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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Onward Program! Joining the University community can be exciting, but it can also be confusing. This handbook will provide many of the answers to the questions you will have as you enter school. You will have other questions, of course, and we will answer those during Orientation Class or individually with a staff member.

The Onward Program began in 1970 as a way to make the University of Maine more accessible to students who, for academic and economic reasons, might not otherwise attend college. Jerry Herlihy, our first director, recruited fifteen students and provided them with support services. In 1970 there were two staff members to serve fifteen students. Currently we admit approximately fifty students and support them with a director, assistant director, three counselors, three faculty members, two administrative assistants, and a computer specialist. Most students will complete the Onward Program and go on to successful careers in the University and beyond. We invite you to join that group of hard-working, determined students!

Onward is more than academics. It is a community of support for our students. We are committed to your education. In the same sense, we expect as much from you. We expect that you will work very hard; we expect that you will always handle yourself in a way that does not harm you or others and doesn't interfere with another person's opportunities; and we expect that you will grow intellectually and personally.

We look forward to getting to know you as you begin your University career. We know you are full of plans as you look toward your future goals. We hope this Onward Student Handbook provides some of the information that will help as you begin.

The Onward Program is a unit of College Success Programs, which is a member of the University of Maine Division of Lifelong Learning.

## Program Staff

Director .....	Alan Parks 118 East Annex
Assistant Director of CSP & Director of Disability Services .....	Ann Smith 123 East Annex
Counselor .....	Ceci Adams 111 East Annex
Computer Specialist .....	Eric Chapman 127 East Annex
Disabilities Counselor .....	Sara Henry 107 East Annex
Counselor .....	Catherine Johnson 109 East Annex
Administrative Assistant .....	Susan Spaulding 121 East Annex
Administrative Assistant .....	Lori Watson 125 East Annex

### Faculty

English Composition & Reading .....	June Carter 119 East Annex
Science .....	Molly MacLean 110 East Annex
Mathematics .....	Linda Rottmann 113 East Annex

Email addresses for all Staff, Faculty and Peer Advisors are: first name.last  
name@umit.maine.edu

Contact telephone numbers for College Success Programs are 581-2319 or 581-2320.

Onward Program Web page: <http://www.umaine.edu/onward/>

Onward Program Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Onward-Program-at-the-University-of-Maine/111244192447>

### Student Peer Advisors

(Fall Semester - subject to change in Spring)

Christine Boobar  
Kelly Gagne  
Christina Gallo  
David Gibbons

Ryan Hadley  
Dianne Herring  
Dean Romprey

# Onward Course Descriptions

Onward courses in reading, writing, mathematics and sciences will prepare you for university courses. Although only some of these courses earn degree credit, they are all essential for your college education. They are serious academic courses, and the faculty have high standards for your performance. Each of your instructors will let you know more about their goals and grading policies when they give you the syllabus for each course.

It is possible to complete your Onward experience with up to 14 university credits on your transcript. You can earn one credit in Ann's Orientation class, and three credits each in English 101 (by portfolio review), Math 111 and Reading (credit for History 103 by CLEP examination), four in BIO 222 and, in some cases, four credits for BIO 100. Many students earn from 0 to 4 credits during their first year at Onward.

Based on the placement tests you took, you will be assigned to the course level that best suits your level of skill. Some students may be exempt from one or more courses, and this decision is based on the scores of the Onward Placement Tests. Otherwise, the courses listed below are required of all Onward students.

You must pass all Onward courses and earn fifteen degree credits before you can transfer into a major of your choice. Since all Onward students enter with different educational backgrounds, the time spent in Onward courses varies. However, most Onward students will spend two semesters taking Onward courses.

## Onward Writing Courses

### ONE 012: Onward Composition

Students write essays based on readings in American history. Each student drafts five or more essays, revises each with the help of peers and writing "experts", and finally presents the paper in the class. A review of grammar, sentence structure and punctuation makes up the editing part of the course. 3 non-degree credits.

