Policy on classroom recording  
College of Arts and Science  
Approved by Faculty Council, February 4, 2014

1. The use of technologies for audio and video recording of lectures and other classroom activities is allowed only with the express permission of the instructor. In cases where recordings are allowed, such content is restricted to personal use only unless permission is expressly granted in writing by the instructor and by other classroom participants, including other students. Personal use is defined as use by an individual student for the purpose of studying or completing course assignments. When students have permission for personal use of recordings, they must still obtain written permission from the instructor to share recordings with others.

For students registered with EAD and who have been approved for audio and/or video recording of lectures and other classroom activities as a reasonable accommodation, applicable federal law requires instructors to permit those recordings. Such recordings are also limited to personal use, except with permission of the instructor and other students in the class.

2. All rules concerning video/audio recording should be explicitly stated in class syllabi.

3. We encourage the Office of Student Accountability, Community Standards, and Academic Integrity to develop new policies that specifically govern the consequences of covert audio/video recording of lectures and other classroom activities, and of the inappropriate dissemination of permissible recordings.

Note: Only point 1 will be inserted into the Vanderbilt Catalog.

Language to be inserted into the 2014-15 Vanderbilt Student Handbook, as proposed by Associate Provost Mark Bandas and Assistant Dean G. L. Black:

“Schools, departments, and individual faculty members may have different policies governing the creation, use, and/or distribution of video and/or audio recording of classroom activities. Students are expected to abide by the recording policies governing their courses and should consult with their faculty members prior to recording any classroom activity. Failure to abide by a governing policy may result in corrective action through the student accountability process.”
January 2014
Proposed policy on classroom recordings
Original proposal written by Student-Faculty Relations Committee, chaired by James Patton
Proposal reviewed by Carolyn Dever, Dean, College of Arts and Science;
   Kevin Davis, Office of the General Counsel; and
   Anita Jenious, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services Department (EAD)
Proposal revised by Karen Campbell, Senior Associate Dean, College of Arts and Science

Initial proposal

Encouraged by several faculty members in the College of Arts and Science, Provost Richard McCarty, and Dean Carolyn Dever, the Student-Faculty Relations Committee of the College of Arts and Science proposed, in October 2013, this policy on classroom recordings:

1. The use of technologies for audio and video recording of lectures shall be solely at the discretion of course instructors. All rules concerning video/audio recording shall be explicitly stated in class syllabi. In cases where recordings are allowed, such content is restricted to personal use only unless permission is expressly granted in writing by the instructor and by other classroom participants, including fellow students. Personal use is defined as use by an individual student for the purpose of studying or completing course assignments. In cases where students have permission for personal use of recordings, they must still obtain written permission from the instructor to share recordings with other students in the same class.

2. The Honor Council shall develop new policies that specifically govern the consequences of covert audio/video recording of lectures and the inappropriate dissemination of allowable recordings.

Dean Carolyn Dever sent the original proposal to Kevin Davis in the General Counsel’s office for suggestions. Senior Associate Dean Karen Campbell (I) incorporated those suggestions and asked Kevin Davis and Anitia Jenious (Director, EAD) for further comments. What follows is a narrative that provides context for the proposal, and a revised proposal.

Context and revised proposal

The possibilities for audio and video recording in classrooms have expanded dramatically in recent years, and will no doubt continue to do so. For example, Google introduced Glass in 2013, promising users the ability to record, hands-free, all that they see and hear. Multiple firms offer watches or pens that can record audio and video. These technologies have raised concerns among faculty members about how such recordings might affect conversations and interactions in classrooms, and how students might use such recordings.
Clearly, students can benefit from being able to review what they see and hear in their classes, in order to enhance their understanding, prepare for tests, etc. New technologies, however, make possible surreptitious recordings, without the knowledge or permission of class instructors or of other students in the classroom. Such recordings can (and have) been posted to the web, offered for sale, and used in other ways beyond enhancing learning for a single student. These uses may challenge the privacy rights of students and instructors, infringe on intellectual property rights of faculty members, and compromise the classroom as a setting for the safe exchange and exploration of ideas.

The role of the Vanderbilt Community Creed

The Vanderbilt Community Creed is a set of core principles that students are encouraged to practice: scholarship, honesty, civility, accountability, caring, discovery, and celebration. Of these, the first three are perhaps most relevant to the use of recording technologies in classrooms:

“SCHOLARSHIP is the pursuit of knowledge in an environment of academic freedom. Members of our community engage in a partnership of learning in which the exploration of ideas is encouraged and protected.

HONESTY is a commitment to refrain from lying, cheating, and stealing. Recognizing that dishonesty undermines community trust, stifles the spirit of scholarship, and threatens a safe environment, we expect ourselves to be truthful in academic endeavors, in relationships with others, and in pursuit of personal development.

CIVILITY is the genuine respect for the rights of others. We value constructive disagreement and are mindful of the potential impact of our words and actions.”

http://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/

To record classroom interactions without the knowledge or consent of others in the classroom violates the principles of honesty and civility, and threatens the principle of scholarship. To use recordings for purposes beyond enhancing personal learning may constitute theft (of intellectual property), undermines the collaborative pursuit of scholarship, and is inconsistent with the principle of civility.

Computing privileges and responsibilities / acceptable use policy

More specifically, Vanderbilt also has an acceptable use policy that guides the use of information technology by students, faculty, and staff. http://www.vanderbilt.edu/info/computing-aup/

Sections D and E address intellectual property rights and the distribution of unauthorized recordings, both of which are relevant to the matter of classroom recordings. Faculty members may, in classrooms, present materials or discuss ideas that are at the heart of their research and scholarship. Electronic distribution of these ideas (or of syllabi, tests, or other classroom materials developed by the faculty) beyond the classroom context may be a violation of intellectual property rights. Vanderbilt’s acceptable use policy also warns us against the distribution of recordings.
without consent of all involved. In particular, “With the availability of low cost cameras, smart phones, and consumer electronics, it is possible for someone to acquire voice, video images, still images, multimedia, or text in non-public situations without the knowledge or consent of all parties. Vanderbilt network computing assets must not be used by anyone in the organization to publish or distribute this type of material without the expressed consent of all involved parties” (section E).

Appropriate penalties

The original proposal from the CAS Student-Faculty Relations Committee calls on the Honor Council to “develop new policies that specifically govern the consequences of covert audio/video recording of lectures and the inappropriate dissemination of allowable recordings.” There will be instances in which the use of recording technologies is a clear violation of the Vanderbilt Honor Code (e.g., a student in one section of a class who takes photos of a test to pass to a student in a later section), and alleged violations should be handled by the Honor Council. Other misuses of recording technology (e.g., posting recordings of faculty presentations or classroom discussions to YouTube) are violations of the conduct code and should be handled accordingly.

Kevin Davis pointed out that the faculty and administration of the College of Arts and Science may request that the University explore changes to processes overseen by the Office of Student Accountability, Community Standards, and Academic Integrity. We cannot, however direct them to do so.

I have written this material with the assumption that students might make and use recordings inappropriately. Faculty or staff members who violate the community creed principles or the acceptable use policy for information technology, particularly in ways that undermine safe learning environments for students, should be sanctioned quickly and firmly.

Proposed revised policy:

1. The use of technologies for audio and video recording of lectures and other classroom activities shall be solely at the discretion of course instructors. All rules concerning video/audio recording shall be explicitly stated in class syllabi. In cases where recordings are allowed, such content is restricted to personal use only unless permission is expressly granted in writing by the instructor and by other classroom participants, including fellow students. Personal use is defined as use by an individual student for the purpose of studying or completing course assignments. In cases where students have permission for personal use of recordings, they must still obtain written permission from the instructor to share recordings with others in the same class.

   RATIONALE: I’ve added “and other classroom activities” so that the proposed policy applies to all classroom activities, not just to lectures.

For students registered with EAD and who have been approved for audio and/or video recording of lectures and other classroom activities as a reasonable accommodation, applicable federal law requires instructors to permit those recordings. Such recordings are also limited to personal use, except with permission of the instructor and other students in the class.
RATIONALE: Anita Jenious recommended this clarification when I sent her the proposed policy and asked how it would affect students who make recordings as part of accommodations for physical or learning disabilities.

2. The Honor Council shall encourage the Office of Student Accountability, Community Standards, and Academic Integrity to develop new policies that specifically govern the consequences of covert audio/video recording of lectures and other classroom activities, and of the inappropriate dissemination of permissible recordings.

RATIONALE: As I've mentioned above, CAS cannot direct Honor Council or the Office of Student Accountability, Community Standards, and Academic Integrity to do anything.

Revised proposal

1. The use of technologies for audio and video recording of lectures and other classroom activities shall be solely at the discretion of course instructors. All rules concerning video/audio recording shall be explicitly stated in class syllabi. In cases where recordings are allowed, such content is restricted to personal use only unless permission is expressly granted in writing by the instructor and by other classroom participants, including other students. Personal use is defined as use by an individual student for the purpose of studying or completing course assignments. When students have permission for personal use of recordings, they must still obtain written permission from the instructor to share recordings with others.

For students registered with EAD and who have been approved for audio and/or video recording of lectures and other classroom activities as a reasonable accommodation, applicable federal law requires instructors to permit those recordings. Such recordings are also limited to personal use, except with permission of the instructor and other students in the class.

2. We encourage the Office of Student Accountability, Community Standards, and Academic Integrity to develop new policies that specifically govern the consequences of covert audio/video recording of lectures and other classroom activities, and of the inappropriate dissemination of permissible recordings.

Catalog placement

If the proposed policy, however revised, is approved by Faculty Council and Arts and Science faculty, I recommend that point #1 of the policy be included in the Undergraduate Catalog, following the section on “Classroom Attendance,” under the heading “Classroom Recording Policy.” (See attached page from the current catalog.)
Academic Regulations

Honor System
All academic work at Vanderbilt is done under the Honor System. (See the chapter on Life at Vanderbilt.)

Class Attendance
Students are expected to attend all scheduled meetings of classes in which they are enrolled; they have an obligation to contribute to the academic performance of all students by full participation in the work of each class. At the beginning of the semester, instructors explain the policy regarding absences in each of their classes, and thereafter they report to the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Science the name of any student whose achievement in a course is being adversely affected by excessive absences. In such cases the dean, in consultation with the instructor, takes appropriate action, which may include dropping the student from the class; students dropped after the deadline for withdrawal receive the grade F. Class attendance may be specified as a factor in determining the final grade in a course, and it cannot fail to influence the grade even when it is not considered explicitly.

The last day before and the first day after official holidays are considered to be the same as any other day on which classes are scheduled. Assignments are made for classes scheduled on these days, and tests may be given in them. Students should take this fact into account in making travel plans.

The faculty of the College of Arts and Science recognizes that occasions arise during the academic year that merit the excused absence of a student from a scheduled class or laboratory during which an examination, quiz, or other graded exercise is given. Examples include participation in sponsored university activities (e.g., debate team, varsity sports), observance of officially designated religious holidays, serious personal problems (e.g., serious illness, death of a member of the student’s family), and matters relating to the student’s academic training (e.g., graduate or professional school interviews). While determination of the merit of a case is left primarily to the discretion of the individual instructor, conflicts arising from personal travel plans or social obligations do not qualify as excused absences.

The primary determination of whether a student’s absence from class occurs for a reason that warrants rescheduling a graded exercise for that student is left to the judgment of the individual instructor. A standard of reasonableness should apply in making such judgments.

Except in cases of true emergency, student petitions for making up missed graded exercises must be made prior to the missed class, preferably at the beginning of the semester or at the earliest time thereafter when the need to be absent is known to the student. Faculty members retain discretion in the form and timing of makeup exercises or in devising other strategies for accommodating students.

The faculty of the College of Arts and Science authorizes the Office of the Dean to resolve through arbitration any cases that cannot be directly resolved between students and their instructors.

Course Registrations

Normal Course Load
Each semester, regular tuition is charged on the basis of a normal course load of 12 to 18 semester hours. No more than 18 or fewer than 12 hours may be taken in any one semester without authorization of the Administrative Committee or an advising dean in 311 Kirkland Hall. (There is an extra charge for more than 18 hours at the current hourly rate.) Students permitted to take fewer than 12 hours are placed on probation, unless their light load is necessary because of outside employment or illness. During the summer session, there is no minimum course load. Summer loads exceeding 14 hours must be authorized by an advising dean in 311 Kirkland Hall.

Credit hours are semester hours; e.g., a three-hour course carries credit of 3 semester hours. One semester credit hour represents at least three hours of academic work per week, on average, for one semester. Academic work includes, but is not necessarily limited to, lectures, laboratory work, homework, research, class readings, independent study, internships, practica, studio work, recitals, practicing, rehearsing, and recitations. Some Vanderbilt courses may have requirements that exceed this definition.

Auditing
Regularly enrolled Arts and Science students who want to audit courses in any of the undergraduate schools of the university must obtain the written consent of the instructor to attend the class but do not register for the course for credit. Forms are available from the school registrar. No permanent record is kept of the audit. Regular students may audit one class each semester.

Taking Courses for No-Credit
Students may want to take elsewhere in the university courses that are not creditable toward the bachelor’s degree. They may do so on a no-credit basis, attending classes, doing all the work of the course, and receiving a grade that is recorded on the transcript with a notation that it does not count toward the degree.

No-credit courses count in computation of the student’s academic load and in computation of tuition, but not in computation of the grade point average. They also do not count toward the attainment of class standing.

Taking Courses for P/F Credit
Students may elect to take a limited number of courses on a Pass/Fail (P/F) basis. To enroll for a course on a Pass/Fail basis, students must have completed at least two semesters at Vanderbilt, must have achieved at least sophomore standing, and must not be on academic probation.

No more than 18 hours graded P may be counted toward the degree, and no more than one course per term may be taken P/F.

The P/F option does not apply to courses in the following categories:

Add "Classroom Recording Policy"