Biological Sciences Department
Recommended common syllabus policy elements document

# Academic honesty

Please refer to the [student handbook](http://www.iit.edu/student_affairs/handbook/information_and_regulations/code_of_academic_honesty.shtml) for the university policy on academic honesty.

Honesty, integrity and ethics are measures of an individual’s character. IIT expects its graduates to be not only technically proficient in their majors, but also to be professionals. Any IIT community member (student, faculty member, or alumnus) who behaves badly reflects poorly on all of us. As such it is expected that everyone in this course, the instructor, teaching assistants and all students will live up to the highest standards. We find cheating1, plagiarism2, and dishonesty3 of any kind morally repugnant and it will not be tolerated in our classes. The penalties for such incidents will be severe. All incidents will be reported to academichonesty@iit.edu for inclusion in your student file (which is drawn upon for the writing of professional references). More than one reported incident may result in dismissal from IIT. This statement may constitute your only warning.

1”Cheating is an act of lying, deception, fraud, trickery, imposture, or imposition. Cheating characteristically is employed to create an unfair advantage, usually in one's own interest, and often at the expense of others.” It can be defined as finding a non-straightforward, non-transparent way of attaining a grade without expending the effort or completing the exercise that was the clear intention of the instructor. (From: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheating)

2 “Plagiarism is using others’ ideas and/or words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.” (From: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>)

3 Dishonesty is lack of honesty; a disposition to lie, cheat, or steal; a dishonest act; fraud.
(From: <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=dishonesty>)

Assignments

1. Students are expected to submit work of their own creations. The wording, structure, and organization of assignments must be of the student’s own mind.
2. In many cases, we acknowledge that students work together to come to an understanding of course material. In general, this is encouraged. However, once you have worked with your peers – or anyone – to come to the understanding of the material, you should recuse yourself and produce the final version of your submission yourself.
3. You should carefully review specific instructor’s instruction on individual, group work and collaboration in each course.

*Any form of plagiarism will result in no credit for the assignment.*

Examinations

1. No electronic devices of any kind will be allowed during examinations, unless specifically allowed by the instructor. Having a prohibited device (including but not limited to cell phones, computers, calculators, and iPod/iPad) on your person during an exam is automatically an offense and will result in immediate sanction.
2. No additional materials other than pen/pencil/eraser are allowed during examinations, unless specifically allowed by the instructor.
3. Students are not to look at another student’s paper during an exam
4. Students are not to talk or communicate in any way to anyone other than the TA or instructor during an exam. Any unauthorized communication is automatically an offense.
5. No bathroom breaks will be allowed during the examination period unless specifically permitted by the instructor. Students who have medical issues for which this is an issue need to contact their instructor in advance to see if an accommodation can be reached.

*Failure to comply with the above rules will result in confiscation of the examination paper and dismissal from the examination room. Students will receive no credit for the examination.* For 1xx and 2xx level courses, the first incident of academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment/examination. Any additional incidences will result in failure for the course. For all other courses, any incident will result in failure for the course. All incidents will be reported to academichonesty@iit.edu and the university may impose additional sanctions, up to and including dismissal, especially for more serious, or repeated transgressions.

# Grading and Instructor-Student Interactions

Criteria for grading will be described in the syllabus, typically including a description of how to achieve each letter grade level. You will be given feedback about your performance in the form of a midterm grade, at least one week before the W deadline. You will also receive feedback on your other graded work regularly, as described in the syllabus. It is your responsibility to diligently engage with this feedback: – come and pick up your work expediently, consider the comments, corrections and other feedback carefully in order to learn the material in the course. The instructor and indeed the entire institution is here to support you, but ultimately, it is your responsibility to engage with your instructor and with the class as a whole to understand how you are doing and to take responsibility for your education. The preferred mode of contact for such feedback, as well as how to contact your instructor outside of class (in person, email, via a TA, class website) is also listed in the syllabus.

# Attendance and participation

From the IIT student handbook:

All students are expected to attend classes regularly. Excessive absences may be grounds for a failing grade. Non-attendance does not constitute an official withdrawal. When illness or emergency requires a student to miss an exam and/or more than two days of class, the student must notify the course instructor. It is also recommended that the student contact the office of the Dean of Students (dos@iit.edu) to request an excused absence. It will be necessary to provide written documentation of the reason for the absence(s). The Office of Student Affairs manages the process for requesting and documenting excused absences but the decision to excuse an absence is generally made by the Professor. Faculty members determine their own policies for attendance and make-up work.

