

TEACHING EXCELLENCE HANDBOOK: FALL 2012



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Chapter One: Teaching Personnel at UNT

The Teaching Excellence Handbook is provided as a resource for individuals who are responsible for instructional activities at UNT. In this resource, we have compiled important university information and helpful tips that will assist you in carrying out your teaching responsibilities. Whether you are a first time Teaching Assistant or an experienced Full Professor, we hope that this handbook provides the answers to your questions.

Types of Teaching Personnel

Teaching Fellows

At UNT, a Teaching Fellow (TF) is a graduate student who assumes total responsibility for the instruction in one or more classes. The TF is the instructor of record and is responsible for assigning grades. TFs working during a long semester must be enrolled as students; see <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-1-27> for specific guidelines. In order to qualify for reappointment as a TF, a graduate student must demonstrate effective teaching skills, maintain high academic standards (usually a minimum of 3.0 GPA), and continue to make satisfactory progression toward degree completion.

Teaching Assistants

A Teaching Assistant (TA) is a graduate student who assists a faculty member in a class or laboratory, but does not have total instructional responsibility for a class. TAs working during a long semester must be enrolled as students; see <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-1-27> for specific guidelines. In order to qualify for reappointment as a TA, a graduate student must demonstrate competence and responsibility in carrying out TA duties, maintain high academic standards (usually a minimum of 3.0 GPA), and continue to make satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

Adjuncts

Adjuncts are faculty members who have been appointed on a temporary, semester-by-semester basis to teach specific courses. Adjuncts must meet the faculty qualifications established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. They serve as instructor of record in the courses they teach, and they may not be enrolled as UNT students. Reappointment decisions are often based on department resources and demand for specific courses. While there is no guarantee of reappointment to a position of adjunct faculty, an adjunct who wishes to be reappointed should make an effort to demonstrate teaching effectiveness to the chair or hiring committee of the department in which he or she works.

Lecturers

Lecturers are generally full-time teaching personnel working on a one-year or multi-year contract with UNT. They may be promoted (from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer), but they are not eligible for tenure.

Professors

Professors are full-time employees of UNT who are either working toward (Assistant Professors) or have (Associate and Full Professors) tenure. Professors generally have responsibility for teaching, research, and university service.

Employee Benefits Eligibility

TFs, TAs, adjunct faculty, and other salaried faculty and staff whose appointments require them to work 20 hours or more per week are eligible to participate in the university's group insurance program. Under certain condition, adjuncts are eligible for employee benefits and should consult with their department chair and the Business Services Center to determine their eligibility. Enrollment information may be obtained from the Business Services Center by clicking the following link:
<http://bsc.untsystem.edu/graduate-student-insurance-benefits>.

English Language Certification for International TFs

An international student must be certified by the International TA/TF Program, sponsored by the Intensive English Language Institute, before being appointed by a UNT academic department as a TF. The certification program is designed to measure effectiveness in spoken English and to provide training and assistance tailored to individual needs. A detailed description of the International TA/TF Program and the Intensive English Language Institute is given in Chapter 8, "Advice to International Instructors/TAs/TFs." Contact the Intensive English Language Institute to schedule the review.

Chapter Two: University Classroom Policies

Class Rolls

Preliminary Class Rolls

It is important that you provide accurate information about student attendance during the first weeks of class even if you do not have a formal attendance policy. You will want to familiarize yourself with your class prior to your first meeting to get a general sense of the composition (e.g., size, major, classification, names). To obtain the most up-to-date class roster, log into **my.unt.edu**; click on the [Faculty] tab and then select [Access Your Faculty Center]; and choose the current term. You will see a list of the courses you are teaching. In the left-most column of that list, you will see a small icon of a cluster of

people. Clicking on that icon will pull up a list of all students who are currently enrolled in the class.

At the top of the class roll, in the solid blue bar, look for the small “checkerboard” symbol with a red arrow in the corner. Clicking on this icon will automatically download your class roster as a comma-delimited file (which you can open in any spreadsheet program, such as Excel).

Audit Rolls

Early in the semester (usually the 12th class day for long semesters and the equivalent class day for short semesters), UNT takes a “census” of all students currently enrolled for purposes of reporting to the state. On or about this date, you will see a new column in your my.unt.edu faculty center list of courses. Specifically, you will see a small icon for an “audit roll”. When you click on this icon, you will see a list of all students who are registered for your class on this important census date. For each student on the list, you must check a box indicating that the student has attended at least once or a box indicating that the student has never attended. At the bottom of the audit roll, there is space to list students who have attended class but who are not officially enrolled.

Follow the directions on completing and submitting the audit roll carefully. These audit rolls are often referenced for state and federal reporting purposes and may be audited by the financial aid office to ensure compliance with state and federal financial aid rules and regulations.

Helpful Hint:

To facilitate taking attendance in large classes, consider using a sign-in sheet. A simple list of student names with check-off boxes can be circulated quickly and without class disruption. If you are only taking attendance to certify your audit roll, you can remove students from the list after they check in once, so you are ultimately left with a short list of the students who never attended at all.

Dropping Courses

Students who wish to drop a course before the census date (12th class day during long semesters) may do so without permission; they may do so online by visiting **my.unt.edu** or in person at the Registrar’s Office. After the 12th class day (or the equivalent class day for short semesters), students must first receive the written approval of the instructor prior to dropping a course.

The grade of **W** (withdrawal) will be recorded for any course dropped during the automatic **W** period. After that time, the student must have a passing grade in order to receive a grade of **W** for a dropped course; otherwise, the grade will be **WF**

(withdrawal/fail). Instructors will need to indicate either a **W** or **WF** designation on the student's drop form.

Helpful Hint

Including one or two assignments, quizzes, and/or tests in your syllabus which must be completed prior to the 12th class day is a great idea. This completed work provides the basis for determining whether or not a student, who wishes to drop a course, has obtained a passing grade up to that point. Completing a drop form by assigning a W or a WF then becomes an easy and justifiable decision.

Generally students may not drop a course after the Tuesday of a given semester's 10th week (summer term, 15 class sessions); exceptions to this general rule are quite rare and made only under extreme circumstances. Please refer to the Academic Calendar (www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar) for drop deadlines specific to each session/term.

Instructors may drop students with grades of **WF** from courses for nonattendance at any time after the automatic **W** period if they have advised students in writing of this policy.

Dropping All Courses – Student Initiated Withdraw from the Semester

Students who intend to withdraw for the semester (drop ALL courses for the semester) have to do so in person at the Dean of Students' Office during office hours in the University Union 319. This is "the one stop shop" to assist students through the process of withdrawing, educate them on any obligations they may have with the University or that may need to be fulfilled upon returning, conduct Financial Aid Exit counseling, enable UNT to understand the reasons why students leave, and to help improve our university and its services.

The student must present ID to withdraw. After the census date (12th class day during long semesters) each student wanting to withdraw will need to meet with a member of the Dean of Students staff during office hours for an exit interview, prior to the census date no exit interview is necessary. The Dean of Students Office will only withdraw students from the first class day until the *official last day* to withdraw as set by the University calendar. After this date students must seek out their Academic Dean for possible withdraw.

If a student is enrolled in classes completely online, students may also request to withdraw by fax. The Dean of Student's Office fax number is (940) 369-8440. The student should send the fax to the Dean of Student's Office before 5:00 p.m. The fax

must include the following information:

- Name
- Student ID number
- Semester and course to be dropped
- Student's signature
- Return address
- Email address
- Indicate if you have or have not attended classes

Attendance Policies

Requiring Class Attendance

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the student at UNT. If a student's grades are to be based wholly or partially on attendance, then the instructor must notify the students in writing at the beginning of the semester. In other words, if you are going to reduce a student's grade for failing to attend, you should state this policy clearly in your syllabus.

An instructor who informs students in writing about the necessity of class attendance may request the Registrar to drop any student from the course with a grade of WF upon the accumulation of a stated number of absences. The instructor obtains an unsatisfactory progress form from their department. The completed form should be submitted to the Registrar's Office for processing.

If the instructor completes an unsatisfactory progress form to drop a student for non-attendance during the time period when the student is eligible to drop with an automatic W, the Registrar's Office will notify the student that he or she will receive a WF unless the student initiates the drop procedure before the end of the automatic W period.

Authorized Absences

Absences due to participation in sponsored activities must be approved in advance by department chairs and academic deans. Within three days after the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the Dean of Students for presentation to their instructors. Students with authorized absence cards may make up the work missed, when practicable, or be given special allowance so that they are not penalized for the absence.

Absences due to other causes, such as illness, emergency, death in the family, etc. are termed "excused" or "not excused" at the discretion of the instructor, but in accordance with applicable absence policies set by the department/division, school, college, or the course syllabus. Students should show proof that the absence was unavoidable, such as a physician's statement, accident report, obituary, etc., and contact the instructor. (Note: The Student Health & Wellness Center provides cards that verify the date and time of a

student's visit. Hospitalized patients are given a form showing the inclusive dates of their hospitalization.)

Absence for Religious Holidays

In accordance with state law, students who are absent due to the observance of a religious holiday may take examinations or complete assignments scheduled for the day missed within a reasonable time after the absence. Travel time required for religious observances shall also be excused. Only holidays or holy days observed by a religion whose place of worship is exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code may be included.

Instructor Attendance (Walks)

Instructors are required to meet with their classes according to the university schedule. If an instructor must miss class for any reason, they are expected to contact their department chair and make appropriate arrangements to cover course content accordingly.

Cancelling classes or giving "walks" is NOT RECOMMENDED.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, the university is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. Students must be registered with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to receive an accommodation. The ODA collects proof of disability and recommended compensation techniques from the licensed or certified professional who made the diagnosis of disability. Students who have disabilities that are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who have been properly registered with the ODA are called "qualified students." Instructors are expected to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for such qualified persons with disabilities.

Qualified students must notify the instructor that disability accommodations will be needed. A qualified student should present an Accommodation Request Form that will contain information relative to the needs of the student and will assure the instructor that proof of disability is on file with the ODA. Students who do not present such a form can be referred to the ODA for assistance in registering with the ODA.

The qualified student and the instructor will attempt to reach mutual agreement on how accommodation is to be achieved. ODA can be called upon to provide assistance in determining the accommodations that shall be provided and for assistance in providing some of those accommodations. (See Helpful Facilities and Services.)

Helpful Hint:

While some accommodations are relatively easy to implement (such as providing extended time for exams or allowing students to sit near the front of the class), others may be harder to implement without either drawing attention to the student with the disability or causing other students to question the fairness of procedures. If a student presents you with a list of accommodations, ask the student to privately discuss how that accommodation will work in the context of your class. If you still have questions, contact the Office of Disability Accommodation for assistance. Make sure you inform teaching assistants of any necessary accommodations. Finally, while you should keep all paperwork relating to accommodations, you should carefully protect the privacy of that information.

It is essential for many accommodations that course materials, syllabi, reading lists etc. be available as early as possible. Significant time is required to convert textbooks to Braille/e-text, arrange Sign Language Interpreters and schedule accommodated exams. Students needing such accommodations may fall behind if such content is not made available by faculty with as much lead time as possible.

Students Called to Active Duty

The University of North Texas has an interest in supporting our students who serve in the military and who are called to active duty while enrolled. A student who is a member of the National Guard, Reserve or other branch of the United States Armed Forces and is unable to complete classes because of military activation may request course withdrawals, incompletes or grades, depending on the timing of the activation and the individual needs of the students. This will ensure understanding and standardized guidelines for awarding grades to students called to active military duty during an academic semester.

If a student is called to active duty while enrolled in the University of North Texas they will be required to provide documentation of military orders to the Dean of Students office and follow procedures for withdrawal through this office indicating the options of withdrawal, requesting an incomplete or requesting assignment of grades depending on the time of activation during the semester. The Dean of Students will meet with the student to discuss options and consider all areas that affect the student upon withdrawal.

The Dean of Students office will review the form and verify the military orders and review the academic options available to the student. If incompletes or grades are requested the student will be referred to the faculty member or academic department for assistance. The Dean of Students will send notification to the faculty member/instructor

of record, academic department and Associate Dean of the verification of military orders and student's preference for incomplete or grade assigned.

