

FREEDOM TO TEACH, FREEDOM TO LEARN

Texas Tech University values students' right to learn and faculty's right to teach, and believes in freedom of expression for all. To foster teaching and learning, proper classroom environments are necessary. This Civility in the Classroom guide offers tips on how to establish and maintain classroom structure and address incivility should it occur.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

As our learning community becomes increasingly diverse and global, it is important to establish criteria that encourages openness to wide-ranging viewpoints.

Consider setting expectations such as the following:

- Faculty and students should respond to contrasting viewpoints in a mature and respectful manner.
- Guide classroom dialogue so that all opinions are valued and that no single viewpoint dominates discussion.

As freedom of speech is valued and encouraged at Texas Tech University, a conversation early in the semester about the proper format for the sharing of ideas is suggested. A discussion about students' right to express opinions while being cognizant of others' feelings and opinions may be beneficial. For example, explain that challenges to comments should be made in a professional manner. Please refer to the *Student Handbook*, Part VII, Section F for specifics: <http://www.studentaffairs.ttu.edu/publications/studenthandbook.pdf>

For information concerning etiquette in an online classroom, please contact the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center at 742-0133.

SYLLABI TIPS

- Clearly establish classroom behavioral expectations in your syllabus, and consider providing examples if some rules could be unclear (ex: some professors allow food and drinks in class; some faculty allow collaboration on homework).
- Discuss these expectations on the first day of class and address them again throughout the semester as necessary.
- Outline clearly other course requirements such as due dates, penalties for late submissions or excessive absences and extra credit opportunities.
- Detail academic integrity expectations, such as rules about collaboration and citation requirements (APA, MLA, AP & etc.). Go to: www.depts.ttu.edu/studentjudicialprograms
- Role model your classroom behavioral and attendance expectations.
- For tips for a conflict free syllabus: www.depts.ttu.edu/ombudsman

CLASS ATTENDANCE

- Structure in-class learning objectives so that critical information is disseminated in class.
- Consider conducting an activity at the beginning of class that students would regret missing.
- Set clear expectations that students are responsible for seeking out notes and other information they have missed.

CHALLENGES TO AUTHORITY

The severity of classroom disruption may dictate the best method for addressing behavior. Remember to treat students consistently and with respect.

MINOR INCIDENTS

Consider a general warning to the class for a minor incident, rather than focusing attention on one student. Other tips include making direct eye contact, stopping the lecture and asking the person to stop talking, physically moving to the problem area, varying presentation or lecture style and speaking to the student privately after class.

MAJOR DISTURBANCES

Remain calm, restore classroom order and review your behavioral expectations again. If necessary, dismiss your class for safety reasons. Request a meeting with the student (after class) to discuss how disruptive behavior impacts the class. Clearly articulate that the behavior will not be tolerated. Explain that further disruptions could result in a referral to Student Judicial Programs, where disciplinary sanctions may result. In addition, consider documenting the incident and keeping it with your student records. Inform your department chair of disruptive activity and student concerns.

The Texas Tech Police Department is available to assist with threats of violence, physical or verbal abuse and uncooperative students (refusing to leave class). Err on the side of caution when considering police involvement.

ADDRESSING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Students sometimes express their frustrations disruptively for a variety of reasons. Respond appropriately.

The following tips may help foster positive discussions with students:

- Be honest and direct, but refrain from aggressive, defensive or submissive behavior.
- Allow students to vent and express their feelings, but do not tolerate verbal abuse.
- Report suspected illegal activity such as physical and verbal abuse to Texas Tech Police Department.
- Do not get into arguments with students or press students for answers they are unwilling to give.
- Do not walk away from students and attempt to get others to help quiet them down, as this may escalate the behavior to the next level.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Your College or Department

Student Judicial Programs 806.742.1714

www.depts.ttu.edu/studentjudicialprograms

- *Code of Student Conduct*
- *Sample Letter for Reporting Academic Integrity Violations*
- *Campus Incident Report*

University Libraries

<http://library.ttu.edu/ul/reference/#stylemanuals>

Ombudsman for Students 806.742.4791

www.depts.ttu.edu/ombudsman

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY

Faculty members are encouraged to include a statement in their course syllabus related to classroom behavioral expectations such as:

“To create and preserve a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, all participants share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in this classroom in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. The instructor is authorized to take such steps as are necessary if the behavior of a student disrupts the normal classroom procedure. Instructors may remove a student for the single class session in which such disruptive behavior becomes continuous and/or serious, and may begin disciplinary proceedings. (Refer to the *Code of Student Conduct*, available in the *Student Handbook*.) Violations of the *Code of Student Conduct* may result in serious sanctions up to and including expulsion. In addition, instructors have the right to limit classroom discussion in order to meet the educational objectives of the class session.”

Departments should establish guidelines for dealing with troublesome or odd behavior, repeated violations and any deviation from appropriate behavior in the civility statement in the syllabus. Recommended procedures include:

- First Incident: Instructor documents the behavior and talks with the student about his/her inappropriate behavior immediately. Follow up after class with a scheduled meeting.
- Second Incident: Instructor should document the behavior and immediately refer the student to the department chairperson and/or Student Judicial Programs.

The department chairperson may inform the student that as a result of repeated deviations from expected classroom behavior they will be referred to Student Judicial Programs for disciplinary action in accordance with the *Code of Student Conduct* as described in the *Student Handbook* at Texas Tech University.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

Civility in the Classroom

is taken in part from *Strategies for Dealing with Troublesome Behavior in the Classroom*, by Dr. Rosalind Reed.

Strive for Honor...

Academic Integrity Brochure & Civility in the Classroom Guide



INTEGRITY MATTERS

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

If you would like Student Judicial Programs to present an educational program about academic integrity, civility in the classroom, the *Code of Student Conduct*, or ethics, please email StudentJudicialPrograms@ttu.edu or call 806.742.1714.

