

University Senate Meeting February 10, 2020  
Syllabus Initiative

Background

- The “syllabus initiative” began as a result of concerns, primarily raised by the Undergraduate Council (UC) and the Ombud’s office. The *SRs* do not contain enough guidance regarding syllabi and this causes problems for both students and faculty.
  - There were times when the UC asked proposers to modify a syllabus and the proposer refused to do so on the grounds that the *SRs* did not explicitly require the requested additions, such as student learning outcomes, assignments to be graded, etc. The lack of syllabi-related information in the *SRs* sometimes made it difficult for the UC to comply with the *SR* mandate that the UC to review courses.
  - The Ombud’s office expressed concerns that inadequate syllabi were at the root of many student complaints. When faculty asked for guidance about what had to be included in a syllabus, the Ombud’s office could only make recommendations based on logic and reason but could not refer to an official list of requirements.
- A small group met in summer 2018 to start putting ideas on paper. The original plan was that the initiative include: a revised version of the *SRs* with more detail about what to include in a syllabus; language about “Standard Academic Policies” to post online that faculty would have to either link to or copy and paste into their syllabi; and a sentence in the *SRs* requiring faculty to provide/link to language about non-academic resources available to students, such as the Office of LGBTQ\*.
  - The group discussed what guidance should be proposed for addition to the *SRs*. The group also identified the information that is currently required to be in a syllabus (per existing *SRs*), although the requirement is buried somewhere within the *SRs* but not explicitly referred to in *SR 6.1.1* (“Information about Course Content”).
  - The purpose of posting Standard Academic Policies online is to make things easier for faculty, specifically to help shorten syllabi and provide students with current, up-to-date information. (For example, regarding the Disability Resource Center (DRC), the UC regularly sees syllabi referring the former director and the DRC’s old address, both of which changed about four years ago.)

Recent Activity:

- After a meeting in summer 2019, information about resources available to students was separated from the initiative, due to a concern that individual faculty members might have strong sentiments regarding some of the resources.
  - Now there is a Senate webpage with the [resources](#) listed. The proposed *SR* changes do include that URL and suggest that instructors link to these resources. Faculty can include the info as a copy and paste, or put the URL in the syllabus, or ignore it altogether.
  - [Standard Academic Policies](#) are also available online.
  - For the existing *SR* language in *Section 5* related to syllabi but not referenced in *6.1.1*, references have been added that refer back and forth between the two sections.
  - The proposal has been reviewed by the Undergraduate Council, Health Care Colleges Council, Graduate Council, and Senate's Academic Planning and Priorities Committee. Suggestions from those bodies have already been incorporated.

## Section 6. Student Academic Affairs

### 6.1. ACADEMIC RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

#### 6.1.1 ~~INFORMATION ABOUT COURSE CONTENT~~ THE COURSE SYLLABUS

Students have the right to ~~expect the course to correspond generally to the description in the official *Bulletin* of the University of Kentucky and the right to~~ be informed in writing (in the course syllabus) at the first class meeting about the nature of the course ~~-, including~~ the content, the activities to be evaluated, and the grading practice to be followed. The course syllabus shall provide information to students regarding any factors used in determining grades (e.g. ~~Whenever factors such as~~ absences, required interactions, and ~~or late~~ papers assignments) will be weighed in determining grades, a student shall be informed. All students must be informed in writing of the course content and other matters listed in this rule at no cost to the student. Syllabi may be posted electronically but must be shared with students ; this must be done by the first class meeting of the semester. Electronically posted ~~and the syllabus~~ syllabi must remain available ~~there~~ to students for the entire semester. All students officially enrolled in a course shall, upon request, be provided a copy of the course syllabus free of charge. [US: 2/11/80; SREC: 11/20/87; US: DATE]

Except for programs and courses that have rules that supersede the requirements here (such as courses in professional programs), course syllabi must address a series of required components (listed below) and include Academic Policy Statements (see SR 9.1.7). [US: DATE]

The following sections of the Senate Rules describe required components of a syllabus: SR 3.1.4 (expectations of graduate students and differentiation from undergraduate students); SR 5.2.4.1 (policy on return of assignments); SR 5.2.4.2.2 (making up graded work for excused absences); SR 5.2.4.2.1 (acceptable documentation for excused absences); SR 5.2.4.2.1 (4) (policy for absences due to major religious holidays, if applicable); SR 5.2.4.6 (Dead Week policies), and SR 6.1.3.1 (midterm grades for undergraduate students).

