

OFFICE OF THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST
The University of Oklahoma
Norman Campus

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: All Instructional Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants

FROM: Nancy L. Mergler, Senior Vice President & Provost
Paul B. Bell, Vice Provost for Instruction

DATE: September 1, 2009

RE: **Honoring our Commitment to Our Students**
University Policies Regarding Instruction
Academic Year 2009-2010

It is hard to believe that classes are beginning for another semester. We look forward to another exciting academic year that includes (once again) the most talented incoming freshman class in our history and lots of new OU Faculty and graduate assistants.

In order to assist the instructors new to the University of Oklahoma - Norman Campus and as a reminder to all the returning instructors, we have included on the following pages, **important policies** that you need to consider throughout the academic year:

3.2.2	Academic Responsibility
3.9.5	Consensual Sexual Relationships Policy
3.13.2	Religious Holidays
4.7	Final Examination Regulations
4.9	Makeup Examinations (Other than Final) due to University Sponsored Activities or Legally Required Activities
4.10	Final Exam Preparation Period
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	Integrity Pledge, UOSA Honor Council and Turnitin.com (new for this semester)

You may also refer to these policies (and many others) that are in the [Faculty Handbook](#) via the Provost's webpage at www.ou.edu/provost/pronew.

Honoring Our Commitment to Our Students Overview of University Policies Regarding Instruction

3.2.2 Academic Responsibility

As teachers, faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Faculty members demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Faculty members make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between faculty member and student. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. They protect their academic freedom.

3.9.5 Consensual Sexual Relationships Policy

The University's educational mission is promoted by professionalism in faculty-student relationships. Professionalism is fostered by an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Actions of faculty members and students that harm this atmosphere undermine professionalism and hinder fulfillment of the University's educational mission. Trust and respect are diminished when those in positions of authority abuse, or appear to abuse, their power. Those who abuse, or appear to abuse, their power in such a context violate their duty to the University community.

Faculty members exercise power over students, whether in giving them praise or criticism, evaluating them, making recommendations for their further studies or their future employment, or conferring any other benefits on them. Amorous relationships between faculty members and students are wrong when the faculty member has professional responsibility for the student. Such situations greatly increase the chances that the faculty member will abuse his or her power and sexually exploit the student. Voluntary consent by the student in such a relationship is suspect, given the fundamentally asymmetric nature of the relationship. Moreover, other students and faculty may be affected by such unprofessional behavior because it places the faculty member in a position to favor or advance one student's interest at the expense of others and implicitly makes obtaining benefits contingent on amorous or sexual favors. Therefore, the University will view it as unethical if faculty members engage in amorous relations with students enrolled in their classes or subject to their supervision, even when both parties appear to have consented to the relationship.

3.13.2 Religious Holidays

It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays.

NOTE: Inclusion of the above statement is recommended in course syllabi.

4.7 Final Examination Regulations

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education calendar regulations require that those institutions that reserve the final week of the semester as a testing period shall ensure that all classes meet during the testing period. Final examinations are given at the discretion of the instructor, or in case of multiple sections, the department in which the class is offered....

* When a final examination is given, the student must take the examination.

4.9 Makeup Examinations (Other than Final) due to University Sponsored Activities or Legally Required Activities

The following guidelines have been approved by the Faculty Senate and the UOSA to aid faculty in determining a policy for make-up exams (other than final examinations) in cases of absences due to participation in University-sponsored or legally required activities.

Only Provost-approved university-sponsored activities such as scholarly competitions, fine arts performances, and academic field trips, and legally required activities, such as emergency military service and jury duty, are covered by these guidelines.

Faculty, if given notice two class periods before an exam or quiz (excluding pop quizzes), should make every effort to find a reasonable accommodation by (a) giving a makeup exam, an early exam, or quiz; (b) changing the exam schedule; or (c) dropping the exam or quiz and increasing the weight of another exam or quiz or other agreed upon approaches acceptable to the instructor and the student. Students missing an exam on account of jury duty must be allowed an accommodation.

