Dear Colleagues,

Over the past few weeks, instructors have undertaken tremendous efforts to change the way that they teach to create a safe and healthy environment for the work of campus to continue. We commend this work and thank you for supporting the students during this time. However, in certain instances, these adaptations not only create difficulties in providing opportunities for students to be successful in our classrooms, but also in attending to student rights, student privacy and academic integrity. In order to support these efforts, the Office of the University Ombudsperson would like to share the following tips and resources to assist teaching as we move towards the end of this semester and continued teaching online for the summer of 2020.

1. **The Code of Teaching Responsibility**: Created in 1967, the Code of Teaching Responsibility outlines the rights of students in the classroom. Some of these rights include the ability to know grading criteria and assessment methods in a timely manner; to review tests and quizzes with such promptness to enhance the learning experience; to return a student’s term papers and other comparable projects with sufficient promptness to enhance the learning experience; among others. Our office encourages instructors to review this document to ensure that their online strategies abide by the Code of Teaching Responsibility. While we recognize this may require new means to attend to these rights, the Code of Teaching Responsibility is still in effect during this time and students have the right to grieve a violation of this document.

2. **Academic Integrity**: Some of the issues that are have emerged in the last few weeks related to academic misconduct are unauthorized collaboration and contract cheating. We encourage instructors to review the resources available on our website to assist them in preventing and responding to academic misconduct. Additionally, the Office of the University Ombudsperson does have handouts in PDF format that you can share with students related to collaboration and academic misconduct. These can be found on our academic integrity resource page. As concerns related to contract cheating emerge, we can discuss best practices in response and prevention. Finally, as with the Code of Teaching Responsibility, the process for filing an Academic Dishonesty Report is still in effect under the Integrity of Scholarship and Grades. A few notes on this:

   - If a student drops the class after you speak with them about your concerns related to academic misconduct and your filing of the Academic Dishonesty Report, you may still submit a report via e-mail to the Dean of Students Office.
   - If you wish to discuss a suspected case of academic misconduct to ensure you are managing it appropriately and fairly, as well as understanding the process, please contact the Office of the University Ombudsperson.
3. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): FERPA restricts the sharing of student educational records without permission, except as allowed under certain exemptions. In our new environment, instructors have expressed concern around remaining FERPA compliant. A few notes on FERPA and the online environment:

- Faculty are permitted to record lectures and post them to sites that store these lectures. The primary restriction is that the material can only be distributed within the course, and you must take reasonable precautions to prevent further release. Thus, sessions should not be posted publicly on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, or similar social media sites.
- On a related note, please be aware of taking photos of your online Zoom discussions and posting them to social media. These can appear with student names and potentially be cause for concern around student privacy. While the student’s name may be directory information (unless a student has it restricted), their name in conjunction with their image in your course is not.
- The Code of Teaching Responsibility referenced above also speaks to the commercialization of notes and lectures. You should also be clear with students about posting and sharing your online lectures and notes at this time.

If you have any questions about these or any other issues, please know that our office is a resource to discuss concerns without triggering formal reporting. The Office of the University Ombudsperson is a confidential, neutral, informal and independent resource for all student-related concerns at Michigan State University. During this time, we are working remotely and meeting with faculty, staff and students via Zoom or phone. To schedule a time to speak with one of us, please complete our Problem/Concern Form or e-mail us at ombud@msu.edu.

Best Wishes,

Shannon Lynn Burton, Ph.D.

University Ombudsperson

Office of the University Ombudsperson