

Talking Through Teaching Tensions Together: Exploring Alternate Models of Conversation

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Talking Through Teaching Tensions Together is:

- A podcast for postsecondary educators
- A space to discuss/hear about various approaches to different challenges faced in the classroom
- Not a “one-size-fits-all” mentality

Logistics:

- Each “season” covers one topic (e.g., using readings effectively in class, use of personal devices in the classroom) and is comprised of:
 - 3-5 interviews with different educators across a range of disciplines from a variety of institutions
 - a recap episode discussing the interviews
- All interviews and episodes are less than 30 minutes



Teaching Tension: How to Encourage Student Engagement with Syllabus?

Adam



Class: Introductory Statistics

Previous Approach: Rapidly discuss the grading scale in the last few minutes of class and tell students to read the syllabus before day #2

Ideas I’m considering:

- Use collaborative annotation for students to discuss the syllabus
- Figure out how to make a visual to go along with the syllabus
- Make a video overview of the grading scale—or maybe I’ll go crazy and try to use AI to create a podcast of it!

Eric



Class: Biostatistics (Intermediate Class)

Primary Takeaway: Instead of viewing the syllabus as a contract, let it be a reflection of you and your pedagogical values.

Impact on My Class:

My syllabus has more personality and visual elements and presents my rationale.

In my introductory course, I have made the introduction to the syllabus a group activity where they provide advice to peers.

Jillian



Class: Introductory Statistics

Previous Approach: Lecture/presentation... 😞

New Approach: Split students into groups and have groups come up with one important fact and one question for each part of the syllabus (excluding grading). Have each group report back their fact and question for a large group discussion. Discuss grading on a different day. During group time, students also introduce themselves and answer icebreaker questions.

Katie



Class: Computational Machine Learning

Previous Approach:

Lecture with a few activities sprinkled in:

- Reflective free-write
- Think-pair-share on previous learning experiences
- Discussion about Academic Integrity

Ideas I’m considering:

Going back to previous approaches from other classes and one new idea!

- Guided activities about the syllabus
- Group Problem Set about the course grading
- Syllabus Quest with small tasks hidden in the document itself
- #AskMeAnything sessions at the beginning of each class for the first two weeks

Brenna



Class: Introductory Statistics

Previous Approach: Present syllabus information in slide show with some interactive review questions scattered throughout.

New Approach: I tried flipping the responsibility onto the students by assigning groups of students each a topic on the syllabus to present to the class.

More Ideas to Try: Focus more on *how* to use the syllabus and our LMS on the first day and what *strategies* are important to be successful. Introduce the details and logistics of the different assignments gradually throughout the first weeks in line when students first see them.