

August 18, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Teaching Assistants
College of Natural Sciences

FROM: David A. Laude, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Sacha Kopp, Associate Dean for Curriculum and Programs

SUBJECT: Coursework and Routine: Policies, Procedures, and Recommendations

Welcome to the Fall 2010 semester in the College of Natural Sciences. We have completed a revised version of the memorandum on Coursework and Routine that is provided each semester to CNS instructors.

The document includes the following information:

- UT registration and grading policies
- UT academic policies
- Course management suggestions
- CNS contact and calendar information

If you have limited time on your hands, the *Baker's Dozen of Commonly-Abused Academic Policies* at the beginning of the document would be a good read.

If you are used to receiving this document and wonder what might be new, here are two major points:

Posting of Course Syllabi: Read the included memo from the Provost that specifies not only that a syllabus must be provided to students on the first class meeting day, but that it be posted electronically. This policy change is consistent with the biggest piece of advice that I offer to faculty—if you provide students a thorough syllabus and stick to what it says, then they have little room for later grievance.

Dean's Office Reorganization of Academic Affairs: Academic Affairs in the Dean's Office is undergoing some restructuring for the 2010-11 academic year. While most of the units remain intact with respect to function, organization at the Associate Dean's level has shifted—Dave Laude will assume responsibility for faculty affairs and instructional budget while retaining oversight of student services. Professor Sacha Kopp, from the Department of Physics, will become the new Associate Dean for Curriculum and Programs.

Feel free to contact either of us with any questions you might have. Also, It would be useful to get to know the advising staff in the advising center associated with your department. Names and addresses of advising and special program locations are provided at the end of the document.

We hope that you have the best of semesters in the classroom!!

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A BAKERS'S DOZEN OF COMMONLY ABUSED ACADEMIC POLICIES

1. Final examination. Guidelines for final examination are the most detailed of all academic policies, and are also the most abused. Adherence to the posted final exam schedule, posted in the Course Schedule, is required and exceptions are rare. Requests for time or room change require approval of the department chair and the dean of the college. In addition, permission of the department chair is required if a final exam is not given.

<http://registrar.utexas.edu/schedules/109/finals/>

2. Course syllabus. Think of the syllabus as a contract between student and instructor. How important is it? It is the first thing the department chair and the dean of the college ask for to arbitrate disputes between faculty and students. Fortunately, the faculty member is required to provide a copy of the syllabus by the first meeting day of the class and make it publicly available on the University web site. The syllabus should include details about course content, prerequisites, drop deadlines, attendance policy, exam times, make-up policy, grading procedure and much more. The bigger your syllabus, the less you get hassled later.

3. By the 12th class day....Students with special concerns, be they athletes who might miss class meetings, students with religious observances that interfere with class meetings, or students with disabilities who need special accommodation, are all supposed to notify you about these special needs. Especially in large classes, responding to these requests can be difficult to manage, so you need to be organized and responsive. If you are going to be a stickler for that 12th class day requirement, make sure you keep lists of student requests and what the accommodation will be. If you want to be more freewheeling on the notification front, you will need to apply this strategy equally to each student.

4. Required meetings outside scheduled course times; night exam conflicts. Required class meetings including required office hours, discussion sections, lectures and examinations can be scheduled only at times published in the *Course Schedule*. If exams are scheduled at times not identified in the *Course Schedule*, make-up exams must be provided without penalty. Be aware that because there has been a significant increase in the scheduling of evening exams, it can be difficult or impossible for students to create a full schedule without a conflict arising. As student dean it is my position that when a scheduled night exam unavoidably conflicts with other scheduled evening exams or labs, a solution must be found that does not affect student performance.

5. Substantial examination during the last week of classes. It is not permitted to give exams counting for more than 30% of the course grade during the final week of classes. Also be aware that a large percentage of faculty schedule exams during the final week of class instead of during the official final examination period—sensitivity to the burden imposed on students would be appreciated and significant violations of this policy that are brought to the attention of the College will not be tolerated.

6. Incompletes. An incomplete (X) is a temporary delay in reporting the final course grade. It is intended to allow students with nonacademic issues the time to make up missing work so that a fair final grade is assigned. It is not to be used to allow a student to replace graded coursework. For your own protection, a written agreement between student and instructor should accompany every assigned incomplete so that there is a clear understanding of what must be done to complete the work.