NOTE: If the student and the faculty member cannot agree, normal appeal procedures (faculty to chair/director to dean to Senior Vice President) are available to the student and can be followed.

For information about what activities are Provost-approved or how to have activities approved. Contact the Office of the Senior Vice President & Provost.

NOTE: The Provost's Office does not approve as University-sponsored those activities which are not directly linked to credit course work.

4.10 Final Exam Preparation Period

Pre-finals week will be defined as the seven calendar days before the first day of finals. Faculty may cover new course material throughout this week.

Student-Faculty Policies and Information

- a) Assignments, examinations, or projects worth less than 10 percent of a student's grade may be assigned at any time prior to pre-finals week and may be due during pre-finals week. However, no assignments, examinations, or projects may be due on the last two days of pre-finals week.

- b) Assignments, take-home examinations, in-class examinations, or projects worth more than 10 percent of a student's grade must be scheduled at least 30 days prior to the first day of finals and must be due or given prior to pre-finals week. Any assignment that is to take the entire semester to complete may be accepted or presented during pre-finals week provided the syllabus explicitly states that the assignment can be turned in prior to pre-finals week. In-class presentation of semester assignments due before pre-finals week may be scheduled for any day other than the last two days of pre-finals week.
- c) Special case deviations from this policy must be clearly stated in the course syllabus and approved by the chair of the department through which the course is offered.
- d) Special requests made by a student for an extension of assignment deadlines into pre-finals week may be granted subject to the discretion of the instructor.

This policy applies only to 16-week courses during the spring and fall semesters.

This policy excludes make-up assignments, make-up tests, and laboratory examinations. It also does not apply to classes meeting one day a week for more than one hour with a start time before 5:00 p.m. and evening classes.

All University laboratory classes are exempt from this policy.

No University of Oklahoma Student Association (UOSA) organization may hold meetings, banquets, or receptions or sponsor or participate in any activity, program, or related function that requires student participation during pre-finals week.

Violations to this policy should be reported to the chair of the department in which the course is taught or, in special circumstances, to the dean of the college and may be grounds for grade appeal.

This policy shall remain in force until reviewed no sooner than 2014.

4.11 Returning Examinations, Papers, and Projects to Students

It is recommended that students be allowed to see their graded papers, projects, or examinations within a reasonable time. A two-week time limit on the reporting of examination and quiz results is, in general, considered acceptable.

4.12 Rescheduling Courses

Courses may not be rescheduled from the published time/day(s) without the prior approval of the chair/director, the dean of the college offering the course, and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

NOTE: The form for seeking permission to reschedule a course is located at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/pronew/content/schedulechange.pdf>.

4.18 Commercial Term Papers

Any staff or faculty member who writes, compiles, or otherwise completes academic assignments for sale to students of the University shall be discharged from employment.

Any student who commits such an offense shall be expelled from the University.

4.19 Class Attendance - Students

Students are responsible for the content of courses in which they are enrolled. Specific policy concerning attendance requirements and announced and unannounced examinations is the responsibility of the individual instructor. Students have a responsibility to inform faculty prior to absences whenever possible. Faculty should make every effort to find a reasonable accommodation for students who miss class as a result of participation in Provost-approved University-sponsored activities or legally required activities such as emergency military service. Students missing class on account of jury duty must receive such an accommodation.

Class Attendance - Faculty

A faculty member's assignment to teach a course is an important element of the faculty member's professional responsibilities, including the obligation of the instructor to attend all classes and to teach. Academic units shall have a policy regarding faculty absences from teaching responsibilities and a procedure for instructors to arrange with their units plans for modifying scheduled class periods. Chairs and Directors are also responsible for ensuring that faculty obligations for courses are fulfilled.

For medical and family emergencies and other unforeseeable contingencies, a scheduled class meeting may be canceled. For legitimate, foreseeable obligations, the faculty member is responsible for finding a reasonable alternative way to perform teaching duties in the form of a substitute or a make-up session.

