

First Class: "Syllabus and Constitution" Aug. 27

2:45-2:50 PM (5 Minutes)

Ask for a volunteer time-keeper - 5 minutes

Introduce myself and my pedagogy, hand out note cards.

2:50-3:00 PM (10 Minutes)

Introductions (Name, major, favorite American author)

3:00-3:15 PM (15 Minutes)

Timekeeper - 15 minutes, give us a 5 minute warning

Think Pair Share

"What is your goal for this class? What do you want to learn that you'll take with you for the rest of your life? Is it mastery of the canon? Is it reading stories by founding women and people of color? Is your goal to be a better-informed citizen? A future leader of the free world?" (90 seconds) Pair up and combine goals into one goal (2 minutes)

Ask for a volunteer note-taker, preferably with a laptop to keep track, share with class

Students share goals with the class, write on board. Keep these in mind when planning the syllabus together. Note-taker emails summary to me so I can share with class.

Write names and Gmail email addresses on notecards and hand them in.

3:15-3:30 PM (15 Minutes)

Look over syllabus.

We need to agree on some ground rules, a constitution that we vote to abide by.

3:30-4:00 PM (30 Minutes)

Get into groups of 5-6. Develop recommendations (rationale/reasons) for why the class should take the action you believe to be the best.

- Group 1:
- (1) What's a fair and just attendance policy? Think: Is lateness different from absence? Are excused absences allowed?
 - (2) How should attendance be taken?
 - (3) How much should attendance factor into one's final grade?

(4) Propose revised “Attendance Policy,” “Attendance Method Options,” and “Excused Absences” sections

Group 2: (1) How should class time be spent (think lecture/discussion - 30/70, 20/80)?
(2) What counts as participation? Do we need time-keepers? Do we rotate who calls on whom? Should there be limits on how much one person can speak?
(3) Make a recommendation for how much participation should count for in the overall grade.
(4) Propose revised “Course Expectations,” “Class Constitution,” and “Individual Participation” sections

Group 3: (1) What kind of feedback is most helpful to you? (e.g., do you want feedback just from your instructor or also from your peers? Do you want qualitative comments or letter grades or both?) How often do you want it?
(2) Would you rather have a Midterm or Reading Reflections? Why?
(3) Based on your answer to (2) above, what do you want that evaluation to look like? (see suggestions on syllabus)
(4) Propose revised “Midterm or Reading Reflections” section

Group 4: (1) How do you want to be held accountable for your work? (To your professor only or to your peers, for example to group/team members?)
(2) Would you like to rotate who you work with in groups or have static groups? (Rotation allows you to meet more people but static allows you to do peer evaluations at the end of the semester, which could count toward your grade.)
(3) Make a recommendation for how you want to be held accountable for your work (e.g., how much or how little group work or collaboration would you like to do?), how you want to be evaluated for your work (e.g., a mid-semester check-in, a monthly check-in), and how much that should count toward your final grade.
(4) Propose revised “Accountability for Doing Work” section

Group 5: (1) Synthesize what you heard from your peers when they shared their goals for this semester. What are the big things we should focus on this year? Make a list.
(2) Brainstorm how we can reach those goals. What would help us make sure we stay on track?
(3) Turn your goals into “Learning Outcomes” and compare your list to the “Learning Outcomes” on the syllabus. Rewrite or revise the “Learning Outcomes,” preparing a recommendation for the class.
(4) Review the “Final Project or Final Paper” section on the syllabus. Will it help students meet your revised “Learning Outcomes”? What should be changed? Propose your recommended revisions to the class.