ESF Academic Governance Meeting

7 December 2021
ESF Academic Governance Agenda

1. Welcome / Call to Order/Acknowledgement
2. Approval of Past Minutes
3. Executive Chair Report – G. Scott
4. President Report – S. Mukasa
5. Reports
   a. Research (3min)
   b. Curriculum (3min)
   c. Library (3min)
   d. Awards (3min)
   e. University Faculty Senate (5min)
6. Old Business
   a. AG Committees
   b. Nominations for At-Large Executive Committee members
7. New Business
   a. Nominations for Ombuds
   b. Open Forum for AG issues
8. General Good and Welfare
   a. Blackboard/online learning best practices from a students perspective – L. Chipules
9. Adjourn
10. Post-Meeting Socialization
Virtual Sign-in QR Code

Instructions:
- Using your “smart phone”, open an internet browser.
- Click in the search dialog.
- Locate and select the “Scan” icon while pointing the phone at the QR code.
- Accept the redirection to the Socrative website
- Type your name when prompted

https://b.socrative.com/login/student/
Room: ESFAG
Executive Chair Report

Gary M Scott
Executive Chair Report

Return of meeting amenities

- Beverages, no food
  - Excess of food at last meeting
  - Minimize danger from Covid
Congratulations on the End of the Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SUNY-ESF</th>
<th>Onondaga County</th>
<th>State of New York</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests administered</td>
<td>3991 (fall semester)</td>
<td>5357 (past 7 days)</td>
<td>122,336 (12/05 data)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active cases</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2052</td>
<td>436,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cases</td>
<td>59 (fall semester)</td>
<td>60242 (since start)</td>
<td>2,876,483 (since start)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity rates</td>
<td>2.04% (past 7 days)</td>
<td>7.5% (past 7 days)</td>
<td>4.8% (past 7 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active cases / population</td>
<td>~0.13%</td>
<td>0.44%</td>
<td>2.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccination rate</td>
<td>&gt;99%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
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</table>

*Thanks for keeping us all safe at ESF.*

https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/usa/new-york/
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing-tracker
https://covid19.ongov.net/data/#testingcounts
https://www.esf.edu/restart/

Academic Governance Meeting - 7 December 2021
Spring AG Meetings

- Online, in-person, or both?

- Last meeting had ~70 online participants and ~40 in-person participants
National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

- We honor those who lost their lives in the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941

- Please join me in a moment of silence to honor their courage and sacrifice
President’s Report

Joanne Mahoney
David Newman
Committee Reports

Research (3min)
Curriculum (3min)
Library (3min)
Awards (3min)
University Faculty Senate (5min)
Committee on Research

- McIntire-Stennis Program
  - All proposals have assigned 2 reviewers;
  - Reviews due: 12/10, 2021;
  - Committee nominations to VPR due: 12/14, 2021

- Research Advisory Council
  - Chair: Giorgos Mountrakis;
  - Members: Jacqui Frair, Theresa Selfa, Tim Volk, Greg Boyer, David Kieber

- Hardy L. Shirley Faculty Mentoring Colloquium
  - Date: January 13, 2022
  - Main Topic: Research
  - Contacts: Giorgos Mountrakis (gmountrakis@esf.edu) and Ashley Gouger (argouger@esf.edu)
Committee Reports

Research (3min)

**Curriculum** (3min)

Library (3min)

Awards (3min)

University Faculty Senate (5min)
Report by Committee on Curriculum

Academic Governance meeting

December 07, 2021
Committee on Curriculum (COC)

Purpose
This committee, composed of faculty members only, in order to exercise its responsibility for the conduct of the College's instructional program, shall be concerned with:

- All matters that pertain to the development, modification and removal of courses and curricula at the College including:
  - Support and administration
  - Content and interrelationship of courses and curricula
  - Instructional methods
  - Degree requirements
  - Outcomes and compliance with College and SUNY policies that pertain to curriculum

Composition
The committee is composed of eight (8) voting faculty members representing the academic departments (Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Environmental and Forest Biology, Environmental Resource Management, Environmental Studies, Landscape Architecture, and...)

