

INSTRUCTOR HANDBOOK

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MATERIALS FOR NEW INSTRUCTORS

Introduction

The purpose of this instructor handbook is to provide information, guidance and resources for the cohort of faculty, lecturers and visiting scholars who will be teaching in the [Ford Dorsey Master's in International Policy \(MIP\)](#) program this academic year.

Because navigating Stanford teaching policies and processes can be daunting, your best resource is the MIP program staff. New instructors may also find it helpful to consult with more experienced faculty for instructional and pedagogical guidance. Instructors should always seek guidance whenever there is a concern about a student or confusion about policy.

The [Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning](#) (VPTL) is a valuable campus resource for instructors on pedagogy, curriculum design, syllabus creation, classroom technology, evaluation of teaching effectiveness, and feedback.

Instructors may also find it helpful to contact the MIP program staff when they have questions, especially concerning policy or concerns about a student:

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ONBOARDING AT STANFORD

If you are new to Stanford, either as a short-term lecturer or permanent member of the teaching staff, this section covers valuable information about University policies, procedures, and resources once you are hired.

Teaching Appointments

All individuals who teach a course for credit at Stanford University must have a professorial appointment or an Academic Staff-Teaching or Other Teaching Staff appointment approved for the quarter or term in which the course is offered. This policy applies to other Stanford employees, such as administrators, who engage in teaching activities. Please visit the Faculty Handbook section for [Appointments Policies and Procedures for Academic Staff-Teaching](#) to learn about the types of appointments and related policies and procedures for teaching staff at Stanford.

Stanford ID Card

Please take this letter to the Stanford ID Card Office to receive a Stanford ID Card that will allow you the benefits and privileges associated with your new appointment. For information on Card Office hours and location, please visit <http://www.stanford.edu/services/campuscard/cardoffice.html> or call (650) 498-2273. Following your start date, you will also receive instructions from Andrea Gray, CISAC about how to obtain a SUNet ID.

StanfordYou

Maintain your personal data (personal information including race, ethnicity and veteran status) through [StanfordYou](#).

Required Training and Patent/Copyright Agreement

You must complete mandatory Stanford training that may include classes specific to your job function. You will receive enrollment information from your department manager if other classes are required.

The Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Training course is mandatory for all new academic staff employees. The course must be completed *within 30 days of being hired*. For information about the course and to register, please see [Harassment Prevention at Stanford for Non-Supervisors \(SHP-2000\)](#).

All employees are required to sign a Stanford University Patent and Copyright Agreement (SU-18). This patent policy applies to all individuals who work at Stanford, or who come here to engage in research. This agreement will need to be signed online at <https://axess.stanford.edu>. A Stanford ID will be required to access the link; however, you must sign the agreement as soon as your ID is issued to you and *no later than 30 days after your start date*.

Computing

All employees should familiarize themselves with policies applicable to use of computerized systems for the creation, updating, processing, outputting, distribution, and other uses of administrative information at Stanford. Please visit the [Computing](#) section of the Administrative Guide.

Accommodation

If you require an accommodation for a disability, please let the departmental contact listed above know. As a federal government contractor, Stanford is required to collect certain information from employees after they are hired. If you are a veteran or an individual with a disability, please complete the *Invitation to Self-Identify Veteran or Disabled Status* form in [Axess](#).

Benefits

If your position is benefits-eligible, information can be found at [Cardinal at Work/Benefits and Rewards](#).

Ergonomics

Stanford University's Ergonomics Program is designed to promote employee health by limiting ergonomic risk factors. Please review the [Ergonomics section](#) of the Environmental Health and Safety website to learn about best practices for workplace ergonomics and features of the program.

Equipment

All equipment supplied by Stanford in order for you to perform your duties is owned by the university and is to be returned to Stanford in proper working order at the end of your appointment.

University Policies

As a condition of your appointment, you are agreeing to abide by all Stanford University policies, including the University's Code of Conduct and applicable Conflict of Commitment and Conflict of Interest policies. Your appointment is governed by the applicable policies in the Stanford University Administrative Guide located at <https://adminguide.stanford.edu/> the University Faculty Handbook located at <http://facultyhandbook.stanford.edu> and the Research Policy Handbook located at <http://rph.stanford.edu>.

THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus contains important information for the student about the course, including content, structure, learning objectives, and evaluation of student work. It informs students about the teaching and learning they can expect, and provides the information necessary for students to understand what is expected of them throughout the quarter.

The [Stanford Teaching Commons](#) provides detailed guidance on [Creating a Syllabus](#). When crafting your syllabus, it is recommended that the following elements and statements be included.

After finalizing the syllabus, upload it to the [Canvas](#) site. It should then also be available on syllabus.stanford.edu.

Enrollment Instructions

Include enrollment instructions for specific student populations to ensure that they know how to properly enroll. For example:

- Enrollment in the course requires instructor permission
- Undergraduate majors who will use this course to fulfill a departmental major requirement may be required to enroll for a specific number of units and for a letter grade
- Graduate students may be required to enroll in the 200-level of the course offering

Assignment and Exam Dates

Provide information about assignment deadlines and exam dates. Additionally, include course policies related to submission of late work such as instructions for requesting an extension on an assignment or how late work will be graded.