In general, a specific attendance policy will be set out in by each instructor at the outset of each course, and described in the syllabus. A grade component for attendance and/or participation is not obligatory, but if employed the criteria by which such points are allocated will be described to you, including how to achieve each letter grade level. Feedback on attendance and participation will be given at least at the level of midterm grade reports, and preferably more frequently.

Absence due to official IIT athletic activities will not result in any grade sanction. All such absences must be verified by your coach or Athletic Director in advance. If you miss a class or other class activity for this reason you will be offered an opportunity to either make up the work, or it will be discounted in your grade calculation. IIT’s coaches work diligently to cooperate with faculty in managing students’ schedules.

Illinois Tech values public service, and feels its students, graduates, faculty, and staff are valuable members of the wider community, and encourages them to engage in their civic duties. As such absences due to jury duty or military duty, including military reserves, will be handled in the same fashion. You will be either given an opportunity to make up the work, or it will be discounted in your final grade.

For serious illness, accident, or other personal disruption (family deaths or other crises) or please contact the Dean of Students, Katherine Stetz at (312) 567-3081/ dos@iit.edu or Vickie Tolbert, Executive Assistant and Student Ombudsman, tolbert@iit.edu, as soon as possible to make arrangements as described above. Each instructor will develop a policy for health-related absences for exams and other graded class activities. If you feel this policy is unfair, you should in the first instance discuss your situation with the instructor. If you cannot reach a resolution, you may appeal to the Chair or the Dean. Your advisor can also be helpful in helping you understand how to proceed.

In the case of other serious professional activities (e.g. professional conferences, med school interviews) you are encouraged to make such events known well in advance to the instructor, and instructors are encouraged to make reasonable accommodations for professional activities. However, you are also expected to prioritize your school work, and in some cases understand that exams, laboratory exercises, and other serious class activities must be accommodated in your own schedule, and sometimes you might not be excused.

# Disabilities and Accommodations

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Center for Disability Resources; (2) request the Center for Disability Resources to provide or bring an accommodation letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodations and what type. This should be done during the first week of class or as soon as possible. For more information about services available to Illinois students with disabilities, contact the [Illinois Tech Center for Disability Resources](http://www.iit.edu/cdr/)  which is located at [3424 S. State Street](https://maps.google.com/?q=3424+S.+State+Street&entry=gmail&source=g), Tech South room IC3-2, and can be reached at disabilities@iit.edu or 312.567.5744.

# Title IX and sexual harassment

Illinois Tech is committed to ensuring an environment for all members of its community that is fair, humane, and respectful - an environment which supports and rewards student, faculty and staff performance on the basis of relevant considerations such as ability and effort. Behaviors that inappropriately assert sexuality as relevant to student, faculty or staff performance damage this environment. Therefore, Illinois Tech strives to provide for its students, faculty and staff an educational and employment environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment as defined and otherwise prohibited by local, state and federal law. Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or sexually-directed remarks constitute harassment when either:

1.       Submission to such conduct is used or threatened to be used as the basis for academic or employment decisions; or

2.       Such conduct directed against an individual persists despite its rejection.

Sexual harassment by any member of the Illinois Tech community is prohibited. This prohibition includes peer harassment among students, staff or faculty. Sexual harassment by a faculty member or teaching assistant of a student over whom he or she has authority or by a supervisor of a member of the faculty or staff is particularly serious. Such conduct may easily create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

To file a complaint, you may complete the online reporting form at [iit.edu/incidentreport](http://iit.edu/incidentreport), which may be completed anonymously. You may also file a complaint in-person by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, Virginia Foster at (312) 567-5725/ foster@iit.edu or the Dean of Students, Katherine Stetz at (312) 567-3081/ dos@iit.edu. If you wish, incidents may also be discussed with any instructor, advisor or administrator of your choosing. Such discussions do not mandate or prevent future (or prior) formal reporting. If you feel more comfortable discussing a matter with a different person we will endeavor to make this possible. However, please be advised that in certain cases, where potentially criminal conduct might be indicated, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as certain officials have a legal obligation to report any suspected criminal conduct in order to protect the entire university community.

# Professionalism, courtesy, and collegiality.

In addition to sexual and gender-based harassment, other forms of harassment are equally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes demeaning or belittling behavior, speech, comments or actions directed by students, faculty or staff against any other student, faculty or staff member. This does not mean that critical comments and opposing viewpoints cannot be expressed; indeed, the university thrives on a free, active and critical environment in its search for knowledge and truth. However, all members of the university community should be treated with respect and professionalism in classes, as well as all other university engagements. This includes live, and in-person interactions as well as potentially anonymous and/or on-line interactions, such as class websites and forums.