

Guidelines and Expectations for Hybrid and Online Teaching Fall 2020

Committee on Educational Technology
Academic Contingency Planning Working Group

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Introduction

This document provides guidelines and expectations for instruction as we move forward in this time of uncertainty. It includes definitions of the modes of instruction and recommendations for considerations as you determine the most appropriate design for the course(s) you are teaching in the fall term.

Definitions of Hybrid and Online Learning

As we move forward, pedagogy and delivery for courses are likely to be quite fluid and we encourage faculty to consider multiple approaches. One expectation is that each course will have a contingency plan, should we need to return to shelter-in-place, and that this plan should be communicated to students, both in the syllabus and at the start of the course with time for questions. Although the definitions have been shared previously, we offer them again so you don't have to search for them.

Hybrid Learning

In each of these modalities, there is some element of in-person instruction.

- **Hy-Flex Classroom:** A fully-synchronous model in which faculty teach courses in-person with some students choosing to join in-person and others joining remotely. Some fully in-person courses will look like hy-flex hybrid when/if students have to remotely join classes due to health concerns, but hy-flex by definition has a default structure that allows students to choose how they want to attend the class.
- **Flipped Classroom:** An asynchronous/synchronous mix, in which lectures or other learning materials are shared with students for independent learning, followed up with in-person and synchronous online class meetings.
- **Modified Tutorial:** An asynchronous/synchronous mix, in which lectures or other learning materials are shared with students for asynchronous learning, followed up with small group discussion sessions with the instructor in-person or online.
- **Dual Classroom:** An asynchronous/synchronous mix, in which students take turns attending class in-person, the instructor teaches the same synchronous lesson twice, while the other half of the class works independently or in groups on asynchronous material, such as lectures, informal writing, projects etc. May be supplemented with a third hour of synchronous or asynchronous work online with the whole class.
- **Low-Residency Hybrid:** Students meet in-person a few times at the start of the term, then transition to mostly online learning with planned events or check-ins for students to meet in-person, together or in small groups, throughout and at the end of the term.

Fully Online

In each of these modalities there is no in-person instruction.

- **Synchronous:** Instructors and students meet according to a regular class schedule, but in a virtual environment such as *Zoom* or *Google Meet*. Faculty should recognize the ways in which synchronous meetings might pose challenges for students who have limited wi-fi, different time zones, lack a supportive place to study, or are caregivers in the home.
- **Asynchronous:** Instructors share and students navigate through course material and activities online, in their own time (generally week-by-week). Students interact with each other through discussion boards, small group projects, and/or the chat feature with a learning management system (such as Moodle); as well as collaborate using Google Apps. Instructors check-in with students individually via assignment feedback tools, office hours, email and chat. However, students often report suffering from a lack of structure or feelings of isolation in asynchronous only courses.
- **Blended Instruction:** Instructors combine synchronous and asynchronous elements of courses together for balance.

Expectations

Contact Hours

Regardless of which delivery modality you choose, the credited contact hours must still be met. In spring, students reported significant variations in expectations from faculty. Contact hours include scheduled instruction, including synchronous class meetings and asynchronous modes such as discussion forums, individualized or small groups conferences, or interactive learning activities. Note that final examinations are not included in calculations of contact hours.

Per Course/Term Contact Hours are as follows.

- Undergraduate: 1 credit is 43.75 contact hours
- Graduate: 12.5 contact hours per unit (a 3 unit course is 37.5 contact hours)

Homework/Class Preparation and Asynchronous Learning

Class preparation and homework are not counted in contact hours. Preparing for class is a student responsibility, which includes reviewing assigned course materials, reading, watching videos or listening to music. Two hours of out-of-class preparation or homework are estimated for every one hour of contact time.

In asynchronous instruction, there is some gray area between what is homework and what is instruction. Homework is assigned outside of class to facilitate independent learning (e.g.,

writing a paper, researching, working on problems, etc.). When students engage in asynchronous learning, there is some degree of peer-to-peer or student-instructor interaction (e.g., discussion forum participation, interactive quiz, collaboration on GoogleDoc, etc.).

Guidelines

For All Courses

You know the needs of your course and its students best. Follow your teaching philosophy and learning goals to make decisions that align with your values and intentions, but be open to refining your approach as your students or the course may require. Remember that in-person and synchronous meeting time is precious in this new Covid context, be respectful stewards of everyone's time and many competing obligations.

