Coordinating Teaching Teams: Questions to Discuss

The purpose of this resource is to help faculty and GEs who are working together on a course to establish explicit expectations about how they’ll work together logistically and pedagogically. GEs can share this document or pose these questions with the faculty they support; faculty can use these questions as a guide when first communicating with GEs supporting their course.

# 1. Planning and Coordination

**Goal: Students experience the course as a unified learning experience.**

* How will we meet as a teaching team and how often? [e.g. on Zoom once per week]
* What will be the purpose of these meetings? [e.g. check in about trends in student understanding and motivation, brainstorm teaching strategies, norm our grading, etc.]
* Who will be in charge of what areas of Canvas?

# 2. Purview and Communications

**Goal: The team has a clear communication plan for the course** that favors streamlined and “high value” contacts (contacts that reflect on specific contributions, are personalized, and drive student curiosity and connection).

* If a student has a question or concern, who should be the first point of contact – their GE, the instructor, either/or?
* Which particular questions, concerns, topics, etc. should GEs address, and which should go to the instructor?
* In which cases, and when, should GEs inform the instructor about a concern or issue that has emerged with a student?
* What is our preferred way to communicate with each other? [e.g. email, text, etc.]
* What is the preferred way we should communicate with students? [e.g. Canvas, email, etc.]
* What is a reasonable timeframe to expect responses from each other?
* How should GEs communicate concerns or questions about teaching challenges, work hours, etc.?

# 3. Course Curriculum and Pedagogy

**Goal: Teaching across all aspects of the course aligns and supports students' work** toward course learning objectives.

* What are the key learning goals of this course?
* Where or how might modular learning objectives (for particular classes or units) be communicated?
* Which content is likely to be most challenging for students?
* What are the main pedagogical approaches to teaching in this course, and are there specific approaches expected for section/lab?
* What should be the primary focus of section or lab? [e.g. discuss readings or lecture, review or clarify content, introduce new content, develop specific skills, etc.]
* Should sections/labs use the same outlines and be more or less uniformly consistent in format, or can GEs plan their own lessons and formats?

# 4. Course Grading and Feedback

**Goal: Assessment in the courses is explicitly linked to course objectives**; students understand

how they’ll be graded the criteria for successful work before they begin assignments, experience consistency across members of the team, and have a chance to practice before any high-stakes assessments.

* What are the grading criteria for assignments, projects, exams, etc.?
* Who will develop grading criteria – instructor, GEs, both together?
* How will grading criteria be communicated to students? [e.g. rubrics]
* What is the expected turnaround time for grading assignments, projects, exams, etc.?
* What kinds of feedback should be given? [e.g. corrections, pointers, proofreading, etc.]
* What will be the mode for feedback? [e.g. comments in Canvas]
* Will grades be hidden until all assignments, projects, exams, etc. are graded?
* Who will manage the gradebook in Canvas?

# 5. UO Policies, Course Policies, and Course Contingencies

**Goal: The teaching team is unified in understanding and clearly communicating UO policies** and the structure and flexibility they allow, and the team has a plan for implementing them consistently.

* Who is primarily responsible for enforcing course policies?
* Are there certain policies that GEs should enforce, and certain policies that the instructor should enforce?
* What [instructional UO policies](https://provost.uoregon.edu/academic-policies-procedures-and-guidance#instructional-policies) might be relevant to review as a teaching team (as they are newer or may come up more frequently with students)? [for example, [AEC Accommodations policy and Guidance](https://provost.uoregon.edu/accessible-education-center-aec-accommodations-policy-and-guidance), the [Course Attendance and Engagement Policy](https://provost.uoregon.edu/course-attendance-and-engagement-policy), or changes to Academic Conduct Procedures]
* What kind of discretion or latitude do we have when it comes to policies, and how will ensure consistency in what we do?
* How will we handle extensions/special circumstances, etc.?
* Should or can sections/labs have their own “mini syllabus” with special polices, expectations, or ground rules that supplement the main course?
* What are our expectations for dealing with our own emergency contingencies/illnesses, if they occur?