7. Course evaluations. Course Instructor Surveys (CIS) must be completed for every formal course taught at UT Austin. The University takes a dim view of faculty who do not complete this task, if for no other reason than that the evaluations are an essential piece of performance evaluation for promotion, post-tenure review, merit raise, teaching awards and reappointments. Fortunately, the process will one day be fully automated with students completing on-line evaluations. You are encouraged to use this option when presented to you at the end of the semester.

8. Grading equity. Grading policies must be applied uniformly in accordance with the grading policy identified in the syllabus. Replacement or “extra credit” grading opportunities must be provided to every student. Not providing the same opportunity to earn a grade to every student in a class raises an immediate flag in the Dean’s Office.

9. Availability of coursework. Faculty must provide students with access to all written material submitted as part of a course. If coursework is not returned to the student it must be retained by the instructor for one long semester following the completion of the course. If a student asks to see the work, you have to provide it. Do not make the mistake of tossing it and not being able to defend a grade you have assigned.

10. Makeup work. A reasonable policy for makeup work should be identified in the syllabus. Requiring a student to drop a course because an exam is missed for good cause is not acceptable, nor is it appropriate to view makeup work in a punitive manner. Although the Dean’s Office cannot enforce simple human decency, it will exert pressure through the department chair to achieve fairness for students who have documented nonacademic reasons for incomplete assignments.

11. Q-drop policy. Know and correctly implement the Q-drop policy. In particular:

- Provide substantial course assessment before the imposed Q-drop deadline (in principle by the 20th class day) but certainly no later than the mid-semester drop deadline (typically around the 40th class day). See the calendars at the end of this document for specific dates.
- Provide realistic advising to students considering a Q-drop and do not encourage them to remain in the class past the Q-drop deadline unless there is a reasonable possibility of success;
- After the 40th class day (mid-semester), students can only drop a course by providing substantiated nonacademic reasons to the College or the Dean of Student’s Office. After the drop deadline the instructor may be asked to provide information about student progress in the course to validate or refute a nonacademic drop or withdrawal request, but the College has ultimate authority in assessing these nonacademic cases.
- Please encourage students who experience significant nonacademic problems such as extended health-related problems or family emergencies to contact your College’s Dean’s Office or the Dean of Student’s Office for assistance.

12. Processing of nonacademic and scholastic dishonesty cases. Refer nonacademic problems and scholastic dishonesty cases to appropriate offices. If uncertain about where to refer a student with a nonacademic problem, contact the Dean’s Office or an academic advisor in your department for assistance with appropriate referral. Contact Judicial Services in the Dean of Students Office for academic dishonesty referral (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>). Academic dishonesty issues can be difficult to navigate so if you would like advice, call Judicial Services. Do not decide to manage academic dishonesty issues off the record. It can end badly if you do not follow procedure.

13. Confidentiality. A student has a right to confidential distribution of grade information. The return of graded coursework must be done in a manner that ensures confidentiality. In addition, no part of the SSN may be made public as either a means to identify students or to return grades. Instead consider switching your grading to one of the secure web-based grading systems. Finally, parents may not be given information about student performance without student consent. To be safe, politely minimize conversation with parents about their children and speak only in general terms about academic issues. Persistent parents should be referred to the Dean’s Office for an explanation of confidentiality rules.

REGISTRATION AND GRADING POLICIES

ROSTERS

Official class rosters are sent to each instructor after the first, fourth, and twelfth class days. A final class roster is sent around the middle of the semester. Rosters may also be retrieved with a picture of each student from the Registrar's Office web site. This is a very easy procedure that requires only that you know your UTEID. It is a great way to familiarize yourself with the names of your students.

Please use these rosters to ensure that the students attending your class are in fact registered for the course and to notify the student's college if the student is not attending. If you discover students are attending your class who are not on the official roster, notify the college immediately. Those students will be required to provide verification that they have been attending class throughout the semester.

ATTENDANCE

University regulations require instructors to keep attendance records for students with less than 30 hours. If the size of the class makes checking roll impractical, assign several homework sets and check these against your class roll to isolate attendance problems. Report these problems to the student's academic dean. This can be done electronically using the absence/failing report (see below).

