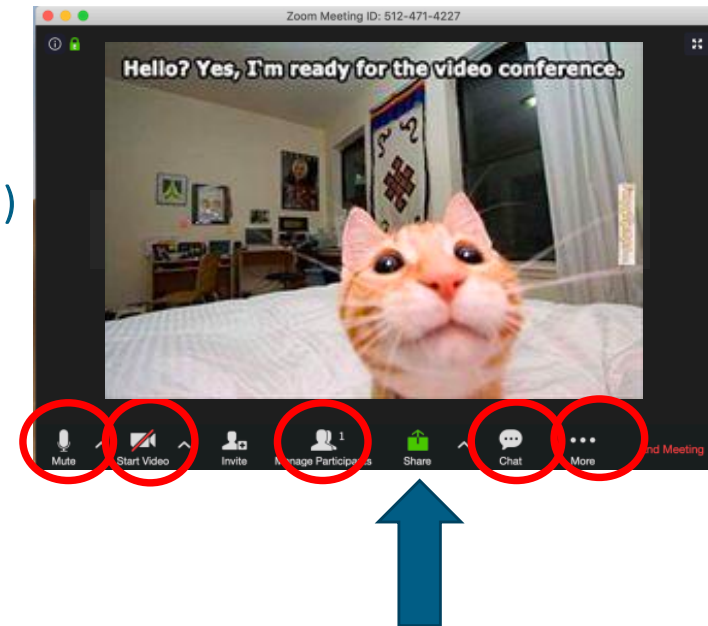# Effective Course Coordination

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– Equity — Access — Excellence –

Dana Center
Mathematics
PATHWAYS

Tech Norms for Virtual Collaborative Work

- Mute audio line when not talking.

- Click "Participants" if you want to:
    - Rename your image (Hover over your name and click Rename.)
    - Raise your hand, etc.

- Use the "chat" feature when you have additional remarks to add but the conversation has moved on

- Speak clearly

- Join a breakout room when you are invited to it.

- When possible:
    - Select "start video" (especially when in breakout groups)
    - Minimize background distractions.

Zoom Meeting ID: 512-471-4227

Hello? Yes, I'm ready for the video conference.

Mute   Start Video   Invite   Manage Participants   Share   Chat   More

Group Norms

Make equity central.

Focus on fulfilling our charge.

Understand that those who work, learn.

Seek clarification in language and ideas.

Look for solutions, not blame.

Focus on systems, not people.

Recognize that everyone has expertise.

Be honest.

Share talk time.

Webinar Outcomes

Participants will . . .

Assess the role of the campus coordinator.

Learn from a case study: Weatherford College.

Plan specific action steps, including:

❑ Starting from an equity lens

❑ Planning now for continuous improvement

Chat: Course Coordinator

What is the role of the course coordinator?

What is the purpose of course coordination?

Why did your department/institution implement coordinators?

Student Retention

"[C]onsistent findings across all four studies strongly suggest that student characteristics are major contributors to attrition. At the risk of over-simplification, if students were better prepared academically, if students had better study skills, if students were more decisive in choosing a program of study and a career, if students were more committed to earning a degree, and if students had sufficient financial resources, there would be little concern about student attrition…"

- Habley, W. R., Bloom, J. L., & Robbins, S. B. (2012). Increasing persistence: Research-based strategies for college student success. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Student Retention

"It is disturbing to note that in spite of all we know about student retention that institutions are still inclined to hold students responsible for their retention/attrition while dramatically minimizing the institutional role in student retention." Placing blame provides for convenient excuses and stymies finding solutions!

- Personal communication from John Gardner in Habley, W. R., Bloom, J. L., & Robbins, S. B. (2012). Increasing persistence: Research-based strategies for college student success. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cognitive Frames

Deficit Cognitive Frame

- Inequality is attributed to cultural stereotypes, cultural deficits, inadequate socialization, or lack of student motivation and self-initiative
- Inequality is attributed to external causes beyond the control of practitioners.

