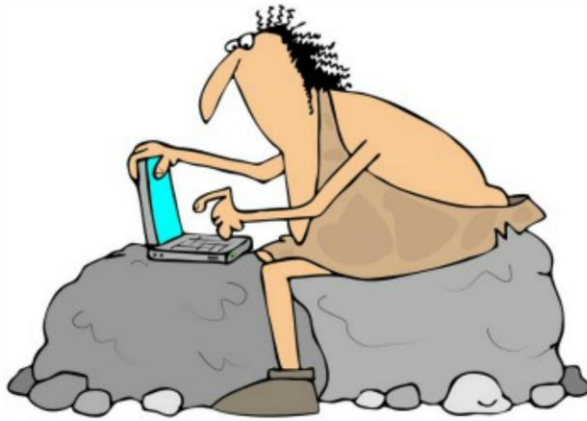


The Student Messages You MUST Send



4 Ready-to-Use Templates

The Student Messages You MUST Send

Here's an insider strategy that took me years to refine.

There are 4 essential student messages that can have a massive positive impact on your course outcomes.

The key is to pre-load the messages as Announcements into your LMS at the beginning of a semester.

Set the announcements to go live at a specific date, and you've just devised a "set and forget" system that:

- Saves you time
- Reminds your students of upcoming deadlines, which keeps them on track to complete the course, and
- Adds a human element to what can be a faceless learning environment.

Everyone wins!

It takes a long time to develop these messages from scratch, and get them just right.

So I've given you a head-start on the process.

Tailor these templates to your own needs, and once again you demonstrate that when it comes to teaching online, you're an absolute natural!

1. The Welcome Message

At the beginning of the semester, post an Announcement that welcomes students to the course. This establishes contact, and helps make expectations clear.

Make sure the message is immediately visible (not “Date Restricted”), and click on the “Send as a Message Now” option.

This action pushes the message to your students’ inboxes, and doubles the chances of them seeing it.

Welcome to Semester 1!

Hello, I’m _____, and I am your facilitator for this paper.

Welcome to Semester 1!

This semester runs from _____ to _____.

It will require approximately _____ hours to complete.

Please take the time to become familiar with Blackboard/Moodle: all course information can be found there.

Assessment requirements, submission details, and due dates can be found under the Calendar link. It’s a good idea to take note of these deadlines now, so that you can plan your time accordingly.

The preferred referencing style for this course is: _____.

Instructions on how to apply this style to your work can be found here: _____.

If you experience problems with logging in or submitting work online, please contact the Helpdesk on: _____.

Please note that the timeframe for returning your graded assignments is 10 working days, and I answer emails within 1 working day.

If you have any questions about this paper, let me know as soon as you can.

My email is: _____.

I hope you enjoy the course!

Kind regards

2. The Referencing Message

It doesn't seem to matter which subject or level you're teaching: many online students consistently struggle with the concept and technique of citation and referencing.

There's not usually time for this to be covered as a separate subject in your course, so it can be helpful to direct them to your organization's online resources.

You'll note the tone of this message is a little sterner than the others.

I've found if you don't really emphasize the implications of plagiarism, students can often disregard how important proper referencing really is.

Referencing Requirements

Hello everyone

This course requires you to do independent research, and to acknowledge your sources in the form of citations and references.

Referencing is important for two reasons:

1. It demonstrates that you are doing relevant reading, and backs up key statements with evidence, and
2. It helps ensure your work cannot be seen as plagiarism.

Plagiarism involves using the work of other scholars without acknowledging it. It is bad practice, and is seen as intellectual theft.

This organization takes plagiarism seriously, and penalties may apply if you submit work that is not your own.

Please make sure that you apply the correct citation and reference formatting guidelines.

They are explained in this online resource: _____.

If you have any questions, please ask.

Kind regards

3. The Deadline Reminder

This is a powerful technique that experienced online teachers often use.

By pre-setting deadline reminders to go live on a certain date, you get to prompt students to make progress with essays and assignments.

With this system, you don't have to make a note in your calendar to follow up with students manually – by setting it up in advance, the LMS will send out the reminder for you.

Think about the optimum date for the reminder to go out.
I set my reminders to go out a week in advance of the assignment deadline.

You'll need to set up a separate reminder for each assignment in the course.

Assignment 1 is due next week!

Hello everyone

Don't forget that Assignment 1 is due next week, on _____.

Please make sure you submit on time, using the assignment submission link in Blackboard/Moodle.

Kind regards

4. The Clean-up Message

As the end of the semester approaches, some students will have lost track of time.

They may still have work outstanding or need to complete the last two discussion boards. By sending out a final message like this, you get to prompt them one last time to get things in order.

For some students, this can actually mean the difference between passing and failing the course.

Pre-load the message to go out 1-2 weeks before the end of the semester.

End of semester is nearly here!

Hello everyone

As you'll be aware, the end of the semester is fast approaching: _____.

Please ensure that you have completed all discussion boards, and submitted all assignments (including resubmissions, which must be received before the end of the semester to be included in your result).

If you have any questions, please contact me as soon as possible.

Kind regards

So there you have it!

These four templates will save you a lot of time, help your students succeed – and demonstrate you're doing a wonderful job!

People will assume you've been teaching online for years...