

# LRU: Planning for Disruption to Campus Operations – Instructional Continuity

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## Introduction

This document serves as guidelines for Lenoir-Rhyne faculty so that they can continue to offer instruction to students in the event of disruptions to campus operations. The guide begins with general principles that will apply to most classes. From there, it turns to the work of moving face-to-face classes to an online format before considering some of the more specialized types of learning experiences – labs, clinicals, student teaching, service learning, and the like.

While it may seem that nothing is as normal when major disruptions occur, please do remember that much of the University will continue to function in ways that are familiar. The [Rudisill Library](#), for instance, will continue to offer a significant number of online resources: 630 million full-text items (books, articles, dissertations, audio and video) available through the Summon discovery tool, 3.5 million full-text e-books and 45,000 streaming videos (mostly in the [Films on Demand](#) collection) along with 109,000 streaming audio files. Similarly, the [Center for Teaching & Learning](#) will continue to operate, though we may be a little slower than normal replying. Email [Devon Fisher](#) or [Jessica O'Brien](#) for appointments, questions, etc., or (as long as campus is open) stop by the Center itself. There's always coffee and snacks, though if there's a health crisis, we may go with prepackaged foods, and we may ask you to make your own coffee.

Above all, remember that you are amazing at what you do, and our students are fortunate to have you as a professor, whether that's in a face-to-face environment or an online one.

## General Principles for Teaching Face-to-Face Classes in an Online Format

What follow are general principles that are likely true for most, if not all, classes that are typically taught in either a face-to-face or a hybrid environment that must be transitioned to online experiences due to disruptions to campus operations.

Principle 1: Don't accept responsibility for the situation. Accept responsibility for what you can do.

You are not responsible for whatever situation we're in. You didn't cause the COVID-19 virus or the blizzard. Whatever situation it is, the students in your class are highly likely to learn in a way that's less effective than if we didn't have a disruption of operations. That's not your fault, no matter how much you hate the idea.

You *are* responsible for doing what can be done to help students continue to learn.

Principle 2: Begin with outcomes.

When considering how to teach your course, keep the student learning outcomes front and center. Your goal should be to think creatively about how students can master the outcomes for your course (a learning-centered view) rather than how you can teach your course exactly as you did in a face-to-face environment (a professor-centered view).

It may be helpful to review your outcomes to identify which are essential to the course and which are not. It may also be helpful to ask which student learning outcomes are ones that students likely have already achieved in the course. Identifying the outcomes that are both essential and that need continued work will help you to focus your energies appropriately.

Principle 3: Don't plan to teach an online course. Plan to teach a face-to-face course online.

Don't think of this process as developing an online course. You're not. Developing and teaching an effective online course takes a lot of time and involves far more than replacing classroom discussions with discussion forums or delivering lectures via Zoom. Furthermore, SACS-COC does not recognize what we are doing here as legitimate online course development. During the COVID-19 disruption, for instance, SACS-COC authorized the teaching of all classes at Lenoir-Rhyne in an online format for a specific, limited time. To teach those classes in an online format outside of those windows would create significant accreditation issues, and outside the scope of an official disruption of operations, faculty are expected to follow normal protocols for developing online courses. What we're doing when campus operations have been disrupted is an emergency transition of face-to-face classes in an online space for a limited period of time.

Instead, think of what you're doing as an emergency effort to use online tools to continue instruction. It's not going to be perfect, and your teaching won't be as effective as it might be in a face-to-face setting or if you had time to develop an online course. You're getting you and your students through an emergency, and that's more than enough.

Principle 4: Be flexible with your students.

If we ever get to the point of moving all courses to an online format, it is highly likely that students will be dealing with illness, childcare issues, significant anxiety, and all sorts of other

challenges. Be generous, and be flexible. That doesn't mean giving anyone a free pass, but it does mean creating opportunities to be successful even as they navigate those challenges. See the next section of this document for more.

Principle 5: Be consistent but flexible with technology.

This may seem like contradictory advice, but it's important. **Be consistent** with technology. Use the tools that the University provides. If you're going to do videoconferencing, use Zoom. That's what other instructors will be using, and if you require Google hangouts, already overwhelmed students will now have two platforms to learn. If you're going to do discussion asynchronously, use Canvas's discussion forums. Even if you later learn of the most mind-blowing way of discussing online, *don't*. Reduce students' cognitive loads by being consistent.

**Be flexible** with technology. Be aware that with numerous universities moving online, we simply don't know what the effect will be on our technological systems. If Zoom crashes, be prepared to move to Canvas Conferences. Be flexible with student use of tech. If a student emails you a paper because she can't get logged in to submit it, accept it. This is a little bit of a burden on you, but it's not really getting in the way of student learning.

## Communicating with Students: Remaining Learning-Centered in the Event of a Disruption

Central to maintaining effective learning in the event of a disruption is consideration for and communication with students. If possible, that communication needs to happen in the time leading up to a potential disruption. Once a disruption has occurred, it is essential that communication between instructor and students continue throughout the event until students are able safely to return to campus.

### Communicating Prior to a Disruption

Communicating with students prior to a campus disruption will make it much easier to transition a class to an online teaching environment. Specific strategies include:

- **Establishing early how students should expect to hear from you.** (Recommended practice here would be to use email and the “announcements” feature of Canvas.) It may be helpful to remind students to check their notification settings in Canvas to be sure that they are getting announcements in a format that they prefer and in a timely manner. [This video](#) explains how to change those settings. Ideally, you should establish a second means of communication in case the first is not available.
- **Establishing your expectations for how frequently students should check in.** We know that students get text messages instantly, and we know that many are less active than they should be when it comes to checking email. You will want to establish *before* an emergency how often students will need to check email and the Canvas announcements page.
- **Identifying ahead of time what resources are available to students.** Find out from students in advance whether they have access at home to high-speed internet (or wherever they would go in the event that they leave campus), whether they will have access to computer/mobile device, whether they will be experiencing your course with a computer or with a mobile device, and how disrupted their lives may be by a campus closure. [This document](#) provides a good list of questions, though you’ll need to modify it because it’s specific to students in the UK.

