The Arts, Sciences and University Transfer faculty strives to facilitate student learning in an environment that upholds academic responsibility, rigor, and integrity.

In an effort to support instructors in this endeavor and provide consistency across the department, I am proposing the following guidelines. They are intended as minimum standards to guide instructor’s decisions regarding course policies and procedures. More rigid guidelines may be established by individual faculties.

Ultimately, it is the instructor who has the authority to draft course policies. It is of vital importance, however, that those policies be clearly stated on the syllabus as a legal contract between student and instructor.

As dean of the department, I will use these guidelines along with instructors’ syllabi to resolve student grievances.

Writing Across Disciplines

Writing across disciplines is expected to be part of every course in the Arts, Sciences and University Transfer department.

Writing in any course must be competent, and students are expected to write at a level consistent with course prerequisites. Inadequate writing in any course will negatively impact student’s grades.

Extra Credit

If given, extra credit should be equally available to all students, not for individual students. Extra credit should never be given as a substitute for mastering the required material. At most, extra credit would be intended as an incentive to attend/engage in course-related activities that would enrich the classroom experience.

Makeup tests (tests that student misses)

With prior approval, tests can either be taken early or late at a mutually scheduled time. In the latter case, a different version of the test should be given. The number and timing of makeup tests is left to the instructor’s decision. Makeup tests should be monitored by the instructor or a designee to ensure adherence to the college’s academic honesty policy.

Retake tests (tests the student takes but does poorly on)

In the event that the instructor offer retakes, it is advisable to clearly define who is entitled to retest. Retakes may be allowed either to all students or to students who make “D” or “F” on a test. Retakes are intended as a tool to ensure mastery of the material, not as a way to undermine the merits of preparation. They should be very limited in number and different than the previous test. Retake tests should be monitored by the instructor or a designee to ensure adherence to the college’s academic honesty policy. No retakes will be allowed on final exams.
Deadlines

Meeting deadlines is an integral aspect of a responsible work ethic that students need to develop to successfully function in their jobs or academic environment. Deadlines and consequences for lateness should be clearly written on the syllabus. Deadlines should be appropriate to the nature of the course and/or discipline.

Class/lab time

The college mandate is to meet full measure of class time in lecture and lab, including the first day of classes. Since Science labs vary in nature, the Science faculty should reach a consensus regarding a realistic and feasible number of labs needed for our students to master competencies.

There are no reading days. Therefore, if the final exam is expected to exceed class time, instructors should plan to give those exams as a multi-part test during their regular class period. Instructors have to be aware that students cannot be late to other exams. If other arrangements for final exams are to be made, they should be discussed with and approved by the chairperson and dean.

Cancellation of Classes

In the event the instructor is unable to meet class due to illness, other emergency or a planned professional activity, arrangements should be made to cover the class. Those arrangements have to be notified to the discipline chair, the departmental secretary, and the evening, weekend, or satellite coordinator. If possible, an attempt should be made to pull other faculty to teach the class or to make a meaningful contribution to class instruction. Other alternatives should be discussed with the discipline chair.

Grading

Grading policies are to be clearly stated on the syllabus. Grades are intended as a reflection of student performance. Therefore, it is crucial that faculty by discipline/subject define the parameters for each letter grade. Ideally, there should be consensus by discipline/subject on what defines an “A,” “B,” “C,” and “D” student. These descriptors will promote consistency in grading and help to prevent grade inflation.

Change of Grade

The instructor can change final grades only if there was a mistake or miscalculation of average. The F2 grade has been approved for students who stop attending class and do not drop by the 60% deadline. The department dean with prior recommendation of the instructor and approval by the discipline chair/program director will change final grades only with documented extenuating circumstances (e.g.: medical emergencies, death in family). If a student is dissatisfied with the instructor’s response to his/her grade inquiry, s/he can follow the Student Grievance Procedure stated on pages 30-31 of the college catalog.

Incomplete Grade

Missing exams is not in-and-of itself reason to receive an “incomplete”. The AS&UT department adheres strictly to the policy stated in the college catalog. It reads, “the special grade of Incomplete is assigned when the student has performed at a satisfactory level and has made
significant progress toward the completion of course objectives but is unable to complete all prescribed work by the end of the semester due to extenuating circumstances such as accident, illness, or comparable unavoidable developments. Under normal circumstances, the grade I will not be assigned to a student who fails to appear for the final examination.” Refer to page 20 for more detailed information.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Pages 27-28 of the college’s catalog describe the Student Code of Conduct. In addition, the AS&UT faculty has agreed to include a detailed statement on every syllabi. Samples are provided, but instructors are encouraged to develop their own Academic Honesty statements in consultation with their Discipline chair. I ask that every instructor follow the stated policy. The dean’s office does not tolerate acts of academic dishonesty.