

## Introduction

### Procedures, Policies, and Services

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Fairmont State consists of Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College. Offering a variety of certificate, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees, Fairmont State is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association.

Fairmont State serves a 13-county area divided into regions. The northern service area includes Barbour, Doddridge, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph and Taylor counties. The southern region encompasses Braxton, Calhoun, Gilmer, Lewis, and Upshur counties. Regional classes are typically held in local-area high schools or vo-tech centers. A branch campus--the Caperton Center--serves Harrison County. Students and faculty at off-campus locations have the same rights, responsibilities, and privileges of those who learn and teach on the Fairmont campus. Off-campus students and faculty may avail themselves of most Fairmont State services via the Internet by accessing the [Fairmont State homepage](#).

While the Caperton Center is a branch campus of Fairmont State University, the classes offered here support both Baccalaureate and Associate degree programs. There is no differentiation among students; students in two-year and four-year programs sit side-by-side in classes.

In addition to using information found on Fairmont State's website, faculty should rely on the [faculty handbook](#), the [student handbook](#), and the [current Fairmont State catalog](#) for the latest procedure, policy, and services updates.

## Reporting and Mission

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The first step you take in becoming a member of the University community is signing your contract, an agreement between you and the University or Community and Technical College saying that you will provide the services you are promising and will work within University guidelines to support [Fairmont State's mission](#).

In signing your contract, you agree that you will become familiar with procedures and policies at Fairmont State and will fulfill your duties and responsibilities to the best of your ability. The person to whom you report is your first line of contact for questions about procedures, policies, duties, and responsibilities.

Adjunct faculty at the Caperton Center report to the Director but are ultimately obliged to meet the academic standards of the department for which they teach.

## Procedures: Part I

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### Class Attendance, School Closings

The procedures and protocol at Fairmont State are in place to better serve our students. For example, faculty attendance and punctuality are expected. Many of our students drive great distances to attend classes and are ill-served if they arrive to discover that the class has been canceled due to an instructor's absence.

While the University understands that there are unavoidable circumstances at times that prohibit a faculty member's being in class, general protocol calls for an instructor to be present for every class; the state requires 45 contact hours for students to receive credit. Faculty who find that they must be absent should notify their directors or chairs as soon as they know. Absences are handled in various ways; some departments require out-of-class assignments; some try to find substitutes; some require paperwork, etc. Faculty should verify in advance the protocol expected for the department or location for which they teach.

Caperton Center faculty must call the Director directly (367-4037) as soon as they know they will be absent and must provide plans for activities in which students will be engaged in the faculty member's absence.

If Fairmont State cancels on-campus classes--including the Caperton Center--the FS home page will display an emergency closing message. The home page provides the most accurate information; the [emergency closing page](#) lists radio and television stations that will also carry the announcement. In general, off-campus locations (**not including** the Caperton Center) cancel classes when the public schools close. In the event of a two-hour delay, classes starting before 10:00 are canceled.

### Grading Scale

Fairmont State uses a letter-grading system explained in the [current catalog](#). The numerical scale on which a grade is based is left to the instructor's discretion. The grading scale and assessment plan and/or activities need to be included on the course syllabus.

## Procedures from the Registrar's Office

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The Registrar's Office oversees functions related to course registration, grading, academic transcripts, academic probation and suspension, and more. The following information provided by the Registrar's Office is a helpful resource giving faculty a brief overview of procedures to follow when questions arise pertaining to important dates, the enrollment center, grade posting and changes, and advising functions. The University recognizes faculty's importance in being the first line of contact for students--particularly off-campus, evening, and weekend students--who may have questions about scheduling and other academic matters.

### 1. Registrar's Calendar:

- Lists dates pertinent to the term
- Updated prior to pre-registration each term
- Each fall and spring semester has several parts of term – 1st and 2nd 8 Weeks and 1st and 2nd 8 Weekend
- Other dates not listed on the calendar (grade due dates, etc.) are sent via email to all faculty

### 2. Faculty Self-Service (BANNER Web):

- To access the Faculty Self-Service menu, click on FELIX on the home page and login to the Students-Faculty-Staff: Secure Area Log-in
- Enter your UCA and Password
- Select Faculty and Advisors from the Main Menu
- You will see a menu that lists many of the topics below and others with which you will want to become familiar

### 3. Registration Information:

- Students can self-register after meeting with their advisor
- Pre-registration happens twice a year at the end of March for summer and fall and the end of October for spring
- Registration stays open until the end of the first week of classes for each term

