

Teaching Philosophy and Course Policies

Dr. Stephanie E. August

Philosophy

The instructor guides, the student explores. My job is to show the students what to learn and how to master it. The student's job is to explore the paths laid out before them. I assume that students are taking the class because the subject interests them and expect the students to take the initiative in learning the material. Everything we learn will be useful later, so it is important to be exposed to many different ideas.

I expect all students to contribute to the learning experience and not simply wait to be taught. In a graduate course, students come to class prepared to discuss the topic at hand, to relate it to their previous experience, and to project how it will be used in the future. Although undergraduates might think they have little direct experience with the topic, they are encouraged to find evidence of it in their life experiences and current news articles.

Students are encouraged to discuss course material with the instructor, but they are also expected to take responsibility for mastering the course material and to seek out additional references for amplification and clarification of course concepts. The course description provides several additional references to use as a starting point.

Expected Work

Course-specific expectations are noted in the Course Description. In addition, I have the following general expectations.

Students are expected to take responsibility for mastering course material, rather than expecting to be provided with all the answers. If an assignment is unclear, the student is encouraged to discuss the assignment with the instructor, but is also expected to seek out published resources related to the assignment.

Students are responsible for all the material in the assigned readings, whether or not it is covered in class, and for all material presented in class, whether or not it is in the assigned readings. Students are expected to complete the assigned reading prior to lecture and to participate in class discussions.

Students are expected to take responsibility for learning course material and keeping track of deliverables and due dates throughout the semester. Students are expected to turn in materials according to the schedule distributed by the instructor at the beginning of the term, unless the instructor explicitly issues an updated course schedule; students should not expect the instructor to remind them of due dates. Late assignments are not accepted, except as noted in the Course Description.

Course information will be published on Blackboard (BB). Students are expected to:

- inspect the course BB frequently for announcements, updates, assignments, documents
- use BB to communicate among class members
- make certain they receive email from the email address listed for them on BB

Grading

Your final grade will be weighted as noted in the Course Description handout.

Graduate-level final grades are assigned as follows:

A-/A	Superior	Student has mastered the material and presents it in a professional manner.
B-/B/B+	Satisfactory	Student has a good grasp of the material and presents it clearly.
C+/C/C-	Poor	Student did some work, but does not have a strong grasp of fundamental concepts.
F	Fail	Student failed to learn fundamental concepts.

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Undergraduate-level final grades are assigned as follows:

90-100%	A-/A	Student has mastered the material
80- 89%	B-/B/B+	Student has a good grasp of the material.
70- 79%	C-/C/C+	Student has a basic understanding of the material.
60- 69%	D	Student did some work, but failed to learn fundamental concepts.
0- 59%	F	Student did an insufficient amount of work to satisfy course requirements.

Unless otherwise stated for a specific assignment or deliverable, half of the grade will reflect *content*, and half of the grade will reflect *presentation*.

An incomplete will be granted only when the student requesting the incomplete has completed 80% of the coursework, and has at least a B average in the coursework completed.

Assignments

Submitted assignments reflect your attitude toward learning. Written assignments may be handwritten or typed. All are expected to be neat and legible. *Homework and papers with multiple spelling and/or grammatical errors or not representative of college-level work will be returned ungraded.* Find yourself a good spelling and grammar checker and/or a trusted human editor, if you have difficulty with English spelling and/or grammar. The Learning Resources Center in Daum Hall offers such a service, both on an appointment and a drop-in basis.

Student's name and the assignment number and due date must appear in the upper right corner of the first page of the assignment. Answer questions with complete sentences; include the question in the answer and show your reasoning.

Exams

Once a quiz or exam has begun, it will be assumed that anyone leaving the room is finished with the exam. Have adequate supplies (paper, pens, pencils, tissues) on hand, and take care of personal needs before coming to class. No makeup quizzes or exams will be given, except as noted below.

If your job, team sports, or other commitments require you to travel during the term, special arrangements should be made prior to a missed class for submitting assignments, receiving assignments and handouts, or rescheduling quizzes or exams. If you miss a quiz or exam without making prior arrangements, I will enter a grade of 0 for the quiz or exam, and no makeups will be allowed.

Electronic Devices

Please turn off and put out of sight all electronic devices other than calculators. The distractions they cause disrupt class and usurp precious class time. A repeat offender may lose credit for the day's work.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Students are encouraged to discuss approaches to assignments and projects with their classmates. However, unless an assignment has explicitly been declared a team assignment, each student is expected to complete and write up the assignment or project component on his or her own. When an approach has been discussed in a group, each student should clearly note on the copy of the work that he or she submits what kind of collaboration occurred, and the name of each collaborator. Researching a problem on the internet is considered to be collaboration and should be noted on the assignment. Relevant URLs should be noted on the assignment. Cheating on assignments by failing to note collaboration or not writing up the assignment on an individual basis, cheating on examinations, plagiarism, falsification of data, and related violations of LMU standards of honesty

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and integrity are not tolerated. Students who commit such offenses will receive a failing grade for the assignment or exam and/or a failing grade for the course, as well further disciplinary action.

Survival

Eat before you are hungry, drink before you are thirsty, and sleep before you are tired, and you will have energy left to celebrate the completion of the course and enjoy the semester break. Eating, drinking, and sleeping are to be done outside the labs and classrooms. Repeat offenders will find it difficult to complete the course, since they will be asked to leave the classroom and will lose their lab privileges.