

## GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

(Faculty Council of November 30, 2004)

The renovation undertaken by the Spanish university within the framework of the European Higher Education Area seeks the study of certain reforms in the area of academic organization of faculties that permits them to advance toward the goals established by the EHEA.

With this goal in mind, taking into account the current reality of our centre, the recent legislative change, the renovation process underway, and the search to improve the quality of teaching, several lines of action are proposed in:

- A) STRUCTURE OF TEACHING
- B) PROGRAMMES
- C) REGISTRATION PROCESS
- D) DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSES AND OFFICE HOURS
- E) SYSTEMS OF EVALUATION AND THE EXAMINATION PROCESS
- F) GRADING, POSTING OF GRADES AND REVIEW OF EXAMS

### A) A) STRUCTURE OF TEACHING

1. University departments are responsible for coordinating, programming, and developing instruction in their respective areas of knowledge according to the teaching centres in which these areas are taught (Art. 11 of the Statutes of the UAM). The Faculty is responsible for the administrative management, organization, and coordination of university teaching (Art. 13 of the Statutes)
2. The organization and structure of teaching will be approved each academic year by the Faculty Council, with sufficient time to be presented to the competent organs of the University, and in all cases before April 30 of the previous academic year.
3. With sufficient advance notice, the Office of the Dean will request that departments provide information on the organization and structure of teaching, which must contain:
  - a. Elective courses along with the number of groups to be taught in each course
  - b. Specific subjects and seminars to be offered, with a schedule of the times. If some courses have low enrolment in the current academic year, reasons must be given for continuing to offer them
  - c. Provisional assignment of professors to the different subjects and groups planned in all undergraduate degrees in the Faculty in which the department teaches, according to the schedules proposed by the Dean's staff.
4. Once the academic structure is approved by the Faculty, the Vice Dean for academic organization will present it to the University's Commission of Studies for approval.
5. The organization of teaching approved by the Commission of Studies may not be changed from the subjects and groups proposed unless justification is given and then analyzed and approved by the Dean's staff.
6. At the beginning of the academic year, once any searches to fill professorial positions have been resolved, the departments inform people of the definitive assignment of professors.

### B) PROGRAMMES

7. Insofar as the departments are responsible for planning the curriculum, they will propose syllabi that constitute the official instruction in the Faculty. These syllabi will be adjusted to the regulated models approved by the Faculty and will include at least the following sections:
  - a. Learning objectives
  - b. Programme of topics to be developed
  - c. General methodology
  - d. Evaluation system
  - e. Complementary activities to be developed
  - f. Bibliography
8. For each subject taught in an undergraduate degree, there will be a single official syllabus, whether or not there is more than one group. Based on academic freedom in instruction, each professor may organize his or her teaching according to his or her methodology, as long as it fulfils the general directives of the syllabus approved.
9. The departments must hand in a copy of the syllabi to the Dean's staff far enough in advance for them to be disseminated to the students in advance of the first registration period. When the syllabi establish mechanisms that are complementary to or that replace the final exam, the departments must be especially careful to comply with the deadlines for submitting these syllabi in order to guarantee that students receive full information before registration begins.
10. Syllabi may be revised annually. If the deadline communicated to the departments by the Dean's office passes without receipt of the syllabi, it is assumed that they will remain the same for the following academic year.

#### A) C) REGISTRATION PROCESS

11. The registration process will proceed according to the guidelines and dates established each year in the academic calendar. Students who have passed all of their courses in the first examination period of the academic year will be permitted to register before the second registration period begins, whenever this is technically possible.
12. Students have the right to choose from within the current course offerings and to adjust these to the study programme, both the subjects they wish to take and the schedule (morning or afternoon), as long as places are available. If the demand for a specific schedule, group or subject is greater than the offerings planned, the assignment will be made based on order of registration. For students in the first year of study, this will be determined by lottery.
13. To establish the order of registration, the first factor taken into account will be the student's transcript.
14. Students who wish to change their schedule times should request the change in writing, addressed to the Dean of the Faculty and including the documents justifying the reason for this change. If the change requires exceeding the number of students planned for a group, this change will only be conceded if it is the result of serious conflicts, such as the schedule's incompatibility with a work schedule or a cause of equal importance.

