Professor Lauren Davila Fall 2019

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2pm-3 in Rob B 470 Music and Theater Building 1002

**English 101: Composition**

*"A word after a word after a word is power."* ***--Margaret Atwood***

**Course Description**

You may have a preconceived notion that you are a good writer or a bad writer. Maybe you have been told by teachers in the past. Maybe it comes from a self-assessment. However, in this class, we will be actively working to dismantle those ideas of good and bad. In order to do so, we will look at activities, strategies, technology, media, and processes that are widely used on the journey to **write effectively**.

Writing is important and you use it every single day. From texting to tweeting to coming up with a punny Instagram caption, you automatically **assess your audience** and write with a specific **purpose**. You inherently understand that what you say is important, and in this class, we will expand your knowledge of writing and its reach. We will accomplish this by tracking journalistic **op-eds**, looking at **annotated bibliographies**, and learning to **write for real** and specific audiences. All of these assignments and activities will use your personal background, assumptions, and passions as ways to make your writing relevant to your audience.

Writing is a complex, **extended process** that must be examined to be effective. Therefore, writing is most improved when revision is emphasized as a critical component of the writing process. You will start to understand this **revision process** through critical thinking and using writing as a tool for expanding ideas. English 101 is designed to help improve your abilities to read, write, think and research at a college level; this process seeks to engage you as a writer through **reflective awareness**.

In conclusion, this class will help you to write consistently, **interpret feedback** from me and your peers, and utilize **academic writing resources** (such as the library, source databases, and citation methods). My hope for you at the end of this class is that you will be equipped to interpret a wide variety of sources (print and digital) through the **writing process.**

**Textbooks and Materials**

* *In Conversation: A Writer’s Guidebook*(2017)
* *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing, 4E*(2018)
* Laptop or tablet
* Full access to Google Drive
* Active Mason email account (per University Policy)

**The Mason Core Program**

This course is part of the Mason Core (General Education) Program, which is designed to help develop “a Mason Graduate [who is] an engaged citizen, a well-rounded scholar, and someone who is prepared to act for the world” ([Mason Catalog).](http://catalog.gmu.edu/mason-core/) It fulfills the Mason Core Lower Level Written Communication requirement. For more information on the Mason Core, visit the [Provost’s Mason Core page](https://provost.gmu.edu/academics-and-research/undergraduate-education/mason-core).



As a Mason Impact course, ENGH 101 teaches students to understand knowledge creation and to investigate a meaningful question through the development of an inquiry-based research project that evaluates, synthesizes, and incorporates multiple perspectives.

**Course Goals**

As part of the Mason Core, the English 101 curriculum works to create engaged citizens who understand that writing is a social, rhetorical act and can effectively analyze and respond to the writing situations they encounter within and beyond the university walls.

These courses help student writers—who may be developing their confidence, critical thinking, flexibility, control of language, and sense of ownership—learn to analyze, research, and produce texts of varying genres that engage a range of audiences.

*ENGH 101 Learning Outcomes:*

1. Students are able to analyze and respond to a range of rhetorical situations with increased awareness of the purposes, audiences, and contexts of writing. They are able to identify appropriate rhetorical strategies and apply them in their own writing.
2. Students develop strategies for anticipating and using audience response as they engage in and reflect upon a recursive writing process that includes exploration, inquiry, and invention, as well as drafting, organizing, revising, peer-reviewing, and editing.
3. Students gain emerging college-level proficiency in critically reading and writing nonfiction genres to develop analysis, reflection, exposition, argumentation, and research skills.
4. Students are able to use research strategies for topic exploration and refining research questions; locate, select, evaluate, synthesize, and document sources; and incorporate outside facts, perspectives, and ideas in their writing to complicate and extend their own ideas. They are able to employ appropriate technologies and resources to support their reading, thinking, researching, and writing.
5. Students develop knowledge of linguistic structures and writing conventions through critical reading and practice (writing and revision). They understand why writing conventions vary based on genre and audience and apply this knowledge by composing different types of texts.

**Blackboard Usage**

In order to succeed in this course, access to both Mason Blackboard and your GMU email are required. This class uses Blackboard as a primary instructional platform. Please be sure to turn in all assignments electronically on Blackboard unless otherwise stated.

To access Blackboard:

1. Go to <http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>
2. Enter your Mason UserId and password
3. Click on the “Courses” tab at the top right
4. Click on our course number in your “Course List”
   1. If this course does not appear in your “Course List” menu, please let me know as soon as possible.

