

**Welcome to  
our class**



**I care about each and every one of you, and want to ensure that you all feel successful and valued in this class.**

*Adapted from "Towards Cruelty-Free Syllabi" by Matthew Cheney*

# Here are some cruelty-free thoughts and rules for the course.

- You are central to my course
  - I want you to be successful
  - I respect you as a human being
- I try to make my course assignments authentic so they have value to you beyond the class.
- If you have a suggestion about this class, do let me know.

# What should you do if you need help?

Ask for help! Asking for help is good. It shows that you care.

For example, if you don't understand course materials, please let me know. I am happy to assist. It's easier to deal with difficulties earlier rather than later. So don't wait, just ask.

If you need help with something outside of the course, feel free to ask me too. Chances are that I can direct you to someone who can help. On the syllabus and on our OpenLab course site, there is also a list of BMCC resources available to you.

## How many classes can you miss?

- As many as you need and as few as you possibly can.
- Strive for perfect attendance!
- I know that's vague, so let me explain:
  - I hope you don't miss any classes, because missing even 1 class may have an effect on your learning. I have tried to make each class useful to you, and I have tried to make our class activities mostly things you couldn't replicate on your own. We have a limited amount of time together, so we should use that time well. If you miss class, you will, indeed, miss stuff. More than that, **we** will miss **you**. Absences detract from the whole class experiences for everyone.
  - However, stuff happens. Life doesn't stop just because you have a class. You'll probably get sick at least once this term. Worse things could happen, too. So there needs to be some flexibility. How much? That's hard to say. We'll need to figure it out as we go.
- Yes, there is a point at which you've missed too many classes for me to be able to say you should get credit for the course. This is not about whether you are a good person or not. It's not a value judgment. It's a judgment about what having this course on your transcript means. What is the point at which it won't make sense for you to get credit for the course? I don't know. But if you miss more than a week of class, you should get in touch with me and let me know what's going on so we can make a plan and get you in the best possible shape to be able to pass.

# What should you do if you miss class/ course assignments?

*Please note that one week of class is the equivalent of one unit in asynchronous classes.*

- ❖ **1 week of classes/ 1 unit.** Nothing. Stuff happens. I don't even need to know about it, but if you'd like to let me know, I'd love to chat. Plus, if you need help, definitely reach out.
- ❖ **More than 1 week of classes/ 1 unit.** Inform me as soon as possible. The fastest way to reach me is to email me at [ebarnes@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:ebarnes@bmcc.cuny.edu) and/ or visit me during my office hours. I am not going to yell at you, or criticize you in any way. But we do need to discuss your plan for making up the missing work and for passing the course in general.

# Late work policy

I tend to think about late work as having two types: The type that isn't really going to matter to anybody if it's a bit late ([suggested deadlines](#)) and other type that it actually does matter ([hard deadlines](#)).

Your replies to classmates in Conversations on the OpenLab, for example, are mostly useless if done after the deadline as no one returns to assignments that ended. Therefore, I am not likely to give you credit for late replies, because their value depends on them being done on time. But don't be afraid to ask if you think I should make an exception.

Your posts in Conversations on the OpenLab, on the other hand, should still be valuable to you, even if submitted late, as each post asks you to engage with that week's course materials. Will your classmates read your late posts though? Most likely not. So this is not ideal. But if it happens once or twice, I am happy to give you up to a 70 for this assignment, because you have gained something from those posts.

In general, I will let you submit late assignments from the first half of the semester until midterm week, and not later; and late assignments from the second half of the semester until the last week of class during that semester.

To continue, I'm ok with you submitting your essay a few days late, but I ask that you let me know that you need the extra time to complete the assignment.

The final reflection, on the other hand, does not have a grace period. I wish it did. But I have to read all your reflections and submit final grades by the deadline that BMCC imposes on me. I hope this makes sense.



## Late work policy continued

If you need significantly more time with an assignment, please come talk to me. We can probably figure things out and agree on a new deadline. My concern is always your ability to participate in the course. I can't do for one student what I wouldn't do for another, because that violates the basic fairness of a course, but fairness doesn't have to mean that everybody does everything at exactly the same time.

Thanks for  
taking the  
time to read  
the slides.

