



Course Planning with a High Teaching Load

 **Wednesday, November 9** • 200A Elliott Hall • Top Teaching Moves as a Special Lecturer

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Key Ideas

1. Intentional planning is crucial. Be proactive in course design in order to avoid confusion and extra work for you and students.
2. When designed well, automated feedback activities such as surveys and quizzes can provide rich, immediate, accessible learning opportunities. Learning [Moodle's](#) tools well is worth the time, and e-LIS instructional designers can help you plan how to best use them.
3. Use automated features in order to give you time to do the work only you can do. Use these strategies to make your course manageable and meaningful, not just so everyone can do more work.
4. Make one activity or piece of work accomplish more than one teaching and learning goal.
5. More feedback isn't always better. Provide limited personalized feedback at times when students can use it. Otherwise, simplify grading feedback.
6. Use consistent, routine activity structures, and provide variety and fun within those structures. In this way, students can focus their attention on the course content rather than figuring out how the activity mechanisms work.
7. Repeated questions are a sign of something to clarify in a course. Figure out the root issue within these repeated questions, and proactively counter them by posting resources students can use to answer their questions.
8. Set meaningful personal boundaries on how often you will answer emails and otherwise be available to students.

Course Planning Strategies

1. Attendance: How do you track student attendance (if you do)?
 - Attendance can be one piece of a larger participation and engagement factor crucial to student success.
 - Helena's [Daily In-Class Sheets](#) not only keep attendance, but serve as an active learning strategy.
 - [Taking Attendance in Moodle: e-LIS Help Doc](#)
 - In asynchronous courses, check Moodle activity reports regularly to get a sense of how often students are engaging in the course.

2. Communication: How do you keep students informed and attend to questions?
 - Through proactive communication via homework models, detailed directions, consistent assignment design, and reminders, you can prevent repeated questions.
 - If a few students email with questions repeatedly even after providing answers and information, try to identify the main issue and address that. This might include training students to navigate Moodle and the syllabus, or having students meet with you to have a holistic discussion about their approach to the course.
3. Grading and Feedback: How do you give students meaningful feedback in a way that is feasible for you?
 - More feedback isn't always better. Provide limited personalized feedback at times when students can use it. Otherwise, simplify grading feedback.
 - Use automated features in order to give you time to do the work only you can do. Use these strategies to make your course manageable and meaningful, not just so everyone can do more work.
 - If students receive a grade with written feedback, they will often ignore the feedback you pored over. Intentionally plan your grading approaches accordingly, either by providing less feedback or designing ways to ensure they use the feedback (e.g., [Reading the Margins: Student Reflection on Written Feedback](#).)

Additional Ideas

How do you make teaching responsibilities manageable and meaningful, even when you are teaching many students and many courses?

- ☐ Stagger grading due dates among classes so that you are not overwhelmed with grading all major assessments within the same limited time frame.
- ☐ Reflect on the overall purpose of your class management practices. In the syllabus and elsewhere, communicate that using automated feedback and other class management strategies is not to make more grading possible but to make the current workload feasible.
- ☐ BONUS, Keep your enrollment up: Keep your current students by encouraging them to take your future classes.

References and Resources

Helena's Related Teaching Tips

- [Daily In-Class Sheets Track Attendance and Improve Student Engagement](#)
- [Getting the Most Out of Faculty Feedback](#)
- [Clarity, Transparency in Grading with the Moodle Grade Book](#)
- ["Chat with Your Professor" Builds Instructor-Student Rapport](#)
- [Communicate with Class Texts](#)
- [Using Moodle Surveys as an Active Learning Activity](#)

More Related Resources

- [Managing Student Questions Online: Teaching Tip](#)
- [Students Sign Up with Google Appointments: Teaching Tip](#)
- [Taking Attendance in Moodle: e-LIS Help Doc](#)
- [Using a Rubric in Moodle: e-LIS Help Doc](#)
- [Using a Grading Guide in Moodle: e-LIS Help Doc](#)
- [e-LIS' Help Library](#) is a valuable resource worth saving and accessing often. Using Moodle helps keep records straight and automate certain course features to allow you to use your time for the work only you can do as the instructor. If you can identify some issues with course management that you think Moodle could help with but you're not sure how, schedule an appointment with e-LIS' instructional designers. Even if you have used Moodle for years, such an appointment can give your course a refresh that makes its mechanics run smoother. See their [Faculty and Staff Resources page](#) for more information.