UC Merced
School of Natural Sciences

Campus

Resource Guide

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Principles of Community

The University of California, Merced is committed to learning, teaching and serving the people of the San Joaquin Valley, California, the nation, and the world, through excellence in education, research and public service. We strive to provide educational opportunities for all.

Our founding principles of community guide both the individual and collective behaviors of students, faculty, and staff. The university expects that all of its members will emulate these fundamental principles as individuals and as a community.

- We celebrate the spirit of academic excellence and strive to promote our University and its strengths through our daily interactions with students, staff, faculty and the community at large.
- We maintain a working and learning environment based on integrity, fairness, cooperation, professionalism and respect.
- We are a community comprised of individuals with multiple cultures, lifestyles, and beliefs. We celebrate this diversity for the breadth of ideas and perspectives it brings.
- We value the creativity of our students, staff, and faculty, and acknowledge both their individual and collaborative achievements.
- We encourage health and wellness and strive to develop a sense of environmental responsibility and stewardship among all the members of our community.
- We are committed to achieving tolerance in our community. All persons--faculty, staff, and students – regardless of background or lifestyle should participate and work together in a collegial atmosphere that we strive to make free of any and all acts of discrimination or harassment.
- We respect, support and value the civil and respectful expression of individual beliefs and opinions.

Note: These are the Founding Principles of Community of the University of California, Merced. In the years ahead, they will undoubtedly be reviewed and modified by future UC Merced faculty, students and staff.

University of California, Merced
Mission Statement

The distinctive mission of the University is to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long-term societal benefits through transmitting advanced knowledge, discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active working repository of organized knowledge. That obligation, more specifically, includes undergraduate education, graduate and professional education, research and other kinds of public service, which are shaped and bounded by the central pervasive mission of discovering and advancing knowledge.

Frequently Called Numbers

School of Natural Sciences

Dr. Maria Pallavicini, Dean	(209) 228-2969
Scott Stehle, Executive Assistant to the Dean	(209) 228-2969
De Acker, Assistant Dean	(209) 228-6984
Mireille Smith, Director of Operations	(209) 228-4162
Tammy Johnson, Student Affairs Manager	(209) 228-4004
Angie Cendejas, Lead Student Advisor	(209) 228-6904
Jesus Jimenez, Student Advisor	(209) 228-4184
Erica Robbins, Pre-Health Advisor	(209) 228-4602
Katherine Brown, Grad Student Coordinator	(209) 228-4292
Jim Whalen, Natural Sciences Inst. Lab Coordinator	(209) 288-7642
Donna Jaramillo-Fellin, Phys. Sci. Inst. Lab Coord.	(209) 675-1498
Mark Lutz, Sci & Eng Building Manager	(209) 228-7819

Campus Contacts

Campus Police, On-Campus Security	(209) 228-2677 (228-COPS)
Facilities Management	(209) 228-7877
Academic Personnel	(209) 228-7948
Bob Cat Bookstore	(209) 228-2665 (228-BOOK)
Career Services	(209) 228-7272
Communications Office	(209) 228-4432
Counseling Services	(209) 228-4276
Human Resources	(209) 724-4456
Information Technology	(209) 228-4357 (228-HELP)
Office of the Registrar	(209) 228-2734
Residence/Student Life	(209) 228-4663
Student Advising and Learning Center, Tutoring	(209) 228-7252
University Library	(209) 228-4444

Academic Calendar: 2008-2009

Summer Session 2008

Instructional Start (8 week session)	June 16, 2008
Last day to Add (instructor signature/permission required)	June 20, 2008
Last day to Drop without a "W"	June 23, 2008
Independence Day Holiday (No classes)	July 4, 2008
Last day to Drop (instructor and Dean permission required)	July 11, 2008
Session Ends	August 8, 2008

Fall Semester 2008

Fall Semester Administrative Start	Monday, August 18, 2008
Housing Move-In	Friday, August 22, 2008
Fall *Instruction Begins*	Tuesday, August 26, 2008
Labor Day Holiday	Monday, September 1, 2008
Veterans Day Holiday	Tuesday, November 11, 2008
Thanksgiving Holiday	Thursday, November 27, 2008 - Friday, November 28, 2008
Fall Instruction Ends	Wednesday, December 10, 2008
Final Exam Preparation (no classes)	Thursday, December 11, 2008
Final Exams	Friday, December 12, 2008 - Thursday, December 18, 2008
Fall Semester Ends	Thursday, December 18, 2008
Winter Holiday	Thursday, December 25, 2008 - Friday, December 26, 2008
New Years Holiday	Wednesday, December 31, 2008 - Thursday, January 1, 2009

