

**ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS CLASSROOM POLICIES**

<http://www.csd.ilstu.edu>

University and Department policies that pertain to students often appear arbitrary and restrictive and seem designed more for the convenience of the faculty than to facilitate student learning. Rules and regulations are, nevertheless, still necessary and important. The sheer size of the educational enterprise at ISU, the large numbers of students and faculty, the scheduling of classes and the required record keeping demand considerable organization. Classes have to meet at specific times. Professors have to turn in grades before a certain date. The organizational demands of a large university may not always meet the educational needs of individual students. For example, for most students attending class regularly probably facilitates learning and so we ask all students to be regular in their class attendance. Students certainly differ with respect to the amount of time needed to prepare for an examination, and yet we ask all students in a class to take the exam at the same time. However much professors would prefer to treat students as unique individuals, our circumstances do not permit it.

A second reason why certain rules and regulations are needed is that professors, in addition to their teaching duties, must function as gatekeepers. That is, professors are required to evaluate student progress and achievements and eventually report a grade that represents a student's level of accomplishment in a course. These grades would have little meaning unless the conditions of evaluations were the same for all students. Students must take exams at the same time and meet the deadlines for turning in reports and papers or a particular grade would not have a fixed value. While many students would prefer not to be graded, and for some students the stresses of being evaluated may indeed reduce actual learning, the university has a responsibility to the society that pays most of the costs of higher education. This responsibility entails, through the awarding of grades and eventually degrees, attesting to student mastery of a certain program of studies at a specified level of achievement.

Finally, employers expect holders of university-level degrees will demonstrate certain skills and attitudes. These include understanding and following of instructions, meeting deadlines, cooperation with persons in authority positions and the demonstration of appropriate oral and written communication skills. The rules and regulations of university life are not too different from the requirements of most employee settings.

General Principles:

The Department intends to treat all students equally and exceptions to this principle will be considered only in extraordinary circumstances. For example, a student will not be permitted to retake an exam to achieve a higher grade unless all members of the class are allowed the same privilege; a student will not be given extra time to complete a project or prepare for an exam unless all members of the class have the same option.

The Department intends to treat all students as adults. This means students will bear the consequences of not being prepared for exams, for failing to submit projects and materials before the due date and for engaging in activities that disrupt the educational goals of other students.

Course instructors have the final determination as to how the course is to be organized, the method of instruction, the timing and nature of exams and the criteria for evaluation and grades. Instructors have the prerogative to develop policies more stringent than those described below and if that is the case, these policies will be included with the course syllabus.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend class regularly, whether or not attendance is taken. Classes will begin and terminate at the scheduled time, with students remaining for the entire class unless permission has been obtained before class from the course instructor. Students will be considered absent if they are not present when class begins. Students are responsible for all lecture and discussion materials and for assignments presented orally during class whether the student was in attendance or not. If attendance is taken and a student is absent for the equivalent for three weeks of class without explaining his or her absence to the satisfaction of the course instructor, the instructor will assume the student has unofficially dropped the class and will award a final grade of F.

Missed Exams, Late Papers and Projects:

Missed exams and late papers/projects are given a grade of F or receive no credit unless the student contacts the instructor BEFORE the exam or due date of paper/project AND presents an acceptable reason for missing the exam or failing to hand in the assignment on time. Evidence of illness is an example of an acceptable reason. Being unprepared for an exam is not an acceptable reason. No reason is acceptable for failing to turn in a paper or project on time if the due date was announced early in the semester. This is to discourage students from starting papers/projects at the last minute. Papers and projects will be assigned with sufficient time allotted for their satisfactory completion. A makeup exam may be administered by the instructor, who will determine the time and place as well as the nature of the substitute exam. An instructor may elect to give partial credit for a late paper/report.

Incompletes:

Students should read the University Catalog for the official university policy on Incompletes. It is the Department's policy to assign Incompletes only in highly unusual circumstances, such as being unable to take the final exam because of illness or a serious family emergency. Incompletes will not be assigned if a student has merely failed to complete one or more of the course assignments or has not taken scheduled makeup exams.

Academic Honesty:

If two exams or papers are essentially identical in important respects, as determined by the course instructor, then BOTH students will receive no credit for the exam or paper. Students have an obligation to protect their materials from being copied by other students; and in the Department's view, both students are equally culpable for cheating. If students believe the instructor's decision is not warranted, then either student should contact the Department Chairperson, who will ask other faculty members to review the materials. If students are still not satisfied with the outcome of this additions review, then they may seek official redress through the Student Code Enforcement and Review Board (SCERB).

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged appropriation of another's work, words, or ideas in any themes, outlines, papers, reports, speeches, or other academic work. If students are caught plagiarizing any portion of their work during this course, the minimum penalty is a grade of zero on the assignment, and the maximum penalty will be a grade of F in the course and pursuit of further disciplinary action. Plagiarism will be reported to the Student Dispute Resolution Services as required by university policy (see the Illinois State University Code of Student Conduct). If students have any questions during the course about what plagiarism is and is not, they should not hesitate to seek the advice of the instructor. It is much better to bring up the issue and have questions answered before turning in an assignment that may contain plagiarized material.

Quality of Written Assignments:

A paper which appears to the course instructor to be a first draft (on the basis, for example, of errors in spelling, grammar or organization) will be returned to the student without an evaluation and may be given no credit, as indicated above, if turned in on the day it is due. The Department expects students to demonstrate writing skill commensurate with their level of education or, if this is not the case, to take advantage of University services to address writing deficiencies.

Final Exams:

Because students know the time and date of a final exam when they register for courses and have all semester to make appropriate travel and other arrangements, the final exam schedule as determined by the University will be adhered to without exceptions. If a student believes his or her final grade is in error, the course instructor should be contacted immediately.

Student Evaluations of Faculty/Staff:

Students have two opportunities to register their evaluation of faculty/staff performance. At the end of each semester in every course offered by the Department, faculty evaluations are distributed to elicit student comments. However often students are asked to make such evaluations, they must still take them seriously and provide an honest and realistic assessment of the faculty member's teaching performance. The second opportunity for students to register their concerns is to meet with the Department Chairperson at any time during the semester. Generally the Chairperson will attempt to mediate between students and faculty and can usually protect a student's identity should this be desired. If a student's concerns are not addressed at the Department level to his or her satisfaction, then students may avail themselves of the procedures offered by the Dean of Students -- Conflict Resolution: Student Grievance Process. Any further complaints can be made to the American Speech Language Hearing Association, 10801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852, 1-800-498-2071, E-mail: accreditation@asha.org