



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TEXAS**  
ARLINGTON

OFFICE OF  
GRADUATE STUDIES

# Graduate Teaching Assistant Handbook

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## Introduction: What is the purpose of this Manual?

The transition from student to teacher can be challenging. On the one hand, your role in the University will continue (first and foremost) to be that of a student working toward an advanced degree. However, when you accept an appointment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) you also accept the responsibilities that come with being an educator and an employee of the University, roles that define the fundamental dynamics of your relationships with the students you teach. This manual will not describe specific classroom duties that you will be expected to perform as a GTA. Such information will come to you through the program or department that hires you. Similarly, this manual is not intended to be a text on the art and science of teaching or even to simply provide a collection of “teaching tips” (although some guidance and a few tips will be offered). Rather, the intent behind this document is to provide you with a resource to help you understand the conditions that apply to your employment as a GTA, highlight your basic responsibilities as an employee of the University and explain the processes and procedures that you must follow to fully meet those responsibilities. GTAs are an integral part of UT Arlington and play a vital role in the success of the University as an institution of higher learning. The Office of Graduate Studies hopes this manual will help free you from questions or concerns that might otherwise take away from the pleasure of the experience of teaching and becoming a skilled educator.



“EDUCATION IS NOT PREPARATION FOR  
LIFE; EDUCATION IS LIFE ITSELF.”

- John Dewey

## Getting Started: Being Appointed as a Graduate Teaching Assistant

Graduate teaching assistants fall under the general direction of the department chair. He or she is responsible for making you the offer of an assistantship and completing the hiring process. The Chair also assigns you work in one or more classes and/or laboratories. GTAs may be assigned to assist a faculty member in a class or laboratory sections associated with a class taught by a faculty member. In such instances GTAs may be required to give presentations, conduct demonstrations, lead discussions, administer tests or assignments, and assist with grading; but they are not responsible for officially assigning final grades to students enrolled in the course. This is the responsibility of the faculty member who is being assisted by the GTA. UT Arlington identifies the person with grading authority as the “instructor of record” and that person’s name is the one that appears as the instructor on the official class roll. Advanced students who have a master’s degree or equivalent and who have completed 18 hours of graduate study in the field in which they will teach may serve as an instructor of record having total responsibility including all grading for one or more undergraduate classes. However, even in cases where a GTA is the instructor of record, faculty members are usually assigned by the department chair to provide some supervision and guidance to the GTA. Newly hired GTAs employed at 50% (20 hours/week) or more must be reported to the UT Arlington Human Resources (HR) Office by the hiring department. New hires may be required to attend a new employee orientation at the HR

department. New GTAs will also need to complete paperwork required by HR. It can be obtained directly from the HR office or it may be available in the hiring department. You should also contact the HR office if you have questions about employee benefits, payment options, your employee record or other matters pertaining to being an employee of the University. Their offices are located at 1225 W. Mitchell Street and they can be reached via phone at 817-272-5554.

## **Qualifications Required to Hold a GTA Position**

The following policies and regulations are taken from the University Catalog [<http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/financialaid/>] and describe the minimum requirements a student must meet to hold a GTA. Hiring departments may impose additional requirements. Even if you meet requirements to hold a GTA appointment, there are no guarantees that you will be hired or that your appointment will be continued beyond the period of your contract. The decision to hire will always reflect the availability of positions, the needs of the hiring department and the match between your knowledge and skills and the requirements of the potential assignment.

## **New and Readmitted Students**

A student beginning graduate study or resuming graduate study after readmission must be admitted to a degree program to be eligible to hold a graduate assistantship. New students admitted either unconditionally or admitted with probationary conditions may be considered for an assistantship. Returning students who left the University on academic probation (GPA less than 3.00) and new or returning students granted provisional admission are not eligible to hold an assistantship.

## **English Proficiency Requirement**

Before being appointed to a teaching assistantship at UT Arlington, a student whose native language is not English must demonstrate English proficiency. The preferred method to demonstrate proficiency is by submitting an acceptable score of at least 23 on the Speaking Section of the TOEFL, or by earning a score of at least 7 on the Speaking Section of the IELTS. The TOEFL and IELTS scores should be sent directly to UT Arlington by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Score reports submitted directly by the student or those marked "Student Copy" or "Applicant's Copy" are not considered official and will not be accepted by the University. The English proficiency requirement will be waived for non-native speakers of English who possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution. See [Graduate Admissions](#) for more information.

## **Developmental English Program**

Students who do not achieve scores on the TOEFL or IELTS high enough to satisfy the English proficiency requirements for graduate teaching assistants must enroll in the Developmental

English Program and be certified for English proficiency before becoming eligible to hold a teaching assistantship. This 10-week program, offered by the UT Arlington [English Language Institute](#) emphasizes oral presentation skills and accent reduction. Registration is in 402 Hammond Hall, and the charge for course is payable at the time of registration.

## Continuation or Renewal of Appointment

Although a student may be appointed initially to a graduate assistantship for a full academic year, continuation of the appointment beyond the first semester is subject to the following conditions:

1. To continue or renew an appointment, the student must be in good standing in the University. A student on academic probation is not in good standing, and therefore, will automatically lose his or her assistantship. However, Graduate Advisors, with the written endorsement of their department's or program's Graduate Studies Committee, may petition the Academic Dean of the relevant College to allow a one-time exception, granting one additional semester of assistantship support in the next semester of enrollment if they judge the student is capable of raising his/her GPA to the required minimum by the end of that semester and believe that the student is making satisfactory progress in all other aspects of his/her studies. If granted, the student will be



considered to be in good academic standing for one semester for purposes of continuing their assistantship. This broadened definition of academic good standing for a student with a GPA below 3.00 applies only in cases where a program wishes to continue or renew a student's teaching or research assistantship during the semester of enrollment following the one in which his or her GPA dropped below 3.00. Programs may not request this exception on behalf of students who will hold any other type of employment.

A student granted one semester of good academic standing for purposes of continuing their assistantship must improve his/ her UT Arlington graduate grade point average to 3.00 and return to good academic standing as normally defined in the next semester of enrollment in order to qualify for assistantship support in subsequent semesters. Requests to extend this form of good standing beyond one semester will not be approved. Further, students who have previously received a one-semester extension of academic good standing for purposes of continuing their assistantship will not be eligible for this exception again.

2. The student must be making satisfactory progress toward an advanced degree.

3. The student must have performed assigned assistantship duties satisfactorily in the preceding semester(s) as determined by the department in which the assistantship is held.

A department may limit the number of semesters during which a graduate student may hold an assistantship.

## Course Load for Full Assistantships

Graduate assistants holding full assistantships (20 hours of employment per week) may register for and must complete no fewer than nine semester hours during each long semester (fall/spring) and no fewer than six semester hours during the three summer semesters. The nine hour minimum registration limit may be reduced to six semester hours for master's degree students who 1) have completed all required coursework 2) are registered for thesis only. In such cases, master's students should enroll in 5698 and International students meeting these requirements must obtain written permission from the [Office of International Education](http://www.uta.edu/oie/) <http://www.uta.edu/oie/>] to enroll in fewer than nine hours and present it to the appointing department.

### Effective Summer 2011

1. Doctoral students must register for a minimum total of 9 hours of dissertation research *over the course of their programs of work*. These hours may be accumulated over several terms or completed in a single term.

2. Doctoral students must be enrolled in *9 hours while completing organized coursework* and 6 hours while exclusively enrolled in dissertation research in order to be considered full time. However, a one-time exception to this rule can be granted for students during their completion term. The **completion term** is typically the term in which a student successfully defends his or her dissertation, fully completes all degree requirements, and graduates. The following apply to the use of the completion term:

- Doctoral students enroll in the 7399 dissertation completion course in the term designated as their **completion term**. Students may designate only one term as the completion term.
- Doctoral students who enroll in the 7399 course and who do not graduate at the end of their completion term will receive a grade of R, W or F and **must enroll in a minimum of 6 hours of dissertation research (6699 or 6999) every term until graduation.**
- **Students who wish to remain eligible for financial aid in the term designated as the completion term must enroll in a minimum of 5 hours each term as required by the Office of Financial Aid. Enrollment in the 7399 completion course only satisfies the full-time enrollment for GTA/GRA appointments and does NOT satisfy the full-time enrollment requirement for Financial Aid (these requirements are regulated by state and federal law).**

3. These enrollment requirements are minimums set by the Office of Graduate Studies. Departments may choose to require more research or dissertation hours than the minimums set by OGS.



## Partial Assistantships

Graduate Teaching Assistants or Graduate Research Assistants who have a 25% (10 hours of employment per week) or less appointment must be enrolled for at least six hours during a long semester and three hours during the summer. This enrollment requirement covers both organized courses and dissertation and thesis hours. However, all graduate students, whether funded or unfunded, must follow UT Arlington policy concerning required enrollment in the final semester (see information listed above regarding completion term).

## Assignment of Duties

Graduate teaching assistants are under the general direction of the department chair with regard to assistantship responsibilities and assignments. The instructor of record for the course will assign specific tasks for assistants to perform.

## Additional Employment While an Assistant or Associate

In accepting a graduate assistantship/associateship, students agree to devote their efforts to graduate studies and assistantship/associateship responsibilities. In some circumstances, however, additional employment may be justified. Immigration policies severely restrict the amount that an international student may work.

## U.S. Citizen Students

Full-time (20-hour) graduate assistants wishing to hold additional assistantships/associateships or accept additional on or off-campus positions must obtain the approval of their Graduate Advisor. Approval will be given only if the additional work will not impact the student's academic progress negatively or exceed employment limits allowed by law.

