

Adjunct Faculty Academic Calendar

- 5/1 Final Exams End
- 5/5 Grades Due to Registrars by Noon
- 5/7 Commencement

Workshops

- 5/12 Breakout Rooms in MS Teams Meetings
1:30 PM Online
- 5/18 Using MS Teams within Canvas
10:30 AM Online
- 5/27 Echo 360: Embed Polling in a video to Engage Your Students
2:00 PM Online

Register for these and other workshops at:
svsu.edu/workshops

Teaching Tip: Remember to Review

It is really helpful to students if you take the first few minutes of class time to review what was covered in the last class, as well as, salient points covered in the readings that were due and any other assignments. Such discussions get the students' heads into the class and prepared to learn new material!

Re-thinking Your Syllabus: Part One

"I believe that teaching is one of the most delightful and exciting of all human activities when it is done well and that it is one of the most humiliating and tedious when it is done poorly."

Paul Ramsden

This quote by Ramsden lends to the idea that when preparing to teach a course it is important to plan. After reflecting upon the tone, formatting, etc. of your syllabus as suggested above, you might want to consider restructuring your syllabus to ensure that your students are learning what you want them to learn. The first step in creating a course syllabus is to construct the student learning outcomes (SLO) for your course. SLOs essentially consist of that information your students need to know when they leave your class after the final exam. These outcomes should include the knowledge, skills, and abilities your students should expect to attain in your course. SLOs should be written in language that clearly implies a measurable behavior or quality of student work. This means that the outcome should employ action verbs which allow for measurement. The following is an example of an SLO which is not measurable followed by one that is measurable:

Not measurable:

Explore the differences and similarities between urban and rural social life.

Measurable:

Write a paper which outlines the similarities and differences between urban life and rural life.

You might ask why measurable? SLOs are intended to define the purpose of your course. They are also intended to guide you in developing appropriate learning experiences for your students and they also play a major role in assessment. In an outcomes-focused course, assessments measure the outcomes students have achieved. These assessments may be formative or summative, but the results show that you are teaching according to the SLOs and that, in the end, your students are learning what you want them to learn.



Updating Your Syllabus

Okay! The semester is almost over. Before you begin your summer activities please give some thought to next fall's syllabus by addressing the following questions:

1. *Did my syllabus convey the correct tone about me and my course?*

Word choices and topics can create a subtext for the semester, so it is important to write a syllabus that is informative and encouraging to the students. Make sure that your course policies, for example, are explicit yet worded so that students aren't offended or become afraid.

2. *Do my learning outcomes need to be reworked?*

Learning outcomes should reflect student proficiency...that is, what your students need to be able to know and do after the course is over. Again, it is important to be explicit. Learning outcomes should be measurable and provide students with an idea for how the course will be directed.

3. *What worked well this year and what didn't?*

Did all of your writing and reading assignments accomplish what you had hoped they would accomplish? If not, think about how you might adjust these so that your students can be more successful.

4. *How did the rhythm of the course work?*

Did due dates work so as not to overwhelm your students? If not, consider readjusting these.

5. *Consider the format of your syllabus.*

Consider digitizing your syllabus so that course links can be easily accessed.

Reference:

Graduate Connections, University of Nebraska, Lincoln (2015). *Review and Update Last Semester's Syllabi*. Accessed: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/news/review-and-update-last-semesters-syllabi>

"Flippable" Moments in the Classroom

A "flippable moment" is the moment when you stop talking *at* your students and "flip" the work to the students. This is when you step back and let them struggle and ask questions, solve problems, and do the heavy lifting of learning on their own. As faculty we need to give our students guidance, but not answers. While it's true that students can discover information and answers to questions within seconds via the Internet, online textbooks, online lectures, and MOOCs, not all students are prepared to do the "messy work" of learning. What students are often unable to do is to analyze, synthesize and engage in higher levels of critical thought. Flippable moments helps students "make meaning for themselves."

The following are three flippable moments that can take place in the classroom:

Flippable Moment #1: Look for confusion – Try to anticipate the most confusing part of the content and add an assessment in the middle of the lesson to help you and your students determine where additional work is needed. Or, try a group activity so students can discuss the material with their peers.

Flippable Moment #2: Look for the fundamentals – Ask yourself what students **MUST** know before they can move forward. A variety of practice assessments that will test and reinforce their knowledge will provide students with multiple opportunities for learning.

Flippable moment #3: Look for boredom – When you come to a place in your lesson when boredom strikes, you need to flip your class over to your students. Step aside and let them **DO** the work. Put them in pairs or groups and give them a challenge. Give them space to struggle, practice and imagine.

Focus your lesson on what your students should do, not what you should do. Try to remember that you had to do the "heavy lifting" when you were learning what you now know as an instructor. You made meaning for yourself. Now give your students the same experience by flipping them!

Reference:

Honeycutt, Barbi. (2013, March 25). Looking for Flippable Moments in Your Class. *Faculty Focus*. Accessed from: <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/blended-flipped-learning/looking-for-flippable-moments-in-your-class/>