

## Academic and Course Management Policies for the Department of Chemistry and Biology

The Ryerson University Policy on Undergraduate Course Management (Policy 145) requires departments to establish policies for group work, academic integrity, course variation, attendance, class participation, accommodation of students with disabilities, student e-mail, and non-academic conduct. The policies must be included in an on-line Student Handbook and distributed to the departmental faculty. The Student Handbook may be referenced in course outlines to avoid repetition of general department information.

These policies are intended for all members of the Department.

### **Group Work**

Group work is course work carried out by two or more students, who each receive the same mark for the shared work. Group work can be a valuable learning experience for students and provide career-related skills. However, due to the importance of individual assessment in grading student competence, group work shall not constitute more than 30% of a course grade for courses offered by the Department. In courses with group work, the course outline must provide students with clear guidelines concerning the assessment of the group's work, including expectations with respect to form and content, and how and when group work will be assessed. The instructor should provide students with learning resources or training in effective group work. Although conflict resolution is a crucial skill that students can learn and improve upon through group work, the course outline must document fair, appropriate and timely procedures for students who encounter difficulty working with their groups. Normally, the procedures would include consultation with the instructor as soon as possible. If the problem remains unresolved after the instructor's intervention, students should consult the Program Director.

### **Academic Integrity**

The effectiveness of university teaching, learning, scholarly research and student evaluation depends critically on the integrity of all participants. Academic misconduct consists of actions that erode the integrity of the learning environment. Plagiarism, cheating, dishonesty, obstructing the academic activities of others, copyright infringement, and falsification of laboratory or research data are all examples of academic misconduct, as is assisting (deliberately or negligently) others to commit academic misconduct. The Student Code of Academic Conduct provides a comprehensive definition and examples of academic misconduct, possible penalties and consequences, and the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected misconduct. Academic misconduct of any kind is unacceptable and may have severe and long-lasting consequences. For example, students who have been found to have committed academic misconduct will automatically have a Disciplinary Notice (DN) placed on their academic record and official transcript. The DN notation will remain until the student graduates or eight years elapses.

Students are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the contents of the Code. It is available on the Senate website (Policy 60 of Ryerson University Senate, [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf)) The Department is committed to full enforcement

of the Student Code of Academic Conduct and requires faculty to report and investigate any suspicion of academic misconduct, whether on the part of an individual or a group. Instructors may use an electronic plagiarism detection service, subject to the requirements of the Course Management Policy (Policy 145 of Ryerson University Academic Council). Students who are uncertain about what constitutes academic misconduct, especially plagiarism, should consult their instructor and the Academic Integrity Office website (<http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity>).

### **Course Variation**

In courses with multiple sections running during the same semester, course descriptions and overall objectives must be consistent. There may be minor variations in assignment structures and evaluation techniques, but all sections will have identical assessment weight distributions.

### **Lecture Attendance**

In-class lectures, discussions, and other activities are an integral part of the university learning process. Students who want to achieve their best academic performance should attend classes regularly. During classes, instructors may make important announcements, provide feedback on academic performance, discuss expectations about assignments and evaluations, and answer student questions. Students who are absent from classes assume complete responsibility for learning what they have missed. Upon request, instructors will provide printed material, e.g., handouts, notes, etc., that were distributed during the class. Instructors are not required to provide their personal lecture notes, or copies of overhead transparencies used in the lecture.

Attendance at lectures will not be graded in undergraduate courses offered by the Department of Chemistry and Biology. Instructors may assign grades to activities, scheduled or unscheduled, conducted during classes, as described in the course outline. The grade assigned to any unscheduled activity in a single lecture session shall not contribute more than 2% toward the final grade. The grade assigned to unscheduled activities throughout the term shall not contribute more than 10% toward the final grade.

When illnesses or other compassionate circumstances will result in substantial absences (more than three or four hours of class), or any missed evaluations, students must consult their instructor and Program Director as soon as possible.

### **Laboratory/Tutorial Attendance**

Laboratory/tutorial attendance requirements are documented in the course outline. In most courses with practical components, attendance of all scheduled laboratories/tutorials is mandatory. Academic consideration for missed laboratories/tutorials will be at the discretion of the instructor and will require valid documentation of the medical or compassionate circumstance. Late course registration is not an acceptable reason for missing scheduled laboratory/tutorial meetings. For some practical components, there are limited opportunities to complete missed work; missing more than 20% of scheduled meetings (labs) for any reason will result in the failure of the practical component regardless of the circumstances.

### **Class Participation**

Courses that include student participation as a component of the final grade will document in the course outline the criteria used in evaluating student performance. A student participation grade will not be based solely on class attendance.

### **Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

The Department is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is inclusive, accessible and fair to all members of the Ryerson community. The Department supports the use of the Access Centre by students with disabilities and special needs (<http://www.ryerson.ca/student-services/accesscentre/>). In collaboration with the student and instructor, the Access Centre determines accommodations that meet the student's identified needs, while preserving the academic integrity of the courses in question. Students must register with the Access Centre in order to obtain accommodation for a disability. Students are responsible for providing their instructors with an "Accommodation Form for Professors" from the Access Centre that documents their accommodation needs. Students registered with the Access Centre at the beginning of the semester must meet with their instructors during the first week of classes to discuss their accommodation needs. Students who register with the Access Centre during the semester must speak to their instructors as soon as their accommodation needs have been identified. Students should note that some forms of accommodation (such as assignment extensions and flexibility in test/exam scheduling) require negotiation with the instructor well in advance of the date in question.

### **Student E-mail**

Students are required to maintain and monitor their Ryerson e-mail address and to use it in all official or formal electronic communications with the Department (this includes faculty, instructors, teaching assistants, technologists and administrative staff). Students are expected to monitor and retrieve messages and information sent to their Ryerson e-mail address on a frequent and consistent basis and must recognize that certain communications may be time-critical (Policy 157 of Ryerson University Senate (<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol157.pdf>)).

### **Non-Academic Conduct**

The Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct outlines actions that the University considers to be nonacademic misconduct offences and the range of remedies and/or penalties that may be imposed. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct (Policy 61 of Ryerson University Senate (<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol61.pdf>)).