



# FACULTY HANDBOOK

## 2022 - 2024

UPDATED JANUARY 2024

THE FACULTY HANDBOOK UNDERGOES COMPREHENSIVE REVISION AND UPDATES ON A BIENNIAL BASIS BY A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE FACULTY SENATE. INTERIM CHANGES ARE DOCUMENTED AND REFLECTED IN THE VERSION POSTED ON THE COM WEBSITE.

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is for full-time faculty members at College of the Mainland. It refers to policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to instruction at the college. While this document includes excerpts, summaries, and condensations of personnel policies, academic procedures, and guidelines relating to faculty, the online College Policy Manual and the online College Catalog are the official documents containing comprehensive procedures and guidelines for academic affairs. In addition, faculty members should consult the current Student Handbook for student related policies and procedures.

The college reserves the right to change policies at any time, and all faculty members are encouraged to submit input to the Faculty Senate concerning needed changes. Specific questions pertaining to current policies or information not covered in this section of the handbook should be directed to the Department, the appropriate Dean, the Vice President for Instruction, or the Human Resources Department.

The College Policy Manual is available online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/497>.

The College Catalog is available online at <https://www.com.edu/admissions/catalogs.html>.

The Student Handbook is available online at <http://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.html>.

### Mission

College of the Mainland is a learning-centered, comprehensive community college dedicated to student success and the intellectual and economic enrichment of the diverse communities we serve.

### Vision

College of the Mainland will be a valued and vital community partner by enriching our community and preparing our students to thrive in a diverse, dynamic and global environment.

### Values

- Student Success and Academic Excellence
- Continuous Improvement and Accountability
- Mutual Respect and Civility
- Diversity and Inclusiveness
- Innovation and Adaptability
- Campus and Community Collaboration

## Strategic Goals (2018-2023)

- Student Success
- Employee Success
- Facility Improvement

## Goals and Strategies

The Office of Planning, Effectiveness, Analytics, and Research (OPEAR) posts strategies and performance indicators derived from the Strategic Goals. Current strategies and performance indicators are available at this address: <http://www.com.edu/opear/strategic-planning-2018-2023>

## College Administration

### President: Dr. Warren Nichols

Phone: 409-933-8271

Email: [wnichols@com.edu](mailto:wnichols@com.edu)

### Vice President for Instruction: Dr. Jerry Fliger

Phone: 409-933-8229

Email: [jfliger@com.edu](mailto:jfliger@com.edu)

### Vice President for Student Services: Dr. Helen Brewer

Phone: 409-933-8213

Email: [hbrewer1@com.edu](mailto:hbrewer1@com.edu)

### Vice President for Fiscal Affairs: Dr. Clen Burton

Phone: 409-933-8268

Email: [clenburton@com.edu](mailto:clenburton@com.edu)

### Vice President for Institutional Advancement / Executive Director of COM Foundation: Dr. Lisa Watson

Phone: 409-933-8674

Email: [lwatson5@com.edu](mailto:lwatson5@com.edu)

### Executive Director, Marketing and Public Affairs: Diane Burkett

Phone: 409-933-8106

Email: [dburkett5@com.edu](mailto:dburkett5@com.edu)

## Instructional Deans

### Dean of Instruction: Dr. Rocky Barney

For departments of Fine Arts, Humanities, Math and Computer Science, Science and Engineering, and Social and Behavioral Sciences

Phone: 409-933-8727

Email: [rbarney@com.edu](mailto:rbarney@com.edu)

### **Dean of Instruction: Dr. Carla Boone**

For departments of Allied Health Careers, Business, Nursing, Human Services Careers, Industrial Careers, and Public Service Careers

Phone: 409-933-8616

Email: [cboone@com.edu](mailto:cboone@com.edu)

### **COM Learning Locations**

#### **Main Campus**

1200 Amburn Road

Texas City, Texas 77591

409-938-1211 or 1-888-258-8859

<http://www.com.edu>

#### **Lifelong Learning**

COM City Center

10000 Emmett F Lowry Expressway, Suite 4100

Texas City, Texas 77591

#### **The Salon at COM**

COM City Centre

10000 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Suite 4000-1A

Texas City, Texas 77591

#### **COM League City**

1411 West Main Street

League City, Texas 77573

409-933-8268

<https://www.com.edu/leaguecity/>

#### **Gulf Coast Safety Institute**

1411 West Main Street

League City, Texas 77573

409-933-8162

## **THE ROLE, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACULTY**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) states, "Institutions of higher education exist to further the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge." In keeping with this mandate, the faculty members at College of the Mainland have the primary responsibility for the quality of the institution's educational program. More specifically, faculty members have the principal responsibility for course instruction, student evaluation, student mentoring, curriculum development, and academic assessment procedures. College of the Mainland faculty members are committed to providing a learning environment that promotes academic excellence, cultural diversity, professional growth, and personal development.

In accordance with College Policy DJ(Local), faculty members are expected to teach a standard course load, maintain office hours, participate in Department meetings and related activities, serve on College committees, engage in professional development, perform other duties and responsibilities appropriate to their position and their department's needs, provide service to the community, comply with the policies of the college, and abide by professional ethical standards.

Faculty members participate in college governance primarily through the Faculty Senate but also through participation on department and campus-wide committees. Faculty members recognize the authority of the College Board of Trustees to approve policy for the institution and expect that the Board and the Administration will carefully consider the faculty members' views on instruction, curriculum, professional development, and related issues.

College Policy DJ(Local) is available online at

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/497?filter=DJ>.