**Technology Policy**

This class uses Blackboard (access explained above) as its primary instructional platform. You will be expected to log on to Blackboard regularly throughout the week to read assigned texts, participate in discussions, and complete assignments. Please be sure to turn in all assignments electronically on Blackboard unless otherwise stated.

You are all required to bring a laptop or tablet with keyboard to class each week; this device should have Wi-Fi connectivity and Google Drive/Docs. We will be using class time to practice writing skills, self-editing, and peer editing.

Various technologies are important tools for our research and writing. However, when you’re not using your laptop or tablet for class work, shut the lid or turn it off. If you have cellphones out consistently or technology is stopping you from participating in class, privileges will be taken away. Using social media and other sites on your phones and computers not only distracts you, but often distracts neighbors as well. If there is an emergency call or text, please excuse yourself from class as quietly as possible.

**Methods of Instruction**

To begin, this course is not a lecture class. Most, if not all, of our class meetings will be interactive and involve a significant amount of discussion, writing, and collaboration. This class will build off of previous weeks’ work and class interactions with your peers and myself; therefore, it is important that you are present and actively engaged. Additionally, much of our class time and most of your reflections are devoted to foundational work on your major projects. Participating in conversation is the single most important thing you can do to succeed in this class.

It is expected that you will:

* complete all readings,
* come to class prepared with all homework completed,
* prep for in-class work (if it is known),
* participate meaningfully in discussions and activities,
* ask questions and remain open to new ideas/viewpoints,
* practice writing strategies and techniques,
* and learn to critically read (annotation, comparative techniques, and comprehension).

Take advantage of the opportunities to practice reading, research, writing and revision techniques and strategies in class!

A common assumption for face-to-face college courses is that you’ll spend about two hours outside of class to prepare for every hour you are in class. However, for the purpose of this composition class, you should expect to spend about three hours for every hour you are in class. Between homework assignments and class prep, you should be averaging 10-12 hours weekly. I would like all of you to leave this class an effective writer, which is a result of time, reflection, open-mindedness, persistence, and lots of revision. Students who attend regularly and actively participate during class, thoughtfully complete all assignments (large and small), and block off sufficient time each week for thinking, drafting and revising will succeed in this class and master important composition skills.

**Grades and Completion Policy**

Grades will be broken down as follows:

A+ 100-97.5% | A 97.4-93% | A- 92.9-90% | B+ 89.9-87.5% | B 87.4-83% | B- 82.9-80% | C+ 79.9-77.5% | C 77.4-73% | C- 72.9-70% | D 69.9-60% | F below 60%

Students must earn a C (73%) or higher to fulfill the ENGH 101 Mason Core requirement; students must complete all major projects to earn a C (or higher).

You will receive a midterm grade based on the work of the first half of the semester, which you can view in PatriotWeb. The midterm grade’s purpose is to help you understand how well you are doing so that you can make any adjustments necessary. It is not meant to predict your final grade, as the work in the second half of the semester may be weighted more heavily. Feel free to make an appointment with me to discuss this midterm grade, but note your grade is non-negotiable.

**Assignment Standards**

* An “A” level grade (90-100%) marks an essay that engages the reader in a provocative conversation. Even more than in a “B” essay, the writer anticipates and responds to possible reader questions, uses a wide range of supporting evidence, structures arguments and analyses to create a fluid reading experience, provides unexpected insights, and/or uses language with care and facility.
* A “B” level grade (80-89%) highlights a strong example of college writing and thinking. In addition to meeting the “C” level requirements, the writer of such an essay goes further in some way(s): he or she demonstrates some insight into the “gray areas” of the topic, provides original or very thorough support that is tightly woven into the overall argument, and/or creates prose that reads smoothly at both the sentence and paragraph levels. The essay has few sentence-level errors and/or may demonstrate a lively voice or style.
* A “C” level grade (70-79%) denotes competent college-level writing and achievement. The writer responds to the specified rhetorical situation: he or she meets, to some degree, all the assignment requirements, and employs some key strategies for communicating his/her ideas to his/her targeted audience. The essay has a central focus, presents some support, and moves from point to point in an orderly fashion; sentence-level errors do not significantly prevent comprehension. Essays that do not meet these criteria will not earn a “C.”
* “D” and “F” level essays do not meet the basic expectations of the assignment.

