

Setting Expectations that Promote Civility

Jennifer Embree, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CCNS, FAAN; Clinical Associate Professor; Department of Community & Health Systems; IUPUI [00:00:05] If they are in an environment that is comfortable in a learning environment and they feel that they can be themselves, but they can also be professional, then they're going to learn more.

Kevin Kelly, EdD; Lecturer; Department of Equity, Leadership Studies & Instructional Technologies; San Francisco State University [00:00:28] So when I meet my students for the first time, I establish the expectations through the syllabus and the meet ups that we have at the beginning of the semester where we get together online and in a variety of other strategies. But I'm one set of expectations that I want to make sure we cover our behavioral expectations, what students will be doing in that online course environment and how they can help contribute to a feeling that they're part of a learning community.

Jennifer Embree, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CCNS, FAAN [00:01:00] I outline that in the syllabus. I talk about that in my introduction video to my students, and I also make sure that we have our first face to face class synchronous video that I talk about. As we saw. As you read in the syllabus, the civility guidelines are here. This is what this means for you all. And these are my expectations. We all should be awake, alert and personally, socially and relationship aware during class. We all want to feel safe during class to voice our opinions and to learn and grow professionally together.

Kristin, Student; IUPUI [00:01:43] I feel it's really important for instructors to outline and identify very clear expectations because it guides your response as a student. It begins to develop that relationship with your instructor because you know they care about you and that they want to ensure your, your success.

Tosha, Student; IUPUI [00:02:02] She expects you to learn from one another within the class. She brings a lot of examples when she's teaching, and she kind of looks for you to provide those insights to provide examples as well because she believes that we can all learn from one another's profession within our classroom and outside of our classroom.

Kevin Kelly, EdD [00:02:25] I also provide networked guidelines and etiquette stands for internet etiquette, and I'll become has put these guidelines out for instructors and other people working on the web to work together in ways that are respectful and make sure that we're all driving toward the same goals. Share expert knowledge. We're all experts in some way, shape or form. Help keep flame wars under control. So do your part to help everybody stay civil in that way.

Franky, Student; San Francisco State University [00:02:56] Students had an understanding of what was expected of us and how we should treat each other, and how should we treat our professors, how we treat assignments. And in that way, everyone was just on the same level about all sorts of expectations.

Tracy Burt, EdM; Instructor; Child Development and Family Studies Department; City College of San Francisco [00:03:20] I feel that it's really important to set the tone at the beginning of the semester and the first couple of weeks of class by creating some shared agreements together, some shared group agreements. And I do that because being explicit and kind of being metacognitive, thinking about how we learn and what kind of a space we're going to create together the culture in our classroom. I've just found it incredibly helpful.

Darvelle Hutchins, MBA, MA; Doctoral Candidate; Department of Communication; University of Missouri [00:03:44] I established this list of community norms as a way for us to foster respect for each other, a love and a caring environment, as well as a supportive environment. And these community norms help to make this class a safe space for students. And so, I have a foundational set of norms, but then I allow students to sort of build on to that.

Julia, Student; University of Missouri [00:04:05] It was nice just to feel like you had a say in everything, and everyone kind of saw what you expected from them. And even as a professor for him to say, I want to be there for you guys, I want to give you guys what you need. That was like literally a first for me. No pressure to ever done that. And so, it was really nice to see that he cared.

Katherine McCarthy, PhD, LCSW; Assistant Professor; Indiana University School of Social Work [00:04:25] Near the beginning of the class, we have a big discussion board where students are posting information to get to know each other. And one of the questions I ask them is, you know, can you tell me what you expect of yourself as a learner? Can you tell me what you expect of your classmates? And can you tell me what you expect of myself as your instructor? And then they get to write their what they want for themselves, what they want for each other and what they want from me and from me. I often hear them say things like clear communication, getting back to them quickly, but from each other, I often hear them say, you know, we want to learn from each other. We want people to post interesting things and respond and be invested in the work that we do together.

