

# Niagara University

## Information for WRT 100 Faculty

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## Absence Policy (Students)

The Writing 100 Students Rights and Responsibilities form delineates the common policy for absences which all WRT 100 instructors have agreed to follow and enforce, which is: *You are permitted five (5) absences on a MWF schedule or three (3) absences on a TTh/MW schedule. Absences above this limit will affect your final grade. Penalties for excessive absences and/or missing in-class work due to an absence are determined by your instructor and are available on your syllabus.*

Please provide a clear explanation of the penalties for absences on your syllabus and explain it to the students during the first week of classes. Also, because absences impact students' grades, maintain good records. It's good practice to inform students if they approach the maximum for the number of absences they may have without lowering their final grades.

## Cancelling Class

If you're absent and need to cancel class, you can call our department secretary, Evelyn Tracy (286-8630) and ask that she post a sign on your classroom door. You can also call Campus Safety (286-8111) if it's after hours and we're unlikely to get the message in time. Please let Martha know if you're not going to be here and why, either through e-mail or a phone call/voicemail.

## Add Forms

During the first week of classes, students may approach you to sign a form to add them to your course. They are trying to enter your course, which has been capped at 17 students. The cap is set at 17 so that the students have as much individual help with their writing as possible. Adding students over this limit is detrimental to the students already in your course, and in some cases you may not have enough room for an extra student in the classroom.

While you can allow students to force-add your class, **you do not have to do so** and we encourage you to gently dissuade students from force adding the course if at all possible. Instead, tell students to sign up for an open section of WRT 100 (there are almost always seats left in some sections), or tell students that they need to talk to their advisor or to the WRT 100 Director about their need to take WRT 100 this semester. (We offer it every semester and in the summer, so they should not absolutely need to take it this semester.) The WRT 100 director will not sign any force-add form without your signature on it or without some communication from you giving permission.

## Athletes

Athletes will come to you near the beginning of the semester and ask you to sign a form which approves the absences they anticipate during the semester for “away games” and other special events. However, no matter what language athletes use about their coaches “giving” them excused absences, you have the sole right to excuse students from class. If it looks like the student will not miss more classes than are in the normal absence policy, go ahead and sign. If you think that a student athlete will miss too many classes due to their athletic schedule, you may want to encourage them to drop your course and take WRT 100 during their “off” semester.

The athletics staff does acknowledge that academics come first. They do not change grades you’ve given to students, or try to bully you into giving a student a higher grade than the student has earned. Coaches may contact you to find out how a student is doing in the class and/or how they and their tutors can help the student succeed in coursework. If you have problems with a student athlete, you may want to contact his or her coach.

## Copies

Transparencies are available if you’d like to make copies onto them for use with the overhead projector. There is a copier available for your use for smaller jobs (50 pages or less) on the third floor of Dunleavy, outside the main office. The code for this copier is 1106. For larger jobs, you should use the Copy Center, where our code is 11-1-11060. You can send your documents to the Copy Center using inter-campus mail or email.

To email documents to the Copy Center, please:

- Compose an email to Todd at [toddf@niagara.edu](mailto:toddf@niagara.edu).
- Attach the document(s) you wish to be copied in Word or PDF format.
- In the email, specify:
  - the quantity of copies to be made
  - whether you want double-sided copies
  - whether you want copies stapled
  - paper color and size
  - the account number (11-1-11060)
  - whether you will pick it up or if you want them to deliver to your mailbox
  - when you need the copies

Either process takes about 24 to 48 hour turnaround time.

## Counseling Services and Academic Support

Students have access to various kinds of support while they are at Niagara University. The following language about counseling and academic support is required on your syllabus:

*The strains and workload of student life can sometimes feel overwhelming and it is easy to lose perspective when faced with academic, social, and personal demands. The staff of the office of counseling services in the lower level of Seton Hall and the Academic Support staff in the Learning Center in Seton Hall are here to help students manage the stresses of university life. All private consultations are confidential and free of charge. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 286-8536 (Counseling) or 286-8072 (Office of Academic Support).*

This language also appears on the syllabus template available on the WRT 100 Web site.

