In college level classes it is often more appropriate for students to draw a rough sketch of a graph instead of an accurate sketch. It is up to the instructor's discretion to determine when an accurate sketch is required and when a rough sketch will suffice. Instructors should provide clear guidance to students about how to determine when an accurate sketch is required. When an accurate sketch is required, the graph should conform to the guidelines listed below.

AXES:
- Axes and any straight lines are drawn in with a straight edge.
- The scale must be clearly indicated on each axis.
- For word problems, each axis is labeled with an appropriate letter and with the meaning and units of the axis. (See Graph B.)

ACCURATE:
- Graph paper is used.
- Instructors will set a clear convention for distinguishing a graph that terminates from one that extends infinitely. Students will adhere to the convention set by their instructor.
- The vertex of a parabola is rounded, not pointed.
- Asymptotes are drawn with a dashed line. Graphs approaching asymptotes appear to get closer and closer, not touching the asymptote and not pulling away from the asymptote. (See Graph D.)

CLEAR:
- The coordinates of important points are clearly labeled on the axes or the point itself is labeled with an ordered pair. What is considered important depends on the particular problem but some examples of such points are: intercepts, points of intersection, maximum or minimum points, and vertices.
- If multiple equations are graphed on a single set of axes, each line or curve should be labeled with its equation.
- Separate problems should be graphed on separate axes.
- The size of the graph is helpful: it is neat, big, and dark enough to be easily read and understood.