

# **Adjunct Faculty Guide for Teaching and Learning**

## **FAMU**

AI was used to help generate, organize, and refine content related to Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The final document was reviewed and edited to ensure accuracy, relevance, clarity, and alignment with the intended purpose and audience.

### **Purpose**

This document provides a structured guide for adjunct faculty who teach at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU). It is designed to help adjunct instructors understand teaching expectations, prepare their courses, use university systems, support students, and contribute to FAMU's mission of academic excellence and student success.

Adjunct faculty are vital members of the teaching community. A clear onboarding process ensures that they are prepared, connected, and supported before and during the semester.

### **Adjunct Faculty Goals**

The goals of adjunct faculty guide are to:

- Welcome adjunct faculty into the FAMU academic community
- Clarify instructional roles, responsibilities, and expectations
- Support effective course planning and syllabus development
- Ensure familiarity with university policies and procedures
- Promote student-centered, inclusive, and culturally responsive teaching
- Provide guidance on instructional technology and learning platforms
- Connect adjunct faculty to key academic and student support resources
- Encourage professional communication and continuous teaching improvement

### **FAMU Teaching and Learning Commitment**

FAMU's teaching and learning environment is rooted in academic rigor, student achievement, cultural awareness, integrity, and service. FAMU values educational excellence and the development of students who are prepared to lead and serve in a diverse world.

Adjunct faculty support this commitment by creating learning environments that are:

- Respectful and inclusive
- Academically challenging
- Organized and transparent
- Responsive to student needs
- Aligned with course and program outcomes
- Supportive of persistence, retention, and graduation

## **Adjunct Faculty Role and Expectations**

Adjunct faculty are responsible for delivering high-quality instruction and maintaining professional standards throughout the semester. While specific duties may vary by department or college, adjunct faculty are generally expected to:

- Teach assigned courses according to approved course descriptions and learning outcomes
- Develop and maintain a clear, complete syllabus
- Prepare course materials, lessons, assignments, and assessments
- Meet scheduled class sessions or online engagement expectations
- Communicate regularly and professionally with students
- Maintain accurate records of attendance, grades, and student progress
- Provide timely feedback on student work
- Use approved university systems for communication and course management
- Follow FAMU and department policies
- Refer students to appropriate academic and support resources
- Submit grades and required documentation by established deadlines

## **Pre-Semester Checklist**

Adjunct faculty should complete the following steps before the semester begins.

### Administrative Preparation

- Complete all hiring and employment paperwork
- Confirm teaching assignment, course modality, meeting days, times, and location
- Obtain FAMU email, username, password, and system access
- Review payroll, contract, and employment information
- Identify the department chair, program coordinator, or course lead
- Obtain key department contacts and emergency contacts
- Review the academic calendar and important university deadlines

### Course Preparation

- Obtain the official course description and approved student learning outcomes
- Review department syllabi, course templates, or common course requirements
- Confirm textbooks, digital materials, open educational resources, or required supplies
- Develop or update the course syllabus
- Align assignments and assessments with course learning outcomes
- Prepare the course schedule and major deadlines
- Create grading criteria, rubrics, and assessment expectations
- Prepare the first week of instruction
- Confirm classroom location, equipment, or online course requirements

### Technology Preparation

- Access the learning management system (Canvas)
- Set up the course shell with the syllabus, modules, assignments, and gradebook
- Upload required readings, links, and course materials
- Test videos, files, links, quizzes, and assignment submission areas
- Learn how to send announcements and messages to students
- Confirm classroom technology needs
- Identify technology support contacts

### Policy and Student Support Preparation

- Review policies on attendance, grading, academic integrity, student conduct, and accommodations
- Learn how to access class rosters and submit grades
- Identify tutoring, advising, counseling, accessibility, library, and student success resources
- Review procedures for reporting academic or behavioral concerns
- Understand emergency procedures and campus safety expectations

Adjunct faculty should be encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification before classes begin.

## **Syllabus Development**

The syllabus is a central teaching and communication tool. It helps students understand what they will learn, how they will be assessed, and what is expected of them.

A strong syllabus should include:

- Course title, number, section, and credit hours
- Instructor name and FAMU contact information
- Office hours or availability
- Course description
- Student learning outcomes
- Required textbooks and course materials
- Course modality and meeting schedule
- Technology requirements
- Course assignments and assessments
- Grading scale and grading policies
- Attendance and participation expectations
- Late work and make-up policies
- Academic integrity expectations
- Accessibility and accommodations statement
- Student support resources
- Course schedule with major deadlines

- Final exam or final project information

Adjunct faculty should use department-approved templates and required university language when available.

