

CVC Recommendations for Syllabi and Assignments: TIPS, TRAPS, AND BEST PRACTICES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Community Values Committee (CVC) recommends that every course offered in the Ross School of Business (RSB) provide a written statement about collaboration, group projects, use of outside resources, class conduct, and student behavior. This statement will vary from course to course, but in general the statement should:

- Enhance learning and build the foundation for a learning community.
- Reinforce RSB community values.
- Establish positive relationships between the teacher and students and among students.
- Clearly delineate expectations and responsibilities without adopting an overly legalistic tone.
- Fit the individual instructor's teaching style.

Updated Mental Health Syllabus Language (Revised March 2017)

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via umich.edu/~mhealth/.

The Ross School of Business has a CAPS Embedded Counselor available to its students. Embedded Counselors are located in school/college buildings and services are tailored to the school's climate. For more information, please visit caps.umich.edu/caps-embedded-model. To schedule, please email Julie Kaplan, LMSW at jrkaplan@umich.edu.

TIPS to Follow:

- Provide a specific statement about the Honor Code and related expectations in your syllabus (see Examples 1, 2, and 3 below).
 - e.g.:

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of the Ross Business School community. This course will be conducted in strict conformity with the Academic Honor Code. The Code and related procedures can be found at <http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyiMpact/academics/ross-community-values>. The site also contains comprehensive information on how to be sure that you have not plagiarized the work of others. Claimed ignorance of the Code and related information appearing on the site will be viewed as irrelevant should a violation take place. Non-Ross Business School students taking the course should also familiarize themselves with the Code as they will be subject to the Code while in this course.
- Provide an explicit citation to the Honor Code on your syllabus -- <http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyiMpact/academics/ross-community-values>
- Provide specific, clearly written instructions for each assignment and exam. (Do not use overly formalistic, complicated, or vague language that students might have difficulty interpreting.)
- Set reasonable expectations for collaborative and individual work.

- State clearly whether work is to be done individually or may be done in a group. (Realize that many students assume that the default is group work, even though our Academic Honor Code clearly states that the default is individual work.)
 - e.g.: “All work is to be done individually unless the instructions clearly indicate that the work may be done in a group.”
- Establish written instructions and policies well ahead of time, and hold firm to them.
- Put any changes in instructions or deviations from the syllabus in writing and post on Canvas so that all students have equal access to relevant information.
- Delineate clearly between permitted and prohibited activities in regard to collaboration and use of outside materials.
- Ensure that your verbal and written instructions are completely consistent.
- For timed or online exams, consider distributing in advance the exam instructions regarding permitted or prohibited collaboration, permitted or prohibited materials or sources, etc., so that students can review the instructions carefully and without the pressure of time constraints.

TRAPS to Avoid:

- Referring in general terms to the Ross honor code but not spelling out specific expectations for assignments, exams, and the course as a whole.
- Relying on verbal instructions about expectations and policies rather than written instructions.
- Contradicting your written policies with your verbal instructions.
- Modifying expectations and policies for an assignment or exam after students have already received initial instructions.
- Setting ambiguous prohibitions about acceptable materials and resources.
- Requiring students to walk a fine line between permitted and prohibited activities, e.g.:
 - Allowing students to discuss the principles and concepts of a problem, but not the answers to the problem.
 - Creating a “group assignment,” but requiring students to submit “individual” work for the same assignment.

BEST PRACTICES:

Some of the best practices in use by our faculty include the following:

- Explicit delineation of individual and group assignments, clearly stated on syllabus and repeated on each assignment.
 - e.g., label the assignment on the first page, clearly and in large font, as either “INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT” or “GROUP ASSIGNMENT” (see Example 3 below).
- Use of uniform rules for all assignments.
- Requiring students to sign an academic honor code statement for each exam (see Example 7 below).
- Providing explicit collaboration instructions (see Examples 4, 5, and 6 below).
- Specifically stating that that use of previously prepared materials or prior years' materials is prohibited if that is indeed the rule (see Example 2 below).

SAMPLE SYLLABI AND OTHER EXAMPLES YOU MAY WISH TO EMULATE

The following pages include samples provided by RSB faculty. These syllabi are from Winter 2009 courses.

EXAMPLE 1 (Syllabus Language)

BCOM (LHC) 350: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of the Ross School community. To help ensure that these values are upheld and to maintain equitability in the evaluation of your work, this course will be conducted in strict conformity with the Academic Honor Code. The code and related procedures can be found at the following website: <http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyImpact/academics/ross-community-values> and will not be repeated here. The site also contains comprehensive information on how to ensure that you have not plagiarized the work of others. Any content in an assignment you submit that is based on the work of others must be properly cited. This includes any information found on the Internet. In addition, the use of any materials prepared by students who have previously taken the course will constitute an honor code violation. With this clear understanding, we are highly confident that none of you will betray our mutual trust throughout the course.

EXAMPLE 2 (Syllabus Language)

ACCOUNTING 301

PRINCIPLES OF MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING

Success in this Course (excerpt)

As a continuation of ACC 301, students must be prepared to bring concepts from financial accounting into this course and build on them beginning the first day of class. Not only are you learning about managerial accounting but you are also developing higher-level critical thinking skills in order to be successful in future upper-level courses....

