# **NKU Graduate Common Syllabus**

For each course taken at Northern Kentucky University, students will receive a syllabus with specific information about the section in which they are enrolled. The following information applies to all graduate courses at the university.

# **Class Workload**

Students cannot learn by simply being spectators – it is not enough to watch and listen in class. Success requires an investment of time and effort outside of class in studying the material and, most importantly, in working on assigned readings, exercises, projects, research, and papers. For most three-credit courses, a typical student will spend at least nine hours per week studying outside of class. Some students will require more time than this; very few can get by with less. Students must take this out-of- class study time into account when developing course schedules. Students unable to make the needed commitment of time for class attendance *and* out-of-class study should consider taking the course some other time when their schedule will allow them to devote sufficient time to the material. Success in courses requires students to read assigned material carefully and to do assignments, projects, and papers on a regular basis.

Expect the unexpected. Power outages, computer crashes, Internet interruptions, and otherwise unavoidable problems *will* happen. Students must take steps to ensure they can complete their work on time. Do not wait until the last possible moment to complete assignments. Have a backup plan in case the unexpected occurs. For example, ensure you have access to a second Internet-accessible computer (e.g., at a friend’s or at the library) and avoid saving projects directly to your device (e.g., use your NKU OneDrive account).

**Academic Misconduct**

The Graduate Student Honor Code (referred to as the Honor Code) is a commitment by graduate students of Northern Kentucky University, through their matriculation or continued enrollment at the university, to adhere to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct. It is a commitment individually and collectively that the graduate students of NKU will uphold professional standards of research, writing, assessment, and ethics in their areas of study.

The purpose of the Honor Code is to establish standards of academic integrity for graduate students at NKU and to provide a procedure that offers basic assurances of fundamental fairness to any person accused of violations of these rules. Each NKU graduate student is bound by the provisions of the Honor Code and is presumed to be familiar with all of its provisions. To read the Honor Code, please visit: <https://inside.nku.edu/studentaffairs/departments/dean-of-students/student-rights/academic-integrity/graduate-student-academic-integrity.html>

Graduate students must conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the highest degree of ethical integrity in all matters, whether covered in the Honor Code or not. The success of this commitment begins in the diligence with which graduate students uphold the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code.

Graduate students responsible for academic dishonesty, research misconduct or ethical violations may be subject to one or any combination of circumstances including, but not limited to, oral or written admonitions, a grade reduction or a final grade of “F” in the course, expulsion from the course, and suspension or expulsion from the university.

As Northern Kentucky University students, graduate students are also subject to the provisions of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities as adopted by the Board of Regents. Where provisions or procedures set forth in the two documents differ or conflict, the Honor Code will prevail in cases involving graduate students. It is incumbent upon graduate students to be aware of university regulations. Ignorance of these regulations does not excuse students from adherence to them.

For information on the procedures for handling alleged violations of the Honor Code, please visit: <https://inside.nku.edu/studentaffairs/departments/dean-of-students/student-rights/academic-integrity/graduate-student-academic-integrity.html>

# **Sexual Misconduct**

Northern Kentucky University is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive educational and work environment free from sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, non-consensual sexual intercourse, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, relationship and domestic violence, stalking and gender-based bullying. For more information please see: <https://inside.nku.edu/titleix/policy/sexual-harassment-policy.html>.

Staff and faculty in the following areas are Officials with Authority (OWAs): Office of Title IX; Student Conduct, Rights, and Advocacy; Human Resources; Athletics; University Police; Vice President of Student Affairs; Legal Affairs; Office of the Provost; Board of Regents. OWAs are individuals who can address and correct allegations of sexual harassment and/or retaliation. Although all staff and faculty are not mandated reporters, all staff and faculty are encouraged to report any information a student shares regarding sexual misconduct that occurred on NKU’s campus or involves an NKU student. Any student who has or is experiencing dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking is encouraged to contact the Norse Violence Prevention Center (NVP Center). The NVP Center provides free, confidential advocacy services. Contact the center at 859-572-5865, or by email at nvp@nku.edu. For more information, please see <http://nvp.nku.edu/support.html>.

# **Prerequisites**

Prerequisites for all courses are listed in the NKU catalog [(https://inside.nku.edu/registrar/catalog.html)](https://inside.nku.edu/registrar/catalog.html). These are meant to convey the background knowledge expected of each student in the course. History indicates that students who do not meet the prerequisites for a course are unlikely to succeed in the course. As such, it is imperative that students not take a course until they have mastered the prerequisites for that course. Prerequisites are typically one of two types: either (i) completion of specific NKU courses, or (ii) placement by satisfactory performance on a standardized exam. Students are responsible for ensuring compliance with the stated prerequisites. The department also checks prerequisites; students may be withdrawn from a course if they are found to have not met the course prerequisites.

# **University Policy on Non-Attendance**

**Face-to-Face/Hybrid Courses**

NKU students are expected to attend the first scheduled class session of each course for which they are enrolled. If a student does not attend the first day of class, the instructor may drop the student for non-attendance.

Students who know they will be absent must contact their instructor(s) prior to the first class meeting to explain their absence and request to remain enrolled in the course.