Texas Tech University students, faculty and administrators are committed to creating a university atmosphere free from academic dishonesty. All members of the university community are responsible for upholding standards of excellence and for having integrity in the work they produce. Members of the Texas Tech community should contribute to the campus environment in an ethical and honest manner.

Role modeling expected behaviors and educating our community will help foster the value that integrity matters to the Texas Tech community. This brochure is designed to provide useful data, helpful web links, and practical information to foster a better understanding about academic integrity issues.

WHAT IS ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?

From the **Student Handbook***, *Code of Student Conduct*, Part IX, Section B, item number 3:

“Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor(s) or the attempt to commit such an act).

a. “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:

1. Copying from another student’s test paper or devices.
2. Using unauthorized materials during a test or other assignment.
3. Failing to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test.
4. Possession of materials during a test which are not authorized by the person administering the test, such as class notes or other unauthorized aids. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation only if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test.
5. Using, buying, stealing, transporting, selling or soliciting in whole or part items including, but not limited to, the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program.
6. Collaborating with, seeking aid, or receiving assistance from another student or individual during a test or in conjunction with other assignments without authority.
7. Discussing the contents of an examination with another student who has taken or will take the examination without authority.
8. Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself in order to take a course, take a test, or complete any course-related assignment; including but not limited to, signing in/registering attendance for another student without permission from the instructor.
9. Paying or offering to pay money or other valuables or coercing another person to obtain items including, but not limited to, an unadministered test, test key, homework solution or computer program, or information about an unadministered test, test key, homework solution or computer program.
10. Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit.

11. Taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of the university, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct.
12. Possession at any time of current or previous test materials without the instructor’s permission.

b. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to:

1. The appropriation of, buying, receiving as a gift or obtaining by any means, material that is attributable in whole, or in part, to another source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, other expression and media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit.

c. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to:

1. The unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit.
2. Collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on academic dishonesty.

d. “Falsifying academic records” includes, but is not limited to:

1. Altering or assisting in the altering of any official record of the university and/or submitting false information.
2. Omitting requested information that is required for, or related to, any academic record of the university. Academic records include, but are not limited to; applications for admission, the awarding of a degree, grade reports, test papers, registration materials, grade change forms, and reporting forms used by the Office of the Registrar. A former student who engages in such conduct is subject to a bar against readmission, revocation of a degree and withdrawal of a diploma.

e. “Misrepresenting facts” to the university or an agent of the university includes, but is not limited to:

1. Providing false grades or resumes.
2. Providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment to obtain an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual.
3. Providing false or misleading information in an effort to injure another student academically or financially.

* Taken from the 2008-2009 *Code of Student Conduct*.

Note: The *Code of Student Conduct* is updated yearly; please follow policies and procedures in the current *Code of Student Conduct*, located in the *Student Handbook*.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY HAS OCCURRED?

1. The course instructor is responsible for initiating action when academic dishonesty is suspected. Discussing suspicion of alleged misconduct with the student(s) in question is an important first step towards determining whether dishonest behavior occurred.
2. In cases where responsibility is admitted by the student or determined by the instructor, the student may be given a failing grade for the assignment or a failing grade in the course.
3. When a student is assigned a failing grade on an assignment or in a course as a result of academic dishonesty, the instructor should report in writing to the instructor’s department chairperson the facts of the case and the academic action taken.
4. The chairperson should provide a written copy to the student, the student’s dean, the chairperson’s own dean and refer the incident to Student Judicial Programs.

Note: Student Judicial Programs serves as a campus clearinghouse for academic integrity violations. It is often the case that students behave dishonestly in courses taught in different colleges. Without referrals, it is difficult to identify, address and track repeated dishonest behavior.

5. Student Judicial Programs shall retain academic integrity referrals as discipline files. A first-time violator usually receives an “Academic Integrity Policy Warning,” but will still be required to visit Student Judicial Programs so that educational conversations can be held with the student to help prevent recurring dishonest behavior. Egregious or flagrant circumstances surrounding first-time violations may result in disciplinary proceedings for first-time offenses. Additionally, repeated violations will likely result in further disciplinary action as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct* in addition to instructor assigned academic outcomes.
6. Student Judicial Programs takes into consideration the opinion of course instructors when determining appropriate outcomes that may result from judicial action. Please note that Student Judicial Programs does not interfere with the academic outcomes assigned by instructors.
7. A student may not appeal a failing grade for a class assignment. However, a student does have the right to request an appeal of the receipt of a failing grade for a course, as outlined in OP 34.03, Student Grade Appeals.
8. If dishonest behavior is suspected on a final exam, the instructor should submit a grade of X until a reasonable attempt can be made to contact the student, preferably within one month after the end of the semester.

FROM OP 34.12 GRADING PROCEDURES

“It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and high standard of integrity. The attempt of students to present as their own work not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.”

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Strive for Honor

The Four Key Points of Academic Integrity:

- Being responsible for your own work
- Trust and respect between students, faculty, and staff
- Ensuring that grades are earned honestly
- The foundation for academic excellence

Academic integrity involves:

- Taking responsibility for one’s own work.
- Being individually accountable.
- Making a personal choice to abide by the standard of intellectual honesty, ethical behavior, and responsibility.

Education requires:

- A shared effort to achieve learning.
- The exchange of ideas.
- A bond mutual trust and respect, which students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to the entire educational process.

Academic achievement includes:

- Scholarship, teaching, and learning, all which are shared endeavors.
- The use of grades as a device used to qualify the successful accumulations of knowledge through learning.
- An underpinning of academic integrity. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures that grades are earned honestly and gives added values to the entire educational process.

In the final analysis:

- Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers.
- Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement.