Smith Center for Faculty Excellence
Ohio Wesleyan University
2026-2027

FAQs for New Part-Time Instructors

Welcome to OWU! We're so glad you're here. We've created this document to help ease your transition as you begin teaching at Ohio Wesleyan and hope that it answers most of your questions. If you have additional questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out either directly to your Chair or to Andrea Colvin, Assistant Director of the Smith Center for Faculty Excellence, at arcolvin@owu.edu. In addition, our Division Chairs are also available to help when a particular question or issue requires it:

- David Counselman for Arts & Humanities
- Vanessa Hildebrand for Social Sciences
- Laura Tuhela-Reuning for Natural Sciences

Getting Started

How do I get my OWU ID?
How do I get a parking pass and where can I park?
How do I connect to OWU's secure wifi?
How do I print to a campus printer from my own computer?
When will I receive my first pay check?
Where do I find my pay statements and tax documents?
Is the campus closed on federal holidays?
Will I have my own office and am I expected to hold office hours?
Will I receive a computer/laptop to use during class?
Where can I find something to eat/drink on campus?
What if there is a maintenance or housekeeping issue in my classroom, building, or office space?
What do I do if I have to miss a day of teaching due to illness or other legitimate reasons?
What is the OWU Connection Conference and do I teach that day?
Am I allowed to use the pool and the gym on campus?

Teaching

How do I access my course roster?

What do I do if a student wants to add my course but it is currently full?
Are there required elements to add to my syllabus?
How and where can I make copies for my classes?
What do I do if the technology in my classroom is not working?
What is Blackboard and do I have to use it?
What is Starfish and do I have to use it?
I received an email about Early Progress Surveys. What are they and do I need to fill these out?
What are midterm grades and do I have to submit them?
How do I know when final exams are scheduled?
How do I submit final grades?
Some of my students tell me they need or have accommodations. How does this work?
Do I need to submit textbook orders for any courses I will teach the following semester?
What is OWU's AI policy?
What do I do if I suspect a student of cheating or plagiarism?
Where do I send students who need additional support (academic, mental health, financial, etc.)?
Where do I find resources to support my teaching?
What should I do on the first day of class?
A student is asking for an Incomplete. When is it appropriate to give an Incomplete?

Getting Started

How do I get my OWU ID?

The Card Office is the Information Services Help Desk**,** located in Corns 116**.** You can stop by during office hours, have your picture taken and get your ID. Note that your OWU ID card is now also used to access your departmental printer/scanner and to access academic buildings after normal business hours.

How do I get a parking pass and where can I park?

Parking permits for OWU faculty and staff are free and allow you to park in any OWU employee parking lot. Fill out the Parking Application for Employees (also available at my.owu.edu). Parking permits are mailed to your department's main office. Here is the OWU Campus Map to help you locate parking lots near your academic building.

How do I connect to OWU's secure wifi?

After you have been issued an OWU email address, you can register your computer/phone in order to get on the university's wifi network. Follow these directions: https://helpdesk.owu.edu/questions/7200 to get started. If you run into problems with any technology questions, either on your computer or in your classroom, please call the Help Desk at 740.368.3120.

How do I print to a campus printer from my own computer?

We have wireless printing available, allowing faculty, staff, and students to print to campus printers from their own devices. Instructions for how to download and install our print driver are found in BishopWorks.

When will I receive my first paycheck?

Part-time instructors are paid twice monthly. In the fall of 2026 the first paycheck will be issued on September 1st. For additional information you may refer to this payroll document.

Where do I find pay statements and tax documents?

Go to my.owu.edu and sign in with your OWU credentials. Click on ADP Portal and then select "Myself" at the top. This is where you'll find your pay and tax statements.

Is the campus closed on federal holidays?

No! While OWU Staff have the day off, classes are held as normal on federal holidays (e.g. Labor Day, Veterans Day, Martin Luther King Day). Instead of having holidays off, faculty get a 3-day break in October plus a full week off for Thanksgiving in the fall. In the spring, faculty have a week-long break in March.

Will I have my own office and am I expected to hold office hours?

Talk to your Department Chair about whether you will have your own or a shared office. All faculty, including part-time instructors, are expected to make themselves available to students for questions or extra help during office hours each week. Ask your chair about whether your department has specific expectations or norms with regard to holding office hours.

Will I receive a computer/laptop to use during class?

Please ask your department chair about this, as this varies from department to department. Most classrooms are not equipped with computers, so instructors are expected to connect their own device in order to project onto a screen. You may want to test this before the first day of classes to make sure that you have the appropriate adaptor and know how to use the technology prior to teaching your first class. If you did receive an OWU computer, please familiarize yourself with the Computer Use Policy.

