Delivering High-Quality Instruction Online in Response to COVID–19

Faculty Playbook

Introduction

For many in the higher education community, the notion that nearly every educator would all at once be delivering their courses online seemed improbable, if not impossible. But here we are. In just the span of a few weeks, as a result of the rapidly spreading coronavirus, almost every postsecondary institution has either closed or rapidly moved face-to-face classes to "remote instruction." For those moving online, the initial mantra was "make it run" in the interest of learning continuity, and for the benefit of students needing to complete courses and earn credits.

Today, as we're transitioning into a new phase of planning for an uncertain summer and fall, we can be more thoughtful about how to deliver high quality online learning. On the positive side, online delivery as an instructional modality is not new. In fact, many colleges and universities have been developing and delivering successful online programs for years. Faculty have learned and shared valuable lessons through this process, and instructional design principles employed in online education can benefit learners in all course modalities.

In recent studies, one-third of all undergraduates are enrolled in online classes, and thirteen percent are learning exclusively online. What's more, online course enrollments in 2019 increased for the fourteenth straight year, even as overall enrollments have declined. This growth has been concentrated in public institutions since 2012, with online enrollment growth in public institutions surpassing both private non-profit and private for-profit sectors for the first time in 2015–16. In 2016, 69% of online enrollments were in public institutions, with 18% in private non-profit institutions and 13% in private for-profit institutions.

Despite the growth in online learning, research on student, faculty, and institutional readiness for online learning makes it clear that educators and institutions need more help understanding how to effectively design, develop, and deliver high-quality instruction online. This need is greatest for educators at institutions serving low-income students, first-generation students, and students of color who will likely be disproportionately affected by the current crisis because they lack access to needed resources and technology.

This playbook is a collaboration between the Online Learning Consortium (OLC), the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), and the Every Learner Everywhere Network with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It is designed to serve as a concise guide in addressing faculty needs for online course design, teaching, and continuous improvement. This guide will provide you with the information you need to get started (and keep going!) at any level, along with resources for more in-depth information or assistance.

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How to Use This Playbook

Each topic covered in the playbook is organized along three different levels:

Design
Guides immediate and basic needs for moving a course online. Most useful for emergent and immediate translation of F2F or blended courses to fully online.

Enhance
Provides options to enhance the learning environment and experience. Most useful for improving F2F elements that do not translate well, or beginning to customize course quality for online.

Optimize
Offers tips and resources for online teaching and learning that aligns with the highest-quality practices. Most useful for continuous improvement and maintaining best practices.

These levels quickly guide you to the resources you need most, and each builds upon the previous, providing a path for continuous improvement along a continuum of increasing quality. The first level, **Design**, provides foundational information and resources for developing an online course, and provides direction for moving courses online in emergent situations. The next level, **Enhance**, provides information to either continue quality course development, or to improve the initial elements of a course moved online unexpectedly. Finally, the **Optimize** level offers resources for designing a course in alignment with the highest-quality recommendations and best practices, as well as for evaluation and maintenance.

In addition to these resources, there are some items that are valuable to all, but may be indicated as being particularly useful for community colleges and/or minority-serving institutions.

Also included are resources and tips for online course development and delivery in both 'standard' and emergency-management circumstances. Of course, every institution, instructor, course, and learning context is unique, so feel free to mix and match from each level to best suit your needs.

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This playbook contains resources that can be used by both individual instructors and institutions seeking guidance for emergency remote teaching and for online learning.

For Individuals

Instructors will find best practices to guide their course design and delivery. These resources may be used independently, but may be most effective when considered for individual need and implemented in consultation with their institutional support teams such as instructional designers, faculty development professionals/ centers for teaching and learning, and online administration and support offices. Using the resources provided in collaboration and/or consultation with institutional support systems can both ease the process of a rapid change to remote teaching and streamline the course design and delivery process for longer-term online learning opportunities.

For Institutions

At an institutional or academic program level, these resources can be provided to faculty, instructional designers, faculty development professionals, and online administration and support offices. However, they can also be powerful tools to help shape and guide a larger strategy for effective development and implementation of emergency response procedures as well as to build a long-term strategy for online learning.

Contents by Topic

This playbook contains several topics that are key to quality course design and delivery, from continuity planning during a crisis, to developing and maintaining high-quality online courses.

Online Learning and Emergency Remote Teaching

This section is focused on understanding and navigating the situation many faculty, students, and institutions are facing as a result of COVID-19. Chances are, if you're reading this playbook, you've been impacted and may need to manage a course that was face-to-face or blended and has transitioned to a fully online environment. It's important to understand the differences between emergency remote teaching online versus the design and delivery of a course that was always intended to be delivered online. There are similarities and best practices that can be followed in either situation, but starting with an overview of the current environment may help you approach both current course needs and optimal development moving forward.

Note: This section does not contain the three levels of recommendations, but is focused on common needs and challenges resulting from COVID-19. The information and resources here are designed to be useful regardless of experience level and/or how much of a course may have been online prior to the pandemic.

Definitions and Differences in Online Education Terms

If you find yourself moving your face-to-face or blended course to a fully online environment as a result of COVID-19, you are engaged in Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), as opposed to designing and delivering an online course.

Emergency Remote Teaching includes a number of challenges and constraints that are unique from typical online course development and delivery, which are discussed throughout the playbook. Under normal circumstances, high-quality online courses are developed by cross-functional teams over several months, and are designed to provide immersive, adaptive and other innovative learning experiences. There is a wealth of research and knowledge about the components and characteristics of effective online learning practices, and it may be tempting to talk about and evaluate Emergency Remote Teaching in the same terms. However, not only is the course design, development, and delivery in emergent situations markedly different, the needs of and resources available to both students and faculty are typically limited.

For a detailed overview of these issues, see the *Educause Review* article "The Difference Between Emergency Remote Teaching and Online Learning (2020)."

Emergency Remote Teaching

Less time for planning and course development

Assistance to design and facilitate instruction may be limited

Support systems for faculty and students may be limited or unavailable

Not all faculty will be comfortable teaching in the online format

Time may be limited for ensuring quality measures for design and teaching

Teaching in a one-size-fits-all framework

Optimal Online Learning

Teaching and learning is planned and effective

There is a more developed instructional design and planning process

Community development and engagement is built into the learning

Various support systems are in place for the learner at the start

More time to prepare faculty for online facilitation

Quality assurance for learning is an ongoing part of the process

Ensures equity and provides personalization

Key Issues Related to COVID-19

Although each institution's response to COVID-19 is likely based on characteristics particular to the institution and its faculty and students, there are some common issues that most institutions are facing.

Regardless of whether an institution had a robust online course catalog or offered few to no online courses prior to COVID-19, the sudden demand for mass migration of courses to the online environment is challenging.

In this section, you will find key issues and support resources for faculty, students, and institutions.

Faculty Development and Support

Under normal circumstances, faculty members preparing to teach online have a number of resources at their disposal, including instructional design support and technology and/or software training. In the current environment, demands on these organizational resources are such that faculty may have limited access or no access to them at all. To address these demands, many institutions have developed online resource pages for faculty, including technical help, updates on processes and procedures during the crisis, and support resources for both faculty and students. Take time to discover the resources provided at your institution.

Additionally, many colleges and universities, organizations, news outlets, and educational technology providers have made

COVID-19-specific online resources available. OLC maintains a robust set of these resources on their Continuity Planning & Emergency Preparedness website, and APLU maintains a detailed COVID-19 webpage including university responses, communications, and research as well as updates and recommendations on legislative action. Additionally, Educause and Achieving the Dream have resources specifically related to COVID-19 leadership and support. For a variety of resources on online courseware, from learning the basics to scaling implementation, visit the Every Learner Everywhere Network resource library on Digital Learning.

For information on the proposed Federal Financial Assistance for MSIs, visit Diverse Education's crisis coverage page.

Student Support

Student support is critical during the unexpected shift to emergency remote teaching, and like faculty, their current needs and the resources available to them are unique. Students may not be prepared to attend courses online, may need technological support, and/or may have challenges with access—whether that's an appropriate device for accessing the course, or access to reliable internet. Further, students may be facing new challenges at home or work as a result of COVID-19.

