



Handbook for New Faculty

2016–17

This document signifies the beginning of an inundation of new information that you will be subjected to in the next few weeks/months. Please don't be overwhelmed and think that all the material contained here needs to be read and understood in detail before you show up on campus. Think of it more like a reference manual rather than a guidebook, and you will be fine.

If you find errors, or have suggestions/questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at aweerapana@wellesley.edu. I am not the original author of this Handbook, it has been passed down through the years by the various faculty members who have been involved with the PLTC. I have updated and revised this as I deemed appropriate.

SECTION I: E-MAIL, COURSEWARE AND SOFTWARE RESOURCES

There are several important software packages that you will use in your day to day life at the college. The folks over at Library and Technology Services (LTS) will be providing you with the proper information, training and support in the weeks and months ahead but here are some basic features to keep in mind.

1. You can always find very helpful information about technology-related issues by going to <http://www.wellesley.edu/lts/techsupport>. If you want more individualized support when on campus, call the Help Desk (x7777) and they will do as their name promises.¹
2. The college email system is Gmail. For most of you this will mean a very smooth transition since you were probably using Gmail anyway.
3. Course management software is less uniform. The two main platforms that faculty use are Sakai and Google Sites. I have used both, but prefer Google Sites. Sakai is more specialized and has a lot more bells and whistles built in. However, in my opinion, Sakai has a major weakness in that it is not integrated into the email platform. So both you and your students have to make the effort to log into Sakai in order to effectively communicate with each other. Google Sites are more straightforward, have fewer bells and whistles but are much better integrated with the email system. As far as I know the LTS folks will be setting up course site templates in both Sakai and Google to help you get started. There are plenty of faculty who will prefer Sakai to Google so please don't let my assessment sway you.
4. *My Wellesley* (portal.wellesley.edu) is the other key site that you will use often. *My Wellesley* will connect you with the *Banner* system that provides you with a ton of faculty and employee related

¹ Telephone numbers appearing in this handbook or on the many website links are given as they would be dialed on campus. To call a number that appears as xZZZZ from off-campus, dial (781) 283 -ZZZZ.

services. You can look up your class lists, submit grades, check your benefits, view your paystubs, vote in Academic Council elections, find out tax information etc.

5. The campus directory is located at <https://webapps.wellesley.edu/directory/>. Access from off-campus is severely restricted though so I strongly recommend putting VPN on your home computer (<http://www.wellesley.edu/its/techsupport/sslvpn>). This will allow you to access campus resources from home just as if you were on campus, very useful in accessing data sources, library resources etc. that the campus has electronic subscriptions to.
6. Academic Calendar: A detailed Wellesley academic calendars for the current year as well as key dates for the next 5 years can be found at <http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/calendars>

SECTION II. GETTING READY FOR YOUR COURSES

1. *Textbook*

By now, hopefully your department chair or administrative assistant would have contacted you regarding textbook orders for the Fall. If not, go to the campus bookstore's webpage, select textbooks and follow the section for Faculty Resources to place your order.

<http://wellesley.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/BNCBHomePage?storeId=67736&catalogId=10001&langId=-1>

2. *Class Meetings*

By now, you will also have been told what time your class meets but you should have an idea about the range of possibilities that exist.

- The most common type is a schedule with two 70-minute meetings a week, Mondays & Thursdays or Tuesdays & Fridays.²
- Some courses will have a third class meeting on Wednesdays. Others will have a Wednesday meeting on alternating weeks, with those on Mon/Thu schedules teaching on ALT-1 Wednesdays and those on Tue/Fri schedules teaching on ALT-2 Wednesdays.³
- Other faculty, particularly for upper-level seminars prefer a once a week schedule where the class meets for 150 minutes (with a 10 minute break halfway through built in).
- In addition, many science classes will have a longer weekly lab session, art/music classes will have studio sessions and language classes will meet 4-5 times a week.

