

## U-M and Federal Policies Impacting Classroom Teaching

As a student instructor, you are responsible for complying with the legal and regulatory requirements that bind the University. You should also be vigilant about potential issues that arise in classes and report them to your supervisor before they cause bigger problems. This section briefly summarizes some important policies you need to understand.

### 1. Academic Integrity

The College of Engineering abides by an [Honor Code](#) - a collection of standards for personal integrity that reflect the ethical conduct expected of engineers. Some important points about the Code include:

- The honor code is not a set of specific rules, but it is meant to support whichever policies are instituted in each class.
- One central tenet of the code is academic integrity - students may only submit (as their own) work that is the result of their own thoughts and efforts.
- Students, faculty members, and administrators of the CoE trust each other to uphold the Honor Code, and are jointly responsible for precautions against violations of its policies.
- To report a suspected Honor Code violation, please tell your supervisor and contact the [Honor Council](#) at (734) 615-8438.

### 2. Student records – protecting students’ information

All information about a student – such as their personal information, enrollment details, assignments and grades – form part of their “student record”, which is protected by a Federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (commonly called “FERPA”). Student records must be handled in accordance with that law by all those who have access to them. For example, the requirements mean that:

- You may not post grades using the student’s name or ID number;
- When returning student tests and papers, a system must be used to prevent access and/or release to anyone other than the student;
- You should password protect spreadsheets that contain student information;
- You can only use student information for purposes directly related to your role as an instructor: do not share information that you learn in your capacity as an instructor with others in your capacity as a student.

### 3. Religious Holidays

Although UM does not observe religious holidays, its policy states that *“every reasonable effort should be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements.”* Students who are absent on days

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of examinations or class assignments for religious reasons shall be offered an opportunity to make up the work, without penalty. Students need to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent (definitely by the drop/add deadline of the given term). See [Religious Academic Conflicts Policy](#) for more information.

### 4. Instructor-Student Relationships

Keep your interactions with and treatment of students professional at all times. According to UM policy an instructor *“is prohibited from having a Covered Relationship with any Learner in a class, lab, field, or other setting in which the Teacher has Academic or Supervisory Authority over the Learner.”* If you have or have had a *Covered Relationship* with one of your students, disclose it immediately to your supervisor so they can inform the Dean’s office and rectify the situation (e.g. assign the student to a different class). See <http://spg.umich.edu/policy/601.22> for more guidance.

### 5. Safety – for yourself and your students

The University has strict obligations to keep its students and employees safe. Some practical things you can do to improve everyone’s safety are:

- Familiarize yourself with the safety and emergency protocols of each of the classrooms and labs you are teaching in – what would you do if an alarm went off in class? Where would you evacuate to? Where is the nearest fire extinguisher?
- Enter the Department of Public Safety ([dpss.umich.edu](http://dpss.umich.edu)) non-emergency number, 734-763-1131, into your phone so you know you can call them anytime you need to.
- If your class has laboratory components, make sure you know who your lab’s Safety Coordinator is. Get to know and follow all relevant safety procedures, and ensure students do the same. If you see something unsafe happening and can’t find your Safety Coordinator, contact Environmental Health and Safety ([ehs.umich.edu](http://ehs.umich.edu)).
- If you are injured while working, or witness an incident where someone else is injured, you must report it according to your Department’s normal procedures, or to Work Connections ([workconnections.umich.edu](http://workconnections.umich.edu)).

### 6. Copyright – making sure class materials are legally used and distributed

When creating and reproducing class materials, there are copyright compliance issues to consider. Make sure you understand the legal limits of how you can and cannot use or hand out materials in your classes (or post them on Canvas) by reviewing the U-M Library Copyright Office site ([lib.umich.edu/copyright](http://lib.umich.edu/copyright)) on using copyrighted materials.

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### 7. Appropriate treatment of students

As an instructor, you must apply the same standards and offer the same opportunities to all students in your class. This includes students in special programs, like athletics. For example, you can give a student-athlete an extension or agree to some alternative assessment, if the same opportunity would be given to any other student in analogous circumstances; but you are not permitted to give them special treatment just because they are an athlete, nor are you permitted to deny them opportunities for academic flexibility that you would normally give other students.

For students with disabilities, you must provide reasonable accommodations to afford them equal opportunity to succeed in the class. The Faculty Handbook, developed by Services for Students with Disabilities ([ssd.umich.edu](http://ssd.umich.edu)) gives an overview of disabilities that affect learning in a college or university setting and guidance on the adjustments that can be made to accommodate students with disabilities. For more details about supporting students with disabilities, see CRLT Occasional Paper #17, at [crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource\\_files/CRLT\\_no17.pdf](http://crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource_files/CRLT_no17.pdf)