### **Employee Ethics and Conduct**

Professional educators affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all persons and the right of all persons to learn. Learning occurs most efficiently in an environment devoted to the pursuit of truth, excellence, and liberty. These flourish where both freedom and responsibility are esteemed.

In order to express more adequately the affirmation of our professional responsibilities, we the faculty members of College of the Mainland do adopt, and hold ourselves and each other subject to, the following Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, as defined in College Policy DH(Local):

1. We shall treat all persons with respect, dignity and justice, discriminating against no one on any arbitrary basis such ethnicity, creed, gender, disability, social station, or age.
2. We shall strive to help each student realize his or her full potential as a scholar and human being.
3. We shall, by example and action, encourage and defend the unfettered pursuit of truth by both colleagues and the students, supporting the free exchange of ideas, observing the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, and seeking always an attitude of scholarly objectivity and tolerance of other viewpoints.
4. We, recognizing the necessity of many roles in the educational enterprise, shall work in such a manner to enhance cooperation and collegiality among students, faculty, administrators, and nonacademic personnel.



5. We shall recognize and preserve the confidential nature of professional relationships, neither disclosing nor encouraging the disclosure of information or rumor that might damage, embarrass, or violate the privacy of any other person.
6. We shall maintain competence through continued professional development, demonstrate that competence through consistently adequate preparation and performance, and seek to enhance that competence by accepting and appropriating constructive criticism and evaluation.
7. We shall exercise the highest professional standards and make the most judicious and effective use of the College District's time and resources.
8. We, recognizing the needs and rights of others as embodied in the institution, shall fulfill the employment agreement both in spirit and in fact, give reasonable notice upon resignation, and neither accept tasks for which we are not qualified nor assign tasks to unqualified persons.
9. We shall support the goals and ideals of the institution and act in public and private affairs in such a manner as to bring credit to the institution.
10. We shall not engage in sexual harassment of students or colleagues and shall adhere to the College District's policies that prohibit sexual misconduct.
11. We shall observe the stated policies and procedures of the College District, reserving the right to seek revision in a judicious and appropriate manner.
12. We shall participate in the governance of the College District by accepting a fair share of committee and institutional responsibilities.
13. We shall support the right of all to academic freedom and due process and shall defend and assist any individual accused of wrongdoing, incompetence, or other serious offense so long as the individual's innocence may reasonably be maintained.
14. We shall not support a colleague or an individual who is known to be persistently unethical or professionally incompetent.
15. We shall accept all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, including participation in the formulation of public policy, always avoiding use of the privileges of one's public position for private or partisan advantage.

### Academic Freedom

In compliance with College Policy DGC(Local), faculty members are entitled to academic freedom, i.e. freedom of teaching, research, publication, and professional communication. As the American Association of University Professors has observed, "Controversy is at the heart of...free academic inquiry" and should not be discouraged. Faculty, however, should avoid "persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject" in the classroom. When professors speak or write as citizens, "they should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution."

The AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/yuxwwhwc>.

### Professional Image

In compliance with College Policy DH(Local), all employees shall project a professional image to students, parents, visitors, and community members by dressing in a manner appropriate to their working environment, type of work performed, and occasion. Dress and grooming standards shall enhance the image the College District exhibits for the community it serves. Each College District employee shall wear and appropriately display his or her nametag at all College District events that include the public, including but not limited to employment fairs, student recruitment or registration, and off-campus events at which the employee represents the College District.

Each supervisor shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy for each employee in his or her department or division. Violations of this policy shall be immediately addressed with the employee in an appropriate manner. A supervisor may suggest that the employee dress more appropriately in the future or may request that the employee leave the workplace temporarily to change attire, depending upon the violation. An employee who continues to violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

At a minimum, dressing in a professional manner shall mean wearing clothing that is neat, clean, in good repair, fits properly, and is appropriate for the employee's work assignment. Sexually suggestive clothing, including revealing or tight-fitting garments, shall not be considered acceptable. Clothing or headgear adorned with racial slurs; with lewd, obscene or derogatory words, statements, or pictures; with unprofessional symbols, phrases, or slogans, including clothing that advertises tobacco, alcohol products, sexual innuendo, or any controlled substance, shall be prohibited. For safety and health reasons, shoes shall be worn on campus at all times.

## INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The primary roles of the faculty member are to instruct, evaluate, and advise. Pursuant to these roles, faculty members serve as liaisons between students and the administration by communicating policies and procedures pertaining to student and academic affairs. The following sections outline the roles and expectations of faculty.

### Curriculum Development

In compliance with College Policy EE(Local), the College President shall establish procedures for curriculum development that provide for faculty involvement in decision-making. All educational programs shall be continually reappraised to ensure that the offered courses meet the needs of the community and College District students.

### Instructional Assessment

Faculty members teaching credit courses are expected to participate in assessment activities at the program and institutional level. This includes assessment of General Education Core Objectives and the course-level student learning outcomes found in the Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (ACGM); it may also include selection of criteria for success and appropriate means of assessment as well as submission of assessment data into COM's SPOL database.

For workforce courses, these activities include assessing course-level student learning outcomes created by the program's accrediting body or created in-house according to national industry standards. It may also include selection of criteria for success and appropriate means of assessment as well as submission of assessment data into COM's SPOL database.

Assessment is planned and reviewed by the Assessment Committee which is co-chaired by a faculty member and the Director of Planning, Effectiveness, Analytics, and Research.

The Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/yc6jcf8x>.

The Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education (GIPWE) is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/bdepjww8>.

College of the Mainland's SPOL database is available online at <https://www.com.edu/opear/spol.html>.

