Teaching Portfolio

TRAVIS ROACH

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Thank you for taking the time to review my teaching portfolio. I've developed this to offer a quick glimpse into my teaching philosophy and methodology. The portfolio is laid out as follows

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This portfolio has been created in partial completion of the TEACH fellowship which is offered through the Texas Tech Teaching Learning and Professional Development Center, to whom I give many thanks for the instruction and opportunities for growth

TEACH Mentor Dr. Jeff Johnson	

Smart

My dad gave me one dollar bill
'Cause I'm his smartest son,
And I swapped it for two shiny quarters
'Cause two is more than one!

And then I took the quarters
And traded them to Lou
For three dimes -- I guess he didn't know
That three is more than two!

Just then, along came old blind Bates
And just 'cause he can't see
He gave me four nickels for my three dimes,
And four is more than three!

And I took the nickels to Hiram Coombs

Down at the seed-feed store,

And the fool gave me five pennies for them,

And five is more than four!

And then I went and showed my dad,
And he got red in the cheeks
And closed his eyes and shook his headToo proud of me to speak!

- Shel Silverstein

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The goal of economics is to discuss the interactions among people and the world around them while taking account of the limited possibilities that are available. As a teacher, it is my charge and good fortune to help students learn the inner workings of such an overwhelming field of study and to entice a curiosity in finding the answer to what many of us ask ourselves on a daily basis, "why?" What drew me to study economics originally is that the fundamental principles I was taught were unavoidable in my daily life. It is for that reason that I enjoy teaching, when a concept is mastered and applied to the personal lives of my students it's as if they see the scenario again for the first time. It's like putting on your favorite hat for the hundredth time but finally noticing what color it is!

As alluded to, I feel the best way for someone to truly learn a difficult concept is to be able to apply it in their everyday life. It is for that reason that I try to connect with students through "simple" yet relevant examples. Another way in which I approach education is that I am constantly searching for interesting and seemingly unrelated news to draw economic insight from. By sharing these with students and opening the floor for discussion students become involved mentally and emotionally with the material. It is also through this active type of learning that students can walk away from a discussion with a sense of accomplishment and, for lack of a less cliché term, academic vigor.

I also strongly believe that the modern classroom must evolve alongside the technology available to today's students. For that reason I strive to incorporate mixed media into lecture based classes as well as maintaining an online component to the course. As an example, you may scan the code below with any smart phone that has a QR reader to reach all current online materials. By scanning below you can also reach an interactive version of this teaching portfolio!



Utilizing online components is an integral component to the economics courses I teach. The typical textbook and lecture type class will only appeal to certain learning styles. However, if students are able to connect material being discussed in class to real life events higher levels of learning and curiosity can be tapped into. Also, by connecting an advanced concept with an intriguing graphic, podcast, video, or article the material seems more easily graspable to young students (especially non-majors!).

Another way in which I tailor lectures to a diverse group of learning styles and backgrounds, as well as incorporate contemporary pedagogical techniques, is by utilizing current events articles to carry out a variety of active learning exercises. This way, students are able to not only connect with material via the textbook but through discussion and personal experience.

As an example, I created a worksheet for students to work on in small groups that is based on a contentious article that was in the Daily Toreador (the Texas Tech student newspaper) about using funds to lease a large parking structure that has resulted in a large loss for the University. The exercise covers the typical profit calculating problem that principles of economics courses will solve using data from the article. Students enjoyed the exercise because they were essentially solving the same problem that University officials were; however they came upon the correct solution. Also, the exercise allowed students to learn cooperatively and apply the skills they had been learning to a real-life problem. The outline of this active learning exercise can be found in the appendix.

Another example comes from an assigned Planet Money podcast that described the clashing of Republicans and Democrats over raising the debt ceiling as a game of chicken. I used this podcast to introduce the field of game theory and discussed its many applications in microeconomics. Then, I showed the class how to solve the game of chicken that Planet Money had described as a game theorist would. As an active learning exercise we then "tested" the solution by having students who volunteered to play chicken in front of the class. This activity was appealing to many different learning styles as it included visual and kinesthetic learners in the game of chicken, and auditory learners as the game of chicken was described and solved.