Spring Semester 2009

Spring Semester Administrative Start	Tuesday, January 13, 2009
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday & Housing Move-In	Monday, January 19, 2009
Spring *Instruction Begins*	Tuesday, January 20, 2009
President's Day	Monday, February 16, 2009
Spring Recess (no classes)	Monday, March 23, 2009 - Thursday March 26, 2009
Cesar Chavez Holiday	Friday, March 27, 2009
Instruction Ends	Friday, May 8, 2009
Final Exam Preparation	Saturday, May 9, 2009 - Sunday, May 10, 2009
Final Exams	Monday, May 11, 2009 - Friday, May 15, 2009
Semester Ends	Friday, May 15, 2009
Commencement	Saturday, May 16, 2009

For specific questions or concerns regarding add/drop deadlines, over-enrolling your course, etc...please contact **Angie Cendejas**, **Jesus Jimenez** , **Katherine Brown** or **Tammy Johnson** in Natural Sciences.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - -School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - -Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - -Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - -Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - -Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - -Accrediting organizations;
  - -To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - -Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - -State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

Family Educational Rights& Privacy Act
retrieved from http://www.ed.gov

Mid-Semester Grade Reporting

Mid-Semester Grade Reporting for all lower division courses is a UC Merced tradition. On May 16th, 2005 the Undergraduate Council (UGC) approved and adapted mid-semester grade reporting. The intent of mid-semester grades is to provide students in lower division courses early feedback (both positive and negative) regarding their academic performance. The reports will provide an opportunity to offer positive reinforcement and motivation to those who are doing well, in addition to identifying those who are struggling. Mid-semester grades also allow faculty, advisors, and services on campus to intervene with students, who are in academic difficulty, while there is still time in the semester to improve their performance and be successful.

Process/Logistics:

- Mid-Semester Grades are usually due by 4pm on the Friday of the eighth week of the semester.
- Mid-term Grades are submitted via the gradebook function of an instructors UCM CROPS course webpage.
- Grades are submitted as letter grades for all courses except courses for which P/NP is the only grading option.

Mid-semester grade reports are *temporary* and are replaced by final, permanent grade records at the end of the semester. Pre-registration for the following semester will begin approximately four weeks after Mid-semester grade reports are available to students. Students with one or more D or F grade(s) will have a block placed on their registration for the subsequent semester. All first-year students with a D or F grade on their mid-term report will have a hold placed on their registration and will be required to participate in an Academic Success Workshop. Sophomores with a D or F grade also will have a block, will be encouraged to attend an Academic Success Workshop, but can get their hold released by meeting with their academic advisor. This ensures that students, whose grades are poor, communicate with an advisor in case the former are in need of any special attention.

Continued

Academic Success Workshops

Academic Success Workshops will be offered repeatedly during the period between Mid-Semester grade submission and the start of the registration period for the next semester.

At the workshop, students are asked to individually assess themselves using an Academic Success worksheet. This is followed by a general discussion where the advisors review with the group the policies relevant to academic probation and suspension, and they also answer students' questions.

Students then meet in small groups with an advisor and discuss some of the items that they selected on the self assessment. Students are asked to speak only about issues that they are comfortable discussing among peers, and they are invited to speak with a faculty member or advisor in private. The discussion leaders turn the conversation toward student services and general ideas for helping each participant's problems to be addressed.

Finally, students are asked to write out their newly formulated plans for success. Before leaving, each student reads his or her plan to the small group, and hands in the worksheet. The faculty or advisor sends a copy of the success plan to the student during the following days, and calls, sends an e-mail or has an in-person appointment with each group member within 3-4 weeks of the session to keep in touch with the students and to find out if they need further assistance.

Students who fail to attend a workshop, yet who wish to be registered for the next term, may fill out a self assessment, which will be available in the Student Advising and Learning Center or online, and then visit their School advisor to discuss a success plan, individually.

Student Services

Office of the Registrar

Assistant Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management: Kevin Browne
Assistant Registrar: Steve Noret
Contact: Kolligan Library, 1st Floor
(209) 228-4265
http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/

The Office of the Registrar handles all class scheduling and registration. Students wishing to add courses after the first week of class must fill out a "Course Additions or Changes" form that must be signed by the instructor of record and returned to the Registrar's Office for processing. A copy of this form is included in the Appendix of this Guide and is available at the registrar's website.