**Course Requirements and Grading Percentages**

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| --- | --- |
| **Assignment Name** | **Course Grade** |
| Project 1: Best of Three | 100 points (10%) |
| Project 2: Annotated Bibliography | 80 points (8%) |
| Project 3: Op-Ed Essay  2nd A. Bib w/ Research Reflection | 150 points (15%)  120 points (12%) |
| Project 4: “Write for Real” w/ Rhetorical Addendum | 250 points (25%) |
| Journal Entries | 150 points (15%) |
| Engagement and Participation | 150 points (15%) |

**Major Assignments**

Four major assignments will be written outside of class and will make up 70% of your course grade. Detailed prompts will be available on Blackboard for each assignment

**Project 1:**

*Best of Three Exploratory Essay (800 words)*

Researchers in economics, business, psychology and education have demonstrated that people make better choices when they select from among at least three reasonable options. So you’ll describe three separate, reasonably interesting, accessible, researchable, narrow, and debatable topics that you could spend this semester inquiring about; explain the personal, academic, and/or societal relevance of each; briefly explain how you know that that each is an appropriate and readily researchable choice; and argue for selecting the one that you prefer. You’ll write *for* yourself, *to* the audience of your professor (who will approve your choice or not), and *with awareness of* your peers, who’ll be learning from your process as you learn from theirs.

**Project 2:**

*Annotated Bibliography w/ Research Evaluation (800 words)*

You’ll conduct research to support and develop your opinion essay and write four to five short annotations (150 words each) that summarize, evaluate and reflect upon highly credible and relevant sources. You will also write one paragraph that explores the connections between your sources and the ways that they complicate, change and confirm your initial stance. Throughout this assignment, you’ll hone your research skills, focus on critically reading and evaluating sources, and learn to select the most appropriate sources based on the essay’s rhetorical situation. ~800 words

**Project 3:**

*Op-Ed Essay (1200 words)*

After doing low-stakes writing in which you develop your opinion on your topic—or a small aspect of it— from the “Best of Three” and A.Bib, you’ll use those ideas and your research to write a newspaper op-ed piece that convincingly conveys your stance to the readers of a specific, real-life publication with a purpose of persuading the reader. You will accomplish this through storytelling and evidence analysis primarily. As we work on this essay, we’ll read and analyze published op-ed pieces for the moves and genre conventions that you can apply in your essay. Throughout this essay, you’ll focus on merging argumentative, creative, and persuasive writing, using and integrating research, establishing your ethos, and honing your voice and writing techniques.

*Annotated Bibliography 2*

Using your op-ed research as a starting point, you’ll refine your topic and produce a focused research question that will allow you to move from persuasion to argument and (eventually) argue to a *local and/or very specific audience*. You’ll conduct research to support and develop your final argument text (see below) and to explore the complexities of the issue and the resistances of your audience. This iteration of the bibliography will include eight high quality sources total. Therefore, there will be an additional three to four sources that you will discover right away. These sources are ones that are appropriate for and relevant to your research questions. As you deselect some (perhaps all) of your original sources, you will annotate your reasons for rejecting or replacing them. Your final sources should paint a complicated picture of your topic in terms of varying perspectives, emphases, and conclusions. Each annotation will include the source’s type and credibility and a detailed source summary that establishes the source’s relevance and potential use in the project. The research evaluation section will explain how this work has complicated or clarified your initial understanding of your chosen issue (with discussion of your research gaps), illustrate the complex connection between your sources, and discuss how audience shaped your research and source-selection process.

**Project 4:**

*“Write for Real” Argument Text (1300 w/ 200-word addendum)*

All writing is real, but for this final project you will focus on real world writing in that you’ll use your annotated bibliography research to write a compelling argument to your local and/or specific audience (which might range from stakeholders to practitioners to academics) in a genre that’s appropriate for communicating with them. I encourage you to be creative. The key, however, is to create something specifically targeted to a specific audience with the power to effect change on your chosen issue. The final product may be publicly shared or submitted to that audience for extra credit and to help effect real change. You will also submit a rhetorical addendum that explains some of the specific ways that your audience and genre research/awareness informed your writing choices. This project will help your hone your analysis skills, focus on integrating and synthesizing research to support and argument, and showcase your ability to consider purpose, audience, evidence, and context in your writing.

