

Remote Teaching Survival Tips

Managing Feedback to Students

As you move further into teaching all of your courses online, you may find yourself spending more time than you anticipated on student feedback. Consider implementing these strategies to avoid getting overwhelmed.

RE-ENVISION WHAT FEEDBACK IS

At its core, feedback is a form of communication between the instructor and students. It is communication that *evaluates*, but it can be packaged in a variety of shapes and sizes and delivered globally through Blackboard tools not specifically designed for feedback:

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Include a summary of the strengths and weaknesses in what you observed in student work in your weekly or bi-weekly announcements. Notify students if you have returned graded work. Push announcements to student email.
- **DISCUSSION BOARD** (or other collaborative work). Post a single comment to the class or each group after the discussion (or other collaborative activity) closes. Communicate to students what they did well and where they need to improve.

USE FEEDBACK STRATEGICALLY

Feedback often comes in the form of comments to individual students, but there are other tools for providing feedback that are less labor-intensive:

- **SELF-SCORING QUIZZES with FEEDBACK.** Create questions that automatically score (true/false; multiple choice) and provide the correct answer in the quiz feedback section. That answer is a form of feedback.
- **RUBRICS.** Create rubrics for small-stakes assignments as well as major projects. The criteria wired into the rubric are a form of feedback, as is the score the student earns. Create a general rubric for each small-stakes assignment that repeats, such as discussions, journals, etc.
- **PRIORITIZE THE FEEDBACK.** Triage your grading. You may have a major assignment that needs summative feedback, but your students are completing activities that need formative feedback to prepare them for the next project. Finish the formative feedback first. The timeliness of that feedback is more urgent than summative feedback on a completed project.
- **USE TECHNOLOGY.** If there is one technology worth trying, it is a text-generating tool. Text-generating tools such as [TextExpander](#) or the [Mac Automator](#) to cut down on the amount of text you must type, and they work well for routine commenting, especially for individual feedback.

MAKE SURE STUDENTS CAN FIND FEEDBACK AND KNOW HOW TO USE IT

No one wants to spend time providing feedback students don't read. Blackboard does not always make it easy for students to find feedback, so you need to show them where to find it and how to use it. Include this information in assignment instructions, or add it to your weekly announcement.

Feedback to students is central to sustaining student engagement in your course, but it is easy to get bogged down by it when rapidly transitioning to online teaching. Spend time up front to make the feedback process more efficient, and let your students know how to find it and use it. Doing so will reduce your workload, improve student learning, and enhance your teaching presence in the course.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Creating a Rubric in Blackboard](#)
- [Creating Test and Surveys in Blackboard](#)
- Darby, Flower and James M. Lang. "Giving Feedback." *Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Courses*. Jousey-Bass. 2019. 107-129.
- Flock, Holly and Heather Garcia. "[How to Give Students Better Feedback with Technology.](#)" *Chronicle of Higher Education*. 2020.
- Stearns Center: [Keep Teaching! Maintaining Instructional Continuity in Emergency or Interrupted Operations.](#)

This Week's "Survival Tips" shared by...

Dr. **Jessie Matthews**, Professor & Associate Director of
Composition, English, CHSS
<https://english.gmu.edu/people/jmatthe2>
email: imatthe2@gmu.edu

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Web: stearnscenter.gmu.edu | Email: stearns@gmu.edu | Phone: 703-993-6200