

Template Language for Remote Course Syllabi Fall Semester, 2020

Below are syllabus policies written by various Rhodes faculty to address the needs of the remote classroom. They are available for you to adapt, reword, or use as written in your own syllabi. A few caveats:

- Treat the policies below as **a random rather than a representative sample** of policies adopted by Rhodes faculty. They are offered as **examples, not recommendations**, and the range of different policies faculty have crafted is likely much broader than what you will find here.
- In shaping your own policies and protocols, **choose what will fit best with the specific goals and methods of your course**. Don't feel pressured to limit your choice to those listed below. There are as many ways to set up a class as there are individual professors. The best way will be the one that promotes the kind of community of engagement you are trying to create in your course.
- When in doubt, consult the updated [Remote Learning Guidelines](#) provided by Academic Affairs. It will help you make sure you've covered everything that needs to be covered. Lots of helpful information on Canvas and Moodle in particular can be found in the [Tech Tips for Remote Teaching and Learning](#) developed by the Instructional Tech Team.
- One note with regard to **camera policy**: Students tend to be more engaged with cameras on, but not all students have the wifi bandwidth to broadcast video all the time. Some may have devices that aren't powerful enough to support a virtual background. And some may not have access to a private space suitable for displaying to all their classmates. Strike a balance here, one that will encourage full participation in an equitable way, without penalizing students because of personal circumstances.

Some other resources for building syllabi for this fall:

- The [Rhodes to Equity](#) video series, created by Justin Rose, Dean for Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Diversity, starts off with an episode on inclusive syllabus policies with Zac Casey. Episode 2, with Kelly Weeks, talks about building an inclusive environment in a remote course. Episode 3, with José Rodriguez, offers techniques for putting ideas from Casey and Weeks into practice.
- These [recommendations on trans inclusivity](#) were developed by the LGBTQ+ Working Group and the Office of Faculty Development
- Suggested language from the Title IX office about faculty status as mandatory reporters is provided at the end of the document, and it has been updated to reflect current policy. See the [Rhodes Title IX site](#) or contact Inez Warner, Interim Title IX Coordinator, with any questions.
- With so much of our work now conducted on a computer screen, reducing visual strain will be helpful for all learners. Resources on best fonts for print accessibility are available [here](#) and [here](#), or consider the new typeface [Atkinson Hyperlegible](#). Our thanks to Melissa Butler for these; you can contact her for further information at butlerm@rhodes.edu.

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1. Interaction on Zoom

- 1.1 Remote Learning ≠ Online Class: To maintain the highest levels of engagement and community in this course, we need everyone to approach our time together with the same rigor and excitement for discovery and dialogue as we do for on-campus learning. Please be flexible, as the course will change as needed, in order to assure we always function as a community of scholars.
- 1.2 Zoom Policy: Treat class meetings on Zoom as you would an in-person class. This includes being punctual, attentive, and on camera (research shows that having the camera on promotes better learning and engagement). Given the fast pace of this course, showing up ready to learn is essential.
- 1.3 We will be using Zoom for our synchronous class meetings. The Zoom link for our class is listed at the top of this syllabus and in multiple places on the course Canvas site. To make our time together more valuable and effective for everyone, keep these points in mind while using Zoom:
- Treat Zoom sessions as regular classrooms. Be prepared for class with course materials ready before logging in, be appropriately dressed, be mindful of your space (ideally a quiet, distraction-free space with good lighting and appropriate background). **Take notes, ask questions, and participate actively in discussions.**
 - **Mute your microphone when you are not speaking.** To prevent background noise, feedback, or other audio distractions, it is best to stay muted unless you are speaking or otherwise engaging in the conversation.
 - **Use the “Raise Hand” button (at the bottom of the Participants list) if you have a question or something to say in class.** If you raise your hand on your camera, I may not see you, but Zoom alerts me when you use the Raise Hand button.

