



KEY UNIVERSITY POLICIES

University policies can be found in the 2011-2013 Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 30-38), 2011-2013 Graduate Catalog (pp. 7-11), and the Human Resources web site at: <http://www.clarion.edu/43651>

Clarion University of Pennsylvania

COURSE SYLLABI

It is a long standing policy of Clarion University that within the first week, each student in each section of each course be provided with a written statement explaining in specific terms the practices and policies to be followed in relation to course requirements and evaluation. I suggest that each handout should carry at least the following information:

1. The instructor's name, e-mail address, office phone, and scheduled office hours
2. The catalog number, title, and section number of the course
3. The time and place of class meetings
4. The titles of all texts and electronic resources/communication media to be used in the course
5. Special materials (graph paper, drawing instruments, calculators, etc.) the student is expected to have
6. A course summary which includes a content outline and indicates student learning outcomes, the extent of the subject matter to be covered, and the goals and objectives to be assessed during the course.
7. Course requirements
 - a) If possible, a listing of specific assignments
 - b) Specific information about special requirements such as term papers and the dates they are to be submitted
 - c) Special reading requirements
 - d) Tests, the approximate dates they may be administered and, if possible, the types of tests to be expected
8. Course grades
 - a) The contribution of each quiz, midterm, and final examination to the grade
 - b) The contribution of term papers, outside readings, etc., to the grade
 - c) The contribution of hand-in work
 - d) The contribution of class participation and the kind of participation expected
9. Class attendance

University policy on class attendance is stated in the catalog, and every member of the faculty is expected to abide by the spirit of that statement. The policy states:

Clarion University of Pennsylvania regards student participation in class as essential to the learning process. Therefore, regular classroom attendance is required of all students. Faculty members determine the absence policies for their own classes, except that participation in university sanctioned activities or active military service will be excused and the student will be given reasonable assistance when class work is missed.

It is understood that absence does not excuse the student from course work and the responsibility to complete assignments on time. If a student knows that a class must be missed, the instructor should be notified in advance and arrangements made to complete the work. The instructor is not required to give make-up examinations or accept class work missed as a result of an unexcused absence.

In the event of an unexpected prolonged absence such as serious illness or military deployment, the Office of the Registrar should be notified as soon as possible so instructors can be informed of the reason for student's absence. This information is provided to the faculty as a courtesy and does not, in and of itself, constitute a valid excuse of the student's absence from class. A valid excuse will be granted to a student for military deployment following receipt of a copy of the military orders from the student's military command (Undergraduate Catalog, 2011-2013, pp. 33).

10. Special Services

Course syllabi should acknowledge that some students might need certain accommodations in the course. These students very often have learning disabilities and/or hearing or visual impairments. Faculty can demonstrate their sensitivity and concern by making the following statement on course syllabi:

“If you are a student with a documented disability and require accommodations, you must be registered with the University's Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). Students must provide current documentation to DSS which identifies their disability and need for accommodation(s). Students must meet with DSS to discuss requested accommodations. Students must provide instructors with appropriate notification from DSS of the approved accommodation as early in the semester as possible. The Office of Disability Support Services can be reached by calling (814) 393-2095 and is located in 102 Ralston Hall.”

11. Academic Honesty

Course syllabi should acknowledge the use of Turn It In, a commercial anti-plagiarism service. Faculty members can include the following language on their course syllabi:

“Clarion University has a license agreement with Turnitin.com, a service that helps prevent plagiarism by comparing student papers with Turnitin's database and Internet sources. Students who take this course agree that all required papers may be submitted to Turnitin.com. While student privacy is protected, papers submitted to Turnitin do become source documents in Turnitin's reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on Turnitin's website. Clarion University is committed to preserving academic integrity as defined by the Academic Honesty Policy available at www.clarion.edu/51642

Additionally, it is strongly suggested that you include language in your syllabi that defines your policy on academic honesty. Suggested language can be as simple as “the university's policies regarding academic honesty are strictly followed in this class.”

POLICY RELATED TO FINAL EXAMINATIONS

The Office of the Registrar prepares a final examination schedule that is essentially time-driven. That is, with few exceptions which are approved by the Provost, the specific testing days and times of final exams are determined by the meeting times of courses throughout the semester. Below is the text of the final examinations letter that is sent each semester to all faculty.