### Communicating During a Disruption

In the event that the University moves instruction online during a disruption, it is essential to keep consistent communication with students. Specific strategies include:

- **Establishing immediately, in as many ways as possible, how students should expect to hear from you.** You already did that before the emergency, right? It doesn’t hurt to reiterate. And if you *didn’t* establish how you will communicate with students, you will need to do so immediately.

- **Be consistent.** Provide updates to students on a regular basis. Use the communication channels you have established. Respond to student communication in a timely way.

## Converting the Traditional, Face-to-Face Course to an Online Environment

This section focuses on the traditional, face-to-face course in which learning activities might include lecture, discussion, group activities, and the like. It is not intended to cover internships, student teaching, service learning, and other highly experiential learning situations.

### Decisions

When converting a face-to-face course to an online course on the fly, you as the instructor will need to make some fairly quick decisions:

- **Synchronous/Asynchronous:** Will you try to meet with all students at the same time using videoconferencing technology? Or will you create materials and assignments that allow students to work more at their own pace? Both have their benefits and drawbacks. **We strongly recommend using asynchronous strategies as much as possible.** We don't know how students will be able to use resources at home. Will siblings need the computer for their own classes? Parents for working from home? Will they have sufficient data on mobile plans for streaming video classes? Time zone problems? Asynchronous is probably the more student-friendly option with synchronous reserved for individual and small group meetings.
  - **Asynchronous:** asynchronous learning has the benefit that students can work more at their own pace (though you may still have deadlines). As an instructor, you may find it easier to manage; holding a full-class Zoom session with twenty-five students can be daunting. Finally, asynchronous work usually requires all students to participate. The main drawback of asynchronous learning is that you lose the face-to-face connection that many instructors value.
  - **Synchronous:** the main benefit of synchronous teaching is that you are able to interact with students in a way similar to how you might interact in a face to face class. Students will meet in real time, and you can use Zoom to have them break into discussion groups. Because you have been meeting at a fixed time, you might expect that students will be available to meet synchronously. Synchronous learning also has its drawbacks. Although your students do have your class time blocked off, the disruption to campus may have created new obstacles for them – childcare if public schools are closed, unusual work situations due to whatever emergency is happening, etc. Synchronous learning also relies even more heavily on reliable high-speed internet than most asynchronous methods. **A major consideration:** we do not know have any reason to believe that Zoom cannot handle the increased traffic COVID-19 will generate not only from universities but from the world business community – but we don't know for sure. If you plan to work synchronously and for any reason Zoom is unavailable, that adds a layer of complexity and challenge.



You can, of course, use a mix of both, but you'll need to communicate that to students. Many instructors find it effective to teach using asynchronous approaches and to use synchronous approaches for individual student consultation.

- **Assignments/Feedback:** after reviewing your student learning outcomes, you will want to review upcoming assignments to determine how feasible they are and how you intend to provide feedback to students. If you have opted to move to an asynchronous model, you may need to build quickly additional low-stakes assignments. Ask whether you will need to modify assignments given the new reality. The “develop and plan the marketing campaign for a board game” assignment might have been great, but is it feasible? (Maybe it is! But if not, cut it. Figure out something else.)
- **Learning Activities:** regardless of whether you opt for synchronous/asynchronous, identify the three or four main *types* of activity you would use to structure a face-to-face course (lecture, full class discussion, writing, group discussion/activity, etc.).  
**Recommendation:** be a minimalist. Don't try to do all the things. Identify your few most effective teaching strategies, and for each one, find the single best tool to accomplish it. Next year, when all crises are past, you can work with the CTL to develop seventeen different ways of conducting online discussions. Now is not that time. Canvas's discussions tool will be boring but effective.

## Planning

Now that you've made some of the tough decisions, it's time to plan. Each of the following will be helpful:

- **Design backwards:** given the current situation, what is your ideal end result for the average student in your class? Imagine the steps that the student will need to take from now until the end of the semester to reach that goal. This should help to establish a roadmap for the course. **Helpful hint:** Design backwards from the end of the semester. It may be tempting to go *forwards* one week at a time. Resist. Your course will be far more coherent if you plan towards that final goal. If we move back to face-to-face, that will not be a problem.
- **Chunk.** especially if you opt for an asynchronous delivery, you will need to decide how you break up the learning that needs to happen between now and the end of the semester. Especially for a short disruption in operations, the CTL recommends breaking learning into weekly chunks.
- **Chunky outcomes:** for each of the chunks you identified, what are the learning outcomes? What should students be able to do by the end of the chunk that they could not do before? Those outcomes should be leading students toward the ideal that you imagined above, preparing him/her to do whatever it is that you will assess along the way.

- **Assessments and activities:** now that you know what you need to accomplish in each chunk of your course, you can plan learning activities that will help them to make progress towards those goals, and you can plan how you will measure whether they meet those goals. (**Recommendation:** don't try to measure everything in a high-stakes assessment like a test or formal paper; rely when appropriate on low-stakes assessments like reflective writing, discussion forums, etc.)

Now that you've planned, it's time to create the student experience. The next sections of this guide cover the most common forms of teaching and offers advice on tools and strategies for adapting those face-to-face techniques to the virtual world.

## Pedagogical Approaches

The following section considers specific pedagogical approaches, offering suggestions on how to handle each in either a synchronous or asynchronous environment. Please keep in mind that the advice given is from the perspective of trying to make it through the rest of the semester if a face-to-face class needs to move online. Do not assume that the ideas and strategies would necessarily be the best ideas if you were to design a fully online course from scratch!

## Lecture

In nearly every traditional, face-to-face class, at one point or another, the professor is going to need to provide direct instruction to students. Fortunately, that kind of direct instruction is fairly easy to provide to students in a pinch. This part of the guide covers two tools to create video lectures and offers some practical tips to do so in a way that helps students learn. We will look at both synchronous and asynchronous tools.

### Synchronous Lecture

Synchronous lecture should be done using Zoom, the University's videoconferencing software. Zoom makes it easy for students to see and listen to you provided that you have a webcam and a microphone. (Nearly all laptops made in the last five years will have those.) In addition, Zoom makes it easy for you to share anything from your computer screen out for students to see. Please see Appendix A: Zoom Instructions for guidelines on using Zoom.

**Recommended Tool:** Zoom, with Canvas Conferences as a backup

#### **Strategies for Synchronous Online Lecture**<sup>1</sup>

One of the biggest challenges with lecturing synchronously online is that everything is smaller. Your face may be the size of a cell-phone screen for students. PowerPoint slides are even smaller. And everything is mediated through a screen. All of this makes it essential to develop strategies to keep learners engaged in the learning process. Consider the following:

- **Camera Position:** Make sure that your camera is on and that it is at eye level. This makes it easier for you to maintain eye-contact with students. Ask students to do the same. Make sure that you have a suitable background for your video; bright, open windows are nice to have, but they make a terrible backdrop.
- **Sound:** If you do not have a headset, try to find a location that is relatively free from distracting sounds. Warn students ahead of time of possible startling noises.
- **Mute participants:** Use the "manage participants" button to mute all participants. Point out to students that on their controls, they have a "participants" button that will allow them to raise their hand, at which point you can call on them and invite them to unmute.
- **Slides and Visuals:** Sharing PowerPoint slides with the "Share" feature can make it much easier for students to follow. However, PowerPoint can create significant problems if the slides are text heavy. Use a few words or an image to reinforce your point.

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<sup>1</sup> Many of the ideas on this page are adapted from Stanford University's [Teaching Effectively During Times of Disruption](#) and from personal correspondence with Professor Laura Hope-Gill.

- **Interaction:** Call on students frequently by name. This will reduce the tendency of students to wander or to have your lecture up on one screen while Instagramming on another.
- **Breakouts:** see the “Discussion” section of this guide for instructions on how to do this. Breakout sessions interspersed with lecture can be remarkably effective.
- **Quizzes:** Intersperse short quizzes to test comprehension. These can be pre-created in Canvas

### **Dealing with Pitfalls in Online Lecture**

Students will inevitably run into problems with online lectures. We know this. Here are some suggestions for troubleshooting.

- **Chat:** Use the chat feature to remind students to click on the video and audio feeds.
- **Support:** Remind students that they can call Zoom support at 1.888.799.0125. Given the number of universities shifting to online instruction, they should expect fairly long wait times.
- **Lag:** Although Zoom is programmed to account for this, if students experience lag, invite them to turn off their video feed temporarily.
- **Malfunctioning microphone:** If you click on the carat next to the phone icon in your meeting controls, you will see a “switch to phone audio” option. That option will give you phone numbers that you or a student can use to dial in to the meeting.

### **Asynchronous Lecture**

Asynchronous lecture has the benefit that students can view it on their own schedule. It has the obvious drawback that you are no longer interacting with students in the same way that you might with a face to face or synchronous lecture.

### **Recommended Tools**

When creating a fully online course from scratch, we would recommend a high-quality video editor like Camtasia to do screen capture and lecture capture. When shifting online in an emergency situation, that is unrealistic and the following two tools will suffice:

- **Zoom:** See Appendix A: Zoom Controls for instructions on how to log in to Zoom. Once you have logged in to Zoom, you can start a meeting, being sure to click on “record.” If you have PowerPoint or other visuals, using the “Share Screen” button will ensure that your visuals are captured. Otherwise, be sure to turn your camera on so that students can attach your face to what they’re hearing. For compliance purposes, downloading a

Zoom video and uploading to YouTube will create auto-captions that are not perfect but that are better than nothing.

- **Loom:** Loom is a Google Chrome extension that is not supported by LR's IT team. Nevertheless, it is free, and it can be added to Chrome without an admin username and password. Loom records only in Google Chrome, but once installed, it is easy to use. It gives you the option of recording camera, screen, or both. Once your recording is finished, Loom automatically hosts your video in the cloud and provides you a link you can share with students. You can [get Loom here](#), and the Loom page includes some training options. **Please note: Loom does not caption and to my knowledge cannot be captioned.** It is not an ADA compliant tool.

### Principles for Creating Asynchronous Lecture

Many of the principles you would use in a face to face lecture apply. Consider the following as you are creating:

- **Attention span:** just as students in a face-to-face lecture drift, so too with asynchronous. Provide students multiple 5-7 minute videos rather than a single 50-minute one.
- **Visuals:** remember that PowerPoint slides on a screen can be hard to read. Make sure you're using words sparingly. Images are helpful provided that they correspond to the content.
- **Camera:** adjust your camera so that your face is centered on the screen. Look into the camera. Make sure you have an appropriate backdrop that isn't too bright.
- **Audio:** if you have a headset, use it. If not, make sure that you are in as quiet an environment as possible.
- **Engagement:** As in a face-to-face lecture, student engagement with material will improve learning. Making them watch seven 7-minute videos back to back is no better than having a single 50-minute video. (OK, it's 1 minute better.) Instead, have them watch a short video on a concept, engage in discussion of that concept or a quiz on it, then another video followed by another activity, etc.