*[Students with an "A" in both ONE 012 and ONR 012 have the opportunity to test out of the Onward series and receive credits for ENG 101. They are required to compile a portfolio of writing that passes the English Department Review and have a session with the instructor about writing research papers.]*

### ENG 101 – College Composition

This college-level course requires that students write several essays using research techniques. Those students who earn a "C" or better in the course and pass the ENG 101 proficiency examination will earn three university degree credits 3 degree credits.

## Onward Mathematics Courses

### ONM 011: Pre-Algebra

Operations, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, are reviewed and applied to fractions, decimals, percents and basic geometry. Briefly introduces signed numbers and simple linear equations. 3 non-degree credits.

### ONM 012: Introductory Algebra

Topics include: graphing, writing and solving linear equations (including fractional equations), solving quadratic equations by factoring and by the quadratic formula, as well as practical applications. Prerequisite: ONM 011 or permission. 3 non-degree credits.

### MAT 111 – College Algebra

A basic course in college algebra emphasizing linear, polynomial, rational, quadratic, exponential and logarithmic expressions, equations, functions and graphs.

Prerequisite: ONM 012 or permission. 3 degree credits.

Satisfies one of the University General Education Mathematics Requirements.

## **Onward Orientation Courses**

### ONO 011: Onward Orientation

Assists the transition of students entering the University of Maine through the Onward Program.

Topics include: Academic Requirements of the Onward Program and the University of Maine, Goal Setting, Learning Styles, Time Management, Note Taking, Test Taking, Stress Management, Self-esteem, Communication and Relationship Skills, Career Information.

(Pass/Fail Grade Only.) 1 non-degree credit.

### ONO100: Onward Orientation II

Exploration of campus resources relevant to academic course work, majors and career choices.

Builds strategies of achieving success at UMaine including study skills, basic computer skills, and self-awareness as it relates to academic competency. Prerequisite: ONO 011 or permission of instructor. (Pass/Fail Grade Only.) 1 degree credit.

## **Onward Reading Courses**

### ONR 012: Introduction to Academic Reading

For students who are already reasonably proficient readers, but who lack the critical skills required for university level courses. Introduces text analysis and methods of critical thinking. Activities include discussion of assigned readings, short papers, as well as some emphasis on effective reading skills, vocabulary building, and exam preparation. 3 non-degree credits.

*[ONR 012 explores readings in U.S. History up to 1877 (the Reconstruction Era). Students successfully completing ONR012 will have the opportunity to take the CLEP test for University History 103. A passing grade on the CLEP exam will earn 3 University degree credits. Note: a fee is required for CLEP testing.]*

### ONR 013: Critical Reading

For students who already have a beginning acquaintance with the methods of critical reading, but who need to refine and strengthen their skills in order to succeed in regular university courses.

Activities include concentrated text analysis, oral and written presentations and independent library research. Prerequisite: ONR 012 or permission. 3 non-degree credits.

## **Onward Science Courses**

### ONS 011: Onward Biology

Understanding life begins with ecological relationships, including energy, nutrients, animal behavior and the ecology of populations. Then attention shifts to the unity of life, involving basic cell chemistry, the genetic basis of life and evolution. Permission to register required. 3 non-degree credits.

#### ONS 012: Onward Chemistry

Topics include measurements and calculations, matter and energy, chemical foundations and composition, nomenclature, reactions, quantities, modern atomic theory, bonding, gases, liquids and solids, solutions, acids and bases, equilibrium and oxidation-reduction. Prerequisite: ONS 011 or permission. 3 non-degree credits.

#### ONS 014: Onward Zoology

Introduces biological diversity and classification of living things. Plant systems are studied as a key part of the living fabric of the earth. Much emphasis is placed on animal systems, including anatomy and physiology, embryology and reproduction. Prerequisite: ONS 011 or permission. 3 non-degree credits.

