



## **School of Aging Studies**

# **MANUAL FOR INSTRUCTORS**

**September, 2010**

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## 1. Introduction

The primary mission of the School of Aging Studies is excellence in applied aging research and education. The School of Aging Studies (SAS) conducts research that is aimed at improving the well-being of older adults; provides educational programs that prepare students for careers in aging research, practice, administration, and policy; and provides service by disseminating the latest knowledge in applied aging.

As such, it is important to SAS, the University, and the students that we make every effort to keep the quality of classroom instruction at the highest possible level. The roles of ALL of our instructors, including Regular Faculty, Adjunct Faculty, Joint Appointment Faculty, and Teaching Assistants (TA) is critical in helping us to achieve the educational part of our mission. This manual is designed to provide information and guidance on a variety of issues regarding teaching. Please be sure to consult with regular faculty and administration at SAS should you need further information. In addition, the University's Adjunct Policy can be accessed at: <http://files.acad.usf.edu/facprogdev/21375.pdf>

## 2. Constructing a Syllabus

### a) Undergraduate Syllabi

One of the best ways to get classes off to a strong and positive start is to prepare a clear, comprehensive, and engaging course syllabus. The syllabus should be more than just a list of topics, assigned readings and exam dates. The most effective syllabus will outline the conditions, expectations, and performance criteria for the students. To meet University standards, the syllabus must contain:

- Instructor' Name and Contact Information
- Time and Place of Office Hours
- Emergency Preparedness Paragraph\*
- Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policies \*
- Accommodation for Student Disabilities \*
- Course Objectives
- Student Learning Outcomes
- Assignments and dates
- Grading policy
- Examination dates
- Attendance policies
  - notification of absence for religious observances)\*
  - Policies on missed work
- Other class requirements

\*Relevant examples given below; all available in Syllabus Template on BCS website: <http://intra.bcs.usf.edu/TeachingCurriculum/TeachingResources.cfm>  
Please note: University policy requires that all students receive at least one graded assignment or examination prior to the semester's drop/add date.

b) Emergency Preparedness Language:

*In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Blackboard, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It's the responsibility of the student to monitor Blackboard site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.*

c) Absence due to Religious Reasons:

*Students are expected to notify their instructors at the beginning of each academic term if they intend to be absent for a class or announced examination. Students absent for religious reasons, as noticed to the instructor at the beginning of each academic term, will be given reasonable opportunities to make up any work missed. For further information, please refer to:*

*<http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-10-045.pdf>*

d) Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

The Provost's Office requires this statement be included in the syllabus for each course:

*Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Students with Disabilities Services in order to receive academic accommodations. SDS encourages students to notify instructors of accommodation requests at least five business days prior to needing the accommodation. A letter from SDS must accompany this request.*

- See Student Responsibilities – <http://www.asasd.usf.edu/Student.htm>
- See Faculty Responsibilities— <http://www.asasd.usf.edu/faculty.htm>

e) Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Instructors should include the following message in the syllabus:

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

*Cheating is defined as follows: (a) the unauthorized granting or receiving of aid during the prescribed period of a course-graded exercise: students may not consult written materials such as notes or books, may not look at the paper of another students nor consult orally with any other student taking the same test; (b) asking another person to take an examination in ones place; (c) taking an examination for or in place of another student; (d) stealing visual concepts, such as drawings, sketches, diagrams, graphs, maps, etc., and presenting them as one's own; (e) stealing, borrowing, buying, downloading from the Internet, or*

*disseminating tests, answer keys, or other exam materials, except as officially authorized, research papers, creative paper, speeches, etc.; (f) stealing or copying of computer programs and present them as one's own; this includes the use of another student's program as obtained from the magnetic media or interactive terminals or form cards, print-out paper, etc.*

*If you have any questions on the definition or application of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please see the University's website:*

- Procedures for Alleged Academic Dishonesty or Disruption:  
<http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0809/adadap.htm>
- Student Academic Grievance Procedures:  
<http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0809/arcsagp.htm>

f) Plagiarism Detection Software:

In addition, there are some techniques that can be used to lessen the probability of cheating, including varying test content from semester to semester, giving different assignments between semesters, and requiring all written work, including online tests, to be submitted using Safe Assignment (see below). If you are using such software, you must include the following in your syllabus:

*The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows instructors to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to submit assignments to this detection system. Assignments are compared automatically with a huge database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student's paper was plagiarized.*

g) Your Completed Syllabus

It is our policy that the first syllabus from a new faculty member, adjunct, joint appointment/courtesy faculty, or TA must be reviewed for University requirements by the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs before being given to Amy Woodbury. When your syllabus is complete, please send a hard copy to Amy Woodbury for photocopying and an electronic copy for our files. You should have your syllabus to Amy at least 1 week prior to the start of class, and 2 weeks is preferable.

h) General Education Classes

The University of South Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). As part of the accreditation process, the State of Florida has set forth certain requirements for Undergraduates to meet to qualify for graduation from any SACS accredited school. Among these requirements are a certain number of credits in General Education (GenEd) classes. Preparing syllabi for GenEd classes is generally no different than for other undergraduate classes. The exception is that, when applicable, the Instructor should clearly state what GenEd requirements the class fulfills, at the

top of the syllabus. At the present time, the following classes qualify as GenEd classes:

Social Sciences:

- GEY 2000 Introduction to Gerontology
- GEY 3625 Sociocultural Aspects of Aging
- GEY 4612 Psychology and Aging
- GEY 4641 Death & Dying

Exit Requirements:

- GEY 4327 Understanding Policies and Practices of Long Term Care
- GEY 4635 Business Management in an Aging Society
- GEY 4647 Ethical and Legal Issues in Aging

At this time, we do not have any Gordon Rule classes.

i) Selecting and Ordering Text Books:

Normally, you will use a text book that has already been used in your class. Whenever possible, we like to make it easy for the students to obtain used copies of the textbooks, as they are cheaper. That being said, however, the choice of textbook is up to you, and if a prior text has a newer addition, you should not hesitate to order it. In many cases, TAs and Adjuncts are 'late' assignments and your textbooks are already ordered. However, when you have the opportunity to choose, be sure to let Amy Woodbury know as soon as possible as she has to order textbooks prior to informing the State of Florida at least 30 days prior to the beginning of a new semester.

j) Graduate Syllabi:

In most cases, graduate syllabi will be similar to those for undergraduate syllabi. One important difference may exist, however:

In many graduate classes, journal articles are used, either in conjunction with or in place of textbooks. In this case, copyright issues are very important. If you have sufficient time, using services such as ProCopy can be the best way to be sure that you have diligently taken care of potential copyright problems. In many cases, however, you may be using journal articles that are readily available on the Internet. If USF has access to online journals, for example, the students are entitled to access these journals as well as faculty. In that case, there is no reason why Instructors cannot post .pdf versions of these articles on Blackboard. Under no circumstance are Instructors to photocopy articles for the students, either gratis or for a fee.

