Quick Tips: Moving Online Quickly & Temporarily

Key Points to Remember:

1. Moving online in support of academic continuity in the face of the Coronavirus outbreak should be thought of as distinct from the more strategic moves into online learning which require planful instructional design and supports.

2. The short term aim is to allow students to continue to progress through their courses until the end of the term. At that point, a broader plan will be called for regarding academic continuity.

3. Remember that many students may not have access to desktop or laptop computers or broadband in their homes. They may well be required to engage with the online class via their phone, and thus be limited in some capacities.

For Faculty / Instructors:

- Learn how to upload content into the LMS (e.g. Blackboard, Canvas, D2L Moodle, etc) if you don’t already.
- Use the technology at hand
  - LMS
  - Web conferencing tools (e.g. Zoom, WebEx, GoToMeeting, MS Teams, Slack, etc)
  - Email
  - Telephone
- It’s ok to build as you go
  - Plan for this week, then next...you can iterate week to week as necessary!
  - Build a flexible weekly plan for synchronous discussions, discussion boards (asynchronous), and assessments
- Communication and presence are vital!
  - Be present for your newly online students - at least as much as you typically are for your in-person students
  - Build opportunities for student-to-student and student-to-instructor communication
  - Leverage the ubiquity of smartphones and cameras to engage in video discussions
- Hold office hours virtually

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- Set days/times for when you will be available
- Explore making student connections during your virtual office hours mandatory
- Know how to support students with technology problems
  - Point them to the institutional help desk
  - Avoid trying to be tech support for your students!
- Explore Open Educational Resources
  - These no-cost, quality digital content pieces can be found to support your course
  - Start at oercommons.org or merlot.org

For the Institution / Administration:

- Establish a formal communication policy to keep students up to date
  - Have a publicly available source of truth (e.g. your university website front page for example)
  - Faculty/instructors should not be asked to serve as the official information conduit to students about institution policies and responses to the Coronavirus
- Provide as many support services as possible to the faculty as they transition to online
  - Leverage your experienced online faculty within departments to support colleagues
  - Identify web resources and online training that should be available from your LMS provider
- Establish or reinforce the use of the IT help desk to support student technology frustrations as they move online
  - Make sure faculty know how to direct students to the help desk and what the support hours are
- Expect that many online courses will have copyright violations in the rush to get materials online (that’s OK in the short run, but must be addressed moving forward)
  - In the longer term, you’ll definitely need to address the copyright

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Other Recent Pieces on this Subject:

- https://er.educause.edu/blogs/2020/3/faculty-readiness-to-begin-fully-online-teaching