



Executive Vice Chancellor
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August 22, 2024

Students,

Welcome back to a new school year! As we prepare to begin the fall semester, I write with important academic information and reminders essential to your success at CUNY.

1. Academic Integrity

The importance of academic integrity in everything we do at the University cannot be overstated. This spring, CUNY passed a revised Academic Integrity Policy that addresses appropriate use of existing and emerging generative Artificial Intelligence tools, like ChatGPT and Copilot, that are in widespread use in our community. Our policy, which you can find [here](#), outlines expectations for honest and ethical behavior in your academic work and recognizes that there are both legitimate and illegitimate uses of this technology. If you encounter any issues or uncertainties about authorized use, please discuss them with your professors and consult your syllabi for guidance. Remember, upholding academic integrity not only reflects your personal values, but also ensures a fair and equitable learning environment for all students.

2. Change in Deadline for Withdrawal from Classes

Beginning Fall 2024, the deadline to withdraw from a course and receive a grade of W has changed to the completion of 60% of the course rather than the last day of classes. The exact deadlines for the 2024-2025 academic year are posted on [CUNY's Academic Calendar](#).

Remember that an official withdrawal (W) must be initiated by you, the student. A WU (Withdrew Unofficially) will be assigned where you “attended class at least once, stopped participating, did not drop the class or receive approval for an incomplete, did not officially withdraw from the course, and did not complete enough work for the instructor to calculate an earned grade using the criteria outlined in the course syllabus.”

Please familiarize yourself with CUNY's Uniform Grade Guidelines, which can be found [here](#).

3. Use of the LMS Brightspace and Online Courses

The CUNY Board of Trustees recently approved a new Learning Management (LMS) Use Policy ([LMS Use Policy](#)). The policy requires instructors to use the University LMS for synchronous and asynchronous online classes. The LMS is the primary tool you will use to access course materials for online courses.

If you are enrolled in an online course (designated as "O" when you register), the course should be delivered in either Blackboard or Brightspace LMS. To determine which LMS your college is using, please visit either the [LMS transition website](#) or the [LMS login page](#).

4. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University is committed to ensuring that all students, including those with disabilities that require accommodations, are fully supported on their academic journey. We understand how vital accessibility and inclusiveness are in creating a nurturing educational environment where every student can thrive.

Should you require an accommodation, have concerns regarding your access to them, or need to speak with the campus ADA compliance officer, we strongly encourage you to contact the [Disability Services Office](#) at your earliest convenience. Our dedicated team is keen to assist you in obtaining the support and resources you need for a successful academic journey.

5. Use of Cameras in Online Classes

Beginning this fall, faculty may require students to turn on their cameras in online and hybrid courses during class periods or for remote testing purposes. A notice has been provided in CUNYfirst for all online and hybrid classes that confirms this policy. 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.

There may be occasions when an otherwise in-person class is scheduled to be delivered remotely on a limited basis because of a temporary pivot to remote instruction or because of faculty need. In these circumstances, faculty may encourage but not require students to turn on their cameras for purposes other than testing unless required camera use is clearly stated on the course syllabus and covered with the students on the first day of class. A copy of the full policy on camera use can be found [here](#).

6. Civil Discourse in Our Classrooms and on Campuses

Last but by no means least, it is no secret that we return to campus at a time when the world is grappling with crises and our country with the next presidential election. It is critical to our values as a community and our educational mission that we maintain civil discourse and respect for all individuals in and outside of our classrooms. Every student is entitled to an education free from harassment, and CUNY is committed to ensuring that the university maintains a safe and respectful environment for all. By committing to these principles, we can foster a positive and inclusive atmosphere that encourages both the free exchange of ideas and an environment where all students can thrive. We will be providing resources and opportunities to engage and shape our community dialogue throughout the semester.

We look forward to welcoming you back to campus shortly. Best wishes to everyone for a productive and engaging fall semester.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wendy Hensel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wendy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Hensel".

Wendy Hensel

Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and University Provost