#### 6.1.1.1 Required syllabi components for courses that are not subject to rules superseding these requirements

[US: DATE]

The Senate Council must approve substantive changes to the list of required syllabi components below and report any such approval, with justification, to the University Senate at its next meeting.

1. Full and accurate title of course, corresponding to the title in the official Bulletin of the University.
2. Course prefix, course number, and course section number.

3. Instructor name, office location, office phone number including area code, and campus email address.
4. Office hours (days, times, location) or how to make appointment. For distance-learning courses, provide virtual office hours, preferred method of communications, and maximum timeframe for responding to student communications.
5. Course description corresponding generally to the description in the official Bulletin of the University.
6. Required materials for the course, e.g. textbooks, required readings/films, etc.
7. Associated expenses other than “required materials,” such as the cost of a field trip, proctoring fees, or polling software devices, if applicable.
8. Skill/Technology requirements, if applicable. If specific technical/digital literacy skills or software are required, the syllabus must describe these.
9. Student learning outcomes.
10. Descriptive list of activities, exams, and grading scheme. The syllabus must include language that describes to students how their grades will be calculated. As applicable, include the following: a list of activities with enough description for students to understand the course requirements; the factors used in determining grades (e.g., absences, required interactions, or late assignments); and due dates (if applicable, include a caveat that due dates can be changed and explain under what circumstances they can be changed).
11. Mechanics of submissions, if applicable. The syllabus must explain if assignments must be submitted via a certain method (e.g., via email or a specific software program or file type).
12. Policy on return of assignments, if applicable. See SR 5.2.4.1.
13. Grading scale (undergraduate, graduate, etc.). See SR 3.1.4.
14. For 400G- and 500-level courses, expectations of graduate students and differentiation from undergraduate students. See SR 3.1.4.
15. Midterm grades, if undergraduate students are enrolled in the course. See SR 6.1.3.1 and the University Calendar.
16. Submission of late assignments and late policies. The syllabus should explain if late assignments are accepted for unexcused absences and if there are penalties or time limits regarding work submitted after the due date. (Per SR 5.2.4.2.2, within some guidelines, late assignments must always be accepted for excused absences.) See SR 5.2.4.2.2.
17. Permissible assignments that are due during Dead Week. See SR 5.2.4.6.
18. Tentative course schedule. At a minimum include due dates of major assignments and exams. More detailed information must also be provided, either within the syllabus or located on another platform, such as a Learning Management System (e.g., Canvas).
19. Course activities outside of regularly scheduled class-required interactions, if applicable. These include special events, field trips, and required synchronous meetings for distance learning courses.
20. URL/hyperlink to, or copy and paste of, Academic Policy Statements. See SR 6.1.1.2.

21. Attendance policy for course, if applicable. (Per SR 5.2.4.2.3.2, unless an attendance policy is described in the syllabus, students cannot be penalized for lack of attendance.) See SR 5.2.4.2.3, SR 5.2.4.2.3.1, and SR 5.2.4.2.3.2.
22. Acceptable documentation for excused absences (e.g., a letter from an institution or medical provider, or published information). See SR 5.2.4.2.1.
23. Policy for absences due to major religious holidays, if applicable. See SR 5.2.4.2.1.
24. Resources. If applicable, the syllabus should describe special resources that may be useful to students, such as UK's distance learning library services, the Hub, proctoring information, etc.

### **6.1.1.2 Academic Policy Statements**

[US: DATE]

Academic Policy Statements are applicable to all courses, such as policies on excused absences, religious observances, accommodations due to disability, non-discrimination and Title IX requirements, and academic integrity. Instructors may either insert the full narrative of the Academic Policy Statements into a syllabus or include the URL/hyperlink to the Academic Policy Statements web page (<https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/academic-policy-statements>).

The Senate Council must approve substantive changes to Academic Policy Statements and must report any such approval, with justification, to the Senate at its next meeting.

[See SR 6.1.1 on documenting this information in a course syllabus.]

### **6.1.1.3 Resources Available to Students**

[US: DATE]

Instructors are encouraged to provide students with a list of available resources, available at <https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/resources-available-students>.

