



**UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND**

**TEACHING  
POLICIES  
AND GUIDELINES  
FOR FACULTY  
2008-2009**

**OFFICE OF FACULTY AFFAIRS  
1126 MAIN ADMINISTRATION  
[WWW.FACULTY.UMD.EDU](http://WWW.FACULTY.UMD.EDU)**

**DATE:** July 14, 2008

**TO:** All University of Maryland Faculty Members

**FROM:** Ellin K. Scholnick  
Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs

**SUBJECT:** Teaching Information for Faculty

Welcome to a new academic year at the University of Maryland. I hope it will be a productive one for you. This memo summarizes several of the University's major academic policies on classroom instruction and student evaluation. It is intended as a brief introduction and guide to selected policies. All instructors have the responsibility to understand these academic policies and are advised to review the full text. A more extensive compendium of academic policies can be found on the website of the Office of Faculty Affairs at [www.faculty.umd.edu](http://www.faculty.umd.edu). The web pages on **Instructional Policies and Procedures** contain the full text of many of the instructional policies and guidelines cited here. Much of our material is drawn from the Schedule of Classes at [www.testudo.umd.edu](http://www.testudo.umd.edu). Additionally, the memo contains information relevant to instruction. For more details on these items or on other faculty matters, please contact me by phone at 405-4252 or email me at [escholni@umd.edu](mailto:escholni@umd.edu).

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## Useful Dates

Monday, Sept. 1, 2008	Labor Day-campus closed
Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2008	<b>First Day - Fall 2008 Semester</b>
Monday, Sept. 15, 2008	Drop/Add Date for undergraduates
Thursday, Oct. 16 by 9:00 p.m.	Early Warning Grades due
Thursday, Nov. 27-Sunday, Nov. 30, 2008	Thanksgiving Break
Friday, Dec. 12, 2008	Last Day of Fall classes
Monday, Dec. 15-Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008	Final Exams
Saturday, Dec. 20-Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008	University & College Commencement
Monday, Jan. 5, 2009	<b>Winterterm 2009 Begins</b>
Monday, Jan. 19, 2009	Martin Luther King Holiday-campus closed
Friday, Jan. 23, 2009	Winterterm classes end
Monday, Jan. 26, 2009	<b>First Day - Spring 2009 Semester</b>
Friday, Feb. 8, 2009	Drop/Add Date for undergraduates
Thursday, Mar. 5, 2009, by 9:00 p.m.	Early Warning Grades due
Monday, Mar. 16-Friday, Mar. 20, 2009	Spring Break
Tuesday, May 12, 2009	Last day of Spring classes
Thursday, May 14-Wednesday, May 20, 2009	Final Exams
Thursday, May 21-Friday, May 22, 2009	University & College Commencement
Monday, June 1-Friday, July 10, 2009	<b>Summer Session I</b>
Friday, July 3, 2009	Independence Day - campus closed
Monday, July 13-Friday, Aug. 21, 2009	<b>Summer Session II</b>

## A. Syllabus

On the first day of class, instructors are expected to distribute a course syllabus. Although there will be variations, this document should contain the following information:

- The course and section number and title
- Name of instructor, office phone number and address, email address
- A general description of the course, its location and meeting times
- Required textbooks (where used). Include ISBN numbers if available (See G1)
- Course outline, if possible by week
- Grading procedures (See E)
- Due dates for papers/projects and exam dates including final (See F3 & 4)
- Expectations of students.
- Attendance policy including handling of religious holidays, inclement weather, excused absences, makeup exam (See F)
- Office hours (See H2)
- Reminders about academic integrity (including Honor Pledge) ( See B)
- Arrangements for students with disabilities (See C)
- How courses will be continued/completed in case of an emergency that will close the University for an extended period of time.

Because commercial firms have been paying people to take notes and course materials which firms copyright and sell, faculty members may wish to take preventive measures. Legally, course materials and tests are a tangible medium such as *written or recorded* lectures, Power Point presentations, study materials and tests are copyright protected and the ability to copy and distribute materials unless it is for personal use and with instructor's permission is illegal. Faculty may wish to inform students on the course syllabus that the lectures and course matter are copyright protected and that written instructor consent must be obtained for reproduction and distribution of lecture notes and course material, especially for commercial use. Materials may be marked copyrighted e.g., @ 2001 Smith. For more information please go to [www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/IllegalDistribution.html](http://www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/IllegalDistribution.html).

## B. Academic Integrity

The University is one of a small number of universities with a student-administered Honor Code and an Honor Pledge, posted on the web at <http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu/aca/honorpledge.html>. The Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging

signatures. The University Senate asks instructors to consider asking students to write the following signed statement on each examination or assignment: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).” Compliance with the code is administered by the Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a “community of trust” on the College Park campus. Allegations of academic dishonesty should be reported directly to the Honor Council (314-8450) by any member of the campus community. Cases are decided by joint faculty-student boards. For additional information, consult the Office of Student Conduct website at <http://www.jpo.umd.edu>.