### **3. Classroom Etiquette and Procedures**

The effectiveness of your role in accomplishing SAS's teaching mission can be enhanced or impaired by your comportment as an Instructor. No matter what your background there may be some special issues you will face. Even for instructors with extensive research or practical experience, the culture of the University may be new. In this section, we lay out some guidelines for maximizing your effectiveness as an Instructor.

#### **a) Classroom Attire and Demeanor**

USF does not have a clearly-stated dress code for instructors or faculty. In fact, different colleges and departments within colleges vary in the norm of dress for faculty and staff. In the SAS, we suggest that proper classroom attire should consist of "casual professional." We do not require jackets and ties for our male instructors, nor do we require female instructors to wear high heels and full-dress makeup. However, it is important that your appearance conveys a seriousness of purpose, and professionalism.

Generally, for men, suggested dress would consist of regular shirt (i.e., not T-shirt), long pants, and sensible shoes. For women, regular shirt, skirt or long pants, and sensible shoes are also appropriate. Please avoid:

- Cleavage of any perceptible kind
- Midriff exposure
- Flipflops
- Excessive makeup or jewelry

In addition, the Instructor's role is one of a facilitator of learning. In order to accomplish this, the students should be able to respect the Instructor. Although we are all judged on the basis of student evaluations, we are not hired to be the students' friends, nor is it appropriate that we act as dictators in the classroom with disregard for students' opinions, beliefs, or needs. Again, the effective Instructor will show a regard for students without pandering to them, requiring something of a balancing act.

#### **b) Office Hours**

Instructors are required to have Office Hours for their students. At the minimum, you should schedule one hour at your convenience. Should the time and place you choose not mesh with your students' schedules, please offer them the opportunity to make alternate appointments to see you, but you are wise to discourage them from walking in without an appointment outside your scheduled office hours.

c) Attendance

Whether you are regular faculty, adjunct or TA, you are hired to teach a class for a semester and that is what we expect you to do. We expect you to attend all of the classes, and proctor your own exams. In cases of large classes, we may be able to provide you with TAs or PhD students to help proctoring exams, but this service is not meant to take the place of the Instructor during the exam. Frequently, students have questions during the exams and expecting a TA to take your place is not realistic.

That being said, life happens. There will occasionally be circumstances in which you are simply unable to attend one of your classes. Appropriate reasons for this can include:

- Illness, yours or immediate family
- A major disaster (fire, flood, act of God, etc.)

Inappropriate reasons for not being in class can include:

- Planned conferences or (rarely) vacations (in general vacations and personal trips should be planned to avoid conflicts with teaching responsibilities)
- Other foreseeable circumstances

In any case, if you are forced to miss class and have sufficient time to arrange backup (e.g. a guest lecturer), please be sure to alert the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs (Dr. Reynolds) or the Undergraduate Director (Dr. Small) or Graduate Director (Dr. McEvoy), whichever applies. In cases in which you must cancel class on an emergency basis and do not have time to arrange for a guest lecturer, contact Gail Smith who may be able to post an announcement in the classroom or reach students. You may also be able to use Blackboard to contact students in case of a last minute cancellation. Remember, some of our students travel at great distance and inconvenience, sometimes at night, so great care should be taken to minimize such cancellations and to lessen their disruption when they do occur.

d) Use of Guest Lecturers

Guest lecturers can add depth and breadth to topic which form an integral part of course content. In addition guest lectures can give students a chance to gain some experience in the classroom. We encourage the use of Guest Lecturers in circumstances in which they are appropriate, but we strongly discourage over-use of them in general.

For example, in a 3 credit hour class (which would generally involve 45 contact hours in the classroom) using more than 2 whole lecture periods of guest lecturers would probably be excessive. You have been hired to teach the course, and are being paid to teach the course, and that is what we expect you to do! If you are teaching a class where you think more extensive use of guest lecturers might be a good idea, please discuss this with Dr. Reynolds, the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs.

e) Attendance Policies

It is up to the individual Instructor to determine and communicate his/her preference for class attendance. That being said, however, we want to encourage attendance in a variety of ways. Some suggested techniques include:

- Making it clear that information given in class exceeds that given in the PowerPoint slides
- Using class participation as a way to earn grade points (this usually works better than punishing them for not attending)
- Using in-class discussion groups to increase participation and attendance

f) Class Participation

The quality of the learning experience is closely linked to the amount of student participation in the classroom. Research consistently suggests that a student who is fully engaged in the learning process is one who is most likely to learn and retain both content and the learning skills so necessary for future success.

To this end, it is the Instructor's role to encourage Student Participation in the classroom, in a balanced and fair manner. Many times, we have students who are in, or have been in, the working world and consequently bring an added depth to the class through their own unique perspectives. On the other end of the spectrum, we may also have students who bring a total lack of depth to the class and believe that their highest and best use is to disrupt the class. Often, handling participation in a class can be a real balancing act for an Instructor. Good discipline in class is essential to make sure the entire class has a chance to absorb class material, and has the opportunity to make their voices heard. An old saying in the strategic planning world says, "over-contribution and under-contribution are equal sins." This saying applies as well to the classroom. Try to make sure that all can be heard, and that no one person or group monopolizes the class.

#### **4. Grading Policies**

a) Fairness in Grading

In general, undergraduate Instructors should aim for a distribution of grades that resembles a bell curve – there should be a few As and a few Ds and Fs, with most grades falling in the Bs and Cs. We ask our Instructors to resist grade inflation that results in entire classes falling within the B+ to A+ range. This may ensure good teaching evaluations, but it does not necessarily ensure good teaching. That having been said, it is incumbent on all Instructors to give fair and accurate grades that truly reflect a student's performance. For example, it's wise to give a mix of assignments, some where all will do well, and some that will be more challenging and will result in a wider distribution of grades. Graduate courses usually have a different grade distribution, a grade of C or below indicates poor performance in a course. Grades for graduate courses are

generally a mix of As and Bs with Cs going to students who have weak performance, but not poor enough to merit an F.

There are several ways to assure that there is a good spread of scores so that it is reasonable to give diverse grades. One thing to avoid is having overly easy exams or assignments where nearly all students will have very high scores, or giving students high points just for turning assignments in. If you give a fairly difficult exam you can always “curve” the scores by adding points, but if you give a very easy exam you cannot curve the scores down by subtracting points! If you give written assignments, include a statement in your syllabus about what criteria you will use for grading. Students also should expect to receive feedback about why their writing received a relatively high or low score.

The School of Aging Studies receives feedback about grade distributions every semester. If the grades that you give are well above or below what is expected, the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs will alert you to this so that you can adjust your grading in the future. If you have any questions or problems with grading policies or practices, please consult the Assistant for Academic Affairs.

Another rule of thumb is to balance assignments and their grades so that students are not “surprised” by their end of term grade. For example, if you give one test during the first part of the class and then have another test, a final exam, and a paper all due in the last few weeks, the student’s grade at midterm may look radically different than the final grade. Try to spread things out so students have a clue how they’re doing as they go along (this will save you the hassles of defending final grades after they’re posted, also).

Students tend to like receiving frequent feedback, rather than having their entire grades being based on few opportunities, such as a Midterm and a Final. With more frequent quizzes and tests you might also choose to allow students to drop a low score. For example a course might include 6 quizzes, with the lowest score dropped. Allowing students to drop their lowest quiz or test score can also make it easier to deal with absences. However, it is NOT advisable to allow students to drop their final exam, or they may stop attending class before the term is over. See the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs for more discussion of these matters.

#### b) Matching Grading Policy to your Syllabus

It is an absolute requirement that your grading policy is accurately reflected in your syllabus. You open yourself up to criticism and possible grievance if you change how you grade a class during a semester. And, it goes without saying, that grading policy applies to all; there is no circumstance in which any student “deserves” a higher grade than you really think they should get.

c) Extra Credit

This issue is a very individual one and should be addressed clearly in the syllabus and emphasized during the first class. Most professors do not allow for extra credit for any number of reasons:

1. The students who take the opportunity to do extra credit often are the ones who are already doing the best in the class and don't really need it.
2. The students who ask for extra credit often ask toward the end of the class because they haven't put in the work in the first place.
3. It's extra work for the professor, and if you've structured your class right, the work load for the class should be appropriate anyway.

d) Scantron Office

The Scantron Office is located in BEH 101. You can take your scanned exams to the Office, or have one of our work study students drop them off and pick them up for you. Scantron sheets are available from Gail Smith; for more information, please visit their website:

<http://usfweb2.usf.edu/assessment/scanning.shtml>

e) Undergraduate

USF's grading policies are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. In addition, you should consult with the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs for further guidelines, particularly in the use of Incompletes.

- The syllabus must include a clear statement regarding the relationship of attendance and all assignments to grades. The syllabus is a contract with the student, and it is not proper to change grading policy during a semester. You must adhere to the grading scenario you lay out in your syllabus. In particular, if class absences will result in a lower grade, the way that attendance will be counted in the final grade should be made absolutely clear.
- Instructors may use the plus/minus system in grading. Your syllabus should state clearly whether you are going to use this system. If you do, standard practice is to use the following:

A+	98-100		4.00
A	94-97	Excellent performance	4.00
A-	90-93		3.67
B+	87-89		3.33
B	84-86	Good performance	3.00
B-	80-83		2.67
C+	77-79		2.33
C	74-76	Average performance	2.00
C-	70-73		1.67
D+	67-69		1.33

D	64-66	Poor performance	1.00
D-	60-63		0.67
F	<60	Failure	0.00

f) Graduate

In general, the same system should apply to graduate students. The difference is that, for graduate students, a C is effectively a failing grade.

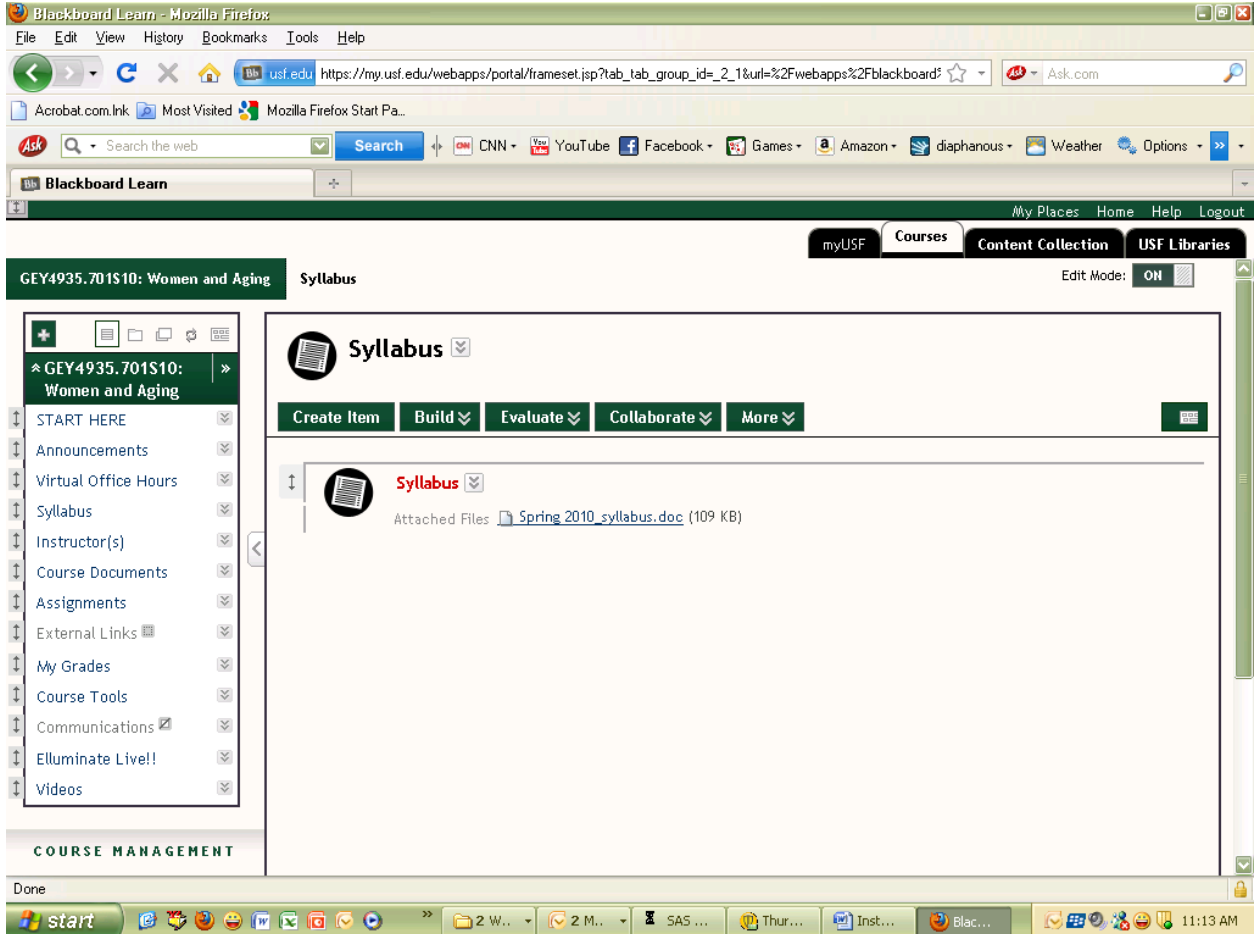
g) The Use of Incompletes

- The use of Incompletes should be avoided if possible. USF policies state that the student must be substantially through with all of the course requirements in order to receive an Incomplete; these are given for well-performing students who may be presented with an unforeseen circumstance that prevents them from completing the course. Many students will beg for incompletes when they have performed poorly in a class for some reason, and they may be granted such incompletes in other departments. However we have found that it is best to give Incompletes ONLY according to USF policies, so DO NOT allow students to talk you into giving them an Incomplete due to a hardship situation. Students have many options to drop classes if they have experienced serious and legitimate problems during the semester; the student should look to the Undergraduate Catalog to learn about these procedures.
- Undergraduates who are given Incomplete in a class are required to clear the Incomplete at the discretion of the Instructor, but cannot exceed two academic semesters.
- Graduates given Incomplete must fill out a formal contract with a plan to complete the course requirements within two academic semesters, including summer semester. In general, Incompletes are not a good idea, as they can simply add to the student's burden in the subsequent semester.

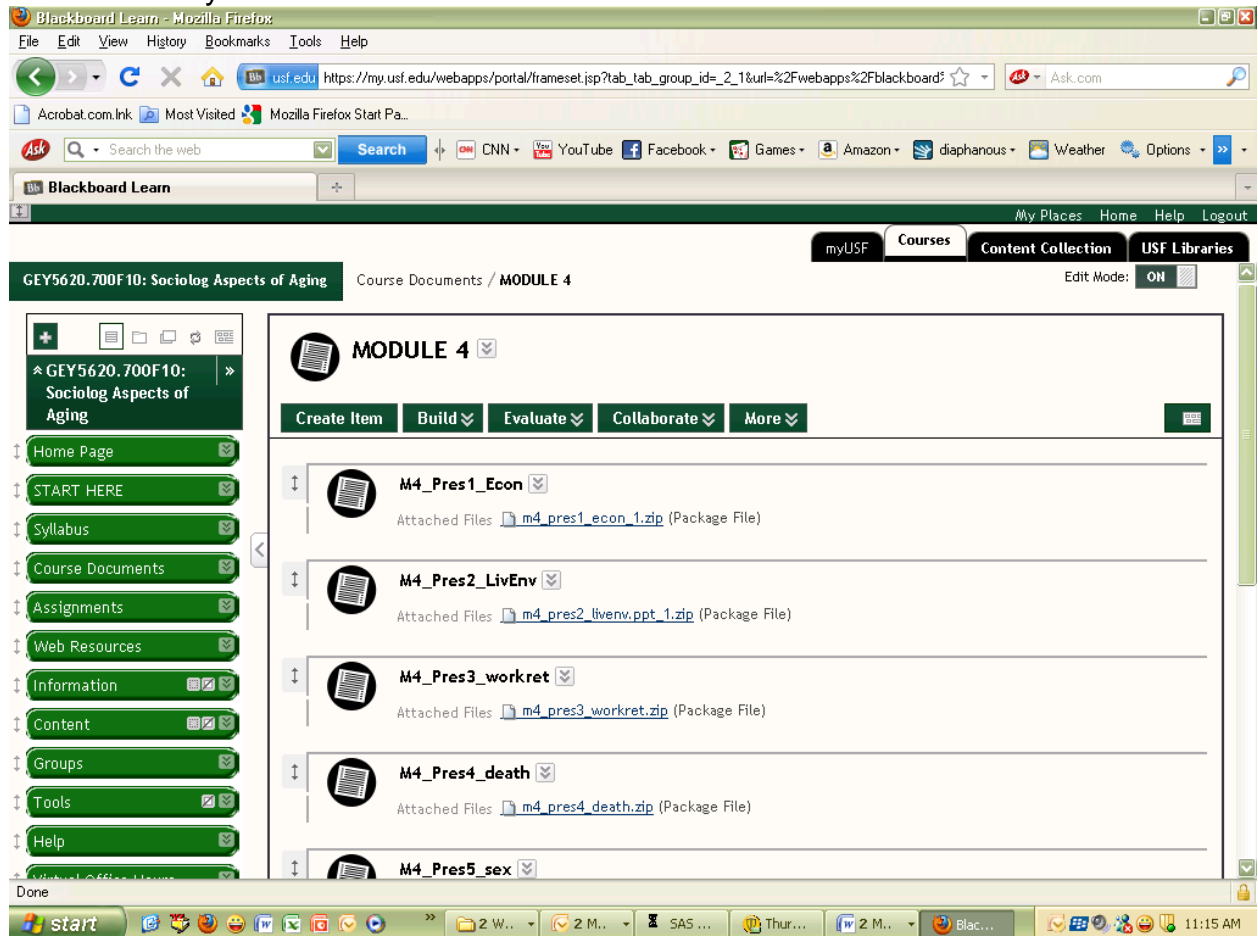
**5. Using Blackboard (BB)**

By now, most of our classes are Blackboard-driven. You do need to learn Blackboard, if for no other reason that grades are e-submitted through it. Any of our experienced faculty members (and our staff) can show you basic Blackboard skills, and the Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching Excellence schedules fairly regular Blackboard classes, which are quite effective in teaching you creative ways to use BB.

a) Posting Syllabi and PowerPoint Slides  
As soon as your syllabus is ready, it should be posted on BB under “Syllabus.”