## Director of WRT 100

The Director of WRT 100, Martha Krupa, is available to support you and your teaching and to provide resources and advice. Please call, e-mail, or stop by with questions or concerns. Martha's email is [mkrupa2727@aol.com](mailto:mkrupa2727@aol.com).

## English Department Overview

Niagara University's English Department serves some 300 majors, as well as providing two general education requirements for students in all majors. Most of our majors are actually "concentrating" in English as part of an Education degree; their degrees will come through the School of Education rather than the School of Arts and Sciences.

The English department also offers two general education courses which most if not all Niagara students take: English 100 and Writing 100. Students at Niagara take Writing 100 in their first semester if their last names are at the beginning of the alphabet or in their second semester if their names are at the end of the alphabet. They also take English 100 during their freshman year. The distinction between the two is that Writing 100 focuses on the writing process and information literacy, while English 100 focuses on the foundational concepts through which literature is interpreted.

## Media and Online Resources

Access to media resources in the classroom will vary depending on where you are teaching. The classrooms in VINI have in-room computer systems with overhead projectors and Internet access, and are equipped for video and audio delivery. The other classrooms have an overhead projector with laptop connection, a DVD player that can be played through the projector, and wireless access. All classrooms have a whiteboard.

If you require a computer and/or a projector in a non-equipped classroom, you can contact Media Resources at 286-8470. You should also contact Media Resources if you wish to arrange for video delivery to your classroom; they will arrange to show media that you provide at a particular time.

NU offers the following resources for instructors:

- Blackboard, which provides Web-based course resources as well as online quizzes, forums, and chat. For access to Blackboard, please email [blackboard@niagara.edu](mailto:blackboard@niagara.edu).
- E-mail accounts and ID cards, which can be obtained in the IT office on the first floor of VINI.
- Mailing lists, which are automatically created from the class roster. To send mail to one, you send mail to [WRT100Z@mail.niagara.edu](mailto:WRT100Z@mail.niagara.edu), where Z is replaced by the letter of the section you are teaching.
- MyNU, which allows you to access announcements, look up information, and contact students.
- Wireless access, which is accessed with your NU username and password.
- WebAdvisor, which allows instructors to access class rosters and to submit grades for students.

For more information about IT resources, please see the IT Web site at <http://www.niagara.edu/it/>.

Students have access to computer labs in VINI and in the library, where they can research, write, and print their papers. Many students also bring computers to campus with them or have access at home. It is reasonable to expect that students will be able to write their papers on computers except in extraordinary circumstances.

Be sure to specify what technological resources you will be using in your course and the expectations that you have for students on your syllabus and assignment sheets.

## Final Exams

Exam times are published on the NU web site at <http://www.niagara.edu/records/exams.htm> Find the time when your sections meet to find out when your final exam is. For WRT 100, all exams meet in their regular classrooms. We have to hold final exams, because the exams are counted by New York State as part of our class contact hours.

Because WRT 100 is about the writing process and revision, a final exam shouldn't count towards students' final grades. The following are suggestions for how you can use the final exam period:

- have a roundtable session during which students present the ideas they've developed in a final paper to other classmates
- turn back students' final projects and grades
- have student write an extended reflection on the writing they did in WRT 100 and their own writing and research process

You should not conduct course evaluations during the final exam period.

## Grades and Grading Scale

### Grading Scale

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| • A+ (4.33) | • C (2.00)  |
| • A (4.0)   | • C-(1.67)  |
| • A-(3.67)  | • D+ (1.33) |
| • B+ (3.33) | • D (1.00)  |
| • B (3.00)  | • D-(.67)   |
| • B-(2.67)  | • F (0.00)  |
| • C+ (2.33) |             |

You can grade assignments with letter grades, numbers, or both. Explain in your syllabus and in class how final grades will be calculated and where they fall on the grading scale.

