



MEMORANDUM

TO: University Faculty

FROM: Sue K. Adams, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Initiatives

DATE: August 12, 2025

SUBJECT: Semester Information and Course Syllabus Guidance

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

August is well upon us, and it is that time of year to begin organizing syllabi for your fall courses! Department Chairs: please share this email with your part-time faculty.

The purpose of this email is to share important academic reminders and updates, including changes to the “Syllabus Policy Memo” that you are accustomed to seeing from the Office of the Provost.

SYLLABUS LANDING PAGE

My team and I have been hard at work reimagining how we share syllabus information with both faculty and students. This is an evolving process; however, below are the changes we have made to enhance accessibility, streamline content, and modernize URI’s approach to syllabi.

We are excited to share a new syllabus statements landing page for [Required Syllabus Statements](#) on the [Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning’s](#) site!

How do I use this new website?

QR code and required syllabus statements: The main text on this webpage include syllabus statements that all faculty are **required** to include in their course syllabi for transparency purposes.

With this new approach, you can simply **cut/paste, screenshot, or download the QR code to your syllabus and refer students to this webpage for a centrally housed list of mandatory syllabus policies**. This will help to reduce the length of your syllabi.

Note: If you prefer to include the *required* written policies in your syllabi, you can download a pdf of the text from the top of the Required Syllabus Statements website.

Additional syllabus design information including academic honesty policy, accessibility guidance, new AI syllabus statements, and more can be found on the [Syllabus design – Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning](#) page.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SYLLABUS GUIDANCE

The recommended syllabus information includes new, optional [AI syllabus statements](#) vetted by members of URI's AI Coordination Working Group. This guidance was developed after a review of best practices at other institutions, with the final product tailored to the URI community and culture.

Our goal is to keep the guidance flexible and fluid to adapt to the rapidly-evolving AI landscape. We hope that this approach demonstrates the importance of faculty intentionally choosing **if, when and how** AI is used in their classes, as well as guidance for sharing those expectations with students.

FACULTY RESOURCE DOCUMENT

Other relevant faculty resources, strategies, university manual requirements and announcements that were traditionally included in the memo are included below in the Faculty Resource Document, or can be accessed via the [Provost's Office: Faculty Resource Brightspace Site](#) (see the Announcement, Memos & Resources section).

This information is not required, but available for you to include in your syllabi as you choose. The main change to this information is that it is grouped by organizational unit:

- ❖ Office of the Provost
- ❖ Campus Instructional Support
- ❖ Student Affairs Information
- ❖ Recommended Syllabus Information (optional)

Again, feel free to pick and choose the information you would like to include in your syllabus or on a "resource" page on your Brightspace site.

GENERAL UPDATES AND REMINDERS

- ❖ **Writing Across URI moving to ATL:** For those faculty who have engaged with the Writing Across URI program at URI, you know how valuable this resource is to supporting faculty in the art of writing both inside and outside the classroom. After many years of dedicated service, Professor Heather Johnson has decided to return back to her full-time faculty role. This transition provided an opportunity for my office to reconsider the administrative home of the program. **I am pleased to announce that Writing Across URI will be administratively housed under the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, with a strong commitment to include faculty voices in the central management of the program.** All existing programming, including Eli Review, WAC Seminars, etc will continue in their current form. **We thank Heather for her service and her commitment to supporting a smooth transition to ATL.**
- ❖ This is a friendly reminder to [ACTIVATE your Brightspace](#) site when you are ready for your site to be visible to students.
- ❖ And remember...someone once said that one good teacher can change the way a student walks into every room for the rest of their life. Thank you for all you do.

Wishing you a productive and energizing fall semester!

cc: Academic Deans

FACULTY RESOURCE DOCUMENT

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SECTION I. OFFICE OF THE PROVOST INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

FERPA

Please be aware in your communications with students and about a student's academic progress in your course, that FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) regulations prohibit any disclosure of “personally identifiable information” from a student’s “education record” without the prior written consent of the student. For more detailed information on FERPA regulations, please go to [FERPA Summary for Faculty – Registration and Records](#)

Spring 2025 IDEA student feedback results

Available for review – [IDEA – Office of the Provost](#). See [Reflective Teaching Practice & IDEA](#) from ATL for resources to incorporate into your reflective teaching practice.

Fall 2025 Academic Calendar and Final Exam Schedule

[2025-26 – Academic Calendars](#). Classes begin on Wednesday, September 3rd. Classes end on Tuesday, December 9th. Thanksgiving Recess November 26-30.

