

Dear Faculty and Instructional Staff,

As we prepare to resume classes on March 30<sup>th</sup> and deliver as much of our curriculum as possible online, I want to thank you for all of the work you have already done. We know from our conversations with the deans, with CTS and with Innovations in Learning staff, that you are all stepping up and doing what is needed to prepare. Thank you. We understand this isn't easy, that not all of what you do can be recreated in an online environment, and that many of you will need to adjust your expectations for the remainder of the semester.

With this message we want to convey some basic information about how to get started in Canvas if you are a new user, offer some tips about effective online delivery, and provide you with information about the technical tools and help that are available for you. All of this information is also in the attachment, but please read at least the next two paragraphs!

First, your go-to place for information is the [Canvas Login page](#). Part way down that page is a link to the [Instructional Continuity UW-Parkside Website](#). New users should scroll down to the "Face-to-Face to Online" section of that page for instructions on how to get started. All of your courses, whether you have ever used Canvas or not, have course shells already created. You just need to find your courses, add content, and publish them to give access to students. Other tools within Canvas you should explore are Blackboard Collaborate to create an interactive environment, and Kaltura for audio and video capture. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Innovations in Learning staff, [innovations@uwp.edu](mailto:innovations@uwp.edu), with questions or for one-on-one help. They are currently unavailable for face-to-face meeting, but can answer questions via e-mail, telephone, WebEx, etc.

Second, we don't expect everyone to be ready with fully formed online courses on day 1, but there are some simple strategies you can use to ensure that students have a good experience when interacting with your courses. The most important is for you, as the instructor, to create a presence in the course so that you can interact with students, provide feedback, monitor student progress and be available to answer questions. Here are some tips given to participants in UW-Parkside's Online Workshop compiled by Jim Robinson. Please pay particular attention to his suggestion that you create a low stakes assignment so that you know by the end of week 1 that all of your students are able to access and use the course materials.

1.) In the online workshop we have instructors make a welcome video. In the short term I suggest a welcome statement (announcement, document, post etc.) In it I suggest acknowledging the unexpected nature of the shift and encouraging that "we will learn together" but that the course is **not self-paced**. Ways to obtain both academic and technical support should be included. Finally I suggest a super low stakes (for little or no credit) sample homework and sample test (could be a survey about the student comfort level with online) to assure students can be successful with the interface before it counts for high stakes. For those who fail – reach out.

2.) The course should be organized so that a consistent pattern is established and emphasized. Online does not have the structure of the regular classroom. If in the f-2-f class one was giving a quiz every Friday, I suggest they continue to do so online. For familiar structure, synchronous open office hours could be available during one (or more) of the former existing class times. It is important to establish a rhythm whereby assignments, postings, or completed readings are due on the same day at the same

time each week. The calendar and class e-mail features can be used to remind students of upcoming deadlines.

3.) Instructor “presence” is a term defining methods for communication and feedback to student so they feel they are in a supportive learning environment. This needs to be established at the onset so I recommend front end loading the attention given to students. Research tells us students want to feel the instructor cares – that they are not isolated. While video seems to be the gold standard they are time consuming to develop. Prompt response time is probably more important. Using individual student feedback to relate learning adjustments that are being made for the whole class to help ensure success is one way of establishing trust and demonstrating caring about their learning. Chat sessions or open office hours that employ videoconferencing are other ideas.

4.) Don’t go it alone. A “Student Assistant Forum” can be established in the Discussion area where anyone can post a question anytime and receive a response from anyone.

5.) Don’t try to do too much to get started: While a rich learning environment is the goal in online course design it typically takes Online Workshop participants four weeks to go through the course and another four weeks to finish designing one class. There are not that many weeks left in the semester and many people have multiple courses to convert. Over the summer with the shell produced this spring you can try to upgrade the content to a more satisfactory norm should you desire.

6.) Assessment: It can be helpful to have additional intermediate forms of feedback to assure students are not falling behind – or at least to identify those who are doing so early enough to be able to intervene before it is too late for their academic success. This can be in the form of having them submit a draft – it need not be graded – or low stakes short reading quizzes (3-5 questions, auto-graded to reduce workload but serving to make visible a trend of repeated failures). If a discussion forum is used it is NOT necessary to grade all postings. We do not grade every response a student makes in class. The grading criteria may need to be changed if, for example, points are to be awarded for discussion participation where none was present in the f-2-f environment.

Finally, here is a compilation of some of the technical tools available for your use.

## **Asynchronous Options**

### **Assignments**

The Canvas assignments tool allows for the online submission of course work. For information on how to build an online Canvas assignment, [visit the Canvas Guides](#).

### **Discussions**

If you’re looking for an asynchronous alternative to in-class discussions, the Canvas discussions tool will allow you to post a prompt either to your full class or groups of students and begin a dialogue on the topic. Discussions can be built into Canvas either as graded or ungraded activities. For information on how to build an online Canvas discussion, [visit the Canvas Guides](#).

### **Quizzes**

Canvas has robust options for building quizzes and surveys within the LMS. Choose from standard options like multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions, or try something more robust like a matching question, multiple select, or hotspot. For information on how to build an online Canvas quiz, [visit the Canvas guides](#).

### **Kaltura**

Record lecture videos using Kaltura. You can record your computer screen, webcam, or both. All Kaltura videos have the capability to be captioned on an as-needed basis. Videos embed directly into Canvas so students can access materials within the LMS. PowerPoint lectures can also be recorded with audio and exported as .mp4 files to convey in-class content to students online.

## **Synchronous Options**

### **Blackboard Collaborate Ultra**

This is Innovations in Learning's preferred method of video conferencing. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra integrates directly within Canvas, and rooms are available for synchronous communication between instructors and students.

### **Help & Resources**

#### **Canvas Tier 1 Support**

Canvas offers 24/7 Tier 1 Technical Support for faculty and students. Tier 1 Support serves as the primary point of contact for all Canvas-related questions. You can access support through the Help button on the black navigation bar within Canvas, or on the [Canvas logins page](#).

#### **Innovations in Learning**

For assistance with moving your face-to-face course to online please contact us at [innovations@uwp.edu](mailto:innovations@uwp.edu).