Undergraduate students are generally also expecting to see the PowerPoint slides you will use posted either under “Course Documents” or under a created tab for “Lectures.” (see below) You are not required to post your lectures on Blackboard, but most of us do, as it saves the students from having to write down everything you show in your PowerPoints and usually you will get better student evaluations if you make these available.

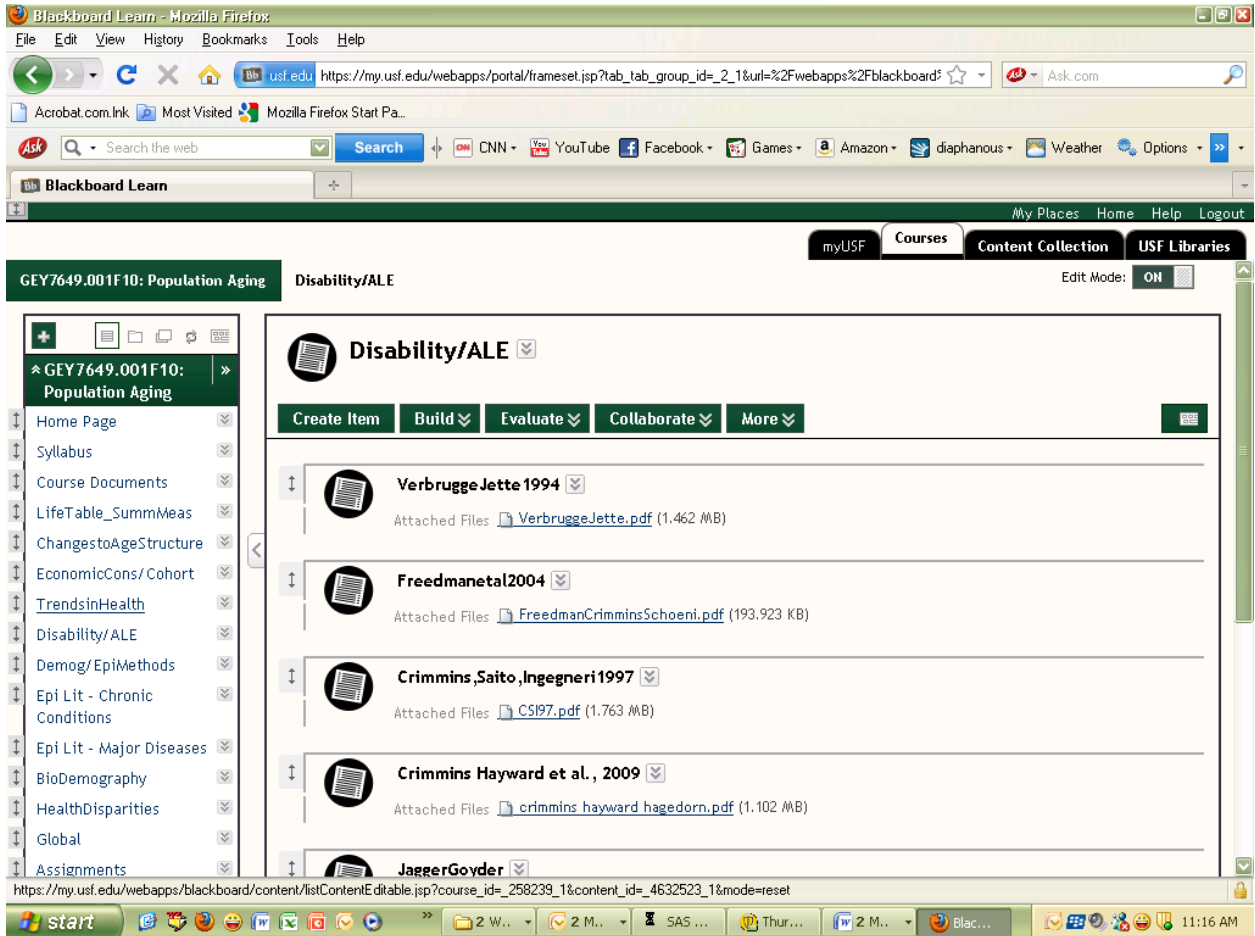


## b) E-Grade Submissions

Whether you use BB for syllabi and lecture notes, all University grading is now done electronically on BB. If you have underclassmen in your classes, you will be prompted to e-submit midterm grades; in all cases, final grades are done through e-submission. Any of your fellow Instructors and Professors can show you how easily this is done. It can be done by directly downloading the grades from the BB Gradebook, or by manual submission. In any case, you will be prompted for information in addition to the grade only if you give grades such as Incomplete, Withdrawn (not already reflected on the system), and other oddities. There is also training on e-submission of grades given by the Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching Excellence if you should feel the need.

