

The Student Must Have Slack!

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From? Trine University Center For Teaching Excellence

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Slides available on tsmorrill.github.io.

Agenda

The Big Idea

Communication Via Subtext

General Policies

List Of General Policies

Grading

Grade Policy

Sample μ -Rubrics

Promises

To The Student

Extension Policy

The Slack System

PROTIP: Start every lecture with your agenda on the board.

Communication Via Subtext

Your course policies are not merely a system of rules. What you choose to write conveys your expectations to the students. Moreover, your words betray any positive or negative sentiment you hold towards your pupils!

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What will you do with this
knowledge?

List Of General Policies

If you don't explain how you deal with common student issues, then student issues must not be important to you!

- Anti-harassment
- LGBTQIA+ Safe Space (ask me about training)
- Seating
- Calculators
- Technology
- Illness
- Academic Misconduct
- Plagiarism

Grade Proportions

Students don't know what "formative" and "summative" mean. My assignments are categorized as circle (○), diamond (◇), or star (★). If anyone asks (they won't), summative assessments are pointy.

○ Assignments (25% Total):

10% Classwork

15% Homework

◇ Assignments (45% Total):

20% Quizzes

25% Midterm Exam

★ Assignments (30% Total):

30% Final Exam

Grade Policy

Absence Penalty	Each unexcused absence deducts 2% from the student's course average.
Final Exam Override	If a student earns an A (at least 90%) on the final exam, their final exam score replaces their \diamond average.
μ -Rubrics	Most assignments are assessed with microrubrics (μ -rubrics). The μ -rubric partitions grade points into descriptive categories. Categories include Technique, Gumption, Tidiness, Completion, and Self-Assessment.
Abuse	Students who abuse self-assessment may be assigned zero (0) self-assessment points on future assignments as a punishment.

Sample μ -Rubrics

μ -RUBRIC (HOMEWORK)

Self-Assessment:	/2
Gumption:	/2
Tidiness:	/1
<hr/> TOTAL:	<hr/> /5

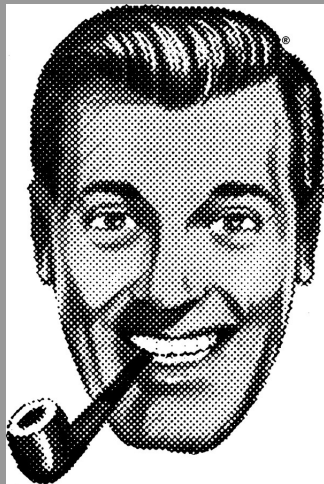
μ -RUBRIC (QUIZ)

Technique:	/4
Gumption:	/3
Tidiness:	/2
Completion:	/1
<hr/> TOTAL:	<hr/> /10

To The Student

- I promise you will be treated with the respect and care you deserve as my pupil.
- I promise to consider your needs as an individual when writing and enforcing my course policies.
- I promise that the tedious work I assign is for your benefit. I promise to explain what those benefits are when you ask me.
- I promise to use the Socratic method without being obnoxious about it.
- I promise to grade and return your work in a timely manner.
- I promise not to use the phrase “as it says in the syllabus” when answering your questions about the course.

The Student Must Have Slack!



Listen to "Bob".

The Slack System

Slack Points Each student is allocated slack points. Students may exchange their slack with the instructor for extensions, no questions asked.

Slack Cards Slack is tracked on a punch-style card, which students keep on their person.

Acquiring Slack Each student is given three (3) slack points at the beginning of the term. After the midterm, all students with fewer than three (3) slack points are be topped up to three (3) slack points.

Slack Cards

A printable slack card template is attached to this pdf.

When a student spends slack, update the number of points on the card in pen.

When a student performs above expectations, sign one (1) empty space on the card as a reward. When ten (10) spaces are full, the student earns one new (1) slack point. (Give them a fresh card.)

Slack Redemption

Students may spend one (1) slack point for any one (1) of the following payouts:

- Excuse one (1) absence and earn a full score on all ○ classwork assigned that day.
- Earn a full score on one (1) ○ homework,
- Postpone one (1) ◇ assignment up to one week (7 days).
- Retake one (1) ◇ assignment up to one week (7 days) after grades are posted.
- Reschedule one (1) ★ assignment to another time during Finals Week.
- Students may propose alternative slack payouts. Approve these on a case-by-case basis

Slack Restrictions

- No more than one (1) slack point may be spent on a given assignment.
- Slack spent on ★ assignments must be spent in advance.
- Slack cannot be spent to avoid the consequences of being asked to leave the classroom.
- Students who abuse slack may lose their slack points as a punishment.

Any Questions?

Thank you!

"THE STUDENT MUST HAVE SLACK!"

— Prof Morrill

REDEEMABLE FOR 3 SLACK POINTS

NEXT SLACK POINT

"CUT ME SOME SLACK, JACK!"

— Prof Morrill

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