### Course Syllabus

A course syllabus must be available to students in each class at the beginning of the semester. An electronic copy of the syllabus must be submitted to the Department Chair or Program Assistant by the established deadline. Faculty must use the approved syllabus template, located on the I: drive under VP for Instruction within the Department Chair folder (see Appendix) to ensure consistency among course syllabi. Faculty are expected to consistently enforce syllabus policies.

#### For Online Courses:

Faculty teaching courses through distance education should consult the Distance Education Faculty Handbook for additional requirements; at a minimum, online syllabi should include these additional elements:

- How the instructor will handle communication, as well as expectations for response time
- ADA statement
- Course Attendance policy
- Detailed explanation of what will be covered in class vs. online (hybrid only)

### Academic Calendar

The academic calendar provides information on the dates that the campus is officially closed, the census dates, the withdrawal dates, and the first and last days of the session for each class length (e.g., 16-week, 10-week, 8-week, etc.). Class rolls should be carefully checked each session. Students who do not appear on your roll for a course on census day cannot receive a grade or credit for the course. If a student does not appear on the official rolls, contact the admissions office as soon as possible. Make a note of "W" day, which is the last day a student may be withdrawn with a grade of "W."

The academic calendar is available online at <https://www.com.edu/admissions/academic-calendar.html>.

### Class Cancellations

Faculty are expected to meet every class of every section that they are assigned. In the event of an absence, the faculty member should notify the department chairperson or administrative assistant and an effort should be made to obtain a substitute when feasible.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves classes based on specific contact hours per student. Should a class cancellation be unavoidable (e.g., inclement weather), it may be necessary to make up the missed time at a future date.

### Campus Closure

Official messages regarding campus closure will come from the COM Alert (Everbridge) notification system. While

employees and credit students are automatically entered into the COM Alert system, creating an Everbridge account is open to those who are already receiving COM alerts, as well as those who are not. To create an Everbridge account, please click here: College of the Mainland – Sign Up (everbridge.net). Once you have created an account, you can edit, change, customize, or update your contact information and notification methods at any time.

Houston area radio and television stations will also be notified when campus is to be closed. These can be useful sources of information but are not considered official. The official sources of information include:

- COM Alert
- email from the President
- headers posted on [www.com.edu](http://www.com.edu)
- College Emergency Response Line at 409-933-8500.

The College will remain open unless a decision to close is made by the President. Attendance is expected unless the College is officially closed.

### Disaster Readiness

It is recommended that all instructors have a disaster readiness plan in case of natural disaster. Emergency Response Procedures for severe weather and other emergencies are available at: Emergency Response Procedures ([com.edu](http://com.edu)).

### Textbook Selection

The selection of textbook and other course materials is the responsibility of full-time faculty in compliance with the deadlines set by the college bookstore and respective departments. As noted in the syllabus template, a student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

### Initial Class Rolls

On the first day of class, faculty members receive a temporary list of students officially enrolled in their classes. Students who are present, but who are not listed on the initial roll, must go to the Registrar's Office to verify their enrollment.

Faculty teaching sections designated as dual credit should immediately notify the Dual Credit coordinator or Department Chair of any discrepancies on the initial class rolls.

### Official Class Rolls

The official class rolls are the documents the college must use to receive state funds based on enrollment. Class rolls

are audited, and the college must be able to show that a student attended class for the college to receive state funds.

Official class rolls are issued on census day (12th class day of a 16-week term). Census dates are available on the COM website. Students who have NOT paid tuition by census day will not be included on the official class rosters. Once the official class rosters are available on WebAdvisor, faculty must electronically verify them.

Students who are not on the official class roll cannot attend the class and should be directed to the Registrar's office. Faculty should check class rolls in WebAdvisor throughout the semester. If a student is not on the roll for a course, the student cannot receive a grade.

Web Advisor is available online at <https://webadvisor.com.edu/>

### Enforcing Prerequisites

A list of prerequisites for each course can be found in the College Catalog. For entry-level and developmental courses, the prerequisites may include minimum placement test scores. Faculty may request that the Vice President for Instruction override a prerequisite for a course. If a faculty member finds that a student does not satisfy the prerequisite for a course, the student should be directed to the Registrar's office to verify that the prerequisite has been met.

### Drop/Adds/Reinstatement of Students

By State law, all students enrolling for the first time at any Texas public college or university after Fall 2007 will be limited to six course withdrawals (drops) during their academic career. Drops include those initiated by students or faculty and withdrawals from courses at other Texas public institutions. This policy does not apply to courses dropped prior to census day or complete withdrawals from the college. Students should fully understand this drop limit before dropping any courses. Students having questions regarding the six-drop Rule should see an Advisor. For more information on the six-drop rule, see TEC 51.907. Rules: Chapter 4, Subchapter A, 4.10). All drops from all Texas public colleges/universities the student has attended count toward the six-drop limit.

If a student has the equivalent of six grades of "W" from College of the Mainland and/or other affected institutions in total, the student may not drop any additional courses. The student must receive grades of A, B, C, D, or F.

A student who officially withdraws from a course for any reason on or before the last withdrawal date (specified as "W-day" on the Academic Calendar) will receive a W. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that s/he has properly



withdrawn from a course. After W-day, only a grade of A, B, C, D, F, FN or I may be awarded (See “Final Course Grades” for an explanation of these grades).

Students who need to withdraw after W-day because of circumstances beyond their control may confer with the instructor about the possibility of a grade of Incomplete. No student or faculty member can initiate a withdrawal after W-day.

