

The Hidden (and some not-so-hidden) Rules in a Lecture Class

The William & Mary Neurodiversity Working Group

NEURODiVeRSiTy

A lecture is...

- ◉ Typically a large class where the professor talks the majority of the time.
- ◉ A situation where you need to focus on the professor's presentation for a significant length of time.
- ◉ A class where you listen and/or take notes more than interact with others in the class

When a lecture works...

- Students have opportunities to ask questions often at a time designated by the professor.
- Students actively make connections between different topics discussed or relate the material to issues outside of class.
- Students leave the lecture with more knowledge than they brought to it.
- Students may take comprehensive notes as they learn the material presented in the lecture.

...and when it doesn't.

- The professor does not allow some time for comments or questions from the class.
- Students do not respect one another's comments and questions.
- Students do not leave the seminar with different perspectives nor a deeper understanding.

Students are expected to:

- Allow others to speak without interruption. There are many different forms of diversity in this class. People have different backgrounds, experiences and opinions.
- Students will be respectful of the opinions expressed by other students and the professor, even when they disagree with those opinions.
- Prepare for class.
- Raise their hand with a question or comment. Wait to be called on.

Students are expected to:

- Not dominate the class with too many questions or make too many comments. You can go to office hours if you need to ask more than 1-2 questions (see Hidden Rules for Office Hours).
- Limit distractions to others (e.g., noise, movement).
- Be mindful of other's space and whether your belongings are crowding others.
- Refrain from talking to other students during the lecture.

How to prepare for lecture

- Make sure to do all of the assigned reading and take notes on this material, including questions you have for the instructor.
- Consider the differing points of view and information that may be expressed in the readings.

How to prepare for lecture

- Review your notes before class.
- If provided, bring PowerPoint slides, notes, or other materials to class

Technology Rules

- It's rude and distracting to use technology for personal, non-academic use in any classroom. You may feel more anonymous in a large class, but your use of technology is usually quite obvious and distracting to others, including the professor.
- If you need a laptop to take notes, make sure you are on task. It may be helpful to turn off your wireless connection to maintain focus.

Technology Rules

- Make sure your laptop (and cord) does not take up too much space at your desk.
- Make sure your cell phone is off.
- Unless needed for disability accommodation, do not wear headphones or earbuds in class

Between classes

- To maximize learning, be sure to budget enough time to complete the readings and review concepts. Do not wait until the last minute to study for tests or complete assignments.
- If you don't understand something, but are uncomfortable talking in class, contact your professor as soon as possible over email or during office hours (see our Hidden Rules for Office Hours).
- If you are a full-time student, consider college as a job and make it your first priority.

Accommodating Disability

- Some students may require accommodations, such as more time on an exam or taking the exam in a quieter location.
- If the above statement applies to you, you should work with the Dean of Students to develop an accommodation plan that you can then share with your instructors.

Evaluation and feedback

- ◉ Have you had a lecture prior to this one?
- ◉ Have you ever encountered an explicit presentation like this one about lectures?
- ◉ On a scale of 1-7 (1 is *least*, 7 is *most*), did you find the material:
 - Relevant?
 - Helpful?
 - A good reminder?
 - Possibly of use in other classes?