Classes are not to be dismissed or rescheduled for any extracurricular function.

NOTE: Copies of each academic unit's specific policy are available in Chair/Director's office or from the Provost's Office.

5.7 Class Attendance - Faculty (Outside Employment and Extra Compensation)

The missions of the University are teaching, research, creative/scholarly activity, professional and University service, and public outreach. As professionals, Norman Campus faculty are individually and primarily responsible for arranging their time among such academic functions as teaching assignments, research, service, continuing education, and consultation. Such arrangements will be subject to evaluation and approval by appropriate authorities as a part of a faculty member's total professional activity during the year with reference to department, college, and University criteria for merit salary increases, tenure, and promotion.

The professional expertise of the Norman Campus faculty is normally available to the state and its citizens for incidental and minor services without remuneration. When, however, the services desired from outside the University exceed a reasonable limit agreed to by the appropriate vice president and the faculty member, direct extra remuneration may be accepted, provided the extent of the involvement does not infringe on the faculty member's regular University duties.

A person who accepts full-time employment on the Norman Campus assumes a primary professional obligation to the University. Any other employment or enterprise in which he or she engages for income shall be secondary to his or her University work, and after consultation with those reviewing requests for outside employment and extra compensation, shall accept the judgment of the President and Board of Regents as to whether he/she may engage in such employment and retain full-time employment on the Norman Campus faculty. In addition, the department chair should be informed and approve of arrangements that are made to dismiss classes or provide substitute teachers for them when the faculty members are to be absent from these duties. **Absence for more than one week at a time for outside employment when classes are in session will require prior written approval of the Senior Vice President and Provost. (See also Faculty Attendance policy.)**

All professional activities, whether within the University or without, whether for extra remuneration or for no remuneration of any kind, should contribute to the faculty member's professional growth or efficiency and to his or her teaching or scholarly competence.

4.20 Irregular Class Meetings

All class meetings should be held during the regular hours scheduled for the course. Unscheduled meetings at other hours should be held only for very unusual and clearly defensible reasons and never for the mere personal convenience of the instructor or the students or both.

If it is desirable for sound educational reasons to schedule a departmental or joint quiz at an evening hour so that all sections of a course may write the quiz simultaneously, (uniform exams), the date and hour of each such irregularly scheduled quiz should be made known to all the students concerned during the first week of classes. If a student then incurs a serious conflict at one of these hours, the responsibility is the student's.

If no such notice of irregularly scheduled hours for departmental or joint quizzes can be given, such a plan for giving tests is presumably not important enough to merit systematic planning and should not be used.

The University discourages all unscheduled class meetings; individual faculty members and departments regulate their teaching schedules in accordance with this principle. The department that announces the hours at which a course will meet, the faculty member who agrees to teach it at those hours and the student who has agreed to take it at those hours have all assumed an unwritten contractual obligation from which no one of them should deviate without very substantial reasons for doing so.

4.21 Classes During Finals Week

The State Regents have indicated the importance of holding class during finals week. Since finals week always has been considered a week of instruction and is a necessary part of the minimum hours of instruction for accreditation, the holding of a final meeting of the class during that week may not be considered optional.

4.24 Student Instructional Travel Policy

DEFINITIONS.

Instructional travel is any student travel for an instructional activity that is sponsored by an academic unit and that occurs off-campus or away from an officially-designated classroom. Examples include field trips to off-campus sites and department-sponsored group travel to a site where instruction will take place. Instructional travel does not include the student's individual travel to or from the official instructional site or travel not sponsored by the academic unit.

GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL TRAVEL THAT IS PART OF A COURSE.

The following guidelines are intended to provide reasonable notice to students of any significant instructional travel that a course may involve, and to ensure appropriate handling of any funds collected from students.

