

# Chapter 7

## Academic Policies and Procedures

### CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

#### CLASS PROCEDURES<sup>1</sup>

The faculty member must, at the beginning of each semester or short term, distribute a syllabus that explains:

1. The course objectives and student-learning outcomes.
2. Special requirements for the course, such as term papers, oral reports, field trips, etc.
3. Grading procedures.
4. Attendance policy.

Faculty members must maintain clear records of all grades. Students will be allowed to review grades by appointment. Faculty shall report grades of students making D's, F's, or NC's on the official mid-term grade report. A written record of all grades must be kept for at least one (1) year after the grade is recorded in the administrative computer system.

A faculty member is expected to:

1. Conduct classes in a professional manner, whether the format is traditional, hybrid, or online.
2. Grade and return test results within a reasonable time.
3. Maintain adequate records of grades and be accountable in grading. In the event of separation from the university, faculty shall leave such records with the department head or director.
4. Maintain regular, scheduled office hours regardless of the delivery format of courses taught. Faculty members shall establish and inform students of their regular weekly office hours. These hours shall be set in accordance with school policy.

Faculty members shall consult the current Jacksonville State University Student Handbook for policy statements on academic honesty.

#### GRADING SYSTEM<sup>2</sup>

Undergraduate: Faculty members shall refer to the current Student Handbook for the undergraduate grading system.

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<sup>2</sup> Revised 06/2023

Graduate: Faculty members shall refer to the current Graduate Catalog for the graduate grading system.

### **CHANGING OF GRADES<sup>3</sup>**

No grade except Incomplete (I) may be changed after the submitting of final grades except in the case of error. Within 6 weeks after grades have been reported, an instructor may change a grade due to an error by a written application through the appropriate department head to the Office of the Registrar, stating the reason for the error and the need to change. Faculty members are accountable for accurate grading and recording. This procedure does not apply to removal of Incompletes ("I"). To remove an Incomplete and assign a permanent grade, faculty that do not have a school policy on Incomplete reporting may go to the Office of the Registrar to change the grade or send a signed memorandum to the registrar to initiate the change.

### **TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS<sup>4</sup>**

In fairness to students, instructors shall apprise students of the nature of their methods of evaluation.

All undergraduate tests and examinations shall be proctored. In cases where cheating is encountered or suspected, faculty members should handle each situation with good judgment. Faculty members should exercise caution and seek the advice of the department head, who may then refer the matter to the dean of the appropriate school for action. Faculty members should consult the current Student Handbook for policy statements on academic honesty. The registrar is responsible for the schedule of final examinations. All final examinations shall be given at the scheduled time unless a change is approved by the department head and dean. Under extenuating circumstances, a faculty member may reschedule an individual student's final examination for just cause.

### **MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS<sup>5</sup>**

Faculty members shall, at the beginning of the semester, acquaint their traditional, hybrid, or online classes with their policy on make-up examinations. In some areas of academic work, course work and experience cannot be made up, and the faculty member should so advise in the syllabus. Students who miss announced examinations or announced assignments for legitimate reasons may take a make-up examination, which shall be scheduled by the faculty member at a reasonable time and under reasonable conditions. The legitimacy of the excuse for missing the test or assignment is to be determined by the faculty member; however, a student may appeal the decision to the department head and the dean, if there is disagreement about the legitimacy of the excuse.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE<sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>4</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>5</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>6</sup> Revised 06/2023

Specific policies on attendance for traditional classes or participation in non-traditional classes may be established by individual departments or schools. Faculty members should be familiar with all policies that apply in the department and should communicate these policies to their students through the syllabus given at the beginning of the semester.

If a policy requires attendance or participation, faculty are required to maintain attendance records to support the policy. Students are held responsible for attendance or participation at all meetings of their classes or delivery modes.

### **OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY-EXCUSED ABSENCES<sup>7</sup>**

Official university-excused absences may be issued to groups or individuals by the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs for participation in authorized Jacksonville State University activities. Although absences may be excused, work missed in class is not. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request to make up class work missed.