**Online**

If the student does not log onto Canvas and access course materials or contact the instructor by 5 PM Thursday on the first week of classes, the instructor is required to drop this student for non-participation (i.e., non-attendance). Additional attendance expectations may be found on the specific course syllabus.

## **Observance of Religious Holidays for Class Attendance**

NKU values diverse religious perspectives and beliefs and recognizes religious practice is, for many individuals, an important element of personal identity, intellectual development and psychological well-being, and is, in many cases, inseparable from cultural identity. As the diversity of our community has increased, additional religious holidays now affect a significant number of students. Consistent with our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive community, Northern Kentucky University believes every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the NKU community to observe their holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. NKU students who are unable to attend classes or participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on some particular day(s) because of their religious belief must submit a formal request to the instructor within 3 weeks of the beginning of the semester so appropriate arrangements can be made.

# **Inclement Weather Policy**

If NKU is open, classes will meet. For information on NKU closings, students may:

* sign-up for Norse Alert [(http://norsealert.nku.edu/)](http://norsealert.nku.edu/)
* call the university/weather closings hotline: 859-572-6165 or 859-572-6166
* listen to local media (information will be provided to all area radio/television stations).

# **Incomplete Policy**

The grade of “I” (incomplete) may be assigned at the request of a student when a portion of the assigned or required class work, or the final examination, has not been completed because of a documented serious illness and/or extreme personal circumstance not caused by the student’s own negligence.

An incomplete will only be issued when the following conditions are met:

* the quality of work is satisfactory (passing), but some essential requirement has not been completed;
* evidence of a serious illness and/or extreme personal circumstance not caused by the student’s own negligence has been presented to the professor; and
* the student has developed a plan with the professor outlining the requirements and specific deadlines for completion of the missed work.

An incomplete grade must be made up by the middle of the next regular semester in which the student is enrolled. The grade for any course not completed by this deadline will be converted to the grade of “F”.

# **Withdrawing from a Course**

The deadline for withdrawing from class with a grade of W is listed in the Schedule of Classes [(https://inside.nku.edu/registrar/calendars.html)](https://inside.nku.edu/registrar/calendars.html)published for each semester. It is a student’s responsibility to be aware of this deadline. To withdraw from class, a student must process the request online via <http://mynku.nku.edu/>. Students who stop attending class without officially withdrawing will fail the course.

Students are generally not permitted to withdraw after the deadline; after that date they must either complete the course successfully or receive a failing grade. Exceptions are made only for very unusual extenuating circumstances involving some change in the student's situation after the deadline. This will require documentation and the permission of the department chair and the dean. Permission for late withdrawal will not be given to students who merely seek to avoid a poor grade.

# **Grade Appeal**

Please see the “Graduate Programs Progression to Degree Section” of the Graduate Catalog for information on the appeal of a final grade. The specifics of the process are detailed under Student Appeals – Grade/Academic Appeals: <http://nku.catalog.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=24&navoid=3404#student-appeals>

Grade appeals that do not relate to consequences for violations of the Graduate Honor Code are covered by the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, Section VII. Academic Grievance Process.

**Diversity**

Diversity describes an inclusive community of people with varied human characteristics, ideas, and worldviews related, but not limited, to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, disability, socio-economic status, geographical region, or ancestry. Institutions that value diversity provide a supportive environment that respects those human differences. It is our responsibility as citizens of the NKU community to promote and value a campus environment and classroom climate that is safe, fair, respectful, and free from prejudice.

As a college student you will have the opportunity to discuss many topics within your classes that will elicit a variety of responses and ideas. An important part of a college education is taking these varied opinions and life experiences into consideration when forming an educated opinion. Therefore, it is critical that we actively listen to and respect one another in the classroom and in online forums.

# **Inclusive Excellence**

At NKU, we believe that individual differences can deepen understanding of one another and the world around us rather than divide us. Instructors at this university value people of all races and ethnicities, genders and gender identities, religions and spiritual beliefs, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities. We strongly encourage everyone to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences, but to do so in a way that is respectful of others. Our discussions are opportunities for each of us to challenge underlying assumptions about our beliefs as we advance our knowledge, skills, and dispositions as professionals in our chosen discipline. Instructors reserve the right to intervene in discussions/communication between and among students if the atmosphere begins to appear hostile or aggressive in any manner. It is the instructor’s role to foster a classroom environment that is optimal for the learning of all students. Any students who believe their differences may in some way isolate them from the class community or have approved accommodations from the Office of Student Accessibility should contact their instructor early in the semester about their concerns to create a learning environment conducive to engagement in the course and NKU community.

# **Student Support**

## **Counseling Services**

Anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns are common among college students. Any student who feels such emotions are getting in the way of their day-to-day activities and/or academic success is encouraged to contact NKU’s Counseling Services. To make an appointment, call the office at 859-572-5650 or walk in at University Center 440. For more information, please see <https://inside.nku.edu/studentaffairs/departments/counseling-services.html>.