Particularly during crisis situations, students need online services such as academic advising, career advising, and financial aid, and also have continuing needs for support services such as food pantries and access to mental and physical healthcare. Additionally, many students may face housing insecurity, job loss, concerns regarding immigration status, or other undue stressors. Though some services may exist in part online (such as financial aid or advising), there has not been time to effectively implement and scale these resources in an online environment.

Many institutions have developed support pages to address student needs (including possible emergency financial aid), and The Hope Center primer on Student Support during COVID-19 provides some resources that may help faculty support their students. Additionally, financial resources can be found at COVID-19 Mutual Aid, as well as resources for undocumented students.

Students' ability to successfully learn during a pandemic, especially if they are new to the online environment or experiencing unexpected stressors, should be taken into consideration. A common step many institutions have offered to faculty is to allow Pass/Fail grading for Spring 2020. In addition to supports like temporary changes to grading policies, here are some guides that may assist students with academic success during COVID-19:

- Tips for Learning During Disruption
- Learning to Learn Online
- Student Guide to Learning Remotely (PSU)
- Student Guide to Online Learning (CVC)

To assist with broadband access, many internet providers are offering free or reduced-cost services for students, and/or waiving disconnection for non-payment, and a number of internet providers have opened their WiFi hotspots for free public use during the pandemic.

Student needs are significant and varied, especially during a disruptive crisis such as the current pandemic. While we've provided some resources above, experts agree that it's most important to be available to students, reach out proactively to those who may be at-risk, and stay informed about institutional support options.

For Community Colleges

See Achieving the Dream resources on teaching and learning during a crisis.

For a general primer on how faculty and institutions may respond to support their students and communities during a crisis, read this research brief from the Center for Minority-Serving Institutions.

Policy and Accreditation Changes Impacting Online Education

In response to COVID-19, as of April 3rd, 2020, Federal Student Aid, An Office of the U.S. Department of Education is approving broadly, the use of digital education without going through the standard Department approval process. This applies to periods that begin on or between March 5th—June 1st, 2020. However, if you plan on offering a program online after this period, and one that has not previously been through the standard approval process, the program will require the Department's approval via the accrediting agency's applicable policies and procedures.

The Department is also allowing consortium developments between other Title IV institutions to award credits to students who complete courses that fall within the consortium, even if it is not within your school, during this period. Due to this change in policy, accrediting agencies can waive the residency requirement for students impacted by the crisis.

View the UPDATED Guidance for interruptions of study related to Coronavirus (COVID-19), and visit WCET Frontiers for detailed coverage of changes and practical implications.

For Community Colleges

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Resources on COVID-19 include helpful information about the CARES Act, Stimulus Efforts, and workplace guidelines specific to industries served primarily by community colleges.

Designing with Equity in Mind

This section provides a brief introduction to intentionally designing and teaching your course to be equitable across student needs and individual differences, and each section after includes principles for embedding inclusivity in your course. Designing your course to be inclusive, from materials and content to assignments and assessments to teaching strategies, enhances student success and encourages equitable outcomes. Equitable design addresses factors that may impact a student's ability to understand and complete requirements as well as to feel comfortable and included. Some of these factors may include racial and ethnic gaps, cultural considerations, religious affiliation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and both cognitive and physical learning abilities.

What Do We Mean by Equity?

1

Equitable design takes student differences in background, ability, and individual experiences into account and explicitly works to provide opportunities for success that are not impacted by these differences

The first step in effective equitable design is understanding what is meant by the term 'equity.' Often, we think of equal and equitable as interchangeable terms. However, equal—offering everyone the same opportunities—assumes that everyone has the same skills, abilities, and starting contexts with which to achieve success. An equitable framework is also focused on offering everyone the same opportunities, but includes explicit actions to eliminate bias and ensure that all students have the support they need to achieve success regardless of individual or experiential differences.
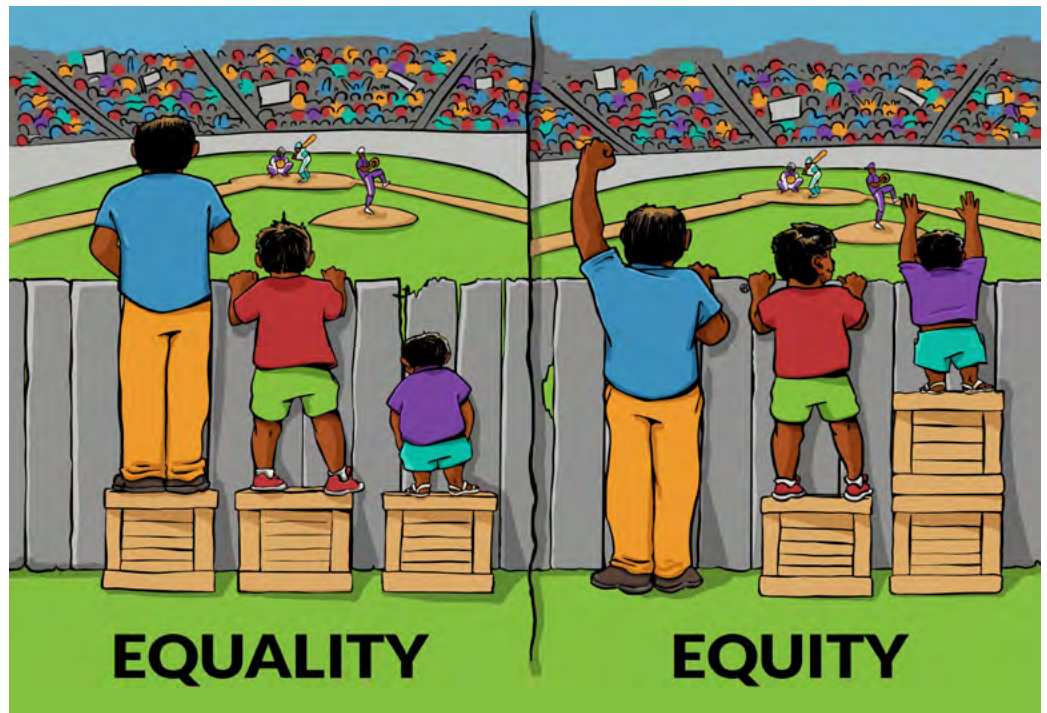
Source: Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire

Equity in Online Education

Key Takeaways

1
Equitable course design encompasses a number of considerations spanning technology, the students as individuals, and course design and pedagogy

2
There are concrete steps that may be taken to improve, enhance, and/or ensure equity in your course

Designing and delivering an equitable online course includes five primary areas of consideration (Kelly, 2019):

Academic
Students' preparedness for learning and readiness for online learning

Pedagogical
Course organization and design, quality interaction, and effective, equitable teaching practices

Psychological
Students' feelings of social belonging and ability to address stereotype threat, as well as perceptions of course relevance and instructor compassion

Social
Students' perceptions of connection versus isolation related to the course

Technological
Students' ability to access and use course technologies

The Peralta Equity Rubric, developed by Stark and Kelly (2019) provides extended explanations of each of these items, as well as concrete practices for getting started and advancing to exemplary equity standards in course design and delivery.

Course Design

This section contains an overview of key course design principles, approaches to course design to help guide your <u>course development process</u>, and guides and resources for making your course accessible, using <u>Universal Design for Learning</u> strategies where possible.

From this section forward, you will find recommendations for course design in any situation—whether designing a fully online course, or moving online unexpectedly—along with tips for the most important considerations in an emergent situation.

Design Principles

Key Takeaways

1
Use measurable learning objectives/outcomes

2
Align content and assessments to learning objectives/outcomes

Equity in Action

Adopt an intentional orientation toward equitable course design, and plan this way from the beginning. There are many resources provided for accomplishing equity individual course elements throughout this playbook.

Overall, a solid foundation for incorporating equity is to ensure that you are clear and explicit in course navigation, instructions, and expectations.

Any course development project should begin with some key design principles for online learning in mind, the main one being that your course design focus should be on the learning aspect of the course, and not the teaching. Studies show that misalignment between learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessments is the leading cause of poor student outcomes. A poor learning design will result in a poor learning experience for both the students and the instructor.