Faculty members sponsoring an activity for students for which an excused absence is required may obtain the appropriate form from any academic dean's office or the office of the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. The form must be completed prior to the scheduled activity.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY<sup>8</sup>**

Jacksonville State University is primarily a self-contained campus with a large number of residential students requiring a variety of support services, regardless of the weather. Normally, the university does not completely close because of bad weather. Decisions to close university operations, including classes, will be made by the president or a designee. In the interest of safety and in recognition of the difficult driving conditions that occur in certain areas, the university permits a liberal make-up policy for commuter students who cannot attend classes during times of bad weather. In the event that the university remains open on days of extreme weather, faculty who cannot reach campus should advise their department heads so their classes can be covered.

### **FACULTY ABSENCE<sup>9</sup>**

Faculty are expected to adhere to scheduled traditional class-meeting times. If a faculty member is unable to meet a traditional class, appropriate arrangements shall be made with the department head by the faculty member. If a faculty member is unable to deliver an online or hybrid course, the department head should be notified immediately.

### **DEADLINES<sup>10</sup>**

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<sup>7</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>8</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>9</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>10</sup> Revised 06/2023

Each faculty member is responsible for meeting appropriate deadlines established by the department head, dean, registrar, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, and the campus bookstore.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT<sup>11</sup>**

The primary responsibility for development of new courses, deletion or changes in existing courses, initiation of new programs, and program modifications lies with the faculty. All proposals concerning programs and curriculum shall be reviewed by department, school, and university curriculum committees, in accordance with established procedures. For curriculum actions that require notification to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) or the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE), please refer to the Substantive Change Policy/Curriculum Change Request Process in the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures.

### **COURSE OFFERINGS AND CONTENT<sup>12</sup>**

All course offerings shall be in accordance with the general requirements of the university, the needs of the department's majors, and the needs of students. Faculty members are responsible for teaching at a standard appropriate to the level assigned to the course; for planning and presenting the course material; for establishing course objectives and student-learning outcomes consistent with departmental policy and making them known to students; for selecting texts and supplemental materials; for preparing, administering, and grading tests and examinations; and for assigning grades.

## **ACADEMIC YEAR AND WORKLOAD**

### **ACADEMIC YEAR<sup>13</sup>**

The 9-month academic year consists of the Fall and Spring semesters. The academic year begins with the date for the return of faculty for Fall semester, as published in the academic calendar, and ends with the completion of the Spring semester. Nine-month faculty are employed for the entire academic year. The workload is comprised of a teaching load and other duties and expectations. Twelve-month faculty shall teach in the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.

### **TEACHING LOAD/WORKLOAD<sup>14</sup>**

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<sup>12</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>13</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>14</sup> Revised 06/2023

The standard teaching load obligation for the Fall and Spring semesters is 12 credit hours per semester for regular full-time faculty, plus other duties and responsibilities. The standard workload expectation for the Fall and Spring Semesters is 15 hours per semester. The teaching load may be adjusted at the discretion of the department head and dean to accommodate special faculty roles, graduate intensive course loads, and the needs of the university, both off and on campus. For example, a hypothetical workload adjustment might yield 9 hours teaching, 3 hours scholarly activity, and 3 hours of non-teaching assignments for a total workload of 15 hours. Examples of non-teaching assignments are noted in 2.9.2. Teaching load credit for supervising students enrolled in independent study, research, practical internship, and similar courses shall be determined by the department head with approval by the appropriate dean. Librarians performing their assigned professional duties shall be deemed to be fulfilling their teaching-load obligations.

