MEMORANDUM FOR: Dean and all UMass School of Law Faculty

FROM: Michael Goodman,
Acting Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Faculty Instructional Responsibilities

UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook comprehensively states the guidelines for course procedures. I encourage you to make use of the guidelines when preparing for and teaching your courses. These guidelines iterate certain basic practices that promote meaningful educational experiences. They are listed here to reaffirm their importance to our students, the faculty and the University.

OFFICE HOURS
All full-time faculty are expected to schedule regular office hours. Due to current and expected health conditions and the recommendation to physically distance, virtual office hours are authorized for the spring semester of 2022 where the Dean determines it to be appropriate. In person office hours may be held at the faculty member’s discretion. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: VII. Faculty Availability

COURSE SYLLABI
Faculty members are expected to provide a syllabus for each course that they teach. The syllabus should be available no later than the day of the first class meeting. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: III. Course Requirements.

Instructors shall clearly outline all course requirements and procedures at the first class meeting each semester. In accordance with the ABA Managing Director’s June 2015 Guidance Memo on Standards 301, 302, 314, and 315, learning outcomes for individual courses must be published in the course syllabi. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: III. Course Requirements.

Syllabi must also contain either a link to the Omnibus Syllabus Language available at https://www.umassd.edu/law/academics/omnibus-syllabus-language/ or the full text of the language found at that link. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: III. Course Requirements.

All syllabi should demonstrate that the course work and associated out-of-class work meets the federally mandated course credit hour requirement:

Credit Hour Definition: A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks [includes exam week] for one semester or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

For further information, please go to: https://www.umassd.edu/provost/resourcesforfaculty/syllabus-language/
MISSED CLASSES
All planned absences for legitimate professional or personal reasons must be approved in advance. When an illness or unforeseen emergency results in the cancellation of a class, the instructor should notify the LEC as soon as possible and arrange for notices to be posted informing students of the cancellation. Consistent with the UMass Law Credit Hours Policy (see UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Appendix C), time lost due to cancellation of classes must be made up. In scheduling make-up classes, instructors shall make certain they are not creating conflicts with the schedules of their students, other instructors, or the Academic Support Program. Instructors shall notify the LEC of the date and time of rescheduled classes. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Administrative Regulations & Procedures: XI. Class Cancellations & Make-Up Classes

FINAL EXAMINATIONS
A written examination shall be given at the end of the semester in most courses. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: V. Examinations

GRADES
Grades are determined and assigned by instructors according to the definitions indicated in the faculty handbook. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: VI. Grades & Grading

LOCATION OF CLASS
Faculty cannot move their class to a new room without the approval of the associate dean. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Administrative Regulations & Procedures: VIII. Class Scheduling

Thank you for your cooperation in supporting and adhering to these practices.