Grade Information

Explain how student work will be graded, including:

- The components of the final grade
- Weighting of each component
- How the final grade will be calculated
- The grade scale (e.g., what constitutes a final grade of B, B+, etc.)

Honor Code

- Provide information about the course Honor Code policy, detailing:
- What aid is permitted and unpermitted when completing assignments
- What online resources may be used for completing assignments
- The citation expectations for assignments
- What collaboration with other students is permitted
- Any other course-specific policies

Variable Unit and Level Expectations

When a course is offered for variable units, the syllabus should contain information about the work associated with each number of units. Similarly, when a course is offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, the work associated with each course offering should be included. More information is available in the “Course Policies” section of this handbook.

Academic Accommodation Statement

Include the Syllabus Statement provided by the [Office of Accessible Education](#):

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <http://oae.stanford.edu>).

Affordability of Course Materials

Include a statement informing students of options for obtaining course materials other than purchasing (e.g., course reserves in the library, additional copies of textbooks available for use in your department). Additionally, provide contact information for the [Diversity and First-Gen Office \(D-Gen\)](#) for students needing assistance with the cost of course materials:

Stanford is committed to ensuring that all courses are financially accessible to its students. If you require assistance with the cost of course textbooks, supplies, materials and/or fees, you should contact the [Diversity & First-Gen \(D-Gen\) Office at opportunityfund@stanford.edu](mailto:opportunityfund@stanford.edu) to learn about the FLlibrary and other resources they have available for support.

Since the cost of some course materials may present financial hardships for some students, instructors may want to research whether alternative formats to textbooks, such as electronic or digital version may be more affordable. Also consider placing multiple copies of textbooks and course materials on reserve in the library or having them available in your department for student use.

Content Alerts

Content alerts may be included in the syllabus when the instructor is concerned that subject matter may cause some students acute distress (see the “Inclusive Classroom” section of this for additional guidance). Sample language:

Subject matter touched upon in this course will include violence, race and racism, hateful language, and other topics. If you anticipate that this content will cause you acute distress, please confer with me prior to enrolling. Please note that students may not be warned about all content of individual readings or seminars, and we will not limit discussion as sensitivity of topic may vary from student to student.

The MIP program staff is available to consult and provide guidance in this area.

To ensure that students are assessed in a fair and equitable manner, instructors should be aware of the following course information. Thoughtful adherence to these policies and best practices ensures that classes conform to University expectations, while reducing the likelihood of student complaints and academic grievances.

Academic Calendar

The [Registrar’s Office](#) publishes an academic calendar that includes important dates that apply to both students and instructors, including:

First Day of Classes. This is also the deadline for students to submit their preliminary study list. Instructors should not change the course grade basis or course unit options after this date. Additionally, instructors should not change the grading rubric or make substantial changes to assignments, although it may appropriate to reduce academic work to better meet the learning objectives of the course. Adherence to the syllabus ensures transparency of course work and expectations and ensures that students can plan appropriately.

Final Study List Deadline. Students can adjust their study list (i.e., add/drop courses or units) through the end of the third week of classes. Instructors may not offer students the option to change course units (if a variable unit course) after this date.

Change of Grading Basis Deadline. No grade basis changes (e.g., change from a letter grade to credit/no credit) are permitted after this date, even with instructor permission.

Course Withdrawal Deadline. When a student withdraws from a course after the final study list deadline and before the withdrawal deadline, a notation of 'W' will be recorded on the transcript. It is not possible to withdraw from the course after this date, even with instructor permission. International students should always check with Bechtel International Center prior to withdrawing to ensure that there is no risk to Visa status.

Grade Submission Deadline. The academic calendar also identifies the quarterly grade submission deadline. Failure to enter a grade results in a notation of 'GNR' in the student record and can have serious negative implications for student-athletes and students who are making less than satisfactory academic progress because no units have been earned for that course. Failure to enter a grade can also impact degree conferral for students who have applied to graduate. *Instructors are responsible for entering all grades by the grade submission deadline.*

The only exception to not entering a grade by the grade submission deadline is when an instructor has submitted a case to the [Office of Community Standards](#) that is still under investigation. See the "The Honor Code" and "Fundamental Standard" sections of this handbook for additional guidance.

University Holidays. Per University policy:

Classes may not be held on official University holidays unless the School has granted an exemption. All classrooms are otherwise closed during holidays and may not be scheduled. No Registrar's Scheduling Office services or facilities are available when the University is closed.

Authority for granting exceptions to this policy rests with the relevant school. Please contact MIP program staff if you have questions.

Course Scheduling

The [Registrar's Office](#) provides significant information about course and class scheduling, including the course scheduling policy.

Unit of Credit

Every unit of credit associated with a course represents about three hours of work per week over the course of the quarter (i.e., 30 hours per unit for the quarter). Typically, this equates to one hour per week in class and two hours for preparation or on assignments. The policy provides additional guidance (e.g., courses with extensive reading, independent study, lab courses, etc.).

