

Seminar Expectations

August, 2018

The following expectations should be incorporated into all seminars to promote engagement and support overall student success.

3 Characteristics of Highly Effective Seminars

1. Provide Social Support
2. Make Time for Task Management
3. Focus on Information Exchange

Provide Social Support - Use Your Voice

Our voice, our tone, our excitement and sincerity will drive the spirit of the seminar. Students have to have a reason to want to show up. Monotone, no enthusiasm, will show through and convince our students that nothing important is happening in the seminar. Use your voice to engage them during the seminar. Content will not go far without delivery.

- ✓ The first place to start is to listen to a few of your seminars in the archive. See how you sound.... to you!
- ✓ Social support includes sharing personal experiences and anecdotes, providing emotional support and community-building, all of which are important in building trust and an atmosphere that encourages open communication.
- ✓ Set aside the opening minutes of the event for social engagement, in a sincere interest to promote a learning community.
- ✓ Use student's names in class, not only in welcoming them to seminar and asking questions but as characters in your "story"... use their names in story problems ... they like this form of personalization.
- ✓ Don't read ... talk, we are the experts in our field, we have experience to share; students can read the power point slide and the text ... talk to them from your perspective.
- ✓ Use ice breakers, polls, cartoons, quotes, motivational tips, humor, etc. to build community and engage students on a personal level for a few minutes (5 minutes is all it takes) before jumping into the course content.

Task Management - Stay On Target

Engage students by setting aside time for Task Management for a few minutes (10 minutes as a rule of thumb), which includes responsibility for planning work. This can be accomplished through discussions about upcoming assignments, showing work examples, modeling expectations, sharing templates, talking about the Academic Support Centers at Purdue Global and discussing elements in grading rubrics.

Simply put, we need to know the course inside and out! We need to know the mission, the course objectives of the unit and assignments while being sure our students are on board with us. Students appreciate instructors taking a few minutes to discuss upcoming assignments, teamwork goals, elements in grading rubrics and showing templates/work examples.

- ✓ Be ready for questions and keep the class on pace ... stay on target.
- ✓ Create an agenda, for you; see them as talking points if you will. If you often teach the same classes each term, these talking points will probably apply every term ...

Information Exchange: Planning is Key , Mix it Up and Lead by Example!

Information exchange and skill development is all about the course content and should take up the majority of the hour seminar time each week (40-45 minutes as a rule of thumb).

Information exchange includes asking and answering content-related questions, facilitating discussions, disseminating relevant content, and providing activities to support the course outcomes by using tools that will enhance learning.

Planning is Key

Planning is key... if you fail to plan, you plan to fail... so don't plan too little, however, be cautious not to bring too much material to the seminar.

- ✓ Know what the key elements of each unit are (outlined in the course unit seminar tab) and focus the seminar on those key questions/learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teach what we really want them to know, and by that, help them better access the rest of the unit material.
- ✓ Work to be flexible enough that if a good discussion ensues in a seminar that is relevant....seize the opportunity...let it run a bit so the students can enjoy, engage and learn --- they love this and get tons of value from it, then steer it back to the topic and continue on.

Mix it Up!

Don't just sit there ... do something! Every course and degree program at Purdue University Global is unique and the activities incorporated into the seminar time will vary based on course and content. Seminars should have the primary focus of promoting student engagement and personalization. Sometimes a brief lecture is appropriate. When possible, seminar time should be used based on the "Flipped Seminar" model even if your seminar falls early in the week– this is an instructional strategy that moves learning activities into the classroom instead of relying solely on a lecture-based format.

Each discipline can find material that supports their objectives and engages the students. Use the available tools to enhance learning and enrich the learning experience. Such activities might include:

- ✓ leading a search for reputable sources from the literature
- ✓ watching a short (3-5 minute) video

- ✓ facilitating a discussion on current events that coincide with concepts being covered in the course
- ✓ sharing experiences related to the course material
- ✓ hosting a game or an interactive assessment of course-based knowledge
- ✓ having students share samples of their learning
- ✓ moderating a debate on a preassigned topic
- ✓ take a tour of a website during the seminar
- ✓ facilitating student presentations
- ✓ Solving Hypothetical Problems

Summarize the learning at the end –have your students summarize the learning in a novel way. This will absolutely reinforce their learning in the seminar and drive home the key points you wanted them to take away from the seminar!

Lead By Example:

Bring great material into the seminar - solid sample problems, case studies or essential higher-level questions from the unit that your students engage in completely.

- ✓ Engage the students with this material, these questions, get input from them on what they think the solution is before you share it.
- ✓ You can link the seminar to the classroom by carrying these examples back to class with you ... expanding on them and inviting student questions.
- ✓ Examples shared between the seminar and the classroom, bring BOTH to life, engaging and educating at the same time.