

# SCHOOL OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

## EXPECTATIONS FOR FACULTY TEACHING FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES

UMUC is committed to providing the highest-quality education to its students as well as providing its faculty members with the technical, pedagogical, and administrative support needed to achieve our shared expectations for excellence in teaching.

UMUC-sponsored research and evaluation data support a set of expectations for best practices in teaching. Listed below is a set of expectations that faculty teaching in the face-to-face format should follow to ensure the best possible learning experience for our students.

### **Before the Term:**

#### **PREPARATION**

- Give yourself sufficient time to become thoroughly familiar with your textbooks and resources if you have not previously used them in another class. Check to make sure you are using the correct edition of the required text.
- Prepare and submit a course syllabus for review by your academic administrator two weeks before the start date of the term. Faculty teaching for Europe and Asia must submit a syllabus or review and customize an existing syllabus two weeks before registration begins.
- The syllabus should be as complete and accurate as possible and include grading criteria, inclusive dates for each week, and due dates for all assignments. Stateside faculty should use the Syllabus Checklist ([http://www.umuc.edu/syllabus\\_checklist](http://www.umuc.edu/syllabus_checklist)) as their guide. In Europe and Asia, faculty should consult their academic administrators for the appropriate course guidelines and sample syllabi.
- Familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of UMUC and your department, especially policies on incompletes, grade submission, and academic integrity.
- If you are a new faculty member, you might be interested in participating in the Peer Mentoring Program, offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning (see <http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla/peer.html>). Feel free to contact your academic administrator for more information.
- A WebTycho online classroom is automatically created for all UMUC stateside, face-to-face courses. Faculty are expected to post a copy of the syllabus and use

the Gradebook to post grades. Faculty are also expected to use the Class Announcements area to post a welcoming announcement, create weekly updates, and alert students to any emergencies.

- Faculty teaching Web-enhanced classes for Europe and Asia should, at a minimum, post a copy of the syllabus in the online WebTycho classroom and a welcoming announcement; they should contact their academic administrators and the DE Director for instructions on how to proceed.
- Keep in mind that whether stateside or overseas, students cannot be required to participate online. Faculty should clearly explain their strategy for using the WebTycho classroom and communicate clear guidelines about what students can expect in terms of frequency of announcements and updates, use of the various WebTycho functions, and posting in case of emergency.

### **COURSE DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES**

- Update your previous lecture material, handouts, and discussion questions prior to each new class.
- Closely align assignments and activities with learning objectives in the syllabus, and provide adequate practice to master objectives. If appropriate, create weekly learning objectives.
- Break down large and complex tasks into incremental assignments so you can provide feedback and correction at each stage. This also prevents students from feeling overwhelmed.
- Pay attention to pacing and sequencing of content and activity. Make sure assessments are spaced out throughout the course, not concentrated at the end.
- Clearly state the criteria or the rubrics for all grading in your syllabus, handouts, and in your class pronouncements. Make sure grades are distributed over a variety of assignments, rather than heavily weighting them on just one or two. A well-constructed rubric provides guidance to students in completing the assignment, makes your grading more efficient, and eliminates confusion and questioning about grading.
- Provide examples of successful or model student work, when appropriate, for particularly difficult or complex assignments.
- Employ a variety of learning approaches, including opportunities to collaborate with other students. Projects, case studies, organized debates and role-playing, and problem-based learning can all be used to enliven the course.

- Allow students to explore beyond the textbook by providing Web and library resources and by making a resource the focus of an assignment. Encourage students to become better acquainted with the library by incorporating its use in at least one of your assignments.
- Integrate Web, textbook, and library resources into the course so that students feel these are intrinsically valuable and relevant to the course. Provide guidance about the appropriate use and purpose of all course materials. Do not merely give students a long list of resources without annotation or direction.
- If your course includes Course Content Modules in WebTycho, utilize these to enrich the learning experience. Familiarize yourself with them, so you can use them appropriately and respond to student questions. Depending upon your course, you may assign them as required reading or simply refer students to them as background resources.
- Incorporate adult learning principles into course activities, encouraging students to apply their real-world experience to the course content.
- Promote active learning strategies and critical thinking by presenting issues from multiple perspectives. Design assignments that stimulate the questioning of assumptions, and ask students to reflect on their learning.
- If appropriate for your course, provide opportunities for student presentations, followed by question and answer periods.
- Guard against plagiarism and promote academic integrity by following the principles for creating assignments at the VAIL Website, <http://www.umuc.edu/virtualteaching/>

### **During the Term:**

- Distribute the syllabus for the course on the first day of class.
- Set the tone for the course ahead by welcoming the students and providing an "ice-breaker" exercise if appropriate (introductions or a question related to prior impressions or assumptions about the course subject matter, etc.). Faculty should set aside time to solicit student questions about the syllabus, objectives, and course expectations.
- Help students to avoid plagiarism by referring them to appropriate resources such as the student tutorial at the VAIL site (<http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/cip/vail/home.html>), the Effective Writing Center resource at <http://www.umuc.edu/ugp/ewp/plagiarism.shtml>, or by making

use of the TurnItIn.com service <http://www.umuc.edu/library/turnitin.html>. (If you decide to use the TurnItIn service, you should refer to this in your syllabus.)

