

August 21, 2009

TO: Council of Deans, Department Chairs and Directors

FROM: Warwick M. Bayly
Provost and Executive Vice President

SUBJECT: Reminders of Certain Policies



The onset of a new academic year is a time of excitement, hope, and aspiration. It is also a good time to acquaint oneself with, or to recall, certain academic policies. Please distribute this document to faculty, instructors and teaching assistants.

1. In May 2007 the Faculty Senate proposed and the Board of Regents approved revisions to the University's Academic Integrity policy. The new policy reflects our community's commitment to the highest standards of scholarship. Please read the full text of the policy at <http://www.conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=338>.

University instructors have the authority to intervene in all situations where students are determined to be cheating. Responsible instructors retain the authority to assign grades to students considering from an academic standpoint the nature of the student action. All confirmed cases of dishonesty must be reported to the Office of Student conduct using the electronic form found at:
<http://www.conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=338>.

Course syllabi should include a statement emphasizing the importance of academic integrity AND how dishonesty in coursework will be treated. Instructors will find a step by step process, sample course syllabus statements and a sample letter on the Office of Student Conduct web page <http://www.conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=338>.

Feel free to contact the Office of Student Conduct (335-4532) if you would like more specific information about the process. Writing Programs can assist with proactive assignment design that minimizes intentional or unintentional academic dishonesty.

2. **Students with Disabilities Syllabus Statement**

We are an institution of higher education and therefore have a responsibility to inform students with disabilities about the process of accessing reasonable accommodations. The Students with Disabilities syllabus statement is an important part of fulfilling that

institutional responsibility. A syllabus statement is required for each instructor to include in every semester's syllabus for all courses at WSU. Please copy and paste either the Students with Disabilities Syllabus Statement or the Distant Degree Program Syllabus Statement paragraph into your syllabus depending upon the nature of your course. If you have any questions, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 335-3417.

Syllabus Statements

Students with Disabilities:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist <http://www.drc.wsu.edu>.

If you are teaching a Distance Degree course, please use the following statement:

Distance Degree Program (DDP/DRC) Statement:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. DDP and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) work together to provide reasonable accommodations for students who have documented disabilities and who are registered both with DDP and the DRC. DDP's liaison to the DRC will assist you in getting started. To begin this process, contact DDP (800-222-4978 or distance@wsu.edu). We strongly recommend that you notify us as soon as possible. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Resource Center (DRC) (509-335-3417 or <http://drc.wsu.edu>).

3. All advisors should remind students that as a requirement for graduation, undergraduates at WSU must now successfully complete a University Writing Portfolio during the semester the student is earning his or her 61st credit hour. Contact the WSU Writing Assessment Office at 335-7959 or go to <http://www.writingprogram.wsu.edu/units/writingassessment/> for further information.
4. Announcements read to classes, if frequent, could divert a great deal of faculty and student time from course objectives. For this reason, they should not be distributed for reading to classes unless authorized. Authorization may be given by the administrator of the unit in which the announcement is read. Thus, classroom announcements are to be authorized for a department by the department chair, for a college by the dean of the college, and for the university as a whole by the Provost. Notices to be read to the entire university student community will rarely be authorized.

5. Please review information about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) at the following website:
<http://www.ronet.wsu.edu/Main/Apps/FerpaInfo.ASP>. Each department is responsible to maintain the confidentiality of student records in accordance with FERPA. Questions regarding the access to or release of student records may be referred to the Registrar's Office at 335-5346.
6. In accordance with Academic Regulation 73, instructors are encouraged to establish and explain classroom procedures for excused absences early in the semester, preferably in their written syllabus. Once announced, these procedures should be scrupulously followed unless extraordinary circumstances require an exception. Absences impede a student's academic progress and should be avoided.

OTHER EXCUSED ABSENCES. Students must sometimes miss examinations or other academic obligations affecting their grades because of illness, personal crisis, mandated court appearances, and the like. As long as such absences are not excessive, it is hoped that the instructor will provide and document reasonable accommodation. The instructor may require the student to submit a written explanation of the absence, but written excuses from health care personnel should not be required since these requests frequently put the health care personnel in untenable positions. A student who is dissatisfied with the instructor's accommodation may follow the Academic Complaint Procedure, Rule 104.

7. Washington State University requires that reasonable accommodations be made in regard to religious holidays as spelled out by Academic Regulation 82.
8. This is a reminder of Academic Regulation 98.
CORRECTION OF GRADE ERRORS.
An instructor may not change a grade after it has been filed with the Registrar, except in the case of clerical error, which the instructor may correct by so certifying to the Registrar. Such change must be approved (signature required) by the chairperson of the department in which the course was offered. Grade corrections must be processed within one year of the end of the term for which the original grade was given. In extenuating circumstances, exceptions to the one-year limit for correction of grade errors may be considered by petition to the Registrar's Office.
9. The final examination schedule provides for the orderly administration of two or three-hour final examinations outside the regular class period. Final examinations should not be scheduled for closed week. While this may seem to be an attractive option, it is clearly contrary to Rule 79 in the Academic Regulations Appendix of the Washington State University Catalog (<http://www.catalog.wsu.edu/>).

79. CLOSED WEEK. No examinations or quizzes, (other than laboratory examinations, make-up examinations and make-up quizzes) may be given during the last week of instruction.

Additionally, a review of regulations 78 and 80 is appropriate.

78. THREE OR MORE IN ONE DAY. During final examination week, if the scheduled arrangement results in students having three or more examinations scheduled for any one day, any one of their instructors is authorized to excuse the students from the regularly scheduled examination and give a final examination to the students during the special exams time blocks. In cases of difficulty in arriving at a solution, students shall refer the matter to the chairperson of their departments or to their academic advisers.

80. NO EARLY EXAMINATIONS. A student will not be granted special examinations for the purpose of leaving the institution before the close of the semester.

Any departure from rule 79 or 80 should have the prior written approval of the area dean and should be reported in writing to the Office of Provost before closed week. Departures from rule 79 or 80 that are not so approved are serious violations of the academic regulations.

No regulation requires a final examination and no policy prevents the introduction of new material during closed week.

Finally, instructional faculty, chairs, deans and students should be aware of Academic Rule 104, Academic Complaint Procedures. Students having complaints about instruction or grading, including potential violations of closed week policies, should refer them to the instructor first. If not resolved they should be referred to the chair and if not resolved at that level, referred to the dean. The University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints.

The full text of all academic rules, including those mentioned above, are available at the WSU Catalog online <http://catalog.wsu.edu/Catalog/Apps/HomePage.ASP>.

Thank you for your attention to these important policies.

cc: M. Tate
M. Wack