

Hybrid Teaching

Supporting Active Learning

Overview

We define synchronous in-person and online teaching as Hybrid.

Here we are providing some guidelines to consider in order to support active teaching and supporting learning in Hybrid mode.

Introduction

We know from student feedback that they value opportunities for active learning and peer-to-peer interaction during classes. When planning for active learning in hybrid teaching, you will need to consider your whole session duration (e.g., 50 or 110 mins), and then identify the sections or times where you want to invite your students to interact. Here are some key issues to bear in mind when doing this in a hybrid setting (see below for more detail):

- Think about how you will address both the campus students and the remote students. (E.g., write yourself a mini script to welcome both groups.)
- Consider selection of "back channels" (ways of allowing for communication from both remote and campus students) for interaction during the session, and decide how/when you are going to use these channels in class).
- Use polls to keep students actively engaged and to ascertain their understanding of core concepts.
- Think about the questions you want to ask students at intervals throughout the session, and any technology you will use to help gather responses from students.
- Decide whether you want to set up group work, and if so, how you will manage both the campus and the remote cohorts.

In addition to these techniques for fostering active learning, you will also need to decide how you are going to capture questions and feedback from the students. For ideas on how to manage this, please see the section on suggestions for addressing student questions.

Back channels for "chat"

Tools for enabling students to "chat" during the class include the Zoom chat, a shared Microsoft Online Document, or a Canvas discussion board. Each of these has its own considerations, as follows:

The Zoom chat:

- This is a good way to involve all the remote students, but it might create an unequal situation where students in the room feel they have less opportunity to ask questions than their peers online.
- Bear in mind that your campus students may choose to join in the Zoom chat on a device from within the room. If they do so, they will need to join the Zoom room **without connecting to audio** (to avoid echoes and feedback) and **with their videos off** (to avoid accidentally sharing images of other students in the room).
- You might find that you receive more questions than you are able to answer during the lecture. For this reason, we recommend inviting students to use another channel to submit questions after the lecture (for example a Canvas discussion board).

Back channels for “chat” cont.

- If you plan to read the Zoom chat after the session to see what questions remain to be answered in future sessions, you will need to have the Zoom session in the Hybrid Teaching room set to record.

A Canvas discussion board:

- A Canvas discussion board for Q&A is a good way for students in both the remote and the campus cohorts to ask any unanswered question after each lecture.
- Tell students when (or how) you will respond to their questions.
- Discussion boards work best when students are in groups of manageable sizes (e.g. 10-15 students per discussion board).
- A discussion board can also be used during the lecture. In this case, you will need to advise students to refresh their browsers regularly, as the Canvas discussion boards do not auto-refresh.

Polling

Interactive polling tools allow you to easily ask questions, track your students' progress and receive instant feedback from both face-to-face and online cohorts simultaneously. We recommend using TurningPoint Web for polling, as it can be used anonymously and without any additional software.

Asking Concept-Checking Questions

If you would like to include "reflection points" at intervals during your session, you could prepare some questions and include these in your slides. A simple way of managing these reflection points is to give students a few moments for reflection, and then take responses from individuals both in the room and via Zoom. If you do this, here are some things to bear in mind:

- Ensure that you give balanced attention to both the remote and the campus students.
- Ask the remote students to use the "Raise hand" button if they want to speak.
- Ensure that both groups can hear each other. (The students in the room may need to project their voices more if they are seated at a distance from a microphone; the online students may need to be reminded to unmute.)
- Ensure that remote students do not feel any pressure to turn on their videos when they speak.

There are many excellent ideas for question-based activities, which can be used in hybrid teaching.

Further Reading

Supporting Active Learning in Large Group Teaching at Birmingham: Starters, Mains and Desserts

<https://canvas.bham.ac.uk/courses/52821>

HyFlex Bibliography

<https://www.hyflexlearning.org/bibliography/>

What Is Hybrid Learning? Here's Everything You Need to Know

<https://resources.owllabs.com/blog/hybrid-learning>

