

Teaching Considerations and Commitments

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As we design courses for Fall 2020 and beyond, planning must acknowledge that courses will be taught in multiple modalities, including face-to-face, blended, HyFlex, and online. This brief resource document addresses two important areas to keep in mind as departments are adjusting schedules and course delivery modes. The first is a list of considerations to help departments address a range of student, faculty, and curricular needs. The second presents research-based guidelines for good teaching, regardless of modality, and thus serves as a set of principles to help us realize our commitments to high-quality instruction.

I. Considerations

- A. Full online course development
- B. Potential shift of all F2F to online if/when necessary
- C. HyFlex and hybrid course development
 - Split attendance for students (entire semester)
 - Student accommodations (intermittent for those self-isolating)
 - Student accommodations (entire semester for those with health concerns)
 - Faculty remote, students F2F with TAs/student leaders
- D. Lab and performance courses
- E. Team-based and POGIL (process-oriented guided inquiry learning) courses
- F. Specialized software-dependent courses
- G. Using Canvas to prepare for course backup coverage and access to course materials
 - Include backup instructor in Canvas for all courses
 - Use Canvas to at least post syllabus and communicate with students at least once at the beginning of the semester

II. Commitments

- A. **Regular, substantive human interaction is key.** Good teaching engages students in regular, substantive interaction with peers and the instructor. This is true regardless of course delivery mode.
- B. **Well-aligned courses facilitate student learning.** A well-designed course aligns expected learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessments. In such a course, the overall design of the course and the purpose of assignments are transparent to students; learning outcomes and criteria for success tell students what they will know, do, and become as a result of the course; and instructional materials (e.g., syllabus, assignments, activities) help students achieve intended outcomes.
- C. **Well-designed courses are attuned to accessibility and usability for all learners.** A well-designed course reflects the principles and methods of universal design, enabling all students and faculty to fully participate. When applied to course design, universal design increases access to course content and interactive experiences with peers and the instructor. Its fundamental tenet of “reach everyone, teach everyone” provides a

broader inclusion framework for education-focused institutions. Resources include <https://provost.jhu.edu/about/hudl/updates/> and <http://udloncampus.cast.org/home> .

- D. Well-designed courses and effective teaching consider situational factors that influence the learning environment.** Situational factors to consider include characteristics of learners (e.g., educational and cultural backgrounds), characteristics of the instructor (e.g., experience, educational and cultural backgrounds), nature of the subject (e.g., disciplinary approaches, signature pedagogies of disciplines), institutional parameters (e.g., class size, expectations for learning), and circumstantial parameters (e.g., online connectivity, physical distancing protocols, learning devices, planned vs. emergency disruptions).

This document was developed by representatives from the Center for Faculty Innovation, the College of Education, the College of Integrated Sciences and Engineering, JMU Libraries, and University Programs. Please contact [Libraries](#) and [CFI](#) for instructional support, and please contact [Fletcher Linder](#) for more information about online planning.