KU Policies and Procedures

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

In any vigorous intellectual community, people sometimes disagree. Disagreements are part of university life and shouldn’t be avoided. We should, in fact, expect to find different opinions on both matters of fact and matters of value. But everybody has an obligation to disagree respectfully, regardless of their position in the community.

At the same time, it’s important for everyone to recognize the difference between understanding and agreement. Instructors may ask students to demonstrate understanding of ideas the students may not like. Students aren’t required to agree with the ideas, but they are obligated to demonstrate an understanding of what’s taught. In the same way, faculty members can ask for understanding of ideas and facts from their disciplines, but shouldn’t require students to agree with values connected with that knowledge.

One of KU’s main purposes is to sustain intellectual life in its many forms, including:

- Study in and out of class by all students;
- Discovery, creativity and research by students and faculty members;
- Engagement with local and global communities; and
- Open discussion of ideas and issues.

To support this intellectual life, students and faculty members need to talk about what they expect from each other as we all pursue the goals of learning and discovery.

Within the University community, faculty members and students will encounter diversity in age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religion, sexual orientation, and physical or learning ability. As former KU Provost Richard Lariviere stated, the University values and supports openness, pluralism and mutual respect:

Diversity matters at the University of Kansas. It matters because diversity enriches our ability to solve problems and create new knowledge. It is our goal to have the richest possible mix of perspectives, life-experiences, interests, world-views and cultures in our campus community.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

At the beginning of a course, students and faculty members should talk about and agree upon:

1. How they’ll work together
2. How they want to be addressed
3. How they want to communicate in and out of class
4. What their community standards for conduct are
5. What consequences would result if standards aren’t followed
KU is committed to encouraging intellectual freedom, personal integrity and inclusion that fosters an environment that is welcoming to all faculty, staff and students.

The KU community reveres individual worth and dignity, and believes that advocacy for diversity and inclusion is a major responsibility entrusted to all campus community members.

This means that we will recruit and retain a diverse community of faculty, staff and students, as well as develop policies and programs to support a culture of openness, pluralism and mutual respect throughout the University community (Lariviere 2007).

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING

Mutual responsibilities

When a semester starts, students and faculty members should discuss how they will work together. Respectful interaction is a foundation for teaching and learning. Disagreements should focus on ideas or facts. Verbal assaults on fellow students or an instructor are never appropriate.

Class attendance is a privilege. Both instructors and students should follow community standards for conduct, in and out of class. Social boundaries vary from person to person; students should have a chance to discuss their expectations with an instructor and with each other. Students should express their preferences for classroom interactions that support their learning. They should know how their fellow students will react if they don’t meet standards for behavior. Instructors should be very clear about consequences of not following the group’s standards. Students should support standards if consequences occur.

Instructors and students should talk about how they want to be addressed (e.g., “Professor Smith,” not “Mr. Smith” or “Sam”). They should also be clear about how they want to communicate in and out of class (e.g., some students prefer e-mail, some texts; some professors answer e-mail late at night, some not after 5 PM).

Student responsibilities

Whether they’re asking for information or commenting on ideas during discussions, students should respect peers and respect an instructor as the classroom leader. One way to demonstrate respect for an instructor is to come to class prepared and on time.

Students should know an instructor’s preferences for communication and follow them. For example, they should find out if it’s

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ESTABLISHING POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTS

To establish a positive classroom environment, instructors should:

- Explain how class time will be used
- Describe their need for students to be quiet and pay attention
- Identify opportunities for student-to-student interaction
okay to call an instructor at home. They should understand how often—and how late at night—an instructor reads e-mail, and shouldn’t expect a reply too quickly.

Students should be formal and polite when they’re communicating with instructors, both verbally and by e-mail. Students can be casual only if an instructor explicitly welcomes it. Learning to differentiate among individuals’ communication preferences is a useful social and professional skill, and it should be developed.

There are many priorities in a full life; academic work should be very high among them. Students should have enough time to go to classes and complete assignments. Other activities, for money or other reasons, aren’t grounds to expect reduced time on coursework. KU’s policy is that students should allow up to two hours of study for every hour in class. While some instructors don’t follow that policy, others reasonably expect full preparation. Learning takes time, and students are expected to reserve enough time to complete the learning called for in their classes.

