



June 10, 2020

As we have entered Summer semester and think about the many unknowns for Fall semester, we thought it was important to clearly distinguish the difference between the traditional, fully online course (section 80) and a face-to-face course that is being taught in a virtual environment for the entire semester or a portion of the semester. As most of you know, a fully online course is delivered primarily via Blackboard. Students have to meet a minimum GPA, and students know that there will be no synchronous learning. The faculty who teach online courses have had the required Blackboard training, and the TEL Committee has reviewed the course with a meticulous online checklist.

However, students enrolled in face-to-face courses are students who either did not qualify for online courses or, more likely, did not want online courses. So, just as students' expectations for face-to-face courses are different, the expectations for teaching in a virtual environment are different. In the event that you have a face-to-face course that due to COVID-19 has had to transition into a course taught virtually, and in the best interest of your students' expectations and needs, please consider following these recommendations for best practices:

- Have at least some synchronous meetings via Collaborate, Zoom, or some other tool during the days/times when the course was scheduled.
- Begin transitioning to Blackboard as your primary mode of delivery. The College has excellent support staff to help you with this transition.
- Do whatever you can to build a learning community with students so that they get to know each other and can give each other support. We want to not only teach, but also retain them for future semesters.
- Make yourself available for virtual office hours via Collaborate, Zoom, or some other tool.
- Contact students using web email rosters or some other mechanism prior to a course starting to let them know your plan for instruction delivery for the semester.
- Within Blackboard utilize the Announcement and Gradebook features at a minimum.
- Enroll in EDTR 227: Best Practices in Remote Teaching, which is offered virtually this summer, to further explore how to build community in a virtual learning environment.

Thank you,

*Jill Lane, Sue Czerwinski, Deborah Witsken, and the LCFA Executive Committee*