**End Pages:**

You will be required to submit an end page with each major assignment (these are not included in each project’s word count). I won’t grade a project without an end page, and a delayed end page (more than 48 hours) will result in a late penalty. While you’ll be given specific parameters for each end page, this is your opportunity to open a written dialogue between us, let me know what you most want feedback on, and reflect on your product and process—what you learned, how that learning is demonstrated in your essay, top strengths and concerns, and how you might apply what you’ve learned to other writing contexts. End pages will be included in the final grade for each of your assignments. Each end page must be a minimum of 500 words.

**Google Drive Journal Entries:**

As we will go over, you will each have a personalized Google Drive page for notes, class activities, and other assignments (link found on Blackboard). Each week, I will post 1 or 2 questions which you should answer after class Wednesday and before Friday. There will be times this due date will change due to scheduling or class cancellations. I expect these questions to be answered fully, around 100 words minimum for each. Throughout the semester, these answers should be used to keep track of your research, progress and ideas. There may also be times I will ask you to consider how the rhetorical situation is shaping your writing; or to explore your successes, failures, risk-taking, goals—and what you’re learning from it all. Therefore, please have access to the Google doc every single class–phone usage for this will not be allowed. You should also bring your journal if you come get help from me or meet me for office hours.

**Journal Grading**

Throughout the semester, the Google questions will be graded. These low-stakes assignments are added as a way to help you think through your process in between major assignments. In other words, don’t think that you can bank on completing all the major assignments perfectly and still make an A in the course. I will drop your lowest grade at the end of the semester. Here is the grading scale I will be using:

10 points Demonstrates a high level of critical thinking, engagement, and effort

8 points Complete and shows critical thinking and effort

6 points Complete and shows some thought and effort

3 points Incomplete or late work

0 points Missing

**Extra Credit Opportunities**

Extra Credit Opportunities (ECO) will be available in certain situations. These credits are to assist you if you feel the necessity for Project 1 or 2; hese ECOs will not do the job of making up for a semester of poor work. ECOs will be posted on Blackboard, such as readings/events which correspond with our work in class.

The semester-long opportunity comes from taking part in workshops across campus from either the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/workshops)> or the library (<http://library.gmu.edu/workshops)>. Each ECO boosts your Project 1 or Project 2 grade by 5 points. You may earn a total of 5 extra points for Project 3 and 10 extra points for Project 4. In other words, you can attend 1 ECO for Project 1 and 2 ECOs for Project 2. In some instances, this may add up significantly– enough for an entire grade jump.

In order to receive credit from any of these events or workshops, you must submit on Blackboard a 500-word write-up within 3 days of the workshop/event you attended. Also, include a photo, ticket stub, or signed slip from the Writing Center and Library. In addition to listing the title, date, and time of the workshop, this write-up should discuss the information that you learned from the workshop/event and how you will use those skills in this class and in your future classes.

**Late Work/Absent Policy**

Because life happens, you have three “free” absences to use throughout the semester. Save them for when you really need them. All other absences, except those resulting from mandated government, military service, or a documented illness will result in a zero for that day’s in-class engagement. If you are absent, you are still responsible for work, most of which are available through our Blackboard site.

I *will* accept weekly journal entries late, but only for half credit if turned in by the next class. I do not accept any major assignments after 10 calendar days have passed. For every day that a major paper is late, it will be marked down by 5%. **Extensions may be granted in certain situations– please come speak to me well before the due date. I am not able to assist if I am in the dark on the situation.**

Besides speaking to me, you have a total of 3 Crisis Passes to use this semester working in your favor. Each crisis pass allows you to submit the work one calendar day late, without grade penalty, without permission or offering an explanation; you may use multiple free passes at once. For example, you could submit Project One three calendar days late and receive no late penalty, but you would have no more free passes for the semester. If using a free pass (or passes) on an assignment, make sure to contact me by email about this before the assignment’s deadline; crisis passes cannot be used retroactively. Passes may NOT be used for drafts or peer review. Because Project Four, your final essay, is due at the end of the semester, I will not accept it after the due date has passed; in other words, extensions and crisis passes will not work.

Please plan to**be in class on time**. If you are frequently late, you may lose engagement credit (see below). Four days late will equal one absence. However, in an emergency I would rather have you come late than not at all; if you have a bad day but you can get here 20 minutes late, please try to come. If there are circumstances in which you will be running late on a regular basis (back-to-back classes, work, etc.), please come speak to me. If you anticipate an extended absence due to documentable major illnesses or other such rare occurrences, notify me immediately via email so that we can make arrangements for you to stay on track.