ADDING AND DROPPING COURSES

The academic calendar for each semester is provided at: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/09-10/index.html>. The College of Natural Sciences adheres strictly to the published deadlines of the University. The following information is generally true during each new long semester. Summer courses are subject to a somewhat compressed version of this procedure:

- **4th class day: Dropping courses electronically:** During the first four class days, students may add and drop courses with the Registrar's online registration service, ROSE.
- **12th class day: Dropping a class with possible refund:** During days five through twelve (September 10, 2010, for the Fall semester, and February 2, 2011, for the Spring semester) students may drop courses by phone, but must go to the department offering the course to seek permission to add a course. Be advised that some departments do not allow adds/drops after the fourth class day. For those departments that do allow adds/drops, the add-transactions before the twelfth class day will be processed in the respective department. Students who wish to add a class after the twelfth class day should be required to go to the Student Division of the Dean's Office (first floor of W. C. Hogg) to provide justification for the proposed change. The student must have written permission and documentation of class attendance from the instructor and departmental approval.
- **20th class day: Deadline for dropping a course without possible academic penalty:** The deadline for dropping a course without possible academic penalty is the end of the fourth class week (September 22, 2010, for the Fall semester, and February 14, 2011, for the Spring semester.) During this period a Q is automatically assigned but no refund is provided. If at all possible a substantial course grade should be assigned by this deadline to assist students in making an informed decision about dropping a course.
- **40th class day: Last day to drop a course with approval:** After the end of the fourth week of class, and until the deadline for dropping courses (October 20, 2010, for the Fall semester, and March 28, 2011, for the Spring semester), a student wishing to drop a course will get the forms from the Dean's Office (WCH 1.106)

and ask the instructor to complete the drop form that assigns a **Q** or an **F**. The symbol **Q** indicates an average of **C** or better at the time of the drop, or that no grade has yet been assigned, or that due to the student's performance and the nature of the course, no academic penalty is in order, or that for documented nonacademic reasons, no academic penalty is in order.

- **Nonacademic Q-drop:** After the last day for academic Q-drop students with substantiated nonacademic reasons (as determined by the Dean's Office) may be allowed to drop a course. Faculty will be asked to provide information on student performance up to the time of the nonacademic Q-drop request but are not responsible for making the decision about assigning a grade of Q. Please encourage students who experience significant nonacademic problems such as extended health-related problems or family emergencies to contact the Dean's Office.

Please include this information about adds and drops with your course syllabus. It will help to clear up much of the confusion that students have about the add/drop cycle.

REPETITION OF FAILED AND DROPPED COURSES

Students cannot enroll more than twice in any course offered in the College of Natural Sciences, even if the course is needed to meet degree requirements. Exceptions are permitted but require the consent of the major advisor and the department offering the course. A symbol of Q counts as an enrollment unless the Q was approved by the Dean's Office for nonacademic reasons. Some departments in the College of Natural Sciences may have additional requirements for students who repeat courses.

ABSENCE AND FAILING REPORTS

Faculty should notify students of excessive absences or poor performance on-line via "Absence-Failing" notice provided by the College for that purpose. Absence-Failing reports need to be in the Student Division Office after the first reporting period and before the end of the Q period if students are to receive maximum benefit from them. Each of you will be notified by e-mail of the specific period and procedure for completing the reports.

PROHIBITION OF SUBSTANTIAL EXAMINATIONS DURING LAST CLASS WEEK

No final examinations may be given before the examination period begins, and no change in time from that printed in the official schedule is permitted. An instructor with a compelling reason to change the time of an examination must obtain the approval of the department chair and the dean of the college or school in which the course is taught before announcing an alternative examination procedure to the students. No substantial examinations may be given during the last class week or during the reading days and the no-class days included in the final examination period. An examination counting for more than 30% of the final course grade is considered to be substantial. A change in the room assignment for an examination may be made only with the approval of the registrar.

FACULTY PRESENCE ON CAMPUS DURING FINAL EXAMINATION PERIODS

A faculty member is responsible for ensuring that final examinations for his or her courses are adequately staffed, that he or she is available for related questions and to resolve problems, and that final course grades are turned in on time. Unless a faculty member has received approval for travel under regular University policy, he or she must be available on campus during final examinations in his or her courses, or available in the Austin area and easily reachable by telephone or e-mail. The faculty member must remain in the Austin area until his

or her grades are finalized. If a faculty member must travel during this time, he or she must include on the request for travel authorization how final examination matters will be handled and how he or she can be reached in case of an emergency.

