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Save the Date Announcements:

Coffee with Sarah: December 16, 10 am, Manna Cafe, 611 N. Sherman Ave, Madison, WI

Quarterly IL Instructor Appreciation and Professional Development Meeting: January 13 at 1 pm, 21 N. Park Street room 7045: Helping Students Define Their Own Success

UW-Extension CEOEL Partner Program Faculty Symposium: May 22-23

Distance Teaching & Learning Conference 2017 : July 25-27
dtlconference.wisc.edu



Communication Strategies

Communication can seem as vital to human survival as air and water, and often, like breathing and drinking, communication occurs without planning or strategy. In most communicative interactions, verbal, non-verbal, and visual strategies work together to achieve meaningful comprehension.

In Independent Learning, we have long relied primary on visual communication through writing. Recent technological advancements have made verbal and non-verbal communication possible, and instructors are using voice recording and video recording tools more often to interact with students.

Another way to think about communication strategies concerns tone and content. Communication can be intrusive, available, understanding, fair, considerate, or inclusive. These communication strategies concern the content, rather than the form, of communication. Each of these strategies can be used effectively by IL instructors when they are used consistently and with clear intent.

Intrusive communication sounds negative, but can be beneficial. This communication strategy is best employed when a student's actions (or lack of submissions) counteract their goal of completing the course successfully. The goal of intrusive communication is to interrupt student behavior that is not aligned with success, and help redirect students to behaviors that will lead to successful course completion.

Available communication is communication that indicates the instructor

is interested in answering questions and working with the student. "Please email me if you have any questions or concerns" is an example of an available communication strategy.

Understanding communication indicates to students that the instructor has empathy for the student's situation or circumstance.

Fair communication focuses on facts and course learning goals rather than instructor emotion.

Considerate communication values and respects each student equally for their ideas, beliefs, and values.

Inclusive communication recognizes that not all methods of communication will work equally well for all students, and utilizes multiple available tools of communication. An example of Inclusive communication is including in-line assignment feedback with GradeMark *and* providing summative written feedback in the dropbox *and* recording a short audio feedback clip.

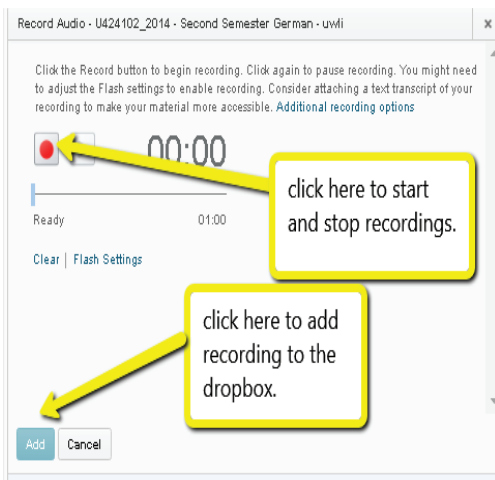
Regardless of the communication strategies you use in your IL course, perhaps the most important communication strategy of all is listening. By listening carefully to students, instructors are best able to tailor communication strategies to fit individual student needs.

Fun Fact: Grade Appeals

IL students can appeal their grades. The first step in a grade appeal process for students is to send a written statement requesting review to the course facilitator. If a student contacts you about a grade appeal, contact your academic program director.

D2L Gem: Recording Audio Feedback

Providing audio feedback is one thing instructors can do that can make the course feel more personal, build connections with students, and help students to understand which aspects of feedback are most important. You can record audio feedback in your D2L drop-box. To the right of the “add a file” link that you use to upload attachments to the drop-box when grading assignments, you will see a “record audio” button. When you click this button, a pop-up window opens with a red record button. Click the red record button to start and stop the recording, and then click “add” to add the recording to the drop-box.



Be sure to use a headset with a microphone to record audio feedback. Please let us know if you are in need of a headset.

Good Practice Reminder: Course End Dates

Many IL students find themselves scrambling to complete their courses very close to their course end dates. As soon as 48 hours after a course end date, the student can be removed from D2L, which means that any last minute work may not be visible for you to grade. If you know that you are working with a student who may be

submitting work up until their course end date, please let us know via email at il@dcs.wisc.edu. If you are unable to grade student work because it has disappeared from D2L after the course end date, please let us know as well so we can make the work visible to you again for grading.

Instructor Meeting Recap: Brightspace

At the last IL instructor meeting, Stephen Beers from CEOEL's Instructional Design team introduced us to Brightspace, a free mobile grading app that can be used with D2L. The app works on iPads and Android Tablets (not smart phones or computers) and has the advantage of allowing instructors to download assignments in need of grading, and then grading and providing feedback off-line. When the iPad or tablet has an Internet connection again, the feedback is automatically uploaded to the D2L drop-box. Unfortunately, GradeMark does not work with Brightspace, and instructors still need to update grades manually in LPV/LRMS.

Students say:

Prospective students should know that this is a great course with a top notch instructor.

Introducing: Matthew Griffin

Matthew is a doctoral student in Applied Spanish Linguistics at UW-Madison with graduate minors in English Language & Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition. His research interests include acoustic and articulatory phonetics and L2 phonology acquisition. Matthew is a native of North Carolina where he received his MA in English Linguistics and graduate certificates in Hispanic Studies and Community College Instruction from East Carolina University. In his free time he enjoys traveling and studying other languages.

