**Online Learning Strategies for Rapid Deployment**

*This information was provided by our colleagues at the iSchool and adapted for the School of Social Work.*

First Two Weeks

1. For many of you, this is going to be a rolling start - the first week or two may feel like a “ramp-up period” until you gain more confidence at using unfamiliar methods and tools.
2. What do you want your students to achieve in the first two weeks? What should your students be doing now to support the learning objectives for your course?  
   1. Reviewing the syllabus and assignments.
   2. Self-introductions online?
   3. Forming groups for course projects and discussion groups?
   4. Covering a baseline amount of reading to introduce the scope of the class and definitions of key concepts?
   5. Completing and submitting their first assignment?
   6. Completing tutorials on how to use Zoom or other software for the course?
3. Review your content and determine whether you could present it synchronously in Zoom, just like you were teaching class, or if it would be better to present it in an asynchronous format – especially in the beginning. Many will prefer doing some of both over the quarter.   
   1. How much of your content materials - readings, slides, recordings, videos - are already available in digital format? Search UW Libraries to check on availability of these resources
   2. Think about how you can engage the students during or after your presentation of materials. Graded chat/comment board? Reflection assignment after a film? Etc.

Please give yourself 20 minutes to read Michelle Miller’s article in the Chronicle of Higher Education entitled "[Going Online in a Hurry: What to Do and Where to Start (Links to an external site.)](https://www.chronicle.com/article/Going-Online-in-a-Hurry-What/248207) (March 9). The author does a great job of summarizing six key points on transitioning rapidly to an online delivery model.

Communication

1. Start by making sure your contact information is up to date on your Canvas site. We suggest:
2. Photo of Instructor(s) and TA(s) or ITs - the photos help establish identity and presence of the learning team.
3. Email address for Instructor(s) and TA(s) and List of Office Hours, with a link to your course Zoom room.
4. Create a specific, recurring Zoom room just for your course.
5. Prepare a communication plan for your course. Post it on your course homepage and syllabus that outlines your expectations. We suggest limiting the number of tools used for communication in order to help students taking multiple courses. Where possible, use the tools that SSW and UW will be widely supporting - Zoom and Canvas Conferences.
6. Select a primary communication method to use in your course. This is used for all of the one directional messages sent to the entire class. The recommended method is to use the Canvas Announcements feature. Many of you are familiar with this and it provides a running history of all course communications.
7. **Anticipate increased email and message interaction with students**. Clarify how you want to receive messages from students. Is this via email to your personal email account or Canvas messages (Inbox)? Be clear to students about the method of choice.
8. For 1:1 synchronous communication including Office Hours, we suggest your Zoom Pro account. This will build some consistency for students who will be using Zoom across multiple courses. UW is also producing lots of support pages and directions on best practices for faculty and students to use Zoom. If you use other platforms for synchronous conferencing, you may then have to provide more individual direction to students.
9. Given there could be a great deal of interaction through Zoom, please add a link to the "Zoom: Guide for Participants" document in the contact information section of your Canvas home page. It is also good to remind students that there is a link to the Learning Technologies Support site in the course’s left navigation bar.
10. At a minimum, your course site should identify **all the assignments** you intend for the course and their **due dates** on the first day of class. It is understandable if you need to add additional instructions and explanation to each assignment description during the first two weeks of the quarter in order to optimize or adjust for online delivery, but **the number of assignments and due dates should be final and posted by the first day of the quarter**. This is essential for students to plan effectively as they cope with other disruptions in their daily life through Spring.
11. Review and update the grading policy, instructor expectations for students, and any other comments on accommodations pertinent to the current situation on the syllabus page of your Canvas site.
12. Publish your Canvas course no later than the first day of class. If you are able to do so a few days earlier, this will help answer questions that many students have and help relieve uncertainty.

Synchronous and Asynchronous

There are two modalities for instructors to facilitate class sessions remotely:

**Synchronous**

Adapted from [*Teaching Effectively During Times of Disruption, for SIS and PWR (Links to an external site.)*](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ccsudB2vwZ_GJYoKlFzGbtnmftGcXwCIwxzf-jkkoCU/preview#heading=h.bsm2vj54ofq4)*,*Jenae Cohn and Beth Seltzer from Stanford University

Instructors and students interact in “real time” with a live exchange. ***Synchronous class meetings must occur at the scheduled time and day according to the official UW Time Schedule***. This is to avoid schedule conflicts for students who are taking multiple courses.