Per Texas Education Code 54.0006 (f) 3, either grades are assigned or incompletes granted. If a student receives an incomplete he/she will have one year from the end of their active duty to complete the course. The Dean of Students office will complete the official withdrawal of the student and full refund of appropriate tuition and fees will be made. If a student opts for an incomplete or grades are assigned no refund will be given.

Grades and Grading

In the UNT grading system, the letters **A, B, C, D, F, W, WF, I, P,** and **NP** are used. Letters other than **A-F** have the following significance:

W indicates a drop or withdrawal during the automatic **W** period as designated in the Academic Calendar. (See Dropping Classes.)

WF indicates a drop or withdrawal with a failing grade given after the automatic **W** period as designated in the Academic Calendar. (See Dropping Classes.) While a **W** does not affect a student's GPA, a **WF** counts as an **F** on the student's transcript and does affect the student's GPA. Check with your department chair for W/WF protocol within your academic unit.

I indicates incomplete and is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of the semester and only if a student

- is passing the course,
- has a justifiable reason why work cannot be completed on schedule, and
- arranges with the instructor to finish the course at a later date (arranged with the instructor but no more than a year after the end of the semester) by completing specific requirements that the instructor must list on the electronic grade report.

The grade of **I** should **ONLY** be given in extraordinary or unusual situations such as serious physical illness. Check with your department chair before agreeing to an Incomplete. If approved, ask the student to submit a written request that states:

- the reason for the Incomplete,
- what work will be completed, and
- the date by which the work will be completed.

Alternatively, instructors may use a standardized "incomplete contract" form. Ask your department administrator if your department uses the standardized form.

If the student does not complete the required work by the stipulated deadline (not to exceed one year) then the grade of **I** will default to an **F** (or other grade specified by the instructor).


The grades of **P** and **NP** are given to students who are taking a class on a pass/no pass basis. The instructor gives a normal letter grade (**A-F**) and the **P** or **NP** is recorded by the Registrar's Office.

P is a credit grade

- on the pass-fail option,
- for student teaching,
- in selected graduate individual problems and research courses, and
- in selected internship courses.

NP indicates a failing grade on the pass-fail option; it is, however, non-punitive (meaning it does not affect the student's GPA).

Submitting Grades

All student grades are submitted online. Grade Rosters are made available via <https://my.unt.edu/> and should be submitted by the deadline assigned by the UNT Registrar's Office. To access the online grade book first log into your **my.unt.edu** account, and then select the Faculty Tab at the top, Select "Access your Faculty Center," select the current semester, select the grade roster icon  from the choices for each course you teach. After entering the grades for some or all students, select save. When all grades are entered and saved, change the approved status for the course to ready for review if you are a TA, and set status as approved if you are the instructor of record (includes TFs) and save the action.

Helpful Hint:

Student grades can be uploaded to the **my.unt.edu** faculty center. In large classes, it may be easier to upload a comma delimited (.csv) file with student grades (rather than manually entering grades one at a time). At the end of each semester, the Registrar sends out information to official UNT e-mail addresses about how to upload grades, so keep an eye out for that e-mail.

Grade Changes

Grades can be accessed and changed on the electronic Grade Roster during the grading period prior to the grading deadline. After the deadline, grades cannot be changed online. Generally speaking, once grades have been posted in EIS, they cannot be changed. There are three exceptions:

1. If a student has been given a grade of I and the student completes the agreed-upon work for the course, the instructor should consult with his or her department about the procedure for changing the I into a letter grade.

2. If the faculty reporting grades makes a clerical error, he may fix it. Requests for error correction must be initiated within 30 days after the close of the semester or summer term the grade was awarded. Corrections require the approval of the department chair and appropriate dean.
3. If the student successfully appeals his or her grade, then a grade change can be processed. (See Grade Appeals Process)

Posting Grades

Students should be notified of their grades in a manner that protects their right to privacy. Instructors should **NOT** post student grades in a public forum. Grades may, however, be kept in the grade book of Blackboard, UNT's online learning management system. This allows students to see the instructor's record of student performance without compromising student privacy. Please visit the university training on FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) for more information: <http://www.unt.edu/ferpa/>.

Grade Appeals Process

The University of North Texas policy on Grade Appeals is found at: <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2-7>

Pre-Finals Week and Finals

UNT policy regarding pre-finals week is found at: <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2-16>. Student activities (including athletics) are curtailed during pre-finals week. Final exams are scheduled by the University Registrar; the schedule for final exams can be found here: <http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html>. Faculty are expected to give some sort of exam during the scheduled period. Note that final exams are generally held in the room in which the class meets.

Emergency Response in Classrooms

During an emergency on campus, instructors are to take appropriate action upon official* notification of an impending or occurring emergency situation on campus. There are three (3) steps for instructors to follow during any emergency situation at UNT:

1-STOP

Stop class activities immediately upon receiving official emergency notification. Instructors need to acknowledge an official warning in order to properly react. Also, it is important for instructors to stop class and allow others to enter the classroom if the room is designated as a shelter location. To determine if your classroom is a shelter location visit <http://emergency.unt.edu/>

2-INFORM

Inform your students of the emergency situation. Instructors are a credible source of information; therefore, students are more likely to react to the threat. Additionally, informing students of a potential or actual emergency will reduce panic and anxiety.

3-ACT

Take action after informing the students of an emergency situation. Instructors are inherently leaders in the classroom and must take this role to lead students to safety. The following are common actions for emergencies:

- Sheltering (Ex: Tornados)
- Evacuating (Ex: Fire and Bomb threat)
- Locking down (Ex: Active shooter)

For more information please visit <http://emergency.unt.edu/>

***Mediums for Official Notification**

Official notification is provided from the following mediums:

- Eagle Alert (UNT)
- Administrative Announcements (UNT)
- KNTU 88.1 FM (UNT)
- www.unt.edu (UNT)
- UNT Safety Coordinators (UNT)
- Students ** (UNT)
- CodeRED Alert (City of Denton and Denton County)
- Media Advisories (Local Media Outlets, Ex: WFAA)
- Weather Radios (National Weather Service)

** Students can be a source for official notification if they have received their information from one of the other aforementioned sources of official notification (Ex: Student receives an Eagle Alert and shows the instructor).

Records Retention

Student records are private. While students have a right to review their own records (see their exams, papers, etc.), you should not discuss a student's grades with other individuals—including parents, other students, potential employers, etc.—without verifying that the student has waived his/her educational privacy rights (consult with your department chair or advisor if this situation arises).

The instructor of record should maintain all course records for at least one calendar year. This means keeping student exams and answer sheets (along with a key), student papers, and any calculations of student grades in a secure place (e.g. a locked cabinet in a private office or on a password protected computer). If students submit papers or assignments via Blackboard, the system will maintain your records; however, make sure that the

electronic version includes grading information and any comments. Please make arrangements with your department chair for retaining important student records.

When you do dispose of student educational records, do so in a secure way. Ask your department administrative staff about secure, bulk shredding of documents.

Chapter Three: Preparing to Teach

Preparing Your Course Syllabus

The first step in preparing to teach your class is to prepare a thorough syllabus. The syllabus should cover a variety of information about the class, including the following:

- Title and section number of the course
- Instructor's name, office number, office telephone number, and e-mail address
- Office/consultation hours
- Required textbooks/workbooks
- Course objectives
- Grading policy (relative weights of components of the grade)
- Academic dishonesty policy
- Attendance policy
- Semester drop dates
- Retention of student records policy
- Policy on accepting late work
- Other policies about conduct in class and in online forums
- Course content by topics and dates
- Reading assignments
- Approximate test dates
- Deadlines for turning in assignments
- Disability accommodation statement
- SETE (Student Evaluation of Teaching)
- Other items required by your academic unit

The syllabus should map out your plans for the semester. Include approximate due dates for assignments and exams. Point out to students that the schedule is a guide for the semester and is subject to minor modification as the course develops.

Ask a senior member of the faculty, your department chair, or the faculty member who supervises a particular course about required content or course objectives. Some departments, for example, have a list of learning outcomes for a particular course, or a book/workbook that all instructors are expected to use. Make sure you ask about such expectations as early as practicable. Most faculty are happy to share their syllabi and will not mind letting you copy useful passages (though you should ask permission before doing so).

Appendix 1 of this handbook provides some standard language about various UNT policies (e.g., ADA statements, academic dishonesty policies, attendance requirements). You may use this language in your syllabus; in fact, you are encouraged to do so.

Turn in a copy of your syllabus to the department administrative assistant during the first week of the semester along with a separate listing of your office hours. You should also ask your department's administrative staff, chair, or faculty mentor about the UNT Faculty Profile System (<https://faculty.unt.edu>). This system, which is required by state law, serves as a public repository for all syllabi. To comply with state law, you must upload your syllabus by the 7th class day, so do not wait until the last minute to prepare your syllabus. You also must upload a copy of your curriculum vita for the Faculty Profile System; this should be completed before the semester begins.

Setting Expectations for Your TAs

As the instructor of record, you may need to oversee one or more teaching assistants. While TAs can be a tremendous help to instructors, the instructor has to think about how best to utilize that resource. Identify tasks that will need to be done both in and out of class (e.g., taking attendance, setting up A/V equipment, proctoring exams, grading homework assignments, monitoring online discussion boards). Figure out how best to divide up those tasks: Which tasks should you handle yourself and which can be delegated to a TA? Should one task (such as monitoring a discussion board) fall to a single person, or can it be shared among two people? If you are dividing work among multiple TAs, what is a fair distribution? Will you let the TAs decide among themselves how to split jobs, or will you do it for them?

Be sure to communicate your expectations as soon as possible and as clearly as possible (ideally, put them in writing). Give TAs feedback during the course of the semester to let them know whether they are meeting your expectations and how they can improve.

Preparing For Your First Class

The first class is a common source of anxiety for new instructors, and even for those with experience. Instructors fret about a host of potential problems that can easily be avoided with proper preparation. Remember, a well-prepared instructor is a confident instructor.

Before your first class session, try to meet with the professor who supervises the course you are to teach. If there is not a supervisory professor, meet with your graduate advisor or department chair for guidance. Ideally, an orientation meeting should be planned which includes all the instructors teaching a particular course. This preparation will ensure that everyone is clear on their responsibilities and can prepare properly for the semester. In addition, veteran instructors (including TAs and adjuncts) who have taught the course can explain to their less experienced colleagues what to expect. Read the material required for the earliest part of the course. This will enable you to give your students an accurate idea of what academic expectations await them.

Helpful Hints for Organizing Class Materials

- Set up folders in your e-mail client that will allow you to keep student correspondence in one place. If you are teaching multiple classes, you should have a folder for each class. You may want sub-folders for items such as ‘make-up exam requests,’ ‘draft papers,’ ‘content questions,’ etc.
- Obtain expandable file folders for each course you are teaching (or devote a portion of a file drawer to each course). Prepare files for specific administrative documents: disability accommodation requests, athletic schedules (which document excused absences), attendance sheets (if you’re keeping them), and copies of exams/handouts/assignments.
- Prepare separate folders for completed exams/answer sheets, assignments, and papers. Even if you plan to return papers and assignments to students, some students will not pick them up in a timely manner. It will be better to have those materials neatly organized and easy to find if and when the students do decide to collect their materials.
- Maintain a separate set of folders for letters of recommendation (and the supporting documentation) as well as memos and forms related to academic dishonesty cases.

Preparing Your Record-Keeping

One of the most astonishing things for new instructors is the sheer amount of “stuff” generated by a classroom of students. You can save yourself many headaches by setting up an organizational system before the semester even begins (though it will need to be flexible to account for unexpected changes and challenges).

Conducting Your First Class

There is no “best” way to conduct a first class. What goes on the first day may differ among courses and even among instructors in the same course. Some instructors prefer not to discuss class materials during the first session, but instead focus more attention on creating an open class atmosphere. Others may have no choice because they are required to cover specific material in the first session.

A case of the pre-class jitters is shared by most first time instructors. Some instructors say that careful preparation helps ease apprehension; others stress that discussing teaching methods with more experienced colleagues before the first class calms them down. One instructor suggested getting to the classroom early and chatting with students before class formally begins, so that you do not walk late into a classroom overflowing with anonymous faces. At a minimum, give yourself plenty of time to set up A/V equipment, locate your notes and class handouts, and take a deep breath before the class begins.

