

Creating Community in the Hybrid and Online Classrooms

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Who are we? Who are you?

Josie Baudier



- Director, Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning at Georgia Highlands College

- COVID-19 Coping Strategy: Mountain biking, running, and reading

Laura Carruth, Ph.D.



- Director, Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning at Georgia State University
- Associate Professor, Neuroscience

- COVID-19 Coping Strategy: Daily walks and lots weekend hikes

Activity 1:
Please
answer
these two
questions:

1) What are your worries/concerns about creating a positive class climate in online classes?

2). What is this worry based on?

Please spend 1-2 minutes thinking about your answers and then add them to the [Padlet](#) link in the chat box. Please include your name.

Padlet is a great app that lets students post notes/messages on a digital wall.

Creating Community—Why this matters now more than ever

- 2020 started out like a normal year!
- The spring rapid transition to remote teaching was new to faculty and students
- The COVID-19 panic of the spring is now the new normal
 - Teaching socially distanced has altered our connectedness to our personal and professional worlds.
 - Everyone is experiencing this—faculty and students
 - Your CLS learning communities can serve to support faculty helping their students AND for faculty to support and help each other.

January 2020

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February 2020

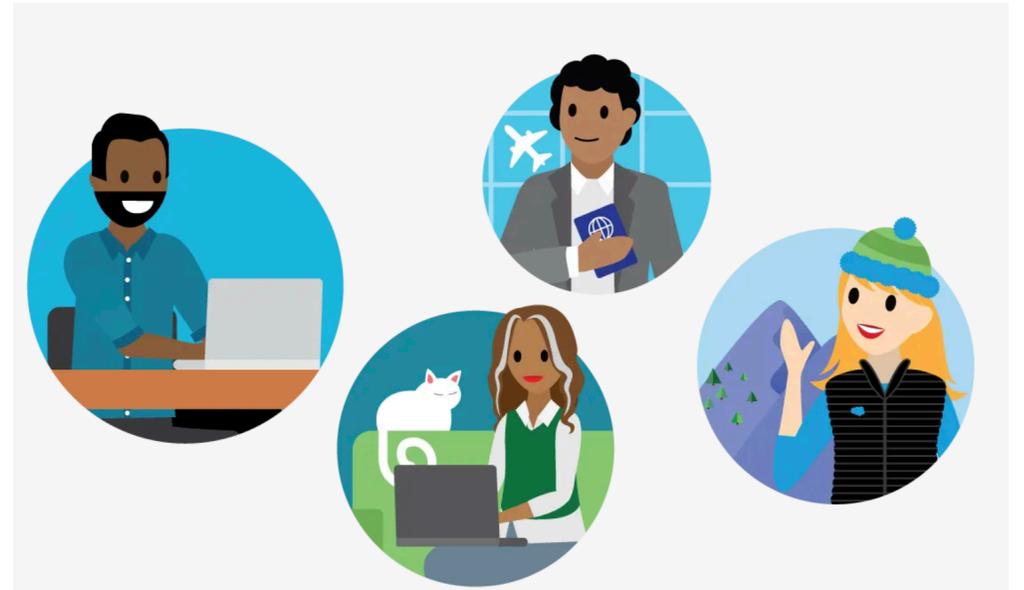
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March 2020

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Connecting With Your Students

- Reach out early--Start BEFORE day 1
 - Send an email or post an announcement in the LMS
 - Consider using a [SLACK](#) or [GroupMe](#) for class messaging
- Adopt a learner-centered approach for your classes and all student communications
- Welcome message
 - Ideally a video, but any post with a picture will do
 - Share information about yourself
 - Describe your teaching philosophy
 - If you're new to online teaching let your students know.
Consider a "we're in this together" message
- Icebreaker Surveys, Quizzes and Polls
 - [Poll Everywhere](#), [Kahoot](#), [Slido](#), plus many more
 - Allow students to share information about themselves