Where can I find something to eat/drink on campus?

Go to https://harvesttableowu.com/ to learn about campus dining locations, menus, and hours. There are water bottle refilling stations in most academic buildings. Many departments also provide a coffee maker, water, and possibly a mini fridge and/or microwave. A few buildings have vending machines with snacks/drinks.

What if there is a maintenance or housekeeping issue in my classroom, building, or office space?

It's a good idea to bring the issue to the attention of your Chair and/or Academic Assistant, as they may want to handle the situation. Maintenance work requests can be made online. Note that there are two different links for maintenance requests and custodial requests.

What do I do if I have to miss a day of teaching due to illness or other legitimate reasons?

Please contact your Department Chair as well as your Academic Assistant to let them know that you will be absent. You should also send an email to your students (through Blackboard or Self Service) informing them of the absence and giving them explicit instructions as to what they should do before the next class. In some cases (for example, if the reason for your absence is inclement weather) it may be appropriate to teach your class remotely (via Zoom or Google Meet). If doing so, it is important to ensure that all students in the class have the technological and other resources necessary to participate. Your Department Chair will be able to provide guidance for your specific situation.

What is the OWU Connection Conference and do I teach that day?

The fall 2026 OWU Connection Conference is Thursday, September 24, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is a day of alternative instruction focused on Connection Experiences, the high-impact practices that fulfill a General Education requirement for every OWU student. Normal classes *do not* meet that day, but students are expected to participate

in the conference by presenting on student panels, attending sessions, or both. To learn more about the OWU Connection, email Dave Markwardt, Associate Dean of the OWU Connection. You may also want to watch this video or visit our website.

Please encourage your students to engage with the conference. Faculty participation is voluntary, though we encourage faculty to attend sessions, especially those featuring their students or advisees. There are also many opportunities to participate as a moderator or in other roles. You may want to check with your chair about whether they expect you to be on campus that day or to contribute in a particular way.

Am I allowed to use the pool and the gym on campus?

Yes! As an employee, you may use all facilities on campus, including the pool, the fitness center, and the library. Meek Aquatics and Recreation Center. Simpson Querrey Fitness Center. Library. You will need to bring your OWU ID card!

Teaching

How do I access my course roster?

Go to Self Service, which you can access by going to the OWU website (www.owu.edu), selecting Faculty & Staff and then clicking on OWU Self Service or by going directly to campus.owu.edu. Log in with your OWU ID and password.
Click on “Classes” and then select “Course Management”. Select the semester and the course you wish to view from the drop down menu. Click on Class List to view the roster.

What do I do if a student wants to add my course but it is currently full?

Students can drop/add classes during the first week of the semester (see Academic Calendar). If the course is full on the first day of classes and there are students wanting to add it, it is reasonable to allow them to come to class for the first few meetings in case a student drops (which happens often). Note that students on the waitlist will not be automatically added even if a spot opens up. The instructor has to offer the seat to them manually in Self-Service (campus.owu.edu -> Classes -> Course Management -> Select Semester and Course -> Wait List). Priority should be given to students who are closer to graduating and/or need the class for their major. If you are unsure of whether to add a student, please talk to your Department Chair. Questions? See "How Do I Manage the Waitlist for My Class?"

Are there required elements to add to my syllabus?

We do not require faculty to follow a specific format, but certain elements should be part of every syllabus (e.g. learning outcomes, required assessments/assignments, academic integrity policy, AI policy, where to find support, etc.). The Smith Center for Faculty Excellence has put together this Syllabus Template with suggestions for inclusive, student-friendly policies and language.You can also search past OWU syllabi here.

How and where do I make copies for my classes?

You can send print jobs to Print Services (located inside the OWU Bookstore in the Hamilton Williams Student Center) by emailing the documents to printservices@owu.edu. Always include the following information:

- Account #: **(ask your Chair or Academic Assistant)**
- Department:
- Date needed:
- Quantity:
- Color or B/W printing:
- Color of paper to be printed on:
- Special finishing options:
    - 1-sided to 2-sided
    - Stapled
    - 3-Hole Punch
    - Folding: _____
- Don't forget to attach your file. **PDF is preferred**.

You may want to ask your Chair about who picks up copies from Print Services and when, and whether there is a copy machine in your department's office as well.

What do I do if the technology in my classroom is not working?

Your best bet is to call the Help Desk: 740.368.3120. More often than not, someone is available to stop by your classroom within a few minutes and help you resolve the issue.

What is Blackboard and do I have to use it?

