



## Instruction Ideas for Asynchronous Courses

### *Take-aways from the Fall 2020 Student Learning Experiences Survey*

In November 2020, the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education asked undergraduate, graduate, and professional students about strategies instructors used that worked or not, as well as suggestions based on their experience in Fall 2020 asynchronous courses. Derived from the most consistent and salient survey responses and supported by evidence-based teaching practices, we offer these instruction ideas and resources for faculty consideration, recognizing that you may have employed some of these practices as well as other strategies not included below. Join the [Faculty Online Community for Teaching](#) facilitated by the Center for Teaching Innovation to share additional ideas and/or questions (if you have already signed up, [click here to go to the community](#)).

Explore the results from the [Fall 2020 Student Learning Experiences Survey](#).

### **Post course materials, such as lectures (videos or PowerPoint presentations), online in advance**

Posting in advance allows students additional flexibility in engaging with course materials.

- Post materials according to a consistent schedule so that students know when to expect them
- Post materials incrementally to avoid overwhelming students
- Provide good quality videos of course lectures; slow down and avoid packing too much content into each video (See [Pre-recorded Lecture Tips](#) and [Recording Lectures](#) for more information)
- Create short video segments rather than long video recordings
- Maintain materials online for a determined period of time for students to reference later
- Keep total recorded lecture length to allotted class time (i.e., as if synchronous in-person)

### **Provide regular forums for discussion/Q&A to enhance understanding, accountability, and connection**

Students working in small groups often learn and retain more. Also, group work provides students a sense of shared purpose that can improve morale and increase motivation.

- Provide regular forums using [Canvas Discussions](#) or [Ed Discussion](#) for students to post questions and receive answers
- Respond to student questions in a timely manner (see [Communicating with Students Online](#))
- Regularly schedule opportunities for students to interact online synchronously with the instructional staff, such as in office hours
- Offer one-on-one office hours

### **Hold synchronous course content review opportunities**

These reveal how and what students are learning during the course and often inform next steps in teaching and learning

- Provide weekly overview of the material to be covered and review upcoming assignments due
- Post recordings of review sessions
- Regularly provide opportunities for students to check their understanding of concepts/materials (e.g., ungraded quizzes – See [Assessing Prior Knowledge](#) and [Measuring Student Learning](#) for additional ideas)

### **Design opportunities for students to get to know one another and the instructional team**

In [inclusive learning environments](#), students feel that their contributions and perspectives are equally valued and respected.

- Assign students to study groups or project groups
- Encourage creation of a course group chat
- Post a course list of students in order for students to contact one another
- Encourage students to sign up for the [Learning Strategies Center's Study Group matching service](#)
- Make introductory videos about the TAs
- Show the primary instructor's face in videos, even if minimally, to promote connection

### **Additional Instructional Strategies**

- Select assignment deadlines so that students in different time zones do not have late evening or early morning deadlines (see [Setting Expectations and Connecting with Students](#) for more information)
- Communicate frequently about upcoming due dates, assignments, content, frequently asked questions, etc.
- Minimize posting extra videos that add to class time
- Encourage students to watch course videos on a regular schedule so as not to fall behind