The Coaching Chronicles

Volume 1 Issue 5

Instructional Development

Make sure you visit the **Instructional Coaches** page on the FTCC Faculty and Staff page for updates and contact information!

Also be sure to keep checking our **Resources Webpage** for up to date information to assist in your instructional endeavors.

Coffee with the Coaches

When

Tuesday, April 7th, 10-11am

Where

Blackboard Collaborate

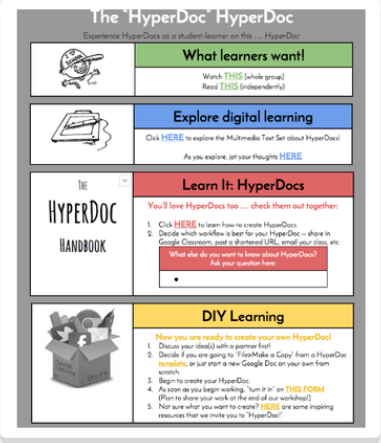
More information

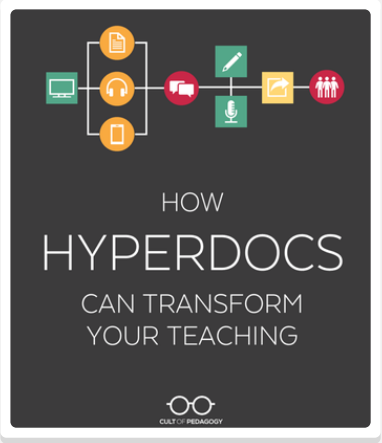
Don't forget to grab your coffee and join the Instructional Coaches for a morning chat. This is a great time to share ideas, pose questions and request resources.

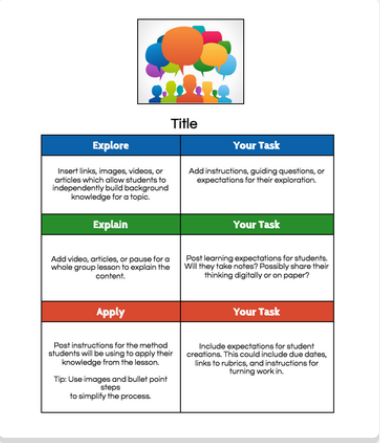
https://us.bbcollab.com/guest/2b6df82b335a4511a1b167930b532682

HyperDocs Interactive Tool

HyperDocs, a transformative, interactive Google Doc replaces the worksheet method of delivering instruction. HyperDocs have the potential to shift the way you instruct with technology. They help to engage, educate, and inspire learning.







So You Want to Temporarily Teach Online?

Practical advice for instructors faced with an abrupt move to online teaching (opinion)

Submitted by Anonymous on March 11, 2020 - 3:00am

With the possible disruption to social gatherings presented by the coronavirus, there is increased discussion around planning for the use of online learning as a continuity plan for most universities and schools. While there seems to be more fervor around this idea than in the past, this is no different than other times when online has been considered as part of an instructional continuity plan. We have seen a number of resources and ideas being shared, but many of them focus more on institutional plans or are technical how-tos. Here we want to provide an instructional planning guide that individual instructors can use.

Your first tendency may be to ask what tools you can use to deliver live lectures so students don't miss a lecture. Let's take a few steps back and do some quick planning to think through a few things before you decide to do this. This guide is aimed not at the permanent movement from face-to-face to online education but at the desire to implement an interim solution for emergency remote teaching and is specifically focused on lecture-based classes with some considerations for more active learning environments.

The Basics

Basic Student Needs

Students will need to access readings and course materials and a way to submit assignments and receive feedback on their work. They also will need a way to send you questions, and they will need to know when and how you will respond to them.

Basic Instructor Needs

You need to deliver your *content*, for lack of a better term, to your students, and to communicate with them. There are many types of necessary communication in this situation. Students need to know what to do, how you want them to do it, how to submit it to you and how to get your feedback on their work.

Meeting Those Needs

All these needs are things that can be readily handled by a learning management system, if you have one, and most universities and schools do have one these days. As a bonus, the skills you are developing in this time of need can come in handy when you resume your face-to-face class. You can continue using the LMS to distribute handouts and other course documents and for students to submit assignments, post questions and access readings. While many instructors may be exploring the use of social media (e.g. Twitter hashtags or other options), you may find it's best to stick with institutionally supported tools and infrastructures since those will have dedicated support for you and your students as well.

