**Teaching Remotely: Detailed Guide**

Below you will find more detail to help you actualize the recommended tasks outlined in the [Teaching Remotely](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/teaching-remotely/) guide for your individual courses. Included in this detailed guide is further information rooted in evidence-based pedagogy describing why you may need to modify elements of your course, as well as considerations and examples to help you think through adjusting these elements for your remote course.

This guide was written at a time of Emergency Preparedness, and we know everyone is overwhelmed and learning/deploying on the fly. The tips here do not fully express all the recommended practices of online learning, but aim to do the best we can in times when we suddenly switch to teaching remotely.

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## 1. Communication

### **Announcements and Email**

It is critical to communicate early and often with your students now that your course is being conducted remotely. Being transparent and having open lines of communication will help you identify unanticipated challenges and support students continuing in the course.

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* What’s New? Post clear descriptions of the changes you have made to the course, such as modified assignments, a new grading structure, new due dates, new ways to submit assignments and view grades, and communicate those changes in visible places, such as in the announcements section in the LMS (Blackboard or Brightspace).
* Show Understanding. Reaffirm your commitment to learners in these unusual circumstances. Tell them you understand the difficulty of switching to remote courses mid-semester, and ask for their understanding as well.
  + Students with disabilities may need additional assurance that you are committed to helping them level the playing field at this time. The [DRC](https://www.purdue.edu/drc/) is students’ first point of contact, and [Innovative Learning](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/) is yours if you need help with making your course accessible.
* Communicate regularly. Establish a clear timeframe with students about updates and feedback on assignments.
* When setting expectations about the course work and deadlines with students, remember to discuss your expectations for communications. When can they expect to hear from you, and where should they expect to receive that message? When do you expect to hear from them, and how?
* **Do not** share grades with students via email (this is a FERPA violation).
  + Tell students when grades have been posted and where to view them. Share and explain how to use grade calculation tools or methods for students if they want to know their current grade. This will allow them to calculate their current grade with the weights of the course.
  + Stay current on grading to avoid having students ask about their grades via email.
* Ask students to use a standardized naming convention for emailing [e.g., Course# - Topic] to make emails easier to identify and respond to with the influx of external communication.

### **Submitting assignments**

An extended disruption to residential courses may require you to adjust your timeline for student submissions of assignments. Students will likely have some anxiety about the disruption affecting their final grade in the course. Early communication about changes to assignments, exams and grading will help alleviate some of their anxieties.

* Have students submit assignments via the LMS only.
* Update instructions to include how students will submit, revise, or apply feedback.
* Ask students to use a standardized file name for assignments to make files easier to identify when downloaded. Example: [Course#\_Lastname\_Firstname--Assignment Name]

### **Additional suggestions for communication**

* Offer regular “office hours” which we will refer to as “student hours” during closures so students can stay connected with you.
  + You may want to offer the option for students to contact you via email, video or text chat/discussion boards, or a phone call. Use the LMS or WebEx to host office hours, and schedule 1:1 meetings with students. All faculty have a [WebEx account](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/supporting-instruction/instructional-technology/webex.aspx). You can also record the office hours in WebEx and share as a video in the LMS, to make the responses, shared content, and examples accessible to all of your students.
  + Keep in consideration that you may have students in various time zones. You can survey your students for availability for your student hours or offer open virtual drop-in hours throughout the day to accommodate students across the world.
* Stay active in the online space (discussion boards, groups, etc.). This will help students feel that you are actively present and that they are still “in class” during a closure.
* Use discussion boards, group work, and other chat platforms to help students stay connected and maintain the class community. Consider alternatives to synchronous meetings if students may not have excellent internet access, are studying from varied time zones, and/or may be dealing with illness.

## 2. Delivery techniques

### **Course materials and accessibility**

You should make all of the relevant course materials, such as the updated syllabus and course readings, easy to find and interact with in the LMS.