Meetings
Academic Year 2021-22
Time and Location: 11:00 am - 12:20 pm, Online Zoom, unless otherwise noted

Please note that, in order for a proposal to be considered by the Committee on Curriculum during the 2021-22 academic year meeting schedule, the deadline for submission of proposals is as follows:

- Curriculum Proposal deadline: January 15, 2022
- Course Proposal deadline: March 1, 2022

https://www.esf.edu/coc/
Committee Reports

Research (3min)
Curriculum (3min)
**Library (3min)**
Awards (3min)
University Faculty Senate (5min)
Committee Reports

- Research (3min)
- Curriculum (3min)
- Library (3min)
- Awards (3min)
- University Faculty Senate (5min)
Awards Committee

- Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence
  - Deadline in January
  - Nomination form available soon
Committee Reports

Research (3min)
Curriculum (3min)
Library (3min)
Awards (3min)
University Faculty Senate (5min)
UFS Report

- Helpful web sites: sunyufs.us updated routinely

  system.suny.edu/facultysenate archive

- Campus faculty/staff can serve on UFS standing committees – don’t need to be Senators or Campus Governance Leaders. Committee details and registration can be found at http://www.sunyufs.us/committee-application-page.html
UFS Report

- Winter Plenary will be in person, hosted by Cornell January 20-22

  - Please send me topics for the Specialized and Statutory Colleges to raise with the Chancellor. These can include issues that are presenting challenges for our campus, challenges that have been positively resolved and outstanding work or projects. Past topics have included using P/F grades, challenges coordinating schedules with sister institutions and academic freedom.
UFS Report

• Chancellor controversy

- Chancellor has apologized.
- Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC) and the Student Association have called for resignation.
- SUNY BoT issued a statement in support of the Chancellor.
- UFS Executive Committee is collecting input from senators and CGLs to formulate a response.

Email input to rappleby@esf.edu.
Old Business
### AG Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Academic Affairs Committee</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joanie Mahoney 2022 Chair</td>
<td>Shijie Liu 2022 Chemical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Scott 2022 Executive Chair</td>
<td>Fran Webster 2023 Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neal Abrams 2023 Secretary</td>
<td>Kim Schultz 2024 Environmental Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Bryant 2023 SU Senator</td>
<td>Wendong Tao 2023 Environmental Resources Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karin Limburg 2023 SU Senator</td>
<td>Silje Kristiansen 2023 Environmental Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Yanai 2023 SUNY Senator</td>
<td>Robin Hoffman 2023 Landscape Architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray Appleby 2023 SUNY Senator Alternate</td>
<td>Eddie Bevilacqua 2022 Sustainable Resources Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Storrings 2022 Sergeant-at-Arms</td>
<td>Anne Moore 2022 Environmental Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Knight 2022 Parliamentarian</td>
<td>Jacob Gedetsis 2023 Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie Bevilacqua 2022 Academic Affairs Chair</td>
<td>Ruth Owens 2022 Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Tochelli Student Experience Chair</td>
<td>Tondalaya George 2022 Open Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan Gitsov 2022 Research and Scholarship Chair</td>
<td>Mary Triano 2022 Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherina Searing 2022 Awards Chair</td>
<td>Sue Sanford 2022 Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexi Chipules 2022 USA President</td>
<td>Casey Duffy 2022 Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Berger 2022 GSA President</td>
<td>Scott Shannon 2022 USA Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aaron Rounds* 2021 At-Large (Staff)</td>
<td>GSA Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Nominated</td>
<td>Scott Shannon Ex Officio</td>
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**Faculty and Staff Advancement Chair**

