

**THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND FINE**  
**ARTS**

**UNDERGRADUATE**  
ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Revised August 2009

## **COLFA SYLLABUS GUIDELINES**

1. The “Criteria for Accreditation” of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, require that “all students must be provided written information about the goals and requirements of each course, the nature of the course content, and the methods of evaluation to be employed” (4.2.4, p.30). Course objectives should be stated in the potential (e.g., “This course will provide students an opportunity to master...”) rather than the absolute (“In this course, students will learn...”). In addition, *The Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOP) states, “Before the end of the add/drop period, students shall be informed in writing as to the methods of evaluation to be used” (Chap. 2.17).
2. **All COLFA Faculty are required to post their syllabus online in the course’s Blackboard or WebCT site. Course syllabi are to be made available to students online no later than the first class meeting of the semester. If subsequent changes need to be made to the syllabus, instructors are to update the posted syllabus as quickly as possible so that it remains current. The syllabus should be available on Blackboard/WebCT in addition to being distributed in paper form. In high enrollment courses, it may be decided for environmental and practical reasons to use Blackboard/WebCT as the primary means for distributing the syllabus. Where this is done, College policy requires that students be given the option of a hard copy of the syllabus from the instructor.**
3. The following elements are required in each syllabus:
  - a. the course number and name
  - b. the instructor’s name and contact information (including email address)
  - c. the instructor’s official office hours and location
  - d. requirements that the course fulfills, e.g. core curriculum
  - e. a brief description of the course’s learning objectives
  - f. the course prerequisites, if any
  - g. a detailed grading scheme, including types of exams/assignments and their weight in determining the final grade
  - h. a schedule of assignments and exams, including the final exam
  - i. the textbook, reading assignments and/or reading list
  - j. the course policies the instructor wishes to impose, such as attendance policies, class participation and “civility” expectations, late assignment, extra credit, and make up policies
  - k. UTSA policies and services regarding disabilities and academic dishonesty

4. In order to assist students with the process of choosing courses at registration time, please provide an expanded course description, draft syllabi, or past syllabi (in the event a new one is not yet available) on the departmental web site prior to the registration period. Included should be:
  - a. the course number and name
  - b. the instructor's name and contact information
  - c. a grading scheme and anticipated assignments
  - d. the anticipated textbook, reading assignments, and/or reading list

## **STUDENT ADDS**

1. Registered students may add classes during the first week by Banner ASAP.
2. After the twelfth class day in a regular semester or the fourth class day in a summer term (Census Date), students must provide a written explanation for adding the class after Census Date, which should be attached to the Add form. The add form must be signed by the Undergraduate Academic Advisor, Instructor and the Department Chair, and then forwarded to the Office of the Dean. Adds after the Census Date also require a signature from the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Support and Undergraduate Studies. Students are required to walk the Add form through for all appropriate signatures.
3. **The Add form has been updated and now includes a box in the upper right hand corner for verifying seating availability, which is to be completed.** Attached to the Add form should be a statement from the student explaining why the class is being added after Census Date, along with a statement from the Instructor verifying the student has been attending class.
4. Only the Department Chair may add students to a class section that is full. Faculty are not authorized to approve student adds to a full class, no exceptions.

## **STUDENT DROPS**

1. Students may drop an individual class through the automatic "W" date on Banner ASAP. All official drop deadlines are listed in the Schedule of Classes and on the administrative calendar. After the drop deadline, students may not drop an individual course except by Administrative Drop.
2. Banner ASAP does not allow students to drop their last class on line. Students attempting to drop their last class and withdraw from UTSA must go to the Academic Advising Center for their major.

3. Students may withdraw from the University through Monday of the last week of classes. To withdraw from the University, students must go to the Academic Advising Center for their major.
4. Faculty are not authorized to drop students for any reason. Students are not dropped for non-attendance.
5. **Undergraduates who withdraw from the university (drop all their classes) will receive automatic grades of “W” for each class dropped.**

This replaces the old policy in which, for an undergraduate who withdrew from the university after the automatic W deadline, the instructor was required to assign a grade of “W” if the student was passing the course at the time of the withdrawal or assign a grade of “F” if the student was failing the course at the time of the withdrawal.

6. Individual Drops after the automatic W deadline can only be processed via a Request for an Administrative Drop which is initiated in the department office. Please be aware of all drop deadlines as published in the University Calendar, and the UTSA Information Bulletin.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DROPS**

1. Requests to drop an individual class after the end of the Automatic W drop period will only be considered in the case of “urgent and substantiated, non academic reasons.” Selective drops will not be approved. Administrative Drops are not intended for students who failed to drop a class correctly or simply forgot, and will not be approved.
2. Students requesting an Administrative Drop must pick up the Request for Administrative Drop in the department office. Department offices will forward the completed form, with student documentation and faculty response, to the COLFA Dean’s Office. After review by the Associate Dean for COLFA Student Affairs, the student and faculty will be notified of the decision in writing.
3. Administrative Drops may NOT be used to change a grade once it has been recorded. Grades can ONLY be changed using the online Change of Grade procedure in ASAP.
4. Requests for Administrative Drops will not be processed after the last day of instruction preceding student study days.
5. Request for Administrative Drop forms may be located on the COLFA website ([http://colfa.utsa.edu/colfa/resources/Administrative\\_Drop\\_forms.pdf](http://colfa.utsa.edu/colfa/resources/Administrative_Drop_forms.pdf)).