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* Communicate with students in the LMS about how they will find and access the course materials. Consider creating a short video or document with screenshots outlining the structure of the course page and where to find important materials.
  + Intuitive: Ideally, a well laid out course does not require much instruction to find the key parts.
    - Organization: Make every week of the course the same routine as much as possible. Start with a task list learners can follow so they know what to do, and when to do it. Then, give specific directions in each assignment on how to do it.
  + Navigable: Point out where in the left-side navigation menu in the LMS students will find readings, the syllabus, etc.
  + Perceivable: Black text on white background are most easily seen by most users, and easily read by screen readers.
    - When you’re not in a rush, perhaps one or two weeks into your remote teaching, you might be interested in reading [20 Tips for an Accessible Online Course by Dr. Sheryl Burgstahler](https://www.washington.edu/doit/20-tips-teaching-accessible-online-course). This highlights some of the techniques that we recommend when we’re not in emergency triage mode.
* When selecting course materials, keep in mind learners who may not have the proper bandwidth to watch streaming video, a quiet place to study, or live where there are technology firewalls.
  + Video: DO caption videos. Keep video content short (3-5 minutes) and divided by topic. If you can make videos downloadable or use audio with text instead, this can help many learners.
    - Upload all videos to [Kaltura MediaSpace](https://mediaspace.itap.purdue.edu/) instead of posting the full video file directly in the LMS (Blackboard or Brightspace). Following this practice will help prevent overloading and potentially the crashing of either LMS for everyone.
    - Note: You can use MediaSpace to caption videos and share the link directly with your students. If you have videos on YouTube, or are using YouTube to caption videos, you should download the video and move it to MediaSpace. YouTube is not accessible in all countries.
  + Consider PowerPoint Slides and MS Word documents: Screen-reader accessible print materials may be your better options to meet learner needs.
    - If you do not know how to make your course content accessible for learners who use screen readers, visit Innovative Learning’s website to [Create Accessible documents](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/accessibility/accessible-documents.aspx).
* Include the full citation to articles, books, etc. found from the [Libraries e-Resources](https://www.lib.purdue.edu/) and link to the item. **Do not** embed full-text items within the LMS, as it violates [copyright law](https://www.lib.purdue.edu/uco/). You can modify the following example text:

Follow the hyperlinked article below to the required reading for the week:

[Van Cauwenberghe, L., & Janssen, C. (2014). Microplastics in bivalves cultured for human consumption. *Environmental Pollution,* *193*, 65-70.](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0269749114002425)

* Consider allowing students to locate articles, books, videos, etc. on their own and document why they believe it relates to the course topic for the week.
* Locate alternative, free materials, such as textbooks, articles, assignments, etc., from Open Educational Resources (OER) repositories, such as MIT Online Textbooks, OER Commons, and more.

If students report an inability to access materials, such as inability to download materials due to low bandwidth, not owning the appropriate technology or inability to access a public library due to closure, geographical or financial barriers that limit access to internet, or other natural hazards occurring in their area, etc., you should work with them to provide the materials. This will be a case-by-case issue. Please see the Innovative Learning site for the 1-800 number for further assistance.

### **Instructional technology**

For options choosing an instructional technology to replace your current face-to-face activities, see this [Alternative Activities and Assessments](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/teaching-remotely/files/Alternative_Activities_and_Assessments_for_Teaching_Remotely.docx)document with examples of Purdue’s recommended tools and technologies to support transitioning to a remote teaching style.

Moving from a face-to-face to fully remote course quickly is a challenge. Consider your current class and the goals. If you are moving from a lecture-based course, for example, you have many technological options to consider that are directly delivered and/or connected to the LMS. The Innovative Learning website has many [Instructional Technology](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/supporting-instruction/instructional-technology/) details which may help you further, but the sheet linked above was created to help you filter all those details quickly.

Consider the following suggestions for moving from face-to-face to remote lecture or seminar options:

1. Record your lectures at home (Kaltura, Camtasia), in a Purdue University classroom (via BoilerCast) or VideoExpress room.
   1. Do not rely exclusively on Purdue physical spaces (BoilerCast or VideoExpress rooms) for creating content. Have back-up solutions in place if Purdue spaces become inaccessible.
   2. Note: Camtasia is accessible to faculty and staff, but not graduate students due to licensing. Adjunct faculty should check with their department about accessing Camtasia.
2. Provide PodCast or AudioBook-style options by reading a text to students (via Audacity) and providing them the transcript of the text. It is key to provide the audio and text options to make these items accessible to all students.
3. Use PowerPoint Narration or the voiceover option in PowerPoint. Make sure the transcript is either in each slide or provided as a single document to students.

For step-by-step instructions as to how to set up components in your course using Blackboard, Brightspace, or other Purdue-supported tools, see the [Tools and Services for Teaching Remotely](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/teaching-remotely/tools.aspx) site.

### **LMS (Brightspace or Blackboard)**

The job of the LMS is to help you manage all of your instructional interactions. It is your hub for announcements, delivery of instruction, grading, and interactivity. Blackboard will continue to be available until August 2020, and many classes are already in our new LMS, Brightspace. Whichever option you use, we have resources and tips to assist you.