**Class Participation and Engagement**

Engagement is made up of at least three parts: presence, preparedness, and contribution. Just being in class does not mean you are engaged. You earn full points for a class period only by being on time and actively engaged. Active engagement will involve you asking/answering questions, listening actively, engaging with tasks at hand, providing feedback, and helping keep your peers on track and engaged. **If active engagement makes you uncomfortable or anxious, please come and speak to me so we can establish a different way of tracking your engagement score.**

Most class periods are worth 3 points. Teacher-Student conferences are worth 5 points. You may only earn 1 or 2 points if you are doing the bare minimum: such as being disengaged, coming late, napping, doing work for another classes, or being rude or disruptive. Being engaged actively, on the other hand, will allow you to receive the full 3 points for the day.

The following are some additional engagement guidelines:

* No earbuds during class. Believe me, I can see Airpods.
* Participate actively in all assigned work. AKA speak with your peers
* Contribute to large group discussions. Volunteer so I don’t have to cold call.
* Arrive at class on time and well prepared. Or shoot me an email if you’re running late.
* Complete online and typed homework either on your home computers or in one of the campus computer labs. "My computer broke" is not a valid excuse for missing an assignment.

**Nondiscrimination and Inclusivity**

In this class, there may be times when discussions of personal views and beliefs may occur organically. These conversations may stem from events that are current, cultural, religious, and/or political in nature. While there will be times disagreements will arise (with me or your peers), I will expect your comments and questions to be respectful and richly add to the conversation we are having. This class is one in which we will be actively learning and expanding our worldview and as such, this is a safe space in which to learn from each other. Each person, viewpoint, and experiences are to be respected and validated both in and out of the classroom.

**I cannot stress the importance I am placing on this nondiscrimination/inclusivity policy.** Discrimination will not be excused and conversations that veer into attacking, tearing down, disrespecting your peers or me will be cut short. This classroom will be a space for inclusivity and learning; diversity of thought and experience is encouraged and expected. For more information, refer to [GMU’s nondiscrimination policy](https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/non-discrimination-policy/) and [Mason’s diversity statement](https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement) more in-depth:

“GMU is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or age. GMU shall adhere to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations.”

**Contact Me**

I have given you my email address at the top of the syllabus. I do check my email regularly so please reach out to me when/if necessary. Per Mason policy, you must email me from your Mason account. If you do not send your email from your Mason account, I won’t respond.

Before you reach out to me, please do the following. I beg of you.

1. **Search for it**– Before you email me, check Blackboard, check the syllabus, and message a classmate. Chances are your question can be answered through one of those avenues.
2. **Google it**– Please don’t reach out with something that can be found on the first page of a search result. If you search and still can’t find something, or you need it further explained, then send an email explaining where you have looked to try to answer the question.
3. **Plan for it**– Reach out to me as soon as you feel yourself struggling. We can work together but the further on in the semester it gets, the less likely we will be able to work to actively change something. And don’t wait until the last second waiting for an extension that won’t be granted.

**Inclement Weather/Class Cancellation**

If the weather is poor, check the GMU website at <http://www.gmu.edu/> and look for a scrolling banner announcing delays or closings. You can also sign up for Mason Alert to have university closures and other critical information e-mailed or texted to you. If the university is closed for weather or other emergencies, check your Mason e-mail and class announcements on Blackboard for instructions and schedule modifications. If class is cancelled, we’ll do our best to stay on track and engaged even if our face-to-face meeting is disrupted. This could come in the form of an online activity, a YouTube video, or syllabus schedule adjustments.

**Revision Policies**

Getting it “right” the first time around might seem impossible, and when you get your graded rubric back, what you see might not reflect what you can do. Therefore, you have the option to revise Project 1, 2, and 3 after receiving your grade. If you want to use this revision option, you have two weeks to meet with me once graded papers have been returned. You will need to email me with your requested revision plan, and we will schedule a time for a revision conference. In other words, **you need to reach out to me!** During the conference, we will set a due date for the revision (usually one week from the conference).

You are not guaranteed a higher grade for revising, but you can’t get a lower one. If your revision produces a better product than the first and you’ve completed a thorough revision, your new grade will replace the original. Otherwise, you will keep your original grade.