## Discussion

Discussion is an integral part of teaching for many of us, and the good news is that it's probably the easiest form of teaching to convert effectively to online learning. Whether synchronous or asynchronous, as a full class or in groups, LR has tools readily available, and they're fairly easy to use and implement.

### Synchronous Discussion

**Recommended Tool:** Zoom, with particular attention to the Breakout Rooms feature for group conversation

**Strategies for Synchronous Discussion:** synchronous discussion in Zoom at the full class level will seem fairly similar to full class face-to-face discussions. One of the biggest differences will be that non-verbal cues will be hard to see. For that reason, you may need to be more intentional about calling on students specifically. In terms of audio/video, many of the strategies for using Zoom are the same as they would be for synchronous lecture. Those strategies are already documented in the "Lecture" section of this guide and in Appendix A: Zoom, so they are not reproduced here. Please refer to one of those sections. Additional strategies for synchronous discussion:

- **Require students to mute themselves and use the "raise hand" option:** more than one person talking comes across as a wall of sound. Require students to mute themselves except when speaking, and require them to use the "raise hand" feature (in "Participants" in the Zoom controls) to jump in.
- **Ask the right questions:** students will find it helpful to be asked specific, thought-provoking, open-ended questions. Yes/no, "what do you think," and "discuss this topic" prompts will be less helpful and should be avoided.
  - **Not helpful:** We just read chapter 1 of *Bleak House*. Discuss your ideas about it.
  - **More helpful:** We just read chapter 1 of *Bleak House*. How did that opening paragraph with all of the dinosaur imagery affect you, and how did it shape the way you understood the rest of the chapter?
- **Give time for reflection:** perhaps more than in a face to face class, silence will feel awkward. Avoid that by giving students specific timeframes and tasks for formulating answers. Consider muting everyone and giving them 2 minutes to write in response before opening discussion (or have them write before the class begins). Even saying "we're going to wait 30 seconds for you to think through some answers" will help.
- **Direct participation:** you may need to call on students by name to make sure everyone participates. It may be helpful to invite students to respond to each other so that you don't create a "discussion" that involves lots of one-on-one interactions between you and students. And you may want to simply sit out the discussion and listen – but be sure to tell students what your role is. (Another possibility: set a timeframe and tell

students you will only ask questions.)

- **Timing:** a full 75-minute discussion may feel awkward. Intersperse discussion with other synchronous activities like having students collaborate on a google document, lecture, etc. See other sections of this guide for ideas.
- **Small group discussion:** Zoom's breakout rooms feature makes it easy to put students into small groups to discuss before coming back for full class discussion. Zoom provides [help for using breakout rooms here](#).
- **Synthesize discussion:** always, always, always leave time to synthesize to help students see what they should have learned from the discussion. Fill in gaps.
- **Clarify expectations and grading:** if you choose to grade synchronous discussion, let students know how they will be evaluated. Let them know as well if they are required to participate, and if so what you expect.

## Asynchronous Discussion

**Recommended Tool:** Canvas discussion forums

**Strategies for asynchronous discussions:** Asynchronous discussions unfold over time. They are opportunities for students to read what other students have written and to respond. Most often, asynchronous discussions take the form of threaded discussions in a discussion forum, and Canvas provides excellent help resources for how to use the discussion tool. Those instructions are available in [written form](#) and in [video form](#).

Specific strategies for online, asynchronous discussions include:

- **Ask the right questions:** students will find it helpful to be asked specific, thought-provoking, open-ended questions. Yes/no, "what do you think," and "discuss this topic" prompts will be less helpful and should be avoided.
  - **Not helpful:** We just read chapter 1 of *Bleak House*. Discuss your ideas about it.
  - **More helpful:** We just read chapter 1 of *Bleak House*. How did that opening paragraph with all of the dinosaur imagery affect you, and how did it shape the way you understood the rest of the chapter?
- **Clarify expectations and grading:** students will want to know how frequently they must post, how often they need to reply to their classmates, and how they will be graded. Providing a grading rubric and specific instructions will be helpful.
- **Clarify your role:** some discussions are just for students. At other times, you as the instructor may want to be an active part of the discussion. Let students know in the assignment how you will be part of discussion.
- **Synthesize learning:** be sure to synthesize, helping students to see what they should have learned from the discussion. Even better, have each student submit a one-



paragraph explanation of what they learned and only then provide your own synthesis.

- **Stagger deadlines:** require an initial post with follow up replies to classmates later in the week.

## Group Work and Projects

This section of the guide focuses on helping students complete group work and projects. Because those projects typically would occur outside of class in a face-to-face environment, this section will not attempt to distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous learning environments. It will, however, suggest some ways that students can organize their work to include synchronous group meetings and asynchronous work. This guide will also distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous ways of collecting group work and projects.<sup>2</sup>

### Creating Spaces for Group Work and Projects

For students who have been moved into an online environment to complete group projects, they must have spaces in which to work. Below is a list of possibilities. You should also encourage students to be flexible and creative as they may well have tools at hand that we don't know about that are more comfortable for them than institutionally provided tools. (Please do remind them of privacy concerns. A group Facebook page is great, but even in the best of circumstances, they're giving up some privacy rights, while in the worst, they may be violating HIPPA or FERPA.)

#### Synchronous Options for Students

- **Zoom:** all students at Lenoir-Rhyne have Zoom accounts. You can share with them the instructions for using Zoom (see Appendix A), at which point they will be able to create and record their own meeting space.
- **Google Suite:** all students at LR have a University created Google drive. Google Docs or Google Slides provides an opportunity for groups to collaborate synchronously.
- **Text messages:** I won't bother to provide instructions. Your students already do this in class, right? 😊

#### Asynchronous Options for Students

- **Google Suite:** while Google provides an excellent opportunity for synchronous work, it can also be used asynchronously. Students can create and share documents that they can then individually work on as their time allows.
- **Canvas's group pages:** Canvas allows you to put students into groups. Those students (and you) then have access to a group page where they have at their disposal discussion forums and wiki pages. Here's a [page that gives an overview of groups](#) appropriate for students and faculty. There is also a [video guide for instructors](#) and a separate [video guide for students](#).