The benefits of synchronous online instruction includes:

* Immediate personal engagement between students and instructors, which may create greater feelings of community and lessen feelings of isolation
* More responsive exchanges between students and instructors, which may prevent miscommunication or misunderstanding
* Ability to discuss and role play in real time

**Asynchronous**

Instructors and students interact at different points in time. Instructors prepare recorded materials and learning activities that students may access at a time of their choosing and will interact with each over a longer period of time. The benefits of asynchronous online instruction include:

* More flexibility in terms of timing that makes the learning experiences more accessible to students. Students manage their time more effectively and can focus on their learning when most conducive.
* Increased cognitive engagement (***higher level learning***) since students will have more time to engage with and explore the course material.
* Students who have temporarily relocated to other parts of the country (e.g. moving back home for a few weeks) can avoid time zone difficulties.

Synchronous Activities

One of the easiest ways to engage learners in an extended closure is to teach class synchronously, online, as if you were still in a physical classroom. In this scenario, instructors can hold class on the same days and times as they would if they were still on campus. At this point in time, Zoom is the tool of choice for synchronous interaction in a whole class environment.

*Considerations*

* All Zoom Pro accounts at UW support up to 300 participants in a meeting room.
  + All participants in a meeting can turn on their video simultaneously. By default, Zoom will show 25 video participants per screen with an arrow at the bottom to scroll to the next screen of videos. There is also a setting that will allow you to see up to 50 video feeds per screen.
* Record each session so those that can’t attend can view at a later date.
* Provide instruction on how to use Zoom or point students to the[relevant location on the Learning Technologies support site.](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-overview)

Using Zoom

Zoom is a video conferencing tool with features such as screen sharing, recording, breakout rooms, polls, and chat. All UW faculty, staff, and students have access to Zoom Pro accounts via their UW NetID. Each meeting can run for an unlimited duration and up to 300 participants. Please review the following tutorials for information on effectively using Zoom:

* [Schedule a Zoom meeting](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-schedule-a-meeting)
* [Start a meeting](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-start-a-meeting)
* [Guide for Participants](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-guide-for-participants)
* [Share your screen (Links to an external site.)](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362153-Sharing-your-screen)
* [Record a Meeting](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-recording-a-meeting)
* [Using Breakout Rooms](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-using-breakout-rooms)
* [More Zoom Tutorials](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-overview)

**Strategies for synchronous Zoom Activities**

Examples of ways to engage the learner in this synchronous setting could include, but not be limited to:

* Have all participants turn on video and have a whole class discussion (best in smaller classes)
* Use screen sharing to show a presentation and walk through the information as if you were in class.
* Use screen sharing to show a whiteboard, where instructors and students can write on the board in the same way that they would on a whiteboard in the classroom. This works really well if you have a touchscreen device.
* Use screen sharing to edit a Word or Google Doc in real time, as if you were writing notes on a physical board.
* Using screen sharing, show a video to the class.
* Using Zoom’s Breakout Rooms feature, break students into groups, providing them some kind of task to work on collaboratively and then bring them back to the main room for sharing the results of their work with the rest of the class.
* Using Zoom Polls, check for understanding during the session
  + In addition to using Zoom Polls, more complex question types can be created using [Poll EverywhereLinks to an external site.](https://itconnect.uw.edu/learn/tools/polleverywhere/), a virtual polling package provided for all students and faculty on campus. Students can respond to Poll Everywhere questions via text message, web page or using the mobile app.

Asynchronous Activities

Asynchronous activities allow instructors to engage their students in meaningful ways without having to meet in real time. There are lots of different types of asynchronous activities, but for the purposes of this document, we will focus on three different options; Pre-recorded lectures, collaborative activities and discussion boards.