## International Students

During the fall and spring semesters, international students may work on campus only 20 hours per week unless authorized for additional employment through Curricular Practical Training (CPT). During vacation and the summer, international students may work more than 20 hours per week on-campus without additional authorization. At any time during the year, employment with an off-campus employer must be authorized by either BCIS or by the International Office in the case of CPT. The Office of International Education must grant approval prior to taking on additional employment if that employment is to be authorized by CPT. Students holding a UT Arlington

"SOME PEOPLE DREAM OF GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, WHILE OTHERS STAY AWAKE AND DO THEM."

- Anonymous

assistantship wishing to work off-campus in addition to the assistantship, must 1) meet and maintain the enrollment requirements for holding an assistantship 2) meet the immigration requirements for CPT 3) work only part-time (20 hours or less) off-campus 4) be employed in off-campus work that is clearly connected to his or her assistantship. If these requirements are not met, a student will be obliged to give up either the assistantship or the off-campus employment.

## Salary and Benefits

### Salaries

Salaries for GTAs working for a department in a particular College or School vary as a function of the GTAs progress in his or her program of study. Starting students are paid less than those with more experience and are typically given GTA assignments requiring less responsibility and more direction. GTAs are usually hired and paid a salary for a 50% time appointment (20 hours/week) although it is not uncommon for students to be hired to work less than this amount. Graduate Assistants are considered “exempt” employees by UT Arlington which means they are not eligible for overtime pay. A department may limit the number of semesters during which a graduate student may hold an assistantship.

### Benefits

Graduate teaching and research assistants employed at least 20 hours per week in positions related to their degree programs are entitled to Texas resident tuition rates. Eligibility for the resident rate must be certified by the hiring department prior to registration otherwise, full tuition will be assessed. Non-resident students receiving appointments after a term's published Census date will not be eligible for resident tuition rates in that term. Non-resident or international students holding less than full assistantships (full meaning 20 hours employment per week) are not eligible for Texas resident rates. Some GTAs are also awarded full or partial tuition fellowships when available. Non-resident students receiving appointments after a term's published Census date are not eligible for resident tuition rates in that term. Non-residents holding less than full assistantships (less than 20 hours/week) are not eligible for the waiver that grants resident rates. Health Insurance: Employees appointed one-half time or more for a period of 4 ½ months or longer are eligible for participation in the university's group insurance programs. These programs include Group Medical, Dental, Vision, Term Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Short Term Disability, Long Term Disability, and Long Term Care. Specific eligibility requirement and details of each program are available from the Office of Human Resources. For each part-time employee, the university will provide 50% of the part-time employee's premiums for the Basic Coverage Package and up to 25% of the premiums for the part-time employee's dependents. Newly eligible employees and dependents will be required to satisfy a 90-day waiting period before State Premium Sharing is provided. Please see the [Office of Human Resources Employee Benefits website \[http://www.uta.edu/hr/benefit-services/\]](http://www.uta.edu/hr/benefit-services/).

UT Arlington Health Center [\[http://www.uta.edu/campus-ops/health-services/\]](http://www.uta.edu/campus-ops/health-services/): Health services are available to all enrolled, fee-paying students. Student employees, such as GTAs, may utilize

Health Services as students. The UT Arlington Health Center is staffed and equipped to care for most routine health needs. Many services are free. A reasonable fee is assessed for services such as medications, x-rays, laboratory tests, etc. The Clinic is located at 605 S. West Street on campus. The phone number is 817-272-2771.

## Where We Teach: The University Profile

The University of Texas at Arlington is classified as Research University by the Carnegie Foundation and is proud to be recognized as a Hispanic Serving University (HSU). It is one of the fastest growing universities in the United States (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014) and has been named one of the “**Best in the West**” by The Princeton Review. Ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the fifth among national universities in diversity, it is one of the 50 most popular U.S. colleges and universities for international students, and is also one of the top ranked “Best for Vets” universities in the nation. Its student body, enrollment growth, degree programs and commitment to research and creative work led the New America Foundation, to name UTA as one of six examples of national “**Next Generation Universities.**”

UT Arlington is committed to expanding academic research; to attracting and retaining high quality faculty scholars who actively engage students; to providing a well-rounded academic experience that promotes student involvement, service learning and free discourse; to employing alternative access venues to meet students’ needs; and to developing public and private partnerships. Founded in 1895 as a private liberal arts institution, UT Arlington has evolved through a succession of names and missions. The institution achieved senior college status in 1959 and became part of The University of Texas System in 1965. The institution, which comprises 409 acres in downtown Arlington, is currently authorized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer 81 baccalaureates, 70 masters, and 30 doctoral degree programs. UT Arlington currently serves more than 34,000 students, including approximately 9,000 graduate students.

*The one exclusive sign of  
thorough knowledge is the  
power of teaching.*  
- Aristotle

## Who We Teach: Undergraduates at UT-Arlington

In fall 2015, 67% of first-time freshmen applicants were accepted. The mean SAT composite score for incoming first-time, full-time freshmen was 1200. Sixty-two percent of incoming first-time, full-time freshmen graduated in the top quarter of their high school class. The student population is non-traditional in many ways. Most students enter UT Arlington as transfers, many with 60 or more hours already completed. The average age of students in fall 2014 was 30, and 44 percent were enrolled on a part-time basis. According to the 2014-2015 Student Survey, 79 percent of UT Arlington students hold jobs, with 62 percent working 21 or more hours per week. It should be noted, however, that the cohort of traditional first time freshman is growing. The size of the incoming freshman class has almost doubled since 2000, reaching 2,825 in fall 2015. These

students have an average age of 18, almost all attend full-time, and about 53 percent of first-time freshmen live in campus residence halls or apartments. UT Arlington is one of the most diverse institutions in the nation. In fall 2015, the student population was 14.7 percent African American, 23.3 percent Hispanic, 10.2 percent Asian, 0.2 percent Native American and 12.7 percent International. It is estimated that the Hispanic student population will be UT Arlington's fastest growing student segment in the coming decades.

## **Mission Statement**

The University of Texas at Arlington is a comprehensive research, teaching, and public service institution whose mission is the advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of excellence. The University is committed to the promotion of lifelong learning through its academic and continuing education programs and to the formation of good citizenship through its community service learning programs. The diverse student body shares a wide range of cultural values and the University community fosters unity of purpose and cultivates mutual respect. The Mission of the University is described more fully at:

<https://www.uta.edu/uta/about/administration/mission.php>.

## **Ethics and Personal Conduct**

As educators at the University, you are expected to uphold standards of personal conduct and behave in an ethical and professional manner. The following are presented to familiarize you with the general outline of these obligations. If you have questions regarding proper conduct, do not hesitate to ask your supervising professor, department chair or to contact the administrative offices responsible for assuring employees understand their roles and obligations. These offices include:

[Human Resources](#)

[Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action,](#)

[Student Judicial Affairs](#)

[Office for Students with Disabilities](#)

## **Ethics and Standards of Conduct**

Ethical behavior is expected of all employees of the University of Texas at Arlington. The State of Texas and the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System have defined certain ethical standards to which we must adhere. The following presents a selection of points from that larger policy to give you a sense of the range of issues where UT Arlington ethical practices are relevant. It should be understood, however, that employees are expected to comply with the entire policy, not just the items reproduced here. For the most complete and current information on ethical standards please see the Standards of Conduct Digest available on the Office of General Counsel's website. [UT Arlington's policy on ethical behavior](#) (UT Arlington Fiscal Regulation 3-34 Ethics and Standards of Conduct) can be found at <http://www.uta.edu/policy/procedure/3-34>. High ethical standards and compliance with the law are of critical importance to The University of Texas at Arlington. It is our obligation to the State of Texas, the UT System Board of Regents and ourselves to be good stewards of the resources that have been entrusted to us.

- Employees shall adhere to the laws, rules, regulations, and policies of applicable governmental and institutional authorities and the following standards of conduct. Failure to do so may be grounds for disciplinary action, immediate suspension or dismissal. Employees shall maintain a working knowledge of all laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures of related job obligations, duties and responsibilities.
- Employees shall notify their supervisor, the University’s Compliance and Ethics Officer, or the Ethics Hotline (1-877-507-7314) of all suspected ethical violations, fraud or breach of the Standards of Conduct. Employees of the University of Texas at Arlington may not have a direct or indirect interest, financial or otherwise, in a corporation or business, engaging in a professional activity, or incurring an obligation of any nature that is in substantial conflict with or might reasonably tend to influence the performance of their official duties at UT Arlington.
- If an employee is served with a warrant or a subpoena regarding official UT Arlington business, you should immediately contact the Vice President for Business Affairs and Controller for further instructions.
- Employees shall not accept or solicit any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence the employee in the discharge of their official duties or that the employee knows or should know is being offered with the intent or influence to influence the employee’s official conduct.
- Employees shall not disclose confidential information gained by reason of his or her official position or otherwise use such information for his or her personal gain or benefit. Unless specifically exempted from disclosure by the Attorney General or made confidential by law, all documents collected, assembled, or maintained by UT Arlington in the regular course of business are available to the public under the terms and conditions of the Texas Public Information Act. Requests for documents under the Texas Public Information Act should be made to the Vice President for Business Affairs and Controller.
- Employees are not allowed to support or oppose legislation (orally or in writing) as representatives of UT Arlington. Additionally, political contributions from any source of University funds are prohibited.

“BE A STUDENT AS LONG AS YOU STILL  
HAVE SOMETHING TO LEARN, AND THIS  
WILL MEAN ALL YOUR LIFE.”