Faculty may, at their discretion, withdraw a student due to a lack of attendance, inability to maintain the prescribed minimum rate of progress stated in the course guide, or behavior detrimental to the learning process of the student or class. In the case of a withdrawal for behavioral reasons, the instructor will consult with the Dean of Students to ensure that the Student Discipline process, outlined in the Student Handbook, is followed appropriately. Faculty may initiate steps to drop a student by notifying the Admissions and Records Office. The Admissions and Records Office will send the withdrawn student a notice indicating s/he has been dropped from the course by instructor request. The student will receive a “W” for that course.

Students who are on the roster but have never attended the class must be reported on the census-day roster distributed after the 12th class day.

If a student has dropped a class or has been withdrawn by the faculty member after the census day, the faculty member may later reinstate that student by informing the Registrar’s Office in writing.

### Course Audit

College of the Mainland has adopted as policy the Texas Higher Education Code allowing senior citizens 65 years of age or older to audit credit courses. Auditing credit courses is not allowed for citizens under 65 years of age. Based on class size and available space, the appropriate program area will determine whether auditors will be admitted to a course. All inquiries regarding class audits should be directed to the department chairperson.

### Students with Disabilities

Students requiring accommodations for disabilities must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities at the beginning of every semester. Faculty members will then be notified in writing if a student requires special accommodations. Accommodations should only be provided in compliance with the requirements outlined in the notification letter. The Office for Students with Disabilities will work with faculty and staff to implement reasonable accommodations for students. Accommodations will only

be granted to students who have provided appropriate documentation of their disability.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Office for Students with Disabilities. Contact information is available online at <http://www.com.edu/counseling/disability-services>.

### Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class section of all courses for which they are registered including labs. They are not permitted a certain number of absences. In compliance with college policy, there are no excused absences for students except as prescribed by law for military service or religious holy days. Students enrolled in a course within an online component (IN or HY) must log in to each course a minimum of twice a week unless otherwise instructed.

### Student Confidentiality

Federal law specifies that student attendance and personal information such as addresses, telephone numbers, and grades are not to be disclosed to any third party—including spouses and parents—except to school officials with legitimate educational interest. This includes dual-credit students. If a student is hospitalized or otherwise unable to attend class, this information is to be treated as confidential. Requests should be directed to the Admissions Office at Ext. 8264.

## DEALING WITH CLASSROOM SITUATIONS

### Disruptive Behavior

Behavior that disrupts the learning environment should not be tolerated. If a student or class exhibits disruptive behavior, discuss it with the department chair. Conduct issues may also be referred to the Dean of Students at Ext. 8131. In the event that student misconduct interferes with the learning environment or becomes a threat, faculty members have the right to contact Campus Police to have the student removed from the classroom.

### Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

The college has instituted a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) to discuss, assess and coordinate a response to possible situations of concern about the safety, health and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. The BIT promotes information sharing and coordinated action to address students who may be in distress.

Any COM employee who feels a student may be a threat to self and/or the campus community may make a referral to the BIT by accessing the BIT Incident Report, available online at <https://www.com.edu/counseling/bit-incident-report.html>. After submitting an incident report, an employee must respond in

a timely fashion to any requests for more information from the BIT or Dean of Students. For more information about the BIT call ext. 8124, Director of Student Success Center.

### **Unattended Minors/Children in Class**

For their safety, unattended minors are not permitted on campus while students are in class. In consideration of the classroom environment, children are also not permitted in the classroom. COM students enrolled in career and technical-education programs may apply for a Carl D. Perkins grant to help cover the cost of childcare. The eligibility criteria and application may be found at <https://www.com.edu/perkins/index.html>.

### **Medical Emergencies**

For medical emergencies – Get help immediately! Go to the nearest phone and call 911; then dial Campus Police by dialing 8599 from any campus phone or 409-933-8599 from your cell phone. If possible, send someone to meet Campus Police and direct them to the incident. Campus Police will direct the EMS to the scene.

For non-life-threatening emergencies, call Campus Police at ext. 8403.

### **Campus Carry**

Senate Bill 11 allows individuals with a concealed handgun license to carry a handgun while on Texas public community college campuses as long as the weapon is not visible. For more information, including a FAQ, see <https://www.com.edu/campus-carry>.

### **Dual-Credit Students**

Like all college students, dual-credit students are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The website of the U.S. Department of Education provides parents with general information about this act (A Parent’s Guide to FERPA).

When a student reaches 18 years of age or attends an institution of postsecondary education at any age, he or she becomes an “eligible student,” and all rights under FERPA transfer from the parent to the student.

Schools and faculty may disclose information to parents under certain circumstances (outlined on the website), but schools and faculty are not required to do so unless otherwise mandated by the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, consult COM’s Dual Credit Department. A faculty member who is confronted by a parent is also advised to direct the parent to the Dual Credit Department.

### **Student Complaints**

Faculty should advise students who have a complaint to attempt to resolve issues and concerns directly with the

employee with whom they have a concern. If students are unable to resolve the issue directly with the employee, the student should be referred to the student complaint steps outlined in FLD (Regulation) and the student handbook. The Student Handbook is available online at <https://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.html>.

### **Proctoring Exams**

Faculty members are responsible for proctoring all examinations. A qualified proctor must be present if the faculty member is not available. Qualified proctors include College of the Mainland testing personnel or another credentialed faculty member. For additional information contact your department chair.

