

Dear New Faculty Member,

Welcome to Hampshire! We are looking forward to meeting you and to working with you during New Faculty Orientation, Monday and Tuesday August 29th – 30th. We will be sending you a link to a guide to working and teaching at Hampshire College. Although the pages copied below about teaching at Hampshire will be included, we want to make sure you have information about course development long before the orientation days.

We plan for engaged teaching and learning at Hampshire – both in courses and through our advising and students' Divisional work. Engagement can be considered in a number of ways.

Engaged Learning Approaches	Description
Active/Hands-On Learning	Getting students actively involved in the learning process with information, concepts, and methods.
Metacognitive Approach to Learning	Asking students to set goals and reflect on their learning helps them make sense of their experiences and create their educational path.
Experiential Learning	Stimulating students' learning by direct experience of something new in practical/real-life settings (i.e., outside of the traditional classroom setting).
Multidisciplinary Learning	Emphasizing the importance of the context of the subject of study and examining related issues and problems, as they may affect and be affected by the area of focus.
Interdisciplinary Learning	Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different ways of knowing and being able to look at issues through multiple lenses helps students appreciate complexity and create new and interesting paths.
Community-Based Learning	Engaging with social and civic life and the human condition.
Multiple Cultural Perspectives	Exploring the influence of cultural diversity, race in the United States, and relationships of power/oppression on the creation of knowledge, students' own perspectives, and the perspectives of others.

As you develop your syllabus, classroom practice and assignments, consider how you can support any of these forms of engagement.

We have a variety of resources available at the College to support teaching. These include:

- Programing sponsored by the Hampshire College Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).
- The Center for Teaching and Learning website, which contains many resources and updates – Visit it at <https://sites.hampshire.edu/ctl/>
- “Like” and “Follow” the *Hampshire College Center for Teaching and Learning* on Facebook to receive updates and news about teaching at Hampshire.

- Staff, including the Dean of Curriculum and Assessment and the Dean of Multicultural Education and Inclusion, Center for Academic Support and Advising staff, librarians, Instructional Technology staff, the community engaged learning staff, the grants office, and many other involved staff who you will meet over the coming weeks.

Please feel free to contact us if there are any teaching supports you are interested in or would like to find on campus. We welcome any and all inquiries.

Below this letter are a few pages to read and consider, including some advice on course planning and some background information on Hampshire that is intended to help you understand the institution and how your course might fit into our larger mission. We are also attaching a Word document that can act as a template for crafting your syllabus. You do not have to use this template, but please note the required sections marked with an asterisk. We will spend time at new faculty orientation addressing your specific questions and ideas about teaching at Hampshire. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Looking forward to meeting you.

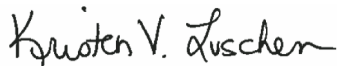
Warm Regards,



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Advice on Developing Your Course Content:

- Take time to **understand Hampshire College** and its overarching philosophy. Read other course descriptions and talk to other faculty and your school dean to get a sense of the kinds of projects and assignments that are typical of a Hampshire course. Then, think as creatively as you can about how you would incorporate these ideas AND diverge from them.
- **Talk to your school dean and colleagues.** Many teaching and classroom practices are different at Hampshire than at other institutions. Your best source of knowledge is a colleague or your dean. If you would like, you are welcome to come talk to Laura Wenk in the CTL. If you have experience teaching at another institution, its teaching and classroom practices (including workload, making up missed work, the use of lecture and exams, etc.) may not be consistent with the general practices here. You have autonomy in the classroom, but it helps to have a sense of the ethos of the institution.
- Based on what you learn, build class assignments and assessments around **meaningful course goals or objectives** that you share with students on your syllabus – this helps them understand the connections between individual class activities, the broader goals of your class, and their own goals for their learning. These are among the same goals on which you will be evaluating students at the end of the course, so it is important that they understand your goals for them. Contact Laura Wenk in the Center for Teaching and Learning if you want assistance with this.
- Design your syllabus with **a diverse group of learners** in mind. Include materials/scholarship that represents various perspectives and experiences in your field. Consider whether students in your classes will recognize their own race, gender, ethnic, and sexual identities reflected in your choice of scholars and scholarship. Perhaps communicate your commitment to diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion by including statements in your syllabus. Critically examine your syllabus from the point of view of a first generation college student - Are your expectations and terminology clear and accessible?
- **Consider framing your course around essential or big questions.** Doing this engages students' interest, and it helps you plan backwards – beginning with a consideration of what it would mean to answer the question(s) and what students could produce or how they could demonstrate their learning. That can lead to ideas about how to build assignments that help them develop their ideas or complete the project, etc.

