A Typical U.S. Classroom

- **Format**: varied class sizes, from 5 to 500
- **Objectives**: critical thinking, applying knowledge
- **Assignments**: group projects, tests
- **Teaching methods**: Exploration (not lecturing)
- **Grades**: Attendance, Participation, Assignments
- **Expectations**: Initiative, studying outside class, engaged participation, new ideas, etc.
What to Expect in a U.S. Classroom

Classroom Expectations

• Interactive methods in class
• Participation, discussion
• Express own ideas
• Challenge professors and other students
• Student Rights and Responsibilities
Why do Professors expect what they do?

Cultural Values!
Activity

Split into 4 groups

Each group gets 2 envelopes

Use index card to brainstorm & record your answers to the question,

“What expectations from your professors might come from this American Value?”
Advice from CSU Faculty

• Ask questions when you don’t understand

• Talk with faculty – this is not an inconvenience!

• Practice your writing skills - writing research papers, describing results, ideas, and especially analytical thinking
Phrases to help you Speak Up in Class:

Begin a Topic:
- “I think/feel/believe that…”
- “The author/text seems to be saying…”
- “In my experience…”

Follow up on an earlier topic:
- “Along with what you said…”
- “I would argue that…”
- “Another related thought” or “Another way to look at it…”

Use phrases you hear your classmates use!
- Write them down for future use
How to Engage in Class

**Speaking up**
- Understand what others have said
- Raise your hand if you have an idea or a question
- Try writing down your ideas when you don’t get the chance to speak in class. Bring anything that wasn’t brought up in class to your professor after.
- Not ok to interrupt
- But ok to disagree, as long as you…

**Give evidence to support your ideas**
- Speak from personal experience
- Use examples from the text
- For every claim (opinion or thought), make sure you give evidence.

**Critical thinking**
- Complicate the idea, or add another dimension to a topic
- Create an original perspective from

*Highly valued in the classroom!*
7 Ways to Not Succeed

International students who have not done well academically provided us with seven reasons why:

1. Poor Test Results
2. Poor Attendance
3. Poor Written Component
4. Unprepared for Class
5. Assignments Done Carelessly
6. Never Attended Class
7. Late To Class
Addressing: Poor Test Results

For every hour of class, 3 hours of study!

• Find your study method: alone or in a group?

• Learn your best study method by trial and error: You will not know if it’s working until your first test results!

• A professor is never happy about giving a low grade on an exam. Visit during office hours to ask about what you did wrong, what the correct answers are, and how you might improve the situation.

• Change your Study Habits. Sit in the front row of the classroom, be on time for every class. Take notes and tape record your lecture if necessary. Find a tutor. Make a plan based on your discussion with the professor.
Addressing: Poor Attendance

- Never miss a class unless you are ill.
- If you miss a class, ask professor how to make up work.
- Attend Class, be on time
- Participate—ask & answer questions, work with others.
Addressing: Poor Written Component

- Final papers are common
- Begin preparing as soon as possible. You cannot leave it until the last week!
- Proofread your work carefully before submitting it to your professor
- Use the Writing Center
- Practice writing well; ask professor for tips.
- Use citation software for bibliography
Addressing: Assignments Done Carelessly

• Complete assignments before class.

• Talk to your instructor to make sure you understand the assignment. Make an appointment during office hours, or approach them after class.

• Extra work in the library is common. Expect to read textbooks plus other required reading.

• Read, Read, Read!

• Each academic department has a librarian that can help you find materials for a research project.
Addressing: Never Attending Class

• We cannot emphasize enough the importance of attending class!

• Many professors make class attendance a percentage of your final grade.

• Professors cover material in class that is not found in your readings.
Addressing: Being Late to Class

• Arriving late to class is discourteous and demonstrates a lack of respect for the professor and the material he/she is trying to teach.

• Take steps to improve your time management skills.

• Arrive early

• Leave late
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Questions?