When considering design principles in an emergent situation, reviewing learning objectives as appropriate for the situation, clearly communicating any changes, and providing course content and materials around those stated outcomes is the most important step. If the course becomes available online for a longer term (or permanently), you can focus on designing your course around objectives from the beginning, and consider enhancing and optimizing course objectives to set yourself and your students up for success.
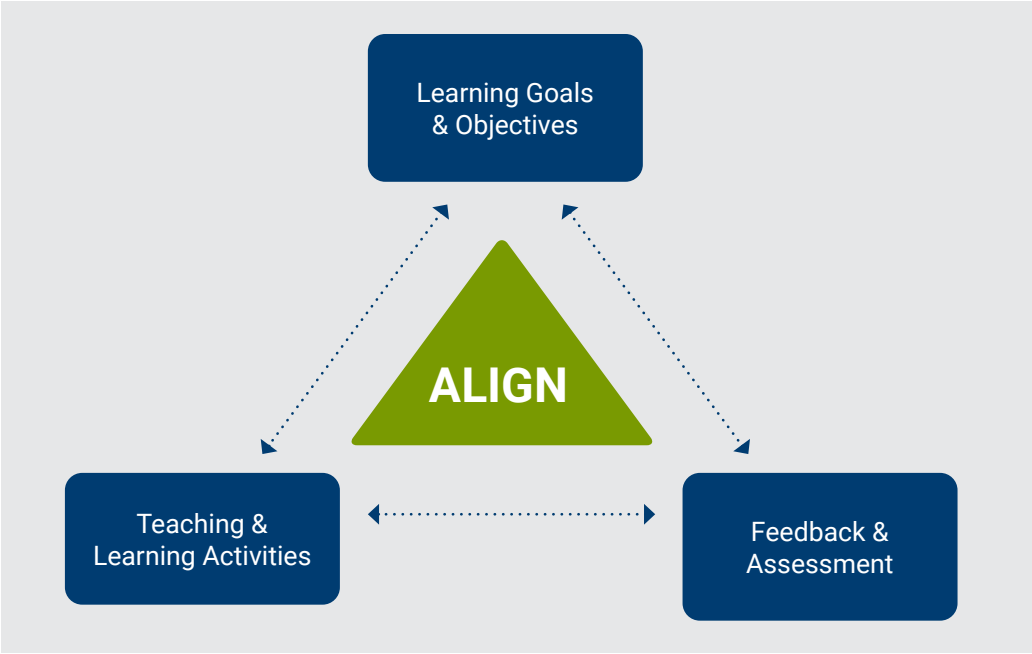
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Course Design
Design Principles

Starting with your learning objectives provides a solid foundation. Bear in mind that you'll want to align instruction and assessment with these objectives and practices rooted in the learning sciences to ensure a successful course design.

Design
Review and Communicate Your Learning Objectives: Focusing the design of your course around well-written and measurable learning objectives/outcomes helps both students and instructors by providing a structure for the course and clear goals.

Enhance
Use your learning objectives to create a "map" of your course that shows an outline of the associated course content and learning objectives. Mapping your course provides a template to organize content and design for an effective teaching and learning experience.

Optimize
Use the section on "Learning Foundations" in OLC's Quality Course Teaching and Instructional Practice (QCTIP) Scorecard to evaluate the quality of your course design. Evaluating quality is an essential part of continuous improvement, and using tools such as the Scorecard helps ensure that your course is in alignment with current best practices.
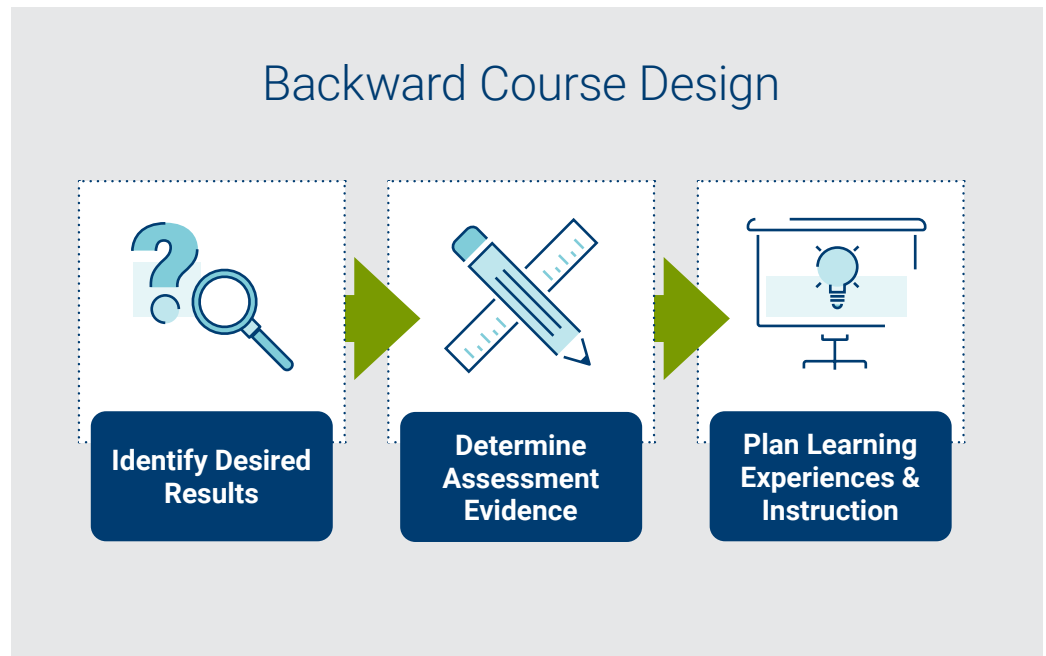
Design Strategies

⚬ Key Takeaways

1
Choose an evidence-based model or framework to guide your course development.

2
Learn to apply a design model, such as Backward Design, which is widely applicable and is efficient and effective for any type of course development.

There are many approaches to instructional design, and you may find a good fit for your course and preferences in one or more strategies. It is important to select an evidence-based course design strategy, to ensure that you are using the most effective practices and enabling equitable learning outcomes for all students. An effective strategy that is adaptable to most course design needs and that provides a solid model for faculty at any level of experience with online course design and delivery is the Backward Course Design Model (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012).

This framework was developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2012) in their book *Understanding by Design*, and suggests that instruction should be developed first with the end goal (i.e, assessment of learning) in mind. Planning and development start at the end with the desired results or course outcomes, and the curriculum is derived from what is needed to achieve those results.

Backward Course Design

Identify Desired Results

Determine Assessment Evidence

Plan Learning Experiences & Instruction

Course Design
Design Strategies

This approach can be used for Emergency Remote Teaching by providing a basis for determining the desired outcomes for the remainder of the semester, and working backward to design an online environment that is conducive to achieving them. For developing online courses for future terms, this model provides a framework for effective design.

Design
Here is a short introduction to Backward Design, including a few simple questions to get you started.

Enhance
As you begin a more in-depth and intentional process of course design, there are many resources to help you learn more about Backward Design and guide your course development. Here are two that you may find useful: Understanding by Design and Backward Course Design.

Optimize
Optimal course design is dependent on aligned learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessments. As you evaluate your course for quality and best practices, following the Backward Design model can allow you to engage in continuous improvement in an effective, efficient way.

Instructional Strategies

Key Takeaways

1
Consider how your face-to-face strategies translate to the online environment.

2
Active learning strategies and findings from neuro, cognitive, and learning research can help shape effective online learning.

Equity in Action

To create (or maintain continuity of) an inclusive environment, clearly communicate to students that you are available, interested in their success, and encourage them to connect and engage.

Be explicit that you value diversity and inclusion in your course, both in ideas and perspectives as well as interactions with all instructors and students.

Monitor course activity for potential bias, microaggressions, and/or stereotype threat that may make it difficult or uncomfortable for some students to be engaged or feel a sense of belonging.

Instructional strategies focus on ways to approach the facilitation of learning directly in your online course design. It is important to remember that your objectives—not technology—should determine how you approach the online activities and strategies.

Many of the instructional strategies you used in a face-to-face setting can also be used online (group discussions, writing activities, project-based learning, etc.), and these may be the most viable options for Emergency Remote Teaching, as they are relatively easy to translate to the online environment.

It is important to minimize disruption for students, and limited or selective use of technology tools is one option. For further development, you should also consider how you might incorporate active learning and other evidence-based practices into your course design to further enhance learning, as well as learning strategies based in cognitive and learning sciences.