Courses that are offered for variable units must specify the work requirements for each unit value offered. This information should be clearly identified in the syllabus. Students should be expected to attend class and perform work in proportion to the number of units for which they have registered. For example, the work requirement for a 3-unit option should be different from the work requirement for a 4-unit enrollment option.

Students may only enroll in a course for the number of units associated with the course in [Axess](#) and [ExploreCourses](#) (i.e., a 5-unit course can only be taken for 5 units). Occasionally, students will request permission to enroll in fewer units than the number associated with this course. This practice, known as unit shaving, is not allowable.

Courses Offered at UG and GR Levels

When a course is offered at both undergraduate and graduate levels (e.g., PSYCH 186/286), instructors should differentiate course requirements and clearly state these on the syllabus. For example, the graduate (200-level) offering might require:

- Additional readings
- Attendance at a separate section with the expectation that the material will be discussed in more detail and with more sophistication
- Additional coursework, such as a longer and/or a more complex term paper

Differentiation in requirements aligns with the course in which the student enrolls, not the student's academic career (undergraduate or graduate).

Timing of Assignments

During the end-quarter period (aka "dead week") instructors may not announce new assignments and any assignments due during this week should be specified in the syllabus. While take-home final exams may be distributed during this period, students cannot be required to return the exam prior to the end of the regularly scheduled end-time for the final. Additional information is available in the Midterms and Final Exam sections of this handbook.

It is generally not allowable for instructors to set a final exam or project deadline that falls after the grade submission deadline. An exception may be for continuing classes (e.g., three quarters of senior honors thesis, TGR).

Audio and Video Recording

University policy on Recording and Broadcasting Courses includes two key components:

1. Before recording and broadcasting a Stanford course, faculty must obtain permission and students must be informed, and
2. Students may not audio or video record lectures or classes without permission from the instructor and recordings must be for personal use only. Students who need lectures recorded for disability-related reasons should contact the [Office of Accessible Education](#).

When deciding whether it is appropriate to record a class, instructors should consider potential impact to the class. For example, would recording the class limit student participation, given the course content and structure? Would recording the class change the pedagogical goals for in-class sessions?

For privacy matters, this policy should be extended to class sections, academic meetings, and similar activities. Any recording should be done with consent of the instructor and other students or attendees should be informed and allowed to raise concerns.

GRADES AND GRADING

The [Registrar's Office](#) maintains helpful information related to grades and grading.

Definition of Grades

The general University grading system applies to all classes in the MIP program. In particular, instructors should be familiar with polices associated with non-standard and temporary grades, including:

- Grade of I (Incomplete): The grade of I (Incomplete) is restricted to cases in which the student has requested an 'I' prior to the last class and has satisfactorily completed a substantial part of the coursework. Instructors may deny student requests and may also set a deadline for submission of work that is less than one year. Instructors should not give an 'I' if the above conditions have not been met.
- Grade of N: A temporary grade indicating that a student is making satisfactory progress on a project, thesis, or dissertation. A grade of 'S' or 'NP' is entered upon completion of the course, at which time the final grade will retro-actively replace all 'N' grades. The 'N' grade is appropriate for students who are TGR. *Note that a grade of 'N' is not the same as the grade of 'NP' (not passed).*
- Grade of N- (N minus): A temporary grade signaling unsatisfactory progress on a project, thesis, or dissertation. This grade is may be used to signal unsatisfactory academic progress and that the student may be at risk of dismissal from the program. The 'N-' grade is appropriate for students who are TGR.
- Grade of L: A temporary notation that may be used when the instructor requires more time to enter the grade and the student has creditably completed all work associated with the course. Use of the 'L' for graduating students can have negative consequences as a letter grade may be required for the student to meet degree requirements.
- GNR Notation: A notation that appears on the student transcript when no grade has been entered and that can cause negative impact to student athletic and academic standing.

Grade Scale

There is no University grading scale; responsibility for determining how assignments will be assessed and weighted, and how total scores will be translated to grades rests with the instructor. This information should be included in the syllabus and should not be revised after the first day of classes.

Grade Submission Deadline

Failure to enter a grade by the identified deadline results in a notation of GNR in the student record and can have serious negative implications for student-athletes and students who are making less than satisfactory academic progress because no units have been earned for that course. Instructors are responsible for knowing about, and adhering to, University grade submission deadlines.

Although a grade of 'L' can be used when more time is required to enter a grade and when the student is believed to have completed and submitted all required coursework, issuing such a grade can have negative consequences for the student. For example, a graduating student may require a final grade to be cleared by the home department.

Revision of Final Grades

Instructors may revise a student's end-quarter grade only under specific circumstances. It is allowable to change a grade when the revision is due to a computational error or when a student's submitted work was unintentionally overlooked. It is not allowable to change a grade due to a revision of judgment on the instructor's part or on the basis of new work submitted (e.g., a new exam or additional work completed after the end of the quarter).

Grades of 'I' must be changed to a final grade within one year or the grade will automatically change to a grade of NP (not passed) or NC (no credit).

The Syllabus and Grades

Although University policy does not require that instructors include grading scale and weighting of assignments on the syllabus, it is best practice to do so. This practice ensures transparency about how the work will be graded, provides students with the information that they need to select an appropriate grade basis for the course, and ensures consistency in assessment. Once established and shared with the class, this grading information should generally not be revised.

MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Stanford maintains detailed policy related to conducting midterm and final examinations, addressing both university-mandated requirements, as well as areas for which decision-making falls to the instructor. Instructors are responsible for knowing and adhering to relevant policies.

Midterm Exams

Some large classes conduct midterm exams outside of regular class hours (e.g., an evening midterm when the regularly scheduled class is in the morning or afternoon). While this alternate scheduling of midterms can benefit many students, it can also result in unanticipated class conflicts for some students.

When a midterm exam is scheduled outside of regular class hours, the instructor must:

- Announce the date and time of the midterm exam(s) during the first week of the academic quarter, and
- Provide reasonable alternative times to those students who have another class or other University commitment at that time.

End-Quarter Period

The end-quarter period (aka “dead week”) begins 7 days prior to the start of final exams. While classes continue to meet as scheduled, instructors may not require additional class meetings or announce new assignments of work. While it is allowable to require submission of work that has been previously announced with adequate notice, there are some restrictions. Instructors are encouraged to conduct review sessions and engage in activities that help prepare students for final exams.

Take-home final exams may be distributed during this period, but students cannot be required to return the exam until the end of the regularly scheduled exam time for the class.

Final Exams

The instructor has authority to determine how the student’s academic performance will be measured (e.g., in-class exam, paper, project, etc.). Once determined, the instructor should consult policy to ensure compliance with University policy.

Student Requests for an Alternate Exam Schedule

Students commit to all course requirements, including exam procedures and scheduled times, when they submit their final study list. Should they anticipate a conflict with the final exam scheduling, the student should notify the instructor and discuss possible accommodation.

When a student is unable to sit a final exam due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e., illness, personal emergency, or required participation in a special event such as an athletic championship), the instructor should make alternative arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

Increasingly, students are requesting alternate exams due to competitive internships and unanticipated conflicts that fall outside of the approved exceptions identified above. In such cases, instructors have discretion as to whether or not to accommodate the student’s request and are not obligated to do so.

The [Committee on Undergraduate Standards and Policy \(C-USP\)](#) discourages faculty from giving final exams earlier to than the published time.

Academic Accommodation

Stanford University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Aside from legal obligations, Stanford is

talents and experiences. Students with disabilities, actively participating in the various aspects of life at Stanford, are an essential part of that diversity.

The [Office of Accessible Education \(OAE\)](#) is the campus office designated to work with Stanford students with disabilities. The OAE provides a wide array of support services, accommodations, and programs to remove barriers to full participation in the life of the University. In reaching its determinations about appropriate accommodations, the OAE considers factors such as the documentation from professionals specializing in the area of the student's diagnosed disability, the student's functional limitations, and the student's input and accommodation history in regard to particular needs and limitations. The OAE then works with the student and relevant instructors through an interactive process designed to achieve an accommodation that meets the needs of all parties.

Instructors should grant academic accommodation only upon receipt of a letter from the OAE. To ensure equitable application of accommodations, instructors should refer students to OAE and avoid seeking to manage academic accommodations themselves.

Examples of academic accommodations include:

- Alternative testing sites (e.g., private or distraction-reduced rooms)
- Extended time on exams or submission of academic work
- Extension of degree milestones
- Alternate format materials (e.g., Braille, MP3s)
- Assistive technology

Instructor Rights and Responsibilities

Instructors have the responsibility for maintaining the academic standards and integrity of their courses. In doing so, they should be aware of the following rights and responsibilities as they pertain to academic accommodation, including:

- Right to verification of disability for requested accommodations in the form of a letter from OAE
- Right to timely requests for accommodation, including prompt notification of changes to approved accommodations
- Responsibility for protecting student privacy and confidentiality
- Responsibility for providing OAE identified accommodations, unless they are a fundamental alteration of the course; in such cases the instructor should work with OAE to review the recommended accommodation and discuss alternatives
- Responsibility for including a statement on the syllabus for students with documented disabilities

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Just as instructors are expected to be active participants in the accommodation process, so too are students. In particular, students are responsible for initiating requests for disability-related accommodations with OAE and for providing instructors with their OAE letter in a timely manner when requesting accommodation.

Office of Accessible Education

The [OAE website](#) contains helpful resources for faculty and teaching staff, including:

- Faculty and teaching staff roles
- Faculty FAQs
- Syllabus statement
- Information for students

The OAE is available to consult and to answer your questions.

Email: oe-contactus@stanford.edu

Phone: 650-723-1066

SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING AND CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

Stanford maintains policies related to mandated training for all instructors, including faculty, lecturers, and teaching assistants.

Sexual Harassment Training

Stanford requires all faculty and staff to complete programs that encourage members of the University community to explore ways in which we can nurture respectful workplaces, classrooms, campus living spaces and programs sponsored by the University. Training topics include illegal forms of discrimination, sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in our community, reporting obligations, campus resources, how to assist survivors, and how to be a positive “upstander.”

Information about required trainings and how to enroll is available from the [Sexual Harassment Policy Office](#). There is also a helpful [Course Comparison Table](#).