Setting the Tone for Your Course

The tone you set on your first day is more important than the content you cover. For many students, the first day of class is all about expectations. What will the instructor expect of students? And what can students expect from the instructor? An instructor who starts off a course with a light, jovial tone and then suddenly becomes demanding will confuse students. In short, begin your class as you mean to continue your class.

No matter how informal your approach to teaching, however, it is important that you establish on the first day that you are in charge. If you appear indecisive or overly accommodating, students may not consider you authoritative on any issue. Moreover, they may attempt to manipulate you later in the course. You can be relaxed, but always remember that you are “the boss.”

Creating a Positive Class Atmosphere

On the first day, students are most concerned with the basic aspects of the course. They want to find out what books they will be reading, what supplies may be required and about grading policy and exams. Be responsive to those concerns. Hand out a syllabus and a reading list, or walk students through the components of your Blackboard shell. Talk about grades. Let them know the nature and frequency of exams and other assignments. Tell them whether you will take class participation and attendance into consideration when grading. Begin and end class on time. Most importantly, let them know that you are concerned about their education and well-being by eliciting their questions and responding to them openly and candidly.

Adopting Realistic Expectations

New instructors should not expect too much out of their first classes. Just as it is difficult to induce strangers to speak to each other in social settings, instructors may find it hard to provoke lively discussions in the first class.

Remember, too, that many students may not be as interested as you in making your first class an exciting educational experience; they may have other concerns on their minds—like whether your assignment list is too heavy to be compatible with the other work they have to do this semester.

Give yourself and your students at least a few weeks before you jump to any conclusions about the quality of the discussion or the success of the course.

Helpful Hints for Your First Day of Teaching

- Introduce yourself as well as any teaching assistants you may have. Distribute and thoroughly discuss the syllabus. Be sure to emphasize available resources for students who need help. Take questions as you move through class policies, so that students feel comfortable asking questions and so you can be assured that expectations are clear.
- Consider an ice-breaker activity. In small classes, this could be as simple as having students introduce themselves and offer an interesting tidbit about their lives (where they're from, for example). In larger classes, consider breaking students into small groups (even just pairs) to discuss a topic related to the course. This will engage students and give them a chance to meet someone else in the course.
- Try to cover some substantive intellectual material during the first class. Many instructors feel it is important to get beyond mundane administrative details and at least briefly discuss some exciting problems or issues germane to the course. This will immediately get students engaged in the material and motivate them to prepare for the next class meeting.

Chapter Four: Working With Students

Understanding Student Rights and Responsibilities

Instructors and TAs need to understand the rights and responsibilities of students. The Division of Student Affairs and the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs have developed the list below.

1. **Protection of Constitutional Freedoms** – Students and all other members of the university community are guaranteed the constitutional freedoms of speech, peaceful assembly, petition and association.

Responsibility: Students and others must exercise their rights by lawful means subject to university rules and regulations regarding time, location, method and duration. Students may not disrupt the operations of the university or interfere with the rights of others to exercise their constitutional freedoms.

2. **Academic Freedom** – Students and all other members of the university community are guaranteed the rights freely to study, discuss, investigate, teach, conduct research and publish as appropriate to their respective roles and responsibilities. Students have the right within the scope of the course of study to state divergent opinions, challenge ideas and take reasoned exception to the data or the views offered.

Responsibility: Students and faculty share the responsibility to protect and to preserve conditions that are conducive to the learning process, including withholding judgment on matters of opinion, ensuring a fair hearing for divergent viewpoints and observing rules of courtesy in the classroom.

3. **Academic Standards** – Students have the right to know the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.

Responsibility: Students are responsible for seeking clarification of any standard in question at the beginning of the term, for preparing assignments in advance of each class session, and for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Rules applying to academic dishonesty must be followed, including those related to plagiarism.

4. **Academic Evaluation** – Students have the right to be evaluated solely on an academic basis, without regard to issues of diversity, opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students have the right to review tests and other written work after the instructor has evaluated them. Students are protected against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation by the grade appeals process.

Responsibility: Students are responsible for bringing academic grievances first to the attention of the instructor who performed the evaluation in an effort to resolve

the issue. If the matter cannot be settled at this level, it may be appealed in writing as outlined in the Grade Appeals Policy.

5. **Improper Disclosure** – Except when disclosure may be required by state or federal law, students have the right to confidentiality of information about views, beliefs and political associations which they may share privately with instructors, advisors or academic counselors. Judgment of ability and character may be provided under appropriate circumstances, normally with the knowledge and consent of the student.

Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to state clearly what is and what is not confidential disclosure.

6. **Personal Safety** – Students have the right to a classroom environment that is free of obvious hazards to safety and security.

Responsibility: Students are responsible for compliance with university rules and regulations prohibiting firearms, explosives, incendiaries and weapons of any kind on the campus. Students also are responsible to abide by all health/safety rules and procedures in all academic courses and laboratories.

7. **Illegal Drugs and Alcohol** – Students have the right to a learning environment free from illegal drugs and alcohol.

Responsibility: Students are responsible for compliance with university rules and regulations prohibiting possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol in classroom buildings.

8. **Disruptions** – Students have the right to pursue an education without disruption or interference and to expect enforcement of norms for acceptable classroom behavior that prevent disruption of the teaching/learning process.

Responsibility: Students may not disrupt class or any other university process by any means whatsoever (including sideline conversations, comments, arguments, noise of any kind or other activity which would hinder access to or utilization of academic information by other students).

9. **Non-discrimination** – Students have the right to learn in a classroom environment where diversity is respected.

Responsibility: Students are responsible for respecting diversity and for behaving courteously to both faculty members and other students in the classroom regardless of difference in race, creed, color, religion, age, nationality, sex, sexual orientation or disability status.

10. **Intellectual Property** – Students have the right to expect that presentation of material in a class will be in compliance with copyright law and that their own creative work will not be disseminated or published without their permission.

Responsibility: Students who receive written notification from a faculty member that the information provided in his or her course is the faculty member's intellectual property shall not distribute, use for commercial purposes, or create derivative works of the intellectual property without obtaining the express permission of the faculty member. Students shall not assume permission in the absence of written notification from a faculty member. Students shall also respect and treat in similar manner, the intellectual property of other students.

Interacting with Students

Clarifying Roles

In the beginning of the semester, decide what relationship with students will be most effective for you. New (and even seasoned) instructors often struggle with striking a balance between asserting authority and commanding respect on the one hand, and being approachable and relatable on the other hand.

If you decide to conduct your class in a more formal way, be cautious about demeaning or alienating students. You should provide students with some forum or opportunity in which to ask questions (whether that's in class, during office hours, or online), and you should respond to each student question or comment in a professional, constructive, and informative manner.

If you decide to adopt a more relaxed approach toward your students, you still need to be cautious of alienating students—particularly shy students who may find a casual instructor even more difficult to approach. Again, be sure to provide an opportunity for students to approach you privately with questions and concerns. Avoid any kind of personal criticism, in class or on written assignments, even if you think you are being funny. Students rarely enjoy being the punch line for their instructors' jokes.

It is particularly easy for TAs, TFs, and new or transitional faculty to forget how much power they have over students because they often feel powerless themselves. An instructor's feelings of powerlessness—and the insecurity it can generate—complicates the problem of authority in the classroom. No matter what your role in the classroom, remember that students are the most vulnerable participants.

Students with Personal Problems

If students come to you with personal or family problems, or problems with university life outside of the scope of the course you are teaching, refer them to the appropriate student services office (see *Helpful Facilities and Services* for a list of resources on campus). While it may be tempting to help students personally, it complicates the relationship between teacher and student, and can be considered inappropriate. If a student is in crisis (but not an emergency) it would probably be best to contact the CARE Team at 940-565-4676 from 8am-5pm so that they can assist the student with the proper resources and follow up.

Disruptive Students

Students occasionally disrupt class discussion by having separate conversations, giggling, passing notes, doing other work, texting on a phone, etc. Often a stern look or a frown is enough to discourage students from such behavior.

If students persist in disruptive behavior, you should verbally request that they desist or that they see you after class—the latter is in some ways better since it will avoid humiliating them in class. In your meeting with the student, explain that it is disrespectful to ignore or disrupt fellow students. Ultimately, you may need to ask the Dean of Students Office for assistance in talking to the student about the behavior and/or possible violations of the Code of Student Conduct (UNT Policy 18.1.11).

Many new instructors understandably feel uncomfortable policing the classroom like this, but in real classroom situations you will sometimes face a choice between asserting your authority and letting disruptive students undermine the learning process. The former is clearly the better option.

Flirtation, Familiarity, and Favoritism

You also can help maintain authority in the classroom—and minimize grade disputes—by making it clear to students that you treat everyone equally. This may sound self-evident, but it is really not so simple. Many instructors want to be liked by their students and will go to great lengths to be friendly, especially since they know that their students (depending on the department) will write evaluations of them at the end of the semester.

Friendliness has its drawbacks. If some students perceive that you are especially friendly to other members of the class, they are likely to assume that you will not grade objectively. Carefully evaluate the social distance that you establish and maintain between yourself and your students. Are you equally friendly and accessible to all students?

Make sure not to become personally involved or conspicuously friendly with individual students (We discourage instructors from asking students to babysit children, taking care of the house or the family pets, socializing outside the classroom). Instructors and TAs need to be sensitive to the potential for charges of sexual harassment, as well as conflicts of interest, when developing personal relationships with students. The university has specific policies dealing with this and other related subjects.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the University of North Texas that no member of the University community may sexually harass another and that all allegations of sexual harassment be investigated. All members of the faculty, staff and student body will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy. Please refer UNT Policy 1.3.19. These matters must be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX Coordinator.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Criteria:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or education, or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such an individual, or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or education performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Types of Sexual Harassment:

- Quid Pro Quo

Examples: "If you have sex with me, you will get a raise."

"If you have sex with me, you will get an 'A' grade."

- Hostile Environment

Unwelcome behavior that is severe and pervasive and unreasonably interferes with the person's work or education. There are generally three categories of behavior that can create a hostile environment:

1. Third Party: Sexual conduct that is welcome and reciprocated, but creates a hostile environment for others.
2. Sexual Favoritism: Sexual conduct that is welcomed and reciprocated, but results in unfair treatment of others.
3. Sex-Based: Any harassing conduct (including, but not limited to, sexually charged "jokes," singling out students for additional work, or inequities in grading policies) that is based on gender.

Responding to Sexual Harassment:

- Confront the harasser and tell that person that the harassment must stop.
- Report the harassment to appropriate personnel (i.e., supervisory personnel, Human Resources, and the Division of Equity and Diversity.)

Helpful Hint: Behavior Which May Constitute Sexual Harassment

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
Sexual Comments	Jokes or remarks that are stereotypical or derogatory to members of the same or opposite sex; repeated comments about a person's anatomy; sexual innuendo
Undue Attention	Flirtation
Verbal Sexual Advances	General verbal expressions of sexual interest; inquiries of sexual values or behaviors, but short of a proposition
Visual Sexual Displays	Display of pornographic pictures, posters, cartoons or other materials, including use of the Internet
Body Language	Leering at another person's body
Invitations	Personal invitations for dates or to one's house or apartment, but sexual expectations not stated
Physical Advances	Kissing; hugging; patting; pinching; fondling; provocative touching
Explicit Sexual	Clear invitations for sexual encounter, but no threats or promises
Sexual Bribery	Explicit sexual propositions which include or strongly imply promises of rewards for complying (e.g. higher grades, better recommendations) and/or threats of punishment for refusing (e.g. lower grades, less favorable recommendations)

SOURCE: adapted from The Minority Review, Vol. 1, No. 3, December 1990

Consensual Relationships (UNT Policy 1.3.23)

It is the policy of the University that consensual relationships between faculty or staff members in positions of authority and their subordinates or their students are not permitted.

Staff in positions of authority and faculty need to be sensitive to the potential for sexual harassment as well as conflicts of interest in personal relationships with their subordinates, faculty and staff members or with their students.

Nondiscrimination/Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Non Retaliation

It is the policy of the University of North Texas to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, disabled veteran status, or Veterans of the Vietnam Era status, in its educational programs, activities, admission or employment policies. If such discrimination occurs, it must be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity.

