



**DATE:** Fall 2024  
**TO:** College Faculty  
**FROM:** Pamela Brown, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs RE - Course Management

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Welcome back and hope everyone had a wonderful summer!

This fall course management memo includes new information about the LMS transition to Brightspace, in addition to needed information to help ensure: (1) your students understand your academic expectations, (2) you have access to information about resources that are available for you and your students, and (3) you are aware of policies and procedures to fulfill your teaching and administrative responsibilities. Please read this memo carefully.

Bookmarked topics include:

**(1) Brightspace – welcoming students and recording attendance and grades, (2) Syllabus requirements, (3) CUNY’s Academic Integrity Policy, (4) Accessibility, (5) Resources, policies and procedures, (6) Class cancellations/changes/relocations, (7) Course Modality requirement, (8) Camera Use Guidance for Online and Hybrid Courses (9) Field trips, (10) Attendance/Grading policies (11) Medical documentation/Technology issues/Accommodations (12) Bereavement policy, and (13) Final Grades.**

## 1. Brightspace, Our New LMS

This summer’s sessions mark the launch of our new LMS, [Brightspace](#). Prior to the start of your summer session, please make sure you are comfortable with this new platform.

**Welcoming Students and Course Administration:** Regardless of the modality you are teaching, please include a message about attending the first-class session posted on Brightspace ahead of time, so that students consistently know where to find this information in advance and will know how to participate from the first class. Remember to activate your class in [Brightspace](#).

**NEW!** [Attendance](#) and [grades](#) should be recorded in Brightspace so that documentation is available if needed for grade appeals, etc. (except Math Dept.). This eliminates the need for the eClass folders and allows continuity of instruction if something should prevent you from teaching the course.

Blackboard course content has been migrated to Brightspace. City Tech’s Academic Technology and Online Learning ([AtoL](#)) website provides information and support, including one-on-one appointments and extensive training and resources to help you set up your course site, as well as support for students. I urge you to take advantage of these resources.

**2. Syllabus requirements:** Please ensure that you distribute the syllabus and any other needed information by the first-class meeting. Comprehensive information will help your students better understand expectations, as well as take advantage of resources that will help them succeed. At a minimum, please include the following in your syllabus:

- Course number, title, section number, course description, credits, pre/co- requisites.
- Instructor’s name, email address or other way to reach you, and Student Hours (aka office hours) so that students know how and when to contact you.

- Technology requirements and links for where to go for technical support.
- Required text(s) and any other required course materials.
- Instructional objectives that incorporate assessment measures and techniques.
- A schedule of topics to be covered. Include dates and location of in-person classes. Dates, times (synchronous modality) and information on how to access online classes. Dates and times should agree with this information in CUNYfirst.
- Required and recommended readings and other major assignments. Include explicit information about due dates and times, or if asynchronous, deadlines for participation as well as deadlines for completion of assignments.
- Details on how to access course materials, discussion boards, etc. and submit assignments. As needed, links to resources such as the [library](#), [writing center](#), [tutoring](#), or other [student services](#).
- Clear statements about grading policies and assessment of student work.
- Attendance/class participation policy.
- The college's [academic integrity statement/plagiarism policy](#).
- An accessibility statement and information about the [Center for Student Accessibility](#).
- Please consider adding a statement about your commitment to diversity and inclusive education (suggestions from DICE available [here](#)).

You should also provide a copy of your syllabus to the department. Please remember that you are responsible for holding all class sessions through the end of the summer session for the entire scheduled time, or a comparable time period for asynchronous sections, observing the USDOE definition of a [Carnegie hour](#).

**3. CUNY's Academic Integrity Policy** The university's latest [Academic Integrity Policy](#) addresses general issues related to Artificial Intelligence, AI.

**4. Accessibility:** Online course materials should be accessible to all students, including students with disabilities, in a timely manner. The Library's self-paced training module [Introduction to Accessibility](#) is a good resource. Brightspace ALLY supports universal design for learning. To learn how to use ALLY see your Brightspace course or sign up for an iTEC workshop. The [Accessibility](#) section in [OpenLab Help](#) provides practical guidance for faculty on making their materials accessible. CUNY is in the process of developing procedures regarding accessible course materials which will be shared as soon as they are available.

