



FACULTY HANDBOOK
December 2014

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Message from Vice Chancellor

It is a matter of great satisfaction for me that the Quality Assurance Office has come up with the *Faculty Handbook*. The Faculty Handbook, I am sure, will go a long way in initiating the process of debate and deliberations on the teaching strategies, pedagogical methodologies, and institutional culture. Abasyn University is a very young institution which needs a strong foundation for its academic and research cultures. I urge my worthy colleagues to come forward and give their input in the QA office's efforts to come up with ambitious but workable plan to make Abasyn an even more distinguished and rewarding seat of higher learning in the country.

Dr. Jamil Ahmad,
Vice Chancellor

Introduction

The idea of the Abasyn University was conceived by Mr Muhammad Imranullah, the Chancellor of the University. The idea was converted into a practical proposition in December 2007 when with God's grace, the chartered was granted by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) through promulgation of an ordinance by Governor KPK, which was later approved by provincial assembly through an act of the provincial assembly. Abasyn was the first and only University of KPK which was awarded category 'W' at its inception, which was the highest category to be awarded to any institution in the old ranking system by Higher Education Commission (HEC). In 2012, it was upgraded to 'W3' by HEC under the new ranking system. In a short span of time Abasyn University has emerged into one of the most effective and rewarding seats of higher learning in the region. It has only been possible with the dedicated support of faculty and staff that the university has progressed both horizontally and vertically in these years. From a few bachelors programs at the outset, it now consists of three major faculties including Engineering & Computing, Management & Social Sciences, and Life Sciences and spread over three campuses. Currently, the total enrollment at Peshawar campus is more than 3000. More than 1200 students have graduated so far. According to our statistics, 25% of our graduates go abroad for higher studies and jobs, which indicate that the education provided by Abasyn University is compatible with International standards. Not only this but multinational companies, Banks, NGOs and Government organizations are also hiring our graduates on regular basis.

Mission Statement

The University's mission is

'To build a nationwide knowledge Community through quality education, relevance, critical thinking, creativity, research and social responsibility.'

Vision

The vision of the university is designed in such a way to cover all important aspects within any educational institutions, which are as follows:

1. Quality Teaching
2. Research and Development
3. Internationalization
4. Industrial liaison
5. Career development

Core Values

The core values of the university are as follows:

- Quality
- Commitment
- Team work
- Accountability
- Respect

I—Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty is the backbone of any educational Institute. The role of the Faculty is very clear at the Abasyn University and explained in the following sections:

Teaching

As a new institution Abasyn University is mainly focusing on the quality of teaching. Faculty members are expected to strive for excellence in teaching and to participate fully in the teaching programs (e.g., lectures, seminars, laboratories, and independent studies) unless an exception (such as leave of absence) is granted by the University. Academic advising, inclusive of the direction of theses, is also an integral part of the teaching program and is required of some of the faculty members. The aim is to provide the students with the opportunity to study with recognized, reputed, as well as developing scholars.

In the conduct of courses/lectures, faculty members should:

- Be able to instruct students of all levels and across the spectrum of courses relevant to their areas of expertise.
- Demonstrate originality and relevance in the design of each course.
- Hold class meetings that are consistent with the course proposal as approved by the University. Any changes in the number of scheduled meetings or substantive changes in course content require a review by the HoD and other relevant bodies.
- Be prepared to reschedule class meetings or arrange for appropriate substitutes if they must miss a class (e.g., to attend a professional meeting, to observe a religious event due to illness).
- Make reasonable accommodations for students identified as having disabilities or students who wish to observe religious holidays.

Expected qualities of all Abasyn University faculty members include:

- A firm knowledge base and competence in relevant subject matter.
- Ability to synchronize subject matter, critical reasoning, critical thinking and practical knowledge.
- Knowledge of education technology and its implications as well as theoretical foundations derived from research.

- An applied knowledge of problem-solving strategies.
- Knowledge and use of curricula that are responsive to modern educational needs and reflect issues of the evolution and change.
- Demonstration of sensitivity to students' academic needs.
- Sensitivity in the use of language on how to effectively talk to and interact with students on personal issues and academic concerns.
- Respect for all human beings and the integrity of others, including those of diverse populations and cultures.
- Recognition of accountability, meaning acceptance of responsibility for actions and their impact on the immediate environment.
- Recognition of the impact of moral issues on teaching behavior.

