

Syllabus Activities

Consider using one of the following activities to provide an active learning introduction to the syllabus and ensure students are thoroughly reviewing the syllabus.

Syllabus Reconnaissance

1. Hand out the syllabus and tell students they will be doing a reconnaissance of it. Ask students if and where they've heard the term *reconnaissance* before and share the definition.
2. Tell students that they will have 10 minutes. They should spend the first 2–3 minutes quickly scanning the syllabus, highlighting or underlining key points. Then they should read through the entire syllabus and place a star next to five important facts.
3. Have students form small groups to share their selections and compare them to their groupmates' selections.
4. Finally, generate a whole class list of the important facts. Discuss them and identify any important information that wasn't mentioned.

Syllabus Scavenger Hunt

1. Divide the class into small groups or pairs.
2. Provide each group with a handout that lists questions they will need to answer by reviewing the syllabus. The questions should reflect what you believe to be the most important information for them to know at this point. Questions might include the following:
 - What is the attendance policy for the course?
 - How can you get in touch with your instructor?
 - When is the first assignment due?

You might also ask questions that require students to consider their goals, such as "Of the listed objectives for this course, which one interests your group the most and why?"

3. Review the correct answers with the whole class. Ask students to share any questions they have about the syllabus that may not have been answered during the activity.

Optional: You can have the groups race to finish the scavenger hunt and award a prize to the team who answers the most questions correctly.

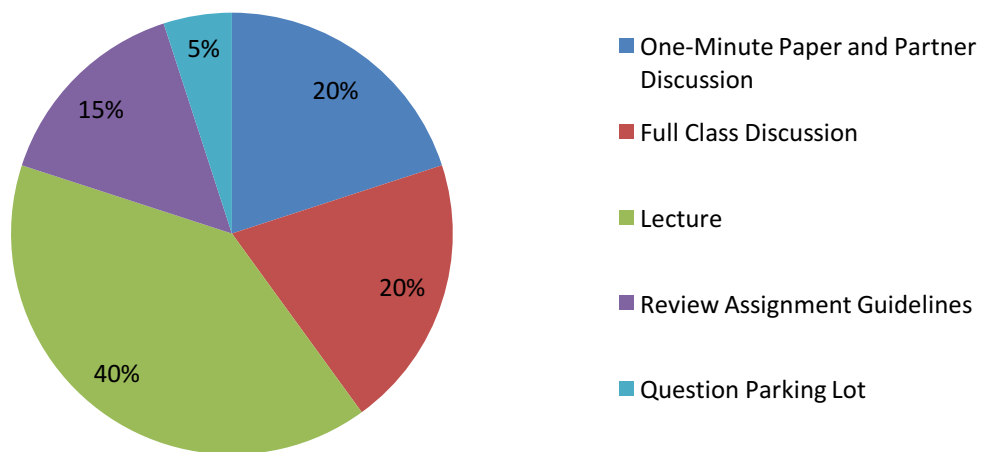
Visual Class–Time Chart

Give students an overview of what a typical class session will contain (lecture, discussion, group work, etc.) by using a visual representation. Here are some possibilities:

- Draw a pie chart with percentages and different colors for each activity.

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Class Time



- Select a picture that represents each activity and add the percentage and/or make the size of the picture comparable to the percentage of class time it represents.
- Write each activity name on a sticky note and pass the notes out to students. Then ask a percentage of students for each activity to place their sticky notes in an area on the board. So you might have 10 students place a “discussion” sticky note but only invite five to place a “lecture” sticky note if you allocated twice as much time for discussion as for lecture.
- Provide a printed copy of the breakdown for students to take with them. This could be as simple as a bar chart.

Reciprocal Interview

Overview

The point of the reciprocal interview is to give the instructor and students a chance to ask questions aimed at better understanding each other's expectations while creating a positive classroom environment.

Activity

1. Create a handout of questions you will ask students.
2. Put students into small groups. Give them time to review the questions and determine their answers (see sample questions below).
3. Interview the class by asking the questions and clarifying answers.
4. With students in the same groups, ask them to prepare questions to interview you. They should choose one member of the team to be the interviewer. You can also provide students with some possible questions (see sample questions below).
5. Let the students interview you about your expectations for them and the course.

Instructor-to-Student Sample Questions

1. What are your goals for this course? To learn new skills? To become better educated? To learn the subject matter? To fulfill a requirement? To get a good grade? To apply your learning to other aspects of your life? Something else?
2. How can I best help you achieve your goals? Lectures, exams, discussions, practice work, group activities, office hours? (Think back to excellent professors/courses you have experienced.)
3. What reservations, if any, do you have about this course?
4. What is the best thing that could happen in this course? The worst thing?
5. What norms of behavior, or ground rules, should we set up to ensure that the course is successful (mutual respect, question asking, punctuality, etc.)?

Student-to-Instructor Sample Questions

1. What is your main objective for this course? What are your goals?
2. What is your theory of learning? How will you help students learn?
3. What is your approach to evaluating student learning?
4. What are your expectations of students?
5. How would you define your role in the course?
6. What is important to you in teaching this course?

Community–Building Icebreakers

Icebreakers (sometimes called discussion starters, impact activities, or warmups) are an excellent way to build a classroom community. Among other benefits, they demonstrate that the instructor is interested in hearing ideas from students, and they begin to create student-to-student and faculty-to-student relationships. Use the three Rs when selecting an icebreaker:

- **Relevance** (it should be tied to your goals)
- **Relaxation** (students should feel comfortable participating)
- **Review** (students should articulate the learning, and you should tie it to the goals)

Here are four possible icebreakers to try:

“What I Want to Learn”

Write the following sentences on the board (or create some of your own):

- I want to learn...
- Something that would help me learn is...
- Something I would like the instructor to do is...
- Something I plan to do to learn is...

