

What Instructional Strategies Should I Consider?

Version 3

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(Adapted from the University of Illinois's resource on [HyFlex Pedagogy](#).)

Always remember that in a Flexible class, the students are afforded the choice of how to participate each week. The student chooses when and how to engage with the class and there are no penalties based on their choice of on-campus, synchronous broadcast, or the asynchronous classroom. Keep that at the center of your focus as you develop your course.

Ask yourself: is there parity between the experiences of students in the three modes of delivery?

It is important to take proactive steps to not “forget” the students who are not directly in front of you in the classroom. Faculty must be adept at encouraging students in each modality, but especially the synchronous broadcast to engage with the students in the classroom. These instructional strategies will help you be successful in your Flexible course.

Pedagogical Suggestions

Plan early and focus on structure. Flexible courses have a lot of moving parts. By planning early and creating a consistent structure for lessons, you will be able to better manage your in-person and remote synchronous (online) students. It is also important to plan ahead for how the online asynchronous students will engage with the class.

Inform your students how and where they should communicate. Identify the preferred communication channel when you are in a blended synchronous environment. Should students use their microphones and speak? Should they use text chat? When students must split their attention between audio and text chat, conversations can be hard to follow. Help your students focus so that they do not miss important information. Instructors also need to make a plan for how they will monitor the text chat and the in-person and video interactions.

Distribute your attention. When designing for a Flexible environment, it is very important to distribute your attention so that the remote synchronous students are not forgotten. A good lesson plan and communication strategy can help you with this issue. Be transparent when

possible with students, for instance, "I will be talking for 5 minutes to explain a concept, and then I will check in with the Zoom chat first, and then with the classroom students." You may find that students settle back and relax a bit when they know what to expect.

Ask for and incorporate student feedback. Ask your students for feedback about the course and its structure. A quick informal poll, a survey, or a discussion asking for feedback about the class structure can give you valuable insight about what is working — and not working — in your course. Take the feedback and adjust moving forward. Your students will appreciate it.

Asynchronous communication. Provide asynchronous communication options for all the students to use. You can use educational technology tools such as [Padlet](#), and especially the Learn@Seneca Discussions. This conversation can extend the learning in many meaningful ways, and can also help build community among the modes.

Use polling. Polls are another strategy to easily cross among the three modes of your students. **Seneca faculty all have access to the professional version of [Mentimeter](#)**, which is extremely helpful for engagement and knowledge checks. Whichever tool you select, be sure to create a wrap-up about the poll after students in all modes have participated. What have you learned? What does it mean? Students can also be assigned this sort of wrap-up summary.

Back channel chat. Use Zoom chat for a back channel during class. This allows students to participate without speaking and can assist students with hearing difficulties. Remember to delegate managing the back channel to a student. Invite them to speak up with interesting observations and questions throughout the lesson. Consider building time into your lesson plan to check on this communication channel.