## **CENSUS DATE**

1. Census date is the twelfth class day in a regular semester or the fourth class day in a summer term.
2. Instructors are responsible for checking their rosters against the students actually attending class. Students may not attend classes after Census Date if they are not on the roster.
3. Students will not be added to classes after Census Date, except under extenuating circumstances (see Student Adds).
4. Students will not be added to a class after the semester is over for any reason. The Dean's Office routinely gets requests to add a student at the end of a semester because the student and/or instructor never verified enrollment. These requests will be denied.

## **CHANGE OF GRADE**

1. **Faculty needing to change a student grade due to completion of incomplete requirements or faculty error, should do so in ASAP.**
2. A grade other than IN can be changed only in case of an error in grade computation or an error in recording a grade. Neither a change of heart by an instructor nor additional work by a student are acceptable reasons for grade changes after the semester has ended and will not be approved.
3. Instructors may not convert F grades to W, except for extreme and extenuating circumstances. The student must direct a letter of explanation to the instructor, providing documentation for verification. If the instructor endorses the student's request, he/she should direct the endorsement, the student's letter and supporting documentation and the Change of Grade form to the Department Chair. There must be verifiable supporting documentation with the request, or the Change of Grade will be returned to the department unapproved.
4. Requests for a Change of Grade from F to W will not be approved for students who failed to follow correct procedures for dropping a class, missed the deadline or forgot to drop the class.
5. Grades may not be changed after one calendar year. However, where a faculty member and department chair consider that truly extenuating circumstances exist, requests for changes over a year old must follow the same procedure outlined in item 3. under Change of Grade, and will be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Support and Undergraduate Studies.

## **GRADE GRIEVANCE/APPEAL**

1. The student must file the grievance with the Department Chair within 90 calendar days from the end of the semester in which the grade was assigned or the other concern or incident occurred.
2. Students should be provided the Student Academic Grievance Form for Appeal of a Grade, located in department offices.
3. After the student has appealed to the instructor and the Department Chair, the Grade Appeal form and all supporting documentation, including Instructor and Department Chair responses, should be forwarded to the Dean's Office.
4. The Associate Dean will review all documents. When a decision has been reached, the student will receive a written response. All documentation will remain in the Dean's Office until requested by the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Support and Undergraduate Studies.
5. Grades more than a year old may not be appealed. This is University policy.

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

1. The grade of IN (Incomplete) may be assigned, at the discretion of the instructor, when a student, who has attended three-fourths of a course with a satisfactory grade, is unable to complete a part of that course due to extenuating circumstances. Incompletes may NOT be given because a student "got behind," didn't show up for an exam, or because an instructor wishes to give a student extra time to meet the requirements of the course.
2. Arrangements for an Incomplete grade must be made before grades are due. Grades may not be changed to Incomplete after the grades have been posted. However in the event of extenuating circumstances only, when an Incomplete grade needs to be awarded after grades are posted, the grade can only be awarded by way of a Change of Grade form. In this case, the faculty member must also provide the Requirements for Removal of Incomplete form.
3. The instructor may set the due date for incomplete work, however Incompletes given to undergraduates must be removed by the Friday before finals begin, no later than one year after they were awarded. If this deadline is not met, the IN grade will convert to an F. Requests for extensions of the deadline for removing Incompletes are almost always denied.

## **BANNER GRADES**

1. Instructors are responsible for entering a grade for all students on their rosters, including those who fail to meet attendance requirements. Any student who does not receive a grade before the grades are rolled, will receive an NR (no report) from. Be aware the grade of NR can have serious negative impact on the student's GPA, academic standing, financial aid, housing, and the ability to graduate.
2. If a student has successfully withdrawn from a class before the Automatic W deadline, Banner will automatically list a grade of W. However, if the student withdraws from a class after the automatic W deadline by means of an approved Administrative Drop, Banner provides a drop-down box for faculty to select a W or an F. If this drop-down box does not appear, the student has not successfully withdrawn from the class and must be awarded the grade earned.
3. Instructors who are not entering a student grade due to a pending judicial process, must provide the Request for NR form to the Dean's Office before the deadline to enter grades. The form should be available in your department office.
4. When you have entered a grade for EVERY student on your class roster, please print out a copy of the grades and submit the copy to your department office. Staff should verify from this print out that all students have received a grade.
5. Remember, ALL students on your roster must receive a grade, even if they never attended class.

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

An Independent Study is a specialized study of a subject not offered in the regular curriculum and normally should not duplicate other courses listed in the catalog. Independent Study forms should be filled out in detail and must include the following criteria:

- a. number of meetings (weekly, bi-weekly, etc.) between the student and instructor;
- b. the type and amount of work the grade will be based on;
- c. the date(s) the work will be due.

