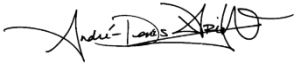




The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA®
Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Instructional Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants

FROM: André-Denis G. Wright 
Senior Vice President and Provost, Norman Campus

DATE: August 20, 2026

SUBJECT: **Honoring Our Commitment to Our Students**
Changes for Academic Year 2026-27
Required Syllabus Statements
University Policies Regarding Instruction
Academic Integrity

To assist the instructors new to the University of Oklahoma—Norman Campus and as a reminder to all the returning instructors, the following includes information regarding **required syllabus statements** and **important policies regarding instruction** that you need to consider throughout the academic year.

Required Syllabus Statements

Every Course Syllabus is required to contain the approved statements on the following issues:

- Mental Health Support Services
- Reasonable Accommodation Policy
- Title IX Resources and Reporting Requirement
- Religious Observance
- Adjustments for Pregnancy and Related Issues
- Final Exam Preparation Period
- Emergency Protocol
- The University of Oklahoma Active Threat Guidance
- Fire Alarm/General Emergency

The Center for Faculty Excellence provides [syllabus templates](#) that contains all required statements and aid faculty in staying up to date with best practices in creating a successful learning environment and revised University policies. In addition, faculty  [may download a Word document](#) with all required University syllabus language. It is imperative that faculty familiarize themselves with this language each semester, as guidance and policies may have changed.

University Policies Regarding Instruction

Honoring our commitment to our students, all instructors are responsible for knowing and following the University Policies regarding instruction listed and linked below.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility Policy

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.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The University, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin (including actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics), sex (see Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy), sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, gender identity/expression (consistent with applicable law), age (40 or older), religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, housing, financial aid, and educational services.

To help provide a learning environment free of discrimination and harassment faculty must include the required statement on disability and academic integrity and Title IX Resources and Reporting Requirement on all syllabi. All required syllabus statements can be found on the [syllabus template](#) on the Center for Faculty Excellence website.

Consensual Sexual Relationship Policy

(A) Purpose

Consensual amorous, dating, or sexual relationships have inherent risks when they occur between a faculty member, supervisor, or other member of the University community and any person over whom he or she has a professional responsibility. As noted in the sex discrimination and sexual harassment policy, the risks include a student or subordinate's feeling coerced into an unwanted relationship to ensure they receive a proper educational or employment experience; potential conflicts of interest in which the person is in a position to evaluate the work or make personnel or academic decisions with respect to the individual with whom he or she is romantically involved; a perception by students or employees that a fellow student or coworker who is involved in a romantic relationship with his or her supervisor or professor will receive an unfair advantage; either or both of the parties engaging in behavior destructive to the other or their academic or working environments if the relationship ends; and the potential that University/state resources are used inappropriately to further the romantic relationship.

Those with professional responsibility over others and with whom they have a romantic relationship should be aware that their involvement may subject them and the University to legal liability; consequently, such relationships are strongly discouraged. “Professional responsibility” is defined as performing functions including but not limited to teaching, counseling, grading, advising, evaluating, hiring, supervising, and making decisions or recommendations that confer benefits such as promotions, financial aid awards, or other remuneration, or that may impact upon other academic or employment opportunities.

(B) Definitions

As used in this policy, the terms “faculty” and “faculty member” mean all those who teach at the University, and include graduate students with teaching responsibilities and other instructional personnel. The terms “staff” or “staff members” mean all employees who are not faculty, and include academic and non-academic administrators as well as supervisory personnel. The term “consensual sexual relationship” may include amorous or romantic relationships, and is intended to indicate conduct that goes beyond what a person of ordinary sensibilities would believe to be a collegial or professional relationship.

(C) Policy

(1) Faculty/Student Relationships

Within the Instructional Context

It is considered a serious breach of professional ethics for a member of the faculty to initiate or acquiesce in a sexual relationship with a student who is enrolled in a course being taught by the faculty member or whose academic work (including work as a teaching assistant) is being supervised by the faculty member.

Outside the Instructional Context

Sexual relationships between faculty members and students occurring outside the instructional context may lead to difficulties. Particularly when the faculty member and student are in the same academic unit or in units that are academically allied, relationships that the parties view as consensual may appear to others to be exploitative. Further, in such situations, the faculty member may face serious conflicts of interest and should be careful to distance himself or herself from any decisions that may reward or penalize the student involved. A faculty member who fails to withdraw from participation in activities or decisions that may reward or penalize a student with whom the faculty member has or has had an amorous relationship will be deemed to have violated his or her ethical obligation to the student, to other students, to colleagues, and to the University.

Returning Examinations, Papers, and Projects to Students Policy

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.

Commercial Term Papers Policy

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.

Course Syllabi and Other Course Materials Policy

Instructional faculty are required to post the required course syllabus on the University's course management system by the first day of the semester. Each 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.

Additionally, instructional faculty are encouraged to use the online course management system to distribute other course materials or to post links to websites with other course materials.

Academic Integrity

Students are required to understand and adhere to standards of scholarship from the time they are admitted to the University. Therefore, a syllabus statement on academic integrity  is not required, but is highly recommended. Students benefit from every reminder that their instructors care about integrity. If there are any course-specific rules, provide them in writing in case questions arise later. Adding a syllabus link to OU's [Academic Integrity](#) website is highly encouraged and will help if the need to report a case arises.