Solutions to all of each chapter's exercises, problems, and cases except those assigned as homework are now accessible via Canvas. Homework solutions will be available in the same manner when coverage of a chapter is complete. Copying the homework answers in any manner either from the solutions manual (or copies of the solutions) or from other students' work (either current or previous students) is considered an infraction of the Academic Honor Code.

Academic Integrity

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of business and the Ross School community. We value both cooperation and competition as means to stimulating high performance and raising standards. However, we seek cooperation and competition that are constructive, and which are professional, not personal, in nature. To help ensure that these values are upheld and to maintain equitability in the evaluation of your work, this course will be conducted in strict conformity with the Academic Honor Code.

As in ACC 300, you are expected to be familiar with the Academic Honor Code. The code and its related procedures can be found at the following website:

<http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyiMpact/academics/ross-community-values>

Claimed ignorance of the code and the related information on the site and in the Ross Statement of Community Values booklet will be viewed as irrelevant should a violation take place. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated at the Ross School of Business.

The following specific policies apply to the Accounting 300-301 course sequence:

1. The use of materials from prior terms that are not made available as a part of the current term's course materials is strictly prohibited. Examples of such prohibited items are previous terms' exam/quiz questions, lecture notes, and solutions to end-of-chapter material. Current term course materials include everything in your textbook, lecture notes provided to you, resources available on the current term's Canvas site, and any materials that were distributed or used during class sessions.
2. You may form a study group to discuss the assignment material, but you may not form a study group to divide the homework problems and then copy the solutions of others. Comparing and discussing answers and approaches is okay—trading answers and copy solutions is not OK. If in doubt, remember that all work submitted for credit must be your own, so err on the side of caution rather than convenience. It is much more honorable and far better to miss an assignment and suffer the minimal consequence than it is to violate the established values of the community in which you work.

EXAMPLE 3
(Syllabus Language;
Individual / Group Work Language)

BL (LHC) 482/582
Real Estate Law

(Excerpted portions addressing Honor Code & group/individual work)

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE:

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of the Ross Business School community. This course will be conducted in strict conformity with the Academic Honor Code. The Code and related procedures can be found at <http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyiMpact/academics/ross-community-values>. The site also contains comprehensive information on how to be sure that you have not plagiarized the work of others. Claimed ignorance of the Code and related information appearing on the site will be viewed as irrelevant should a violation take place. Non-Ross Business School students taking the course should also familiarize themselves with the Code as they will be subject to the Code while in this course.

The assignments are designed to practice concepts discussed in lecture and in the reading. For some assignments, you will be permitted (but not required) to work on the assignment in study groups. It is your responsibility to read all instructions on each assignment to ascertain the specific rules that apply to each assignment, particularly the rules regarding whether the work must be done as an individual or may be done as a group.

...

- If the assignment is not clearly designated as “group-optional,” you must complete the assignment individually. You may not discuss individual assignments with any person.

- You must properly cite to all sources that you use, and particularly you must cite all sources that you quote. You may use any reasonable, standard citation format, provided that you provide all necessary citation information (i.e., sufficient information that a reader could easily locate the source material on his or her own). I would suggest that you put your citations in footnotes or endnotes. I encourage you to review the resources available on the CVC webpage at <http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyiMpact/academics/ross-community-values> and to take care to avoid even inadvertent plagiarism.

[A group-optional assignment has the following heading on page one, and the following specific instructions:]

GROUP-OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT!

- You may (but are not required) to work on the problem sets in a group. Your group must submit a single set of answers. All members of the group will get the same grade. A group can be no larger than three students. Larger groups will not be allowed and will not have their answers graded. Please see the Syllabus for further instructions regarding assignments. You do not need to (and are not permitted to) consult any materials other than your class materials, including your class notes and textbook, in order to complete this assignment.

[A mandatory individual-only assignment has the following heading on page one, and the following specific instructions:]

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT!

- This is an individual assignment. You may not discuss the assignment with any person (either a present or former student in this course or any other person).

<p>Example 4 (Collaboration Instructions)</p>

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS IN MANAGEMENT (MO 561)

INDIVIDUAL CASES

With whom may I discuss my individual assignment?

In preparing your individual assignment, you may discuss your professional development with people who can help you better understand yourself and your professional goals. You must acknowledge the help from the other people/student(s) in the header or front page of your paper. For example, you could say: I thank Name and Name for their help on this assignment. All text, tables, exhibits, etc. for this assignment were prepared on my own. (Please always include this last statement.)

What is the acceptable level of collaboration in doing individual assignments?

Acceptable collaboration includes discussing your professional development (as described in the syllabus) and the approach necessary to fulfill the assignment's requirements. The text and any other supportive documents must be strictly your own work.

What is considered a violation?

- Rephrasing others' work and including it in your submission.
- Modifying others' supportive documents, including tables and exhibits and including them in your submission.
- Sending (or receiving) a draft or final version of any portion of work to (from) others.
- Discussing an assignment and then jointly developing a set of notes or a draft of supportive documents that each student could then draw on when writing his or her individual paper.