Faculty responsibilities

Faculty members should be very clear about how they expect students to perform and participate in courses. During the first week of classes, instructors should discuss their expectations, including acceptable conduct during class meetings (e.g., no cell phones, Facebook, etc.). The discussion could also include specifics about attendance and whether late assignments are accepted.

Instructors should be clear about communication, including forms of address, timing and amount of phone or e-mail contact, and the appropriate degree of formality. Students should be asked how they would like to be addressed in class or in phone and e-mail communication (e.g. “Miss Smith” or “Ms. Smith” or “Jenny”). Instructors should also be clear about how quickly they’ll provide feedback on student work. Ideally, faculty members should return graded work to students by the date promised.

As part of an open class discussion, instructors should explain how they’ll respond if students ignore the guidelines for class conduct. At all times, instructors should respect a student’s right to offer alternate opinions and to ask questions.

Some things must remain areas of instructor discretion, not subject to negotiation with students. These include course content, criteria for measuring understanding/performance, nature and timing of assignments (in and out of class), and use of class time. As with other areas, these expectations should be made explicit at the beginning of the course.

KEYS TO FACILITATING CIVILITY

To facilitate civility, the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and the Center for Teaching Excellence suggest that faculty members and students:

- Talk about and be clear about expectations—how to address each other, communicate in and out of class, and meet community standards for conduct.

- Recognize that disagreements are part of university life, and there’s a difference between understanding and agreement.

- If you disagree with someone, be respectful.

- Support the KU community as we all pursue learning and discovery.
CLASSROOM CIVILITY

KU classrooms should be:

- Focused on learning and communication
- Respectful of diverse understandings
- Committed to supporting learning
- Respectful of all people

The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (see documents.ku.edu/policies/Student_Affairs/Code_Student_Rights_Responsibilities.htm) outlines the rights of students and many of the standards of conduct (responsibilities) expected within the KU community. Within the classroom, according to the University Senate Rules and Regulations (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect6), “An instructor has the authority to set reasonable rules for classroom conduct. When an instructor judges that a student’s behavior is disruptive or obstructive to learning, the instructor can request that the student leave the classroom. Refusal to comply with a request to leave a classroom can itself be grounds for a charge of academic misconduct.”

Faculty members are encouraged to talk with students early each semester to clarify mutual expectations. In most cases, this will help circumvent serious civility problems.

COURSE ENROLLMENT

ENROLL & PAY

Enroll & Pay is the name of KU’s student information computer system. Go to https://sa.ku.edu and use your Outlook sign on to find the Faculty Center on Enroll & Pay. If you have questions, contact the Information Technology help desk at 864-8080.

CLASS ROSTERS

There are two types of class rosters available to faculty at KU:

- Class rosters on Enroll & Pay, Faculty Center (see above), and
- Class rosters on Blackboard, supported by IT (864-8080 or enroll-pay@ku.edu).

REFERRING STUDENTS FOR SPECIAL SERVICES

Setting boundaries with your students is a way to avoid devoting too much time and energy to problems outside of the normal classroom activities. Part of this includes knowing when to refer your students to other campus resources.

Sometimes things occur that are outside your area of expertise. There are people on campus who have a great deal of experience and expertise, ranging from housing disputes to mental illness.

Departments within the Office of Student Affairs provide a variety of services and programs that are designed to enable students to excel academically, such as the Writing Center and the University Advising Center.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Academic Achievement and Access Center help students make a smooth transition to college life.

In addition, students can receive assistance and support through the Counseling and Psychological Services Center, Legal Services for Students, and Disability Resources.

For more information about these resources, see studentaffairs.ku.edu.
CREDIT/NO CREDIT

Undergraduates seeking the credit/no credit grading option for semester-long courses must register their choice in their Dean’s Office during the 21st through the 30th instructional days of the semester. A student may select this option only once during the semester, and the selected class cannot be in his or her declared major. The grade of CR (credit) will be received for grades of A, B, or C. The grade of NC (no credit) will be received for grades D or F. The instructor will not be informed when a student has chosen this option and will assign a conventional letter grade, which will then be converted by the Office of the University Registrar to CR or NC as appropriate. Courses graded CR or NC will not count in computing the grade point average but will be included in the total hours counted toward graduation (see University Senate Rules and Regulations 2.2.8).

