

UCA Spring 2021

Instructional Principles and Strategies

We believe we as faculty have been doing the best we can to adapt to online, hybrid, and socially distanced teaching, and as we have learned more, we can lead and instruct more effectively. This document contains three sets of recommendations. The first, Policy Reminders, are intended to reorient faculty to the existing policies for online, hybrid, and socially-distanced teaching established by Academic Affairs. Faculty are expected to adhere to these policies. The second, Guiding Principles, are informed by the scholarship of teaching and learning, online pedagogy, and usability and accessibility. The third, Instructional Strategies, are practices that faculty and students have found to be effective during the fall semester. We recognize that these principles and strategies are not “magic bullets”; rather, they are offered in a spirit of continuous growth and improvement. These are provided as points for reflection, not an exhaustive list of action items.

Policy Reminders

- Grades must be available via LMS and updated frequently.
- Courses using the Consultation Instructional Model must include a set schedule of regular faculty-student interaction.
- Students in quarantine are still responsible for completing and submitting work.
- Faculty should hold regularly scheduled in-person or virtual office hours.
- If a student has been identified as a close contact or has tested positive, they should present you with a quarantine/isolation letter from the Student Health Clinic (SHC). If they tested elsewhere, instruct them to contact the SHC at 501.450.3136 or covid19@uca.edu so on-campus contact tracing can take place. Faculty may also contact the SHC and provide the student’s name.
- Faculty who needs supplemental instructional technology should request it through their Chairs. Classroom technology requests will be made through the Classroom Technology Committee via Chairs. The Classroom Technology Committee includes a representative from each college, and can help to secure technology needs for effective hybrid teaching in classrooms.

Guiding Principles

- High standards and high empathy can and should coexist.
 - Class policies exist as boundaries to protect faculty and students; they can be negotiated and are not entirely rigid but are in place to uphold expectations.
 - Attendance/participation choices are opportunities for students to self-sabotage. Providing too much flexibility can backfire on students who lack the ability to self-manage when provided with options.
 - Fewer choices reduce students' and faculty's cognitive loads.
- Faculty and students benefit when faculty create multiple and frequent opportunities for faculty-student and student-student connections.
- Students in all instructional models need a dependable, consistent, predictable schedule and structure.
- Many undergraduate students may not be well-prepared to self-manage in fully asynchronous models; additional preparation may be needed on the parts of both the faculty and students.



Instructional Strategies

- Maximize opportunities for faculty-student interactions.
 - Reply to email within 24 hours.
 - Incentivize attendance to office hours; create a space for virtual drop-ins.
 - Provide frequent and timely feedback on student work.



- Maximize opportunities for student-student connections and interactions.
 - Use Zoom breakout rooms for small-group discussion in class.
 - Use collaboration tools (e.g., Google Docs, Blackboard Course Groups, etc.) when possible.
 - Facilitate the exchange of contact information to help students set up

GroupMe, Slack, text chains, or other modes of communication.

- Leave Zoom sessions (or breakout rooms, for larger classes) open for a few minutes after class ends so students can chat informally.
- Implement an attendance policy that sets students up for success. Have a strategy to accommodate students who are in quarantine or isolation but limit choices for general participation. Utilize recordings as a supplement to other instructional activities; they are not a replacement for all course materials, with few exceptions.
- Keep class meeting patterns consistent.
- Feel free to require video on with few exceptions and show students how to use Zoom backgrounds if desired. Encourage students to use mobile phones for video if they have poor internet connection.



- Students may need multiple reminders or communications.
 - Create consistent channels of communication. Select a channel (email, LMS announcement, in-class announcement) and use it for all important communication. Consider establishing a pattern (day of week, time of day) for sending messages.
 - Ensure that assignments and due dates are available in a single list, whether that is a document, in the LMS, or another channel. This might be supplemented with reminders through other channels, but students should know the first place to look.
- Be transparent/obvious about time commitments for assignments.
- Emphasize the importance of academic integrity.
 - Draw students' attention to the existing academic integrity statement; consider including a more course-specific version in your syllabus and putting it in a prominent position.
 - Remind students about consequences beyond grades: lacking the foundation to be successful in the next course, reputation in the institution and discipline, and so on.
 - Consider creating more low-stakes assignments rather than fewer high-stakes assignments.