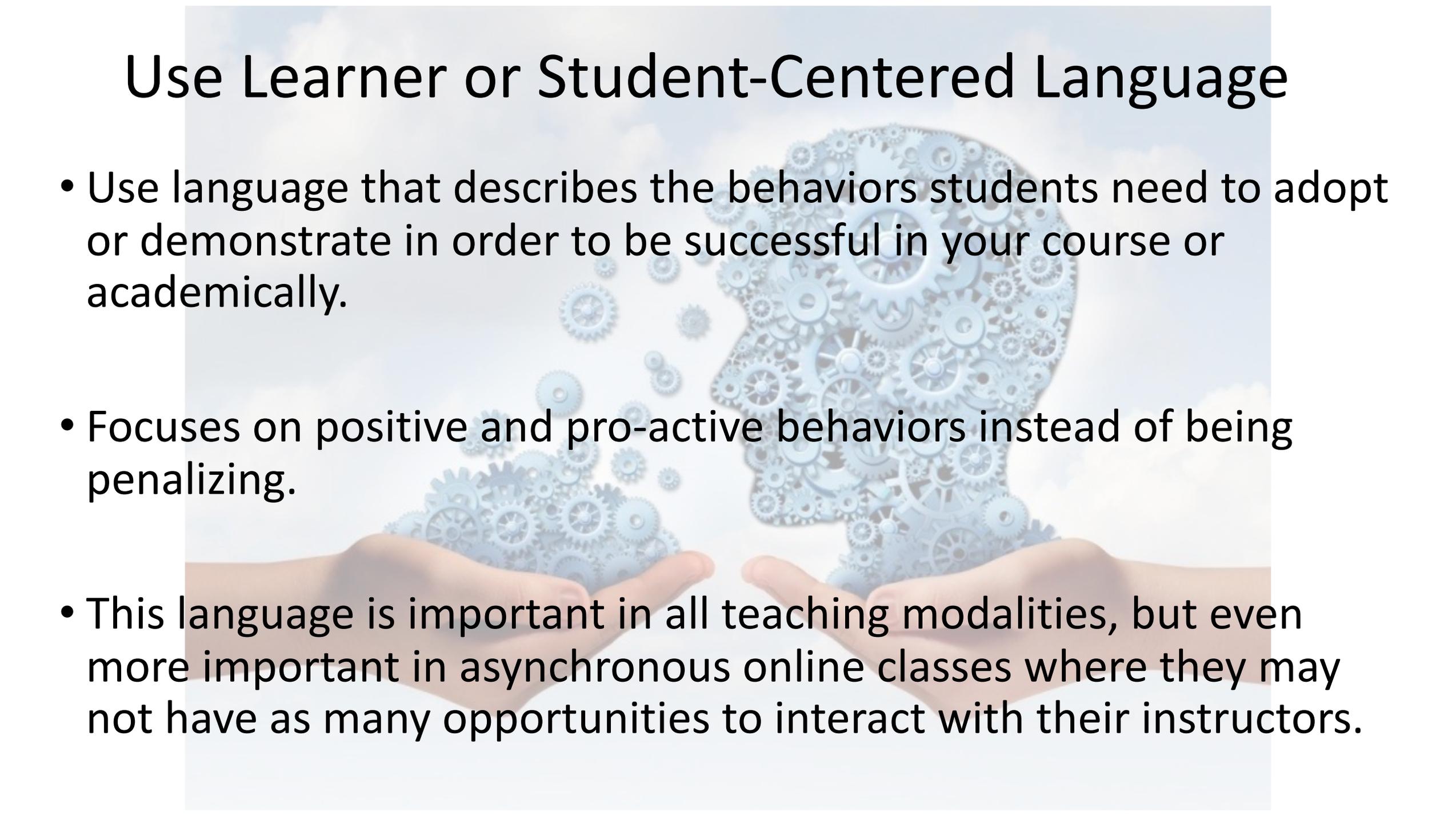


Example Icebreaker Questions

- What's your favorite food?
- What's your favorite movie?
- Two truths and a lie
- Hopes and Fears
- 21 Icebreakers for online and remote courses:
 - <https://symondsresearch.com/icebreakers-for-online-teaching/>
- Can you tie any of the answers to your course?
 - A GSU marketing professor does a great job connecting favorite movies to marketing and product placement.
- You can add new icebreakers each week to help connect to your class.



