

SYNCHRONOUS TEACHING

1 PLATFORM

- Get familiar with the platform you will use for your synchronous classes (i.e., Collaborate or Teams at StFX), consider:
 - Capacity - the number of participants that can use it at one time
 - Quality - audio and visual (even when muted)
 - Accessibility - on a variety of devices (i.e., phone, tablet, etc.)
- What features does the system have integrated (e.g., whiteboard, polling, chat, breakout rooms, etc.)?
 - can these features replicate what is done in an in-person class?
 - how easy is it to use these features?



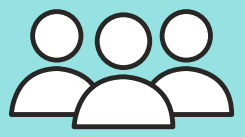
2 ACTIVITIES

- Choose a variety of teaching and learning experiences
 - group discussions and projects, debates, guest speakers, presentations, collaborative worksheets, etc.
- Emphasize variety in presentation
 - visuals, media, interactive tools, and learning activities, etc.
- Break complex tasks into smaller learning 'chunks' to provide students with the time needed to learn them.
 - provide formative feedback - frequently
 - create several learning tasks for these complex ideas, if possible



3 STUDENTS

- Foster connections with students online
 - Start class with a social check in
 - What news/sport topic can be spoken about?
 - What TV programs are students watching?
 - Use the chat function to gauge students' progress during class, to ask questions, provide feedback, etc.
 - A student can be assigned each class to keep track and notify professor when there is a question to be addressed
 - Hands up can also be used to allow students to share questions/comments with class
- Encourage online communication between participants
 - allow students to connect in online learning room as needed (e.g. Collaborate is open unless we close it)



4 PLAN AHEAD

- Consider your primary objective(s) when creating your classes - and share this in an 'agenda' or overview
 - what should students learn, be able to do, etc.
- Respect the students' time
 - start and finish on time
 - set and follow time restrictions for discussions, presentations, etc.
- Provide weekly announcements of what to expect, reminders of scheduled due dates
- Be conscious of time zones and other reasons it may be difficult to attend synchronous classes
 - consider recording class for these students and as a study tool for all students



5 INTRODUCE MATERIAL

- Assign readings to students ahead of class time
 - Require students to come to class with one or more prepared questions; consider
 - students submitting these questions before class
 - providing a grade for these questions
- Share your screen and/or using whiteboard function giving students an opportunity to be actively engaged in the class, showing their work, etc.
- Use the 5-Minute Rule - involve learners (i.e., active engagement) at least once every 5 minutes
 - break up the presentations with quizzes, open-ended questions, and using scenarios where learners must put what they have just learned into practice



6 SOLICIT FEEDBACK

- Ask the students about their overall synchronous experience
 - Communicate the importance of their feedback for fine-tuning future classes with them
- Ask students during class how class is going
 - use Chat Box for 'thumbs up', 'thumbs down' or other emoji responses
- Finish class using snowball questions:
 - what did you learn today?
 - what do you need more time to understand?
 - what was not clear today?



Resources

10 Tips for Using Synchronous E-Learning. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.elearninglearning.com/activities/examples/synchronous/?open-article-id=9280255&article-title=10-tips-for-using-synchronous-e-learning&blog-domain=captech.com&blog-title=captech>
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Morgan, A., & DePaul University. (2016, October 10). Instructional Design Tips, Advice, & Trends for Online & Distance Learning: Educational Technology and Online Course Design Help. Retrieved from <https://www.idblog.org/get-in-sync-5-tips-to-better-domestic-and-international-collaborations/#more-2611>
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& LEARNING
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