- HENRY L. DOHERTY

## Personal Relationships with Students

It is possible to become friends with the students you teach and it is wonderful and rewarding for both the GTA and the student when such friendships develop. However, relationships that go beyond the platonic must be avoided. It is never appropriate for a GTA (or a faculty member for

that matter) to enter into a sexual relationship with one of his or her students. It makes no difference if the relationship is consensual. The policy of the University is that even consensual relationships between faculty or staff members in positions of authority and their subordinates or their students are not permitted and shall result in disciplinary action. In fact, not only are such relationships morally suspect and professionally unacceptable, they are also considered a form of sexual harassment which is illegal. The following provides the details of UT Arlington's policy on sexual harassment.

## **Sexual Harassment and Misconduct**

Sexual misconduct and sexual harassment are unacceptable behaviors. These acts include verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Incidents of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment should be reported to Equal Opportunity Services. Additional information can be found in [A Standards of Conduct Guide for Employees](http://www.uta.edu/compliance/pdf/conduct_guide.pdf) [[http://www.uta.edu/compliance/pdf/conduct\\_guide.pdf](http://www.uta.edu/compliance/pdf/conduct_guide.pdf)].

### **Policy on Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment is unacceptable, unprofessional and illegal. The University of Texas at Arlington's policy on Sexual Harassment was developed in response to Federal law and applies to GTAs and all other employees of the University.

The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to an academic and employment environment free from unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Arlington that a consensual relationship between faculty or staff members in positions of authority and their subordinates or their students are not permitted. The University will take prompt disciplinary action against individuals who are found guilty of sexual harassment against employees or students. What is Sexual Harassment? - Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual misconduct includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed towards another individual that does not rise to the level of sexual harassment but is unprofessional and inappropriate for the workplace or classroom. What are the Types of Sexual Harassment? - Sexual harassment can take many forms. It can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical and can range from an overt suggestion that a person could get a higher grade or salary increase by submitting to sexual advances to an advance or suggestion implied from the conduct, circumstance, and relationship of the individuals involved. Such conduct may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or scholastic environment. A third party can also claim sexual harassment when his or her employment or educational opportunity has been adversely affected by "sexual favoritism" in the workplace or academic environment. Ignoring sexual harassment does not make it go away. It may make it worse because the harasser may misinterpret no response as approval of the behavior. For more information on sexual harassment see <http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/sexual-harassment>.

## Policy on Drug Free Work Place

You should also be aware of the University's policy regarding drug and alcohol use. Generally speaking the policy states that you will not manufacture, sell, possess distribute store and/or use alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours, or use such substances while off duty or at University functions in a manner that impairs your performance while carrying out your job responsibilities or which impairs the safety of others. For a complete description of this policy go to <https://www.uta.edu/policy/hop/adm/5/502>.

## Ethical Use of State Resources

*The Law: State officers or employees commit a criminal offense if they intentionally or knowingly misapply any "thing of value" belonging to the government that is in their custody or possession as a result of their state employment in order to obtain a benefit or to harm another person.*

Here are some examples of resources that must be used properly by employees.

- 1. Telephone and Electronic Mail:** Telephones and email are to be used for institutional purposes. Incidental use for local personal calls or messages, not interfering with work responsibility, however, is not a misapplication of state resources. Personal long distance telephone calls should not be charged to the institution and must be reimbursed by the employee if charged inadvertently. UT Arlington telephone logs, records, and email are public property and may be subject to open information requests.
- 2. Equipment and Supplies:** State-issued machines, office supplies, and other equipment are to be used for institutional purposes only, not for personal or private purposes.
- 3. Employee Time:** Employee work time is a "thing of value" belonging to the state. Employees may not use work time for personal business.
- 4. Political Campaigns and Elections:** An employee shall not use institutional time, funds, equipment, or other resources to work on a political campaign or to influence the passage or defeat of legislation.
- 5. Expense Claims:** Vouchers for travel expenses must be accurate and requested only for expenses related to official business of the University.
- 6. Liability for Property Loss:** When UT Arlington property disappears, whether through theft or other cause, as a result of an employee failing to exercise reasonable care for its safekeeping, each person shall be liable for the loss sustained by UT Arlington.
- 7. Internet:** Access to the internet via institutional computers is for institutional purposes. Incidental personal use not interfering with work responsibility, however, is not a misapplication

of state resources. Improper or illegal use of the Internet by employees may subject them to disciplinary action.

8. **Software:** Software licensed to the state is to be used for institutional purposes only, not personal purposes. Only properly licensed software may be loaded on institutional computers.

### **Clarifying goals and responsibilities**

Successful teaching begins with good planning. Below is a list of general topics that you will have to consider as you prepare to meet your class. You should meet to discuss your teaching assignment with the professor in whose course you are assisting or who is responsible for supervising and helping you in the course for which you are the instructor of record. In either case the list below should help direct your discussion to key issues.

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## **Basic Class Management Information: What Do You Need to Get Started?**

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"I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a [person's] life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a [person] humanized or dehumanized."

- Haim G. Ginott

### **Goals for the course**

- Expectations of relevant others (e.g., supervising professor, department chair)
- Lesson plan content and development
- Assignments
- Attendance policy
- Testing, grading and related policies
- Office hours
- Meeting schedule with supervising faculty member
- How to use student evaluations to improve your teaching

If you are appointed to assist in a course taught by a faculty member, you will be expected to supplement and support his or her efforts. However, responsibilities assigned to you will vary



from professor to professor so it is particularly important to meet and discuss your role in the class and his or her expectations of you. You should try to obtain a clear understanding of your role and the scope of your responsibilities at the start of your assignment because this will eliminate confusion and minimize problems arising from miscommunication. The following list offers a number of very specific questions that can help guide your conversation (their relationship to the general issues presented in the bullet list above should be obvious). It was adapted from one provided to GTAs at the University of Pittsburg. GTAs who are responsible for a course may also find the specific nature of these questions helpful in guiding their discussion with their supervising faculty member.

- What are the professor's goals for the course?
- If you are to conduct a laboratory or recitation section, what does the professor wish it to accomplish?
- Does the professor have a set plan for the content of the laboratory/recitation sections or are you expected to develop them?
- What assignments does the professor wish to make for students in your laboratory/recitation section? Are you free to substitute your own or add additional assignments?
- Will you be expected to evaluate what students learn in your laboratory/recitation section? Will tests or grading schemes be provided or will you be expected to develop them?
- Does the professor have an attendance policy? Is laboratory/recitation attendance mandatory or optional?
- Will you be expected to assign grades? What grading standards are appropriate?
- Is there a make-up policy for the course that applies to work assigned in laboratory/recitation sections?
- If there is more than one GTA running laboratory/recitation sections in the course, how will responsibilities be divided and how will the conduct of these sections be coordinated to assure students receive similar exposure to material and are held to similar standards?
- How many office hours per week should you make available to students?
- How often should you meet with the professor?
- What should you do if you are experiencing problems related to your teaching assignment (e.g., problem students, difficulty communicating, etc.?)

## Syllabus

You must provide students with a written syllabus before the end of the first week of each fall and spring semester and the second class day for each short semester (e.g. summer sessions, Wintermester, Maymester). A copy must be uploaded to your web space in the University's Faculty Profile System <https://www.uta.edu/mentis/public/>. The syllabus template is available on the following website: <http://www.uta.edu/provost/index.php>.

## Required elements of a syllabus

Suggested standardized versions of this content can be found on the Syllabus Template.

- Instructor's name, office number, office telephone number, email address, and office hours
- Course number, section and time and place of class meetings;
- General description of course content
- Your profile
- Office hours
- Information about the course content, learning outcomes, goals and requirements (e.g., prerequisites, special meetings, etc.)
- List of the required textbooks and other course materials
- Descriptions of all major assignments and examinations with due dates
- An overview of the grading policy and standards including a description of how the final course grade will be calculated
- Policies regarding late work, extra-credit (if applicable) and make-up exams
- Attendance and drop policy
- Disability accommodations
- Title IV Statement
- Academic Integrity statement
- Lab Safety information required for courses with a lab component
- Electronic Communication policy
- Student Feedback Survey information
- Final Review Week
- Emergency Exit Procedures
- Student support services

## Final Review Week

A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions is designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. You should schedule no required activities such as field trips or performances or assign any papers, themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless these assignments have been clearly specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week you should not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor is to give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week.

## Office Hours

GTAs are generally required to hold office hours and it is important to discuss how many hours you should set aside for students with your supervising professor. Office hours are designated hours in which you are available in a specific place on campus for students to contact you for tutoring, assistance with an assignment and other advisement or mentoring activities. These hours should be listed on your course syllabus. As a general rule the number of office hours held

per week should at least equal the number of hours you teach, so if you teach three hours per week, you should hold at least three hours of office hours. You have some latitude in how you conduct your office hours. Face-to-face meetings will certainly continue to be important, but you may choose to supplement these hours with times during which you will respond immediately to emailed questions, or respond to messages through IM services like Yahoo messenger or MSN Messenger. Similarly, you could set up a blog through the UT Arlington Blog site to respond to student questions. If you are a GTA in a faculty member's course, it would be best to check with him or her regarding how you plan to conduct your office hours.