I feel the best summary of my teaching philosophy can be found in this simple quote that is included at the top of my teaching notes every day,

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

TEACHING

Texas Tech University

Course	Semester	Role	Enrollment
ECO 3336 -	Fall 2012	Instructor	100 (expected)
Environmental			
Economics			
ECO 2301 -	Spring 2012	Instructor	100 (expected)
Principles of Micro			
ECO 2301 -	Fall 2011	Instructor	180
Principles of Micro			
ECO 3311 -	Spring 2011	Teaching Assistant	100
Intermediate Macro		(two sections)	
ECO 3311 -	Fall 2010	Teaching Assistant	100
Intermediate Macro		(two sections)	

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

Pop Economics or: How I learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Subject

For better or for worse everyone remembers that economics course they had to take. This class will approach the field of economics like the popular book *Freakonomics* and explore the hidden phenomena of everyday life. We will look at the debt ceiling debacle, why emissions in the atmosphere are like beer in a college student's fridge, and many more seemingly non-economic topics.

Two Session Course - Spring 2012

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTION

Being a TEACH fellow has given me the opportunity to receive feedback from my students at mid-semester as well as get feedback from a TEACH consultant. The suggestions have been excellent resources for me to learn and adapt my class to student suggestions and pedagogical suggestions from my consultant. The responses that will be discussed from both the students and my consultant are from my first semester teaching principles of microeconomics, a course which had an enrollment of 180 students.

To start, here is what I learned from my students. They were first asked what their overall satisfaction with the course was on a scale from 1-10, 10 being the best. The average student response was an 8.59. Similarly, they were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the instructor on a scale from 1-10. For this measure the average student response was a 9.05. In addition to providing a "score" a written evaluation was taken. I've chosen a few examples from broad topics that were written about by many students

What works well in class? What do you like? What helps you learn?

Examples -

- Instructor always talks about examples to retain the concepts and details of knowledge. Helps connect concepts to reality and helps is comprehend. Helps me learn about what is going on in society.
- Brings forth examples that are relatable to the class and overall just makes microeconomics enjoyable.
- He provides real life examples that bring relevance and a greater understanding to the subject matter.

Teaching Style -

- The class has a mix of different teaching methods and can attract any type of student's learning style.
- I like coming to class not knowing what to expect but knowing that I'll be interested
- He doesn't just teach from the book, he makes class interesting.

Class Involvement and Student Participation

- He is very interactive and really tries to get us to think actively during class while we are learning which really helps.
- He asks stimulating questions and encourages class participation.

Online Learning Resources

- I really enjoy the different types of tools used for learning such as current events articles, NPR radio, and the online tools made available for studying.
- Things that work well in this class are the podcasts and current events. I like the fact that these tools are able to help tie in what we are learning to real world situations.

What does not work well? What do you not like? What does not help you learn?

Podcasts, Current Events

- I don't like the Planet Money Podcasts. They do provide great info going on in the world but I wish he would go over them in class so I can have a better understanding.
- There are too many podcasts to keep up with. Even just listening to one instead of two a week would be better.
- The addition of current events and podcasts have the only negative effect on me. They are easy to read and listen to but it can be daunting trying to keep up with them under a semester with a heavy load of other work.

Originally I had my students listen to two Planet Money Podcasts per week. After receiving student feedback I realized how over-zealous this was and limited the amount of podcasts they listened to. This compromise allowed me to continue utilizing podcasts as a learning tool without over-burdening students. In addition, I've used the assigned podcasts as active learning exercises with relation to the subject we're currently covering.

In addition to student comments, the TEACH consultant gave me very useful suggestions and critique. Among the comments were:

- Large classes can often become dull and boring learning experiences for students. You, on the other hand, bring a lot of genuine passion to the classroom that keeps it alive and engaging.
- You have a nice grasp of the material and you are particularly successful in breaking down the concepts with careful attention and accuracy
- I'm thrilled that you already pose questions throughout the lesson because asking questions is a type of active-learning. However, I would like to challenge you to start refining the way in which you ask questions.

This comment was particularly helpful in helping me develop as an instructor. To improve, I've structured the course such that I ask at least two questions per lecture that are worded in way that forces students to think critically on the subject.