1. Approval.
All instructional travel for a course must be approved in advance by the chair/director of the academic unit offering the course.
2. Scheduling and notification.
In order to be able to plan their class schedules and financial obligations, students must receive adequate advance notification any time that they will be required to travel to an off-campus location as part of a course. At a minimum all required instructional travel must be described in the course syllabus that is given to students no later than the first day of class. If the travel is to occur outside of the scheduled meeting times listed in the class schedule, a description of the travel should be included in all information describing the course. Instructional travel outside the regular class time cannot be made mandatory if not included in the class schedule.
3. Travel Costs.
 - a. Costs covered by course fees.
Mandatory fees associated with a class must be approved by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. They should also be listed in the class schedule and included in any advertising regarding the course. If instructional travel is funded by course fees, then responsibility for the management of those fees and their use for travel-related expenses is the responsibility of the sponsor of the fee account and the chair/director of the academic unit offering the course.
 - b. Costs not covered by course fees.
Travel-related expenses not covered by approved course fees must be managed in a manner approved by the University. It is preferable that arrangements for the collection and use of funds for travel-related expenses be managed through either the College of Continuing Education or the University of Oklahoma Foundation. Such use must be approved in advance by the chair/director of the academic unit sponsoring the course and by appropriate officials at CCE or the Foundation. All other

arrangements for paying travel-related expenses must be approved in advance by the head of the budget unit, the Dean, and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL INSTRUCTIONAL TRAVEL.

1. Itineraries.
An itinerary should be filed with the department or college office and with the OU Department of Public Safety for any University-sponsored activity that is conducted off-campus for a period exceeding 24 hours. The itinerary should include a list of the names of all participants, student numbers of student participants, telephone numbers where the group may be reached or emergency telephone numbers, destinations and, if possible, trip routes.
2. Commercial travel and unusual activities.
Academic units sponsoring field trips by commercial carrier or trips involving unusual activity (hiking, climbing, athletic activities, etc.) are responsible for obtaining releases, i.e., written acknowledgment from students that they have received reasonable notice of the nature of the activity and understand the possibility of risk. For information about releases, contact the Office of Risk Management and Safety Services or the Office of Legal Counsel.
3. Liability
The Oklahoma Governmental Tort Claims Act adopts and delimits the doctrine of sovereign immunity for the State of Oklahoma, all of its political subdivisions, and its employees. Since the University of Oklahoma is a duly authorized agency of the State of Oklahoma, all instructional travel that has been approved, scheduled, and sponsored by the University and is in the complete control of an authorized University employee is afforded the liability protections of the Act. For purposes of instructional travel, the authorized university employee is the instructor(s), including graduate assistants, assigned to the course.

University employees are protected by the Act from liability as long as they are acting in good faith and within the scope of their University employment. Volunteers may at times be authorized to perform services for the University, and duly authorized volunteers are also protected under the act within the scope of their employment.

The University's liability for student accidents and injury in instructional travel is limited by the Act. Low-cost accident and illness insurance policies are available for field trip participants from the Center for Student Life.

OTHER POLICIES PERTAINING TO INSTRUCTIONAL TRAVEL

Other provisions affecting instructional travel include Faculty Handbook policies entitled Travel, Insurance, University Vehicles, and Use of State Vehicles for Private Purposes. Further information is available from the OU Employee's Guide for Business Travel, available from the Department of Risk Management and Safety Services.

4.25 Course Syllabi

Faculty members have responsibilities to their students. They shall encourage in students the free pursuit of learning and independence of mind, while holding before them the highest scholarly and professional standards. Faculty members shall show respect for the student as an individual and adhere to their proper role as intellectual guides and counselors. Instructional Faculty shall publish written course syllabi the first week of class. The syllabus should define the goals of the courses, and faculty members should devote their teaching to the realization of those goals. Where appropriate, course syllabi should state, in addition to the major goals of the course, instructor's office hours; university policies regarding reasonable accommodation and codes of behavior; list of required reading materials; list of all major reading, laboratory, and/or performance assignments for the semester; approximate dates for all graded assignments and approximate percentage each contributes to the final grade. Internships/practicum, directed readings/research, dissertation and thesis hours are exempt from this requirement.

