SVSU | SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY®

In the Loop

Adjunct Faculty
Academic Calendar

11/8   Last day to Withdraw with a "W" grade

11/27-12/1   Thanksgiving Recess, No Classes

Workshops

11/1   Canvas: An Introduction
              1:00 PM   Z115

11/12   Why Use Open Educational Resources (OER)
              3:00 PM   Z223B

11/22   Create Video Lectures on SVSU's Lightboard or Surface Studio Using Echo 360
              1:00 PM   SE142

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

The November 2019 workshop is titled, *Transforming the Walls of you Classroom to the Community* It is scheduled for Friday, November 22th at 12:30 in SE 203. To register please go to the workshop schedule at svsu.edu/workshops. Attendees are compensated $30 and a light lunch will be served.

Creating Community through Your Syllabus

Cullen and Harris (2009) have written that the language and tone of your syllabus can lend itself to creating community in your classroom. One way to do this is to create a learner centered syllabus that emphases your accessibility, your learning rationale, and student-student collaboration.

- Accessibility- simply listing office hours doesn't signal how accessible you are. But letting the students know a variety of ways they can contact you does. You should also encourage your students to visit your office or even require them to do so as a sign of your accessibility.
- Learning rationale- another way you can create community through your syllabus is to detail the rationale you have for each assignment and assessment and how these relate to your learning goals. Explain why you give exams. Explain what your exams are like. Explain why these exams are important to student learning. Let the students know why you are doing what you are doing and how these plans lead to student success.
- Collaboration- including collaborative work into your class structure can also help to grow community. Your syllabus should not only encourage student-student collaboration but also consider including it as a requirement in some of your assignments.

Just by employing these three actions, your syllabus can demonstrate your commitment to community.

Reference:

Cullen, R. & Harris, M. (2009). Assessing learner-centeredness through course syllabi. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 34(1),* 115-125.

Count the Candy Corn in the Head Contest!

Well, we had fun and a few friends won prizes in this yearly event. There were a total of 1016 candies. The winners were:

First place: Carol Cooper (1007)
Second place: Andrew Behmlander (1042)
Third place: Shawn Wilson (1056)

Be sure to participate next year, because you can always count on having fun and, hopefully, you will win prizes in the, Count the Candy Corn in the Head Contest!

Strategy to Create an Inclusive Classroom With Your Syllabus

As it turns out, only 1 in 4 college students who are eligible for ADA accommodations actually request them (Scott and Vallian, 2018). What this means is that every class we teach probably has students who require accommodations but have chosen not to request them. As well, only 14.8% of students with disabilities graduate with a four-year degree or more (disabilitystatistics, org, 2017). Therefore, it might be helpful to use the following language in your syllabus so that more students will feel empowered to get the assistance they require:

Disability Accommodations:
Saginaw Valley State University views disability as an important aspect of diversity and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations (ARA) is the campus office which collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- *If you have or think you have a disability in any area such as chronic or mental health illness, or attention, learning, or issues, please contact ARA to arrange for a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.*
- *Students with short-term disabilities such as a broken arm, should be able to work with their instructors to remove classroom barriers. In situations where further assistance is needed, students should contact ARA.*
- *If you are registered with ARA and you have a Faculty Notification Letter dated for this semester, please see me as soon as possible with your letter to review your accommodations and plan how they will be employed in your class.*
- *If you are registered with ARA and find that you have questions or concerns, please contact their office.*
  Contact Information:
  Phone: *(989) 964-2130*
  Email: accessibility@svsu.edu
  In person: *Wickes 260B*
  For further information please see www.svsu.edu/access

Mental health needs:
As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These issues can include strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to fully participate in daily activities. The Student Counseling Center is available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the Student Counseling Center's confidential mental health services by going to their website at svsu.edu/studentcounselingcenter.

What I can't do for you:
- *The longer you wait to ask for help, the less I may be able to help you: I cannot accommodate disability-related needs retroactively.*
- *If you choose to stop attending class, I am unable to support your well-being and intellectual growth.*

We understand that this language takes a good amount of syllabus space, but we feel that it covers almost every situation and will lend toward greater student success!

References:
    Disability Statistics: Online Resource for U.S. Disability Statistics. Cornell University. Accessed from: http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/reports/acs.cfm?statistic=9

    Scott, S. & Edwards, W. (2018). *Disability and World Language Learning: Inclusive Teaching for Diverse Learners*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.