

Key Principles for the Pivot to Remote Instruction

CAS Teaching Academy Fellows

1) Focus on learning outcomes

What are the things students need to learn in the remaining 5 weeks? Move away from thinking about what you have traditionally required them to do and focus instead on what you want students to learn.

2) Use asynchronous instruction; avoid synchronous

Synchronous learning challenges students' complicated schedules and bandwidth, creating inequities in access.

Many students will be in challenging situations: little privacy and a no quiet space to study, having to share a family computer, needing to address emerging family situations.

- Reserve Zoom for office hours.
- Use [VidGrid](#) or [Record Slideshow in Powerpoint](#) to deliver lectures asynchronously.
- Separate asynchronous lectures into short segments (3-7 minutes) focused on a concept. This will help with attention in what may be challenging situations at home.

3) Keep it simple

Remember, your students will be facing multiple courses moving online, and you will be addressing multiple challenges.

- Only use technology that is necessary and familiar. This is important for security and to reduce tech overload for students. The focus should be on learning course content and skills, not new technology.
- Keep text brief and clear.

4) Create a communication plan

Let them know that you are there and committed to their learning.

- Develop a schedule for consistent updates or emails to students. Make them regular enough to assure and guide students, but not too often to overwhelm them.
- Communicate the window of time during which you and TAs will be responding to student emails or having zoom office hours. Students will be reassured knowing when to expect a response. Have a regular schedule for due dates.
- Create a clear learning path of expectations for students on the Canvas Home Page, for example organized Modules with sequential ordered requirements. Remain cognizant of accessibility issues and challenges for students with disabilities and install appropriate accommodations.

5) Evaluate remaining projects and points

When adjusting your course for the remainder of the semester, think through your changes from the student's perspective. Consider:

- The distribution of the remaining projects/assignments point values.
- What learning your students have already demonstrated in work submitted to this point.

- The likelihood that many of your students were counting on remaining points to improve their overall course grade.

Reflection from Manda Williamson, Chair of the CAS Teaching Academy and Associate Professor of Practice, Psychology

Let's agree to release ourselves from our expectations for what a college course should look like and achieve. Let's also agree to release our students. Let's use what we do know, and what assets we have in order to do this as a community. What do we have: Compassion - before you speak, assume the perspective of your student; Grace - sometimes we need to offer gifts to people that they otherwise haven't earned or deserved; Mercy - sometimes we have to release people from punishment that they normally would deserve; and Wisdom - the last of these, wisdom is a wonderful tool to rely upon. It is the sum of a rich accumulated personal history of past perseverance that if we choose to reflect upon, can empower us to take this current situation of uncertainty of anxiety and turn it on its ear. As we move forward ready to offer Grace and Mercy and Compassion —to the extent that we are mindful enough to stop and give thanks when it is given to us first will predict the extent to which we can continue to offer it up to others. So let's resolve to personify grit and determination to see the Hope that is still around us if we choose to look for it.