

Teaching and Learning: Instructor and Unit Responsibilities (Crookston, Morris, Rochester, Twin Cities)

Responsible University Officer(s):

- Executive Vice President and Provost

Policy Owner(s):

- Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
- Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education

Policy contact(s):

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Policy Statement

Instructors have a responsibility to establish and maintain a civil, productive, inclusive, and stimulating learning environment. Both instructors and students have a fundamental obligation to respect the instructional setting as a place for civil, courteous discourse. Instructors have a responsibility to accommodate students with documented disabilities and are encouraged to invite students to talk or communicate with them about such circumstances.

Instructors have a responsibility to accommodate legitimate student absences and student exam conflicts in accordance with the policies (1) *Intercollegiate Athletic Events During Study Day and Finals Week*, (2) *Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences*, and (3) *Scheduling Examinations, Final Examinations, and Study Days*.

Instructor Responsibilities

A. Provide Course Information

Instructors are responsible for providing accurate and timely information about their courses to prospective students, current students, and relevant members of the University community.

1. Instructors must provide academic units and students with accurate course descriptions in a timely fashion. Instructors should use official information tools to provide information about courses to students.
2. The course descriptions available in University catalogs ~~and/or in the Course Guide~~ must be generally consistent with the content of the actual course taught, though the content may vary somewhat with the individual instructor and across sections.
3. At the beginning of each course, instructors must communicate the course objectives. Class activities should be directed toward the fulfillment of these objectives and student performance should be evaluated in relationship to these objectives. **Instructors should provide a syllabus to students consistent with the *Syllabus Requirements* policy within the first week of classes. Instructors should also provide contact information, office hours, and may include personal pronouns.**
4. If an instructor changes the course requirements or materials, students should be given timely notice consistent with the magnitude of the change (e.g., a few days of notice for an additional article to read or a few weeks of notice if a paper is added). No major change (e.g., adding a research paper or major examination) should be imposed after the second week of the **fall and spring semesters or the first week of the summer semester.**
5. In accordance with Administrative Policy: *Grading and Transcripts*, instructors must inform students in their classes of the methods to be used in determining course grades, **(i.e. criteria for assessments such as exams and major assignments, quizzes and activities) and the weight of each of these contributing to the final grade.** ~~evaluation criteria and the contribution to the final grade of each graded component.~~ **Additionally, in accordance with Administrative Policy: *Grade Accountability*, instructors of record are accountable for all grades given to students.**
6. **Instructors must notify students of the expected timeframe to receive feedback or grades on assigned coursework and exams.**
7. At the beginning of the course, instructors must inform students of any requirements related to regular course attendance and participation.

Students should refer to the [Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences policy](#) prior to requesting arrangements for makeup work or exams.

8. At the beginning of the course, instructors must inform students of any special attendance requirements. This includes, insofar as possible, specific dates, times, and places of additional outside-of-class work such as field trips, study sessions, or extra class meetings, and whether attendance at these additional activities will be reflected in the grade. If an instructor schedules mandatory activities that occur outside the regularly scheduled class time, information about these activities must be included on the syllabus and, when possible, in the class schedule. **Special attendance requirements or optional extra credit requirements should not require an additional cost for students.**
9. Instructors should discuss scholastic dishonesty and what it means in the context of their class (e.g., **define collaboration and when it**~~whether collaboration~~ is permitted ~~and limits on it~~, requirements about and methods for citing sources, ~~whether direct quotes are allowed and to what extent~~, receiving or giving aid on tests, and using electronic aids or communications during exams when prohibited).

B. Provide Students with Access to and Feedback on Their Work

1. Instructors should specify the process and schedule for returning student work during the semester. Instructors who desire to retain a copy for their own files should state their intention to do so. Term papers and comparable projects are the property of students who prepare them (see Board of Regents Policy: [Copyright](#).)
2. Instructors should ensure that students have access to course Canvas sites and course materials (**i.e., a syllabus, resources, assignments and assessments.**)
3. Instructors must evaluate examinations and other student work with sufficient promptness to enhance the learning experience. **As part of this process, instructors must promptly return examinations or permit students to review their exams responses in accordance with the [Grade Accountability policy](#).**~~to request clarification of grades.~~
4. Instructors are strongly encouraged to provide sufficient graded feedback **early in the term**, and before the deadline for withdrawing from classes, to enable students to assess their progress in the course.

5. Instructors are required to provide in-progress notifications for all 1-XXX courses to students who, on the basis of performance to date in the course, appear to be in danger of receiving a grade of D, F, or N. Such notification will be provided to students within a timeframe to allow them to improve their academic performance or to withdraw by the withdrawal deadline. In-progress notifications will not be recorded on transcripts. Instructors are encouraged to provide in-progress notifications for all courses and all students.
 - a. Crookston campus only: Instructors are required to provide in-progress notifications for every student in all 1-XXX & 2-XXX courses for A, B, C, D, F, S, N grades, utilizing the PeopleSoft system in MyU. Such notification will be provided no later than the seventh week of class, and earlier if possible, to allow students to improve their classroom performance or to withdraw by the eighth week. Mid-term grades will not be recorded on transcripts.
6. Instructors must turn in **final grades** within three business days after the last day of final examinations.

C. Secure Handling of Examinations

Instructors must maintain the security of student examinations both before and after exams are given. For those using a University office, such as the Office of Measurement Services (OMS), for scoring answer sheets, instructors or their designate (e.g., departmental office employee or teaching assistant) must submit examination answer sheets in the manner prescribed by that office.

