



## Welcome Announcement

Your welcome announcement should be posted prior to the time when students have access to the course space; this is typically the Friday prior to the Monday start date. AOI recommends that you include the following information, reminders, and suggestions in your welcome announcement:

- Share a bit about yourself. Include your professional education noting any areas of study that are especially relevant to the course being taught. Let students know what excites you about the course and what you want them to take away from it. In your own words, communicate the course goals and expectations. You may also want to include personal or family information—only provide information that you are comfortable sharing.
- Give students a few tips explaining your recommendations for being successful in the course. For example, if the course has a heavy reading load, encourage the students to stay on top of it to avoid falling behind.
- Set the proper expectations for your interaction and how frequently you plan to be in the course space. We recommend 3-5 times a week minimum, Monday through Friday. Students do not need to know specific days and times, but should be made aware of any days/times that you definitely will not be available (e.g., Tuesdays after 6 pm PST).
- Provide an expected turnaround time for responses to posts entered in the “**Questions for the Instructor**” forum or sent via email (24-48 hours is recommended, and grading feedback (5 - 7 days). Keep in mind that these are the primary ways students know you are engaged in the course (i.e., by your presence in the discussion forums, responding to questions, and receiving feedback on assignments and exams).
- Provide students with the following reminders:
  - The length of the course. A normal fall/spring semester course runs 16 weeks; summer courses can run anywhere from 6 -12 weeks.
  - Ideally, students should print out the **Syllabus** and thoroughly review the course policies, especially those regarding submission of late assignments and incompletes. Additionally, students should print the **Course Schedule** and refer to it often. Let them know that any date changes will be made only if absolutely necessary, and will be announced in advance on the “**Announcements**” page.
  - Remind students that it is their responsibility to frequently check and stay abreast of notices posted on the “**Announcement**” page and the questions and answers posted in the Discussion Board under “**Questions for the Instructor.**” Suggest that they subscribe to one or both of these to automatically receive an email alert each time a new message is posted.
  - Assignments, papers, exams, etc. should be submitted to the appropriate electronic submission folders set up for that purpose. Explain that you will not accept assignments via email.
  - All content-related questions should be posted to the “**Questions for the Instructor**” forum or other designated forums related to individual assignments. Confidential or more personal questions should be handled via email using their **WSU email account**.
- Tell students that technical support is available. Direct them to the **Technical Support** page in **Course Information**, which lists contact information for 24/7 support. The **Course Information** link also contains helpful “How To” information, such as how to access eReserves (Leganto) or get eTutoring support.
- If you have a Virtual Mentor (VM) assigned to your course, introduce the Virtual Mentor and encourage the students to contact them with **non-content** related questions through the **Virtual Mentor** discussion forum.