- Indicate to students how and when you may be contacted via email or phone, and indicate your availability for "office hours." Be responsive to students by replying within 48 hours to inquiries.
- Punctuate lectures with planned occasions in which you invite questions or ask a question of students about their underlying assumptions before introducing a new subtopic.
- At appropriate intervals, summarize or bring closure to the week or unit, or assign students to perform this task. Provide an overview or introduction to an upcoming week in your remarks to students. You may also want to post such materials in the WebTycho classroom.
- Facilitate, but don't dominate class discussions. Ask follow up questions and redirect questions to encourage students to contribute to the discussion.
- Encourage peer-to-peer interaction when appropriate. Divide large classes into smaller groups for the purpose of discussion and provide them with guideline questions that help focus their attention and serve to stimulate discussion.
- Make an effort to learn the names of all your students. Call on a variety of students during each class session. Ticking off names on a roster can help you keep track of student participation as well as attendance.
- Show commitment to the progress and success of each student by individualized attention, support, and referrals for assistance from UMUC resources such as the Effective Writing Center or advising when needed. Praise students for work well done and point the way for improvement.
- Provide adequate and timely feedback on all assignments and pay special attention to the first major assignment so as to set expectations for the future.
- Assignments on which future assignments depend should be returned as quickly as possible so students have plenty of time to make corrections based on your feedback that will carry over into the next assignment (e.g., an annotated bibliography that will support a major paper).
- Provide feedback that suggests areas for improvement and growth as well as reinforcement and acknowledgement. Students learn more from an assignment if they receive comments from you along with the grade.
- Use lectures and faculty commentary as an opportunity to provide deeper insights about assigned readings or problems, not merely for reviewing content.

- When appropriate, utilize case studies in place of lectures for presenting material or reinforcing concepts. Case studies elicit student response and bring concepts and data to life.
- When using PowerPoint in the classroom, use the slides as a departure point, rather than simply reading off the slides. Relevant graphics enliven the presentation and can be used to illustrate both concrete and abstract ideas. Be sure that both text and graphics are large enough to be seen by all students in the class.
- Use the WebTycho site to enhance what you do in the classroom, while keeping in mind that students cannot be required to participate online. You may want to post materials or questions for reading by students before a class and make these the object for discussion, or use the WebTycho conferences to continue a discussion after the class. Provide any pre-class questions to students in the week prior to the class. Print out and distribute or summarize any online discussion for the benefit of those who were not able to log on to WebTycho. Post classroom handouts in the WebTycho classroom for reference.
- If you need assistance concerning Web-enhancement issues, feel free to contact the CTL Faculty Consultant Service at [http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla/fac\\_consult/fac\\_consult.html](http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla/fac_consult/fac_consult.html). You may also want to contact your academic administrator, or overseas, the DE Director.
- Post the outline or PowerPoint of lectures in the WebTycho classroom after each class. This will facilitate the opportunity for students to review and reflect on the lessons.
- Recognize that students may be apprehensive before major exams and major assignment due dates, and schedule adequate time to answer questions or review, as appropriate.
- Periodically ask for class feedback in order to adjust course activities as needed. Quick surveys and questions that ask students to reflect on their progress are ways to assess whether the course activities are effective in reaching the desired goals and objectives.
- Be sure to allot time at the appropriate period during the term to distribute the student evaluation forms. It's not a good idea to wait until the last day of the class.

### **After the Term:**

- Submit final grades in a timely fashion according to the UMUC grade submission policies and schedules. Students need their grades recorded promptly in order to make informed choices about registering for new classes, to meet contingencies for reimbursement, and for continuation of financial aid.

- Review and assess your teaching methods and approaches on a regular basis. Analyze your student evaluations with an eye to learning your areas of strength as well as areas for improvement.
- Set an example of commitment to life-long learning by keeping current in your field and continuing to improve and refine your teaching skills. The Center for Teaching and Learning offers face-to-face and online workshops throughout the year on topics such as web-enhancement, teaching and feedback strategies, detecting and preventing plagiarism, assessment, and understanding the needs of adult learners. For more information, visit the CTL Website at <http://www.umuc.edu/facdev/workshops.html>