

New Faculty Orientation Materials– 2010

Welcome to West Chester University (or welcome back!). This packet of information is meant to help provide you with important information about getting started here on campus. It was compiled by your union, APSCUF (the Associated Pennsylvania State College and University Faculty), and by the Provost's office in an effort to make the complicated process of getting oriented a bit simpler. Please do not hesitate to contact Jen Bacon, Chair of the Temporary Faculty Issues Committee, if you have questions that are not answered here! Jen will be on campus to answer your questions in person on the morning of **August 27th from 8-12 in Main 143**. But even if those times don't work, ask by email: jbacon@wcupa.edu.

West Chester, its faculty and its students

While there's certainly no quiz, it's often helpful to know where you fit into the larger structure of the University. In particular, get to know who your colleagues are in your department, and who the Dean is for your college. The Department secretary is likely to be your lifeline, so make sure you introduce yourself.

- West Chester University is a public Institution with about 13,000 students: Bigger than you might think!
- WCU has a mission to provide undergraduate education: While West Chester offers many different Master's degrees, and you may well be teaching graduate courses, the primary mission of the University is Undergraduate education. You might want to know a little bit about the curriculum in your program. Are the classes that you are teaching going to have graduate students in them? Will they be mostly students majoring in your subject matter, or will they be students taking courses as part of the General Education Curriculum at WCU? The Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs can answer many of your questions: <http://www.wcupa.edu/information/official.documents/>
- WCU has 500+ faculty teaching in 5 different colleges: How many faculty members are in your Department? Is it HUGE, like English? (The English Department employs about 50 tenured/tenure track faculty and hires almost 20 full time temporary faculty each year), or tiny, like physics? (The Physics Department employs about 6 tenured/tenure track faculty and one or two part-time temporary faculty members each year.)
 - College of Arts and Sciences: Home to Anthropology and Sociology, Biology, Chemistry, Communication Studies, Computer Science, English, Languages and Cultures, Geology and Astronomy, History, Mathematics, Philosophy, Physics, and Psychology.

- College of Education: Home to Counseling and Educational Psychology, Early Childhood and Special Education, Elementary Education, Literacy, and Professional and Secondary Education.
- College of Business and Public Affairs: Home to Accounting, Criminal Justice, Economics and Finance, Geography and Planning, Management , Marketing, Political Science, and Social Work
- College of Health Sciences: Home to Communicative Disorders, Health, Kinesiology, Nursing, and Sports Medicine
- College of Visual and Performing Arts: Home to Music, Art, Theater and Dance

Basics of getting started at WCU

Contract: The Department Chair offers you a job and initiates your “paperwork”. Behind the scenes this means forms, forms, forms – for Social Equity, for Human Resources, etc. When all of that paperwork is done, at the college level, it goes to the Provost’s office, and a contract is generated.

You bring your contract letter and your proof of employment eligibility to Human Resources to do your tax forms, etc. (Human Resources: <http://www.wcupa.edu/hr/>)

Benefits: You may be eligible for benefits. Full-time faculty with a one-year (fall and spring) contract are eligible for full health care benefits. Faculty teaching more than a 50% load with a full-year contract are also eligible for some benefits. To determine your benefits level, visit: <http://www.wcupa.edu/HR/Benefits/eligible.asp>

Human Resources would be happy to schedule benefits sessions for you. If you are eligible for benefits, contact Kathy Hilbert to register for a session or to ask questions about your benefits. Kathy Hilbert: 610-436-2830 (khilbert@wcupa.edu)

ID/ Library: Your “Ram Card” or University ID is your ticket to some important privileges at West Chester, including access to the library and all of its resources. To get your ID, you’ll need to bring a copy of your ID authorization form (which you got at HR when you did your paperwork there) and a photo ID to the Ram Card Office (Lower Level of Sykes).

Computer Access: Once your contract is active, you will get a Faculty ID number (which will go on the ID Card above) and an email account. Your department chair or department administrative assistant will get the password information you need to activate your account, but this all requires that you sign a Confidentiality Statement, which you can get here: http://www.wcupa.edu/HR/Forms/FORMS/Confidentiality_Statement.pdf

Parking: Faculty who teach classes during the daytime will likely want to purchase a \$30 parking permit (annually). Parking permits can be purchased at the Public Safety Office in the Peoples Building. You will need your Driver's License and Vehicle Registration.