Tutoring Services

Director: Elizabeth Boretz
Contact: Student Advising and Learning Center, Kolligan Library, Room 172
(209) 228-2993
http://learning.ucmerced.edu/

Tutoring will be available as of the third week of classes. Tutors will be available for many of the introductory level lower division courses. Students can attend drop-in group sessions or schedule one-on-one appointments. Students can drop by the center to sign-up for tutoring. The tutoring schedule can also be found at the website or by visiting the Student Advising and Learning Center during the third week of classes.

Counseling Services

Director: Debra Kotler
Contact: Kolligan Library, Room 113
(209) 228-4266
http://counseling.ucmerced.edu/

Counseling Services offers assistance for all students free of charge. Students are treated in a secure, confidential environment for any number of psychological and emotional health issues. These services will be crucial as students face the many challenges associated with college life. With this in mind, faculty and staff should feel free to refer any student to the Counseling Services, either by speaking directly with the student or passing the student's name onto Counseling Services staff. All information is kept confidential.

Disability Services Center

Director: Alan Grisby, Ph.D.
Contact: Kolligan Library, Room 107
(209) 228-7862
http://disability.ucmerced.edu/

Disability Services Center supports students with various forms of disability by providing opportunities to participate fully in the academic community. It is the responsibility of the student to self-identify if services or special considerations are needed; this information is strictly voluntary and must be kept confidential. Faculty members may give the students an opportunity to reveal any limiting condition that may affect their performance by including a statement on their syllabus such as " Any student who has a disability that might interfere with his/her work, please see me as soon as possible, at my office".

Office of Student Life

Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Charles Nies
Contact: Kolligan Library, Room 184
(209) 228-5433
http://studentlife.ucmerced.edu/

Students interested in co-curricular involvement on campus including leadership development, intercultural programs, community service, clubs and student government should visit the Office of Student Life. Student Life is also the starting point for the establishment of student clubs and programming. This office also houses judicial affairs and oversees student conduct and discipline.

Career Services Center

Assistant Director: Kelly Patterson
Contact: Kolligan Library, Room 127
(209) 228-4259
http://careerservices.ucmerced.edu/

The Career Services Center is the central location for students employment (on-and off– campus). The Center has a variety of assessment tools students can use to explore career options, develop career goals and develop job-search skills. In collaboration with the Student Advising and Learning Center, the staff will assist students in pursing post-baccalaureate education. The Career Services staff is also developing an extensive internship program.

Enrollment & Enrollment Limits

Enrolling in Courses

Registration allows students to enroll in courses at the University. UC Merced students must register each semester using the online web-based registration system named MyRegistration. The registration process includes enrolling in classes, paying fees and other financial obligations, filing a current address with the Office of the Registrar, and completing and filing other information forms.

MyRegistration is an interactive computer system that allows the student to enroll in classes via the Internet. With UC Merced's web registration a student will always receive the most up-to-date information regarding their registration and class enrollment. Pre-assigned appointments that are spread throughout the registration period regulate access to the web registration system. For security purposes, students are assigned a unique login user code and password that must be entered to access MyRegistration. They may then add and drop courses during the adjustment period, which starts one week before instruction and extends through the first three weeks of instruction.

Late Registration

Late registration begins after the first day of instruction and privileges extend through the 10th day of instruction, but students are assessed an appropriate fee. Registration after the deadline is allowed only if action or inaction on the part of the university delayed registration. A recommendation from the student's school is required.

Adding and Dropping Courses

Adding a Course

During the first week of instruction students may add a course (s) provided that space is available. During the second and third weeks of instruction, a student may add courses only with the permission of the instructor. After the third week of instruction, students may add a class only with the permission of both the instructor and the appropriate Dean. A fee will be assessed for adding a course after the third week.

1 st week students may add if space available (students enroll themselves)

2 nd -3 rd week with instructor's approval (instructor's signature on form required)

after 3 rd week fee assessed and only with instructor's and appropriate Dean's approval (signatures of instructor and Dean required)

Enrollment & Enrollment Limits

Dropping a Course

During the first three weeks of instruction, students may drop a class(es) without paying a fee and without the appropriate Dean's approval. After the third week of instruction, a student may drop only if the student is not failing the course, is not subject to disqualification, and if dropping the course would be to the educational benefit of the student. For courses dropped after the 3rd week of instruction, a student must receive the appropriate Dean's approval, a fee will be assessed, and a notation indicating the week of the term in which the course was dropped will appear on the student's transcript. The Undergraduate Council may designate certain courses to have a drop date that is shorter than three weeks.