## Examinations and Grading

Faculty members are free to develop their own methods of evaluating the performance of students in their classes. GTAs who are instructors of record and have entire responsibility for a course have similar freedom regarding the methods used to evaluate their students but if you are new to teaching, it is a good idea to talk over your grading plans with a more experienced person. Grading practices for GTAs working under the direct supervision of a faculty member

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*"The quality of a university is measured more by the kind of student it turns out than the kind it takes in."*

*- Robert J. Kibbee*

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who has responsibility for assigning final grades to students should conform to the requirements of the instructor. The minimum overriding requirements for your grading practices are that they be appropriate to the class, provide a valid measure of student achievement and be applied in an even-handed manner. Your method of evaluation must be explained on the course syllabus as should policies on late work, extra credit (if applicable) and make-up exams or assignments. Instructors should clearly state their grading standards and examination policies and dates, if possible, in their course syllabi. This includes policies for late work, extra-credit (if applicable) and make-up exams.

## Final Grades and Grade Descriptions

Final grades are grades awarded at the end of the semester that become part of a student's permanent academic record, reflecting the overall evaluation of his or her performance during the course of the semester. Students should be informed how the final grade will be determined at the start of the term. UT Arlington uses the following grading scheme to assign final grades. Plus/minus final grades are not assigned.

### Grade Description

A Excellent

B Good

C Fair

D Passing, Below Average

F Failure

I Incomplete

W Withdrawn

Q Withdrawn – No Penalty (does not count toward Six-Course Drop Policy)

P Pass

Z No Credit

Grades that can be assigned in any given course are preset so you can only use the predetermined grading scheme. Some courses allow grades of A-F, but don't allow a P or Z while others might exclude A-F grades and restrict your grading options to P, F or Z. The grade roster will only allow you to assign grades that have been approved for the course you teach.

You are likely familiar with the meaning of grades ranging from A to F. The following provides a brief explanation of how grades of I, W, P/F and Z are to be applied when they are available as grading options.

**I:** A grade of I (incomplete) may be assigned for a course if, in the opinion of the instructor, there are extenuating circumstances which prevented the student from completing the required work within the semester of enrollment for the course. The incomplete must be removed by the end of the final examination period of the following semester, excluding the summer session, for the student to receive credit for the course. If the incomplete is not removed during the allotted time period, it will revert automatically to an F. As long as the grade is carried as an I, it will not be used in the calculation of the student's grade point average. A student should not re-enroll in a course for which an I remains the grade of record.

**W:** A grade of W may be assigned if a student chooses to withdraw from a class after Census Day, but prior to the last date to drop posted in the University's Academic Calendar. However, the grade of W is not automatically awarded and the student must actively take steps to withdraw. After the drop date passes, a student may withdraw and obtain a W only under extraordinary non-academic circumstances. In such cases the he or she should follow the instructions provided on the Office Records and Registration website: <http://www.uta.edu/records/courses/policies/add-drop-withdrawal.php>.

Documenting the reasons why a W should be given and securing permission from the instructor, department chair, College of School Dean and the Provost's Office. Completing this step takes some time and there is no guarantee that a W will be granted. Therefore, the student should be reminded that he or she is responsible for attending class, completing assignments, etc. until the Provost's Office makes the final decision.

**P/F:** Students who are majors in the colleges of Engineering, Liberal Arts or Science or in the School of Nursing may take courses on a pass/fail basis subject to differing rules established by these academic units. This policy is intended to offer students an opportunity to take courses that will broaden their education with less immediate emphasis on the need to achieve grade points. However, an F received in a pass/fail course will be evaluated the same as an F received on a regular basis, adversely affecting the grade point average. Students must inform the instructor of their intention to take a course on a pass/fail basis by the Census Date of the semester. Complete details and requirements of each college are available in the offices of the academic deans and in the departmental offices of the colleges.

**Z:** The Z grade is used principally in some freshman level courses. It is applied when a student has completed all assignments, tests, etc., but his or her grade is below passing. Assigning a Z grade means the student will have to retake the course, but will not have their GPA reduced as would happen if an F was given. An F should be assigned to poor performing students who fail to complete required assignments and tests.

## Grade Reports

**Progress Reports:** Freshmen, athletes and undeclared majors will receive an interim grade report. The progress report is not recorded on the student's permanent record. It is for information purposes only and is intended to benefit the student, advisors and instructors. **Semester Grade Reports:** Grades are available on the Web through MyMav. Grades are posted at the end of each regular, summer, and intersession semester. The grade reported at the end of a semester is the official and permanent evaluation of a student's performance in a given course.

## Accessing Your Class Roster and Assigning Grades

If you have full responsibility for a course you will be able to access the class roster and assign grades in MyMav. **Accessing Class Roster:** Log into MyMav with your NetID to go to your personal "MyHome" page and click on "Faculty Center". A list of the courses to which you have been assigned will appear. Links at the end of the row of information describing your class will take you to your Class Roster and Grade Roster. Selecting these links will allow you view a list of enrolled students and assign grades. A printer friendly option is available if you want a hard copy of these records.

## To post (record and submit) final grades for your students

Access your Class Roster (see above). Select the Grade Roster, and assign grades that are available for use in your course. If you wish, you may also download your Class or Grade Roster to an Excel spreadsheet by using the "Download Grid Content" link and following instructions. Finally, you can use MyMav to facilitate communicating with your students. While in the Class Roster, you can click "Notify Selected Students" or "Notify Enrolled Students" to send emails to some or all of your students via MavMail. If you have problems with MyMav, visit the OIT Help Desk, located at the first floor of the Main Library or call them at 817-272-2208.

"I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn."

- Albert Einstein

## Evaluation by Your Students

If you teach a course or a laboratory or recitation section where you teach content students will receive the opportunity to complete an evaluation of your teaching performance. At a minimum, this evaluation will include standardized university approved evaluation questions and may include additional College/School and department-specific items.

Students enrolled in a lecture, seminar, or lab course will receive the Student Feedback Survey (SFS) via email toward the end of each semester. Students will receive separate emails for each SFS course evaluation. Students submit feedback anonymously, and the instructor of record will

receive the results shortly after submission of final course grades. Do not make jokes about this evaluation with your students (e.g., “be nice to me or I’ll make the final really, really hard.”). Students must not be given any reason to feel that their responses will be used against them or that their opinions are not going to be given serious consideration. GTAs, especially those who are relatively inexperienced, may find that surveying the reactions and perceptions of their students at earlier points in the semester is helpful in guiding them to ways to improve. This is not required, but GTAs may wish to develop a short survey to try to identify what students perceive as their strengths and weaknesses and use the information to adjust their teaching practices. More on the SFS is available online at [www.uta.edu/ier/Surveys/sfs](http://www.uta.edu/ier/Surveys/sfs).

## **Policy Exceptions and Accommodations**

Students will ask that you make exceptions to policies that you use to manage your course and normally expect all to follow. In other words, students will ask for some form of differential or preferential treatment. The most common requests involve make-up work and tests, late assignments, extra credit opportunities, or getting an incomplete in the class to allow more time to finish required work and requests to withdraw with a grade of W (W grades do not count against a student’s GPA). You can be certain that you will be asked to provide an opportunity to earn extra credit or to allow a delay taking a scheduled test or give permission to turn in an assignment late without penalty. In some cases you should use good judgment in deciding how to handle such requests, keeping in mind that you must avoid granting opportunities to some students that are not available to all. It pays to consider in advance how you will handle such requests and provide all students with clear, written policies at the start of the semester. Such information should be included in your course syllabus. By creating and communicating a clear policy, you can hold students accountable for their actions and avoid the possibility of allowing some students differential treatment. There are a couple of points to consider when thinking about allowing a student to withdraw from your class or granting a grade of incomplete. The University sets a date (two-thirds of the way through a semester) after which students may drop only under extraordinary nonacademic circumstances. In requesting to withdraw, a student must complete the withdrawal form documenting the reasons why a W should be given, and securing permission from the instructor, department chair, College of School Dean and the Provost’s Office. One way to reduce problems arising with withdrawal requests is to keep track of the drop date and remind students prior to the deadline of the rules and procedures pertaining to withdrawing from the class. Students ask for grades of incomplete for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, the requests have a clear and legitimate basis (an unexpected illness, family disaster or other extenuating circumstances) but sometimes not (ran out of time, forgot to do an assignment, etc). If giving an incomplete grade makes sense in a particular situation, it is very helpful to have a written agreement with the student regarding what has to be done and by what date the work must be completed if the incomplete grade is to be changed to a permanent grade. By University policy, students have until the end of the following long (Fall or Spring) semester to complete the work and for you to submit the grade change. If the work is not complete by the deadline, a grade of F may be given.

**Note:** Students presenting an “excused absence”, students who are absent due to observance of a religious holiday and students with disabilities must receive appropriate accommodations regardless of your personal policies. These exceptions will be explained below in the section titled *Attendance, Absences, and Observance of Religious Holy Days*.

## The Rights and Responsibilities of Your Students

A fundamental responsibility of a GTA is to provide students with a fair opportunity to succeed. It is expected that you will perform your assigned tasks to the best of your ability, establish meaningful and attainable educational objectives, provide fair and reasonable assessments of student achievement and give students the benefit of your help, advice and experience. Providing students with a “fair opportunity to succeed” does not mean that students should expect that they have little or no personal responsibility for the educational outcomes they attain. If you have made your expectations clear, done what you can to help students meet those expectations and used appropriate means to evaluate progress then the student is responsible for his or her success or lack of it. Remember if you’ve done your job right, you don’t give grades to students, students earn them. As a GTA, you will be expected to meet your obligations to students and at the same time hold students accountable to their responsibilities. The following is excerpted from University’s policy on student rights and responsibilities as found in the Undergraduate Catalog. While not explicitly noted, this policy is also intended to hold your students accountable to the rules you impose in your class. To hold students accountable, however, those rules must be made clear and explicit. While University faculty and staff members give students’ academic advice and assistance, each graduate and undergraduate student is expected to take responsibility for his or her education and personal development. The student must know and abide by the academic and disciplinary policies ...including rules governing quantity of work, the standard of work required to continue in the University, scholastic probation and dismissal, and enforced withdrawal. The student must also know and meet the requirements of his or her degree program, including the University’s core education requirements; ...and must seek advice from appropriate University representatives about degree requirements and other University policies when necessary. The policy goes on to state: E-mail is a prime means for communication. Therefore, the University has the right to send communications to students via e-mail and the right to expect that those communications will be received and read in a timely fashion. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) assigns all students an official University e-mail address and students are expected to check their official e-mail account on a frequent and consistent basis. This means that if you plan to communicate with students via email your students are expected to read and respond to it as needed.

