

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS

Department of Economics
University of California, Berkeley
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Logistics:

You can find the location and time of your lectures and all discussion sections for your class [here](#).

You can find a map of campus [here](#).

The academic calendar for UC Berkeley is available [here](#).

[Here](#) are various resources / information put together by the Center for Teaching and Learning

Classroom Technology:

You can get classroom technology support [here](#). This page is worth perusing carefully. Some things of particular interest include: Basic information about classrooms available [here](#). ETS also offers classroom orientation (a private orientation of the particular classroom you will be using). You can request such an orientation [here](#). The classroom AV Help Desk number is 510-643-8637.

“Berkeley Time”:

At Berkeley the convention is that lectures/sections/seminars/etc. start 10 minutes after the official start time and end at the official end time. For example, if you lecture time is 3:30pm-5:00pm, your lecture should start at 3:40 and end at 5:00pm. The 10 minutes are meant to allow students to get between classes.

Course Website (bCourses):

The course websites at UC Berkeley are available [here](#). You need to create and post the website for your course. Some of the more useful features of the course website are the ability to post class announcements, email the class, post files for the class, post grades of assignments, create assignments, create discussion boards, view student photos, etc.

[Here](#) is a page on how to get started on bCourses.

[Here](#) is a different page with information about how to get started.

Class Roster:

You can download your class roster through the Grading part of bCourses. But you can also download your class roster with more information (e.g., which program the students belong to) from [CalCentral](#)

Graduate Student Instructors

Graduate student instructors (GSIs) are unionized at Berkeley and their work is governed by a collective bargaining agreement. The most important aspect of this for you as an instructor is the workload clause which states the following:

- a. A GSI with a 50% appointment shall not be assigned a workload of more than 220 hours per quarter or 340 hours per semester. This standard shall apply proportionately to other percent appointments.
- b. In addition, a GSI with an appointment of 50% or less shall not be assigned a workload of more than 40 hours in any one week or assigned to work more than eight (8) hours in any one day. The number of hours worked in excess of twenty (20) hours per week may not total more than 50 hours per quarter or 77 hours per semester.

The 340 hours per semester works out to 20 hours per week. So, the basic idea is 20 hours per week with some weeks being less and some more (e.g., midterm and final grading times).

The official appointment period for the fall semester is August 1st to December 31st and for the spring semester is January 1st to May 31st.

Below, please find a few guidelines about what GSIs are expected to do and what they are not expected to do. These guidelines are not mandatory. Rather, they are suggestions and recommendations.

What is expected of GSIs:

1. Attend lecture
2. Hold discussion sections (and create material for such sections)
3. Hold office hours (2 hours per week is typical)
4. Grade problem sets, papers, and exams
5. Create answer sheets for problem sets and exams
6. Proctor exams
7. Maintain student records (grades)
8. Hold pre-exam review sessions
9. Manage DSP accommodations, coordinating with DSP office
10. Field emails from students

What is not expected of GSIs:

1. Write problem sets and exams
2. Give lectures
3. Assign course grades

[Here](#) is a useful guide to working with GSIs.

It is important to be in touch with your GSIs as early as possible to decide which GSI will teach which section and to decide on office hours for each GSI. If scheduling conflicts imply that your GSIs are not able to teach the sections for your course, you should contact the head GSI for the Economics Department immediately (headgsi@econ.berkeley.edu).

Enrollment Inquiries from Students:

You may receive emails from students asking to take the class even though it is full. Please advise students to first consult the department's [Course Enrollment](#) page. Questions not addressed on this webpage should be sent to the Head GSI of the Department at (headgsi@econ.berkeley.edu).

Off the record: There are usually a few slots that can be filled at the discretion of the department. If you forward all requests to the Head GSI, they will fill these in cooperation with Student Services. But if you have a desire to make a pitch for a student who has contacted you, you can send such a pitch to the head GSI.

