Frequently Asked Questions for GS420

Instructors are more than happy to answer questions by email when absolutely necessary. However, we are unable to answer every question each student has in a timely manner. We have created this document as a reference for you who most likely have the same questions as other students in the course.

Please read these FAQs prior to emailing us with your questions. We are also glad to answer any questions and provide support before and after class.

# Attendance & Absences

1. **I missed the first class or second class. How can I make up my lost points for Top Hat and attendance?**  
   The first and second week of Top Hat class participation will not count in student’s final scores. And attendance does not count for points in this class. We use the first two weeks of class as practice for the rest of the semester. Points will be counted on the third class. Attendance will be taken on Top Hat for documentation purposes, but does not count for points toward your grade.
2. **I have an excused absence. How can I make up what I have missed?**   
   There are 3 categories of students who, with documentation, will have an excused absence and the opportunity to make up Top Hat class discussion points for the class missed.
   * Students with a documented medical excuse
   * Student-athletes with documented sports conflicts
   * Students who have communicated that they will be observing a religious holiday

To receive an excused absence and make-up class discussion points, you will need to email BOTH instructors: [rschlesinger@sdsu.edu](mailto:rschlesinger@sdsu.edu) and [dcarson@sdsu.edu](mailto:dcarson@sdsu.edu) (with your full name as listed on Blackboard, RED ID, and section number), and we will set you up to answer the Top Hat questions outside of class. Emails not including full name, RED ID, and section number may not be responded to. We will not respond to emails not addressed to BOTH instructors.   
  
**Note:** Students who miss class, excused or not, are responsible for watching the lecture recording for the date missed, as well as referring to the power point presentation on Blackboard. New content will be presented during each class. And content from each class will be reflected on quizzes.

1. **I have an unexcused absence. How can I make up what I have missed?**You can not make up Top Hat points for unexcused absences. You can do the extra credit to make up for missed points. See Blackboard for more details.

# Assignments

1. **I turned my assignment in a few minutes after the 11:59 PM deadline. Can I still get full points?**No. We create a deadline for you to plan ahead and prepare. In fairness to those who plan ahead and prepare, we are strict on the deadline. If your assignment is late, you will lose points.
2. **I cannot upload my assignment to Blackboard. What should I do?** Answer these questions:
   1. Are you using Google Chrome? Use Google Chrome when uploading assignments to Blackboard.
   2. Are you submitting a document created in Microsoft Word? Do not use Pages or any other format. Only Microsoft Word.
   3. Did you try to re-submit it? We allow multiple attempts. So please re-submit.
   4. Avoid uploading issues with Blackboard, do not use spaces or the number symbol (#), and use only one period in the name at the end (for example, allaboutme.docx) in your file name.

If we cannot open your document, then it will be considered “Late” with point loss once received in Word format.

Reminder: All students at SDSU have access to the Microsoft Office Suite (PC & Mac) for free using your SDSU ID. To do this log on to Microsoft Suite login here: http://it.sdsu.edu/sdsuid/

Note: All students received free downloads of Microsoft word onto their account.

After following all these criteria and you still cannot upload your assignment, please email us with a screenshot of what it looks like on Blackboard. You will want to take a screenshot immediately when this happens anyway for documentation purposes.

**Note:** Students are responsible for completing and uploading assignments in advance of the due dates. Assignments received late on Blackboard will lose 1 point if submitted within a week of the due date. Assignments submitted after that one week window will lose 2 points.

1. **I do not have Microsoft Word. May I submit my assignments in another format?**No. Not all formats are compatible with Blackboard. SDSU students have access to free Microsoft downloads. See the syllabus for more details about how to acquire Microsoft Word. Make sure to include your name (LAST, FIRST) and REDID on all assignments.
2. **Can I do more than one extra credit assignment?**No. Students are responsible for attending class weekly, paying attention in class, completing all assignments, and applying concepts learned in class to all assignments. Students who do all these things will not need more than one extra credit opportunity.
3. **Why did I have points deducted from my assignment?**There are many reasons why students have points deducted from their assignments. Here are a few:

* Did not follow directions
* Work did not reflect the ideas and content taught in the course (Please pay attention in class and ask questions if you have them.)
* Did not use respectful disability-related language as discussed in class (Please see *Disability-Related Language Standards in Written Assignments* on Blackboard)
* English grammar interfered with meaning or made it difficult to read and grade. Please get help at the SDSU Writing Center prior to turning in each assignment if you are an English language learner and/or need writing support).
* Your assignment was late. Students are responsible for completing and uploading assignments in advance of the due dates. Assignments received late on Blackboard will lose 1 point if submitted within a week of the due date. Assignments submitted after that one week window will lose 2 points.
* Plagiarism. Plagiarized work results in an automatic 0 points.