If you are teaching face-to-face classes, your first impulse may be to think about your lectures. You may want to record lectures, narrated PowerPoints/slides or live sessions to make them available online. It is not hard to create some videos or narrated slideshows with technology that is often readily available. Be aware that you need to make sure these materials are accessible to all students, so transcripts or captions will need to be included. Your institution may have specific solutions for these accessibility accommodations, but automatic captioning in YouTube works well with a little effort on your part to make sure it's there. Yes, this may be a little confusing for you at first, but meeting the needs of all of your learners is paramount.

Here are some quick planning items you can implement:

- Create a course site in your university's or school's LMS
- Load any assignments that will be due into the assignments section (or have support staff help you with this).
    - For online, students require very clear instructions and prompt feedback, so make sure you provide students clarity on what to submit, how and any associated handouts for an assignment. In an LMS, you can set due dates, attach files and write a description for assignments to provide students guidance.
- Load any readings that students will need into resources/files (or have support staff help you).
- Create a discussion/forum section dedicated to student questions for you that you will check periodically (may want to set a meeting reminder to allocate time and remind you to do so).
- Create a class communication plan so students know where to go and what to expect; address questions like:
    - Where to send questions
    - How quickly will you respond to emails; how quickly will you respond to discussion posts
    - How to reach you with any urgent needs or questions
    - What sort of regular communications you will send out to the class (e.g. weekly reviews and/or updates)
    - Other plans you have for how you will be available to students and how you will send out regular information and updates

Most universities often have online tutorials that will guide you through many of these tasks. There is a link provided at the bottom of this article to a resource that has been created with links to all the various resources and guides created by universities.

Synchronous vs. Asynchronous

Think about whether synchronous meetings are really needed. Disruptions that are major enough to force closures, etc., can also be major enough to significantly impact people's schedules and availability. Is it really important that students be present live, at a specific time, for a lecture? Consider recording lectures they can listen to on their own time, and then set up periodic live sessions throughout the week where students can join you for virtual office hours to ask questions and get further guidance and support. This can ensure your learners have the access they need to critical content while also having opportunities for additional support. So, for this decide:

- What can be recorded
    - Identify how you can record this. Most live meeting tools allow you to record, so you often can use Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, Adobe Captivate or others to just open a session/room or record a talk (share your screen if you have slides to talk through), and then it will save it somewhere and you can provide that file or link. Using the tool your university or school has means it's likely integrated with the LMS for easy distribution. Support staff can

help you with this, but if your support staff are overwhelmed, YouTube is also a great user's manual for many of these tools -- most products have how-to videos on YouTube or on their websites. If you want to edit your videos, you may need a different tool like Camtasia, which allows for more advanced editing and closed captioning. Some of the synchronous video tools allow for very basic editing of video.

- How do you want to make yourself available to students for questions or support with more complex needs than a discussion board may provide?
    - We recommend virtual office hours. You may decide you want to answer any questions asynchronously or in one-on-one appointments via phone or video chat.

Student-to-Student Communication

Now, let's think about the ways in which students informally support each other in their learning and how you can make some avenues readily available for them. In face-to-face settings, if a student feels confused, they can turn to a classmate and say, "Hey, I didn't understand … did you?" These sorts of informal social learning supports are crucial to student learning (not just socially but to comprehension and retention as well). Consider how you can integrate some ways for students to connect with each other. Here are some quick and easy solutions to implement:

- Create a discussion/forum for students to pose questions for each other and provide each other support.
- Provide a link to a live session that's open 24-7 for them to use. For example, Zoom rooms have links and can be open for anytime access. You could create a Zoom room for your class, post that link and tell students it's there for them to use and connect with each other as they need.

Once you have done all that, in your LMS, you can then:

- Create a page with a table on it that quickly summarize for students each week -- what they'll read, any assignments due, any recorded lectures and any live sessions -- with links as necessary to these things).
- Make sure your class roster is added to your class site -- typically support staff can help with this.
- Download your class roster with emails to have on hand for quick reference if necessary (usually, you can save your class roster in a spreadsheet format with this information -- it takes less than one minute to do).
- Communicate your plan to your students:
    - Do a quick walk-through of your plan and the course site for students -- this can be done either in person if you still have some in-person sessions or can be done as a recorded video you share out with your class.
- Implement a transition plan with your class, if you have time -- start having your students access readings, etc., in the course site and hold some virtual office hours for class.
- Connect with support staff at your university or school to help you ensure your content is accessible.

