

Item	8.2
Approved by	UOIT Academic Council
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ACADEMIC STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD TO STUDENTS

PREAMBLE

The objectives of this policy are to identify the responsibilities of academic staff members with regard to students, to promote harmonious relations between academic staff members and students, and to ensure that students are treated fairly and consistently. Although the individual responsibilities of academic staff members with regard to students are primarily instructional and scholarly, they also include certain collective responsibilities exercised through the actions of administrators and various university councils.

I. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Individual responsibilities with regard to students include the timely preparation, organization, and delivery of course materials; the timely evaluation of student academic progress; the timely reporting of such evaluations in accordance with approved policies and schedules; availability for consultation with students outside class and/or laboratory hours; the careful supervision of student research and thesis preparation, and participate in other broader instructional activities, including committee work at various levels as it pertains directly or indirectly to students. In the effective discharge of their teaching responsibilities, faculty members are expected to be familiar with all university and Faculty policies including policies on course evaluations, to treat students fairly and consistently and to demonstrate academic integrity and scholarly competence.

The Course Outline is a contract-like arrangement with the students in the course. Any changes to the evaluation criteria, dates of tests, or assignments made after initial announcement should be made advisedly and in consultation with the dean, students in the course, and any other faculty members teaching that subject. Changes are to be filed with the Faculty office.

The course outline should draw attention to, and outline the due dates for, all significant pieces of work to be evaluated including all tests, mid-terms, the final examination or assignments that constitute 10% or more of the student's final grade. This information will assist students manage their individual workloads as they work through course material.

1. Within the first week of classes, each academic staff member responsible for a course shall provide to every member of the class via the university Learning Management System (LMS) with relevant links to electronic documents, the following information:
 - Name, office number, telephone number, e-mail address and office hours;
 - A list of required textbooks, materials and readings, including the reference style guide preferred by the instructor (as applicable);
 - A reference to statements on academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation in the university calendar;
 - An outline of the topics to be covered in the course;

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- A description of the evaluation procedure to be used, including the weighting of the components that will contribute to the final grade;
 - An indication of instructor availability for individual student consultation in person or by electronic means; including the reasonable expectation regarding the amount of time a student should expect to wait for a response to electronic communication;
 - A schedule of term assignments and tests; and a statement of the practice to be followed regarding late submission of assignments;
 - Learning objectives of the course;
 - Learning outcomes of the course;
 - Laboratory and tutorial details; and
 - Teaching Assistant and Laboratory Instructor contact details.
2. Academic staff members shall teach their courses with due regard for Calendar descriptions and shall specify textbooks and materials, including on-line materials, in accordance with announced purchasing deadlines.
3. In their dealings with students, academic staff shall:
- 3.1 not deny registration for instruction in those courses for which the permission of the instructor is required, except where a student lacks appropriate qualifications including necessary prerequisites, or where an approved policy on limited enrollment is in effect;
 - 3.2 not accept money or other goods or services from students for assistance with any course offered by the university. This clause, however, shall not prevent student teaching assistants, or other part-time instructors, from accepting payment for tutoring in courses which do not fall within the terms of their university employment;
 - 3.3 be available on a known and posted basis for individual consultation with students registered in their courses or laboratories;
 - 3.4 strive to respond to e-mail communication within a reasonable period of time, normally within 2 weekdays;
 - 3.5 provide written evaluative feedback and/or at least one mark prior to the voluntary with-drawal deadline specified in the Calendar;
 - 3.6 foster a free exchange of ideas between themselves and their students in the classroom, and allow students the freedom to take legitimate exception to any data, views, or methods presented;
 - 3.7 respect the confidentiality of documentary information about students;
 - 3.8 keep confidential any information about the academic performance of a student, unless the release of such information is authorized by the student, required by others teaching the same course, or requested by an administrator in accordance with university policy on the release of information;
 - 3.9 explicitly acknowledge in written or oral presentations any indebtedness to student re-search contributions;
 - 3.10 not retaliate against a student who has filed a complaint, whether the complaint was substantiated or unsubstantiated;
 - 3.11 not exchange information about students previously or currently taught with anyone other than persons referred to in 3.8 above.

4. Academic staff members shall not cancel, miss, terminate, or shorten scheduled instruction except for good reason. Whenever a scheduled period of instruction is cancelled, the academic staff member shall:
 - 4.1 inform the class at the earliest possible time;
 - 4.2 inform the administrative head of the academic unit; and
 - 4.3 where possible, ensure that appropriate substitution or make-up instruction is provided.
5. Academic staff members who provide instruction shall comply with the schedules and formats for reporting student grades, on line and in written form, as established by Faculties and the Office of the Registrar. In the event that a grade is reviewed by a committee, the relevant academic staff member should be available for the duration of the committee's work. An academic staff member who learns of an error, which, if corrected, would raise an assigned grade, should correct it without requiring the student affected to appeal the grade.
6. Academic staff members must keep files of student grades for one full year after grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar.
7. The total value of any tests or examinations given in the last five days of classes in a semester must be no more than 15 per cent of the final mark for the course. Students who are asked to write tests or examinations in contravention of this provision may refuse to do so without academic penalty. They also have the right to raise the matter with the dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered.

II. COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

The collective responsibilities of academic staff are to provide an effective learning environment and to endeavour to ensure fair and consistent treatment of students. They include periodically reviewing and updating all courses and programs; ensuring that academic regulations and policies provide fair and consistent treatment of students, providing for convenient student access, on-line, to information on policies, regulations, and procedures that may affect academic progress, including the provision of the names of instructors assigned to teach particular courses at the earliest possible opportunity.

1. Through their Faculty Councils, academic staff members should review program and course descriptions periodically to ensure that the material presented is current and appropriate, and that all information the Calendar and posted online is clear and accurate.
2. The following material must be available through the university website:
 - 2.1 University and Faculty regulations regarding class attendance and penalties for non-compliance;
 - 2.2 The information described in Section I. 3.3 provided to the class by the academic staff member for each course;
 - 2.3 University and Faculty regulations and procedures, if any, regarding the evaluation of courses and instructors;
 - 2.4 University and Faculty policy regarding student access to final examination marks;
 - 2.5 University policy on student discipline;
 - 2.6 University procedures regarding grade appeals;
 - 2.7 University policy on the responsibilities of academic staff with regard to students;
 - 2.8 University policy regarding harassment and discrimination; and
 - 2.9 University policy regarding electronic communication between faculty and students.

3. Where necessitated by large class sizes or other circumstances, academic units shall ensure that course instructors and/or designated substitutes are available for individual consultations with students for a reasonable amount of time on a known and posted basis.