1. **I don’t know what to do for my Disability Culture Plunge. What should I do?**Visit the Disability Culture Plunge link on Blackboard for a multitude of ideas. Find one that calls to you. Or just pick one that works with your schedule. Do this as soon as possible. Make any contacts necessary immediately. Do not be that student who waits until the last minute and stresses out trying to arrange an activity. This assignment is worth 20 POINTS! And it is a critical component of this course. Get it done and turn in your written portfolio with photos in advance of the due date so you don’t have to worry about it anymore. AND because it’s going to be fun!
2. **I work in the field of disability. Can I use my work or a past assignment as my Disability Culture Plunge activity?**

No. This assignment is intended to provide students with a NEW experience related to disability. The value of the assignment is lessened if students do not challenge themselves to learn something new.

1. **I heard about an opportunity that I think might be good for the Disability Culture Plunge. May I do use that opportunity for my assignment?**Maybe. We need to assess the value as it relates to this course. Please email BOTH instructors with a link to this opportunity. We will let you know if it will work for this assignment. And if it does, we will also make it available to the rest of the class. Thank you!
2. **I am uncomfortable participating in a disability culture plunge. Can I have another option?**

No. The purpose of this course is for you to learn and be exposed to a culture you are not familiar with. Research has shown that participating in a culture different from your own can add immense value and insight to the lives of others, and even yourself. If you feel you are unable to meet this requirement, you might want to reconsider taking this course.

# Quizzes

1. **I did not take the quiz. Can I take it after the fact?**  
   No. Students have a predetermined time to take each quiz. It is your responsibility to complete the quiz within the allotted time allowed. We recommend that students take the quiz within the first day or two of the testing window.
2. **I failed the quiz. Can I retake it? Or can I make up the points?**  
   No. Students are responsible for attending class, paying attention in class, reviewing course lecture recordings and power points as needed, and letting us know if you need additional support. If you do all of these things, you are likely to pass the quizzes.

# Email and communication

1. **Why haven’t I heard back from the professors in a timely manner?**

* Did you include your full name, Red ID & section number to your email?
* Did you email BOTH professors?
* Has it been less than 48 hours?
* Is it a weekend? Or a holiday?

As much as we would love to sit by our desks and wait for our students to email us, as professionals with full-time jobs in addition to teaching, we take our work-life balance seriously. If you follow these instructions, you will most likely hear back from one of us within 48 hours unless it is a weekend or holiday. Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on our part. True emergencies are the exception to the above.

1. **Why are office hours only on Zoom?**   
   We spend minimal time on campus due to being full-time professionals. We are able to accommodate our students more efficiently through online office hours. You are welcome to come and speak to us after class if it’s easier.

# Top Hat

1. **Top Hat isn’t working for me. What should I do?**Contact Top Hat immediately. And if it happens again, contact Top Hat immediately again. Do not wait until the end of the semester. It is your responsibility as the student to make sure your Top Hat scores and app are working correctly. Top Hat has the technology to assess your account. We do not have access to that information.
2. **My Blackboard grade does not show my Top Hat points. What should I do?**Top Hat points will be transferred over to Blackboard at the **end** of the semester after all assignments have been graded. We will send out an email when they have been transferred.   
     
   At the end of the semester, if your grade shows a “zero” this is due to your Top Hat not being set up accordingly. You must have your Top Hat Account Settings include your full name and RedID as it is listed on Blackboard.

# General Information

1. **I have a disability (physical, mental health, learning, developmental, etc.) and I require accommodations to be successful in this course. Will I be accommodated?**Absolutely! Please email us your Accommodation Letter and let us know what your accommodations are and how we are doing with supporting your success. We want you to feel included, valued, and supported. Also, if you think you may need disability accommodations, please make sure to contact the Student Ability Success Center in the Calpulli Building, 3rd floor. 619.594.6473. This will help you not just with this class, but with all of your classes and your overall SDSU experience.
2. **I am learning English and am not understanding all of the content in the class. Can I get extra help?**

Yes. You have three steps you can take:

* We suggest first, that you take time to watch the course lectures and revisit the powerpoints on Blackboard each week to help process the information once again.
* We recommend that you utilize the services of the SDSU Writing Center to help with your written work in the class.
* Once you have done these things, if you still need further support, please let us know. We believe in you.

1. **I think I’ve worked really hard in this class, but my points are not giving me the ‘A’ (or whatever grade) I think I deserve. Can you please bump up my grade so I can get the ‘A’?**No. Students are responsible for following directions and monitoring their grades on Blackboard and Top Hat throughout the semester. In fairness to all students and SDSU Academic Integrity, we can not bump up grades, extend additional extra credit, or make any exceptions to the rules. We believe in you.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this. We hope it has been helpful in answering your questions. - Diana & Rachel & GS 420 TA Team**