ATTENDANCE AT CLASSES, STUDIOS AND LABS

University Senate Rules and Regulations 1.3 (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art1sect1) state the following regarding attendance and exams:

Examinations and tests other than final examinations should not be scheduled in conflict with mandated religious observances. In order to ascertain in a given class if a scheduled examination conflicts with a mandated religious observance, at the beginning of the semester the instructor shall ask students who may be affected to identify themselves privately so that a make-up examination may be scheduled at a mutually acceptable time.

Students with a verifiable medical crisis of a relative or friend may be excused from being present for scheduled examinations and tests. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate discussion with the instructor, prior to the examination/test if possible. The instructor and student shall come to a mutually agreeable method of making up the missed work.

For more information about attendance, see this topic under Motivating Students on page 24.

PRIVACY OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Academic, financial and non-directory information about students is confidential and protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is also known as the Buckley Amendment. Academic information about students cannot be released to another person, including parents or guardians, without students’ written authorization. If a student wishes

PRIVACY DO’S AND DON’TS

DO:

- Do return tests and papers individually.
- Do use Blackboard to post grades or truly anonymous identifiers, randomly assigned.
- Do get a written release to use a student’s paper or photo when it’s identifiable.
- Do use a secure server to store all student information.
- Do train all instructional staff, including GTAs/GRAs, in allowable and appropriate handling of student records.
- Do consult the Privacy Office, Office of General Counsel, or University Registrar if you have student records questions.

DON’T:

- Don’t tell a parent or spouse of a student any information—the student controls his/her record.
- Don’t return tests or papers in a stack or box; names and grades aren’t public information.
- Don’t post grades on a door or Web site with name, SSN or KUID number.
- Don’t post class photos, with or without names, since they contain personally identifiable information; get a signed release first.
- Don’t post a class roster or share it with anyone outside of the class.
- Don’t use excerpts from a student exam or paper that can link it to a student; e.g., name, KUID, SSN, student in a small class, etc.
### WITHDRAWAL PERIODS

**Period 1:**
- Day 1 through 15 of the semester (or first seven instructional days of a summer session).
- Student may cancel enrollment.
- Course will not appear on student’s official transcript.

**Period 2:**
- Day 16 through 60 of the semester (or 8th through 30th instructional day of a summer session).
- A student seeking to withdraw from a course must follow the withdrawal procedures of the College or School in which the student is enrolled. Neither the instructor nor the College or School is entitled to withhold approval of the withdrawal.
- Student will receive the grade of a W. This grade will appear on student’s transcript but will not be included in the GPA.

**Period 3:**
- Day 61 through last day of class for the semester (or 31st instructional day through last day of class for summer session).
- Student cannot withdraw from a course.
- Course grade determined by student’s overall academic performance.

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**WITHDRAWING FROM COURSES**

**WITHDRAWALS**

The withdrawal period is divided into three segments. During Period 1 (first 15 instructional days of a semester, or first seven instructional days of a summer session), students may withdraw from a course by canceling enrollment in it. The course won’t appear on the student’s official record.

During Period 2 (beginning the 16th instructional day through the 60th instructional day of a semester or the eighth instructional day through the 30th instructional day of summer session), a student seeking to withdraw from a course must first obtain a schedule change form signed by the instructor (or designee) and, if required, the student’s school. A student who withdraws during Period 2 will receive the grade of a W. This grade will go on the student’s academic record but will not be factored into the GPA.

During Period 3 (beginning the 61st instructional day through the last day of classes for the semester or the 31st instructional day through the last day of classes for the summer session), a student cannot withdraw from a course. The course grade will be determined by the student’s overall academic performance.

After a student completes a course and a grade has been assigned, including an Incomplete if appropriate, retroactive withdrawal from the class isn’t allowed, except in accordance with **USSR 2.3.3**.

For complete information about the withdrawal policy, see **USSR 2.2.5** (https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect2).