#### D) DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSES AND OFFICE HOURS

15. The development of classes will follow the academic calendar of the Universidad Autónoma and the schedules and classrooms planned by the Faculty.
16. Official instruction in the Faculty of Economics is predominantly classroom teaching. The respective course syllabi will permit the establishment of requirements for class

attendance as an objective element of evaluation of learning, especially in electives and seminars.

17. Students have the right and responsibility to attend class. Classroom behavior must be regulated by the fundamental norms of education, which invite the student's active participation in the classroom learning process. Respect for all people who make up the university community is required in the Centre, as is respect for the installations, equipment, and furnishings (Art. 84.e of the Statutes of the UAM).
18. At the beginning of the academic year, professors will establish their schedule of office hours, during which they will attend students, according to the regulations in effect. The departments will be responsible for ensuring that information on schedules and offices in which the office hours are to be held will be posted so that they are accessible. Whenever possible, office hours should be scheduled to be compatible with the rest of the academic activity of the students to whom they are addressed.

#### A) E) SYSTEMS OF EVALUATION AND THE EXAMINATION PROCESS

19. The evaluation of the students' learning will be performed according to the specifications in the course syllabi approved by the departments, taking particular care to have the evaluation focus on the degree of learning of the knowledge expected according to the objectives and topics established. These procedures must agree with the principle of objectivity established in Art. 83. g of the Statutes in effect.
20. If the syllabi establish requirements in addition to the written exam required officially, these requirements must be approved by the Faculty Council or the person or entity to which this organism delegates the responsibility. The teaching commissions for the degree programmes must review this point in any case and inform the Faculty Council periodically.
21. The syllabi can establish methods of evaluation alternative or complementary to the exam planned, as long as these methods are sufficiently justified. Among these may be attendance and active participation in class, individual or group papers, continuous evaluation, oral exams, etc. In the case of core and required subjects, these methods of evaluation should be studied with special care to ensure that their methods establish systems for passing the subject that are within reach of all students registered, according to the regulations in effect.
22. The exam schedule must be approved by the Faculty Council and published sufficiently in advance of the first registration period for the corresponding academic year. When, for unforeseeable reasons or in exceptional cases, it is necessary to change the dates established in the academic calendar, these changes must be approved by the Offices of the Dean or the Director of the Centre, who will determine the appropriate solution to ensure that the students may exercise their right to be examined.
23. In the case of a time conflict between exams scheduled at the same time on the same day, the student must notify the professors affected of this conflict at least one month in advance and request a change of date or time for one of the evaluations. If there is disagreement, the Dean's office will mediate the conflict, taking into account that core and required subjects should have priority over elective and electives over other courses. Likewise, subjects in lower-level courses will take priority over those in higher levels. Since students will have access to the dates of exams before registering, they should take special care whenever possible to avoid time conflicts in exams.
24. When duly justified individual reasons prevent a student from taking the exam on the scheduled date, he or she may make a written request to the professor to change the time. The professor will analyze the case and answer the student. In the case of a