Blackboard (bb.owu.edu) is OWU's learning management system. You are not required to use it, but many instructors find it helpful. You may wish to use it for any of the following:

- Gradebook

- Posting course materials that students can access (syllabus, rubrics, PowerPoints)
- Communicating with students (sending emails, posting announcements)
- Discussion forums
- Assessments / Assignments

Your Blackboard course shells will be automatically created for you as soon as you have completed all HR processes. To learn more about how to use Blackboard, check out the Blackboard Teaching Essentials Course. If you need help setting up your Blackboard course, please contact David Soliday, our Instructional Technologist.

What is Starfish and do I have to use it?

Starfish is an online student success system. We use it to provide information to our student success team about students who are struggling in our classes (missing classes, not turning in assignments, low scores on exams etc.). Go to starfish.owu.edu and log in with your OWU credentials. You will see a list of your students and can also search for a specific student using the search bar at the top. The two main functions to use are “Flags” and “Kudos”. Giving a student “Kudos” is like giving them a pat on the back and letting them know that they are doing a great job. “Flags” can be raised for different reasons (Attendance Concern, Behavioral Concern, General Concern, Student is considering Transferring or Withdrawing). When selecting the type of “flag” you wish to raise, pay attention to who will receive an email with your comments. Some flags will automatically send an email to the student, while others will not. You will want to keep that in mind when writing your comments.

I received an email about Early Progress Surveys. What are they, and do I need to fill these out?

Early in the semester (usually around week 3) you will receive a request to fill out an Early Progress Survey for each of your classes on Starfish. Please do so, as this information helps our student support team as well as Academic Advisors reach out to and support students who are struggling. Note that for many first-year students, this is the first time that they receive an email from Starfish, and knowing that their instructor “raised a flag” may cause them some anxiety. Therefore, it may be helpful to mention the survey during class and explain what it’s about, so that students are not caught by surprise.

What are midterm grades and do I have to submit them?

Midterm grades are due in October (see Academic Calendar). These are not letter grades (A-F) but grade estimates (C or higher / C- or lower). It is very important to submit them by the due date, as these estimates provide important information to both students and their academic advisors about students' academic standing and allow them to make decisions about adding or withdrawing from courses if needed. You will receive an email from the Registrar before the deadline with more detailed information. To submit midterm grades, go to Self-Service (campus.owu.edu) and log in with your OWU credentials. Select the course for which you wish to enter grades. Click on Overall Grades, and then use the drop-down menu to enter midterm grades for each student. Don't forget to hit "save" and "submit" when you're done. Questions? See "How Do I Submit Midterm Grades for My Class?"

How do I know when final exams are scheduled?

It is important that all instructors adhere to the published Final Exam Schedule. Faculty should not administer final exams / student presentations during the last week of classes. Questions? Consult with your Department Chair if you're unsure about whether you are required to give a final exam and before making any changes to the schedule or allowing individual students to take an exam at a different time.

How do I submit final grades?

Access Self-Service: campus.owu.edu and follow the same steps as you would to access the roster. Then, instead of "Class List", choose "Overall Grades". Enter final grades for each student and don't forget to hit "save" and "submit". You don't have to enter all grades at once. Note: Submitting final grades by the deadline is essential, because the Academic Status Committee meets the very next day to discuss students' academic standing and make decisions about things like academic notice, warning, suspension, and expulsion. Having all of the information is crucial for the committee to be able to do their job well. Questions? See "How Do I Submit Final Grades for My Class?"

Some of my students tell me they need or have accommodations. How does this work?

Any student registered with Accessibility Services and needing reasonable accommodation due to a temporary/permanent disability/condition should provide instructors with a letter from the Accessibility Services Office which lists their approved accommodations. (Note that students are not required to disclose clinical or medical information to instructors.) Typical accommodations may include additional time on tests/quizzes, distraction-reduced testing space, note-taking assistance, modifications to deadlines/attendance policies, etc. It is recommended that instructors meet with each student briefly to discuss specific logistic concerns as to how these accommodations may be provided within your course. If you are unsure what's considered a "reasonable accommodation", please reach out to your Chair or Amanda, our Accessibility Services Director (see below). If a student needs to complete in-class tests/assignments at the OWU Testing Center, it is the student's responsibility to schedule an appointment with the testing center. Instructors will receive an automated notification when a student has scheduled an exam, with instructions to provide the exam file and any information needed for proctoring. Testing Center staff will return completed exams to your mailbox, typically the same day. If you have questions about any of this, don't hesitate to contact Amanda Rodenborg: anrodenborg@owu.edu, #3990 and/or testingcenter@owu.edu, #3857.

Do I need to submit textbook orders for any courses I will teach the following semester?

Ask your department chair! If they tell you that you should submit textbook orders for your courses, please follow the guidelines sent by the bookstore along with the request for course materials. The OWU Campus Store is located in the lower level of the Hamilton Williams Campus Center, and is managed by Bibliu.