- **Our class meetings on Zoom will be recorded.** These recordings will be only for students enrolled in the class who are unable to attend or who experience technical problems that prevent them from attending the entire class session. They will not be posted publicly nor will they be kept after the semester.
- **If you lose your internet connection during class,** try reconnecting through Zoom. If you are unable to reconnect, send me an email or a message through Canvas explaining your situation. I will do everything I can to accommodate anyone with technical or other interruptions.
- **If I lose power or internet connection during class,** I will send instructions through the course Canvas site on how to proceed.

1.4 When interacting with video/audio, please observe the following etiquette:

- If joining from a public place (coffee shop, etc.) please be respectful of the privacy of others in your course and **always** use a headset. **A headset is strongly recommended!**
- Avoid joining from a noisy space; turn off the TV and keep distractions to a minimum (pets, etc.).
- If your computer audio doesn't sound well, please use the phone number provided. **Earbuds recommended.**
- This is your class time. Avoid distractions or distracting others (driving a vehicle, riding a bicycle, walking, etc.). Class time should demand your full attention.
- Silence cell phones.
- Mute microphone when not talking to avoid background noise coming through
- If you experience technical difficulties, try going out/coming back into the zoom meeting, or restarting your system.
- Be courteous to other speakers/be punctual and avoid interruptions.
- When speaking, look into your camera.
- Avoid sitting in front of a window; bright light behind you will make your video difficult for others to see. Be aware of surroundings behind you (ceiling fans, etc.) that could be distracting to others.
- Speak slowly and clearly; be aware that you may need to talk louder or softer for others to understand what you are saying.
- Avoid making hand gestures into the camera - it can be distracting or cause video lag.
- Enjoy your time together!

1.5 Technology Expectations: We will use the course Moodle site to access readings, communicate via the discussion board, and submit course work to the instructor. We will use Zoom to meet synchronously; during these meetings, I encourage all of us to close applications and browser tabs that are not needed (i.e., anything other than Zoom, your readings, and your notes).

1.6 To get the most from our time together, please limit distractions as best as possible. This means, please abstain from social media, web browsing, media distractions (news, tv, et al.), and side conversations as best as you possible can.

1.7 Zoom Etiquette

- Have adequate front lighting, preferably natural light, to be clearly seen during class times.
- Position your computer/iphone at eye level for good images to be seen.
- Faces should be clearly seen, no ball caps, hair out of one's face, etc.
- Avoid lighting over or behind you, that may obscure the camera view.
- Be in a private location where distractions such as pets and housemates/family members will not interfere with your class participation.
- Classes will be done during Central Time Zone (currently CDT, later on, CST). Be sure you are aware of the appropriate time zone for class.
- Eating food during class sessions should be restricted as this can be distracting for others. Drinking water is allowed as it would be during customary rehearsal times.
- Using one's cell phone or any electronic device other than their computer during class is prohibited. Anyone using a second electronic device during class will be **counted as absent** for that class session. If there are emergencies that make it essential for a student to have another device on during a class session, consult with your professor in advance.
- Mute your microphone, unless asked to unmute it by the director.
- **International students:** If Central Time Zone makes it impossible or difficult for you to participate, let your professor know and sessions will be recorded to accommodate this difficulty.

1.8 Zoom Policy: Treat class meetings on Zoom as you would an in-person class. This includes being punctual, attentive, and on camera (research shows that having the camera on promotes better learning and engagement). Given the fast pace of this course, showing up ready to learn is essential.

1.9 Students must have the ability to log in to a zoom-based classroom. To access Zoom, students should log onto the Rhodes Express domain and click on the zoom button on that site. All participants in Zoom class sessions are expected to adhere to the following rules and best practices in order to ensure the best possible learning environment. These practices should be followed in all online environments, including class, faculty conferences, and extracurricular events. Students not able to participate in some or all Zoom classes must consult in advance with the professor about alternative assignments.

