Dos and Don’ts of Teaching Online
Don’t

• ...Wait until the last minute to set up your shell. Why?
  • Dates incorrect
  • Material out-of-date
  • Material out-of-order
  • No time for creativity
  • No time to upload videos
  • **POLL:** Do you wait until the last minute?
  • **What happens when you wait until the last minute?**
Don’t...

Let them see you SWEAT!
Technology can be Challenging!

- Don’t...Underestimate the time it takes to prepare.
- Don’t...Publish the wrong video or lesson, i.e. chapter 5 is in chapter 3.
- Don’t...Publish the wrong syllabus or out-of-date syllabus.
- Don’t...Forget to check links. Make sure they are working.
- Don’t...Wait until the day of class to determine that your computer is not compatible with the LMS.
- Don’t...Overload the course with too much technology.
- Don’t...Let the students know you don’t have it together. If they think you don’t, then why should they?
Don’t Assume!

- Don’t...Assume students are prepared to take an online class.
- Don’t...Assume students understand the expectations of learning online.
- Don’t...Assume students know how to operate a computer.
- Don’t...Assume students will communicate with you when there is a problem.

- **Poll:** Do you assume that students are prepared for online learning?
- **Can you think of any other “assumptions”?”**
Don’t Get Too Comfortable!

• Don’t...Try to be their friend. Keep the communication a student-teacher relationship.

• Don’t...Tell them too much about your personal life. Yes, you want to establish a friendly relationship, but be careful sharing too much.

• Avoid using profanity or any other offensive language. Stay professional. What you write is permanent and evidence.

• Avoid getting into back and forth email debates with a student, i.e. a grade, late work, unfair grading or assignments. For this reason, make sure your syllabus is clear. Use a grading rubric for all assignments.
Dos
Smile!

• Did you know that you can SMILE and be excited and exciting in an online class?

• The WELCOME ANNOUNCEMENT is one of the most important first steps to take and give with a smile.

• How you present yourself to students with comments, announcements, feedback, discussions, and all written communication indicates if you are enjoying the class and are excited to teach it. Attitude is represented in what you WRITE!

• Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
Dos
Be Prepared!

• Be prepared ahead of time. Although instructors are tempted to work on a shell week by week, it is always best to have the entire shell ready to go, i.e. dates set, lesson plans, videos, etc. Changes can always be made along the way. This could save your life. If you are ill or have a professional or personal emergency, you will not have to worry that assignments, announcements, and the like are being released on time.
Dos
Be Prepared!

Put forth maximum effort in all you do. It is tempting to be relaxed because students cannot see your face or raise their hands to ask a question at a specific given time. Students recognize quality, exciting, meaningful work as soon as they login. If the online classroom is in order, looks appealing, exciting and inviting, then the expectations of the class will reflect your maximum effort you put into it.

• **Opposite:** If students see misspelled words, out-of-date material, incorrect dates, the wrong syllabus, or in some cases, nothing at all, then their expectations of themselves will be the same.

• **Poll:** Agree or disagree with this statement?
Dos
Show Up to Class!

- The first two weeks of teaching online, especially the first day of class, is crucial to establishing retention. If students do not see the instructor, they may think the class is too hard because they are on their own. Remember, your class is a DE course, not a Correspondence course.

- Every day for the first two weeks write encouraging messages via email or in the announcements. Email personal messages to each student. It can be one line. The strategy is to see instructor involvement and to build student confidence. 😊 Take off the shades and be VISIBLE!

- If there is no connection immediately established by the instructor with the student, the likelihood of that student being successful or staying in the class is slim.
Dos
Give Lots of Feedback!

- Feedback can help students make improvements over the weeks. Without it, they will continue to repeat the same mistakes, get discouraged, quit, or fail the class. Here’s an example for discussion assignments.

- You started off with a strong discussion, however, to make improvements:

  1. Provide resources to validate all of your posts.
  2. Give examples that demonstrate your understanding of the material.
  3. Avoid cutting and pasting too many direct quotes. Instead, summarize the information in your own words.
  4. Respond to peer discussions using factual information, not just opinion.
Dos

You must....

• Have weekly lectures. Distance Education is not a self-taught form of education. Therefore, lectures must be included for every chapter you cover in class.

• Have weekly assignments, i.e. discussions, quizzes, activities, and so forth. There should NEVER be a week where the student has nothing to post. Reading chapters is not sufficient. There MUST be weekly activity going on in the classroom.

• Have sufficient information where the student is not just reading a lecture or a chapter. Help the student learn by providing study guides, Powerpoints, and videos, etc.

• Poll: Do you do all of the “You Must...” in your classroom?

• What else do you do in the classroom?
Dos
Give Lots of Feedback!

- Rubric:
  - Content/information 1.5/2
  - Resources/APA format/Grammar .5/1
  - Response to Peers 1/2
  - Total points: 3.0/5

- For written assignments, use the “comment” box to insert specific feedback comments.
Dos

Give Timely Feedback!

• Give students a chance to make improvement by giving them timely feedback. Try to pick a day of the week to grade assignments and discussions. It’s like going to class on specific days.
**Dos**

- Check the “activity meter” every day for the first two weeks of class and email non-participating students.

- Check the “activity meter” once a week, thereafter, for non-participating students.

- Practice sending a weekly message. The start of the week is the best time to send a “Welcome to Week 2” announcement.

- Send reminders via announcements/emails, i.e. read the syllabus, do assignments, take quizzes, complete discussions, watch video, etc.
• Keep track of students who never show up in class or never participate. Send out an email warning them they will be dropped from the class. Let them know they will not be reinstated.

• Encourage students to get started, but if the instructor has not heard from them, they must be dropped so that there will not be an abundance of fails at the end of the course.

• Communicate with them first, then take action.
Dos

Make the Class Exciting, Inviting and Visual

• Do all you can to make your class exciting.
  • Make discussions relevant to everyday life.
  • Make discussions relevant to current happenings of the world.
Dos

Make the Class Exciting, Inviting and Visual

• Do all you can to make your class inviting.
• Use color and graphics.
• Use photos
• Challenge the students with fun questions.
• Take a poll. “How many of you had a great weekend”? 
Dos

Make the Class Exciting, Inviting and Visual

• Make the class visual.

• Make self videos, even if it is a message to say hello and keep working hard.

• Include weekly videos relevant to your weekly topics.

• Use clipart relevant to your subject topics each week.

• Make your home page visual and inviting.

• Your module should be full of study guides, tips on learning, lectures.
Dos
Practice What You’ve Learned!

• The End!

• Thank you so much for taking the time to become a better online instructor.

• Poll: Was any of this helpful to make improvements in your classroom? Email me and let me know. Also, be sure to fill out all surveys coming your way to help LASC improve its Distance Education program.
Have a wonderful Day!

Be sure to visit the DE Webpage (under LASC Online) to find:
- Documents
- Webinars/Workshops
- Faculty Checklists
- Student Information
- Contact Information