Welcome

Since its founding in 1847, The University of Iowa has been first and foremost an educational institution. Excellent teaching enriches—even transforms—the lives of students. You probably can think of at least one faculty member or teaching assistant who made a profoundly positive difference in your life. We hope you aspire to be such a teacher and role model for your students.

Every day of the semester, instructors play a vital role in the educational lives of UI students. As a faculty member or lecturer you may be taking on existing courses or designing and implementing your own courses. As a teaching assistant, you may find yourself leading discussion sections for large-enrollment general education courses, designing and teaching freestanding courses, or assisting in clinics or laboratory sessions. The nature of your role will vary according to course and departmental needs. As you take on this important responsibility, keep in mind that other people on campus—including Center for Teaching staff members—are eager to support and encourage you.

Center for Teaching
ITS Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology
Using this book

We at the Center for Teaching, part of the ITS Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology, designed this handbook to make your teaching life a little easier. It is not intended to serve as an encyclopedic collection of all information on all topics related to university teaching and learning or to your life as an instructor. In this era of rapid information creation and exchange, you may find that consulting Internet resources, faculty members in your department, and University offices such as the ITS Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology (OTLT), including and especially the Center for Teaching, will provide more in-depth and current information about your teaching role. This handbook is an overview with guideposts for further exploration. It also is available online as a PDF at the OTLT website (http://teach.its.uiowa.edu), where you can find links to additional information and resources, which we will update as necessary.

We hope this handbook about your role as an instructor and the teaching life will inspire you to ponder both who you want to be as a teacher and how you can best help your students learn. We encourage you to read the handbook before you begin teaching and then turn to experienced faculty members, online resources, and the Center for Teaching for additional information, ideas, and support.

We are an important part of your professional network. Let us know if we can help make your teaching experience even more exciting and rewarding for you and your students.

Best wishes,

The Center for Teaching staff
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Whether you are a new or experienced instructor, it is important to consider your responsibilities with respect to the particular course you teach. To help you understand how this course fits within your department, consult with the Departmental Executive Officer (DEO) and other faculty members. The following questions are worth exploring together:

**What are the teaching goals of this course and how does the course fit into the departmental curriculum and into students’ entire college experience?**

The most effective instructors understand the teaching (and learning) goals and objectives of the course and how they dovetail with the larger educational arc of the departmental curriculum. A survey course designed for any student, for instance, is bound to differ in its goals, content, structure, and requirements from a course intended for upper-division majors. As a new instructor, you will find the previous course syllabi, previous exam questions, textbook organization, and conversations with other instructors can provide insights into the course goals and key concepts.

**What are my responsibilities to my students?**

Every instructor has three primary responsibilities related to their role as instructors:

- **To value teaching and believe in learning**—It’s no surprise that good teachers understand their subjects and know how to engage and challenge their students. But regardless of whether they tap dance during every class or are quiet and unassuming, the best teachers also fervently believe that teaching matters and that students can learn (Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, Harvard University Press, 2004).

Many college students believe the best instructors are organized, maintain a passion for the subjects they teach, and care about their students’ learning. Of course, there are...
many ways to successfully demonstrate these three characteristics, including providing your students opportunities to be actively involved in their own learning inside and outside the classroom (see page 21, “Basic Principles of Teaching”).

• **To encourage open and respectful classrooms/discussion**—Instructors should encourage university students to speak and listen to each other with respect, particularly when opinions differ.

• **To act professionally**—Instructors are responsible for maintaining open but professional relationships with their students. Because instructors and TAs evaluate students, inherent power differences exist in the instructor/student relationship.

The University of Iowa has a strict policy against sexual harassment, which subverts the school’s teaching-and-learning mission and undermines productive, professional relationships among students, faculty members, teaching assistants, and staff members. The University’s complete Policy on Sexual Harassment can be found at [http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment](http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment). Even a consensual romantic relationship between instructor and student threatens the integrity of the student-instructor relationship, creates a conflict of interest, and causes the perception of undue advantage. You can review the University’s Policy on Consensual Relationships Involving Students at [http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/consensual-relationships-involving-students](http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/consensual-relationships-involving-students).

**How will my teaching be evaluated?**

All departments at The University of Iowa require end-of-semester evaluations of teaching to determine students’ opinions about course content, instruction, organization, and to provide documentation of teaching skills for instructors’ resumes and personnel issues. TAs and faculty members can use this information to assess the effectiveness of specific instructional practices and identify areas for improvement and development. Assessing the Classroom Environment (ACE) is an online evaluation system that collects student opinions about a course/instructor and provide a standard set of summary results. Instructors may or may not be required to use ACE and should check with their department to determine their options.

You can learn much about your teaching effectiveness from your students. Analyzing results of their quizzes, assignments, and lab reports can help you understand your teaching strengths and challenges.

Various kinds of ungraded, periodic feedback, including minute papers (see page 21, “Basic Principles of Teaching”) or brief questionnaires, also can provide insights about your teaching. Asking students to simply comment on your teaching is unlikely to produce specific information that could help you understand your teaching strengths and challenges. Instead, ask specific questions such as “How can I help you learn?” or “What two things have you learned this week (or during this class period), and what confused you?”

After reviewing students’ answers, thank them for their input and tell them a few of the things you learned from their comments.

You can assess your own development as a teacher by keeping a teaching journal or portfolio (see page 8 in “Who Are You?”). Over the course of your college teaching career, a professional portfolio can enable you to see evidence of and reflect on your professional growth. Teaching portfolios are becoming increasingly important in employment searches, tenure, and promotion.

You also may arrange for a Center for Teaching staff member to provide a free, confidential, and voluntary teaching consultation and feedback.

**I’d like to improve my teaching—who can help?**

Your college or department may offer formal training for new instructors and teaching assistants before and during the fall semester.
For new instructors, your DEO or your peers in your department (and for TAs, a supervising faculty member or a faculty mentor) also can observe you teach and provide feedback and ideas.

In addition, the Graduate College offers graduate students who are interested in pursuing faculty positions an opportunity to earn a Graduate Certificate in College Teaching (https://education.uiowa.edu/services/office-graduate-teaching-excellence-ogte/graduate-certificate-college-teaching).

The Center for Teaching staff are also available to help you improve your teaching. The Center for Teaching was established in 1996 to encourage and support excellence in teaching and learning at The University of Iowa. Our services are free, voluntary, and confidential.

- Each semester we sponsor a number of workshops and institutes to help enhance teaching and learning at Iowa. A poster with information about these events should arrive in your campus mailbox the week before the semester begins. You can find descriptions about and register for workshops on our website.
- We also offer individual feedback—one-on-one consultations, classroom observations, or more structured teaching evaluations (Classroom Assessment by Student Interview, or “CLASSI”). We do not discuss any aspect of a particular consultation with those who are charged with the evaluation of teaching performance. Except in extraordinary circumstances, we will only reveal that information to a third party upon your request.
- Any UI instructor is welcome to use the Center for Teaching lending library, which contains books, journals, and other media about teaching and learning in higher education.

Other chapters in this handbook, including “Planning Ahead and the First Day of Class,” “Basic Principles of Teaching,” and “Behavioral Expectations,” present specific teaching concepts and ideas that you can learn, practice, and adapt to your own needs. Many online resources and listservs that focus on teaching in higher education are also available for you to peruse.

**How often should I hold office hours?**

The minimum number of instructor or TA office hours is a departmental policy matter.

If you are a TA who teaches a discussion section for a course, the supervising faculty member will let you know his or her expectations about TA office hours. If you are teaching a course yourself, you will want to schedule at least two office-hour sessions per week, preferably one session in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Office hours and office locations should be published in the syllabus (see page 15), “Planning Ahead and the First Day of Class”). Any changes should be announced in class and published on the course website well in advance, if possible. Just as in their discussion sections or lectures, instructors and TAs can make creative use of their time during office hours. To become familiar with your students and help ease them into the course, you might schedule individual conferences with them during the first month of the course. As the semester continues, you could also use office hours to host small-group workshops or reviews.
What is my role in the course?
Particularly if you lead discussion sections related to a lecture course, you will want to know what the course instructor expects of his or her teaching assistants. Are you supposed to review information presented in lecture? Provide supporting or new material? Review readings, problem sets, homework, discussion questions? Conduct exam reviews?

What are my responsibilities as a discussion section leader or lab TA?
TAs often lead small discussion sections or labs related to lectures involving large groups of students taught by faculty members. “Small” discussion sections can range from five or six to forty students. You will want to understand how much independence you have in choosing subject matter and whether the course instructor requires students to attend discussion sections.

In addition, most faculty members require their TAs to attend course lectures so they will be able to answer students’ questions about digressions, problems, announcements, and handouts.

Who grades what?
You will want to understand how students earn their grades and then make sure they also understand what part of their course effort will be graded and the standards on which their work will be assessed. Beyond that, of course, you need to know whether you have a direct role in grading exams, assignments, lab reports and quizzes.

Are you responsible for recording other facets of the learning process that may affect grades, such as class attendance, participation, and timeliness? How should grades or other assessments be recorded? Will you be proctoring exams? Will you and other course TAs participate in exercises to help calibrate your grading processes and outcomes?

What must I do to prepare for teaching a course solo?
Experienced TAs sometimes may be invited to teach a course solo. In that role, the TA performs functions similar to a faculty member—organizing and preparing the course goals and objectives; preparing the syllabus; delivering course content (knowledge and skills); creating and grading assignments and exams; holding office hours; etc. Nevertheless, a TA in this role should consult with a faculty member in the department about the course and should rely on that individual for advice about teaching issues that develop during the semester.

Am I responsible for non-teaching activities related to this course?
Yes, you may well be. Part of your job may entail setting up and putting away equipment, learning how to use technology, locating reference materials and putting them on reserve, updating the course website, attending weekly TA meetings, and participating in professional development workshops and events.
The Teaching Goals Inventory

The Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI) can help you discover something about yourself as a teacher. Created by Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross, the TGI is an easy-to-use, self-scoring, online tool to help you discover what you value about teaching and learning. Although it is primarily used by faculty members who are developing or revising instructional goals, it also is useful for anyone teaching college courses or developing a teaching portfolio. The TGI is available online at http://fm.iowa.uiowa.edu/fmi/xsl/tgi/data_entry.xsl?-db=tgi_data&-lay=Layout01&-view.