New faculty and senior lecturers are required to complete *Harassment Prevention at Stanford for Supervisors and Faculty* (SHP-1001 in STARS).

Other instructors are required to complete *Harassment Prevention for Non-Supervisors* (SHP-2000 in STARS). Instructional staff may include:

- Non-senior lecturers
- Postdoctoral fellows
- Teaching and course assistants
- Visiting professors and scholars

The expectation of MIP is that this training will be completed *prior* to the first day of the teaching assignment.

Relationships — University Policy

Consensual Relationships. Stanford has a detailed policy regarding consensual sexual and romantic relationships between people in inherently unequal positions. The [Consensual Sexual or Romantic Relationships in the Workplace and Educational Setting](#) policy (AdminGuide 1.7.2) identifies relationships that are prohibited, as well as those that require notification and recusal from decision making, including assessment of coursework. This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, and others who participate in Stanford programs and activities.

Prohibited Relationships. The following relationships are not allowed:

- Instructors and undergraduate students, regardless of whether the undergraduate student has taken or is taking a course with the instructor
- Instructors and students when the instructor has or might be expected to have an academic responsibility over the students (e.g., instruction, grading, advising, mentoring, evaluating a proposal for funding, dissertation reader, TA supervisor, etc.)
- Staff in authority roles (e.g., academic advisor, coach, work supervisor) and undergraduate students

Relationships Requiring Notification and Recusal. The following relationships require notification and recusal:

- Students when one student is teaching or evaluating another student’s academic work
- Students when one student is managing or supervising another student’s employment
- Adult employees (including faculty) when one has authority over another - *even if the relationship is consensual.*

Student Instructors. Students serving in instructor roles, including teaching fellows (TF), teaching and course assistances (TA, CA), are also required to disclose a prior or current consensual relationship with another student in the class. In such cases, the student instructors must recuse themselves from teaching and grading the student enrolled in the class. The student instructor also must notify the supervising instructor so that alternative arrangements can be made for instruction, section assignment, and grading.

Resources. Written policies and resources:

- [Sexual Harassment Policy Office](#)
- [SHPO Guidelines on Consensual Relationships](#)

STUDENT PRIVACY AND FERPA

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records by:

1. limiting the information that institutions can share about a student, and
2. providing students with the right to inspect their education records and to request amendment to their records.

Who Is a Student?

Any individual who is, or has been, in attendance at Stanford University, including: exchange students, non-matriculated students, and students of new faculty (SNF). Student status begins on the first day of the first quarter of enrollment, and continues after the student graduates or otherwise separates from the University.

Who Is Not a Student?

The following are not considered to be students under FERPA and do not have a right to view their education records: applicants to degree programs, admitted students prior to the first day of their first quarter, visiting student researchers, and conference participants.

Requests for information about postdoctoral fellows should be forwarded to the [Office of Postdoctoral Affairs](#).

What Is an Education Record?

Any record directly related to a student and that is maintained by the University, including records maintained by faculty and staff. An education record is broadly defined to include shared handwritten or electronic documents, emails, and other materials relating to a student (e.g., spreadsheets, video and audio recordings, computer files, grades, etc.). Education records include:

- Evaluative records about admissions decisions (e.g., rankings)
- Formal or informal evaluative discussions regarding academic progress and review (e.g., candidacy, oral exams)
- Letters of recommendation for which the student did not waive FERPA rights
- Faculty and committee meeting minutes (if shared)

FERPA was adopted in 1974 before email, iPhones, iPads, texts, and the ability to retain large numbers of records on computers and servers. In considering education records, it is important to think about the many types of communications that we use and where these records are stored.

What Is Not an Education Record?

The following are not considered to be education records under FERPA:

- Sole possession records (personal notes, not shared with others)
- Applications to degree programs and associated evaluative materials (once a student enrolls, these become education records)
- Employment records (unless associated with student status – e.g., TA, RA)
- Public safety records (unless shared by the student)
- Health records (unless shared by a student)

Record Retention

With the exception of admissions records, the University does not maintain specific retention policies for most types of student records. Generally, records may be deleted at any time prior to a FERPA request. For email, this requires that all parties copied on the communication delete the files from their inbox, sent file, trash, and any folders in which they have stored the correspondence. Once a FERPA request has been received, records cannot be purged, and the University has 45 days to provide the records.

Why FERPA Matters: The Current Landscape

Students are increasingly aware of their rights under FERPA, resulting in a dramatic rise in student requests to view their education records. This includes:

- Students using requests for education records (e.g., emails) as a basis for academic grievances
- Students using requests for education records as a means of protest

Such requests place a significant burden of time and effort on faculty and staff.

FERPA Best Practices

Communicating About Students. Because every shared document and written exchange referencing a student is an education record under FERPA, it is important to follow best practices when communicating about students:

- Write each communication with the understanding that the student may view it in the future.
- Be factual and honest about the student's academic work, noting both the positive as well as areas of concern. Provide specific examples, when possible.
- Avoid inserting opinions and comments of a personal nature (e.g., *I think Susan needs to focus less on her family and more on her coursework*).
- Avoid direct comparison of individual students (e.g., *Susan's work is not as good as Laura's work*).
- It is not appropriate to share information relating to disability, health issues, or medications with other faculty or staff unless there is a concern about the health and safety of the student or concerns that the student may pose a safety risk to others.