Regardless of what the weekly schedule looks like, it's important to keep in mind that every Wellesley academic semester will have exactly THIRTEEN Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. If public holidays throw the ratios off (12 Mondays and 14 Tuesdays, for example) then the

² So when you hear people on campus ask you if you are a "Mon/Thu person" or "Tue/Fri person", don't be confused that this is a bizarre version of the "Are you a morning person?" question

³ Many hours have traditionally been wasted trying to find which Wednesdays are ALT-1 or ALT-2 but now the information can be found by clicking on your course listing in the Course Browser on the Registrar's webpage. This Fall, the ALT-1 dates are 9/7, 9/21, 10/5, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16 while the ALT-2 dates are 9/14, 9/28, 10/12, 10/26, 11/9, 11/30..

college will treat a Tuesday as a Monday for the purposes of the schedule of class meetings. Please pay attention to this in setting your syllabus, planning conference/vacation travel etc.⁴

If you need to book rooms for review sessions/additional meetings or if your assigned classroom is too small or otherwise unsuitable, your best bet is to ask your department's administrative assistant. The truly intrepid can venture into the cryptically named *25Live* system at (<http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/curriculum/classrooms>) to request changes themselves.

3. *Syllabus*

I will send you some example syllabi but please craft your own syllabus without feeling like you must conform to a set structure. As you put your syllabus together, try to incorporate the following into the document.

- A brief statement about the course and how it fits into the department curriculum.
- What you want your students to learn in this course in terms of both content and skills.
- What assignments students are expected to complete: weekly homework assignments, quizzes, how many papers (and of what length), final exam, final paper.
- How each of those categories of assignments will contribute to the student's final grade.
- As much specific information as possible about when those assignments are going to be handed out and when they will be due. Even if exact dates can't be promised, you will find that saying "there will be a midterm the week of Oct 25" will be appreciated by the student and lead to fewer headaches for you from students asking for extensions and relief from other work due at the same time.

Wellesley has some guidelines about final exams in legislation that you should know about. These include the following:

- A student's grade in a course cannot be based on a single piece of work.
- A course may not have both a final exam and a final paper (a paper due on the last day of the final exam period).
- "Term papers," as opposed to "final papers," are not in lieu of a final exam. They are due no later than the last day of classes. Term paper topics must be announced at least three weeks before the end of class.
- Most final exams are self-scheduled. A description of this system can be found at (<http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/exams>). Some courses (mostly language and art history courses involving multi-media resources) have fixed schedule exams. So in specifying dates for exams in the syllabus, most of you should not have to worry about when to schedule the final

A few other tips that I will discuss in more detail at orientation.

- Set a clear policy for office hours. Wellesley students like having access to faculty but are respectful of faculty time limits. Some of you may want to have open office hours every Tuesday afternoon from 3-5 while others will want to have "by appointment only" office hours every

⁴ Fortunately, there are no such dates this Fall, although note that Friday Sep. 30th is the inauguration of President Paula Johnson so there will be no classes held. In the Spring, however, Monday, February 20th is a holiday but Tuesday February 21st is a Monday schedule. So those of you teaching Monday/Thursday would be incorrect in assuming you had a week off from Thursday to Thursday but those of you teaching Tuesday/Friday would in fact have a week off from Friday to Friday!!!

Monday morning from 9-11. Whatever works for you, but please state the hours and policies clearly on your syllabus.

- Set a clear policy about how you handle requests for extensions/late submissions etc. Again I will discuss pros and cons of different approaches at orientation, but for now I will emphasize the importance of clear upfront statements in your syllabus about how you will handle such requests in general.
- Set a clear policy about how you answer emails. Some people are logged on to email most of the day and night. Others prefer not to email students outside of “business hours” so tell them in advance not to expect answers to email sent at 9pm.
- A paragraph that makes clear your interest in working with students with disabilities and helping them find the accommodations they need to do their work successfully. You could use this paragraph:

“Students with disabilities who are taking this course and who need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to work with Jim Wice, the Director of Disability Services. Jim’s office is located in the Pforzheimer Learning & Teaching Center on the third floor of Clapp Library. If you have a physical disability or a learning disability, Jim is the person to see to arrange for accommodations. If your learning disability is undocumented or if you are uncertain as to whether you have an actual “disability”, Jim can arrange for you to be tested.”