What is OWU's AI policy?

- OWU AI Policy (Approved May, 2026)
- AI Syllabus Guidelines This document has suggestions for syllabus policies, in-class conversations about AI, and AI disclosures.
- Additional OWU AI Faculty Support

What do I do if I suspect a student of cheating or plagiarism?

Here is OWU's Academic Integrity Policy. It is recommended that you talk to your students about academic integrity in class, make expectations very explicit, and include a clear policy statement in your syllabus. If you are unsure of how to handle a situation where you suspect a violation of the academic integrity policy, you might want to reach out to your Chair or contact Lauren Hensley at acrb@owu.edu. She is our Director of Holistic Advising but also currently serves as the Academic Affairs Rep on the Academic Conduct Review Board. If your concern remains after meeting with your student, submit the Academic Integrity Reporting Form, located on the OWU Faculty Resources page. It is optional to include supporting documentation on the initial reporting form; documentation can be added later through the Supporting Documentation Form if a student contests the charge or the ACRB requires additional information.

Where do I send students who need additional support (academic, mental health, financial, etc.)?

- **Academic Support:** The Sagan Academic Resource Center houses our Writing Center, Academic Skills Center, Quantitative Skills Center, Bishop Access, Departmental Tutoring, University Testing Center, and Accessibility Services. Staff

- **Accessibility Services:** For Accessibility Services, contact Amanda Rodenborg, Director of Accessibility Services, x3990 or anrodenborg@owu.edu.

- **Student Concerns (Academic and General):** Brad Pulcini, Assistant Vice President for Student Engagement and Success (btpulcin@owu.edu, x3943) leads the student success and care teams. He monitors Starfish and follows up with students, faculty, and advisors as appropriate. He can also be contacted with questions or concerns regarding student conduct and wellness.

- **Library:** The library web site has a landing page for Faculty and Staff under the Service menu (e.g. instruction, borrowing, course reserves, and more). The library is also in a period of significant but exciting transition. For the latest on major library happenings, visit the Library Projects page. More routine updates (hours, new acquisitions, etc.) can be found under the News & Events section on their homepage.

- **Career Connection:** Connect your students with the Career Connection Office! Career Connection staff help students at any stage; from discovering their career direction and searching for jobs or internships, to refining resumes and practicing interview skills. Students can get involved by joining one of our 8 Career Communities, scheduling a meeting with a specialized Career Catalyst, or dropping by the Career Connection office in Slocum 207 with quick questions. Check out our Career Resource Hub Here to learn more, or contact us directly at careers@owu.edu / 740-368-3152.

- **Financial Aid:** If students have questions about their financial aid status, tuition, or scholarships, they should reach out to the Office of Financial Aid at 740-368-3050 or financialaid@owu.edu. They can also check their financial aid award status on the Financial Aid Website.

Where do I find resources to support my teaching?

- For course design questions check out the following:
  - Grounding your course in Learning Outcomes
  - Designing your Syllabi
- Check out our Smith Center for Faculty Excellence Website. Here you can find lots of pedagogical resources, teaching tips, resources for new faculty and more.
- If you would like to meet with someone to discuss ideas or questions related to one of your courses, don't hesitate to reach out to Dr. Barb Bird (bjbird@owu.edu), Director of the Smith Center for Faculty Excellence, or Dr. Andrea Colvin (arcolvin@owu.edu), Assistant Director of the Smith Center.
- OWU is also a member of the Greater Lakes College Association (GLCA) Consortium for Teaching and Learning, which offers additional resources.

What should I do on the first day of class?

Here are some suggestions for how to make the most of the first day of class: First Day Suggestions.

A student is asking for an Incomplete. When is it appropriate to give an Incomplete?

Our policy states that an instructor is authorized to assign a temporary grade of Incomplete if a student experiences extenuating circumstances that prevent them from finishing a limited amount of work. When instructors assign a temporary grade of Incomplete in a course, the student must either 1) complete the remaining work by the end of the third week of the semester immediately following or 2) submit a petition to ASC for an official course extension. While assigning a grade of Incomplete is certainly

appropriate in some extenuating circumstances, the Academic Status Committee urges you to carefully consider your use of this option. If the amount of work remaining in a course cannot reasonably be completed within the first three weeks of the semester immediately following, an Incomplete is not in the best interest of the student. The burden of finishing substantial work from a previous semester while taking a full load of courses compromises students' ability to succeed in their current courses, leading to additional academic challenges. Additionally, we know that well-meaning faculty sometimes assign Incompletes without a student's knowledge, assuming that this will be helpful. While we understand this impulse, we ask that faculty do not assign an Incomplete without first discussing all potential options with the affected student.