Equity Cognitive Frame

- Inequality is viewed as unnatural and as a problem of institutional accountability
- Inequality is viewed as a product of unconscious racism in practices and beliefs
- Inequality is viewed as solvable by practitioners

Bensimon (2006)

"[B]y categorizing (and stereotyping) people…we place an undue burden on individuals to adapt themselves in all their wonderful diversity to inflexible learning environments. We should instead be expecting more of our learning environments. Chief among these expectations is that our learning environments be designed with a deep understanding and appreciation for individual variability."

Meyer, Rose, & Gordon (2014)

Why is course coordination important?

Traditionally, the primary role of a course coordinator is to maintain quality and consistency of instruction in multiple-section courses.

- Ensure that students are being given a consistent experience across sections.

- Confirm that expectations for mastery are clearly defined and consistently applied across sections of a course.

- Check consistency of grading of common assessments, if they exist.

- Ensure consistency of implementation of department policies regarding testing, calculator use, active and collaborative learning, non-cognitive skills, etc.

- Participate in ongoing continuous improvement of courses.

Why is course coordination important?

Now that we are offering courses primarily in a virtual format there are additional reasons that course coordination is crucial:

- Ensure consistent application of alternate grading schemes.

- Support faculty in making sure that the resources offered to students in the support courses continue to meet the standards of the designated model, regardless of virtual format.

- Support faculty in fostering a sense of community and belonging for students in a virtual synchronous or asynchronous setting.

- Support faculty in incorporating active and collaborative learning strategies and other impactful pedagogical strategies, in a virtual synchronous or asynchronous setting.

Case Study: Weatherford College

Course Coordination Planning: Initial Stage

- Take the opportunity to consider departmental, discipline-specific, and institutional goals.

- Share syllabuses (preferably in advance of initial meeting).

- Decide whether common assignments will be required (align objectives).

- Integrate assessment to consider while aligning.

- Review past student success rates to target areas of concern.

- Determine specific curricular responsibilities between disciplines.

ACTIVITY: What is the mission statement for the disciplines and courses (SLOs will work in lieu of these, but Departmental goals need to be considered in addition to state requirements)? Summarize, compare, and share these. Look for the common terms and goals, as well as the differences, between institutions.

Course Coordination Planning: Assessment

Personal Responsibility is sometimes difficult to assess; so, it was selected as the non-cognitive area on which to focus.

- DIRW courses chose to assess primarily through attendance (quantitative, objective)

- ENGL courses considered 1)attendance 2)class contributions 3)student self-identification of areas causing confusing, student propensity to contact instructor and demonstrate dedication to improvement (holistic)

Course Coordination Planning: Advice

- Target interested and knowledgeable faculty.

- Share materials early and often.

- Consider polling faculty on potential concerns in advance of the meeting.

- Be honest; consider resources and culture.

- Meet as Chairs/Directors infrequently (especially in the development stages); faculty-driven.

Course Coordination Evaluating

- Consider Discussion Groups: more informal opportunity to share experiences and concerns.

- Review student success rates, student surveys, and reflections.

  - **DIRW students asked to rank their levels of confidence and understanding**

  - **ENGL courses: targeted questions related to critical reading at the start of the term compared with results at the end of the term.**

    - How often do you read for pleasure? Do you feel that you understand and remember most of what you read?/Think back on your comments from the beginning of the semester regarding your ability to understand and remember what you read? Have our practices in annotations improved your reading skills? If so, how? If not, then what do you think would help?

Breakout 1: Evaluation

- Quick introductions

- Assign a reporter and a timekeeper

- Remember the timekeeper also ensures that everyone gets a chance to speak.

What method of student self-assessment have you found to be the most valuable and/or inventive? How were you able to apply that feedback into course planning?

10 min

Shareout 1: Evaluation

- Reporters please share one idea from your group:

What method of student self-assessment have you found to be the most valuable and/or inventive? How were you able to apply that feedback into course planning?

Other participants:

- If there are any important ideas that haven't yet been mentioned, please type them in the chat box.