1 st -3 rd week no penalty

after 3 rd week fee assessed and only with the appropriate Dean's approval

Course Substitutions

Students may petition the appropriate dean to substitute a suitable course in place of a required course (for a general education course: petition the Dean of College One; for a major course: petition the dean of the School in which the major resides). Petition forms are available on the Publications and Forms portion of this web site or at the following web sites: Student Advising & Learning Center, College One, and Schools.

Retroactive Add

In some rare circumstances, students are allowed to add a course after the course is completed. Petitions for retroactive adds are available from the Publications and Forms portion of this web site. Each petition must include the reason for the student's failure to add the course during the semester in which it is offered. The petition must be supported by the instructor's signed approval, together with a statement from the instructor indicating knowledge of the student's participation and performance during the presentation of the course in question and the instructor's understanding as to the reason for the student's failure to add the course before the end of the semester. Once the petition is complete, it should be forwarded to the appropriate School Dean for review and approval. A course grade must be assigned by the instructor. A fee is applicable on all retroactive adds.

Retroactive Drop

Occasionally, in exceptional circumstances, students are allowed to drop a course after the course is completed. Reasons for seeking a retroactive drop are very specific: medical problems, severe emotional difficulties, or recent death or severe illness in the immediate family. Petitions are available from the Office of the Registrar and should include a detailed account of the problem, appropriate documentation and an adequate explanation of why an I grade or late drop was not taken during the semester in which the problem occurred. The instructor's signature is required on the petition. Once the petition is complete, it should be forwarded to the appropriate School Dean for review and approval. A fee is applicable on all retroactive drops.

Enrollment & Enrollment Limits

Repetition of Courses

A student may repeat only those courses in which a grade of D, F, U, or Not Passed was received. Undergraduate courses in which a grade of D or F has been earned may not be repeated on a Passed/Not Passed basis. Similarly, a graduate course in which a C, D or F grade is received may not be repeated with the S/U option.

Repetition of a course more than once requires approval by the appropriate Dean in all instances. Degree credit for a course will be given only once, but the grade assigned at each enrollment shall be permanently recorded.

In computing grade-point average of an undergraduate who repeats courses in which the student received a D or F, only the most recently earned grade and grade points shall be used for the first 16 units repeated. In the case of further repetitions, the grade-point average shall be based on all grades assigned and total units attempted.

Examinations

Midterm Examinations

The number of midterm examinations varies at the discretion of the instructor. In undergraduate courses for which a midterm examination is required, each student has the right to take the midterm (or submit the take-home examination as opted by the instructor) during one of the regularly scheduled meetings of the class as defined in the Class Schedule. The scheduling of a midterm examination at a time other than a regularly scheduled class meeting requires mutual consent of the instructor and each student registered in the course. A student who does not consent in writing to the different time must be permitted to take the examination (or submit the take-home examination) at the officially scheduled time. A student who consents in writing to the change of examination time waives the right to take the midterm at the officially scheduled time.

Final Examinations

Scheduling

The Schedule of Classes lists the times that final examinations are to be held. These are set up according to the day-and-hour periods in which the classes are given during the semester. This information is available online or in the Schedule of Classes each term so that students can avoid final examination conflicts. A student who has multiple exams on the same day may discuss the situation with the instructors of the courses. There is no regulation mandating a change.

Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities may be entitled to in-class accommodations. The student shall provide the instructor with a letter from the Disability Services (DS) recommending those academic accommodations that the instructor is responsible for providing. Students must request accommodation as soon as possible, to allow the university reasonable time to evaluate the request and offer necessary adjustments. No accommodations shall alter the nature of the academic demands made of the student nor decrease the standards and types of academic performance, nor require facilities or personnel that cannot reasonably be provided. The instructor should consult with the student and DS on any questions or concerns.

GRADING

Grades: The work of all students on the UC Merced campus is reported in terms of the following grades:

A (excellent)
B (good)
C (fair)
D (barely passing)
F (not passing)
P (passed at a minimum level of C- or better by an undergraduate student)
S (satisfactory - passed at a minimum level of B or better by a graduate student)
NP (not passed)
U (unsatisfactory)
I (incomplete)
IP (in progress)
NR (No report, when an instructor fails to report a grade for a student).

Grades of A, B, C and D may be modified by a plus (+) or minus (-).

