

Recommendations for CEMS Faculty: FA20 Instructional Delivery

As we prepare for teaching in fall '20, the following recommendations are offered for consideration by CEMS faculty. These recommendations are grounded in recent resources provided through the UVM Center for Teaching and Learning ([Pivotal Pedagogy](#), [Teaching Effectively Online](#)), best practices at other institutions, and results from the CEMS Remote Instruction Student Survey (April 27 – May 10, 2020).

| Recommendation | Basis and specific recommendations |
|--|--|
| <p>1</p> <p>Make your courses 'flexible' with regard to delivery method</p> | <p>Instruction will likely require some combination of in-person and remote delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review CTL guidelines for online course design and teaching continuity. Consider methods such as HyFlex and Universal Design for Learning. Ensure the course learning outcomes can be achieved, both in-person and remotely. If they cannot, contact CTL or the CEMS Directors of Curricular Enrichment for support. Identify the primary learning platform for your course (See Rec. #6); Ensure that all course materials are available on this platform. For synchronous delivery, ensure student access to recorded lectures after class. Consider the requirements for assessment and explore options for providing exams/assignments online or in alternative formats (See Rec. #7). |
| <p>2</p> <p>Build community in your courses</p> | <p>Community-building is an important means of keeping students engaged and motivated regardless of whether a course is offered online or in-person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to your students at least one week prior to the first class. Let them know that you are looking forward to teaching them this semester. Create an introductory post or video for your course(s). Provide an overview of what students will learn, why this information is valuable, and the 'culture' you would like to create in the course (e.g., participation, exploration, respect). Introduce yourself either in writing or by video. Sharing your story can make students more inclined to share theirs. Invite students to introduce themselves and their interests. Explore using Blackboard discussion board, FlipGrid video chat, or an activity in MS Teams (See Rec. #6). Provide more 'face-time' in online lectures or synchronous meetings. Create opportunities for discussion throughout the semester. Try Blackboard, FlipGrid, YellowDig for student/group discussions (See Rec. #6). |
| <p>3</p> <p>Promote engagement and inclusion in your courses</p> | <p>Students that feel engaged and included in their courses, tend to assume greater responsibility for their learning and demonstrate success in their studies. Therefore,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all course materials are accessible. See CTL guidelines and resources for accessible course materials. Review UDL guidelines for inclusive course design. Caption all videos using Screencast-O-Matic, MS Stream, during live lectures in MS Teams, or plan ahead to use UVM's captioning service. Create opportunities for student choice: Project topic, format of assessment, which quizzes to complete given a minimum number required, different achievement 'paths' (series of smaller assignments vs one larger assignment). Vary the format of course materials and their delivery (written, video, audio) Vary the type of assessment (formative/summative) and delivery (written, multiple choice, peer-review, timed/proctored versus take-home exams). Provide opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction: In-class group activities/assignments, discussion boards, virtual office hours, study groups. Reward student participation and engagement. Have fun with this! |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>4</p> <p>Maintain clear and frequent communication with your students</p> | <p>Particularly for online courses, strong instructor presence and clear communication is key to keeping students on-task and engaged in their coursework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate clearly about the course layout and the platforms on the first day of class (or prior). Show students how and where to access course materials. • Communicate with students weekly (minimum) using both Blackboard and email • Set clear expectations around class attendance, participation, and assignments. • Include a netiquette statement (Network Etiquette) in the syllabus stating the proper behavior while interacting online. • Communicate frequently during the first two weeks to ensure that students understand the course expectations and can navigate the course materials. • Provide students with a course schedule, list of assignments and their due dates to help plan their week/semester |
| <p>5</p> <p>Provide synchronous classes and help sessions where possible</p> | <p>The majority of CEMS students preferred synchronous instruction in spring '20. Synchronous instruction is another way to promote student engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey students at the beginning of the semester to assess possible barriers to access (live lectures, course materials, software and platforms). • Record live lectures so that students can watch/review asynchronously. • Record help sessions for those who cannot attend, especially if example problems are discussed regularly. |
| <p>6</p> <p>Minimize and coordinate required learning platforms and technology within your program</p> | <p>Students may become overwhelmed when too many learning technologies are required. To minimize the number of learning platforms required in fall '20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Blackboard as the primary learning management system (where possible). • Use MS Teams as the primary conferencing tool for live class meetings. • Prioritize additional technologies and proctoring tools with Bb integration. • Coordinate and minimize additional <u>UVM-approved</u> platforms not covered above. • Minimize the cost to students of additional platforms and technologies. |
| <p>7</p> <p>Be prepared for online or alternative final assessments</p> | <p>If social distancing measures are required, final assessments may need to be fully or partially online. Therefore,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See CTL's Exam Decision Tree to explore options for different exam formats. • Use UVM-approved platforms for administering exams (Blackboard+ integrated tools, Gradescope). • Consider alternatives to timed/proctored final assessments, particularly if students indicate barriers to access or <u>opposition to online proctoring</u>. • If proctoring is required, use <u>UVM-approved</u>, low- or no-cost options. • Ensure <u>academic integrity</u> is maintained in whichever option you choose. |

