



protecting academic quality

Contract Tip: Students selling your course materials

UA has received inquiries regarding concerns about students selling lecture notes, exams, and syllabi to web-based companies. The University concurs with UA that these items belong to the faculty who produce them. (The University's Intellectual Property Policy may be found here: http://www.uvm.edu/policies/general_html/intellectualproperty.pdf; see specifically section 2.4.1 for discussion of course material ownership.

UA believes that students in violation of the Intellectual Property Policy could be subject to University disciplinary action. Students may be unaware that selling notes, etc. is a violation of University policy. In an effort to educate students and to prevent violations, faculty may want to do these two things:

- 1) Work with colleagues to adopt a department policy that explicitly forbids the recording (except under approved circumstances) and/or sale of course materials. The statement below, authored by the Sociology Department, may be used as an example.
- 2) Insert a statement on course syllabi about your own policy or a departmental policy on this matter.

The Sociology department recently adopted the following policy:

Consistent with the University's policy on intellectual property rights, it is the Sociology department's policy that teaching and curricular materials (including but not limited to classroom lectures, class notes, exams, handouts, and presentations) are the property of the instructor. Therefore, electronic recording and/or transmission of classes or class notes is prohibited without the express written permission of the instructor. Such permission is to be considered unique to the needs of an individual student (e.g. ADA compliance), and not a license for permanent retention or electronic dissemination to others.

Faculty members are encouraged to add a similar statement to their syllabi if they are concerned about this issue. In addition, faculty members may have recourse to individual legal actions to protect their intellectual property.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact UA's Contract Administration Committee at contract@unitedacademics.org.