Credit toward Degree Requirements: A course in which the grade A, B, C, D, P, or S is received is counted toward degree requirements. A course in which the grade F, NP, or U is received is not counted toward degree requirements. Grades of I or IP are not counted until such times as they are replaced by grades A, B, C, D, P, or S.

Grade Points: Grade points are assigned as follows: A+ = 4.0, A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D = 1.0, D-= 0.7, F = 0.0, I= 0.0, P/NP = N/A. The grades P, S, NP, U, I, and IP carry no grade points and the units in courses so graded are excluded in determination of the grade-point average.

Grade-Point Average: A student's grade-point average is computed on courses undertaken in the University of California, with the exception of courses undertaken in University Extension. Grades A, B, C, D, and F are used in determining the grade-point average; grades I, IP, P, S, NP, and U, carry no grade points and are excluded from all grade-point computations. The Grade of I, is excluded from computations.

Change of Grade: All grades except Incomplete and In-Progress are considered final when assigned by an instructor at the end of a term. An instructor may request a change of grade when a computational or procedural error occurred in the original assignment of a grade, but a grade may not be changed as a result of re-evaluation of a student's work. No final grade may be revised as a result of reexamination or the submission of additional work after the close of term.

Grade I (Incomplete): The grade of I may be assigned when the instructor determines that a student's work is of passing quality and represents a significant portion of the requirements for a final grade, but is incomplete for a good cause. (Good cause may include current illness, serious personal problems, an accident, a recent death in the immediate family, a large and necessary increase in working hours or other situations of equal gravity). It is the student's responsibility to obtain written permission from the instructor to receive an I grade as opposed to a non-passing grade. An Incomplete petition is available from the Office of the Registrar's web site and must be filed prior to the end of the final examination period. If, however, extenuating circumstances exist where submission of the I grade petition is not possible before the end of the final examination period, an instructor may submit an I grade; however, the petition, including student and instructor signatures, must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar before the first day of instruction of the next semester (which would include the summer sessions). If the petition is not received by the Office of the Registrar before the first day of instruction of the next semester, then the I grade will revert to an F, NP, or U.

If an I grade is assigned, students may receive unit credit and grade points by satisfactorily completing the coursework as specified by the instructor. Students should not re-enroll in the course; if they do, it is recorded twice on the transcript. Once an I grade is assigned, it remains permanently on the transcript along with the passing grade students may laternreceive for that course.

I grades are not counted in computing the grade point average. An I grade received in the fall term must be replaced by the first day of instruction in the following fall term. An I grade received in the spring or summer terms must be replaced by the first day of instruction in the following spring term.

Except as noted below, any I grade that has not been replaced within the deadlines above will be converted to grade F (or NP/U if taken passed/not passed). After that time, but not retroactively, the grade is counted in computing a student's grade point average.

Exception: If a degree is conferred before the end of the deadlines above following the assignment of an I grade, the grade will not be converted to an F (or NP/U). However, the student still has the option of removing the I grade within the deadlines above. Students with 15 or more units of I on their record may not register without permission of the appropriate dean.

Grade IP (In Progress): For a course extending over more than one term where the evaluation of the student's performance is deferred until the end of the final term, provisional grades of In Progress (IP) shall be assigned in the intervening terms. The provisional grades shall be replaced by the final grade if the student completes the full sequence. The grade IP is not included in the grade point average. If the full sequence of courses is not completed, the IP will be replaced by a grade of Incomplete. Further changes in the student's record will be subject to the rules pertaining to I grades.

Passed/Not Passed (P/NP): Undergraduate students in good standing who are enrolled in at least 12 units may take certain courses on a passed/not passed (P/NP) basis. Students may enroll in one course each term on a P/NP basis (two courses if they have not elected the P/NP in the preceding term), not including Freshman Seminars which are always P/NP courses.

Changes to and from the P/NP option must be made during the enrollment period. No changes can be made after the first two weeks of classes without the approval of the appropriate dean. A student may not repeat on a P/NP basis a course that was previously taken on a letter-graded basis.

The grade P is assigned for a letter grade of C- or better. If the student earns a grade of D+ or below, the grade will be recorded as NP. In both cases, the student's grade will not be computed into the grade point average.

Credit for courses taken on a P/NP basis is limited to one-third of the total units taken and passed on the UC Merced campus at the time the degree is awarded.

Passed/Not Passed (P/NP) continued:

A course that is required or a prerequisite for a student's major may be taken on a P/NP basis only upon approval of the faculty. Schools may designate some courses as passed/not passed only. Students do not have the option of taking these courses for a letter grade.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U): The grade of S is awarded to graduate students for work in graduate courses that otherwise would receive a grade of B or better.