“A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron.”

- Horace Mann

## **Attendance, Absences, and Observance of Religious Holy Days**

UT Arlington has some general guidelines regarding attendance requirements and circumstances in which an instructor or GTA must allow a student to miss class without penalty. The information is provided below. Attendance: Regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. An instructor is under no obligation to accommodate students who are absent or miss work without prior notification and make-up arrangements. Students will be allowed an excused absence when the student notifies the instructor in writing at least one week before the start of the excused absence and the student must arrange to make up missed work or missed examinations. Instructors will allow students an opportunity to make up the work and examinations within a reasonable time period following the absence or adjust the grading to ensure that the student is not penalized for the absence, provided that the student has properly notified the instructor. If there is disagreement between a student and faculty member regarding what constitutes a reasonable amount of time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the Office of the Provost. The decision of the Provost is final. Excused Absences: There are two types of excused absences that must be allowed: University Authorized Absences - The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs provides lists of students who have absences authorized by the University, specifying when the student will be absent. Such activities include participation in athletic events or scholastic activities that are officially sponsored University functions. Students must be included on the list provided by the Vice President for Student Affairs to receive this accommodation. Absence for Military Service - A student is excused for attending classes or engaging in other required activities, including examinations, if he or she is called to active military service of reasonably brief duration.

In either case, the student will be allowed a reasonable amount of time after the absence to complete assignments and take examinations. Absence due to Observance of Religious Holy Days: A student who must miss a class or laboratory, miss an assignment deadline or an examination date due to the observance of a religious holy day/holiday must be given the opportunity to complete the work missed. To be eligible for a make-up opportunity, the student must notify the course instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester. The instructor must accommodate these students, but has some flexibility in exactly how this is done. For example, a student needing to make-up a missed test need not receive exactly the same version of the test that others took. It is recommended however, that the nature of the accommodation be put in writing and sent to the student well-before the date of the requested absence. Students who do not notify their instructor within the first 15 days of the semester and subsequently claim that they were absent for religious reasons need not be accommodated and instructors may treat the student's absence as "unexcused". A "religious holy day" means a holy day by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. The period of the excused absence will include time for any travel needed to fulfill that religious obligation.



**Note:** If you need to observe a religious holiday you must notify your department chair or the person who hired you in writing prior to the start of the semester.

## Disability Accommodations

As a GTA, you are required by law to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Faculty members are also responsible for informing students about their right to request reasonable accommodations by posting a statement on the syllabus. Templates for the disability accommodation statement for a syllabus can be found at <http://www.uta.edu/search/index.php?q=syllabus+template>. Students are primarily responsible for informing GTAs and faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing the proper documentation of the need. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability). If you have any questions you may contact the Office of Students with Disabilities located at 102 University Hall. They can be reached by phone at 817-272-3364. Their webpage is [www.uta.edu/disability/](http://www.uta.edu/disability/).

## A Student's Right to Appeal a Grade

Students have the right to request that their grade in a course be changed if they feel the grade is incorrect or reflects discrimination, preferential treatment or is the result of procedural irregularities. Students with grade grievances should be told to follow the procedure explained below. In attempting to resolve any student grievances regarding grades, it is the student's obligation first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the individual with whom the grievance originated. Individual course instructors retain primary responsibility for assigning grades. The instructor's judgment is final unless compelling evidence shows discrimination, preferential treatment or procedural irregularities. If students wish to appeal, their request must be submitted in writing—on an appeal form available in departmental or program offices—to the department chair or program director. The student has one calendar year from the date the

*"Education is not to reform students or amuse them or to make them expert technicians. It is to unsettle their minds, widen their horizons, inflame their intellects, [and] teach them to think straight, if possible."*

*- Robert M. Hutchins*

grade is assigned to initiate the grievance. The normal academic channels are department chair or program director, academic dean and the Office of the Provost. However, before considering a grievance, the department chair or program director (dean) will refer the issue to a departmental or program (college/school) committee of faculty. If the committee cannot reach a decision acceptable to the parties involved, the matter will follow the remaining academic channels. The decision of the provost is final. Information specific to the procedures to be followed in each academic unit is available in the office of the academic dean. The dean of the college or school in which a student is enrolled, or the director of the University Advising Center if the student has not declared a pre-major or major, has jurisdiction over the

student's program of study, degree requirements and all other academic matters including grievances. However, students taking a course in a college or school other than the one in which they are primarily registered are subject to the dean of the college or school in which the course is offered concerning the course and academic grievances regarding the course.

## **Student Records: Retention and Confidentiality (FERPA)**

UT Arlington expects students and faculty to retain original copies of tests, exams and answer keys, as well as originals of tests, exams and papers that are not returned to students for two years after the close of the semester in which they were used. Among other things, these documents are important if a dispute about a grade should arise. (See Records and Information Management rules at <http://www.uta.edu/business-affairs/rim/index.php>. The University of Texas at Arlington has a legal obligation to protect the privacy of students and the confidentiality of student records. This is mandated by the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Among once common practices that are banned by FERPA is public posting of grades on office, class or departmental doors or bulletin boards, or on the web, which uses student names or identifiers, including the UT Arlington ID (EMPLID). FERPA is designed to give a student access to his or her own records while preventing access to those records in ways that will violate the student's right to privacy. The law does permit UT Arlington faculty and staff who have a legitimate educational need to access student information. However, it places heavy restrictions on the access of others, including parents, to a student's record. A summary of FERPA and its restrictions can be found at [http://www.uta.edu/aa/recordsandregistration/content/student\\_services/ferpa.aspx](http://www.uta.edu/aa/recordsandregistration/content/student_services/ferpa.aspx).

Finally, one other rule related to the confidentiality of Social Security Numbers must be followed. Simply put, you may not seek out or disclose student Social Security Numbers. Posting grades using students' full or partial Social Security Numbers is clearly prohibited under this policy. The full policy can be found at [http://www.uta.edu/security/ssn/ssn\\_rules.php](http://www.uta.edu/security/ssn/ssn_rules.php).

## **Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty**

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code which should be reproduced on your syllabus:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code*

It is the policy of the University to enforce these standards by following fair and objective procedures in instances of alleged dishonesty, cheating or other academic misconduct. Students found responsible for dishonesty in their academic pursuits are subject to sanctions that may lead to disciplinary probation, temporary suspension or even expulsion from the University.

## What Is Academic Integrity?

Academic integrity is defined as being a firm adherence to five fundamental values:

- Honesty
- Truth
- Fairness
- Respect
- Responsibility

Academic dishonesty arises when these values are not translated into behavior. It is the policy of the University that if a student chooses to act in an academically dishonest way, he or she will be held personally accountable for that choice and any consequences that follow. The official definition of academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion on an examination or an assignment being offered for credit. Each student is accountable for work submitted for credit, including group projects. The Office of Student Judicial Affairs defines the key terms in the definition of academic dishonesty in the following manner:

### Cheating

- Copying another's test or assignment
- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e., written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key.

### Plagiarism

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source.

### Collusion

Without authorization, collaborating with another when preparing an assignment. Clearly, it is better to take steps to promote academic integrity than to respond to instances of academic dishonesty. Appendix B contains numerous suggestions that will support the former and discourage the latter. However, despite your efforts you may have to respond to situations where you feel academic dishonesty has taken place. The following provides describes how to proceed.

### Responding to Academic Dishonesty

Procedures regarding allegations of academic dishonesty must be followed carefully. The process begins with a discussion with the student regarding the alleged act of dishonesty. This should be done in discreetly and in private. If you determine that the student was not acting dishonestly, the process comes to an end. If you remain convinced that he or she violated rules of academic honesty then you should complete and submit either of two different forms to Student Judicial Affairs depending on whether the student admits to or denies the allegation. If the student

admits to the accusation, you may use the form to indicate what academic penalties you feel should be imposed. If the student denies any wrong doing, the case will be heard before Judicial Affairs and that office will determine what consequences, if any, should be applied. A student who has denied your charge should be given a grade of incomplete in your course until Judicial Affairs decides the matter. **You should not impose any sanctions on a student you suspect of academic dishonesty without following the prescribed procedure.**

Follow this link to see a schematic overview of the process

<http://www.uta.edu/conduct/academic-integrity/index.php>.

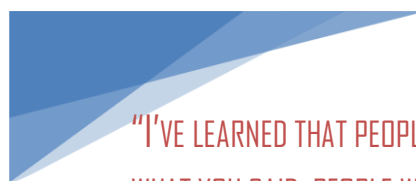
## Dealing with Disruptive Students

While rare, you may find yourself in a situation where a student is acting in a manner that makes it difficult or impossible for you to conduct your class. Generally speaking, most of these situations can be handled if you remain calm and simply ask the student to quiet down, see you after class to continue the discussion, etc. However, you may have a more serious problem to handle if a student's behavior is unusually problematic, going beyond merely being pushy or somewhat rude and becoming truly disruptive or dangerous. The University has a very clear view on behaviors of this type and a clear policy on how you should respond.