- *Create community*
 - Consider how you will create community in your class in its new modality. What is your common purpose, learning goals, or the needs of the students? Some groups may appreciate holding time or a place for students to check-in; other groups may appreciate the use of class time to immediately immerse themselves in the course content and activities. Ask your students.¹
- *Balance synchronous and asynchronous models*
 - Include both. Synchronous learning supports students' needs for structure and routine, while asynchronous learning provides flexibility and supports accessibility. This means that it is highly recommended that instructors find a balance that works well for the needs of each course, and try to prioritize high impact or meaningful interaction for synchronous meetings. Remember to plan for breaks or change activities to battle Zoom fatigue. Consider starting your syllabus design with *at least 50%* of the online and hybrid teaching/learning in a synchronous mode, and then adjust it from there.
 - Two options to consider: (1) front load synchronous at beginning of week and asynchronous later in week, or (2) front load synchronous at the beginning of the term and shift to more asynchronous later in the term.
 - Be thoughtful about how technology supports learning goals.
- *Set clear expectations for engagement*, such as frequency and evaluation methods, particularly for asynchronous work (see sample in the appendix)
- *Set clear expectations for online time* (e.g. cameras on, mics muted, appropriate virtual background), but work with students for whom this may not always be possible.

¹ Some faculty may find the "Humanizing Online Teaching," document written by our colleagues (Raygoza, León, & Norris, 2020) helpful. If you have other resources that reflect useful ways of thinking about building community in your classroom, please use them and share with others.

- *Have a transparent communication plan* - during this time we cannot over-communicate. Students value structure, consistency, transparency.
 - One recommendation is to use the Announcements feature in Moodle or email students at the beginning of each week. The Announcements feature is useful because students who “lose” the email can go there to see what was sent (the Announcements forum has a forced subscription).
 - Establish a consistent place for students to ask questions about the course or assignments in Moodle and subscribe to it; if one student has a question it’s likely that others are holding the same question; this way you can answer it once. Communicate your strategy for answering content-related questions; for example, use a Discussion Forum or set aside time during a synchronous session.
 - Repeated and through multiple channels - let students know what to expect.
 - Be vigilant about communicating with students that are drifting/missing in action.
 - Phone conversations can be really effective means of interaction/engagement.

For Asynchronous Mode

- Set clear criteria for engagement - include in syllabus (see sample rubric below)
- Have students post responses to lecture/video
- Create engaging discussion prompts; include an open-ended prompt (“other ideas . . .”).
- Invite students to participate in creating prompts - perhaps as a small group assignment
- *Instructor participation is key* - when the instructor shows up in the discussions, the students show up more frequently
- Set up small groups to facilitate deeper discussions; Mix up the groups from week to week so students interact with different peers. Encourage people to read but not post in other groups - this cuts down on the amount of online reading for students.
- Beginning of week - purpose is to check for understanding; foundation for subsequent online discussion

For Synchronous Mode

There has been much conversation about the length of synchronous classes. The answer is “it depends”. Regardless of the length of time, the following recommendations apply to all classes:

- Create engaging interactive activities
- Use google docs for real-time collaborative work and note-taking posted live for students who were absent or want to revisit the class
- Small group discussion using breakout rooms (task-oriented or focused question)
- Use the whiteboard feature
- Use chat creatively - ask a question and how students post their answers
- Poll and quizzes

- Attention to length of class (optimal time/length)
- Diversity of activities
- Beginning of week - check for understanding; foundation for subsequent online discussion, participation, attendance, etc.
- Be clear (with yourself and the students) about the metrics and means of assessment. For example, give students a detailed breakdown of what you are looking for, and report their participation score at the midterm and final.
- Have a student monitor the chat.

Length of Synchronous Sessions

We asked a number of people for their thoughts on the length of synchronous (Zoom, Meet) sessions and here are some points to keep in mind as you design these sessions:

- Segment the session to include varied activities interspersed throughout the session. Young adults have short concentration spans - about 12 minutes. Every 12 minutes the students' concentration drops, so it is important to plan different activities in each hour.
- Graduate course with full-day format or 3 hour classes - break into manageable segments; remember that students who are working full-time have likely spent their day/week on zoom or something comparable.

Design Considerations

- Supplement reading with videos in lieu of longer in-person lectures.
- Cover less ground and be more repetitive. Online curriculum doesn't translate in a one-to-one manner to in-person curriculum. Take advantage of what online pedagogy can do well, and be realistic about what it doesn't do well.
- Online classes: lots of front-end work, but ideally it is lighter during the week. Labor is in keeping everyone on track.
- Moodle quizzes have the ability to auto-grade multiple choice questions with varying feedback options - which can make it easier in terms of grading, and force students to read. Then class time can be conversational.
- Video lectures are easy to make (e.g. using Loom or even Zoom) and can be assigned before class. If those are watched in advance, then class time can be more dynamic and engaged.
- Create a predictable routine or rhythm to class to help students stay on top of work (weekly checklists, start and end class in the same way, regular journal prompts or forum posting deadlines).