Technology

- Students will have domain authentication access to Rhodes Zoom, Moodle, and Box platforms, and students must use their Rhodes accounts to enter these platforms.
- Zoom meeting IDs should not be shared with others outside the course.
- Log into the Zoom account using the specific instructions sent out by your professor.

- The background for a Zoom session should be appropriate for a learning environment and respectful to the other participants. Your professor is happy to provide a non-distracting virtual background if necessary.
- Students should, *whenever possible*, have their video and audio set to “on”. The professor or staff member may ask that audio be muted. If for any reason you will have difficulty joining the class with video on, consult with your professor in advance.
- A student’s profile should be identified by the student’s full preferred name, which is the name the professor will see on the Zoom “waiting room.”
- Display your preferred first and last name, in the zoom window
- In the event of technology failure, students are expected to phone in using the call number available on the Zoom invitation. Please also notify your professor if you have further issues.
- If the professor experiences a technology failure during class hours, please check your email for updates.

During Zoom Classes

- Whenever possible, sit in a private area free of distractions at a table or desk. Only enrolled students are permitted in the course.
- Arrive on time.
- Report to Zoom sessions dressed in clothes appropriate for school.
- Posture before the camera must be conducive to active learning and participation (e.g., no reclining). The student’s full face must be visible with adequate lighting in the camera frame.
- Taking screenshots or screen recordings of virtual environments without the explicit permission from the professor or program administrator and class members is prohibited.

2. Participation

- 2.1 Conversations During Class: This class practices mindful communication, which means that we are engaging in material and course-specific discussion. In relation to Zoom classes and online discussion board posts, mindful and conscious choices should be made to engage with the material and classmates in a meaningful way. Take advantage of the tools that these platforms offer for enriching our exchanges. For example, make use of the “Raise Hand” function in Zoom to let others know you’d like to speak, or use the Chat feature to insert a comment or raise a question. Both of these are especially helpful if you find that you need to turn off your camera in a given class. (See Camera Policies below.)

In addition, you may (and should) talk to and meet with classmates outside of the classroom. It might behoove you to ensure that any other discussion is left for outside the classroom; in a virtual field this relates to discussion board use and any other windows

open on your computer/phone. Any disruptive behaviors may result in dismissal without opportunity for make-up. In addition, see respectful dialogue above for rules surrounding conversation.

- 2.2 Regarding the current climate: Current environmental markers including, but not limited to: the global pandemic, racial social injustice, social unrest, isolation, and the fact that a majority of our class might not have been able to experience their high school prom or graduation, means that this class is uniquely a challenge and opportunity for ALL of us. This class was not initially developed for remote learning and I (the prof) ask you to be patient, candid, and kind as we all try to connect through a screen. That means that I ask you limit distractions around you or on your computer and FULLY engage with the material during study and class times. I also ask that you talk to each other and me. Sometimes it is strange to figure out when to say something. If you aren't sure just try – if someone talks over, you that's okay – we'll maneuver through this together as long as we all give our effort toward doing it respectfully and deliberately.
- 2.3 Intellectual maturity often requires individual struggle with unfamiliar ideas. We recognize that our views and convictions will be challenged, and we expect this challenge to take place in a climate of open-mindedness and mutual respect.
- 2.4 Participation & Reading Responses (15%): Active participation in class discussions and activities are crucial to individual intellectual development and the development of a learning community. Please come to our Zoom meetings having completed the readings, and make sure you have the readings accessible during class. When you are unable to attend a synchronous class, your participation will be based on your written responses to the course readings and video-recorded lecture.

3. Cameras

- 3.1 To facilitate appropriate pacing and classroom discussion it is helpful to have as many students as possible to appear on camera during class. Please plan to have your camera active if your connection allows it. Not everyone is comfortable putting their personal space on display. If it would allow you to feel more comfortable appearing on camera, please select either the white or black "distraction limited" virtual Zoom background I've provided on the course website. This should protect your privacy while not presenting a distraction to fellow students who may have distraction-based accommodations.
- 3.2 Keep your camera turned on at all times. Seeing everyone creates a more engaged and interactive learning environment. If technical limitations or other problems prevent you from using your camera, please consult in advance with the professor.
- 3.3 Enable camera (unless otherwise indicated by the instructor) so you can all see each other/interact equally.