Give students a few minutes to write responses to the questions. Then ask students to introduce themselves and share an answer to one of the statements. Ask other students to raise their hands if the statement also applies to their learning. Collect the responses and let students know you will use the information to inform future class sessions.

“Quiz Show”

Write a fun quiz (pop culture items, well-known facts, etc.) about your topic area. Ask students to work individually for a few minutes to answer the questions. Then put students into small groups to finish the quiz and agree on the correct answers. Go through the quiz with the students, hearing their answers, giving correct answers, and connecting their current knowledge to topics you will cover this term. Discuss the difference between completing the quiz individually and with a team. Ask questions such as “What was the benefit of working in a group?” and “How can we use groups in class?”

“Collaborative Classroom Norms”

Assign students to teams of three or four. Ask them to introduce themselves to one another and then identify three ground rules for the class. Explain that “ground rules” are about behaviors and how we treat one another in the classroom. Have each group share their items. Write the items on the board and put checkmarks by items for each group who

repeats the same idea. Then have a classroom vote on which rules should be the official ground rules. Have a student write the agreed-upon rules on the board. Type them up and post them for students' reference.

“Problem Posting”

On the first day of class, ask your students to think about what problems they would like to solve in the course or what burning course-related question they would like to have answered (see our Problem-Posting Questions planning guide). Have them write responses for you to collect. Organize students into pairs and ask them to identify commonalities in their responses. Invite the pairs to share their commonalities with the class. Then, explain to students how the course will address the problems and questions they identified.

“What I Want to Learn” Worksheet

Think about a key concept you want to learn more about in this course, and then fill in the chart below.

I want to learn...	
Something that would help me learn is...	
Something I would like the instructor to do is...	
Something I plan to do to learn is...	

The Quiz Show

Activity Steps

- Design a high-interest or fun quiz about the subject.
- Ask students to complete the quiz individually.
- Divide students into small groups to compare responses and decide which is correct for each question.
- Review the students' responses as a class, identifying the correct answers and explaining how they relate to course topics.
- Reflect on the activity as a class.

Quiz Design: Questions to Consider

- What key current events or trends relate to your subject matter?
- What are commonly held assumptions about your subject that students may believe?
- What interesting facts can help contextualize the subject for students?
- What personal examples or case studies can you connect to key terms or concepts?
- Which course topics are the most intriguing or may be most surprising to students?

Sample Quiz, American History

1. Open-ended question: Which U.S. president was the wealthiest? A: George Washington.
2. Open-ended question: Which U.S. president wore dresses until elementary school? A: Franklin Roosevelt.
3. True-or-false question: The Liberty Bell still rings today. A: False; it hasn't worked since 1846.
4. Open-ended question: The Democratic Party symbol of a donkey originated in 1828 when this president's opponents called him a "jackass" during an election. A: Andrew Jackson.
5. Multiple-choice question: In September 1820, Salem, New Jersey held a trial against _____, and Robert Johnson intervened to prove the city wrong.
 - a. tomatoes
 - b. guerrilla warfare
 - c. harvesting corn
 - d. taxation

A: a. tomatoes
6. Multiple choice question: In 1959, Robert G. Heft, a(n) _____, designed the 50-star U.S. flag still used today.
 - a. engineer
 - b. high school student
 - c. farmer
 - d. published author

A: b. high school student

Post-Quiz Reflection Questions

- Which answers were most surprising to you and why?
- What were the benefits of working in a group?
- What were the challenges of working in a group?
- What types of activities in this class would you like to do in groups? What types of activities in this class might be better accomplished individually?

Collaborative Classroom Norms

Pair students into teams of three or four. Ask them to introduce themselves and then identify three “norms”—standards or behaviors—for the class.

Sample Team Responses

- Always arrive to class on time. If you know you'll be late, email the instructor in advance.
- Follow assignment guidelines. If you have questions, ask the instructor prior to the due date.
- Don't start packing up your items while the instructor is still speaking. Wait to be dismissed.

- Raise your hand and wait for the instructor to call on you before speaking.
- Contact two or three classmates to see what you missed when you were absent from a class before asking the instructor.
- Be on time.

- Be respectful of classmates' beliefs. If you have a difference in opinion, be polite and maintain an appropriate tone when addressing it.
- When working in groups, make sure each team member contributes.
- Submit work by the deadlines even if you miss a class.

Have each group share their list. Write the items on the board and put a checkmark next to items repeated by multiple groups. Then have the class vote on which norms should be official. Type up the finalized list, and post it somewhere students can easily access it.

Sample Finalized List

1. Arrive to class on time and prepared with the assigned work.
2. Stay for the duration of the class until the instructor dismisses you. If you need to arrive late or leave early, notify the instructor in advance.
3. Raise your hand if you want to add to the discussion, and wait for the instructor to call on you before speaking aloud.
4. Be respectful of other classmates' opinions. Use an appropriate tone when engaging in discussions, especially those about controversial issues.
5. When working in groups, make sure each team member contributes.
6. Follow assignment guidelines and submit work on time. If you miss a class, you should still submit the work on its due date. If you have questions about an assignment or are unable to submit the work on time, contact the instructor in advance.
7. Contact two or three classmates to ask what work you missed when you are absent. If they are unsure, then you should reach out to the instructor.

Problem-Posting Questions

Please answer the following questions. Then compare your responses with your partner(s) and identify commonalities. Be prepared to submit your responses.