### 4. Registering Students for Classes:

- Meet with the student and determine what courses are available and appropriate for the student to take. The paper Schedule of Courses is available but the [online Schedule](#) shows the most up-to-date account of available courses.
- Students are permitted to register during certain windows of time based on their credit hours. These dates are available on the [Registrar's Calendar](#).
- If you are trying to register a student who has a 'hold' on his/her account, is not properly admitted, or is not permitted to register at the current time due to credit hours, you will receive an error message that prevents you from continuing. Please refer to the [Student Self-Registration Guide](#) for information.
- Once courses are selected, go the 'Enrollment Center' under 'Quick Links' on the home page and log-in to the 'Students-Faculty-Staff: Secure Area Log-in'
  - Enter your UCA and Password
  - Select 'Faculty and Advisors'
  - Select 'Registration Add/Drop'
  - Select the appropriate 'Term'
  - Enter the 'Student ID' or 'Name'. Note that if searching by name you may have to select from a pull down menu if there is more than one student with the same name
  - Enter the student's 'UCA Password'

- Enter the 'CRN's' of the selected courses under 'Add Classes Worksheet' and click 'Submit'
- The classes will appear under 'Current Schedule'
- If registration for a class is not completed, you will see an error message that reads 'Registration Add Errors'
- Look under 'status' to identify the particular error that occurred
- Some of the possible errors include major restrictions, instructor approval required, closed class, pre-requisite error, time conflict, etc.
- Please refer to the [Student Self-Registration Guide](#), which lists all potential registration errors and their resolutions.

#### 5. Registration Overrides:

- Several registration errors can be resolved by using the Permission to Add/Override Courses form. This override form can be obtained in your department or directly from the Registrar's Office and should be returned to the Registrar's Office for processing. Please refer to the [Student Self-Registration Guide](#), which lists all potential registration errors and their resolutions.
- Only the instructor of the course and the dean associated with the class can sign the override form. If you are advising a student who wants to take a course that has a pre-requisite error on it, you cannot sign the override giving permission unless you are the instructor. Any forms not signed properly will be returned to the person who submitted the form.
- Major restrictions and instructor approval overrides can be done online by the instructor.
- To do overrides online proceed with the following steps:
  - Select 'Registration Overrides' from the 'Faculty and Advisors' menu
  - Select appropriate term and click 'Submit'
  - Enter the student name or ID and click 'Submit'
  - When the student name appears click 'Submit'. Note: If you don't have the ID you may have to select the correct student if more than one name appears
  - In the 'Registration Override' box click the drop down box under 'Override' and select the appropriate override (either major restriction or special approval)
  - Click on the drop down box under 'Course' and select the appropriate course. Note: All CRN's attached to your name will appear
  - Once both are selected, click 'Submit'
  - You will see 'Faculty Registration Override Confirmation'. YOU MUST CLICK 'SUBMIT' TO FINISH THE PROCESS
  - You will then be returned to the previous page and will see the message that the override has been successfully saved
- PLEASE NOTE THAT AFTER YOU GRANT THE OVERRIDE THE STUDENT MUST STILL REGISTER FOR THE CLASS. PROCESSING THE OVERRIDE WILL NOT REGISTER THE STUDENT.

#### 6. Purge Process:

- At the beginning of each term, students who have not paid their tuition and fees (or some portion) are removed from classes for non-payment. This includes students who are registered for 2nd 8 weeks and weekend classes.
- Notification is sent, during the first week of classes, to these students telling them they are going to be removed. At the same time, notification is sent to each faculty member having students in their classes who are going to be removed.
- Faculty are to contact any students in their classes who are on the list to be removed and let them know they will not be able to attend class after they are removed.

Faculty are to refer students to their Fairmont State email accounts, where their notices are sent.

- Approximately one week later (actual removal dates are listed in the first notice that is sent out), students who have not paid are removed from their classes, and, once again, both students and faculty are notified.
- When faculty receive their lists of students who have been removed, they must tell any of these students who continue to attend that they are not allowed to attend until they make payment. At this point, please refer these students to the Registrar's Office
- It is imperative that faculty make sure all students in their classes are properly registered. Faculty can add students to their classes until the end of the first week of classes.

#### **7. Dropping Classes/Withdrawing From the Institution:**

- Students can drop classes and withdraw from the institution online via Student Self-Service.
- There is a last day to drop for each part of term as well as a last day to withdraw from institution. These dates are available on the [Registrar's Calendar](#).
- Withdrawing from the institution is done when a student wants to drop all of his/her classes even if the student has only one class.
- Dropping is done when a student wants to drop individual classes.
- The procedure for dropping and withdrawing can be found on the [Registrar's web page](#).

