# Going online in a hurry: What to do and where to start

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Need to move a course online in a hurry?  We have compiled useful resources to transition courses online. Below, are recommendations for faculty members who need to move online, fast, with the goals of maintaining instructional continuity as much as possible and helping students to finish each semester strong.

**1.  Begin by going over your course assignments for the coming weeks.** Are they accessible online, so that students can find the instructions and materials that they need? Is it clear how students will be turning in their work? Have deadlines changed, and are all of those deadlines prominently posted in Moodle?

**2.  How will you give students feedback on their progress?** Consider how students will be able to practice the key skills and objectives you want them to get out of the course — things they would normally do in class. How will you give them the opportunities for practice and feedback, for both small-stakes and high-stakes assignments? Undoubtedly those opportunities will be different from what they were before you moved the class online. Just be sure that it's very clear how students can access those opportunities.

And if you don't spend much class time having students practice and receiving feedback, now may be a good time to increase that aspect of your course — given that you might not be presenting content in person. For example:

- If students would have been developing their skills in analyzing and synthesizing assigned readings via in-class discussion, perhaps they could do that online using collaborative annotation of the text.
- Or, if you'd normally have students practice by attempting to answer questions in an interactive in-person lecture, present a version of those questions in online discussion forums or quizzes, and offer feedback on their responses.

**3.  Provide an in-class experience to your online class.** What do you normally use your in-class time for? Try to define what you do in class at a higher, more goal-oriented level (e.g., presentation of content, checking for understanding, collaborative project work — instead of listing activities as "lecture," "quiz," "discussion"). If you keep those goals in mind, you will have a better idea of how to achieve them online, as well as what aspects of the in-class experience to focus on simulating.

In particular, this mini-reflection could help you decide whether to go with a synchronous means of engagement (e.g., a real-time Teams Virtual Meeting or a BigBlueButton meeting), an asynchronous one (narrated videos), or some combination of the two.

**4.  Decide what you're going to do about any high-stakes assessments, particularly exams.** There are no easy answers here, especially if you planned to have a good chunk of a student's grade hinge on what would have been a proctored, in-person test. Perhaps you could take another route to summative assessment for the course, such as replacing a big supervised test with some type of project that is easier to personalize and less dependent on proctoring.

You also could use online proctoring, McNeese offers several test proctoring solutions: Respondus, SmarterProctoring and ProctorU.  This knowledgebase has several articles to help you set up these services in Moodle.  Simply use the search toolbar to find the articles.

**5. Consider the accessibility of course materials.** In all likelihood, your readings and other materials exist in digital form, and you may have posted them already. But you'll need to double-check that any readings, videos, problem sets, quizzes, and the like are accessible, along with key documents such as the course syllabus and calendar.

**6. Determine communication expectations for the course.** In the face of all this uncertainty, you need to explain — as clearly as you can and in a variety of places — what students can expect about the course in the next few weeks. Be sure to cover what it is that students are responsible for doing, how they can find the things they need to meet those responsibilities, and what they should do first. Make sure the lines of communication are two-way, as well. When in doubt, offer more ways to get in touch with you (text, messaging app, email, video call), not fewer.

Remember, the focus should be on student success and on using what we know to help them move forward under some really difficult circumstances. This is a time for faculty and online support staff to shine.

We have included additional articles to help with classroom management strategies to this knowledgebase. Also, check out recommendations for setting up your Moodle course.