a desktop computer; not through any portable devices. (In other words, I read my e-mails only when I am in my office or at home, *and at no other time*.) ← Read this paragraph again.
3. As a general rule, I dislike e-mails from anyone who can easily talk to me in person (therefore, it may take time for me to get to your e-mails and write a response). **REMINDER:** Students (current as well as former students) are ALWAYS (repeat ALWAYS) welcome to come and see me during my office hours—even without prior notification. This privilege does NOT apply to those who are not students (e.g. faculty and administrative staff).
4. When you send the instructor an e-mail, please note the following:
 - The instructor is not your long lost cousin from Timbuktu. Your e-mail must begin with this salutation and closure (*Dear Dr....* and *Sincerely....* as if you are writing a letter). If you do not observe this format, you most likely will *not* get a response. So, you thought that e-mails are a license to abandon the normal rules of communication etiquette! Not in this case buddy! (Unless, of course, you are the inventor of this technology—in which case you certainly deserve a break.) Needless to say, the instructor will also follow this same rule when sending you or replying to your e-mails. (By the way, where is Timbuktu?)

- You, most likely, will NOT get a response at all if a class session intervenes (or the instructor runs into you by chance outside class) **before the instructor has had the opportunity to read or respond to your e-mail**. (The assumption here is that if your e-mail was that important you would have talked to the instructor in person about it.) ← Read this sentence again.
- E-mails sent via someone else's e-mail address will usually not receive a response.
- You must indicate in the subject line the course you are taking; otherwise, there is a serious danger that your message may be deleted in error before it's even read on the assumption that it is junk mail.
- Your e-mail must adhere to proper grammatical rules: punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc.
- If you blind copy (bcc) your e-mail to other persons then you may not get a response. .
- Your emails must NOT be about matters concerning: (a) **your test/course grades**; (b) **request for an incomplete**; (c) **course content (topics, issues, etc. covered or to be covered in the course)**; and (d) **course requirements**. (The first three items must be dealt with in person during office hours, while the last should be raised in class.)
- Do NOT send any kind of attachments without obtaining prior permission—computer viruses are usually spread through attachments.
- Do NOT forward any email without obtaining prior permission—computer viruses are usually spread through forwarded e-mails.
- If you do not receive a response to your e-mail, then any one or more of the following conditions may be the reason:
 - You did not follow the correct e-mail format and/or instructions specified above.
 - The issue you have raised will be addressed in class and/or on the class home page.
 - You are simply making a comment on some aspect of the class, and you have not made it clear that you need a response.
 - We are on school break.
 - The instructor is on research leave.
 - You should come and speak to the instructor in person (rather than addressing whatever the issue is via e-mail).
 - You weren't paying attention in class when the matter you are asking about was being covered. (Suggestion: speak to a classmate.)
 - The information you seek is available via the class homepage (e.g. in the announcements section or in the syllabus packet). Reminder: you are required to thoroughly familiarize yourself with all parts of the class homepage. (Suggestion: go back to the class home page and look for the information you need.)
- The instructor's e-mail address can be found through the online UB directory available through a link on your MYUB page or go to www.buffalo.edu and use the "find" search box.

B. Office hours:

All students (current as well as former students) are ALWAYS (repeat ALWAYS) welcome to come and see me during my office hours—*even without prior notification*. See also policy on office hours below.

C. Talk to the instructor upon conclusion of a class:

If the matter is really brief, you are allowed to talk to the instructor after any class period has ended. (You are also welcome to see the instructor at the end of his other classes (check what other classes are being taught by the instructor through the school's class schedule you can access via your MYUB page).

D. Come and interrupt a class:

If the matter is important (from *your* point of view), come to any of the instructor's other classes and simply walk in and interrupt the class. (The implication of this facility is that you have no excuse that you could not speak to the instructor.)

E. Talk to the instructor anywhere you run into him on or off campus:

Although there appears to be a strange and sad custom in this school of students and instructors not talking to each other outside class or office hours, you are always welcome to approach this instructor at any time anywhere you run into him outside class (plus, you do not even have to bow first—smile).