**Academic Affairs Chair**

**Student Experience Chair**

**Academic Governance Meeting - 7 December 2021**

**Ex Officio**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Experience Committee</th>
<th>Faculty and Staff Advancement Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deepak Kumar 2022 Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewart Diemont 2023 Environmental Biology</td>
<td>Environmental Biology</td>
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<td>Environmental Resources Engineering</td>
<td>Environmental Resources Engineering</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Environmental Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Leibowitz 2022 Landscape Architecture</td>
<td>Landscape Architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diane Kiernan 2022 Sustainable Resources Management</td>
<td>Sustainable Resources Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Science</td>
<td>Environmental Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christina Ciereck 2023 Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Verostek 2023 Library</td>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Academy</td>
<td>Open Academy</td>
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<td>Laura Crandall 2022 Staff</td>
<td>Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casey Duffy 2021 Staff</td>
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<td>Erin Tochelli 2022 Staff</td>
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<td>USA Representative</td>
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<td>GSA Representative</td>
<td>GSA Representative</td>
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<td>Anne Lombard Ex Officio</td>
<td>Ex Officio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophie Gublo-Jantzen 2023 Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matt Smith 2023 Library</td>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Mukasa Ex Officio</td>
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### AG Committees

#### Research and Scholarship Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ray Francis</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan Gitsov</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dylan Parry</td>
<td>2024</td>
<td>Environmental Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Morin</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Environmental Resources Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Cousins</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Environmental Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aidan Ackerman</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Landscape Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Volk</td>
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<td>Sustainable Resources Management</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental Science</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casey Koons</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Open Academy</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Wasiel</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Staff</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Staff</td>
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<td>USA Representative</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>GSA Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Stella</td>
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<td>Ex Officio</td>
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#### Awards Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Janine DeBaise</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherina Searing</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Kimmerer</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Moore</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie Rutkowski</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Yanai</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karin Limburg</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
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<td>USA Representative</td>
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AG Committees

- Chairs/Unit Heads provide their nominations/appointments

- Convene initial meeting of Faculty and Staff Advancement Committee
  - Initial meeting convened by AG Executive Chair
  - Selection of Committee Chair as first agenda item

- Continue work of the AG committees
  - Ad hoc committees appointed as necessary
Nominations for At-Large Executive Committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Nominees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Representative</td>
<td>Aaron Rounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (non-continuing appointment)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty (continuing appointment)</td>
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</table>
New Business
Nominations for Ombudsperson

- Provost Mukasa is looking for a community member to serve this role

- Characteristics
  - Empathetic and good listening skills
  - Commitment to confidentiality
  - Impartiality
  - Principled and ethical
  - Timely but considered processing and resolving of conflicts
  - Good working knowledge of the tenets in both the student and faculty handbooks
Nominations for Ombudsperson

- The Ombudsperson will:
  - listen and help to analyze the problem or complaint
  - identify and explain relevant university policies and procedures
  - help to define and evaluate options
  - help to resolve problems informally and expeditiously
  - make inquiries into a problem, complaint, or concern
  - initiate discussions with other involved parties (with appropriate consent)
  - help develop problem solving skills and promote critical thinking so individuals will be better able to act on their own behalf in resolving conflicts.
  - assist in outlining a plan of action to resolve conflict(s) and/or guide adherence to University policy and protocol
  - make referrals to other campus and community resources and
  - recommend changes in University policies or procedures that may be outdated, ineffectual or arbitrary.
  - support individuals by connecting them with internal and external resources to foster a helping network
  - provide a safe and neutral setting where individuals feel respected and where they can be candid and forthright
Nominations for Ombudsperson

The Ombudsperson will not:

- does not act as an advocate in a dispute. The Ombudsperson is neutral and impartial.
- does not compel participation. The use of the Ombudsperson is voluntary.
- does not represent individuals in appeals or formal grievance procedures either on campus or off campus
- does not provide legal representation or give legal advice
- does not get involved with non-University related problems or complaints
- does not overturn binding decisions, but can investigate procedural fairness
- does not serve as an office of record. Speaking with the Ombudsperson is not "notice to the University" of problems or policy violations. Often persons will seek advice from the Ombudsperson privately, before deciding what actions to take in response to a problem. If you want the University to "be on notice," that is, formally to know about a particular problem and formally respond, the Ombudsperson can help you identify which office to contact.
- does not keep formal written records. The Ombudsperson can help you determine how to keep your own records, if you need to do that.
Nominations for Ombudsperson