Advice on Developing Your Syllabus:

- **Convey your expectations** clearly. Students need to know what is expected of them in order to receive an evaluation in a course, and you want to make sure that students who continue through the semester have actually produced work worthy of receiving an

evaluation. Setting expectations at the start of the semester about attendance, work completion and the quality of work helps everyone.

- Build a schedule that **allows for revision** whenever possible.
- Build a schedule that will realistically allow you to provide **consistent and meaningful feedback** to your students in any course. Students need to know what they're doing well and where they need to make improvements. As you plan your course schedule, consider building in opportunities for significant formative assessments— those that students can learn from along the way—as well as summative assessments that lead to final course evaluation. If at all possible, develop your schedule so that you will provide students with significant feedback prior to the mid-semester evaluation date and certainly before the deadline to withdraw with a “w.”
- **Give early assignments** as much as possible. We would especially recommend a small assignment in the first week or two, so that students receive feedback early in the semester and you can begin a conversation with students about your expectations. The Center for Academic Support and Advising (CASA) also appreciates this measure because a missed assignment early on can be an indication of a need for intervention. This is especially important in the case of first-year students. If you are worried because a student has not come to class, do not hesitate to reach out to CASA with an email or phone call; or you can submit a mid-semester report electronically through the Hub (required for first year students, but helpful for any student).
- **Consider assigning web-based materials** that are easily accessible for all students at the beginning of the semester. This will help students avoid difficulty due to lack of access to resources at the start. It can be helpful to integrate web-based materials throughout the course since students will use them anyway (e.g. ask them how the issue described in the reading differs from the description on Wikipedia? Or how having watched the film version, how does it differ from the book in terms of x or y?)
- **Please consider the spacing of your assignments.** Many courses have one large project at the end of the course. If a student faces this in all courses, the end of the semester is very difficult. You should think about what you want students to produce by the end of the course and consider ways to build to that project, develop the necessary skills and understandings, perhaps even produce pieces of the project as you go along. Try to leave time at the end of the semester for revision if there is a final paper or production.
- Remember to review the **academic calendar** as you're planning your course schedule. You'll find it at https://intranet.hampshire.edu/calendar/thyme/custom_hampshire/academic_calendar.php as well as in this packet. Review the policies about religious holidays and keep that information in mind as you plan.

Advice and Resources for Teaching/Classroom Logistics:

- Clearly, you want to select what is best for your course, but **please be mindful of cost** when choosing books. If you choose, you can place an extra copy (or copies) on reserve at the library. You can also place readings, both primary and supplementary, on-line in Moodle. If you scan in or digitize readings to put in Moodle, please ensure the originals are clean (i.e. not marked-up or written on) and the digital file is properly rotated. This ensures accessibility for all students. If you start now to think about universal design, you will have less adjustment for yourself later. Just ask Asha Kinney if you need help.
- Book information and orders should be submitted directly to the Hampshire College Bookstore using the on-line form available at <http://www.hampshire.edu/offices/17285.htm>. Due to new federal regulations, all faculty must submit information about books required for courses— *even if you are not ordering through the college bookstore*. If you would like to speak to a bookstore representative, please call 413.559.6000.
- **Accessing Class Rosters.** For any course, you can email students, print the roster, or download the roster on the Hub. To do so, log in to the Hub (<http://thehub.hampshire.edu>). Choose the “Teaching” tab and select the course of interest. You’ll notice three buttons on the top left of the course list: 1) email, 2) print, and 3) download. Select the appropriate button. The Hub is the place for official rosters. Although students will show up on Moodle, it is not an official list (you can add students regardless of the registration status).
- **Learning Preferred Gender Pronouns (PGP).** Faculty are expected to use students’ preferred gender pronoun (he, she, they, them, zir, or just their name) and can access them by looking beneath a student’s name on the course roster available on the Hub. Designated PGP’s should be used in all interactions and written communication, including course evaluations. Occasionally students are not yet prepared to have their transcripts reflect their PGP and so their PGP on the course roster/hub may differ from the PGP that they would like used in class. To accommodate these differences, faculty typically ask students at the beginning of the semester to introduce themselves and identify the PGP they would like used in class – “Tell us your name, where you come from, and your preferred pronoun.” More tips for faculty regarding preferred gender pronouns can be found at: <https://sites.hampshire.edu/ctl/transgender-inclusive-education/>
- **Emailing students, faculty, and staff.** You can email students in your course directly from the Hub or from the course Moodle. You can also look up individual emails of students, faculty, or staff at <http://directory.hampshire.edu>
- Familiarize yourself with **Moodle**. Using Moodle can help you communicate with students, adjust assignments as a result of student learning and interest, and provide password-protected readings and videos to students at no cost. There are many tips posted at <https://moodle.hampshire.edu/>. To that end, **check your course Moodle**

