

# Tips for Transitioning an On Campus Course to Online and Keeping your Sanity

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Whatever situation may keep you or your students from campus, please remember that the tools you need to teach online are available and ready to use. For instructors moving course content online in a hurry, please remember:

**1) Keep expectations realistic.** Good online courses take a long time to build, but even given a week or two, we can create a useful, short-term experience for our students. Also, students may have unreliable access to technology when not on campus, which might require some flexibility from us as instructors. There will be some bumps in the road, but we'll work through them together.

**2) Stay Calm.** While the process will no doubt feel unfamiliar and at times possibly frustrating, try as much as possible to be patient. There will always be hiccups, but times of disruption are, by their nature, disruptive, and everyone expects that. Be willing to switch tactics if something isn't working. Above all, stay focused on making sure the students are comfortable, and keep a close eye on the course learning goals--while you might not be able to teach something exactly the way you imagined, as long as you're still meeting the learning goals of the course, you're doing fine.

**3) Capitalize on technologies you are already using plus one or two new ones.** No one can learn AND effectively use six new tools today. Start by doing more of what you already do. If you need to use new technologies, give yourself plenty of time to read up and play around with the new tool. Use the articles in this knowledgebase and the Online Training course in Moodle to help you learn new skills and to learn how to use new online tools and features.

**4) Get help.** Connect with colleagues who are faced with similar challenges or similar kinds of courses. If you have questions about any Moodle tools, check out our articles in this knowledgebase or reach out for support from the McNeese IT Helpdesk or eLearning office. Contact information is located below.

**5) Prepare for Technology Failures.** Whether it's problems with the online platform or internet connections, technology can and will fail. During the first few semesters of teaching online, each of us has faced a situation where we frantically tried to fix problems while remaining on camera in a live virtual classroom. Unless you are certain that it will be a quick fix, it's best to post a message on the chat box or say (if your audio is working) that you are facing technological problems, and then offer a five-minute break. Include a time stamp in case the platform freezes; for example: "Hi all, I'm having technical difficulties. It's 5:55 p.m. right now — let's take a five-minute break and regroup at 6 p.m.". In our experience, five minutes is enough time to restart the platform, restart your computer, or contact your online-support staff. On that note, make sure you have your real-time online-support phone numbers saved in your phone's contacts. Another helpful tech support is a battery backup unit into which you can plug your computer and your router or modem. Having one will save you through a temporary power outage.

## Other Tools for My Classroom I Found Online?

We recommend that McNeese's instructors only use online tools and services supported by the university's IT department (Moodle, Microsoft Teams Meeting, BigBlueButton, Respondus, SmarterProctoring, ProctorU, RedShelf, Turnitin, etc.). There are some fantastic educational tech tools out there, but it takes quite a bit of vetting to make sure they have responsible student data handling policies, are accessible, reliable, etc. The best option in times of disruption is to stick with

the tools which McNeese has already vetted and can provide tech support for as needed.

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

## Need to Contact Help?

For internet connection or WiFi, email, VPN, office phone, Office 365, any McNeese login, or online course computer requirements, equipment requirements for online courses: Contact Office of Information Technology by phone (M-TH 7:30 am – 5:00 pm and Friday 7:30 am – 11:30 am) 337-475-5995. Email recommended: [helpdesk@mcneese.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mcneese.edu)

For Moodle, Respondus, ProctorU, SmarterProctoring, RedShelf, Turnitin, or BigBlueButton issue contact eLearning by phone (M-TH 7:30 am – 5:00 pm and Friday 7:30 am – 11:30 am ). Dr. Wendi Prater, Director, 337-475-5126 Office, Email recommended: [wprater@mcneese.edu](mailto:wprater@mcneese.edu)

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