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<sup>2</sup> Pepperdine University's Center for Teaching Excellence has an [excellent page on these strategies](#). Many of the ideas on this page have been adapted from Pepperdine for a Lenoir-Rhyne specific context.

## Collecting and Assigning Group Projects in the Online Space

Many group projects will be of the sort that students can submit just as they would in a face-to-face environment. Group writing, for instance, can be submitted as a MS Word document or a PDF file in the Canvas assignments tool. (Here's a page with [text instructions for creating a Canvas assignment](#), and Canvas also offers a [video guide](#) for instructors. Below are some general recommendations for collecting group presentations beyond using the Canvas assignments tool:

- **Zoom:** for many performance-oriented tasks (group presentations), Zoom may be a good option. Students can share visual aids and can talk to the instructor in real time. Although the skill set is slightly different than a presentation in front of a live audience, the skills may be similar enough to work. See Appendix A: Zoom for help using Zoom.
- **Recorded Video:** iPhones are amazing. Android phones are even better. Both have remarkable abilities to capture video. Consider having students record themselves doing whatever performance/presentation they need to and submit through Canvas assignments.
- **PowerPoint/Google Slides:** A narrated PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation can be an effective way of capturing both visual and audio.

## Special Considerations:

Converting group projects to an online format may require additional considerations:

- **Simulations and Case Studies:** Group projects often go hand-in-hand with service-learning or other forms of experiential learning. Once students have dispersed to their homes, it may be challenging if not impossible to have them engage in those projects. In such cases, consider whether the same outcomes (the *learning* part of the service-learning) may be achieved either through individual or group work on case studies or through appropriate simulations.
- **Process vs. Product:** Consider carefully whether the learning for your class requires a polished finished product or whether the learning occurs through the process. (Hint: your student learning outcomes will be helpful here.) If the presentation is a means to achieve learning rather than an end in itself, consider building into the process a significant reflective piece. This strategy will enable students to identify their learning (something you would have done in class), and if you attach a significant portion of the grade to it, it may alleviate fears of failure due not to inability to do the group project but inability to do the project in an online format.

## Student Presentations<sup>3</sup>

Student presentations in an online environment may be easy if you the professor are the audience. They may be much more challenging if your outcomes involve *public* presentation. While presenting via videoconferencing is a valuable skill for students to learn, it may or may not be sufficient for the outcomes in your course.

### General Principles:

When thinking about student presentations, your first question should be “why am I assigning a presentation?” If the answer is “because learning how to deliver a presentation publicly is one of my essential student outcomes,” you may wish to give some consideration to the ideas in the section below titled “Synchronous and Asynchronous Presentations.” If, as is more likely the case, your answer is “to help students develop the skills that presenting requires,” you may find the section titled “Developing Presentation Skills Without Presenting” more useful.

### Developing Presentation Skills Without Presenting

Even in some of the courses like COM 111 that *seem* to be about public speaking, student learning outcomes often focus on the *skills* that presenting can develop. Below are some ideas for helping students develop those skills (and thus meet course outcomes) when there are not ideal conditions to deliver a speech or presentation to a live audience.

- **Organizing Ideas:** ask students to submit an outline for a speech, or have them submit a Google Slides/PowerPoint presentation that structures what would be a live speech/presentation.
- **Analyzing Ideas/Analyzing Rhetoric:** one reason to assign presentations and speeches is to help students understand the structure of ideas and the rhetoric used to communicate them. One strategy to help students develop these skills is to have them write analyses of other speeches or presentations.
- **Use of Visual Aids:** many courses may teach students to link images and ideas. A narrated Google Slides/PowerPoint presentation can require students to demonstrate those skills even in the absence of a public presentation.
- **Integration of Research:** a fully written out script of a speech can be used to have students demonstrate the ability to integrate the ideas of others into their own thinking. Of course such scripts would need to be appropriately documented.
- **Developing Comfort Presenting Ideas:** one purpose of presenting is simply to develop comfort talking about complex ideas. That requires an audience. It does not necessarily require *you* as the audience. Consider asking students to present an idea to a family member or friend, even if it’s an idea that makes them uncomfortable or that is more complex than one might typically

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<sup>3</sup> Special thanks go to Drs. Rebecca Alt and Jeffrey Delbert for help in developing the ideas in this section.

share at the dinner table. Then require them to write about the experience, reflecting on what they learned.

### Synchronous and Asynchronous Presentations

There may be occasions where it is both appropriate and necessary to have students give presentations. In such cases, the best options will be to have students either present live to you and/or classmates using videoconferencing or to have students record themselves presenting.

#### Asynchronous Possibilities

- **Leverage recording technologies:** iPhone and Android devices make it easy for students to record themselves speaking, though they may make it difficult to integrate visual aids. Canvas has an option for uploading files as part of an assignment.
- **Zoom:** all LR students have Zoom accounts. You may share with them Appendix A: Zoom so that they will have access to those accounts. For presentations, students can use webcam/microphone and the ability to share the screen to present with visual aids. They can submit the “share” link in a Canvas assignment.

#### Synchronous Possibilities

- **Zoom:** Zoom is your best bet here. Refer to Appendix A: Zoom for instructions. Zoom could allow for a student to present to you in a one-on-one session, or you could have students present to the full class. Zoom’s breakout rooms can provide options for students to practice speeches/presentations with a small group of classmates.
- **Loom:** Loom is a Google Chrome extension that makes it exceptionally easy to do video screen capture and to use a webcam. It is not supported by LR’s IT team, but it is free, and it can be added to Chrome without an admin username and password. Loom records only in Google Chrome, but once installed, it is easy to use. It gives you the option of recording camera, screen, or both. Once your recording is finished, Loom automatically hosts the video in the cloud and provides a link that students could either email to you or submit through Canvas. You can [get Loom here](#), and the Loom page includes some training options. Loom is simple enough that students should get the hang of it quickly.

