

Easy Teaching Hacks to Support Equitable Practices with Online Instruction¹

Ensure access: Evaluating equitable student access to technology tools

- Evaluate student access to computers, software, cameras, internet to ensure students can participate in online instruction. See Appendix 1 for sample survey to assess student needs.
- Evaluate student access to a place to participate in online courses (e.g., minimal distractions, quiet space, etc.). See Appendix 1 for sample survey to assess student needs.
- Review student accessibility needs; consider what diverse learning looks like for all students.
- Identify campus resources, as appropriate, to ensure students have access to technology requirements for successful participation in online classes.
 - For spring 2020: If a student contacts you who does not have a laptop and cannot get one due to financial constraints, please send an email to this address. laptopcheckout@ucdavis.edu with the following information: student name, student ID, and student phone number. Someone will respond directly to the student and if they qualify via financial aid guidelines, provide a laptop to check out for spring quarter free of charge (it can be mailed to their house).
 - Identify options for back-up equipment and IT support if something goes wrong for students.

Note: For spring 2020 online instruction, the campus is surveying student needs and working to make equipment available to students. Results of the survey are now available on the [Know Your Students](https://knowyourstudents.ucdavis.edu/limited_tou) portal (https://knowyourstudents.ucdavis.edu/limited_tou) (both in campus aggregate and specific to your courses). Faculty should still consider talking with students in their classes to discuss ways to support their full participation in the class.

Set the tone: Planning your syllabus

- Think about the climate you want to create for the class.
 - Welcome students to the class.
 - Explain philosophies behind policies—pedagogies not punishment.
- Consider sharing some information about yourself, e.g., why do you enjoy teaching this class? What is your teaching philosophy?
- Consider flexibility in participation and attendance policies; include statements in syllabus that allow for consideration of extenuating circumstances for deadlines, exam dates, etc. (personal illness, family commitments, unexpected work hours, etc.).
 - During current coronavirus situation, consider waiving medical documentation because it may not be available in all cases.
 - Some students may be in different time zones and/or have internet and computer access issues making real-time participation difficult or not always possible. If you put your key learning materials on Canvas (asynchronous), students can follow even if they miss your real-time class, and this will be enormously helpful to them.
- Identify free online texts and resources and use library reserve materials when possible
 - **Note:** For spring 2020, the library will work with faculty to provide online resources on reserve. See information in Appendix 2.
- Provide clear course goals/learning outcomes.

¹ Compiled by Amanda Crump, Susan Ebeler, Nann Fangué, Will Horwath, Bryan Jenkins, Kristin Kiesel, Kyaw Tha Paw U, Dan Potter, Anne Todgham, Kali Trzesniewski, Mikael Villalobos, Jeffrey Williams; March 2020

Build trust: Establishing a supportive class environment

- Start classes with short 2-3 min activities to reduce stress, calm anxiety, and help students to focus; some examples:
 - Breathing exercises.
 - Normalize stresses students are experiencing—name it and talk about it.
 - Share successes, fun experiences from the past few days.
 - Share your own experiences, stresses and successes.
- Seek feedback.
 - Provide at least two mechanisms that allow feedback, one that identifies the sender, and thus allows responding directly to the needs of an individual, and one that allows anonymity.
 - A script for both feedback mechanisms can read something like: “For this class I have provided you all with two ways to provide feedback. [Method 1] includes your identification so that I may respond to you directly if needed. [Method 2] allows for anonymous feedback because I recognize an anonymous option can be useful depending on the situation.”
 - Ask students frequently about what is going well for them, what material has been interesting or challenging for them, and devise strategies to address their concerns.
 - Check in with students midway through the quarter to see how remote learning is going for them. Ask if there are things other faculty are doing in their classes that work really well for them and that you might be able to incorporate in your class.

Engage with content: Supporting in-class learning

- Focus content to main topics; critically evaluate what are the most important concepts for mastering course goals.
- Break material into small chunks (5-10 min each)—for both synchronous or asynchronous formats.
- Use several quizzes, polls, iClickers, etc. to periodically check for learning and understanding—keep it fun too! Can be used with both synchronous and asynchronous formats.
- Pre-lecture quizzes can help to identify areas that students aren’t understanding—use part of next class to discuss quiz results and clarify misconceptions.
- Use smaller group discussions to engage students.
 - Zoom can be set up to provide for mini breakout rooms for students to discuss in small groups; Check the UC Davis [KeepTeaching site](#) for zoom resources.
- Online discussion forums (e.g., in Canvas) can be used to engage students with content outside of class time.
- Use [written reflection exercises](#) to assess learnings, apply knowledge, encourage connections to course materials, and allow students to express their own interests, challenges, etc.
- Check frequently for understanding.
 - Do not assume what you meant was understood or what you understood is what was meant. Appreciate that there are different ways that situations can be interpreted.

- Be aware and flexible with potential differences in cultural etiquette. Pause your assumptions and values; try to hear not just what the other person is saying but what is meant by what is said.
- Be complete and explicit; provide opportunities for clarification and summary.
- Strive to create a class culture where students feel comfortable asking and answering questions.
- Be patient with yourself and others.
- Consider multiple opportunities for graded work, rather than a small number of exams worth a high percentage of the course grade.
 - Consider a range of question types on exams, from multiple choice, to short answer, to matching, to drawing and flow charts. Campus resources in the Center for Educational Effectiveness can assist in developing strategies for exams that can test higher order learning, link to resources [here](#).
 - Learning takes practice. Provide multiple opportunities to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of material, with the first opportunities being lower stakes. These types of assignments are also a great opportunity for students to get familiar with the types of questions you ask on exams.
 - Consider opportunities for students to work in pairs or small groups to solve problems on assignments.
- CAST (Center for Applied Special Technologies) has created a set of useful Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Guidelines which provide good information on creating meaningful learning opportunities for all learners. See link here: <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
- Refer to the UC Davis [KeepTeaching](#) site for general information on online instructional practices and [Online Equity and Inclusion](#).