1. What problems would you like to tackle in this course?
2. What do you think are some of the biggest issues or topics for discussion in this content area?
3. What current news or debates have you heard recently that relate to this course?
4. After reviewing the topics on the syllabus, which seem most interesting to you and why?
5. In what ways is this subject relevant to your current studies, future studies, future career, or personal life?
6. What resources will help you be most successful in this course (e.g., specific academic databases, a daily column in the newspaper, a textbook companion site, etc.)?
7. What do you personally hope to achieve in this course?
8. What can I do to enable you to achieve your course goals?

Question Parking Lot

Use a “parking lot” for questions on the first day to enable students to write down their questions as they arise. A question parking lot is also a great method to encourage more reserved students who don’t want to ask questions in front of the class.

Collect students’ questions from the parking lot at the end of class and address them immediately or during the next class period.

You can use the parking lot during the entire term to identify areas where students may need more explanation.

Directions:

- Pass out small sticky notes to students on the first day.
- Have students write questions on them as they think of them.
- Later, they can either ask you the question or post them in a designated spot. A board or wall on the side or in the back of the classroom works well as the parking lot.
- Let students know that they can post their questions anonymously on the first day of class and throughout the course.
- Then answer the questions before class ends, creating an environment in which questions are shared and welcomed.
- If you run out of time at the end of class, be sure to address students’ questions at the start of the next class period.

Develop an Orientation Module

Students taking online courses often underestimate the time and effort required to succeed in this format (Bawa, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of an orientation module is to make sure that students understand how to be successful online, how to use the different features of the course, and how to meet course expectations (Stavredes, 2011). It can also be an opportunity for students to start to get to know each other and build community through syllabus activities.

Key Components of an Orientation Module

General information about online learning: Since some students may have little experience with online courses, provide a list of proven suggestions such as creating a plan that includes a weekly schedule of where to work, when to work, and the tools and technology they will need.

Weekly communication expectations: Describe the weekly patterns students should follow to be successful in your course such as, *“Each Monday, you should review the recorded microlecture and take the quiz. Each Wednesday, you should participate in the online discussion. Every other Friday, you should submit your reflection paper.”* Let students know where in the syllabus they can find the weekly schedule.

Navigating your online course: Record a brief introductory video, narrating as you navigate through the key elements of your course including important tools such as the gradebook, instructor contact information, the course syllabus, supplementary materials, course calendar, course email, video chat tools, assignment uploading tools, collaboration tools, and where to go for technical assistance.

Syllabus Activity: Use one of the syllabus activities below to help students learn how to engage in the online platform and understand course expectations.

Open Discussion/Q & A Forum: Include an open discussion forum and encourage students to post any questions or comments about the course, the syllabus, or anything else in the orientation module. Keep this forum open throughout the course and continue to encourage students to post questions there. Remind them that if they have a particular question, it is likely that other students do as well, so asking and answering questions in the open forum is helpful to everyone.

Syllabus Activities

Use one or more of the activities below to ensure that students understand course expectations by reviewing the course syllabus and demonstrate the ability to engage in the online platform.

Activity 1. Syllabus Scavenger Hunt: A Syllabus Scavenger Hunt can be made using the quiz function on your learning management system (LMS). Here are some example questions—using fill in the blank responses:

1. Whom do you contact for technical assistance?
2. How do you set up a meeting with your instructor?

3. When do you need to post an initial response to the weekly discussion board?
4. How many of your peers do you need to reply to?
5. What is the first guideline for Online Netiquette?
6. What is due on March 16?
7. When is your project proposal due?
8. What happens if you plagiarize?

Activity 2. Syllabus Discussion Board: Create a discussion board, and require that all students post a question or comment about the course objectives, participation expectations, grading, or any other element of the syllabus. Example discussion questions include:

- What two key points or aspects of the syllabus caught your attention and why?
- What two key points or aspects of the syllabus need some further explanation?

In addition to creating a written record of questions and responses that may be useful later in the course, it also provides some early feedback as to what is important and/or confusing for the students. This activity also gives students the opportunity to practice posting. You can award a few points for successfully posting to the discussion board. Success breeds success, so starting all students off with a few earned points sets them on the right path.

Activity 3. Personalize and Customize Learning Outcomes: In order to have students think more deeply about the learning outcomes of your course and make connections to their own lives, ask students to choose one learning outcome listed in the syllabus that really resonates with them for personal or professional reasons. In a discussion board post, ask them to explain why they chose that outcome, how it connects to their goals or interests, and how they can customize the outcome to help them move towards their goal.

Orientation Module: Helping Students Prepare for Online Coursework

Use this handout to help your students organize and manage their time for successful participation and completion of work in your online course.

Planning work time for online courses can be particularly challenging since there is no scheduled in-class time. You will need to schedule time for various learning activities such as reading and processing content, participating in online discussions, completing assignments, or collaborative group work. To help you succeed in this course, start by developing a plan to tackle the work.

To develop your course plan, start by considering these issues and questions.

Course Plan – Since we do not have scheduled time in a classroom, it is helpful if you take time now to decide where, when, and how you will complete your course work throughout the semester. Use the questions below to plan where, when, and how you will complete course work.

