Best Practices for Hybrid Instruction

Writing SLOs for a Hybrid Class

1. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) should be the same for hybrid and face-to-face courses; the only things you might consider changing are the means with which students attain the SLOs (Stein & Graham, 2014).

2. You may want to consider which SLOs would be best met in the face-to-face sessions and which in the online environment.

Delivering Content (When, How, and Why) in a Hybrid Class

3. Consider how to incorporate student-centered learning in the classroom. Minimally guided instruction, which constructivists often advocate for, propose that students locate, assess, and construct knowledge for themselves. Direct instruction, whether through lecture, video, or reading, keeps the teacher-expert at the center of content delivery process (Thompson, 2011).

4. Keep in mind that hybrid learning lends itself to learner-centered, teacher-guided (as opposed to teacher-directed), interactive, and student-collaborative learning.

5. When adapting a current face-to-face course, "direct translation" may not work for multiple reasons, such as intentionally timing course activities and preparing students for in-class sessions. Consider re-designing certain elements to still meet the learning objective; for example, reimagine an in-class discussion as a reflection paper or a group project.

6. There are several models for delivering content in a hybrid course:
    a. Flipped classroom: where students receive content online and practice in the face-to-face class.
    b. Instructional split: students receive an equal amount of instruction through face-to-face lectures and posted content materials, such as readings, recorded lectures, and other videos.

7. Many hybrid courses put recorded lectures online, reserving the in-class sessions for questions and practice (Asarta & Schmidt, 2013). If you are using a video, make sure to plan out the content beforehand, consider using a script, keep the videos to 3–4 minutes long, and ask for student feedback to improve the delivery (Di Paolo et al., 2017).

8. The easiest activity to switch to online is a lecture. Try to make an online lecture interactive as well: follow the lecture by an interactive activity, or precede the lecture by an activity that activates or challenges students' prior knowledge.

9. Since you can't gauge your students' understanding by their reaction, it is important that you create activities for students to demonstrate whether they understood a principle.

10. Elements that lend themselves well to self-study should be moved online (Troha, 2003).

11. When deciding what to move online, choose material where:
    a. "Students are passive participants,
    b. There is minimal student interaction, [and]
    c. Delivery can be effectively replicated online" (Klotz & Wright, 2017, p. 29).

    Quizzes and lectures usually involve minimal interaction so might best serve the students if delivered online (Klotz & Wright, 2017).

12. Instruct your students how to watch your videos: whether it is important or not to take notes, whether they will be quizzed at the end of a segment before they can proceed to another segment.

13. Consider using material from an Open Educational Resources (OER). Check the quality and copyright usage first. Some repositories can be found at the following links:
    a. Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT): https://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm
    b. WikiEducator: https://wikieducator.org/Main_Page
    c. Internet Archive: https://archive.org/
    d. OpenLearn: https://www.open.edu/openlearn/
    e. ibiblio: https://www.ibiblio.org/about/
    f. Jorum (UK): http://jorum.ac.uk/
    g. iTunesU: https://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/

Choosing and Allocating (Online vs F2F) Student Practice in a Hybrid Class

14. Discussion boards, while easy to implement, bore many students, who view these assignments as busywork (Nilson, 2016).

15. Online discussions have the potential to be more thorough; it is easier to keep track of participation; have students continue their onsite discussions online (this had the added advantage to reinforce the connections between the online and onsite course components)

16. Provide opportunities for interactive and collaborative learning online, such as with discussion posts or group projects (King & Arnold, 2012, p. 45).

17. Ask discussion questions that have more than one answer; maybe that are even controversial.

18. Divide the class into smaller groups and have them engage with different discussion topics.

19. Ask students to summarize their in-class discussions (Aycock, 2011).

20. Provide clear instructions and expectations for assignments. Provide examples where possible to avoid "ambiguity" or "miscommunication" (Kung, 2017, p. 483).

21. Learning journals, blogs, and reading reviews could be online.

22. It is important to develop the activities and assignments for the online and face-to-face sessions simultaneously to integrate the two and to avoid having what might appear to be two separate classes: one online and one face-to-face (Ross & Rosenbloom, 2011, p. 361). Consider how your face-to-face sessions will complement and enhance the students' online work and vice-versa. The two should be "interdependent" to help the students' see the relevance of the coursework (Stromie & Baudier, 2017, p. 40).

23. Practice consistency with regard to course logistics, for example, where/how students will submit assignments, organization of online content, etc.

24. Use online quizzes as a way to provide automatic feedback to students as to how well they are understanding the material (Stromie & Baudier, 2017, p. 40).

25. For content delivered online, consider various low-stakes assessments to measure students' understanding. For example, assign a WSQ (Watch Summarize Question) where they watch a video, summarize the video's content, and ask 2–3 questions for clarification and/or as discussion prompts for the next face-to-face class period (Stromie & Baudier, 2017, p. 43).

26. Develop discussion and assignment prompts that encourage students to express their personal opinions, in order to help build community.

27. Worked examples could be transferred online.

28. Self-assessment quizzes and reading quizzes could be online.

29. Use class time for peer instruction.

30. Consider making a table like this for all activities before deciding where to have it take place:

Type of Activity	Onsite Advantages	Online Advantages
Lectures, presentations, and worked examples	Sensory richness Spontaneity Opportunity for elaboration	Flexibility of time and space Reusability User control of pacing
"Hands-on: guided practice	Simultaneous monitoring of whole class High level of "humanness" Allows for shared physical objects	No limits with simulations and virtual environments Supports individualized practice User control of pacing
Self-assessment quizzes	Easier to control against cheating	Individualized question selection Automated scoring Automatic feedback Multiple attempts

(Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 137)

Choosing and Allocating (Online vs F2F) Assessments in a Hybrid Class

31. Use rubrics to expediate the grading process. Online quizzes can assess reading completion.

32. Assign assessments that will help bridge the concepts introduced both online and face-to-face, for example, concept maps or entrance / exit tickets (Stromie & Baudier, 2017, p. 41).