Y
ou are a faculty member or graduate student, so you are probably someone who relishes the excitement and challenge of teaching and learning. You are also probably wondering what kind of teacher you will be. Learning to teach well is a lifelong journey, and we welcome you to the beginning steps and are here to support you along your professional journey.

The TGI helps college teachers:

- become more aware of what they want to accomplish in individual courses,
- locate classroom assessment techniques they can adapt and use to assess how well they are achieving their teaching and learning goals, and
- discuss teaching and learning goals with colleagues.

Introducing Yourself

How you introduce yourself on the first day of class can set the tone for the semester. While you will want to create an open and welcoming atmosphere for serious learning, you will not
want to imply that you and your students will be buddies. This can be a tricky line to negotiate. Here are a few tips that might help:

- Write your name and contact information on the board (as well as in the syllabus). Before the first day of class, ponder the implications of your students addressing you by first name or last name. If they address you by your last name at the beginning of the semester, you can always invite them to use your first name later in the semester. It’s unlikely the reverse would work.

- Provide your students with a brief summary of your professional background and interests. Telling them where you earned your undergraduate and graduate degrees, your research or dissertation focus, and work experience related to the course topic will help to establish your expertise in the discipline.

- Briefly tell students how you have used certain skills that they will be learning in the course (e.g., writing, speaking, analyzing statistics, interviewing, or lab skills).

**Where Are You From?**

One of the great pleasures of college life for all members of the campus community is getting to know people from across the country and around the world. Students who may never have had the opportunity to venture far beyond their hometowns suddenly interact with people who possess different cultural backgrounds, values, religions, gender preferences, languages, and ethnic backgrounds.

Students may, without realizing it, demonstrate certain biases or judgments about instructors (and their fellow students) who differ from them.

It may be a good idea to very briefly share a few interesting points about where you grew up, particularly if you do not seem “like a Midwesterner.” At any time during the semester, however, resist the urge to reveal too much personal information. It is, after all, personal. In addition, students may not want to know that much about one of their instructors.

If you wonder what is appropriate to share about your personal background or current life, ask yourself, “If I tell my students this, will it serve a specific teaching-and-learning purpose related to this course?” In many cases, the answer will be “no.”

**International teaching assistants and instructors** may face special challenges in the American classroom, not only because of their own secondary education perceptions and experiences but also because of the cultural knowledge and assumptions of their American students. Telling students something interesting about where you grew up or your own experiences as a student in your country can relieve them and you of anxiety and also be an insightful “learning moment” for your students.

Occasionally, language differences cause misunderstandings in the classroom. A few tips might help avoid frustration for both you and your students:

- Adjust expectations—American education emphasizes independent thinking, creativity, and active involvement by students in the classroom and even in course development.

- Students respond well to enthusiasm for the subject and for teaching. They like to be encouraged, particularly when wrestling with an especially difficult intellectual challenge.

- If you think language might be an issue, let your students know that you will do your best to make sure you understand them and vice versa.

- Invite students to politely let you know if they do not understand you, and tell them you also might ask them to repeat a word or phrase.

- Use the minute paper (see page 21, “Basic Principles of Teaching”) to check whether students really understand what you have said.

- Write your main points and any course-related vocabulary on the board at the beginning of class and as the words come up during discussion.

- Confirm your understanding of a student’s comment or question by repeating what they
have said. Then phrase it in another way and ask if that is a correct representation of the student’s comments.

- Students cannot use your accent as an excuse for not learning the course material or to justify their poor performance.

- Observe American instructors and classes to better understand how teachers and students interact appropriately in this country. Nonverbal communication also varies across cultures. For example, in American universities, presenters are expected to make eye contact with their audience. This is not necessarily true in schools in other countries. In addition, college students in the United States are encouraged to raise their hands and ask questions, even in the middle of a lecture. In other societies, such behavior is considered extremely rude and disrespectful of the lecturer’s age and position.

- Watch for nonverbal communication behaviors involving speed of speech, volume and tone of voice, eye contact, facial expressions, and head and hand movements. Unnecessary or exaggerated expressions or gestures can distract and even confuse students.

- Invite an experienced TA or faculty member to observe you “teaching” a brief mock class and provide you feedback before the semester begins.

- Contact the Center for Teaching or English as a Second Language Program (https://clas.uiowa.edu/esl/iiep) for more ideas and resources.

**Physical Presence**

Students can infer many things about you from how you dress, stand, and move in the classroom.

- If you dress like your students, particularly if you are a teaching assistant, students may think of you more as a student than an instructor—at least at the beginning of the semester. You certainly don’t need to buy a new wardrobe, but consider dressing more formally for at least a few weeks. Then once you have established a teacher-student relationship, you can start wearing more casual attire, such as jeans. Faculty members at UI tend to dress more formally than teaching assistants, so use your department colleagues as a guide.

- **Whether and where you stand** also says something about you and your relationship with students. Many instructors like an informal atmosphere where everyone is gathered around a table, or chairs are in a circle. Others prefer to stand behind a lectern, which can be a symbol of authority. Perhaps some combination of informal and formal is best, depending on the message you want to convey. Coming out from behind the lectern can sharpen students’ attention and indicate that you feel comfortable with the course content. If the class gets out of hand when you are seated, just standing up might refocus student attention on the learning tasks at hand. Walking among your students during discussion can demonstrate your confidence.

**Teaching (or “Professional”) Portfolios**

Teaching portfolios are becoming increasingly important to showcase the teaching talents of graduate students and faculty members who are seeking employment, promotion, or tenure. They sometimes are called “professional portfolios” to distinguish them from learning portfolios, which are created by students in the course of their studies. The best portfolios include evidence of good teaching (syllabi and assignments, course evaluations, video clips) as well as the instructor’s teaching philosophy and reflections on his or her development and long-term goals as a teacher. Contact the Center for Teaching for more information on how to put together an effective teaching portfolio.

Electronic teaching or professional portfolios can very effectively present evidence of your teaching skills not only with text, but also via video clips of you lecturing or working with students. You can find more information about this approach to portfolio presentation from the OTLT website.
of course, there is no single, correct answer to the question, “Who are my students?” except to say they are a diverse group of individuals with whom you will spend several months forging a community of learners. Learning more about your students is one of the joys of teaching.

Like you, each student brings his or her own cultural background and experience to the classroom—good news for everyone involved. Diversity enriches the learning experiences of instructors and students by broadening intellectual exploration and bringing to light alternative ways to define and solve problems.

Undergraduate Students Today
You will understand your students better if you do a little research before the first day of class. Many people in their 30s, 40s, and beyond are now enrolled in undergraduate degree programs. Nevertheless, the majority of your students will be younger than that and likely younger than you.

Faculty members sometimes begin to put their undergraduate students’ experiences in perspective by looking over the Beloit College Mindset List (www.beloit.edu/mindset/). The list is a general statement of the experiences and events that likely have shaped the world view of most students as they begin their college education. The list does not describe every first-year student’s mindset (note the comments on the site’s home page), but is a generalization and a fun “read.”

Every semester the Office of the Registrar publishes a Profile of Students Enrolled at the University of Iowa. http://admissions.uiowa.edu/future-students/university-iowa-student-profile. While this report provides data on UI students, the Office of Assessment has also surveyed undergraduate students about their academic and extra-curricular experiences at UI. See their website (http://www.uiowa.edu/assessment/reports-and-surveys) for recent Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) and Senior Exit survey results and reports.
Recognizing and Valuing Diversity

The very acts of teaching and learning are cultural experiences. Classroom behaviors and practices are strongly influenced by an instructor’s own cultural background, and each of us must work hard not to privilege students of one background and disadvantage students whose language, experience, abilities, or learning styles differ from our own.

When a student hails from another country, differences in language, dress, and appearance can be apparent. Like most people around the world, Americans are curious about those who dress and speak differently. First-day introductions might politely bring to light these differences and satisfy curiosity about the variety of places that each student calls home. Underscoring the value of these differences will set a positive tone for future classroom interactions.

Here are a few questions that might help you and your students recognize and value classroom diversity:

- Am I sensitive to the fact that people from other parts of the country or from other countries may not view education, college, teacher/student relationships, classroom interactions, or course content in the same way I do?
- Do I try to find out something about why my students are taking this course and what they are curious about?
- Do I understand that students feel uncomfortable when asked to “speak for” a particular cultural, ethnic, special needs, or religious group of which they are a member?
- Do I call on people fairly?
- Do I understand that academic disadvantage cannot be assumed simply because a student is a member of a particular group?
- Do I try to explain jokes that seem to confuse students from another country?
- Do I understand that religious faith can condition how students and instructors view intellectual pursuits?
- Do I include examples from alternative lifestyles in class?
- Do I try to incorporate research conducted by women?
- Do I present information and require student responses in a variety of ways such as visually, orally, and kinesthetically?
- Am I respectful, not condescending, in my communication with all my students, regardless of their age and abilities?

Of course, these questions are not comprehensive; there are many issues to consider when trying to promote an atmosphere that is inclusive, respectful, and cooperative. You not only set the tone by your own behavior but also should let students know you expect them to recognize and value the richness that diversity brings to a classroom.

Helping Students Respect Others

It requires finesse to balance the various elements that create an open, respectful discussion of sometimes emotionally charged subjects, and to do so in a way that all students continue to feel comfortable voicing their opinions and expressing their ideas. On rare occasions, however, a student may make a stereotypic or offensive comment in class that sparks high emotion. Suddenly, discussion becomes personal and ventures far astray from the learning task at hand.

- Be prepared for that possibility and think ahead about how you can react appropriately.
- Early in the semester, be proactive with your class by encouraging students to establish a brief set of ground rules for interaction that they agree to abide by during discussion and debate. At least one of the ground rules should address the issue of inappropriate or offensive speech.
- Be willing to accept a certain amount of high emotion and conflict as long as students continue to pursue intellectual, not personal, agendas.
- If someone does say something offensive, don’t ignore it. Racist, sexist, or other offensive comments or behaviors have no place in a classroom.
• On the other hand, don’t assume the speaker intended the comment to be offensive. Students—particularly those who may never have been away from home—may not even recognize that something they say (and perhaps have heard elsewhere) would be offensive to someone else. Let the student know that what was said might be considered offensive, and reframe the discussion to get it back on track.