1. Where to work?
 - a. Make a list of all the places where you can get work done (home office, home sofa, coffee shop, library). If you are going to work from home, have a dedicated space if at all possible and make an agreement with your family and/or friends that this area is your working area. You may also share the amount of time you expect to be working and left alone.
 - b. Rank the places you have written down from the places where you can be the most productive to the least productive.
2. When to work?
 - a. In a calendar or organizer, write in your daily, scheduled professional and personal responsibilities.
 - b. Find at least 10 hours outside of those scheduled times, and block that time off for course work.
3. Tools to use?
 - a. Not all online course work needs to be completed while sitting in front of a computer. Take stock of your digital devices. Does your smartphone support an app that will allow you to complete some tasks while you are on break from work, standing in line at the bank, and/or waiting to pick up your children? Can you listen to audio podcasts while you are driving, on a bus or train, or while exercising? Remember, however, that this time is not 100% attention time, so it is not a time for processing complex or difficult content.

Weekly Schedule – Use the course calendar in the syllabus to plot out your course work time and location for at least the first two weeks of the course. This will help you establish your work rhythm and figure out what works and does not work. Here is a list of things to consider:

1. **Schedule where to work.** For assignments that require more concentration or higher level thinking, such as reading articles, writing discussion board posts, or working on problems, schedule time in your most productive places. For assignments that require less concentration, such as watching a video, listening to a podcast, or reading discussion threads, schedule time in places that are the most enjoyable for you.
2. **Schedule when to work.** When looking at the time you have allotted to work each day, be sure to account for any time you need to transition to your chosen online working place. For example, if you plan to get one hour of work done at Starbucks, you should schedule more than an hour so you have time to get there, settle in, and get your coffee.
3. **Specify tasks to complete during each work period.** Weekly modules require diverse tasks such as reading chapters or articles; watching a video; writing, reading, and responding to discussion posts; or writing a reflection. Decide on the specific task you plan to complete for each scheduled block of time. Some assignments, such as discussion board posts, require multiple steps (e.g., 1. Reading/watching new content, 2. Thinking about the questions, and 3. Writing your post). Make sure to schedule time for each task.
4. **Get your tools and resources ahead of time.** If you have a writing assignment than requires you to cite sources, schedule time to search for appropriate articles or other resources prior to your scheduled time for writing, so you can focus on writing during that allotted writing time.

Weekly Course work Plan (Example) Develop a course work plan based on weekly tasks listed on the course syllabus.		
Where will you work?	When will you have time to work on weekly assignments?	What will you accomplish at those specified times and places?
Home Office	Monday: 1. 8:00-9:00am 2. 7:00-9:00pm	1. Make weekly plan, collect all readings for the week. 2. Start weekly reading assignment.
1. Coffee Shop 2. Library	Tuesday: 1. 8:00-9:00am 2. 4:00-6:00pm	1. Finish weekly reading 2. Take notes for discussion post
Home Office	Wednesday: 7:00-9:00pm	DISCUSSION POST DUE AT 11:59 PM 1. Write, revise, post to Discussion Forum. 2. Prepare for reflection paper assignment due for Sunday. Finish readings, complete prewriting and brainstorming.
1. In the Car 2. On the Couch	Thursday: 1. 7:00-8:00am (on the way to work) 2. 5:00-7:00pm	1. Listen to podcast. 2. Read and respond to discussion posts.
Home Office	Friday: 4:00-6:00pm	1. Complete draft for reflection paper.
	Saturday: OFF	
Home Office	Sunday: 8:00-10:00am	REFLECTION PAPER DUE AT 11:59PM 1. Revise reflection paper and submit completed work.

Weekly Course work Plan (Template) Develop a course work plan based on weekly tasks listed on the course syllabus.		
Where will you work? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where are you most productive? Where do you enjoy working? Where is the best place to write? Do you have dedicated space to do your work?	When will you have time to work on weekly assignments? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember that not all course work requires that you be sitting at a computer. You can divide an assignment into steps rather than complete at one time. 	What will you accomplish at those specified times and places? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be sure you are being reasonable with your time commitments (e.g., work, family, etc.). It is best to overestimate time needed to complete assignments rather than underestimate. Remember, this schedule may need to be adjusted on select weeks to accommodate bigger assignments.
	Monday:	
	Tuesday:	
	Wednesday:	
	Thursday:	
	Friday:	
	Saturday:	
	Sunday:	

Adapted from Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R.-M. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Weekly Communication Expectations

When you share your course calendar in the syllabus, describe the weekly patterns students should follow to be successful in the course. For example:

Our week-long course modules follow a pattern:

- **Monday** - Review the recorded micro-lecture and take the quiz.
- **Tuesday** - Read my feedback on the quiz and complete the required readings.
- **Wednesday & Thursday** - Be sure to participate fully in our online discussion.
- **Friday – Sunday** - Read my feedback and complete the reflection assignment.

Keeping this general weekly pattern in mind will help keep you on track and help you to be successful.

Building Community Online: Post a First-Day Message

In addition to a more traditional overview of the course syllabus and student expectations, post a first-day message designed to pique students' interest including how the knowledge and skills they will gain in the course will help them in future courses or in a future career. Be sure to let students know that you care about their success, how you intend to support them in the course, and how you plan to ensure the course is engaging. You might even introduce one of the core concepts or a teaching practice you might regularly use in the course to get students thinking and learning on day one. Here is an example:

Welcome to Qualitative Research Methods III! My name is Dr. Sandra Smith, and I will be your instructor for the course. I love qualitative research, because it provides an important lens through which to explore and create understanding about all aspects of human existence. Qualitative research can focus on the experiences of individuals, groups, organizations, or larger communities. The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with and give you a chance to practice different qualitative research methods to answer questions that are of interest to you.

This course takes place 100% online. It is designed to keep everyone moving along together as a group and to give each person the flexibility to do the work when it is most convenient for them. There are 12 modules in the course, and each module consists of a variety of activities, readings, discussions, and assignments. You will have a few days to complete each part of each module's activities, which will make more sense after you complete the orientation module and syllabus activities. The orientation module will also give you a chance to get to know each other better. So, without further ado, please click the "next" button to start the orientation. You'll probably need less than an hour to watch the course navigation video, review the syllabus, do the syllabus scavenger hunt, and post your introduction. But you will need to return to the introduction discussion board later to meet and greet your classmates.

I look forward to getting to know you and exploring interesting questions with you!

Creating Your Personal Introduction Video

Write a basic outline of what you plan to say. Students will often engage and put forth more effort in courses where they feel they know more about you as a person. Consider addressing the following questions in your introduction:

- What excites you about the course topics, including how they connect to real world issues or events? What do you want students to get excited about?
- What inspired you to become an instructor in the area you are teaching? How did you overcome academic hurdles? What do you love about teaching?
- What do you enjoy doing outside of academia?
- Reassure students that you are there to help them and they should not hesitate to reach out to you.

Record yourself. Videos can be very informal; you can get creative.

Using your webcam or smartphone. Make sure you choose a relatively quiet place with good lighting. If using your smart phone, consider using a tripod to keep a steady, centered frame. To make the video more personal, you may also want to record in a fun or relevant setting.

Using PowerPoint. PowerPoint allows you easily to record voice-over narration to slides. You can get creative and show engaging or funny pictures or examples of your work.

iMovie. If you are a Mac user, you can use iMovie to turn your pictures, music, and text into a movie trailer-style course introduction. For more information, visit <https://www.apple.com/au/support/imovie/tutorial/>

Adobe Spark for Education. Try this free tool used to create narrated lectures using PowerPoint, Word, or even a website with ease: <https://spark.adobe.com/edu/>

Caption or transcript. It is helpful to all students, not just those who have disabilities, to provide a transcript and/or captioning for all videos. Contact your educational technology department or disability office for more information.

Building Community Online: Student Introductions

Creating intentional opportunities for students to get to know each other at the beginning of (and throughout) the course helps build trust and foster a sense of community (Conrad & Donaldson, 2011). These initial activities also provide a low-stakes opportunity to engage with the technology of the course, which is particularly helpful to students who are new to online learning. Introductions should serve as a fun and non-threatening icebreaker to ease students into the course, the course technology, and the learning community. Effective introduction activities, such as the ones suggested below, should require that students

- share something personal,
- read one another's entries,
- respond to other entries,
- find something in common with several others in the learning community, and
- be imaginative or to express genuine emotions or openness.

Some good introduction discussion prompts include:

- *What experience do you have with this course topic?*
- *How does this course topic relate to your career goals?*
- *If someone were to visit your town or your state for the first time, what are your top five recommendations of things to do, places to eat, or sights to visit?*
- *What was the best class (online or in person) that you ever had? Why was it so good? What was the worst class you ever took? Why was it so bad?*
- *What is your biggest fear or hope about engaging in online classes?*

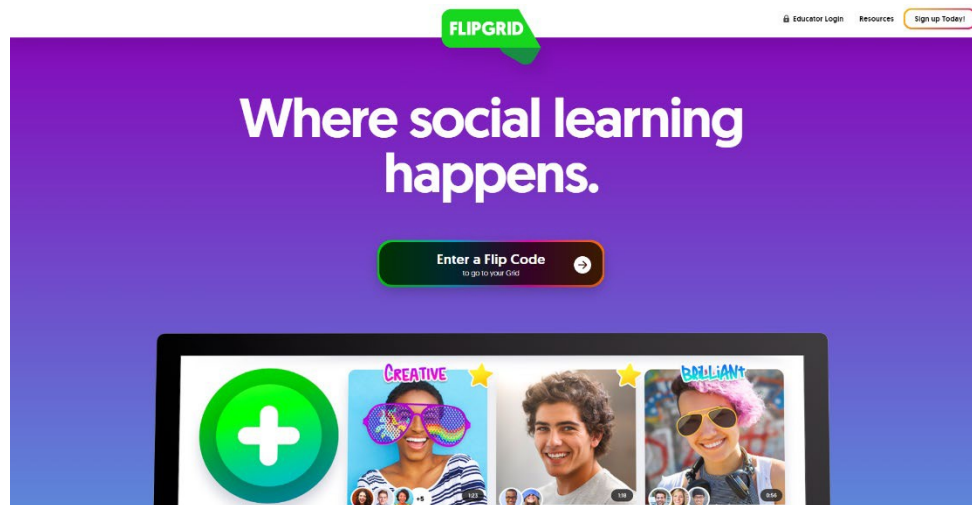
After posting an initial response to the prompt, ask students to find and reply to at least two to three students with whom they have something in common and two to three students who shared a perspective or experience different from their own. Instructors might also consider posting a brief 'hello or welcome' message to each student as they introduce themselves as a way to let them know that you see and acknowledge them.

Note: In a large class, create smaller discussion groups (around 10 people) to keep discussions manageable.