### **Exam Periods**

COM does not observe a special week for final exams. Check with your department concerning designated midterm or final exam periods observed by your department, if any. Most faculty administer final exams on the last or next-to-last class day of the semester. Check the current COM Academic Calendar for the semester’s “last class day” and “grades due deadline.” Note that grades are due in the Admissions and Records Office very soon after the last class day (sometimes, for summer classes, on the last class day). Schedule your class’s final work so that you can meet the deadline for turning in your grades.

The Academic Calendar is available online at <https://www.com.edu/admissions/academic-calendar.html>.

### **Final Course Grade**

Faculty members are expected to evaluate the work of students enrolled in college-level credit courses and to assign grades. Evaluations may include tests, homework assignments, quizzes, in-class essays, out-of-class writing assignments, projects, term papers, oral presentations, journals, and other assignments. The college encourages faculty members to include a variety of these assessment methods so that students have an opportunity to demonstrate different ways of learning.

Faculty should adhere to the following:

1. Periodic assessment of student academic progress
2. Clear statement of course requirements to help students become prepared to meet the academic standards of coursework
3. Timely feedback on student academic achievement so that students can monitor their progress throughout the semester
4. A fair, objective, and impartial grading system

At the end of each semester, faculty are required to submit final grades on WebAdvisor.

For students who complete a course, COM awards passing grades of A, B, C, and D and the failing grades, FN and F. For students who do not complete the course requirements, COM awards the grades of W, I, FN, and F.

The FN grade is issued in cases of failure due to a lack of attendance, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. When assigning a student an F or FN as the final grade in WebAdvisor, the instructor must also enter the student's last date of attendance.

### Grade Books / Final Grade Reports

Faculty are required to keep a permanent record of grades for all assigned work and are required to keep grade books in the Learning Management System, which is currently D2L. Faculty should also keep a record of student attendance. Faculty should record all grades to include a description of all assignment types that were used to determine the final course grade, a detailed description of all grade calculations, and the assignment of grades. Faculty must either keep copies of their grade books for each course or submit copies of their grade records to their Department Chair for each course. Faculty members must adhere to end-of-semester departmental requirements and must meet the grading deadlines posted on COM's official Academic Calendar.

At the end of the semester the faculty members will receive instructions from the Registrar's Office on submitting final

grades. These final grades must be carefully reported as these are used to record grades on each student's official transcript.

### "I" Contract

The Incomplete Grade ("I") is a temporary grade given when a student has experienced unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control which results in the student being unable to successfully complete the course within the time frame of the semester. An "I" may be assigned only if, in the judgment of the instructor, the student can complete the course outcomes with minimal instructional assistance and without attending additional class sessions. Additionally, an "I" may be assigned only when one of the following circumstances is met:

- 1) No more than 25% of the points possible in the class are still outstanding

**AND**

- 2) Passing the course with a 70% or better.

In cases where an instructor agrees to assign an "I", the instructor must complete the electronic "I" contract form and submit to the appropriate Dean for approval. The student will receive an "I" as the course grade on the grade roster. The "I" contract will specify the course requirements that must be completed and the due date for the work to be submitted (no later than one year from when grade was assigned). A copy of the "I" Contract form should be attached to the grade sheet, and the student and instructor will retain a copy.

After the student has successfully completed the

| Grade          | Significance  | Grade Points   |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| A              | Superior achievement of course objectives   | 4 per sem. hr. |
| B              | Outstanding achievement of course objective   | 3 per sem. hr. |
| C              | Average achievement of course objective   | 2 per sem. hr. |
| D              | Accomplishment of minimum course objectives   | 1 per sem. hr. |
| I              | A temporary grade given to indicate that, in the instructor's judgment, the student can complete the course objectives within a specified extension of time | NA             |
| F <sub>N</sub> | Failure due to lack of attendance   | NA             |
| F              | Failure to achieve course objectives  |                |
| W              | Withdrawal on or before the W-day specified in the College Calendar   | NA             |

requirements of the “I” contract, the instructor will complete and submit an electronic Change of Grade form, changing the “I” to the appropriate permanent grade.

If after one year the student fails to complete the requirements of the “I” contract, the “I” will automatically be converted to an “F.”

### **Maintaining Student Education Records**

Except where otherwise required by policy or law, faculty are expected to maintain student education records for 6 months. For the purposes of this policy, the term “education records” means those records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to the determination of a student’s grade.

### **Grades in Developmental Classes**

“Developmental education” includes pre-college, non-degree credit courses, interventions, tutorials, laboratories, and other means of assistance that are included in a plan to ensure the success of a student in performing entry-level academic coursework. Areas to be addressed by “developmental coursework and/or intervention include reading, writing, integrated reading and writing, mathematics and general student success. 19 TAC 4.53(9)

An institution of higher education, including a college district, may refer a student to developmental coursework, including basic academic skills education, as considered necessary by the institution to address a student’s deficiencies in the student’s readiness to perform freshman-level academic coursework, except that the institution may not require enrollment in developmental coursework with respect to a student previously determined under Education Code 51.338(d) or by any institution of higher education to have met college-readiness standards. An institution of higher education that requires a student to enroll in developmental coursework must offer a range of developmental coursework, including online coursework, or instructional support that includes the integration of technology to efficiently address the particular developmental needs of the student.

Education Code 51.336(a)–(b), 19 TAC 4.53(10) [See EI for information on the Texas Success Initiative]

Students will receive grades in Developmental courses. Developmental courses will not be calculated into the cumulative GPA, but developmental class grades are recognized for financial aid purposes.

### **Repeating a Course**

When a course has been attempted more than once, only

the highest grade received for that course will be used to compute the cumulative GPA. The lower grade will remain on the transcript but will not be used to compute the cumulative GPA.