Title IX Coordinator

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." -Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. If such discrimination occurs, it must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity.

Dealing with Language Difficulties

Instructors should be aware they may have a student in class whose first language is not English. Showing appropriate and respectful concern and awareness about the students' specific language difficulties will aid in their overall performance in the class.

In a class based upon students' verbal participation, heavy accents may prevent students from contributing to the class discussion and may consequently affect their grades. Usually, accents do not change even when students improve their English skills. Certainly, instructors cannot correct accents, but they can encourage students to participate and help them with their efforts to express themselves.

- Repeat the student's main point. If you do not fully understand the point, you should say so openly. One of the most frustrating experiences of international students is to talk without any reaction.
- Ask for further explanation. Many students, out of politeness or indifference or a fear of embarrassing their classmate, prefer to remain quiet and to give the impression that they understand.
- Correct expressions/language that may help the student in the future.

Pronunciation can become clearer to Americans if the speaker can identify his or her specific difficulties. In extreme cases, if a student's accent is incomprehensible, you can suggest ways of improvement, such as attending a course offered by the Intensive English Language Institute. (See Helpful Facilities and Services.)

When the course requires extensive written work, such as essay exams or term papers, the international student may face an even greater disadvantage. You cannot and should not exempt such students from these assignments, but there are ways of helping international students. If the midterm and final exams are taken in class, you have only limited devices, such as giving some extra time to the international student or allowing them to bring a dictionary to the examination.

If some of the assignments are take-home exams or term papers, the instructor together with the student can ease the burden of language. With the consent of the student you might ask for a volunteer among the American students to proofread the paper, correct grammar, spelling, and style. You can also refer the student to the University Writing Lab for assistance. (See Helpful Facilities and Services.)

Chapter Five: Effective Teaching

Motivating Students

The ability to motivate students is one of the most important skills in effective teaching. If students are excited by both the course content and by the process of learning, then your instructional work will be a gratifying experience. All instructors should carefully consider ways to encourage students to take an active role in their own educational development.

Positive Reinforcement

Perhaps the most important means of maintaining an open and vivacious classroom atmosphere is positive reinforcement. When students answer your questions correctly, praise them. This encourages them to continue participating actively in class or lab.

When you are summing up information presented in class, try to refer by name to the students who made good comments in class--e.g., "As Joe pointed out..." or "As Jane contended..."

Do not embarrass students who volunteer incorrect answers to your questions during class. Try as diplomatically as possible to show that the student's error is not totally unreasonable, that it is a good guess, but that it isn't right.

Grading

Instructors also should be aware that grading policies might affect the motivation of students in class. If it does not conflict with departmental policy, you might want to factor attendance and class participation into the final grade. This helps promote class discussion.

You might also consider allowing students to revise their work for credit. This may help prevent students who do poorly on the first class assignments from getting despondent and giving up on the class.

Emphasize that grades are not a measure of innate intelligence but simply a gauge of their educational progress. Let them know that with hard work there is always room for improvement. Strive to convince students to divorce their egos from their grades. Point out, also, in cases where it is appropriate, that even though the student ended with a grade of, say, a low B, this may actually be a sign of substantial improvement if the student began the class getting grades in the D range. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

Tell even your best students that there is still room for improvement. Even an A exam or assignment may be improved upon. Convince them to strive for excellence and self-improvement.

Classroom Management

As with most things, the key to successful classroom management is preparation.

Think in advance about what you will need to accomplish in class. Do you need to take attendance? If so, how can you do that in the most efficient manner? Do you have A/V materials you need to use in class? If so, how can you prepare so that you get the material set up quickly?

Perhaps the most important bit of preparation you can do is to prepare your instructional materials. First, you need to decide exactly what you will cover over the course of a class period. What topics will you cover? What are the most important pieces of information and concepts for you to cover? You should be realistic here, planning to cover a modest amount of information so that you are not rushed.

Second, you need to decide exactly how you're going to cover the material. If you're going to use a class activity, you need to think about how much time the activity will take (remember, organizing lots of people always takes more time than you think). What kind of preparation can you do to make the activity go faster? Are there ways to streamline the activity so it is easier to manage? If you are going to use both lecture and discussion, how much time will you devote to each? Often new instructors are underprepared and do not have enough material to fill the class time. Make it a point to over-prepare, but have a strategy for prioritizing the material so you are not rushed to get through it all.

Finally, you need to organize your presentation so that you get through the most important material and your progress through the material in a way that makes sense to students.

Providing an Outline

Even the best students will occasionally lose the thread of a lesson or forget the original objective of a discussion. An outline, on the marker board or projected on a screen, can help students keep up with the lesson. Here are some hints for using outlines in class:

- Use headings that list the major points to be covered in the class. This is an invaluable aid to students in putting their notes in perspective and providing better sets of notes for study.
- Use underlining, capitals, and boxes to emphasize key statements, ideas, terms, or formulas.
- Be selective. Stick to the basic ideas. Writing down everything usually obscures rather than clarifies what you are doing.
- If you are projecting your outline with an overhead projector or data projector, reveal the points as you discuss them, so that students will listen to the discussion instead of simply copying the whole outline.
- Make sure that your outline is visible to all in the room.

Office Hours

Every instructor is required to identify, post, and maintain office hours so students can have access to their instructors. Policies regarding the amount of time and location of office hours are developed by departments, schools, and colleges and may reflect unique programs and conditions; consult with your department chair about specific requirements for office hours. Policies on office hours may also reflect differences between levels and types of classes. However, assurances must be made that all faculty make themselves available on an appropriate, regular, student-convenient basis.

During the first week of the semester, tell your students the location of your office and the times during which you will be available for consultation. Also, include this information in your syllabus. Make sure you specify that you are also amenable to making appointments with students who cannot attend your regular hours. Consider coordinating hours with your TAs to provide maximum “coverage.”

You should also post these hours on your office door, and be sure to post them on Blackboard if you will be using that system. It is advisable as well to announce any change in your consultation hours or any emergency cancellation. Finally, be sure to notify the administrative staff of your department about your hours.

Consultation hours can be an important part of the learning process or a completely wasted opportunity. The difference depends on your ability to encourage students to come to your office to clarify material presented in class, ask questions about assignments, or get suggestions for further readings.

In smaller courses you can encourage the habit of using consultation hours by scheduling a short interview with each student in your class. In this interview you can find out the reasons they are taking the course, any particular problems they anticipate, and generally develop rapport.

Virtual Office Hours

If you find that students are not actually coming to your office, you also might consider adding virtual office hours using various tools in Blackboard. You can host live chat sessions (with video/audio or just via text) or schedule specific times when you will be available to answer questions on a class discussion board. Students who live far away or who are particularly shy may be better able to participate in virtual office hours. An added advantage of these sessions is that you can create a record of the interaction so that other students can review the information on their own time. To learn more about options for virtual office hours, contact a representative in CLEAR (UNT’s Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign).

Helpful Hint:

Almost every semester you will teach a few reserved students who consistently do well on written assignments but who are initially reticent in class discussions. During office hours you can meet individually with these students and encourage them to participate in class by expressing your enthusiasm for their work and urging them to share their good ideas with other class members.

In addition to advising and answering questions from individual students, office hours can also be used in a number of ways to supplement lectures and discussions. For example, special time can be scheduled to deal with particularly difficult material, or issues related to accommodating students with disabilities. Group consultation hours can also be held for review sessions at the end of the semester.

Using E-Mail to Communicate With Students

All students are expected to activate their Eaglemail account that is provided by the university; Eaglemail is the official e-mail account and e-mail contact for all students at UNT. An Eaglemail account can be activated on the web at my.unt.edu then click on [Activate my EUID]. Instructors may send e-mail to students' Eaglemail accounts via the official class roster generated in EIS.

Finally, Blackboard offers an e-mail feature which allows you to send e-mail to specific students, all students, TAs, etc. Students can set up their Blackboard accounts to forward Blackboard e-mail to any account they wish to use, or they can read and respond to the messages through the Blackboard system. These widely available resources offer two important means of communicating with students.

First, e-mail opens up the possibility for individual communication with students. Students can use e-mail to pose questions to you, and you can provide quick feedback. **Using this approach requires that you make a commitment to reading your e-mail regularly and responding quickly to your students.** This opportunity for communication may be especially valuable to the shy or reticent student who would be embarrassed to ask a question in class. Such students can use e-mail to ask the questions they would not ask otherwise.

A second resource e-mail offers to instructors is the opportunity to send "bulk" e-mail. Through this service an instructor can send a message to all the students in a class by sending only one message. This makes it easy to send assignments, study sheets, or reminders to all members of the class. Make sure you tell them, if important class information is to be distributed this way.

Three caveats about using e-mail to reach students:

1. You should remind students that you will not get e-mail the instant they send it (and remember that yourself). A student may e-mail you with a question at midnight, but that student cannot reasonably expect a response at that time. Be sure to advise students about how long they may expect to wait for a response from you and how often you expect they will be checking their accounts.
2. Remember that e-mail communications are not particularly nuanced. E-mail communications can seem brusque and impersonal, and the tone of the person writing the message is not always clear.
3. Do not communicate with a student about his grades via e-mail, unless you are using the student's official UNT e-mail address. You have no way of verifying that other e-mail accounts are private or even that they belong to your student. If you use anything other than the student's official e-mail address, you run the risk of disclosing confidential student information to a third party in violation of state and federal educational privacy laws.
4. Ask students to put their name and course number in the subject line. This practice alerts faculty that the email is from a student and can, therefore, make it a priority.

Choosing Teaching Techniques

Several teaching techniques are available. The approach used will depend, to some extent, on the nature of the course and the topics to be covered. The approach may be dictated by the nature of the section, if it is a lab or a discussion section. In other cases, you may be free to choose the approach that seems most appropriate to the subject matter and works best for you.

Varying methods of instruction are often desirable, because different students learn in different ways, and because some material is more amenable to one approach than another.

Lecturing

One venerable form of instruction in universities is the lecture. While it is still one of the most widely used teaching techniques, many experts doubt that lecturing is the most effective technique. It can be a useful way of conveying new information or of explaining difficult concepts and analytical techniques. Successful lecturing depends on good organizational and public speaking skills. It may even demand an amount of showmanship to be effective.

Leading Discussion

Discussion can be an effective technique of instruction when students need opportunities to apply concepts that have been learned from reading or lecture or when they need practice in critically evaluating arguments made in reading or in other material. The important skill to be developed in this teaching technique is the art of asking good

questions. It is important to ask questions that will get students to think, analyze, and apply. Students should not be put in the position of trying to guess what the instructor is thinking. It is also important to create an environment in which students feel free to participate without fear of ridicule.

Problem-Solving Activities

Sometimes it may be appropriate to divide the class into groups and let each group work on solving a problem or question that is posed for them. By listening to the solutions devised by various groups, students can learn more about thinking critically and how to synthesize material.

Media

It is also appropriate to use audio or video tapes as a part of instruction, so long as they are not depended upon excessively to avoid preparation for class. The Media Library has a large collection of materials. (See Helpful Facilities and Services.) The catalog of these materials can be searched online. A relevant segment of a video followed by probing discussion can be a very effective teaching technique.

Writing Assignments

Writing assignments are an important means of determining whether students understand material and can practice critical thinking. Understanding is demonstrated when students can explain things in their own words. Critical thinking is demonstrated when they can evaluate alternative arguments effectively. Instructors who use writing assignments must be willing to make the commitment to effective grading. These assignments will not have much value to the student unless instructors provide meaningful feedback that can lead to improvement.

Choosing a Teaching Style

All teachers have been students at some point, and they likely have had a variety of different types of instructors. Some are funny, and some are passionate. Some are formal, and some are informal. Some are stern, and some are nurturing. Many teaching styles can be effective. The key is identifying a style that is natural to you. If you are nervous about speaking in front of large groups, don't rely on extemporaneous lectures or force yourself to be more gregarious than you actually are. Similarly, if you are naturally very relaxed, adopting a more formal tone may mask your passion for your subject. Know yourself, and choose a style that works for you.

