Communicating expectations with students

Whether your class is HyFlex or entirely remote, it is important that your students know how classes will be structured and what they will be expected to do during and outside of class sessions. Before the semester starts, it is recommended that you reach out to your students through Canvas or email and begin to introduce them to the norms and expectations that you will put in place in your classroom. This is especially important in these times of uncertainty and change.

Provided below are sample norms that you can adapt to your course. These do not include expectations for grading or for academic integrity, both of which should already be in your syllabus as part of the SPS Syllabus Template.

Introduction to course norms

This is a community we create together and therefore it's important that we begin by establishing the norms and expectations we would like to see from our community. Please read the classroom norms and expectations listed below. After that, on the Discussion Forum please respond to the following prompts:

1. What is one practice you've seen in a virtual classroom that you think supported your learning experience?
2. What is one practice you've seen in a face-to-face or virtual classroom that you think is really important for developing a positive classroom climate?
3. What is one practice you've noticed that inhibited your learning in the course?

Overall norms and expectations

1. Our classroom is a shared learning community and one where diverse experiences and opinions are valued. Please remember to be respectful at all times and to share ideas and thoughts in a non-judgmental and respectful manner. Here are some norms for our classroom, adapted from [Carnegie Mellon's Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence](#):

    *   Listen actively and attentively.
    *   Ask for clarification if you are confused. Reach out to the instructor via Email or Canvas (add appropriate links). You can also reach out to one of your classmates via the Canvas site
    *   Do not interrupt one another.
    *   Challenge one another, but do so respectfully.
    *   Critique ideas, not people.
    *   Provide supporting evidence for opinions
    *   Avoid put-downs (even humorous ones).
    *   Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
    *   Build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding.
    *   Always have your book/readings in front of you.
    *   Do not monopolize discussion.
    *   Speak from your own experience, without generalizing.
    *   If you are offended by anything said during discussion, acknowledge it immediately.
    *   Consider anything that is said in class confidential.

Norms for the Zoom classroom

Before the semester starts, have your students watch this from Harvard University on the Dos and Don'ts of a Zoom classroom. Here are some sample norms that you can adapt to your classroom:

1. Enter the classroom on mute and remain on mute until you want to speak up. This will help us reduce unnecessary sound interference.

2. If possible, I would love to 'see you' during class. It creates a sense of community and shared space if we have our cameras on. However, I understand that these are exceptional times and you have may constraints that don't allow you to have your camera on at all times.

3. Make sure that your Zoom name is your full name (you can include preferred name or pronouns in brackets).

4. Dress appropriately and sit upright as you would in-person.

5. Use the chat function to ask questions or respond to the instructor's questions (include this if this is your preferred method).

6. Raise your hand physically or use the Zoom feature to raise hands and wait until the Instructor or Associate calls on you (appropriate for classes over 25).

Additional Norms for HyFlex Classes

1. Please wait to be called on before speaking. This will ensure that the audio will pick up your speech so that everyone can hear you.

2. Please make sure your mic is muted any time you are not speaking. This is particularly important for in-class students.

3. I will do my best to repeat questions to ensure that everyone hears them. If I forget, please feel free to politely bring it to my attention.

4. In order to make sure both online and in-person students have the opportunity to participate and ask questions, I will alternate calling on online and in-person students. So it may be the case that I call on someone before you even if your hand was raised first. Please be patient and allow your fellow classmates to participate.

5. The HyFlex modality is new to all of us, so I would be grateful for your patience and understanding as we work together to figure it out. If you have any suggestions about how I can manage the class better, please do feel free to reach out by email or in person during my office hours and share your ideas.

Setting Norms for Group Projects

Setting norms is particularly important when students are working in groups on projects that need to be completed outside of class, and it is doubly important when students are working virtually and don't have the opportunity to touch base in person. There are many decisions to be made that, if not spoken about explicitly, can cause frustration or difficulty for team members: How quickly will they respond to emails and requests? How much flexibility in deadlines is acceptable? How often will the team meet? How frequently will they check in? You can help your students develop their group norms by providing a sample of a Group Contract for students working in groups. You could also provide a sample Group and Self-Assessment tool.