F. Get in touch by voicemail:

If you need to leave a message, but do NOT need a response: leave a message on the instructor's 24 hour voice mail at the following number: 645 0801. (Please make sure you identify the course you are in when you leave a message.) NOTE: your call will NOT be returned because I rarely access my voicemails.

G. Special appointments:

If you have made a special appointment with the instructor and you do not keep it without an *acceptable* reason, then you will not be allowed to make further special appointments. You will have to come during regular office hours.

H. Campus mail:

The instructor's campus mailing address is available via the online UB directory.

2. Policy on Electronic Devices (phones, computers, etc.)

(a) Once class has begun, all your electronic communication devices must be switched off AND completely out of sight; that is they must be in your book bag at all times. Each time I have to tell you to put a device away (regardless of whether you are using it or not) I may assign penalty points to your final course grade equivalent to a drop in a grade level (e.g. C+ to C). See also the “Policy on Student Responsibility and Classroom Conduct” in this document.

(b) Use of portable computers are not permitted in my courses without obtaining prior permission from me (which usually will be denied).

3. Policy on Classroom Sitting Arrangement

The sitting arrangement in class is the prerogative of the instructor. In other words, I may ask that you vacate your favorite spot and sit elsewhere in the room in the interest of enhancing the learning atmosphere in class. For example, generally, I like to ask those who love to sit at the back of the class to sit in the front sometime in the semester.

4. Policy on Complaints

If you feel you have a *legitimate* complaint(s) about this course then you are welcome to talk to the instructor. If, thereafter, you are still dissatisfied, then you can ask to speak to the Chair of his department (*Department of Transnational Studies*) by visiting the departmental office. For information about the department, check out its website by looking it up at the university’s website. (Have you ever visited the university’s website? Why not?)

5. Policy on Academic Freedom

This course subscribes to the University’s policy regarding academic freedom, which reads in part::

The University supports the principle of academic freedom as a concept intrinsic to the achievement of its institutional goals. This principle implies a trust in the integrity and responsibility of the members of the academic community. Samuel P. Capen, former Chancellor of the University of Buffalo, who is remembered for the tradition of academic freedom he implemented during his leadership of the University, said in 1935:

"Acceptance by an institution of the principles of academic freedom implies that teachers in that institution are free to investigate any subject, no matter how much it may be hedged about by taboos; that they are free to make known the results of their investigation and their reflection by word of mouth or in writing, before their classes or elsewhere; that they are free as citizens to take part in any public controversy outside the institution; that no repressive measures, direct or indirect, will be applied to them no matter how unpopular they may become through opposing powerful interests or jostling established prejudices, and no matter how mistaken they may appear to be in the eyes of members and friends of the institution; that their continuance in office will be in all instances governed by the prevailing rules of tenure and that their academic advancement will be dependent on their scientific competence and will be in no way affected by the popularity or unpopularity of their opinions or utterances...."

(The full policy is available here: <http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/judicial/12rulesp.pdf>)

6. Policy Concerning Academic Dishonesty

1. This course subscribes to the University’s policy regarding academic dishonesty. This policy, *which I have modified slightly* to take into consideration the potential to cheat via the internet, reads in part:

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university’s imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas. . . .

Academic dishonesty IN THIS COURSE includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- *Previously submitted work.* Submitting academically required material that has been previously submitted—in whole or in substantial part—in another course, without prior and expressed consent of the instructor.
- *Plagiarism.* Copying or receiving material from any source and submitting that material as one’s own, without acknowledging and citing the particular debts to the source (quotations, paraphrases, basic ideas), or in any other manner representing the work of another as one’s own.
- *Cheating.* Soliciting and/or receiving information from, or providing information to, another student or any other unauthorized source (including electronic sources such as cellular phones and PDAs), with the intent to deceive while completing an examination or individual assignment.
- *Falsification of academic materials.* Fabricating laboratory materials, notes, reports, or any forms of computer data; forging an instructor’s name or initials; resubmitting an examination or assignment for reevaluation which has been altered without the instructor’s authorization; or submitting a report, paper, materials, computer data, or examination (or any considerable part thereof) prepared by any person other than the student responsible for the assignment.
- *Misrepresentation of documents.* Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any University or Official document, record, or instrument of identification.
- *Confidential academic materials.* Procurement, distribution or acceptance of examinations or laboratory results without prior and expressed consent of the instructor.
- *Selling / distributing academic assignments.* No student is allowed to sell or offer for sale (or even simply distribute without receiving anything in return) to any person/website any academic assignment, or any inappropriate assistance in the preparation, research, or writing of any assignment, which the person knows, or has reason to believe, is intended for submission in fulfillment of any course or academic program requirement here at U.B. or elsewhere.