There has been much research into the connection between neuroscience, brain-based learning, and education. This research further explores how our brains work and learn, and we are able to use various strategies based on these principles to inform our continued teaching and design practices.

Design
Review your course learning objectives and use that as a basis for selecting online instructional strategies to employ in your course design.

Enhance
Determine what types of active learning strategies can be used in your course.

Optimize
Adopt strategies from the neuro, cognitive, and learning sciences into your course design.

Accessibility/Universal Design for Learning

Key Takeaways

1
Meeting basic accessibility standards can not only make your course more open to all students, but can relieve both instructors and students of challenges and delays resulting from immediate accommodation needs.

2
Universal Design for Learning as a course design strategy ensures maximum broad accessibility, and benefits all students—not just those requiring accommodations.

Many instructors become aware of Web accessibility needs only after receiving a disability accommodation request. Historically, the way to ensure that students with disabilities had equal access to education was by providing accommodations and retrofitting changes. The concept of universal design, however, has shifted this focus from "special features for a few" to "quality design for many." Just as we would never dream of constructing buildings without sidewalk ramps, or only choose to add them on later whenever an individual in a wheelchair would like to access the building, we should strive to make all course content accessible to everyone starting with the design phase. While universal design benefits students with disabilities, there are benefits for others as well. For example, using captioning for videos ensures access for a student who is deaf, however, captions can also benefit nonnative speaking students, students with learning disabilities, or students that are watching the video in a loud environment.

It is unrealistic to expect instructors engaged in Emergency Remote Teaching to become familiar with and implement full accessibility standards during a crisis situation. However, it is still important to consider student needs (even if a student has not made a request), and below is a link for ten simple steps toward meeting common accessibility needs. Once you begin to refine your online course, or move it online for an upcoming term, designing for meeting accessibility standards, and even better, using universal design principles, can greatly improve the student learning experience (and even save you time later, should an accommodation be required).

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Course Design
Accessibility/ Universal Design for Learning

In addition to design considerations, you'll want to familiarize yourself with your institutional accessibility or disability services office. These offices offer services to faculty regarding accommodations requests, processes, and procedures, and have resources available to students who need accommodations.

⚖ Equity in Action

UDL benefits all students, and goes beyond cognitive and physical ability, offering potential solutions for differences in students' contextual and experiential background. In addition to accessibility compliance, equity can be achieved or enhanced by including:

Clarity of purpose, instructions, and expectations for assignments/activities/ assessments

A variety of options for students to demonstrate their learning

A variety of options for students to engage with each other and the instructor

Design
Implementing the principles of universal design in online learning means anticipating the diversity of students that may enroll in your course and planning accordingly. These ten key elements will greatly enhance the accessibility and usability of your course for students with and without disabilities.

Enhance
This comprehensive Accessibility Toolkit is a compilation of helpful resources and tutorials for diving deeper into the key aspects of accessibility including the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), creating accessible documents, closed captioning and transcription, and commonly used accessibility evaluation tools.

Optimize
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a specific framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. The UDL Guidelines from CAST offer a set of concrete suggestions that can be applied to any discipline to ensure that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities.

Course Components

This section includes an overview of course components common across disciplines and course types. Online course components are similar to face-to-face and hybrid courses, but there are special considerations for a successful online experience. Common components include Course Content, Course Materials, Welcome and Start Here, Syllabus, Course Interaction, Assessments, and Digital Learning Technology.

Course Content

⚙ Key Takeaways

1

Consider multimedia options for presenting your course content in effective ways for an online environment.

2

In addition to original content, explore options to provide students with high-quality online content.

3

Be sure to consider and follow copyright guidelines.

⚖ Equity in Action

Review your content and correct for potential bias and/or assumptions about student knowledge/experience.

Ensure that course materials such as textbooks and images are inclusive, unbiased, and representative.

Ensure that all course content meets accessibility compliance standards.

The way that you provide knowledge and facilitate learning—your course content—is a key consideration when putting your course online. One strategy that can enhance teaching presence in an online course is to provide audio and video content that can be developed with relative ease using multimedia applications. Creating microlectures along with other multimedia is a great option for designing online course content.

In addition to developing your own course content, you can use content developed by publishers or explore a plethora of open content on websites like Khan Academy, VideoLectures.net, iTunesU, Forum Network, Merlot, OpenStax, OER Commons, CCCOER, and Creative Commons. It's always important to ensure the content aligns with the course and modular learning objectives and that you have followed copyright compliance guidelines.
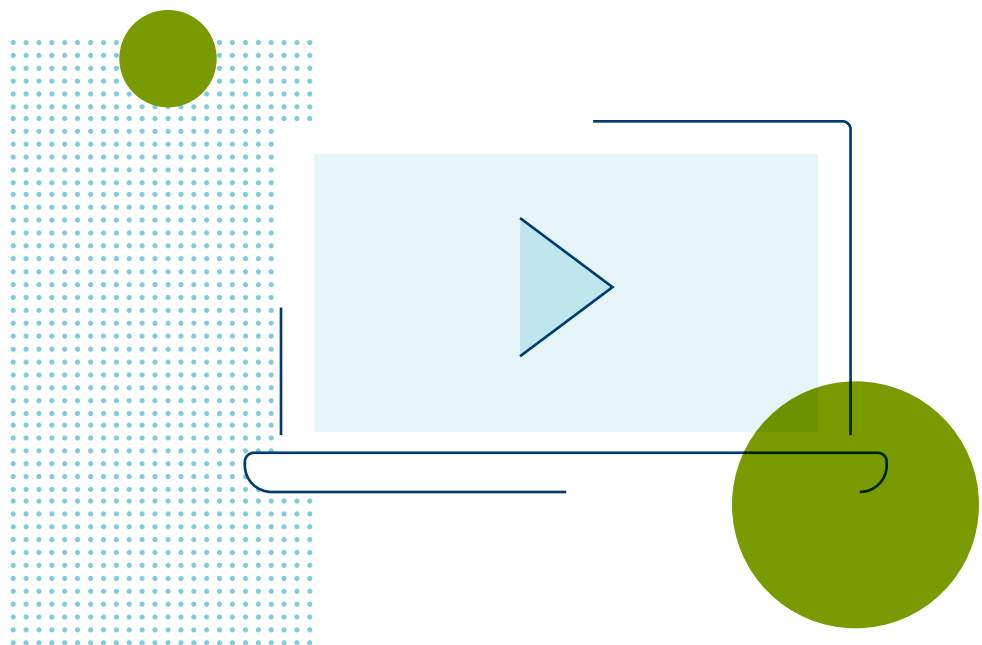
Course Components
Course Content

When moving to an online environment during a crisis or disruption, your primary concern is likely to simply translate your existing plans to your online course. If you have existing written materials or presentations, you might use those as a starting point. Audio and video are great options—but they can be time-consuming to develop, and more so if following best practices for learning. Consider providing written materials and supplementing with short video or audio content, and consider whether there may be existing content already developed for online instruction that could meet your needs.

Design
Identify your course goals, and consider how you can adapt content using multimedia to best provide learning opportunities that engage your students. Note that when infusing a course with additional courseware or media, you should consider access to the tools or platforms, as well as student access to sufficient internet access to support your selections.

Enhance
Continue to provide media-rich, interactive, and engaging content, curating and refining as you become comfortable with the online course and discover best-fit options for your style and course outcomes.

Optimize
Regularly review and update your content for functionality (i.e. no broken links, etc.), relevance, and fit for your course outcomes.

Course Materials

Key Takeaways

1
Evaluate your face-to-face course materials for how well they will function in an online environment.

2
Consider media-rich and/or courseware options for enhancing the learning experience through a variety of course materials.

The course materials that you select to complement your course content are an important part of shaping your students' experience. Typically, textbooks and/or journal articles are the most common materials. Of course, you can still have these in your online course—but you have additional options to consider. Since your course is online, it may be that there are publisher or other materials that easily integrate into your LMS. Courseware in Context (CWiC) provides a selection tool that may help you identify and select appropriate resources, and EdSurge curates a selection of courseware options.