Graduate students, under certain circumstances, may be assigned grades of S or U, but units earned in this way will not be counted in calculating the grade point average. Petitions to elect S/U grading are available from the Graduate Division's web site at gradstudies.ucmerced.edu and must be signed by the student's graduate advisor. Graduate students may petition to take no more than one course per semester on an S/U grading basis. A graduate course in which a C, D or F grade is received may not be repeated with the S/U option.

In specific approved courses, instructors will assign only Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grades. Such courses count toward the maximum number of units graded S allowable toward the degree, as specified by each degree program.

Grading Options

Unless otherwise stated in the course description, each course is letter graded with a P/NP or S/U option (unless required for your major or graduate program), not including Freshman Seminars which are always P/NP courses.

Students have until the end of the second week of each semester to change the grade option on a course via MyRegistration, accessible through MyUCMerced. After the second week of each semester and up until the last day of instruction for that semester, a student may only change the grade option on a course with the approval of their School dean using the Course Addition/Change form. Students in good standing who are changing a grade option for a course from a letter grade to a P/NP option must conform to the rules guiding the taking of courses on a P/NP basis (see section on Passed/Not Passed).

Retroactive Grade Changes

All grades except I and IP are final when filed by an instructor at the end of the semester. No final grade except I may be revised by examination or the submission of additional work after the close of the semester.

If a clerical or procedural error in the reporting of a grade by the instructor can be documented, the student may request a change of grade with a petition available from school dean's office. The request must be made by the fifth week of the following semester.

Grade changes for "clerical" errors (such as incorrect addition of points), upon documentation, are automatically granted. Requests to interchange P, NP, S or U grades with normal letter grades based upon student need (such as to allow graduation or to meet entrance requirements for professional school) do not involve clerical or procedural errors and are automatically denied. Thus, students should exercise the Passed/Not Passed or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading options with caution.

Students are reminded of their responsibility to be aware of the procedures and regulations contained in this catalog and the Schedule of Classes, to verify their class schedule and to familiarize themselves with the expectations of their instructors. No changes, except completion of an I grade as noted above, can be made to the student's record once he or she has graduated.

Academic Integrity Policy

CHAPTER VIII: ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Preliminary Statement

Academic integrity is the foundation of an academic community. Academic integrity applies to research as well as undergraduate and graduate coursework.

800.00 Definitions

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, altering graded examinations for additional credit, having another person take an examination for you, or facilitating academic dishonesty or as further specified in this policy or other campus regulations.

Cheating is the unauthorized use of information in any academic exercise, or other attempt to obtain credit for work or a more positive academic evaluation of work through deception or dishonesty. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: copying from others during an examination; sharing answers for a take-home examination without permission; using notes without permission during an examination; using notes stored on an electronic device without permission during an examination; using an electronic device to obtain information during an exam without permission; taking an examination for another student; asking or allowing another person to take an examination for you; tampering with an examination after it has been corrected, then returning it for more credit than deserved; submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting the second instructor; preparing answers or writing notes in a blue book before an examination; falsifying laboratory, or other research, data or using another person’s data without proper attribution; allowing others to do the research and writing of an assigned paper (for example, using a commercial term paper service or downloading a paper from the internet); and working with another person on a project that is specified as an individual project.

Plagiarism refers to the use of another’s ideas or words without proper attribution or credit. This includes, but is not limited to: copying from the writings or works of others into one's academic assignment without attribution, or submitting such work as if it were one's own; using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment; or paraphrasing the ideas of another without proper attribution. Credit must be given: for every direct quotation; when a work is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part (even if only brief passages), in your own words; and for information which is not common knowledge. The requirement to give credit applies to published sources, information obtained from electronic searches, and unpublished sources.

Collusion is when any student knowingly or intentionally helps another student to perform any of the above acts of cheating or plagiarism. Students who collude are subject to discipline for academic dishonesty. No distinction is made between those who cheat or plagiarize and those who willingly facilitate cheating or plagiarism.

801.00 Notice to Students

Instructors (faculty, lecturers, TAs and so forth) should explain to students at the outset of a course and on the syllabus the behavior expected of them when taking examinations or preparing and submitting other course work.

In some courses, instructors will announce that it is allowed for students to work together. In such cases, all students should write up their work independently of one another, unless explicit approval has been given to a common write-up. Students should write on their paper the names of other students with whom they have collaborated.