In addition to using questions throughout your lesson, consider utilizing additional active-learning strategies in your classroom.

To incorporate more active learning I've researched and developed many new active-learning exercises for the classroom. I've found that the students really enjoy when they can work cooperatively to master a subject. A few examples of active-learning exercises that are not present in this teaching portfolio, for brevity's sake, are: group practice questions, think-pair-share activities, small group debates, and non-graded written responses.

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, PUBLICATIONS

Awards

Arts & Humanities Conference 2011 - Best panel presentation
 Paper - Viable Economic Growth: The Future of Free Trade Policy

Fellowships

TEACH fellowship – Teaching Effectiveness and Career Enhancement fellowship from the Teaching Learning and Professional Development Center.

Publications and Conferences

- Modernizing the Lecture: Incorporating Online Components to Connect with Students and Guide Learning. Submitted to the Journal of Economic Education May 2012
- Viable Economic Growth: An Appeal for the Inclusion of Consistent Environmental Standards in Free Trade Agreements. To be presented at the 87th annual Western Economic Association International conference.

Professional Affiliations

- American Economic Association
- Omicron Delta Epsilon

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Teaching Learning and Professional Development Center at Texas Tech offers a wide variety of teaching workshops. The workshops that are offered include conferences on teaching, invited guest lecturers, and lectures by TLPDC and Texas Tech Faculty. The following is a list of workshops and seminars I've attended in the past year.

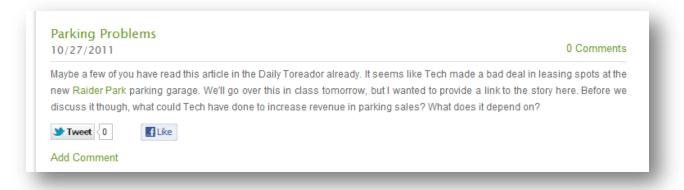
Event Name	Date	Event Type
Teaching Portfolio Review Panel (TEACH	11/29/2011	Private
Fellows Only)		
"So You Want to be a Professor?" Series:	11/7/2011	Teaching and Learning
Writing Your Teaching Philosophy		Workshop
Lecture Well Series: How to Excite	10/24/2011	Teaching and Learning
Your Students About Class (Even at 8:00 a.m.)		Workshop
Teaching Tips, Strategies, and Techniques	40/47/0044	m 1. 17
StrengthsQuest for TEACH Fellows:	10/17/2011	Teaching and Learning
Understanding your Strengths and Using		Workshop
them in the Classroom	10/10/2011	D: (
Mobile Learning Ideas and Options	10/13/2011	Private Conference (Martine)
John M. Burns SoTL Conference: LUNCH	9/30/2011	Conference/Meeting
John M. Burns SoTL Conference: Intelligence	9/30/2011	Conference/Meeting
and Creativity: Morning Session with Dr. Rex		
Jung Getting Started with your Teaching Portfolio	9/24/2011	Teaching and Learning
Getting Started with your reaching rothono	9/24/2011	Workshop
Dr. Linda B. Nilson: The Scientific Value of	9/16/2011	Invited Outside Speaker
Different Learning Styles		-
Jumpstart: Changing Student Populations	8/18/2011	Teaching and Learning
Understanding Who is in Our Classrooms and		Workshop
Recognizing their Needs		
Jumpstart: A Culture of Cheating Student	8/18/2011	Teaching and Learning
Perspectives on Academic Integrity		Workshop
Jumpstart: Can I Learn in Your Class?	8/18/2011	Teaching and Learning
Reflections from Faculty Members		Workshop
Participating in Cross-Disciplinary Peer		
Observations	- / - /	
Jumpstart: Pecha-Ku What? Using the Pecha	8/18/2011	Teaching and Learning
Kucha Presentation Method in the Classroom	0.140.1004	Workshop
Jumpstart: Hats on, Hats Off Decision Making	8/18/2011	Teaching and Learning
in Teaching	0 /15 /0011	Workshop
Graduate Writing workshop - Rules of	2/15/2011	Seminar/Workshop
Grammar		

CURRENT EVENTS COMPONENT

SAMPLE ACTIVE LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS

The following images and examples come from the current events blog I've created for the class to follow. The blog is a very user-friendly tool that is easy to access from home or any mobile device. I've found this to be a great way to connect what we are learning in class to events that students may be following or would have an interest in. Also, it is an easy way to introduce topics that would be covered in upper level economics courses. This is intended to encourage students to consider "field courses" as electives. In each blog post I provide a brief description of what is being discussed in the article, graphic, or podcast as well as ask open ended questions that are meant to encourage higher-level thinking. This was another change that I made following the suggestions I received from my TEACH consultant.