Create connections: Encouraging engagement outside of class time

- Establish online office hours, incentivize participation. If you record these office hours you can then post them on Canvas for those that were not able to make the meeting.
- Create opportunities for online study groups; consider making this a requirement for the course. These can build study skills and help students to make connections to peers.
- Send individual emails to students who have a C/C- or lower and encourage to come for office hours, using supportive, inclusive language:
 - “Dear AA—I care about your success in this course and invite you to meet with me in an upcoming office hour. The material covered is complex and I would like to make sure that I am presenting it in a way that is understandable to you and to discuss ways to support your study strategies.

If you aren't able to come to an office hour, please email me at abcde@ucdavis.edu to set up an appointment. I look forward to talking with you.—Professor ZZ”

Be kind to yourself and your students

- Don't expect perfection of yourself or students under situations with limited time for preparation.
- Model a growth mindset for your students—believe in the malleability of intelligence and use strategies to grow and develop your own knowledge and skills
- Practice patience and flexibility.

Resources:

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Appendix 1. Survey to assess students' access to technology tools for online instruction.

UCD 001 spring 2020²

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 For spring quarter, do you expect to have reliable internet access and equipment (e.g. computer, tablet) for READING and POSTING TEXT content via Canvas?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not sure (3)
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Q2 For spring quarter, do you expect to have reliable internet access, appropriate for LISTENING TO AUDIO content via Canvas?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not sure (3)
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² Source: Wernimont, J; C.N.Davidson.2020. Teaching in the Context of COVID-19.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yBE1cCqJ_4M-JZ62K4CefmYsZugqAWkGmZmdwESt0IM/preview?fbclid=IwAR2R3VoPldRrf81x9h-csV6m-0ELWXgze06Y0e1rsDsuC1xXMgs02XfX6x4#. Thank you to Valerie Eviner, Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis, for sharing this resource.

Q3 For spring quarter, do you expect to have reliable internet access, appropriate for WATCHING online video content via Canvas or Zoom?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not sure (3)
-

Q4 For spring quarter, do you expect to have appropriate equipment and internet connectivity to participate in live webinar sessions via Zoom?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not sure (3)
-

Q5 What kinds of device(s) do you expect to use to read, listen to, and/or watch course content?

- Computer (1)
 - Tablet/ iPad (2)
 - Smartphone (3)
 - Telephone without internet access (4)
 - Other (5)
-

Q6 Do you have specific limitations in internet access (e.g. limited data plan, limited connection speed, internet access at only specific times of the day)? Please explain

Q7 Given the changes in the quarter, I realize that students may have new work or family care obligations. Given that, is the regularly scheduled class time still available to you for class activities?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Not sure (3)

Q8 In an ideal world, would you prefer live (synchronous, during scheduled class times), re-recorded (asynchronous) or mixed instructional materials? This is something we'll have to balance based on the full-range of needs within our class.

- Live (synchronous during scheduled class) (1)
- Pre-recorded (asynchronous) (2)
- Mixed (3)
- Other (4)

Q9 For question 8 above, if you answered "other", please explain

Q10 Do you have any accessibility requests for me regarding online teaching? For example, materials available in a different format, transcriptions, specific approaches to discussion boards, a preference of video discussion vs. discussion boards, etc? If you think you may need to update existing accommodations for ALL your classes, I recommend reaching out to the Student Disability Center ASAP

Q11 Do you have any additional questions or concerns about logistics for this class in its move to online status for the quarter?

Q12 Do you have any questions or concerns about the transition to online learning that you would like me to share with university administration, for yourself or on behalf of your peers?

End of Block: Default Question Block

Appendix 2. Library resources for Spring 2020

Faculty and instructors teaching remote courses during Spring Quarter may find the following resources useful.

Access online materials from off-campus. Before students start searching for [library resources](#) from off-campus, they'll need to login using their [UCD LoginID](#) through the library VPN client Pulse Secure. Here's help information, including video tutorials, for downloading and using Pulse Secure <https://www.library.ucdavis.edu/service/connect-from-off-campus/>

Online books for your course. To request new electronic books or an increased number of users for current online resources that will be part of your course, email Belen [Fernandez](#), Collection Strategies at b Fernandez@ucdavis.edu

Does Your Course Have a Course Reserves Reading List? Course Reserves is a vital student resource that sets aside course materials at the library and allows students to borrow course material for free. For more information, visit <https://www.library.ucdavis.edu/service/course-reserves/> or email us at courseserves@ucdavis.edu

Research assistance for projects and papers. Librarians are readily available to assist students with class assignments personally. In addition to offering individual appointments or office hours, we are also planning to have a virtual reference desk. Contact the library <https://www.library.ucdavis.edu/service/researchsupport/>. Make a [virtual appointment](#) with a librarian for one-on-one research and learning consultations.

Request librarian-led instruction or assistance with an assignment. We can help you design class assignments, or we can meet with your class via Zoom to help students navigate, discover, and critically evaluate information resources. To request asynchronous or synchronous instruction for your class, or discuss what online resources are available to assist your students in a research assignment, send an email to libraryinstruction@ucdavis.edu or use our [instruction request form](#).

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