### **C. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The University is legally obligated to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students who seek special accommodations due to disabilities must first set up an appointment with Dr. Jo Ann Hutchinson or her staff at the Disability Support Service (DSS) in the Counseling Center, 314-7682. Students should download the DSS registration forms and bring appropriate documentation to the DSS office (Shoemaker 0126) prior to the meeting

( [www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/registration.html](http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/registration.html)). The DSS representative will make a determination of the appropriate accommodations and provide an accommodation form to distribute to instructors. Faculty should request that students both present these forms at the beginning of the semester and make an appointment to discuss the arrangements. When the arrangements involve modifications of testing procedures, students will present a test authorization form which instructors are to complete and hand deliver along with the test to 0106 Shoemaker. This material can also be faxed to 301-314-9478.

### **D. Confidentiality-Posting Grades**

The University complies with the regulations set forth in the Buckley Amendment, which is a part of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. This amendment protects a student from the disclosure of personal and academic information to any one other than the student, including parents, except under special circumstances. Posting student grades with either student names or social security numbers, in whole or in part, *is strictly prohibited* and exposes the university and the responsible faculty member to civil litigation. Graded exams and papers should be returned to students individually, rather than left for retrieval outside of office doors. Other “protected” information includes, but is not limited to, special requests, current and past course registrations, enrollment status, financial aid disbursements, billing history, and any disciplinary actions.

### **E. Grading Policies**

The university uses the following grading system: A, B, C, D, F, XF, I, P, S, and W. These marks remain as part of the student's permanent record and may be changed only by the original instructor on certification, approved by the department chair and the dean, that an

actual mistake was made in determining or recording the grade.

**A+, A, A-** denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship. In computations of grade point averages, these grades are assigned 4 quality points per credit hour.

**B+, B, B-** denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship. Marks of B+, B, B- are assigned 3 quality points per credit hour.

**C+, C, C-** denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and the usual achievement expected. These grades are assigned 2 quality points per credit hour.

**D+, D, D-** denotes borderline understanding of the subject. These grades denote marginal performance, and they do not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree. These grades are assigned a value of 1 quality point per credit hour.

**F** denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance. F grades are assigned 0 quality points per credit hour.

**XF**-denotes failure due to academic dishonesty.

**S** is used to denote satisfactory performance by a student in progressing thesis projects, orientation courses, practice teaching etc. S grades are not included in computation of cumulative averages.

**W** indicates withdrawal from a course in which the student was enrolled at the end of the schedule adjustment period. This mark is not used in any computation of quality points or cumulative average totals at the end of the semester.

## 1. Early Warning Grades

Faculty are reminded that early warning grades are to be submitted for those undergraduate students who are newly enrolled at Maryland. The UMEG system will prompt you via email with the names of students who should receive an early warning grade. These grades are an important component of our retention efforts as they provide timely feedback to those students who are unfamiliar with our academic expectations. Faculty may submit a letter grade or “satisfactory/unsatisfactory” (S/U) marks. For Fall 2008, early warning grades are due by 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 16, and for Spring 2009, by 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 5. You are encouraged to adjust your course syllabus so that some graded work is available for your review by these dates.

## 2. Incomplete “I” Grades

Incomplete grades are **exceptional marks** given to students who are doing satisfactory work but for circumstances beyond their control, are unable to complete a small portion of the coursework. The instructor may offer the student an Incomplete Contract stipulating work to be done by a certain date, usually the end of the next semester. If this option is offered for any course other than 799 or 899 there **MUST** be an Incomplete Contract that specifies the work to be completed and the timetable by which the work must be completed. Every student, **graduate** or **undergraduate**, must receive an Incomplete Contract.

For **graduate** students, the contract appears on the Graduate School website, [www.gradschool.umd.edu/gss/forms](http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/gss/forms). The form, signed by the student and instructor, must be filed in the Graduate Director's Office in the unit. "I" grades in courses at the 600-level or above will not be automatically converted to a letter grade.

For **undergraduates**, the Incomplete Contract is available on UMEG (University of Maryland Electronic Grading), [www.umeg.umd.edu](http://www.umeg.umd.edu). Signed contracts must be approved by the dean of the college offering the course within six weeks of the grade submission deadline. A copy of the contract should be kept on file in the unit's Undergraduate Director's Office. Failure to submit a contract or fulfill its terms will lead to conversion of the grade to the grade stipulated on the Incomplete Contract. UMEG provides a feature to monitor the terms of the Incomplete Contract for undergraduates. This feature allows instructors to access the policy, download an Incomplete Contract, stipulate the deadline for the completion of missing work, extend that deadline if necessary, and specify the default grade to be assigned should students fail to make up the missing work. The instructors are afforded live access to "I" grades they have assigned and both students and instructors are emailed about the original arrangement and are warned as deadlines approach.