4.25.1 Sale of Required Course Materials to Students

Instructional Materials - Instructional Faculty

Faculty on the Norman Campus should seek to collaborate with students to ensure access to the most economical and efficient process for obtaining the very best instructional materials.

a) Faculty must place their instructional material orders with their departmental representative. This person will 1) will ensure that faculty place their orders in a timely way, and 2) will place orders with the University Bookstore and other local bookstores.

b) The order form used within each academic unit (available at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/textbookadoptionform.xls>) shall require that the suggested manufacturers' retail price be listed for each required textbook. (This can be found by looking at Books in Print, which is available as a database via LORA (<http://libraries.ou.edu/eresources/LORA/index.asp>)). If the cost per individual student, for all required materials in a course, exceeds a fixed amount (to be determined by each academic unit and approved by the Dean and Provost), the Chair/Director of the academic unit must review and approve the order.

c) Faculty shall allow students to use the most recent prior edition of a required textbook unless the faculty member specifically states in the course syllabus that the newest edition of the required textbook is necessary.

d) No faculty, staff or academic unit shall demand or receive any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything, present or promised, as an inducement for requiring OU students to purchase specific textbooks or instructional material required in a course. However, an employee may receive:

- i. Sample copies of textbooks/instructional materials, instructor copies of textbooks/instructional materials, as long as these are not to be sold by the employee or academic unit.
- ii. Royalties or other compensation from sales of textbooks/instructional materials that include the writing or work of the employee.
- iii. Honoraria for academic peer review of instructional materials.
- iv. Training in the use of instructional materials and technologies.

e) For all open access material, such as lab quizzes, lab worksheets, homework exercises,

etc.; students shall be provided access online where they can download material rather than having to purchase printed copies.

f) Faculty are encouraged to use other good practices to keep instructional costs including having electronic reserves in the library when feasible and possible, being careful to require only those materials that will actually be extensively used during the course of the semester or term, and learning about and utilizing other emerging technology tools or resources in their courses.

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center provides support services to students with disabilities. The office is committed to the goal of achieving equal educational opportunity and full participation for students with disabilities. In many cases, these services have been developed in response to expressed student needs. The Disability Resource Center sends all accommodation requests to faculty via their OU e-mail accounts. The Center offers a set of instructional tools developed by Project Pace at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. These tools are available on a set of CDs but have been modified to make them available on our website, <http://drc.ou.edu>. The list of instructional tools includes: faculty development; tips for teaching students who are blind or have low vision; tips for teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing; and tips for teaching students who have learning disabilities. If you have a need that cannot be met by any of the above, please contact Director Suzette Dyer at drc@ou.edu, 325-3852 voice, or 325-4173 TDD.

5.4 Reasonable Accommodation Policy

The University of Oklahoma will reasonably accommodate otherwise qualified individuals with a disability unless such accommodation would pose an undue hardship or would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service, program, or activity or in undue financial or administrative burdens. The term **reasonable accommodation** is used in its general sense in this policy to apply to employees, **students**, and visitors.

Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to:

- (a) Making existing facilities readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities;
- (b) Job restructuring;
- (c) Part-time or modified work schedules;
- (d) Reassignment to a vacant position if qualified;
- (e) Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices;
- (f) Adjustment or modification of examinations, training materials, or policies;
- (g) Providing qualified readers or interpreters; or
- (h) Modifying policies, practices, and procedures.

NOTES regarding this policy:

- 1) You are strongly encouraged to make a statement in the opening session of your class and in the class syllabus such as this one:

“Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.”

- 2) Any student who responds to your announcement should be referred to the Disability Resource Center, (Goddard Health Center, Room 166, 325-3852) to make a formal request for accommodation.
- 3) Refer also to sections 5.2 Individuals with Disabilities and 5.3 Disability Resource Center of the Faculty Handbook. Please be assured that both the Disability Resource Center and the Provost’s Office will assist you in making appropriate accommodations.

