

Six Best Practices for Effective Online Teaching

Outline your communication policy



- Be accessible and responsive to your students and provide multiple means of contact (e.g., email, forum, web-conferencing)
- Provide clear policies for communication in the course, including when students should expect to get a response when they reach out
- Make your contact information available in multiple places in your course

Recommendation:

 Respond to student inquiries within 24-48 hours

Send out regular announcements

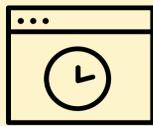


- Communicate extensively with students during the first week of the course to promote engagement
- Send updates and reminders about what is coming up in the course (e.g. deadlines, tips for assignments, etc.)
- Capitalize on opportunities to highlight connections between course content, activities, and assignments
- Keep announcements concise: focus on one main point per announcement; make use of bullet points or videos to separate large regions of text

Recommendation:

 Send announcements at regular intervals (1-2 times per week or module)

Hold virtual office hours



- Conduct synchronous office hours or chat sessions
- Offer to schedule one-on-one synchronous meetings with students via web conferencing (e.g., Zoom, Skype)

Recommendation:

 Vary office hours to accommodate different time zones and student needs

Be active in forums



- Moderate discussion threads on a regular basis
- Answer student questions within forums with prompt and complete responses
- Recognize exemplary responses

Recommendation:

 Post a "summary" response to the forum, highlighting major points

Provide timely, constructive feedback



- Provide personalized feedback to students in various ways (e.g., in-line grading, auto-graded quizzes, rubrics)
- Use constructive feedback and supportive language to help the student understand the areas they need to improve

Recommendations:

 Respond to students in forums within 24-48 hours

 Provide feedback on assignments within 48-72 hours

Support your students



- Communicate pro-actively with learners throughout the course to discuss their progress, especially if they are missing assignments or at-risk for failing
- Contact students who are not actively participating in your course and offer assistance; 'cc your dedicated Learner Concierge on these emails
- Support students in accessing content that is external to the course (e.g., lab software, videos)
- Refer students to course-specific support or LSU support services as needed

Recommendation:

 Check course activity reports weekly