### **OVERLOADS<sup>15</sup>**

To allow faculty to concentrate their energies adequately on a reasonable teaching load, it is the policy of the university to generally avoid the use of overloads. Any arrangement for an overload must have the approval of the dean and provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

### **OTHER DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS<sup>16</sup>**

The standard non-teaching duties required of all full-time faculty include:

1. Academic advising. The responsibilities of faculty with respect to academic advising include, but are not limited to, scheduling office hours to meet advising responsibilities regardless of mode of delivery of the curriculum; assisting students in setting academic goals; informing students of curriculum requirements; maintaining appropriate records of advising; and providing, as necessary, referrals to appropriate student services.
2. Participating in meetings of the general faculty, school, and department.
3. Participating in departmental activities such as curriculum planning, departmental policy-making, evaluation procedures, library additions, program assessment, and care of instructional supplies and equipment.
4. Participating in student recruitment activities.
5. Engaging in appropriate scholarly activities.
6. Participating in community engagement and other service activities.

### **AVAILABILITY AND OFFICE HOURS<sup>17</sup>**

As per school policy, all faculty members shall be available for consultation with students enrolled in their classes, regardless of the mode of delivery. University policy allows a department or school to adjust faculty workload by 3 hours for non-teaching assignments, e.g., committee work, class preparation, student advisement and/or consultation, or other non-

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<sup>16</sup> Revised 06/2023

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teaching duties as assigned. During pre-registration advisory periods and during registration itself, faculty members shall be available for scheduled advising periods.

Each faculty member shall establish, post, and make students aware of regular and adequate office hours so distributed throughout the week as to be convenient to students. A copy of the office hours schedule is to be submitted to the department head and dean. The department head is responsible for notifying the faculty member if office hours are inadequate.

## **CREDIT HOURS AWARDED FOR COURSES**

### **CREDIT HOURS AWARDED FOR COURSES<sup>18</sup>**

Jacksonville State University has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and programs which conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to SACSCOC policy, which states, “not less than 1 hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 2 hours out of class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or at least an equivalent amount of work as required above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.”

### **CREDIT HOUR DEFINITION<sup>19</sup>**

JSU awards 1 unit of credit for satisfactory completion of 1 60-minute session of classroom instruction and a minimum of 2 hours of out-of-class work for a minimum of 3 hours of course activities per week for a typical semester of not less than 14 weeks. For example: Typically, courses at JSU are awarded 3 semester credit hours per course. The 3 semester hours of credit consists of the equivalent of at least 3 hours (60-minute period) per week of "seat time" in-class and 6 hours per week of out-of-class academic activities for a period of at least 14 weeks. Hence, a standard 3 semester credit hour class meets for at least 42 contact hours per semester, plus a minimum average of 6 hours of activities outside of the classroom per week for 14 weeks.

Alternatively, a credit hour may be granted for an equivalent amount of work as itemized above for other academic activities or instructional modes of delivery, such as distance education (blended, distance, and face-to-face instruction), laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. Course instructors are responsible for making adjustments so that the total number of hours of work required by students, regardless of instructional mode, is equivalent. Assigning credit for courses with alternate delivery methods is based on content and instructional activities. When courses are offered both in the traditional format as well as via distance, the syllabi for the modes of

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delivery demonstrate similar content and expectations so that distance education and face-to-face instruction classes are awarded the same number of credit hours. For classes offered in a shortened format, such as summer terms, the hours are prorated so that classes contain the same total number of contact hours and instructional activities as if the classes were scheduled for a full 14-week semester.

When developing courses, faculty are responsible for ensuring that the designated work load for a course justifies granting the student the specified number of credit hours as indicated in the course description. When courses are taught via distance learning where no actual “contact hours” are required, faculty are responsible for designing their courses to ensure that an equivalent quantity of content and academic activities are included as would be required if the course were taught in a traditional format. Ultimately, the responsibility for protecting the academic integrity of curricula, programs, and class schedules rests with the university’s provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

For graduate and professional students, even though the face-to-face meeting time may be equivalent to that required for undergraduate students, the required academic work will exceed the total nine hours per week as described above since out-of-class demands will exceed 2 hours per week.

The university may adjust its basic measure for awarding academic credit proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study as long as it meets the aforementioned criteria.

### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR NEW COURSES AND COURSE REVISIONS<sup>20</sup>**

Faculty developing new courses or revising currently existing courses must ensure that the required quantity of student learning/activities per credit hour is equivalent to a minimum of 42 hours of coursework over a 14-week semester that instructional activities for the course address and demonstrate student competencies in defined learning outcomes that a semester credit hour will be consistent throughout all academic programs of the university.

These instructional activities should draw upon instructional practices approved by the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

### **POLICY ADMINISTRATION<sup>21</sup>**

For each academic term, the university registrar will assist academic units to schedule classes in conformity with the university’s semester credit hour policy.

Periodically, the university curriculum committee, university council, the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, and faculty senate will review the semester credit hour

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policy as defined and, if changes are identified, forward recommendations for identified changes to the president for approval.

The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for disseminating the policy to the university website and ensuring that the policy definition is included in the Undergraduate Catalog, the Graduate Catalog, and the Faculty Handbook.

### **EXPERIMENTAL COURSES<sup>22</sup>**

An experimental course is a course approved and offered at the departmental or school level for a limited number of times to test its viability in the program's curriculum. An experimental course does not require university undergraduate or graduate curriculum committee approval. A course may be offered experimentally over a 2-year period to assess student interest, demand, and course appropriateness. Although an experimental course may be submitted through the regular curriculum process any time during the two-year limit, the course must be submitted through the regular curriculum process (undergraduate and/or graduate) within the 2-year limit to be offered during the third year or later. The 2-year time limit begins with the course's first offering. Failure to act in a timely fashion to remove an experimental course or to pursue the regular curriculum approval process will result in the course being removed from the class loadings by the Office of the Registrar.

## **GRANTS, SPONSORED PROJECTS, AND FUNDRAISING**

### **FACULTY RESEARCH GRANT GUIDELINES<sup>23</sup>**

Through the Faculty Research Grant Program, the university provides funds to encourage and support faculty involvement in research or creative activities. Research proposals are accepted from all fields of academic endeavor. However, no dissertation/thesis research projects or curriculum development projects will be accepted. Proposals should be submitted to the chair of the faculty research committee and should include the objective of the project, the benefits of the research to the discipline and to the university, the methods and techniques involved, special consideration, such as prospects of future contracts or grants funding, and a detailed budget.

Specific instructions on the submission process are available online on the academic affairs website.

Proposals must be submitted in March for the upcoming academic year. They are evaluated by the faculty research committee, which recommends funding to the prFovost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

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To support a diverse population of researchers, a general funding limit is placed on each request. However, when proposals are of exceptional quality with possible broad benefits to the university, funding requests exceeding the year's funding limit will be considered. Awards are generally made for the next fiscal year, although a proposed project may continue for several years. A one-year funding of a multi-year project does not guarantee future funding. No projects will be funded if the principal investigator/research coordinator fails to submit a summary report detailing the results of previously funded projects. Monetary awards should be expended within the appropriate fiscal year. A faculty member is limited to submission of one proposal per year.

#### **FACULTY RESEARCH GRANT COMMITTEE<sup>24</sup>**

The faculty research committee consists of full-time faculty members nominated by the faculty senate and appointed by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Members serve for 3-year terms with one third of the committee replaced annually. Primary functions of the faculty research committee are as follows:

1. To encourage and promote scholarly research/creative endeavors in all academic disciplines.
2. To establish and maintain procedures to solicit and evaluate internal research grant proposals.
3. To forward recommendations regarding funding and support to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.
4. To make an annual report to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs on the effectiveness of the JSU Faculty Research Grant Program and to make recommendations for improvement.
5. To review applications for faculty research recognition and make recommendations for recognition to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### **FACULTY TRAVEL AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT GRANTS<sup>25</sup>**

Faculty Travel and Self-Improvement Grants are intended to provide opportunities for faculty self-improvement and renewal. The program guidelines are intentionally broad so that faculty throughout the university can propose innovative and diverse projects in a variety of areas. Presentations of scholarly papers or creative activities at regional, national, or international professional meetings will be supported with these funds. Travel grants are not made for normal course development. Also eligible are faculty who hold official positions or offices in professional organizations and who are not compensated for expenses associated with attendance at organizational meetings.

