Checklist for Emergency Remote Teaching

Another semester of remote instruction approaches. What can you do right now to ready your summer courses? The checklist below offers some suggestions for getting started.

Before the Course Begins

Course Description:

The Course Description is not only an opportunity to orient your students towards the course objectives. It is also an area where you can share your enthusiasm, perspective, and expertise about the subject of the course. An expanded course description can address the following considerations:

- Why should students want to complete this course?
- How does it fit into the overall program curriculum?
- What are the main learning objectives of the course?
- How can students apply the content, intellectually and practically?

The goal is to write a more expansive course description that provides essential details of the course. A welcoming tone is an ideal way to humanize your course!

Welcome Email/Announcement:

Posting/sending a welcome announcement/email to your students begins the dialogue that takes place between you and your students as the semester progresses. A warm greeting followed by instructions for finding important information/resources in your course, as well as where to start, is recommended.

Syllabus:

When preparing to teach a course of any kind, the syllabus is typically a good place to start as it provides a workable outline for the instructional aims of the course. Upload your syllabus in the Blackboard course menu item entitled, 'Syllabus.'

Course Calendar:

The course calendar allows your students to see where their due dates fall on a calendar in relation to not only your course, but to all courses where instructors post Blackboard assignments & activities. When you leverage due dates for activities in your course, they will automatically post on the calendar.

Virtual Office Hours:

This is an area in a Bb course where you can post your contact information, provided scheduled times of availability, provide links to live communication, such as phone conferences, provide a course questions discussion forum, and even include your picture and/or video.

Technical and Hardware Requirements:

Do you anticipate asking students to broadcast video during Zoom or Bb Collaborate meetups? Do you anticipate proctoring a final exam? If so, students will need a webcam and microphone. Even though most laptops have integrated webcams and mics, not all students may have access to this hardware. Posting these requirements in an announcement, email, your syllabus, or in a welcome message can help your students prepare ahead.

Pre-course Survey:

This activity can be useful in many ways. Primarily, you can issue a survey to students at the start of the course to get a sense for their current home situations, technical proficiency, and access to a computer lab, etc. Additionally, by issuing a pre-course survey, you indirectly help your students get familiar with the testing software in Blackboard (Bb). This will help reduce any anxiety they might have prior to completing a graded activity, like a test or quiz.

Announcements:

An announcement is a general message you can post to all students in the Bb course. It has the added benefit of being sent by email at the same time it is posted, if you wish. The neat thing is that an announcement can be retained in your course for continuous access by students, so no need to resend emails or reissue documents.

Netiquette/Ground Rules for Zoom or Bb Collaborate:

Setting up ground rules for live, remote lectures and online discussions is a great way to take your remote course to the next level! There are several resources available to you to get started:

- SHSU Online Blog Post on Netiquette
- Sample Netiquette Guidelines from Merlot
- [INFOGRAPHIC]- 15 Rules of Netiquette for Online Discussion Boards
- Video: Discussion Board Netiquette

ADA Compliance:

While many of the recommendations on this checklist are optional, providing accommodations for disability populations is a requirement. If you have a student in the class needing special accommodations, we are here to help. Whether it is allowing additional time on an exam or providing captions for course videos, contact your instructional designer to get started.

Going Deeper

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes:

Your online course is a great place to display the learning objectives. These can be included with your expanded course description. You can also include Unit Objectives at the start of every unit module or folder.

Discussions for Learning and Engagement:

The Discussion tool is the backbone of interaction of any online course. This is a versatile tool that can be used to continue the dialogue of a topic after a class meeting, a virtual office space for students to post general course inquiries, a student water cooler, or a group's virtual interactivity area.

Assignments:

The assignment tool provides an area for assignment title, description, due date, points possible, and rubric. It also provides a date-stamped, dropbox mechanism for your students to submit work. Assignments can be programmed to appear to only certain students, such as with a group activity, and they can be used in conjunction with plagiarism detection software.

Tests & Quizzes:

The Test tool can be used for exams, quizzes, or in survey mode. The test tool provides 16 different question types, including the usual suspects: multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching, essay, short answer, etc. Some question types are a bit more unique, such as the file response, which allows students to upload a file into their test to submit as a response to a question. All question types allow for images and links to be included as part of the test questions. Once created, test questions can be randomized, and tests can monitored, password protected, and scheduled ahead of time. Questions with prescribed, finite answers are also auto-graded.

Proctoring:

Exams can be proctored for enhanced academic integrity. The exam proctoring tool at SHSU is called Monitor ® and it can be used with Blackboard exams, quizzes, and surveys. Monitor ® records students and it can also be used with LockDown browser, which prevents students from opening up other programs or webpages during a test.

Setting up the Gradebook:

The gradebook tool in Bb is called the Grade Center. It is a robust tool that can handle a lot of mathematical computations on your behalf. It can have a learning curve to it, especially if you get deep into test exceptions, weighing, extra credit, etc. However, the Grade Center, without customization, is already set up in your online course. Any time you create a graded element, like discussion, assignment, test, quiz, the grade center will update the gradebook and calculate grades accordingly.

Group Work:

Social interaction among learners can have a significant impact on learning Outcomes. According to Grabinger and Dunlap (2000), "learning occurs in a social context through collaboration, negotiation, debate, peer review, and mentoring."

Nearing the end of term? Wrap it up!

Consider proctoring the final:
See proctoring on the previous section!

Encourage students to complete the end-of-course survey:
The end of course surveys are set up automatically in Bb through CampusLabs. All you need to do is ask your students to complete it.

Use the Announcements and Discussion Tools to End the Course on a Cordial Note.

Report Final Grades Promptly:
All Bb grades will need to be keyed into Banner when grades are due.

Dealing with Unwanted Situations

Lack of Netiquette:
Reinforce netiquette rules in online forums and web conferencing sessions. Here is a handy blogpost to get you started: [#bestpracticemonday – Netiquette for the Online Course – SHSUOnline](#)

Cyberbullying in Discussions:
Monitor the discussion area regularly. Watch for laggards who sit out the forum and flamers who use personal put-downs or attacks to impress or sound authoritative. Intervene if necessary and provide a safe learning environment for all.

Zoombombing:
If you experience Zoombombing during a live lecture using the Zoom tool, there are measures you can take to stop it as it happens. There are also steps you can take to prevent it. To read about these helpful tips, visit "[Settings to Prevent Zoom-Bombing](#)" and work with your instructional designer to set up.

Setting Yourself up for Success

Hardware & Software:

Do you have the technical hardware needed to accomplish teaching remotely? Consider your own needs based on how you intend to deliver instruction. For instance, if you intend to broadcast video during Zoom or Bb Collaborate lectures, check the webcam settings on your laptop. Using a desktop? You still have time to order a webcam.

Tool Training:

SHSU Online will continue to provide brief training webinars designed to get you going. Check out the latest development workshops and sign up today!

Technical Support:

Tech issues? Malfunctioning tools? Broken links? You are not alone! The SHSU Online Support Desk is your frontline defense for technical troubleshooting. The best part? They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and you will do yourself a big favor recommending their services to your students. Call them anytime at (936) 294-2780.

Course Services:

SHSU Online provides key services to support courses online. While remote courses are not the same as online courses, we have made all of our services available to all faculty and students. These include...

- Instructional Design & Course Building
- Video & other Multimedia (graphics, simulations)
- 24/7 Technical Support
- Faculty Development

Please contact the online support desk with the contact information found below.