In addition to using current events articles within examples in class and active-learning exercises I give a current events quiz. These quizzes are held the week before the test so that I can motivate students to not only think about the material being covered prior to the night before the test, but to apply the material being learned at a higher level then would be asked of in a test situation. For instance, on each quiz there is one question that asks the students to use a supply and demand graph to demonstrate what is going on in the background of an article. This "proof" type question is difficult yet feasible for the students and provides me with direct evidence on how well students understand the concept being asked. Examples of the current events quiz are provided directly following the active-learning examples



Active Learning - Based on "Alumni Association Ignored Warning Signs from Red Raider Club..."

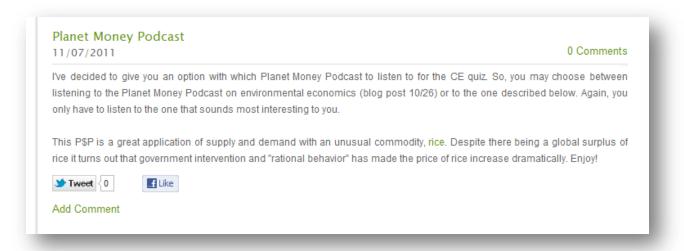
- The Daily Toreador

You are hired as an economic advisor for Texas Tech University to decide whether or not spaces should be leased from the new parking garage, Raider Park. They have offered you 1,000 parking spaces at a cost of \$750,000. You and your team of economic advisors expect to make \$400,000 dollars by selling game day parking. At what price (per year) should you sell parking spots to students in order to "break-even?"

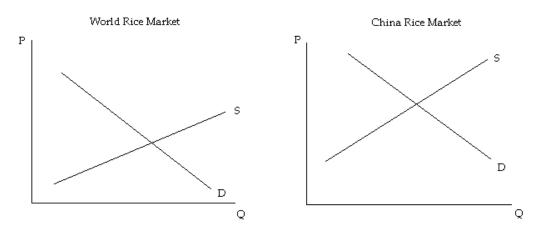
Assume you and your team of advisors have decided to sell parking spots to students at a rate of \$500 per year. What is Texas Tech's expected profit (assuming all spots are sold)?

At \$500 per year only 200 spots have been bought leaving 800 empty. What is Texas Tech's profit?

You remember from your principles of micro course that when demand is price ______ that total revenue can be increased only if the price is lowered. You estimate that the total revenue maximizing price is \$225 dollars per year. Should Texas Tech agree to rent the parking spaces from Raider Park? Why or why not?



Active Learning – Based on "When Fear Turned Surplus into Scarcity" – Planet Money



Suppose the world rice market is in equilibrium at a price of \$100 and that the Chinese rice market would be in equilibrium at a price of \$150. According to this diagram China was initially an _______ of rice. We know this because ______ is greater than ______ domestically.

In 2008 a global "rice panic" was created when India decided to stop exporting rice. This action effectively shifted the world supply curve to the _____ and caused prices to ______.

When this happened it created an incentive for rice producers in China to _____ production. Thus, the amount of imports ______.

Using a graph of perfect competition show why the world price increase encouraged domestic producers of rice to increase production.



In class we discussed the recent Occupy Wall Street movement and I asked students to provide an argument for or against the protestors. Following the lively discussion I received this unsolicited email,

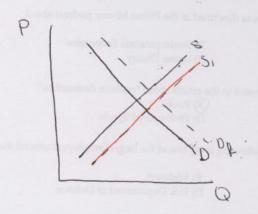
Today in class you asked what we thought about the movement. There was a lot that I had to say on the issue but would not be able to get all my opinions out due to time, the ability to coherently say it all off the top of my head, and people who would start a fight over this kind of stuff. I came back and couldn't stop thinking about it so I just started writing. I only intended on writing a couple paragraphs but I couldn't stop writing because there is so much to say.

