Academic Senate Best Practices

Title: Principles and Practices for Effective, Equitable Synchronous Online Classes
Author/Committee: Joelle Adams/Distance Education Committee

A. **Definitions**

Distance Education: Title V § 55200. DEFINITION AND APPLICATION[1]

(a) "Distance education" means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) either synchronously or asynchronously.

Technologies that may be used to offer distance education include: (1) The internet; (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; (3) Audio conference; or (4) Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision. (b) The definition of "distance education" does not include correspondence courses.

Fully Online Synchronous: (from ASCCC Curriculum Institute)

"Faculty and students meet at a scheduled date/time using technology (i.e. Zoom) for live class sessions"

---

[1] Still in ratification process as of Dec 2021

B. **Principles and Practices for Equitable, Effective Synchronous Online Teaching**

Principles	Related Practices	Activities, Tools, and Links (updated Fall 2021 – subject to change)
Community, Connection, and Belonging	• Facilitate establishment of norms and expectations • Create opportunities for students to interact • Turn camera on and invite, but do not require, students to use theirs	• Breakout rooms • Introduction assignments • Threaded Discussions • Assignments requiring students to interact • Pronto chat and video meetings
Active Learning	• Students do more than passively listen • Students shape and contribute content • Students' voices included in learning activities • Students co-create knowledge Students interact with each other	• Workshops • Student presentations, performances, demonstrations, etc. (check regulations/concerns about recording and sharing) • Peer review • Canvas tools: e.g.Collaboration, Conference • Polls • Discussion • Games • Retrieval Practice – share something from segment • Chat • "Raise hand" feature • "Reaction" feature • Think-Pair-Share • Zoom breakout rooms • Use Google Docs to share a visual resource

Principles	Related Practices	Activities, Tools, and Links (updated Fall 2021 – subject to change)
		• Consensogram using Google Jamboard or Padlet • Four Corners using Zoom Annotation feature • Practice/formative assessments (i.e. mock exam)
Reflection and Metacognition	• Students have opportunities to identify and reflect on what they have learned	• One-minute papers at start/end of class • Quick check-ins in chat • Time for journaling with prompts that facilitate reflection • KWL (Know, Want to know, Learned) • LMS discussion board
Care and Acknowledgement of Emotions	• Acknowledge life beyond the classroom (e.g. pandemic, current events) • Demonstrate care for students as human beings • Proactively refer and connect students to resources and support • Be aware that instructor presence and interaction will be expected in synchronous DE classes	• Check ins and icebreakers • Schedule breaks • Refer to Center for Wellness and Wellbeing (invite speaker) • Encourage, but don't require cameras on – seeSMC Camera Use Resolution • Student feedback collected and responded to during course term

Principles	Related Practices	Activities, Tools, and Links (updated Fall 2021 – subject to change)
Intentionality and Alignment	• Set and communicate learning objectives and outcomes • Align teaching and assessment to objectives and outcomes	• Start modules/class time with clear communication of objectives/outcomes • All activities support learning outcomes and assessments • Link to course objectives/learning outcomes • Require students to interact with/respond to learning outcomes
Multi-Sensory/Multi-Media	• Use a wide range of tools and media to support learning • Follow updates to learning platforms and guide students to adjust as those changes happen	• Use whiteboard to draw/write notes as you speak • Zoom annotations • Jamboard (draw/write with pen) • Microsoft OneNote (draw/write with pen) • Skills demonstrations (by instructor or media source • "Teach backs"
Clarity and Communication	• Clear, early indication of all class meetings, if class meetings are required, and alternatives to attending class meetings (if relevant) • Teach students how to use technologies and tools required for learning activities and assessments • Clear expectations for student/instructor interaction opportunities outside of scheduled	• Syllabus, welcome letter, etc. • Rubrics • Online Student Readiness Tutorials • Title V • DE course shell template • CVC OEI Rubric • Policies in syllabus/introductory module content