### Faculty Syllabus Posting Requirement

To support compliance with state legislative requirements and to ensure students have timely access to important course information, all faculty are required to use Simple Syllabus to complete and post course syllabi by the established deadlines.

Course syllabi must include sufficient detail to inform students of the course curriculum; course goals, objectives, and student expectations; and how student performance will be measured. Syllabi must also include required course information, textbook and instructional materials information, and applicable university policies.

Simple Syllabus serves as the University's centralized syllabus repository and provides a consistent, accessible format for faculty and students. The platform integrates with Canvas and supports public access to syllabi for current and prospective students, as required. Posted syllabi must be searchable, downloadable, and retained in accordance with applicable requirements.

All Faculty must complete and submit syllabi in Simple Syllabus by the following required dates:

- **Spring Semester:** On or before October 1
- **Summer Semester:** On or before March 1
- **Fall Semester:** On or before April 1

Faculty are responsible for ensuring that their syllabi are accurate, complete, and posted by the applicable deadline. Timely submission is essential to maintaining institutional compliance and providing students with the information they need to make informed academic decisions.

Additional guidance may be provided by the appropriate dean, department chair, or college/school representative. Questions regarding syllabus requirements or Simple Syllabus may be directed to Program Chair, Dean or designated university office.

For more information, visit the [Teaching and Learning Center](#).

## **Course Design and Alignment**

Effective courses are intentionally designed so that learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessments work together.

Adjunct faculty should ensure that:

- Course content supports approved learning outcomes

- Assignments measure what students are expected to learn
- Course activities prepare students for assessments
- Grading criteria are clear and transparent
- Workload is appropriate for the course level and credit hours
- Students receive feedback before major high-stakes assignments
- Assessments include opportunities for improvement and reflection

A simple course alignment plan may include:

| <b>Learning Outcome</b>             | <b>Learning Activity</b>       | <b>Assessment</b>              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Students will explain key concepts  | Lecture, readings, discussion  | Quiz or short response         |
| Students will apply course theories | Case study, group activity     | Applied assignment             |
| Students will evaluate evidence     | Research activity, peer review | Research paper or presentation |

For assistance designing your courses contact the [Teaching and Learning Center](#), or [FAMU Online](#).

## **Learning Management System and Instructional Technology**

Adjunct faculty should use Canvas, the university's designated learning management system and instructional tools according to department expectations. The learning management system may be used to share materials, communicate with students, collect assignments, manage grades, and support online learning.

Recommended practices include:

- Publishing the course site before the semester begins
- Organizing materials in modules or weekly folders
- Creating assignment submission links
- Using announcements for regular communication
- Keeping the online gradebook updated
- Providing clear instructions for online activities
- Ensuring that files and links are accessible
- Testing course materials before students use them
- Contacting technology support early when problems arise

Visit the [Office of Instructional Technology Office](#) and the [Teaching and Learning Center](#), for insight and assistance with Canvas and your Instructional Design needs.

## **Student Communication**

Clear communication helps students stay engaged and understand expectations.

Adjunct faculty should:

- Use FAMU email or approved university communication tools
- Communicate response-time expectations in the syllabus
- Send a welcome message before or during the first week
- Provide weekly reminders or announcements
- Respond to student questions professionally and consistently
- Document important conversations about grades, attendance, or concerns
- Encourage students to communicate early if they are experiencing challenges

A sample communication expectation might state:

Students should use FAMU email or the course learning management system to contact the instructor. I will typically respond to messages within 24–48 hours during normal business days.

## **First Week of Class**

The first week sets the tone for the semester. Adjunct faculty should use this time to build community, clarify expectations, and help students understand how to succeed.

Recommended first-week activities include:

- Welcome students and introduce yourself
- Review the syllabus and course schedule
- Explain learning outcomes and major assignments
- Discuss attendance, participation, and grading policies
- Demonstrate how to access course materials
- Confirm students can access required technology
- Invite students to share questions or concerns
- Establish norms for respectful discussion
- Complete an early low-stakes activity or assessment
- Encourage students to use office hours and support services

## **Office Hours and Student Support**

Adjunct faculty should provide opportunities for students to receive help outside scheduled class time. Office hours may be held in person, online, or by appointment.

Office hours can help students:

- Clarify course concepts

- Review assignment feedback
- Prepare for exams or projects
- Discuss study strategies
- Build confidence
- Connect with academic resources

Faculty should include office hour information in the syllabus and remind students regularly that seeking help is a normal part of learning.

## **Academic Integrity and Responsible AI Use**

Adjunct faculty are responsible for promoting academic honesty and addressing suspected misconduct according to university and department procedures. You should establish clear expectations for the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in each course and, when appropriate, for individual assignments. In alignment with university policy, AI tools may enhance teaching and learning when used responsibly, transparently, and with proper attribution. However, adjunct faculty retain the authority to determine whether, when, and how generative AI tools may be used in their courses or for specific instructional activities.

