

# Managing Asynchronous Events in Large Classes

# Large Class Definitions

- Any class with a lecture component
- Synchronous events
  - Lectures
  - Exams (maybe)
- Asynchronous Events (AE)
  - Labs
  - Discussion/Recitation Sections
  - Office hours

# Asynchronous Events

- Typically provide
  - experiential component
  - closer student contact
  - opportunity for student exploration
- Often a source of student (instructor) dissatisfaction.
  - Inconsistency between sections
    - Grading
    - Delivery
    - Content – technical (ex. hypothesis testing)
  - Unclear objectives
  - Quality of instruction
- Management objective for AE is to minimize variation.

# Some Obstacles to Minimizing Variation

- Instructors
  - Personalities
  - Personal preferences
- Students
  - Timing of AE
    - students at 8:00 on M v 3:30 on T
    - Relative to lecture times
  - Birds of a feather
- Physical Space
  - Engendering discussion or ease of demonstration

# Performance Measurement

- Performance Measures
  - Student Feedback
    - course/teacher
    - mid-semester
  - Instructor Feedback
  - Grades

# Tools

- Syllabus/Course Outline construction
- Course Robustness?
  - Course Policies
    - Role of asynchronous events

## Discussion Sections

*Discussion sections usually meet twice per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Note that sometimes classes are scheduled irregularly. Pay close attention to your schedule for any such changes in meeting times of discussion sections or of lectures.*

*Discussion sections form the core of SM299 and your discussion section instructor may provide valuable advice during your first semester at SMG. Therefore, you should get to know him/her well. Please, don't hesitate to contact us frequently. (Discussion classes are designated as Section Bx in your registration information.)*

# Tools

- Syllabus/Course Outline construction

- Course Policies

- Attendance

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- Attendance is mandatory in all classes (discussion sections, lectures, and labs). We take attendance seriously and monitor it carefully.

- Punctuality

- Punctuality is an important component of attendance. We will consider that you are absent if you arrive late to class. You should arrive on time not only to avoid an absence but also to avoid disrupting the class. It is disrespectful to your instructor and to your classmates to arrive late and your instructor may refuse to allow tardy students to enter class.

- Absences

- Absences are neither excused nor unexcused - simply absences. Your first two absences are “no questions asked” free absences. Each additional absence will lower your final course grade by two points. For example, six total absences (four beyond the two free absences) could lower your course grade from 80 (B-) to 72 (C-). You should be aware that students have failed the course because of excessive absenteeism. If unusual circumstances occur the student should inform his or her instructor and consideration will be given. You should also be aware that an absence does not remove your responsibility for the day's work. Your instructor may assign extra work to compensate for lost time and to ensure that your overall learning experience does not suffer. However, the responsibility to make up for missed classes is entirely yours.

# Tools

- Syllabus/Course Outline construction

- Course Policies

- Grading

- Each section of SM299 is graded independently on all items except exams, which are scored and scaled across the course.

- Class Participation

- Quality is more important than quantity. We consider that you are participating well when your comments reflect clear knowledge of the case and of the theoretical background provided by lectures and readings. Additionally, to establish quality your instructor will consider:

- » the relevance of your comments to the topic,
        - » the extent to which what you say is based on thoughtful interpretation of facts,
        - » the clarity and depth of your reasoning,
        - » your willingness to "think on the spot" and engage your professor and your classmates in discussion, and
        - » the degree to which you bring issues discussed earlier in the course and other relevant experiences into our deliberations.

- The degree to which you respect everyone's right to participate in the discussions is absolutely critical to the success of the course.

# Tools

- Syllabus/Course Outline construction

- Detailed assignments

- 1 **Introduction to Operations Management**

- Text: Ch.4 Product and Service Design: pp. 121-126

- Readings: *Product Development: A Customer-Driven Approach*  
(Appendices optional)

- Prepare: *Which Product?* (Note: this a “team case” so read the case and then meet together as a group to discuss what are the best product ideas before class)

- Questions:

- 1. Which of the 14 products described in the case do you think should make the “final cut” of the 5 best ideas to submit to the SM323 PTA?
        2. Are you really sure about your best 5 ideas? (Hint: use the flow-chart at the end of the case as a guide to *carefully* screen each of them)

- Specifics provide milestones

# Tools

- Teaching Team Meetings
  - Frequency (scheduling)
  - Where
  - Why
    - Discussion of upcoming AE
      - agreement on approach
      - Lessons learned
  - Agenda, expectation of participation, distribution of minutes

# Tools

- Visitation
  - Process and Objectives
- Evaluative Rubrics
  - Grading variability
  - Papers, participation, presentations

# Tools

- Examinations
  - Feedback
  - Analysis by section
- Communication
  - Posting Exemplars, Examples, Key Points
  - Blackboard, WebCT, Sakai