Final examinations for the [semester] will be administered throughout the week of [week]. The specific testing time and day of each exam will be determined by the class meeting time of the course section throughout the spring semester. Each exam will be one hour and fifty minutes and will be given in the same classroom used during the semester unless noted otherwise on the exam schedule.

All departures from the conventional examination procedure must be cleared with the college dean via the appropriate department chair before the final examination schedule is prepared and published.

Slight modification may be made for certain large enrollment courses. Faculty members who teach two or more large enrollment sections of the same course may request, in writing, to consolidate multiple sections to facilitate the administration of one final exam. **Requests should be sent to Deb Fleeger, Office of the Registrar, 122 Carrier.**

Consideration will be given to all such requests received by [date]. Each faculty member will be notified as to the status of his/her request. The Dean of Venango Campus must countersign any changes for Venango Campus.

No final examinations are to be given during the last week of classes, nor are other tests to be given which are administered in lieu of final exams.

Final examinations are considered to be part of the evaluation process and it is expected that final examinations will be given in almost all courses as a part of the evaluation procedure.

It is recognized that certain courses (e.g., studio performance and physical activity courses) are not adapted to conventional final examinations and that there are other evaluation techniques which are entirely acceptable. In a few courses, terminal evaluation may not be appropriate at all. **If an instructor believes that an alternative to the final examination is appropriate or that no final examination should be given, the instructor must clear the alternative with the college dean and department chair before the final examination schedule is prepared and published.**

Once the final examination schedule is published, no changes in or deviations from that schedule are to be made without prior clearance. Approval for such changes will not be given unless there are substantial reasons for doing so.

The Office of the Registrar is receptive to specific requests for final examination locations and times, and will make every reasonable effort to meet these requests. However, it should be understood that some examinations will necessarily be scheduled for the last period of the last day of final examination week, as well as of all other available periods throughout the time set aside for finals.

Faculty should also be aware that several large classrooms are no longer available to accommodate the administration of multiple section final exams. Therefore it is possible that faculty requesting to administer multiple section final exams will be assigned to different classrooms and will be responsible for making arrangements for proctoring at each testing site.

It should be understood by all faculty that if they fail to appear at the time and place an examination is scheduled, they will be regarded as taking unauthorized leave and be treated accordingly.

GRADE APPEALS AND MAINTENANCE OF STUDENT GRADE RECORDS

At times, students may have concerns about the grade they earned in your class. If at all possible, the student should first work with the faculty member directly to address their concerns. If concerns cannot be resolved directly with the faculty member, students may elect to file a complaint about a grade. At that time, the department chair and/or the Dean of the College may become involved. After a decision by the department and/or college, if the student still seeks redress, the student may bring their complaint to the Associate Provost for a final determination. The Provost's Office cannot and will not change the grade unless there is compelling evidence to do so. In the majority of complaints, no grades are changed.

If a student files a complaint about a grade, the faculty member is obligated to provide a solid, documented explanation of the grade earned. If evidence does not defend the original grade, then there is an obligation to change it in congruence with the evidence available. To minimize these complaints, the Academic Affairs office, in accord with the spirit and intention of the Faculty Senate, has established the following policy and requests that all faculty adhere strictly to it:

1. Explain to students at the beginning of the semester the basis for evaluation of achievement and then follow the procedure so presented.
2. Maintain a complete grade book record of grades upon which the course grade is finally based.
3. During a class session return quizzes, tests, and other evaluative papers to provide an opportunity to clarify grading and to allow students to raise questions. At the instructor's discretion, tests or papers may be recollected following class discussion, or students may retain them permanently. If a standardized test, which requires close security, is administered, grade results should be discussed with the class and the instructor should be prepared to talk with students individually about their responses.
4. Retain all final examinations, and retain other tests and quizzes which students have not been permitted to keep, for a full semester following the semester in which they were administered.
5. Retain all record books for at least one year following the latest semester in which they carry recorded grades.
6. Expect and welcome occasional grade complaints and handle them based on an explained grading policy and documented records. The official grade appeal policy can be found in the *Student Rights, Regulations, and Procedures Handbook*, which is available on line at www.clarion.edu/51580.pdf

One final note: It would be helpful if faculty would make record books available to the department office when they leave the university for an extended period, such as for sabbatical leaves or other reasons. This, however, is a suggestion and not part of the grading policy.