## **Onward and University Attendance Policies**

Attendance is mandatory in Onward courses. If illness, a family emergency, or bad weather prevents you from attending, you are expected to phone the reception desk (581-2320) or email your instructors to let them know as soon as possible. However, phoning in does not mean that you are excused from the class. In some cases, you may be required to provide a written medical excuse. In any case, you are expected to talk to the instructor and to make up any work in the missed class.

Each instructor has her/his own attendance policy. In most cases multiple absences affect your grade. Your instructors' attendance policies are usually on the course syllabus. If you have questions, please ask.

## **Grading Policies**

Instructors have clear grading standards by which they determine each grade and your course grade. Course grades are most often an average of individual assignments, quizzes, tests, and final exams. Course grades can be negatively influenced by repeated and unexplained absences and/or by lack of participation in the class.

## **Academic Policies**

### **Requests for waiver of a required Onward course**

Onward students are well advised prior to admission to the Program as to the course requirements necessary to bring each student into readiness for regular university coursework. Although Onward students can show completion of a course in high school or other setting, they must demonstrate current competency level by examination. It is not our intention to create barriers for students to advance to college level courses. Students who feel their competency level is higher than the course in which they are placed, or who request a waiver for an Onward

course, must demonstrate through a competency examination their level of academic skill in the contested area. With passage of the competency examination the Onward course may be waived.

### **Onward Course Progress Policies**

Initial Placement in Onward Courses is determined by a review of our placement test scores and previous college academic work. Onward courses are designed to build academic skills needed to succeed at UMaine. In most cases students will follow the sequence of Onward courses before advancing to University degree classes.

It is the Director's decision, after reviewing the Onward placement test scores and student's academic history, to determine how transfer credits will affect placement in Onward classes. College credits from another institution may not guarantee an exemption from Onward classes. Each such situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Advancing through Onward Mathematics Courses**

Onward students in ONM011 and 012 must earn a "C" grade or higher to advance to the next math level.

Students are expected to successfully complete Onward's mathematics courses (ONM011 and ONM012 with a grade of C or better) or complete Onward's MAT111 course, whichever happens first. Students who test higher than Onward MAT 111 on the math placement test, will be enrolled in an appropriate University of Maine mathematics course indicated by their test result.

Students who have successfully completed ONM012 will advance to Onward's MAT 111, or, if they have already completed two semesters of Onward Math courses, to another University math course approved by their academic advisor in consultation with the Onward Math instructors.

Students registered for ONM 011 who are performing "A" level work and wish to advance to the MAT 111 level may request permission from the course instructor and Program Director to take the final exam for ONM 012. Earning a passing grade on the final exam of "C" or better can result in advancement.

### **Advancing through Onward Reading and Composition**

Students enrolled in ONE012 and ONR012 who wish to be exempt from taking ENG101 and ONR013 must test out of ENG101 by meeting the following criteria:

- Must have an "A" average in both courses
- Must create a writing portfolio according to class guidelines
- Must participate in a research paper information session with the instructor
- Must write an in-class essay, for a representative of the English Department, worthy of receiving credit for ENG101.

Students who do not test out of ENG101 the fall semester must take Onward ENG101 and ONR013 the spring semester.

### **Advancing through Onward Science**

Students are required to pass two of the Onward Program's three science classes. Students earning a "C" or better grade in Biology and who do not need Zoology or Chemistry for their

intended major, may request a review by the course Instructor, and the Program Director for permission to register in a University science course appropriate to their academic major.

### **Completing Onward with Fourteen Degree Credits**

Completing the regular sequence of Onward courses *can* afford *some* students the opportunity to earn up to fourteen Degree Credits. These credits may be earned by demonstrating competency through testing or portfolio review in the following areas:

- MAT111                                      3 Cr
- ENG101                                      3 Cr
- ONO100                                      1 Cr
- BIO222                                      4 Cr
- CLEP HTY 103 Test                      3 Cr

### **When can I Take University Degree Credit Classes?**

Onward students who complete the highest level of Onward's Reading, Composition, Mathematics and who meet the Science requirement may enroll in UMaine degree granting courses in that content area. Example: Completion of Onward math courses = student may enroll in a University degree credit math course.