Academic Integrity at OU: Honor Pledge, Honor Council and Academic Misconduct Code

UOSA Honor Pledge. The University of Oklahoma Student Association has approved, with the concurrence of the Faculty Senate, a resolution encouraging the use of an integrity pledge on all major assignments. The Pledge reads:

On my honor, I affirm that I have neither given nor received inappropriate aid in the completion of this exercise.

Instructors are encouraged to place this pledge, along with a student signature line, on quiz and test sheets. Students may also be asked to write or type it themselves on the title page of papers and projects. A faculty member who chooses to do so may state in the syllabus that work will not be accepted if it does not bear the signed integrity pledge. A downloadable version of the pledge text is available at <http://www.ou.edu/honorcouncil/FAQ.html#Pledge>.

UOSA Honor Council. The UOSA Honor Council acts as the voice of the student community with respect to academic integrity. Council members will promote integrity through community activities and presentations; sit on academic misconduct hearing panels, and advise the Provost on integrity policies and procedures. To request a presentation for your class or to raise a concern, contact the Honor Council on their website, <http://www.ou.edu/honorcouncil>.

OU Academic Misconduct Code. The misconduct system for the Norman Campus, excluding the College of Law, is set forth in the Academic Misconduct Code. The Code is included as an appendix to the Faculty Handbook and is available as a link from the Provost's student academic integrity page, <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity>. Links from that page also lead to instructions on filing misconduct charges and imposing academic misconduct "admonitions" on students when either becomes necessary.

Charging or Admonishing Misconduct under the Code. Instructors are encouraged to discuss expectations of academic integrity with their classes regularly and should not hesitate to respond vigorously to incidents of academic misconduct. Any such incident may be dealt with by either filing a **charge** of misconduct or giving the student an **admonition**. **Charges** are filed with the Campus Judicial Coordinator Andrea Baker (Cross Center, Alley House A-36, 325-1540) within 15 class days of the incident’s discovery. A form for this purpose is available on the Provost's procedures webpage, <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity-rights/>. Further information for both students and faculty is also available there. Once the student meets with the CJC and formally admits, defaults, or is found guilty in a subsequent hearing, a charge of misconduct will result in

any grade penalty the instructor deems appropriate-- up to an F in the course. It will also result in university sanctions from the Provost, in consultation with the student's dean, ranging from a formal reprimand to expulsion. If final grades are due while a charge is pending, the grade of "N" (not "I") should be assigned until the matter is resolved.

In less serious cases, the same form used for charges may be used to impose an instructor's formal warning, or **admonition**. An admonition is less severe than a charge of misconduct and is only appropriate for first-time, less-egregious offenses on assignments other than final examinations or semester-long projects and papers. Once the matter is discussed with the student and a written notice of the right to appeal is provided, an admonition may lead to an immediate grade penalty without further delay for adjudication. However, the penalty can be no greater than a zero on the assignment and will not be accompanied by any institutional penalty. To prevent repeat lenience by instructors unaware of the prior warnings a student has received, any admonition should be reported to the Campus Judicial Coordinator using the charge/admonition form. Faculty contemplating an admonition may contact Associate Provost Greg Heiser (gheiser@ou.edu 325-3221) to determine whether a student has already received one.

The admonition process may be entirely verbal and informal with one exception. An admonished student has the right to contest the admonition by contacting the Campus Judicial Coordinator within 15 class days. Notice of this right must be provided to the student in writing. Notice may be effected by giving the student a copy of the same form used to report the incident. Alternatively -- or better yet, in addition -- the instructor's expectations of integrity and the right of appeal may be spelled out in the course syllabus. The Provost's student integrity webpage and procedures page, <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity> and <http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity-rights>, may be referenced to shorten the syllabus discussion. Discussion of academic misconduct in the syllabus is a good idea, but is *not* required in order to hold students to appropriate standards of conduct.

Turnitin.com. The University subscribes to Turnitin.com, an online plagiarism detection service. For information about access and best practices in using the service, follow the link at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/pronew/content/integritymenu.html>.