Another option that can provide an immersive, customizable learning experience is Open Educational Resources (OERs) designed for online use and incorporating multimedia approaches (in addition to being more cost-efficient than traditional textbooks). Finally, there are countless resources from audio and video selections to interactive games and activities to having students themselves create learning artifacts that you can use to reinforce learning and keep students actively engaged.

Course Components
Course Materials

In an emergent situation, you may not have the time or resources needed to provide a rich online experience through curated course materials. You may be able to simply provide or use what you had already planned, but if you have a little time, it can pay off to find resources that you are able to easily include in your course. Consider browsing resources such as Cool4Ed, MERLOT, OpenStax, Khan Academy, VideoLectures.net, iTunesU, Forum Network, OER Commons, CCCOER, and Creative Commons for materials that may help your students learn in the new online environment. There are many sources for course content, and you'll want to ensure that the content you select is high-quality and aligned with your course objectives. Content varies in cost from no-cost to independently-priced (at a cost either to the student or institution) to subscription-based (again, either student or institution-based), and you should consider any potential costs when selecting content.

Design
Consider what you want to achieve through course materials and explore the options available for your online course.

Enhance
Evaluate the materials you are using, and consider options to customize your materials as it makes sense in support of your course objectives and learning activities.

Optimize
Keep your content fresh and relevant by reviewing existing content and incorporating new materials as appropriate. Consider your selection process and reflect on how well your course materials support your objectives.

Welcome and Start Here

Key Takeaways

1

Introducing yourself and your course is just as important in the online environment as in a face-to-face setting.

2

In an emergent situation, providing this section in the online course can help ease disruption and set the stage for instructional continuity.

3

Be creative and encourage students to interact with each other and the instructor.

Equity in Action

Welcome all students in your first communication, and express appreciation for diverse ideas, experiences, and perspectives.

Invite students to communicate with you about any special needs or concerns.

Make an effort to connect with students both individually and as a group, to establish a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

In face-to-face courses, you have the opportunity to introduce yourself and the course, and to meet your students and allow them to get to know each other. This sets the 'tone' of the course and expectations, and facilitates trust.

Make the first thing your students see a "Welcome & Start Here" page to accomplish these goals online.

If you're moving the course online unexpectedly, add this page to help orient your students and provide continuity from your face-to-face classroom to the online environment. To fully use this opportunity in a subsequent term, you can begin to communicate with your students leading up to the semester, and use different interactive approaches to engage students from the beginning.
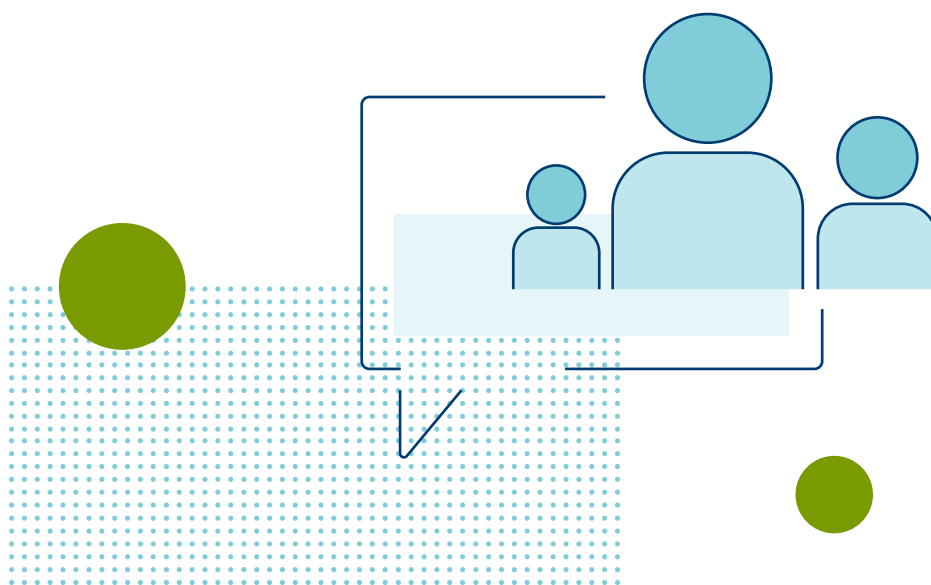
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Course Components
Welcome and Start Here

Design

Create your welcome page. Here is a short guide to quickly creating a course welcome that hits the essential points.

Enhance

Send out a welcome message before the course starts.
You can send an email, post on the LMS, or get creative with a video or other media to make the most of your first interaction with your students. When designing your messaging, remember that students will come into your class with varying needs and preferences, and messaging should be equity-focused from the beginning. Make sure that any media used meets accessibility standards (for example, captions, transcripts, etc.), and that your welcome is inclusive and open to the differentiated contexts from which your students will begin the course.

Optimize

Identify different methods to welcome students in the online classroom. Here's a quick resource for some ideas on how you can create a sense of community and help your students become comfortable with you and each other. There are lots of virtual icebreakers that can be easily found with a quick web search—feel free to find something that fits your personality and classroom environment, and get students engaged from the start.

Course Components

Syllabus

Key Takeaways

1
The syllabus in an online course serves the same purpose as in a face-to-face course, but includes some key elements that are unique, such as communication and technology policies.

2
The online environment provides an opportunity to create an interactive syllabus that is fully integrated into the course. Consider multimedia options and how you want the syllabus to be used.

Equity in Action

Create a diversity and inclusion statement for your syllabus (in addition to the required ADA statement).

Provide information about and links to institutional policies and procedures related to equity, diversity, and accessibility.

The syllabus in an online class serves the same purpose, and has the same elements as a face-to-face course syllabus. However, the syllabus for an online course should include some additional information, and may be customized to make it easier to navigate and use.

When moving a course to the online environment during a crisis, you'll only modify what has changed in your existing syllabus. When creating or customizing a syllabus designed for an online course, there are several ways to ensure that it is useful to students and that it is integrated throughout your course.

Course Components
Syllabus

Design

Identify what is different about syllabi for an online class.

Of course, you will want to identify any changes to assignments, due dates, and grading policies. However, you'll also want to make sure that you:

- Set expectations for communication, including your preferred method (i.e. email through LMS, campus email, etc.), response time (i.e. within one business day), and any virtual office hours you will hold
- Provide technology information: What kind of device, software, etc. will students need? Who should they contact for help with technology? What should they do if the LMS (or other tool) is down? You might also consider including any resources available during the crisis for internet access services.
- Ensure your syllabus is accessible to all students.

Enhance

This guide from Purdue Repository for Online Teaching and Learning provides an overview of considerations for developing a syllabus for online learning, and you can also reference their Sample Online Course Syllabus Template.

Optimize

Take it up a notch and make your syllabus interactive. There are many methods and technologies you can use. Consider your course objectives and design, and what might be most useful to your students. The more you can integrate the syllabus with the course, the more valuable it will be to your students.

Course Interaction

Key Takeaways

1
Design your course to provide intentional opportunities for students to interact with the instructor, each other, and the course content.

2
The Community of Inquiry Framework provides a model for finding an optimal balance between teaching, social, and cognitive presence.

Equity in Action

Include opportunities for students to participate in the course in a variety of ways.

Provide opportunities for students to openly present their perspectives and even to analyze and assess content for representation, inclusion, and bias.

Ensure that students have a safe and inclusive environment by monitoring for bias, stereotype threat, and microaggressions, and correcting these issues if present.

Student and faculty interaction are essential quality indicators in an online course setting. Course interaction can be organized into three categories: student-to-student, instructor-to-student, and student-to-content interactions. Instructor-to-student interactions can be achieved online with class discussions, daily or weekly multimedia announcements in the LMS, synchronous meetings, virtual office hours, and providing substantive feedback.

The Community of Inquiry framework (see next page), a model that has been used significantly in online and blended education, highlights the importance of three interdependent elements that facilitate successful learning experiences: social presence, teaching presence, and cognitive presence.

When engaged in Emergency Remote Teaching, the most important thing is to ensure that interaction opportunities are available, and that you are regularly interacting with your students. Basic tools in the LMS allow you to do this in ways that are simple and already familiar to many students and instructors.

