

MICHIGAN STATE
U N I V E R S I T Y

November 25, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Karen Klomparens, Assistant Provost for Graduate Education
and Dean, The Graduate School
June Youatt, Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education

FROM: Linda O. Stanford, Assistant Provost for Academic Services
and Registrar

RE: Code of Teaching Responsibility

In response to numerous inquiries regarding the expectation that grades be submitted in a timely manner, a suggested addition to the Code of Teaching Responsibility is proposed (see attached).

This change will allow students to know what they can expect from their instructors in terms of final grades and it will inform faculty and advisers of what students can reasonably expect.

At the November 18, 2003 meeting of the Undergraduate Assistant / Associate Deans, Dr. June Youatt and I received strong support for the submission of this change to the appropriate governance bodies for consideration.

Therefore, I submit this proposal to you both and request that the University Committee on Academic Policy and the University Graduate Council review and approve/disapprove.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Attachment



**UNIVERSITY
CURRICULUM
and CATALOG**

Michigan State University
176 Administration Building
East Lansing, Michigan
48824-1046

PH: 517/355-8420
FAX: 517/353-1935

CODE OF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY

The teaching responsibilities of instructional staff members (herein referred to as instructors) are among those many areas of university life which have for generations been a part of the unwritten code of academicians. The provisions of such a code are so reasonable to learned and humane individuals that it may appear redundant or unnecessary to state them. However, the University conceives them to be so important that performance by instructors in meeting the provisions of this code shall be taken into consideration in determining salary increases, tenure, and promotion.

1. Instructors are responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses they teach is consistent with the course descriptions approved by the University Committee on Curriculum and the Academic Council. Instructors are also responsible for stating clearly to students in their classes the instructional objectives of each course at the beginning of each semester. It is expected that the class activities will be directed toward the fulfillment of these objectives and that the bases upon which student performance is evaluated will be consistent with these objectives. The University prohibits students from commercializing their notes of lectures and University-provided class materials, without the written consent of the instructor. Instructors may allow commercialization by including express permission in the course syllabus or other written statement distributed to all students in the class.
2. Instructors are responsible for informing students in their classes of the methods to be used in determining final course grades and of any special requirements of attendance which differ from the attendance policy of the University. Course grades will be determined by the instructor's assessment of each student's individual performance, judged by standards of academic achievement; they will be submitted in accordance with University deadlines so students are informed promptly of their academic progress.
3. Examinations and other assignments submitted for grading during the semester should be returned with sufficient promptness to enhance the learning experience. Unclaimed final examination answers will be retained by the instructor for at least one semester so that they may be reviewed by students who desire to do so. Examination questions are an integral part of course materials, and the decision whether to allow their retention by students is the responsibility of the instructor. Term papers and other comparable projects are the property of students who prepare them. They should be returned to students who ask for them and those which are not returned should be retained by the instructor for at least one semester. Instructors who desire to retain a copy for their own files should state their intention to do so in order that students may prepare additional copies for themselves.
4. Instructors are expected to meet their classes regularly and at scheduled times. Instructors will notify their units if they are to be absent and if appropriate arrangements have not been made so that suitable action may be taken by the unit if necessary.
5. Instructors of courses in which assistants are authorized to perform teaching or grading functions shall be responsible for acquainting such individuals with the provisions of this Code and for monitoring their compliance.
6. Instructors are expected to schedule and keep a reasonable number of office hours for student conferences. Office hours should be scheduled at times convenient to both students and instructors with the additional option of prearranged appointments for students when there are schedule conflicts. The minimum number of office hours is to be agreed upon by the teaching unit, and specific times should be a matter of common knowledge.
7. Instructors who are responsible for academic advising are expected to be in their offices at appropriate hours during advising and enrollment periods. Arrangements shall also be made for advising during registration.

Added text is underlined to the left.

Hearing Procedures

1. Students may register complaints regarding an instructor's failure to comply with the provisions of the *Code of Teaching Responsibility* directly with that instructor.
2. Students may also take complaints directly to teaching units' chief administrators or their designates. If those persons are unable to resolve matters to the student's satisfaction, they are obligated to transmit written complaints to unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A copy of any complaint transmitted shall be sent to the instructor. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the student and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.
3. Complaints coming to the University Ombudsman will be reported, in writing, to chief administrators of the teaching units involved when in the Ombudsman's opinion a hearing appears necessary. It will be the responsibility of chief administrators or their designates to inform the instructor and to refer such unresolved complaints to the unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the University Ombudsman, to the student, and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.
4. Students wishing to appeal a teaching unit action or recommendation may do so as outlined in *Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University*, *Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities*, or *Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities*.

Such complaints must normally be initiated no later than the middle of the semester following the one wherein alleged violations occurred. Exceptions shall be made in cases where the involved instructor or student is absent from the University during the semester following the one wherein alleged violations occurred.