### **6.1.1.4 Optional Information for Syllabi**

[US: DATE]

As non-required information that instructors may opt to include in a course, the following items may also be included: if required by an accrediting agency, course goals or objectives (in addition to student learning outcomes, or SLOs); classroom behavior policies; and course material copyright statement ("Materials distributed or made available to students in connection with the course may be copyright protected. The materials are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in the course and only for the instructional activities associated with and for the duration of the

[course. The materials may not be converted to or retained in another medium or disseminated further.”\).](#)

### **6.1.2 CONTRARY OPINION**

A student has the right to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in the classroom without being penalized.

### **6.1.3 ACADEMIC EVALUATION**

[US: 12/5/83]

#### **6.1.3.1 Midterm grade reports to undergraduate students**

All teachers must inform the undergraduate students in their courses of their current progress based on the criteria in the syllabus before the following dates: [US: 2/14/94; 4/10/2000; 2/27/2008]

1. the end of the Monday following the end of the ninth week for the fall or spring semester; [US: 3/20/2017]
2. the third day of the fifth week for the eight-week summer term;
3. the second day of the third week for the four-week summer term.

[\[See SR 6.1.1 on documenting this information in a course syllabus.\]](#)

#### **6.1.3.2 Right to receive fair and just grades**

Students have the right to receive grades based only upon fair and just evaluation of their performance in a course as measured by the standards announced by their instructor(s) in the written course syllabus at the first class meeting.

\* To “receive grades” means “to be graded.” [SREC: 2/17/2016]

#### **6.1.3.3 Right to receive fair and just evaluation of performance in a program**

Students have the right to receive a fair and just academic evaluation of their performance in a program. In addition to the student's overall academic record, evaluation may include the assessment of such activities as research and/or laboratory performance, qualifying examinations, professional board examinations, studio work or performance activities, behavior in professional situations, or interviews to determine continuation in a program. The program faculty and/or relevant administrative officer must inform the student as to which activities will be included in the academic assessment no later than the beginning of the activity to be evaluated.

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# Academic Policy Statements

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## [Acceptable Excuses for Absences and Verificatic \(\*Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.\*\)](#)

*Senate Rule 5.2.4.2* defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (1) significant illness, (2) death of a member of the student's household (permanent or campus) or immediate family, (3) trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an educational unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, including club sports registered with the University as well as varsity sports, (4) major religious holidays, (5) interviews for full-time job opportunities after graduation and interviews for graduate or professional school, and (6) other circumstances the instructor of record finds "reasonable cause for absence." Students should notify the instructor of record of absences prior to the absence when possible. Instructors of Record have the right to request appropriate verification for certain types of excused absences. (*Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.1*)

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. *Senate Rule 5.2.4.2.1* states that faculty have the right to request appropriate verification when students claim an excused absence due to: significant illness; death in the household, trips for classes, trips sponsored by an educational unit and trips for participation related to intercollegiate athletic events; and interviews for full-time job opportunities after graduation and interviews for graduate and professional school. (Appropriate notification of absences due to University-related trips is required prior to the absence when feasible and in no case more than one week after the absence.)

## [Religious Observances \*Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.1.\*](#)

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays. Please check the course syllabus for the notification requirement. If no requirement is specified, two weeks prior to the absence is reasonable and should not be given any later.

### Making Up Graded Work (*Senate Rule 5.2.4.2.*)

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Students missing any graded work due to an excused absence are responsible: for informing the Instructor of Record about their excused absence within one week following the period of the excused absence (except where prior notification is required); and for making up the missed work. The instructor must give the student an opportunity to make up the work and/or the exams missed due to the excused absence, and shall do so, if feasible, during the semester in which the absence occurred. The instructor shall provide the student with an opportunity to make up the graded work and may not simply calculate the student's grade on the basis of the other course requirements, unless the student agrees in writing.

### Excused Absences and Required Interaction (*Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.3.*)

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If a course syllabus requires specific interactions (e.g., with the instructor or other students), in situations where a student's total EXCUSED absences exceed one-fifth (1/5) of the required interactions for the course, the student shall have the right to receive a "W," or the Instructor of Record may award an "I" for the course if the student declines a "W." (*Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.3*)

### Unexcused Absences or Syllabi without a Policy on Excused Absences (*Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.3.*)

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If an attendance/interaction policy is not stated in the course syllabus or the policy does not include a penalty to the student, the Instructor cannot penalize the student for unexcused absences.