Specific Tips for Asynchronous Learning

- Forums are more effective when the instructor synthesizes comments and conversations in an email or correspondence afterwards. If students are required to engage with only a few classmates via forum responses, they rarely get a sense of the bigger picture. I draft a one-page synthesis of forum conversations, in which I quote students, commend good interaction, and generally try to model the kind dialogue I'm hoping to see. It also gives me a chance to clarify misinterpretations of concepts, etc.
- One way to incorporate asynchronous assignments into an online course is to ask the students to respond in writing to a set of questions following a given prompt. In addition, asking students to interact with each other would be key to an asynchronous assignment. With the help of a rubric, students would understand how long the response should be and how much interaction with each other they should contribute over a specific period of time (class week, for example). In my experience, video assignments work best.
- If there are asynchronous group assignments, make sure to have the students record their group Zoom session. Have each student use a rubric to comment on each group member's contributions and effectiveness toward group communication. The recorded Zoom session (and transcript) can then be used to assign points to the members for that group assignment based on the rubric.
- Student presentation of work to the class can be dry and people can drift. I think small group presentations can be more effective. Or presentation of work via small group forums, and then students must write out thoughtful responses.
- Take advantage of screen time and integrate videos, etc. Break up lectures with discussions or other activities. Use polls to assess learning on the spot and to prompt new discussions.

Library Information

Here is a summary of the "online digital material" the library provides:

- [200,000+ ebooks](#)
- Additional ebooks available through the library's vendors can be purchased on-demand to support teaching or research at the discretion of the subject librarian; [contact your subject librarian](#) with any requests
- [100,000+ streaming videos](#)
- [200+ research databases](#)
- [172,000+ e-periodicals](#)
- Articles or books that are available electronically in our databases can be linked in Moodle using [e-reserves](#)

- [ILLiad](#) article/chapter online document delivery
- [Research Guides](#), [FAQs](#) and [video tutorials on YouTube](#)
- [Research help from librarians via chat, text, email, and Zoom](#)

SDS

Here is a summary of resources available through the SDS office. For information contact Julie Scaff (jas37@stmarys-ca.edu) or Auston Stamm (abs13@stmarys-ca.edu).

For All Students

- Kurzweil: We have a campus license of the text to speech program. It can be used to read/annotate journal articles and other digital handouts. Kurzweil is compatible with Microsoft Word Documents & PDFs. Students can use the app on their phone to listen to on the go. It is compatible with multiple foreign languages. If students want to use the program they should contact SDS and a tutorial will be scheduled.
- Cam Scanner App: Students can use the cam scanner app to convert physical text materials to PDF. These PDFs could be added to Kurzweil. Students can contact SDS for a tutorial.
- Grackle Docs: Accessibility checker for the Google Suite. It will check a document for accessibility and provide step by step suggestions for remediation. YouTube Tutorial Videos will be added soon to the SDS Tutorials YouTube Channel & EdTech webpage
- Speech To Text: SDS can provide a tutorial on how a student can use their laptop's dictation software. Apple computers have built-in dictation in their accessibility options and Google Docs has a dictation option too.
- SDS Webpage: There is a section on the SDS Homepage with tips for students taking online courses. We will be adding that information to the Resources for SMC Students section.
- Report A Barrier: Students can report a physical or digital accessibility barrier on our SMC & Accessibility webpage

For Faculty

- Zoom: SDS encourages faculty to record their Zoom class sessions and enable automatic transcription. There is a link on our SDS webpage
- SDS Webpage: Resources for SMC Faculty includes tips for how to implement accommodations. We have resources relating to digital accessibility for faculty in our SMC & Accessibility webpage

- Grackle Docs: Accessibility checker for the Google Suite. It will check a document for accessibility and provide step by step suggestions for remediation. YouTube Tutorial Videos will be added soon to the SDS Tutorials YouTube Channel & EdTech webpage
- Report A Barrier: Faculty can report a physical or digital accessibility barrier on our SMC & Accessibility webpage

For Qualified Students

- Kurzweil: Students with an accessible formats accommodation can have their physical textbooks made digital and access them in Kurzweil
- Otter.ai: Students who have difficulties with notetaking can qualify for an accommodation to use Otter.ai transcription software. This can be used to record their Zoom class sessions. The transcript is over 90% accurate, fully searchable, and can be exported as Word Document or PDF.
- Live Captioning: Students with hearing loss may have an accommodation to use Otter.ai for live captioning their Zoom class sessions. Our office will contact the student's professors and integrate Otter.ai into each professor's Zoom account. Otter.ai live captioning is then available to anyone in the Zoom class session.
- Captioning: Professors working with students with a classroom access accommodation need to make sure that all video/audio materials are captioned. Our office can caption materials for professors but need time to have them ready. It is recommended to provide all materials for captioning a least a week in advance. We deliver our materials using a Google Drive link.
- CART/Interpreting: Students who are hard of hearing or deaf may require CART or interpreting services for their courses. We are able to provide remote CART and interpreting for class sessions.

