

The Relationship between Seminar Instructors and Course Participants

Graduate classes and seminars offer an opportunity for constructive interaction between graduate students and instructors (faculty). We view graduate coursework as a valuable occasion for a mutual exchange and learning.

Goals:

- Free expression of ideas
- Mutual dialogue regarding course expectations and objectives
- Equal opportunity for learning
- Responsible behavior toward completing course objectives
- Objective evaluation of performance

Norms:

- Instructors should:
 - discuss the objectives and expectations they have regarding the course
 - provide a course syllabus at the start of the semester
 - clearly specify all course assignments
 - provide reading assignments at least a week before they are due
 - hold class sessions at their normally scheduled times
 - develop specific goals for each class
 - be prepared to lead discussions
 - return assignments in a timely manner that enables students to take advantage of feedback during the remainder of the course
 - return final assignments before the beginning of the next semester
 - make themselves available outside of the classroom for help and assistance
 - provide all advisees with the same opportunity to learn -- additional materials or Assistance provided to some should not be denied to others
 - provide and be willing to receive explicit and constructive feedback
- Advisees should:
 - discuss the objectives and expectations they have regarding the course
 - attend and be prepared to contribute to all class discussions
 - complete all assignments on time
 - take responsibility for seeking additional help when needed
 - provide and be willing to receive explicit and constructive feedback

Situations that May Signal a Problem:

- Participants being personally attacked for the expression of their ideas
- Participants engaging in behaviors (e.g., yelling, belittling, intimidating, etc.) that discourage others from participating in discussions
- Participants taking advantage of personal relationships to unfairly influence course related outcomes
- Instructors requiring students to make-up canceled class sessions outside of the normally scheduled time period