RESILIENT PED & OTHER FLEX APPROACHES

FULLY FACE-TO-FACE

Fully face-to-face means all learners and the instructor are in the same place at the same time for instruction, sometimes referred to as "traditional" classrooms on experience. Some colleges and universities are planning for fully face-to-face (F2F) courses for Fall Term, but with protections in place for faculty and students including social distancing, masks, plexiglass barriers, and updated HVAC. Often, courses identified for F2F instruction are difficult to deliver effectively online; labs, performance courses, and practices might be identified for F2F. While these courses are not the most important thing the instructor should communicate to learners, they are not about access, content, or structure, since students are likely familiar with this model, but instead about precautions, how to properly social distance in the classroom, self-care, and policies related to absences and illness.

FULLY SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE

Fully synchronous online courses still meet at a common time, but with the learners and instructor(s) in different locations. Synchronous online courses are mediated with technologies such as Zoom, WebEx, or Google Meet and may use lecture, live-scribing, small group discussion, live polling, or polls to enhance engagement. Synchronous online courses often encourage learning. If instructors are planning to use fully synchronous online instruction, they should survey their students about access concerns, use adaptable language to foreground concern for students and protect the foreground of the Fall where synchronous meetings and build in alternative learning opportunities for students who are unable to attend at the scheduled time for some reason. Differences or loss of internet, institutions that expect synchronous online instruction must ensure that students have all the necessary access and tech without additional financial burden on the students.

FULLY ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE

A fully asynchronous online course invites students to engage with course materials, the instructor(s), and their colleagues in the course at times that best fit their schedule and access needs through online resources and tools. Learning Management System (LMS) discussion boards, social media posts and comments, recorded instructional videos, online quizzes or tests, and assignments turned in through drop box might all be ways learning happens in fully asynchronous courses. There are advantages to fully asynchronous courses, especially in terms of student access. However, learners will need transparent and clear instructions for assignments, due dates and evaluation as well as a sense of instructor presence though video feeds and timely commenting and feedback on work. Institutions that are primarily utilizing asynchronous learning need to ensure faculty are well-trained on the features of the LMS (quizing, les tools, etc.) as well as how to create instructor presence.

HYBRID / BLENDED LEARNING

Blended learning usually involves a mix of online learning and F2F meetings. Faculty teaching in blended courses might still have regular F2F meetings in a week or as a weekend intensive, for example, and a student would need to respond to that in a discussion board or via LMS quizzes. Hybrid and blended are often used interchangeably, but hybrid might also refer to F2F courses where "synchronous" is decreased with the inclusion of online learning and asynchronous aspects. These interactions may be synchronous, asynchronous, or both. In hybrid/blended classrooms, students are expected to be F2F part of the time, and online part of the time, which makes this model different from the other models discussed below. Instructors teaching hybrid courses should be clear about how much F2F interaction and what type(s) of online interaction are expected, as well as what protections will be available to F2F. They will also need clear instructions for learners, especially if they are familiar with F2F learners, have equitable access to participation, a clear weekly or modular schedule identifying learning goals, synchronous meeting times, and asynchronous due dates are all critical for student success.

HYFLEX

Hyflex describes an approach to course design that allows students to move seamlessly between F2F, synchronous, and for asynchronous modes of instruction toward the same learning goal. Usually, hyflex courses are divided into modules or units based on the goals, and then students are given the option of which learning environment they will meet for that goal. Students can migrate to other environments for other course goals or based on contextual factors like student health, location, or access needs. The hyflex approach was popularized by Dr. Brian Beatty and developed by San Francisco State University, and it provides maximum flexibility for students but might require additional preparation for instructors, including setting up multiple parallel assignments that meet the learning goals regardless of modality, and a highly structured module-based structure. Students will need clear instructions on the various environments, the differences to learning in each environment, and how to inform the instructor of their choices for engagement. Institutions that are considering a hyflex approach will need to clarify how much additional labor is expected by faculty as well as clear identification and exploitation of courses designated Hyflex in the course catalog.

RELEVANT PED & OTHER FLEX APPROACHES

Recently, many faculty developers and teaching and learning professionals have proposed a resilient approach to teaching during the pandemic. This model or " realities are as follows: The "new normal" allows for a "hyflex" or other, is "a combination of course design principles and teaching strategies that are as resistant to disruption and to change in the learning environment as possible" (via @DrAshley_r Eyler on Twitter). For example, an instructor might set a learning goal for the first part of the course and then build a series of synchronous/ asynchronous/F2F learning opportunities culminating in a single assignment that can be completed to show learning regardless of environment. The advantage of this approach is that it does not require multiple assignments for multiple modalities, as hyflex sometimes does. Other student-centered flexible approaches, like Agile teaching, might also allow the kind of flexibility students need to succeed this fall. Students will need guidance on how to communicate their context and learning needs to the instructor, and an emphasis on the part of the instructor to foreground flexibility above their own teaching preferences.