Information related to student academic progress or personal issues should be shared on a need-to-know basis only, and such information should never be shared with other students.

Evaluation of Student Work. When evaluating students or discussing academic progress, the best practice is to meet in person or participate via conference call. A summary of the discussion, including any decisions and votes, should be placed in the student file after the meeting. Detailed minutes of the meeting should not be maintained.

If discussion of a student's academic progress is conducted over email, adhere to the best practices identified above. Send one email for each individual student. Avoid writing one comprehensive email commenting on, and comparing, multiple students.

Concern for a Student. When concerned about a student, follow best practices to the extent possible. FERPA, however, should never prevent you from contacting the [Graduate Life Office](#), [Undergraduate Advising and Research](#), [Residential Education](#), the MIP program staff, the [H&S Dean's Office \(GUS\)](#), or other campus partners when you are concerned about a student's health and safety, or the health and safety of others.

When contacting the MIP program staff about a non-urgent student issue or requesting feedback on a draft communication to a student, please redact all identifying student information (e.g., student name, email, phone number, SUID).

Letters of Recommendation. Students have the right to view letters of recommendation if they have not waived their right to do so under FERPA. If there is a letter that you are uncomfortable with the student viewing, confirm that the student has signed a waiver prior to submitting it.

Sharing and Returning Academic Work. A student's work (e.g., honors theses, milestone papers, etc.) should not be shared with other students without permission of the author. If the academic work is maintained at a University library, including the Stanford Digital Repository, and is broadly available to the Stanford community, there is no need to obtain additional student permission to share the work with other students.

Graded work containing personally identifiable information (e.g., student name or email) is an education record. When returning graded work, adopt processes to ensure that other students cannot connect an individual student with a grade. For example, return the work in section or place the grade inside the paper/exam and staple the side of the document so that the grade is not visible.

Graduate Admissions. Admissions documents (e.g., evaluative notes, comments, and rankings) that have been retained become education records when a student enrolls. Consult with department staff about school and department best practices relating to retention of graduate admissions records.

Sole Possession Records. Personal notes that remain in the sole possession of the maker are not an education record. Once shared, however, they become education records, and students have the right to view them.

Review Local Processes. Academic units should review business processes and adopt best practices for creation and retention of education records. Such practices may revolve around admissions, review of students, candidacy and other academic milestone decisions, dismissal of students, and/or return of graded work.

Resources. Written policies and resources:

- [Administrative Guide Privacy Policy](#)
- [Stanford Bulletin](#)
- [Stanford Privacy Office](#)
- [Graduate Academic Policies \(GAP\)](#)
- [FERPA for Parents](#)

The MIP office is available to consult on issues related to student privacy and FERPA and to provide helpful resources such as a Consent for Release of Information form.

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THE HONOR CODE AND FUNDAMENTAL STANDARD

Students are responsible for adhering to established community and academic standards, including the Fundamental Standard and the Honor Code. Instructors are responsible for knowing about these standards and knowing policies related to the Honor Code and reporting suspected violations.

The [Office of Community Standards \(OCS\)](#) coordinates the student conduct system, including administering the formal disciplinary process and the informal resolution of concerns.

The Honor Code

The Honor Code, written by students in 1921, is Stanford's statement on academic integrity. It articulates the University's expectations of students and instructors in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work.

The Honor Code depends on the vigilance of both faculty and students. It allows for unproctored midterm and final exams, and for take-home exams to be open book. The expectation is that instructors will minimize opportunities for, and incentives to, violate the Honor Code by providing clear guidelines on permitted collaboration, proper citation, and other expectations for honorable academic work.

The Honor Code was written well before the Internet, smart phones, and other technological advances shaping the current educational environment. As such, violations of the Honor Code are increasingly complex. Please consult the "The Syllabus" section of this handbook for suggestions on what to include in the syllabus about course expectations on citation, collaboration, permitted aid, and use of online resources.

Instructors who suspect that a student has engaged in an Honor Code violation such as plagiarism, unpermitted collaboration, or giving or receiving unpermitted aid should consult with the Office of Community Standards.

Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors demonstrate confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent academic dishonesty. It is expected that instructors will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.

Instructors should carefully review [Tips for Faculty and Teaching Assistants](#) on the OCS website for information on best practices and what is, and is not, permitted under the Honor Code, including the following:

- **Penalty grading:** Students may not be penalized for suspected violations of the Honor Code without adjudication under the procedures specified by the Student Judicial Charter of 1997. Therefore, an instructor may not lower a student's grade or impose any other academic penalty on the grounds of dishonesty in the absence of such formal proceedings. The Office of Community Standards can offer information about how other instructors have handled grading for students found responsible for violating the Honor Code.
- **Proctoring:** Instructors and/or TAs may not be present in the room during an exam, except to distribute and provide information about the exam, to transmit additional information, to answer questions, or to collect exams. Instructors may also enter the exam room to investigate a report of an Honor Code violation.
- **Grade submission:** At the end of the quarter, if an Honor Code complaint is still under investigation, do not submit any grade for the student(s) under investigation, including a grade 'I' (Incomplete). Once an investigation has concluded, instructors may assign a final grade. Any unsubmitted grade on a class grade roster triggers an automatic notification from the Registrar's Office to instructors with a reminder

to submit grades. This process is unable to distinguish missing grades from those associated with an on-going Honor Code complaint; the instructor should not enter a grade until the Honor Code matter has been resolved.

