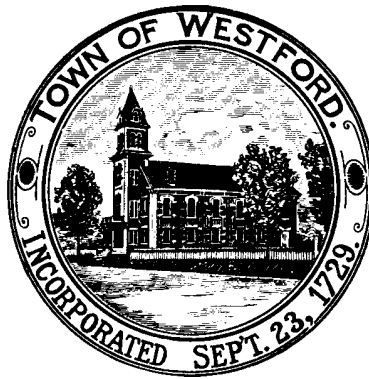


# **University of Westford**



## **Handbook**

**Updated March 2017**

**Office of Curriculum and Instruction**

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**Introduction**

Dear Staff,

This handbook has been developed as a working document to inform the faculty of the Westford Public Schools of the policies and regulations for the University of Westford. The document should be useful to teachers when planning to elect a course or for those wishing to propose a course offering. Please feel free to contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction if you have questions that are not addressed in this handbook.

On behalf of the school system and course instructors, we look forward to working with you in this professional development endeavor.

Sincerely,

Kerry Clery, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

## **Purpose**

The University of Westford was established during the teachers' contract negotiations in 2003 as an in-house alternative to graduate level courses at local colleges and universities. Through this program, courses will be offered in the Westford Public Schools at no cost to the participants. The University of Westford does not usurp the faculty's ability to elect coursework at accredited colleges and universities. Graduate level courses at accredited colleges and universities, which receive prior approval from the superintendent or his/her designee and the University of Westford courses, may be used for transfer from the Masters to Masters plus 30 column. Please note that University of Westford credits may not be used to transfer from the Bachelors to the Masters column. Teachers on the Masters plus 30 column can accumulate up to thirty (30) University of Westford credits and apply them to a one time lump sum payment, an annuity, or an annual payment spread over a number of years. (Please see the teachers' contract for more exact information.)

The purposes of the University of Westford courses are consistent with the school system's philosophy on professional development. These courses will enable the Westford Public Schools to:

- provide professional development opportunities that are inclusive of all staff, allow for individual choice, provide for collaboration and are personally meaningful
- create a structure that consists of professional expertise, a supportive culture, and essential resources to ensure that teachers realize maximum benefit from professional development opportunities\*

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\* Taken from the Westford Public Schools' Strategic Plan, 2008

## **Courses and Credits**

Courses will be offered in a variety of areas of study that are consistent with the goals and direction of the Westford Public Schools. Studies within the University of Westford will ensure that the participants are exposed to current, relevant, and essential knowledge bases. Participants will expand their knowledge of educational pedagogy, curriculum, instructional practices, technology, and program evaluation, as well as examine their own educational beliefs and values in light of their new learning.

- Courses will be offered three times each year; summer, fall, and spring semesters.
- Coursework may carry one credit, two credit, or three credit hours depending upon the number of classroom contact hours. The following structure will be utilized.

45+	contact hours = 4 UW credits
37.5	contact hours = 3 UW credits
25	contact hours = 2 UW credits
12.5	contact hours = 1 UW credit

- Each class will have a minimum number of 12 participants in order to be held.
- All classes will be offered at no cost to the participants.
- Participants will be evaluated on the quality of their work including, but not limited to class participation, projects, papers, and individual and group research. Instructors will utilize letter grades.
- A minimum earned grade of C is required to be awarded credit for a course.

## **Grading Scale**

4.0 = A

3.5 = B+

3.0 = B

2.5 = B–

2.0 = C

Any grade below a 2.0 = F

I = Incomplete

W = Withdrawn

- Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Students who are absent for more than 10% of the contact hours will not be awarded credit.
- When the Westford Public Schools are cancelled due to weather or other circumstances, the University of Westford courses are also cancelled.
- Participants will be given a course syllabus at the first class meeting. Course expectations will be reviewed at that time. Please note that all courses will have multiple forms of assessment.
- An Incomplete grade must be made up by the end of the following semester, or the student will automatically receive an F.

## **Course Registration**

Courses will be announced through email.

## **How to Submit a Proposal**

Course offerings will be consistent with the goals and direction of the Westford Public Schools. Suggestions from the faculty for new courses are always welcome. For faculty wishing to offer a course, the following information is required.

- Course name
- Proposed credit hours, dates, and times
- Prerequisites
- Instructor's name and contact information
- Course description
- Required texts
- Room requirements/location
- Course syllabus
- Grading rubric

Decisions regarding course offerings for a given semester will be based upon the needs of the district, faculty, and budgetary constraints.

The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction must approve all course offerings.

## **Instructor's Requirements**

All instructors are expected to complete and submit the instructor's attendance/grade sheet (Appendix B), completed evaluation forms (Appendix C) and request for payment (Appendix D) to the Curriculum Office within 30 days of the last class meeting.

If an instructor is absent, he/she is expected to find a competent substitute. If this is not possible, the instructor is required to notify class participants and the Curriculum Office regarding a make-up date.

Instructors are required to submit a detailed syllabus that includes a course description including course title, dates and times, location and prerequisites. Additionally, the instructor contact information, course requirements, and assessments, the grading policy including the weight of each assessment, the make up policy, course schedule and topical outline must be included on the syllabus.

## Appendix A – Course Proposal Form

Course Instructor/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Times: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's contact information:

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Credit Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

(1 = 12.5 contact hours, 2 = 25 contact hours, 3 = 37.5 contact hours, 4 = 45+ contact hours)

Room requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

Prerequisites: \_\_\_\_\_

Required texts: \_\_\_\_\_

Course description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Course syllabus: (attach detailed syllabus)

Grading rubric: (attach detailed rubric)

.....

☐ Course Approved \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Course Not Approved \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction*