

Orienting students to your class

APPROACH 1

Welcome to XXXX: 1234. This class meets 9-9:50 MWF. Your grade is based on a your combined scores from the midterm, project, homework assignments and final examination. No late work will be accepted and there will be no makeup exams!

Attendance in class is required. No cell phones or laptops are allowed. At the discretion of the instructor, your grade may be adjusted due to disruptive class behavior.

Most students find this to be a very difficult course. It will require a lot of work on your part. You will have to work evenings and weekends and even so many of you will not be happy with your grades. Seek out one of the class TAs when you are feeling overwhelmed with the content.

APPROACH 2

This course will introduce us to the language used within the sciences: mathematics. Calculus is one of the many tools we use to explore and explain physical phenomena. We need to study the underlying principles and intuitively understand what the various calculus topics like differentiation and integration represent. These concepts will arise in other science classes and we will work to relate course topics to their applications in the world around us.

First of all, you need to know that mathematics is not a subject for which rote memorization is always the answer. Some problems will take more than 5 minutes to solve, and there will occasionally be problems you aren't able to solve. Struggling is natural in a Calculus class and nothing to be ashamed of; don't be afraid to seek out myself or the TA so we can provide another explanation that might work better for you.

I expect you to work a lot of problems in this course. Every problem will not be a carbon copy of an example we worked in class, so it is imperative to push your limits of comfort with problems to see how the tools we are learning can be applied and extended. The more problems you work, the easier it is to identify when specific techniques will be useful...Math is only learned by doing; you cannot learn math passively. Nor will you be successful if you cram only on the days before exams. The nature of math and how it relates to the other sciences requires constant attention, and failing to regularly study will cause deficiencies in understanding that could plague your entire science career; this is because of the cumulative nature of the calculus sequence. In addition to a solid work ethic, I expect students to ask "why?". As scientists, we should never accept a statement without investigating it ourselves.

(Thanks to Loribeth Alvin, Mathematics)

CIVILITY & TOLERANCE

The Writing Program supports DU's Code of Student Conduct, available online at <http://www.du.edu/ccs/code.html>, which in part "expects students to recognize the strength of personal differences while respecting institutional values." Because writing courses rely heavily on the interaction of individuals in both small and large groups, students need to share their writing and ideas in a manner respectful of different perspectives. In addition, working productively with others is an important rhetorical skill. The Writing Program will take action to reduce behaviors that compromise a productive learning environment; these actions may range from informal conversations to requests for formal action by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards.

(DU Writing Center syllabi language)

How to take this course

Attend every class.

Come to class prepared

Expect to participate

Expect to learn from your peers

Expect to be confused, irritated, and misunderstood at times, as well as appreciated, applauded, and surprised.

Most important: You clearly could do well in this class without being transformed by the experience at all, and you could change how you think "theoretically" but not change how you think about practice, nor integrate the two. You could...but it would be a real shame. Let us use this course to dig as deeply as possibly into our, as well as others', thinking about children's mathematical thinking, and come out never thinking quite the same way again.

(Thanks to Doug Clements, Education)

Class Participation and Attendance

In this course you will be expected to participate by sharing your thoughts and reactions to readings, speakers, and general class discussions. The input of each student is valuable. Your attendance for the full class period is expected and you are responsible for everything that is covered, distributed, or announced during class. In order to fully participate in class, you are expected to do all assigned readings prior to class. There is a substantial amount of reading for this course. To accomplish all of it, you will need to plan your schedule carefully.

(Thanks to Frank Tuitt, Education)

CELLULAR PHONE AND PAGER POLICY

I respect the need for each individual to stay in contact with family and friends. The use of cellular phones and pagers, however, is disrupting to the learning environment. Thus, I request that the ringers of all cellular phones and pagers be muted during class. If an emergency arises, and you need to make a call on your phone, I request that you quietly leave the room and conduct your conversation out in the hallway.

(Thanks to Keith Miller, Chemistry)

Class Norms of Learning, Interaction and Communication:

The following chart lists the responsibilities that you have as a student and that I have as your instructor. You should understand and live up to your responsibilities in class, and you can expect me to do the same. In Blackboard, there are more complete descriptions of what each of these responsibilities mean.

As a student your responsibility is ...	As your instructor, my responsibility is ...
To learn.	To facilitate your learning.
To challenge yourself to be more accountable for what you learn and what you achieve.	To challenge you to think more deeply, express what you understand and what that means.
To complete your own work on time.	To assign and assess your work (or delegate to a TA) in a timely manner.
To come to every class on time, prepared and equipped to learn.	To come to class on time, prepared and equipped to teach.
To abide by the honor code.	To uphold the honor code.
To follow directions and participate in group tasks.	To support you when tasks need clarification.
To treat fellow students equitably, acknowledging and supporting them in group work.	To treat all students equitably, acknowledging and responding to their questions and concerns.
To seek help when you need it.	To support you in getting help when you ask for it.
To make an earnest attempt at learning and applying your learning before asking someone how to solve a problem. It is your responsibility to try to solve it first and determine what it is you do not understand.	To ask appropriate questions and direct you to relevant materials that will help you learn what you need to apply to solve a problem. This policy also applies to TAs and Math Center tutors.
To communicate clearly in emails, including your full name and your lab meeting time.	To respond to your email within one business day.
To notify me prior to an unavoidable absence.	To work with you to make alternate learning arrangements when the absence is legitimate.
To purchase the textbook, WebAssign code and other required items for this class in the first week.	To enforce the deadlines and equipment rules. I will not extend deadlines if you have incomplete work because you have not acquired course equipment/texts on time.

(Thanks to Allegra Reiber, Mathematics)