

Faculty Development – Options with Implementation to Meet the Online Challenges

Challenge	Option	Implementation
<p>1. Different students in the same online class email you with the same questions.</p> <p>2. Students flood you with questions already answered somewhere in course materials, often very obviously in the syllabus.</p> <p>9. Students send emails asking questions that have already been answered in online materials or messages.</p>	<p>Option 1: Dedicated Q/C discussion board for all student assignment questions. 1,2, 9</p> <p>Option 1a: Students-Helping-Students board</p>	<p>Implementation 1: Include a syllabus policy requiring all course questions be posted on a dedicated questions/comments (Q/C) discussion board (or in person, or by telephone) but never email; state that this is to promote a learning community and equity of information throughout the class.</p> <p>Implementation 1a: Include a syllabus policy requiring all course questions be posted first on the students-helping-students board a day at least 12 hours before posting on the dedicated questions/comments (Q/C) discussion board (or in person, or by telephone) but never email; state that this is to promote a learning community and equity of information throughout the class.</p> <p>Implementation 2: Repost every email question that violates your syllabus policy in a discussion board message beginning with the phrase “Here is a great example of a question that should be post on the Q/C board since everyone should see my response”. Always delete any student identifier in the email message you have copied to the discussion board message. Then respond to the violating email question about future assignments by telling the student, he/she will find the answer on Q/C discussion board.</p> <p>Implementation 3: Include a syllabus policy encouraging students to answer each other’s Q/C questions</p> <p>Implementation 4: Acknowledge/reward students helping students; for example, when a student offers a helpful response to any Q/C question, thread a discussion board message to the helpful message thanking the student for assistance.</p>
<p>3. Students post disruptive or inappropriate messages on discussion boards.</p>	<p>Option: Remove any such message immediately. To keep a record, move to a private disc board which only you can see. 3</p>	<p>Implementation 1: Include a syllabus policy should state the instructor reserves the right to maintain a positive learning environment and promote a learning community – and will remove any messages or information counter to those goals.</p> <p>Implementation 2: Remove any messages or information counter to those goals (usually anything that is inconsiderate or cruel to other students).</p> <p>Note: usually it is completely unnecessary to do anything else. Offenders cease soon enough.</p>

<p>4. Students are confused about which assignment is due next, when it is due and where to submit it; they can't find updated or revised assignment information or feedback.</p>	<p>Option 1: Assignment Table with columns for month number, due date, submission location code, and points for the assignment. 4 Option 2: Every week announce next few assignments on the course homepage as a reminder. 4 Option 3: Announce any important information on the instructor message board and in a course homepage reminder. 4</p>	<p>Implementation 1: Whenever answering any assignment question about where, when, and how many points for an assignment refer the respondent to the assignment table but do not directly answer the question. Implementation 2: Create and chronologically sequence discussion boards for submitting specific message assignment. Implementation 3: Create and chronologically sequence assignment or drop box titles for individual assignment submissions.</p>
<p>5. Students ask assignment questions but do not clearly identify the assignment</p>	<p>Option: Require students use intuitive, standardized assignment names (such month number_due date) whenever referring to an assignment 5</p>	<p>Implementation: Include a syllabus policy that requiring students use the standardized, intuitive assignment name in all message subject lines when asking about a specific assignment on the discussion board or in email. Implementation: When students do not use the standardized, intuitive assignment name when asking about a specific assignment, begin your reply with "I assume you are asking about [insert name here]" or ask the student to confirm assignment by standardized name.</p>

<p>6. Students can't find information that you posted about specific assignments.</p>	<p>Option: Use a dedicated INSTRUCTOR-only message board for any, all, and only your messages to the class. 6</p>	<p>Implementation 1: Begin every message subject line on your dedicated discussion board with the standardized assignment name (such month number_due date, 11_07) or, if not an assignment, three or four words to specifying the message subject Implementation 2: Include a syllabus policy that you will use YOUR instructor message board for important communications about assignments. The policy should identify your other primary communication methods such as instructor answers on Q/C board and instructor homepage reminders – do NOT use email. Implementation 3: REMOVE any student message posted to instructor board immediately, quietly and discretely; assume the student will repost correctly if it is important. Implementation 4: Include a syllabus policy that students are responsible for reading All instructor messages posted on the homepage, instructor message board, the Q/C board and in email.</p>
<p>7. Students confused about assignment(s) extended or revised due dates.</p>	<p>Option: KEEP the original assignment name followed by the extension date whenever referring to the assignment. 7</p>	<p>Implementation 1: Refer to the assignment only by original month number_due date followed by the extended time period or due date. Example: 10_4 (submit until Nov 6 without late penalty). Implementation 2: Announce the extension on the homepage beginning with the original assignment (e.g., 10_4) Implementation 3: NEVER change the original due date – JUST extend with parenthetical notice.</p>
<p>8. Students arbitrarily name files so that it is impossible to identify assignment or student without opening the file.</p>	<p>Option: Use a file-naming protocol which intuitively names the file with the assignment and student. 8</p>	<p>Implementation 1: Publish assignment instructions or syllabus policy which specifies a credit penalty if file-naming protocol not followed. Implementation 2: Include a syllabus policy that requires all assignment files begin with a seven character code, the month_due date and the student's last and first initials (or first two letters of last name for students with same initials in same class). Example: 10_04sk</p>

10. Students want individual feedback on assignments but it takes forever to write comments to everyone in the class.	Option: Audio feedback. 10	Implementation 1: Convert student assignments to one pdf file with all or one for each assignment and add audio feedback. Implementation 2: Reply to email questions about grades with audio message.
11. You reply to a student message only to receive more questions about the same issue.	Option: Use telephone for communications after any initial email miscommunications. 11	Implementation 1: Reply to any 2nd email about the SAME issue from the same student with “Help me help you by calling me” or “lets switch to synchronous listening and speaking instead of asynchronous writing and reading.”