

UMUC EXPECTATIONS FOR FACULTY TEACHING HYBRID CLASSES

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UMUC is committed to providing the highest-quality education to its students as well as providing its faculty members with the technical, pedagogical, and administrative support needed to achieve our shared expectations for excellence in teaching.

A hybrid course is one that mixes face-to-face (f2f) and online delivery, and in which both the f2f and the online elements are required of students and the f2f and online elements are also pedagogically integrated and complementary. The key to effective teaching in the hybrid format is fully exploiting the face-to-face and online environments with appropriate activities and smoothly integrating the two modes of delivery.

Listed below is a set of expectations that faculty teaching in the hybrid format should follow to ensure the best possible learning experience for our students.

Before the Term:

PREPARATION

- Successfully complete CTLA 201, Teaching with WebTycho, if you have not done so in the past. If you have previously completed CTLA 201, it is recommended that you participate in an upcoming CTL online workshop on teaching a hybrid course. This Expectations document is also intended to provide guidance for all phases of the hybrid teaching experience.
- If you are a new faculty member, you might be interested in participating in the Peer Mentoring Program, offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning (see <http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla/peer.html>). Feel free to contact your academic administrator for more information.
- Give yourself sufficient time to become thoroughly familiar with your textbooks and resources if you have not previously used them in another class. Check to make sure you are using the correct edition of the required text. Familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of UMUC and your department, especially policies on incompletes, grade submission, and academic integrity.
- Review the schedule for your hybrid class. Find out how much flexibility, if any, is afforded you in planning out which weeks will meet face-to-face or whether the pattern for meetings has been determined by your program.

- The first class session should usually be f2f to enable students to get off to a good start. For subsequent meetings, schedule activities for f2f or online so as to make the best use of each mode. For example, faculty should cover the most complex materials or arrange for initial small group meetings for f2f sessions, while scheduling heavy reading loads, use of web-based resources, class discussion in conferences or continuing group work for times when students only meet online.
- Prepare and submit a course syllabus for review by your academic administrator two weeks before the start date of the term. Faculty teaching for Europe and Asia must submit a syllabus or review and customize an existing syllabus two weeks before registration begins.
- The syllabus should be as complete and accurate as possible, include grading criteria, inclusive dates for each week in the schedule section, and due dates for all assignments. It should also give a detailed explanation of the schedule and expectations for face-to-face and online sessions in the **course introduction** section of the syllabus. Use the **schedule** section of the syllabus to clearly highlight whether the meeting is f2f or online for each week.
- Indicate to students how and when you may be contacted via email or phone, and indicate your availability for "office hours."
- Faculty members should publish the syllabus in the WebTycho classroom and distribute a hard copy to students at the first f2f meeting.
- Set up the Gradebook in your WebTycho classroom with all assignments and graded elements for the course fully created.
- Students in hybrid courses who do not attend the first f2f class meeting often encounter problems in keeping up with the class. Email students before the first class meeting to emphasize that for a hybrid course the first day is of great importance and to encourage them to attend in order to be fully oriented.
- Create an Introductions conference and a CyberCafe in the online classroom and explain their use in your syllabus.

COURSE DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES

- Update your previous lecture material, handouts, and discussion questions prior to each new class.
- Closely align assignments and activities with learning objectives in the syllabus, and provide adequate practice to master objectives. If appropriate, create weekly learning objectives.

- Pay attention to the integration and transition between the f2f and online activities. In particular, for each f2f session, detail what is expected of students in the online session(s) that immediately follow.
- In designing a hybrid class, keep in mind that your total student time for both online and face-to-face activities should be comparable to the number of hours required in a purely f2f class.
- Break down large and complex tasks into incremental assignments so you can provide feedback and correction at each stage. This also prevents students from feeling overwhelmed.
- Pay attention to pacing and sequencing of content and activity. Make sure assessments are spaced out throughout the course, not concentrated at the end. Build in extra time for discussion or group projects that are carried out online—the asynchronous nature of WebTycho communication requires that a reasonable span of time be afforded to complete a task. For example, a brainstorming session that might consume 2 hours in the f2f classroom would ideally be divided over a 2-day period to allow for students' disparate schedules and posting times.
- Take advantage of the opportunity for study groups to meet at least initially in a f2f session in order to get to know one another in person. Schedule other opportunities for f2f study group meetings as appropriate, especially at crucial points in their project work. This tends to make it easier for students to establish community and cooperation in their group work online and assists groups in establishing consensus or making decisions at critical points in their work.
- For the portion of study group work carried out online, utilize the Study Group area and give detailed directions, guidelines, and due dates for tasks. Let students know ahead of time that you will be monitoring their group activity, and request that all work be visible in the online classroom. (Ask students to cc you on any email and to post transcripts of chat sessions.)
- Clearly state the criteria or the rubrics for all grading in your syllabus, handouts, and in your class pronouncements. Make sure grades are distributed over a variety of assignments, rather than heavily weighting them on just one or two. A well-constructed rubric provides guidance to students in completing the assignment, makes your grading more efficient, and eliminates confusion and questioning about grading.
- Provide examples of successful or model student work, when appropriate, for particularly difficult or complex assignments.
- Employ a variety of learning approaches, including opportunities to collaborate with other students. Projects, case studies, organized debates and role-playing, and problem-based learning can all be used to enliven the course and can take