Use Learner or Student-Centered Language



- Use language that describes the behaviors students need to adopt or demonstrate in order to be successful in your course or academically.
- Focuses on positive and pro-active behaviors instead of being penalizing.
- This language is important in all teaching modalities, but even more important in asynchronous online classes where they may not have as many opportunities to interact with their instructors.

Definition of a learner-centered syllabus

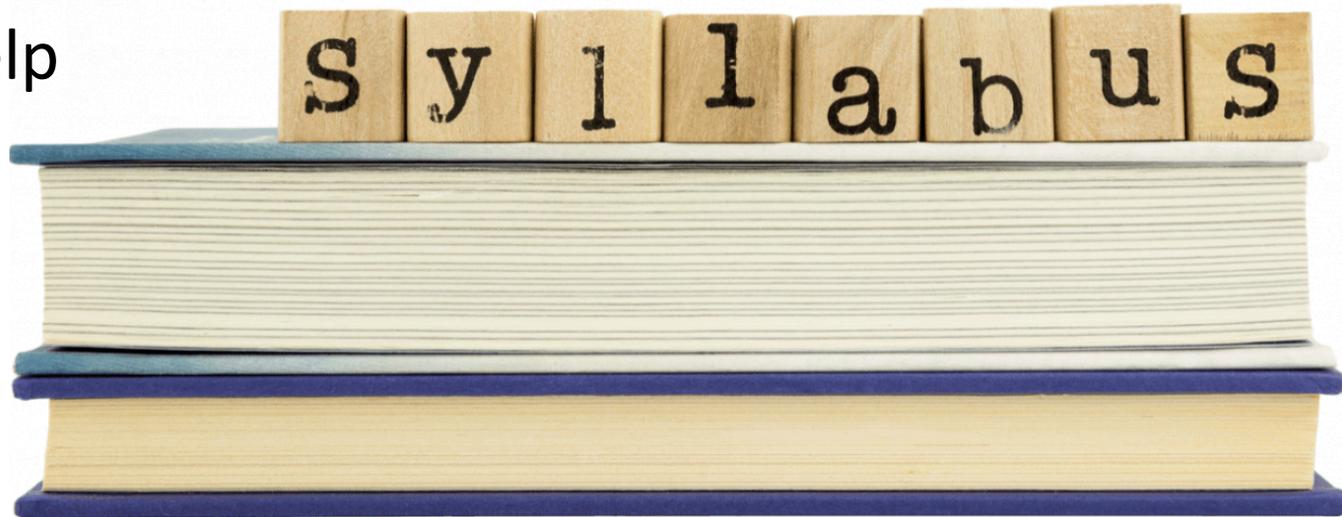


- A learner-centered course syllabus **focuses** on the needs of students and their learning process.
- This approach is even more important now for setting the tone in asynchronous online and blended learning classes.
- Instructors specifically include information that will facilitate the academic success of their students.

Syllabus and Class Climate

Syllabus study—punishing vs. encouraging (Ishiyama & Hartlaub, 2002 plus others)

- Significant difference in perceived approachability ($p=.04$)
 - Instructor with punishing wording rated as less approachable
 - Students less likely to seek help from the punishing instructor
 - Underclassmen and first-generation students most affected by wording



Punishing vs. Encouraging language

- *Punishing:* “If for some substantial reason you cannot turn in your papers or take an exam at the scheduled time you must contact me prior to the due date, or test date, or you will be graded down 20%”
- *Rewarding:* “If for some substantial reason you cannot turn in your papers or take an exam at the scheduled time you **should** contact me prior to the due date, or test date, or you will only **be eligible for 80% of the total points.**”

A few benefits of a well-written & learner-centered syllabus

Establishes a contact and connection between students and instructors

- Sets the tone for the course and is the most effective if written in positive language
- Can describe your beliefs about learning, teaching and assessment
- Sets up the structure and organization for the course
- Connects to handouts or detailed assignment descriptions
- Defines student responsibilities for success including advice on how and where to study (finding quiet spaces, dedicated study time)
- Helps students determine their readiness for the course
- States how the course fits into the curriculum and overall program
- Describes available campus and virtual learning resources (i.e., campus tutoring centers, writing centers)
- Can serve as a learning contract

Example statements: What successful students should expect to do in this course

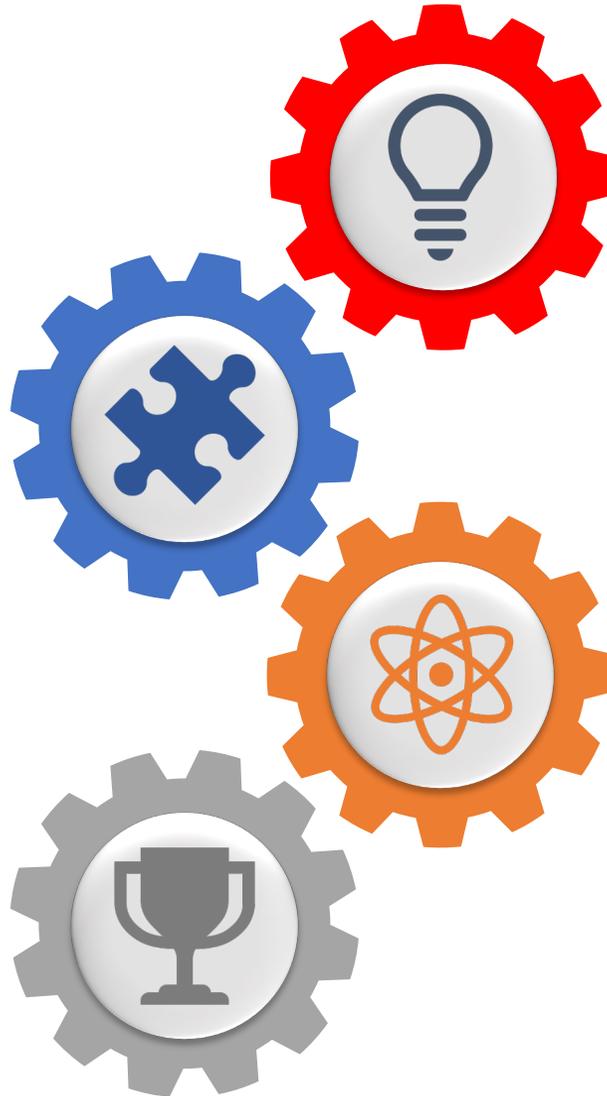


- Finding information:
 - Successful students look up information first so that they ask informed questions, not questions they already have the answers to. If they can't find the answers, they contact the instructor. (from 4faculty.org)
 - Successful students write down any instructions given orally by the professor; they also are careful to make sure that they have taken accurate notes and ask questions before due dates. They also read and re-read written instructions and ask questions for clarification as needed. (from 4faculty.org)
- Make sure students first know how you want to be contacted and how long it may take you to answer their emails.

Include Information on Technology

Let students know if webcam and microphones are needed for proctoring or synchronous class discussions.

Who to contact for help with technology problems



Information on what technology students will need access to in order to be successful in your class

Info on where to access free WiFi and checkout technology

Due Dates and Organization



- Consider when your asynchronous assignments will be due
 - [Remind App](#)
 - What message are you giving if everything is due at 11:59pm on Sunday night?
 - Is that the same due date being used by all of their other professors?
- Help students develop time management skills
- Reminders about campus support resources with links