#### **8. Grading:**

- All faculty are expected to submit mid-term grades.
- Mid-term grades are due the Monday following mid-term. Mid-term dates are listed on the [Registrar's Calendar](#).
- Final grades are due the Monday after finals week by noon.
- Final grades must be submitted on time so that the Financial Aid Office can determine if students are eligible for aid the next term and so that suspensions can be processed. There is very little time between terms to get this work done so it is extremely important that grades be submitted on time.
- Grades are submitted via BANNER Faculty Self-Service not Web CT/Vista.
- To enter both mid-term and final grades, access the 'Faculty and Advisor' menu through the [Enrollment Center](#).
- Select the appropriate grade option (Mid Term Grades or Final Grades). If you receive the error message 'The Final/Mid-Term Grade Worksheet is unavailable' please see the section on 'Grade Changes' below.
- You will need to select the appropriate term and CRN (all classes you are teaching will be listed by CRN and course title) and enter grades for each CRN.
- The appropriate grades can be selected from the pull-down menu.
- Once all grades are entered be sure to hit the 'submit' button. If you do not do this, grades will not be recorded. If you 'submit' properly you will see a message that states that the changes were submitted successfully.
- Mid-term grades are viewable by students immediately upon entry. Final grades have to be 'rolled' (processed) by the Registrar's Office before they can be seen by students.

#### **9. Grade Changes:**

- If you receive the error message 'The Final/Mid-Term Grade Worksheet is unavailable' this means that grades cannot be entered at that time and you are either ahead of schedule or behind. The Registrar's Office will send email to all faculty prior to each

mid-term and final grading session indicating when grades 'open' and 'close'. Please watch for those messages.

- If the deadline has passed to enter final grades, you must submit a 'Grade Modification' Form. This form must be done for each grade that needs to be entered and can be obtained from the Registrar's Office. These forms are not available online and will not be given to students.
- If you miss the mid-term grading dates, you must inform your students individually of their mid-term grade.
- If you need to change a grade that has been already submitted, you must also use the grade modification form. Any grade changes submitted more than 60 days past the original grade date will need to be accompanied with an explanation.
- If you grade a student with an 'Incomplete' you must change the grade, when ready, with a Grade Modification Form. Students have one year to make up incomplete grades. If the grade is not change before the end of the one year period it will automatically change to an F.
- Students who have incompletes should not register for the class while they are completing the work. If a students do not complete the work and the grade changes to F, students can register and retake the class.
- The [Registrar's home page](#) has useful information including important dates, graduation information, and much more.

## Fairmont State Policies

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Fairmont State policies provide principles upon which any measure or course of action is based. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to promote understanding, cooperation, efficiency and unity among the employees of Fairmont State and to ensure fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, and staff.

As a faculty member, you have joined the Fairmont State community and will want to become familiar with *all* Fairmont State policies. Of greatest importance, though, is your knowledge of those policies which might affect you directly in your role.

The most current versions of Fairmont State Policies appear on the [Board of Governors Policy page](#).

- **Ethics**
- **Social Justice**
- **Sexual Harassment**
- **Faculty Development**
- **Student Rights and Responsibilities**
- **Regulation of Speed, Flow, and Parking on Campus**
- **Drug-Free Workplace**
- **Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships**

Additionally, for adjunct faculty:

- **Part-Time Employees and Adjunct Faculty**
- **Adjunct Faculty**
- **Adjunct Faculty Workloads**

## Fairmont State Services

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Fairmont State faculty and students can avail themselves of a variety of services designed to make teaching and learning accessible, enjoyable, and effective. From plentiful, nearby parking to open computer labs in every building, amenities at Fairmont State complement the learner-centered philosophy that makes Fairmont State a user-friendly teaching and learning environment.

While faculty and students share access to some services, such as the bookstore, other services meet the needs of either faculty or students. For example, the open computer labs are intended for student use. Faculty can use them, but students have first priority.

As an adjunct faculty member, you might not be aware of the services Fairmont State provides, especially if you teach off campus, evenings, or weekends. The following information is intended to familiarize you with services for both [faculty](#) and students.

### Faculty Services I: CTE and LTC

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Two offices with which you will want to become familiar are the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) and [the Learning Technologies Center](#). Fairmont State created these centers specifically for teaching support. You should bookmark these web pages for quick access.

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)--currently directed by Dr. Barbara Fallon--provides a variety of services, including this orientation program for faculty. The Center oversees programs for new faculty, offers one-to-one faculty consultation, and makes resources available to you both online and in the physical location on campus: 135 Library. If you have questions related to the use of basic campus technologies (UCA, email, e-reserve, etc.); instructional strategies; problematic situations in the classroom; [assessment](#); etc., contact the Center at 367-4508 or via email: [Barbara Fallon](#). Make the Center for Teaching Excellence website your first stop when you have questions. The site provides a "how-to" list that provides step-by-step instructions for nearly everything you will need to do as a faculty member. For example, if you forget how to access your class roster, you can go to the "how-to" for help. Visit the site frequently for faculty-development workshop information and updates on conferences, etc. The on-site resources center loans books, a digital projector, an overhead projector, digital cameras, flipcharts, easels, etc., for your instructional needs.

At the Caperton Center, any member of the staff may direct you to resources located at the Center. Dr. McClure is the person to whom you speak regarding teaching and learning strategies, assessment activities, and other curriculum and instruction concerns.