There are other possible ways to do synchronous speeches and presentations, but in the event of a forced move online, the CTL recommends against them. Some will be cost-prohibitive. Others, like Google hangouts, are free, but using them will require students to learn an additional technology for which LR has no formal support. For the sake of your students, keep it simple and Zoom or Loom.

## Special Considerations

Hopefully, you had the opportunity to communicate with students ahead of time about their access to technology. Regardless, presentations in the online environment require certain special considerations:

- **Be flexible:** students who lack the technology to do exactly what you hope to see. A student with an iPhone can join Zoom meetings and deliver a speech. That same student may really struggle to navigate a PowerPoint in Zoom in that mobile format.
- **Adjust rubrics:** some of what you might assess in a face-to-face setting will be difficult in an online environment. Gestures, facial expressions, etc. may be harder to see (and thus to score). Students are likely to be apprehensive about the camera in between them and you, and it may be good to keep that in mind when grading/scoring.

## Assessing Student Learning

For some faculty, a move to online learning will present little challenge in terms of assessing student learning. A written essay, for instance, might well be collected and assessed exactly the same as in an online environment as in a face-to-face environment – a .doc file submitted through Canvas. For other faculty, the move to online presents significant challenges. Canvas easily allows us to create online tests, but faculty may worry (rightly) that online tests may present easy opportunities for academic dishonesty. This section of the guide is intended to provide ideas for maintaining the integrity of courses while still assessing student learning effectively.

### General Principles

Some general principles may help faculty to develop assessments that are appropriate for a forced online environment:

- **Formative assessment/Summative assessment:** Formative assessment helps students in building towards the points where you really need to test their knowledge and skills. Formative assessments likely will count less towards the student's final grade than summative assessments, and they may be structured in such a way that what would be cheating on a high-stakes, summative assessment might simply be built into the learning process. Consider a vocabulary quiz. If your purpose is to test whether students know the vocabulary (summative), a test where they can easily look up the answers is not helpful. If your purpose is to help them learn the material (formative), it may be perfectly OK to tell them that they can look up terms they don't know.
- **Outcomes focused:** keep in mind that your task is to measure student success in achieving your course outcomes. If "demonstrating knowledge of basic vocabulary" is not a course outcome, don't give students a high-stakes multiple choice vocabulary test. If that *is* a course outcome, ask if there are other ways to measure – perhaps by having them write a paragraph in which they use and apply those terms.
- **Proctoring services (avoid!):** Lenoir-Rhyne does have access to online proctoring services, but the costs of those services are the responsibility of students and must be built into the course syllabus from the outset. Under normal circumstances, adding such a service without notification on the syllabus would create significant accreditation issues with SACS-COC. Until we receive word that that has changed, faculty ***must not*** add ProctorU to their courses unless it was part of the original syllabus. Moreover, suddenly adding that service adds a layer of technology that will create confusion for students.
- **DO NOT LOCKDOWN:** You may know that LR has a software called a lockdown browser that limits how students can use an internet browser and other computer resources during testing. ***Do not under any circumstances require students to use Lockdown Browser during this period.*** If students want to cheat, they will simply get out their phones. Adding Lockdown Browser will be 100% ineffective, and it adds significantly to the complexity of tasks for already overwhelmed students.

## Resources

Canvas includes a “Quizzes” tool that allows for online testing, and this will be the best resource for you if you choose to give tests in an online environment. Canvas provides a [text-based help file](#) on the Quizzes tool. Canvas also provide a [video guide for instructors](#) and a [video guide for students](#).

## Specific Strategies for Avoiding High-Stakes, Easily Compromised Exams

- **Avoid testing simple facts:** many if not all of our disciplines have vocabulary and facts that we need students to master. Testing those with multiple-choice or other simple exam formats is difficult in an online environment – at least if we wish to maintain the integrity of our courses. Instead, consider asking students to move to more advanced tasks that force them to apply that knowledge and vocabulary. Ask students to diagnose a patient using appropriate terms and methods rather than using a multiple-choice test. Have them analyze a poem, noting its formal features rather than asking them to define “metaphor.”
- **Be imaginative:** Create questions that cannot be looked up, copied, etc. A favorite example from a Milligan College humanities exam circa 1995: rather than having students summarize the philosophies of Socrates, Descartes, and Hume, the professor offers this: “Socrates, Descartes, and Hume walk into a coffee shop (no bars – alcohol is prohibited at Milligan!). They sip their lattes and enter into a conversation about how they know that they are there drinking coffee. Provide a transcript of their conversation. Be sure to capture both their points of agreement and disagreement.” Sure, the student could look up their philosophies and create that transcript – but to do so probably requires demonstrating mastery of the content.
- **Projects:** Consider moving to projects and/or presentations rather than tests. See the relevant sections of this guide for tips on using these strategies.
- **Reflection:** if appropriate, pair knowledge/fact testing with reflection assignments with the heavier (or entire) weight of the grade on reflection. Go ahead and give students the multiple choice test, but make clear to them that their grade depends not so much on getting questions right/wrong but on the reflective piece that asks them to identify strengths in their knowledge base, gaps in their knowledge base, and strategies for filling in those gaps.
- **Multiple Choice +:** pair multiple choice exams with explanations. “Which of the following is the best answer. Once you have marked your choice, explain why you chose it.”
- **Delay:** if you know that disruptions to campus operations will be for a limited duration, consider postponing exams until students return to a face-to-face setting.