Students cannot be required to take three final exams on the same day - See [8.51.27](#) for details. Section [8.51.18](#) also states the University's long-standing policy regarding administering examinations during the final week of classes - *Final examinations are not required by the university, but any final examination, with the exception of take-home examinations, must be administered according to the final examination schedule prepared by the Office of Enrollment Services.Faculty members cannot administer an examination during the last five days of classes in lieu of a final examination, but must instead postpone such an examination to be administered according to the final examination schedule.*

- The Final exam schedule is posted on the [Final Exam Schedule – Kingston – Academic Calendars](#). To minimize conflicts with final examinations, list the time of the final for your course in the syllabus and to provide students with the link to the final exam schedule so they can plan ahead.

Academic Integrity

Understanding the culture of source management and attribution in academe is a process of learning and relearning, with increasing complexity over time. Our goal is to better distinguish between intentional plagiarism or cheating, and making mistakes. [URI's Student Handbook](#) provides guidelines concerning academic honesty in this regard. Students who engage in academic dishonesty should be reported to the [Office of Community Standards](#) through the Student Conduct process (see [Report Academic Misconduct](#) form). Additional assistance related to academic integrity is available at the [Writing Center](#) and the [Academic Enhancement Center](#). It may be useful to add an extended and course-specific statement to your syllabi that can be found on [ATL's Syllabus Design Website](#).

University Manual Requirements

Course Syllabus Requirements ([University Manual 8.50.30](#)) – According to the University Manual: *“All instructors shall make available a syllabus in the first week of class, or first day of class for fully-online accelerated programs (8.51.24), to students enrolled in each of their courses. Syllabi components should clearly communicate classroom policies, essential aspects of the course, and expectations of student participation.”*

In addition to satisfying Faculty Senate approved policies, your syllabus communicates mutual expectations between you and your students and serves as a roadmap to successful course completion, including your course scope, expectations, learning outcomes, deadlines, attendance policies, grading criteria, and other important information. Please provide students with information about assessment/major paper/project due dates, office hours, availability of special tutorial sessions, and expectations on individual vs group work. This clear outlining of expectations helps to ensure that students in your classes understand what they are expected to learn, how they will be assessed, and are fully aware of your academic standards. Providing such information can help avoid misunderstanding, frustration—on both sides—and foster acceptance of responsibility by our students.

The *University Manual* also contains information that is helpful in preparing your syllabus. I refer particularly to the following sections in [Chapter 8 of the Manual](#): [8.27.10-19](#) (plagiarism—instructor's responsibilities, judicial action, and student's responsibilities); [8.39.10-12](#) (attendance); and [8.51.10-27](#) (examinations). Each semester, issues are directed to this office that are addressed specifically in these sections.

SECTION 2. CAMPUS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Office for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning (ATL)

As you develop your courses and syllabi, please take advantage of the instructor support resources offered through [the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning](#), such as the [syllabus development](#), [course design](#), and [assessment design](#) resources. For additional instructional resources, consider reviewing [ATL's instructor resources webpage](#), as well as their [fall 2025 schedule of programs and workshops](#). If you need individual support, or support for your department or college specifically, [submit a consultation request](#), and ATL would be glad to listen to and support your needs.

Writing Across URI

[ATL is now the administrative home for Writing Across URI](#). We will host writing retreats this fall on Sept. 18 and Oct. 17 from 9 am - 3 pm at the Bay Campus. [Register](#) or visit our [writing retreat webpage](#) for more information. ATL will also support the use of ELI Review. We will also be hosting multiple listening sessions during the fall 2025 semester to engage the campus community and learn about your needs related to writing and to co-author the next evolution of Writing Across URI. Be on the lookout for more information. Contact teach@uri.edu for questions.

Academic Testing Center (ATC)

The ATC, a unit within ATL and the Office of the Provost, offers a dedicated facility and professional proctoring support for faculty and students. Faculty are invited to submit proctoring requests for exams and quizzes for students with DAI approved testing accommodations, university excused absences, and culturally responsive make-ups. Also, to support students who are absent due to illness (see [University Manual sections 8.51.11-8.51.14](#)) the Academic Testing Center is available to support proctoring needs for make-up quizzes and exams. Faculty, colleges, and departments seeking guidance on independent proctoring, exam and testing best practices, or even [support with the College Level Examination Program \(CLEP\)](#), please visit [For Faculty – Academic Testing Center](#) for more information, or contact Lisa Macaruso, lmacaruso@uri.edu, for a consultation.