Gauging Teaching Effectiveness

Reappointment to most teaching positions requires demonstrated teaching effectiveness. To demonstrate (and improve) your skill in the classroom, consider inviting an established member of the regular faculty to observe a class. Rather than waiting until the end of the semester, give students the opportunity to provide feedback at the midpoint in the semester by conducting a "mini" teaching evaluation. Give feedback to students and where possible incorporate their good ideas.

Don't be afraid to ask questions about issues that arise from experienced faculty members. Your questions will show your commitment to teaching and your willingness to change will help you achieve higher evaluations and greater student success. Keep student evaluations and other proof of your skill in the classroom (such as notes or e-mails from class observers) in a file to build your teaching portfolio.

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETE)

The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey is made available in the final weeks of the semester to provide students with an opportunity to comment on how a particular class is taught. It is a good idea to include in your syllabus when the SETE is open for student feedback. To increase student response rate of the SETE, here are few helpful tips for you to consider:

- Tell students why this is important and give specific examples of how you use student feedback to improve teaching from semester to semester.
- Personally email students and ask them to complete the SETE.
- Provide participation updates at each class meeting.
- Offer bonus questions on final exam if class achieves 100% participation (or other types of departmental-approved incentives)
- Schedule lab time for class to complete survey (monitored by another faculty member).

Chapter Six: Evaluating Students

Introduction to Testing and Grading

One of the principal duties of an instructor or TA is to assign grades in accordance with UNT regulations. Grading is often complex and time-consuming. The following points are designed to help you avoid common grading problems. Hard work, enthusiasm, and politeness count, but do not substitute for the quality of a student's work. A UNT degree certifies competency. Our responsibility is to uphold this goal.

Setting Expectations

One of the most important steps in evaluating students—and avoiding student complaints—is identifying your objectives for both you and the students and making your expectations clear. Specify on your syllabus how students will be evaluated (what percentage of their grade will be based on tests? Will the exams be comprehensive?). Moreover, for longer written assignments (projects and papers), be clear about what skills and content students should demonstrate. Should students demonstrate creativity? Should they demonstrate knowledge of a specific subject before providing their own analysis?

Setting expectations will help you evaluate student work as well. If you know what your objectives are, you can create a rubric that matches those objectives. A rubric is a clear statement of the objectives of an assignment and an allocation of points to each objective.

For example, if you've specified that a paper should connect a concept to course readings, you might assign 10 points on the rubric to "tying concepts to course readings." As you grade, you can evaluate how the paper performed on that particular objective and give it a score of 1-10 for how successfully it achieved that objective. You might also assign a point value for following formatting requirements, abiding by length guidelines, being on time, etc. When you have completed evaluating each element of the rubric, you simply add the elements and you have a score.

Using a rubric helps students identify exactly where they went wrong (and where they went right). It also helps to establish credibility for your grading and ensure that your grading is consistent across students.

Providing Feedback

Our job as instructors is to help students improve; as a result, instructors tend to focus exclusively on students' weaknesses. Providing only negative feedback, however, demoralizes students. When you provide feedback for students, always start by identifying one positive feature of a paper or assignment. Sometimes this is challenging, but it increases the likelihood the student will construe the negative feedback as constructive.

When you do discuss weaknesses, be sure to be specific. "This is terrible" and "You've missed the mark" are not constructive remarks. Specify the problem ("your thesis statement is not clear"); explain why it's a problem ("it's not clear which position you support until the last paragraph; as a result, readers are not sure how to evaluate the information you provide in the body paragraphs"); and provide information that will help the student do better next time ("a reader should always know what position you are taking by the end of the first paragraph").

You also might try to keep your remarks impersonal. That is, instead of saying "You misinterpret the problem here: or "You have not analyzed the question very thoroughly," write that "The paper misinterprets..." This will help ensure that students do not feel personally attacked by your written comments.

With exams—especially multiple choice exams—detailed comments may not be appropriate or feasible. Instead, you can provide students with a summary of student performance. Identify questions that large groups of students struggled with and explain why students might have gotten the answer wrong (or, at a minimum, why the correct answer was correct).

Evaluate and return graded work to students promptly. It is important that students have information about their progress in a class and feedback that will allow them to improve their work.

Exams and Tests

The purpose of exams is to assess student learning. Exams are not meant to trick students or confuse them. Make sure that exam questions are related to important learning objectives (rather than asking questions about insignificant details in the text). If you have clearly stated your objectives to students, those objectives should actually guide you in creating exam questions. For multiple choice questions, make sure that there is one (and only one) correct answer to the question. For short answer questions, make sure that the question reflects the information you will be looking for in a good answer (for example, if you want three examples of a concept, specify that in the question).

It is always a good idea to have someone else read your exams for you. Not only will they identify typographical errors (which can confuse students and cost them valuable time during the test), but also they can catch questions that are confusing. Draft your exams far enough in advance that you can have someone proofread the exam for you; you can revise the exam; and you can get the exam printed before the exam takes place. Ask the administrative staff in your department about copying services and the availability of scantron sheets (computer-readable answer sheets).

Tips on Administering Tests

- Make sure the testing environment is quiet and free of distractions.
- Minimize interruptions. Tell students before the exam that you will write announcements, instructions, or corrections on the blackboard.
- Give a warning (say 10 minutes) before collecting tests.
- Specify rules about test taking in advance. For example, if you plan to require picture identification, say so on the syllabus. If you do not want students to wear hats with brims, tell them in advance.
- Bring extra exams, pencils, scantrons, and answer sheets/blue books to the exam so that you are prepared for emergencies (such as a student filling in a scantron with an ink pen or another student spilling coffee on their questions).
- Students with disabilities may need accommodations on tests visit <http://www.unt.edu/oda/testing/procedures.html>

Academic Dishonesty

It is an unfortunate fact that some students will engage in cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct. As an instructor or TA, you need to be prepared to deal with those occasions.

Plagiarism

In grading term papers or other written assignments, instructors and TAs will need to be on guard against plagiarism. Since students often claim that they do not understand this

form of academic dishonesty. Be prepared to explain what plagiarism is and what punishment is appropriate when it is detected.

The Code of Student Conduct states that the term “**plagiarism**” includes, but is not limited to

- (a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and
- (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

It is also important to make sure that students know the consequences of academic dishonesty from the beginning of the course. The actual consequence for plagiarism will likely depend on departmental policy, the course syllabus, and the gravity of the offense. In explaining the consequences, instructors and TAs should simply repeat and interpret the policy given in the course syllabus.

When an instructor or TA suspects plagiarism, the student should be confronted in private and given an opportunity to dispute the allegations. Instructors should discuss the matter with the student themselves, make a judgment as to whether the student is responsible for plagiarism, and assess penalties if convinced that the student is responsible. TAs should turn over cases of suspected plagiarism to the supervising instructor. Students who wish to protest a decision should be informed of their rights to appeal under the grade appeals policy.

Further information on student standards of academic integrity academic dishonesty and integrity can be found on the website of the Provost’s office:

<http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>. For additional information, refer to UNT Policy 18.1.6.

Preventing Academic Dishonesty

The best way to deal with academic dishonesty is to prevent it.

- Make sure your syllabus addresses academic misconduct and the possible penalties you will impose (failure of an assignment, failure of the course, referral to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities).
- Be clear about what you consider to be academic misconduct. Specify which sources students may and may not use in completing assignments and papers. Refer students to the website for the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities for information about plagiarism and proper citations.
- Reduce the pressure. Provide a number of opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of course goals, rather than relying upon a single examination.
- Make reasonable demands and write a reasonable test. Some academic dishonesty is simply the result of frustration and desperation arising from

- assignments too long to be covered adequately or tests requiring memorization of trivial details.
- Show that you are concerned about academic dishonesty. Move around the room during the test. Avoid a tense atmosphere, but convey a sense of alert helpfulness while strolling down the aisles or watching for questions.
 - Ask students to raise their hands if they have questions so that they don't have to move around the room.
 - Make different versions of a single test to keep students from looking at their neighbor's test. For example, if you are administering a multiple choice test, you can randomize the question order or the answer order (or both). Print one version of the exam on a different colored paper (blue, pink, etc.) or put a notation on the exam itself. Alternate the versions of the exam. If you do this, make sure that you use the proper key for each exam you will be scoring.
 - Restrict the use of cell phones in class during testing. Prohibit students from wearing headphones or hats with brims during exams.
 - Make sure students know that they cannot leave the room during the test (they need to attend to personal needs before the exam period begins).
 - Consider a policy of not handing out blank exams after the first completed test is turned in.
 - Create novel paper assignments to reduce the ability of students to find "canned" essays that they can adopt wholesale. Require them to utilize a specific set of sources (in addition to others) to make it more difficult to purchase or steal an essay from an online source.
 - Notify students in advance that you will be searching for plagiarism using Turn-It-In or a similar plagiarism detection program; if students know they are likely to get caught, they are less likely to cheat.
 - Instructors should discuss expectations for student conduct and appropriate responses to misconduct with TAs before a situation arises. This will ensure that issues are handled properly and consistently.

Handling Academic Dishonesty

No matter how many steps you take to prevent academic dishonesty, it may still occur.

- Follow department and university procedures.
 - Meet privately with the student to give the student an opportunity to refute your allegations.
 - If the student admits to wrong-doing, assess your grade penalty and inform the student of that penalty and of the fact that you will be referring the matter to the Office of Academic Integrity. Inform the student of the appeal process.
 - Follow up the meeting with a written summary of what transpired, including the penalty you plan to assess. Make sure you provide this information to the student, your department chair, and Office of Academic Integrity.
 - Advice about how to proceed along with the forms to use in reporting incidents to the Office of Academic Integrity are located at <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>.

- If you have time to think about the suspected academic dishonesty, consult an experienced faculty member before taking any action.
- Know in advance how to handle a student looking on another's paper during a test. Will you take the exam away from the student, ask the student to move to another seat, or take some other action?
- Have a written policy that prescribes what will happen if academic dishonesty is discovered. Make sure your policy conforms to departmental or university rules.
- Follow your own written policy; you need to be fair and consistent in your enforcement of your own rules.
- Where appropriate, require students to use pen rather than pencil to fill out the tests. Students may correct their answers after grading trying to get more points from exams. If you are using a computer-graded answer sheet that must be completed in pencil, make a copy of all answer sheets before you hand them back. This will allow you to spot student efforts to revise their answers.
- Even when confronting a student about misconduct, it is important to be respectful. Do not yell at the student, and do not take the student's behavior personally. Be calm, professional, and matter-of-fact. Explain that you understand that students make mistakes but that you have an obligation to impose rules fairly and consistently. Your own demeanor can defuse a potentially emotional situation and ease the process in the long run.
- Teaching Assistants should always consult the instructor of record before approaching a student about academic misconduct.

Favoritism, Fairness, and Consistency

Despite an instructor or TA's best attempts to keep grading objective, grading often contains an element of subjective judgment. Because they see it as a direct attack on their authority, some instructors and TAs may get defensive when a student questions a grade. The best way to avoid this appearance of arbitrariness is to spell out as clearly as possible your grading policy and have a reasonable number of assignments throughout the semester. The student should know how he or she is doing in the class all during the semester, so the final grade will not be a shock.

Graphing Grades

Graphing the distribution of your grades provides another means of checking yourself. A fair scale reflects the entire range of grades with the bulk of students doing average work. If all of the students fail or if most students make A's, the evaluative process or course content may need re-evaluation.

Grade Conflicts

Nearly every instructor and TA at one time or another will have to deal with students who are extremely unhappy with the grade assigned to their work. Many students have their ego so tied to their schoolwork that a relatively low grade becomes a blow to their self-esteem. Others are under intense pressure to perform well in order to be admitted to law school, graduate school, maintain scholarships, etc. As a result, debates with students over grades can often become unpleasant. Explain to your students that your role is to

evaluate their ability to learn and apply course material. Make it clear to them that you are not judging them as human beings and that the same standards apply to everyone in the class.

Avoid intimidating students into thinking that they have no right to appeal their grades—often their complaints about grades are legitimate. When you hand back graded work, explain the procedure for appealing a grade. And make sure to treat any such complaints with an open mind.