POSTING TEST GRADES

Faculty are not permitted to post grades using students' name, social security number or Clarion ID. Also, refrain from distributing student work in a manner which identifies a student's work to others (e.g., leaving graded papers in a box outside of an office door). Doing so is a violation of one's personal right to privacy and also a violation of the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment.

It is permissible for faculty to post grades provided no personally identifiable information is used to associate grades with specific students. Students can be assigned a random number at the beginning of the course to use throughout the semester. Grades can be posted using this number as long as the numbers are kept confidential and posted in a random order. Grades cannot be posted in alphabetical order and the random number should not include any portion of a student's social security number or Clarion ID.

SMOKING IN CLASSROOMS

There is a long-standing university regulation against smoking in classrooms. Please refrain from smoking in classrooms and please do not permit students to smoke in classrooms.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University's policy on Academic Honesty can be found in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. It is reproduced below.

Academic Honesty Policy

Students at Clarion University shall maintain a high standard of honesty in scholastic work. As members of the university community, students have a responsibility to be familiar with the conduct regulations found in the university catalogs, *Residence Hall Handbook*, *Student Rights, Regulations, and Procedures Online* handbook, and other university documents. Among the conduct regulations addressed are acts of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism or cheating on assignments, examinations, or other academic work; or without prior approval of the instructor, submitting work already done for another course.

Students shall avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to:

1. **Plagiarism**—the use of another’s words without attribution or without enclosing the words in quotation marks. Plagiarism may also be defined as the act of taking the ideas or expression of ideas of another person and representing them as one’s own—even if the original paper has been paraphrased or otherwise modified. A close or extended paraphrase may also be considered plagiarism even if the source is named. Downloading partial or entire text from one or more Internet paper mills and cutting/pasting entire and partial text from one or more Internet Web sites constitute plagiarism.
2. **Collusion**—collaborating with another person in the preparation of notes, themes, reports, or other written work offered for credit, unless specifically permitted by the instructor.
3. **Cheating on an examination or quiz**--giving or receiving information or using prepared material on an examination or quiz.
4. **Falsification of data**—manufacturing, falsification of information, including providing false or misleading information, or selective use of data to support a particular conclusion or to avoid conducting actual research.

Complaints of academic dishonesty may be brought against a student by any member of the academic community. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can range from a failing grade on a particular assignment or examination to dismissal from the university, based on the seriousness of the action and whether it is part of a pattern of academic dishonesty. Sanctions extending beyond a particular course, such as suspension or dismissal from an academic program or from the university can only be imposed as a result of complaints filed under the Disciplinary Procedures Code and addressed through a formal hearing before the Conduct Board. Instructors imposing a lowered or failing grade on an assignment or course as a result of a charge of academic dishonesty must inform the student in writing of the charge. Students have the right to appeal instructor decisions related to academic honesty either (1) through the Grade Appeal Process outlined above (see section on Student Rights, page 3) or (2) directly to the university Conduct Board by contacting the Office of Judicial and Mediation Services. A student may not appeal through both procedures. Should a student appeal through the second option, the board will schedule a hearing at which the faculty member will explain the charge and resultant academic action; the student shall then have an opportunity to address the allegation. The decision of the Conduct Board shall be final. Rather than imposing a lowered or failing grade on an assignment or for a course, an instructor may choose to report an allegation of academic dishonesty directly to the Office of Judicial & Mediation Services. This process automatically results in a formal hearing before the university Conduct Board. Should the board find the student in violation of the academic honesty policy, the student may appeal the decision and/or penalty to the university president. The decision of the president shall be final. Sanctions extending beyond a particular course, such as suspension or dismissal from an academic program or from the university can only be imposed as the result of complaints filed under the Disciplinary Procedures Code and after Formal Hearings under this code.

Further information on the Academic Honesty Policy is available on the university website at <http://www.clarion.edu/51642/>