[Dr. Roxann Humbert](#) directs the Learning Technologies Center (LTC), where you can receive instruction related to Blackboard/Vista, Microsoft Office, and other software, and some hardware. The LTC is located in room 126 of the library, down the hall from the CTE. The LTC website, like the CTE's website, offers a wealth of information such as training dates, Blackboard/Vista templates and guides, etc. For more information about LTC offerings, email Dr. Humbert or her assistants, [Vicki Holcomb](#) and [Chris Lambert](#); you may also contact the LTC at [ltc@fairmontstate.edu](mailto:ltc@fairmontstate.edu).

In addition to the Center for Teaching Excellence and the Learning Technologies Center, other departments offer services to support faculty in their academic endeavors. The following list provides an overview of some of these services.

1. [Advising Center](#): Whether or not you are assigned advisees, students will often come to you with questions because you *are* Fairmont State to them. Thus, it is good to know as much as you can about the advising process. If you would like to learn more about programs and advising at Fairmont State, you may contact [Pamela Stephens](#), or [advising@fairmontstate.edu](mailto:advising@fairmontstate.edu), for more information or for brief training in advising.

Caperton Center advisors are as follows: Dr. Butcher, Dr. Cassell, Dr. Larew, Dr. McClure, Mr. Savchuk, Dr. Woods, and Mr. Young.

2. [Fairmont State Bookstore](#): The bookstore carries textbooks and other resources faculty and students need for class. Collegiate wear and gifts can also be purchased. The bookstore is located in the [Falcon Center](#), but purchases may also be made online.

Caperton Center students may purchase their texts at the Caperton Center during the first two weeks of classes each semester. Resources faculty need may see Beverly Johnston.

3. [Copy Center](#): Located in the Falcon Center on the 3rd floor, the copy center provides copying of course materials at a small cost to the department. Faculty may also have personal items copied at the center at their own cost. Any large copy job should be submitted to the copy center.

While copying services are most convenient to on-campus faculty, off-campus faculty should check with their directors about using the online request form for course materials or should inquire about off-site alternatives to the copy center.

4. [Campus Directory](#): The campus directories provide names, email addresses, and locations of all faculty and staff, in addition to phone numbers for full-time faculty and staff. If you are an adjunct faculty member and want to update your listing on the adjunct-faculty directory, log into Felix and choose Personal Information from the Main Menu.
5. [Faculty Identification Cards](#): The faculty ID permits you to check out books from the library, exit the parking garage, use the Falcon Center facilities (membership required), purchase food and coffee on campus (deposited funds required), and attend cultural and sporting events at the University.

At the Caperton Center, faculty may see Kim DeMeester to obtain their ID cards.

6. [Falcon Center](#): The Falcon Center is the student activities center located at the heart of the campus on the hill above Hardway Hall. Students, faculty, and staff enjoy such amenities as a fitness center, pool, walking track, gyms, multipurpose rooms, dining hall, convenience store, snack bar, and a conference center. While students become members through payment of their University fees, faculty, staff, and their families must pay membership fees.
7. [Library](#): Located on the Education Quad, the Ruth Ann Musick Library offers a broad selection of materials including books, newspapers, journals, magazines, videos, reference books, a children's collection, and government documents. Students, faculty, staff, and the greater community can also avail themselves of such services as a fulltime reference librarian, electronic reserve, copying, computer and Internet access, scanning, faxing, and microfilm reading and printing. The library promotes faculty and student use through its friendly atmosphere, bright lighting, and comfortable seating. Coffee is permitted! Most library resources can be requested online with the use of a Fairmont State ID card.

Faculty at the Caperton Center may access all library materials through the Caperton Center Library. Tish and Pat, Caperton's librarians, will help with your requests.

Also located in the Caperton Center library is the Adjunct Resource Room. This room is accessed via keypad to ensure security of your teaching materials. The room houses computer workstations, a test grader, mailboxes, lockers, a refrigerator, microwave, and coffee pot and offers comfortable seating.

8. Mailboxes: Each department and off-campus location provides adjunct faculty with a means by which they can receive campus mail. Check with your chair or director to determine the process for your location.

Caperton Center adjuncts may pick up their mail in the adjunct resource room located in the library.

9. [Meal Services](#): Food can be purchased at three locations on campus: the Falcon Center Dining Hall (3rd floor); the Nickel (2nd floor); and Starbuck's (in the library building). All three locations accept credit cards. Faculty may also deposit money on their ID cards (Falcon cards) and use them as debit cards for on-campus purchases.

The Caperton Center offers food items in a vending machine located in the student-lounge area. Pepperoni rolls, salads, and sandwiches are available for purchase. Soft drink and coffee machines are also located in the vending area. There are plans for a food court in the near future.

10. [Parking](#): Located on the east end of campus (side closest to Hardway Hall), a six-level parking garage offers over 900 spaces with easy in-and-out access. Exit from the garage requires a Fairmont State ID card and paid Fairmont State parking (i.e., a parking hang tag). In addition to the parking garage, there are several designated faculty-parking areas around campus and close to classroom buildings. Parking in any space on campus requires a parking hang tag. Adjunct faculty pay reduced rates for parking tags.