Syllabus:

Here are a few guidelines about information to include in your syllabus:

1. A list of the assignments in the class and how the grade on each assignment will factor in the overall course grade. If there are other components of the overall course grade (e.g., participation), this should be listed clearly.
2. An exposition of how grade disputes will be handled.
3. An explanation of rules (or etiquette) regarding students working together on assignments, if applicable.
4. An explanation of rules (or etiquette) regarding use of electronic devices during lecture and sessions.
5. Your policy regarding academic honesty (cheating).
6. Timing of your final exam (see below for where to find this).

[Here](#) is a checklist developed by COCI about syllabuses. This is quite extensive. But may be useful in developing your syllabus.

Please feel free to ask the Vice Chairs for examples.

Final Exam Schedule:

You can find information about the timing of the final exam for your class [here](#).

Extra Rooms for Midterm / Final Exam:

If you need to reserve extra classroom space to implement alternate seating during midterm or final exams, please email: Blair Van Tassel (bvantassel@berkeley.edu).

Guidelines for Student Scheduling Conflicts (e.g. Athletes, Musicians, etc)

[Here](#) are guidelines for student scheduling conflicts with academic requirements (e.g. exams)

Textbooks:

You should submit book orders for required textbooks to the [Cal Student Store](#). The official deadline for this is very early. Please do this as soon as you can. You are also supposed to email your textbook adoption to text@berkeley.edu for the record. We all get an email once a semester about this from the Vice Chancellor of Undergraduate Education.

Course Packets / Handouts:

[This page](#) is useful regarding copyright issues and creating a course packet and handouts. You may also find it useful to contact James Church, the librarian for Economics. His email is jchurch@library.berkeley.edu

Disability Accommodations

See separate memo.

Course Capture

IT services offer “Course Capture” to record your lectures for asynchronous viewing (students that are sick or can’t make lecture or just want to review later in the semester). You should receive an email “invitation” before the beginning of the semester regarding this, if your class is in an eligible classroom.

There are two options “slides + audio” and “slides + video + audio”. Only some rooms have the second option. The recordings will show up under My Media on your course’s bCourses site. You then publish them to Media Gallery.

With “slides + video + audio”, the students can toggle between viewing the slides and viewing a video of you lecturing. You can also tap buttons to focus the video on certain portions of the blackboard.

More information about Course Capture can be found [here](#).

Academic Integrity / Cheating

If you believe a student has cheated or otherwise violated academic integrity in your class you should:

1. Ask to speak with the student and confront them with your allegation. If more than one student is involved (e.g., copying of a problem set), you should do this one-on-one with each student. You should do this in person (or on Zoom) as opposed to by email so that the students do not have an ability to create an excuse.
2. If they acknowledge the misconduct and agree to your proposed sanction, you should get them to sign a Faculty Disposition Form which lists the sanctions and send this document off to the Center for Student Conduct. [Unless the student is a repeat offender, they will face relatively mild additional sanctions from the University over and above what you determine.]

[Here](#) is a useful page with a flow chart for this process (including contingencies not discussed above).

[Here](#) is the basic page with a link for "reporting an incident"

Concerns about Student Welfare (e.g., Mental Health Concerns)

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) is the office at Berkeley that services students of concern.

CAPS has created the [gold folder](#) as a resource when you have concerns about the welfare of a student.

[This page](#) also discusses options for getting help for students of concern.

One specific thing to consider is to file a [care report](#) with the Students of Concern Committee.

Grading – Gradescope

Gradescope is an online tool to help make grading more efficient which is quite popular with GSIs in the department. Berkeley has a Gradescope license. For more information, see [this page](#). Your GSIs are likely to be familiar with Gradescope.

Midterm Deficient Grades

Instructors are required to submit midterm status grades for any undergraduate student who at the end of the 8th week in the semester is earning a deficient grade of D+, D, D-, F, or NP for the class.

For more information, consult [this page](#).