## Defining Disruptive Student Conduct

According to the *Code of Student Conduct and Discipline*, "students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages, utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment, software, or networks". (UT Arlington Handbook of Operating Procedures, Ch.2, Sec.2-202). The following is adapted from

<https://www.uta.edu/policy/hop/9>



"I'VE LEARNED THAT PEOPLE WILL FORGET  
WHAT YOU SAID, PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT  
YOU DID, BUT PEOPLE WILL NEVER FORGET  
HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL."

- Maya Angelou

## Examples of Disruptive Student Conduct in and Outside of the Classroom

- Conduct that poses a significant threat of danger and/or physical harm to members of the University community.
- Unreasonable conduct that interferes with the rights of other students, staff, and/or faculty of the University, or interferes with the exercise of any activity or function of the University.

- Negative words or individual behaviors that cause another to become concerned with his or her personal safety.
- Distractions involving cellular phones and pagers during classroom lectures.
- Excessive chattering, tardiness and blatant inattentiveness that distracts or disturbs the instructor or other students.
- Intimidating or harassing statements that affect the living, working and teaching of students, faculty and staff.

### **Procedures for Dealing with Disruptive Student Conduct**

- If a student is displaying disruptive behavior, ask the student to refrain from the conduct in concrete terms (e.g., “please lower your voice” or “please sit in your chair”) and briefly remind the student that there are consequences for failing to improve the disruptive behavior.
- If the student fails to comply with an order or instruction of an official of the University acting in the course of his/her duties, he or she should be immediately referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.
- If the student continues the disruptive behavior and/ or becomes violent or threatening, contact the campus police immediately (817-272-3003-emergency or 817-272-3381-nonemergency).
- Document the incident, make a referral for disciplinary action and notify your department head or supervisor about the incident.

### **Incident Management**

To react with fear or to over respond with inappropriate aggression is to become a contributing factor to the incident, rather than a mediating or limiting factor. Three general guidelines apply in such incidents:

1. Protect against threats to personal safety
2. Calm the situation. Create the first impression of non-hostile authority.
3. Carry out the plan of action as described in “Procedures for Dealing with Disruptive Student Conduct.” <http://www.uta.edu/conduct/>

### **Verbal Control**

- Remain calm and listen
- Acknowledge the concerns and feelings of the student
- Avoid a tone that suggests nagging, demanding or indifference
- Avoid abusive language
- Keep a safe distance and avoid touching
- Recognize the non-verbal signs displayed by the student
- Set limits on the conversation after explaining policy and procedure
- Refrain from shouting or getting into an argument with the student

For more information on dealing with disruptive student conduct contact:  
Office of Student Judicial Affairs  
The University of Texas at Arlington

Box 19355  
Arlington, Texas  
(817 272-2354  
Fax: 817-272-5221  
<http://www.uta.edu/conduct/>

## Responding to Troubled Students

Troubled students may tell you about their feelings or ask you about how to get academic or psychological help. You may observe having an unusually difficult time in your class or a student acting in ways that just don't seem quite "right". UT Arlington is committed to taking proactive steps to promote the personal welfare of its students and provides academic counseling for those who need help. The Office for Students with Disabilities is available for students who have or may have physical or psychological challenges requiring special attention, and Mental Health Services for students with emotional or psychological issues. How should you respond if you learn or suspect that a student is in need of help? You should know what kinds of behaviors signal that a student is in difficulty and possibly in need of professional assistance and what actions you should take to point that student toward the type of assistance needed. Refer to the following brochure: <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/downloads/pdf/Troubled-Students-Brochure.pdf> for information to assist with handling these situations. If you want advice regarding the behavior of a student you can have a confidential discussion with professionals by calling the Mental Health Services at 817-272-2771. You can also contact a members of the the Behavior Intervention Team for assistance: <http://www.uta.edu/bit>.

## International GTAs

### The Language Barrier

As a GTA it is important that your students and those around you be able to understand you. It is also important that you be able to understand the students. If you are the person perceived as having a heavy accent, be sure coworkers and students understand what you mean. Also, make sure that students understand what you expect of them. If you are dealing with a person whom you find difficult to understand, do not be shy about asking them to repeat or rephrase their words. Comprehension is key. While it may seem dumb to repeat things, clear communication is important. Being clear from the beginning can prevent problems later. Some ways of effectively communicating your expectations are through a syllabus and by effective use of classroom handouts and emails.

### Cultural Differences

UT Arlington hosts over 34,000 students. International students make up about 12% of the student population. Over 110 countries are represented at UT Arlington, giving UT Arlington a wide range of cultures to experience and ideas to share. With all the cultural differences on campus, you may find it difficult at times to deal with or understand students. While professionalism and respect are expected of all students toward their instructors, there is a level

of casualness that is acceptable here that may be somewhat surprising and uncomfortable for you at first. This casualness is easily observable on campus. If you have time, you may find it helpful to go to an area where students have congregated and “people watch.” You might also seek opportunities to see how students interact with other instructors and faculty. Some readily observed differences in the volume of voice used, how close to or far from each other students stand, and the amount of eye contact made between people are often surprising. A little time spent observing people interacting can help you understand what you may expect when you are instructing UT Arlington students. The Office of International Education has extensive information: <http://www.uta.edu/oie>.

## Teaching Resources

### Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence

UT Arlington is committed to promoting “active learning” in its classrooms. Active learning makes students hands on participants in their learning experience. Active learning emphasizes learning by doing and de-emphasizes learning by passively taking in information presented by lecture or text. Resources that can help you learn more about active learning and suggest ideas for how to bring active learning to your classroom or laboratory can be found at <http://www.uta.edu/ctle/teaching/classroom/learning-activities.php>.

The website for the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence at UTA has many important resources available online for GTAs and graduate student teachers. This includes information about Blackboard (<http://www.uta.edu/blackboard>), the Learning Innovation and Networked Knowledge (LINK) Research Lab (<https://linkresearchlab.org>), as well as the Open Educational Resources offered by the UTA Library (<http://libguides.uta.edu/oerbycollege>).

The Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence at UTA also has its own online YouTube Channel where faculty and GTAs can access resources and insight on teaching effectiveness, productivity, student engagement, along with many other points of advice for college-level educators. The CTLE YouTube Channel is located at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLQITTe-biH2STO9pS-76CA>

Teaching GTAs can find updated syllabus templates through the Office of the Provost website, <http://www.uta.edu/provost>. Through this website, GTAs can also keep up to date with the newest information regarding curriculum requirements set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Details include the specific course core curriculum requirements apply to, as well as checklists to ensure instructors meet all the latest standards. You can find full information about the Core Curriculum requirements at <http://www.uta.edu/provost/core-curriculum>.

### Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL UTA)

CIRTL - UTA is one of 21 institutional programs collaborating to improve STEM education in the United States. As a member of the [Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning \(CIRTL\)](#)

[Network](#), the UT Arlington program provides programming, workshops, funding, and certification to support graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and faculty to enhance excellence in undergraduate education through the development of a national faculty committed to implementing and advancing effective teaching practices for diverse learners. CIRTL - UTA offers many opportunities for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers to learn best practices in STEM undergraduate education.

### Office of Information Technology (OIT)

OIT provides high-speed data network and computing resources for campus-wide instructional and research activities, as well as University business operations. OIT's on-campus computer labs and resources are available to current UT Arlington students, faculty and staff. These labs are networked, provide Internet access and can be found in the Architecture Building, Business Building, Central Library (three facilities), Engineering Laboratory Building, Fine Arts Building, Nedderman Hall, Ransom Hall and University Hall. Ransom Hall is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This facility offers computers running Microsoft Windows, Apple MacOS, and X- Windows terminals capable of connecting to our campus' computing servers. Ransom Hall also features numerous multimedia and networked computer classrooms for teaching purposes. OIT supports the MyMav system that you have already encountered as a student at UT Arlington. You'll have do some new things in MyMav if you become the instructor of record in a course, most notably you'll obtain official class rolls and assign final grades through MyMav. Later other things MyMav can do to support instruction will be briefly described. Additional information about OIT's computers, network and student computing facilities, as well as access to documentation and staff consultants is available at the Computing Services Help Desk on the first floor of the Central Library (817-272-2208, [helpdesk@uta.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uta.edu)).

“Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life.”

- Sidney Sheldon

### University Libraries

The UT Arlington Libraries are some of the most important resources on campus for teaching and research. The Central Library, two branch libraries and three electronic libraries cumulatively house more than 1 million physical volumes on the shelves and provide access to more than 32,000 full-text print and electronic periodicals and newspapers and a rapidly growing collection of digital and analog media, including documents, technical reports, microforms, motion pictures, computer disks, sound recordings and maps. The Libraries provide access to print and electronic information through the online catalog and many specialized web pages within the UT Arlington Libraries Online (UTALO) Web site <http://www.uta.edu/library/> Databases and full-text journals are available on all library computers and via laptops using the library wireless network. Access is also available through any UT Arlington IP connected computer on campus, such as faculty offices, the Internet Cafes, Office of Information Technology



(OIT) computer labs or dorm data ports, and off campus by logon through the University modems or via proxy server. Visit the UTALO site and click on the header “Research Resources” for a comprehensive listing of indexes, abstracts, and full-text sites in the A to Z Database List. Course-integrated library instruction is available for all UT Arlington courses. Library staff will work with faculty and instructors to develop instructional curricula specific to UT Arlington course requirements and assignments. Subject librarians are assigned to each department and can help you and your students to identify resources, search databases, or simply get started in the library. Go to <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php> to learn about these and other services that support instruction.