Students with Disabilities
In any particular year, 500 or more students at Iowa are recognized as having psychiatric, learning, attention deficit, or physical disabilities. The majority of these students have learning (LD) or attention deficit (ADD) disabilities. Students with LD often struggle with acquiring, processing, or remembering new information. Students with ADD are easily distracted by any stimuli and need assistance with structure.

Federal and state laws require the University to provide equal access to academic programs and to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students with disabilities. “Reasonable accommodation” means removing physical and instructional barriers to learning so that academic success can be achieved. According to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, accommodation should not be construed as giving special advantages to help students with disabilities pass a course or as grading them on a different scale.

The following guideposts can help you interact appropriately with students with disabilities:

• Accommodations include alternative ways to fulfill course requirements, assistive technology, tutorial assistance, seating arrangements, or modified testing procedures.
• Course syllabi should inform students that accommodations are available for students with disabilities and that they must register with Student Disability Services in order to receive consideration for alternative testing and assignments.
• Some students may want to avoid this process and will simply ask you for the appropriate accommodation. Tell them that you are required to follow the University’s protocol, and refer them to Student Disability Services.
• In addition to language in the syllabus, a few remarks on the first day of class can encourage students with special needs to speak with you outside the classroom as soon as possible so you can help provide any accommodations.
• Create an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable discussing their needs with you. Provide appropriate help when asked but avoid placing undue attention on the student in class.
• Maintain the student’s confidentiality at all times.
• Don’t single out any student as a representative of people with disabilities.
• Remember that students with disabilities are students first.

For more information about how instructors can assist students with disabilities, contact Student Disability Services or see https://diversity.uiowa.edu/policies/assisting-students-disabilities-guide-instructors.

Of course, diversity among students goes beyond appearance, lifestyle, nationality, age, language, and abilities. Many of your students are interested and committed to an array of co-curricular activities. College years can provide new and exciting opportunities for students to participate in athletics, service clubs, Greek life, and student government. Students who are involved in co-curricular activities often are more organized and motivated to do well in course work. In addition, co-curricular activities offer unique learning experiences that can have a positive and permanent impact on students.

Learning to manage co-curricular activities so they do not interfere with coursework can be an important facet of the college experience. Help your students understand that managing their schedules can mean planning ahead to complete assignments early or otherwise adjusting their work habits to fit the course schedule.
It’s worth noting several points you should know about students in University-sanctioned athletic teams:

- About 630 students are members of a University of Iowa-sanctioned athletic team.
- Student athletes must meet eligibility requirements, so the Athletics Department will contact instructors at least twice per semester to determine if students are attending and earning passing grades. Student-athletes will need permission from Student-Athlete Academic Services before making changes to their class schedule such as adding or withdrawing.
- Student athletes can request free tutoring from Student-Athlete Academic Services (http://academics.hawkeyesports.com/), but may still seek assistance from instructors. Students may receive study table hours for the time they spend with an instructor during office hours or review sessions, and students must present Student-Athlete Academic Services with a signed document verifying when and with whom they met.
- Instructors also are notified before student athletes will be out-of-town for competitions, and student athletes are required to make arrangements with their instructors prior to travel.
- In general, student athletes prefer not to be singled out about their athletic accomplishments or team records in class but want to be treated like other students.

Additional Resources

Additional information about diversity is available from these offices:

- Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity: 202 Jessup Hall, 335-0705
- International Programs: 1111 University Capitol Centre, 353-2700
- Office of Staff Disability Service: 121 University Services Building, Ste. 20, 335-2660; 335-3495 (TTY)
- Student Disability Services: 3015 Burge, 335-1462; 335-1498 (TTY)
- Sign Language Interpreters: Contact sds-deafbob@uiowa.edu

For additional information, you may want to read these documents:

- The University of Iowa Policy on Human Rights makes clear that the school strives to bring together “in common pursuit of its educational goals persons of many nations, races, and creeds.” (http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/human-rights)
- The University of Iowa Strategic Plan—Renewing The Iowa Promise—states that a key University goal is “to continue to advance the core values and priorities of inclusion and internationalization. Domestic and global diversity are essential to excellence across all parts of our mission.” https://provost.uiowa.edu/strategic-plan-0
Planning Ahead and the First Day of Class

Good instructors walk into a classroom on the first day—and every subsequent day—having prepared ahead for class. Planning ahead includes research, talking with colleagues, formulating teaching and learning goals and objectives, creating a syllabus, and outlining the first day—if not the first several sessions—of the course.

Become Familiar with Your Classroom and Students

Classrooms are assigned well in advance of the beginning of each semester through the Office of the Registrar (http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu). Once you know where you will be teaching in a classroom or supervising a lab, visit the room.

- Do the lights, windows, and window coverings work?
- If you are in a lab, is the safety equipment easily accessible and up-to-date?
- Will you have access to the teaching technology you need and does it work?
- Have you asked the departmental or course administrative assistant about keys, photocopy privileges, and supplies?
- What kind of chair arrangement is in the classroom? Can you move the chairs and tables? If so, what arrangement would be most conducive to student learning?
- Where will you want students to sit in a large classroom?
- Is the assigned room unsuitable for you or your students? If so, let your departmental administrative assistant know. Another, more appropriate room may be available.

If you are comfortable in the space, you will be—and appear to be—more confident. If you will use a lectern, stand behind it to make sure you will be able to make eye contact with every student in the class. Then “break free” of the lectern and move throughout the room—laterally in the front, down the aisles, even behind the last row of chairs. Remember that this “real estate” is all part of the classroom; moving throughout the classroom can enliven a lecture and encourage student participation.

The OTLT Learning Spaces Team (http://its.uiowa.edu/gac) can help you learn how to use the technology in the room you are assigned, and are available to help if anything is broken or not
working right. They can also work with you to make sure that any software you require for your teaching is available on the classroom computer.

In addition to visiting and becoming comfortable in the classroom or lab, get to know your students before the first day of class.

- If you receive a course list before the semester begins, read students’ names aloud several times.
- During the first few class sessions, you undoubtedly will mispronounce some names. Don’t be embarrassed; just explain that it might take you a time or two to say names correctly.
- As students pronounce their names, write phonetic spellings of names you find difficult.
- Look at each student as they respond when you call roll. This will help you remember their names next time around. Consider doing icebreaker activities during the first week of class to learn students’ names and to build community in your class.
- If you have a small enough class, you can use a few minutes during the early sessions to engage in a quick conversation with each student. You’ll remember the conversation, which will help you remember their names.

**Syllabus Construction**

The University requires instructors to distribute a thorough syllabus during the first class session and on the course management system, ICON. For support using ICON, visit [http://teach.its.uiowa.edu/technology-tools/icon](http://teach.its.uiowa.edu/technology-tools/icon). Although many teaching assistants receive a syllabus from the professor teaching the course, a TA who independently teaches a course must create a syllabus. This is a crucial part of the course that should receive considerable thought.

The following tips are not meant to be the last word on constructing an effective syllabus. The Center for Teaching has many resources, including handouts, about the theory and practice of syllabus construction. Feel free to contact us or go to the OTLT website if you would like more information.

- The University requires the following specific course information on the first day of classes. The most common method of providing this information is a syllabus:
  - The instructor’s name, office address, office hours, and directory information (telephone and email). If the instructor is a teaching assistant, the course supervisor’s name, office address, office hours, and directory information also are required. Please also include the departmental executive officer (DEO) name and office location.
  - Goals and learning objectives of the course.
  - Course content and schedule of topics.
  - List of readings and/or other anticipated course materials.
  - Expectations for attendance, assignments, and examinations.
  - Dates and times of any examinations outside of class time (see the link to Registrar’s [Examination Policies](http://teach.its.uiowa.edu/technology-tools/icon) section on the website listed above).
  - Grading procedures, including whether plus/minus grading will/will not be used.
  - Statement on availability of accommodations for students with disabilities.
  - Resources for obtaining additional help, such as tutors or teaching assistants.
  - Any changes in the information about the course from what appeared on MyUI.
- Additional information may be required by each college. Check with the college(s) under whose auspices the course is being taught.
- Clearly state the course **learning goals**, **learning objectives**, and **learning outcomes**. Periodically refer back to these as you teach and if students question a grade or their progress in the course. Goals reflect the broad learning targets for a course. Learning objectives include the specific content and activities that you want students to learn and the behaviors that you expect from
students to demonstrate their learning. Learning objectives are phrased with verbs such as “apply,” “analyze,” and “create” that make clear to the student what is expected of him/her. These are the nuts and bolts of learning. Learning outcomes are what you measure to demonstrate student understanding and application of the material. In a nutshell, goals are where you want to go, objectives are how you get there, and outcomes are proof that you have arrived. The Center for Teaching has additional information about structuring learning goals, objectives, and outcomes.

• The tone of the syllabus helps set the tone of the course. A positive tone helps students engage in their own learning endeavor. An authoritarian or scolding tone does not welcome or encourage their collaboration in the teaching-and-learning process. Describe the syllabus as an educational “promise” not a “contract.”

• Clearly state course policies and make sure they are in accordance with University and college policies.

• Some instructors include a disclaimer in the syllabus to the effect that the schedule should be viewed as a tentative outline subject to reasonable adjustment. This reminds students that the learning process should be flexible and may be altered according to their learning needs and your teaching expertise.

• Obtain copies of syllabi from previously taught courses to make sure you haven’t missed anything important, and invite a supervising faculty member, mentor, or experienced colleague to review your syllabus before printing.

Session Plans—The “Mini-Syllabus”
Just as a syllabus provides a road map to the course for TAs and students, so the session plan provides a guide for a single class. Devising a session plan will:

• help you determine the important knowledge, skills, and habits of mind you want students to acquire and demonstrate during the session and force you to arrange them hierarchically and logically;
• help you “edit” the amount of material you reasonably can cover during the session;
• encourage you to consider alternative, “non-outline” ways to organize information such as diagrams, tables, or concept maps; and
• ensure that you complete the mundane but critical tasks such as “write goals on board,” “hand back Bill’s paper,” “remind students about quiz.”