place either online or f2f. The Workbook feature in WebTycho may be used for journaling assignments, or to provide opportunities to ask students for feedback on the course or their progress in the course.

- Allow students to explore beyond the textbook by providing Web and library resources and by making a resource the focus of an assignment. Encourage students to become better acquainted with the library by incorporating its use in at least one of your assignments. If appropriate, request that the library visit your online classroom.
- Integrate Web, textbook, and library resources into the course so that students feel these are intrinsically valuable and relevant to the course. Provide guidance about the appropriate use and purpose of all course materials. Do not merely give students a long list of resources without annotation or direction.
- If your course includes Course Content Modules in WebTycho, utilize these to enrich the learning experience. Familiarize yourself with them, so you can use them appropriately and respond to student questions. Depending upon your course, you may assign them as required reading or simply refer students to them as background resources.
- Incorporate adult learning principles into course activities, encouraging students to apply their real-world experience to the course content.
- Promote active learning strategies and critical thinking by presenting issues from multiple perspectives. Design assignments that stimulate the questioning of assumptions, and ask students to reflect on their learning.
- If appropriate for your course, provide opportunities for student presentations, followed by question and answer periods.
- Guard against plagiarism and promote academic integrity by following the principles for creating assignments at the VAIL Website, <http://www.umuc.edu/virtualteaching/>

During the Term:

- Introduce related topics or relevant current news and resources in the CyberCafe and Webliography areas of the online classroom.
- Distribute the syllabus for the course in hard copy on the first f2f meeting day of the class. Faculty should set aside time to solicit student questions about the syllabus, objectives, and course expectations and to discuss the interaction and expectations for the respective f2f and online activities.

- At the first meeting, emphasize to students the importance of paying attention to the WebTycho orientation that they complete upon entering WebTycho for the first time.
- Set the tone for the course ahead by welcoming the students and providing an "ice-breaker" exercise at the first meeting if appropriate (introductions or a question related to prior impressions or assumptions about the course subject matter, etc.). This exercise is one that can be started in the f2f classroom and continued online.
- Make an effort to learn the names of all your students. Ask students to post a short bio and self-introduction online after the first f2f class meeting. Call on a variety of students during each class session. Ticking off names on a roster can help you keep track of student participation as well as attendance. Taking notes on online discussion can also be helpful.
- Be responsive to students by replying within 48 hours to emailed inquiries. Visit the online classroom at least three, but preferably four times a week when there are no f2f meetings to respond to questions posted in the conferences and to establish a presence there. Don't wait until the next f2f class to respond to questions. Remember that students cannot "see" you in the online classroom unless you post in the conference or create an online announcement. For weeks during which there are f2f meetings, visit the online classroom at a minimum at least once before and within a day or two following the f2f meeting.
- Send a personal email as a friendly reminder to students who are not actively participating in the online portion of the class.
- Weekly emails may be sent to remind students of the activities taking place online during weeks when the class does not meet f2f. Students may not always remember to check in to the online classroom.
- Make regular participation in the online classroom a significant portion of the grade and ensure that part of that grade is for interaction with classmates, not just with the instructor. Faculty should clearly communicate their precise guidelines and explain what constitutes participation.
- Keep "Class Awareness" enabled in the WebTycho classroom so that students may instant-message each other if they desire. Let students know if you will also be available via that function. If you do not want to be contacted this way while in the classroom, you may disable the feature for yourself (either temporarily or permanently) by using your WebTycho Preferences. Remind students that they may also disable that feature for themselves through their WebTycho Preferences.