IDEA Support and Professional Development

As a collaborative service with the Office of the Provost, instructors can discover best practices for using the IDEA tool and interpreting student feedback. Newly created less than a year ago, there is a self-paced, asynchronous Brightspace course. These interactive modules guide users through understanding the different types of survey questions, setting relevant objectives, and interpreting scores. Visit [IDEA - More Than Just A Number - Discover - University of Rhode Island](#) to begin this learning experience. If you still have questions, ATL provides support for this process with the Office of the Provost. Visit [IDEA support webpage hosted by the Office of the Provost](#), or contact Sean Krueger at skrueger@uri.edu.

URI Online (URIO)

[URI Online](#) supports the development, design, marketing, and enrollment of fully-online degree-granting and certificate programs. We also help to ensure faculty are appropriately qualified to design and teach online and maintain [the list of qualified online faculty](#). Also, the [self-paced Basic Brightspace Training Course](#) is available to provide foundational guidance on how to use Brightspace effectively in your course(s) and teaching practice. To meet the standards required by URI's regional accreditor, the New England Commission for Higher Education (NECHE), and NC-SARA, for offering online courses, the Joint Committee on Online and Distance Education outlines [several approved methods for faculty to demonstrate this online teaching qualification](#). Lastly, if you are interested in proposing a new online program or designing online courses, contact [Heather Sharpes-Smith](#).

ITS Teaching and Learning Services

Visit the [ITS-TLS web site](#) for educational technology professional development trainings, How-to articles, blogs on latest technology and more. The [ITS training](#) calendar provides a comprehensive list of offerings from all IT departments.

Specific Technology Guidance:

- [Rhody Ed Tech Essentials](#) - ITS will host a virtual training on August 19th to learn the quick setup for Brightspace and Panopto, offered by TLS. Join us as we review the essentials to getting started: activating your course, quick setting up for assignments, quizzes and gradebook, Panopto video recording, and accessibility technology in your Brightspace.
- **Video Captioning and ADA Accessibility Resources** – Please be aware that classroom video recordings that capture you and course materials may be part of your course instruction. However, additional considerations apply if your recording includes the voices or images of other individuals such as students - especially in rare cases where the video is shared beyond the course. In such cases, students must be notified in advance on the syllabus, and the instructor must provide options for students who do not wish to appear or be heard in class recordings. For more information about video capturing tools available at URI, and to learn more about ITS's video editing services, submit a Help Desk ticket, use in [Panopto](#) and [Camtasia](#), or visit [ADA Compliance in EdTech – Information Technology Services](#) for information on live and post-production captioning.
- **Faculty Spotlight:** Read about colleagues who have used innovative educational technologies in their URI classes: [Ed Tech Faculty Spotlight – Information Technology Services](#).
- **Tech Day 2025:** [AI in the Classroom: Discover and Leverage URI Ed Tech Tools](#). Get ready to dive into the growing AI toolbox at URI! Tech Day 2025 is a virtual all day conference on August 21 that breaks down the coolest AI tools and platforms available today at URI. Register today.
- **Need tech help?** Anytime you need help, the IT Service Desk is here for you - walk in, call, email or join a virtual drop in. Hours and details of how to reach us can be found on our website: [Ed Tech Faculty Spotlight – Information Technology Services](#)
- **Be Mindful! Fall 2025 Update:** Our usual Library location is temporarily closed due to water damage—[check out our website](#) for current hours and our temporary location.

SECTION 3. STUDENT AFFAIRS INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

URI Bookstore Adoptions

Many students rely on the ability to purchase textbooks and course access codes from the URI Campus Store before the semester begins, often using financial aid. To ensure your course materials are available to students on the first day of class, please submit your fall textbook and material adoptions as soon as possible. If you have not yet done so, check your email for a personalized message from URI@verbasoftware.com—URI's contracted vendor for managing course adoptions. For any questions or assistance, please contact the URI Campus Store directly at uri@bkstr.com or call **401-874-2722**. Thank you for supporting our students' academic success!

Illness-Related Absences

Faculty should clearly outline class attendance and absence policies in their syllabus, bearing in mind that absences due to viral illness are expected. NOTE: Per URI Health Services policy, please do not ask students to provide a medical excuse for a self-limiting illness of less than 3 days duration ([Medical Excuse Note Policy](#)). If a student requires 3 or more days away from their academic responsibilities, a Dean's notification will be made via URI Health Services administration and the student's dean will contact the course instructors. Students who are absent due to illness should not be penalized by grading or assignment/exam make-up policies. See [University Manual sections 8.51.11-8.51.14](#). The [Academic Testing Center](#) is available to support proctoring needs for make-up quizzes and exams.