What followed was an eloquent and well reasoned three page response that applied principles we had been learning in class to the Occupy Wall Street movement. By going beyond lecturing on profit maximization and other firm related topics I believe this student connected with the material much more than would have happened otherwise.

GRAPHING. Use the space below to answer the following question

Using a supply and demand graph show the following.

"Of course, as the supply of electric vehicles increases, the value of each to the power company will fall"



Only supply has

SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes each statement or answers the question.

10) Which article or podcast did you enjoy the most and why?

10)

I enjoyed reading the article about the pay alscrimination between men and women. because as a woman, I find it interesting that a man doing the same exact job as me covid potentially get paid more money than me. It was wood interesting to see that even though women are not discriminated by allowed to work now, we are still getting discriminated when it comes to pay.

Question 10, above, was one way that I solicited feedback throughout the semester. I tried to stay away from the topics of articles that didn't garner much interest

0)	have fallen recently, Mr. Hudson said, but that is mainly because the sluggish economy and other factors have outweighed the loss of supply."
	Using a supply and demand graph show the cotton market in equilibrium and label this point A. Then, show how cotton prices would rech historic highs after a drought and label this new equilibrium point B. Finally, show how a sluggish economy would bring down world prices and lable this final equilibrium point C.
	Po Si Close, but S didn't shift again
	PA Pe
	OBQCOA
	According to your results from the previous question we can say that the equilibrium price of cotton has fallen. For a cotton farmer in a perfectly competitive market this will cause profits to decrease. Choose one of the following questions to answer Track to the equilibrium 9)
	According to the Planet Money Podcast, "Will Economic Growth Destory the Planet" can you put a price on loss of visibility at the Grand Canyon? If so, how is it done?
	you could put a price on loss of visibility due to omey formed by nitrous exides (NO2) emitted by power plants, cars, etc. This could be implemented by taxes an certain types of fuel, be it cool, natural gas, gasoline diesel whose by products after combustion emit particulates of harmful According to the Planet Money Podcast, "How Fear Turned a Surplus Into Scarcity" did India start a global food crisis by making it illegal to export rice? Why, in supply and demand terms did the price goun?

This excerpt comes from the final current events quiz of the semester. Compared to the previous excerpt the "proof" type question got more difficult but was still achievable.

REPRESENTATIVE SYLLABUS

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Department of Economics and Geography Principles of Microeconomics (ECO 2301) Section 005 Course Syllabus – Fall 2011

Instructor: Travis Roach

Place and Time: Holden Hall-150, MWF 1:00-1:50

Office: HH-237

Office Hours: M: 11:00-12:00, T: 3:00-5:00

Email, and Website: travis.roach@ttu.edu, travisroach.weebly.com



Using the QR code and allowing students to access the website on their phones right away shows both how easy it is to access all online materials, and how important they will be for the semester.

Reading Material

- Case, Fair, Oster, "Principles of Microeconomics", Texas Tech University customized edition. Pearson Publishers.
- Class notes

Course Description

This course emphasis is on theories of the firm, value and price determination, and functional distribution, with the application of these theories to the problem of particular firms, industries, and markets.

The first day of lecture in most classes is typically used only to cover the syllabus, but after directing students to read the course description I take the time to start giving notes and lecturing. I discuss microeconomics and all of the topics that will be covered over the semester and why they are important. I feel this is a good way to get students accustomed to my teaching style, and it helps show students that every day of class is valuable and won't be wasted.

Course Purpose

The Uniform Undergraduate Degree Requirements apply to all Texas Tech undergraduates regardless of their major in college. There are 5 components to these requirements. This course fulfills a Core Social and Behavioral Sciences—Individual or Group Behavior requirement. Students graduating from Texas Tech University should be able to demonstrate the ability to access critically claims about social issues, human behavior and diversity in human behavior. This course is also a required course for all lower-division undergraduate students in the Rawls College of Business.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientist use to investigate the human condition.
- Learn how to "think like an economist"

This is perhaps the most important learning outcome to me because the majority of students in principles courses are non-majors. By teaching students to analyze their circumstances as an economist would I can trust that they will approach both personal and business decisions with a more critical perspective. To use jargon: As economists we assume agents that behave "rationally", as teachers we produce agents that behave "rationally."