## Dead Week (*Senate Rules 5.2.4.*)

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The Dead Week rule applies to ALL courses taught in the fall semester, spring semester, and summer session, including those taught in a format that has been compressed into less than one semester or session. The rule does not apply to courses in professional programs in colleges that have University Senate approval to follow a nonstandard calendar, as authorized in *Senate Rules 2.1.4.*

1. The last week of instruction of a regular semester is termed "Dead Week." This phrase also refers to the last three days of instruction of the summer session and winter intersession.
2. In cases of "Take Home" final examinations, students shall not be required to return the completed examination before the regularly scheduled examination period for that course.
3. No written examinations, including final examinations, may be scheduled during the Dead Week.
4. No quizzes may be given during Dead Week.
5. No project/lab practicals/paper/presentation deadlines or oral/listening examinations may be scheduled to fall during the Dead Week unless it was scheduled in the syllabus AND the course has no final examination (or assignment that acts as a final examination) scheduled during finals week. A course with a lab component may schedule the lab practical of the course during Dead Week if the lab portion does not also require a Final Examination during finals week.
6. Make-up exams and quizzes are allowed during Dead Week; these are exempt from the restrictions stated in 1, 2, and 3.
7. Class participation and attendance grades are permitted during Dead Week.

The Dead Week rule language does not prohibit continuing into Dead Week regularly assigned graded homework that was announced in the class syllabus.

## Plagiarism (*Senate Rules 6.3.*)

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Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The



minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, including expulsion from the University, may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the [Code of Student Conduct](#). More information on these issues can be found on the [Academic Ombud webpage](#). A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Senate Rule 6.3.1 states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be, except under specific circumstances (e.g. Writing Center review, peer review) allowed by the Instructor of Record or that person's designee. Plagiarism may also include double submission, self-plagiarism, or unauthorized resubmission of one's own work, as defined by the instructor.

Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, except where prohibited by the Instructor of Record (e.g. individual take-home exams). However, the actual work must be done by the student, and the student alone, unless collaboration is allowed by the Instructor of Record (e.g. group projects). When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what,

where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Please note: Any assignment may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

### Cheating (*Senate Rules 6.3.*)

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Cheating is defined by its general usage. It includes, but is not limited to, the wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another on any academic work which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade. The fact that a student could not have benefited from an action is not by itself proof that the action does not constitute cheating. Any question of definition shall be referred to the University Appeals Board.

### Falsification or Misuse of Academic Records (*Senate Rules 6.3.3*)

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Maintaining the integrity, accuracy, and appropriate privacy of student academic records is an essential administrative function of the University and a basic protection of all students. Accordingly, the actual or attempted falsification, theft, misrepresentation or other alteration or misuse of any official academic record of the University, specifically including knowingly having unauthorized access to such records or the unauthorized disclosure of information contained in such records, is a serious academic offense. As used in this context, "academic record" includes all paper and electronic versions of the partial or complete permanent academic record, all official and unofficial academic transcripts, application documents and admission credentials, and all academic record transaction documents. The minimum sanction for falsification, including the omission of information, or attempted falsification or other misuse of academic records as described in this section is suspension for one semester.

To access the entire *Senate Rules*, click [here](#).

## Accommodations Due to Disability

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For students who have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see the instructor or course director as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. To receive accommodations in this course, students must provide a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. Visit the [DRC website](#), [email the DRC](#), contact them by phone at (859) 257-2754, or visit their office on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. Please note that DRC accommodations are not retroactive and should therefore be established with the DRC as early in the semester as is feasible.

## Non-Discrimination /Title IX

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UK is committed to providing a safe learning, living, and working environment for all members of the University community. The University maintains a comprehensive program which protects all members from discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. For complete information about UK's prohibition on discrimination and harassment on aspects such as race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, and sexual orientation, please see [the electronic version of UK's Administrative Regulation 6:1 \("Policy on Discrimination and Harassment"\)](#). In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex in academics, employment, and all of its programs and activities. Sexual misconduct is a form of sexual harassment in which one act is severe enough to create a hostile environment based on sex and is prohibited between members of the University community and shall not be tolerated. For more details, please see [the electronic version of Administrative Regulations 6:2 \("Policy and Procedures for Addressing and Resolving Allegations of Sexual Assault, Stalking, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Sexual Exploitation"\)](#). Complaints regarding violations of University policies on discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct are handled by the Office of Institutional Equity and

Equal Opportunity (IEEO), which is located in 13 Main Building and can be reached by phone at (859) 257-8927. You can also visit [the IEEO's website](#).

