

Online Teaching & Learning Collaborative (O-TLC)

Online Classroom Management Strategies

Keeping Organized in the Online Environment

One of the most important things to consider when teaching in an online environment is the overall management of the course. Having a plan in place ahead of time can help keep students on task and help to create an enriching and collaborative learning experience.



Weekly Class Plan – Jonathan Kipp (GSC Faculty)

The weekly class plan (WCP) is simple in design yet chock full of features. It allows instructors to note information about each student, instructor-student interactions, and student participation and performance each week. Annotated and blank templates are provided below, and there is an accompanying video. Trust me when I say that the WCP takes longer to explain than it does to use!

General:

The template at the end of this document demonstrates the framework for the WCP. Each instructor is encouraged to modify it to fit their specific needs, and to develop their own shorthand for recording student and instructor activity. Use a separate sheet each week (or each Moodle module). The information in the Name and 1:1 column remains week-to-week. The remaining columns start fresh each succeeding week. So, at the end of a 12-week course there would be 12 Weekly Class Plans.

The capabilities of the system are maximized when the instructor logs in frequently (daily recommended) to track and note student activity. The system would become an unnecessary exercise in paperwork if the information was entered at the end of the week (or assignment period).

Refer to the key on the template for each of the following columns:

Column 1 – Name. Note each student’s preferred name (for use when communicating with them), their past and present degree program(s), and their interests, plans, and aspirations.

Column 2 – 1:1. Depending on class size, this column needs an entry for each student within the first two-three weeks of the class. This sets the standard for consistent and frequent communication. Priorities for contact are first-time students (to provide guidance and

resources), and those who show evidence of struggling with myriad challenges, including but not limited to time management and the online environment.

Column 3 – Forum Intro. (Note – this and the columns that follow are updated each week to reflect the appropriate forums/assignments). In this course students are required to make an original and a minimum of two response posts in the discussion forums.

Column 4 – Mgmt. View. See the explanation on the template for information about the assignment. At the end of this exercise students are provided with a graphical summary of the class responses and encouraged to review their position as the class progresses (views change!).

Column 5 – Comments. Available for quality and quantity comments. These serve as the starting point for determining grades.

Annotated Weekly Class Plan Template

Class:
Sept. 22 – 28

MGMT500 Fall 2019

Week 1:

Name	1:1	Forum Intro	Mgmt. View	Comments
R.A. – Young. Has AA in GS. Wants BS. Starting own company.	M	OR	GTD	Exc.
J.L. – AA in Computer Science – didn't like field. Para in school. Wants BS in Bus., then HR.	SM	O	GTD, RRR	Exc.
P.M. – Wants AA in Bus. Not much experience.		O	TOP, RR	Superb.
A.M. – free spirit. BS Bus. Ops Mgt. No firm plans.		OLR	TOP, RRL	Good – grammar.
A.M. – Ops. Mgr. for company 17 years. 1 st online course.	MS	O	TOP, RR	Exc.
B.P. – Mom. School bus driver supervisor. Needs AA in Bus. Mgt. to advance.			GTD	Exc.

Key:

Name – Information excerpted from the student's introduction post.

- Use student's preferred name (Note: names hidden in this sample)
- AA, BS – Student's degree program, with major

- 1st course – Will note first college course, first course at GSC, first online course, or first course in long time (students returning to school)

1:1 – This is the one-on-one forum, which is where I primarily communicate with students.

- M – Post made by me
- S – Post made by student

Forum Intro – This is where students introduce themselves and provide basic information such as preferred name, major, employment, etc.:

- O – Original post made by student
- R – Reply post made by student
- L – Late post by student

MGMT View – This discussion forum asks students where they place the emphasis on this definition of management: Getting Things Done Through Other People.

- GTD – Getting Things Done
- TOP – Through Other People
- R – Reply post made by student

Comments – My notes on the quality of student posts

- Superb – Highest possible
- Exc. – Exceeds expectations
- VG – Meets expectations
- Good – Improvement needed; explanation provided

User Experience Surveys – Nicola Imbrascio (GSC Faculty)

Every semester, I have students take a short survey about the course (the pace, the assignments, etc.) around the 4th week. Last semester (and this semester) I decided to do a more in-depth survey through Google forms. The response has been PHENOMENAL (90% participation) and I'm getting a lot of great feedback in terms of my teaching and the course set up.

Like many of my GSC online teaching colleagues, my student evaluations are often lack luster-- few students participate and those that do get through it as quickly as possible. This early quarter survey allows me to see what's going on, address any issues if I can, and "take the temperature" of the course. Also, because last semester I also tried some new formats for "Discussion Board Wrap Ups" (a narrated PowerPoint AND a video lecture), I wanted to get feedback on those new tools – this allowed me to get feedback right away so I know what to spend time on for the future.

I truly believe that students will be more engaged with their learning when they know that the instructor cares about their experience of the learning process. One of the most common responses to the survey is a student's indicating what is working/ not working for them and then "Thank you for asking!" Our students are dedicated learners and we should see them as a resource to our own teaching practices.

I created this survey in Google docs and included a link in my course asking students to take the survey as part of their assignment that week. The survey is **anonymous**, and I make sure that is clear!

[Click here to see the sample survey provided!](#)



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