For help applying these recommendations in specific courses or types of courses (large or small lecture, lab course, project course, seminar), please reach out to support staff at [CTL](#) or the CEMS Directors of Curricular Enrichment, Priyantha Wijesinghe (pwijesin@uvm.edu) and Courtney Giles (cdgiles@uvm.edu).

Watch this space! Join the [CEMS TEACH team](#) for on-going teaching-centered conversations and the [CEMS TEACH webpage](#) for fall '20 updates and workshop opportunities.

UVM Approved Learning Platforms Used Within CEMS

The following are UVM-approved learning platforms used in CEMS. Programs are encouraged to coordinate and minimize the number of required learning platforms for teaching in fall '20 by choosing one platform from each category. For example, a program may choose to have all instructors use Blackboard as the primary LMS, MS Teams for holding and recording live class meetings, Blackboard for discussions, assignment submission and assessment, MS Forms for synchronous polling, Respondus for exam proctoring if required (Total platforms = 3).

| Platform | Blackboard Integration | Cost to students | Description | Who can I ask for help? * |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| A. Primary Learning Management System | | | | |
| Blackboard | Yes | Free | UVM's primary LMS used for communication, written discussion, course materials repository, assessment, assignment submission, and grading center; See Blackboard Ally for creating accessible course materials. | 1, 2, 3 |
| B. Primary Conferencing Tool | | | | |
| MS Teams | No | Free | Microsoft Teams is the recommended collaborative communications platform that incorporates a persistent chat, video calls/meetings, polls, and file sharing (including collaborative editing of documents). | 1, 2, 3 |
| C. Discussion Tools | | | | |
| Blackboard | Yes | Free | Used for written discussion boards and blogs within Blackboard | 1, 2, 3 |
| Flipgrid | Yes | Free | Cloud-based application that allows for asynchronous video and audio discussion; Flipgrid is included in UVM's Microsoft license. Flipgrid for Faculty . | 2, 3 |
| Piazza | Yes | Free | Wiki-style discussion platform; See Intro to Piazza video . | 1, 3 |
| YellowDig** | Yes | Pricing | Social media platform that allows students to connect with each other and instructors. Free until 12/31 (no limits on users). Signup here . **Not supported through CTL | 1, 3 |
| D. Classroom Response Systems | | | | |
| TopHat | Yes | \$30/sem; \$48/yr | Active-learning platform with clicker function that allows faculty to quickly pivot between online and in-person instruction. Fact sheet . | 1, 2 |
| iClicker | Yes | \$47 | Electronic polling system for in-person classes. | 3 |
| MS Teams | Yes | Free | Use MS Forms for polling and questions during a live class meetings. | 1, 2, 3 |
| E. Proctoring Tools | | | | |
| Respondus | Yes | Free | Recommended Lock-down browser and monitoring for Blackboard exams; Problematic for code-based assessments. | 3 |
| ProctorU | Yes | \$25/120 min | Live proctoring service; Cost per student varies with length of exam. | 1, 3 |
| Proctorio | Yes | See notes | A.I.-assisted remote proctoring service for Blackboard exams. Gradescope integration coming soon; \$5/exam- discounted from \$10 or \$20/course unlimited use within that specific course. | 1, 2 |
| Gradescope | In progress | Free | Online assignment submission and grading tool; Exam proctoring via Proctorio coming soon with student fee (TBD). | 1, 2 |
| F. Assignment Submission & Grading Platform | | | | |
| Gradescope | In progress | Free | Online assignment submission and grading tool; | 1, 2 |
| Blackboard | Yes | Free | Assignments can be uploaded directly to Blackboard and graded directly within Blackboard. | 1, 2, 3 |

* Who can I ask for help?

1 = pwijesin@uvm.edu;

2 = cdgiles@uvm.edu;

3 = [Center for Teaching & Learning](#)