Design
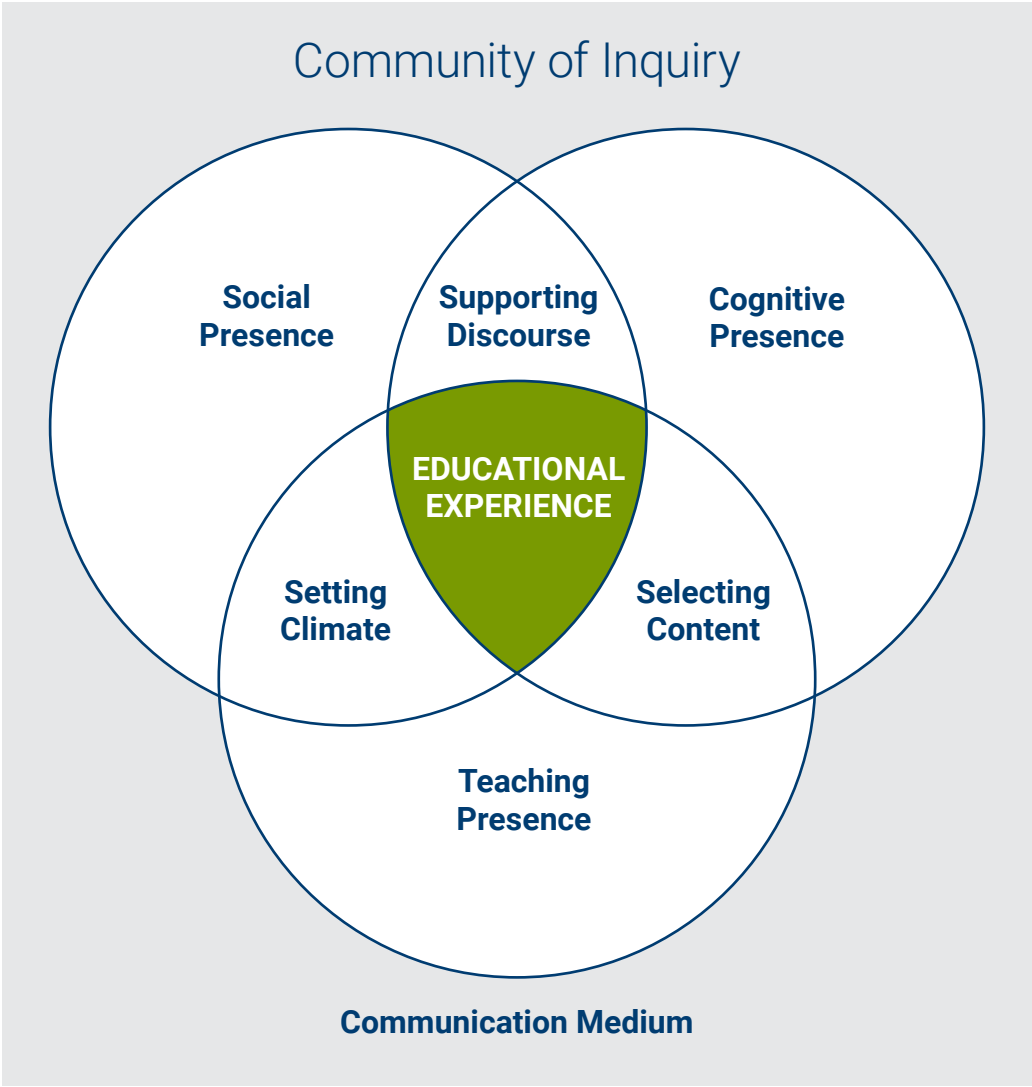Establish instructor presence with LMS tools such as announcements and discussion forums.

Enhance
Facilitate effective online discussion activities to foster student-to-student and instructor-to-student interaction.

Optimize
Implement online course activities that include student collaboration and group work.

Community of Inquiry

**Social
Presence**

**Supporting
Discourse**

**Cognitive
Presence**

**EDUCATIONAL
EXPERIENCE**

**Setting
Climate**

**Selecting
Content**

**Teaching
Presence**

Communication Medium

Source: Community of Inquiry

Assessments

1
Align assessments with learning objectives and choose methods that demonstrate learning while reducing stressors and minimizing cheating

2
Include multiple types of assessments in your course to allow for holistic and diverse opportunities to evaluate learning and performance

Equity in Action

Review assessment content for bias, and correct where necessary.

Provide multiple opportunities in various formats for students to demonstrate learning.

Consider, acknowledge, and support students' experiences, beliefs/values, and prior knowledge when designing and evaluating assessments.

An important component of successful online teaching is developing efficient assessment strategies and methods. Accurate assessment of learning can be challenging whether online or face-to-face, and assessment in an emergency remote teaching situation bears additional considerations.

Assessment allows us to measure students' ability to apply the content they have learned, and is commonly provided in a multiple choice or similar format. While this common assessment method is simple to conceptualize and replicate in the online environment, it is important to consider challenges that may be encountered with technology (especially during an emergency situation), ensuring academic integrity, and whether it is the best option for accurately measuring learning.

When moving unexpectedly to an online environment, consider how your existing assessments can be offered remotely, and if/how they are impacted by any change in grading policies or other procedures during an emergency. Key considerations might include a review of which concepts are essential to assess, whether intermittent lower-stakes assessment might be effective, and how the alternative assessment methods discussed above may be helpful to both students and instructors in balancing learning and assessment with a stressful environment due to an emergency situation.

Course Components
Assessments

Particularly during a situation in which students were not expecting to complete their courses online, high-stakes testing in the online environment can create additional stress in an already stressful environment, and impact accurate reflection of learning. Additionally, the use of proctoring tools to prevent cheating bear privacy concerns (especially for students who did not choose an online environment for the course), potentially cause undue stress on students, and may have excessive flags for potential cheating due to the circumstances of working/learning at home during a crisis. Considering alternative (or additional) options for assessment allows for more accurate assessment of learning and avoids some of these challenges, resulting in a better experience for both students and instructors.

In their presentation, Measuring Student Learning in Online Courses: Assessment Strategies that Work, Crosslin et. al. (2020) provide a great summary of considerations and challenges, as well as recommendations for both emergency remote teaching and general best practices for online assessment.

Integrating multiple forms of assessment allows students more opportunities to evaluate their performance. Four alternative assessment methods identified in the literature are focusing on skills that can be applied outside of the classroom (authentic assessment), involving students in the learning and assessment process (active assessment), measuring learning throughout the learning process rather than at the end (formative assessment), and engaging students in work either offline or even just online but outside of the LMS (experiential assessment). These methods provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, allow instructors to understand students' application of learning, and may reduce testing stress, environmental stress, and cheating behaviors in an online course.

Multiple choice (or similar) assessments are still an option, and still have value for online courses. They are a great low-stakes option for learning practice (i.e. allow students to re-take multiple times, use as a 'check for understanding,' allow for open-book test-taking, etc.), and there are also some options for minimizing cheating that do not rely on proctoring. When using multiple choice assessments in the online environment, randomized questions, shuffled answer options, and large question pools (features widely available in the LMS) are great options that address some of the challenges with this type of assessment.

**Course
Components
Assessments**

Design
Develop assessments that can be implemented in the online environment. This video, Effective Assessment Practices for Online Learning, may be helpful, as well as this basic guide to online assessment.

Enhance
Design learner-centered assessments that include a variety of options and opportunities to demonstrate learning throughout the course.

Optimize
Design and include grading rubrics for the assessment of all course assignments, collaborations, and contributions.

Digital Learning Technology

1
Become familiar with the LMS that your institution uses.

2
Select supplementary tools based on your course outcomes and goals.

3
Consider the impact new tools will have on both the students and instructor.

The Learning Management System (LMS), is (most likely) the primary environment for your online course. Your institution may provide an LMS, such as Canvas, Blackboard, D2L, or Moodle, or may use open courseware or self-designed systems. Beyond the LMS, digital courseware may include a number of learning products that enable additional instructional content and assessment options that could be beneficial to students. Digital courseware can be used in many ways to enable a variety of options for providing content and learning activities, opportunities for independent practice, personalized learning applications, and valuable data for instructors on student learning.