- Understand the economic problem of scarcity and choice and their impact on consumer and firms
- Understand the concepts of demand, supply, and market equilibrium
- Demonstrate knowledge on how to apply demand and supply analysis on real world examples
- Distinguish between various market structures from perfectly competitive markets to imperfectly competitive markets to monopoly
- Predict firms' behavior and strategy under each market structure

Methods of Assessing the Expected Learning Outcomes

The expected learning outcomes for the course will be assessed through exams, in-class application activities, graded and non-graded quizzes, class discussion and participation, and homework.

Description of How Grades are Determined

Exams

There will be 3 midterm exams and a cumulative Final Exam. Each exam will include several multiple choice questions. Each midterm exam will consist of 30 to 40 multiple choice questions. The Final Exam will include 50 multiple choice questions. Exam dates are listed below.

Of the 3 midterm exams, your lowest grade weighs 15% of your final grade, and your remaining 2 grades weigh 20% each. Thus, the 3 midterm exams weigh 55% of your total final grade.

The Final Exam is cumulative, and will weigh 30% of your total final grade.

Class Activities/Quizzes/Homework

These will weigh 15% of your final grade. Details will be discussed with you in class.

Grading Scale

A = 90% - 100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 0% = 59%

Exams = 85% (3 midterms and a Final Exam)

Class Activities = 15%

Class activities include online homework, quizzes, non-graded active learning assignments, and current events quizzes

Extra Credit Policy

There is no extra credit policy offered in this course.

True. However, as an economist I understand that people respond to incentives. For instance, the first quiz that I give each semester is simply a form that the student must fill out and bring to me during office hours. If they do this they have the benefit of an easy 100. I have the benefit of knowing that they know where my office is, when my office hours are, and I have had the chance to shake their hand, and have one on one time with the student at least once.

Important Dates to Remember

- □ Last day to drop a course and receive full refund, 09/12/11 (Monday)
- □ Last day to drop a course and receive a W is Monday, 10/31/11
- □ Thanksgiving: 11/23-11/27.
- □ Last day of classes, Wednesday 12/7/11 For more important dates, go to:

Examination Calendar

First Exam: Thursday (Friday), 9/22/11 (9/23/11)

Second Exam: Thursday (Friday), 10/20/11 (10/21/11)

Third Exam: Monday (Tuesday), 11/21/11 (11/22/11)

Final: Tuesday, 12/13/11, 7:30:00-10:00 PM (location will be announced

prior to final exam)

Makeup Exam: Cumulative: Friday, 12/2/11 @5:00-7:00 PM, in Holden Hall #76

Read Carefully:

- If you miss one of the first three midterm exams, and you presented an official, acceptable, and verified excuse, you will be allowed to makeup the exam that you missed as early as possible.
- If you miss one of the first three exams and you don't have an acceptable excuse, the makeup exam's grade will replace it. The makeup exam's grade will not replace (i) the final exam's grade, or (ii) your lowest midterm grade.

Notes

- Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have an opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from using cellular phones, eating or drinking in class, making offensive remarks, using laptops for nonrelated class activities, reading newspapers, sleeping or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a request to leave class.
- 2. Attendance is REQUIRED and will be MONITORED throughout the semester. Incidences of excessive absence will be dealt with in a manner consistent with University policy and procedures.
- 3. American with Disability ACT. Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification for Disabled Students Services during the instructor's office hours. Please not that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, you may contact the Student Disability Services office in West Hall 335 or by phone at 806-742-2405.
- 4. Student Absence for Observation of Religious Holy Days. A student who is absent from classes for the observation of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence if, not later than the fifteenth day after the first day of the semester, the student had notified the instructor of each scheduled class that the student would be absent for a religious holy day.
- 5. Students are expected to have their ID's with them in class. The instructor reserves the right to ask a student to show his/her ID, especially during exams.
- 6. Any instance of cheating will result in an (F) for the course. The instructor reserves the right to pursue the matter further.
- 7. You will be given a grade of a zero for any test you miss until you replace it with the makeup exam's grade.