10 min

Course Coordination Reflecting

- Review initial goals and consider where to expand, improve, and/or adjust.

- Use tools to enhance and expand the response to initial goals.

  - Apply across disciplines.

    - Enhancing the use of student self-reflection throughout multiple Humanities courses.

- Begin the cycle again.

- Expand institutional reach to contribute to the academic community.

DCMP Philosophy of Professional Learning Design

Faculty want development that is continuous, builds collegiality, creates groups of faculty who observe and discuss teaching regularly, honors internal expertise, and is collaborative.

(Grubb, Worthen, & Bird, 1999)

Professionals are most likely to develop new skills and change current practice when they:

- Actively engage with colleagues and with the content.
- Practice and reflect on new learning.
- Engage in structured learning activities over a period of time.

The University of Texas at Austin
Charles A. Dana Center

" The question that remains for us is this: how do we move from science and theory to practice? …[We must] place our social natures as human beings front and center in the learning process."

—Eyler 2018

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Our goal is departmental engagement

- Shared learnings with colleagues
- Implement practices
- Create a framework of continuous improvement
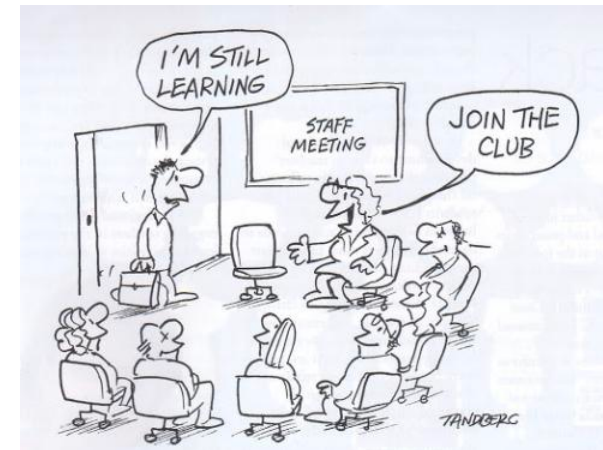
Components of Course Coordination: Policies

The role of the course coordinator (CC) in ensuring policies are implemented consistently across sections can look like the following:

- Provide a syllabus template with section-wide policies already described.

- Review course syllabi prior to the start of the semester.

- Provide several sample syllabi and calendars for faculty to use as a model.

- Select the course materials (textbook, online tools, etc.) that will be used in all sections.

- Recommend course and supplemental materials to instructors teaching the course.

Universal Design for Learning and Equity-Mindedness

"Multiple means of representation" also refers to how we present ourselves and the discipline to students:

- Ensure that minoritized students see themselves in syllabi, assignments, and other instructional materials (texts, ideas, special projects, etc.).

- Make race visible in syllabi including texts, videos, and other teaching artifacts authored by racially minoritized scholars, authors, and cultural critics.

- Create a learning plan to become familiar with minoritized writers, poets, sociologists, political scientists, philosophers, scientists, mathematicians, artists, and musicians.

Universal Design for Learning, Equity-Mindedness, and the Course Syllabus

"For racially or ethnically minoritized students who have experienced exclusion, marginalization, discrimination, and oppression in educational settings and elsewhere, the syllabus is a tool that faculty can use intentionally to demystify **the implicit norms and ambiguous processes** that need to be learned to navigate college successfully."

McNair, Bensimon, & Malcolm-Piqueux (2020)

Universal Design for Learning, Equity-Mindedness, and the Course Syllabus

Sample Syllabus

Welcome to Statistics with support I believe we all have the capacity to do college-level statistics and that we can tap into that capacity as a family of teachers and learners who are responsible for each other's success in this class. As your teacher and a fellow learner, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you to demystify math and to be part of your journey toward achieving your educational goals. Together, through our good hard work and sustained effort, we can all be successful and reap the rewards of education's promise.