Your Office: Your office assignment and keys will also be handled by your home Department.

Faculty pay: Faculty members are paid every two weeks for a 40 week period (20 pay dates). The first pay date for the 2010-2011 academic year is September 24th, 2010.

University Policies

Drop/Add: Students will be able to drop and add courses through the first week of classes, electronically. Specifically, students can drop classes through midnight on Saturday, September 4th, and add classes through midnight on Sunday, September 5th. Check with your Department Chair on your department's policies about over-enrolling your courses when students present you with drop/add forms.

Syllabi: University policy stipulates that students are to receive a paper copy of their syllabus for the course by the second class meeting. The syllabus is a legal contract between you and the students, and it must contain certain types of information. The full policy on this can be accessed at: <http://www.wcupa.edu/admin/associateprovost/pdf/policies.pdf>, but here are the basics:

- a. **Course name and number**
- b. **Instructor's name, office location, mailing address, phone number, office hours**
- c. **Required textbook(s)**
- d. **Evaluation policy**
- e. **Course objectives**
- f. **Course requirements**
- g. **Course outline**
- h. **Cut policy**
- i. **Syllabi Statements**

West Chester University strongly encourages the inclusion of a syllabus statement that encourages students with disabilities to come forward early in the semester with requests for accommodations and services. The following has been approved and will appear in the catalog, Ram's Eye View, and on announcements campus wide. It may be used as is by faculty or as a model.

"We at West Chester University wish to make accommodations for persons with disabilities. Please make your needs known by contacting the _____ (faculty, appropriate academic department, SGA, etc.)
_____ and/or the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at _____"

ext. 3217. Sufficient notice is needed in order to make the accommodations possible. The University desires to comply with the ADA of 1990.”

West Chester also recommends that the emergency phone number for WCU’s Department of Public Safety (610-436-3311) be listed on all course syllabi.

Office Hours: The Collective Bargaining Agreement requires that faculty teaching a full load (four courses) must hold 5 office hours per week, over three different days. This works out to 1.25 office hours per 3 credit course.

Grading Policies: The University has a standardized grading system. An A is worth 4.0 points, and this matches up with percentage equivalents from 93-100 percent. For details: www.wcupa.edu/information/official.documents/undergrad.catalog/acpolpro.htm#reports. **The University also requires that one Major course evaluation take place before October 30th.**

Attendance: You must excuse absences for University-sanctioned events (like Marching Band or athletic events or forensics competitions). Obviously, students will need to make up all missed work, and they will have documentation for such events. Beyond this, faculty determine their own attendance policies, and must publish them in the syllabus, but absences cannot be used as the sole criterion for assigning a failing grade in a course.

Submitting Grades: Grades are submitted electronically at West Chester, generally by the first Tuesday following the end of the semester. Consult your Department Chair or Office Administrator for details on submitting grades.

Exams: For a course below the 400 level, the exam shouldn’t be worth more than a third of the grade for the course. No final exams should be given before the scheduled exam time, and if you’re not going to give an exam, then you must continue to meet the class during the scheduled exam time.

Communication: Faculty, Staff, and Students are expected to activate and maintain regular access to University provided email accounts, and faculty are responsible for accessing that mail to obtain official University communications.

More information can be found at:

The Faculty Resources Page: <http://www.wcupa.edu/facultyresources/>

Faculty Evaluation

Classroom Observations: Faculty members are evaluated regularly at West Chester under the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Your Department Chair will handle the details of your evaluation, but you should anticipate that you will be observed in your classroom every semester, and you may be observed more than once. (Some Departments do one peer observation per semester, and some do two). You will also be observed once each academic year by your Department Chair, or a designee. So it could be as many as 5 observations in an academic year. The procedures for this vary some from Department to Department, so you should ask your Department Chair about this early in the semester. You have a right to say when observations can take place. Be proactive.

Student Evaluations: Students in your classes will complete student evaluations in the last few weeks of the semester. Some departments have specific policies about when these evaluations will take place, and who will do them, but the University rule is they must be completed sometime AFTER the 10th week of the semester, and that they must be administered by a faculty member who is not teaching the course.