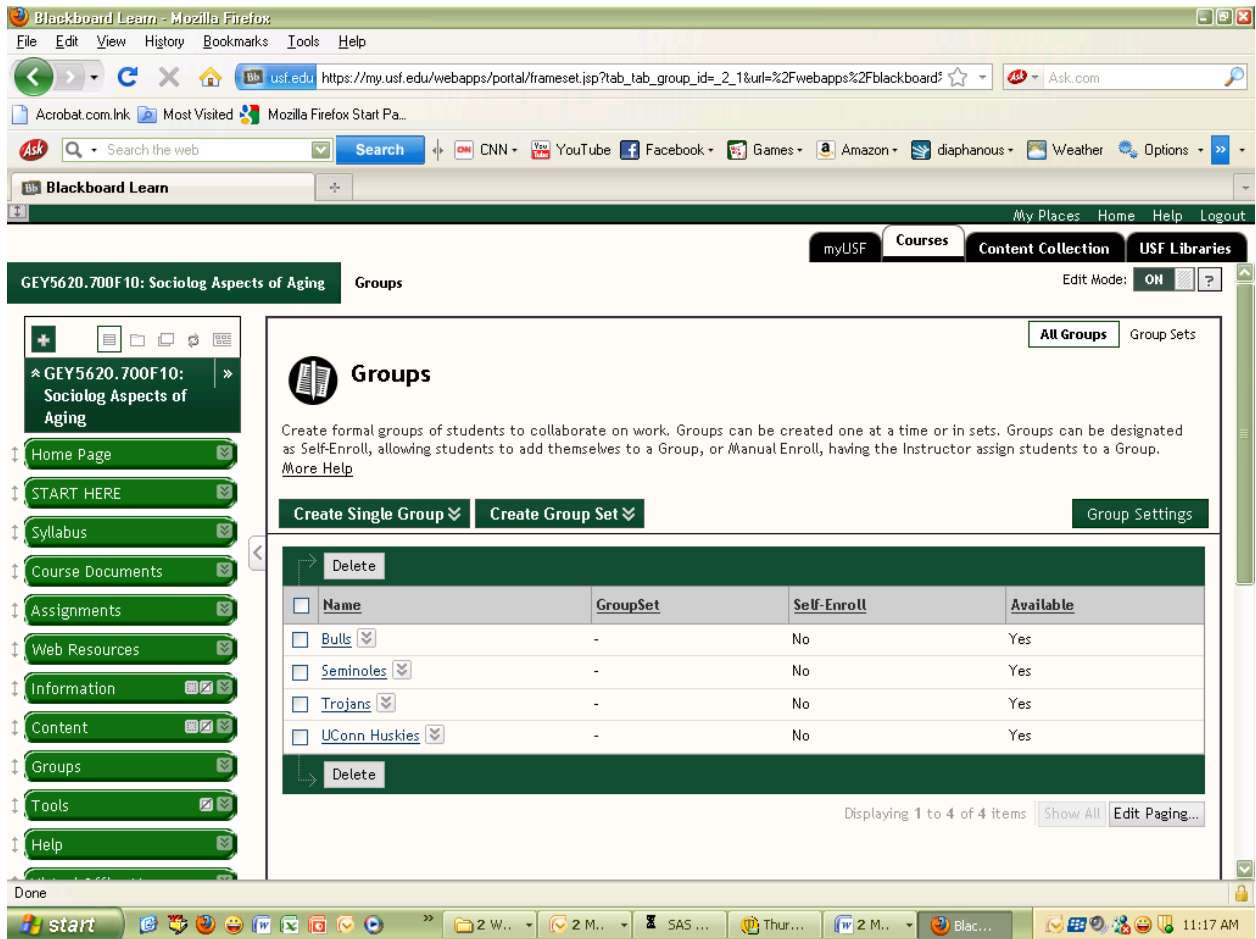
### c) Copyright policies

In addition, for Graduate courses, often we will be using class materials that are publicly available journal articles that we will post on BB. This can only be done for articles to which USF has access. If you have any questions or hesitations about whether posting specific pieces is allowed, please refer to the University's copyright policies located at: <https://security.usf.edu/copyright/>



### d) Discussion Groups:

One thing BB does really well is to help you to organize discussion groups that can allow for class participation outside the classroom. Depending on your desire, the size of the class, and other constraints, you may want to set up discussion groups that facilitate this process. The following screen shows one approach to naming the groups:



For each of the Discussion groups, similar or different topics can be given for discussion and the Instructor can participate in and/or monitor and grade the quality of discussion contribution for each student. In this case, you are wise to have made explicit the type, amount, and quality of contribution you are expecting – e.g., a constructive contribution to a discussion would have to consist of more than “I agree with what Soandso said.” Publishing a formal rubric in the Syllabus is always a good idea.

An example:

### Performance Expectations for Discussion

1. Quality of the posting content -- You will receive credit if your posting addresses the discussion questions and reflects accurate knowledge from the assigned reading and online lectures
2. Quality of reply -- You will receive credit if your reply is relevant to posting of another student and is respectful as well as insightful. Reply invokes further discussion.

3. Timeliness -- You should post well in advance of the due date (several days) so that everyone in your group can complete their post and reply by the deadline

In addition, the Instructor should provide some guidance to the students on proper online etiquette – or, Netiquette, as it is called.

