Mayville State University

KEEP TEACHING

STEP BY STEP

FOR ASYNCHRONOUS DELIVERY

In these challenging times we have had to come together quickly to do our best for students. This guide will help you transition to asynchronous delivery of your courses.

STEP 1: DECIDE ON YOUR METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Decide on one of the following and inform Extended Learning of your decision:
- I plan to teach all of my on-campus courses synchronously via Zoom (live session during scheduled class time).
- I plan to teach SOME of my on-campus courses synchronously via Zoom. If this choice is selected, please provide name of class and meeting time.
- I plan to teach all of my on-campus courses asynchronously as an online course in Blackboard with no required meeting times
- Other. Please explain.

Most of you have already done this. If not, please do so as soon as possible and notify Extended Learning.

Also consider whether you would like to use Zoom for office hours. If so, review the [Guide for Virtual Office Hours.](#)

STEP 2: COMMUNICATE WITH STUDENTS

Students who have not learned online before are likely very nervous and would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible. Communication will be key for helping students get through this challenging time. Here are a few suggestions:

- Send an announcement to your students as soon as you have decided on your plans for moving forward.
- Inform students of your expectations for attendance and participation
- Inform students of the best way to contact you and what they can expect from you regarding your response time. Be prepared for a lot of questions.
- Explain how the class will operate under the period of instructional modification.
- Encourage students who are inexperienced with learning online to take the Blackboard Orientation course.

STEP 3: ASSESS AND PLAN

Course Information
Review your course to determine priorities. Set realistic goals for continuing instruction. What activities that you already have planned lend themselves well to the delivery mode you have chosen? What do you expect students to accomplish during the disruption? Update your syllabus with information that has changed. Consider policies, due dates and assignments.

Course Design
If you do not normally teach online, you may be feeling a little overwhelmed. Re-designing courses from one delivery mode is not an easy or simple task. Don't worry! Just take it one step at a time. These

questions and the worksheet below will help you rapidly re-design your courses for the duration of the disruption.

- What learning objectives still need to be addressed?
- What activities already planned lend themselves well to asynchronous delivery?
- In what ways are my courses already structured to support online learning?
- What assignments and activities should I keep, and which can I modify or cut, if any?
- What instructional technologies should I consider that I am not already using?
- What can I maintain in my original syllabus and class schedule? What do I need to change?
- How many students are in the class and how will that affect my choices?
- Can I make remaining course work optional?
- Should there be an alternative timeline for exams (e.g., If I typically give 2 exams per semester, should I give 3 exams and drop the lowest grade)?
- Will changes need to be made in the grading structure?

Course Development Questions

Now that you have considered the important points of course re-design, consider what needs to be developed.

- What course materials do I need to create?
- Do my course materials need to be tweaked for the online environment?
- What support do I need to develop (or further develop) my courses in Blackboard?
- What pre-existing resources can I use?
- What is the best way to deliver this content?
- What can I realistically accomplish?

Logistics to Consider

When delivering instruction in a new environment, logistics may be different from what you are accustomed to. These questions help you consider important aspects of online learning:

- Will I require proctoring for exams? If so, what level of security will I require? What tool will I need to achieve that level? (Consider ProctorU and YuJa Proctoring).
- How will I support students who get sick and cannot meet expectations?
- How will I handle it if some of my students cannot get online or have technical difficulties?
- Am I willing to record my lectures and create other videos or screen casts to support online learning?
- Am I prepared to give incompletes if student illness justifies it?
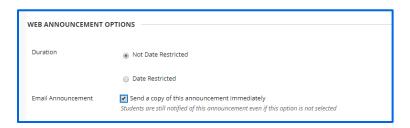
Designing for Transition

When transitioning an on-campus class to online delivery, ask yourself how each activity is best presented for your students.

Current Class Activities	Asynchronous (Blackboard)
Quizzes and Exams	Blackboard
Participation • Terms & content • Articles discussion	Discussion done in Blackboard on discussion forums
Group Project	Record group presentations using Zoom
Gallery/Studio visits and reactions	VoiceThread Discussion Forums
Study Guides	Assignment drop boxes Ungraded or low stakes quizzes

STEP 4: TRANSITION TO ONLINE INSTRUCTION

Start the transition with adding class information to Blackboard, if it does not already exist.