Any member of the university community who suspects that a violation of the academic honesty policy may have occurred may report it to the instructor of record. If the instructor of record is unavailable, or the case is outside the scope of the course, it should be reported to the dean of the School/College/Graduate Division offering the course.

802.00 Approaches to Violations

Discipline for academically dishonest behavior is exercised on two levels:

1. Stage 1 (Instructor-Led Process)

The instructor of record for the course has the authority to handle an incident of student academic misconduct directly, by any of the following means:

a. assigning a failing grade for the course

b. assigning a failing grade for the course, with additional notation placed on the student's transcript that the failing grade was the result of a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy

c. assigning a failing or zero grade for the piece of work

d. lowering the grade on the piece of work

e. assignment of additional work or reexamination

If any violation of the UCM Academic Honesty Policy is suspected in a course, the instructor of record must fill out the Faculty Report for Academic Misconduct and then meet formally with the student(s) involved to explain the suspected misconduct and the academic sanctions the instructor is recommending. If the student(s) admits to the violation and accepts the sanctions, the instructor and student sign the Faculty Report Form and the instructor submits the form to Judicial Affairs. If the student refuses to admit that a violation has taken place or refuses to meet with the instructor, the instructor must provide written notification to the student and the dean of the School/College/Graduate Division offering the course outlining what remedies the instructor elects to impose. In addition, the instructor must submit a copy of the written notification and the Faculty Report Form to Judicial Affairs. The Form will be kept on file in Judicial Affairs for the duration of the student's enrollment at UCM.

A student may ask for a review of the action taken by the instructor by submitting a written request to the dean of the School/College/Graduate Division offering the course. The dean may either respond to the request or refer the matter to the Office of Judicial Affairs for an advisory opinion. If the dean is the instructor of the course, the request for review should be forwarded to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost. Students have ten working days to submit a written request for review; the dean/EVC has ten days to review the request and respond to the student in writing. The dean/EVC may take action to revise or revoke the action of the instructor on the basis that the instructor failed to follow the procedures set forth herein, or that the instructor's action was based on impermissible criteria (for example, discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, or sex).

2. Stage 2 (Formal Disciplinary Procedures)

If the instructor of record believes that the academic misconduct was especially serious, he/she can recommend in writing that action be taken by the dean of the School/College/Graduate Division offering the course. If dean agrees that the conduct is especially serious, he/she will refer the case to the Office of Judicial Affairs for investigation.

The Office of Judicial Affairs may conduct interviews that may include the reporting party, all witnesses, and any person(s) alleged to have violated the University regulation. All persons accused will be informed in writing of the nature of the charge, his/her rights, and the procedures to be followed.

If the preliminary investigation does not result in the withdrawal of charges by the Office of Judicial Affairs, in consultation with the dean, the case will be heard by the Faculty/Student Academic Conduct Board. The dean or his/her designee will serve as the chair of the Academic Conduct Board. The Faculty/Student Academic Conduct Board will be comprised of: three faculty members nominated by the Committee on Committees, one undergraduate, one graduate student, and a staff member from the Office of Judicial Affairs or designee. At least five members of the Board must be present for a hearing to take place. The University's case will be presented by the a staff member of the Office of Judicial Affairs or designee.

All hearings for alleged academic or behavioral conduct violations will respect students' due process rights. Detailed instructions about how hearings will be conducted are included in Chapter VII of the Student Handbook.

In sum, persons involved in the Conduct Hearing process have the following rights and responsibilities:

The Student:

1. Shall be served with a written notice of the specific charges, the time and the place of the hearing, and a copy of the procedures which will govern the hearing at least five calendar days prior to the hearing.

2. May be accompanied by an advisor, however, students will be expected to speak for themselves.

3. Is entitled to be present during the hearing while evidence is being presented and may remain until the Board begins confidential deliberations.

4. Shall have the right to produce witnesses and confront and cross-examine all witnesses.

The Academic Conduct Board:

1. Shall base its findings upon the preponderance of evidence.

2. Shall keep summary minutes of the hearing which will be available to the student within seven working days following the hearing.

The student shall receive written notice, by registered mail, within five working days following the hearing informing him/her of any decision, including recommended sanctions, if applicable.