### **Change of Grade Forms**

A change of grade is justified when the final course grade was miscalculated due to clerical error or when a student who has been awarded an “I” (incomplete) has subsequently satisfied all course requirements.

To change an incorrect final course grade, complete an electronic Change of Grade Form and submit the form to the Admissions Office. These forms are not valid if sent through campus mail.

### **Student Course Evaluations**

Each semester, students will participate in the campus-wide course evaluation process. All students are invited to complete the evaluation process online. Faculty should not be present during the evaluation. When the course evaluation system is open to students, faculty and students will receive an email that includes instructions for completing the evaluation and the deadline for completion. Before the end of the semester, faculty will receive reports from the Office of Planning, Effectiveness, Analytics, and Research (OPEAR) indicating which students have completed the course evaluation. The results of the course evaluation will be made available to faculty during the following semester. Course evaluations are posted online on the COM website for the public to view

### **Student Grade Appeal**

An academic appeal is a formal request brought by a student to change a final grade. A grade appeal must be made within six months of the assignment of the final grade.

An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the faculty member’s professional judgment of the quality of the student’s work and performance is also not an admissible basis for an academic appeal. The student must provide evidence that the instructor unfairly applied grading practices or violated college policy.

Students do have the right to a clear explanation (from the faculty member, department chair, or dean, as appropriate) of actions taken by the faculty member, such as how a grade was calculated or how their actions violated the academic honesty policy.

Procedures for filing an appeal are explained in detail in the COM Student Handbook.



## Student Honor Organizations

Membership for Phi Theta Kappa, the International Honor Society of the Two-Year Colleges, is available to all students with at least a 3.5 grade point average and at least 12 college-level credit hours. Eligible students are notified of their eligibility to join Phi Theta Kappa after census day during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Notifications are sent to the student's COM email from ptk.org. Induction ceremonies are held each October and April. Students may participate in the induction ceremony, but participation is not required for membership.

## Honors Credit

Faculty members are encouraged to work with and mentor students who are committed to intellectual growth and professional development. Students may earn honors credit in regular credit classes during the semester by completing an honors contract with their professor. Honors contracts require students to complete an independent project either (a) within the semester when the contract was accepted, or (b) by the end of the following semester. The project is developed by the student and professor of the course but must be approved by the Honors Committee.

## Field Trips

Because of the legal liability involving field trips, faculty members must inform and discuss any field trips with their department chairperson in advance. College procedures must be followed in planning a field trip involving vehicles rented on the college's behalf.

## Copyright and Fair Use Policy

Faculty are expected to comply with the College Policies CT(Legal) and CT(Local) addressing Instructional Resources and Copyrighted Materials. Fair use of any copyrighted material must follow both College policy and Title 17 U.S.C. section 107 of the US Copyright Law.

## Educational Technology Services

Educational Technology Services assist faculty in the creation, use, and management of appropriate technological processes and resources. This includes Distance Education and media support. The Instructional Technology Center is located on the second floor of the Industrial Careers Building (ICB), suite 222. More information may be found about EdTech services at their website.

To request any of these services, submit a ticket using the COM Online Student Support Center, available online at <http://de-support.com.edu/requests>.

For immediate assistance with Distance Education, someone from the team will follow up as soon as possible. D2L SOLVE

offers 24/7/365 help services that is accessible from any page in the LMS via the red "Need Help?" button in the lower right-hand corner.

## Teaching Online

The processes and requirements of teaching Internet and/or hybrid courses can be found in the DE Faculty Handbook.

## Library

COM Library offers a number of services to faculty including library instruction for classes, placing materials on reserve, selecting books, embedding a librarian in your online course, creating course guides and more. Faculty are encouraged to develop an active partnership with the Library. Learn more about what COM Library has to offer on the faculty page: <https://libguides.com.edu/FacultyResources>. COM Library hours are posted on their website at <https://libguides.com.edu/hours>.

## Testing Center

The Testing Center provides services designed to assist students by assessing academic achievement and providing various testing alternatives. When using the Testing Center, faculty will complete the Testing Services Make-Up Form located on the I:Drive under Campus Forms. Faculty should complete the form with all relevant information, attach form to the exam and deliver to the Testing Center. COM's Testing Center offers various testing options for Distance Education and Online Testing. The Testing Center is located in the Doyle Family Administration Building room 215-02, hours are Monday and Tuesday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. and Wednesday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Faculty should inform student(s) to make an appointment on the Testing Center webpage, bring a photo ID with them, and they must complete their exam by the stated closing time.

For additional information, visit the Testing Center webpage at <http://www.com.edu/testing-center>, email at [testingcenter@com.edu](mailto:testingcenter@com.edu) or call ext. 8676.

## Computer Labs

A number of computer labs are available to provide students the opportunity to enhance their learning. These include the Library Computer Lab in the LRC bottom floor and the Tutoring Center Computer Lab in ICB 109.

For additional information about each lab, visit the Computer Lab webpage at <http://www.com.edu/computer-labs/>.



## FACULTY EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Employment Status

Faculty member employment status is designated as “full-time” or “part-time.” Full-time faculty members are issued a contract, awarded full benefits, and assigned a full-time teaching load. All full-time employees shall be evaluated by their immediate supervisor annually. All evaluations shall be completed for the prior calendar year.

### Faculty Credentials

All faculty members are required to meet or exceed the current standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). As a condition of employment, every faculty member is responsible for having official and complete transcripts, as well as any other pertinent documentation, on file with the College’s Human Resources Department.