Adjunct faculty at the Caperton Center may park in the main lot behind the Center in spaces marked Faculty and Staff. If there are no spaces available, faculty may park in student spaces. Parking tags are available for purchase from Beverly Johnston.

## Student Services

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As mentioned in the introduction to the Services section of this module, students enjoy many of the same services as faculty. These include the Fairmont State Bookstore, Falcon Center, Copy Center, Library, Meal Services, Parking, and Identification Card privileges as described on the Faculty Services pages.

Fairmont State offers other services, however, that are designed specifically for meeting students' needs, whether the students are attending Fairmont State on campus or off. As a faculty member, you will want to be aware of these services so that you can provide students with the proper assistance as needed. The [Student Resource page](#), the [student handbook](#), and the [Student Affairs Office](#), located on the 2nd floor of the Falcon Center, can provide you with more details, but brief descriptions of some services are listed here.

1. [Academic Development Center](#): In the Community & Technical College's School of Academic Studies, the Academic Development Center offers classes to prepare students to take for-credit courses at the Community & Technical College or the University. The Center also administers placement tests; offers tutoring (see Tutoring Services); lends software and video tutorials; and provides a comfortable environment where students can receive support and encouragement.

Students at the Caperton Center also have the option of taking the same preparatory courses that are offered on the main campus.

2. [Advising Center](#): In general, the Advising Center exists to help students navigate the often-confusing world of academia. Advisors offer guidance in career and major selection, help students register for courses, serve as departmental liaisons, explain the forms needed for various processes, and assist students in locating appropriate offices for counseling, tutoring ,etc.

Advisors at the Caperton are experienced in helping students decide on majors, plan their schedules, and register for classes.

3. [Career Services](#): Providing an array of services from career exploration to resume building and interview practice, Career Services counsels students through the process of selecting, preparing for, and applying for their best-suited careers. The Career Services web page lists many online resources students can use on their own to assess their career interests and other links they can use as they prepare for the job search. On campus, students can enroll in classes offered by Career Services to learn job-search strategies, interviewing skills, and more.

Career Services counselors visit the Caperton Center at least twice per academic year. Students may also consult with Dr. McClure at the Caperton Center, a provisionally-licensed supervised counselor.

4. [Counseling](#): College life is stressful. As students take on more and more responsibility, they experience greater stress. The Counseling Center provides a place where students can feel comfortable speaking to professional counselors who are well versed in helping students handle stress, crises, depression, and other problems that might prevent students from reaching their goals and dreams. Students may visit counselors free of charge and can be assured that their interactions at the Center are completely confidential.

Students at the Caperton Center may also consult with Dr. McClure, a provisionally-licensed supervised counselor.

5. Disability Services: In accordance with the Rehabilitation and American Disability Acts, the office of Disability Services at Fairmont State ensures that students with disabilities have equal access to campus services and can function independently in all aspects of campus life. Students who have a documented need for assistance may register with the office to receive the various services offered such as tutoring, scribe services, interpreting, etc. The office also assists students who request evaluation for disabilities.

The disabilities coordinator comes to the Caperton Center on a regular basis, identifying and meeting with students with disabilities. She arranges for those students to have appropriate accommodations at the Caperton Center.

6. Tutoring Services: Certified by the College Reading and Learning Association, the Tutoring Services Center at Fairmont State has been used as a model by other institutions across the country. On-campus students at Fairmont State may use the service free of charge. Tutors receive extensive training and are available for most subject areas. Tutoring takes place in a lab that allows for collaborative work or individualized quiet study.

The Director of the Caperton Center works closely with the Director of Tutoring Services to provide help for students at the Caperton Center. Plans are being made to have tutors available to students on a regular basis for math and English.

## Strategic Plan, Goal 1: High Levels of Teaching and Learning

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This module on teaching stems from [Fairmont State's Strategic Plan](#). As the institution strives to become more learner centered, Goal 1 serves as the faculty guide to achieving high levels of teaching and learning. Each of the [four action steps under Goal 1](#) details objectives being addressed by committees of individuals dedicated to making the institution the best it can be. If you would like to become a part of the Strategic Plan processes, you can visit the [Fairmont State Wiki](#) to see where you can contribute.

### Writing and Assessing Learner Outcomes

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When designing courses, faculty can take a variety of approaches. The design process used by Fairmont State is known as backward course design. This means simply that course designers first envision what it is that they want their students to know and be able to do when they have completed the class and then work backward from that vision. Faculty verbalize the end vision in statements known as "learner outcomes." Learner outcomes are then tied directly to assessment of student learning

As a new faculty member, you should receive outcomes for your course from your departmental chair or hiring manager, so you should not have to be responsible for writing them. To understand the structure of learner outcomes, though, you can review the following steps faculty use to write learner outcomes.