D. Observe Scheduled Class Times

1. Instructors are expected to meet their classes at the scheduled times, to be prepared for all class sessions, and to start and end classes at the scheduled times.
2. When instructors know in advance that they will be unable to attend particular class sessions, they are responsible for working with their academic unit to make appropriate alternate arrangements.

E. Observe Office Hours or Appointment Times

Instructors must schedule and keep a reasonable number of office hours or appointment times for student conferences. The minimum number of office hours or appointment times may be defined by the academic unit.

F. Report Scholastic Dishonesty

Instructors are obligated to report suspected scholastic dishonesty to their departments and to the appropriate office on campus (on the Twin Cities campus, the Office for Community Standards; at Morris, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; at Rochester, the Office of Student Affairs; and at Crookston, the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Student Life).

G. Maintain an Appropriate Learning Environment

Instructors should take appropriate steps to have removed from class students who disrupt the educational process because of discourteous, threatening, harassing, or other aggressive behavior. "Appropriate steps" may include calling the University Police.

H. Maintain the Classroom Environment

Instructors are expected to leave the classroom and its equipment in good order (e.g., white/blackboards clean, chairs arranged, electronic equipment shut off).

I. Faculty Responsibility in Undergraduate Advising on the Curriculum

The faculty in each unit are responsible for ensuring that there is an effective advising process. The faculty of every unit will collectively determine the mechanisms by which faculty members will be involved in advising students and will periodically review the effectiveness of that process. In some units faculty may choose to be directly involved in advising or may share that responsibility with appropriately trained academic professionals, graduate students, or peers. The faculty of each unit must assist in and cooperate with the advising process as appropriate and are responsible for providing timely information about the curriculum and student performance to advisers. The faculty should encourage students to take advantage of opportunities provided

by the advising process to broaden, intensify, and integrate their educational experience.

Academic Unit Responsibilities

A. Maintain an Appropriate Schedule

1. Courses must be offered on a schedule, and frequently enough, to permit students to graduate in a timely fashion. All undergraduate departments must have a four-year graduation plan in place and must have course offerings that support it.
2. Classes must be offered at standard times **in accordance with Administrative Policy: [Class Scheduling](#)**. Failure to observe standard class periods leads to inefficient use of classrooms and is disrespectful of students and faculty: students are forced to be late to other classes, and faculty access to classrooms they need is reduced.
3. Academic units are responsible for retaining course records in accordance with Administrative Policy: *Maintaining Records of Student Work*.

Exclusions

This policy is not applicable to the Duluth campus.

Reason for Policy

This policy clarifies and outlines responsibilities, to provide clear expectations for the instructor and the instructor's department and college. Faculty and students need a common understanding of their responsibilities for the learning process. This policy implements criteria and requirements for accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission.

Procedures

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

Forms/Instructions

There are no forms associated with this policy.

Appendices

There are no appendices associated with this policy.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How do these instructor responsibilities apply to courses in which instruction is provided by more than one individual, for example, a course in which a faculty member and teaching assistants share responsibilities?**

The person in charge of the course (e.g., the lead instructor, course coordinator, faculty member supervising teaching assistants who work with the faculty member within a course) is responsible for ensuring that **each instructor is applying consistent standards and policies in all sections of** ~~are applied consistently to all students enrolled in~~ the course. The lead instructor is responsible for communicating this information to teaching assistants, responding to questions, and ensuring a common understanding among everyone who is part of the instructional team for the course.

2. What does “sufficient promptness” regarding grading entail?

Students have the right to understand their academic standing in a course in order to make adjustments to their learning approach or to make registration decisions. Instructors should return work within a reasonable timeframe (e.g. 1-14 days) and communicate the timeframe to students.

2. A student does not have an accommodation letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC), but is asking for an accommodation. What should I do?

If a student is requesting a disability-related accommodation, they must work with the DRC to obtain it.

3. What are instructor responsibilities regarding accommodating makeup work?

Instructors should refer to the University's [Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences policy](#) for more information. Additionally, instructors are encouraged to provide alternative accommodations such as short-term remote learning options, if reasonable to do so.

Contacts

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Definitions

Scholastic Dishonesty

Plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations, including the unauthorized use of online learning support and testing platforms; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work, including the posting of student-generated coursework on online learning support and testing platforms not approved for the specific course in question; taking, acquiring, or using course materials without faculty permission, including the posting of faculty-provided course materials on online learning support and testing platforms; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, misrepresenting, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities are specified in the Policy Statement.

Related Information

- Board of Regents Policy: [Copyright](#)
- Board of Regents Policy: [Student Conduct Code](#)
- Administrative Policy: *Grading and Transcripts: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester)*
- Administrative Policy: *Maintaining Records of Student Work: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester)*
- Administrative Policy: [Teaching and Learning: Student Responsibilities \(Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester\)](#)
- [Higher Learning Commission. Criteria and Requirements for Accreditation](#)

- [Intercollegiate Athletic Events During Study Day and Finals Week: Twin Cities](#)
- [Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester](#)
- [Scheduling Examinations, Final Examinations, and Study Days: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester](#)
- [Administrative Policy: Class Scheduling](#)
- [Syllabus Requirements policy](#)
- [Grade Accountability: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester](#)
- [Equity and Access: Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Names and Pronouns](#)

History

Amended:

September 2014 - Added clarifications related to Higher Learning Commission accreditation requirements.

Amended:

December 2013 - Comprehensive Review, Minor Revision. Includes language from the retired policy on classroom environment.

Amended:

December 2009 - Policy now applies to Crookston.

Amended:

April 2009 - Clarified policy and put in standard format. Added contact information.

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Supersedes:

Classroom Expectations Guidelines