Communication Plan

Relevance: Why do faculty need to worry about this topic when switching to physically distanced, hybrid, or remote teaching?

Our students complained about our communication plan in spring. While they were generally positive about instruction generally, several students noted that faculty members all used different methods of communication (Blackboard, email, Google Docs, etc.), and it was difficult for them to keep track of their assignments and Zoom links. Students are also juggling a lot right now, both practically and emotionally, and they will do better overall if we can reduce the number of things they need to keep track of.

In the fall, we will at least start off with in-person teaching, so it’s possible that we don’t need a detailed communications plan if and until we have to go remote. On the other hand, some students may go remote even if the course is still primarily in-person, so that students will face additional challenges that clear communication will help address. And if we do end up going fully remote, it will be a tumultuous transition, so the more we can continue patterns that we have set early in the semester, the better.

Recommended Approach:

The faculty pedagogy advisory group recommends that faculty post a Blackboard announcement every Friday that includes the following information about class the next week: (i) topic, (ii) class times, (iii) reading and other assignments, and (iv) Zoom links. If class is at the same time each week, you don’t need to include this information.

It might look something like this:

Hi everyone -- Here is the plan for our Business Associations class next week:

**Topic:** Shareholder Voting

**Class Times:** We will meet online on Monday at 10 a.m., and we will be in-person on Wednesday at 10 a.m. in Room 102. Anyone who would like to participate remotely on Wednesday can join the class over Zoom (see link below).

**Reading Assignments:** We will read assignment #13 for Monday and assignment #14 for Wednesday. Both assignments are listed in the syllabus.

**Other Assignments:** You should complete the Blackboard assignments by 8 a.m. Monday’s assignment is a set of three multiple choice questions. Wednesday’s assignment requires you to upload a brief video of yourself giving advice to a hypothetical client.

**Zoom Link for both Classes:** Insert link here.