Faculty are responsible for completing the descriptions of topic to be studied and a description of work to be required.

Student must obtain all necessary signatures: Academic Advisor, Instructor, Chair.

After approval by the Associate Dean, the form will be returned to the Department office for the student to retrieve and walk to Enrollment Services.

Students may not register for Independent Study on ASAP.

In order to supervise an Independent Study, the instructor must be teaching another course during the semester or summer session in which the Independent Study is to be offered.

## **STUDY DAYS and FINAL EXAMS**

### *Student Study Days*

*At the end of each Fall and Spring Semester, two days prior to the beginning of the final examination period are designated as Student Study Days. Classes do not meet during Student Study Days. Furthermore, Student Study Days are not to be used as dates on which papers are to be turned in, examinations are given, quizzes scheduled, review sessions held, or for any other class related activities, other than office hours.*

**The date and time of the final exam are scheduled by the University (see “Final Exams Schedule” in ASAP) and should be given on the syllabus. The date and time of the final examination cannot be changed by the faculty. All classes are to meet during the assigned final examination time, whether a final exam is to be given or not. This is necessary to ensure that we provide sufficient contact hours in each class to satisfy accreditation standards and expectations.**

## **INSTRUCTOR ABSENCE**

When an instructor plans to be absent and is unable to fulfill regular teaching duties, it is expected that the instructor will make acceptable arrangements for classes to meet. Acceptable arrangements include asking a qualified instructor in the department to substitute, inviting a qualified instructor from a department in a related discipline to hold a guest lecture, or arranging in-class activities (e.g. viewing a video, interactive activity, examination, student presentations) to be supervised by a qualified instructor. It may be appropriate for an instructor to assign out-of-class activities during planned absence. However, it is not acceptable for department or college staff to be asked to supervise a class. Before submitting a Request for Travel Authorization (RTA) the instructor must obtain approval from the department chair as to how classes are to be covered during a planned absence.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

When there is reason to believe that scholastic dishonesty has occurred, the faculty member should gather all pertinent evidence (such as tests, reports, computer programs, and other academic assignments) and identify any possible witnesses. After the exam (or other situation of suspected scholastic dishonesty), the faculty member will notify the Department Chair and

arrange to meet with the student(s) involved and discuss the alleged violation and the evidence that supports the charge. The student(s) should be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations but may not be forced to comment. Accusations that a student has cheated should be made in private and the investigation of a cheating incident should be handled as a confidential matter.

The instructor must inform the student of her or his right to have the allegations reviewed by the Department Chair. The student must be allowed to attend all classes and complete all assignments until the due process procedures are complete.

If the student admits the facts upon which the charges are based and elects to waive his/her option to proceed to a student disciplinary hearing, the instructor shall complete the Faculty Disposition of a Scholastic Dishonesty Case form as a written waiver of the hearing procedures. The student must sign the form. If the student does not agree, the student signature will not be present. The form must be signed by the faculty member and must be reviewed and signed by the Department Chair/Dean before it is forwarded to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.

If a student denies the facts or declines to waive the hearing, the faculty member must complete the Faculty Disposition of a Scholastic Dishonesty Case form and submit all documentation to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.

Consult the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (Chapter 2.37) for a detailed account of steps to be taken in cases of scholastic dishonesty.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

The COLFA Dean's Office will attempt to remind Departments of upcoming COLFA and UTSA deadlines, but faculty and staff are responsible for knowing all pertinent UTSA deadlines posted in the Academic Calendar, the Information Bulletin and the Schedule of Classes.

**New Policy for Repeating Courses to Improve Grades: Any undergraduate may repeat a course in which he or she has received a grade of "D" or "F" in an attempt to replace the grade with a higher grade. If the student receives a higher grade, then the original grade of "D" or "F" is not used in the computation of the grade point average. An undergraduate may repeat an individual course only once in an attempt to improve a grade and repeat courses at most four times in his or her career as an undergraduate at UTSA in attempts to improve grades.**

*All student forms should be made available to the students in the Department offices.*

**College of Liberal and Fine Arts**  
**Teaching Portfolio Required Format**

Effective July 2009

The teaching portfolio is an integral part of the evaluation materials for annual faculty merit consideration. Portfolios should be complete but concise representations of teaching activity for the annual review period. All faculty will submit portfolios as part of their annual reports. Items A-E are supplied by the faculty member; Item F is acquired and added by the department chair.

- A. A statement on teaching (750 words maximum) introducing materials in the portfolio. The statement can address each class individually, and discuss any special evaluative considerations such as pedagogy, class size, grading, instructional support, and class dynamics. The statement should address all instructional activities, including organized courses, internships, independent studies, and graduate degree committee work.
- B. Syllabi for all courses
- C. Assignments and exams for all courses
- D. Grading rubrics
- E. Examples of graded work (anonymous; pairs of graded assignments for each class showing high and low outcomes)
- F. Grade distribution reports

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