Keep in mind that online learning may be new to your students, too, so weekly summaries or regular notes keeping them up-to-date, summarizing the past week, providing guidance for the week ahead and any other important communications will help orient them as well. These can be handled as a course email or course announcements in the LMS.

Beyond the Basics

The above steps are geared toward helping you set up a functional, temporary online learning environment for your class(es). The recommendations above are not designed to take the most advantage of the online learning environment and some of the tools and other affordances. Nor does this account for various systemic and/or equity issues that may arise from a sudden shift to online, such as whether students will have reliable internet access. While some of these affordances would take more significant planning and development than you are likely wanting to invest in right now, there are others you may want to consider.

Interactive Learning

Many live meeting tools have features like breakout rooms that allow you to break your class into small groups and go from room to room to talk with each group. If your class is more engaged in active learning, you may find using this feature helpful. Some of these tools also allow you to do

polling during a live class or post quiz questions. Often, these tools also have a screen-sharing feature that allows you and students to share your screen. This can be useful if students are working on projects and you want them to share and talk through them or have them give presentations. If you will be online for a time when you planned for group work or sharing, be aware of your options and plan accordingly.

Many of the resources in the link below have more about using these live online environments.

Collaboration

Part of your in-class plan may involve student collaboration on creating a project or working on a paper together. Today, even for in-class work, students are often using tools like Google Docs to work together. If you have some assignments or activities where you want students co-creating some sort of assignment or submission together, consider having them work in Google Docs, Google Sheets or some other sort of online collaborative software and allow them to submit assignments in that format.

Flexibility

Flexibility will be key to ensuring students are not put at a disadvantage by a sudden move to online. Consider implementing flexible deadlines for when anything is due and flexible methods for how students will complete an assignment or demonstrate their learning. Using asynchronous recorded talks instead of requiring synchronous meetings can provide everyone important flexibility as well. In addition, assume at least some students will use phones or tablets for accessing class and completing and submitting their work. There are times that leads to difficulty with viewing, submitting or accessing live sessions. Make sure you record any live sessions and make those recordings available or use methods that allow students to reach you by phone and email, not just by video chat. (Torrey Trust, from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst [1], has put together a Google slide deck with more on UDL considerations and a host of great ideas.)

You may find that a number of students rely on the physical university infrastructure, such as computers at the library, and will not be able to access remote solutions, especially on such short notice. Be available by phone and email and actively invite students to reach you any way they can and share if they are having difficulties so you can monitor and adjust accordingly.

Access to Additional Resources

Students are probably going to need access to additional resources -- like the library -- to complete their work for your class. Identify what your library plans to do and what they have available and create a section in your course site with links to online library resources as well as links to other types of resources students may need to access at a distance.

Preparing Your Own Space

Finally, it's important for both you and for your students to get the right equipment. You may already have most of these, and you do not need costly options for any of these to be functional:

- Laptop, desktop or tablet.
- Headphones or earbuds -- the biggest impediment to online communications is poor audio quality, so make sure you have a headset or earbuds; this is important to eliminating audio feedback loops, background noises, and other disruptions.
- Microphone -- may already be built into your device, computer, camera or as part of a separate headset.
- Webcam -- may already be built into your device or computer.
- Internet -- this all does require reliable internet service; a wireless hotspot on a high-speed network may also suffice.
- Backdrop -- make sure what students see behind you for any live or recorded video is clean and professional.

Finally, we want to thank and recognize the myriad professional instructional designers who are doing a lot of heavy lifting during this time supporting their universities' planning and implementation processes.

Section:

Transforming Teaching & Learning [2]

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Webinars

Blackboard Webinars

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Webinars: https://go.blackboard.com/Instructor-webinar-series?utm_source=Bb_Website&utm_medium=Web&utm_campaign=Preparing

ACUE (Association of College & University Educators) Webinars

Webinar Registration and Resources: https://acue.org/webinars/