



DATE: January 2014
TO: UNLV Full-time, Part-time Faculty and Teaching Staff
FROM: John V. White, Executive Vice President & Provost
RE: UNLV Policies for Faculty and all Teaching Staff – Spring 2014

As you prepare for the new term, I would like to call your attention to some of the policies and guidelines that you will find important. As noted in previous semesters, I would like to remind you that it is imperative that faculty members maintain contact/office hours, meet classes for their fully scheduled time, and give final examinations at the times indicated in the class schedule.

Please review all of these items carefully. **New or updated content is in green.** This memo is posted electronically on the Executive Vice President and Provost Office's website at <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/policies-forms#S>, (Semester Memo, UNLV Policies for Faculty, Spring 2014). If you have any questions, please contact **Gail Griffin**, gail.griffin@unlv.edu.

ADA Accommodations – For all faculty and staff (professional and classified) ADA accommodation determinations, please contact EEO/AA Compliance Office, located in Flora Dungan Humanities (FDH), Room 514, (702) 895-3656. See <http://hr.unlv.edu/policies/ada.html> for additional information.

Classroom Policies/Rules – It is a faculty member's discretion and prerogative to determine what is and is not acceptable behavior in his or her classroom (e.g., late arrival, wearing hats). Also, classroom occupants are at the discretion of the instructor (per UNLV General Counsel). If faculty do not wish to permit students to bring their children to class, they may want to note it on their syllabus. Although there is no policy prohibiting bringing children to class, it falls within the Student Conduct Code, Section Two, III. K. and L. relating to "disrupting" the classroom and/or university operations. See <http://studentconduct.unlv.edu/>.

Consensual Relationships – UNLV prohibits romantic or sexual relationships between members of the university community when one of the individuals involved has direct professional influence or direct authority over the other. For further information, see <http://hr.unlv.edu/policies/consensual.html>.

Final Examinations – The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

General Classroom Procedures – Faculty members are expected to hold class meetings that are:

- Consistent with the course schedule. When faculty members must miss an occasional class (e.g., for professional meetings, due to sickness, or for the observance of a religious holiday), they are expected to reschedule that class meeting or to arrange for a replacement, or provide alternative instruction or assignments (see complete *Missed Classes* policy and procedures at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/policies-forms#M>)
- Maintain a predictable number of office hours which shall be posted and the faculty shall be available to students, colleagues, and others;
- Evaluate academic performance fairly;
- Counsel students;
- Carry through with their workload commitment in accordance with UNLV, college/school, and department/unit bylaws. Faculty members should have prior approval from their supervisor before missing/rescheduling classes and/or missing other scheduled duties, with the exception of emergencies (see complete *Missed Classes* policy and procedures at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/policies-forms#M>);
- Continue their professional development; and
- Meet their obligations to the university community.

Grading/Exams/Grade Posting – All syllabi should clearly indicate processes for grading, exams, and grade posting. In keeping with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), grades should not be posted unless you can ensure complete confidentiality for individual students. Please remember that Social Security numbers are not adequate protection of privacy. The preferred method for posting grades is to assign random numbers to the students and scramble the listings so that they are not in alphabetical order.

Grade Submission Deadline – Tuesday, May 20, 5 pm.

Final grades are due at 5:00 PM on the Tuesday following final exams, except for the few courses (NUR, for example) that have a different ending date. Beyond the professional responsibility to provide final grades to students in a timely manner, late grades have a negative impact on UNLV's share of the NSHE performance funding formula. It is ultimately the department and college's responsibility to have all final grades posted on time.

Incomplete Grades - The grade of I – Incomplete – can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed **all course work up to the withdrawal date of that semester/session** but for reason(s) beyond the student's control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. A student who receives an I is responsible for making up whatever work was lacking at the end of the semester. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Recording Date of Last Attendance for Incomplete and F Grades - Under NSHE and UNLV policy, faculty are "not required to take attendance" as defined under federal financial aid guidelines. However, both federal financial aid and NSHE policy require faculty to record, when assigning an F grade, the student's "date of last attendance" to determine if the student has completed more than 60% of the instruction of a course. Individual faculty may, at their discretion, record an "FN" grade (F for non-attendance) in the case of a student who has not completed greater than 60% of instruction but has not withdrawn from the course.

The UNLV policy for the assignment of an Incomplete requires the student to complete a designated portion of coursework instruction, equal to the established deadline for withdrawal from the course, so faculty are expected to record a date of last attendance when recording an Incomplete grade.

In all of these instances, the percent of instruction achieved is based upon the student's date of last attendance, which in turn, based upon Federal financial aid guidelines, is defined as the "last date of attendance at an academically related activity" associated with the course. This could be later than the last date of physical classroom attendance.

Academically related activity is defined at UNLV as any of the following, all of which are drawn from title VI federal financial aid guidelines:

- a. physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students;
- b. submitting an academic assignment;
- c. taking an exam, an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction;
- d. attending a study group that is assigned by the school;
- e. participating in an online discussion about academic matters;
- f. Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Academically related activities do not include activities where a student may be present, but not academically engaged, such as:

- a. living in institutional housing;
- b. participating in the school's meal plan;
- c. logging into an online class without active participation or
- d. participating in academic counseling or advisement.