Performance Reviews: The above evaluations serve as the main data for a performance review that indicates whether a faculty member is “Distinguished” “Meets Expectations” or “Needs Improvement”. Faculty members have the ability to see all reports generated about them (in fact, they must sign the reports), and they have the opportunity to respond in writing. The full evaluation procedure can be accessed at:
<http://www.apscuf.com/images/07article12.pdf>

Statement of Expectations: When you are hired at West Chester, you will be asked to sign a Statement of Expectations, which you negotiate with your Department Chair. Normally, these documents are fairly generic, but they are the criteria by which you are evaluated, so it’s important to know what’s in your Statement of Expectations, and to meet those expectations. They generally contain information about what sorts of classes you will teach, and make clear that you are expected to meet those classes and complete all necessary grading and paperwork associated with them.

Extras? Faculty who are not tenure-track are generally only evaluated on their teaching (or other professional responsibilities that they do in lieu of teaching). That said, you are not prohibited from engaging in scholarly activities or service activities, and you should discuss with your Department Chair what opportunities might align well with your interests and skills if you are interested in doing more than is required of you.

The Role of APSCUF (Your union)

APSCUF is the Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties (your union). There are 6000 faculty members and coaches represented by APSCUF, and the job of the union is quite simple, to protect and advance faculty rights, guaranteeing that faculty have participation in hiring, tenure, promotion, sabbatical and curriculum decisions.

This means:

Better pay and benefits than many area colleges and universities

Grievance rights to protect faculty

Why APSCUF for you? Participating in APSCUF guarantees that your voice counts in the contract negotiations that determine much of what happens at West Chester. Our current contract expires in the summer of 2011, and faculty participation in the negotiations process is our only way to assure that the next contract continues the gains achieved by the most recent contracts, and addresses the problems that are still present.

Dues: Dues for APSCUF are 1.15% of your salary. But whether or not a faculty member joins APSCUF, he or she pays a “fair share” of union costs, since all faculty benefit from the work of the union. For a full-time instructor hired at step 1-A, the salary for the academic year is \$44,795.24 (ok, there’s a weird thing where you get paid last year’s salary for the first paycheck of this year – and last year’s salary was \$43,072.35). You will automatically pay \$463.64 (\$23.18 per paycheck) in “fair share” fees. Becoming a member of APSCUF will cost you \$25.75 per paycheck, **so about \$2.58 more** than you’d already be paying, but it will also assure that temporary and part-time faculty members like you have a continuing voice in the ongoing process of negotiations.

Please consider joining APSCUF.

Working with Student Information

When you signed that form for Computer Access privileges (or when you do, if you haven't yet), you'll basically be agreeing to use the information you have access to responsibly. There are two key areas where this generally affects faculty:

Talking to Parents: Even students who are not yet 18 years old are considered to be adults in terms of the legal requirements surrounding their personal information in a University setting. This means that you should not discuss a student's grades, attendance, participation or any other personal information with that student's parent (or with anyone else) without getting permission to do so. Encourage parents to communicate directly with the student, and encourage students to take ownership and responsibility for their academic careers.

More information on FERPA (The Family Educational Rights and Privacies Act) can be found at: http://www.wcupa.edu/registrar/ferpa_policy.asp

Posting Grades: If you need to post student grades, you must do so in a way that does not identify the student. This means you cannot post grades using Social Security Numbers, or using Student IDs. If you need to post grades, we suggest that you assign students a coded number that only they know, and that you do not post grades in Alphabetical Order (the order on your role sheet). A better solution would be to use Blackboard (more on this later).

The general premise here is quite simple. You're only supposed to access student information that you need in order to teach your classes, and you're obligated to protect that information so that others cannot access.

Resources for Students

Even if you're an amazing teacher, there are some problems you can't solve. Knowing the available resources on campus can help you refer students to experts who can help.

Career Development Center (Twardowski): Offers resources to help students identify career paths, polish their employment credentials and interview skills and locate jobs. 225 Lawrence. Phone: X 2501. <http://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.car/>

Counseling Center: Provides free counseling services to enrolled students – Staffed by licensed psychologists. 241A Lawrence. Phone: X 2301.
<http://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.cou/>

Health and Wellness Center: Provides routine health care for students for a nominal fee. Appointments required unless it's an emergency. Wayne Hall, 2nd Floor. Phone: x- 2509.
<http://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.inf/>

LARC (Learning Assistance Resource Center): Provides tutoring services for many courses. Located in 223 Lawrence Center. Phone: 610-436-2535. <http://www.wcupa.edu/ussss/larc/>