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Your syllabus may also take account of other factors. Students are not enthusiastic about exams on the last day before Thanksgiving vacation, for instance. The stress level tends to build as the term goes on, both for you and for your students. Since both you and the students have many demands to balance, once you’ve set due dates for exams and written work, don’t change them without plenty of notice and a serious talk with your class. Once you commit to a date on the syllabus, even if circumstances warrant a change, accommodate a student who would like to stick to the original date for a good reason. Take note of religious holidays (<http://www.wellesley.edu/religiouslife/high-holy-days-and-religious-observances>) and decide how you will accommodate them.

It’s a good idea to have extra copies of your syllabus to give to students who ask about taking your course but who are not yet signed up for it, or for those who are not pre-registered but attend the first meeting of your course.

Some faculty members hand out a one-page questionnaire on the first day to learn more about their students, e.g., how much of the subject they’ve already had, why they’re taking the course, and anything else they might want to mention. The personal interest implied even in a relatively impersonal questionnaire can often break the ice for a student who is feeling anxious about whether she should be in a course.

4. *Class Lists and Add/Drop*

In *MyWellesley* you can find out the names of the students who are signed up for your class and even put together a class list with photographs, which is invaluable for learning the names of your students. Don’t spend too much time doing this before classes start because you will find a lot of students “shopping around” for classes in the first two weeks of the semester. For Fall

2016, the last day for students to add a course will be Friday, September 16th, the beginning of the third week of classes. The last day to drop a course will be Friday, September 30th, after the completion of the 5th week of classes. The latter is also the last date at which students can elect to take their course Credit/Non rather than for a letter grade.

The Banner system allows students to add and drop courses electronically, even before a class has met. Unless your class is full or your department has chosen to block students from automatically registering for open spots, this means that over the summer or during wintersession, if one student decides to withdraw from a class another student can take her place in your course.

If a class is filled, or if registration is blocked, students will email the professor and ask to be added to a wait list. Some departments are quite strict about not going over the indicated enrollment caps. Others are more flexible. Ask your department chair how many students to expect and whether there is a departmental policy regarding class size, wait lists etc. If you start getting emails even before classes start, I would recommend a short response asking the student to come to the first day of classes at which point all registration decisions will be finalized. At that point you can take stock of how many registered students showed up, how many unregistered students are trying to get in, who contacted you early etc. and decide how many and whom to admit. There are no college rules on this, so use your discretion and try to follow common policy/practice in your department.

5. Honor Code and General Judiciary

All academic life for Wellesley students is governed by the Honor Code. Information about the Honor Code is available at (<http://www.wellesley.edu/studentlife/aboutus/honor>). This includes resources for faculty and descriptions of the procedures and processes that govern academic learning at Wellesley.

6. Grading Policy

Grading is another issue that will crop up early during your first semester. I would offer you the same advice that others will offer to the incoming students, focus on the learning in the classroom instead of the grades. Here are some useful things to know about grades at Wellesley.

- The college adopted a policy in the Spring of 2004 that mandated that in 100-level and 200-level courses with more than 10 enrolled students, the mean grade should be no higher than a B+ (3.33). This policy does not cover 300-level classes, nor small classes with fewer than 10 students. You can read more about the policy at (http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/grading/grading_policy).
- The policy is very flexible. It does not restrict the number of A grades, it does not mandate any C grades and most of all it does not force anyone to receive a grade that is lower than they would have earned since faculty are always allowed to make an exception for an exceptional class.
- Students like to call this the “grade deflation” policy and view it with some trepidation but I would recommend playing down those fears by including a short statement that you will be following the grading policy and encouraging students to actually go and read the policy. You would be amazed by the number of urban legends floating around regarding this policy.
- A new policy, introduced in Fall 2014, for first year students is shadow grading, which means that in their first semester students will receive letter grades which will not appear on their

transcript. This is an attempt to reduce grading anxiety among students at the earliest possible stage and also encourage students with differential levels of high school preparation to adjust to Wellesley academic standards, See more at (<http://www.wellesley.edu/admission/why/firstyearexp/shadowgrading>)

SECTION III. YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE AS A FACULTY MEMBER

I am intentionally putting this section at the end of the document and keeping it short. This is not because the material in this section is not important but because you do not need to know all of it right now. Even those of you starting out on a longer-term position don't really need to know everything about reappointment, tenure and promotion before you even set foot on campus.