Emotional Students

Grade disputes are sometimes charged with emotion. In a few cases, students who associate their self-worth with their grades may become distraught and begin to cry when they come to discuss their grades with you. Obviously, it is important first to try to calm them down; then explain to them that the grade you assigned their work, though perhaps lower than they hoped for, should in no way be interpreted as a sign that they are incapable of learning. Convince such students to strive for improvement; reassure them that they are intelligent and capable.

Belligerent Students

In a few cases, students may be belligerent in grade disputes. If students approach you with grade disputes, but are unwilling to accept your explanation of their grades, then you should advise them of their right to appeal grades. You should, however, stand your ground. If you “give in” to belligerent students, it invites other students to employ similar tactics.

Assessing Student Learning

UNT is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges. This process takes an active commitment from every member of our community and you play a critical role in our ability to maintain this designation. One major element of impact that you have is your ability to help demonstrate that our students are meeting your learning objectives for the class. In order to do this, you may find it helpful to get a refresher of sound assessment practice and how it is different than traditional test administration.

We recommend using multiple methods of assessment and you may be surprised to learn that grades are not a legitimate form of evidence to demonstrate student learning for SACS. Instead, you may be asked to provide other forms of evidence. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is your partner in this process. It is our role to provide you with expertise and assistance in this area. Additional content can be found on our website (<http://institutionalresearch.unt.edu/>).

Advice for Constructing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

You may have been asked to develop or revise student learning outcomes in your role in the classroom. Creating a strong learning outcome is made easier by keeping in mind some basics. SLOs:

- Identify the elements that the students should know, think, or do as a result of attending the classes offered through the program.
- Need to be clearly articulated and state the criterion for success. Being intentionally vague or lumping multiple outcomes into one statement will not be effective.
- Often perform best when Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Domains (1956) are applied to understand and develop appropriate SLOs.
- Require the use of direct assessment methods.
- May not be perfect. Don't expect perfection, rather look for improvement.
- Work best when the evidence gathered to demonstrate achievement is directly related to the SLO.

By way of example the following format is typically adopted as a template by educators:

Students who (define activity) → _____ will (include an illustrative verb) → _____ (include a singular objective) → _____ at a (select a percentage for successful achievement) → _____.

An easy acronym to help you measure your SLO is the SMART model. In essence, are your Outcomes:

- **Specific** - Is the Outcome singular? Is it understandable to anyone with a basic knowledge of the office/program?
- **Measurable** - Is this something that can be measured? Are resources in place to accomplish this?
- **Aligned** - Is the outcome linked to the larger mission of your department?
- **Relevant** - Does the result matter to the program? Can improvements in instruction be made based on the results?
- **Time-Framed** - Is there a time frame for data collection? Is a plan in place to ensure data is collected in a timely manner and shared appropriately?

Additional resources on SLO creation, review and editing is offered by Institutional Research and Effectiveness.

Forms of Evidence to Help You Assess Student Performance

Most new faculty believe surveys, tests and quizzes constitute the entire domain of assessment practice. Assessment methods actually fall broadly within two categories: Direct and Indirect (Maki, 2004).

Direct – Methods that prompt student to show or model their learning or produce work products so that faculty or other observers can ascertain how well the student work fit into the larger class or program outcomes. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Course-embedded Assessments (Assignments, Lab Reports, etc.)
- Performances (Documented)
- Rubrics
- Portfolios or Creations (Catalogued or Captured Digital)
- Results of Research or Exploration
- Locally or Commercially Developed Tests
- Interactions within Groups (Problem Solving or Demonstrating Team Work)
- Responses to Questions and/or Prompts

Indirect – Methods that collect student opinions or perceptions of their learning and the educational environment where this learning takes place. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Surveys and Questionnaires
- Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Alumni and Employer Surveys
- Exit Interviews or Focus Groups
- Transcript Analysis

The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment and Redesign (CLEAR) can also provide additional support and consultation on assessment tactics and forms of evidence.

Interpreting and Sharing Assessment Results

When thinking about how you might interpret your assessment results remember that this process works best when you apply your data to the learning outcomes they are supposed to measure, draw inferences and conclusions, and evaluate the results. The following strategies may help you when interpreting assessment results.

- Ask yourself why the assessment was conducted in the first place and what learning outcomes you wanted to assess.
- If you already established a benchmark or criterion for success, summarize results in a way that reflects that goal. For example, if the criterion for success is that at least 85% of students should reach a certain performance level, summarize your findings as the percentage of students reaching the 85% threshold/level.
- Scan the results for elements that jump off the page—significant successes or failures relevant to the given learning outcome. Try to identify patterns within these sub-groups and consider impacts on your future practice.
- Assessment works best when it can improve future student experiences at UNT. Consider sharing assessment results with faculty members within your program. Do you see trends that cut across individual courses? How might these trends

inform curriculum decisions? How could you and your colleagues use your data to close the loops between assessment and action?

- Depending on your assessment needs, additional audiences could be involved, e.g., students within the department, alumni, etc.
- Keep a record of assessment results. Such a record will be useful for doing longitudinal studies of assessment projects, which can reveal trends and patterns in student learning. SACS wants to see evidence of how individual programs utilize assessment to make data-based decisions and how these assessment efforts are ongoing and consistent across time.
- Consider working with your Department Chair and the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness to ensure assessment work is properly captured in campus-wide accrediting systems.

Chapter Seven: Tips for Teaching Assistants

Responsibilities

As a Teaching Assistant, it is important for you and the instructor you assist to come to a clear understanding of your responsibilities. This chapter provides you with a list of duties for which teaching assistants might be held responsible. It is important to make sure you understand which ones you personally are responsible for in the classes in which you will be assisting. The best way to achieve that understanding is for you to schedule a meeting with your supervisor as soon as possible—preferably before classes begin.

Make sure you advise the instructor as soon as possible about conflicts you may have. Let the instructor know, for example, if you will be taking comprehensive exams during the semester and, if so, when. Inform the instructor of planned travel, such as family weddings or professional conferences. Make sure the instructor knows about your schedule and availability.

Class Objectives

You must understand the objectives of the class in which you are assisting. This understanding can be achieved in two ways. First, get a copy of the class syllabus and read it carefully. Second, talk to your supervising instructor about the class and get him or her to explain the objectives of the class more fully.

Contact Information

Make sure that you give your supervisor several forms of contact information. Provide a telephone number where you can be reached and an e-mail address that you check regularly. If the instructor uses Blackboard, you need to give the instructor your EUID (initials + four digits) so she can grant you TA access to the course shell.

Course Materials

The department will usually supply the textbooks that will be used in courses in which you are assisting. You can usually get them from your supervisory instructor or from the department's supervisor of TAs and TFs. Check with your supervisor to see if there are other materials that you will need and how you are expected to acquire them. At the end of the semester, departmental policy may require that you return textbooks and other course materials.

Class Meetings

Make sure you understand the instructor's expectations about your attendance in the class with which you are assisting. Some instructors will want to have you there every class period, others may not. Also make sure you understand what you are expected to do when you attend class. Are you expected to take roll? Are you expected to take class notes? Are you expected to set up audiovisual equipment? When you meet with the supervising instructor, make sure you get a clear understanding of these responsibilities.

If you have a particular interest in the subject of a course, consider asking the instructor whether you might deliver a lecture. Some instructors are reluctant to turn over the reins of their class, but others will welcome the opportunity to mentor you in your own teaching. If you do preside over a class meeting, make sure you obtain clear information about what you should cover during the session and prepare well for it. Ask for feedback from the instructor afterwards so that you can improve the quality of your teaching and, eventually, be the instructor of record for your own courses.

Office Hours

In most cases, Teaching Assistants are expected to hold regular office hours. Make sure you understand the policy of your department and your supervising instructor about the number of office hours you are expected to hold. Also make sure you understand what kinds of things you are expected to be able to do during those office hours. Are you expected to be able to answer questions about lectures? Are you expected to explain grades and grading policy?

It is critical that you are in your office during your office hours. If you need to go to the restroom, tell an office mate or leave a note on the door. Failure to keep office hours may compromise your ability to obtain future TA assignments.

Professionalism

While you may not be the instructor of record, you still represent UNT and your department. You should conduct yourself as a professional.

Take your cue from the instructor of record regarding professional attire (some faculty are more formal than others). Regardless of how casual a class may be, always dress neatly. Avoid off-color t-shirts or overly revealing clothes.

Treat students with respect and avoid undue familiarity with them. Denton is a small town, and you are likely to run into students outside of the campus environment. Be conscious of how your public behavior may undermine your credibility in the classroom.

If you are assisting a Teaching Fellow, you may find yourself in the awkward position of working for a fellow student who is very close in age and "class rank" to you. Remember that this person is your supervisor, and treat her accordingly. You may express concerns

and opinions, but ultimately it is up to the instructor of record to make decisions about class policies.

Examinations and Grading

Ask your supervising instructor what your responsibilities will be with regard to grading and examinations. Will you be expected to help construct exams? Will you need to make copies of the exams? What part of the grading will be your responsibility, if any? Will you be grading assignments? Will you be grading examinations? What will your role be in administering exams?

Record Keeping

TAs often have some responsibility for record keeping. You may be expected to take roll and keep a record of each student's number of absences. You may also be expected to keep the records of grades for the class. Make sure you understand your supervising instructor's expectations about your role in record keeping.

All records pertaining to students should be carefully guarded. Keep them in a secure place in your locked office or on a password protected computer. Maintain back-ups of your files if at all possible. Do not disclose student records to anyone other than the specific student and the instructor. Do not, for example, share grade information with a student's parents without gaining explicit permission from the instructor of record.

Laboratories or Recitation Sections

In some departments, a TA's principal responsibilities may involve teaching a lab or recitation/discussion section that is associated with the course taught by the supervising instructor. In such cases, it is important that TAs get a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They must know what material is to be covered, what techniques they should use, and what part they will play in grading. The most important thing is to make sure that you and your supervising instructor share a common understanding of your responsibilities.

Time Management

As a teaching assistant you must balance your responsibilities as an employee of the university and your responsibilities as a graduate student. Your department has the right to expect you to work the number of hours that is appropriate for your appointment. For a half-time appointment, your department can expect you to work an average of twenty hours per week. For a quarter-time appointment, an average of ten hours per week can be expected. Some weeks you may be expected to work more hours and you will work fewer hours other weeks. Focus on the average workload.

Prepare in advance for major assignments, both your own and those of your students. If you see, for example, that you have a major research paper due the Monday after an exam

is administered in the class for which you are assisting, be sure to tell the instructor you are working for that you may not be able to get exams graded over the weekend.

Ultimately, balancing your commitments requires communication. Tell the instructor you are assisting about conflicts. Similarly, let them know if you are feeling overextended. The instructor may not realize how long it takes to grade each individual assignment and thus may not realize how many hours you are putting into your work. If you notify the instructor that a particular grading assignment is consuming too much of your time, the instructor may spread that work out to other helpers or may have advice on how to complete the task in a quicker, more efficient way.

Chapter Eight: Advice to International Instructors and TAs

Language Difficulties

The trials and tribulations of international instructors do not differ substantially from those of their American counterparts. Yet in one crucial area, that of student-teacher communication, they have a set of problems all their own.

The best possible practice is to confront your students immediately with the problems arising from language barriers. Advise your students to speak clearly and to avoid excessive or incomprehensible slang, and request them never to ignore things that you say that they do not comprehend.

Encourage your students not to be shy. This point is best conveyed to your students in a humorous, light-hearted fashion to encourage students to request language clarification freely (“Oh, I realize that sometimes I’m difficult to understand!”).

No matter how hard you try, there will always be a small group of students who will attempt to shirk their responsibilities by laying the blame on your language difficulties (“I didn’t understand you correctly. I thought you said NEXT week.”) The following points will help you avoid this problem.

- Provide your students with ample written instruction. All course requirements, the method used in computing the final grade, exam dates, and a thorough reading list should be presented in writing at the first possible opportunity.
- During the first few weeks, hand out written study questions to familiarize students with the mode of questioning that you will use during the semester.
- Be attentive to students’ facial expressions. Blank looks are a sure sign that something is going wrong. At times you may even request some of your more able students to paraphrase crucial thoughts in their own language.
- The use of audio-visual material is invaluable. Slides, photographs, movies, or music are often extremely effective ways to illustrate hard to explain points.
- Make personal use of audio-visual techniques. Record yourself on a video camera or on an ordinary tape recorder. You will be surprised how many problems you can identify by watching or listening to yourself carefully.

