Teaching Commons

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Remote Teaching Options

How to facilitate your class online due to an unforeseen circumstance

If the campus were to close for unforeseen reasons, would you have a back-up plan for teaching your face-to-face classes? Whether it's dangerously low temperatures or a special event that causes campus closures, some circumstances may prevent you and your students from meeting in person. This page lists a number of recommendations and tips for teaching remotely due to unforeseen circumstances.

There are two modes of instruction you can choose: teaching a live/synchronous class using the [Zoom video conferencing application](#) and/or delivering your class asynchronously using DePaul's Learning Management System, Desire2Learn (D2L).

For either modality, you can contact fits@depaul.edu for assistance.

Host a live session using Zoom

You can schedule a virtual meeting using the [Zoom video conferencing application](#). You'll need a computer with a microphone and webcam for this to work best. Your students can join using a computer, tablet or even phone.

- [Instructions for setting up a Zoom meeting](#)
- [Create a news item](#) and/or [send an email to your classlist](#) announcing the virtual class session and including the URL to join
- [Record your session](#) so students who can't join in real time can watch it later
  - You can record locally to your computer or online using Zoom Cloud Recording
  - If you record locally, you can [upload your video into D2L using Panopto](#). If you use Zoom Cloud Recording, you can also [share the URL with your students](#).

Deliver your class asynchronously using D2L

If you plan on using D2L, you will need to [activate your course](#) if you have not done so already in order for students to access it.

Many instructors use their course homepage in D2L to share updates via the [news](#) and [calendar](#) tools. Some faculty even create highly customized homepages that feature a particular tool (such as Voicethread or Panopto) or even point to an external webpage (such as an instructor's website). Learn more about what you can do with [your course homepage](#).

In addition to sharing updates on your homepage, you may consider the following options for engaging your students using D2L:

Facilitate a class discussion

Creating class discussions in D2L allows students to respond to you and one another asynchronously (i.e., not in real time). You can provide a prompt that asks students to discuss course material, reflect on how key concepts are linked to other fields of study or to their own experience, or share their works in progress, among other things.

- [Instructions for creating D2L discussions](#)
- Visit the Center for Teaching and Learning's blog for [suggestions on crafting and responding to student discussion forums](#)

Record a lecture

Did you know that you can record and share video and audio of your computer screen and webcam with your students? Panopto is a web-based screencasting tool. It's integrated into D2L and it allows you to capture and share lectures, tutorials, demonstrations, and the like.

- [Get an overview of Panopto](#), a lecture-capture tool integrated with D2L
- [Check out tips on recording lectures](#) from Panopto's blog

Share course materials

Instructors have a number of options when it comes to sharing course materials online. You can upload documents in D2L's Content area, or you could use a cloud hosting service like Box.com or Google Drive.

- Check out [how to use D2L's Content tool](#)
- [Learn how Information Services has partnered with Box.com](#), a cloud-hosting service similar to Dropbox
- In addition to Box.com, faculty and staff now have access to [Google's G-Suite for Education](#).

Give a quiz or self-assessment

Check your students' learning and help them gauge their own progress by giving a quiz or self-assessment. There are a couple differences between quizzes and self-assessments in D2L. With quizzes, student activity is tracked (you'll know whether a student took the quiz or not) and students must submit a quiz in order to receive any feedback that you provide. Quizzes can also be assigned point value for grading. With self-assessments, student activity is not tracked, and students can receive immediate feedback on their answers without having to submit them. Grading is also unavailable for self-assessments.

- [Learn more about quizzes in D2L](#)

- Learn more about self-assessments in D2L

Have students submit an assignment

Avoid having your email inbox bombarded by students submitting assignments by requiring them to submit assignments using D2L's Submissions tool. This versatile tool also allows you to do the following:

- Check assignments for plagiarism
- Offer feedback and grade assignments

Retrieval Practice

Done right, quizzing and self-assessments can be a part of an increasingly popular teaching strategy known as retrieval practice. Retrieval practice refers to the third stage of remembering information (known as the retrieval stage), and it has been shown by cognitive neuroscientists to aid not only students' ability to remember but also to understand. Unlike using quizzing as a strict assessment tool, retrieval practice should be ungraded, offer timely feedback, and utilize a variety of methods, such as classroom clickers and polling apps, flashcards, etc. For more on this teaching strategy, visit retrievalpractice.org.

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