We will be having various events at the PLTC over the course of the year exploring many of these issues, so there will be more opportune moments for detailed discussion. Here are some resources and guides for now.

1. Academic life at Wellesley is governed by the College's "Articles of Government", divided into two books, Book 1 and 2. (<http://www.wellesley.edu/provost/articlesgov>). In these books, you will find the official word on leaves, promotions, tenure, sabbaticals, benefits etc.
2. A less wordy guide to what is expected of Wellesley College faculty can be found on the Provost's webpage at (<http://www.wellesley.edu/provost/facinfo>)
3. Information about the different sources of money for research, teaching and travel can be found at (<http://www.wellesley.edu/provost/facinfo/awards>)
4. Information about the various committees that faculty serve on, typically not in their first year (<http://www.wellesley.edu/provost/committees>)⁵

The primary non-electronic method by which we speak to one another is at Academic Council. Academic Council meets in a 90-minute session approximately once a month (either Wednesdays at 12:30, or Tuesdays at 4:15) during the semester.⁶ All academic decisions of importance go through this body. The first meeting of the year will include introductions of all new members of the faculty.

Some useful people to know/contact if needed:

1. The Provost's Office

Andrew Shennan, Provost
Kathryn (Cappy) Lynch
Ann Velenchik

The Provost's office is the place to go for critical issues regarding your career at Wellesley, funding for large scale academic initiatives outside of existing committees, etc. Obviously, if at all possible, you should talk to your

⁵ Wellesley terminology groups faculty into "Groups" according to their home department for elections/appointments to certain committees. Broadly speaking, Group A is humanities, Group B is Social Sciences and Group C is Sciences but it's not always clear. Since this is also a piece of information hard to locate, here is the semi-official breakdown.

Group A: Art, Cinema/Media Studies, Classical Studies, East Asian Languages & Literatures, English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Music, Russian, Spanish, Theatre Studies, Writing Program

Group B: Africana Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Cognitive and Linguistic Sciences, Economics, Education, Environmental Studies, History, Jewish Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Recreation and Athletics, Religion, Sociology, South Asian Studies, Women's Studies

Group C: Astronomy, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geosciences, Mathematics, Neuroscience, Physics, Quantitative Reasoning

⁶ In the Fall, Academic Council meets on Tuesday 9/6 (4.15pm), Wednesday 10/5 (12.30 pm), Wednesday 11/9 (12.30 pm) and Wednesday 12/7 (12.30 pm)

department chair and other colleagues before kicking things up to this level

2. The PLTC

Akila Weerapana, Faculty Director (x2300)

Roberta Schotka, Director of Programs (X2675)

The PLTC is located on the third floor of Clapp Library) runs various programs to support teaching for all faculty on campus. We will be having monthly workshops/discussions/seminars for new faculty as well as events open to all faculty where we can learn from each other how to become better teachers. My door/email account is always open to your questions, even if I can't directly help you, I will find someone who can.

Roberta Schotka can help connect students who are struggling academically with tutoring services. These include Academic Peer Tutors (APTs) who are dorm-based and run study skills workshops and work individually with students. The PLTC also offers Group tutoring (also called "Drop-In", "Help Room" or "Attached" tutoring) and limited individual tutoring (also called "Assigned" tutoring) in support of many courses. At the beginning of each semester, the PLTC posts (electronically and in hard copy) the Group Tutoring schedules and other PLTC support services available for that semester. To request an Individual tutor (for one-on-one help), students fill out a tutor request form available online. If they do request one on one tutoring help, you will receive an email informing you that a student of yours has requested an Individual tutor. There is no out of pocket cost for tutoring; the tutor is paid by the PLTC, however, we ask the tutors to schedule a follow-up meeting with a student's professor if that student is tutored more than twice to ensure that resources are being used in a beneficial manner.

