YOUR STUDENT’S CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Rayvon Fouché
Shannon McMullen
Anagul Yaryyeva
Yu Dou

American Studies Program

August, 14, 2017
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Classroom expectations
  • Classes for undergraduates usually meet two or three times per week for 50 or 75 minutes
  • graduate seminars meet less frequently (once per week is normal) for two or three hours
  • Class attendance is expected, and in courses of 50 students or fewer, students with more than two or three absences may be penalized or urged to drop the course.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Classroom expectations
  • Some instructors take attendance each day throughout the term; others will stop taking roll after the opening weeks.

  • Nonetheless, they will know who is there and who is not and which students are actively engaged in the class.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Classroom expectations
  • In smaller classes and seminars, discussion, speculation and student participation will probably be expected and even required.

• The smaller the class, the more likely this is to be true.

• International students are sometimes shocked at how early and often they are called on to voice opinions and ask and answer questions.
• Classroom expectations
  • At the beginning of the course, look carefully at the syllabus (the plan for the semester) and see if there are indications that class participation will figure into your final grade.

• You may find nothing explicitly stated, but the opening sessions will give you a good idea as to how much the instructor values responses from the group.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Accountability
  • In the syllabus, reading assignments and other homework are listed for each meeting.

  • Students will find the class begins where the reading assignments leave off.

  • Students are not only expected to come to the class, but also to have read the assigned material and to have thought about it.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Accountability
  • Undergraduate or graduate course will probably require you to complete several projects during the semester.
  
  • These projects may be essays, laboratory reports, design projects, or other work requiring sustained effort. Deadlines are firm.
  
  • If student have questions about the format of a paper or project, ask the instructor well ahead of the deadline.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Help from instructors
  • Professor or teaching assistant will list "office hours" for your class.

• "Office hours" are times when the instructor will be available in his or her office or laboratory to talk about class, your questions or projects or anything else having to do with your academic work.

• Take advantage of this time!
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Interaction with instructors
  • Students interactions with faculty members shape their overall academic experience.

• Sadly American culture dominants the classroom. Many faculty members attempt to broaden this perspective, but it can be difficult.

• Communication difficulties (not just language) can arise between people of different cultures.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Interaction with instructors
  • What images does the word "professor" create in your mind? What is expected of a professor in your home country? What is expected of a student?

  • How does this compare to U.S. academic system, where professors are sometimes called by their first names, and students are expected and encouraged to contribute to class discussions and question the professors’ statements.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

- Interaction with instructors
  - Faculty assessment
    - 40% Research
    - 40% Teaching
    - 20% Service

- It is important to know that a faculty member is required to do more than just teach.

- At Purdue, the need to do research is powerful.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Writing assessments
  • Students may need to adjust their writing style in order to write successful papers here.

  • Americans tend to be direct in their communication patterns.

  • In some countries, this explicit style of writing might be perceived as an insult to the reader's intelligence.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Writing assessments
  • International students who do not adopt the direct U.S. style of writing may find their paper critiqued negatively for lack of cohesion, little focus or failure to stick to a topic or theme.

  • Avoid plagiarism or the use, without attribution, of someone else's thoughts or words.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Examinations:
  • Essay--broad in scope, students will need to synthesize materials and concepts from class.
  • Problem test--most common in science, engineering and mathematics classes. Students are required to solve a problem or problems using formulas, equations and rules learned in class.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Examinations:
  • Multiple choice--present a question or statement and four or five possible answers.
  • Take home--student will be able to refer to books, notes and other materials during this type of test, but expectations of quality tend to be a bit higher.
  • Final--tests a students knowledge of the material covered over the entire duration of your course.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Honor Code
  • Most colleges and universities in the United States have established "honor codes" - statements of certain rules that students are expected to follow in their academic work.

  • These rules relate primarily to academic honesty and originality as they are defined in the U.S. Academic dishonesty is defined differently from country to country.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Honor Code
  • Some international students find that U.S. rules regarding academic honesty are quite different from the ones that they followed at home.

  • Purdue take these rules very seriously.

  • Not knowing the rules is not an acceptable excuse for breaking them. Nor is it reasonable to say that a particular academic practice is accepted in your country. While at Purdue, students are expected to conform to campus academic regulations.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• Honor Code
  • Cheating or the perception of cheating is a problem.
  • Cheating is the unauthorized help on an assignment, quiz or examination.
  • Sometimes students who speak a foreign language in the classroom are perceived by others to be cheating, even though they may simply be asking for a piece of paper or an eraser.
WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW?

• ISSS ACADEMICS GUIDE

• http://isss.illinois.edu/publications/guides/academic_guide.html
Why American Studies?

Where we work

• Industry
• Business
• Educational Institutions
• Government
• Non-Profit
TOP SKILLS

• Effective communication skills
• Teamwork
• Analytical and problem-solving skills
• Organizational and Negotiation Skills
• Interpersonal skills
• Leadership
• Learning skills
• Work Ethic

* Susan Adams, Forbes. The 10 Skills Employers Most Want in 2015 Graduates
LIFE SKILLS

• Emotional Intelligence
• Work Life Balance
• Self-care
• Self-esteem
• Compassion
Thank you

Questions?

Rayvon Fouché
Director, American Studies
Purdue University
G10 Heavilon Hall
500 Oval Drive, West Lafayette, IN 47907
rfouche@purdue.edu