New Faculty Checklist: Preparing for the Semester

The Office of the Provost welcomes you as a valued member of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville community! To help you get off to a strong start, we've prepared an introduction to the university-level resources, services, and policies that new faculty members should be familiar with to succeed. Your college/school and department will also introduce you to complementary resources, services, and policies that exist at those two levels. Use this chronological checklist as a guide throughout your first year.

Step-by-step

1. First Steps
2. Prepare for the Semester
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1. First steps:

☐ Complete all hiring paperwork. Work with your department and school/college to complete any remaining documents.

☐ Relocating? Most of our SIUE community lives in either "Metro East"--the SW Illinois region which includes Edwardsville, Alton, Belleville, Glen Carbon, Collinsville, Troy, Highland, and O'Fallon or across the Mississippi River in St. Louis' many neighborhoods.

☐ Orientation: Read through the online materials and plan to attend university-level orientation and events:

1. Before arriving on campus, **read through** the New Faculty Orientation Course--an online, asynchronous resource with detailed information that you can refer back to during your first year.

2. **In-person orientation** is held early in the fall semester; see the New/Early Career Faculty page for details updated throughout the summer.

3. Attend **online presentations and workshops** offered by the Center for Faculty Development and Innovation for beginning faculty. Look for emails from the Faculty Development Director, Nicole Klein.

☐ Benefits Orientation: First, review the Human Resources Benefits/Payroll section of the New Faculty Orientation online course. Sign up for and attend an online Benefits Orientation offered by Human Resources—you will be sent an email with more details. Prior to your benefits orientation, you can also see an overview of faculty benefits with links to more details about current benefit plans. Note that from your date of hire, you will have 30 days to make your health insurance/plan selections and 6 months to select your permanent retirement plan.

☐ e-ID and password: Request your e-ID and set up your password. Your e-ID is a combination of your first and last name that you will use to sign on to most systems at SIUE, including Blackboard and your email.

☐ Email: Start to use your Office 365 employee email account. Besides Outlook, this login gives access to Word, Excel, PowerPoint, One Note, OneDrive, Teams, and other Office 365 apps. You can install desktop Office versions on up to 5 personal devices as well.

☐ Parking: Go to Parking Services to register for employee parking. There are several parking hangtag options, so view the parking map to determine which lot(s) are closer to your building. Note that the area has a minimal public transportation system, but extensive MCT bike trails, some of which connect to SIUE.

☐ Cougar ID Card: Once you have your e-ID, you can get your Cougar Card in the Service Center in Rendleman Hall 1309. Among other purposes, swiping your Cougar Card will gain you access to the Center for Faculty Development and Innovation on the second floor of Lovejoy Library.

☐ Faculty Handbook: Locate the Faculty Handbook—it introduces you to helpful resources and important university policies that you'll need to follow in your teaching, research, and service at SIUE.

☐ Department and College Onboarding: Each department may have a different way of orienting you to their specific procedures, so check with your department's administrative staff. If your department does not have an onboarding document for new faculty, here are the top 10 questions to ask, depending on whether you are teaching, conducting research, or both:

1. What am I teaching? How will I get my exact teaching schedule and locations?
2. Where is my office?
3. How do I get keys to offices and/or labs that I will need to access?
4. How do I get access to computing equipment, lab equipment, and/or specific software?

5. Is there a Program Director or Course Coordinator who oversees any courses I am teaching?
6. What textbooks are used for my class and how can I get access to these? How are textbooks ordered?
7. May I have the contact information for any graduate assistants who will be supporting my work?
8. What are the faculty meetings and/or other department events that I must attend or can attend?
9. How can I learn about specific department standards and protocols (e.g. typical course grade distributions, assignment of GAs/TAs, photocopying, dress code)? How can I get a copy of our department and/or school Operating Paper?
10. What department and college policies should I be most familiar with as I begin? Are there any guidelines that I need to follow regarding things like course materials, tests, or assessments?

2. Prepare for the Semester

☐ Syllabus: Prepare your syllabi. SIUE's Instructional Design & Learning Technologies group of ITS provides a [Teaching Toolkit](#) that includes an optional syllabus template that is accessible for all learners and contains the most [current academic policies and guidance](#), student services, and accessibility resources that can be customized for your courses. Consider asking your department for examples of previous syllabi for the course.

☐ Academic Calendars: Access academic calendars, semester calendars, and final exam schedules from the [Office of the Registrar's website](#). These will help you when preparing syllabi and planning travel.

☐ LMS: SIUE uses Blackboard as our learning management system (LMS). Log into [Blackboard](#) with your e-ID and password. Go to "Organizations" to see ITS Training Services to learn how to use Blackboard and other systems/applications we use at SIUE including YuJa—the video platform we use to create, store, and share videos and Zoom. These trainings can also be found in the [Teaching Toolkit](#).

☐ Example Blackboard Course: Ask if there is a current faculty member who has taught the course before who might be willing to add you to a previous semester's Blackboard course as "Course Builder" so you can see an example. Also consider requesting a [one-on-one consultation](#) with one of our Instructional Designers.

☐ Once you are assigned as the instructor of record for your course, you can sign into Blackboard to begin constructing your course. Don't know where to start? Begin here, with the [Blackboard Start of Semester Activities](#).

☐ [Cougarnet](#) (Banner's self-service product): Using your e-ID, you can access essential faculty services (e.g. class lists, final grade form, schedules) and employment and personal information. HR provides an [overview](#) of the Employment features here.

3. Before Classes Begin

☐ Class Roster: You can download a roster of students enrolled in your courses through Blackboard using [these directions](#). Select "User Information Only". Save as an Excel file to use for attendance, student notes, or as a grading sheet.

☐ Learn the Campus: You can review the [interactive map](#) and take a walk around our beautiful campus. Our many Candian Geese are fun to see (from a distance), and some consider them our unofficial mascot.

☐ Visit Your Classrooms: Find your classroom (most rooms are unlocked) and do a practice run with your technology. If you plan to use the classroom computer, log in with your e-ID and password as this will make it faster and smoother on your first teaching day. If you are using a laptop, make sure you can connect to the projector. Play around with the [technology in the room](#) or call 618-650-5500 or email help@siue.edu to make an appointment to have someone from ITS meet you in your classroom to help orient you to the tech options. They are happy to do this!

☐ Technology Issues: The [ITS KnowledgeBase](#) is an excellent source of updated, clear instructions for all things tech at SIUE. Browse or use the search bar. Our [ITS Help Desk](#) is a fast, friendly way to receive multiple forms of assistance for a variety of technology issues. If they can't help, they'll find who can.

☐ Create Your Email Signature: You can use the template [here](#), or tailor/design your own (e.g. add your pronouns, [how to pronounce](#) your name, your calendar link).

Questions?

Consult the online [New Faculty Orientation course](#), [the Faculty Handbook](#), [ITS' New Faculty Orientation Reference](#), and/or [HR's New Employee training](#).

Also, reach out to your department chair, a faculty colleague, and/or department administrative staff.

Suggestions?

Do you have any suggestions for this checklist? Let us know at facultycenter@siue.edu!

A big thank you to Georgia State University for permission to use their checklist as inspiration.