You may also want to consider other technology tools to meet the needs of offering your course online. These tools may be integrated with the LMS or used independently, and may be either synchronous or asynchronous. Remember that with any tool you evaluate for use in your course, that your learning goals, not the technology, should be the deciding factor for whether or not you use it. Beyond learning goals, consider any costs associated with your selected tools, and how the tool will be integrated with your course—especially if it is not integrated with the LMS. Additionally, evaluate the use of synchronous versus asynchronous tools. Synchronous options like virtual classrooms within the LMS and web conferencing can provide direct interaction opportunities, but also often require more bandwidth for students, and require that students are able to meet on a regular schedule. For some students in online courses, the flexibility is a key point and synchronous meetings may not be possible—so you'll want to ensure that any synchronous requirements are communicated prior to or during registration for the course. In an emergent situation, students who have been attending face-to-face courses may also be experiencing disruption in their personal and/or professional lives and may not be able to meet synchronous requirements for a distance course on the same schedule they had on campus. Asynchronous tools offer a wide range of options for learning, and you'll want to consider costs, technical support (if needed), and how you'll manage deliverables from students on an asynchronous schedule.

Course Components
Digital Learning Technology

Particularly in an emergent situation, consider the learning curve your students (and you!) may have, as well as the ease of access and any potential costs associated with any new technology. When making technology decisions, consider whether the tool will ease disruption, or create unnecessary stress for you or your students.

⚖ Equity in Action

Don't assume that students have access to devices or adequate internet access (especially in emergency situations). Be clear, before the class begins if possible, about technology that is necessary for course success. In an emergent situation, be mindful of these potential challenges and be prepared to provide flexible options to support students with insufficient access.

Be mindful of students' comfort with and ability to use various technologies. Provide support resources, instructions for what to do if technology fails, and alternative methods of participation and completion whenever appropriate/ possible (particularly in an emergency situation).

Design
It can be challenging and overwhelming to identify technology tools that meet your needs—especially if you need to do so quickly. As a first step, you can reach out to institutional resources, such as instructional designers and/or the department that oversees the LMS. Additional resources may be available through your current content provider, and some may already be integrated with the LMS.

Enhance
Once you've selected and incorporated technology tools into your online classroom, you can ensure that they are effective through evaluation. This Checklist for Evaluating Tech Tools, Apps, Software, and Hardware can help you determine how well a tool fits your course.

Optimize
Evaluation tools like the OLC Digital Courseware Instructional Practice Scorecard and the Courseware in Context (CWiC) Framework can help you further refine your course technology selections by providing key considerations for evaluation and use.

Course Management

Course management, whether online or face-to-face, includes many of the same elements: setting expectations, establishing and maintaining effective student-to-instructor communication, and the identification and provision of support resources. While the basic components of course management are the same, there are some key actions that can ensure successful implementation of course management strategies for online courses. Additionally, there are a few considerations for course management in online courses that are not present in face-to-face courses. This section will cover all of these, and provide clear recommendations for successful online course management.

Setting Expectations

Key Takeaways

1

Set clear and explicit expectations for your course for both performance and interaction. This is especially important in the online environment, where there are fewer verbal or behavioral cues than in face-to-face courses.

Equity in Action

Clearly state your expectations for interaction and performance with regard to acknowledging and respecting diversity. Ensure that these standards are upheld, and take corrective action where appropriate.

Consider providing a guide to students that explains and demonstrates inclusive interactions and behavior.

In online courses, there are fewer cues from both students and instructors about expectations, making it essential to clearly state expectations for performance and interaction.

When moving online unexpectedly, explicit expectation-setting can help calm some of your students' anxieties, and set the stage for clear communication and the way the remainder of the semester will go.

Design
Course Expectations: Why You Need Them and How to Communicate Them.

Enhance
Develop an awareness of best practices and what is expected of you as the instructor in an online course.

Optimize
Identify and implement strategies to manage student expectations.

Student-Instructor Communcation

Key Takeaways

1
Provide options and opportunities for students to communicate with the instructor. This is especially important in online courses, where real-time interaction is limited or unavailable.

Equity in Action

Establish open communication throughout the course.

Provide a variety of opportunities for student-instructor communication.

Ensure that individual and group communications are inclusive and equitable.

Providing opportunities for students to communicate with the instructor in an online course is essential to establishing instructor presence. Students don't necessarily see or interact with instructors in real-time in the online environment, and ensuring that there are effective opportunities for communication is critical.

Especially in emergent situations, ensuring that students can communicate with their instructors is important to allow for as smooth a transition as possible, while allowing for a less disruptive experience.

Design
Identify ways to establish effective student-instructor communication.

Enhance
Implement communication best practices to create a sense of community in the online course.

Optimize
Look for ways to keep the human element present in your online course.

Academic Support Resources

Key Takeaways

1
Providing academic support resources and ensuring that students are aware of them is essential in all course modalities, but critical in online courses.

2
Academic support options range from course-level (office hours, peer learning/ tutoring, etc.) to institutional (library, tutoring centers, etc.) and may include using data insights to identify at-risk students and direct them to appropriate resources.

Equity in Action

Provide a comprehensive outline of support resources, with clear instructions on how they may be accessed for online students. Be sure to include information about disability accommodations here, as well.

Providing students with academic support resources is essential in any course. It's a good idea to provide this information freely and without students asking in any modality; however, it is critical in the online environment, where students may not have face-to-face opportunities to seek assistance, and instructors may not have access to the same cues that a student needs help.

Design
At a minimum, ensure that students are aware of your communication/appointment policies and any virtual office hours that you hold, and provide clear information for campus-based resources for virtual learning such as library services/resources, tutoring services (including general tutoring, math centers, writing labs, supplemental instruction/peer-to-peer tutoring, etc.).

Enhance
Provide supplemental resources supporting academic success, including topics like time management, study skills, and test-taking, among others. You should also consider enabling LMS or publisher-based study tools (independent practice, adaptive learning, etc.). Additionally, peer learning is an option for students to learn, assess progress, and review.

Optimize
If your institution offers an Early Alert Warning System for at-risk students, implement it in your course. You can also consider at-risk indicators and use your course data to identify students needing academic support.

Online-Specific Course Policies

Key Takeaways

1
Provide both general course policies and those specific to online courses to your students.

2
Include information on appropriate etiquette in the online classroom in your course.

3
Consider creating an 'orientation' to your course that highlights key policies and other information.

Equity in Action

As noted previously, include a statement of equity, inclusion, and diversity at both course and institutional levels.

Provide a clear policy regarding expectations for behavior and communication, including support for students to communicate openly with you about any concerns.

Your online course should include specific policies underlying expectations and requirements for student participation and course completion, providing students with a clear understanding of their responsibilities as an online student.

In an unexpected move to the online environment, consider whether there is anything your students must know about the course in the new format, and ensure that you communicate those things. Examples may be items such as procedures for problems with accessing the LMS, or key information about turning work in or completing assessments.

Design
Ensure that the general course policies and procedures of your institution are included in your course and course syllabus.
Review Best Practices and Expectations for Online Teaching when considering policies that you may need to include in your course information.

Enhance
Create a guide on appropriate etiquette in the online classroom for your students.

Optimize
Create an "Online Student Orientation" overview in your course (section or video) highlighting the key policies.

Online-Specific Course Resources

Key Takeaways

1
Ensure that information provided is relevant and up-to-date.

2
Teach digital literacy and make sure that students understand how to identify and use appropriate resources.

3
Discuss academic integrity with students to ensure that they understand expectations, appropriate use of resources, and accurate citation.

Equity in Action

Ensure that a variety of resources are provided, and that students can access them in accessible ways.

Include information about any available resources specifically related to accessibility, diversity, and inclusion for online students that your institution provides.

The Internet provides a wealth of information and resources at a moment's notice. It's important in an online course that you are providing relevant, up-to-date information to your learners. You should also make your students aware of the types of resources they are bringing into the online classroom, and how to identify and use appropriate resources.

Design
Understand what types of resources are appropriate for your online class and communicate with students about appropriate use and academic integrity.

Enhance
Create a plan, or schedule, for checking your online resources used in your class. This guide, 7 Keys for Successfully Updating Online Courses, can help you efficiently manage this process.

Optimize
Ensure that your students understand the importance of digital literacy, appropriate use, and accurate citation with the resources they share in the online course.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Even after an online course is completed and has been offered, it is important to regularly evaluate and continuously improve the course to ensure that it is up-to-date, relevant, and following current best practices for high-quality online education.

