

## Fresh Ideas to Maintain Social Distancing for Small Group Work

Creating opportunities for students to work together in the classroom while maintaining safe social distancing can be challenging. As the weather improves, there may be more opportunities to move some class activities outside, but there are also ways to work together safely in the classroom.

### Considerations

- Acoustics: Plan with the acoustical properties of your classroom in mind. Think about what your room can handle in terms of people hearing each other
- Remind students about your expectations for social distancing, even if people are vaccinated. Be very clear and specific. Students should know exactly where they should be arranged during activities. Use tape or post-it notes on the floor if needed
- Model safe behavior by staying masked and distanced

### Creative communication methods

- Have students write or place post-it notes on physical whiteboards (with clear instructions about distancing from the instructor)
- Have students write notes back and forth, or exchange journal entries or papers for feedback
- Have students make flashcards and then quiz each other
- Have students convey ideas by drawing diagrams, pictures, concept mapping
  - e.g., Charts, graphic organizers, tables, flowcharts, Venn diagrams, timelines, sequence maps, story maps, hierarchy maps, mind maps
- Pair in-person students with online students using video conferencing

### Live Collaborative Tools for Small Group Work

- Work on a digital whiteboard together: [Jamboard](#)
- Post notes and lists on a shared page: [Padlet](#)
- Brainstorm and fill in information together: [Google Slides, Sheets, or Docs](#)
- Participate in interactive team polls, surveys, or games: [Poll Everywhere](#)
- Peer review teammates' work: Google Docs, Word, or paper
- Annotate and comment on readings or visuals together: [Hypothesis](#), [Perusall](#)
- Chat back and forth digitally: [Zoom breakout rooms](#) (using breakout rooms can help avoid audio feedback), [Microsoft Teams](#)

### Rotations and Stations with Protocols

(if safe, depending on room and class size)

- Gallery Walks: Have half of the students stand 6 feet from their displayed work or a list on the wall and the rest of class rotate every few minutes to view, discuss, or write. Everyone should be spread out enough to be safe but still hear each other. Place markings where students should stand
- Inner stations and outer stations: Arrange the desks/tables on the inside with places to write comments. On the perimeter, set up spaces to write comments on the walls. Have students go back and forth writing while in the middle and then to the perimeter opposite their partner, while maintaining distancing (please be sure to return furniture to its original configuration to help the next class maintain safe distancing)
- 4 Corners: In small classes, put only 2 to 4 people in each corner of the room to discuss while being distanced. Place markings where students should stand