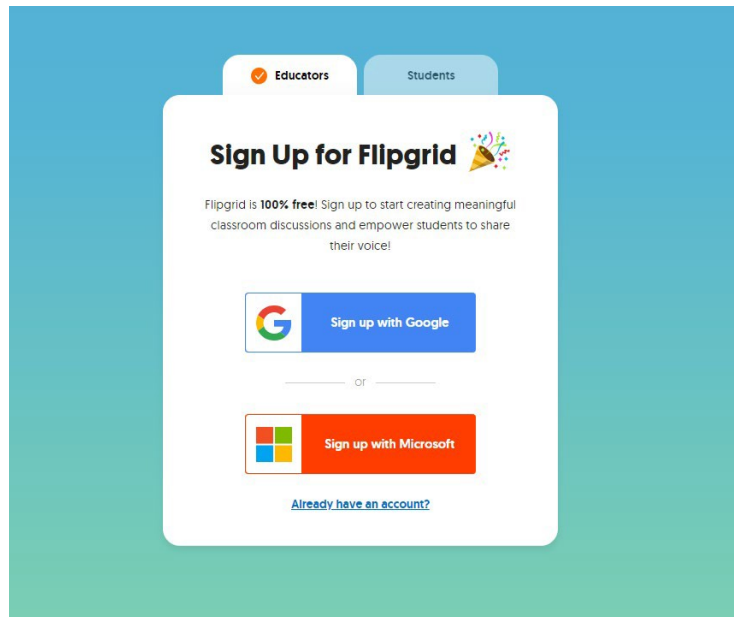
Technology Tools for Effective Online Teaching Practices: Flipgrid

Flipgrid is an asynchronous video technology that is free for educators. Flipgrid can be accessed on a computer or on a mobile device via the free app, which encourages mobile learning and can leverage student down time. Below are step-by-step directions for getting started with Flipgrid.

1. Go to www.flipgrid.com.



2. Create a FREE educator account using a Google or Microsoft email account.



3. Launch a new Grid – A Grid is like a digital classroom or community of learners.

Select a Grid Community type:

School Email Domain - Students enter the Flip Code and verify their school email using Microsoft or Google.

Student ID List - Students enter the Flip Code and input their Student ID # or scan a QR code for verification.

Professional Learning Community and Public - Allow anyone to view videos with just the Flip Code. To record a video, participants verify their email address via Microsoft or Google.

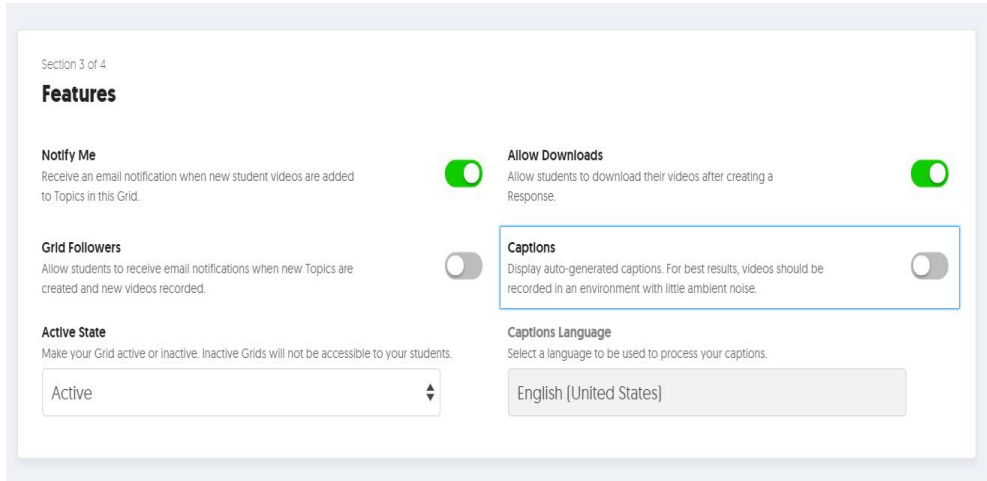
Name your Grid – Use the name of the course you are teaching or the learning objective.

Personalize Your Grid – Upload a picture from your computer or use one of the free images provided.

Create a Flip Code – With Flipgrid, students do not create accounts. Educators provide students a Flip Code, and students enter this on the Flipgrid app or at flipgrid.com. Flip Codes can also be customized. Click here for more information:

<https://help.flipgrid.com/hc/en-us/articles/360007660333-Customize-Your-Flip-Code>

4. **Set Grid Features** – Flipgrid is ADA compliant; you can choose to turn on the captions for each video created. You also have the option to receive notifications when each student creates a new video.



Section 3 of 4

Features

Notify Me
Receive an email notification when new student videos are added to Topics in this Grid. ☒

Grid Followers
Allow students to receive email notifications when new Topics are created and new videos recorded. ☐

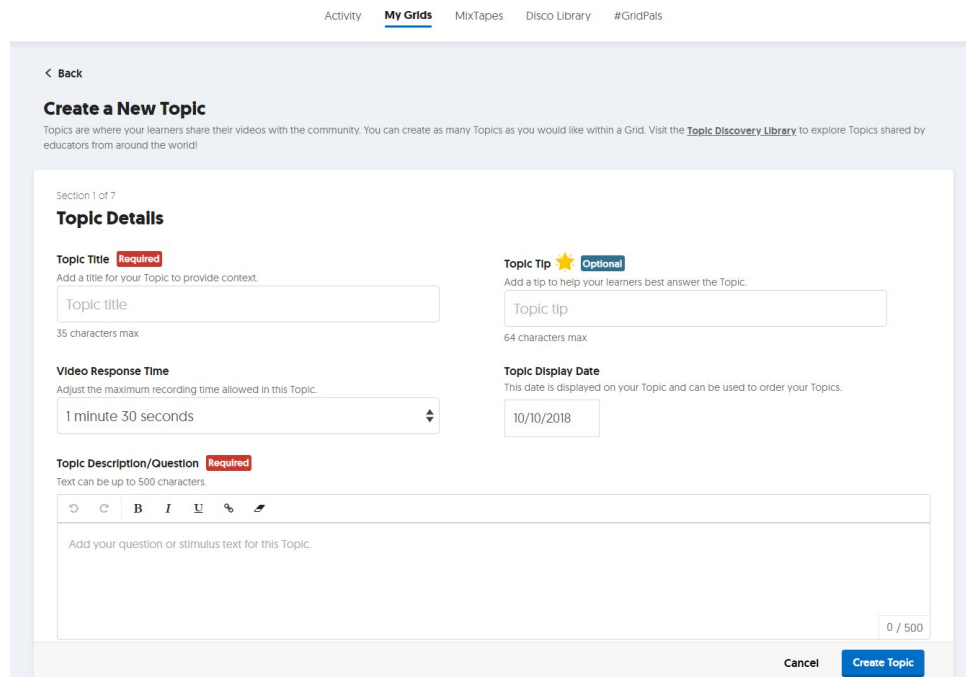
Active State
Make your Grid active or inactive. Inactive Grids will not be accessible to your students.
Active