1. Focus on answering the question, "What do I want my students to know and be able to do that will stay with them forever?"
2. Write the answers to this question--your **learner outcomes**--in observable, measurable terms (students will be able to...), using terms such as those included in [Bloom's Taxonomy](#).
3. **Fairmont State faculty state the "audience" and "behavior"--and sometimes, "conditions"--in learner-outcome statements.**

Example (without conditions): Students (audience) will be able to predict (behavior) the effects of poverty on children's ability to succeed in school in terms of language development, appropriate behavior, and ability to read.

Example (with conditions): After having participated in Ruby Payne activities (conditions), students (audience) will be able to predict (behavior) the effects of poverty on children's ability to succeed in school in terms of language development, appropriate behavior, and ability to read.

To assess learner outcomes, follow this strategy.

1. Choose and/or develop assessment instruments: Ask yourself, "How will I know that my students have learned what I have set forth in my learner outcomes?"
2. Remember that assessment means more than a test or quiz; often, learning activities are, in themselves, assessment instruments. Your assessment should directly reflect a particular outcome.  
Example: (matches above learner outcome): Given case studies, students will identify the children's characteristics and will make predictions on their chances at success, supporting their predictions based on Payne's research on patterns.
3. Plan learning activities that involve students in practicing and applying the concepts you are teaching.  
Example: Students will read Payne's *Framework for Poverty* and will participate in the following exercises: checklist of daily behaviors, case studies to determine children's personal resources, discussion of hidden values.

## Introduction to Course Design

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**As an institution dedicated to providing a student-centered learning environment, Fairmont State prides itself on the high quality instruction offered by knowledgeable, skilled faculty who keep current with research-based best practices in teaching and learning.**

In recent years, educational researchers have proven through brain research that the early pedagogical (instructional) models--which focused on the teacher as the center of instruction--aren't supportive of most students' learning ([Barr & Tagg, 2004](#); [Bonwell & Eison, 2003](#); [Fink, 2003](#)). As a result, there has been a paradigm shift (shift in beliefs and actions) in education to move the focus away from the "sage on the stage" and even away from the "scribe on the side" ([instruction paradigms](#)) to a "community of learners" ([Carroll, 2000](#)) wherein teachers serve as the "expert learners" in their fields and students are novice learners engaged in authentic problems and becoming mature learners ([learning paradigm](#)). The classroom has become less a lecture hall and more a hands-on learning lab, where students are actively engaged in inquiry and application.

Rethinking our approach in the classroom requires that we reconsider the way we design our courses. Under the old paradigm, faculty could easily structure their courses around the chapters in the text, planning daily lectures and interspersing quizzes, tests, and occasional papers. Now that we understand that [students learn more when they are actively engaged](#), we must think more about the learning outcomes we want, the learning activities in which to engage students to help them meet our outcomes, and the types of assessment that will be useful in evaluating students' learning.

## Backward Course Design

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**When faculty receive their contracts and know what courses they will be teaching, they typically turn to writing course syllabi. This approach, however, ignores the research on learning and the basic constructs of instructional design, frequently resulting in disjointed content that leaves students wondering how one concept connects to another.**

Instructional Design is the systematic development of instructional specifications using learning and instructional theory to ensure the quality of instruction. It is the entire process of analyzing learner needs and goals and developing a delivery system to meet those needs. It includes development of instructional materials and activities and tryout and evaluation of all instruction and learner activities.

While there are many instructional design models, the one Fairmont State supports is backward design, and in particular, Dee Fink's model. Backward design is a model introduced by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (1998) in their book, *Understanding by Design*, and updated by L. Dee Fink in 2003 in his book, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*. (Both books in full text are available through Fairmont State's electronic books in the [net library](#). through the Center for Teaching Excellence, and in the Caperton Center Adjunct Faculty Resource Room.

Backward design requires instructors to work backwards from the results they want for their students to the delivery system that will get those results. [Dee Fink's backward design model ensures integration](#) of all of the components of instructional design. Fink's interactive model encourages instructors' attention towards including components that will promote significant learning.

## Applying the Process of Backward Course Design

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Fink's [integrated course design model](#) has three design phases. In Phase 1, the instructor develops and integrates the primary components (goals, feedback and assessment, learning activities) based upon situational factors (see model). In Phase 2, the instructor determines the course structure, instructional strategy, and the overall scheme of learning activities. Finally, in Phase 3, the instructor addresses the grading system, de-bugs possible problems, writes the course syllabus, and plans an evaluation of the course and of his or her teaching. (NOTE: Click here for more detail on [Fink's design phases.](#))