Cultural Problems

Communication is not always a language problem—it has definite cultural dimensions. One common solution lies in the realm of intensive observation. Try observing some undergraduate classes before taking on the burden of serving as an instructor of record. This will familiarize you with the interaction between student and instructor. If possible, you should be a grader or TA for at least one semester. This way you will know what level of preparation to expect from the average student.

The most fruitful way of overcoming the cultural barrier is to show your students that you care. At the earliest possible opportunity, get to know their names, where they come from, and the subjects that interest them. A few minutes of small talk before each class can make a world of difference.

Be flexible with your office hours, if students cannot make the times you set. You might even require a mandatory one-on-one meeting with each of your students, provided they do not number in the hundreds and thousands. It goes without saying that your willingness to accommodate students should not compromise your firm demands for punctual assignments, nor should it erode your strict, but fair, grading standards.

Cultural obstacles may be overcome by showing your enthusiasm and by being attentive to the actions and reactions of your students.

Body Language

Here are a few tips on body language. American students expect you to look them straight in the eye when addressing them. Facial expressions convey a sense of receptiveness, while a moderate use of hands and arms serves to emphasize crucial features of your discourse. Touching, a common feature in many cultures, should be avoided.

University International Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow Program

The International TA/TF Program at North Texas trains, evaluates, and assists current and prospective international teaching assistants or teaching fellows (ITAs).

The program consists of three phases:

1. an initial English language competency screening;
2. a formal course designed to improve the International TA's communication skills (if necessary); and
3. an extensive evaluation of the course participants that includes recommendations for future teaching responsibilities.

The communication skills course is a free, non-credit course offered for a twelve-week period during each long semester. It includes a weekly lecture, a weekly workshop session, and recommended work in the IELI language laboratory. The objectives of the course are as follows:

- to improve language skills, such as pronunciation and intonation
- to improve non-verbal skills, such as eye contact, gestures and cross-cultural awareness
- to improve basic teaching skills, such as lecturing and answering questions

All international Teaching Fellows and assistants must be reviewed by the ITA program before any UNT department can hire them.

The final evaluation is based on a short (ten to fifteen minutes) lecture. A panel evaluates this presentation, and recommendations are made in the following categories:

- CERTIFIED - The ITA demonstrates teaching and language skills adequate for full teaching responsibility in the classroom.
- CONDITIONALLY CERTIFIED - The ITA exhibits some problems in speaking skills, non-verbal skills, or basic teaching skills and should be given teaching responsibility only in a class or lab where a senior teacher is present. An ITA in this category should work closely with the departmental TA supervisor, observe experienced teachers' classes, and/or take the communication skills courses again.
- NOT CERTIFIED - The ITA exhibits serious problems in communication and should be given no speaking responsibility in class or lab. An ITA in this category could, at the department's discretion, assume tutorial or grading responsibilities, take the communication skills course again, and/or enroll in an optional pronunciation course at the IELI.

Chapter Nine: Helpful Facilities and Services

CARE Team

The CARE Team is a collaborative group of officials from various UNT offices who meet weekly to discuss solutions for students exhibiting at-risk behaviors. The CARE Team website offers tips for identifying students who are in distress, a flow chart analysis for how to respond when a student seems to be at-risk, and information about how to report a student to the CARE Team for further consideration. Visit the CARE Team website at <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care/index.html>.

Classroom Support Services

Classroom Support Services (CSS) is funded by the student Technology Use Fee to provide and maintain audio-visual equipment in UNT's general-use classrooms. If you have difficulty operating any A/V equipment in a classroom (including difficulty in the middle of a class), or if you need to request special equipment that is not regularly available in your classroom, contact CSS at 565-2691. Please refer to the CSS website, www.css.unt.edu, for additional information. CSS is located in Chilton Hall 243.

CLEAR (Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment and Redesign)

UNT's Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign (CLEAR) supports the University's goal of enhancing learning-centered environments, thereby helping students get the most from their academic experience. They assist faculty in the creation, design, implementation, and assessment of distributed learning courses, and also serve as the liaison for various administrative and technical support functions, thereby saving faculty's time, talent, and creative energies for their students.

CLEAR supports faculty, adjuncts, and teaching fellows/assistants to facilitate teaching and measuring learning at the class, department, and college level. Examples of services include:

- **Consultation** - The Center consults faculty members on how to design courses, accomplish deadlines, program and course approvals and course administration.
- **Production** - The Center provides assistance on all aspects of production including media design, production schedules and cost analysis.
- **Marketing** - The Center's marketing specialist is available to assist departments promoting their distributed programs and courses in a variety of media.

- **Copyright** - The Center provides information on Copyright issues such as Fair Use and faculty and student rights.
- **Administrative Guidance for Departments** - CLEAR provides guidance to department chairs and program coordinators who are currently offering or are interested in implementing distributed learning courses or programs.
- **Assessment** - The development of high quality assessments is part of the next generation of course redesign for large classes facilitated by CLEAR. This course redesign is the major focus of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for which CLEAR is responsible. A comprehensive assessment plan is in place to address QEP support and training for faculty, development of a community of practice, program evaluation, and reporting.
- **Faculty Development** - The Center offers a variety of services to enhance teaching and learning throughout the University for both face-to-face and online classes. The Center is available for one-on-one consultations as well as custom workshops for individual departments. Topics can include a broad range of subjects in teaching, learning, and assessment techniques. Competitive grants also are available for course redesign and course enhancement.

CLEAR also provides support for a variety of technology tools for teaching:

- Blackboard
- iTunes U
- PBWorks wiki
- Respondus test and quizzing
- Turning Point - student response systems (clickers)
- Turnitin/Peermark/Grademark
- Wimba Collaboration Suite

CLEAR delivers content through the use of The University of North Texas Videoconferencing Network (UNTVN). UNTVN is a video network connecting several videoconferencing classrooms in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. CLEAR facilitates the delivery of videoconference-based courses every semester and also schedules many non-class related videoconferences.

UNT ecampus: www.UNTeCampus.com

Computing and Information Technology Center (CITC)

Central computing services in support of instruction and research are provided through Academic Computer Services. The Computer Center is located in Sycamore Hall, Room 119. Telephone: 565-2324. The web site for the Computing and Information Technology Center is: <http://citc.unt.edu/home> . CITC oversees a number of programs that may be of assistance to instructors:

- **General Access Labs:** General access computer labs, located throughout the Denton campus and at the Dallas Campus, provide access to hundreds of microcomputers for use by UNT students. The general access labs contain both Windows and Macintosh personal computers with laser printing capabilities. A special adaptive computing lab is available for persons with disabilities.
- **Internet Services Academic:** Computing Services provides a suite of Internet Services available to all students. Eagle Mail is the official student E-mail system of the University of North Texas and University policy requires that students activate and read their Eagle Mail. A bulk mail service allows faculty to send Eagle Mail to their students simply by entering their course and section number. In addition to E-mail services, personal web publishing and dialup Internet access are available as part of UNT Internet Services. For more information see: <http://eaglemail.unt.edu/> and <http://bulkmail.unt.edu/>
- **Help Desk:** The Computing Center Support Services Information Desk provides a centralized referral service to advise students on a wide variety of computing subjects and assist them in trouble-shooting problems. The helpdesk can be contacted by phone at (940) 565-2324 or via e-mail at helpdesk@unt.edu. For more information see: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/>
- **Training:** A series of short courses on effective use of campus computing technology is available each semester. Computer-based training on a number of computing resources is also available. To see course offerings visit: <http://www.unt.edu/training/>
- **Test Grading:** The Data Entry Office of the Computing Center provides test-grading services for tests using the appropriate optical scanner answer sheets. Check with Data Entry to determine the correct type of answer sheet. A test analysis can also be run that provides such useful statistics as the mean test score, the standard deviation, and the percent getting each question correct.

Counseling and Testing Services

The Counseling and Testing Services (CTS) provides a wide range of psychological services to assist students with social/family/relationship difficulties; psychological problems such as loneliness or depression; crisis counseling and referral, and career counseling and testing. Consultation and outreach programming are also available for faculty/staff and students.

CTS administer computer based testing for GRE, GMAT, TOEFL, and CLEP. CTS also administer most national tests including THEA, MCAT, SAT, and ACT. Information and application forms are available at the center. You may also visit their website:

<http://www.unt.edu/cat/>

Location: Chestnut Hall, 311
Telephone: 565-2741

Computer Based Testing is located in the Gateway Center, 140. Telephone: 369-7617

Division of Institutional Equity and Diversity

The Division of Institutional Equity and Diversity is committed to executing the mission of the University as it relates to the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students. The primary goal of this office is to develop a supportive environment for a culturally diverse faculty, staff and student body. The Division of Equity and Diversity provides a safe zone for all. Please refer to the university policy on diversity, UNT Policies Manual, (see Policy 10.12.11).

http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume2/10_12_11.html

The Division of Equity and Diversity is located in the Hurley Administration Building, Room 210. Telephone: 565-2711.

Multicultural Center

The Multicultural Center, a student services department of the Division of Institutional Equity and Diversity, was established to address the needs of the diverse campus population with the goal that it would be a place where the entire community and region could experience the cultural wealth of the University. Its central purpose is to “teach the culture” by increasing the involvement and knowledge base of all members through communication across cultures. Programs and activities sponsored by the Multicultural Center are developed with the intention of increasing the level of awareness, understanding, and consciousness regarding the underrepresented culture and history of people of African, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native American/American Indian descent.

The Multicultural Center is responsible for planning university-wide activities during Hispanic Heritage Month, Native American Month, Black History Month, Asian History Month, and assists in the planning of Women’s History Month, and International Week as well as other cultural programs.

In addition to working with a number of organizations geared towards students of color in advisory roles, the Multicultural Center also has established the Alton and Renay Scales Ethnic Studies Library, which maintains a basic collection of works relevant to the experiences of African, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native American people. These resources are available to all university students, faculty, and staff for research or general information purposes.

The Multicultural Center is located on the second floor of the University Union, Room 218. For more information, visit or call (940) 565-3424, Fax: (940) 369-7262. Also visit their website: <http://www.unt.edu/edo/multicultural.htm>

UNT-International

International Studies and Programs at the University of North Texas assists all students, faculty, staff and all departments and colleges in administering, participating and developing programs with an international emphasis. ISP is committed to fostering an international perspective that amplifies the university's mission of excellence in teaching and the discovery and application of knowledge through research and creative activities.

- **Welcome Center and Programs Office:** The International Welcome Center provides year-round orientation for international student. It is a place for students to meet, to relax and feel at home.
- **Intensive English Language Institute:** The IELI provides seven levels of English language academic preparatory classes for students from beginning to advanced levels. A “Gateway” to the university, the IELI provides conditional admission (NO TOEFL required) for international students who successfully complete the IELI. The IELI offers specialized courses, including the Graduate Preparation Course (GPC) which, upon successful completion, waives the GRE verbal requirement for many graduate degree programs. IELI also offers a GRE/GMAT preparatory course
- **ITA Training Program:** The IELI conducts the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) program, which provides training for teaching/research assistants and fellows at UNT. This program offers workshops for developing language and teaching skills, as well as an awareness of the roles and expectation of international teaching assistants and fellows in the classroom environment.
- **International Admissions:** The International Admissions office processes all international student applications for the Intensive English Language Institute and UNT undergraduate and graduate programs. Advisors work closely with students for speedy document evaluation and processing as well as the transfer of appropriate academic credit when necessary.
- **International Advising:** The International Advising office assists international students and scholars at UNT Dallas, and the Health Sciences Center at Fort Worth in the process of obtaining visas, maintaining status, extending stays in the U.S., authorizing employment, and all other immigration matters.
- **Sponsored and Special Programs Center:** The SSPC offers specialized services to students who are sponsored by their government or other sponsoring agency. SSPC offers tailor-made academic programs for special groups, orientation, academic advising, personal counseling, cultural excursions and other services. SSPC also provides third-party billing, and timely reporting to sponsors.

