

A Few Words of Advice to Students in Online Courses

It's a good idea to keep in mind that distance learning can easily lull students into becoming too distant. Without a classroom, classmates, and an in-person instructor, students may begin to feel detached from a course and forget that the online environment calls for the same basic civility as a course with a face-to-face component. And it goes without saying that academic dishonesty is no more acceptable in an online course than in any other. Try to recognize these dangers ahead of time and remember that online courses have many of the same ground rules as courses offered face-to-face.

1. You have a right to expect that the instructor of an online course will post a syllabus that makes clear exactly what his or her expectations are concerning attendance at synchronous sessions, preparation for those sessions, coursework, and grading policies. Moreover, the syllabus should indicate when the professor is available for office hours and how you can contact him or her if any special concerns arise.
2. Each semester has a "drop date" (in the Fall 2020 semester, it's Friday, November 6th).
 - You may drop a course without penalty for any reason at any time through the drop date.
 - You must drop courses yourself through the Registrar's Office.
 - If you drop a course, it will remain on your transcript with the non-prejudicial grade of **W**. **W** grades do not affect your GPA.
 - Before dropping a course, international students should consult the Office of International Student Services, and students on financial aid should consult their academic advisors and the Office of Financial Aid.
 - You have a right to expect that your instructor will give you enough feedback before the drop date—at least one significant piece of graded work—for you to make an informed decision about whether to stay in the course.
3. If you experience an outside problem after the drop date—illness, a death in the family, or some equally serious catastrophe—you may appeal for a "drop after the deadline" to the Committee on Academic Standing of the school to which you've been admitted (or to the Joint Committee on Academic Standing, located in the Center for Academic Advisement, if you have not yet been admitted to one of the three schools). Should your appeal be granted, the non-prejudicial grade of **W** will be substituted for whatever grade you received, and your GPA will be adjusted accordingly.
4. Abandoning a course mid-semester by ceasing to attend and hand in work will result in the prejudicial grade of **WU**, which is figured into a student's GPA as an **F** and, even more importantly, may violate the terms of his or her financial aid or threaten an international student's visa status.
 - International students and students receiving financial aid should make every effort to finish all their courses, even if they anticipate that they will fail.
 - If you can't finish all the work for a course by the end of the semester because of some outside problem but you feel that you could do so if you had more time, you should ask your instructor for a grade of **INC** (Incomplete). Please be aware that your instructor may ask you to provide some proof of whatever is keeping you from finishing the course on

time. If your instructor agrees to give you an INC, you will have until the end of the following semester to complete the coursework, and it will be your responsibility to do so. In other words, do not wait for your instructor to contact you; it is up to you to contact him or her and make arrangements to complete the coursework. An INC grade that has not been resolved by the end of the following semester automatically turns into an **FIN** grade, which is the same as an F.

5. You should expect to be awarded the grade that you have earned, not the one that seems most advantageous after the fact.
 - If you abandon a course mid-semester, the instructor *must* give you a WU, and you should not ask him or her at some later date to change the grade to an F. This is a matter of the college's responsibility to outside authorities and the integrity of academic records, which may be audited.
 - If you earn a passing grade that is lower than the one you were hoping to get, don't ask your instructor to change the grade to an F so that you can retake the course for a higher grade. Your instructor is not free to give you any grade other than the one that you have earned.
 - Remember that it is *your* responsibility to keep these ground rules in mind. Even if a course is conducted entirely online, it is still a Baruch College course, and it is up to you to do what you must to comply with the terms under which you have been permitted to take it.
6. The college offers tutoring services in the Student Academic Consulting Center (SACC), writing assistance in the Writing Center, and oral communication assistance through Tools for Clear Speech. All these services are available online. If you need assistance, you should visit the centers' respective pages on the Baruch website to schedule an appointment.
7. The Center for Academic Advisement is also fully operational online, and you are able to schedule advisement sessions, even though you are not, at present, able to visit the center in person. The same is true of the Starr Career Development Center and the Counseling Center.