OSSD (Office of Services for Students with Disabilities): Offers support services for students with Disabilities. If a student is working with this office, the student will present you with documentation about his/her learning needs (extra time on tests, note taking, etc.). If a student does not provide such documentation but claims to have a disability that will impact his/her learning, you should refer the student here. 223 Lawrence. Phone: x-2564.
<http://www.wcupa.edu/ussss/ossd/default.asp>

Pre-Major Advising Center: Students who have not yet selected a major will work with this office to gain admission to a desired major, or locate a major that fits their interests. 262 Lawrence. Phone: x- 3505. <http://www.wcupa.edu/ussss/pmaac/>

Women's Center: 220 Lawrence. Phone: x-2122. Provides confidential support and assistance to women in crisis, along with information and referrals around issues that disproportionately impact women, such as sexual assault, relationship violence, sexual harassment, unplanned pregnancy and disordered eating.
<http://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.wce/>

Writing Center: Free tutoring services for all types of writing, at any stage in the writing process. 214 Lawrence. Phone: X-5664. <http://www.wcupa.edu/academics/writingcenter/>

Resources for Faculty

Ally Training: Faculty can attend a 90 training session with representatives from LGBTQ Services in order to better assist students with issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity issues. Contact Jackie Hodes (jhodes@wcupa.edu) x-3351 for a schedule of training sessions. <http://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.lgb/ally.asp>

Desire 2 Learn: D2L is a course-support tool that lets you interact with your students outside of the classroom. You can access D2L from the University homepage.

Instructional Technology: In addition to D2L the University offers ongoing training to help faculty integrate technology into the curriculum. The Calendar for training can be found at: <http://www.wcupa.edu/infoservices/clientservices/agenda.asp>

Library (Francis Harvey Green): Once you have your WCU ID card (the “Ram Card”) you will have full privileges for borrowing materials from the library, including materials that may be useful for your classes. The library also offers electronic reserve services, and instructional services for students related to using the library resources. Phone: 610-430-4400. <http://www.wcupa.edu/library.fhg/>

Recap (Resources for the Electronic Classroom): Each summer, the university offers a conference designed to provide training for faculty in educational technologies. For more information: <http://www.wcupa.edu/recap/>

Service Learning: Interested in adding a service component to one of your courses? Contact Maggie Tripp (mtripp@wcupa.edu). Phone x-3379. <http://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.slv/>

Writing Center: The Writing Center isn’t just for students. Faculty who are writing articles, grants, or other materials can work with the center as well! 214 Lawrence. Phone: X-5664. <http://www.wcupa.edu/academics/writingcenter/>

Webpage: WCU is continuing to improve its web resources for faculty. Keep a lookout for information about a new website dedicated to providing even more! <http://www.wcupa.edu/facultyresources/>

Your Future at WCU

Next year's contract? Given the current budget situation in Harrisburg, many decisions about hiring are still "on hold" for next year. Faculty members hoping to return to West Chester are advised to maintain communications with their Department Chairs, who are the first contacts on all hiring decisions. To give you a sense of the timeline, the Provost has already made decisions about many tenure-track searches for the coming year. Departments who initiate such searches will aim to make offers to candidates in February or March, and only then will Department Chairs be able to begin to predict their staffing needs for the following academic year. Contracts for Temporary Faculty are typically issued in May, June, July, and even August. If you feel you meet the qualifications for a tenure-track search in your department, be sure to let APSCUF know!

The APSCUF Contract and the 25% cap: The current Collective Bargaining Agreement between Faculty and the State System of Higher Education contains a provision that all of the 14 State System Universities must utilize temporary and part-time faculty for NO MORE THAN 25% of their teaching by the end of the contract period (June 30, 2011). The goal of this provision is to encourage the State System to demonstrate its commitment to permanent tenure-track faculty by assuring that 75% of the teaching on our campuses is done by them. West Chester University is currently staffing about 30% of our classes with temporary and part-time faculty, and is working to try to get to the 25% figure required by the contract.

Faculty Development Opportunities: In addition to availing yourself of the resources listed on page 9, faculty members are encouraged to pursue faculty development opportunities whenever they are offered. Ask your department chair about opportunities that will continue to prepare you for a productive teaching career at West Chester.

Stay in Touch: APSCUF has developed a committee specifically for you! The Temporary Faculty Issues Committee is charged with hearing about your concerns, and sharing them with the administration. Please email Jen Bacon (jbacon@wcupa.edu), chair of the committee, if you would like more information or would like to become more involved.