

How Do I Create a “Hybrid” Class?

Note: Due to the reimagining of “online” instruction during the crisis of full institutional closure, the definition of “hybrid” has changed to include “online hybrid” that combines both asynchronous and synchronous online activities.

Objective: Teachers will be able to offer a successful hybrid course (whether synchronous online, asynchronously online, or on-ground in a classroom).

Outcome: Teachers will be able to implement one or two strategies that will result in a plan for a hybrid course offering.

Definitions:

- **Synchronous:** Students and Teachers meet together at set time and methodology (Face-to-face in a classroom or online)
- **Asynchronous:** Activities that take place via an LMS. Students and teachers are online at the same time.

During the pandemic crisis, the term “hybrid” has taken on a new meaning. Prior to March of 2020 a partial face-to-face class that substituted on-ground meetings (FTF) online activities was called a “Hybrid”. It was the combination of a synchronous meeting with students and use of asynchronous time in an online format. If we think of Zoom as that synchronous meeting format rather than the FTF classroom, we can consider this a virtual or online hybrid. This guide was originally written for the old meaning where FTF was possible. It can be helpful when considering the online hybrid, too, by just substituting FTF for Zoom as the meeting space.

The considerations are:

- Method of meeting students synchronously
 - Online (Zoom)
 - In a physical classroom

Time spent in the synchronous mode vs time students spend completing asynchronous activities. Time for synchronous meetings should initially be determined by intentional strategies for what is being taught and/or by grade level needs.

- Zoom time may be difficult
 - if the segments are so long that students lose focus.
 - if bandwidth causes a degradation of audio and/or video transmission
 - if real-time captioning is needed and not available

Time for synchronous meetings should initially be determined by intentional strategies for what is being taught and/or by grade level needs.

- Student schedules
 - Required online or FTF synchronous components must be scheduled in advance so that students are notified.
 - If students are not notified of meeting times or cannot attend during

those times, accessible recordings of synchronous meetings need to be available in the LMS.

When you are considering offering a hybrid class, it may not be obvious at first just what to put in what box: synchronous or asynchronous. Think about the things you do in a regular course. You likely do lectures, assign reading and other assignments, and/or have students involved in discussions or creating projects and more. Those items need to be dispersed into two main areas: (1) things you will put in the asynchronous component of your course and (2) Things that will be in the synchronous components.

The amount of time spent by students in either modality should be determined by what works, not a predetermined amount of time in one modality or the other. There are no regulations that define what amount of time is asynchronous in a hybrid situation. This decision should be based on what you think will be best and is likely to fluctuate term to term as you become comfortable with your distribution of activities. Additionally, as new technologies become available and your ability to teach in a asynchronous online mode develops, you may find that activities that you didn't think could be done successfully are now able to be offered that way.

Preparation:

Develop a course outline that is actually how you teach the course. A practical course outline may differ from the course outline of record in that you have decided the order in which you will cover the content and the specifics that will comprise the instructional activities of the course.

Separate your course in to topic areas (units, weeks, modules, whatever works for you.) Then consider the outcomes for each unit or topic area of your course.

To minimize getting the distribution wrong the first time out, give it some careful thought. The activity described below may help you identify which parts of your course should be where! You will need a large piece of paper or a clear tabletop and two different color pads of sticky notes. (If you choose to do this in a digital tool, go for it!)

Activity 1-Global Planning:

Use Sticky Notes to build an idea by following these steps:

1. Put each learning activity in your course on a yellow sticky (lecture, reading, activity, discussion, research project, etc.). Don't worry about what modality you will be using for them, just get as many accounted for as possible.

2. Then on the left side of a table, page, whatever, put the activities identified on the sticky notes that students struggle with and usually need help to complete.

3. On the right side, put the activities that are easy to accomplish by students on their own (like reading text, watching a video, or listening to a lecture).