803.00 Sanctions for Stage 2 (Formal Disciplinary Procedures)
Individuals found responsible by the Faculty/Student Academic Conduct Board for violating University policies or regulations regarding academic honesty may receive the following sanctions:

803.01 Disciplinary Probation:
A status imposed for a specified period of time during which a student must demonstrate conduct that conforms to University standards. Conditions restricting the student's privileges or eligibility for activities may be imposed. Misconduct during the probationary period or violation of any conditions of the probation may result in further disciplinary action, normally in the form of Suspension or Dismissal. The sanction of probation is normally limited to a student’s first violation.

803.02 Loss of Privileges and Exclusion from Activities:
Specific exclusions or loss of privileges for a specified academic term or terms.

803.03 Suspension:
Termination of student status for a specified term or terms. This sanction will be noted on the student’s academic transcript during the term(s) of suspension.

803.04 Dismissal:
Termination of student status from the University for an indefinite period. Students who are dismissed may not return to UCM without the express permission of the Chancellor. This sanction will be noted on the student’s academic transcript.

Disciplinary sanctions may be imposed instead of or in addition to the sanctions listed above and may include, but are not limited to, the following.

1. In cases where a determination of academic misconduct has been made and where close supervision of a student's academic conduct seems appropriate, course instructors may be requested to specifically monitor or separately test that student for a specified period of time.
2. Work, research projects, or community service projects may be assigned.
3. Violations of any of the conditions imposed under this section can be cause for further disciplinary action, usually in the form of loss of privileges and exclusion from activities, suspension, or dismissal.
Sanctions are assigned with the intent of correlating the sanction with the extent and severity of the violation(s) as well as any past violations.

804.00 Appeals

Appeals by a student, following Stage 2 sanctions, must be directed to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost. The EVC will only review written materials regarding the case including hearing documents provided by the chair, the appeal letter provided by the student outlining the rationale for the appeal, and any new evidence provided by the student which was previously unavailable at the time of the hearing. Appeals shall be limited to the following:

1. Whether there is substantial evidence to support the finding(s) of violation of university policies or campus regulations for which the discipline was imposed.

2. Whether there is evidence, which could not be adduced at the time of the original hearing and which is likely to change the result.

3. Whether there was procedural unfairness at the conduct of the hearing.

4. Whether the sanctions imposed were too harsh given the findings of fact and relevant circumstances.

Any appeal to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost must be made in writing and received by the EVC within 10 working days after the student receives the decision of the Academic Conduct Board. The decision of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost or his/her designee is final and shall be conveyed to the student and the student's dean in writing within 15 working days of receipts of the appeal letter. The EVC or his/her designee will then formally notify all other parties involved in the case of the outcome of the appeal.

If an academic honesty case whose outcome would affect the student's grade remains under investigation or appeal at the time final grades are due, the instructor of record shall assign a grade of "NR" until the case is resolved.

805.00 Maintenance of Disciplinary Records

Disciplinary records regarding academic misconduct will be maintained in the Office of Judicial Affairs as long as the student is enrolled and for a minimum of five years thereafter. Records will then be destroyed unless the Office of Judicial Affairs determines there is good reason to retain the records beyond that date.

Additional Academic Integrity
Instructions for Lecturers & TAs & Teaching Assistants

If you have an occurrence or potential occurrence of academic dishonesty in your course, we encourage you to discuss the situation with the course instructor (for TAs) or with the course lead faculty member or course coordinator (for instructors). We strive to find a fair resolution for all situations.

The lead faculty members and coordinators are:

Kevin Mitchell for Physics,
Anne M. Kelley for Chemistry
Michael Sprague and Arnold Kim for Math

You may also discuss the situation with Assistant Dean De Acker, or Tammy Johnson.

The best way to avoid Academic Dishonesty is to prevent it!

State clear expectations in your course syllabus. Tell students specifically if they are or are not allowed to work together on assignments. It may be obvious to you that working together and turning in identical assignments may not be the same thing, but it's not always so to your students.

In exams, encourage students who are friends to sit far apart. It is permissible to use assigned seating or to move students to alternate seating prior to the start of an exam.

During an exam:

If you suspect that students are sharing information, move them apart to stop the sharing. Be as non-confrontational as possible. One suggestion would be to tell the student you're moving you're worried *someone else* may be looking at *their* paper and you want to protect the integrity of their work.

If you catch a student with notes or other unauthorized course materials, take away the materials, make a note for yourself of what portions of the exam had been completed and a memo of what you observed. It's best to allow the student to finish the exam once you've confiscated the unauthorized materials. If other proctors observed the situation, as them to make a memo as well. These procedures will assist you later on if/when action is taken.