33. Consider using a mix of online and face-to-face forms of assessment (when possible) to give students a variety of ways to demonstrate learning.

34. Low-stakes, online self-assessments or practice exams can also be used to help students prepare for face-to-face assessments.

35. Consider spacing access to the material to prevent students from cramming before exams (Asarta & Schmidt, 2013, p. 121). Spaced, cumulative exams can help discourage cramming.

36. Make sure that assessments maintain their authenticity; for example, an SLO about refrigerator repair should be measured in students actually attempting to repair the refrigerator, not as a multiple-choice questionnaire.

37. If the assessment tests a skill depending on social interactions, then have this assessment take place onsite.

38. If you want to test how a student might perform during a live presentation, then do not ask them to post a recording of their presentation.

39. If you want your students to do a physical demonstration, consider what equipment they need before you decide where the assessment should take place.

40. Some assessments can be authentically measured online.

Academic integrity

41. It is usually advisable to administer high stakes exams onsite.

42. Consider using proctoring software, like Proctorio, for online tests or exams.

43. Term papers could be contracted to outside sources, so ensure that the student who turned in a paper is the student who wrote it. Have students write parts of papers in class so that you have a basis for comparison.

44. Use plagiarism detection sources, such as Turnitin, to discourage cheating.

45. Use timed online quizzes so that students don't have time to look up answers but instead have to know the material beforehand.

Options for Timeline of the Semester in Hybrid Classes

46. Use the first in-class session for a general course orientation (Gurley, 2018), as well as covering some of the course material.

47. Use the first class to orient students to the technology needed for the online portions of the course (Jerke & Mostard, 2017).

Use of Class Time in Hybrid Classes

48. Instructors must have a strong presence both online and in the face-to-face part of the course (i.e., give feedback, participate in discussions), and design online and face-to-face activities that complement each other. In other words, create what Glazer (2011) calls a "layered course" (p. 5).

49. Consider looking the Bloom's taxonomy and spend class time on the activities on higher Bloom's levels: analyze, evaluate, and create.

50. Use case studies to help students understand abstract material.

51. Pay close attention to timing. If something is due right before class, then students might not have time to process the information – especially if the activity is a group activity with students having to wait on one another to contribute.

52. Explain to students the advantages of hybrid learning – they can learn as much with reduced seat time as in a regular class, provided they are actively engaging with the material.

Syllabus Best Practices in Hybrid Classes

53. You will need more structure for the hybrid course. Therefore, you need to revisit your syllabus to make sure you have clear expectations, clear outcomes, and assessments.

54. Include a course schedule with meeting dates for both online and face-to-face meetings.

55. Clearly state what is due for each day/week.

56. Specify expectations for students when they are not in the classroom.

57. Detail when you'll be available for face-to-face and virtual office hours.

58. Have clear policies about attendance and participation in both face-to-face and online environment.

59. Add resources on how to use the technology and on time management.

60. Describe what "hybrid" entails for the context of your course (McGee & Reis, 2012).

Accessibility Considerations

61. Make sure that course notes, handouts, PowerPoints, and Canvas pages are organized with headings in order to be accessible, particularly for students using a Screen Reader (Behling, 2017, p. 90). Utilize the "check accessibility" button in the rich content editor menu in Canvas in order to check material written directly in one of Canvas's pages:

62. Use consistent sans serif font, type size, and layout throughout Canvas pages, and make sure the colors are contrasting, preferably black text on a white background (Behling, 2017, p. 95).

63. Any scanned documents should be "clean" without smudges (Behling, 2017, p. 91).

64. Label charts and graphs (Behling, 2017, p. 91). Incorporate these as text, not as an image.

65. Label or describe any links, such as the USF website, rather than www.usf.edu. Similarly, describe any images using alt-text or alt-tags.

66. Make sure there is a transcript or captions available for audio or video files (Behling, 2017, p. 91). Some applications, like Panopto and Kaltura, give you the option to request captions; however, you will need to check their accuracy.

67. Learn how to extend the time for assignments in Canvas for just one student.

General Considerations

68. **Don't overwhelm students with new technologies to learn**. Keep the focus on the SLOs rather than the tools used to learn them. Exercise restraint when expecting students to learn new technologies as part of the course. The idea that students are "digital natives" conversant with any new technology is largely a myth (Margaryan et al., 2011).

69. Content is more important than production value; do not get bogged down in the quality of your videos, but use a quality microphone

70. Student success is dependent on self-motivation, more so perhaps than would be necessary in a face-to-face class (Asarta & Schmidt, 2013).

71. Foster an online teaching presence (Gurley, 2018; King & Arthur, 2012). Consider posting videos of yourself, actively responding to discussion posts, or being readily available over email.

72. Remember students have different access to technology: design the online component for the lowest common denominator.

73. Have students complete an online readiness checklist before beginning the course (Jerke & Mosterd, 2017, p. 104).

74. Plan for technical difficulties. Have policies in place should the technology stop working.

75. Set clear expectations as to when students should expect feedback or interactions with the instructor.

76. Communication – between the instructor and students and between students – should be consistent. Consider using a discussion board for questions and technology troubleshooting (King & Arnold, 2012, p. 55).

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