## If High-Stakes, Fact-Based/Multiple Choice Tests are Necessary

You may decide that despite the potential problems, it is both appropriate and necessary to assess student learning through the kinds of exams that might be easy to monitor in a face-to-face setting but that present challenges in an online environment. If you do go this route, the University of Illinois’s



[Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning](#) offers the following suggestions, which are echoed by [Pepperdine's Seaver Center for Teaching Excellence](#)<sup>4</sup>:

- **Large Question Bank:** using a large question bank (see the “Resources” section above for Canvas help files that include instructions for creating question banks) will reduce the possibility of students sharing questions/answers.
- **Randomize Questions and Answers:** similar to using a large question bank, using Canvas to randomize questions and answers will reduce the possibility of students sharing answers.
- **Short time:** setting a quiz/test to a relatively short time will reduce opportunities for students to consult outside resources. Keep in mind that you will still need to give appropriate extended time for students with accommodations letters.

#### Additional Considerations

- **Good enough:** keep in mind that you have not designed your course for online learning and thus may not have had the time needed to develop the perfect assessments for students in an online environment. While it may feel deeply uncomfortable, you ultimately may have to decide which matters more: giving the assessment that you think best measures student learning and giving an assessment that is less effective but that maintains integrity. This is an unusual situation that may have no perfect solutions.
- **Accommodations:** on any timed exam or assessment, it is essential that you meet all accommodations requirements per letters sent from Sherry Proctor's office. [This document](#) explains how to give extra time on a Canvas Quiz.

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<sup>4</sup> The suggestions that follow are specifically from <https://cdn.citl.illinois.edu/jolt/#/AssessmentCYOC/1>.

## Special Cases

This section offers suggestions and advice for special circumstances that are more limited than what is covered in the rest of this guide. LR's CTL staff does not have expertise in the pedagogies required in all fields. The advice in this guide, therefore, is pulled together from a variety of sources including email correspondence with other faculty development specialists, other centers for teaching, and conversations with in-house subject matter experts.

## Labs in the Emergency Online Environment

Labs may be one of the most challenging experiences to recreate or accommodate for when forced to teach in an online environment. Often, the learning in a lab happens through the hands-on work of *doing*, and that can be difficult to replicate outside of the face-to-face environment. What follows are strategies developed out of a) principles of sound college teaching, and b) ideas and strategies developed at other universities and other centers for teaching & learning. These strategies do not necessarily get us to something equivalent to a face-to-face lab, but they may provide ways to get us to “good enough” in the event of an emergency campus closure.

### Strategy 1: Begin with outcomes

Begin with outcomes: what is the learning that the lab teaches? Is a face-to-face lab the *only* way to help students reach those outcomes, or are there other possible ways to meet them? Consider the following two outcomes from Laney College’s student learning outcomes for biology labs:

- Outcome A: Students will define and correctly use scientific terminology in regard to biological organisms and processes.
- Outcome B: Students will correctly focus and adjust lighting on microscope slides, to locate and identify biological organisms and their parts.

While outcome “a” might, in the professional experience of biology professors, best be taught in a lab setting, students could meet that outcome in other ways - perhaps applying terminology in a quiz setting after watching a video. Outcome “b”, on the other hand, would be exceptionally difficult to accomplish short of a very good simulation.

### Strategy 2: Consider open source

For outcomes that must be handled in a lab setting and that truly are essential to your course, NC State suggests investigating open education resources to see if there may be virtual labs available that you might adapt. LR’s Library maintains a [LibGuide page on finding OER](#). You may have your best results by using one of the following and searching for an entire course like yours; those online courses will likely have been designed with the idea in mind that they need lab activities:

- a. The POD Network has compiled a [Google spreadsheet](#) that has links to numerous free, online lab sorts of resources.
- b. George Mason’s [OER Metafinder](#)
- c. [Project MERLOT](#)
- d. [OER Commons](#)

You may find virtual labs that are licensed under a creative commons license that can help students meet the outcomes in your course. Again, that may not be the *ideal* approach, but it may be sufficient in an emergency.

Strategy 3: Consider whether observing or using an instructor-provided dataset might suffice.

Both of these suggestions come from the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown University, which has created this [page for inclusive teaching in times of disruption](#).

- Determine whether the point of the lab is data collection or data analysis. If the latter, consider ways that you can provide a dataset to students for analysis, in which case the learning that the lab was designed to promote can be completed without the specialized equipment typical of lab assignments.
- Consider the possibility that students might *watch* experiments and learn from them rather than *doing* the experiment. Lenoir-Rhyne subscribes to the *Journal of Visualized Experiments* which includes (according to the Sheridan Center's website) over 9,500 experiments in video format. Could students watch and then respond to questions?

Strategy 4: Consider whether students have already done enough.

It's worth asking how far into the semester a campus disruption occurs. If it is late in the semester, your students may have been working on labs (or a single lab) for the entire semester. If that is the case, it may be asking whether they can move to the writing phase, even with perhaps incomplete information.

## Music<sup>5</sup>

Teaching music in an online environment may seem like a particularly challenging thing, but modern technology may enable this field to convert to an online format more easily than some others. Quite simply, students have constant access to recording tools on their phones, and apps may facilitate learning in unexpected ways.