What is OK?

- Discussing your goals, strengths, and weaknesses/developmental opportunities with others; sharing ideas in a discussion, actively exploring the possible strategies to solve the problems, and discussing how to develop a supportive document, and then writing the text and generating supportive documents strictly on your own.

The best prevention of any violation is to keep in mind that you should “Always start with a blank file, and prepare all parts of the submission on your own.” If you are not sure whether a certain form or level of collaboration is acceptable, you should assume that it is not, and then, if you wish, seek clarification from your instructor.

REPORTING OF VIOLATES OF THE HONOR CODE

If there is evidence of a violation of the above rules, the assignment will be submitted to the Community Values Committee (CVC) for investigation. The CVC website is:

<http://www2.bus.umich.edu/MyiMpact/academics/ross-community-values>

EXAMPLE 5 (Collaboration Instructions)

TO 313: OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

(Excerpted portions addressing individual work)

Individual Assignment Collaboration Guidelines:

What is the acceptable level of collaboration in doing individual assignments?

Acceptable collaboration includes discussing case-study facts and the approach necessary to fulfill the assignment's requirements. The text, formulas, tables, exhibits, Excel worksheets, and any other supportive documents must be strictly your own work.

What is considered a violation?

- Rephrasing others' work and including it in your submission.
- Modifying others' supportive documents, including Excel worksheets, tables and exhibits and including them in your submission.
- Sending (or receiving) a draft or final version of any portion of work to (from) others.
- Discussing an assignment and then jointly developing a set of notes or a draft of supportive documents (e.g., Excel workbook) that each student could then draw on when writing his or her individual paper.

What is OK in doing individual assignments?

- Sharing ideas in a discussion, actively exploring the possible strategies to solve the problems, and discussing how to develop a supportive document (e.g., Excel workbook), and then writing the text and generating supportive documents strictly on your own.

The best prevention of any violation is to keep in mind that you should always start with a blank file, and prepare all parts of the submission on your own. If you are not sure whether a certain form or level of collaboration is acceptable, you should assume that it is not, and then, if you wish, seek clarification from your instructor.

**EXAMPLE 6
(Collaboration Instructions)**

TO 551: Introduction to Operations

- Teamwork: Teamwork in preparing cases and assignments is encouraged. However:
- o *You are directed to work individually on the Nissan memo and on the exams.*
 - o *Your name should be included as part of a team’s case submission only if you participated and contributed materially to the team’s work*
 - o *Consultation outside the team is not permitted for case submissions.*

**EXAMPLE 7
(Exam Instructions)**

TO 513 Final Exam April, 2008

Turn in this exam statement at the conclusion of the exam

Name (please print legibly):							
Program (circle one, or write in the “Other”):	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">MBA I</td> <td style="width: 33%;">MBA II</td> <td style="width: 33%;">MBA Eve Program</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Global MBA</td> <td>Other:</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	MBA I	MBA II	MBA Eve Program	Global MBA	Other:	
MBA I	MBA II	MBA Eve Program					
Global MBA	Other:						

Problem	Description	Points
1	Decision Analysis	33
2	Risk Analysis	33
3	Optimization	33

Academic Honor Pledge

As a student in the Ross School of Business (RSB) or, more generally, as a student in RSB courses, you are subject to the RSB Academic Honor Code.

In this regard, you are asked to sign the Academic Honor Pledge on the next page.
(If you cannot sign this pledge in good conscience, please bring this exam statement to the proctor immediately and leave the exam room. You will then be contacted later for clarification and resolution.)

Exam Conditions

The exam is open Winston-Albright, open course website, open homework files, and open summary notes you might have prepared (excluding worksheet printouts).

We will try to help you with any computer (hardware) problems and will also try to answer questions about software problems or error messages, unless it is our judgment that you should be able to use knowledge gained in the course to resolve the software problem or interpret the error message.

If you don't finish the exam ... Not to worry.
(Performance is relative, not absolute. Work carefully, doing what you can in the available time.)

ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

http://www2.bus.umich.edu/sites/default/files/files/AcadServices/Ross%20Academic%20Honor%20Code%206_23_14.pdf
(Interpreted specifically for TO 513 Exams)

I pledge to adhere to the following TO 513 exam conditions, so as not to attempt to gain an unfair advantage for myself or my friends over other TO 513 students:

Prior to My Writing the Exam

- I have not talked about the details of the exam with any TO 513 students who have written the exam, and have not seen the exam files or descriptions of the exam problems.

While Writing the Exam

- I will not interact in any way, electronically or otherwise, with other students currently writing the exam, or who have already written the exam, or who have yet to write the exam, e.g., no instant messaging; no emailing of exam files.

After Writing the Exam

- I will not talk about any aspects of the exam with or in the presence of other TO 513 students who will write the exam at a later sitting.

I am aware that sanctions for honor code violations are severe, and that signing this pledge dishonestly will itself be treated as an honor-code violation independent of the violation implied by signing this pledge dishonestly. I am also aware that two independent honor code violations can lead to expulsion from my degree program.

Signature

Date

Please print your name