before orientation. Asha Kinney, our Assistant Director of IT for Technology, Teaching, and Learning will be present to follow up. She suggests you do the following:

1. Go to <https://moodle.hampshire.edu>
 2. Log in. (You will need to have activated your Hampshire account.)
 3. Look to the bottom right and you should see links to your courses. Let Asha know if they're not there- akinney@hampshire.edu
 4. Take a look at our Moodle how-to guide: <https://moodle.hampshire.edu/course/view.php?id=2711>
 5. Take a look at our faculty Moodle examples: <https://moodle.hampshire.edu/course/view.php?id=3081>
 6. Take a look at our page on Accessible Course Materials: <https://moodle.hampshire.edu/mod/page/view.php?id=75909>
 7. Asha is happy to meet or talk if you'd like a personalized Moodle intro - Asha Kinney, akinney@hampshire.edu or book a meeting here: <https://doodle.com/ashakinney>
- Pay attention to **accessibility issues** in all your course materials and activities. Be in touch with Asha Kinney if you have students who need special accommodations for how material is presented.

A Few Other Important Things to Know:

- All students are given the opportunity to **evaluate your courses** at the end of the semester. However, asking students for feedback through a **quick mid-semester evaluation** can improve communication and will give you a chance to make helpful modifications at the mid-semester point. This can be as simple as asking, within an anonymous feedback sheet, “What is going well for you? What could you do to improve the quality of our classroom discussions? What could I do to improve your experience in this class?” or similar questions. This process can be paired with the date of mid-semester evaluations that you will be asked to do of students. I can help you with this quick yet helpful process if you are interested.
- **Campus Visit Days.** Admissions is hosting small format campus visit days this Fall. They will be hosting 8 mini events (called “Div Days: an introduction to the Hampshire academic model”) from late September through mid-November. These days will be capped at 50-60 total guests per event (including parents). Look for information from your deans – visitors will be able to visit classes. You might design classes those days with prospective student visitors, and perhaps a parent or two, in mind. It is great to involve visitors where appropriate. If you would rather not have visitors to your class, you can let the administrative assistant from your school know.
- **Incompletes and extensions.** Students often request extensions for work assigned. It is your discretion as the instructor whether to allow the extension, though in the case of significant medical conditions or family emergencies we strongly urge you to be flexible. Be explicit in your syllabus about your policy on late work. At the end of the semester, you may grant a student an incomplete if you so choose. This will involve negotiating a new deadline for completing the remaining work prior to the start of the next semester (see the incomplete policy in the forthcoming guide to teaching at Hampshire for specific deadlines). The sample syllabus has an example of wording.
- **Winter or inclement weather.** Rarely, classes will be canceled due to inclement weather. It has happened, though. Be sure to build some flexibility into your syllabus in case you have a class period that is canceled. You can find out about closings by phoning 559-5508.

Get to Know Hampshire: Thoughts on Hampshire's Indispensable Core

Neil Stillings, Professor of Psychology, School of Cognitive Science
Member of the faculty since 1971

Traditionally-delivered liberal arts education is in some respects not perfectly suited either to the traditional goals of liberal education or to the challenges of the 21st Century. In many successful students the college experience breeds compliance and an ability to work hard and unquestioningly at tasks and toward requirements set by others. At worst the B.A. becomes a mere credential, and success in college involves a set of encapsulated grade-getting skills that do not transfer to life after graduation. What today's students and today's world need consistently are the ideal outcomes of liberal arts education: intellectual independence that is integrated into graduates' personalities and that transfers to life after college; a life-long appetite to identify and think through problems without arbitrary constraint; an ability to weigh and synthesize alternative perspectives and to reflect on ultimate purposes and goals; and the courage to act on the basis of one's analyses and reflections. Hampshire's system was designed to nurture just these capabilities and to challenge students not to settle for less.