4. Attendance

- 4.1 Students are required to attend every class meeting. In recognition of the fact that illness and emergencies occur, students are allowed *three* absences during the semester without impact on your grade. Each additional absence will result in a loss of 5 percent of their final course grade. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor as soon as you know and obtain notes or other information from fellow students. **Changes for Remote Learning:** For each class meeting, students are expected to either (a) participate in a Zoom session during our regular class time (MWF, 11am CST); or (b) view the video-recorded lecture and complete a written response. These activities will constitute your attendance for the remainder of the semester. In the event that you face situations (either technological or personal) that make this difficult to do, please let me (the instructor) know as soon as possible, as I will exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.2 Failure to attend class: Attendance will be taken for all synchronous learning sessions. You may miss 1 session without penalty. Your second absence will result in a 5% reduction. Your third absence will result in a 10% reduction.
- 4.3 Attendance: Students are expected to attend class virtually. Attendance should be with a properly set up camera and microphone and should not include any distracting background. I also ask that, when possible, you participate in class from a seated/upright position (please don't be on your bed if you can help it). Any student who is absent, even for a legitimate cause, is responsible for the material covered and assignments given during the class that is missed, this must be from a student – the professor will not provide material for absences.
- 4.4 Be sure to arrive on time for our synchronous meetings (if not a little early), as late arrivals are even more problematic with synchronous lectures. Extenuating circumstances may require adjustment to these practices, but please discuss them with me as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

5. Assignments, Quizzes, Tests

- 5.1 This course will be taught remotely, partially asynchronously and partially synchronously. **Lectures will be prerecorded** and available for viewing by 10 am MWF. Classes will meet synchronously via Zoom most Tuesdays and Thursdays (note: there are exceptions to this rule — CHECK YOUR SYLLABUS AND MOODLE FOR THE EXACT SCHEDULE). You are expected to view the lecture videos at the designated class time. To ensure timely viewing, there will be online quizzes and homework

assignments for each class. You should do the reading PRIOR to viewing the lecture video.

- 5.2 **Quizzes and tests** will be administered via Moodle. They will be open book and note, but you MAY NOT use other resources (e.g., the internet). There will be a designated time window for taking quizzes and tests. Homework must be submitted via Moodle portals and feedback will be posted via that same portal (be sure to scroll all the way to the right of the web page to download your feedback file)
- 5.3 **Homework** assignments are essential to provide you with practice applying the concepts discussed in the textbook and lecture. You may work in small groups, but each student must turn in their own assignment (no photocopies of group members' work). Homework assignments will consist of examples from the text, word problems, and calculations. Each homework assignment will be due at the beginning of class the day after they are assigned, as indicated on the syllabus. Late homework will not be accepted. You will submit PDF images of your homework assignments via Moodle.
- 5.4 **Chapter quizzes** will be administered on most asynchronous lecture days on a combination of reading material due that class and lecture material that has been previously covered. Due to the fast pace of the summer class, students are expected to watch the video having read the chapter ahead of time. No makeup quizzes will be given. To compensate for illness, excused absences, or catastrophic situations, the lowest two quiz scores will be dropped.
- 5.5 Two **midterm exams** are scheduled at approximately equal intervals throughout the summer. Exams will consist of multiple choice, computation, and interpretation questions. Exams are designed to focus on the material in the unit most recently covered; however, due to the cumulative nature of the course, some material may be included from previous units. Exams must be taken on Moodle at the scheduled time unless prior arrangements have been made. Make-up exams will be given only for exceptional circumstances.
- 5.6 **Assignments:** Students are expected to complete assignments on time. Any student who does not turn in an assignment, even for a legitimate cause, without prior notification and approval from the professor will not have an opportunity to make up the work. The course calendar outlines every due date. All deadlines are made at 11:59pm on the given deadline date. Under NO exception will ANY late material be accepted or graded. If there is any technological issue the time and date MUST be documented (i.e. screenshot) and evidence of IT services contacted BEFORE the deadline.