### **Rules for Online Discussion or "Netiquette"**

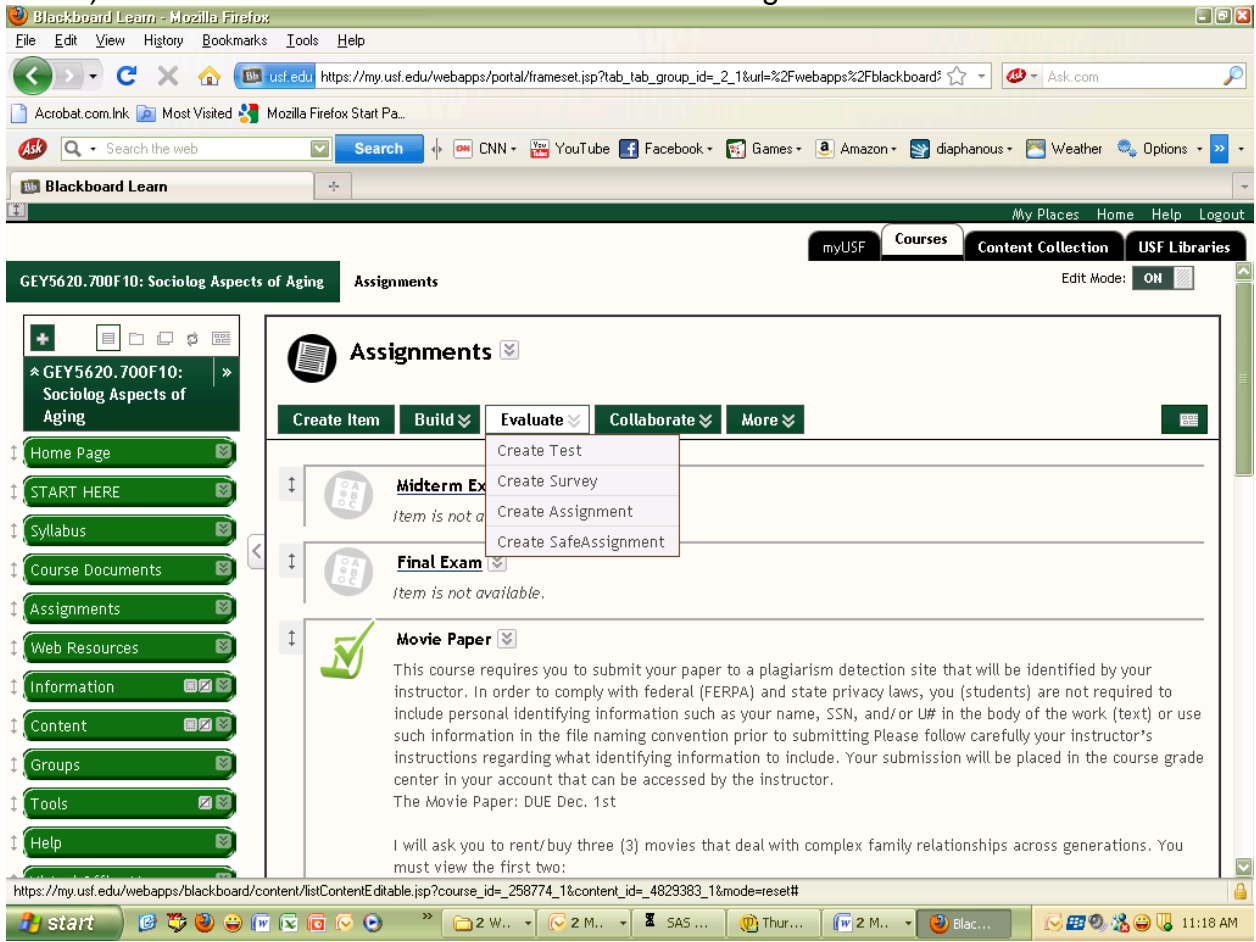
(quoted from Basic Netiquette for Online classes by D.L. Molinari  
<http://nursing.wsu.edu/current/Netiquette.pdf> )

1. Read all postings from first to last within the forum PRIOR to posting an original comment or responding to another's posting.
2. No accusations, insults, or potentially inflammatory or hurtful comments are acceptable at any time. Any person making such a comment will not receive credit for ANY of the semesters discussion assignments. Remember that , " ...Emotions are strongly felt in cyberspace..... People may interpret messages as hurtful and react to them in a defensive manner." Also, be careful in expressing your own emotions in postings. Without non-verbal cues, it is difficult to "read" intent of messages. Be very specific and intentional with your comments avoid sarcasm at all times.
3. College level grammar, spelling and punctuation are expected in all postings. These discussions are not meant to be informal, but rather part of your learning process. Write your comments as you would a paper. Capitalize words only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading. Capitalizing whole words that are not titles is generally termed as SHOUTING!
4. When posting a reply, provide a short description and/or quote of what you are responding to. "I agree" is not a sufficient response to a posting. You must elaborate upon and extend the discussion by your postings in order to receive credit.
5. Don't post anything that you wouldn't say in person in front of all of your 100+ classmates and professor. Also, don't post anything you wouldn't want to appear on the front page of the newspaper as a quote by you.

e) Safe Assignment:

Safe Assignment under BB is currently the only software the University supports to detect plagiarism. It is also a convenient way for students to submit papers and other assignments electronically. If you follow the instructions below, you should have no trouble creating Safe Assignments for your students to use.

Step 1: Once you are in a course in BB, go to the Course Tools and Click on Assignments (unless you've already made a Tab for Assignments as shown below). Under "Evaluate" – click on "Create SafeAssignment"



Once you do that, you'll be prompted to fill in your information:

Here's the top half of the page, where you'll name the assignment, allocate the points being given, and include the Assignment Instructions:

GEY5620.700F10: Sociolog Aspects of Aging Assignments / Add SafeAssignment Edit Mode: ON

### Add SafeAssignment

\* Indicates a required field. Cancel Submit

#### 1. ENTER INFORMATION

\* Name

\* Points Possible

Instructions

#### 2. OPTIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Create  Yes  No

Subject

Message

And the Bottom half, where you can specify your options:

Make the assessment available  Yes  No

Track Number of Views

Availability Dates

Display After

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Draft

Urgent Checking

Student Viewable  Yes  No

#### 2. OPTIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Create  Yes  No

Subject

Message

Now, here's an example of one that's been filled out with very simple Instructions, and given it 250 points; be sure it says Yes to "Make the Assessment Available"

myUSF Courses Content Collection USF Libraries

My Places Home Help Logout

### Add SafeAssignment

\* Indicates a required field. Cancel Submit

#### 1. ENTER INFORMATION

\* Name

\* Points Possible

Instructions

Make the assessment available  Yes  No

Done

In the bottom half, I've entered dates that start at the beginning of the semester and end at the end of the semester (since this is a Term Paper – you'd want to do that differently if you were writing an Exam). Note: ALWAYS check "Urgent Checking" or your assignment will go into a long line waiting to be checked for plagiarism.

myUSF Courses Content Collection USF Libraries

My Places Home Help Logout

My Groups

- Bulls
- Seminoles
- Trojans
- UConn Huskies

#### COURSE MANAGEMENT

- Control Panel
- Course Tools
- Course Links
- Evaluation
- Users and Groups
- Customization
- Packages and Utilities
- Help

Track Number of Views

Availability Dates

Display After

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Draft

Urgent Checking

Student Viewable  Yes  No

#### 2. OPTIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Create  Yes  No

Subject

Message

Done

### Other Options:

-- in the Instructions, you can give details on what the assignment consists of. In some cases, you may want to have those instructions in the syllabus, or in a separate document. In that case, all you have to put in Instructions is something like “details on this assignment are in the Syllabus.”

--You have the option of displaying this assignment during a specified window of time.

--You can give students the option to submit a draft which you could grade for feedback and allow them to re-submit a final paper.