Research and Scholarship

Faculty members are expected to demonstrate a dedication to scholarship by:

- Conducting or collaborating in research and research scholarship related to a specific field of study.
- Developing independent programs of research that have a major impact on a specific field of study.
- Engaging in significant research and publication throughout their active careers in accordance with departmental requirements and academic standards.
- Participating in teaching and professional service activity within their departments (Teaching loads can be adjusted to accommodate research activities.).
- Conducting all research in conformance with University policies and the policies of external granting agencies (where applicable).

In the event of significant changes in the support or resources for particular scholarly work, the faculty member's need to adjust will be taken into account in the application of these departmental standards. Although dedicated to both scholarship and instruction, faculty members may, on occasion or in different intervals of their careers, devote considerably more time to one of these activities than the other with consent of the senior management.

Availability

Members of the faculty are generally expected to be available to:

- Participate in required departmental/University meetings. Appropriate officials should be informed when a faculty member must miss such an activity due to personal, academic, or professional reasons/engagements.
- Advise students throughout the academic year by means of regularly scheduled weekly office hours or appointments or both, unless prevented by professional conflicts.
- Support their colleagues in the collegial conduct of University business.
- Participate in University-sponsored events.

Teaching Methodologies

Faculty members are expected not only to disseminate and transfer knowledge and skills to students, but also to create knowledge. At AU, faculty members are encouraged to develop their own teaching methodologies for effective transfer of knowledge. They are advised to contribute in developing an elaborate process of developing teaching and learning strategies.

Teaching Evaluation

As an expression of its commitment to maintain excellence in teaching, Abasyn University conducts regular evaluation of faculty teaching effectiveness. Such evaluations will be used for the purpose of recommendations for (or against) contract renewal/service regularization/job confirmation, and promotion.

Student Evaluation

Students are encouraged to assess performance of the faculty in carrying out their academic responsibilities. Data gathered from these questionnaires may impact decisions made by the University regarding faculty promotion and salary. This data may also be used to help faculty members improve their teaching effectiveness.

Evaluation may:

- Include the use of appraisals solicited from students at all levels to whom the faculty member has provided instruction.

- Encompass teaching functions which include both graduate and undergraduate instruction, lecturing, leading small discussion groups and seminars, directing independent studies or theses, laboratory teaching, research direction and participation in creative scholarship.
- Include not only classroom and laboratory instruction but efforts by faculty members to sustain competence in their fields, to devise new and creative teaching methods and pedagogical skills by up-dating and reinforcing their teaching through scholarly activity.
- Include any materials which the faculty member deems relevant to the determination of teaching effectiveness.

Evaluation results, the extent to which faculty members have met or failed to meet these standards, with reasoning and evidence, are disseminated by Departmental Heads. Consideration shall be given to the maximum possible protection of the rights of students as well as faculty members involved in the evaluation process. Departments shall provide reasonable opportunity to any faculty member to review, explain, rebut, and/or comment upon any evaluations of teaching that are part of his or her official record for purposes of contract renewal or promotion. Teaching evaluation shall be considered confidential and accessible only to those officially involved in the evaluation process.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism has been defined in the revised Academic Rules and Regulations which has already been shared with faculty and students. As mentioned in the above rules that Abasyn University strictly follows HEC's guidelines in this regard. All faculty members are strongly advised to avoid plagiarism in any form.

Administrative Contributions

Administrative contributions include all activities that benefit the department, the University, and the profession. All faculty members are expected to perform duties that are appropriate to and compatible with their seniority and the needs of the academic department. Faculty participation in professional activities significantly affects their own development as well as the reputation of the department and the University.

Summary

In summary, faculty responsibilities include but are not limited to the tasks listed below:

- Preparing Conducting Lectures (Classroom hours/lectures)
- Observing Office Hours
- Preparing/Grading Examinations
- Submitting Results in Time
- Invigilation
- Attending/holding Official Meetings
- Participating in events, such as Convocation, Annual dinner, etc.
- Conducting Research and Publications

Some faculty members are also asked to:

- Be student advisors.
- Participate in a committee be it academic or extracurricular oriented.
- Be a Head of a Student Committee.
- Strive for funding from relevant sources for Research/Publication/Travel(s) to read/present papers.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants, normally graduate students, are expected to:

- Assist senior faculty by; conducting tutorials and labs, and grading assignments quizzes reports, etc.
- Prepare lesson plans and submit them for consideration and approval.