- *Purchasing/acquiring academic assignments.* No student is allowed to purchase or acquire an academic assignment intended for submission in fulfillment of any course or academic program requirement here at UB.

(For your reference, the full university policy is available here: <https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/integrity.html>)

2. See also my grading policy in this document regarding academic dishonesty.

7. Policy on Student Responsibility and Classroom Conduct

1. If you do not already know, this is a *research* university; the implication of which is that you are responsible for your own learning to a much greater extent than, say, at a “hold-my-hand-and-pamper-me” institution (such as a two-year college). This fact also means that this course subscribes to the University’s policy on student responsibility, which states in part:

By accepting responsibility for their education, students enhance the development of their academic, social, and career goals. As a condition of enrollment, students are responsible for reviewing, understanding, and abiding by the university’s regulations, procedures, requirements, and deadlines as described in official publications, including the university’s undergraduate catalog, UB websites, and official university email communications. In addition, all students are required to positively affirm their knowledge of, and adherence to, UB’s Student Conduct Rules, University Standards and Administrative Regulations prior to their inaugural semester at UB. Asserting a lack of knowledge of university regulations will not be accepted as a basis for an exception to these regulations.

(The full policy is available here: <https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/life-on-campus/community/rules.html#studentcode>)

2. Additionally, this course fully subscribes to the policy on “Behavioral Expectations in the Classroom” spelled out in the Undergraduate Catalog here: <https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/obstruction.html> Note: failure to comply with any of these expectations together with any of the other requirements specified in this document or on the class home page may entail, at my discretion, not only lawfully permissible sanctions but the withdrawal—*both retroactively and prospectively*—of any privileges extended to students in this course (such as bonus points from extra-credit work, and the like).

8. Policy Concerning Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment

This course subscribes to the University’s policy on discrimination, and sexual harassment, which states in part:

Pursuant to University policy, the University at Buffalo is committed to ensuring equal employment, educational opportunity, and equal access to services, programs, and activities without regard to an individual’s race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, gender, pregnancy, gender identity, sexual orientation, predisposing genetic characteristics, marital status, veteran status, military status, domestic violence victim status, or ex-offender status. Employees, students, applicants or other members of the University community (including but not limited to vendors, visitors, and guests) may not be subjected to harassment that is prohibited by law or treated adversely based upon a protected characteristic. The University’s policy is in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and harassment. These laws include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as Amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, and the New York State Human Rights Law. These laws prohibit discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

(The full policy is available here: <http://policy.business.buffalo.edu/Policy%20Library/Discrimination%20and%20Harassment.pdf>)

9. Grading Policy

1. A course grade is a proxy (it can only be that and nothing more) for what is supposed to be the effort you put into a course and the measurable results of that effort. Not all teachers and students, anecdotal evidence suggests, appear to understand this. Anyhow, you may wish to note this with all the seriousness it deserves: In this class, you will never be assigned a course grade willy-nilly with little or no regard to your performance vis-à-vis course requirements (regardless of how intelligent you think you are, or how much you claim you liked this course, or how much you think the instructor is the greatest [or worst] teacher since the dawn of time).