Your final revision must:

* Use “Track Changes” to show each change made,
* Use the comment function to explain why you made at least two changes and how each of those changes supports your primary revision goal(s)
* Submit a reflection page (around 150 words) that addresses the strengths and weaknesses of the revised essay.

**Statement on Plagiarism**

It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades: ”To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at [http://oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/)

Mason’s Composition Program recognizes that appropriately attributing sources is a learning process. This class will include direct instruction in source integration, documentation, and citation strategies in a range of rhetorical situations, and follows the CWPA [Best Practices for Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism](http://wpacouncil.org/positions/WPAplagiarism.pdf). Instructors in the Composition Program support the Mason Honor Code, which requires them to report suspected instances of deliberate plagiarism to the Mason Honor Committee.

**Outside Resources**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please visit the Office of Disability Services ([ODS](http://ds.gmu.edu/)) as all accommodations will be arranged through their office. Accommodations won’t be tendered until you have submitted the ODS Official accommodation letter to me.

English as a Second Language (ESL) students have resources reading available to them on campus. The Writing Center (below) has a specific, semester-long program to assist ESL students; information can be found [here](https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/tutoring/esl-writing-support). Workshops and Tutoring at the Language Resource Center in Mason’s Global Center are also available. To register for reading, speaking, and writing support, please visit their [website](https://intomason.mywconline.com/).

Writing Center tutors can help you at any stage of the writing process. In addition to free individual tutoring sessions (by appointment) at a variety of campus locations, they have an [outstanding website](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu) that offers resources for student writers. Appointments can be made for face-to-face meetings, online draft uploading known as OWLs, and video sessions. The Main Writing Center Office is located in Robinson B.

Librarians in the Fenwick and Johnson Center libraries (and at the libraries in Arlington and Prince Williams campuses) are available to help with any research help you may need. Be sure to show up with your assignment/specific questions or contact the library online. The [library’s website](http://library.gmu.edu) offers tutorials, research resources, and databases that we’ll use throughout the semester. Please familiarize yourself with the library website and source offerings.

Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](http://caps.gmu.edu/)) offers free counseling and academic workshops. Services are provided by professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors. CAPS’ individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs are designed to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance. In addition, CAPS is offering Therapist Assisted Online (TAO), a 24/7, online program providing support for mental health concerns, such as anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts.

As a faculty member, the instructor for this course is designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [the Student Support and Advocacy Center](https://ssac.gmu.edu/) (703-380-3686) or [Counseling and Psychological Services](https://caps.gmu.edu/) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing [cde@gmu.edu](mailto:cde@gmu.edu). View the Title IX Campus Resources: [https://diversity.gmu.edu/sexual-misconduct\](https://diversity.gmu.edu/sexual-misconduct/) and <https://diversity.gmu.edu/sexual-misconduct/who-can-i-call/campus-title-ix-resources>

The Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education ([ODIME](http://odime.gmu.edu/)) supports our diverse student and faculty population. The office is committed to the success of all members of the Mason community. Throughout the year, it sponsors a variety of programs for students and faculty. It works specifically with African Heritage, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian/Pacific American, Native American, and LGBTQIA+ populations.

The Office for Academic Integrity ([OAI](http://oai.gmu.edu/)) works to promote and support academic integrity throughout the university community by educating its members, fostering an environment where students can be recognized for high levels of integrity, creating opportunities for leadership and personal growth, and upholding the university honor code through a student-based honor committee. If plagiarism is ever a discussion that needs to be had, OAI will be contacted.

**Registrar’s Office and Important Dates**

Contact the registrar for information about student records and transcripts; registration, including adding or dropping the course; the Schedule of Classes or University Catalog; academic policies and degrees; student eligibility for NCAA athletic participation; Veteran’s educational benefits; and tuition status.

The full academic calendar and final exam schedule is available through the registrar’s website, but here are some key deadlines:

August 26: First Day of Classes

September 3: Last Day to Add Classes

September 9: Final Drop Deadline (with 100% tuition refund)

September 17: Final Drop Deadline (no tuition refund)

December 7: Last Day of Classes

**\*Note**: As of Fall 2018, students that drop after the 14th day of the semester will have a W on their transcript. Per the Registrar’s Office, “Grades of W are considered attempted hours, which means they are used to determine academic progress. Both the university’s standards for academic standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for financial aid are affected by these attempted hours. W grades do not affect GPA.”  More details are available [here](http://registrar.gmu.edu/drop-withdrawal-deadlines-faqs/).