Kate Kelley, PhD; Visiting Assistant Professor Director of Undergraduate Studies; Department of Religious Studies; University of Missouri [00:05:07] I ask students to first write down three things. What are the things that are going to make you feel comfortable in this course? After that, I put them into groups of four or five students together in a discussion board group, and I say, everybody, tell us what your three things work. Look at the similarities, look at the differences and distill your three things down from the whole group into three new things. Each group has sort of elected someone to, to post their three things that came out of their group discussion. We get this huge, long list, and it's great because it's coming from each individual person talked about in a small group setting and then sort of unleashed on the whole big discussion board. And so, I try to make it a community effort.

Lauren, Student; University of Missouri [00:06:01] Making sure that everyone has a sense of safety and respect anything that they share is very important because it's very hard to get someone to share when they don't feel like they're being listened to or respected.

Tessi, Student; University of Missouri [00:06:12] When you invite a community in a classroom to establish their own norms and needs and ways of being together, then then in essence, what you're doing is creating a space where everyone feels like they have a part of making it a space that they can be brave in to do the learning that they need to do.

Darvelle Hutchins, MBA, MA [00:06:31] I think as an instructor, we also have to be very mindful of the times that we're living in and what's going on in students' social roles and how that can also impact the tone and the pace of the course. And so, for me, I'm always going in and logging online to see if something's been posted or to make sure that we are following those community norms or those community rules that are set in place and sort of in some way help manage the productivity of the space.

Kate Kelley, PhD [00:07:01] So if you have those hot moments in your course where you can sort of you see that something might be leading somewhere or someone just flat out said something really awful, I could step in and I can say, remember these guidelines that we created? I just want you to know that I think you might be coming up on the edge on this one. Maybe I'm hoping that you can see this a different way or even it's apparent to me that this impacted students like this other student more than maybe you intended to or, you know, think about impact and intention.

Tracy Burt, EdM [00:07:39] If I feel like the class needs a reminder, I will have everybody do an activity at mid-term or so or whatever it is and say I would like you to share one group agreement that you're doing well and one that you'd like to work on when that the class is doing well and one that the class what you'd like the class to work on. The group has an opportunity to reflect and then it's not necessarily individual conversations. I see if the group can actually take it forward together.

Ashlyn, Student; University of Missouri [00:08:03] If someone were to speak in a way that kind of exposed some of their biases, they were asked to kind of acknowledge that in a way that wasn't shameful, in a way that wasn't fueled by guilt, in a way that doesn't feel. By anger, these students in this classroom were able to understand that maybe they meant one thing and the way that it was received by another student in the class was what's different than their original intentions. And both of those things matter so much.

Deninne Pritchett, PhD; Chairperson and Faculty Member; Department of Psychology; Central Piedmont

Community College [00:08:43] The way that I communicate with students is the way that I expect students to communicate with me, I'm going to show you that I am accountable, that I have integrity because I expect the same thing. I make sure that I monitor my interpersonal skills as well as my interpersonal skills, because I have to also be aware of how I'm communicating based on the way that I feel.

Jennifer Embree, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CCNS, FAAN [00:09:04] As I think about how I teach, trying to maintain and role model a civil environment. It's really critical that I know when I'm in the wrong, when I'm not being professional, but I also know what other people are feeling and the impact on them.

Kristin, Student; IUPUI [00:09:24] The behaviors that Dr. Embry expects of us in the classroom. She also upholds those expectations of herself as an instructor. And I think that she role models those behaviors very well.

Julie, Student; IUPUI [00:09:36] She was always present in our assignments. We had group discussions and she would come, and she would be part of that discussion group. So, you always felt she was there and also responding to what you had to say and adding clarification.

Kevin Kelly, EdD [00:09:52] I do call out examples of civility in my summaries of discussions and sometimes in my reminders for students to go participate in those discussions. I'll say, hey, take a look at what Jeanette just put in the discussion, and I really appreciate the way she interacted with the student. And so, you can model and actually reinforce the behaviors by promoting students who are already doing it.