Provide a short outline—three to five main points would be plenty—that you can write on the board to help students follow the arc of that day’s session. After you complete each section of the day’s schedule, you can provide or ask for a three-sentence summary of:

• what knowledge/skills were learned during that section of the outline,
• how that section related to what was learned earlier in the course, and
• how the material might relate to the following sections of the outline.

If you get off track, determine whether the material still proves to be a good teaching moment. Explain to students how the issue relates to the course. If it does not, acknowledge that and get back on track.

First-Day Jitters
It’s natural to feel nervous the first time you teach; even many veteran teachers feel nervous the first day of the semester. Think like a concert pianist or an actor—transform that nervousness into productive energy. Here are a few points that might help:

• Make sure your handouts, including the syllabus, are complete and that you have extra copies.
• Practice your first-day welcome and the “substantive” teaching that you plan to do. Planning substantive teaching for the first day can help set the tone for the course and allow students to get an understanding of what the course will be like.
• Arrive in the classroom early and organize all your handouts, presentation materials, etc. Make sure you can access and know how to use any technology.

• Write the day’s brief outline on the board or put it up on the doc cam or as the first PowerPoint slide.

• Your students expect you to be a content expert, but this doesn’t mean that they expect you to know every answer to every question immediately.

• At any point during the semester if you can’t answer a question, acknowledge that, thank the student for asking the question, and assure the class that you will find out the answer before the next session. Then make sure you do. On the course ICON site or at the next session, provide the answer, the source of the information, and explain how the information relates to the course.

• Encourage students to keep asking questions.

A Definite Beginning, A Definite Ending
First impressions count for a lot. Give considerable thought to how you will begin the first class session of the semester. Will you use humor to break the ice? Would a short narrative about your own learning experience or a famous person in the discipline capture students’ attention? Will you set the tone by standing behind a lectern, venturing among the desks and chairs, sitting in a circle with your students?

Not only on the first day, but every day of the semester, a well-planned, brief, but clear beginning is the best way to ensure your students refocus their attention and conversation onto the learning tasks at hand. Simple actions such as saying, “Good morning,” directing attention to the day’s outline on the board or screen, and asking for a student to summarize the previous class session are quick and effective.
Just as students need a definite beginning to class, they also benefit from a clear ending. A few ideas to help ensure you create “closure” for each session:

- Leave enough time for summary of the session—by you or them—and questions.
- Refrain from tossing new or altered assignments at students at the end of class. If you must give a new assignment, make sure you provide time for explanation and questions.
- At the end of each class, pose questions or a dilemma for them to ponder for discussion (or a quiz or one-minute paper) next time. This helps bridge the distance between class periods and encourages students to think about and discuss the subject outside of the classroom and to prepare for next session.
- Early in the semester, tell students you will end three minutes early each day so they can gather together their papers, put on their coats, etc. In return, request that they not begin to do this until you have signaled the three-minute close-out.
- A “thank you” or encouraging comment at the end of a session can go a long way to making students feel good about their efforts in the course.
- Remain after class for questions.

**Invite Students into the Learning Process**

Inviting students to join in the learning process can be literal—as when a faculty member greets students at the door on the first day—or figurative. Students—particularly those who have just graduated from high school—tend to think learning is just a process of dumping information from instructor to student. One of the most important things an undergraduate student can come to realize in college is that learning is a **lifelong process** in which they must be **actively engaged** and which requires a commitment to developing and applying **critical thinking skills and habits of mind**. True, a considerable amount of knowledge will pass from instructor to student. But the real beauty of higher education is learning critical thinking skills, such as how to analyze, synthesize, and critique information—in other words, learning how to learn.

Early in the semester, begin to invite students into the learning process by:

- explaining critical thinking skills and periodically reminding students which skills they are applying;
- explaining that you are a guide in the educational process, but that learning is up to them;
- periodically reminding them that “the ball is in their court”; and
- indicating how you learn from them.

A very effective way of inviting students to become actively engaged in their own learning process is the **Four Questions Assignment**. The assignment and an explanation of how it can be used as a teaching tool are available on the OTLT website.

**Get to Know Your Students**

Students consistently say that the best teachers care about them as people as well as learners. One of the best ways to show you care about your students is to make an effort to learn their names. Of course, this task is more or less difficult depending on the size of the class. Nevertheless, even instructors who have classes with 150 students can learn most if not all of their students’ names.

College teachers across the country have invented a multitude of ways to learn their students’ names. Here are a few of the best, tried-and-true ideas:

- In a large-enrollment class, study photographs of students alongside their names. Instructors of record (that is, those listed on MyUI for a particular course) can access class lists and student photographs through MAUI at [www.maui.uiowa.edu](http://www.maui.uiowa.edu).
- Use a seating chart until you feel comfortable with most names.
- Ask students to write their names on card stock **name tents** and invite them to add color, designs, etc. to reflect their personalities or interests.
• In smaller-enrollment courses, conduct “name-game” activities the first day or two of class. There are many versions of this idea, such as asking students to interview each other for three minutes and then introduce their “partner” to the class. Other ideas are available on the OTLT website.

Teach Something
Spend at least some time actually teaching course material on the first day. This will:

• allow students to get a sense for the subject and your teaching style;
• cue them that course material matters and that there is much to learn;
• spark their thinking about course content; and
• provide a contextual and substantive springboard for the second class.

Guidelines for Classroom Interaction
Early in the semester, ask students to brainstorm ideas about how best to conduct classroom interaction.

• Explain that you want students to take responsibility for their own learning, including being responsible classroom participants.
• Write their ideas on the board or project ideas using the document camera.
• Write every idea, even if it isn’t something you want to include, in the list. At this point, this is a brainstorming exercise, not consensus formation. Examples might include:
  ▶ No interrupting.
  ▶ One person cannot speak a second time until another person speaks.
  ▶ Debate is a healthy and important part of learning.
  ▶ Debate does not include personal or offensive comments.
• Cell phones, tablets, and laptops can only be used for educationally appropriate reasons. Appropriate use of laptops does not include web surfing or reading email.
• Offer a few ideas of your own.
• After class, write all the ideas on a piece of paper. Later, select ten or so that you think are most important and useful. Add any that are critical but were not mentioned during class.
• At the beginning of the next class, hand out copies of this framework for classroom interaction and post this to the course ICON site. Emphasize that this is the framework that they created and that everyone will be expected to abide by it. Ask them to keep the copy in their course notebooks. Creating such a framework can be a powerful message to students that you expect them to take responsibility for their own actions, their individual learning, and the creation of an interactive learning community. At some point during the semester, it’s likely that you or a student will refer to these guidelines to redirect discussion that has gone awry or to diffuse a tense situation.
Rhythms of the Semester

Much like the rise and fall of the plot in a novel, semester courses unfold in an arc of development. After the flush of excitement during the first week of class, students and instructors begin to settle into a more routine. When you think of your own undergraduate courses, you’ll recall a definite rhythm to the semester—a brief “honeymoon” period at the beginning when everything seems fresh and exciting; a longer span when students and instructors get to know each other and start establishing patterns of interaction; a stretch about three-quarters of the way into the semester when everyone seems concerned about deadlines, stressed, and, perhaps, ready for a break; and a few weeks before the semester ends, the final push accompanied, we hope, by a sense of accomplishment.

If you recognize these rhythms, you can design lecture materials, readings, and assignments to fit well with student learning needs at particular points along the continuum. Scheduling all the “fun” learning activities during the first few weeks of the course probably isn’t a good idea. On the other hand, waiting until the end of the semester to incorporate “fun” learning might send the message that you’ve “given up” on helping students work through the final, challenging push of the semester.

Keeping Students Engaged

One of the tenets of American education is that students learn and retain information and skills better if they are actively involved in the learning process. Explain to your students that you expect them to prepare for class, think carefully about course content, take intellectual risks, and participate in class discussion. It is...
their responsibility to wrestle with the issues and concepts explored in the course; it is your responsibility to support their active involvement with the subject matter. You do this not so much by providing answers as by posing excellent questions.

A substantial literature exists on how students learn and how best to engage them in the learning process. Here are a few tips; many more are available in the Center for Teaching library or on the OTLT website.

**Lecturing**
- If you lecture, remember that most people actively listen for about 20 minutes. Plan your session accordingly with a break for small-group work, Q&A, or other active learning before resuming the lecture.
- Try to leave the lectern now and then. Walking “into the crowd” will help you make eye contact with students and keep them alert and curious about what you might do next.
- Vary the tone and rhythm of your voice. Use body language effectively.
- Define new vocabulary several times. Avoid jargon.
- Refer to and expand upon material presented in the textbook—don’t repeat it.
- Use technology—PowerPoint, student response systems (“clickers”), lecture capture, digital media, tablet PCs, etc.—effectively.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.
- Summarize major points.

**Active learning**
Active learning is characterized by these qualities:
- encourages students to explore their own attitudes and values; and
- does not mean you must abandon the lecture format, which is one of several effective ways to convey information.

**Active learning techniques**
- **Small-group activities** encourage many more students to speak in class. It’s harder to be a passive learner in a group of three than in a group of thirty. Small-group activities can be done even in classes of 500 students. All it takes is about five minutes and a well-thought-out question or task for groups to work on.
- **Effective use of teaching technology** can present visual representations via PowerPoint, doc cams, videos, and tablet PCs. OTLT staff can help you incorporate technology in ways that enhance learning and recall of course content and skills.
- **Minute papers** are easy, fun, and adaptable to many purposes. The goal of this exercise—which can take no more than a minute—is to gather feedback. Minute papers can help you discover what did or did not work well, as well as provide ideas about how to teach in new ways. They can be used in any size class.

If you are trying to gather general information about what interests or confuses the students or what they think of your teaching, the feedback should be anonymous. Occasionally, you may want to just use the minute paper as a quiz; in that case, of course, names are necessary. Students write for a brief time in response to a focused question from the instructor.

Here are a few examples of questions:
- Write the most important point you’ve learned in today’s class (or this week’s readings, this unit, etc.).
- Did anything confuse you during today’s discussion? If so, write it as a question or two.
- What has been the most effective teaching technique used during this unit?
You can do this exercise at any point during the class session, although most instructors do it at the end of a unit or the period. After you’ve looked through the responses, let students know one or two things you learned and how that information will affect the course. Students are glad to have an opportunity to express themselves in a way that has an impact on their learning in the course.