COURSES TAKEN ON A PASS/FAIL BASIS (CR/NC)

The University defines a **D** as a passing grade for undergraduate students. The instructor is obliged to assign a grade of **CR** (Credit) for a student registered on a pass/fail basis who has a **D** or better in the course. It is important that the roster indicate the student is registered for the course on a pass/fail basis. Otherwise, a letter grade must be assigned. There is a time limit for students to change courses from a grade basis to pass/fail basis and vice versa. During the long session, it is the same as the final deadline for drop/withdrawal for academic reasons. See the current academic calendar for the exact date. After that deadline, students should see a counselor in the Student Division of the Dean's Office of their college.

INCOMPLETE GRADES (X)

(From the UT Austin General Information Catalog)

A grade of Incomplete, X, is a temporary delay in reporting the final course grade. A student is expected to complete a course, including self-paced courses, in a single semester, summer term, or summer session. If the course is not completed as expected, the student normally will not be given additional time to complete it, or to do additional work to achieve a better grade. In rare instances, for nonacademic reasons and at the discretion of the instructor, a temporary delay of the final course grade, symbol X, may be recorded.

Improper uses of the symbol X. A student must not be assigned the symbol X to provide (1) the opportunity to raise a grade for any reason other than the approved reasons cited below; (2) time to prepare coursework in addition to that assigned the entire class; or (3) time to repeat the entire course.

Approved uses of the symbol X. The symbol X is not issued for student or faculty convenience; it may be issued for one of the following reasons only in the case of compelling, nonacademic circumstances beyond the student's control.

- 1. Missing the final examination: The student is unable to take a final examination because of illness or for another nonacademic reason. A physician's statement or other satisfactory verification is required.*
- 2. Incomplete classroom assignment: The student has not been able to complete the required class or laboratory assignments for a reason other than lack of adequate effort. A request for temporary delay of the final course grade because of incomplete class or laboratory work can be made only if the student has a passing average on the class work or laboratory work already completed and has taken and passed the final examination (unless a final examination is not given in the course or the student is unable to take the examination for reasons indicated in the previous paragraph).*
- 3. Reexamination petition: Only a student who has a grade average of at least C on all class work and laboratory work submitted before the final examination may request a temporary delay of the final course grade because he or she failed the final examination, which is the examination given during the final examination period as defined in the official examination schedule. If the instructor denies the petition, the student's final course grade remains as originally determined. If the instructor grants the petition, and the student earns a grade of at least C on the reexamination, then the instructor substitutes the reexamination grade for the original examination grade in determining the student's final course grade. If the instructor grants the petition, and the student earns a grade on the reexamination of less*

than C, then a final course grade of F must be recorded.

Our perspective in the Dean's Office is that students sometimes pressure their instructors to assign them an **X**, the symbol for an incomplete grade. This results in the **X** symbol often being assigned improperly, as a means of allowing a student to avoid a poor grade. Here are considerations you should use in deciding whether to give an incomplete:

- An **X** may properly be assigned for students who must miss the final due to illness or other imperative nonacademic reasons. You may require a medical excuse if the reason for the request for a postponed final is illness. If you would prefer to not deal with nonacademic issues, you may refer the student to a counselor in the Dean's Office.
- An **X** may also be given when the student has not been able to complete all the required assignments for reasons other than lack of diligence *but only if the student has a passing grade on the work completed*. Finally, an **X** may be assigned if the student qualifies for a reexamination and the instructor chooses to give a reexamination. (See the *General Information* bulletin for details.)
- An **X** should not be assigned to allow the student an opportunity to repeat the entire course; the only assignments or exams that should be completed to resolve the **X** are those that were missed for legitimate reasons during the semester.
- An **X** should be assigned only if the student has been informed and the exact procedures by which the student will make up the work are agreed upon. The assignment of an **X** constitutes a contract between the student and the instructor. It is often helpful to have the arrangement in writing, specifying what the student is expected to do to complete the course, including due dates.

The instructor who assigned the **X** is responsible for evaluating the student's subsequent work. If another faculty member is to be involved, the procedures for this should be clearly understood by all parties in advance. If an instructor does not assign a grade or a symbol to a student on the final roster, the Registrar will automatically insert an **X**. This grade in no way obligates the instructor to allow the student to complete missing work. Students who have stopped attending class or who have never attended class should be assigned a grade of **F**.

Students have one long semester to make up an **X** and extensions are rare. After one long semester, the **X** converts to an **F** if no other grade is reported.