- **Study Abroad Office:** All students at UNT, including international students, who meet academic requirements, are eligible to study abroad in many countries. SAC advisors help plan appropriate semester or year exchange programs and short-term or summer programs led by UNT faculty. Scholarships and financial aid, if applicable, are available to all students who participate in SAC programs.

Location: Sycamore Hall, 2nd Floor

Website: <http://www.international.unt.edu>

Learning Center

The Learning Center (LC) was created to support academic success for all UNT students. Programs within the Learning Center include: RASSL (Reading and Study Skills Laboratory), Supplemental Instruction (SI), Connecting for Success, Volunteer Tutoring, online tutoring, Learning 101 series and the Academic Success Program.

- **RASSL** is a non-credit course and/or workshop aimed at developing academic skills in areas such as textbook reading, studying, note taking, test taking, goal setting and time management.
- **Speed Reading** courses help students improve their reading rate while maintaining or improving their comprehension.
- **Supplemental Instruction** places peer tutors in difficult courses. SI Leaders meet with students in small groups to discuss and clarify class material.
- **Volunteer Tutors** are outstanding UNT students who volunteer to help other students with course work.
- **Connecting for Success** is a program that provides comprehensive linkages to other academic support throughout the university.
- **Online Tutoring** provides UNT students with 24/7 access to qualified tutors from any computer.
- **Learning 101** series are drop-in, skill based workshops for students seeking to improve their academic performance.
- **The Academic Success Program** works with students needing to regain good academic status with the university.

Office Location: Student Union, Suite 323.

Telephone: 369-7006.

Website: <http://learningcenter.unt.edu>

Libraries

The Libraries are the heart of teaching and academic research at UNT. In addition to a major collection of electronic journals, books and databases, six campus facilities house just under six million cataloged holdings, including books, periodicals, maps, documents, microforms, audiovisual materials, music scores, full-text journals and books. Areas of excellence include the Music Library, the Digital Library Division, the University Archives and Rare Books and Texana Collections, and Government Documents.

- **Willis Library** - The main library on campus, Willis houses the business, economics, education, humanities, and social sciences collections along with microforms and special collections. The Willis Library is open 24 hours a day, Sunday – Saturday.
- **Eagle Commons Library** - Housing the Collaboration and Learning Commons (CLC), the Eagle Commons Library offers unique group study areas and research materials on mathematics, sciences, and the arts. The CLC has been specifically designed for group study and features Smartboards, whiteboards, large TV monitors linked to computers, PCs and Macs, moveable furniture and multi-media software.
- **Media Library** - Located in Chilton Hall, the Media Library houses audiovisual materials, including films, audiobooks and video games. Video recording equipment and gaming consoles are available.
- **Discovery Park Library** - Located at Discovery Park, this library covers multiple areas of engineering, library and information science, and learning technology. This library serves the College of Engineering and College of Information.
- **Music Library** - Located on the fourth floor of Willis, the UNT Music Library is one of the largest music libraries in the nation and contains over 325,000 volumes of books, periodicals, scores, dissertations, and reference works in many languages, as well as over one million sound recordings in a variety of formats.
- **Library Annex** - Located near campus on Airport Road, the Annex houses remote storage, the Technical Services Department and the Preservation Unit. Requests for remote materials can be made using the Library Materials Delivery Request Form.

Key Reference and Library Services to support student and faculty success:

- **Ask Us** - Chat, email, call or visit directly with a reference librarian by calling 940-565-3245 (toll-free 877-872-0264), or visit our website.

- **Class Pages** - These resource guides are developed for specific classes and fields of study by a librarian with the involvement of the course instructor.
- **Distance Learning Students** - Students enrolled in a distance learning class may request regular, circulating books and journal articles available at the UNT Libraries be sent to them. UNT-owned materials are generally sent out within 48 hours; articles will be delivered electronically to your ILLiad account. Books are sent Express Mail.
- **Library Instruction** - Workshops are offered throughout the long semesters and teach students how to locate, evaluate and use information relevant to their research. An up-to-date schedule may be found on our website.
- **Subject Guides** - These guides may include both print and electronic sources and are prepared by librarians with special knowledge in the subject area.
- **Tutorials** - Need help using the online resources? Tutorials are a great introduction to the diversity of research materials available on our website.\

Office of Disability Accommodation

The Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) exists to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability as mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended. This is accomplished by determining eligibility for qualified students by reviewing disability-related medical and psychological documentation along with the student's individual experiences, to determine appropriate, reasonable accommodations which are recommended to the campus. As part of this process, our office strives to facilitate the development of students through independence and autonomy. UNT is a student centered research institution; our office compliments this mission by providing leadership in the areas of equal access and advocacy for students with disabilities. In turn, our campus diversity will be richer and UNT will be more accessible to everyone.

ODA provides a wide variety of services and resources spanning the full range of disabilities including but not limited to, dyslexia, hearing loss, vision loss, mobility impairment, brain injury, learning disabilities, ADHD, mood disorders, chronic diseases and Injuries, and other conditions that meet ADA definitional criteria. In addition, the ODA provides testing facilities for administration of classroom exams when faculty are not able to provide these accommodations. Students with impairment(s) lasting less than six months, such as a broken bone or brief illness, may receive assistance through the Dean of Student's Office.

Office Location: University Union Suite 321

Web site: www.unt.edu/oda/

START

START (Student Academic Readiness Team) provides a “one stop shop” for at-risk transfer and FTIC students providing access to support programs which strengthen academic performance and promote academic success and retention.

What programs and services does START offer?

- **Advising:** Specialized advising, services and support for at-risk students focusing on college readiness and TSI requirements, course / major selection, and academic success.
- **TSI Testing:** Regular Accuplacer testing and advising to incoming and current UNT students.
- **Early Alert Program:** Receive all Early Alerts, assess their content, and respond to each student either by directly intervening with an offer of assistance or a referral to another academic or student services area.
- **Course Intervention Program:** Working with a select group of classes each semester, the START office contacts and make referrals for students who are having difficulty in class or who have more than two consecutive absences.

Office Location: 117 Stovall Hall

Contact us at 940.565.4403 or academic.readiness@unt.edu or on the web at www.unt.edu/academicreadiness

Toulouse Graduate School

The Graduate School leads graduate education at the University of North Texas through a variety of services and programs designed to enhance the educational experience of graduate students. These programs include:

- Professional development workshops

- Milestone management
- Thesis/Dissertation Fellowships
- Assistantships, and scholarships
- Travel grants
- Center for Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies, which sponsors and develops interdisciplinary courses and a master's degree program with a major in interdisciplinary studies.

For more information about the Toulouse Graduate School, please go to <http://tsgs.unt.edu> or call us at 940-565-2383.

Writing Lab

UNT's Writing Lab offers free face-to-face and online tutoring to all UNT students (from incoming first year students to graduate students). Their website offers schedules of workshops; information about tutoring services; and games and other resources for grammar, punctuation, punctuation, and more.

Contact them by phone (940-565-2563); e-mail (writinglab@unt.edu); or in person (Room 105, Auditorium Building). Their website is located at <http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/>.

APPENDIX 1: Standard Syllabus Language

The following provisions are standard language for syllabi at UNT. Include them (modified to fit your particular department, college, school, or circumstances) on your syllabus as a way of effectively and consistently communicating important university policies to your students.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the

acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.dos.unt.edu/conduct.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the my.unt.edu site www.my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your email: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

ADA STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

COURSE SAFETY STATEMENT (For Laboratory Courses)

Students in the _____ are urged to use proper safety procedures and guidelines. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use property safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing,

walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the University of North Texas is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance for this insurance program. Brochures for this insurance are available in the UNT Health and Wellness Center on campus. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the UNT Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If you have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, please be sure that your plan covers treatment at this facility. If you choose not to go to the UNT Health and Wellness Center, you may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. You are responsible for expenses incurred there.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at www.my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Coursework completed via the Blackboard on-line system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and F.E.R.P.A. (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: <http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html>

STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING (SETE)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation of this course. The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available at the end of the semester to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught.

Appendix 2: Instructor Checklists

The checklists on the following pages will help you prepare for the start of your term and guide you through some of the difficulties you may face during the first two weeks and beyond.

Checklist: Before the Semester Begins

- Order books (contact department admin for information)
- Consult with TAs about their office hours, contact info, and duties
- Consult with CLEAR about use of Blackboard and classroom technology
- Prepare Syllabus
 - Office hours, location, contact information
 - Learning objectives
 - Required materials
 - Basis for evaluating students
 - Class, Departmental, College, and University policies
 - Class schedule (including dates of assignments and exams)
- Post syllabus and curriculum vita to Faculty Profile System (<https://faculty.unt.edu>)
- Provide syllabus, office hours, and contact information to department admin
- Arrange to have syllabus copied (if distributing in paper format)
- Create filing system (electronic and/or paper) for course materials
- Develop system for taking attendance (to verify audit rolls)
- Visit classroom to identify media availability and layout

Checklist: First Day of Class

- Arrive early to get the lay of the land
- Set up A/V equipment and touch base with TAs
- Introduce yourself and TAs and identify class
- Take attendance
- Distribute syllabus and go over key points (readings and course requirements)
- Advise students of class policies including
 - How you will contact them
 - Attendance policy
 - Late policy
 - Use of Blackboard and other technology
- Provide some content or ice-breaker activity to engage students. Your first class day sets the tone for the rest of the semester.
- Advise students about expectations for next class period

Checklist: First Two Weeks

- Keep track of attendance, verifying that each student has attended once
- Complete audit roster through your faculty center at <https://my.unt.edu> before the deadline (usually the 12th class day for long terms)
- Identify students in trouble
 - Provide a few low-stakes grading opportunities
 - Keep track of student use of Blackboard
 - Contact students who are not keeping up
 - Follow up with Early Alert system (in my.unt.edu grade roster)
- Meet with students with disability accommodations to ensure they are receiving the necessary accommodations
- Meet with TAs to make sure they are comfortable with their responsibilities

Checklist for TAs

- Meet with instructor before classes begin to cover expectations and responsibilities
 - Office hours
 - Attendance / class facilitation
 - Writing exams and assessments
 - Grading exams and assessments
 - Potential scheduling conflicts
- In consultation with instructor and other TAs, set office hours
- Provide instructor, fellow TAs, and department admin with your office location, office hours, phone, and e-mail contact information
- Attend first day of class (and afterwards, as instructor requests)
- Keep office hours
- Document interaction with students (keep e-mails and responses)
- Meet with instructor every 2 weeks (or so) to make sure you are meeting expectations and to voice any concerns
- Grade assignments fairly and quickly

Checklist: Large Classes

- Take attendance with a checklist or sign-in sheet (or via Clickers)
- Have students turn in work electronically to minimize loss of papers and facilitate return of work
- Consider a seating chart to facilitate group work; use a folder for each row of students to facilitate taking up assignments or distributing graded assignments. A cover page or placing the grade on the last page can maintain grade confidentiality.
- Reduce the opportunity to cheat on exams by
 - Using multiple forms of an exam, alternating forms by seat
 - Having students (or a random selection of students) show ID at the beginning or end of exam
 - Forbidding hats with brims, headphones/earbuds, trips to the bathroom, and all cell phones (if they ring, they ring – don't touch them to turn them off)
- Use the grade book feature in Blackboard so students can keep track of their own grades and identify grade entry errors sooner (place a limit on appeals)
- Use the discussion board and/or announcement features of Blackboard to convey student questions and their answers to reduce repetition
- Build in extra points or “drop the lowest” one or two scores on small assignments so that you can implement a zero-tolerance late policy (which reduces administrative headaches)
- Critically evaluate how you will divide TA work, and provide each TA with clearly defined roles

Checklist: Final Weeks of Semester

- Administer final exam or similar assessment during the time period assigned by the Registrar (<http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html>)
- Encourage students to complete the Student Evaluation of Teaching SETE
- Submit grades through your faculty center at <https://my.unt.edu> before the deadline (consult with your department about any internal deadlines)
- Determine method for retaining important student records (such as exams, answer sheets, papers, and calculations of student grades). Discuss with your department chair where and how records will be retained.
- Organize your own class files (lecture notes, exams, quizzes, handouts, etc.) to save time and energy in future semesters.
- Update your curriculum vita and teaching portfolio to reflect your experiences and student evaluations.