### Orientation

The Human Resources office holds mandatory New Hire Orientation (NHO) for new full-time staff. This mandatory orientation provides new employees with introductions and information to further their familiarity with College of the Mainland (COM).

### Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate shall present to the administration the views and recommendations of the faculty members on matters such as curriculum, academic standards, academic freedom, faculty member qualifications, professional development, tenure, salaries, student achievement, institutional goals, and other faculty and instruction-related policies.

All full-time faculty members are eligible to serve as departmental representatives to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate By-laws outline the policies and procedures of the Senate.

### Workload

In addition to the time spent in the classroom or laboratory, a faculty member’s total commitment to the College District also includes preparation for class meetings, laboratory sessions, online course management, student consultation, committee responsibilities, advisement, professional development, and service to the community.

The standard teaching load for a full-time faculty member is 15 credit hours per semester or 18 contact hours per week per semester. The traditional configuration is five courses, each having a value of three contact hours per week and three credit

hours per semester, but the number of courses and the credit and contact hours per course may vary. During the summer, six credit hours – or equivalent – shall be considered a full load. Equivalency for each discipline shall be determined and recorded by the Vice President for Instruction as appropriate to the program areas in which a faculty member works.

Full-time faculty may teach noncredit courses and participate in special assignments as part of their workloads with the approval of the chief academic officer.

Faculty members shall schedule office hours at times most convenient for students, as approved by the department chairperson. Upon approval by the department chairperson, each faculty member shall post his or her office hours at the beginning of each semester.

Faculty members shall not schedule office hours during the College District’s Tuesday/Thursday college hour.

Full-time faculty shall be required to work no less than 40 hours per week. This shall include working on campus or at an approved teaching site or alternate location for a minimum of 30 hours per week. Faculty schedules shall be approved by the department chairperson and shall be subject to review and revision by the dean

The minimum number of office hours per week shall be seven and one-half hours per week during the fall and spring semesters and three hours per week during any summer session. Full time faculty members teaching online courses may provide one virtual office hour per week for each online section taught to fulfill the above requirements.

College Policy DJ(Local) is available online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/497?filter=DJ>.

### Tenure

An employee hired after December 31, 2015, shall not be eligible for tenure. An employee who has been granted tenure by the Board prior to December 31, 2015, shall retain his or her tenure status. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/2s5kb9dc> for full details of the tenure policy.

### E-Mail

Email is the official form of communication at COM. The campus has an inter-campus email system that faculty members can access from off-campus locations through links on the COM homepage. Faculty members are responsible for monitoring their campus email on a regular basis. All use of the College District’s electronic technology resources, including e-mail, is bound by federal, state, and local laws relating to the use of electronic communication; therefore, users of any of the College District’s technology resources

shall not have an expectation of privacy. All electronic correspondence to and from College District e-mail users, except what is protected by attorney-client privilege, shall be subject to the Texas Public Records Act and may be disclosed to third parties.

### **Payroll**

All faculty must enter their leave time every month in WebAdvisor in the Employees menu, specifically through the Time Entry (Self Service) option. Leave time includes sick days, college leave, holidays, and other types of leave (such as for weather closure). The form must be submitted even if no leave was taken that month. Faculty are notified by email of the deadline for time entry.

To make a request for leave, faculty must complete a Request for Leave form and submit the form to his or her supervisor. Faculty must also print the Leave Plan Summary (accessed via WebAdvisor –Employee screen) when requesting leave.

For additional information associated with payroll policies, faculty are directed to the Human Resources Department and to the following policies and procedures:

- CDDA Payroll Procedures Salary Deductions
- CKC(Legal) Insurance and Annuities Management Deferred Compensation and Annuities
- CKE(Legal) Insurance and Annuities Management Workers' Compensation
- DEA(Legal) Compensation Salaries and Wages
- DF(Local) Retirement Programs

### **Professional Development Plan (PDP)**

The PDP provides the opportunity for faculty members to formalize their plans for professional development. It will be utilized as an evaluation tool by both faculty members and their supervisors during the annual performance evaluation process. PDPs are submitted annually and may be revised as needed. On the PDP, the faculty member establishes long term goals and annual objectives related to the college or department mission, functions, or goals. The faculty member must also list strategies for achieving these goals in the upcoming year, such as conferences, workshops, committees, reading, research, professional activities outside the college, productive and creative activities, or community and public relations activities. Faculty members are encouraged to seek their supervisor's input to help establish realistic and relevant goals, objectives, and strategies.

### **Professional Organizations**

Faculty members are encouraged to become members of and actively participate in professional organizations. Faculty members' attendance and participation in conferences,

seminars and workshops provided by professional organizations are an integral part of professional growth and development.

### **Professional Development (PD)**

Faculty members may request funding for individual professional development activities such as conference attendance, journal subscriptions, materials such as books and course-design software, and memberships in professional organizations in the amount not to exceed \$150 a year (but not further education leading to a degree). A faculty member should consult with their department chair for the current application process for PD funding. Details are located in the COM Board Policy Manual (Local).

### **Hotel Reservations and Travel Reimbursement**

To be reimbursed for travel, faculty must save itemized receipts. Hotel stays should be booked directly with the hotel, not with any third-party site like Expedia, to ensure that the faculty member receives a fully itemized receipt.

### **Development Leave (Sabbatical)**

In compliance with College Policy DEC(Local), a faculty member may be granted faculty development leave for study, research, writing, field observations, or another suitable purpose. The leave shall be for one academic year at one-half of the faculty member's regular salary or for one-half academic year at full regular salary, unless the faculty member has held an administrative position at the College District for more than four years. In that case, the Board may grant development leave at the faculty member's full, regular salary for one year.