Connecting Students with Campus Resources

Find resources, report a concern, or refer a student through the [Faculty & Staff resources page](#).

REPORT IT: Students exhibiting concerning behaviors may have difficulties both in and out of the classroom. You may be the first contact person who is in a position to help a student in need. Being aware of distress signals, ways to intervene, and resources to help a student may assist you in responding effectively to such an event. If you find yourself feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened, take signs of distress seriously. Help ANCHOR the student by calling for assistance, [reporting your concerns](#), or accessing resources to share with the student. This page is not for emergencies. Reports are routed to the office designated below. Students are typically contacted within 2 business days. The report forms are not monitored in real time.

SECTION 4. RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE FOR YOUR SYLLABUS

Please consider including the following information in your syllabus or course site to highlight these important student resources

Recommended Syllabus Language for Artificial Intelligence (AI) use in Classes

Faculty are urged to provide students with a clear generative AI acceptable-use statement for all courses, including whether use is permitted, and how students should reference their use of this technology. To provide support and clear guidance to all URI instructors, the following information is provided to URI instructors as recommended syllabus language for AI use in classes.

As generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and Copilot become more integrated into academic and professional work, it is increasingly important for instructors to define how and when these tools may be used in their courses. While AI can support creativity, revision, and problem-solving, it also raises important pedagogical questions about authorship, accuracy, and academic honesty.

As of July 2025, the University of Rhode Island does not have a university-wide policy governing the use of generative AI in coursework. Therefore, it is the responsibility of faculty to clearly articulate expectations for appropriate use within their courses, and to do so in a way that aligns with URI's existing policies.

Two key references provide guidance:

1. [Academic Requirements – University Manual](#) - See chapter 8, Academic Regulations, sections 8.27.10 - 8.27.22
2. [Student-Handbook-2025.pdf](#) - See Appendix I - Academic Misconduct in the 2025 URI Student Handbook, subheader "Academic Honesty" section, beginning on pages 46-47

Faculty are strongly encouraged to include a clear statement on AI use in their syllabi, reinforce expectations in class, and consider varying their policies **by assignment type**. Below are three model syllabus statements that can be adopted as is, or adapted to reflect specific goals, assignment designs, or instructional approaches.

URI Recommended Syllabus Statements (3 options)

AI Use Not Permitted

In this class, it is essential that all submitted work reflects your own understanding and skills. The use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, or similar technologies is not permitted. This ensures that your submitted work genuinely represents your personal knowledge and capabilities. Any use of AI tools on submitted work in this course will be considered a violation of the university's [Academic Requirements in the University Manual](#) (see 8.27.10 - 8.27.22).

AI Use Optional

For certain assignments, you can choose to utilize AI tools to assist you. When you do, it is crucial to clearly document which tool you used, the prompts or questions you provided, and how you used the AI-generated output. This is similar to collaborating with a peer, where it's important to communicate each contribution to the project. However, you must also critically review and refine the AI's output to

ensure the final work accurately reflects your own understanding and meets the academic standards expected by the university. Failure to properly document or cite use of AI will be considered a violation of the university's [Academic Requirements in the University Manual](#) (see 8.27.10 - 8.27.22).

AI Use Required

In parts of this course, you will be asked by your instructor to use AI tools as a resource to enhance your learning experience. You can use these tools to explore ideas, draft projects, and get feedback. It's important to acknowledge your use of AI by mentioning the tool, your prompts, and any edits you made based on its suggestions. Think of AI like a creative partner that can offer new perspectives, while you remain the one responsible for ensuring the originality and quality of your work.

Guidance for Creating a Custom AI Policy for Your Course

If you choose to draft your own statement, consider these questions to help you develop a tailored AI statement for your class.

- **What is the learning objective of the assignment or course?**
Is the focus on independent writing, problem-solving, or critical thinking that could be undermined by AI?
- **If you are considering supporting AI use in your class, which assignments could benefit from AI tools without compromising student learning?**
For example, could AI be used for ideation, editing, code debugging, or summarizing?
- **How will students be expected to disclose or cite AI use?**
Do you want students to include a note or appendix describing how and where they used AI?
- **How will you, as the instructor, support effective AI use throughout the assignment or semester?**
Will you have discussions with your students about their use of AI, or provide written guidance or clear expectations if challenges to effective use arise?
- **How will you assess student understanding?**
Will you include in-class reflections, oral exams, or annotations to ensure students can explain their work?