- Provost Mukasa would like three to four nominations to consider

- Please send nominations (self-nominations welcome) to the Provost’s office at provost@esf.edu.
Open Forum for AG issues

■ Invited to give a report to the ESF Board of Trustees on Friday
  – *Important highlights?*
  – *Concerns of Academic Governance*

■ Issues for Academic Governance to address
General Good & Welfare

Blackboard/online learning best practices from a student’s perspective – L. Chipules
LEXI CHIPULES (USA) AND THE OPEN ACADEMY
SURVEY SENT OUT TO ALL STUDENTS

111 Responses
“I think blackboard is really hard to use and confusing for both professors and students”

“I find it best when a professor will at least have the blackboard course open for viewing, with the schedule there and grades posted”

“I think there should be a dedicated platform that online classes are done through, be it collaborate ultra or zoom”

“It can be hard to find the information I am looking for because there are so many not standardized tabs to sort through”

“What’s the point of having an organized system like BB if teachers don’t use the tools”

“It would be helpful if professors were given recommendations on how to lay out blackboard. And we’re encouraged to update grades frequently”

“Blackboard when done right works great but it has to be the same in each class”

“It would be SO MUCH easier if they all had the same section titles”

“I just want whatever is used to be universal”

“It drives me absolutely nuts that my profs use different platforms. It makes it so difficult to keep up with work because you have to switch between a ton of sites and tabs to figure anything out. Plus the learning curve in the beginning of how to use each site. Finally, a few of my profs have blackboard locked so even the syllabus isn’t available on there and I have to go back in my emails to find it. It really is absolutely maddening and I WISH someone would regulate professor use of the platforms. I get that they all have different teaching methods but as a student who is PAYING for their classes, its harming my learning experience (and grades) for it to be an absolute free for all amongst professors to chose where to display grades and important information”
How many of your professors/classes use Blackboard?

- 0 courses: 10
- 1 course: 20
- 2 courses: 30
- 3 courses: 40
- 4 courses: 50
- 5 courses: 60

Do they use Blackboard effectively, or in a way that is helpful and has a positive impact on your learning experience?

- No - 1
- Yes - 5
Blackboard Usage vs. Grade Center Usage

How many of your professors/classes use Blackboard?
- 0 courses: 6.36%
- 1 course: 93.64%

How many of your courses keep the "grades" section in Blackboard up to date?
- Not a factor: 6.36%
- Yes: 93.64%

Does it contribute positively to your learning experience when grades are up to date in Blackboard?
If you have to use an online learning video platform would you prefer all classes use the same, or leave it up to the professor?

- All the same: 60.91%
- Let the professor decide: 20.00%
- No opinion: 12.73%

Which online learning video platform do you prefer?

- Zoom: 63.64%
- Blackboard Collaborate: 18.18%
- MS Teams: 4.55%
- Other: 1.27%
Which document format is most helpful/accessible for download/use from Blackboard?

- Adobe PDF: 50.91%
- MS Word: 35.45%
- Google Docs: 2.73%
- Other: 2.64%
Would you appreciate a guide/"best practices" for professors to follow in terms of Blackboard use?

- Yes: 65.45%
- No: 7.27%
- No Opinion: 20.91%
What Blackboard features/uses do you find most effective/impactful?

Grade reporting and updates
Grade book
threads for asking questions
Activity Stream
Posting lecture PowerPoints

I like that I can access the slides if the professor posts them, the homework is easy to find, and the discussion assignments are pretty good too.

Announcements
Grades section
When the tabs on the left are laid out clearly with the different sections, when grades are updated, and the questions section is helpful but only if my teacher responded to it regularly.