### **3. Grade Submission**

All final grades should be submitted electronically through UMEG, [www.umeg.umd.edu](http://www.umeg.umd.edu) within 48 hours after the scheduled exam. Delays in grade submission impede students' ability to finalize registration for the next semester and to take advantage of Winterterm and Summer Sessions to maintain their progress to degree. Please keep copies of final exams and the grade report for at least a year in case of the need to document past grades. Note: UMEG also provides updated class rosters, updated grade reports, and the capacity to download student email addresses and class lists.

## **F. Attendance Policies**

### **1. Attendance Guidelines**

University policy ([www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html](http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html)) excuses the absences of students for illness (self or dependent), religious observances, participation in university activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control. Students must request the excuse in writing and supply appropriate documentation. Course syllabi should specify the nature of the in-class participation expected and the effects of absences on the student's grade. Students with written, excused absences are entitled to a make-up exam at a time mutually convenient for the instructor and student.

### **2. Inclement Weather**

Faculty should clarify their policy on handling official schedule adjustments (closings and delays) including associated rescheduling of examinations and assignments due to inclement weather and campus emergencies. Official closures and delays are announced on the campus website, ([www.umd.edu](http://www.umd.edu)) and snow phone line (301-405-SNOW) as well as local radio and TV stations.

### 3. Religious Observances

The University of Maryland policy on religious observances ([www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii510a.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii510a.html)) states that students should not be penalized in any way for participation in religious observances and that, whenever feasible, they be allowed to makeup academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. However, the student must personally hand the instructor a written notification of the projected absence within two weeks of the start of the semester. The request should not include travel time. Instructors should take the validity of these requests at face value. For your reference, an extensive list of religious holidays appears at [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org). In addition, due to the inconvenience that would be caused as a result of the large number of our students who participate in particular religious observances, tests and the due dates of other significant assessment *must not* be scheduled for the dates listed below!

Rosh Hashanah	Sundown, Mon., Sept. 29 - Sundown, Wed., Oct. 1, 2008
Yom Kippur	Sundown, Wed., Oct 8 - Sundown, Thurs., Oct. 9, 2008
Good Friday	Fri., April 10, 2009
Passover	Sundown, Wed., April 8 - Sundown, Fri., April 10, 2009

Faculty should remind students in advance, preferably on the syllabus, that *it is the student's responsibility* to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances *in advance* and that prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before the conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester. *This problem is especially likely to arise when final exams are scheduled on Saturday.* Your failure to understand and adhere to this policy may result in a false perception that the campus is insensitive to the religious diversity on campus. Accordingly, please make every feasible effort to accommodate students' requests based on attendance at religious observances.

### 4. Rescheduling Classes and Examinations

Permanent changes in the scheduling and location of classes and the final exam must be approved by the chair of the department or dean of the college or the appropriate designee. Final exams shall not be rescheduled to the final week of classes. Unless written permission is granted by the unit head, every course must have a final exam.

## **G. Textbooks and Class Materials**

### **1. Ordering Textbooks**

The University's policy on textbook orders is designed to reduce their cost to students. Timely submission of books orders ensures that sufficient textbooks are available on time for students and facilitates the buyback and resale of used textbooks. University policy requires submission of all textbook orders for Summer and Fall classes by **May 1** and for Winterterm and Spring classes by **December 1**. All textbook adoption information, including the International Standard Book Number (ISBN), must be submitted by these dates through the University Book Center website ([www.ubc.umd.edu](http://www.ubc.umd.edu)). Click on "Faculty." The site also contains a link to the Faculty Center Network, a one-stop resource providing detailed information on textbooks to help instructors in making adoption decisions. Once you have entered your textbook adoptions they will be posted on Testudo to facilitate textbook acquisition. You may submit this information to other vendors but not in lieu of submitting it to the UBC website.

### **2. Self-Authored Materials**

All orders of self-authored instructional materials that entail financial gain for the instructor must be approved by the chair of the department offering the course.

### **3. Sale of Course Materials in the Classroom**

Sale of such materials is strongly discouraged unless the instructor is the sole source of the material or can provide the material at the lowest price. Even in that case, alternative modes of distribution should be encouraged, such as sale through the department's business office or placing the materials on reserve at the campus library.