**ADMINISTRATIVE DROPS**

In general, students are required to drop class(es) themselves. However, the Office of the University Registrar can process administrative drops when departments publish conditions and circumstances under which an administrative drop will be pursued in the *Schedule of Classes* for each semester, or departments request an administrative drop when a student hasn’t met published requirements for a particular class or course of study.
Only one faculty/staff person per department should be delegated to submit administrative drop requests. Departments are responsible for attempting to contact students for notification of administrative drops. Refunds may be awarded if the administrative drop is requested during a refund period. The amount of the refund is determined by the date of the request to the Registrar.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct at KU is defined in the University Senate Rules and Regulations, as are sanctions that may be imposed upon a student or instructor (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USR.htm#art2sect6). The Senate Rules and Regulations also specify that “Every instructor shall make clear, at the beginning of each course, his or her rules for the preparation of classroom assignments, collateral reading, notebooks, or other outside work, in order that his or her students may not, through ignorance, subject themselves to the charge of academic misconduct.”

PROMOTING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

McKeachie (2002) suggests several ways that teachers can promote academic honesty. See the box at left for these ideas.

STUDENT WRITING

To reduce plagiarism, Walvoord and Anderson (2010) suggest intervening early: If you see a proposal, outline or draft of a paper, it’s much harder for a student to purchase or copy someone else’s work at the last minute. This is also recommended so that students receive early direction, as opposed to finding out that they’ve spent many hours on a flawed work. This forces students not to procrastinate until the last moment, as well. Finally, taking time to check a draft helps you reach students during a teachable moment—when they can still do something to improve their work—rather than doing an autopsy on a final paper. It will also save you time at the end of the semester; because students have already received feedback on previous drafts, you won’t need to make extensive comments on the final draft.

Two of the best ways to be prepared for an occurrence of plagiarism is to have a clear policy in the syllabus and to know your department’s plagiarism rules and regulations. For more general information, see the Writing Center’s Academic Integrity guidelines (www.writing.ku.edu) or its list of plagiarism resources (www.writing.ku.edu/instructors/guides) and the Ombud’s Website (www.ombuds.ku.edu).

WAYS TO PROMOTE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

McKeachie & Svinicki (2010) suggest the following as ways to promote academic integrity:

Reduce the pressure, by providing several opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, rather than giving only one or two exams. Keep students informed of their progress throughout the semester.

Make reasonable demands and write reasonable and interesting tests. If students are frustrated and become desperate with an assignment that’s too long or a test that focuses on the trivial, they may be more tempted to cheat.

Develop group norms that support honesty. Even discussing academic honesty in class helps students recognize its value. Preserve each student’s sense that he or she is an individual with a personal relationship with the instructor and other students. Dishonesty is less likely to occur if students feel that teachers and other students know them, as opposed to if they feel alienated and anonymous.

When you’re giving a test, if a student has wandering eyes, ask the student to move to a different seat where he or she will be less crowded. McKeachie writes, “If he says he’s not crowded, I simply whisper that I’d prefer that he move. So far no one’s refused” (2010).
GRADE ROSTERS

Grade rosters are available to faculty by 6 PM on the last day of the semester for 15-week courses. For short courses, grade rosters are available the next business day after the last day of the class.

To access rosters, go to https://sa.ku.edu and use your Outlook sign on to Enroll & Pay. Once you’re signed in, select the Faculty Center to see your grade rosters by term. You must be the Instructor of Record to see a roster. If you’re not listed as the Instructor of Record, contact the scheduling officer in your department, and he or she will contact the University Registrar to make the update. The deadline for submitting final grades is five business days after the last day of finals by midnight.

EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Developing Assignments and Evaluating Learning, pages 5–11, provide a useful frame of reference for evaluating student performance. Note the section on repeated testing on page 10.

University Senate Rules and Regulations 2.1 (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect1) provide the following guidelines about evaluating student performance in a course:

The evaluation of student performance shall be based upon examinations, written papers, class participation and such other requirements as the instructor may determine.

Information about the basis for evaluating students’ performance and about the requirements that students must fulfill should be made available to students, preferably in writing, within the first two weeks of class. Students who are not in class when such information is provided are responsible for knowing it. Students are also responsible for subsequent announcements about course content and grading policies. This information should not be considered a contract; the information may be revised as the course progresses, provided students are given timely notice of such revisions.

The faculty of the College or a school may prescribe conditions under which individual students may be exempted from final examinations, provided that such exemption is based on grades received prior to the time of the final examination.