FINAL GRADES

Do not leave town or disappear before turning in final grades for your students. Seniors' names are starred on the grade sheets and their grades must be received in time to determine eligibility to graduate. A schedule for reporting final grades is provided to the department. Please notify the College if you are unable to comply with these deadlines so we can try to prevent problems for students.

PLUS/MINUS GRADING

Beginning with courses taken in fall 2009, plus/minus grading will be implemented for all students. Instructors will have the option of awarding a plus/minus grade to any student in any course where a letter grade is assigned. (To be clear,

though recommended, you don't have to use plus/minus grading if you don't want to.)

The plus/minus grades and grade points listed below will be used to calculate grade point averages for undergraduate and graduate students.

Plus/minus grade points

A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.0
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.0
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.0
D-	0.67
F	0.0

One implication of the new plus/minus grading is that what constitutes a passing grade for a course must be reevaluated. The College of Natural Sciences, in consultation with faculty representatives from each department on the College Course and Curriculum Committee, have decided that in general, a grade of C- constitutes a passing grade for the course, both to meet degree requirements and to meet prerequisites for later coursework in Natural Sciences.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

CONFIDENTIALITY

Student confidentiality is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. This means that it is not possible to give out any information about students or grades to anyone without the student's written permission.

Issues to consider include:

- Grades may not be posted by name or social security number
- No portion of the SSN may be posted, distributed or made public in any way, even with consent of the student.
- Students must give written permission to discuss academic issues with others, including parents.
- Homework or exams may not be left unsupervised for students to pick up and should be returned in a manner that maintains student confidentiality.
- Written permission must be given by a student prior to writing letters of recommendation if the student's academic record is to be discussed.

Faculty may continue to use student specific password protected systems (such as UT Direct and its applications) to communicate academic work, grades or other confidential information to individual students. Students may also access their final course grades using UT Direct services. ITS has developed an e-grade book application that provides faculty with a password protected system to communicate academic work grades to individual students.

For those faculty who wish to post student grades on the Web, at least two options are available through the University.

Blackboard

Faculty may use the grade book feature of Blackboard even if they do not use the course management system for their courses. Tutorials on using the Blackboard grade book are online at

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/blackboard/>
Faculty may also call 475-9400 for assistance.

e-Gradebook

The e-Gradebook tool, developed by a team at UT Austin, is available at

<https://utdirect.utexas.edu/diia/egb/index.WBX>

Training is provided.

PROHIBITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

(for more information see: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gen-info/appD.html>)

It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin to maintain an educational environment free from sexual harassment and intimidation. Sexual harassment is expressly prohibited and offenders are subject to disciplinary action.

"Sexual harassment" is defined as either unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or other

verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, by a faculty member or other employee of the university, when

- submission by a student to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a condition for academic opportunity or advancement;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student
- the intended effect or reasonably foreseeable effect of such conduct is to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for the student.

The Office of the Dean of Students has been given the primary responsibility for responding to questions about and receiving complaints of sexual harassment of students. Students who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment may consult with the associate dean of students. However, they also may address their questions or complaints to the department chairperson or other University administrative personnel. In such cases the chairperson or the administrator should immediately contact the associate dean of students for consultation.

Investigation of a specific complaint of sexual harassment will be initiated upon submission of a written and signed statement by the student to the associate dean of students, department chairperson, or dean. Investigation and resolution of such complaints will be through the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent permitted under the law, and the rights of the individuals involved will be protected.

Disagreement with the resolution of the complaint will be handled according to the usual procedures for grievances.

In addition to complying with the above policy dealing with sexual harassment, students and faculty members should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and should avoid compromising situations involving any romantic or sexual relationship between a faculty member and a student who is enrolled in a course taught by the faculty member or who is otherwise under the supervision of the faculty member.

This policy is not intended, in any way, to discourage the interaction of faculty and students where harassment or a conflict of interest is not a factor; however, the policy is intended to clarify that it is inappropriate for a faculty member to form romantic or sexual relationships with students working under the faculty member's direct supervision.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>)

The rights of students with disabilities are protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which are civil rights provisions aimed at ending discrimination against persons with disabilities. Section 504 specifically refers to post-secondary and vocational education services. The legislation reads: "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." The University of Texas at Austin provides a wide variety of services to assist students with disabilities in becoming active members of the University community. These services vary according to the different types and severity of impairments.

The Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office of the Student Dean's Office is charged with assisting disabled students. They estimate that about 2000 students suffer from disabilities including mobility impairments, learning disabilities, visual impairments, hearing impairments, ADD and ADHD, and others. By law, these students are guaranteed a learning environment with reasonable accommodation of their disability.

As an instructor you are required to provide reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities. Many of the problems that might arise during the semester can be avoided by letting students know that you are aware of your responsibility to provide these accommodations, especially with respect to modifications to the examination procedure.

OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS (Student and Faculty)

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. Sections 51.911 and 51.925 of the *Texas Education Code* relate to absences by students and instructors for observance of religious holy days.

Section 51.911 states that a student who misses an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day must be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence, provided that he or she has properly notified each instructor.

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that the student must notify each instructor at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates he or she will be absent to observe a religious holy day. For religious holidays that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, the notice should be given on the first day of the semester. The student may not be penalized for these excused absences but the instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to complete satisfactorily the missed assignment or examination within a reasonable time after the excused absence.

Section 51.925 prohibits the University from discriminating against or penalizing an instructor who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day. Proper notice must be given to the department chairman. Prior to the beginning of classes each semester, the instructor must provide the department chairman a list of classes that will be missed due to observance of a religious holy day. The list must be either personally delivered, acknowledged and dated by the chairman, or sent certified mail, return receipt requested. Consistent with regular University policy, the instructor is responsible for finding a qualified substitute U.T. Austin instructor for any such classes.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Cheating is not tolerated in this College. Design your course and teaching methods so that cheating is difficult. Tell your class what you consider to be plagiarism and collusion. If you have any questions about a suspected cheating problem, we will be happy to try to answer them, but ultimately the Office of the Dean of Students is responsible for handling academic dishonesty complaints. Additional information on the definition of academic dishonesty including plagiarism can be found at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>. You should discuss your options and University procedures with the Office of Student Judicial Services at 471-2841.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR SURVEYS

The University requires that Course Instructor Surveys (CIS) be completed for the instructor of record in all organized courses. The surveys are an essential component of promotion and post-tenure review files. Instructors and Teaching Assistants are not to be present in the room while surveys are being administered. Go to <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/mec/cis/index.html> for more information.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Should a student have a concern about your course that you are unable to remedy to both party's satisfaction, the next recourse for the student is the department chairperson. Please direct the student to your chairperson

rather than to the Dean's Office. It is the chairperson's responsibility to send the student to the Dean's Office if the grievance is not resolved at the departmental level. If you wish, please consider making use of the Office of the Ombudsman. The ombudsman is authorized to investigate and seek to mediate and resolve student complaints and grievances concerning academic or administrative policies, procedures, or decisions at the University. Each complaint is carefully scrutinized to determine whether the student's grievance is actionable. The telephone number is 471-3825.

COURSE MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL formerly DIIA)—FACULTY INSTRUCTION SERVICES AT UT

The University has strengthened and consolidated its faculty support services for instruction with creation of the Center for Teaching and Learning. The Web site, <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/> is a remarkable source of materials and information that can help you improve your entire teaching experience. Please go to the web site and explore. I am sure you will learn things that will be of real value to improving the quality of your course as well as providing resources to simplify the teaching process.

TUTORING AND STUDY GROUPS

The College and University are committed to providing attractive learning environments outside the classroom for students who need additional assistance beyond what you can provide through discussion sessions and office hours. Both the CNS Academic Communities Program and the UT Learning Center offer these kinds of resources, especially for faculty teaching the large lower division courses.

Academic Communities. The Academic Communities Program (ACP) was created in 2005 to provide to University of Texas at Austin students resources and services that promote success in introductory courses in math and sciences and encourage students to utilize positive learning and study skills throughout their academic careers. Through a combined effort between CNS course instructors, the College and UT Housing, residence hall dining rooms are transformed into evening study environments with a TA presence, tutoring, and study group formation. For more information on the various activities offered by ACP, go to <http://cns.utexas.edu/community/resident-hall-study-groups>.

Learning Center. The UT Learning Center in Jester provides a variety of opportunities for students to improve their chances for success in the classroom. A broad array of workshops and classes assist students with study skills development as well as foundational preparation in math, reading and writing, and English-language skills. In addition, free or inexpensive tutoring is provided for many introductory-level courses.

SYLLABUS AND DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

Instructors are required by University policy to provide a written statement to students on course requirements and the evaluation of student performance. This statement lets students know what they must do and how they will be graded. It must specify how the course grade will be determined. This statement should be handed out on the first day of class and is required before the end of the fourth class day each semester.