2. When written submissions are graded, a three-step procedure is followed: first, all submissions are gone through to get a sense of the quality of what you guys have submitted. Second, they are carefully read again to identify a response (for each question, if more than one) that can be considered as the best when compared to that of others—this does NOT necessarily mean that this response will be the most ideal, that is an “A-grade,” response. Finally, all the responses for each question, going question by question (if more than one), are graded using the best one as the benchmark. (For example: if the best response was assigned, say, a B, then all the other responses will not receive a grade higher than a B.) **NOTES:** (a) *Extra-credit* assignments/tests/quizzes are always graded more strictly than regular requirements. (b) Students are always, always, always welcome to go over their graded assignments/tests/quizzes, etc. during the instructor’s office hours; however, you must follow this procedure: make an appointment, and bring with you all your notes, textbooks, and any other relevant study materials. (c) Tests/quizzes are not generally cumulative; however, if a substantial number of you fail a particular question(s) then questions on the relevant material may reappear on subsequent tests/quizzes (and even the final exam). (d) If I become suspicious that your assignment has been “plagiarized” (which I define very broadly to include purchasing or acquiring without any compensation involved or asking someone to do the assignment for you), *as a first step*, I will call you in and ask you to take an oral and/or written test based on the assignment. See also the policy on academic dishonesty in this document.

3. It is your responsibility to keep up with your test scores as they are posted and to immediately bring to the instructor’s attention any bona fide discrepancies you may find. Therefore, all scores posted on the course website (available via a link on the class home page) are considered *written in stone*

after the last day of office hours; that is, they cannot be changed even if you later detect an error! The exception is with scores posted AFTER the last day of office hours; in which case if you detect an error in the posted **scores** send me an e-mail (using the correct e-mail format—see policy on e-mails above) with “error” plus the course number in the subject heading. What about an arithmetic calculation error in the computation of the final course **grade**? **See rule below.**

4. When you do your own calculations on the basis of scores provided through links on the class home page, please note that as per course requirements in the syllabus, the weighting for the different elements of the course requirements is not the same. (Note: All percentage calculations are based on zero decimal places, and tests/exams/quizzes, etc. are not graded on a curve.)

5. A *grade level* in this course is defined to include grades with pluses or minuses (e.g. going from a C- to a C or going from a C to a C+ equals a change in one grade level).

6. All course grades are FINAL. That is, as indicated above, once the final grades are submitted they are written in stone. (The school does not permit extra-credit work *after the fact*, nor does the instructor.) There is one exception to this rule: if you can clearly demonstrate that there was an error in the *arithmetic* calculations that led to your grade. The rule is that students must be awarded the grade they deserve (see, however, the policy above concerning errors in posted scores). Therefore, if you are *absolutely* sure—after you have rechecked all your scores and redone your calculations—that there was an *arithmetic* error please come and see me. We will go through the calculations once more, and if I find an error, I will submit an application for a change of grade. Note, however, that I will also submit an application for a grade change if the arithmetic error was in YOUR favor; *in which case your grade will obviously go down.* **←Read this sentence again.**

7. University regulations concerning grade changes include these two regulations:

- Once an "I" [incomplete] grade has defaulted, it cannot be changed.
- A grade (other than I or J) may be changed at the instructor's discretion *only to correct a calculation or data-entry error...* Such a change must include justification by the instructor and be approved by the department chair and cognizant dean. *A grade change other than an I or J is not permitted under any other circumstance.*

8. Do not send the instructor e-mails about grades, because you will most likely not receive a response. If you detect a **demonstrable arithmetic error** (highly unlikely), then come and see me in person within the first two weeks of the beginning of the coming semester. Do not send me an e-mail about it because you will not get a response.

9. If you end up being unhappy with your grade, then all one can say is that you should have heeded the advice that was liberally dispensed throughout the session in class: e.g. taking an R in the course; and/or lightening your course load; and/or attending class regularly; and/or taking notes; and/or lessening the number of hours you work at your paid jobs; and/or eliminating your social life; and/or developing good study habits; and so on.

10. Do not lie to your friends about the grade you have received for this course. (Students often claim that person “so-and-so” got a better grade than they did even though person “so-and-so” rarely came to class. It usually turns out that the person “so-and-so” was just lying about his/her grade to his/her friends.)

11. Grade points allocation for this course; plus other types of grades (as per university regulations): **A**=97-100 / **A-**=93-96 / **B+**=90-92 / **B**=85-89 / **B-**=80-84 / **C+**=73-79 / **C**=66-72 / **C-**=60-65 / **D+**=55-59 / **D**=51-54 / **F**=0-50 / (NOTE: When you do the percentage calculations it must be on the basis of ZERO decimal points.