- Student Privacy: Instructors should refrain from discussing Honor Code concerns with others unless there is a specific need to do so. Student privacy should be respected to the greatest extent possible.

Student Responsibilities

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively. As such, students confirm that they:

- Will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading, and
- Will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.

Resources

Written policies and resources include:

- [Interpretations of the Honor Code](#)
- [Tips for Faculty and Teaching Assistants](#)
- [Honor Code statements for syllabi](#)
- [Exams and the Honor Code](#)
- [VPTL TA Training Resources](#)

The Fundamental Standard

The Fundamental Standard was articulated in 1896 by David Staff Jordan, Stanford's first president:

Students at Stanford are expected to show both within and without the university such respect for order, morality, personal honor and the rights of others as is demanded of good citizens. Failure to do this will be sufficient cause for removal from the university.

An aspirational statement, it sets expectations for student behavior that falls outside of the Honor Code. Possible violations of the Fundamental Standard include, but are not limited to, violation of University policy, physical assault or threats, theft, seeking a University benefit to which a student is not entitled, hazing, hate crimes, and impersonating another individual.

Instructors who have questions about whether a student's behavior or action may be a violation of the Fundamental Standard should consult with the [Office of Community Standards](#).

Resources

The MIP program staff is available to consult on issues related to the Honor Code and Fundamental Standards.

INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

President of Stanford University Marc Tessier-Lavigne's statement on inclusion:

Stanford's strength comes from the diversity of our community, and our culture of inclusion of people of all backgrounds, nationalities, races, genders, identities, religions, political views and ways of thinking. A thriving academic community depends on the free and open exchange of ideas in a culture of mutual respect, free of harassment, intimidation and violence.

Given the diversity of our student body, instructors should take steps to create an inclusive classroom experience that supports the success of all students. The [Office of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning](#) (VPTL) provides excellent resources and support for instructors in this area.

Difficult Classroom Conversations

In some cases, course content may include topics, readings, or videos that may be difficult for some students to engage with because of their personal experience or beliefs. While engaging with a broad range of ideas and arguments – including those that some might find objectionable – is fundamental to the educational experience, students should not be surprised by course content.

Content alerts may be included in the syllabus when the instructor is concerned that subject matter may cause some students acute distress. For example:

Subject matter touched upon in this course will include violence, race and racism, hateful language, and other topics. If you anticipate that this content will cause you acute distress, please confer with me prior to enrolling. Please note that students may not be warned about all content of individual readings or seminars, and we will not limit discussion as sensitivity of topic may vary from student to student.

In such cases, the instructor should review the content alert in the first class meeting and provide opportunities for students with concerns to meet privately.

The MIP program staff is available to consult on these matters.

Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit

VPTL provides helpful teaching resources, including a [Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit](#). The toolkit provides information related to growth mindset, implicit bias and microaggressions, first-generation and/or low-income students, leading difficult conversations, identity, as well as links to other resources.

Pronoun Usage and Name Pronunciation

Correct pronoun usage contributes to an inclusive classroom. Students may now select their preferred gender pronouns so that they appear in [Canvas](#), class rosters, and other systems on campus. Since not all students may take this step, however, it may be helpful for the instructor to normalize introductions that include name and pronouns at the start of class. For example, "My name is Joe Smith and my pronouns are he/him/his."

NameCoach is a campus system that allows students to record the pronunciation of their names and note their preferred pronouns. This information is available in class rosters in [Axess](#).

Religious Holidays

Given the diversity of our student body, instructors can reasonably expect that a student may have a conflict between a class and a religious holiday. The [Office of Religious Life](#) offers the following guidance:

Stanford has long supported faculty, students and staff in observing religious holidays of significance to them. In the complex process of creating the academic calendar, religious holy days are but one of many considerations. The university administration has always been helpful in facilitating communication and encouraging respect and understanding when there are academic calendar conflicts with religious holy days. Most instructors will be cooperative and flexible regarding students' religious observance when they receive appropriate and early communication. If a student is planning NOT to attend class or take an exam because of a religious holiday, he or she should convey this information to instructors in advance so that the student will not be disadvantaged as a result of religious practice. The Office for Religious Life makes available to faculty, staff and students this list of significant religious holidays at the beginning of each academic year. For any questions or concerns, please contact the Office for Religious Life.

The Office of Religious Life maintains a list of major religious holidays.

CONCERN FOR A STUDENT

Instructors often are among the first to notice a student experiencing academic or personal difficulties. Some behaviors or signs that a student in your course may be struggling, include:

- Frequent absences
- A pattern of unsubmitted work or missed deadlines
- A decline in academic performance
- Repeated requests for extensions or excused absences
- Failure to respond to repeated communications
- Mood or behavioral changes
- Unusual or troubling behavior, such as angry outbursts, inappropriately dark humor, vague threats to harm self or others
- Changes in appearance
- Concerns expressed by other students

When you have a concern about a student, your first resource is the student services officer in your department. Student services staff are knowledgeable about university resources and often have helpful information about individual students.