A memorandum from the Provost's Office explicitly defines the minimum requirements of the syllabus as proposed by the Educational Policy Committee:

MEMORANDUM

Gretchen Ritter, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Faculty Governance

Requirement to Provide a Course Syllabus by First Meeting Day of All Classes

On June 13, 2007 President Powers approved a section of the Educational Policy Committee Proposal to Improve Course Availability for Undergraduates (D 3835 -3837) requiring that faculty provide students a course syllabus by the first meeting day of all classes. In addition, the state legislature (HB 2504) recently adopted new requirements concerning the need to make course syllabi publicly available on the University's website. In response to these mandates, this memorandum specifies the University's policy on providing and posting course syllabi.

Syllabus: Required Materials

- The course number and title
- The instructor's name, office location, and office hours. (Listing of office hours and location is not required for the publicly available version of the syllabus.)
- If there are teaching assistants for the class, their names, office locations, and office hours
- An overview of the class, including prerequisites, the subject matter of each lecture or discussion, as well as the academic/learning goals for the course and how they will be assessed
- Grading policy, including whether attendance is used in determining the course grade
- A brief descriptive overview of all major course requirements and assignments, along with the dates of exams and assignments that count for 20 percent or more of the class grade
- A list of required and recommended materials, such as textbooks, image collections, audio and audiovisual materials, supplies, articles, chapters, and excerpts as appropriate, identified by author, title and publisher.
- Final exam date and time (when available)
- The class web site, if any
- A notice that students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Syllabus: Recommended Materials

In addition, we recommend that faculty include the following information on their course syllabi:

- A notice regarding academic dishonesty: UT Honor Code (or statement of ethics) and an explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism (Link to University Honor Code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>)
- A notice regarding accommodations for religious holidays. (Sample statement— "By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.")

For additional suggested templates and guidance on writing an effective syllabus, please refer instructors to materials available on the Center for Teaching and Learning website:

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/teaching/>

Posting Syllabi

Additionally, instructors need to provide a copy of their syllabus for each organized course (or section thereof) they teach to their home department or office (and any cross-listing departments or centers) by the first day of class. All class syllabi for undergraduate courses should be provided in electronic form in a PDF file format (created from a word processing package such as MS Word - the PDF should NOT be created from a scanned image or fax). These PDF syllabi will be posted to the respective class via the Registrar's Office Class Manager System or Information Management and Analysis' FaSET System by the seventh class day. Note that if multiple sections of a course use an identical syllabus with identical assignments and readings, only one syllabus shall be posted for the course.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR CNS DEAN'S OFFICE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Academic Affairs in the Dean's Office is undergoing some reorganization for the 2010-11 academic year. While most of the units remain intact with respect to function, organization at the Associate Dean's level has shifted—Professor David Laude will assume responsibility for faculty affairs and instructional budget while retaining oversight of student services. Professor Sacha Kopp, from the Department of Physics, will become the new Associate Dean for Curriculum and Programs.

Feel free to contact either David or Sacha with any questions you might have. Also, it would be useful to get to know the advising staff in the advising center associated with your department. Names and addresses of advising and special program locations are listed below for your convenience.

Dave Laude—Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

dalaude@mail.utexas.edu, WCH 2.222, 471-6176

Faculty and Student Affairs: Judy Davis, Assistant to the Dean, WCH 2.222, 471-6176

Student Services: Mike Raney, Assistant Dean, WCH 2.102, 471-3796

Departmental Advising Centers:

Biological Sciences: PAI 1.13, G2530, 471-4920

Chemistry and Biochemistry: WEL 2.216, A5300, 471-3097

Computer Sciences: TAY 2.126, C0500, 471-9509

Human Ecology: GEA 37, A2700, 471-7219

Mathematics, Physics, and Astronomy: RLM 4.101, C1650, 471-0900

Sacha Kopp—Associate Dean for Curriculum and Programs.

kopp@hep.utexas.edu

Career Services and Health Professions: PAI 5.03, 471-6700

Quest: Patsy McDonald, Program Coordinator, WCH 2.306, 471-5416

Honors & Research Programs: Sarah Simmons, Assistant Dean, PAI 3.04, G2550, 232-9029

Texas Interdisciplinary Plan: Sue Harkins, Program Director, GRG 234, A2900, 232-1058