

Questions for Reflection on Creating Hybrid Courses

Developed by UW-Milwaukee Learning Technology Center

What do you want students to know when they have finished taking your hybrid course?

As you think about learning outcomes, which would be better achieved online and which would be best achieved face-to-face?

Hybrid teaching is not just a matter of transferring a portion of your traditional course to the Web. Instead it involves developing challenging and engaging online learning activities that complement your face-to-face activities. What types of learning activities do you think you will be using for the online portion of your course?

How will the face-to-face and time out of class components be integrated into a single course? In other words, how will the work done in each component feed back into and support the other?

Online asynchronous discussion is often an important part of hybrid courses. What new learning opportunities will arise as a result of using asynchronous discussion? What challenges do you anticipate in using online discussions? How would you address these?

Students sometimes have difficulty acclimating to the course Web site and to other instructional technologies you may be using for face-to-face and online activities. What specific technologies will you use for the online and face-to-face portions of your course? What proactive steps can you take to assist students to become familiar with your Web site and those instructional technologies? If students need help with technology later in the course, how will you provide support?

When working online, students frequently have problems scheduling their work and managing their time, and understanding the implications of the hybrid course module as related to learning. What do you plan to do to help your students address these issues?

How will you divide the percent of time between the face-to-face portion and the online portion of your course? How will you schedule the percent of time between the face-to-face and online portion of your course?

How will you divide the course-grading scheme between face-to-face and online activities? What means will you use to assess student work in each of these two components?

There is a tendency for faculty to require students to do more work in a hybrid course than they normally would complete in a purely traditional course. What are you going to do to ensure that you have not created a course and one-half? How will you evaluate the student workload as compared to a traditional class?

BENEFITS FOR FACULTY

- Faculty will have to use more student-centered learning and relinquish some “sage on the stage” control of the classroom
- Reduced commuting/ parking time
- May find improved attendance in the reduced classroom portions of the course
- Can offer increased access to facilities (such as labs) or equipment that is in demand for more than one course
- Allows mainstream faculty to "transition" to asynchronous online instruction - materials created can be used for fully online offering and for F2F iterations.
- Instructors are often more comfortable moving into hybrids as compared to fully online courses
- Faculty report that their face-to-face teaching techniques are expanded
- Concerning professional development, a majority of instructors report enhanced hardware & software skills - this is especially true for faculty who are also involved in the design of the hybrid materials
- Testing can be done face-to-face if there are concerns over online testing - testing online can also be more effective for frequent assessment of progress, immediate feedback and automated grading when using a learning management system (LMS) such as WebCT.
- Discussion responses by students are generally more thoughtful when written than when given extemporaneously.
- Assignments "collected" and "returned" online and lectures viewed online become the basis for more focused in-class discussion
- Students who rarely take part in class discussions are more likely to participate online.
- Hybrid instructors are often surprised to report *increased* interaction and contact among students and between the instructor and the students.
- Reduced need to lecture, particularly when lectures are recorded & archived. These lectures tend to be shorter and more polished than traditional ones.

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

- Increased time flexibility - including reduced commuting and parking time & opportunities for employment
- Develops/enhances time management, and skills in critical thinking, problem solving and computer skills as related to online.
- May show improved attendance in the reduced classroom portions
- Student-centered learning is generally perceived by students as more appealing and puts greater responsibility on the student
- Some studies show an increase in student success as measured by decreasing withdrawals
- Because of the text-intensive nature of online discussion, and web pages, hybrid courses are often more writing-intensive than their F2F counterparts - for example, discussion responses are generally more thoughtful when written than when given extemporaneously

- Greater integration of out-of-class activities with in-class activities (much "homework" is "collected" and checked in online discussions)
- Students often have access to pre-recorded lectures and course materials for review if needed
- Students report that they feel these lectures are better quality and easier to comprehend when done in shorter modules
- Those students who rarely take part in class discussions are more likely to participate online (due to "wait time", anonymity etc.)
- Materials are generally presented in several formats probably allowing for more learning styles

BENEFITS TO THE INSTITUTION

- Increased classroom availability
- Increased enrollment without increasing classroom space. Schools can offer "paired" courses on one day (block scheduling) allowing commuters & part time students the opportunity to take 2 classes with only one on-campus visit.
- Increased access to facilities (such as labs) or equipment that is in demand for more than one course or department
- Administration may feel more comfortable with hybrids as compared to fully online courses.
- Testing can be done face-to-face if there are concerns over online testing integrity without the use of testing centers.
- Can decrease withdrawals