Hampshire's overarching educational principle is to challenge students throughout their college careers to take charge of their own intellectual development and to integrate an active, independent, critical, reflective intellectual perspective into their lives as a whole. The crux of the college's motto *Non Satis Scire* is going beyond the passive acquisition of received knowledge to extend and ramify knowledge through the student's own creation, inquiry, critique, invention, and informed action in the world. Hampshire aims beyond putting a post-graduation surface polish on its students, working from their first day to transform them into independent thinkers, creators, and doers. There is no path through Hampshire along which the student compartmentalizes college work and dutifully but mechanically discharges tasks set by the faculty.

After forty years Hampshire's educational program remains a highly distinctive and transformative approach to achieving the college's overarching educational goals for every student. It is often pointed out that other colleges have adopted pieces of Hampshire's program over the years. What should also be pointed out is that no other college has adopted enough of the interlocking parts of the program to serve the ultimate objectives.

- At Hampshire all students work with faculty to develop personalized concentrations in their second and third years (Division II), reflecting on their evolving intellectual interests and how those interests intersect with the demands of multiple disciplines. At other colleges the customized major is increasingly offered as an option for "honors" students. At Hampshire it is recognized as central to a meaningful undergraduate education for all

students, who are consistently challenged to ask, What are the questions that I want to answer, What do I need to know to pursue my interests, and How am I integrating and using my studies in my own original work and in my plans for the future. Their focus on these concerns of personal lifetime significance is not displaced by questions such as, How can I get a high grade in this course with minimum effort, or How can I just get this required course out of the way, or What does the instructor want me to do on this assignment.

- At Hampshire all students work with faculty to design and complete a year-long independent-study project in their final year (Division III), building on their work in the concentration. This level of initiative and independence is considered a necessary feature of an undergraduate education, whereas at most of the most prestigious liberal arts colleges it is considered an “honor,” reserved for as few as 10% of the student body. The required Division III project is the concrete expression of Hampshire’s commitment to make every student’s work in the concentration a significant time of intellectual development, because that work must be deep enough, coherent enough, and personally significant enough to support a year of independent, original work.
- Hampshire is perhaps unique in having a rigorous distribution requirement for first-year students designed to build broad foundations for their independent intellectual development. In Division I students practice the major approaches to scholarly inquiry and artistic practice, work to develop fundamental academic skills, and begin to work outside of the course curriculum. While other institutions stick with survey courses that encourage student passivity or abandon general education requirements out of timidity and lack of imagination, Hampshire has continued to refine its commitment to pushing students to lead diverse, active intellectual lives from the day of their arrival.
- Students at Hampshire receive narrative evaluations rather than grades. Hampshire is not a competition, and it does not rank students. Every student receives rigorous, constructive evaluation on every assignment and at the end of every course and learning activity. At completion of Divisions I and II students present full portfolios of work for comprehensive, diagnostic evaluation by their advisors. At Hampshire evaluation is more than a grade—it is a reflective, constructive conversation with faculty. Hampshire students can concentrate on learning to think and write without guessing what is going to be on the test, gaming the syllabus, looking for the gut courses, or worrying where they are on the grading curve. At Hampshire the goal is learning, not a GPA.
- At Hampshire progress toward graduation is measured by the development of intellectual skills rather than the accumulation of credit hours. Among other things this gives students enormous flexibility in working with faculty on opportunities for learning outside the classroom, in independent study projects, internships, community work, service abroad, and so on. Experiences outside the classroom are more than add-ons or résumé pads. They

are intentionally and thoroughly integrated into students' educational programs, allowing the student to build deep connections to life beyond the college.

- Hampshire does not have departments. The college's interdisciplinary schools free faculty and students to think in terms of questions to be addressed rather than disciplinary boundaries to be observed. Hampshire students must explore their individual intellectual and life goals in face-to-face conversations with their advisors, because no one decided what they must study before they even enrolled.

The case for Hampshire, then, is that it is a college that is uniquely designed to produce active, independent, deeply thoughtful, and intellectually skilled graduates who can succeed in and who are badly needed in the 21st Century. Hampshire was not intended to be an "alternative" college. It was intended to be transformational, to point the way toward the redesign of undergraduate education. That redesign is as timely, perhaps more timely, today than it was in 1970.