Any course grade below a C- is considered unsatisfactory academic progress and should be reported at midterm. Students who withdraw from your class before midterm will show up as a "W" on your midterm and final course roster. If a student has not officially withdrawn and he or she is failing the course, you must give him/her an "F." You should not give an "I" (incomplete) unless you have arranged this with the student in advance. Grades are submitted on-line through WebAdvisor.

## Midterm

The midterm date is available on the academic calendar page at <http://www.niagara.edu/records/calendars.htm>. Shortly after that date, **you are required to submit midterm grades for those students who have a course grade of C- or below**. You may submit grades for all students if you so desire.

A midterm grade report is generated for those students; this report is sent to their academic advisors and to the student's home address to keep students and their advisors informed of their progress. You submit midterm grades through WebAdvisor.

## Office Hours

Adjunct faculty should be available to students for one hour a week per section they teach. Telephone and e-mail access are helpful supplements, but students do need to be able to meet with you in person. You may use the office space provided in Dunleavy 356, or many adjunct instructors hold office hours near the Jazzman Café in the student center or in the common areas on the third floor of Dunleavy.

## Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

All instructors are required to include a statement about academic honesty in their syllabus. The sample syllabus template has an example of an academic honesty statement. The new academic integrity policy is available through myNU.

To report a student for academic integrity violations:

- 1) Log into MyNU (<http://mynu.niagara.edu/>)
- 2) Click on **Academic Integrity** in the left column.
- 3) Click on **Report Student** in the left column.
- 4) Fill in the appropriate information and click on the **Preview Letter** button.
- 5) After you have reviewed your letter, click on **Submit** to submit a report.

The report will be sent to the student's NU email address, to you, and to the Dean of the student's college (if the student is in Education, Business, or Hospitality and Tourism Management) and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Students will be allowed to protest sanctions by requesting a hearing with the Academic Integrity board. Additionally, students who have more than one violation on their records will be subject to a mandatory hearing.

The Academic Integrity Web site (<http://www.niagara.edu/academicintegrity/>) has additional information about the policies and about reporting, including contact information for the faculty ombudspeople on campus.

## Progress Reports

During the semester, the Office of Academic Support will ask for progress reports on selected students who have been identified as in need of academic assistance or whose progress is required to be monitored (athletes) – this is called Early Action Program (EAP) reporting. You will be asked for number of absences, approximate grade to date, and a brief narrative comment. This information will be shared with the student and the student's advisors. EAP reporting is done through myNU.

## Students With Disabilities

Students with disabilities have an office of Academic Support to help them meet the requirements of their courses. Please be aware of this office and put the following statement on your syllabus:

*Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know about, or who need special arrangements in the event of an evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible in the semester, preferably no later than the first week of the semester. Students must also register with the Disabilities Specialist (286-8541 or [kadams@niagara.edu](mailto:kadams@niagara.edu)) in order to facilitate the provision of needed accommodations.*

Students who meet with you will explain their needs and their accommodations; if you have any questions, please contact Kelly Adams or Diane Stoelting. You do not have to offer accommodations to students who do not have their needs documented by the Office of Academic Support; instead, refer them to the Office of Academic Support so that they may begin the documentation process.

## WebAdvisor

WebAdvisor is our online scheduling and grading system. To obtain a WebAdvisor login, please talk to Information Technology; you will use the same login to access myNU, WebAdvisor, and your niagara.edu email address. WebAdvisor can be accessed from the Faculty Resource Page at <http://faculty.niagara.edu> or from the WRT 100 Resources page.

After you have accessed WebAdvisor, you can click on “Course Rosters” to obtain course information for your courses. If you check the box next to a student name and click on submit, you can student information, including their advisor and contact information.

Grades are submitted by logging into Web Advisor and clicking on Grading. You are then asked to choose a course, to designate whether these are midterm or final grades, and to enter the grades.

For final grades, please print a copy of the page with the final grades before clicking on the submit button. Sign that page and submit a copy of it to the Records Office.

## WRT 100 Resource Pages

The WRT 100 program has several resource pages available on their Web site at <http://www.niagara.edu/english/writing/wrt100.htm>.