

# Recommendations for Effective Online Teaching

Online Facilitation Functions <sup>1</sup>	Top Tips and Tactics	Notes
<p><b>Social</b>-Build meaningful human relationships based on shared goals for success.</p>	<p>Be available for contact through multiple channels at different times</p> <p>Post a short video instructor introduction and ask students to post an introduction (written or video).</p> <p>Be present in the discussion forums.</p> <p>Hold an informal Zoom Meet and Greet at the beginning of the session.</p> <p>Hold Zoom office hours and/or schedule an open Q&amp;A a few times during the session.</p>	<p>Respond to email, community forum, class questions ASAP.</p> <p>This does not mean you have to comment on every post. Respond to all introductions. Respond more often at the beginning to establish your presence and model responses. Spot post and keep track of who you have responded to so all students get a response from time to time.</p> <p>Students appreciate meeting their instructors and other classmates. This goes a long way in helping them realize you are a real person and are there to help. If you have no other synchronous meetings, prioritize a Meet and Greet.</p> <p>Vary your office hours or Q&amp;A times to increase your access to more students. Students will often attend class meetings more so than one on one office hours.</p>

	<p>Post a weekly announcement (consider video or audio).</p> <p>Call out exemplary student work in announcements/discussions.</p> <p>Model the communication, behavior, and responses you wish students to emulate.</p> <p>Reach out to students who are struggling or disappear.</p>	<p>Whether it is a weekly wrap up or preview, communicate with your class via announcements at least once a week. You can draw important connections, include reminders, share events, answer questions, etc.</p> <p>The online experience can be isolating and students wonder if their work/contributions matter. Publicly recognizing exemplary work validates and motivates students and shows you are paying attention.</p> <p>Regular, professional, and thoughtful communication encourages students to respond in kind. When you set the performance bar high through your own behavior students are often motivated to meet it.</p> <p>This not only helps you to determine what kind of assistance students need, but knowing you care about their performance can motivate them to ongoing success.</p>
<p><b>Pedagogical</b>-Facilitate student learning, sustain participation and motivation</p>	<p>Provide timely feedback on assignments/projects.</p> <p>Provide personalized judicious feedback following the praise, suggest, and encourage model.</p>	<p>Feedback in a 7.5 or 6-week session should be returned promptly, particularly so students can apply it to future assignments. Strategize your efforts. Spend more time on more consequential assignments. Use standardized comments on less consequential assignments.</p> <p>The tone of feedback directly impacts student motivation. Address students by name and be sure</p>

		<p>to include positives. Limit the amount of suggestions for improvement to the most pertinent and achievable items for their success on future assignments. Students cannot and will not process a litany of their mistakes. That is not an efficient use of your time.</p> <p>While instructors have reported ambivalence about audio feedback, students often respond favorably. Consider alternating feedback modalities.</p> <p>Students do not automatically make these connections on their own and need you to make them. The weekly announcement or a wrap up discussion post or video is an effective means of doing this. This is what we just did and why . . . this is what we are doing next . . .</p> <p>Bring additional examples and materials into the class, whether scholarly debates, contemporary news/events, or popular culture happenings, etc. Help students connect the material to their worlds. Students want to learn from you.</p> <p>Many online students are experienced professionals and have lived interesting lives with very diverse experiences. Encourage their contributions by asking students to bring related material into the class and share/discuss. Promote conversations by asking questions and encouraging students to talk with one</p>
	Provide feedback using various modalities (written, video, audio)	
	Draw connections for students among objectives, learning materials, and assignments.	
	Share your expertise and make the course material relevant and interesting.	
	Draw on your students' experiences and knowledge.	

	Leverage peer feedback.	<p>another. Provide choice and let student interests guide the learning where applicable.</p> <p>Peer to peer interaction is important and students often report positive feedback on interacting with peers and learning from one another. Low stakes peer interaction creates community and fosters learning without increasing student anxiety.</p>
<b>Managerial</b> -Implement practices to effectively manage course logistics.	<p>Schedule your time.</p> <p>Post a video-based course orientation.</p> <p>Create and communicate clear policies and expectations.</p> <p>Respond to questions as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>Online teaching requires attention to organization and time management. Create a schedule for yourself and try to adhere to it. Allocate time to manage all aspects of your course. Creating consistent patterns for yourself and your students is key.</p> <p>Many of our online classes already include a short course introduction. If your course does not, consider creating one.</p> <p>Use the syllabus to explain your methods of communication. Set your late policy and communicate your expectations for performance and etiquette.</p> <p>Students in online courses need just in time information. They are working in time-constrained windows so prolonged waiting for responses creates anxiety and impedes their progress. Try to answer student questions as quickly as possible. Remember</p>

		<p>students can send you messages from all over in Canvas, including through their Inbox and responding to comments on grading assignments. Using the Canvas App can facilitate communication because you will get push notifications when students reach out to you through an unexpected channel.</p>
	Set due dates on all assignments in Canvas.	<p>Students rely heavily on their “To-do” lists and calendars in Canvas. Assignment due dates are required to populate their calendars.</p>
	Be flexible when possible.	<p>You are working with a unique population of students who have many demands on their time/lives (as you do). In order to support student success, you are encouraged to be flexible; however, flexibility can easily become cumbersome in large classes with many students. Do what makes sense to allow for effective course management while still promoting empathy and student success.</p>
	Implement time-saving techniques when grading.	<p>Utilize Speedgrader and the rubrics provided in Canvas. Note that students often cannot find annotations on their work in Canvas. It may be a waste of time to use that feature. Spend the most time on the most important assignments. Save time by recycling comments but personalize with student names and to their projects.</p>
	Utilize announcements.	<p>Use announcements to provide global feedback, keep students on track, and communicate any</p>

	Announce your plans to set expectations.	<p>changes or important reminders to keep the class running smoothly.</p> <p>Tell students what you plan to do and when they can expect feedback, etc. If that changes, let them know. Usually when students are kept informed they handle delays and changes with ease.</p>
<b>Technical-</b> Leverage available technology and resources to facilitate learning, course facilitation, and improve skills.	Know your Canvas and Course Related Tools	<p>Make the most of the online tools embedded in Canvas, know how they function, and customize them to suit your needs. Course Instructor Guides provide information for setting up the tools in most courses. Instructor Guides are attached in the top module of courses labeled Instructor Information.</p>
	Create content in the form of short videos/multimedia	<p>You are not expected to film additional lengthy lectures for online courses, however, a short video can help students with difficult concepts or assignments. Record videos using evidence-based practices. Research shows videos should be presented in short, digestible increments. Students stay focused and retain what they watch in videos that are 8-10 minutes max.</p>
	Use your resources and keep learning.	<p>ASU offers ongoing training and support for both new and experienced online teachers. We strive to supplement and complement the resources offered campus wide in our department in order to customize your resources to the English Department.</p>

1. Adapted from: Martin, Florence, Chuang Wang, and Ayesha Sadaf. "Facilitation Matters: Instructor Perception of Helpfulness of Facilitation Strategies in Online Courses." *Online Learning*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2020, p. 28-49.