Student “on camera” Concerns

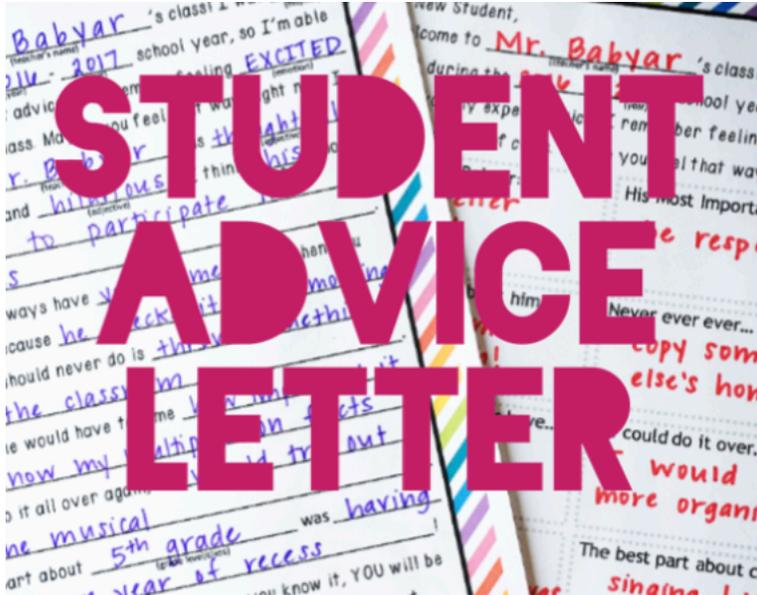
- The use of webcams to see your students does make the class feel more connected, however, this may not be an ideal situation for your students.
- Students with anxiety issues may be uncomfortable on camera
- Students living at home or with roommates might not have a quiet place to be on camera
- Bandwidth issues



Student Choice – Syllabus Suggestions

- (Virtual) Office hours—make a few suggestions based on your schedule and then have the class vote on the time.
 - Encourages students to come when they need help
 - Consider not calling them office hours, but use drop-in or check-in hours instead
- Assignment due dates (if possible)—works well for upper division and graduate-level courses
- Assignment choices (if possible)—also works well for upper division/graduate courses
- Rules of Engagement for online discussions, breakout room discussions

Advice from Former Students



- Consider including a "success" section of your syllabus or in your LMS course
- Good prompts include:
 - “What I wish I knew when this class started”
 - “What I did to be successful”
- Start collecting advice (written or short videos) before the end of the semester

Academic Honesty

- Make sure the “what and why” of academic honesty is clear. Include the policies, penalties, and procedures.
- Example: Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of the trust upon which the success of our University depends. Cheating and plagiarism can not only result in a poor grade and penalties from the University, but it can cause your mentors and peers to mistrust you and could keep you from developing the habits to make you a successful student and a successful worker in your future career.
- Make it explicitly clear in your syllabus that sharing information/cheating via group messaging apps such as GroupMe or Slack is a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