Allow Downloads
Allow students to download their videos after creating a Response. ☒

Captions
Display auto-generated captions. For best results, videos should be recorded in an environment with little ambient noise. ☒

Captions Language
Select a language to be used to process your captions.
English (United States)

5. **Create a new topic** – Once you create a Grid, you can also create topics within the Grid based on your learning objectives. You can set the video response time from 1 minute 30 seconds to 5 minutes.



Activity **My Grids** MixTapes Disco Library #GridPals

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Create a New Topic

Topics are where your learners share their videos with the community. You can create as many Topics as you would like within a Grid. Visit the [Topic Discovery Library](#) to explore Topics shared by educators from around the world!

Section 1 of 7

Topic Details

Topic Title Required
Add a title for your Topic to provide context.
Topic title
35 characters max

Topic Tip Optional
Add a tip to help your learners best answer the Topic.
Topic tip
64 characters max

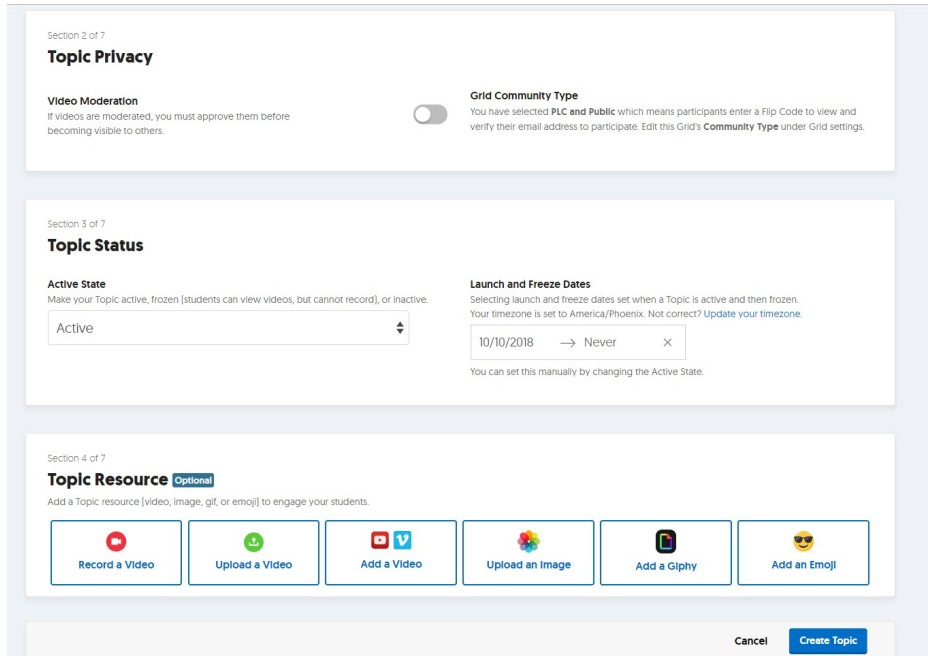
Video Response Time
Adjust the maximum recording time allowed in this Topic.
1 minute 30 seconds

Topic Display Date
This date is displayed on your Topic and can be used to order your Topics.
10/10/2018

Topic Description/Question Required
Text can be up to 500 characters.
Add your question or stimulus text for this Topic.
0 / 500

Cancel Create Topic

6. Select topic settings – You have the option to moderate the videos created. You also have the option to upload a pre-recording video, image, document, or gif that you would like students to respond to.

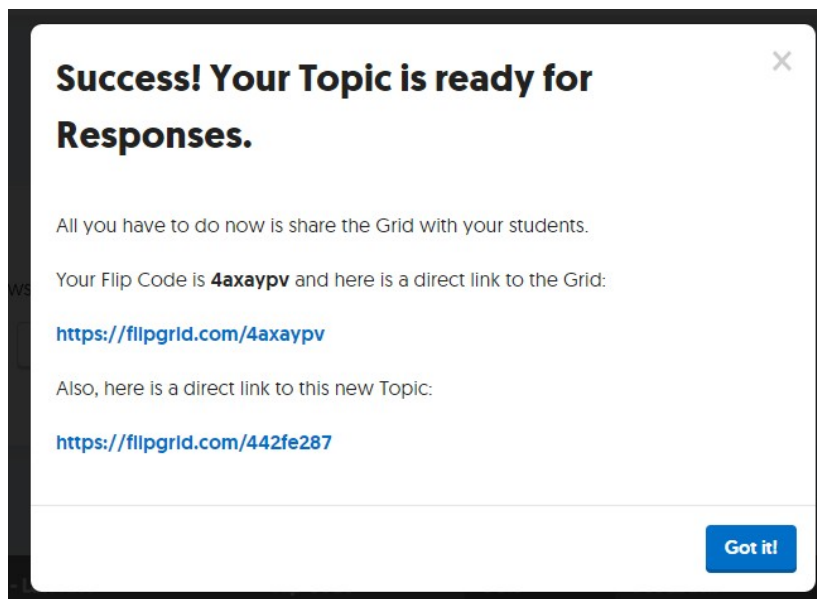


The screenshot shows the 'Select topic settings' interface for Flipgrid. It consists of three sections:

- Section 2 of 7: Topic Privacy**
 - Video Moderation:** A toggle switch is currently turned off. Text below reads: "If videos are moderated, you must approve them before becoming visible to others."
 - Grid Community Type:** A text box contains "PLC and Public". Text below reads: "You have selected **PLC and Public** which means participants enter a Flip Code to view and verify their email address to participate. Edit this Grid's **Community Type** under Grid settings."
- Section 3 of 7: Topic Status**
 - Active State:** A dropdown menu is set to "Active". Text below reads: "Make your Topic active, frozen [students can view videos, but cannot record], or inactive."
 - Launch and Freeze Dates:** A date range selector shows "10/10/2018" to "Never". Text below reads: "Selecting launch and freeze dates set when a Topic is active and then frozen. Your timezone is set to America/Phoenix. Not correct? [Update your timezone.](#)"
- Section 4 of 7: Topic Resource** (Optional)
 - Text: "Add a Topic resource [video, image, gif, or emoji] to engage your students."
 - Buttons: "Record a Video", "Upload a Video", "Add a Video", "Upload an Image", "Add a Giphy", "Add an Emoji".

At the bottom right, there are "Cancel" and "Create Topic" buttons.

7. Start the Conversation – Copy and paste the Flip Code link in an email, announcement, or post directly in the module on your Learning Management System.



First-Day Email

Send an email a few days or a week before the course start date to welcome students to the course, help set expectations, make the syllabus available and prepare students for the first day and week of the course. Below are some tips with an example of a first-day email:

Strike a friendly tone. Share your enthusiasm for the course.	Greetings! You are receiving this email because you are registered for COMM 320, an online course that begins next Monday, February 3. This is my second year teaching the course online, and I really enjoy it. I hope you will too! I know that many students are new to online courses, so I just wanted to send this brief email to give you an idea of what to expect on the first day.
Address nervousness about online courses.	On Monday morning, you should receive an email invitation from Canvas (our campus's Learning Management System) to join the course. Accepting the invitation will lead you to our course site. Please accept the invitation, and log on to the course on Monday morning before noon. Email me right away (simply reply to this message) if you have any issues logging on!
Set an early timeline to preempt issues with student access to course.	The first module is the course "Orientation," which includes information on how to navigate the course site, a detailed explanation of the syllabus (and a syllabus scavenger hunt), and an "introductions" forum. The purpose of the orientation module is to give everyone a chance to get familiar with the course environment, to get your questions answered, and to get to know your new classmates. The Orientation module should take you no more than 1-2 hours to complete, and you will have until the end of our first day (Monday, February 3 at midnight) to complete it. Once you are done, you'll be ready to jump right into coursework on Tuesday.
Provide information about what tasks need to be completed first and by when.	As will be explained in more detail in the syllabus, although this course is online, it is not a self-paced course. While there are deadlines each week, you will be given a few days to complete each task so you can work at the times that are most convenient for you. The intent of this structure is to give each person enough flexibility to do the work when it is most convenient, while still allowing us to progress through the course material together.
Set expectations for participation. This will be repeated in the syllabus.	If it seems confusing, please don't worry...it will become clearer as we dive in. Please feel free to email me by replying to this email if you have any questions or concerns. Otherwise, I'll see you on Monday in our online course site!
Tell students how to reach you if they have questions.	Until then!
End with a reassuring note.	Dr. Gist

Online Orientation: Syllabus Activities

Use one or more of the activities below to ensure that students understand course expectations by reviewing the course syllabus and to demonstrate the ability to engage in the online platform.

Activity 1. Syllabus Scavenger Hunt: A Syllabus Scavenger Hunt can be made using the quiz function on your learning management system (LMS). Here are some example questions—using fill in the blank responses:

1. Whom do you contact for technical assistance?
2. How do you set up a meeting with your instructor?
3. When do you need to post an initial response to the weekly discussion board?
4. How many of your peers do you need to reply to?
5. What is the first guideline for Online Netiquette?
6. What is due on March 16?
7. When is your project proposal due?
8. What happens if you plagiarize?

Activity 2. Syllabus Discussion Board: Create a discussion board, and require that all students post a question or comment about the course objectives, participation expectations, grading, or any other element of the syllabus. Example discussion questions include:

- What two key points or aspects of the syllabus caught your attention and why?
- What two key points or aspects of the syllabus need some further explanation?

In addition to creating a written record of questions and responses that may be useful later in the course, it also provides some early feedback as to what is important and/or confusing for the students. This activity also gives students the opportunity to practice posting. You can award a few points for successfully posting to the discussion board. Success breeds success, so starting all students off with a few earned points sets them on the right path.

Activity 3. Personalize and Customize Learning Outcomes: In order to have students think more deeply about the learning outcomes of your course and make connections to their own lives, ask students to choose one learning outcome—listed in the syllabus—that really resonates with them for personal or professional reasons. In a discussion board post, ask them to explain why they chose that outcome, how it connects to their goals or interests, and how they can customize the outcome to help them move towards their goal.