### Here’s what it will look like when it’s posted under Assignments:

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Blackboard Learn interface. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <https://my.usf.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tabGroup=courses&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fcc>. The page header includes the University of South Florida logo and navigation links like 'My Places', 'Home', 'Help', and 'Logout'. Below the header, there are tabs for 'myUSF', 'Courses', 'Content Collection', and 'USF Libraries'. The main content area is titled 'GEY5620.700F10: Sociolog Aspects of Aging' and 'Assignments / Linked File'. A sub-header indicates 'SafeAssign / SafeAssignments' with an 'Edit Mode: ON' indicator. On the left, a navigation menu lists 'Home Page', 'START HERE', 'Syllabus', 'Course Documents', 'Assignments', and 'Web Resources'. The main content area features a 'SafeAssignments' section with a green checkmark icon and a 'Synchronize this course' button. Below this is a table with columns for 'Name', 'Instructions', and 'Date Modified'. The table contains one entry: 'Term Paper' with a dropdown arrow next to it. The instructions for this assignment state: 'This course requires you to submit your paper to a plagiarism detection site that will be identified by your instructor. In order to comply with federal (FERPA) and state privacy laws, you (students) are not required to include personal identifying information such as your name, SSN, and/or U# in the body of the work (text) or use such information in the file naming convention prior to submitting. Please follow carefully your instructor's instructions regarding what identifying information to include. Your submission will be placed in the course grade center in your account that can be accessed by the instructor. Write an incredibly brilliant Term Paper on a topic of your choice.' The date and time listed are 'Thu, Sep 23, 2010, 11:22 AM'.

--Finally, when you are setting up the Gradebook in BB, you do not have to create a space for the Term Paper – Safe Assignment automatically adds the assignment to the Gradebook along with the points you have allotted.

## **6. Resources for Obtaining Teaching Skills**

Although we expect a lot of our Instructors, the University and the School of Aging Studies are also prepared to offer a lot of resources to make your teaching experience enjoyable for you and productive for you and your students. There are several mechanisms in place to give you constructive feedback and offer you opportunities to increase your teaching skills.

### **a) Student Evaluations**

At the last class of each semester, Instructors are asked to hand out student evaluation forms. This process ensures that students have a say in the quality of their education and offer information to SAS on areas of both strengths and weaknesses in Instructors, at least from the students' point of view. This process is highly confidential.

When you hand out the evaluation forms, you must leave the room immediately. A student will be designated to collect the forms and return them to the SAS office. Should you be asked, please assure the students that you will never see their comments in a manner in which you could possibly identify them. You will be given the aggregate scores on the quantitative items, and all of the hand-written comments are transcribed and attached to the quantitative summary, so you do not see the students' hand-written comments.

Student evaluations are more informative if they are completed by nearly all students in a class. One way to try to have maximum participation in course evaluations is to have students complete the course evaluation at the beginning of a class period where you will also give a quiz. This increases the likelihood that there will be a large number of students in class that day.

### **b) SAS Feedback**

In addition to the results of the student evaluations, you will receive feedback from the School on the average GPA of your students compared to the grades you have given the class. We use this feedback to monitor for grade inflation and it is meant to give you guidance on how harshly or generously you are grading your classes.

### **c) Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching Excellence (C21TE)**

Each summer, C21TE offers a week-long seminar that introduces faculty members to the latest technical advances in Active Learning Teaching. These seminars are intense and stimulating and we encourage faculty to attend them when possible.

In addition, C21TE offers a selection of courses designed to enhance teaching skills. Some of the courses offered include: Using Blackboard Communication Tools to Improve Collaboration and Enhance Learning; Help with Assessing Students' Writing; Developing Effective and Attractive Web Pages

Using Dreamweaver; Creating a Teaching Portfolio; Getting Started with Blackboard; Enhancing Teaching and Learning with PowerPoint; and many more. For more information, see the C21TE website at: <http://www.cte.usf.edu/>

d) Lead Faculty in GEY Courses

Finally, for the Undergraduate courses, we have identified faculty members who can be considered as “lead faculty” in specific courses. If you have general questions about teaching, feel free to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Brent Small), the Director of Graduate Studies (Cathy McEvoy), or the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs (Sandy Reynolds). For information about specific courses, please feel free to consult with the following faculty:

DEP 2004	Life Cycle	Jessica McIlvane
GEY 2000	Introduction to Gerontology	Kathy Hyer
GEY 3601	Physical Changes in Aging	Ross Andel
GEY 3625	Sociocultural Aspects of Aging	Sandy Reynolds
GEY 4612	Psychology of Aging	Brent Small
GEY 4628	Race, Ethnicity and Aging	Tamara Baker
GEY 4641	Death & Dying	Debra Dobbs
Online Classes		Jerri Edwards

e) Letters of Offer

For Adjunct Instructors, formal letters of offer are sent by the Office Manager indicating the details of the offer to hire for a semester’s teaching. These contracts apply to each individual semester and continued hiring as an adjunct from semester to semester is in no way implied to be a permanent contract. Adjunct Instructors are asked to return their signed contracts along with 2 official transcripts indicating the highest level of degree completed.

f) Human Resources Issues

Any human resources issues, including pay, timing of pay, and payroll sign-up should be referred to our financial staff, principally Pam Stobaugh.

g) Student Advising

Gail Smith is our Undergraduate Advisor, and is conversant with all of the requirements for our Bachelor’s Degrees. If a student asks you an advising question, feel free to answer if you know the answer. If you do not know the answer, **please** refer the student to Gail, rather than guess. Incorrect advice, no matter how good your intentions are, can cause great havoc and negative feelings toward USF and the SAS.

Graduate students are assigned to individual advisors – Amy Woodbury will know who to refer you to, if you are asked an advising question by a graduate student. Again, please refer the student to her(his) advisor, rather than making a well-meaning guess.

h) Dealing with troubled students

On occasion, you may be presented with situations in which students act out, or become ill in a way that disrupts class. It is unfortunate when something like this happens, but it occasionally does. Your first duty is the safety of yourself and your students. If you have a student who is simply disrupting class, normally you would try to deal with it yourself. If the conduct persists, you should feel free to demand that the student exit the class. If the conduct becomes threatening or violent toward anyone in the class, call the Campus Police immediately (974-2628). Do not call 9-1-1 unless absolutely necessary, but if it is, do not hesitate.

If a student become ill (on occasion, we have had students suffer epileptic seizures, for example), call 9-1-1 and then inform Campus Police so they are aware an ambulance will be coming on campus.