Principles	Related Practices	Activities, Tools, and Links (updated Fall 2021 – subject to change)
	classes, including email response time, channels of communication and designated time zone • Create time during meeting for student questions • Consider synchronous online office hours • Use the SMC learning management system to communicate, teach and assess	
Accessibility and Universal Design for Learning Principles	• Live captioning and/or transcription for class presentation • Record Zoom sessions for later review when possible • Enable Closed Captions feature for any meetings that will require closed captions (accommodation requests) • If using an ASL Interpreter & recording the Zoom session, spotlight the ASL provider's video so that the ASL is captured in the recording	• Otter.ai for live captioning and transcription/audio recording of lectures • Chat functions • UDL guidelines • Accessibility links • SMC Canvas App Accessibility Request

Principles	Related Practices	Activities, Tools, and Links (updated Fall 2021 – subject to change)
	• Video/audio content effectively captioned/transcribed • Provide technical terms, equations, etc. in multiple formats (e.g., combination of text, video, audio, and/or image format) • Describe images and other visual content that's displayed whenever possible • Set up Zoom account to [auto-save Chat](#) in your account settings to share with recordings • Send any resource links you post in Chat via email as well • Ensure sound and graphics are of a high quality • Use technologies and platforms in live sessions that are supported by the college and are known to be accessible	
Privacy and Safety	• Create and share policies around recording	• SMC's [Camera Use Resolution](#)

Principles	Related Practices	Activities, Tools, and Links (updated Fall 2021 – subject to change)
	• Follow regulations about recording • Follow guidance about camera use: encourage, but don't require students to have cameras on	
Equity	• Be flexible/mindful/forgiving of tech issues (e.g. bandwidth/connectivity problems) • Be mindful of potential bias in some software (e.g. proctoring) • Do not require students to turn on cameras • Consider alternative assessments to timed/live/proctored exams	• SMC's Camera Use Resolution
Working Conditions	• Ensure contract upheld • Consider instructor teaching styles and skills to create and deliver material	SMC FA website/contract
Legal Requirements	• Ensure course delivery method satisfies SMC's legal obligations as a publicly-funded institution of higher education	• Title V

C. Live, Synchronous Online Class Lesson Plan Template

Session Essentials	
Topic of session	
Length	60-minutes
Description	In this session, we will explore the

Session Objectives	List 2-3 session objectives.
	By the end of this session, you will be able to:: LOTS /HOTS
	      1. …
	      2. …
	      3. ...

Session Agenda	
1.Ice Breaker	An Ice Breaker involves using a non-academic prompt to check-in on your students social-emotional mindsets and/or help students get to know each other as individuals. In this space, describe an activity you will use to open the session and check-in on your students' social and emotional state or help them get to know one another better.
2. Review & Preview	The Review & Preview involves a quick summary of the previous session or assignment and a preview of this session's topic and learning objectives. In this space, write your script for your Review & Preview.
3. Direct Instruction (10-15 minutes)	Direct Instruction involves presenting/demonstrating instructional content to your students. In this space, describe what students will learn about in this direct instruction segment.
4. Active Learning	Active learning ensures your students have opportunities to check-in on their learning, make their learning visible, and/or apply what they've learned to construct new knowledge. In this space, describe a simple activity that has students reflect on the preceding topic, check their learning of the topic, or apply what they have learned. At least one of your active learning examples will need to involve student-student interaction. See Module 1 for examples.
5. Direct Instruction (10-15 minutes)	In this space, describe what students will learn about in this direct instruction segment.
6. Active Learning	In this space, describe a simple activity that has students reflect on the preceding topic, check their learning of the topic, or apply what they have learned. At least one of your active learning examples will need to involve student-student interaction. See Module 1 for examples.
7. Q&A	The Q&A period is simply an opportunity for students to ask questions. In this space, describe how you will provide a supportive way for students to indicate they have a question, provide options for how they ask questions, and ensure there are no dominant voices.
8. Bridge	Your Bridge is your closing. In this space, write a script for your session wrap up that quickly reviews the session's objectives again and previews what's ahead.

D. **Resources and Further Reading**

- @One Live Online Teaching class
- Reading the Virtual Classroom is Hard, but it Can be Done
- Balancing Synchronous and Asynchronous Teaching: Effective Strategies for Enhancing Flexibility without Losing Student Engagement