- **Surveys** can be conducted several ways, including electronic student response systems (“clickers”) and minute papers, anonymous or not. Another effective way to survey students about their opinions or responses to a question is to have them line up along a continuum, discuss their choices, and then ask them to realign themselves along the continuum. If anyone has changed his or her place, ask them to explain why.

- A **combination** of small-group activities and surveys works well when each group holds up a card to indicate its choice of several answer options. Groups then defend their choices and try to convince others to “join” them.

- Allowing students to jot down a few thoughts before discussing in class can improve the depth of discussion and help those who feel shy about speaking off-the-cuff.

- **Board work, role-playing, panel discussions, case studies, posters, and projects** also actively engage students by enlisting the full panoply of learning styles (visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic).

**Writing**

Writing demands critical thinking, organizational skills, patience, and the ability to critique others and to listen to criticism. It’s a truism—but also true—that the act of writing forces us to construct our understanding of a topic—in other words, to create as well as to convey meaning.

Writing is one of the essential skills that defines an educated individual, yet teaching writing seems to be the juggernaut of many an otherwise gifted teacher. The following ideas about teaching writing might smooth your way:

- Make writing a **regular part of the classroom experience**. One-minute papers work well. They can be anonymous or signed. You also can invite students to read aloud what they’ve written.

- Think carefully about the **purpose of the writing** assignment:
  - to demonstrate learned knowledge (a quiz or test);
  - to show research abilities—analysis, synthesis, evaluation (term paper);
  - to wrestle with an idea (short essay);
  - to help students speak aloud or focus class discussion (one-minute paper);
  - to help students understand that writing improves thinking (expository writing);
  - to hone communication skills (series of drafts); or
  - to express feelings and opinions, and to reflect on what has been learned, how, and why (personal essay, reflection).

- **Design the writing assignment with explicit questions** and provide clear learning objectives.

- Invite students to **reflect**—in writing—on their writing process for any particular assignment and also across the arc of the semester.

Even veteran faculty members wonder how to assess written work. Instructors sometimes find assessing personal writing, such as essays or reflections, especially challenging. But simply because a written piece is personal or subjective does not mean it cannot be assessed.

A few suggestions to help make assessment of writing effective for your students and efficient for you:

- Help students avoid the temptation to plagiarize by assigning a series of short exercises that build to the final paper or essay.
• Provide written comments in the margins. Marginalia need not be extensive, however, and if you have many students or many short assignments, you can rely on the “check, check-minus, check-plus” technique.

• Writing many comments such as “Good,” “Weak,” or “Confusing” probably helps the student less than fewer comments that are more specific as to why you find a sentence or paragraph good, weak, or confusing.

• One technique works especially well to start a conversation about written work. Rather than giving students grades for their first drafts, ask them to read your comments and then respond. This assignment assures that they actually read and think about your comments. You also can have them rewrite certain sentences, paragraphs, or sections.

• Resist rewriting your students’ work—you don’t have time and they will not learn if you do the work for them.

• Grammatical errors should not be ignored. On the other hand, you should not serve as a copy editor for your students. Undoubtedly, they have been told about run-on sentences, “their” vs. “there,” and misspelled words many times before. What to do?
  ▶ Put check marks in the margins and tell students to find and correct the errors on the marked lines.
  ▶ Mark and correct one paragraph and tell them to find identical errors and fix them in the rest of the piece.
  ▶ Tell students they will be exchanging papers for peer review of grammar and usage. There are various software programs available to enable peer review. OTLT staff are available to consult with you about which software may be appropriate for your needs.
  ▶ Devote some time throughout the semester to teaching a few of the most frequent—and egregious—examples of bad grammar and usage. These exercises can be amusing, and students almost always appreciate learning or brushing up on a few basic writing skills.
• Develop and use a **rubric** for grading writing. Be sure to hand it out to students and post it in your course ICON site at the same time as you give them the assignment so they know what is expected of them. Writing assessment rubrics generally cover nuts-and-bolts such as grammar and usage, but also include content, organization, critical thinking skills, and stylistic considerations.

**Service learning**

Today, many students come to college having already performed impressive volunteer work in their communities. They are eager to participate in volunteer and service-learning opportunities in college.

Service-learning courses provide active-learning experiences by integrating community service with academic course work. Service learning requires students to apply what they learn in class in their community service efforts and then bring their volunteer experiences to bear on their classroom learning. Instructors and students work together to establish community partnerships. Instructors must create a plan for monitoring and assessing the service aspect of the course, and possibly even engaging in community service themselves. More information about teaching service-learning courses is available on the OTLT website.

**Teaching in laboratory or studio settings**

Students who take lab or studio courses necessarily engage in active learning. In these types of courses, instructors and teaching assistants work with students on a more individual basis. To enhance the lab or studio experience:

- Each session, introduce the conceptual background for their activities in the lab or studio.
- Inform them of what they are going to do and the learning objectives for the activities.
- Make certain you have already conducted the experiment, or, in a studio, are familiar with the materials and media being used. Point out where you had difficulties and how you resolved them.

- As students work, circulate. Ask them what they’re doing and why and to interpret their results.
- Ask them to link what they are doing at the moment to what has been learned in the classroom or through the textbook.
- Invite questions.
- Remind students about safety issues and where to find devices and individuals to help in an emergency.

**Effective Use of Technology**

At one time, chalkboards were considered “cutting-edge” technology. But an instructor who wrote on the blackboard with his back to students was not using this technology in a way to optimize student learning.

Incorporating technology into a course should not be an end unto itself, but a way to broaden and enhance learning. Although there are excellent pedagogical reasons to use technology to teach, many students—including graduate students—have experienced “death by PowerPoint” or comparable technological faux pas. Any technology—even blackboards—risks becoming the end rather than a means for better teaching and learning.

Nevertheless, many excellent reasons exist for incorporating technology such as PowerPoint, student response systems, tablets, ICON, lecture capture, and digital media in the teaching process. The Center for Teaching staff, as well as other staff in OTLT help TAs and faculty members effectively incorporate technology into their teaching. Center for Teaching staff can assist you with pedagogical questions and also arrange consultations with our Student Instructional Technology Assistants (SITAs) to help you integrate technology into your course plans.
Assessment of Learning

The most obvious way to assess student learning is by graded assignments or exams. However, many other assessment techniques exist to help you and your students understand their mastery of knowledge and skills. For instance, one-minute papers can reveal much about what students learned during one class session and what might confuse them. Discussion, small-group work, class surveys, written reflections, periodic questionnaires, and self-evaluation of learning also help both instructor and students evaluate where they stand in terms of learning content and developing a facility with required skills.

Grading

Assigning grades can be an angst-filled time for instructors. While some departments require that all student work be graded, others encourage a variety of approaches to learning assessment, including observations and comments by instructors throughout the semester with grades only assigned at the end of the term. Instructors are not required to employ pluses or minuses on grades. Instructors must, however, announce at the first class and include in the syllabus which grading option will be used.

The clearer you are about how you will assign grades prior to the actual grading process, and the better records you keep, the more likely you can avoid grade disputes later.

Grades, of course, can be a source of friction between students and instructors. Students want to know that instructors have been consistent and fair in their grading. The following points will help you achieve consistency and fairness and demonstrate your commitment to those qualities should a student question his or her grade:

- Keep accurate and duplicate copies of your grading records.
- Maintain records that can easily be interpreted by your DEO.
- Inform students fairly often throughout the semester about their progress in the course. This does not need to be a grade, but it should be evaluative in some way.
- Create a rubric (or a scoring guide that assigns specific points to each answer) when grading papers or exams.
- For written assignments, require students to use the rubric to assess themselves and to turn in their “scores” along with the assignment.
- After you’ve developed a rubric or scoring guide, “test” it by applying it to five or ten exams or papers. If your grading guidelines don’t seem reasonable, alter them.
- After you have graded all the exams or papers, reexamine the first few that you graded. Are the standards you applied at the beginning of the grading process the same as the standards you used at the end?
- When evaluating written work, try to find at least one thing to praise and encourage further work. And even students who produce “A” writing need to be given new, higher goals to shoot for.
- Make clear that you have considered what a student is trying to say in written work as well as how they have managed to communicate it.
If you are a teaching assistant, finding out the answers to these questions may help you feel more at ease in the grading process:

- How much responsibility do I have for assigning particular or overall grades?
- Will my supervising faculty member provide instructions on grading and a grading schedule?
- Does my department recommend a grading curve that I am supposed to use in the course?
- Does my department or the course faculty instructor employ a rubric for grading particular assignments or exams? If so, when will I provide it to students?
- Will TAs and the course faculty instructor discuss standards and expectations for grading? Will TAs “calibrate” their grades via a practice grading exercise?
- How will I handle the grading of students for whom English is a second language?
- What is the departmental, course supervisor’s, or my policy on makeup exams and late assignments?

Your course supervisor or department may dictate grading guidelines, although you may have discretion in assigning at least some percentage of grades in a course.

TAs who serve as graders for a professor should receive clear instructions about how to evaluate subjective responses. If more than one TA works with one class, the assistants and professor should meet to hammer out consistent grading standards. TAs also can rehearse and “calibrate” their grading. During this process, TAs review identical exam answers or papers, compare the responses and grades they would have assigned, and discuss differing reactions and perceptions. They and the supervising faculty member then develop a rubric that specifies the criteria everyone will use to evaluate student work.

Attendance
The University’s Operations Manual (http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/) defines excused and reported absences. You must allow work and exams to be made up if a student misses class because of an excused absence. Excused absences include absences due to participation in a school-sanctioned athletic or other event for which the student has provided prior notice of event dates.

Large-scale tragedies or unexpected events can affect many students and their instructors. Research has shown that students appreciate instructors who acknowledge the event and provide an opportunity to discuss the event and its impact during class time. Such consideration by instructors reinforces the shared sense of community among students. Whether during the current class session or the next session, turning back to the course work at hand after thoughtful discussion can provide a welcome return to normal routine.