3. Information services

Heather Woods, Director of Research & Instructional Support (x3175)

Kenny Freundlich, Director of Emerging Technologies (x2801)

Information Services provides expert advice on the use of technology in the curriculum. Kenny Freundlich, Heather Woods and other members of the LTS Support teams can help you learn more about how technology and library resources can enrich your classes and can guide faculty instructional technology projects. You do NOT have to have a fully developed idea: exploratory conversations ("I wish there were a way to...") can lead to concrete results.

4. Human Resources

Eva Bedrick, Benefits Specialist (x2212)

The Human Resources Office (<http://www.wellesley.edu/hr> , x3202) is your best source for information on salary and benefits.

5. Campus Police

Campus Police (www.wellesley.edu/police, x2121) issues ID cards and parking permits.

6. Class Dean's Office

John O'Keefe(x2326)

The Class Dean's office is an important point of contact for many of you. The Class Dean's are professional staff members who work with students in helping them deal with academic difficulties and personal issues. There is one Class Dean for each class (first years, sophomores etc.). If one of your students finds herself in academic difficulty in your course (a D on the first hourly, a failing paper), you can work with the student's Class Dean to better understand the underlying situation. The Class Dean may see a pattern that is invisible to you, since deans often have access to more information about students. For instance, the student may be recovering from mono and in tentative physical condition. It is usually wise to tell the student that you consulted her Class Dean: you can make clear that you called her dean because you were concerned about her or her work. Students in turn may contact the Class Dean when they are having issues rather than talking to you directly. My best advice is to think of the Class Deans as a great resource for both you and for the students but never to lose track of the fact that in the end only you can set the terms of satisfactory academic performance in your classroom.

7. Writing Program and Quantitative Reasoning Program

Jeannine Johnson (x2579)

Anne Brubaker (x3897)

Jessica Polito (x3032)

All Wellesley students are required to take a First-Year Writing course. Jeannine Johnson, the Director of the Writing Program and Anne Brubaker, Coordinator of the Writing Tutors program are both terrific resources to

discuss any writing related pedagogical issues with. If students have writing difficulties, they may work with the Writing Tutors on more general writing issues or with PLTC Tutors for writing difficulties specific to writing in your discipline. If a student's writing difficulties seem profound, you or the student may contact Heather.

All Wellesley students also take a Quantitative Reasoning assessment exam and students who do not achieve a passing score are required to take a remedial AQ course. Corri Taylor, the Director of Quantitative Reasoning, is on leave this Fall so please contact Jessica Polito to see who is available to work with students and coordinate services for students who are having difficulty with quantitative reasoning skills.

**8. The Advisory Committee to the Committee on Faculty Appointments (AC-CFA)
Wes Watters (x2170)**

The AC-CFA is an elected committee of academic council that serves as an invaluable resource for new faculty in particular and for all untenured faculty in general. The AC-CFA organizes social events, addresses concerns regarding college policies with the administration and serves as the voice of the untenured faculty on campus.

**9. Disability Services and Student Emergencies.
Stone Center Counseling Service (x2839)
Jim Wice (jwice, x2434)**

It's sometimes hard to know where academic difficulties end and personal difficulties begin (there is no hard line, of course). A faculty member, however sympathetic or empathic, is not a professional counselor. If personal issues are interfering with a student's work, it is appropriate to contact her Class Dean or to refer her to the Stone Center's counseling service for help.

Emergencies (e.g., suicidal remarks, medical emergencies) obviously require immediate action. To help you be prepared for an emergency, the Dean of Students sends each faculty member a detailed discussion of how to handle various kinds of emergency situations. Read it carefully and keep it at hand.

Students with documented learning and attention disabilities are registered with Disability Services. Each semester they receive a letter from Jim Wice, the Director of Disability Services, alerting them to the process of arranging for accommodations. If a student is seeking course accommodations, she meets with Jim Wice to request that a letter regarding the accommodations be sent to her professor.