

TO: All NJIT Faculty and Instructing Staff

FROM: Donald Sebastian, Provost (Interim) and Senior Vice President for
Research and Development

DATE: August 31, 2009

RE: Course Requirements and Expectations

Welcome to Academic Year 2009 - 2010! I hope the summer proved to be productive and energizing.

It is timely to restate the university policies associated with instruction and to underscore their importance in meeting your classroom responsibilities. These are intended to simplify and systematize your teaching responsibilities, and help achieve one of our primary goals – that of providing an excellent learning environment for our students.

- On the first day of class, you should provide each student with a course syllabus (or directions on how to access it on the web). We are committed to implementing the course standards requirement for all classes taught at or through NJIT. This means that on the first day of class each student must be provided with a complete course syllabus that includes:
 - Course number, title and prerequisites.
 - A course description and outline.
 - A description of the course assessment criteria, methodology for final grade determination, and the weight of each course component (test assignments, class participation, etc.) in determining the final grade.
 - A weekly listing of course topics and assignments/projects with due dates, and that includes expected test dates.
 - The instructor's contact information, office hours during which the instructor will be available, and office location.
 - The title, author, publisher, ISBN number and edition of all required texts, and similar information for non-text required readings.
 - A statement indicating that academic integrity and honesty are of paramount importance to you. Clearly indicate that the NJIT Honor Code will be upheld, and that any violations will be brought to the immediate attention of the Dean of Students.

The syllabus is an important document for students, and any needed modifications or deviations from the syllabus that might be introduced in the course of the semester should be made very clear to students in a timely fashion so that they can respond to accommodate the impact of the changes.

- Chairs and Deans should maintain electronic files of course syllabi from current and past semesters, and they are charged to assess the content and format of syllabi for quality and completeness. These syllabi should be available so that faculty, students and others can access them through the department web site.
- All instructing staff is encouraged to make use of the course profile tool that is developed to conveniently provide general information about their course. This tool can be accessed at <https://courseschedules.njit.edu/>
- In order to insure consistency and fairness in application of the NJIT policy on withdrawals, student requests for withdrawals after the deadline (*end of the 9th week of classes*) will not be permitted unless extenuating circumstances (e.g., major family emergency or substantial medical difficulty) are documented. The course professor and the Dean of Students are the main points of contact for students considering withdrawals.

- Our students want to know how they are doing in courses, and therefore early and periodic testing, assessment, and feedback are important. Tests should be returned in a timely fashion so students know their status in the class. Please make plans in your course so that at least two tests and/or significant assignments are scheduled, graded and returned before the deadline for withdrawal.
- The final examination in NJIT courses typically constitutes approximately one third of the total grade for the course, and students need to be able to schedule their preparation for it. Therefore, it is important that any and all final exams be given during the period scheduled for the examination.
- Professors should post their scheduled office hours for each course on the web and at their office, and should be available during those hours.
- All classes should meet at their scheduled time and location. Classes should not be cancelled without the consent of the Department Chair, and no classes should be scheduled during the university common hours (Mondays 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, Wednesdays 2:30 pm – 5:45 pm, and Fridays 8:30 am – 10:00 am). Any use of the common hour for classes must be approved by the Provost. Any changes in the designated date, location and time of any class may be made only in consultation with the Registrar's Office and with approval of the Chair.
- All common exams must be scheduled at least one semester in advance through the Registrar's Office. Common exams can be scheduled on Fridays 8:30 am – 10:00 am and when absolutely necessary on Wednesdays 4:15 pm – 5:30 pm. In order for a department to schedule any common exams, a department representative must attend the "Common Exams Scheduling Meeting" convened by the Registrar's Office each semester.
- Academic Integrity: please refer to the Academic Integrity web site that contains much information about strategies to promote academic integrity and avoid cheating on classwork and exams. <http://integrity.njit.edu/index.html>. Faculty should also refer to the "Best Practices" document developed and published on the Provost's website (on the policies page) or directly at http://www.njit.edu/academics/provost/docs/Best_Practices_related_to_Academic_Integrity.pdf

During the 2008-2009 academic year the NJIT Administration worked very closely with the Student Senate to enhance and improve NJIT's Honor Code. To continue stressing the importance of academic integrity, the Committee on Academic Affairs and the NJIT Faculty approved the Student Senate's recommendations developed from the findings of the University's Taskforce on the Honor Code.

The approved document, "[University Code on Academic Integrity](http://www.njit.edu/academics/pdf/academic-integrity-code.pdf)" thus replaced the older Honors Code document. (<http://www.njit.edu/academics/pdf/academic-integrity-code.pdf>)

All students are responsible for upholding the integrity of NJIT by reporting any violation of academic integrity to the [Office of the Dean of Students](http://www.njit.edu/doss/). (<http://www.njit.edu/doss/>) The identity of the student filing the report will be kept anonymous.

NJIT will continue to educate top tier students that are academically sound and are self-disciplined to uphold expected standards of professional integrity. NJIT will continue to adapt its policies and procedures to make clear that academic dishonesty will not be tolerated at this institution.

Excerpts from the University Code on Academic Integrity

II. Article 2 - Violations Against the University Code on Academic Integrity

A. Section 1. Violations of Academic Integrity and Range of Sanctions

1.
 1. Violations of academic integrity are grouped into four general categories, based upon the degree of seriousness of the offenses. Descriptions of the violations and the range of sanctions within these categories are provided below. In addition to these sanctions, those stated in the Professional Conduct Code may be applied concurrently.
 2. Repeated offenses of academic integrity (for the same level of incident) shall be treated at the level above (in seriousness) the original (or previous) offense.
 3. The disciplinary action(s) imposed by the Committee on Professional Conduct will not appear on the student's transcript, except in cases of suspension or expulsion. In the case of suspension, the transcript notation will be removed when the student is eligible to return to the university.
 4. The university reserves the right to adjudicate alleged violations either during the academic term when the incident occurs, or after that term, and may revoke a degree which was awarded before the violation was adjudicated.

B. Section 2. Student Transcript: XF Sanction System

1. A student who fails a course due to academic integrity violations will be assigned a grade of "XF" in that course and placed on probation for a period to be determined by the sanctioning authority. The "XF" will be treated in the same way as an "F" for the purposes of Grade Point Average, course repeatability, and determination of academic standing.
2. Once the probationary period has passed, the student may petition the Dean of Students Office to remove the "X" portion of the grade after completion of an ethics workshop. The student will have up to two years to attend the workshop and have the "X" removed. After that time the "X" will remain permanently.
3. Notation on the student's transcript shall read, "Failure due to academic dishonesty."
4. Students with the "XF" designation will be prohibited from officially representing the university, holding office in a student organization or representative body during their probationary period.
5. Receiving more than one "XF" grade will result in expulsion.

Thank you for your commitment to continuous improvement in the learning environment at NJIT. Our experience indicates that implementation of our best practices will lead to student success.

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