### Fink's Phase 1

1. Assess situational factors: Ask yourself what you know about the course, its place in the program, the students, the classroom, etc. Example: Course is Intro. to Education. Students are freshmen or sophomores. It's the first course in education. There is no practicum attached to the course. The course is on campus in a room with 36 chairs, Internet access, video capability, and a blackboard.
2. Develop goals (**learner outcomes**): Use [Fink's taxonomy](#) and focus on answering the questions, "What do I want my students to learn that will stay with them forever?" (Note that Fink's taxonomy extends beyond typical content "coverage.") **Important Note:** Fairmont State uses the term, "**learner outcomes**" rather than goals." Write your **learner outcomes** in observable, measurable terms (students will be able to...), such as those included in [Bloom's Taxonomy](#). Fairmont State has faculty state the "**audience,**" "**behavior,**" and "**conditions**" in learner-outcome statements. Example: After having participated in Ruby Payne activities (conditions), students (audience) will be able to predict (behavior) the effects of poverty on children's ability to succeed in school in terms of language development, appropriate behavior, and ability to read.
3. Choose and/or develop assessment instruments: Ask yourself, "How will I know that my students have learned what I have set forth in my goals?" Remember that assessment means more than a test or quiz; often, learning activities are, in themselves, assessment instruments. Your assessment should directly reflect a particular outcome. Example: (matches above learner outcome): Given case studies, students will identify the children's characteristics and will make predictions on their chances at success, supporting their predictions based on Payne's research on patterns.
4. Plan learning activities that involve students in practicing and applying the concepts you are teaching. Example: Students will read Payne's *Framework for Poverty* and will participate in the following exercises: checklist of daily behaviors, case studies to determine children's personal resources, discussion of hidden values.

### Fink's Phase 2

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In Phase 2 of Fink's model, you are involved in planning the structure of the course for the whole semester. You have likely done this in the past as you decided what chapters or topics you would address each week and scheduled tests and quizzes. Fink's model takes this strategizing a step further, requiring you to think more specifically about how you will introduce and reinforce topics you want to address. Again, for a more detailed explanation, you may refer to **Fink's integrated course design model.**

## Phase 2

1. Create a course structure: This refers to that process with which you are familiar-- deciding on topics you will address and distributing them across the semester. It involves determining the complexity of the topic and how much time you think it will take for students to grasp it, and how much time it will take to introduce and reinforce the topic (allowing for student-application time). [\(see model\)](#) Generally, seven topics is enough for one semester. [For example](#), for an Intro. to Education course, I identified six topics (one for each of the components in Fink's taxonomy). I knew that two of the topics were essential in getting students prepared for a spring-break service project, so I planned to spend the first six weeks on those two topics, allowing for plenty of application and discussion time. The other four topics received more or less two class sessions each, again depending on the difficulty of the subject matter.
  
2. Formulate an instructional strategy: This process uses "instructional strategy" in a way that is likely unfamiliar to you. While the phrase seems to mean a technique we use in the classroom, instructional strategy in Fink's model has to do with sequencing in-and-out-of-class learning activities in a way that you prepare students for learning, provide opportunities for them to practice, assess their learning, and give them time to reflect on their learning. The activities you choose should, for each topic, build on each other. For this step, you will use the learning activities you identified in Phase 1 or can identify additional ones. [Example](#): The instructional strategy I used for the education class was daily teamwork wherein students designed concept maps of the topic, developed questions around the concept, conducted research and read their text outside of class, and wrote reflective journal entries. I gave mini-lectures and brought in resource people and video in response to students' research questions. Students developed portfolios that included their concept maps, group- and individually-developed questions, research-based answers, articles and other research artifacts, and reflective journal entries. A rubric was used to score the portfolios.
  
3. Integrate the course structure and instructional strategy for the whole semester: Organize your semester by topics and instructional strategies for those topics. The strategies may or may not vary for different topics. [Example](#): An English class might have a literature component and a writing component. The instructor may spend the first half of the semester having students analyze literature. She might plan lecture for Mondays, discussion for Wednesdays, and student presentations on Fridays for the first half. During the second half of the semester, with the focus on writing, she might plan for drafting on Mondays, peer review on Wednesdays, and revision on Fridays.

## Phase 3 of Fink's Design Model

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**Phase 3 of Fink's model will likely feel more familiar to you than the other two might. Phase 3 involves developing your grading system, reviewing the course, writing the syllabus, and evaluating the course and your teaching both as you go and after the course is completed. Remember that referring to Fink's [integrated course design model](#) will help you understand the process.**

## Phase 3

1. Develop a grading system: In Phase 1, you determined the learning activities in which your students will engage to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to meet your outcomes. Now, you will determine how you will grade those activities and how those activities will contribute to students' grades in the course. [Example](#): In the Intro. to Education course, student-learning activities included concept maps; student-generated questions; Test Your Knowledge forms (article-review questionnaires for the research

they conducted); learning plans; reflective journal entries; and the final [portfolio](#). I assigned each learning activity a set number of points based on scoring [rubrics](#) for each activity. Students were also given points for attendance each day. The grading system was a percentage of the total number of points on a 10-point scale. That is, 90 - 100% of the total points was an "A," and so on.