Submission of the application is made through the department head and dean to the professional development committee, which reviews applications and makes recommendations for funding to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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<sup>24</sup> Revised 06/2023

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Additional information concerning faculty development grants may be obtained from the academic affairs website.

### **EXTERNALLY FUNDED/SPONSORED PROJECTS AND GRANTS<sup>26</sup>**

The mission statement of the university specifies that it provides service to the community through research activities. Moreover, the university's goals include providing faculty with resources for professional development, increasing fiscal resources through externally funded projects and grants, and maintaining a reputable academic standing. Therefore, the university encourages and supports faculty efforts to acquire and maintain funding for research from external sources.

The Office of Sponsored Programs will assist faculty and university personnel in the pursuit and administration of externally funded grants and contracts, in compliance with the requirements established by federal and state laws, sponsor rules and regulation, and university policies and procedures. The Office of Sponsored Programs offers a Proposal-Development Guidebook, available from its website. For specific guidelines concerning submission of proposals and policies relevant to protection of experimental subjects, civil rights, patents, copyrights, cost-sharing, indirect costs, and related matters, faculty should consult the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures.

When grants and awards are made to faculty members, the faculty member will normally be designated project director and budget manager for a university account for that project. Faculty members should consult the appropriate sections of the Jacksonville State University Business Procedures Manual and the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures upon approval of grants and projects.

### **EQUIPMENT<sup>27</sup>**

Equipment that is acquired through a grant or sponsoring agency becomes the property of the university and the responsibility of the department head unless otherwise specified in advance by the sponsoring agency.

### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY<sup>28</sup>**

Consistent with the university's objectives of supporting faculty research and maintaining a reputable academic standing, faculty members are encouraged to engage in scholarly activities that may result in the creation of patents and copyrights. Faculty members shall retain ownership of copyrights and patent rights from individual creative works, if no substantial aid from the university or from an outside agency operating through official university channels is received.

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Rights pertaining to materials that result from university-assisted efforts, externally sponsored efforts, and university-assigned efforts shall be determined in accordance with the terms of the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures.<sup>29</sup>

### **FUND RAISING, ENDOWMENTS, AND GIFTS<sup>30</sup>**

The coordination of these activities and plans for solicitation is the responsibility of the Division of University Advancement. Its primary purpose is to coordinate fund-raising activities and to ensure that each development activity is consistent with the long-range missions of the university.

The Jacksonville State University Foundation receives private gifts of money, securities, land, personal property, and any other assets for the benefit of Jacksonville State University in a manner that may be designated by the donor. These gifts may be used to create endowment accounts or may be provided for immediate use as restricted or unrestricted funds. Prior to any development activities on behalf of any unit at Jacksonville State University, faculty members should consult the Vice President for University Advancement or the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures.<sup>31</sup>

### **PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION<sup>32</sup>**

The Office of Public Relations is the official channel for university publicity. All publicity releases shall be coordinated through this office. See the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures for additional details. All official university publications, prepared for public distribution, must meet certain standards with regard to the quality of the writing, printing quality, and overall impression. In addition, any administrative office, department, or individual desiring to distribute printed materials that advertise, solicit, or inform on behalf of the university must obtain prior approval from the vice president for university advancement. The university's name, logo, and seal are the exclusive property of the university. Use of the university seal and the university logo is determined by the executive director of marketing and communications or the vice president for university advancement. See the Jacksonville State University Manual of Policies and Procedures for additional details.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> <https://public.powerdms.com/JSUAL/documents/1291514>

<sup>30</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>31</sup> <https://public.powerdms.com/JSUAL/documents/1291602>

<sup>32</sup> Revised 06/2023

<sup>33</sup> <https://public.powerdms.com/JSUAL/documents/1291605>