

Synchronous vs. Asynchronous?

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There are two options for instructors to facilitate class sessions remotely:

1. **Synchronous:** instructors and students gather at the same time and interact in “real time” with a very short or “near-real time” exchange between instructors and students.
2. **Asynchronous:** instructors prepare course materials for students in advance of students’ access. Students may access the course materials at a time of their choosing and will interact with each over a longer period of time.

Instructors may choose to engage their students synchronously or asynchronously depending on the course content or material that needs to be taught. There are many advantages and disadvantages to asynchronous and synchronous teaching options.

Advantages of Synchronous Teaching

1. Immediate personal engagement between students and instructors, which may create greater feelings of community and lessen feelings of isolation
2. More responsive exchanges between students and instructors, which may prevent miscommunication or misunderstanding

Disadvantages of Synchronous Teaching

1. More challenging to schedule shared times for all students and instructors
2. Some students may face technical challenges or difficulties if they do not have fast or powerful Wi-Fi networks accessible

Advantages of Asynchronous Teaching

1. Higher levels of temporal flexibility, which may simultaneously make the learning experiences more accessible to different students and also make an archive of past materials accessible.
2. Increased cognitive engagement since students will have more time to engage with and explore the course material.

Disadvantages of Asynchronous Teaching

1. Students may feel less personally exchanged and less satisfied without the social interaction between their peers and instructors.
 2. Course material may be misunderstood or have the potential to be misconstrued without the real-time interaction.
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