Activity Stream and Grades
grades, assignments
I like everything being all in one place

Handing out/turning in assignments
My Grades / Blackboard Collaborate
Content posting and grade section

If the "Due Dates" portion of the calendar were accurate for every class, that would be incredibly helpful. Like immensely.

grades
Organized tabs with specific information
Grades, and documents from professor.

Separating the tabs into logical categories. Sometimes hw gets hidden in many folders and it's easiest if there's a hw folder and then a separate one for class notes. Also allowing you to see correct answers for the quizzes is nice.

The grades section, and the activity stream section
grades section
Lecture recordings and slides
the discussion board and assignment list spot
the grades sections
The grades section
grades, assignments
The separate sections in each class
Calendar

The Folder Feature! Professors don't create enough separation in their content.

Having specific folders for different aspects of the class makes things much more clear instead of lumping everything into "content"

Grades, the calendar is nice if you have many assignments due on blackboard.

Organization
Assignment information and submit
Calendar
Being able to turn in assignments online
Grades
Well organized content sections for course material
Grades and Announcements
tools, grades
assignments list
Content/Grades
Access to Slides
Lecture notes
When all homework is listed under the hw section.
Quizzes and exams
Discussion boards, communication with groups
Viewing grades as well as access to Class Syllabus
Lecture slides and other class info and guidelines. As well as quick multiple choice outside of class quizzes or assignments

Grades and Quiz
The calendar! I think all assignments and tests should be in the calendar regardless if they are going to be submitted on blackboard
the ease of finding assignments
The organized layout
Grades!
Messages
It's nice that everything has its place
Quiz
Content tabs with slides and readings posted from class; Grades
When things are separated into sections
Q+A sections
Submissions, Collaborate during class, Online quizzes

Grades
Quizzes directly on blackboard
Calendar, lecture content and Due dates
Referencing the syllabus for most classes regularly
Its ability to organize files for class grades, activity feed, push notifications

Different tabs for course content (i.e. homework tab, lectures tab, lab material tab)
Love virtual lectures recorded and available for review in BB, whether they were originally recorded on BB or Zoom or whatever

The folders help keep everything super organized
Turning in assignments, seeing grades, access to notes/helpful information and resources

The grade section keeps me up-to-date on what I need to study more of.
Discussion board
Grades, content tabs, courses tab
the grades section (when updated throughout the semester) is the best tool at keeping track of your status in the class
Being able to submit assignments right there
Discussion threads for asking questions
Grades

Having lecture slides and PDFs of homework’s/labs/instructions and putting grades up.

I appreciate when grades are up to date and there is logical sorting of information in folders on Blackboard.

Organization of material is very important, and being able to upload assignments directly to Blackboard is useful
Grades. I need to know how I'm doing in my classes, it's really important to me.
Effective, organized folders. Minimal use of tabs.

Up to date grades and turn in portals, folders with organized readings by week, constant access to the syllabus and schedule.

grades
finding the different tabs related to the course like content area, assignments, grade and etc under the same page, and being able see all the classes in one website

The content tab is very important having all of the readings up and organized is essential
Teaching with Technology: Best Practices
Learning Management Systems

About Learning Management Systems
A Learning Management System (LMS) is a tool that helps plan, implement, and assess learning. You can use it to help you communicate and interact with students, deliver and collect assignments and assessments, and provide information and materials. With any tool, however, there are some practices that will make using it more effective for both you and your students. Keep reading for some best practices and ideas adapted from the SUNY OSCQR rubric (https://oscqr.suny.edu)

Course Information
Providing basic course information in the LMS is a really helpful resource for students. This allows them to easily find important details, such as contact information, due dates, and help resources.

