Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology

Expectations for online courses

(updated 1-4-17)

Grading & Feedback:

While the grading for any one assignment may vary, as a general rule, assignments **should be graded BEFORE the next similar assignment is due**. For example, test 1 should be returned before test two, journal entry 1 before journal entry 2 is due, etc.). If you are not able to return an assignment within two weeks for a full term course or one week for a half semester course, please consider restructuring the course requirements.   Feedback is not required for all students on all assignments, but **if students need to improve on future assignments, they should receive written feedback** in time for them to make adjustments to a future assignment.

Syllabus & Documents:

All courses should follow the **CAS syllabus checklist**. This includes providing dates on a course calendar, and a grading scale among other requirements. Documents should be proof-read for type-os or outdated information. In online courses especially, dates/deadlines can be an easy one to miss when one is using the same blackboard course shell, so always double check that the dates change with each new semester.

Responsiveness & Communication:

Students in online courses have more limited means of communicating with instructors making responsiveness to emails, texts, or phone calls more critical than in a regular class. Online office hours are not required because students do not typically use them; however, in lieu of this requirement, instructors must respond to student inquiries in a timely manner. Online instructors should **give students at least two reliable contact methods**. These ways could include blackboard discussion board, phone call, email, skype, facetime, in-person office hours, or text. Let students know which of your chosen methods you prefer (for example, if your email is too cluttered, tell them not to email you but give them a good phone number and ask them to post general questions to the discussion board). Instructors are encouraged to set boundaries (not be constantly available), but should also let students know when to expect a response. A 24-hour response time is recommended while **a maximum response time for a full semester class should be 3 business days, 48 hours for a half semester class**. The semester extends from the first day of class through graduation.