### **Synchronous or asynchronous delivery**

While you may want to replicate your in-person course in an online format as much as possible, synchronous sessions--where students and instructors still meet virtually in real-time using web conferencing tools like Webex or Skype--pose considerable challenges and barriers to students who do not all have equal access to the necessary tools, devices, or internet connectivity. Consider alternative means to help students feel connected to the course and one another, so students can continue with remote instruction.

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* Create videos (using Kaltura Capture) or audio recordings for students to engage with on their own time. Make sure to upload these to Kaltura Media Space and caption all audio elements to support accessibility.
  + Due to high usage not only on our campus, for all users of the tool internationally, sometimes there is a delay in getting these to process, or temporary glitches in replaying. Please be patient.
* Provide a range of materials (detailed outlines, instructor created accessible PowerPoint or MS Word documents, additional readings directly linked to Purdue Libraries, etc.) to help students interact with the content in a range of ways.
* Have students use discussion boards to communicate about the course or group projects. If you do not need to see these interactions, students can use other messaging technologies like WhatsApp, Slack, etc. to meet and discuss.
* If using a web conferencing tool, please record the session for those who cannot attend synchronously and to allow later review. Remember to upload the video to Kaltura Media Space, add captions, and upload the video link to Blackboard or Brightspace for all of your students to access.

## 3. Activities and assessment

Teaching remotely will likely require you to modify the types of activities and assessments you have your students do. Below are various components of a course with a technique and examples to consider.

### **Course discussions**

Moving from an in-person course where students can easily and instantly communicate with their peers will require intentional efforts on behalf of the instructor to help students continue to learn from and support their peers.

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* Modify the course assignments and points to support this important element of remote instruction. Create a set number of points that students can acquire for highly utilizing the discussion boards (answering questions correctly, posing insightful thoughts or questions related to the course, providing useful feedback to others’ posts, etc.).
* Create different kinds of discussion boards in the LMS, such as open forums for general or logistical questions, group discussion boards, boards for particular assignments or topics, etc.
* For large courses, consider putting students in smaller groups that will allow for more focused and meaningful conversations around the topics.
* Determine how you will assess participation for discussions, such as routine auditing of boards or reviewing individual students’ posts at regular intervals in the semester.

### **Demonstrations, problem solutions, or examples**

Having students demonstrate their ability to carry out physical tasks may be particularly difficult remotely. Consider ways in which you can modify these in-person activities for environments that are online, asynchronous, or lack necessary equipment.

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* Model procedures, problem solving, and examples in detail for students. You can consider different modes of demonstrating procedures, such as annotating Word documents with track changes or comment balloons, audio recordings, videos, etc. in lieu of physically showing students face-to-face.
* Use think-alouds to assess students’ ability to carry out a procedure or solve a problem. Students orally (or in writing) explain in detail what they would do step-by-step and why. This can be done in writing only, as an audio recording, or as an audio/video recording. In addition to making this a good alternative to a live demonstration, it would require students to slow down and explain their metacognitive process. Examples from students can allow instructors to hear incorrect understandings or identify challenging steps in the process in a way that a regular presentation would not likely reveal.

### **Exams outside the classroom**

Need your modified exams to ask students to demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge to different situations? You can restructure open-response questions to multiple choice questions that are feasible to conduct remotely, while still requiring students to apply content knowledge.

* Consider the type of knowledge you want assessed.
  + Do you want them to remember basic knowledge?
  + Apply knowledge learned to a different situation?
  + Analyze, evaluate, or create something based on conditions of the course?
  + For example:
    - 1. What are the different types of trees in a Tropical Savannah? (Recall question)
    - 2. In a Tropical Savannah, which type of tree would you expect to survive drought conditions? (Recall + Application question)
* Make sure that if you provide outside exams that you have established your availability to your students to ask questions during the exam period. **We highly recommend outside course exams to be asynchronous and open-source, with generous time limits**.
* Accessibility and Academic Integrity Considerations: If you are concerned with issues relating to academic integrity, you can consider lock-down browser options by using [Respondus Lock Down Browser](https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/supporting-instruction/instructional-technology/respondus-browser.aspx), which prevents students from utilizing other browsers, tabs, and applications during an electronically delivered exam.
  + Many learners have accessibility accommodations related to the duration of their exams. We do not recommend setting automatic submission or force completion settings for any assessment.
  + **Note**: Students who use web-based text readers, such as Kurzweil or Read and Write Gold, cannot use Respondus LockDown Browser or Monitor

### **Hands-on and outside course components: labs, recitations, fieldwork, site visits, clinical rotations**

One of the more challenging parts of teaching a course when there is a building or campus closure is determining how to revamp the hands-on and outside course components, such as labs, recitations, field work, and site visits.