Additional Student Resources

Emergency. In case of an emergency involving a student, dial 9-1-1 or, from your office phone, 9-9-1-1.

Graduate Students. The [Graduate Life Office \(GLO\)](#) assists graduate students with navigating personal issues, including health and family, academic challenges, financial difficulties, and other situations. You can reach an Assistant Dean anytime by calling the GLO pager at 650-723-8222 (enter ID# 25085 at the prompt, then follow the instructions).

Undergraduate Students. The Resident Deans (RDs) in [Residential Education](#) assist and support undergraduate students through difficult or challenging health, personal, financial, or other situations. To reach an RD during business hours, call 650-725-2800. Outside of business hours, call 650-504-8022

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). The professional counselors at [CAPS](#) are available to consult with faculty who are concerned about a student. You may consult with the CAPS on-call clinician 24/7 at 650-723-3785. CAPS has also created a brochure for faculty and staff about helping a student in distress.

Confidential Support Team (CST). The [Confidential Support Team \(CST\)](#) offers free and confidential support to Stanford students impacted by sexual assault and relationship violence, including domestic abuse, intimate partner abuse, stalking, and sexual or gender-based harassment and discrimination. The CST is also available to consult with instructors who are concerned about a student. During regular business hours, call 650-736-6933. The CST hotline for urgent concerns is 650-725-9955.

International Students. The [Bechtel International Center](#) assists international students and scholars about obtaining and maintaining legal status in the United States. They also provide guidance to students impacted by immigration issues and changes. Bechtel staff offer daily drop-in advising hours each weekday afternoon.

Academic Skills Coaching. Students wanting assistance with study strategies, time management, test-taking anxiety, or procrastination can make an appointment with an [Academic Skills Coach](#).

Consultation and Help. The MIP program staff is available to consult on any student issues and identify appropriate resources.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MIP Program Staff

The MIP program staff works closely with H&S and campus partners to support undergraduate and graduate students and interpret and uphold policies. They manage and support graduate student diversity initiatives in the departments; departmental staff training; curriculum review and learning outcomes assessment; graduate aid; and graduate awards and fellowships. The MIP program staff is also available to consult on students of concern, course policy questions, and potential violations of the Honor Code (academic dishonesty issues).

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Stanford Teaching Commons

The [Stanford Teaching Commons](#) is a valuable website for instructors, with information about policies, logistics, resources, and funding.

Graduate Life Office (GLO)

The Assistant Deans in the [Graduate Life Office](#) assist graduate students with navigating academic and personal issues, family concerns, financial difficulties, and other situations.

graduatelifeoffice@stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-736-7078

On-call pager: 650-723-8222 enter ID # 25085

Office of Accessible Education (OAE)

The Office of Accessible Education offers a variety of accommodations, including academic accommodations, for undergraduate and graduate students with documented disabilities.

oe-contactus@stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-723-1066

Office of Community Standards (OCS)

The Office of Community Standards is responsible for upholding the Honor Code and the Fundamental Standard. The Office coordinates the student conduct system, including administering the formal disciplinary processes and information resolutions of concerns. They are available to consult on potential academic integrity violations of the Honor Code.

community-standards@stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-725-2485

Residential Education (ResEd)

The Residence Deans (RD) of Residential Education are professional staff available to help undergraduate students navigate Stanford, particularly during challenging or difficult times.

areaadminteam@list.stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-725-2800

RD-on-call 650-504-8022

Schwab Learning Center (SLC)

The Schwab Learning Center supports students with learning differences that is separate from the accommodations model. They offer workshops to faculty on learning differences and Universal Design Learning.

schwablearningcenter@stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-497-3391

Stanford Library

At the [Stanford Library](http://library.stanford.edu/), faculty can find a variety of resources to support their teaching, including topic specialists, course reserves, resource guides tailored to specific classes, and digital collection resources. The Library also offers workshops on a variety of programming languages (Python, R, SQL, etc.), data management, data visualization, reference database management, and other topics.

<http://library.stanford.edu/>

Green Library Information Center phone: 650-725-1064

Undergraduate Advising and Research (UAR)

The professional advisors in [UAR](#) provide undergraduate students with comprehensive academic advising and guidance on undergraduate research.

advising@stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-723-2426

Vice Provost for Graduate Education (VPGE)

The [VPGE](#) provides a variety of resources to support graduate students, including: advising and mentoring workshops for faculty, graduate student professional development workshops, interdisciplinary projects, and research funding.

vpge@stanford.edu

Office phone: 650-736-0775

Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning (VPTL)

The [VPTL](#) provides resources for designing curriculum, courses, and programs, applying innovative classroom and digitally mediated teaching practices, and effectively leveraging structured evaluation and feedback. They also manage the Canvas course management system and end-of-quarter course evaluations. VPTL also provides the following resources for students:

- Academic skills coaching
- Subject and language tutoring
- Digital Language Lab