>F< = failure for reason of academic dishonesty / **FX**= failure for reason of non-attendance of classes / **N**= audited course, no credit / **R**= resigned officially / **S**= satisfactory / **U** = unsatisfactory.

10. Policy on Disability

The policies of the school on disability arrangements apply. Visit the web page of the Accessibility Resources Office to determine what the policies are here: <http://www.ub-disability.buffalo.edu/>

11. Policy on Attendance and Missed Tests/Late Work

Attendance is mandatory in this class. Why? First, because the course is designed to include class-time for teaching and learning. This is not a distance or online learning (stay-at-home) course. Second, so that you won't be tempted, at the end of the course session, to request an incomplete or some other favor because you have been doing badly in the course. Third, because others, most likely, are paying your tuition and they expect you to attend class. Fourth, because your attendance record may be taken into consideration, as per school policy, when computing your final grade.

I. Missing Classes

1. If you miss a total of an equivalent of **6** or more regular 50-minute classes (or **4** or more regular 80-minute classes) for the entire course session without a legitimate excuse (see definition below) then you will not be allowed to receive a course grade higher than a "D" regardless of how well you do with respect to other course requirements. If you miss a total of an equivalent of **9** or more regular 50-minute classes (or **6** or more regular 80-minute classes) but *with* a legitimate excuse for the entire course session this same penalty applies. (Note: does not include absences during drop/add period.)

2. If you have a **legitimate** excuse (see definition below) for not coming to class, which will, most likely, require documentation, then you are allowed to make up missed work for that class (depending upon the specific class you have missed). Making up missed work will most likely require you to summarize *in your own words* the readings for that class—please contact the instructor for instructions. (For missed tests/quizzes see below.)

3. A legitimate excuse is defined in this course as one or more of the following:

- A documented illness (e.g. doctor's note). Note: if you have a flu or a cold and you purchase over-the-counter medication for it, the sales receipt in lieu of a doctor's note in the absence of a visit to one *may* be acceptable (please talk to the instructor).
- A documented serious illness in the family where you are the caregiver (e.g. you are a parent).
- A religious holiday specific to your religion (I may ask you to provide evidence if I am unfamiliar with your religion).
- A death in the family (you must provide some form of documentation).
- You are with the UB athletics department and you have a letter documenting your absences.
- You have been able to convince the instructor (even in the absence of documentation)—*against the backdrop of an otherwise perfect attendance record*—on the legitimacy of your absence.

4. All legitimately excused absences must be accompanied by the *missed class/missed test form* available via your class home page at this web site, even if you have sent the instructor an e-mail about your absence. (In fact, concerning e-mails and absences it is preferable that you do not send e-mails but instead complete and submit the missed attendance form.)

5. It is your responsibility (assuming you are present in class) to make sure that you are marked present when a roll call is taken or if an attendance sheet is passed around. Your attendance record will not be changed *after the fact*. ← **Read this sentence again.**

II. Attendance Record

1. Your attendance record will usually be available via your class home page at the course website. It is your responsibility to check it for accuracy whenever it is posted/updated.

2. Even in cases of *legitimate* excuses, the *posted* record itself will still reflect absences. Therefore, it is super important that you submit the *missed class/missed test form* so that there is a record on file to explain your absences should it be necessary to look at your attendance record at the end of the semester.

Reminder: your *posted* record cannot be falsified by marking you present when you were absent—*whatever the reason!* (Thought experiment: imagine you were absent from class for the entire semester for a legitimate medical reason. Is your posted record supposed to show that you were present in all classes throughout the semester? Really?)

3. If the attendance record is based on roll calls then it is your responsibility to pay close attention to the roll call. **NOTE:** If you are a few minutes late and miss the roll call then it is your responsibility to alert the instructor, at the end of class, to record you present. Once class is dismissed, the attendance record will not be changed after the fact (even if you claim you were present) ← **Read this sentence again.**

III. Coming Late to Class

1. Coming late to class without a legitimate excuse is simply not acceptable.

2. If you come late to class because of a legitimate reason, that is after class proceedings have begun, it is your responsibility to indicate your presence at the end of class (you will, of course, be recorded as having come late to class).