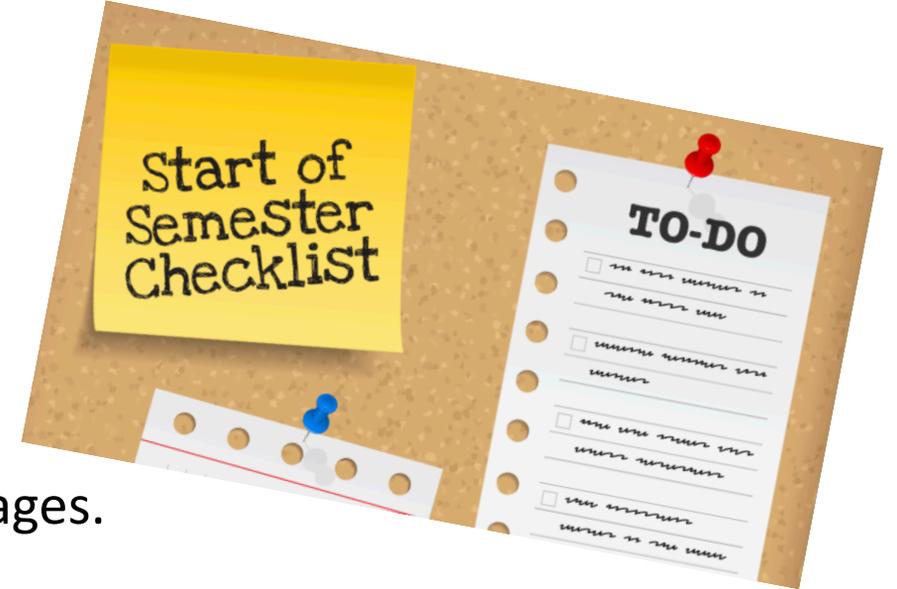
Once the Semester Starts

- Adopt teaching strategies that are learner-centered and support ALL students
 - [TILT](#) (Transparency in Learning and Teaching, from *TILT* Higher Ed)
 - Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect
- Be consistent
 - With course design and course expectations
- Be organized
 - Don't make changes to dates or assignments unless it is to the benefit of all students
- Don't replicate your F2F lectures online!
 - Short videos are easier to make and watch. Anything longer than approx. 10 mins is too long
 - Consider sharing notetaking guides or lecture outlines so students can be more active while watching (this supports metacognition)



Once the Semester Starts

- Be present and be responsive
 - But this doesn't mean you have to be available 24 hrs/day!
- Reach out often—send reminders, announcements, and messages.
 - Be encouraging as needed
 - Share questions you get with the class, other students may have the same questions (post in discussion board—remove personal info)
 - Use apps, like remind
 - Intelligent agents built into the LMS
- Consider using weekly polls or “questions of the week” to keep the class connected.
- Administer an informal anonymous mid-semester teaching survey to check the pulse of the class.
- Provide guidelines on your expectations for online interactions and engagement
 - “Rules of Engagement” for discussions



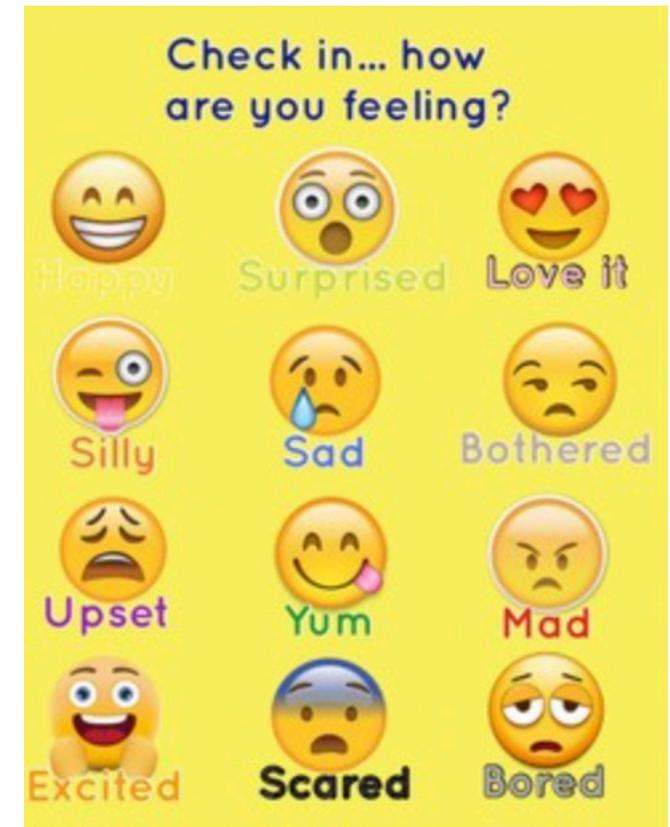
Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect

- Create a welcoming environment for all students
- Lots of research describes the benefits of including these statements on syllabi
- [GSU example statements](#)
- Plus 6 questions to help you develop your own (link above)



How to Teach F2F With a Mask and Create Caring Classroom

- From Dr. Jamie Landau (Director of CELT and Associate Professor of Communication Arts, Valdosta State University)
- [Inside Higher Ed \(Aug. 26, 2020\)](#)
- [Mood “temperature” checks](#) with Emojis
- [Caring Class Constitution](#) and Care Ethics