In order to take a fifth course in the Spring semester, an Onward student must have at least a "B" in every course the previous semester and a 3.33 GPA. In each case a review with the director and appropriate faculty member is required.

## **Onward Services and Activities**

### **Orientation**

Orientation Week begins a week prior to the start of the fall semester. During this week, you will meet other incoming Onward students, the counseling staff, the program staff, the faculty members, and the peer advisors. You will go on a tour of the campus to help you become familiar with buildings, important offices, and classroom locations. You will also meet your academic advisor and receive your schedule of classes for the semester. Orientation Week also includes a mandatory overnight camping trip. The focus of the camping trip is to develop a sense of community through sharing tasks, team-building and communication activities.

### **Counseling Services**

The Onward Program offers counseling to its students. Students not only have academic challenges; but may also face personal, social, and emotional challenges during their college career. The Onward counselors provide transitional counseling, individual and group counseling, financial aid counseling, and career counseling to students. The counselors are advocates for students and can refer students to external resources as appropriate. These services are confidential and are provided at no cost to Onward students.

### **Peer Advisors**

Peer Advising is the cornerstone of the support system that helps Onward students successfully adjust to the University community. Peer Advisors (PAs) are upper-class students who have completed their Onward courses. They have experienced the challenges of first year students. Each new Onward student will have his/her own PA and will meet with that PA at least once a

week. During these weekly meetings students can receive academic help, discuss general concerns, and learn how to navigate the university environment. PAs are selected, trained and supervised by the counseling staff.

### **Onward Academic Support and Assisted Study Labs**

Onward students will find a great deal of academic support within the Program. Faculty are available to meet with students outside of class, either during office hours or by appointment. In addition, Onward provides a Reading/Writing Lab, Math Lab and Science study groups. Under the supervision of Onward faculty, study labs are staffed by student Instructional Aides. Usually these students have had the course themselves, so they are familiar with both the curricula and instructional styles of the faculty. Peer advisors are also able to assist students with academics.

### **Annual Activities**

Members of the Onward Program gather several times a year for events, which help foster a strong sense of community. These annual events historically have included a potluck picnic lunch on First Year Family Day, a Holiday party in December, a spring clean-up event on Maine Day, and the Graduate Recognition Dinner in May. Events and gatherings may vary from year to year.

### **Scholarships**

The Onward Program awards several scholarships each year. The Dawn Allenwood Scholarship, the Single Mother Scholarship, the MaryAnn Devoe/Fern Stearns Mathematics Prize, and the Lee Davis Science Prize are awarded to first year students. Information about applying for a scholarship is announced during the spring semester.

### **Disability Services**

Disability Support Services (DSS) is housed with the Onward Program in East Annex. DSS provides accommodations and services for all students with disabilities at the University including Onward students. The students served have a wide range of physical, psychiatric, and learning disabilities.

DSS staff are available to talk with students who do not have a formal disability diagnosis but have concerns about barriers to their learning. The University of Maine and the Onward Program do not provide psycho-educational testing to diagnose learning disabilities, although referrals for these evaluations can be made. This testing is done at the student's expense.

Onward students who need accommodations and services are encouraged to make an appointment with either Ann Smith or Sara Henry.

### **Tutoring**

The Tutor Program is part of the College Success Programs as is Onward. The Tutor Program provides small group tutoring in 100 and 200 level courses. It does not provide tutors for Onward classes because specific academic support is available through the individual instructors, and the Reading/Writing, Math labs and our Science study groups.

## Academic Honors

The University recognizes outstanding academic achievement in several ways. Two of the most prestigious are the Presidential Pin and the Dean's List.

