

Course Management and Preparation Topics

CONSIDERATIONS FOR COURSES WITH DISCUSSION SECTIONS

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE TEACHING TEAM

- How often will you meet with the professor? Are there topics that are important to you to cover during these meetings?
- How will you communicate to the faculty about section? Will you e-mail a brief synopsis after each section or discuss at a staff meeting? What about students who are raising concerns—are there some situations that warrant immediate communication while others can wait? If so, try to give examples of each.
- What is the role of the staff assistant in the course? What types of tasks are reasonable to requests of the staff assistant (e.g., returning papers, copying, etc.)? How much lead time is sufficient?
- When is it appropriate for you to interject during lecture? Try to think of an example that is appropriate and one that is inappropriate.

YOUR AVAILABILITY TO STUDENTS

- How will you set up office hours? For example, will you set specific hours, or make them “by appointment”? How will you handle requests for students meeting outside of normal office hours? What are your boundaries around these requests? For example, how much advance notice do you need? How often are you willing to meet with the same student? Are you willing to meet in the evening and/or early mornings? What types of advanced planning on the part of the student would best enable you to assist him or her during office hours?
- What are the time limits for requesting help before an assignment is due? What type of assistance are you willing to give? For example, will you read drafts of papers, or only outlines?

YOUR SECTION

- Who will lead/facilitate section? Will it always be the TF, or a rotating group of students? Will the professor ever visit and/or lead section?
- Will you provide feedback on participation? If so, what will be your criteria and how will you communicate performance to students? How will you work with problematic students (e.g., dominating discussion, inappropriate comments, gratuitously unprepared)?
- Will you take attendance in class and section? What are your expectations for section attendance? Will you let students know if they are not meeting those expectations? How?

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- How will you handle grading as a team? Will you grade all assignments, or share with the faculty? How will you ensure that you share consistent grading standards?