Communicating with Your Students
You will communicate with your students through a variety of technological means and in a variety of venues. Planning ahead about how to communicate effectively can help avoid potential pitfalls in communication later.

- The syllabus should include your office or at least the departmental telephone number. It is up to you whether you provide your home telephone number to students.
- ICON offers many opportunities for communication, such as threaded discussion forums, chat rooms, and more. There is also a wiki service available for more interactive communication and group activities.
- Just as in their discussion sections or lectures, TAs and faculty members can make creative use of their time during office hours. To become familiar with your students and help ease them into the course, you might
schedule individual conferences with them during the first month of the course. As the semester continues, you might also use office hours to host small-group workshops or reviews.

- **Email** is a popular way for students to communicate with instructors, and instructors sometimes incorporate online discussion via email as a course requirement.

  - All students are assigned an official University email alias (firstname.lastname@uiowa.edu). All official University email is sent to this official University email address, and every student is responsible for the information contained in official University email messages sent to the student’s official email address. For more information about email and email support see [http://its.uiowa.edu/office365](http://its.uiowa.edu/office365).

  - The course management system, ICON, also has email capabilities, including a method to send email to the entire class.

  - Include your email address in your syllabus, as well as your expectations for email communication. Inform students that you are not available via email (or otherwise) except during certain hours, and that they cannot expect you to respond immediately.

- **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)** generally prohibits disclosing educational records (including grades) to anyone other than the student or a university official with a legitimate educational need to view the record. Instructors communicating via email about grades need to be certain that they are, indeed, communicating with the students. In general, sending an email to a student’s University address (e.g., pat-doe@uiowa.edu) or via ICON provides adequate assurance that the recipient is the student. Emailing to another address such as Gmail or Yahoo does not provide adequate assurance.

- Some instructors accept assignments as attachments, and some do not due to potential viruses or system incompatibility. Indicate in your syllabus whether you will accept assignments via email attachment. The “Dropbox” feature on ICON is a safe way to accept electronic submissions.

- Be alert to the possible risks of communicating via email, in particular, the challenges of interpreting intent and tone online. Irony and light sarcasm can be devastating to a student. Maintain a friendly, but professional tone and focus, and insist your students do the same. Write your messages with the assumption that your supervisor or department chair will read them.

- You may encounter the rare electronic message that is inappropriate, hostile, or bullying. If you are a teaching assistant, forward it immediately to your faculty supervisor. If your supervisor feels you should respond, maintain professional integrity, copy your supervisor, and let the student see that you have done so. Faculty members should also keep a record of all communications with students, and in extreme cases should forward the hostile student communication to your DEO and potentially the Office of Academic Support and Retention ([http://uc.uiowa.edu/retention](http://uc.uiowa.edu/retention)) so that appropriate actions can be taken.

Save all messages and make paper copies for your course file.
Assessment of Teaching
Instructors can tap into a number of sources of information to assess their teaching:

Evidence of student learning
The same techniques used to determine what students have learned also can speak to the instructor's teaching skills.

Student perceptions
Most courses also apply direct approaches to assessing teaching, including midterm questionnaires and end-of-the-semester teaching evaluations—both anonymous. All colleges require instructors of undergraduate courses to distribute an evaluation form to students at the end of the term. The completed forms are turned into the department, and you do not see the forms or the collated results until after you have turned in grades to the department.

Departments use ACE online, an evaluation system that collects student opinions about a course/instructor and provide a standard set of summary results. Evaluation & Exam Service can provide Scantron scoring services for you to use during the semester. Their office supplies the answer sheets for classroom testing and data collection, as well as quick processing for scoring and analysis services (https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/organizations/evaluation-exam-service).

Classroom Assessment by Student Interview (CLASSI)
At your (voluntary) request, the Center for Teaching will conduct a CLASSI for feedback about your teaching. The CLASSI is a structured method to obtain information from students.

The Center staff member asks students to form small groups and discuss what is going well, what impedes their learning, suggestions they might have for you, and what they can do to improve their own learning. You will not be present during this session, which takes 20-30 minutes. The Center staff member summarizes the findings and meets with you later.

Observation by colleague or supervising faculty member
Your experienced peers or a supervising faculty member/mentor can provide insights about how to better promote student learning. If you invite a fellow instructor or staff member from the Center for Teaching to sit in on one of your classes, let them know ahead of time what you would like them to focus on. The Center for Teaching staff member will meet with you sometime later to discuss what was observed. Ideally your peer instructor or supervising faculty member will do the same. Assessment of course content should be conducted by someone in your discipline.

Teaching portfolio
The teaching portfolio is a systematic, long-term approach to assessing your growth as a teacher. It includes both evidence of teaching excellence—for instance, course syllabi, assignments, and exams that you have designed, and student evaluation results—and your reflections on teaching, your development as a teacher, and higher education. The Center for Teaching provides a number of resources about how to construct and benefit from portfolios (see page 10 in “Who Are You?”).
The University of Iowa is fundamentally a community of teachers, learners, and scholars. As in any community, certain behavioral expectations provide the social “glue” that helps keep us—faculty, staff, and students—functioning in a lively and productive way.

The Operations Manual of The University of Iowa makes explicit some of these behavioral expectations. University employees are obliged to follow the manual’s guidelines, including these expectations:

- Members of the teaching staff may not provide private instruction for pay in any course offered by them or with which they have an official connection, or in other courses without prior approval of their Department Executive Officers.
- The Iowa Gift Law prohibits University employees and their immediate families from accepting gifts valued at more than $3.00 from certain donors, including students. Several situations are exempt.
- Each college can establish its own rules concerning absences from class. University regulations require, however, that students be allowed to make up examinations they have missed due to illness, mandatory religious obligations, or other unavoidable circumstances.

The Well-Mannered Classroom

Of course, no manual can enumerate every rule of behavior necessary for a community to function. Common sense, good manners, historic precedent and other elements help maintain the University as a community. Set the right tone and expectations at the beginning of the semester and you’ll go far toward forging a strong learning community by semester’s end.

- Assume the best of your students.
- Show not only your passion for the discipline and the course subject matter but also for the art of teaching.
- Model the “good behavior” you want your students to follow in their interactions with you and each other.
- During the first week, provide an opportunity for students to formulate guidelines for classroom behavior that will serve throughout the semester (see page 15, “Planning Ahead and the First Day of Class”).
• Remind students why they are there. Ask them to think about the course in the context of the discipline, higher education, and their lives.

Difficult Situations
Despite your best intentions and at any point in your teaching career, you may encounter a moment in class when you face a difficult situation or challenging student. What to do?

Controversy in the classroom
Controversy in the classroom can arise not only because controversial or sensitive topics are part of the curriculum but also because of student or instructor behavior. Occasionally, of course, the former can spark the latter.

Universities exist to provide a setting where students, staff members, and instructors can explore a wide array of topics in a safe and respectful setting. If sensitive material is an integral part of your course, educate your students about the reasons for studying such topics and the methods for tackling them during the course. Students whose minds are prepared to address controversial material are more likely to be open to participate in fruitful analysis and evaluation.

Remember that many students are in their late teens and likely do not have your experience or sophistication. They might feel uncomfortable with and even complain about course content of a sexual, religious, political, or cultural nature. Let them know early in the semester that controversy and reasonable conflict are important aspects of the educational process.

Heated discussion can remain within the bounds of appropriate intellectual exercise. If, however, a discussion becomes so emotionally charged that it becomes personal or students lose sight of the intellectual value of the content, call a time-out and invite everyone to relax. Discussing the passion rather than the content might be useful. Beware of being drawn into taking sides.

A particularly helpful approach to defusing a discussion that has gotten off track is to ask everyone to write their thoughts, ideas, and feelings for five minutes. You then can ask them to step back from what they think and feel and write about why they think and believe the way they do. Alternatively, ask them to write down something that “the other side” said that seems legitimate.

Emotional moments
Of course, even without the spark of controversy, emotions in a classroom can run high. Just like you, students have rich and challenging lives beyond the classroom. On rare occasions, emotions may spill over into the classroom.

In situations where a national or world event has widespread emotional impact, consider taking time from the regular schedule and invite students to discuss the event. If you can link it to course content in a meaningful way, do so. And after a reasonable length of time—it may not be until the next class period—gently steer the conversation back to the learning task at hand.

If an individual student seems upset about something personal, you can quietly acknowledge their distress and invite them to talk to you after class. Once you can talk in private, tell the student that you have noticed unusual behavior and express your concern in a nonjudgmental way. Listen to both the factual and emotional content of their response and show you are concerned. Offer hope.

Be polite and express concern, but keep in mind the limits of your own expertise or ability to help. It’s unlikely you are trained in crisis management, and even if you were, your relationship with students is as an instructor, not a counselor. Tell them candidly about your limits to assist, but try to work with them to identify resources that can better help them address specific concerns. Such resources include their departmental advisor, the Office of Academic Support and Retention, the Academic Advising Center, University Counseling Services, or Student Health & Wellness. At a later time, check back with them to see if they have followed through with the referral or otherwise begun to address the problem.
**Difficult Students**

Most students behave appropriately and will respect you and their peers. Occasionally, however, one or two can disrupt the tone and rhythm of the class. Such problematic behavior can include talking during lecture or discussion; arriving late or packing up early; sleeping; using cell phones or computers to check email, surf the Internet, or communicate with others inside or outside class; and reading newspapers.

Ignoring bad manners will not make them disappear. And it’s important to realize that students who are paying attention and engaged in classroom interactions will expect you to take action.

- Before you are faced with them, imagine how you will respond to various kinds of challenges from students, be they about grades, your teaching or authority, or the relevance of the subject matter. Role-play or discuss appropriate responses with other instructors. Consider possible responses to the “critical incidents” shown on DVDs from the Center for Teaching library.
- Subtle messages often work. So, for instance, if one student seems to frequently dominate discussion, shift eye contact onto another student. If that doesn’t work and the geography of the classroom allows, try moving past the student so your back is to him or her.
- If subtle hints don’t work, speak privately with the student after class. To the student who dominates class, express your appreciation for such interest and enthusiasm, but remind the student about the value of participation for all students. As the teacher, you are responsible for making sure that limited resources, including time to speak, are distributed fairly.
- Monitor your own behavior. Do you arrive late and appear disorganized? Do you ever use a sarcastic or condescending tone? Do you ignore or without good reason postpone students’ in-class questions?
- Occasionally, a student will appear to challenge your authority in class. First ask yourself: Is this student challenging my authority or simply communicating a viewpoint that is unfamiliar or different from mine? What may seem like a blunt or even abrasive manner of communication may not be intended as such by the student.
- If you decide the student’s behavior is, indeed, directed at you personally or otherwise problematic, try the following to diffuse the situation and reorient everyone’s attention to the learning tasks at hand: “OK, that’s an interesting point, but discussion about it would take us too far off the topic. Let’s talk about it later.”
- You have a right and the responsibility to ask an excessively disruptive student to leave your classroom, laboratory, or studio. You also may refer a student to the vice president and dean of students. As part of such a referral, you may need to report in writing to the dean any disciplinary action taken against the student.
- If a student is misbehaving in a manner that threatens or endangers you or the other students, call the University of Iowa Police, or in a clear emergency, 911.
- If a student challenges you during class about a grade, ask them to write out their complaint and tell him or her you will respond.
- TAs who need to change a grade should contact their supervising faculty member. Faculty can change reported grades by logging into MAUI, where it may require DEO approval.
- Do not use an after-class “hallway chat” to discuss grades with students. Instead, invite students to talk about grades during your office hours.
- If you feel the situation—whether about grades or anything else—has not been sufficiently resolved, talk to a supervising faculty member or DEO about the problem.
Academic Freedom
The University of Iowa Operations Manual addresses issues of academic freedom and responsibility for students, instructors, and staff. According to the manual, while University personnel enjoy the political privileges of citizens, personal political activity—including soliciting support for personal views and opinions—should not occur in the classroom.

The manual specifies the instructor’s obligation to:

• respect the academic freedom of others;
• refrain from unprofessional criticism of colleagues, students, or the institution before students and the public;
• respect the intellectual freedom of students;
• refrain from imposing upon students’ search for or consideration of diverse or contrary opinions;
• protect students’ freedom to learn, especially when that freedom is threatened by repressive or disruptive action;
• maintain a classroom where free and open discussion of content and issues relevant to the course can occur; and
• respect reasonable decisions by students, based on their exercise of their own intellectual freedom, not to attend part or all of a particular class session.

Academic Integrity
Individuals who commit plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic fraud poison the mutual respect and trust that are essential to the life of a university. They also rob themselves of the fundamental purposes of education—to continually stretch their intellectual curiosity, knowledge, and abilities beyond what they believe are their limits.

Plagiarism and cheating
Plagiarism and cheating are forms of academic fraud that disrupt the educational atmosphere and devalue the educational process.

Students must assume responsibility for the content and integrity of their work, whether in the form of examinations, lab research, written reports, or creative products. A wide array of behavior falls under the umbrella of academic fraud. Students perpetrate academic fraud if, for example, they:

• represent the work of someone else as their own;
• fabricate data in support of laboratory or field work;
• forge a signature on student records, documents, or student identification cards;
• provide or obtain unauthorized assistance in examinations or other academic work;
• take credit for group work without appropriately contributing to the team effort; or
• download and submit work from electronic databases without proper citation.

If you believe a student has cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise committed academic fraud, report it to your department chair, who can refer you to relevant policies. All course syllabi should include a statement of departmental and college consequences for academic dishonesty. You should point this out to students before they submit major assignments. TAs should report to their faculty supervisors. Seek advice before accusing a student of academic fraud. Grade reductions and other disciplinary action also may be warranted, including suspension from the student’s college or expulsion from the University.
The dictionary definition of plagiarism begins with the words “To steal…” In essence, plagiarism occurs when one person represents the language, ideas, or thoughts of another person as their own. Although this may seem straightforward, identifying and dealing with plagiarism can present a number of thorny issues.

In addition to using the online plagiarism detection service Turnitin, which is integrated with ICON, instructors can tap into a number of useful campus resources to help prevent, identify, and deal with plagiarism: the OTLT Center for Teaching, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Education Literature Program, Hanson Center for Technical Communication, the UI Writing Center, and University Libraries.

Confidentiality
You have an ethical responsibility and, under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), a legal obligation to maintain the confidentiality of student information, including grades. So, for instance, you should not talk about a student's grades, progress in the course, or behavior in class to or in front of another student or even to another instructor unless the instructor is acting in the student's educational interest and has a demonstrated need to know.

Grades linked to any identifying information, including randomly generated ID numbers, cannot be posted without students’ written consent. ICON enables an instructor to confidentially communicate grades to students online. Even something as seemingly benign as putting final notebooks in a box outside your office door for students to pick up is a breach of confidentiality.

Student Grievances
Student grievances can occur for a number of reasons—grade disputes, misperceptions about the culture of the class, or complaints about the instructor's presentation style. You cannot eliminate all possibility of a disgruntled student, but you can diminish its likelihood by:

- discussing course content, course expectations, classroom policies, and your teaching methods at the beginning of the semester;
- working to maintain academic integrity—your own and that of your students;
- creating an atmosphere of respect in your classroom;
- including in the course syllabus the procedure for students to air complaints and a website address for the grievance policies employed by the appropriate college;
- informing students of the appropriate steps they can take, should they have a complaint: 1) if the complaint is grade-related, have students wait 24 hours after receiving a grade before contacting the instructor; 2) resolve the issue with the instructor; 3) if the matter is not resolved or discussion with the instructor is inappropriate, contact the supervising faculty member or department chair; 4) if the issue remains unresolved, contact the dean's office. If this informal approach does not resolve the issue, the student may file a formal complaint as specified by The University of Iowa Operations Manual; and
- if you do receive a complaint or believe one is imminent, seeking advice from your course supervisor (for TAs) or DEO (for instructors).

Rights of a Teaching Assistant
UE Local 896/COGS represents approximately 2,500 Teaching and Research Assistants at the University of Iowa. Organized in 1996, the members of UE Local 896/COGS negotiate salaries, benefits and working conditions for all Teaching and Research Assistants. For further information about COGS, see www.cogs.org.
Teaching and learning: They seem inseparable. To accomplished college teachers, the famous (or perhaps, infamous) statement, “I taught it, but they didn’t learn it” is a non sequitur.

While good teachers do their utmost to create opportunities for students to experience significant learning, the process of learning takes place in the minds of students. The best college teachers convey knowledge and skills, show passion for their discipline, and care about their students’ intellectual lives. They also explicitly make their students responsible for their own learning.

This Handbook for Teaching provides tips and resources about teaching in higher education. Its larger purpose, however, is to encourage and excite you about the art of teaching in the intellectually rich and diverse context of The University of Iowa. We hope you are eager to teach and to learn about teaching as you embark on a fascinating, fulfilling, lifelong journey as an engaged and caring college teacher.

Let us know if we can help.

The Center for Teaching staff
Appendix: Additional Resources

During the last 40 years, the scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education (or “SoTL”) has come into its own as a legitimate field of inquiry. As a result, many excellent publications about college teaching and learning are available.

The following brief list includes a few of the classics. Please visit the Center for Teaching to peruse our lending library, which includes books, journals, and other media.

Books


Journals
Change: the Magazine of Higher Learning, edited by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
http://www.changemag.org

www.chronicle.com

Diversity Digest, published by the Association of American College and Universities.
www.diversityweb.org/Digest

Educause, focusing on IT in higher education.
www.educause.edu

Peer Review, published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.
www.aacu.org/peerreview/

Services on Campus
University Libraries
The University Libraries system consists of the Main Library, Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, and 5 branch libraries. (www.lib.uiowa.edu). (The Law Library is independent of the University Libraries and is administered by the College of Law.) Library staff members specialize in many different areas, and they offer instruction sessions and research consultations. Encourage your students to ask a librarian for help any time that they need it. The information desk at any of the libraries is the best place for them to begin. The Service Desk at the Main Library can be contacted regarding any question you may have about the libraries: 335-5299. You may text a librarian at 313-2395. You and your students may ask UI librarians reference questions online through “Ask a Librarian.” Just click www.lib.uiowa.edu/contact/ask/ to be connected. With virtual reference assistance you can co-browse the library catalog, subscription databases such as EBSCOhost (electronic journal index), or web pages on the Internet. Through co-browsing, the librarian can lead you to an electronic resource and show you how to search it.

InfoHawk+
InfoHawk+, the online catalog, contains holding records from the University Libraries, the Law Library, the Curriculum Laboratory, as well as numerous local libraries and regional research libraries. http://search.lib.uiowa.edu/

Assignments that use the library
Many instructors create specific assignments to help their students “get their feet wet” in the library. It will greatly benefit you and your students if you consult with a librarian to plan
the assignment. In the past, situations have
occurred where suddenly many students are
looking for the same two articles on a specific
topic, or the tasks are so puzzling to the
students that the reference librarians end up
doing the students’ homework. Librarians
have sample assignments and can help you
create meaningful projects in your discipline.

Reserve Services
If you have important materials for your
students, you may want to put them “on
reserve” so that they will not circulate for the
semester. You may place a maximum of 40
books, articles, or media (library-owned or
personal copies) on reserve. The libraries can
put electronic materials on reserve if already
owned in electronic format. The interlibrary
loan/article delivery service can help you
obtain a PDF copy of articles in print volumes.

Lists of materials must be turned in to the
library six weeks before the term opens.