Note (c) above – logging into an online course without active participation -- is specified as not the acceptable standard; instead the standard is that an institution can demonstrate "that a student participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically related activity, such as by contributing to an online discussion or initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question."

Mid-semester Grades – Mid-semester grades will be reported using MyUNLV for students in all 09X, 100, and 200 level courses. **For Spring 2014, all mid-semester grades should be entered into MyUNLV by 5 pm on March 14.** This deadline will allow Academic Success Center (ASC) Staff and Academic Advisors in each Advising Center to contact students in need in sufficient time to allow them to register for mid-semester courses. Additionally, this timetable allows for adjustments prior to the **April 4 final drop date**. The ASC Academic Success coaches and tutors will also work with advisors to provide additional support and resources to students who are struggling in one or more courses.

Although assignment of mid-semester grades is not required, the Executive Vice President and Provost strongly urges those teaching pre-junior level courses to participate and the tool is available for all undergraduate courses.

If you do not have a login for MyUNLV, please contact pstraining@unlv.edu.

Mid-Semester Courses - For Spring 2014, instruction of mid-semester courses will begin April 7 and end May 9. This will allow for five weeks of instruction before the full semester final exams begin. As in prior semesters, these classes should include a minimum of 750 minutes of classroom instruction per credit.

Departments should build their mid-semester courses as soon as possible to allow for scheduling and advertising. Note that these courses will be FTE generating courses just as any others that are taught in a department. Thus, each department will need to complete the employment documents for its courses.

Missed Class(es)/Student – As a general rule, a student missing a class or laboratory assignment because of observance of a **religious holiday** shall have the opportunity to make up missed work. Students must notify the instructor of anticipated absences no later than the end of the first two weeks of classes, **January 31**, to be assured of this opportunity. Faculty may give students an additional week, but are encouraged to set a clear deadline.

In accordance with the UNLV faculty senate-approved policy regarding class time and assignments missed, students who represent UNLV in any **official extracurricular activity** shall also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student provides official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy is to offer fair and equitable opportunities to all students, including those representing the university in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the faculty senate's policy, and an infringement on the student's right to complete all work and fairly earn his or her grade in the course.

This policy shall not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the university that could reasonably have been avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both faculty and student to come to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy do arise, they can be appealed to the department chair/unit director, college/school dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to: fine arts activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, science and engineering competitions, liberal arts competitions, academic recruitment activities, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a college/school dean, and/or the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail – By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication, information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu.

Saturday Classes Holiday Schedule – In general, if a holiday falls on a Monday, then Saturday classes meet. If a holiday falls on a Friday, then Saturday classes do not meet. To review the Faculty Senate policy detailing when Saturday classes are considered holidays, please see “Saturday Classes Holiday Policy” in the alphabetical listing, <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/policies-forms#S>.

Student of Concern – Faculty may come in contact with students whose behavior may cause concern. A process has been developed to deal with such situations and training is also available by contacting the Office of Student Conduct at 895-2308. To report an issue, go to <http://studentconduct.unlv.edu/concern/>. For immediate emergency assistance from UNLV Police Services, dial 911 on a UNLV land-line phone or 895-3668 option 2 from a cell phone.

Teaching Evaluations – In order to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching at UNLV, course evaluations are required to be administered at the end of each course. Teaching evaluations are a very important piece of assessment data and it is important that the reliability, validity, and legitimacy of these instruments be maintained. The minimum standards for administering these evaluations (Anonymity, Objectivity and Post-Evaluation Procedures) are outlined in the document “Minimum Standards for Teaching Evaluation by Students.” This

document has been approved unanimously by the Academic Council of Deans and the Executive Vice President and Provost as reflecting the minimum standards that apply to all departments/schools/units when administering student evaluations of teaching.

To review the policy, please see “Evaluations by Students - Minimum Standards for” in the alphabetical listing at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/policies-forms#E>.

Textbooks/Faculty Requiring Own Textbook(s) for Class – In order for faculty members to assign their own textbook for use in one of their classes, it must be approved by the faculty member's dean. These guidelines were developed to protect both faculty and students. The policy and form can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/policies-forms#T>. Approval is granted by completing the request form and obtaining the requisite signatures prior to submitting book orders each semester. An approval is good for three years, so it will not be necessary to complete a form for the same book/class during that time period. The offices of the deans maintain these records.

Requirements specified by the NSHE attorneys are as follows: 1) published books must be properly copyrighted by the authors; 2) published books are available for open sale; 3) UNLV faculty do not make sales directly to students; and 4) published books being assigned as texts in a course are approved for such use by the Dean of the College/School concerned. NOTE: This does not apply to course packets that go through Reprographics/Design Services and the UNLV Bookstore. They are covered by another policy, see http://repro.unlv.edu/print/academic_printing_service.php.

UNLV Today – a daily e-newsletter that delivers information to UNLV faculty and staff via their Lotus Notes e-mail account. Information shared in UNLV Today includes upcoming events, training, benefit changes, organizational changes, and more. You can submit an item for consideration via <http://news.unlv.edu/unlvtoday>.

UNLV Official – an electronic mail list that disseminates information the entire campus must receive. Subscription to the UNLV Official list is automatic and occurs at the time an employee e-mail account is established. Our expectation is that employees will read these daily.

Thank you for your compliance with these important policies. Have a great semester!