**Department of English Graduate Student Professionalism Policy**

**Purpose and Usage**

These guidelines are in place to be used as a “best practice” model and as a checklist for professionalism.

**Policy**

Graduate students are expected to attend all assigned class meetings and adhere to the absence or attendance policies clearly stated in each graduate syllabus. As a graduate student, one’s attitude, behavior, and level of professionalism reflect upon the English Department faculty and staff. Graduate seminars are taught in ways that require active attendance. Excessive and/or unexcused absences affect not only the individual graduate student’s grade but also the learning outcomes of the graduate seminar. This policy applies equally to 500-level classes.

**Possible Repercussions of Lack of Professionalism**

It may not seem obvious that a graduate student’s grade will be affected by multiple unexcused absences, yet that is clearly the case. A graduate student should not expect to earn the highest grade possible in a course if a lack of professionalism is demonstrated.

Graduate students who exhibit a lack of professionalism may also jeopardize their chances at receiving letters of recommendation from their professors. Letters of recommendation are designed to attest to an individual’s professional attitude and academic potential; therefore, a lack of professionalism clashes with the concept of the letter of recommendation.

**Advice**

It is always a good idea to remain in contact with your professor, especially if you are feeling overly challenged by a particular seminar, topic, or assignment in that seminar. Professors in the English Department are invested in broadening the knowledge of graduate students as well as enhancing their opportunities for success in and out of the classroom.