

Guidelines for Merging Class Sections in Canvas and Face-to-Face Classes to Comply with FERPA*

*Per March 27, 2017 Memo from Dave Stolier, Sr. Assistant Attorney General

(a summary of the memo can be sent to you upon request)

- Cannot merge separate class sections in which students register separately and/or meet physically in different classrooms, with some exceptions noted below.
- Ok to merge students into the same physical classroom in specific instances (see below for examples), if footnote explicitly advertises that.
- Ok to merge Canvas classrooms if students meet in the same physical classroom at the same time, with a footnote explaining that.
- Ok to merge known cohorts of students into the same Canvas classroom.
- A general caveat added to the class schedule: "Occasionally, class sections may be merged at the last minute. Affected students will be notified."

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
1. Separate class sections that do not fall into any of the following categories	Class sections listed separately in the class schedule; students register separately for the class sections and do not meet physically in the same classroom.	ACCT& 201 item # 0059 + ACCT& 201 item # 0061	Not ok to merge.	No footnote needed.	N/A
2. Shared lecture with separate lab classes	Lecture/lab class listed in separate place in class schedule with separate item # from the other lecture/lab class but students meet all together for lecture portion.	BIOL& 241 item #0271 + BIOL& 241 item #0273	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #> for Lecture."

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
3. Shared grading for lecture/lab classes	Lecture/lab class sections listed separately in class schedule but faculty in all sections share a portion of the grading across all section to ensure consistency.	Chem 181 item #0427, item #0429, item #0431, + item #0433.	Not ok to merge, but all 4 instructors can be listed in Canvas.	N/A	N/A
4. Dual-listed classes	One class listed more than once in the class schedule under different disciplines.	GWS 205 item #1127 + INTST 205, item #1225	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."
5. W writing intensive and non-writing intensive classes cohort	Class sections listed separately in the class schedule; students register separately for the class sections but meet physically in the same classroom.	CMST& 102 item #0533 + CMST& 102W item #0535	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."
6. Get in Gear (GIG) cohort	Two or more class sections in separate disciplines linked and taught in the same physical space with the same class item # to create a cohort learning experience. Existing course description: Students will take English 099/101 (5 Cr), + Communication Studies 101 (5 Cr), +	GIG 101 item #4700	Ok to merge, but not Math 007 since it is optional.	Footnote already there for each class section.	ENGL 099 existing footnote: "This class is part of the Get in Gear (GIG) program. For details see the Get In Gear program page at the beginning of the class listings."

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
6. (Continued)	Study Skills 099 (2 Cr). Addition of MATH 007 (2 Cr) is optional but encouraged.				
7. Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) cohort; Student Interest Group (SIG) cohort; Veteran Interest Group (VIG) cohort	Two or more class sections in separate disciplines linked and taught in the same physical space to create an interdisciplinary learning experience. Some have the same class item #; some have different item #s.	IDS 100 item #4500	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	For those with different item #s: "Meets with <other item #>."
8. iBest	iBest and non-iBest class sections listed separately in class schedule with separate item #s but students meet in same physical classroom at same time.	BUSTC 114 item #0377 + 0379	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
9. Shared classes per instructor (clustered)	Same teacher teaches multiple courses at same time/place, but classes listed separately in class schedule.	PE 226 item #1943 + PE 260 item #1961 + PE 126 item #1913 OR Art 122 item #0095 + Art 123 item #0099	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."
10. Known disciplinary cohort	All sections of a course are listed separately in the class schedule, but the group of students is a known cohort with, for example, a joint orientation.	NURS 151 item # 1771 + 1773 +1775 OR MLT 231 item #1475 + 1477	Ok to merge.	Footnote not needed.	N/A

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
11. eLearning "optional" modality	Class sections are listed separately in the class schedule and students register separately but are given the choice to attend online, hybrid, and/or web enhanced modes/class sections of the same course or to mix and match. Designed flexibly to meet student needs.	PHIL& 120 item #2003 hybrid + PHIL& 120 item #2001 online	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	Section N1 is fully online, but students enrolled in Section N1 may optionally attend class with Section Y1.
12. Bucket classes	Students register for a lower level class but can get credit for a higher-level class if they meet competency requirements. Students in both class item numbers meet in same physical classroom at the same time with the same teacher.	ENGL 099 item # 0723 + ENGL& 101 item # 3047	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."
13. Double-section	One class section that ends up having double the number of students.	ENGL& 101, item # 0763 with 60 students registered.	Merge not needed since there is only one class item number.	N/A	N/A

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
14. New classes clustered with outgoing / old classes	ECE program transitioning out Prof/Tech classes based on old standards and clustering with new course numbers/titles/descriptions. Separate class item #s. Not dual listed in MCO system.	EDUC 116 item # 0672 + ECED& 180 item # 3004	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."
15. Clustered face-to-face classes due to faculty load or student enrollment numbers	Classes clustered and offered in the same room, same time with the same instructor so FT faculty can make their load.	ESLAB 020 item # 0919 + ESLAF 020 item # 0991.	Ok to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets with <other item #>."
16. Co-located, but separated class sections	Classes listed separately in class schedule with separate item #s, but taught in the same physical location.	MFGT 120 item #1417 + MFGT 215 item #1435.	OK to merge.	Footnote needed.	"Meets in the same location as <other item #>." OR, for manufacturing, "This manufacturing class shares the lecture and shop with all sections of all Manufacturing classes."

Type of classes	Explanation	Example(s)	Ok to merge?	Footnote in class schedule needed?	Suggested sample footnote
17. Group or Club	Group or club, not an official class that uses a Canvas site.	Examples: Honors students Yoga Meditation and Acroyoga Club	See note in footnote column.	NA	NOTE: Merging is not the issue, but forcing a student into a site that may reveal personally identifiable student information from their education record without their consent is a violation of FERPA so we need to take it on a case-by-case basis.