Asynchronous activities allow instructors to pre-record lectures. These recorded lectures could be a lecture just as you would deliver in the class, or if you have time, you can condense an hour long face-to-face lecture into one or more 15-20 minute lectures, highly focused on specific topics. Once recorded they can be added to course materials in Canvas. Generally there are two widely used ways to record lectures - making a single attempt recording of the entire lecture or using a slide by slide approach. Read on for more information regarding tools for recording lectures.

[***Panopto*** Links to an external site.](https://itconnect.uw.edu/learn/tools/panopto/)

Panopto is the campus-wide lecture capture platform used in many of the large lecture halls for automatic recording of lectures. It is also setup in Canvas so anybody in Canvas can create screen capture recordings using the Panopto Recorder. Academic Technologies provides a [list (Links to an external site.)](https://www.washington.edu/classroom/?active=1&coursecasting=1&capacity=0) of all spaces on campus that have automatic lecture capture capabilities.

[***Zoom***](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/721562/pages/zoom-overview)

Zoom’s screen share feature can be used to record your desktop or applications during a Zoom session whether you have participants in the meeting or not. These recordings can be saved to Zoom’s cloud storage for up to ninety days or you can record and save them to your local computer and then decide where you want to store them.

*Note: If you want to save your recordings for more than the 90 days, download them and then decide where you want to host them for continued access.*

*Considerations:*

* Try to keep all recordings to less than 20 minutes.
* Assign some kind of activity after video to engage the learner before introducing the next video.

Collaborative Activities

Instructors can design group activities that students could be working on during their time outside of the classroom. Create the activities with set deliverables by a certain date. This will keep students on task. There are a number of collaborative platforms that can be used in this scenario:

* + Canvas - use groups feature to create a space for students to collaborate. This is essentially their own space, a mini Canvas site that includes discussion boards, file storage, a conference feature, ability to create pages and a collaboration option that allows for working in both G Suite and Microsoft’s Office 365.
  + Google docs - use during a Zoom session to keep notes or collaborate on a project
  + Office 365 - Collaborative writing projects
  + VoiceThread - VoiceThread is the preferred tool for creating shared presentation or collaborative projects where information can be collected, discussed and presented.

Discussion Boards

Instructors can use discussion boards to engage students in a conversation about various topics. The key to successful use of these boards is to have focused questions where specific content can be discussed. Make sure to use a scoring rubric so students know how they will be assessed. There are a couple of options for creating discussion boards. Try some out and start with what feels comfortable!

* + Canvas - Use the built-in discussion board tool in Canvas to create your discussion questions. This is straightforward and simple.
  + VoiceThread - Pose your discussion questions with any type of media, text, audio, video, images, MS Office files, Libre Office files and of course pdf documents.
    - VT has the ability to do moderated discussion where students answer the discussion question, the instructor reviews and scores and then releases for the class to review.
    - Discussions can be threaded
    - Students can reply directly to other students.
    - All participants can comment using text, audio, and video.
    - Links can be left in text comments
    - Participants can annotate using the drawing tool anywhere on a slide or in a video.

**Discussion Board Best Practices**

Successful discussion boards always start with a great question. Check out "Designing Effective Discussion Questions" from the Stanford Teaching Commons. While this description is targeted at a face-2-face audience, it does have good information about forming your discussion questions. In addition to a good question, here are a few best practices to consider:

* We recommend you grade the majority of your discussion boards. Assigning a grade can improve student participation. If no grade is assigned, students are less likely to participate at a higher level. This is where your rubric will come in handy.
* It is recommended that discussion count for 10%-20% of the course grade; no additional benefits are observed when the grade is increased above 20% (deNoyelles, Zydney, & Chen, 2014).
* Consider using a rubric for the evaluation of student responses so they know what is expected of them.
* Provide clear directions for how, where, and when to respond.
* Consider adding points for responding to other student posts or questions. This makes things more interactive and engaging.
* Provide prompts to help guide the discussion towards your learning objectives.
* Be present! Students want you to participate in the discussion. You don't need to respond to all posts in a thread, but select outstanding posts to comment on, keep people on topic and ask clarifying questions to elevate the quality of the discussion.
* While grammar is important, think about content first, evaluating ideas and higher level responses.
* Call out and model substantive responses to encourage other students to elevate their responses.