Activity 2

- How can you adapt what you do in your F2F classes to an online format to develop and support a positive classroom climate?
- Take one minute to think about your response and then type your response in the chat box, **but don't hit enter. Everyone will submit at the same time.**



Connecting Your Students Together

- Have your students get to know each other.
 - Make sure the student welcome messages or fun fact info is available for all students to see (post in the discussion board or on a page all students can easily access)
 - [VoiceThread](#) is a great tool for connecting students.
- Include info on preferred names and pronouns
- Share results of the "Get to Know You" survey or polls
- Rules of engagement for online discussions
- [Perusall](#), social e-reader, allows students to connect remotely as they respond to course readings
- Other tools to engage and connect students
 - [NearPod](#) (make videos interactive)
 - [FlipGrid](#) (interactive video discussions)
 - [Padlet](#) (dynamic post-it notes)

Connecting Your Students Together



- Hold weekly class check-in meetings
 - Set-up times during the week where you can meet with your students
 - Record and post for students who can't attend
- Set-up a Positive News Board on the discussion board where students can share good news, study tips, or just connect
 - You can also do this via Padlet or Flipgrid

Community During Times of Uncertainty

- Supporting students during times of social unrest (Black Lives Matter, Covid-19)
 - The GSU and GHC CETLs have developed some resources:
 - [GSU Difficult Conversations](#)
 - [GSU Fall Plan Resources](#)
 - [GHC Remote Instruction](#)
- Check-in times for free discussion—it doesn't always have to be about the content, but don't push this if students don't respond

Mini Case Studies

Case A:

- Dr. Who is a busy science professor. She has not taught online before. For Fall 2020 she decided to just give twice/week full-length synchronous lectures and post the recordings online. Her class will only consist of all posted lectures and two M/C exams.
- What advice would you give her to re-think her course?

Case B:

- Dr. Austen is an over-worked literature professor. He's a bit nervous about technology and never used his campus LMS much before. However, he did some training over the summer and now wants to use the class discussion boards. He plans on having his students respond to two weekly readings in the discussion boards and respond to at least two other student's posts.
- What advice would you give him about effectively using the discussion board?

Things to Consider Now and Later

- Trauma-informed pedagogy framework
 - Students and faculty will respond differently due to different early life experiences and current support systems and coping styles
- Learning styles
 - Everyone learns differently even though we can place students (and faculty) into “learning categories”
 - Students might experience hybrid/blended and online classes differently and need to know that what works in a F2F class may not work online.
- Student metacognition
 - Setting up hybrid/blended and online learning environments to support student self-directed learning

References and Resources

- Learner-Centered information:
 - Faculty Focus (Magna Commons)
 - <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-classroom-management/a-learner-centered-syllabus-helps-set-the-tone-for-learning/>
 - Learner-Centered syllabus workshop offered by 4Faculty.org at Santa Barbara City College (website is no longer maintained)
- *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (2010)
- *Small Teaching Online* (2019)
- Jamie Landau, Ph.D. [Inside Higher Ed \(Aug. 26, 2020\)](#)
- [BetterLesson blog](#): Distance Learning: 3 Strategies to Build a Positive Classroom Culture
- Some slide templates are from <https://www.presentationgo.com/> all free to download!

Resources: These were mentioned or provided during the live presentation of this webinar.

- [Active Learning While Physically Distancing](#) and the [GSU revision](#) of the same document.
- Spangler. (2020). [Cinderella Deadlines: Reconsidering Timelines for Student Work](#). Faculty Focus
- [UVA CTE – Learning-Focused Syllabus Rubric](#)
- [Jamboard](#) (interactive technology)
- [Constructing a Diversity Statement](#)
- [Hypothes.is](#) (annotation tool)



<https://perusall.com/>



Flipgrid

<https://info.flipgrid.com/>

Kahoot!

<https://kahoot.com/>



<https://nearpod.com/>



<https://www.remind.com/>



<https://www.polleverywhere.com/>



padlet

<https://padlet.com/>

slido

<https://www.sli.do/>