In their interaction with students, Teaching Assistants are expected to:

- Maintain a professional relationship with the students both within and without the classroom.
- Conduct themselves in a manner sensitive to students' needs, expectations, and responses.
- Maintain definite standards; be firm, fair, and consistent in matters of student discipline.

- Treat all students with equal respect.
- Demonstrate to students a sincere interest in their learning progress, and offer additional help during office hours.

II-Code of Conduct

The AU aims to prepare its students to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The University endeavors to inspire in its students intellectual diversity, self motivation, critical thinking and inquiry, research-oriented approach, capacity for leadership, and community-oriented, ethically guided, high sense of professionalism. The University expects its students to strive towards acquisition of attributes that befit the national objectives. These attributes, in turn, should reflect in their everyday behavior, attitude and dress.

Naturally, faculty members and staff should also aspire to appropriate conduct that would encourage and motivate students to reflect the above qualities and attributes. In order to achieve these goals, all faculty members and staff are obliged to strictly follow the Code of Conduct detailed below.

- Faculty members and staff should refrain from conduct that might damage the reputation of the University. They must also avoid any conduct that may lead to the disruption of any academic program of the Campus.
- Faculty members and staff should show tolerance, understanding, and respect for the rights of others. They should keep in mind that acceptance of one another can enrich their educational performance and everyday interactions. As members of the University community, all faculty and staff should strive to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect.
- In case of any misunderstanding with peers or University management, etc., it is important that discussions and exchange of views remain within the framework of decency and decorum. Threatening behavior to students, fellow faculty, staff, or the University as an institution could cause irrevocable dismissal from the University.
- Faculty members and staff will be respectful to members of the

opposite gender and will refrain from any behavior that can be interpreted by others as 'gender harassment'.

- The Campus is a No-Smoking area, and at no time in any part of the Campus is smoking allowed.
- Faculty members and staff are advised to switch off mobiles in classrooms, examination halls, labs and library to avoid disrupting the calm of the said places.
- Faculty members and staff are encouraged to interact with students. This interaction, of course, is subject to the desirable norms.

Dress Code

Faculty members and staff of the University are expected to dress keeping in view local cultural values.

- Male members of faculty and staff may not wear shorts or sleeveless shirts. The dress should not have any scripts or images, which appear to be provocative or indecent.
- Female members of faculty and staff may not wear skintight or diaphanous dress, shorts, or sleeveless shirts.

The University will not tolerate any violation of the Code of Conduct outlined above. Anyone faced with such situation should contact the office of Administration, HoD or Dean without any inhibition.

III-Academic Rules and Regulations

Academic Sessions

Academic sessions include a Spring semester, a Fall semester and a Summer semester. The maximum duration of Spring and Fall semester is 17 to 18 weeks, while the duration of Summer semester is approximately 8 weeks. The academic session is governed by the academic calendar issued by the University. A semester consists of 16 weeks of lectures, 1 or 2 weeks of final exams, 1 week for the checking of the final exam papers, and a week for the declaration of results.

Lectures

Faculty members are required to complete 45 (minimum) lecture hours of

theory class if the course is of 3-credit hours and 58 (minimum) lecture hours of theory class if the course is of 4-credit hours. In case of 3+1 credit hours, they are required to conduct a lab session of 3 hours/week in addition to 45 hours of theory class.

Course Design and Responsibilities

Faculty members are primarily responsible for determining course content, choice of reading materials, and type and size of written and oral assignments. Originality and relevance are the expected qualities for appropriate course and lecture design. Faculty members are encouraged to create environment within the classroom that supports free discussion, inquiry and expression.

Evaluation of academic achievement of students in a course is also the responsibility of the faculty member. To maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, faculty members may take reasonable disciplinary measures. Faculty members must evaluate student performance and conduct according to academic standards, not based on opinions of religious beliefs or political views and inclinations. Should any student feel his/her performance was not judged solely on academic grounds or that his/her grade does not reflect the quality of work completed, he/she may appeal any faculty member's decision via the Student Grievance Process.

Course Outline/Handout Document

Faculty members are required to prepare and follow a Course Outline. On the first day of class students should be given a Course Outline/Handout. The handout may include:

- The name of the University
- Department where the course originated
- Title of the course
- Credit Hours
- Semester (for example, Semester: Spring 2010)
- Prerequisite (if any)
- Instructor's name
- Objective and description of the course
- Teaching Methodology

- Learning Outcomes
- Outline of the course
- Importance of attendance
- Grade distribution/percentages

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