**5. Resources, policies and procedures:** [Faculty Commons Resources](#) provides information on administrative responsibilities, information on using CUNYfirst, and other important policies and procedures, including details about the [alerts system](#). Please take advantage of this valuable resource.

Valuable information on pedagogy, helpful tips, and additional resources and policies are also provided on the [Faculty Commons Teaching](#), and [Open Lab Distance Education](#) sites.

I encourage you to promote a culture of active learning from the first class. Active learning is considered so critical for student success that our accreditor, MSCHE, specifically requires regular and substantive student-faculty interactions in online courses.

**6. Class cancellations/changes/relocation:** Class meetings are governed by state regulations. No class may be cancelled without prior notification of the department chair and, in the case of evening or weekend classes, the Adjunct Workload Management Office as well (718.260.5565 or [awmo@citytech.cuny.edu](mailto:awmo@citytech.cuny.edu)). If you are unable to teach, arranging for substitute service to avoid canceling the class may be possible, so please notify your chair right away.

Instructors of in-person classes should not relocate classes to a new room without first receiving permission from the Registrar's Office. AWMO conducts routine classroom checks.

**7. Course Modality Requirements:** Please remember that you should not unilaterally change the

modality of your courses—be it in-person, hybrid, or synchronous/asynchronous online. CUNY policy explicitly requires faculty to meet their classes in the modality listed in the CUNYfirst Schedule of Classes. For hybrid classes, in-person meeting dates should align with the information in the CUNYfirst Schedule of Classes and should also be included in the course syllabus, distributed by the first class. We all understand that situations can develop unexpectedly, including illness. In this case, please reach out to your chairperson, who can consult with the Dean and Provost to help you develop a reasonable solution which best allows your students to keep learning. Provost's approval is required to change modality.

**8. Camera Use Guidance for Online and Hybrid Courses** - Faculty may require students to turn on their cameras in online and hybrid courses during class periods or for remote testing purposes. Faculty who intend to require camera use should also clearly state this on course syllabi and cover the requirement with students on the first day of class.

**9. Field trips:** Please be aware that every off-campus field trip requires an approved field trip form. More information about field trips can be found on the [Faculty Commons Resources](#) website under [Student Travel Overview](#). An ESPARC certificate from within the most recent 12-month period is required along with the field trip request.

For on-campus activities such as trips to the library or the on-campus [Cold Spring Harbor Labs DNA Learning Center](#), you should inform the department in advance and post a sign on the classroom door indicating the temporary location, in case an emergency situation arises.

**10. Attendance/grading policies:** CUNY is considered a “non-attendance taking system,” which means the institution is not required by the federal government to take attendance. However, class participation can be used in grading criteria. Student attendance should always be recorded to ensure that correct grades are assigned (for example, to determine whether a WU or an F is appropriate). All grades, and the nature and the weight of each component of the final course grade, as listed in the syllabus, should also be recorded in Brightspace. Students' Brightspace login can be viewed via the Performance Dashboard or by running a course report. Please see the [CUNY Uniform Grade Glossary](#), found on the [Faculty Commons Resources](#) website for questions on grading. **Please note the last day to withdraw has been moved to 60% and is available on the college's fall 2024 calendar.**

**11. Medical documentation/Technology issues:** Sometimes students fail to participate in class, miss assignments, etc., and explain the reason was illness or loss of internet access and connectivity. Please exercise compassion and common sense when receiving these requests. In most situations, you can choose to grant accommodations without reviewing medical or other documentation. In the rare cases when you feel that some examination is necessary, the VP of EMSA ([VPSA@citytech.cuny.edu](mailto:VPSA@citytech.cuny.edu)) can help with review. Faculty should never review medical documentation from a student.

**Accommodations:** When students are granted an accommodation by the Center for Student Accessibility it must be honored.

**12. Bereavement policy:** please follow guidance on supporting students who have lost a family member. This, too, can be found on the [Faculty Commons Resources](#) website.

**13. Final Grades:** Final grades are submitted electronically via CUNYfirst. Final Grade rosters for **Fall 2024 Semester** will be available beginning **Sunday, December 15** and must be submitted no later than **midnight of Friday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

This memo will be posted on the [AWMO memos](#) and [Faculty Commons Resources](#) websites.

Best wishes for a successful and rewarding fall 2024 semester.