Dear Students: Welcome to Spring 2020 from the Office of Academic Ombud Services

The Office of Academic Ombud Services provides a confidential and impartial setting for discussing and resolving academic rights concerns. Academic Ombud Services is an advocate for fairness and equitable treatment for all persons engaged in teaching and learning activities at the university; we value working with students and faculty from every discipline and at every level. Here is a brief outline of issues that often concern students:

Cheating: Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the wrongful giving, taking or presenting of any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another. The fact that a student could not have benefited from an action is not by itself proof that the action does not constitute cheating.

Plagiarism: All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors is expected to be the result of the student’s own thought, research, or self-expression. If a student is unsure about a question of plagiarism involving his/her work, the student should consult the course instructor before submission. Students must use quotation marks for quoted material on all draft and final submissions.

Penalties for academic offenses: The minimum penalty for an academic offense is a zero on the work in question. Penalties increase in severity up to dismissal from the University. There are specific procedures outlined in the University Senate Rules for handling academic offenses. Students may appeal academic offense determinations, or the severity of the penalty, by contacting Academic Ombud Services.

Syllabus: Students are entitled to receive the syllabus on the first day of classes. Generally, the syllabus is considered a contract between the student and the instructor and should not be changed thereafter.

Dead Week: No papers, presentations, projects, or exams may be scheduled during the last week of classes during regular semesters (consult the University Registrar or Senate Rules for shorter terms). However, regular homework assignments are allowed.

Excused absences: Under certain circumstances a student’s absence must be excused and the student must be allowed to make up the work. In short, “a student shall not be penalized for an excused absence.”

General grade appeals: The subjective opinion of the instructor is not normally an ombud issue. For example, the grade received on an essay is not appealable unless a specific student right has been violated. However, a deviation from the syllabus or unequal treatment of students, that affects a student’s final grade in the course may be appealed through the Office of Academic Ombud Services.

Disability accommodations: The Disability Resource Center provides services to the University community so students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of University life. The DRC can be reached by calling (859) 257-2754 or by visiting 725 Rose Street, Suite 407, Multidisciplinary Science Building.

Our office, located at 109 Bradley Hall, is open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. We can also be reached by email at ombud@uky.edu or phone at 859-257-3737.