

U.S. Academic Culture



International Orientation 2018

U.S. Classroom Culture

- Entering the Classroom
- Finding Class Information
- Assignment Expectations
- Negotiating Grades
- Teacher vs. Learner-Centered Classrooms
- Emailing Your Professor



Situation 1

- You are 20 minutes late for a lecture. When you arrive, you can see from the door that the lecture has already started. What would be the best thing to do?



Situation 1: Entering a Classroom

- a.** Knock on the door, enter and say, “hello.”
- b.** Go in; walk up to the professor and apologize.
- c.** Wait outside; when class is over, apologize to the professor.
- d.** Knock and wait to be told to enter.
- e.** Enter quietly and take a seat, trying not to be noticed



E: Enter Quietly

- Making an apology or any noise disrupts the flow of the class. Even though these gestures are done with good intentions, they can be considered rude.



Situation 2

- You missed the information for the big assignment due tomorrow. What are the BEST steps to find out the information?



Situation 2: Finding Class Information

- a.** Email your professor. If they don't respond, don't do the assignment.
- b.** Check the syllabus; check Blackboard; check with a classmate; finally, email the professor
- c.** Ask a classmate; email the professor



B: Use Tools Provided

- Always use the tools provided before asking your professor, especially the syllabus and Blackboard



Situation 3

- You need to ask for an extension to your assignment due date because you have not finished an important essay for another class. What would you be most likely to do?



Situation 3: Assignment Extension

- a.** Hire someone to write your paper for you.
- b.** Say you're sick then take the extra time to complete all your work.
- c.** Prove that you had too many assignments due at the same time by making a chart that compares the amount of work with the hours in a day.
- d.** Reflect on your situation: why haven't you been able to meet your deadlines? Email your professor before the due date explaining your problem. Seek out and ask for help managing your time.



D: Reflect, Reach Out

- **Communicate with your professor when you're having trouble**
- **Reflect on your situation and recognize areas where you need help**
- **Reach out and ask for help (UASP, Let's Chat).**



Situation 4

- You worked hard on an assignment and were eager to see the good marks from your professor. However, when it was returned to you, your grade was a C- with critical feedback from your professor.



Situation 4: Discussing a Low Grade

- a.** Accept that the professor doesn't like you, and disregard the comments.
- b.** Reflect on the comments; review the materials; ask in your study group until you understand.
- c.** After class, ask the professor why they gave you a C-.
- d.** Reflect on the comments then meet with your professor to discuss how you might improve.



B and D are Acceptable

- Reflecting before acting gives you time to gain a more objective view.
- Focusing on what your professor wants you to understand relieves hurt feelings and helps academic success.
- Study partners are important.
- Going to the tutoring center is a sign of responsibility.
- Professors are available, but be respectful of their time.



teacher-centered classroom

learner-centered classroom

lecture

lecture

class discussion

group discussion

direct learning process
source of knowledge

present content

facilitate dialogue

demonstrate analytical skills

listen to lectures

take notes

read assigned texts

memorize content

listen, take notes, read

think critically about content

express perspectives

demonstrate understanding

who directs learning

instructor

**instructor
student**

supplemental only

integral to learning
instructor-guided

top down

instructor > student

cooperative

participatory

interactive

written exams

oral exams

exams

essays

presentations

discussions

quizzes

group projects

peer evaluations

who conducts evaluations

instructors evaluate students

instructors evaluate students

students evaluate instructors

classmates evaluate each other



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source: 2009 nafsa

memorize texts

absorb knowledge

gain knowledge

apply concepts to new skills

use critical analysis skills

Emailing Your Professor: Etiquette

- Address professor by name
- State your full name
- State the class and time (ex. Eng 470 T/R 1:30-2:45)
- State specific request
- List availability options (including office hours)
- Thank them for their time and consideration

Stay Connected

- Read the Syllabus
- Arrive On Time
- Maintain Good Attendance
- Take Good Notes (Record Lectures)
- Check Blackboard Often
- Attend Study Groups
- Attend UASP (Tutoring)
- Visit Professors During Office Hours
- Email Professors, if Needed



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