In emergent situations requiring a rapid shift to online education from face-to-face and/or blended environments, the immediate focus is necessarily on just being able to move forward. Once the initial work of providing a course online is completed, it is important to consider evaluation and improvement.

It may be possible, but is not necessarily the most effective or efficient path forward to further iterate on a course that was rapidly converted for emergency remote teaching in order to create a sustainable, high-quality learning experience following the crisis situation. It may be a

better choice to familiarize yourself with quality standards, select the elements of your online remote-teaching course that were particularly effective or meet standards, and redesign your course intentionally for an online format.

Quality assurance is critical in creating and maintaining best practices in online course design, teaching, and learning. There are various widely recognized sets of standards developed by different organizations like Quality Matters (QM), Quality Learning and Teaching (QLT) and others.

Continued on next page...

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement Introduction

The Online Learning Consortium also has the OLC Quality Scorecard Suite which consists of multiple scorecards for different aspects of online and blended education and provides institutions with the necessary criteria and benchmarking tools to ensure online learning excellence for the entire institution.

Understanding and selecting appropriate quality standards can be useful as you design and implement your high-quality online course. Your institution may already use one or more of these tools, and you may want to talk with instructional designers or others at your institution regarding quality as you begin to design a sustainable course.

Source: **OLC Quality Scorecard Suite**

Course-Level Evaluation

The OSCQR Course Design Review Scorecard is a course-level quality rubric developed by the State University of New York for reviewing and improving the instructional design and accessibility of online courses based on online best practices. With 50 instructional design and accessibility standards integrated into the rubric, it can be used to identify and target aspects of online courses for improvement. The rubric includes the following categories: Course Overview and Information, Course Technology and Tools, Design and Layout, Content and Activities, Interaction, Assessment and Feedback.

Design

If you are an educator facing the challenge of putting your face-to-face course online in a short time frame, familiarize yourself with the indicators of the OSCQR as you design your online course. This can help ensure that you are setting yourself up for not only a successful course, but for efficient continued development. However, if you do not have the time or resources to do that, refer to the foundational principles of an evidence-based model such as Backward Design.

Enhance

As you run your course online for the first time, identify areas of improvement using the quality metrics of OSCQR rubric and implement them for the next iteration.

Optimize

Organize a continuous improvement schedule that addresses all sections of the QCTIP over a series of semesters.

Instructional Evaluation

Key Takeaways

1
Consider quality indicators for online instruction as you design your course.

2
Throughout your course, identify areas that work well and areas that might be improved, and continue to evaluate and improve instructional methods over time.

Equity in Action

Regularly review your course design and instructional strategies, and reflect on the success or failure of previous efforts toward inclusivity, to ensure that your instruction supports equitable opportunities for all students.

The Quality Course Teaching and Instructional Practice (QCTIP) is a comprehensive scorecard which can be used for an in-depth review to validate instructional practices as compared to quality standards identified by a panel of experts. Designed to evaluate the overall classroom experience, this tool can be used to evaluate teaching effectiveness in several areas, including: Course Fundamentals, Learning Foundations, Faculty Engagement and Student Engagement.

Design
If you are an educator facing the challenge of putting your face-to-face course online in a short time frame, familiarize yourself with the indicators of the QCTIP as you design your online course.

Enhance
As you run your course online for the first time, identify areas of improvement using the quality metrics of QCTIP rubric and implement them for the next iteration.

Optimize
Organize a continuous improvement schedule that addresses all sections of the QCTIP over a series of semesters.

Summary and Next Steps

Delivering instruction online and ensuring your students have a high-quality and effective learning experience—whether through an intentional choice to develop an online course, or because of an emergent situation—is a process that requires thoughtful design based on evidence-based best practices and proven strategies.

These strategies build upon each other across the different components of a course, the stage of course development or delivery, and the goals of the instructor for the course.

Summary and Next Steps
Conclusion

This playbook provides an introduction to strategies and resources for further development in each area. While as comprehensive as possible while remaining accessible for ease of use, there may be topics you want deeper information about, and of course, there will be ongoing developments in the field overall and as a result of the current COVID-19 situation. Keep an eye out for future resources, and visit the Every Learner Everywhere Network as a source for ongoing information.

The COVID-19 crisis has caused rapid and unprecedented disruption across higher education, impacting students, instructors, and institutions. The immediate focus of instructional and institutional response has (appropriately) been to move courses online while ensuring learning continuity and supporting students during this challenging time.

Whether you are redesigning a face-to-face course for remote teaching, enhancing an existing online course, or optimizing your course to improve the learner experience, the COVID-19 crisis has presented an opportunity to refocus on learner needs and leverage digital learning strategies.

Let's take this opportunity to build upon our recent experience and act to deliver high-quality, equitable online teaching and learning.

Every Learner Everywhere is a network of 12 partner organizations that collaborate with higher education institutions to improve student outcomes through innovative teaching strategies, including the adoption of adaptive digital learning tools. Evidence demonstrates active and adaptive learning has the potential to improve course outcomes and digital solutions lower the cost of course materials, particularly for low-income students and students of color. Our network partners represent leaders and innovators in teaching and learning. We have specific expertise in the adoption, implementation, and measurement of digital learning tools as they're integrated into pedagogical practices.
Learn more at everylearnereverywhere.org

The **Online Learning Consortium (OLC)** is a collaborative community of higher education leaders and innovators dedicated to advancing quality digital teaching and learning experiences designed to reach and engage the modern learner—anyone, anywhere, anytime. OLC inspires innovation and quality through an extensive set of resources, including best-practice publications, quality benchmarking, leading-edge instruction, community-driven conferences, practitioner-based and empirical research, and expert guidance. The growing OLC community includes faculty members, administrators, trainers, instructional designers, and other learning professionals, as well as educational institutions, professional societies, and corporate enterprises. Learn more at onlinelearningconsortium.org

The **Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)** is a research, policy, and advocacy organization representing 238 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations. Founded in 1887, the APLU is North America's oldest higher-education association with member institutions in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, four U.S. territories, Canada, and Mexico. Annually, member campuses enroll 4.8 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.3 million degrees, employ 1.3 million faculty and staff, and conduct $44.9 billion in university-based research. Learn more at aplu.org

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One-Page Guide

Whether you are engaged in strategic online learning development, or have been impacted by the COVID-19 emergency situation, there are best practices that can be followed to create high-quality learning experiences. The Faculty Playbook provides detail and extensive resources, but this overview will get you started.

When initially conceptualizing course design, the use of an evidence-based model, such as Backward Design, provides a roadmap for an effective and efficient process.

Key course design principles include:

- Become familiar with basic quality standards for online courses as you begin to design your course - regardless of whether you have months to prepare, or are going online quickly.

- Use measurable learning objectives/outcomes.

- Align content, activities, and assessments to learning objectives/outcomes.

- Consider how your face-to-face strategies translate to the online environment, and media-rich and/or courseware options for enhancing the learning experience.

- As you assess content and materials, and determine needs for adaptation of existing materials and/or the addition of new content for effective online delivery, be sure to attend to web accessibility standards (check out these ten steps for a great foundation) and use Universal Design for Learning wherever possible.

- Design with equity in mind. This equity rubric can help guide course design to provide opportunity for all learners to succeed.

Beyond effective design and presentation of content and materials, there are several things you can do to set yourself and your students up for success:

- Become familiar with the LMS that your institution uses and select supplementary tools based on your course outcomes and goals.

- Introducing yourself and your course is important for establishing your class environment, setting expectations, and for allowing students and instructors to get to know one another. In an emergent situation, providing a course welcome in the online course can help ease disruption and set the stage for instructional continuity.

- Design your course to provide intentional opportunities for students to interact with the instructor, each other, and the course content.

- Set clear and explicit expectations for your course for both performance and interaction. This is especially important in the online environment, where there are fewer verbal or behavioral cues than in face-to-face courses.

- Provide options and opportunities for students to communicate with the instructor. This is especially important in online courses, where real-time interaction is limited or unavailable.

- Provide academic support resources (including institutional resources such as library and tutoring services as well as supplemental resources) and ensure that students are aware of them.

After an online course is completed and has been offered, it is important to regularly evaluate and continuously improve the course to ensure that it is up-to-date, relevant, and following current best practices for high-quality online education.

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