## Using Technology In and Out of the Classroom

Increasingly, instructors are turning to technology to support their efforts in the classroom, and in some cases to replace the classroom altogether. Creative use of secure file sharing services via Blackboard, including blogs, podcasting, instant messaging and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technologies are becoming increasingly common in courses taught at UT Arlington. GTAs may wish to use them to deliver material, promote discussion groups, communicate with students, hold virtual office hours, etc.

*MavSpace* <https://mavspace.uta.edu/xythoswfs/webview/xythoslogin.action>

MavSpace is a service provided by OIT that allows users to store and share files via the Internet. This web-based utility provides users with a personal, easy-to-use interface to upload and download files, and can be set to allow file sharing only among people you select. It offers a secure environment for making information available to specified people, allows groups to collaborate on a document and more. MavSpace also provides a tool called “subscriptions” that are notifications informing you when a file or directory has been viewed, changed, or commented. The type of report (view, change, or comment) and frequency of the report is determined when the subscription is created. This provides a great opportunity to develop interactive materials and track student responses.

*MavBlog* [blog.uta.edu](http://blog.uta.edu)

UT Arlington has set up server space for students, faculty, and staff to set up their own blogs. Anyone with a UT Arlington Net ID can have their own blog. Access to a blog can be easily restricted to particular people so an instructor can control who sees what and when they can see it. With links to assignments, reference materials and other documents a blog can enable a GTA to make information available to students 24-7. Soliciting reactions of students to an idea, article, or presentation via a blog can add a new and interactive dimension to instruction. If you feel you need some training to create a blog, go to <http://blog.uta.edu/support/faq/>.

For full information about the online courses and tutoring available to UTA students, visit the website for the Center for Distance Education (<http://www.uta.edu/distance/index.php>).

Included on this website is a list of links and resources about using Blackboard, MavBlogs, and CDE-Developed Courses. The CDE offers workshops throughout the year to help familiarize new

instructors with the online sources available at UTA. For questions, contact the CDE at 817-272-5727.

## Links to Campus Resources for GTAs

1. **Center for Distance Education** – <http://www.uta.edu/uta/academics/distance-education.php>
  - Resources regarding digital teaching tools. Includes resources and workshops to familiarize educators with online classes taught via Blackboard, podcasts, blogs, online student journals, along with many other educational technologies.
2. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action** – <http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/>
  - Information regarding university policies, including links to forms and documents.
3. **Health Services** – <http://www.uta.edu/campus-ops/health-services/>
  - Website for the on-campus health clinic. The site has hours, contact information, as well as information regarding student insurance plans.
4. **International Office** – <http://www.uta.edu/oie/>
  - This website has important resources for international students, as well details about international student events and study abroad opportunities.
5. **Office of Information Technology** – <http://www.uta.edu/oit/>
  - The website for all your on-campus computer assistance needs. The OIT site has troubleshooting resources to guide you step-by-step through technological issues, as well as contact information for the UTA Help Desk.
6. **Office of the Dean of Students** – <http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/>
  - Online information regarding Student Affairs events. It also includes details about participation in student government offices, volunteer opportunities, as well as wellness programs.
7. **Office for Students with Disabilities** – <http://www.uta.edu/disability/>
  - The central resource for students in need of accommodation while taking courses as UTA. This website also includes information regarding the Adaptive Resource Center (ARC), Veterans Affairs, and the Disabilities Studies Minor.
8. **Parking Office** – <https://www.uta.edu/pats/contact.php>
  - Where students can register their vehicles, purchase parking permits, and locate maps of the parking lots on campus.
9. **Office of Research Administration** – <http://www.uta.edu/uta/research.php>
  - Includes information on sources of outside funding, research compliance training, and the Office of Technology Management, among many other research-related resources.
10. **University College and University Advising Center** – <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-planning/uac/index.php>
  - Information about on-campus advising and university policies.
11. **Classroom Support Services** – <http://www.uta.edu/crss/>
  - CSS provides in-class technical support. This website will keep you up to date about the latest technology available in UTA classrooms.
12. **The Writing Center** – <http://www.uta.edu/owl/>

- The Writing Center provides guidance and feedback on written assignments. You can learn about workshops offered and book an appointment through their website.
- 13. **The UTA Bookstore** – <http://www.bkstr.com/texasatarlingtonstore/home>
  - Like its on-campus counterpart, the online UTA Bookstore offers UTA merchandise, testing materials, and discounted tech (including software and hardware) for students.
- 14. **Policies pertaining to teaching** – <http://www.uta.edu/provost/policies/index.php>
  - Keep up to date with all the required classroom policies at the website.
- 15. **Office of Graduate Studies** – <http://www.uta.edu/gradstudies/>
  - The home base of extra-departmental support for graduate students at UTA. On this website you will find resources related to your success as you pursue your graduate degree and beyond. Information about OGS workshops on professional development, career guidance, and thesis & dissertation support all appear here.

The whole art of teaching is only the art of  
awakening the natural curiosity of the mind  
for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards.”

— Anatole France



## Appendix A

### Ways to Promote Academic Integrity and Discourage Dishonesty

Faculty and staff members in their respective roles can educate students regarding the importance of academic integrity and/or implement strategies which discourage scholastic dishonesty. This document contains a variety of approaches listed according to broad areas where education/prevention strategies may be implemented. Your attitude and response to scholastic dishonesty creates a climate that can either foster or inhibit dishonesty. What you do is very important. Ignoring an incident implies that scholastic dishonesty is accepted.

### General Academic Practices

1. Stress the importance of academic integrity in course syllabi. Include test-taking rules (e.g., no books, no caps, ID required) and clearly detail behaviors you consider scholastically dishonest that others may not (e.g., one paper submitted for credit in two different courses; students who work together on a lab or take-home assignment). A general statement for syllabi follows: *Policy on cheating—students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.*
2. Discuss scholastic dishonesty policies, procedures, and possible penalties on the first class day.
3. Take action against all involved, including those who assist, when evidence of scholastic dishonesty exists.
4. Assign a small percent of the final grade to activities that cannot be closely controlled (e.g., take-home exams, lab reports, homework assignments).
5. Do not give answer manuals to graders.
6. Personally deliver the final course grades to the proper administrative official.

### Classroom Exams

1. Advise students in advance that restroom use during the test is not permitted and that silence will be enforced.
2. Do not use the same exam twice, including different sections of the same course.
3. Develop alternate test forms (i.e., same items and response options but one or both are presented in a different order).
4. Print the same test using different type fonts so that it looks like different test forms are used.
5. Assign more than one number to each question (e.g., the first question might be numbered 8/6) and break students into groups (e.g., odd and even on the basis of the last

digit in their social security number) and ask that they record the answers using their group's designated question number.

6. Include a statement like the following on exams and answer sheets if students are not permitted to retain them: *Any test file that includes this document was developed with stolen materials. Stealing this document or using it prior to an examination is cheating and will be dealt with as such.*
7. Do not use students to type/duplicate exams.
8. Secure exams/answers in a locked cabinet.
9. Put different forms of the test on different colors of paper and distribute them so that the colors alternate.
10. Check desks and the surrounding area for notes and other unauthorized materials.
11. Staple scratch paper to the answer sheets before distributing them to the students.
12. Ask that backpacks, notebooks, etc. be put in a designated area or not be taken to class.
13. Check photo IDs when students enter the test site, ask that they be placed on the desktop for verification during the exam, or put students' names on exams and answer sheets and give test materials to them after checking the names against the IDs.
14. Separate students or assign seats.
15. If blue books are used, ask students to write on different lines (e.g., every third line) for specific pages or require them to bring the booklets at the beginning of the semester and distribute them on the exam day.
16. Mark each computer-readable answer sheet with an identifier that is not accessible to students (e.g., rubber stamp with the department address) to prevent them from bringing in sheets with "crib notes".
17. Number the tests and answer sheets and ask students to sign both to prevent copies from being taken out of the testing area.
18. Remain in the classroom during the exam and use additional proctors.
19. Walk around and occasionally stand at the rear of the room since students will want to know where the professor is and turn around before cheating.
20. Do not permit students to grade their own exams.
21. Request that students leave their test papers so that the answer sheets can be collected in row sequence.
22. Ask students to return both the exam and the answer sheet.
23. Advise that some answer sheets will be photocopied before being returned so that students cannot subsequently change their answers and claim grading errors.
24. Develop a computer program to identify identical answers (e.g., same errors, sequence of items).

## Research/Term Papers

1. Define the term "plagiarism" and proper documentation of sources.
2. Request that the department purchase catalogs from term-paper services so that suspicious titles/papers can be checked to determine if they have been purchased. Even if your department lacks access to term-paper checking services, check passages of

student papers on Google by searching for whole phrases or sentences within quotation marks. Advise students that these checks for misrepresentation will be made.

3. Keep a copy of all papers submitted and maintain a filing system by topic to check for papers submitted more than once. Advise students of this practice.
4. Notify the class that if authorship is questioned, you will query the student to determine familiarity with the topic.
5. Require an early outline, progress report, or tentative bibliography with library location numbers; do not permit late topic changes; accept only originally typed papers—no photocopies; and require notes and rough drafts to discourage the use of “paper mills”.
6. Randomly select papers and check citations. (This should be noted in the syllabus and the selection of papers should occur in the classroom to avoid complaints of bias.)

