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