Syllabus
• Post a copy of your syllabus that students can download
• Make sure to use the most up-to-date ESF Syllabus Template provided by Academic Governance
• For parts of the syllabus that students may refer back to regularly (e.g., class schedule), add a copy of that content to the course menu or landing page for quick access

Contact Information
• Identify your preferred method(s) of communication. Should students use email, phone, or another form of contact?
• Let students know your availability by listing office hours but also times when you check and respond to email (and times you do not!)
• If you have a TA, make sure to include their information as well

Relevant Help Resources
• Outline what on-campus and remote resources are available to students in your course, such as the Academic Success Center, Writing Center, Public Speaking Lab, Library, and Tutoring
• Include contact information for any resources as well as your perspective on the benefits of using these services
Third-Party Tools

When using technology in your teaching, especially technology that students will need to create profiles or accounts to access, consider the following points. If you are using technology like this in your class, please communicate with students as early as possible so that they can sign up or acquire any needed software.

1. **Cost:** How much will access to the technology cost students? Is this in addition to any textbook or course fees? Will they use it in multiple courses?

2. **Security & Privacy:** Look at the company’s Terms of Service. Consider the data they are collecting and what they are doing with that information. Send students the links to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policies before class.

3. **Support:** With technology comes the occasional issue. If you or your students are having trouble, who will support the program or hardware?

4. **Accessibility:** LMS tools typically adhere to accessibility standards, but those outside the LMS need to be reviewed for accessibility before being included in your course.

5. **Platform Compatibility:** Some programs only run on Windows, Mac, iOS, or Android. If a program cannot be used on all devices, consider how students who have different platforms can access the program.

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**Help is available!**

For support on best practices using the LMS, please reach out to the Open Academy Teaching and Learning Center by contacting Ashley Gouger or Brandon Murphy.

For questions on how to do specific tasks or for troubleshooting, please reach out to Syracuse University ITS.

Contact information can be found on the next page.
Design & Layout
A clear and logical design and layout of your course will help learners find what they are looking for easily and quickly.

Consistency
- A consistent layout within your course, across your courses, and even in your department/program can help students reduce confusion about where things are and how to navigate your LMS page.
- Consistently sequencing communication, overviews of content, learning activities, and interactions allows learners to routinely access what they need and anticipate where to find course materials.

Logical & Clear
To help create a logical and clear layout, consider the following:
- Use intuitive and descriptive labels for activities, homework, content, etc.
- Implement a sequential organization.
- Group content, materials, and assignments by time period (e.g., weekly) or by topic to create modules.
- Put commonly used tools (e.g., Zoom, discussions, etc.) as part of the main navigation.

Interaction
An important part of the learning process is interaction and communication. There are tools available through the LMS that can help you communicate and interact with students.

Communication
- Announcements are a great communication tool. They are emailed to students as well as persistent in your course so students can easily return to them.
- Consider setting up a communication schedule. Send a weekly message (email or announcement) on the same day of the week with the same structure. Consider including important upcoming dates, new content, class-level feedback, and any other information you'd like to include.
- Communication can be used to provide consistency and clarity in your course.

Interaction
- For group projects, consider giving groups a digital workspace including discussion board, virtual meeting room, and file center so they can work together virtually.
- Set up a general Q&A discussion board for general questions about the course (e.g., “Are we meeting in the computer lab Thursday?”) Students can answer each other and you can jump in and reply too, if needed.
Assessment & Feedback
As with design and layout and communication and interaction, clarity and consistency is an important part of assessment and feedback. Clear instructions and labels will help students know what to do. A consistent schedule of due dates and expected feedback dates will help students stay on track.

Distribution & Collection
- Use the built-in assignments and tests functions in the LMS to distribute and collect assignments. Using the built-in tools connects the assignments right to the grade book and reduces email/inbox clutter
- Use consistent labels for assignments so that everyone knows what assignment is due when

Due Dates
- Use the Due Date feature in your LMS to automatically create a calendar of assignment due dates for students
- Try to use consistent days of the week and time of day to create due dates

Gradebook
- Keep the gradebook uncluttered and up-to-date. This helps students know how they are doing in your course
- Use rubrics to help with giving feedback and grades

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Thank you
Adjourn