

Faculty Communication

Communicating with faculty is always important for students to do, and to do well. Effective communication is even more critical during the unusual circumstances created by COVID-19, including remote instruction. Many articles and videos can be found on the web for students that share guidance about communicating effectively with professors ([click here for an excellent example](#)) and how to [engage in crucial conversations](#) when you need to talk about sensitive or difficult subjects. Please review these resources, organize your thoughts, and contact your faculty as soon as possible when you have a question or concern. Dealing with small things early is much easier—and usually more successful—than dealing with big things later.

Communication Hierarchy

It is also important to know “communication hierarchies” so you can talk to the right person at the right time (and the first time) which can help you save time and avoid frustration. At Buffalo State, the communication hierarchy for courses is: the instructor, the Department Chair responsible for offering course, the Dean’s Office responsible for department offering course, the Provost’s office, and finally—if all other levels have failed to address your concern—the President’s office.

Here are the right people to contact to get answers to your academic questions and address your academic concerns:

- **Academic adviser** (faculty/departmental or professional) or course registration and advising PINs. Advisers are listed in Degree Works and Banner.
- **Instructor** for course related questions. Email your instructor if you have general questions about the class that you are taking.
- **Dr. Amitra Wall**, Associate Provost, for general academic affairs issues, concerns or complaints, and kudos – for example, issues that have not been resolved with instructors, or faculty who are doing an excellent job during the unexpected remote instruction period. Dr. Wall’s email address is hodgeaa@buffalostate.edu.

Grievances and Appeals

Sometimes, however, all the best communication in the world can still find issues unresolved. We have two main procedures to address these situations at Buffalo State when seemingly unresolvable issues arise related to academic matters:

- 1) **Student Academic Grievances** – When there are alleged violations or misapplication of college and/or course policies or a student believes they have been treated unfairly, in violation of established academic policy or practice, then students can engage in the Student Academic Grievance process. You can find this procedure in the college catalog in the “Student Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals” section: <http://ecatalog.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/student-complaints-grievances-appeals/>
- 2) **Academic Petition Appeals** - Students are expected to adhere to all regulations of the college. However, unusual and extenuating circumstances may warrant a modification of certain all-college regulations, such as registration deadlines or graduation requirements. More information about Academic Petition Appeals can also be found in the “Student Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals” section of the college catalog and the process for submitting an Academic Petition Appeal can be found on the Academic Standards website: <https://academicstandards.buffalostate.edu/petitions>