In cases where part of a class grade is based on attendance, a student shall not be penalized for absence from regularly scheduled class activities which conflict with mandated...
religious observances. In cases of conflicts between regularly scheduled class activities and mandated religious observances, the student is responsible for initiating discussion with the instructor to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

The evaluation of student performance is the responsibility and privilege of the faculty. If this responsibility is delegated to a Teaching Assistant or an Assistant Instructor, the faculty member or members in charge of the course retain the right to assign the final course grade.

USRR 2.2.1 also specifies the following regarding the grading system at KU (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect1):

The letters A, B, C, D, S (satisfactory), CR (credit), and + shall be used to indicate passing work.

The grade of A will be reported for achieving outstanding quality.

The grade of B will be reported for achieving high quality.

The grade of C will be reported for achieving acceptable quality.

The grade of D will be reported for achievement that is minimally passing, but at less than acceptable quality.

The letters F, U (unsatisfactory), and NC (no credit) shall indicate that the quality of work was such that, to obtain credit, the student must repeat the regular work of the course, or that the student’s work was not of passing quality at the time of disenrollment from the course.

The letters W and I may be given. The letter I shall indicate incomplete work, such as may be completed without re-enrollment in the course. The letter W shall indicate withdrawal for which no credit or grade point is assigned.

The letter I should not be used if a definite grade can be assigned for the work done. It shall not be given for work of a student in any course except to indicate that some part of the work has, for good reason, not been done, while the rest has been satisfactorily completed. When an I is reported, the character and amount of work needed to remove it should be indicated on the Explanation of Incomplete card for the student’s dean.

An I must be made up in the next semester of enrollment, except when the removal of the I involves the repetition of a portion of the classroom work, in which case it shall be removed

MAXIMIZING STUDENTS’ ACCEPTANCE OF GRADES

Davis (2009) suggests these strategies for maximizing students’ acceptance of grades:

Clearly state grading procedures in your course syllabus, and go over this information in class.

Set policies about late work.

Avoid modifying grading policies during the semester.

Provide many opportunities for students to show you what they know.

Consider allowing students to choose among alternative assignments.

Stress to students that grades reflect class work and aren’t judgments about people.

Encourage students who are performing poorly.

Deal directly and privately with students who are angry or upset about their grade.

Keep accurate records of students’ grades.
in the first semester of residence in which the course is offered. An I not removed according to this rule shall be regarded as a grade of F, U, or NC on request of the student’s dean, with the consent of the instructor, if possible, or the department chairperson if the instructor is not available, and so indicated on the permanent record.

The College or any school may use the letter P to represent satisfactory progress during one semester of work for which a grade will be given only upon the completion of the course or project in a subsequent semester.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Kansas weather varies widely from season to season and may result in class cancellation, particularly during the winter and spring months. In the event of inclement weather that could create hazardous traveling conditions for students or employees, the Provost will make a decision on canceling classes by 5:30 AM and alert the regional news media and the Information Center, and a message will be placed on the inclement weather line (864-SNOW) and the KU Information Center line (864-3506).

**VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

In order to ensure the safety of all its employees and students, the University of Kansas adheres to the State of Kansas Violence in the Workplace Policy, which states that any threatening or violent actions committed on state property against state employees or members of the public will not be tolerated, and could result in dismissal, arrest or prosecution. The policy says that state employees are responsible for alerting their institutions about “any threats which they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.” At KU, employees should contact the director of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity, Ola Faucher, at ofaucher@ku.edu or 864-4946.

Although the chances of a school shooting occurring at KU are statistically slim, it is still important to be aware of the warning signs for potentially violent students or employees. The KU Human Resources web site (http://www.hr.ku.edu/policies_procedures/category_details/index.aspx?category=28; look for “Workplace Violence”) has a link to a report by the Virginia Tech Review Panel that lists warning signs for potentially dangerous individuals. Knowing how to identify these signs, such as violent content in writings and art or a fascination with weapons or previous shootings, could lead to early intervention and saved lives.

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**EMERGENCY RESOURCES**

The following three web sites are great resources for emergency preparation:

For emergencies: http://www.hreo.ku.edu/policies_procedures/category_details/14

For inclement weather: https://documents.ku.edu/policies/provost/WinterWeather-Policy.htm

For violence in the workplace: https://documents.ku.edu/policies/provost/WorkplaceViolence.htm