3. Those with the habit of frequently coming late to class should note that I will count every three late class attendances as equivalent to missing an entire class.

IV. Leaving Class Early

Unless you have been given permission, do not leave the classroom before class has ended (otherwise you may be marked absent).

V. Missing a Test/Exam

If (repeat, IF) you are allowed to make up a missed test/exam, then this is what you will have to do:

- If you have a *documented* legitimate excuse (see definition of legitimate excuses above) you must make up the missed test before the next scheduled test **during office hours**. Failure to meet this deadline may entail sitting for the test at the end of the semester during the exam period *at the instructor's convenience*.
- If you do **not** have a *documented* legitimate excuse then you *may* be allowed under very special circumstances (but not guaranteed) to sit for the test at the end of the semester during the exam period, but only *at the instructor's convenience*.

VI. Test/Exam Scheduling

Tests/exams will **NOT** be given on an individual basis prior to the assigned time and date under ANY circumstances. **Since final exam dates are available at the beginning of the semester it is your responsibility to make your travel arrangements accordingly.** ← Read this paragraph again.

VII. Late Submission of Assignments

If (repeat, IF) you are allowed to submit an assignment beyond a deadline then you must submit a written excuse, including, if required, supporting documentary evidence, explaining the late submission.

12. Policy on Incompletes

Because of the nature of this course with its heavy emphasis on in-class proceedings, incompletes will be given only in the *rarest* (repeat: rarest) circumstance. Before you approach me for an incomplete make sure that you read the school regulations on incompletes (reproduced in this packet—see the document titled "Academic Policies for Students in the College of Arts and Sciences (an SRC document)" in this packet. Note also that as per school regulations

- an incomplete can only be issued if you already have a passing grade in the course, *and*
- incompletes are a prerogative of the instructor, not the school! ← Read this last sentence again.
- The instructor has the right to impose a shorter time frame than the school's for the completion of an incomplete.

13. Policy on Coverage of Course Content

Please do not have a cow if we are unable to cover *in class* all the topics indicated in the proceedings schedule of the syllabus. (The readings—together with AV materials assignments should help to mitigate part of this inherent conflict between time constraints and completion of course content.)

14. Policy on Office Hours

- (a) My office hours are indicated on the class home page.
- (b) If you are in one of my courses, make sure you have checked all the information available about the course on the class home page (announcements, syllabus packet, etc.) *before* coming to see me. And always bring paper and pen with you.
- (c) There will be no office hours when classes, as per university calendar, are not in session.
- (d) After the last day of classes, my regular office hours will change.
- (e) You are ALWAYS welcome to bring an escort with you (parent, grandparent, peer, friend, etc.).
- (f) Students (current as well as former students) are ALWAYS (repeat ALWAYS) welcome to come and see me during my office hours—*even without prior notification*. This privilege does NOT apply to those who are not students (e.g. faculty).
- (g) For the duration of the time you are in my office I will give you my undivided attention and I will expect the same from you; therefore, all your electronic devices must be switched off and in your bag—otherwise I may prematurely cut short our meeting

15. Policy on Requests for Letters of Recommendation

Guys: Please note that I provide letters of recommendation for academic purposes only. I do not provide personal recommendations (usually concerns your character/ personality). I receive many requests for letters of recommendation from students. To handle these requests I have instituted the procedure indicated in a separate document available as part of this syllabus packet. This procedure aims to, simultaneously, accomplish three things: first, that I treat every request fairly (that is, without regard to class, race, sex, religion, etc.). Second, that the overall tone of the recommendation is a positive one (even if it turns out that I may have to indicate reservations on some aspect of your academic potential). Third, that the value of my letters of recommendation are not compromised in any way by ensuring respect for my reputation (among those to whom the recommendations are sent) as a person who writes honest and useful letters of recommendation. Please access this document and go through it very carefully before you request a recommendation from me.