You can replace outside course components with several options, below are a couple options to consider:

1. Simulations of sites or experiments for students to engage with and manipulate. It is increasingly important to provide clear instructions of the variables to manipulate or features to identify or examine in these spaces when simulations and lab work is being done individually and/or remotely.
2. Providing raw data for students to analyze themselves.
3. For conducting patient or managerial work in clinical rotations or site visits, use software that allows for interaction learning about patients or client(s) needs. If there are confidentiality needs, explain this to students and be clear about how to keep virtual conversations and records confidential (e.g., using secure platforms for online consultations, not having the discussions in a public place, using headphones, where and how to document and store files, etc.).
4. Record yourself walking through a site or a fieldwork location to provide students with the visual experience they will be missing. Provide questions that students will answer about what they see in the video to encourage engagement.

Consider the purpose of the outside course components. What is it that students should be able to do by the end of the lab (goal), recitation, fieldwork, site visit, or rotation? What are the limitations to the version you provided? We recommend sharing the limitations with students and keep those in mind when assessing student learning.

### **Peer feedback**

Peer feedback can help students gather more insight and opinions about their progress with a project by hearing from others about the strengths and areas for improvement with their work, and by allowing them to see other examples by students in their classes. It also can take some of the formative assessment workload off an instructor.

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* Utilize technologies that will make peer feedback easier, such as the LMS discussion board, Circuit, Microsoft One-Drive, etc.
* Provide students with structure for assessing their peers’ work. Consider a rubric or a specific set of questions that can ground students’ feedback.
  + If you adopt the Purdue technology [Circuit](https://purdue.peercircuit.org/), there are peer calibration and rubric settings available to make the grading easier on everyone, and it assigns peer reviewers for you.
* Model ideal and unhelpful kinds of feedback and why they are helpful, so students know what to aim for with their comments.
  + Helpful Comment: “I found the quoted work in paragraph three on page 2 to be a better piece of evidence for the argument you make in paragraph 1 on page 4. I would recommend moving it there to fill out that argument, which is already missing some evidence from the book, and finding a different quote for this section. Perhaps something from Lady Macbeth’s monologue would make sense?”
  + Less Helpful Comment: “Avoid vague comments, such as ‘confusing language.’ This doesn’t provide the author with enough information of what is confusing or how to modify it. Consider a suggestion instead.”
* Allow students to direct their reviewers to particular parts of their projects that they want help with or to ask specific questions that reviewers can provide substantive responses to.
* Ask students to extract particular evidence from graded work to support their assessment.

### **Presentations and performances**

You can replace in-class presentations with several options, below are a couple options to consider:

1. Student-recorded presentations and performances using simple technology (even a cell phone).
2. Presentation scripts, step-by-step descriptions of how they would do something, or posters summarizing a topic, all of which can allow for assessment of content knowledge and other skills.

Consider how students will be able to record a performance, their physical access to items necessary for a demonstration, how to manage group performances when students are in different locations, etc.

## 4. Adjusting your Grading Structure

Consider how you can assess students who are remotely continuing the course *without* adding barriers that may prevent them from being able to complete an assessment. Can you be flexible in your grading structure, such as due dates, number and types of submissions, weight of assessments, etc.? Can you modify elements in your course to be Pass/Fail? (Note that Pass/Fail final grades are not an option for core courses in units with accreditation.)

#### Consider the following suggestions:

* **Do not** automatically fail or suggest students defer their plan of study! This is not an equitable solution for students trying to navigate the new online course structure.
* Do reduce the originally scheduled number of assignments, tasks, and exams while still addressing course outcomes and objectives.
* Assign alternative assessment types that are more easily completed remotely, such as low-stakes discussion boards, or substituting individual presentations or papers over exams.
* Redistribute points, such as reducing the weight of exams, providing more low-stakes quizzes, etc.
  + If still students need to take high stakes exams, adjust them to be open-book, open-note, etc. to help eliminate concerns with academic integrity that you may not be able to control if students take exams online while also meeting needs of learners who have accommodations for longer testing sessions.