### Presidential Achievement Pin

Full-time and part-time students are eligible for the Presidential Pin, which is awarded only once in a student's career at the University of Maine. Full-time students must attain a 3.0 GPA or better over two consecutive semesters (a minimum of 24 credits) of accumulated UMaine course work, and must also achieve a 3.5 GPA or better for the most recent semester (a minimum of 12 credits). Part-time students must achieve a 3.0 GPA or better based on 30 credits of accumulated UMaine course work and a 3.5 GPA or better for the most recent 12 credits. No Pass/Fail courses may be counted towards the 30- and 12-credit minimum registrations for either full-time or part-time students, and no incomplete grades may be on the transcript for any semester used in the computations.

### Dean's List Requirements:

To be eligible for Dean's List a student must:

1. Have a semester grade point average of 3.3 or better
2. At the end of the semester have completed a minimum of 12 credits taken for letter grades (exceptions: courses with a deferred grade for thesis and a maximum of 3 credits in courses restricted to the Pass/Fail grading option may count toward the 12 degree credits)
3. Have no incomplete or missing grades for the semester.

## Academic Actions

The University takes a series of progressive academic actions when a student is failing to meet performance expectations and make continuous progress towards completing degree requirements.

The Faculty Senate recommends the standards to determine which students are making satisfactory progress toward their degree. Those students not fulfilling academic requirements are placed on probation, suspended or dismissed. The Academic Standing Committee administers academic standing policies.

### Academic Probation

The minimum acceptable accumulative grade point average needed for graduation is 2.0. Therefore any GPA below 2.0 is a warning to a student that such work will not permit graduation. Students are placed on probation following a semester in which her or his accumulative grade point average falls below 2.0, and a student may be placed on probation following a semester in which he or she receives a semester grade point average less than 2.0. A student on probation who does not improve her or his accumulative grade point average to a 2.0 may be continued on probation. A student continued on academic probation will be required to meet certain conditions defined by his or her college dean/director. These conditions will specify the level of coursework and academic achievement required to be removed from probation.

### **Academic Suspension**

Academic suspension indicates that a student is separated from the University for a minimum of one semester. A student must file an application for readmission. Suspension is the usual action when a student fails to make normal progress toward graduation. Situations that lead to academic suspension are any one of the following:

- a. Students receive a semester grade-point average at or below 1.0
- b. Students continued on academic probation fail to meet conditions as defined by the college dean, program director or school director
- c. First-year students (0-23 credits) acquire an accumulative average less than 1.5 at the end of the first two semesters; Sophomores (24-53 credits) acquire an accumulative average of 1.7 or less; Juniors (54-83 credits) acquire an accumulative average of 1.8 or less; Seniors (84+ credits) acquire an accumulative average of 1.9 or less  
Regulations under c. above also apply to transfer students. Exceptions may be made for students who have earned a semester average of at least 2.0 while on probation but who have not achieved the required minimum accumulative average.

### **Academic Dismissal**

Dismissal is normally the final action taken when students are not making satisfactory progress toward a degree or when students readmitted after suspension show no improvement in their accumulative average or otherwise fail to meet conditions set by the college. In such cases:

- a. The student is not normally allowed to apply for readmission
- b. The action is posted to the official academic record
- c. A hold is placed on the student record to preclude enrollment as a student at all UMS institutions.

### **Provisional Continuation**

First semester students who are experiencing academic difficulties may be placed in a provisional continuation status. This intermediate status requires the student to discuss his or her academic record with the associate dean of the college, program director or coordinator, or school director to determine whether the student will be placed on academic probation, suspension or dismissal.

### **Academic Activity during Suspension/Dismissal**

Students under dismissal or suspension may not be admitted as matriculated students within the University of Maine System. Students may request permission from their associate dean or program or school director or coordinator to take one or two courses as a non-degree candidate at any UMS institution while they are under suspension.

### **Academic Standing Appeal Procedures**

Students appealing a suspension or dismissal must do so in writing addressed to the associate dean of their college or school, program director or coordinator. Appeals which explain extenuating circumstances (health problems, family emergencies, etc.) beyond the student's control and which affected academic performance will be brought to the Academic Standing Appeals Committee, which will decide upon them.