Sample Syllabus

Attendance

In this class we function as a team – teaching and learning together in small groups that are frequently reorganized during each class period. Consequently, throughout the semester you'll become increasingly vested in the success or failure of your classmates and vice versa. As a result, when you arrive to class late or return after an absence, your group mates will try to "catch you up" rather than moving forward with the lesson, and the entire group will fall behind. So your on-time presence in each and every class matters. Your deep and committed engagement in teaching and learning matters.

Ensuring Support: Aligned Course Calendar

Introduction to Statistics and Co-requisite Support Course Sample Timeline
Adapted from and with thanks to Roane State Community College

Day	Co-requisite Notebook Topics	On-line Lab	*Essentials of Statistics* Triola 5th ed.		MyLabsPlus Assignment
1	Orientation, study habits, time mgmt.; converting between fractions, decimals, percentages; finding a percentage of a number	1	1.1 – 1.2	Orientation; introduction to statistical terms and statistical thinking	1
2	Rounding; estimating; calculating means,	2	1.3 – 1.4	Types of data; collecting sample data	2
3	Decimals, ratios, percent, conversions	3	2.2 – 2.3	Frequency distributions; histograms	3
4	Applications of percent, squares, square roots; order of operations	4	2.4	Graphs that enlighten and graphs that deceive	4
5	Operations on real numbers	5	3.2	Measures of center	5
6	Review of types of data, sampling methods, types of graphs	6	3.3 – 3.4	Measures of variation; measures of relative standing and boxplots	6
7	Review of measures of center and variation	7	Practice Test 1		
8	Comprehensive review of chapters 1 – 3 & basic skills	8	**Test 1**		

Components of Course Coordination: Policies

The role of the course coordinator (CC) in ensuring policies are implemented consistently across sections can look like the following:

- Homework assignments

- In-class activities

- Common LMS shell

Components of Course Coordination: Preparation

The role of the course coordinator (CC) in ensuring faculty preparation across sections can look like the following:

- Pre-semester meetings

- Weekly or monthly meetings

- Pair mentor instructors

- Faculty peer observations

- Departmental observations

- Learning Communities

- Workshops

Components of Course Coordination: Assessments

The role of the course coordinator (CC) in ensuring consistent assessment strategies are implemented across sections can look like the following:

- Write common exams, projects, group assignments, etc. that will be used by all faculty teaching the course.

- Write exam templates, project guidelines, group activity suggestions, etc. that will be used by all faculty teaching the course.

- Review the exams, projects, and group activities written by faculty teaching the course prior to their administration.

- Schedule common grading sessions for any common assessments for all faculty teaching the course.

Breakout 2: Collaborative Planning

- Quick introductions

- Assign a reporter and a timekeeper

- Remember the timekeeper also ensures that everyone gets a chance to speak.

What action steps arise from today's discussion?

Share-out 1: Evaluation

- Reporters please share one idea from your group:

What action steps arise from today's discussion?

Other participants:

- If there are any important ideas that haven't yet been mentioned, please type them in the chat box.

10 min

Selected Citations and Additional Reading

- Bensimon, E. (2006). Learning equity-mindedness: Equality in educational outcomes. The Academic Workplace, 1(17), 2-21.

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- Peralta Community College District. (2019). *Peralta Online Equity Rubric* v.2.0, https://web.peralta.edu/de/equity-initiative/equity/

- Universal Design for Learning:

  - Universal Design for Learning: Theory & Practice -- http://udltheorypractice.cast.org

  - CAST Science Writer -- http://sciencewriter.cast.org

  - CAST UDL Editions -- http://udleditions.cast.org/

  - iSolveIt math puzzles -- http://isolveit.cast.org

  - UDL Curriculum Toolkit -- http://udl-toolkit.cast.org

  - UDL Book Builder -- http://bookbuilder.cast.org

  - UDL Curriculum Self-Check -- http://udlselfcheck.cast.org

  - UDL Exchange -- http://udlexchange.cast.org

  - UDL Journal -- http://udljournal.cast.org

  - UDL Studio -- http://udlstudio.cast.org

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