

# Appendix B

## Learning Interactions: Fostering Engagement in Blended Learning Classrooms

From the [Instructional Playbook](#)

### Introduction

The blended learning model that Clemson University is adopting this fall has its roots in both classroom teaching and online learning. It is unsurprising, then, that engagement strategies that work in these two environments are also going to be important in a blended course. Blended courses require careful planning to blend these two modes to maximize learning for students. Blended learning is an area that does not have a widely accepted definition in the literature, and you may hear related terms such as hybrid and HyFlex. For the academic plan this fall, versions of blended learning will be implemented that are different from other versions in the requirement for physical distancing while face-to-face. The project team used the following definition: “at its simplest, blended learning is the integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences” (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004, 96; Jeffrey, Milne, et al., 2012).

### Tips and Suggestions

- Communicate interaction and participation expectations early in the class for online and face-to-face students.
- Welcome both face-to-face, online, and acknowledge those who might be watching the recording (if you are recording sessions).
- Establish guidelines and expectations for participation.
  - In the synchronous session, what does engagement consist of for both online students and face-to-face students? What are the expectations for frequency of comments and questions?
  - For example, should online students ask questions orally at any time, use the chat, or wait for the instructor to ask for questions?
- Set a timer for 8 to 10 minutes to remind yourself to engage with the online students. Pause and specifically ask for questions from, or ask questions to, the online students as well as face-to-face students.
- Create opportunities for face-to-face students and online students to work collaboratively during class sessions (using Zoom breakout rooms, Google Docs, etc.)

- Ask whether student questions are heard. Repeat face-to-face student questions so the online attendees can hear both the question and answer and be sure to read chat questions for the face-to-face students before answering online questions.

## Questions to Consider

- Will you require face-to-face students to be online/logged into Zoom?
- How do you want students, both online and face-to-face, to engage in the synchronous session?
- How should students who are watching the lecture online engage? How will you assess their participation (assessment can mean your sense of participation or graded participation)?
- Will you give students the option to watch a recording and complete an assessment if they don't attend live?

## Activities

### Learner-instructor Interaction

- Maintain frequent learner-instructor interaction
- Provide feedback and responses promptly.
- Offer scheduled synchronous online “office hours” through Zoom.
- Periodically survey students for feedback throughout the course in order to adjust as needed for students.
- Make yourself available by email and respond to students’ emails, in a timely manner, using Canvas to keep track of emails.
- Provide audio, video or written feedback on student work promptly (setting up expectations in your syllabus).

### Learner-learner Interaction

- Consider interaction among students who are attending face-to-face classes and students who are attending online.
- Use Canvas Discussion board for synchronous or asynchronous conversation.
- Use video discussion where students who are face-to-face and online discuss questions posed in class or class readings.
- Assign students to provide feedback to peers on an assignment. Students should have clear guidelines for providing constructive feedback.
- Allow students to complete work collaboratively (e.g., simultaneously edit a document and/or work collaboratively on Zoom).
- Organize study groups – instructor or student developed study groups that can take place virtually.

- Design synchronous or asynchronous online debates.

## Learner-content Interaction

- Consider how students will interact with a variety of content (e.g., textbook or electronic textbook, Open Educational Resources, videos, websites or online tutorials).
- Assign or encourage students to create reading guides, ask students to identify key information; use Canvas or apps like VoiceThread to gather student reactions to content; provide students with “how to” guides to reading and studying in your discipline. Include resources from the Libraries and Academic Success Center to support student learning of content.
- Encourage students to be inclusive in study groups, by facilitating that process (for example, creating a “when to meet” form that makes it easier for students to match up study schedules). The Academic Success Center also has a new online resource to help students form study groups.

## Learner-interface Interaction

- The “interface” refers to the technology used with a course. At Clemson, the supported LMS is Canvas. Making full use of Canvas offers benefits to you and to your students. It is the supported tool, but beyond that, making full use of Canvas supports all students, and particularly students who struggle to stay organized and balance the load of multiple classes.
- Build an organized Canvas course using Modules and limiting the amount of items visible in the “menu”.
- Encourage interaction with Canvas through regular use of Announcements and providing grades and feedback in the Gradebook.
- Use tools within Canvas, rather than outside of Canvas, to enhance learner-interface interaction: Canvas discussion boards, Canvas groups, Google apps, Flipgrid, and VoiceThread.(See “Clemson supported tools” from Clemson Online.) If using an app not integrated in Canvas, provide a link within the Canvas site that is easy to find (e.g., Homepage).

## Resources

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