Other

- Accessible Library Databases: PDF with information regarding library database accessibility is attached and will be added to the SDS Website
- Webpage Testing: SDS can help test a website using the Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool or provide a tutorial on how to use the tool to screen a website for accessibility barriers

Appendices

The following appendices provide ideas for thinking about how to evaluate participation for those of you who are new to asynchronous teaching. They are not meant to be prescriptive or interpreted as College policy, but they might help you craft your own.

Appendix A: Sample Language for Asynchronous Participation Expectations

Discussion Forums

The discussion forums are designed to take the place of live classroom discussions and therefore ongoing and substantive participation by every student is critical to further the learning of everyone in the class, and required as a measure of progress in the course. Participation consists of 8-10 substantive postings each week—the first one should be no later than Tuesday—and we estimate that this will require 3-4 hours of online activity each week.

Substantive postings are those that further the discussion and prompt additional posts by other learners, including (but not limited to):

- Providing your ideas and reflections of the reading in response to a posted question;
- Providing an answer to a question or a response to another learner's post;
- Asking a question that will further the discussion;
- Providing examples from your experience of the issue being discussed;
- Providing a resource that will enhance the discussion;
- Making a connection between the current discussion and previous discussions;
- Posting a question that was not answered in the weekly readings; or
- Synthesizing other learners' responses and/or redirecting the discussion.

To get the most out of the discussion forums, learners are expected to participate in the discussions throughout the week, entering the forums on at least four different occasions, including early in the week, mid-week, and during the final weekend, to read and post. Students who follow this formula seem to get more out of the discussions and contribute to the overall quality of all of the forums. The more you can do on a daily basis, in smaller increments, the easier the online environment will be.

While the online portion of the course offers a certain degree of flexibility, weekly online attendance and participation are mandatory. Attendance means you are reading the online discussions and participation means you are posting in the discussion forum forums. If circumstances arise that prevent you from participating during a particular week, you must discuss this with your instructor(s) and arrange to complete the learning activities for that week. A make-up assignment may be required.

Appendix B: Sample Rubric for Online Participation

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forum Participation

The Discussion Forum is the primary learning activity of the course, taking the place of in-person classroom learning. Each student's full participation is the foundation for each individual's learning, as well as to the cohort's. Online participation counts for 30% of the grade.

Required Elements	Weight	Exemplary	Accomplished	Needs Improvement
Timeliness	30%	An initial substantive post was made by Monday of each week.	An initial substantive post was made by Tuesday of each week. If circumstances prevent this, learner has notified the instructor of the delay by Tuesday.	An initial substantive post has not been made by Tuesday of each week, and no notification of the delay was made by Tuesday.
Frequency	30%	There were more than eight posts submitted over the arc of the week: early, mid-week, and late-week. More than three were substantive posts.	There have been at least eight posts submitted over the arc of the week: early, mid-week, and late-week weekend, three of which were substantive posts. Advance communication was made if this frequency could not be met.	There have been less than eight posts submitted. Posting was done in just one part of the week, and there was no advance communication of not being able to meet this expectation.
Quality	40%	There were more than three substantive, separate, and original discussion points on each week's board that reflected one's learnings and ideas from the readings and other assignments; more than 4 of the substantive post elements were accounted for in these postings.	There were at least three substantive, separate, and original discussion points on each week's board that reflected one's learnings and ideas from the readings and other assignments; at least 4 of the substantive post elements were accounted for in these postings.	

Criteria For Substantive Posts

1. The prompt or questions was responded to fully;
2. An answer was provided to a question or a response from another learner's post;
3. Questions were asked that furthered the discussion;
4. Examples from personal experience were given of an issue being discussed;
5. A resource was offered that enhanced the discussion;
6. A connection was made between the current discussion and previous discussions;
7. A synthesis of other learners' responses was provided;
8. Clear, succinct writing was present that reflect a thoughtful engagement with the text, personal experience, and observations of current trends, appropriate citations were provided;
9. Connections were made to concepts, ideas, and learnings from other courses, and to 21st Century leadership practices.