Assigning Final Grades

Grades are assigned at [CalCentral](#) (see more detail below).

Official grading guidelines can be found [here](#).

[BerkeleyTime](#) is very useful to get a sense for the grade distribution in your class or other related classes in the past.

Students taking a class for a letter grade will pass the class with a grade of D- or above. However, students taking a class P/NP will receive an NP if their letter grade is below C-.

The [department's page](#) on assigning grades is very useful

To assign grades, first go to [CalCentral](#). Click on "My Academics" towards the top of the page. You should then see a list of your courses and should be able to click on an option to start grading. Once you are on the grade roster page for a particular course, you can download the course roster and match it up with grades you may have in a separate spreadsheet. When doing this, make sure to match on "Student ID", not name. Matching on name can in rare cases lead to mismatching when names are similar.

A tricky aspect of assigning grades is the P / NP (i.e., "pass", "no pass") grades. You need to manually convert letter grades that you have assigned to P / NP for the students taking the class pass-fail. The normal conversion is that a C- and above is a P, and a D+ and below is an NP. There is a "Grading Basis" column in the CSV file that you download. This column will list GRD for students taking the class for a regular letter grade. It will list EPN for student taking the class pass-fail. The CSV file also has a column called "Comments". When you convert the letter grades to P/NP, make sure to copy the letter grade

that the student would have received into this “Comments” column. If you do not do this, you will get errors when uploading the CSV file back into the system. For students getting a P, no further action is needed. But for students getting an NP, after you upload the grades into the system, you need to manually list a reason from a drop-down panel.

Incomplete Grades

You may receive requests for an “Incomplete” grade. Here are the rules regarding incompletes:

- Incomplete grades **are appropriate** if the ALL of the following criteria are met:
 - Student has completed at least 50% of the course work and is currently *passing* the course.
 - Student is unable to complete the course for extenuating circumstances beyond their control (i.e. mental health concerns, family emergency, illness, etc.).
 - Student has been in touch with you about their concerns for not being able to complete the course work.
- Incomplete grades **are NOT appropriate** if...
 - Student missed the final exam/did not turn in paper/etc. and reasons are unknown.
 - Student is failing the class.

If you have determined that an incomplete grade is appropriate given a student's circumstances, you must complete a Contract for Incomplete Grade which you can find [here](#). It requires your signature, the student's signature, and a clear deadline date for the work to be completed. The deadline date can be set to whatever works for you and the student, but must align with the [specific deadlines](#) for incomplete grades. Submit the completed contract to ugrad@econ.berkeley.edu.

Course Resilience

Please make sure to store essential information regarding your class (e.g., grades) in a manner that is resilient to an emergency (e.g., you or one of your GSIs having a serious accident or illness). Storing all grades on bCourses is one commonly-used way to do this.

If you become unable to teach because of an accident or illness, please contact the Vice Chair, Chair, and/or Phil Walz so that we can work to make alternative arrangements for instruction in the course.

It is prudent to make your spouse aware of who to contact in the event of such an emergency.

Contacts:

Co-Vice Chairs of the Department: Jon Steinsson (jsteinsson@berkeley.edu) and Emi Nakamura (enakamura@berkeley.edu)

Issues with location and time of classrooms: Blair Van Tassel (bvantassel@berkeley.edu)

Issues with GSIs/Readers and enrollment inquiries by students: headgsi@econ.berkeley.edu

If an emergency arises regarding classroom lock-outs, please call Facilities Services via 510-642-1032.

If an emergency arises regarding AV technology, please call 510-642-2800.

Addendum for Summer Session Instructors

Final Exams: There's no particular summer schedule from the Office of the Registrar. A Q & A from the summer session website says "The final exam schedule for Summer Sessions does not get posted, however, it is usually the last day of the class." <https://sall.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360042338133-Final-Exam-Schedule->

Midterm Deficient Grades: You do not need to report midterm deficient grades for summer session.