4. Write the letter G on the sticky notes that would be best done by groups of students or in pairs.



5. Order both sets of activities by when during the course they should be taught, so you have a timeline of sorts. (still in two columns)
6. On a second set of sticky notes (a different color works best) consider each activity related to the tools available in the LMS (Quiz, portfolio, discussion, wiki, blank page, learning unit, mash-up, link to a web site, etc.) Write the tool on the second sticky and attach it to the appropriate activities. You may have more than one tool for an activity, that's ok.

Consider:

Take a look at what you have.

- Some activities won't be matched to obvious tools. Those will take some extra thought to put asynchronously online and may be better done in a synchronous mode at first.
- Generally, individual activities, like reading text, can be easily done as an asynchronous online activity.
- Listening to a straight lecture or doing a tutorial, are individual activities and can be easily done asynchronously online via written lectures, web cam recordings, audio with PowerPoint, etc.
- Activities that call for figuring out specific problems, might work better in a synchronous space with students working with you, especially things you know take your direction to accomplish. These should be part of your synchronous work.
- Figuring out other kinds of problems or scenarios (that take a few days, or lots of research) might work well by putting students in work groups in a LMS and giving them a set of tools to use, like a Wiki and Discussion forum, and would work well asynchronously online.
- Obviously, field trips or practicum activities belong in the in an on-ground category that will take special arrangements.
- Reflection in groups or individuals is great done asynchronously online. Portfolios are for reflection or activities over time, discussion forums are good for specific, in the moment, conversation type interactions.

Decide:

From here, you should be able to start seeing what will be in the asynchronous online component and what should be in the synchronous modality. You may have chosen to put a lot of the work asynchronously online and then can figure out how much synchronous time you need to schedule.

You don't have to build every online "learning object" (like a video or tutorial) spend a little time thinking about what would work, even if you don't know how to make it. Then try to find it. If you can't find it or make it, consider making it simple by doing it synchronously until you can get it built OR look for some instructional design support.

Review and Revise:

This is not easy, but if you start simple and change things that don't seem to be getting results, the class will be a successful one. Survey your students often to see how they feel about the work they are doing and take that feedback to heart

Activity 2-Dialing-it-in:

Use the outline you have to zero in on the details of how your course will be presented. You may want to take the outcomes approach to developing your hybrid course. To use this approach, it is important that you have taught the course before and are familiar with your course management system. In a Digital Media class, the first unit is about defining Digital Media and understanding the critical skills and abilities needed to be a professional in the field (i.e. web design, videographer, graphic designer, etc.) The general objective of the week-long unit is:

- Unit 1 Objective:** *The student will have a working knowledge of the skills, abilities and education required to be successful in the field of Multimedia Production.*
- The learning outcomes for the unit were more specific. Learning outcomes become critical in designing any online course whether it is fully online or a hybrid!
- Unit outcomes:
 1. *The student will understand the broad range of jobs within the field of Multimedia as well as how multimedia professionals work in teams depending on skills.*
 2. *The students will collaborate and research at least six jobs and the education, skills and abilities that are required for those jobs.*
 3. *The student will identify several specific jobs that they are interested in pursuing and create job goals.*
 4. *The student will create a list of skills and abilities that they already have along with a list that they will need to develop, to achieve their desired job goals.*
 5. *The students will be able to create collage in Photoshop that combines images representing their needed skills.*

Why? You may be asking how this fits into my determining what goes where in my hybrid plan. Having clear outcomes gives you a good idea of what students will do to achieve them.

Outcome language that is lower on the Bloom's Taxonomy list, will likely find itself in the online portion of the course. This is not always true, however, see what happened below:

S=synchronous, A=Asynchronous

Outcome	Verb	Activity	Implementation	S or A?	Time?
1	Understand	Lecture presentation	Video lecture w/quiz	A	30 minutes
1	Understand	Reading	Web Materials	A	1.5 hours
2	Collaborate	Group Research	Wiki & Meeting	A & S	3 hrs. A and 1hr AS
3	Identify	Research	Online Sources	A	30 min.
4	Create	Individual writing	Word File w/links	A	30 min.
5	Create	Photoshop work	Use PS to build an image	S	2 hrs.