Additional AI Syllabus Resources

In the spirit of providing additional support, as well as added examples of AI syllabus statements at other universities, the following digital resources are provided for your optional consideration.

- Pepperdine Syllabus Statement Creator (available through ATL) - [Generative AI Syllabus Statement](#)
- Syllabus Repository (available through ATL and URI Library) - [Syllabi Policies for AI Generative Tools - Google Docs](#)
- [Teaching With ChatGPT & Other AI – Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning](#)

Academic Enhancement Center (AEC)

All Academic Enhancement Center support services for Spring 2025 begin on January 27th and are offered at no added cost to undergraduate students. Visit [Academic Enhancement Center – University College for Academic Success](#) for more information about our programs described below.

Appointments can be scheduled in **TracCloud** located in [Microsoft 365](#).

STEM & Business Tutoring

Get peer tutoring for many 100 and 200 level STEM, Business, Nursing, and Engineering courses. Choose weekly or occasional sessions through TracCloud or visit the Drop-In Center in Carothers Library LL004. Learn more at the [STEM & BUS Tutoring – Academic Enhancement Center](#)

Meet one-on-one with a peer academic coach to build habits and strategies around time management, goal setting, and studying. Contact Heather Price (hprice@uri.edu) for more information. [Click here for more details.](#)

UCS 160 and UCS 161 are 1 credit courses designed to improve your academic skills and strategies. Consider enrolling in one of these courses! Contact David Hayes (davidhayes@uri.edu) with any questions or to schedule a professional staff academic consultation. [Click here for more details.](#)

Undergraduate Writing Center

Receive peer writing support at any stage of your writing process. Schedule in-person or online consultations through TracCloud or stop by Roosevelt Hall Room 20 **-new location!** Learn more at the [Writing Center – Academic Enhancement Center](#)

Center for Career and Experiential Education

The [Center for Career and Experiential Education](#) (CCEE) supports undergraduate students with career education and preparation through [one-on-one advising](#), 24/7 [online resources](#), [career events](#), year-round [career education, community engagement courses](#), [recognition of prior learning](#), the [ITR Internship Program](#), and pre-health [career pathways](#).

The [Handshake](#) platform connects students to on- and off-campus jobs as well as internships. Our [Career Education Specialists](#) (CES) are available to meet with students all year long, as early as their first-year, both in-person and virtually. They assist with career exploration, resume and cover letter development, interview preparation, job and internship search, and more. Through active reciprocal relationships with employer and community partners, we develop an impressive workforce talent pipeline that contributes to the Rhode Island economy, community, and beyond. For more information, visit us on the first floor of Roosevelt Hall, at the [Center for Career and Experiential Education | #RamsGetJobs – University College for Academic Success](#) or call 401.874.2311.

University Libraries

The [University Libraries](#) connect students and researchers at all levels with the information they need. Contact the [Research Help Desk](#) for assistance locating sources, and visit the [Interlibrary Loan page](#) to access additional books, articles, and other materials outside of our collection.

Graduate Writing and Presenting Lab (for graduate courses)

The [Graduate Writing and Presenting Lab](#) provides writing support as well as presentation preparation support for posters, conference/class presentations to all URI doctoral, master's, and certificate students. GWPL programs and individual appointments foster continuing development of academic and professional writing and presentation skills necessary to succeed in graduate programs and in academic or professional careers. Contact the [GWPL](#) to come to your class/lab/seminar to speak on citation style or management, publishing research, abstract writing, poster preparation, and more.

Graduate Academic Support (for graduate students)

[Graduate Academic Support](#) resources help graduate students overcome learning, time management, and planning obstacles and succeed in graduate school through individual appointments and programs. This office also provides guidance on working with advisors and committees.

Graduate Professional and Community Development (for graduate students)

The Graduate School's [Office of Graduate Professional and Community Development](#) provides career services workshops and 1:1 appointments, badge programs, weekly newsletters, job resources for international students, and [GTA Training](#). The office oversees the Grad Writing and Presenting Lab and Graduate Academic Support. To schedule a tailored career or professional development program for your graduate class/ lab/seminar, email [Cara Mitnick, Director, Graduate Career and Professional Development](#).