Faculty members are obligated to forward any report made by a student related to IEEO matters to the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity. Students can confidentially report alleged incidences through the [Violence Intervention and Prevention Center](#), [Counseling Center](#), or [University Health Service](#).

## Title IV/Class Attendance

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## Bias Incident Support Services

Bias Incident Support Services (BISS) provides confidential support and advocacy for any student, staff, or faculty member impacted by bias, hatred, and/or an act of identity-based violence. BISS staff aid impacted parties in accessing campus and community resources, including the Bias Incident Response Team, the University's official reporting system for acts that negatively impact a sense of belonging. Campus and community consultation and educational opportunities centered on inclusion, diversity, equity and belonging is a resource also provided by BISS. For more detailed information please visit the [BISS website](#) or contact them [via email](#).

## Counseling Center

The UK Counseling Center (UKCC) provides a range of confidential psychological services to students enrolled in 6 credit hours or more, psychoeducational outreach programming (including QPR suicide prevention), and consultation to members of the UK community (students, faculty, staff, administrators, parents, concerned others). Please visit [the UKCC's website](#) for more detailed information or call (859) 257-8701.

## Martin Luther King Center

The Martin Luther King Center (MLKC) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated as a source of strength. The MLKC's year-round programs and activities that focus on the importance of cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding support its three primary goals: 1) sponsoring cultural and educational programming; 2) offering opportunities for student support and development; and 3) through programmatic linkages with a wide variety of civic and

community agencies, promoting community outreach, engagement, and collaboration. Students can reach the MLKC via phone at (859) 257-4130, by visiting them in Gatton Student Center Suite A230, [via email](#), and by visiting [the MLKC website](#).

If there are aspects within your experience here at UK that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify the instructor as soon as possible and/or [contact the Office for Institutional Diversity via email](#).

## Office of LGBTQ\* Resources

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UK is committed to supporting students and upholding the University's efforts to promote inclusion among our community. UK faculty and staff employees support inclusion and diversity throughout the University, including the ways in which faculty structure classroom conversations and manage those dynamics. To assist in these efforts, students are welcome to provide the names and pronouns they prefer. One easy way to do this is by using the pronoun feature of UK's Name Change Form. (More information about the form can be found on the [Office of LGBTQ\\*'s website](#).) Otherwise, students can provide this information to faculty members directly.

Discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity is prohibited at UK. If you have questions about support, advocacy, and community-building services related to sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity, students are encouraged to visit [the website of the Office of LGBTQ\\* Resources](#).

## Veterans Resource Center (VRC)

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Being both a member of the military community and a student can bring some complexities. If you are a member of the military or a military veteran or dependent, please let me know when these challenges arise. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, issues with GI Bill disbursement, etc. can complicate your academic life. Please let me know if you experience complications and I will do my best to work with you.

If you are a military student serving in the National Guard or Reserve it is in your best interest to let all of your professors know that immediately. You might also consider sharing a copy of your training schedule as well as any orders activating you. The Veterans Resource

Center (VRC) can provide a letter for your professors validating your absence but be aware that there is no current UK policy protecting military students who miss class due to short term activations such as long weekend drills, annual training, or emergency activations. See the instructor or the VRC for details.

The VRC is a great resource for members of our military family. If you have questions regarding your VA benefits or other related issues, the VRC has a full complement of staff to assist you. The VRC also provides study and lounge space, as well as free printing. Please visit [the VRC website](#), [email the VRC](#), visit them in the basement of Erikson Hall, or call the director, Tony Dotson, at (859) 257-1148.

## Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Center

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If you experience an incident of sex- or gender-based discrimination or interpersonal violence, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to a faculty member or TA/RA/GA, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University these individuals **MUST** report any acts of violence (including verbal bullying and sexual harassment) to the University's Title IX Coordinator in the IEEO Office. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you can visit [the Violence Intervention and Prevention \(VIP\) Center's website](#) (offices located in Frazee Hall, lower level; (859) 257-3574), [the Counseling Center's \(CC\) website](#) (106 Frazee Hall; (859)), and [the University Health Services \(UHS\) website](#). (The VIP Center, CC, and UHS are confidential resources on campus.) **The VIP Center accepts walk-in appointments.**

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