COVID19: Best Practices & Academic Integrity

Dear Faculty,

Thank you very much for your willingness to move your classes on-line in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. We know that this requires a lot of hard work on the part of the faculty. Academic Affairs has received a number of questions about whether it is permissible to make adjustments to syllabi, including changing the number of assignments and assessments. This is certainly permitted and often makes good pedagogical sense. Our accreditation and the reputation of our University rest in part on the excellent instruction of the faculty who maintain the quality of our programs, as well as the credit we award. So, as you make adjustments to your course, please consider the following:

If your syllabus has stated learning outcomes for your course, please make sure that there is evidence of the extent to which these outcomes have been achieved through your assessments of student assignments. If you are able to do that, then you should feel free to adjust your syllabus as needed. Please ensure that the changes you make to the class are communicated to students so that they know how you are assessing them and whether they have met the learning outcomes.

If you make any adjustments to your syllabi, whether you have clearly articulated learning objectives or simply describe the material that is covered, please make sure the adjustments are transparent to students and that your syllabus adjustments are academically defensible. You may make modifications to the nature of the assignments and how they will be graded, but the learning that takes place in your courses, and your assessments of that learning, should be essentially equivalent to that of your original course.

One way to ensure that your adjustments to the class are academically defensible and retain the academic rigor of your course during this emergency is to employ best practices for course assessment and for academic integrity. The ILC has developed a wonderful resource for you to help with issues of assessment, grading, and academic integrity:

https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/ilc/covid19-teach-strag.html

Thank you for all you are doing for each other and for our students.