

"Your interview will now be taken by your future students"

FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Imagine walking into a university where you are about to face an interview for the position of a lecturer. You are fully prepared for all the questions those high profiled professors and academicians are about to throw at you. You enter the room full of confidence and, surprise! Instead of senior professors and HR executives, your interview will be taken by a bunch of students of the same university. Your recruitment is in their hands. What do you do? What are the questions this bunch of undergraduate students might ask? Fear not, for this undergrad student has got you covered.

Q. Slides, books or YouTube videos – which one do you prefer for teaching?

A. This one is a trick question. The answer can be anyone of them or even all of them. However, no matter what you say, you must also mention that you will be explaining the topic in details during class. Slides, books or videos can only function as additional resources. At the end of the day, your students are in your hands and it is up to you and your teaching abilities to mould their brains into the proper shapes.

Q. Do you give grade bumps?

A. Of course, as a faculty member, you are in no way allowed to show any mercy to your pupils when it comes to tests and exams. Everyone is to be graded fairly and in accordance to the policy of the institution. But luck doesn't always favour us students. Our marks are often left stranded at the borderline of two grades. Those 79s and 89s are quite the heartbreakers. These are the marks that deserve a small bump and may be our teachers can agree to our silent plea.

Q. Weekends are for chilling and not for makeup/extra classes – do you agree?

A. The only thing more irritating than early morning classes is having to attend a make-up or extra class on a weekend. An off day for a student can be a life changing event. From taking a much needed break off the end of a hectic week to getting ahead on studies or due assignments, one free day can work wonders for students. Hence, you should agree with the aforementioned statement. But if you are left with no other alternative, you can go ahead and schedule a make-up class on a weekend, but why not spare the students their attendance on that fateful day?

Q. What's your take on assignments?

A. As a faculty member, no one can stop you from giving your students assignments. In fact, many of your students will welcome this initiative as they see this to be a way through which they can easily acquire marks. But here are a few important things to remember before giving your students an assignment.

Firstly, no matter small the task, give them a minimum of one week to send in their assignments. Secondly, avoid giving your students the assignment on the very last or second last week of the semester. It might end up hampering their preparations for the finals. And last but not the least, if it's a group assignment, allow the students to choose their own teammates.

Q. Does 'traffic jam' count as a valid excuse for coming late to class?

A. "You live in Dhaka. Traffic jam should not be an excuse for being late". This is the most common reply we get every time we use the term 'traffic congestion' as an excuse for being late. But think of it in this way, nothing is predictable in this city, especially the rush hour traffic. Even if you consider this factor while leaving for your destination, there is no way or algorithm for you to predict how long it will take to reach your destination. A journey that is supposed to take only thirty minutes can end up taking over a couple of hours due to the traffic. Sometimes, it might take even longer depending on the

time and the condition of the roads. You can't expect everyone to leave their home at 8 in the morning for a class that starts at 12. Hence, maybe traffic jam is a proper excuse for being late to class even in 2019.

Q. Is it okay if in-class presentations are not delivered in formal attire?

A. Yes. It should be completely fine, at least in the summer. Most students are uncomfortable with the idea of dressing up in formal attire just for a five minute presentation. Your effort to set a standard for the students is admirable. However, if possible, do give us the liberty to choose our attire.

At the end of the day, a student cannot be the judge who decides if someone is qualified to teach them or not. But at times, we wish we could. Of course, that judgement will not be based on how many certificates the teacher has or where he got his higher education from.

Faisal wants to be the very best, like no one ever was. To survive university is his real test, to graduate is his cause. Send him memes and motivation at abir.afc@gmail.com