- Add your contact information.
    - Using the Announcements tool, create a welcoming message to students that explains the situation and tells them what to expect. Announcements remain in the course under the announcement tool.
    - Remember to have the announcement sent to the email inboxes of your students. In Bb you do this by checking the box to Send a copy of this announcement immediately.

Example of Welcome Announcement

To help you continue with the semester successfully, this course has been moved to a hybrid format. I will post announcements and send emails as the need arises to keep you informed. Please login to this course and check your MSU email accounts daily.

Add already existing materials, including:

- PowerPoint slides
- Course handouts and Test review materials
- Videos you normally show in class

Re-work materials and activities for optimal delivery in the online environment:

- Direct instruction can be recorded in YuJa and published or linked to the class
- In-class discussions can be moved to Blackboard forums or VoiceThread
- In-person group projects can be done by meeting outside of class in Zoom meetings
- Convert study guides into low stakes quizzes and knowledge checks

Use the Grade Center:
- Enter students' existing grades by adding external grade columns to the Grade Center for each item.
- Items that are added in Bb (like assignments and quizzes) will automatically generate a column for grading.
- If you are grading items that are not provided via a Bb feature, and are not integrated with Bb, will require a manually created column.

Build relationships: This will be far easier for you and students have been meeting face to face for several weeks. Keep this in mind as you plan your online learning experiences. Take advantage of tools that support continuing and strengthening relationships.

"When you are regularly present and engaged in the online classroom, your students
are more likely to be, too." (Darby, 2020)

- Weekly videos or announcements describing the work for the upcoming week and recap the previous week.
- Hold virtual office hours, especially in the beginning of the disruption period to help students adjust.
- Post a brief video to clarify misconceptions about a topic or assignment
- Talk with students in online and synchronous discussions as you are able.

Be Yourself. When teaching online, your teaching style can be diluted behind the walls of technology. Find authentic ways to convey your personality. Videos and audio recordings can go a long way in making that happen. Start small and don't worry about perfection.

Read the article from *The Chronical of Higher Education*, How to Be a Better Online Teacher: Advice Guide by Flower Darby. She provides many ideas and suggestions that are obtainable (Darby, 2020).

STEP 5: PREPARE FOR SUCCESS

If you have not taught online before, take some time to get to know Blackboard and its tools before your classes resume, if possible. With the time crunch, give yourself a break if you must learn as you go! Chris Gonnella and Alissa Perkins from Extended Learning are available during business hours from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm to provide support. Other faculty teaching online may also be able to help.

Utilize the course development tools provided to you on the MSU Instructional Design and Technology pages. Specifically, the Online Course Development Rubric and Course Alignment Matrix.

Online Course Development Rubric

1. Course Overview and Introduction – addresses quality and accuracy of syllabus, updated course materials, clear instructions, navigation and visual design.
2. Learning Objectives – addresses the quality and clarity of course level objectives and asks the reviewer to ensure that all objectives are promoted by evaluated learning activities.
3. Learner Support – ensures that courses are effectively supported for learners through full accessible instructors, resources and other learner supports.
4. Student Performance Expectations and Evaluation – Grading and evaluation strategies are established to measure effective learning and learner progress.
5. Resources and Materials – evaluates whether instructional materials are designed for an effective online environment.
6. Learner Engagement – evaluates the course for regular and substantive interaction and activities that foster interaction between students, professors and the content.
7. Accessibility – Evaluates access to course resources in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Course Alignment Matrix - The Course Alignment Matrix analyzes the alignment of a course's evaluated learning activities/assessments with its description and objections.

Keep it Simple. If you are new to Blackboard, stick with the basics. Wait until you are comfortable using discussion forums, creating content items and building assignments before thinking about using more advanced features.

Don't let students hide behind technology. Assign video and audio projects that require students to come out of their shells.

Academic Support - Be mindful of academic supports that students may need due to school closure. Some students may need academic support that they didn't have before because of transitioning to online and/or remote learning. If you have questions about academic support in general or concerns about specific students, contact Katie Richards.

STEP 7: STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR DIVISION

Stay in close touch with your colleague, your division chair and with your moderator. Reach out to others when you have questions; we are all in this together!

WORKS CITED

Darby, F. (2020). How to Be a Better Online Teacher: Advice Guide. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/advice-online-teaching#1.