- negative answer, the student may appeal to the director of the department and, finally, to the Dean.
25. Before or during the exam, the professor may request identification from the student. Students are therefore required to provide proof of their identity according to the norms establishing in Art. 5.1. of the Regulation for academic evaluation of the UAM (approved by the Governing Council on November 11, 2005).
  26. Before the exam begins, the professor will inform the students of the general criteria for evaluation of the exam. He or she will also provide information on the expected date for posting of the exam results. If for any reason the grades cannot be posted on that date, the professor will inform students of the new posting date through an announcement on the bulletin board for grades.
  27. During the exam, students must follow the directions of the proctors. In situations in which behaviour arises that fails to comply with the expected rules for the exam or the proctor's instructions to maintain the orderly and peaceful procedure of the exam or that suggests cheating, the professor may take disciplinary measures such as removing the exam, whether or not other action is ultimately taken.
  28. The regulations stated in the previous sections apply to all exams given, both final and partial.
  29. The students in the fifth or sixth sitting of an exam may request to be evaluated by a tribunal appointed by the department responsible for the course. Likewise, when there are justifiable reasons, the professor may request in writing from the director of the department that a student's evaluation be made directly by a tribunal appointed by the department.
  30. The professor is responsible for keeping the exams for one full year after the date that grades were handed in. If an exam should go missing, the following rules are to be followed:
    - a. If the exams have not been graded, the student will repeat the exam on a date established with the professor's agreement and that of the majority of the students affected. If there is no agreement, the Dean's Office will establish the new exam date, during the days immediately following the end of the official exam period.
    - b. In the case of exams that have been graded but that are not yet available for review, the grades will be valid as long as the students do not appeal. If students appeal, the exam will be repeated at the student's convenience.
    - c. If a student agrees to having taken the exam but, for whatever reason, the exam is not found, he or she may opt for taking a new exam, while demonstrating truthfully his or her attendance at the exam.

A) F) THE GRADING, PUBLICATION AND REVIEW OF EXAMS

31. Grades will be posted on the bulletin boards used for this purpose in the departments or the centre. Grades may also be posted in other, electronic formats (internet, e-mail, etc.), taking care in this case to fulfill the legal regulations in effect, especially those concerning confidentiality of information.
32. When grades are posted, the date and location for review of the exam must also be given. In the final grades for a course, the numerical grade must be included, on a scale from 0 to 10 with a maximum of one decimal point.

33. Any student may request a justification of attendance at the exam. This justification must include the student's name, the course, the date and time of the exam, and the professor's signature.
34. Review of the exam will be performed on the day and at the time established in the posting. A period of at least two working days on the academic calendar must intervene between the posting of grades and the formal review.
1. If after reviewing the exam the student does not agree with the grade obtained, he or she may request a review from the Director of the department responsible for the course. The request must be made within five days counting the date of the review. The Director of the department will appoint a tribunal composed of three professors in corresponding or related areas of knowledge (excluding those professors who evaluated the student initially) to review the exam. The tribunal will hear both the professor and the student before reaching a decision. The tribunal must resolve the case within 20 days, counting the day on which the complaint was presented. It must record its decision in a formal report and communicate the result to those affected. This report, with the approval of the Director of the corresponding department will be sent to the Department Administrative Unit of the Centre so that, in the case of a grade change, the appropriate change can be made to the student's transcript. If, after a period of 20 days from which the complaint was filed, the tribunal has not expressly resolved the issue, the student's claim will be considered to be rejected, and the student may request certification from the tribunal of the alleged action in order to give notice of further appeal.
36. The tribunal's decision may be contested, according to Art. 114 of Law 30/1992 of November 26 on the legal regulation of public administration and common administrative procedure, by presenting an appeal to the Rector within one month from the day following notification of this decision. Notification of the right to contest must be provided in the document explaining the decision. The resolution of this appeal will be made by the Rector or by the person he or she delegates, who will communicate the decision to the person affected, as well as to the department or centre involved. If this decision is negative, the administrative channels are exhausted. The student may then submit a legal-administrative appeal within two months, counting from the day following the student's receipt of the notification.
37. The professor must keep the exams and other documentation justifying the evaluation of the students for the period established legally, which may not be less than one year, counting from the deadline for turning in grades. Notwithstanding this requirement, if the evaluation has been contested or appealed, the documents mentioned above must be kept until the case has been resolved.
38. Where specified in the syllabi, oral exams may be given. The date and time of each student's exam must be communicated on the corresponding bulletin board and must be as close as possible to the official date of the exam.
39. Oral exams will be public. The professor responsible for the course will convene a tribunal composed of him- or herself and two other professors in the same area of knowledge. The tribunal will provide a record of the session that includes written data relevant to justification of the evaluation. If both parties agree, the exam may be recorded. The mechanism for review of the evaluation will be the same as that for written evaluations.