6. Other Policies

- 6.1 The Rhodes Honor Code, especially as concerns academic integrity, applies to all portions of this class. Any student found in violation of academic honesty standards will be reported to the Honor Council.
- 6.2 Unauthorized Recording or Distribution of Classroom Proceedings: Students are not permitted to record or distribute classroom lectures or discussions without either the express written approval of the faculty member teaching the course or an accommodation through Student Accessibility Services. Qualified students with disabilities that impact their ability to take or read notes should have already received an accommodation through Student Accessibility Services that permits them to record lectures. If Student Accessibility Services has determined that recording lectures and classroom discussions is an appropriate accommodation, the recording may be used only for personal academic purposes. Authorized student-initiated recording must not be made available to anyone outside of the students enrolled in the class in any fashion, including posting online, sending by email, or distributing through other media without the express written consent of the faculty member responsible for the course. Unauthorized recording or dissemination of recorded classroom proceedings, including distribution for compensation, is strictly prohibited and is a violation of the Rhodes Honor Code.
- 6.3 Social Media Policy: The classroom experience is strictly for your personal education. You MAY NOT share anything from class (pictures, text, voice recording, PowerPoint slides, etc.) to any website or social media vehicle whatsoever without written permission from the instructor. Sharing notes and materials with fellow classmates for study purposes only, however, is very much encouraged.
- 6.4 Access and Accommodations: Your experience in this class is important to me. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know immediately so we can discuss options. If you have already established accommodations with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course. Students with disabilities will be offered appropriate academic accommodation. Requests should be made during the first two weeks of the semester through the office of Student Accessibility Services.

7. Suggested Syllabus Language from the Title IX Office

Below are suggested statements for syllabi regarding Title IX to help inform your students about your status as a mandatory reporter. If you have questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact Inez Warner, Interim Title IX Coordinator (warneri@rhodes.edu).

1. Rhodes is committed to ensuring a safe learning environment that supports the dignity of all members of the Rhodes community. Rhodes prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct, which includes, but is not limited to, dating/domestic violence, sexual

assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, sexual harassment and sex/gender discrimination. Rhodes strongly encourages members of the Rhodes community to report instances of sexual misconduct immediately. All Rhodes faculty, staff, Peer Advocates, and Resident Assistants are Mandatory Reporters (exceptions are confidential resources: Counseling Center- 901-843-3128, Chaplain Beatrix Weil- 901-843-3822, and Student Health Center- 901-843-3895) and are required by the College to report any knowledge they receive of possible violations of this policy to the Interim Title IX Coordinator, Inez Warner. If you choose to share information related to sexual misconduct with me I will report it to the Interim Title IX Coordinator; however, you are not required to pursue a formal claim. The goal is to make you aware of the range of options and resources that are available to you. For more information about Rhodes' sexual misconduct policy or to make a report please see www.rhodes.edu/titleix.

2. Rhodes faculty are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are required by policy to share knowledge of sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, sexual exploitation, stalking, sexual harassment and sex/gender discrimination with the Interim Title IX Coordinator, Inez Warner. For more information about Rhodes' sexual misconduct policy or to make a report please see www.rhodes.edu/titleix.

For classes where it is anticipated that this topic may come up in a student's writing:

3. In the event that you choose to write or speak about having survived sexual violence, including sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking or sexual exploitation, I am required to report this to the Interim Title IX Coordinator, Inez Warner, who will contact you to inform you of your options and available resources. If you do not want a report to be made to the Interim Title IX Coordinator you can speak confidentially with the Student Counseling Center- 901-843-3128; Student Health Center- 901-843-3895; or Chaplain Beatrix Weil- 901-843-3822.