Students whose appeals are denied may appeal the decision of the Academic Standing Appeals Committee in writing to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, whose decision is

final. The Associate Vice President makes sure that the Appeals Committee properly considered the information provided to it and acted in accordance with university policy and practice in making its decision. The Associate Vice President is unlikely to overturn a decision of the Appeals Committee unless there were procedural irregularities or unless new information becomes available.

### **Summer Session Courses for Suspended and Dismissed Students**

Students who receive notification of suspension or dismissal who are currently attending a summer session course will be allowed to complete that course for grade and credit. Students under suspension or dismissal will not be allowed to take any subsequent courses without the permission of the associate dean of their college.

### **Transcript Re-Evaluation**

Once, during a student's association with the university, his or her transcript may be reevaluated if certain conditions are met. This can only occur following one of the actions listed below:

- Return to the University following suspension or dismissal
- Completing a successful semester on provisional continuation
- Changing academic majors or colleges within the University
- Entering a transitional program
- Returning to the University after withdrawal from it.

If one or more of these conditions is met, the student's dean may exclude from the calculation of the student's accumulative grade point average all grades (including passing grades) received during one or more semester(s) immediately prior to the qualifying program change. For purposes of this policy, any courses taken outside normal term dates will be treated as part of a separate semester. When a transcript is reevaluated, the dean may waive required courses in which passing grades were received (so that students need not repeat them) but neither the grade(s) nor the credit(s) for those courses count toward graduation or the computation of the accumulative GPA.

Alternatively, if one or more of the above conditions is met, the student's dean may elect to exclude from the calculation of the student's accumulative grade point average and credits only courses and grades which would not be required by the student's new major or by General Education requirements received during the one or more semester(s) immediately prior to the qualifying program changes and for which the grade received was less than a "C." Thus, the grades of courses, which fulfill major or General Education requirements would continue to be included in the calculation of the accumulative GPA unless they are repeated.

Former students needing to complete at least 30 credits to qualify for graduation and who have been away from the University for at least five academic years may reapply as an external transfer student. The student's previous coursework at the university remains on the transcript, but previous grades do not count. Courses for which the student received a grade below "C-" are not accepted for degree credit. In effect, such students begin a new UMaine academic career upon their readmission.

# Conduct Policies

The University of Maine has an extensive discussion of student behavior standards included in the University of Maine Student Handbook. The student conduct code may be viewed at <http://www.maine.edu/pdf/06-09conductcodebookcleancopyfinal052206.pdf> Program supports and abides by these standards.

In general, the Onward Program expects appropriate behavior from all students in the classroom, in and outside the Onward offices and elsewhere in the University. We expect that students will be civil to each other, to all the faculty and staff, and to all the other members of the University community. The Onward Program will not tolerate:

- sexual harassment
- rude behavior
- foul language
- inappropriate language based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability or veteran status
- verbal and/or physical violence
- any attempt to intimidate, harass or threaten others by verbal, emotional behaviors or assault.

These behaviors must be addressed in a healthy and constructive way before any continuance of normal class participation. In some cases, inappropriate behavior will be referred to the University Disciplinary Office or the Office of Public Safety. The Onward Program has ZERO tolerance for disruptive or abusive behavior.

## University Health Services

The University provides comprehensive health services at Cutler Health Center. For information about fees, services, and hours of operation, visit the Cutler Web page at: <http://www.emmc.org/cutler.aspx>

There you will also be able to find a physician and will have access to a health library.

To make an appointment call 581-4000 or visit the Web site.

### Optional Health Insurance

Students will have the option of purchasing health insurance for themselves and their family. Information about this health insurance is usually mailed to you by the University prior to the beginning of the semester; students may decide whether or not to choose it. Cutler Health Center does not accept any insurance except the student insurance offered by the University. For further information please visit <http://www.emmc.org/cutler.aspx>