Assignment Design for Teaching Online

Spring 2020

CENTER FOR
TEACHING
& LEARNING
Baruch COLLEGE

Today's Guiding Questions

- How can you translate what you already do to the online/hybrid format?

- How might the online/hybrid format expand the ways you engage and assess your students?

Some Basics & Logistics

Synchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
Gather at the same time and interact in "real time"	*Instructors prepare course materials in advance of students' access. Students access course at time of their choosing and interact over a period of time.*
Pro: Immediate personal engagement may create greater feelings of community	**Pro:** Higher levels of temporal flexibility, makes learning experiences more accessible to different students and creates an archive of past materials.
Pro: More responsive exchanges may prevent miscommunication	**Pro:** Increased cognitive engagement since students have more time to engage with and explore the course material.
Con: More challenging to schedule	**Con:** Students may feel less satisfied without social interaction between peers and instructors
Con: May face technical challenges if lack fast/powerful Wi-Fi networks	**Con:** Course material may be misunderstood or have the potential to be misconstrued without the real-time interaction.
Example: Meet on Zoom for 75 minutes on Monday at 6pm	**Example:** Participate in Bb Discussion board March 16-22

Adapted from Jenae Cohn and Beth Seltzer at bit.ly/stanfordteachingdisruption

Best practices….

- Keep in mind realities of access to equipment, space, privacy and wifi for you and your students

- Communicate expectations
  - Synchronous/Asynchronous
  - Tech requirements

- Be flexible and have a "Plan B"

- Be patient with yourself and your students

What have you been doing?

Current Practices

- What are my course learning goals?

- How do students learn the course content? (Readings, lectures, discussion, videos, etc.)

- Where do students experience this content? (In class? Outside of class? Online?)

- In what ways do students practice or apply the course content? (Homework? Office hours? Class activities?)

- Where does this practice/application take place?

- How do I assess what my students have learned? (Quizzes? Writing responses? Class discussion?)

- Where does this assessment take place?

- What technology do I use for my class?

Current Practices: How do you use time? (worksheet)

	In Person Class Activity	Outside of Class Activity
Content coverage		
Practice		
Application		
Assessment		
Community Building		
Other?		

Current Practices

- What works well with your current course design?

- What could be better?

- What most concerns you about shifting to an online/hybrid format?

- What is something that you hope comes out of this process?

Exploring How To Shift Your Course

Backwards design (Wiggins and McTighe)

- What outcomes am I looking for?

- How do I measure if these outcomes have been achieved?

- What do I provide for students to succeed using these metrics?

Learning goals ➡ **Assessments** ➡ **Lesson plans**

What does backwards design look like in your course? (application)

- What are my course learning goals?

- What assessments/tests/assignment/homework/projects do I use to measure these learning goals?

- What am I assigning and doing (lecturing, course materials, activities, homework, assignments, etc.) so that the students are successful meeting these learning goals?

Learning goals ➡ **Assessments** ➡ **Lesson plans**

Rethinking a course goal:

Choose one learning goal. Ask and answer for yourself:

- How will I assess whether a student has achieved this goal?
- What skills are necessary to be successful on this assessment? (Be as specific as possible.)
- What do you need to do to teach these skills? (Consider readings, lectures, in-class activities, homework, etc.)

Rethinking an assignment

- What are my course learning goals?

- Review how you currently use time in your course. What is an assignment/activity happening in the in-person portion that needs to shift outside of the classroom?

- Should this activity be done by the individual student, in groups or as an entire class?

- How might you engage students in this activity? How do you help students understand the relevance of the task?

- What is a low-tech option for engaging and assessing students?

- Are there any academic integrity issues?

- How might you measure if the learning goal has been met through this assignment/activity?

- Will students need new content/instructions/technology?

Rethinking an assignment (worksheet)

Learning Goal:	In Person Class Activity	Outside of Class Activity
Primary purpose? (Content coverage, practice, application, assessment, community building, other?)		
Individual, Group, Class?		
Engagement approach		
How do you assess?		
Special instructions?		
New content/instructions?		

What's your approach to time and learning?

Rethinking an assignment (worksheet)

Learning Goal:	Outside of Class Activity	Synchronous or Asynchronous?
Primary purpose? (Content coverage, practice, application, assessment, community building, other?)		
Individual, Group, Class?		
Engagement approach		
How do you assess?		
Special/new instructions?		
New content?		