If AI tools are permitted, faculty should explain how students may use them and how they should acknowledge that use. If AI tools are not permitted, that should also be clearly stated in the syllabus and assignment instructions.

## **Accessibility and Accommodations**

Adjunct faculty must support approved student accommodations and maintain confidentiality. Students with documented accommodations should be treated respectfully and equitably.

Faculty should:

- Review accommodation letters promptly
- Implement approved accommodations as directed
- Keep accommodation information private
- Provide accessible course materials when possible
- Use readable documents and captioned videos when available
- Avoid asking students to disclose disability details
- Contact the appropriate university office with questions

Faculty should not deny or change approved accommodations without guidance from the designated university office.

For more information visit [FAMU Accessibility](#).

## **Monitoring Attendance and Student Progress**

Adjunct faculty should monitor attendance, participation, and academic performance throughout the semester. Early intervention can improve student success.

Faculty should pay attention when students:

- Miss class repeatedly
- Stop submitting assignments
- Perform poorly on early assessments
- Do not access the online course site
- Appear disengaged or distressed
- Communicate academic or personal challenges

When concerns arise, adjunct faculty should follow department procedures for referrals, early alerts, or communication with advisors and student support offices.

For more information visit [Academic Advising](#).

## **Grading and Feedback**

Grading should be fair, timely, transparent, and consistent with the syllabus.

Recommended grading practices include:

- Use rubrics or grading criteria for major assignments
- Provide feedback that helps students improve
- Return graded work within a reasonable timeframe
- Keep the gradebook current
- Apply late work and make-up policies consistently
- Explain how final grades are calculated
- Maintain accurate records of grades and attendance
- Submit midterm and final grades by university deadlines

Faculty should consult the department chair or course coordinator when grade disputes or unusual grading situations occur.

## **Classroom Management and Learning Environment**

Adjunct faculty should create a classroom climate that supports learning, professionalism, and respect.

Effective classroom management includes:

- Setting expectations early

- Encouraging respectful dialogue
- Addressing disruptive behavior calmly
- Applying policies consistently
- Protecting student privacy
- Avoiding public embarrassment of students
- Redirecting off-topic or inappropriate comments
- Consulting department leadership when serious issues arise

For online classes, classroom management also includes maintaining discussion board expectations, monitoring participation, and addressing inappropriate online behavior.

For more insights on classroom management, visit the [Teaching and Learning Center](#), or [FAMU Online](#).

## Online and Hybrid Teaching

Online and hybrid courses require intentional organization and regular instructor presence.

Adjunct faculty teaching online or hybrid courses should:

- Organize content by week or module
- Provide clear instructions for each activity
- Use announcements to guide students through the course
- Include regular interaction between instructor and students
- Use discussions, videos, quizzes, or activities to promote engagement
- Provide timely feedback
- Offer virtual office hours
- Monitor student participation
- Ensure deadlines are clear
- Make course materials accessible

Students in online courses should know what to do each week, when work is due, and how to receive help.

For more insights on teaching online or hybrid courses, visit the [Teaching and Learning Center](#), or [FAMU Online](#).

## End-of-Course Responsibilities

At the end of the course, adjunct faculty should complete required instructional and administrative tasks.

These may include:

- Administer final exams or final projects
- Grade remaining assignments

- Submit final grades by the university deadline
- Complete course assessment reports if requested
- Maintain grade records according to department expectations
- Respond professionally to student grade questions
- Return borrowed equipment or instructional materials
- Provide feedback to the department about course materials or student needs
- Reflect on course strengths and areas for improvement

For assistance or more insights, visit the [Teaching and Learning Center](#)

## **Professional Development**

Adjunct faculty are invited and encouraged to participate in professional development related to teaching and learning.

Recommended topics include:

- Canvas or learning management system training
- Active learning strategies
- Assessment and rubric design
- Online and hybrid teaching
- Academic integrity and AI use
- Universal Design for Learning
- Student engagement strategies
- Classroom management
- Supporting first-generation students
- Teaching with open educational resources
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)
- Grantsmanship

Professional development helps adjunct faculty stay current and continuously improve their teaching practice.

For professional development opportunities visit the [Teaching and Learning Center](#).

## **Conclusion**

Adjunct faculty are important contributors to FAMU's teaching and learning mission. A thoughtful onboarding process helps ensure that adjunct instructors are prepared, supported, and connected to the university community.

By providing clear expectations, access to resources, instructional guidance, and ongoing professional development, FAMU can support adjunct faculty in delivering high-quality, inclusive, and student-centered learning experiences.

