

Addressing low attendance in classes

Faculty have been working extraordinarily hard to be flexible and to meet the many and varied needs of students, some of whom may want to be in class but have been told to quarantine, feel ill, or are worried about their risk for contracting Covid-19. Erratic attendance in in-person classes is one of the realities of the semester, but we would like to offer some suggestions that may help you to encourage those who can be in-person to be there.

- If students have been assigned specific days to attend class, encourage students who are able to attend to come every day. Note: ask students to sign up to ensure you do not exceed classroom capacity. Signing up is also a little like making a commitment to be there as well. Consider giving students jobs/roles in class and online depending on what they signed up to attend. E.g. choose a student to facilitate/monitor chat session for questions, or other roles.
- Have an honest conversation with your students about the value of the in-person portion of the class; let them know why you think it is important they come when they can even if you have provided other ways for them to access the material and participate. Classes differ, so a discussion with an instructional designer assigned to your college and colleagues may be helpful.
- Ask your students to let you know in advance when they cannot attend. Indicating that you are paying attention and that it matters to you if they are there may impact their choices.
- Use the tools available through Canvas and VidGrid to monitor student engagement: you can find out, for example, how much of a recorded lecture/presentation a student has seen, or who was in attendance at a Zoom meeting, or the ways in which students are engaging with materials on Canvas. This guide will help and contains other useful links: <https://teaching.unl.edu/using-analytics/> To focus on attendance, one could note when students attended in person, online synchronous, or fully played a recording.