- Punctuate lectures with planned occasions in which you invite questions or ask a question of students about their underlying assumptions before introducing a new subtopic. Such questions may be communicated either online or f2f.
- At appropriate intervals, summarize or bring closure to the week or unit, or assign students to perform this task. Provide an overview or introduction to an upcoming week in your remarks to students. The WebTycho classroom provides an ideal venue to accomplish this.
- Facilitate, but don't dominate class discussions whether online or f2f. Ask follow up questions and redirect questions to encourage students to contribute to the discussion. It is generally recommended that the faculty member initiate the topic threads in the conference discussion unless a particular conference is intended for student presentations or student-led discussion.
- Encourage peer-to-peer interaction when appropriate. Divide large classes into smaller groups for the purpose of discussion and provide them with guideline questions that help focus their attention and serve to stimulate discussion.
- For small group projects, students should be graded in some measure on individual contribution as well as for the group as a whole. This encourages participation in group projects and provides reassurance about fairness of grading.
- Observe and monitor on a regular basis the progress of online group work in the study group area. Provide clarification about tasks and assignments to groups when necessary.
- Show commitment to the progress and success of each student by individualized attention, support, and referrals for assistance from UMUC resources such as the Effective Writing Center or advising when needed. Praise students for work well done and point the way for improvement.
- Invite the librarian to visit your online classroom and make sure your students are thoroughly familiar with the online library resources available at UMUC.
- Provide adequate and timely feedback on all assignments and pay special attention to the first major assignment so as to set expectations for the future, diagnose problems, and to make timely referrals.
- Assignments on which future assignments depend should be returned as quickly as possible so students have plenty of time to make corrections based on your feedback that will carry over into the next assignment (e.g., an annotated bibliography that will support a major paper).

- Provide feedback that suggests areas for improvement and growth as well as reinforcement and acknowledgement. Students learn more from an assignment if they receive comments from you along with the grade.
- Enter all grades in the Gradebook on a timely and regular basis so that students can track their own progress in the class. Short comments may be added in the areas provided by the Gradebook.
- Use lectures and faculty commentary as an opportunity to provide deeper insights about assigned readings or problems, not merely for reviewing content.
- When appropriate, utilize case studies in place of lectures for presenting material or reinforcing concepts. Case studies elicit student response and bring concepts and data to life.
- When using PowerPoint in the f2f classroom, use the slides as a departure point, rather than simply reading off the slides. Relevant graphics enliven the presentation and can be used to illustrate both concrete and abstract ideas. Be sure that both text and graphics are large enough to be seen by all students.
- Depending on the content and purpose, post an outline of your lecture or your PowerPoint presentation in the WebTycho classroom after each class or before selected lectures. This will facilitate the opportunity for students to review and reflect on the lessons or to fully prepare for the f2f session.
- Recognize that students may be apprehensive before major exams and major assignment due dates, and schedule adequate time either online or in the f2f classroom to answer questions or review, as appropriate.
- Periodically ask for class feedback in order to adjust course activities as needed. Quick surveys and questions submitted online that ask students to reflect on their progress are ways to assess whether the course activities are effective in reaching the desired goals and objectives.
- Help students to avoid plagiarism by referring them to appropriate resources such as the student tutorial at the VAIL site (<http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/cip/vail/home.html>), the Effective Writing Center resource at <http://www.umuc.edu/ugp/ewp/plagiarism.shtml>, or by making use of the TurnItIn.com service <http://www.umuc.edu/library/turnitin.html>. (If you decide to use the TurnItIn service, you should refer to this in your syllabus.)
- Be sure to emphasize the importance of filling out the student course evaluation forms.
- If you need assistance concerning online teaching issues, feel free to contact the CTL Faculty Consultant Service at

http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla/fac_consult/fac_consult.html. You may also want to contact your academic administrator.

After the Term:

- Submit final grades in a timely fashion according to the UMUC grade submission policies and schedules. Students need their grades recorded promptly in order to make informed choices about registering for new classes, to meet contingencies for reimbursement, and for continuation of financial aid.
- Review and assess your teaching methods and approaches on a regular basis. Analyze your student evaluations with an eye to learning your areas of strength as well as areas for improvement.
- Set an example of commitment to life-long learning by keeping current in your field and continuing to improve and refine your teaching skills. The Center for Teaching and Learning offers face-to-face and online workshops throughout the year for faculty at any stage in their careers. For more information, visit the CTL Website at <http://www.umuc.edu/facdev/workshops.html>