

Online Teaching Check List

This document is intended to foster reflection for instructors redesigning existing courses for online delivery. There is not “one way” to deliver an online course, but the suggestions contained within the checklist reflect best practices from the literature for creating successful online learning experiences.

	INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN COMPONENTS FOR TEACHING ONLINE	Checklist Options Consider which of these are relevant to accomplishing your teaching goals:
1	I have created an online “faculty presence” in my course in multiple ways.	☐ Welcome message ☐ Intro videos to frame topics ☐ Virtual office hours/meetings ☐ News posts ☐ Discussions boards ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
2	I have a communication plan for my course that is clear and explicit about how and when I will communicate with students.	☐ Weekly emails ☐ Announcements ☐ Virtual office hours/meetings ☐ News posts ☐ Discussions boards ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
3	I have a detailed plan for how to manage and organize my students and facilitate their engagement each week that I've shared with my co-instructors and/or TAs, GAs, Lis, etc.	☐ Co-instructor/TA/GA roles and responsibilities ☐ Structure for Lab sessions ☐ Student groups ☐ Individual instruction ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
4	I have designed my course for ease-of-use and simplicity so that students can find what they need when they need it.	☐ Weekly modules (Course Framework) ☐ Weekly Organizer Pages ☐ Consistent headings ☐ Clear deadlines ☐ Chronological order ☐ Other (explained below)

Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
5	I have designed my course for active learning, maximizing both synchronous & asynchronous modalities (Zoom & D2L) based on what is best suited for the activity and learning goals.	☐ Live discussions ☐ Group work ☐ Quizzes and/or polls ☐ Discussion boards ☐ Case studies ☐ Screencasted lectures ☐ Guest speakers ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
6	I have developed formative and summative assessments aligned with my course goals and learning objectives.	☐ Self-Assessments/Reflections ☐ Rubrics ☐ Quizzes ☐ Case studies ☐ Final exams ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
7	I have provided opportunities for students to practice improvements and receive low-stakes feedback from me, other instructors, and their peers.	☐ Practice quizzes/games ☐ Discussion boards ☐ Ungraded assignments ☐ Peer reviews ☐ Active learning techniques ☐ Shared video practices (Video Note or Flipgrid) ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		
8	I have developed rubrics or grading criteria to evaluate student application of knowledge and demonstration of skill.	☐ Rubrics ☐ Grading Criteria ☐ Other (explained below)
Other/Notes/Next Steps:		

Further Reading/References:

Faculty Compass: Best Practices for Teaching Online

<https://www.mghihp.edu/faculty-staff-faculty-compass-teaching/best-practices-teaching-online>

Faculty Compass: Building Online Community

<https://www.mghihp.edu/faculty-staff-faculty-compass-teaching>

Faculty Compass: D2L Course Framework

<https://www.mghihp.edu/faculty-staff-faculty-compass-teaching/d2l-course-framework>

Faculty Compass: Rubrics

<https://www.mghihp.edu/faculty-staff-faculty-compass/rubrics>

IDEA Paper: Team Teaching

https://ideacontent.blob.core.windows.net/content/sites/2/2020/01/PaperIDEA_55.pdf

8 Questions to Consider When Planning Your Next Online Course

1. How will you create a faculty presence in your online course?

Establishing instructor-student connections are just as important online as in traditional classroom courses. Your “presence” as an instructor can be created through text, voice, or video. Welcome pages, news posts, and discussion board participation are common ways to be present in an online course. More and more instructors are leveraging videos to 'personalize the student experience.' Short 5-10 minute videos can help introduce weekly topics or a major assignment by establishing context and purpose for class activities. These shorter videos can guide learning by providing relevancy to students who thirst for your commentary as “connective tissue” to scaffold, amplify, or expand learning.

2. How will you primarily communicate with students?

Have a plan for communicating with students (weekly emails, D2L news posts, discussion boards, virtual office hours, etc.) and stick to that plan. For most courses this plan will be weekly. Being clear about how and when you will communicate with students, and how they can communicate with you, will help to reduce their anxiety levels by making the online course experience more routine and manageable.

3. How will your students be organized and managed?

For many online courses it may be helpful to keep students in groups of 6-8 that are persistent across the semester. In larger courses with multiple facilitators, different people may be responsible for different groups of students or different weeks of course activities. Establish a plan ahead of time with identified roles and specific workloads for co-instructors, TAs/GAs, and lab Instructors, etc. This kind of coordinated effort will make the online experience much more seamless for you and your students.

4. How will you organize your course content and materials for ease of access and use?

Organization and consistency are important aspects of all online materials with the goal of minimizing student confusion or frustration. The D2L Course Framework and D2L Weekly Organizer Pages provide a default template for structuring online courses in D2L. Other recommendations include:

- Weekly Modules with material organized in chronological order
- Consistent headings, labels, and naming of files
- Clear deadlines
- Sensible file formats (PDFs for anything text based)

5. How will you design your course with the right balance of delivery options?

Effective online courses strike a balance between two modalities, with the work students do asynchronously used as preparation for the synchronous sessions and vice versa. Synchronous sessions should be interactive, engaging, and meaningful - not a place for passive content delivery. While Zoom is the main tool for synchronous activities where students and instructor(s) are online in real time, D2L provides a variety of other tools for asynchronous activities (working through content, completing quizzes, polling, posting in discussion boards etc.) Consider the role of screencasting for lecture-based content delivered asynchronously in D2L.

6. How will students be assessed?

What are the major projects, exams, presentation, or papers in your course that will hold students accountable and create evidence that the goals and learning objectives of your course are being met? Exams, papers, and projects are common high-stakes assessments (summative), but you will want to also plan for the ongoing, low-stakes assessment (formative) of student learning throughout the course. Your decisions about how and when to assess student learning will be based on the goals and learning objectives of your course/program as well as the logistics of your course. Whatever method you use, consider when these are introduced in the course and how you will use low-stakes opportunities to prepare students for them (see question 7).

7. How will you provide opportunities for students to get feedback and improve?

Opportunities to practice with techniques, apply ideas, and then receive feedback before being asked to perform in higher-stakes contexts are an important part of learning. Depending on the context of a course, these practice opportunities could happen in several places such as:

- Ungraded D2L quizzes (may or may not be self-assessments of their learning)
- Low-stakes discussion board participation
- Low-stakes assignments (may or may not include peer reviews/feedback)
- Active learning techniques used in synchronous sessions
- Sharing video of practice via Flipgrid or Video Note

Whatever your practice opportunities look like in your course, make sure they align with your goals and learning objectives as well as the higher-stakes assessments (see question 6) your students are being prepared for.

8. How will you evaluate student application of knowledge and demonstration of skill?

Whether papers, presentations, posters, or discussion board postings, you will want a plan in place to evaluate student work and performances - and the criteria for that evaluation of knowledge and/or skills should be clearly described in assignment descriptions/instructions. For assignments of even modest complexity, rubrics are an important teaching tool to make evaluation of students work efficient and consistent. Developing a good rubric can be time consuming but hopefully pays off in the quality and increased speed of evaluating student work. The Transparent Assignment framework (<https://tilthighered.com/tiltexamplesandresources>) can be a helpful structure for providing clear and well-defined assignments for students.

Next Steps

Set up a time to meet with an Instructional Designer 1:1 for discussion of your course planning:

Faculty Compass: Teaching Consultations

<https://www.mghihp.edu/faculty-staff-faculty-compass/teaching-consultations>

Contact an Instructional Technologist for help with Zoom, D2L, and other technology components of teaching online: <https://helpdesk.mghihp.edu/>