

WHAT STUDENTS SAID ABOUT TEACHING IN FALL 2020

(AND HOW YOU CAN ADAPT IN SPRING 2021)

Our students shared their gratitude and appreciation for your efforts in a challenging semester, and provided valuable suggestions for the spring. Below, we share student feedback from the CIF and Student Pandemic Academic Experience Survey, organized into commonly reported themes with research-based action steps recommended by Notre Dame Learning.

“Communicate even more clearly”

Explicitly tell students why you’ve set up your class as you have

Clearly explain the purpose, task, and criteria for assignments

“We feel isolated - help us connect with you and each other”

Set up study groups rather than assuming students will do that

Clearly express your concern for your students’ wellbeing with frequent informal check-ins

Do your best to learn and use student names, with the help of name tents if needed

“Please be flexible”

Be generous when responding to requests for extensions or accommodations

Be more flexible than usual if you grade participation

Avoid attendance policies that incentivize sick students coming to class

“Provide easy access to learning resources”

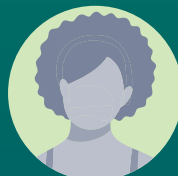
Record and share class meetings whenever appropriate

Make sure students have access to lab manuals and materials, studio supplies, etc

Hold virtual office hours

“Thanks for your flexibility and compassion”

Give yourself grace - you are doing a challenging thing, and doing it well



“Help us stay engaged”

Remember that chronic stress decreases everyone’s attention span

If using small groups or breakout rooms, provide a concrete prompt or activity

Break up lecture frequently with a pair discussion, poll, or written activity

“We’re more stressed than ever - be mindful of workload”

Outside work should be \leq 2 hours per week per credit hour for undergrads

Restructure your assessments to be more frequent and lower-stakes

Consider which smaller assignments are expendable if students are overwhelmed

“Don’t forget your remote students”

Check for raised hands on Zoom and call on remote students during interactions

Repeat questions from students in basic-audio rooms so Zoom students can hear

Ensure remote students can see the board and slides

“Speak up”

Speak loudly and clearly so both in-room and remote students can hear

Use microphones where available

Consider masks that allow your voice to carry farther (e.g. blue disposables)