16. Miscellaneous Matters

- (a) Students are expected to cooperate with each other and to help each other in meeting course objectives. You must be on comfortable speaking terms with each other within the first two weeks of the course; and you must remain so, at the very minimum, for the duration of the course. In this course, you will not be competing against each other; you will be competing only against yourselves.
- (b) Smoking, private conversations (no matter how important), sleeping, or any other anti-learning behavior will not be permitted in class.
- (c) Minimum waiting time if instructor is late: 20 minutes if the class is 80 minutes or longer; and 15 minutes if the class is less than 80 minutes.
- (d) Extra work for credit will not be available (if at all) on an individual basis. Question for you to ponder: if you don't have the time to do the regular course work, when will you get the time to do the extra-credit work (which, by the way, I grade at a higher standard—not least because its extra-work for me)?
- (e) You are allowed to bring to class any alcohol-free beverage and any food that may help you to stay awake and alert (as long as this does not disturb fellow class members and/or class proceedings AND you do not leave a mess behind).
- (f) You are *not* allowed to do any work for any other class (OR, for any other purpose) in my class at any time! (If you are caught doing so then it may be grounds for ejection from the class as well as recording you as absent from class.)
- (g) If you are still registered for this class after the last day for drop/add then I will take it to mean that you have *contractually* agreed to abide by all the requirements and instructions (specified either verbally in class or in writing) concerning this course.
- (h) If you fall into any one (or more) of the following three categories you may want to take a section with a different instructor: (a) you have a full course load and you have an equivalent of a fulltime job; (b) you are on probation; and (c) you have acquired the bad habit of skipping classes.
- (i) My procedure in all my classes is that class does not start until there is absolute dead silence and we have had an opportunity to greet each other. I consider teaching and learning as almost a sacred act, befitting a privilege that has behind it a long, long history of the struggles and sacrifices of countless generations of people. (Besides, it is common etiquette to begin social interactions with a greeting—*at least among civilized people.*) To the astute: the fact that I have to include this point in this document is an indication of how low we have sunk in human relations in this society!
- (j) You must regularly visit the home page for this class at this web site to check for general class announcements as well as indication of materials that a specific test will cover.
- (k) If you have positive comments to make about this course I would like to hear them. However, please send these comments via e-mail AFTER you have received your final grade for this course at the end of the session. At the same time, if you have critical comments to make, then they are welcome too. Send them via e-mail, and if I am convinced and if it is possible I will try and accommodate your criticism through course changes.
- (l) Course participants are expected to not only adhere to all regulations of the school that apply to them, but to make every effort to cooperate with me in assisting them to meet their immediate and long term educational objectives. I must strongly emphasize that I consider teaching as an altruistic endeavor; consequently, everything that I do to enhance your learning beyond the obligatory minimum is a favor to you—do not take this favor for granted.
- (m) Where an opportunity has been extended to the class to earn bonus points, only those who have exhibited professionalism in class will be entitled to these points. Professionalism is defined here as behavior that is in consonance with what is specified in the University's Undergraduate Catalog in the section titled "Obstruction or Disruption in the Classroom" under "Course Expectations." (Link: <https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/obstruction.html>)
- (n) Do not, under any circumstances, lie or submit false documentation in support of an excuse for an absence or missed/late work; otherwise, I may seek to impose a severe penalty beyond the nullification of the opportunity to redress the absence or missed/late work.
- (o) If this course is not part of your major, please treat it as if it is. In other words, you must approach this course (and all other courses you take in this school) with equal seriousness because all knowledge is important.
- (p) I am allergic to all forms of stupidity and *learned helplessness*. I define stupidity as *intellectual laziness* (that is, it is *not* a genetically determined mental condition).
- (q) I have included in this syllabus packet a statement on my teaching philosophy that undergirds my teaching. I urge you to read it because it will help you understand why I teach the way I do.
- (r) I have a dry sense of humor. If you learn to appreciate it, your passage through this course will be easier. (A question for you: what is a dry sense of humor?)

(s) You must understand, if you do not already do so, that teachers are among the few people outside the circle of your family, relatives and friends, who sincerely want you to succeed in your lives—both when you are in school and when you have completed school. Your successes are your teachers' rewards. So, once again: please cooperate with me to help you reach your educational objectives. By the way, in case you did not know: your tuition does NOT cover the entire cost of your education; taxpayers foot the larger part of the cost. I am alerting you to this fact for obvious reasons.