2. Debug the course: During this phase, you will want to look at the course as a whole to determine if the [learner outcomes](#) and [assessment](#) activities match, the course progression seems logical, the timelines for assignments are practical for students; etc. Try to predict where problems might occur.
3. Write the syllabus: At last! As you can see, this step comes much later in this course-design process than in more traditional models. Because you have put so much work into the process, though, writing the syllabus becomes easy. Plus, Fairmont State uses a [standard template](#) so that students know what to expect. Remember, the syllabus represents a contract between you and your students. It provides course boundaries and faculty/student expectations and responsibilities. Having a strong syllabus with straightforward policies, procedures, and course details will save you headaches in the long run. **Note: Fairmont State requires all faculty to post their syllabi and gradebook in WebCT/Vista.**
4. Evaluate the course and your teaching: Throughout the semester, take time to reflect on the success of each class period and activity. Ask yourself if students are engaged as much as you want them to be, if activities truly relate to your learner outcomes, if your assessment instruments give you the information you need to know if students are learning. At the end of the semester, ask yourself if there are things you could change to make the course better, to improve student learning, to engage students more in significant learning. Fink provides several ideas for evaluating your course in the [model description](#).

## Using Blackboard/Vista Syllabus and Grade book Tools

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Now that you have designed your course, you are ready to write your syllabus. Fairmont State has a [syllabus template](#) that contains all of the required syllabus components. You can follow this structure to design your own, adding the [learner outcomes](#), assessments, and learning activities you have designed.

Once you have written your syllabus, you will make your course public in Blackboard/Vista, Fairmont State's online course-management system. As mentioned previously, Fairmont State requires all faculty to have a course presence in Blackboard/Vista in the form of a syllabus and grade book for each course they teach. As soon as you have been "connected" to your courses in our data-management system, your courses will automatically appear in your My Blackboard space. To access that space, click on Blackboard/Vista in the Quicklinks menu, then click on Fairmont State. Log in with your UCA and password. You should see the course(s) you are teaching listed there.

The [Learning Technologies Center \(LTC\)](#) provides face-to-face Blackboard/Vista training on an ongoing basis, with summer boot camps and workshop sessions throughout the semester. In addition, the LTC posts on its website [syllabus tool instructions](#) and [gradebook tool instructions](#). The syllabus tool does not allow you to simply upload your syllabus document to the site. You will need to copy and paste each section of your syllabus into the tool. The tool has some pre-named components which reflect parts of the [syllabus template](#) but not all. You can use the "custom" option in the syllabus tool to add the names of the components on the syllabus template.

The gradebook tool allows you to provide grades to students as they complete assignments, participate in discussions, and take quizzes and tests. You can create columns manually, or you can use the assignment and [assessment](#) tools which will give you the option of automatically adding columns to the grade book.

Students at Fairmont State have come to expect that their instructors will post the syllabus and their grades in Blackboard/Vista and will call you on it if they don't see their grades posted regularly.

Syllabus components			
Information about the Instructor	Course Information	Policies	Grading Information
<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/> Office Location <input type="checkbox"/> Office Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Email address <input type="checkbox"/> Office phone number  Note: Provide any other additional information that you feel would be helpful to students, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ telephone numbers for the tutoring office, advising, and IT helpdesk</li> <li>◆ emergency information such as how to learn about school closings or where the closest exits are to the classroom</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Title and location <input type="checkbox"/> Course Description from the catalog <input type="checkbox"/> Course ID (CRN#) <input type="checkbox"/> Required texts, titles, authors, editions <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Outcomes</b> reflecting expected educational results <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-requisites and / or special requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Standards / Conceptual Model	<p>The following four policies are standard Fairmont State policies and are found on the <a href="http://www.fairmontstate.edu/AcademicAffairs/SyllabusStatements.asp">Academic Affairs web page</a>.</p> <p><a href="http://www.fairmontstate.edu/AcademicAffairs/SyllabusStatements.asp">http://www.fairmontstate.edu/AcademicAffairs/SyllabusStatements.asp</a></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Integrity Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity Policy/Disability Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Copyright Policy  Note: Provide any additional policies you feel are fair to students and that are conducive to a civil classroom environment, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ cell phone usage</li> <li>◆ student responsibility</li> <li>◆ faculty responsibility</li> <li>◆ respectful behavior</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Fairmont State's official student expectations</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Fairmont State's core values and motto (SOAR with Fairmont State)</a></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Course requirements: exams, quizzes, classroom participation, projects, and papers including the percentage /points (weight) each counts toward the final grade  <input type="checkbox"/> Policies on missed exams and late work  <input type="checkbox"/> Grading scale and standards  <input type="checkbox"/> Course syllabus does not contain grammatical errors and is written in simple, positive language  Note: Provide as much information as you can to help students with time management and planning. For example, provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ dates for major assessments such as projects, quizzes, tests</li> <li>◆ a calendar showing required readings with page numbers or citations for articles</li> </ul>