Classrooms
The Information Commons Classrooms in
Hardin Library are available for faculty and
TAs to reserve for a single course session or an
entire semester. (http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/
hardin/reservations) Classrooms in the Learning
Commons in the Main Library can also be
reserved for single course sections (http://
teach.its.uiowa.edu/technology-tools/learning-
commons)

Other Campus Services
Academic Advising Center .....................353-5700
Staff at the Academic Advising Center help
students plan their current and future classes
during their first few years, and counsel them
about grades, majors, and their overall future
at The University of Iowa.
http://advisingcenter.uiowa.edu/

Academic Support
(See Office of Academic Support and Retention)

Bionic Bus .................................... 335-7595
These minibuses have wheelchair lifts and
provide door-to-door, demand-response service
for students with disabilities. Contact the Bionic
Bus for service, eligibility, and scheduling
information at https://transportation.uiowa.edu/
bionic-bus-passenger-information-guide

Cambus .......................................335-8633
Cambus is a no-fare, fixed-route public transit
service that provides intra-campus transportation
for all. It circulates on several routes throughout
campus and the Iowa City area. Schedules, maps,
and information about Bongo (a service that
tracks bus locations and can alert you about
upcoming bus arrivals) is available online:
https://transportation.uiowa.edu/cambus

Campus Information Center (See The Hub)

Career Center ...................................335-1023

Cashier’s Office (See University Billing Office)

Center for Diversity and Enrichment .........335-3555
Students who are first-generation college
students (no parent or guardian has received a
baccalaureate degree), meet low-income guidelines,
have a disability, are a veteran, dependent, and
active-duty member, or are a minority student
can get help from the Center for Diversity and
Enrichment. Staff can help identify learning needs,
provide tutoring, introduce students to a CDE
student mentor, or refer them to other services.
http://diversity.uiowa.edu/cde

Center for Teaching
ITS Office of Teaching, Learning
& Technology .....................................335-6048
Walk-In Center, 2080 UCC, open 8am-5pm
http://teach.its.uiowa.edu

Classroom Scheduling ............................335-1243
http://classrooms.uiowa.edu/

Classroom Technology Hotline .............335-1976
If equipment is missing or broken, or to
request new software, call or email at
classroom-technology@uiowa.edu

COGS
UE Local 896/COGS represents approximately
2,500 Teaching and Research Assistants at the
University of Iowa. Organized in 1996, the
members of UE Local 896/COGS negotiate
salaries, benefits and working conditions for all
Teaching and Research Assistants. For further
information about COGS, see www.cogs.org.

Community-Based Learning Program.....335-7589
100 Pomerantz Career Center, Suite C310
https://careers.uiowa.edu/students/volunteer
Continuing Education..........................335-2575
https://distance.uiowa.edu/

Colleges
For questions that can’t be answered by your faculty supervisor or chair, or questions concerning the departments your students are in, the following Deans’ offices can direct you to helpful information.

Business .............................................335-0862
Dentistry ............................................335-9650
Education ...........................................335-5380
Engineering ........................................335-5764
Graduate .............................................335-2144
Law ....................................................335-9034
Liberal Arts and Sciences ..................................335-2633
Medicine ..............................................335-6707
Nursing .................................................335-7018
Pharmacy .............................................335-8794
Public Health ........................................384-1507

Computer Labs and Instructional Technology
Centers (ITCs) ......................................384-4357
A map of study spaces on campus with information about the number of computers currently available can be found at: https://maps.uiowa.edu/study-spaces

Counseling Service ..................................335-7294
The University Counseling Service provides individual counseling as well as group counseling. Some programs focus on stress management, career counseling, cultural diversity, sexual diversity, association or affection preference, and study skills, to name a few.
https://counseling.uiowa.edu/

Course Packs (UPACS) ..............................335-3410
https://printmail.bo.uiowa.edu/printmail/copyctrs/coursepak.shtml

Credit Counseling
(See Student Credit & Money Management Services or Financial Literacy Services)

Disabilities
(See Student Disability Services or Faculty and Staff Disability Services)

Document Centers
Boyd Law Building.................................335-9138
Mossman Business Services Building .335-2699
John Pappajohn Business Building .....335-0861

OTLT Evaluation and Examination Service..........................335-0356
Offers scoring of tests (bubble sheets), ACE online faculty evaluations, and placement exams for students. https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/organizations/evaluation-exam-service

Faculty and Staff Disability Services........335-2660
TTY: 335-3495
http://hr.uiowa.edu/fsds

Financial Aid
Office of Student Financial Aid..............335-1450
http://financialaid.uiowa.edu/

Financial Literacy Services .......................335-1450
A counselor is available to help students develop workable budgets and money management skills, pay off debts, and regain control of their finances. To set up an individual consultation, email financial-literacy@uiowa.edu.

Health Iowa
(See Student Health and Wellness)

Hospital (University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics) .........................356-1616
www.uihealthcare.org

The Hub (Box Office and Information)....335-3041
The Hub, located in the Iowa Memorial Union, is a one-stop information and service center, featuring ticket sales, laptop checkout for UI students, guest services, and general campus information and referral services.
http://imu.uiowa.edu/services/

Information Technology Services ........384-4357
Generally referred to as ITS, this unit oversees technology on campus, including Internet access, computer hardware and software problems, email and telephone issues, and more. ITS staff provide help in person, by emails, or over the phone. http://its.uiowa.edu
The Help Desk is located at 2800 University Capitol Centre. Information is available there or by calling 384-HELP (384-4357). The office also offers repair services.

ITS sponsors the Instructional Technology Centers (ITCs) and computer labs on campus. There are 26 locations—in libraries, residence halls, classroom buildings, and the student union. Check the University Directory for locations and telephone numbers. Each center is staffed; hours differ.

ITS offers Assistive Technology workstations in several ITC computer labs currently, and works closely with partners on campus to provide efficient, effective support for campus faculty and staff.

All university students, faculty, and staff are eligible for a UI email account and cloud storage space, backed up on university servers, and available 24 hours a day from work or home.

ITS can also help you with additional questions you may have about using technology in your teaching. Each year they publish a Technology Resource Guide in both Faculty/Staff and Student versions which are distributed to new faculty and students and are available at the ITS office.

Insurance Information ......................... 335-2676
http://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits/health-insurance

International Programs ..................... 353-2700
http://international.uiowa.edu/

Iowa Memorial Union (IMU) ............... 335-3114
The IMU is the focal point of student life. There is an automatic teller machine, a Ticketmaster outlet, food service, copy service, a computer lab, the Hub, a hotel, an art museum, and meeting rooms that may be scheduled for recognized student organizations. http://imu.uiowa.edu/

Language Media Center ..................... 335-2331
http://clas.uiowa.edu/dwllc/lmc

Lost and Found ............................... 384-2797
809 UCC
www.uiowa.edu/homepage/lost-and-found

University Mailing Services .............. 384-3802
https://printmail.bo.uiowa.edu/printmail/

Mathematics Tutorial Lab .................. 335-0810
www.math.uiowa.edu/math-tutorial-lab

Office of Academic Support and Retention ..................... 335-1497
310 Calvin Hall
http://uc.uiowa.edu/retention

Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity ......... 335-0705
This office ensures that UI community members are not discriminated against with respect to educational or employment opportunities due to race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or association preference. It also provides training and workshops on disability and racial awareness, diversity, sexual harassment, nondiscrimination, and hiring procedures.
http://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod

Ombudsperson .............................. 335-3608
The Ombudsperson serves as a confidential, neutral, independent person who listens, provides information, advises, and mediates when problems arise. http://www.uiowa.edu/ombuds/

Parking and Transportation Department ............. 335-1475
https://transportation.uiowa.edu/

Payroll ............................................ 335-2381
http://hr.uiowa.edu/payroll

Poison Information .......................... (800) 222-1222

Police, Campus .............................. 335-5022
For emergencies dial 911
http://police.uiowa.edu/

Printing Services ............................. 384-3700
https://printmail.bo.uiowa.edu/printmail/

Rape Crisis Line (24hrs) ................. 335-6000 or (800) 228-1625
Rape Victim Advocacy Program .......... 335-6001
https://rvap.uiowa.edu/
Registrar’s Office ........................................... 335-0238
1 Jessup Hall
www.registrar.uiowa.edu/

Retention
(See Office of Academic Support and Retention)

Rhetoric Department
Speaking Center ........................................... 335-0205
http://speakingcenter.uiowa.edu/
Writing Center ........................................... 335-0188
https://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/

Student Instructional Technology Assistant
(SITA) Program
SITAs work one-on-one with instructors on projects that enhance instruction with technology. They are located in the OTLT Center for Teaching and can help faculty integrate technology into their new and existing courses. https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/organizations/sita-student-instructional-technology-assistant

Student Credit & Money Management Services ........................................... 335-3059
http://csil.uiowa.edu/services/money

Student Disability Services ........................................... 335-1462; TTY: 335-1498
SDS provides support services and coordinates academic accommodations for students with disabilities: priority registration, alternative testing arrangements, reader services, personal and academic counseling, personal orientation to the campus, sign language interpreters, Bionic Bus, Speech and Hearing Evaluation Service, parking and transportation, etc. https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/

Student Health & Wellness
Appointments ........................................... 335-8394
Nurseline ........................................... 335-9704
Pharmacy ........................................... 335-9200
http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/

Student Loan Information ........................................... 335-0071
http://financialaid.uiowa.edu/types/loans

Summer Session (Division of Continuing Education) ........................................... 335-2575
http://www.uiowa.edu/dce/

Support Service Programs
(See Center for Diversity and Enrichment)

Telephone Trouble ........................................... 335-2949
Visit the telephone and voice services web page at http://its.uiowa.edu/voice for further information, including telephone and voicemail guides.
For University Directory assistance, dial 0 on campus. For off-campus access, dial 335-3500.

Transcripts ........................................... 335-0229
Transcripts may be requested in person at the Registrar’s Service Center (Room 17 Calvin Hall), by correspondence (use the Transcript Request Form available on the transcript web page), or online by logging into MyUI (https://myui.uiowa.edu) with your HawkID and password. https://registrar.uiowa.edu/transcript-request-forms

Tutor Referral Service (Tutor Iowa) http://tutor.uiowa.edu/

University Book Store
(Iowa Hawk Shop) ........................................... 335-3179
www.hawkshop.com

University Box Office
(See The Hub) ........................................... 335-0071
5 Calvin Hall
http://ubill.fo.uiowa.edu/

University Housing ........................................... 335-3000
http://housing.uiowa.edu/

Veteran Student Services ........................................... 384-2626
111 Communications Center
http://diversity.uiowa.edu/unit/military-and-veteran-student-services

Women’s Resource and Action Center
(WRAC) ........................................... 335-1486
WRAC is an advocate for the removal of oppressive barriers for women in the University and the state of Iowa. It creates a community working toward social change by providing information and referrals, advocacy, individual counseling, group services, monthly workshops, extracurricular activities, volunteer, practicum, and internship training. http://wrac.uiowa.edu/