### **4. Reproduction of Copyrighted Material**

The photocopying of copyrighted material is subject to strict legal regulation, and failure to adhere to these laws may be punishable both civilly and criminally. The University neither condones nor encourages any actions that violate copyright law, whether or not University facilities are used. Generally, the photocopying of print materials without the consent of the copyright owner is an infringement of the owner's rights. However, representatives of education and the publishing industry have formulated an agreement whereby certain types of copying are deemed "fair use" and do not require permission. *The Guidelines for Classroom Copying* ([www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/copyright.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/copyright.html)) defines "fair use." For more information, contact the President's Legal Office, 405-4945. If permission to reproduce copyrighted material is required, it may be obtained by writing to the owner of the copyright, to the publisher, or by contacting the Copyright Clearance Center (278 Congress St., Salem,

MA 01970, [www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com)). Alternatively, many commercial copying services (such as Kinko's) or the University Copy Services ([www.dbs.umd.edu/copyright](http://www.dbs.umd.edu/copyright)) (405-5500) will submit requests to the Copyright Clearance Center for you. Please make your request sufficiently in advance to allow for the time needed to obtain permission. Remember that there may be a fee for the permission.

## **5. Electronic Resources**

Instructors may wish to use ELMS (Enterprise Learning Management System) to deliver class materials, record and compute grades, and communicate with students. ELMS uses Blackboard as its course management system, and it can be accessed at [www.elms.umd.edu](http://www.elms.umd.edu). Training in this class management tool is offered by the Office of Information Technology (OIT) at [www.training.umd.edu](http://www.training.umd.edu).

## **6. Reserve Lists**

The Libraries is instituting a new method of processing course reserves integrated with OIT's ELMS course management system. To find out more and to create a reserve list, go to [www.lib.umd.edu/PUBSERV/RESERVE](http://www.lib.umd.edu/PUBSERV/RESERVE). The Faculty Tip Sheet should enable both registration in ELMS and, by clicking on the Course Reserves Administration link, construction of a reserve of a reserve list. Note that reserve materials should be submitted at least two weeks prior to when students will need them.

## **H. Other Relevant Policies and Resources**

### **1. Time Reporting**

As of the Fall 2008 semester, all faculty who are entitled to benefits must complete biweekly electronic time reports, recording the days on which they were engaged in university duties. These data are important for determining sick leave, and where appropriate, annual and personal leave. These reports should be completed in an accurate and timely manner. Personal time entry records are available at [www.was-3.umd.edu/phvertimeentrymenu/menu](http://www.was-3.umd.edu/phvertimeentrymenu/menu).

### **2. Faculty Expectations**

[www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/reasonable.html](http://www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/reasonable.html) All faculty are expected to meet their classes and keep office hours. When unforeseen circumstances arise precluding meeting classes, and the instructor cannot arrange a substitute, the instructor should notify the department chair as far in advance as possible and, where possible, notify affected students.

### **3. Relevant Student Policies**

All faculty should be acquainted with several student policies. Each is available on our webpage.

Some that are particularly relevant deal with:

Arbitrary and Capricious Grading

[www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii120b.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii120b.html) for undergraduates

[www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii120a.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii120a.html) for graduate students

Classroom Climate

[www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/classclimate.html](http://www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/classclimate.html)

Code of Student Conduct

[www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/v100b.pdf](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/v100b.pdf)

Disruptive Students

[www.studentconduct.umd.edu/docs/classroom\\_disruption.pdf](http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu/docs/classroom_disruption.pdf)

Human Relations Code

[www.president.umd.edu/policies/vi100b.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/vi100b.html)

Sexual Harassment

[www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/sh.html](http://www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/sh.html)

#### **4. Dealing with Troubled Students**

Sometimes students will encounter psychological problems that hamper their life on campus and you may wish to refer them to the Counseling Center at 314-7651, [www.counseling.umd.edu](http://www.counseling.umd.edu) or the Mental Health Service in the Health Center, 314-8106. The Counseling Center provides a useful guide, *Helping Students in Distress*, [www.counseling.umd.edu/Services/csservices.htm](http://www.counseling.umd.edu/Services/csservices.htm). Click on the menu for Faculty/Staff. In addition, in cases of violent or potentially violent behavior, you should contact the Campus Police (405-3333) or Dr. Jonathan Kandell (314-7658), or other members of the BETA group.

#### **I. Emergency Alerts**

The campus Department of Public Safety has created an alert system to send text messages to your email, cell phone, pager, and Blackberry/Treo when emergencies occur. The messages may inform you of the emergency, update its status and provide instructions about where to go (evacuation routes), and what to do or not do. You can register for the alert on [www.alert.umd.edu/learnmore.php](http://www.alert.umd.edu/learnmore.php).