## Appendix B

### Responding to Troubled Students

Adapted from: <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/downloads/pdf/Troubled-Students-Brochure.pdf>

#### Behavior Intervention Team

<http://www.uta.edu/bit/>

The University of Texas at Arlington cares about our students' success, not only academically, but emotionally and physically. Because of our commitment, we provide literally hundreds of departments and services across campus that respond to our students' unique needs. But sometimes, students do not ask for help when they need it. So in an effort to identify those students proactively, UT Arlington has created a network of professionals from across campus that are committed to a caring, confidential program of identification, intervention and response in order to provide our students with the greatest chance of success and our community with the greatest level of protection.

We created this website to accomplish the following:

- Educate you about the BIT and how it works;
- Provide you with information and tips about how to deal with incidents you may encounter;
- Provide additional resources on our campus and in our community.

If you have questions or concerns for the BIT about a student or an incident, please contact a [BIT Chair](#) or email questions to [bit@uta.edu](mailto:bit@uta.edu) <http://www.uta.edu/bit>.

### HOW CAN I TELL IF A STUDENT MAY BE TROUBLED?

At times students simply inform you that they are in need of counseling or other assistance. In these instances, provide students with information about campus resources that are provided in this guide. At other times, students who are troubled will not directly inform you of their difficulties, but they will exhibit behaviors that indicate a problem. Knowledge of and sensitivity to some of the indicators of possible problems can help the instructor in determining whether or not to refer the student for assistance. Some behaviors that indicate a need for referral are:

#### Unusual or Inappropriate Behaviors

- Withdrawal from usual social interactions, seclusion or unwillingness to communicate
- Statements related to death or dying or feelings of hopelessness
- Persistent lying, stealing, or antisocial acts
- Lack of social skills or extreme shyness

- Persistent sadness or unexplained crying
- Extreme appetite or weight change (increase or decrease) in a relatively short period of time
- Inability to sleep or excessive sleep
- High levels of irritability or inappropriate excitement
- Outbursts of anger
- Acute change in activity level, (i.e., restlessness or noticeably decreased activity)
- Irrational conversation or speech that seems disconnected
- Suspiciousness, irrational feelings of persecution
- Frequent or excessive worry, anxiety, agitation, or expression of fear
- Problems concentrating, remembering things or making decisions
- Excessive dependency or “clinginess”
- Infrequent class attendance

### Significant Changes in Relationships

- Severe illness or death of a family member or someone close to the student
- Separation, divorce, or threat of separation or divorce
- Difficulties in family relationships
- Dating or courtship difficulties

### Alcohol or Drug Abuse

- Indications of excessive drinking or other drug abuse or drug dependence of any kind. Contact the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention and Education located in the Health Center (817-272-2771). <https://www.uta.edu/healthservices/health/substance-abuse.php>
- **NOTE: In the event of overdose, call 817-272-3003 (if calling from an on-campus telephone) or 911 (from other telephones).**

### References to Suicide

- When a student makes any reference to suicide, threat of suicide, or attempt at suicide, a judgment should be made by a professional about the seriousness of a possible suicidal thought or behavior.
- Suicide attempts are first and foremost a medical emergency. The person who has attempted suicide should obtain immediate medical attention. After the person is medically stable, other interventions can be performed.
- **NOTE: If danger of suicidal behavior appears imminent, call 817-272-3003 (if calling from an on-campus telephone), 911 (from other telephones) or take the person to an emergency room.**

### Learning Problems



- Marked change(s) in academic performance in the classroom
- Significant drop in examination scores
- Test anxiety that significantly interferes with performance
- A marked deficit in memory or concentration
- A lack of confidence in a student’s ability to understand or learn
- Learning problems that involve deficient reading or comprehension, mathematics deficiency, poor writing skills, or poor study habits
- **NOTE:** The verification of documentation regarding learning disabilities is handled by the Office for Students with Disabilities (817-272-3364).

## FACULTY AND STAFF GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO TROUBLED STUDENTS

Since faculty and staff members are sometimes the first to recognize that a student is experiencing difficulties, this guide is being disseminated to offer suggestions in responding to troubled students. The Offices of Mental Health Services (MHS) at Health Services, Counseling, Advising, Assessment, and Career Services (CAACS) and The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) have professional staff available to assist troubled students. MHS, located in the Health Center, provides students with psychological evaluations, counseling and referrals, as well as consultation to faculty and staff regarding concerns about students. Counseling Services, located in Davis Hall, provides academic and career counseling, personal counseling, and a number of assessments and seminars to assist students in their academic, personal, and career pursuits. OSD, located at 102 University Hall, verifies all physical, emotional, Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Learning Disabilities documentation in order to specify the appropriate disability specific accommodations and/or adaptations that will assist each student in successfully completing his/her academic objectives.

### HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL

The nature of a student’s difficulties determines the appropriate campus referral source. In general, most students who are troubled by difficulties of a psychological or emotional nature can be referred to MHS. Those students who are troubled by difficulties of an academic or vocational nature can be referred to Counseling Services. The following suggestions may be helpful when making a referral to either office.

- Be specific and straightforward with the student about the behaviors that are the basis for your referral.
- Be sensitive as you express your concerns about the student’s behavior. Making generalizations or negative attributions about the person’s character or personality is counterproductive.
- Except in emergencies, allow the student the freedom to accept or decline the referral. If the student is reluctant to seek counseling, express your acceptance of the student’s feelings.
- Go slowly unless it is an emergency or a matter of urgency.

- If the student agrees to a referral, provide the appropriate telephone number and, if desired, allow the student to use your phone to set up an appointment.
- A student may prefer to go to the office or call at another time to schedule an appointment.
- Offer to provide information about the nature of the problem to the appropriate referral source and ask for the student's permission to do so.
- If possible, follow up with the student.
- **In the event that the situation is urgent, accompany the student to MHS in the Health Center or call the Campus Police at 817-272-3003. You may also contact Heather Snow, Chair of the Behavior Intervention Team 817-272-1009.**
- If at any time you want consultation about the behavior of a student, please call MHS (817-272-2771).

### **SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DEALING WITH AN UPSET STUDENT**

- Remain calm and speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Let the student know you are interested in helping him or her.
- Listen to what the student has to say.
- Try to engage the student in considering options to deal with the upsetting situation.
- Suggest options the student may not have considered.
- Be forthright about whether you can be of assistance to the student.
- Suggest a counseling referral.
- If needed, contact the Campus Police (817-272-3003) or MHS (817-272-2771).
- **NOTE: If there appears to be a threat of immediate danger to the student or others, call the Campus Police emergency line (817-272-3003).**

## Appendix C

### Emergency or Urgent Care Telephone Numbers and Procedures

City Fire/Police/Ambulance Response: 9-911  
UT Arlington Environmental Health & Safety Office: 817-272-2185  
On-Campus Emergency Response: 817-272-3003  
Inclement Weather Closings and Urgent Notices: 972-601-2049  
Physical Plant: 817-272-3303  
Student Health Center: 817-272-2771  
University Police Department: 817-272-3003

#### Emergency Procedures

Emergency Communication - The information that an emergency exists (fire/chemical spill) or is developing (tornado warning) could come from several sources. The University Police will be the focal point for emergency communications. Depending on the nature and urgency of the situation they might use personal contact, telephone, building public address system, police vehicles, or building fire alarm. However notified, it is imperative that persons in authority (department heads, supervisors and faculty members with students) establish specific policies for notifying all personnel in offices, laboratories, classrooms, workshops and work areas and that such policies are consistent with the University's Designated Safety Liaison (DSL) Program. Fire - You should alert people in the immediate vicinity to evacuate and activate the building fire alarm.

Call UT Arlington Police Department at 817-272-3003 to give them the nature of emergency and the location.

If you use a fire extinguisher:

Pull the pin, point at base of flames and squeeze handle. Never fight a fire that seems too large. Tornado - A tornado is usually accompanied by hail, severe thunderstorms and often times dangerous lightning. If a tornado has either been sighted or it is highly probable that one will develop, a warning will be signaled by the storm warning sirens. Everyone should move to basement or first floor of multistory buildings. Because of possible power failures, avoid using elevators. When the storm warning sirens sound, it is best not to leave the building, obviously, it is better to seek shelter in a basement. If the building you are in has no basement, or if there is no nearby building with a basement, go to the lowest floor and get in a small interior room or hallway. Stay away from glass and exterior walls. If you or someone with you is handicapped: In the event of an emergency evacuation, the DSL will ensure that the person with physical impairments is assisted, if necessary, to a safe location. The DSL shall also maintain a system of accountability for those persons with physical impairments including their location and impairment. For additional information contact Environmental Health & Safety at 817-272-2185.

On Campus Medical Emergencies - Call University Police at 817-272-3003 and tell them the type of the emergency, the location (specific address or building and room number), and a phone number where you can be called back. Stay on the telephone if possible until dispatcher has all needed information.

Beginning in 2013-2014, a statement of “Emergency Exit Procedures” is REQUIRED in all Syllabi.

**Emergency Exit Procedures: [NEW and REQUIRED]** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, **which is located [insert a description of the nearest exit/emergency exit]**. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

[As you see, this new section requires faculty members to be fully aware of the exits nearest their classrooms, even before the semester begins. In the case that you are unable to ascertain this information in time for your syllabus, you must be sure to explain to your students on day one how best to exit the building. Inclusion of this verbiage as well as a brief discussion on the matter with your students at the beginning of the term is mandated by UT Arlington Procedure 7-6: Emergency/Fire Evacuation Procedures (<https://www.uta.edu/policy/procedure/7-6>).]