To qualify for development leave, a faculty member must serve at least three consecutive academic years performing full-time academic duty as an instructor or as an assistant, associate, or full professor, or an equivalent rank. The work need not include teaching. The applicant must also agree to return to the College District following the conclusion of the development leave to serve for a period of time equal to the amount of time the faculty member received for development leave and if not, to repay the College District for any benefits paid to or on behalf of the faculty member during the leave period.

### **College Service**

College service is a required element of the faculty workload. College service consists of active participation on college committees, councils, projects and initiatives as well as sponsorship of student clubs, organizations and study abroad.

Membership in many committees is by invitation. To

participate in college service, new faculty members should contact their department chairs and monitor their college email to learn of new service opportunities.

### **Intellectual Property**

In compliance with College Policy CT(Local), faculty are encouraged to copyright publications and patent materials and objects that they have created. Faculty retain sole property of any copyright or patent they created on their own time, away from his or her job with personal equipment and materials. CT (Local) details the role and responsibilities of the faculty and the College with respect to the copyrighted publications and patented materials that use College resources.

### **Textbooks and Instructional Material**

During the term of employment, a faculty member shall not act as an agent or attorney for any publishing company or subsidiary selling textbooks and/or instructional materials to the college. No faculty member shall receive a profit from the sale of curriculum materials to students enrolled in the faculty member's class when those materials have been developed solely for use by students enrolled in the class. Faculty members may not sell books received free from publishers; however, such books may be donated to students, libraries, or any other worthy cause.

### **Freedom of Association and Political Participation**

In compliance with College Policy DGA(Legal), a state employee, including a college district employee, has the rights of freedom of association and political participation guaranteed by the state and federal constitutions except as provided by Government Code 556.004 & Government Code 556.003

### **Disciplinary Action/Termination**

The College values its employees and is committed to fair, efficient, and equitable solutions to problems arising out of the employment relationship. Progressive discipline will be followed when a non-probationary, regular employee fails to comply with College rules, policies and/or work directives. An employee may receive informal coaching/counseling, formal disciplinary action, administrative leave with pay, or suspension without pay prior to being terminated for continued or policy violations. A supervisor may skip one or more of those steps depending on the seriousness of the infraction or if there are grounds for immediate termination. Any faculty member is subject to disciplinary action or termination during the term of the contract according to provisions of the Performance Improvement and Discipline Manual and College Policies DM(Local), DMA(Local), DMAA(Local), DMAB(Local), DMC(Local), and DMD(Local).

## APPENDIX: COURSE SYLLABUS

Faculty should adhere to the most recent syllabus template as provided by their department chair.



**Course Number and Section (History 1301.XXXCL/HY/IN)**

**Name of Course (United States History I)**

**Course Semester (Fall 2022)**

**Time and days of course**

**Instructor Information:** Name, email, phone number

**Student hours and location:**

**Required Textbook/Materials:**

**Course Description:** (catalog description is acceptable)

**Course requirements:** (including description of any special projects or assignments)

**Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:** (methods of evaluation to be employed to include a variety of means to evaluate student performance)

**Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy:**

**Attendance Policy:**

**Communicating with your instructor:** ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via Blackboard or other LMS)

| Student Learner Outcome | Maps to Core Objective | Assessed via this Assignment |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1.                      |                        |                              |
| 2.                      |                        |                              |
| 3.                      |                        |                              |
| 4.                      |                        |                              |
| 5.                      |                        |                              |

**Academic Dishonesty:** (Describe your academic dishonesty policy and state consequences if it is violated)

**Student Concerns:** If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with

me, you continue to have questions, please contact [insert name and title of direct supervisor] at [phone number/email address].

**Course outline:** (include calendar with lecture topics, due dates)

### **Institutional Policies and Guidelines**

**Grade Appeal Process:** Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook. <[https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf).

*An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.* [https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf)

**Academic Success & Support Services:** College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

**ADA Statement:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Michelle Brezina at 409-933-8124 or [mvaldes1@com.edu](mailto:mvaldes1@com.edu). The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

**Textbook Purchasing Statement:** A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week session is October 5. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 18. The last date to withdraw for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week session is December 1.

**FN Grading:** The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

**Early Alert Program:** The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program, you will be



contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

**Resources to Help with Stress:**

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at [deanofstudents@com.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@com.edu) or [communityresources@com.edu](mailto:communityresources@com.edu).

**FOR ONLINE COURSES:**

Online courses should follow the requirements as set out by the Distance Education Committee and the [DE Faculty Handbook](#) *but at a minimum, online syllabi should include these additional elements:*

- Course attendance policy, e.g., “must log in 1-2 times a week”
- Link to ADA statement
- Communication policy

# Campus Map



## Learning Centers

### Main Campus

1200 N. Amburn Road  
Texas City, Texas 77591

### COM Cosmetology Lab/Offices

Mainland City Centre  
10000 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway  
Texas City, Texas 77591

### COM Learning Center – Delmar

Mainland City Centre  
10000 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway  
Texas City, Texas 77591

### Gulf Coast Safety Institute

1411 West Main Street  
League City, Texas 77573

### COM League City

1411 West Main Street  
League City, Texas 77573



An Achieving the Dream Leader College, College of the Mainland has served the community for more than 50 years. Preparing students to transfer to a university or enter the workforce, College of the Mainland has helped more than 90,000 students reach their goals.

College of the Mainland is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees and certificates. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of College of the Mainland. The Commission is to be contacted only if there is evidence that appears to support the institution's significant non-compliance with a requirement or standard.