## **Health Services**

For high quality, accessible medical treatment; prevention services; or health education, students may contact NKU’s Health Services, a confidential and inclusive resource focused on helping the campus community achieve and maintain optimal levels of physical functioning. Call (859) 572-5650 to schedule an appointment. For more information, please see <https://inside.nku.edu/studentaffairs/departments/health-services.html>.

## **Norse Violence Prevention**

Students impacted by sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking may contact Norse Violence Prevention. Located in Albright Health Center 246, NVP provides advocacy services to students, and engages the NKU community with innovative prevention strategies. To access an advocate or request information, please call (859) 572-5865 or visit <https://inside.nku.edu/studentaffairs/departments/nvp.html>.

## **W. Frank Steely Library**

Students seeking research sources and/or information for assignments, general knowledge, or interest can visit, email ([library@nku.edu](mailto:library@nku.edu)), chat, call (859-572-5457), or text (859-534-9800) Steely Library, or request a research appointment to work with a librarian.  Sources, services, and more information can be found at <https://inside.nku.edu/library.html>.

## **FUEL NKU**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries is encouraged to contact FUEL NKU, the campus food pantry for students. FUEL NKU is located in Albright Health Center 104, and may be reached at [fuel@nku.edu](mailto:fuel@nku.edu). Any student who is experiencing challenges with accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is urged to contact Student Affairs (859-572-6447; [vpsa@nku.edu](mailto:vpsa@nku.edu)) for support. Furthermore, students are encouraged to notify their instructors if they are comfortable in doing so. This will enable instructors to provide any resources they may possess.

**Military Affiliate & Veteran Students**

NKU recognizes military affiliate and veteran students have served our country and have chosen to return to school in order to further their education and continue their service to society. In recognition of the uniqueness of many veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities, etc.), the university welcomes and encourages students to communicate these, in advance if possible, to their instructors. If, during the semester, a student becomes absent due to military service, they must complete the appropriate documentation located at: <https://inside.nku.edu/veterans/current-students/forms/military-service-absence.html>.

As a reminder, NKU offers the Veterans Resource Station (VRS) located in UC 131 for all military affiliate and veterans. This space is specifically designed for military affiliate and veteran students, and has a lounge, computers, printer, and staff that can act as a liaison with local, state, federal, and campus resources. They can be reached Monday thru Friday from 8:15 a.m-4:30 p.m., by phone at 859-572-7867, or by email at [veteransresource@nku.edu](mailto:veteransresource@nku.edu). Additional information can be found on the VRS website at: <https://inside.nku.edu/veterans.html>.

## **Learning PLUS**

Students experiencing roadblocks (e.g., financial, personal, and social concerns) to academic success may seek assistance from Learning PLUS - <https://inside.nku.edu/plus.html>) who offer assistance in academic tutoring, developing success skills, a math center, and a writing center.

# **Learning Management Software**

Canvas [(https://nku.instructure.com )](https://nku.instructure.com/) is an integral component of our courses. Most of the course materials (e.g., syllabus, schedule, readings, and movies) are only available on Canvas. Any questions or problems with the course Canvas site should be brought to the professor’s attention as soon as possible.

In addition to downloading and installing Office 365 (free for NKU students, see <https://inside.nku.edu/it/service-catalog/software/softwarecatalog/microsoft-stu.html>), students who need access to Microsoft products (e.g., Word, Excel, PowerPoint) or Adobe Acrobat Pro and SPSS off campus may access NKU software and network drives from anywhere using NKU Virtual Desktop (VMWare View,<https://one.nku.edu/task/all/virtual-desktop>).

All technology problems must be addressed directly to the NKU IT Help Desk (<https://inside.nku.edu/it/service-catalog/supporttraining/hd.html>).

# **Student Evaluation of Instructor and Course**

NKU takes instructor and course evaluations very seriously. They represent an important means of gathering information about instructors and courses, information that will be used to enhance student-learning opportunities. As such, NKU asks its students to participate responsibly in the instructor and course evaluation process and to include thoughtfully written comments.

For a full-semester course, evaluation periods begin two weeks prior to final exams. For seven-week courses, evaluation periods begin at midnight the Thursday of week 6 and close 11:59 p.m. the Sunday of week 7. For five-week courses, evaluation periods begin at midnight the Thursday of week 4 and close 11:59 p.m. the Sunday of week 5. Students are notified by email when the online evaluation process is available and are sent several reminders until evaluations are completed.   
Student evaluations are strictly confidential, and results are not available to instructors until after final grades for the course are posted. The university has established extensive precautions to prevent individual student comments from being identified.  
In addition, students should be aware:

* Evaluations can affect changes in courses. Evaluations without comments are less valuable and less credible than those filled out thoughtfully. Comments that are expressed well are more effective than those that are not.
* Positive feedback is just as important as criticism. Moreover, negative evaluations without any explanation and specifics are not especially useful.
* Once grades are submitted, all evaluations are read not only by the instructor, but also by the instructor’s department chairperson.
* Evaluations not only provide feedback to your instructor, but also provide information to the department chair for use in performance evaluations. This information affects reappointments, promotions, salaries, and teaching assignments.
* For more information and to view the instructor and course evaluation schedule, visit the student evaluation home page (<http://eval.nku.edu>).