### Activities that support learning outcomes for applied and ensemble courses

Obviously (perhaps), the most challenging part of converting a music course from face-to-face to online involves the actual performance of music, whether in lessons, in an ensemble, or in other polished performance settings. For that reason, one of the first questions to ask would be “which (if any) of the outcomes for this course might be met *without* the need for students to perform?” Suggestions include:

- **Analysis:** Students might listen to a piece and analyze the composition and/or the performance of the piece.
- **Reflection:** Students who have been working on performance pieces for the full semester to this point may benefit from reflective writing. What have they learned about the craft of music from what they have done so far? How might they continue to work towards a more finished piece? Daily journaling of progress towards specific performance goals or reflections on individual practice sessions allow the student to become more mindful of their work.
- **Discussion:** Either synchronously or asynchronously, students can listen to performed pieces and discuss. Instructors may pose questions to guide those discussions in directions particularly beneficial for a given class. See the section of this guide on Discussion for further ideas.
- **Recording:** Zoom is one option for recording, but students may feel more comfortable using their iPhones or Android devices. If students have USB microphones, they may get better sound quality with that than with a phone or onboard mic in a laptop. Many students might have access to Audacity, a free, open-source recording software and digital audio editor. Many mobile phones have an option to record video in slow-motion, a useful diagnostic tool. And, metronome and tuner apps (Tonal Energy, i.e. “TE Tuner” is a personal favorite) have a wealth of tools at the ready, including audio and video recorders with variable speed playback.

### Lessons Online

Although Lenoir-Rhyne historically has not done this, online music lessons are not a new thing. Some of the world’s best music teachers deliver lessons by Skype or Zoom. While perhaps not ideal, LR faculty can continue lessons using Zoom. As noted above, for both faculty and student, a USB-microphone is ideal (or as ideal as we’re likely to get).

### Performance/Ensembles Online

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of teaching music in an online format will be performance courses, especially those involving ensembles. Zoom may suffice to observe an individual student playing his/her part, but due to bandwidth issues (among other things), it really isn’t a viable option for observing

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<sup>5</sup> With special thanks to Dr. Christopher Nigrelli for suggestions here.

students playing *together*. For that reason, music may be one of the disciplines that needs to make use of tools beyond what are standard for LR students. Options may include:

- **Individual Performance**: Students can use Zoom or native phone software, or third-party apps to record themselves performing their part of an ensemble piece. While certainly not the same as performing together, this kind of recording does move students closer to where they need to be.
- **Acapella**: Acapella is an app available for both iOS and Android. It enables musicians to layer multiple tracks. Using Acapella, it would be possible to have a student play multiple parts and/or record a track and share with a classmate who could then layer their own collaboration on top of it.
- **SmartMusic**: SmartMusic offers a range of helpful educational tools to aid the development of musicianship. There are technical exercises and sight-reading materials, solo repertoire, and a healthy selection of ensemble material for concert band, jazz band, orchestra, and choir. Students play along with recorded literature on the screen. The program then measures pitch and rhythm, providing feedback to the student. Additionally, there are recordings for another collection of solos, but you must have the sheet music at hand, rather than on the computer screen. Each of these 'performances' becomes an audio file that student can use for their own analysis, or to send to their instructor.

## Internships, Practicums, and the Like

Internships, clinicals, practicums, student teaching – each of these practices forms an essential part in the learning of students in certain disciplines. These types of learning experiences are also the ones that create the greatest challenges when there are disruptions to LR's normal operations. Unfortunately, there are not easy solutions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CTL staff monitored numerous listservs and reached out to other professionals, and no-one had viable online alternatives to in person experiences of this sort.

Lenoir-Rhyne's approach is not one that can be captured in a guide like this. Faculty will need to work through the official channels to determine on a case-by-case basis how to proceed.

## Conferences

Especially as we near the end of the semester, faculty at LR rely on individual or small group conferences as part of the learning process. The good news here is that conferencing using Zoom can in many ways be even more effective than working in a face-to-face environment. What follows are some general tips for making Zoom conferences work well.

- **Setting:** Follow all of the same tips for microphone and camera placement that you would use in a teaching situation. If possible, use a USB microphone or headset. If not, make sure that both you and your student are in a reasonably quiet place. Make sure to turn your camera on, and ask your student(s) to do the same. Position your camera so that your face takes up the middle part of the screen, and remember to look at the camera.
- **Prepare:** Be sure you have helped students prepare for the conference. Although we think of them as “digital natives,” there’s still a learning curve if they have not used Zoom. Send them the help file at the end of this guide. Let them know that it’s OK if they struggle a little, and give them email/phone to ask you for help.
- **Make Comfortable:** If you’re using this guide, it’s likely that LR is in some sort of disruption. Before jumping right into the business side of things, take a few minutes to check in with your student. How is he/she doing? Does he/she have the resources needed to continue learning? Give that personal touch.
- **Tools:** Zoom is an effective conferencing tool in part because of its screen sharing capabilities. See the help file at the end of this document for more on using screen sharing. Beyond just sharing, Zoom includes annotation tools, [help for which you can find here](#). You can share a document with a student and then mark it up. Even better, you can have the student share with you and have the student mark it up.
- **Record:** Zoom allows you to record student conferences so that the student can refer back to it later. See the guide at the end of this document for instructions on recording.
- **Silence:** The camera and the microphone demand action. Fight that demand. Students sometimes need time to think, and it’s perfectly OK to say “I’m going to mute myself for three minutes to give you time to work/think.”



## Appendix A: Zoom

**Logging in to Zoom:** To host a Zoom lecture, you will need to log in to Zoom. Your students will not; they will only need the link to the Zoom meeting that you can provide to them by email. To log in to Zoom, go to <https://lenoir-rhyne.zoom.us>. Click the “Sign In” button. Enter your LR username and password. Select “lenoir-rhyne.zoom.us” from the dropdown menu. You should now see your Zoom dashboard. [This video](#) will give you visual and audio instructions.

**Scheduling and Starting a Zoom Meeting:** To schedule a Zoom meeting, click on the “Meetings” link on the left-hand side of the page. Click on “Schedule a New Meeting.” Fill in the topic, the date, and the length of the meeting. (Note: you may choose to make this a recurring meeting, and you could set it to take place during the times that your face to face class met.) All of the other settings can be tweaked if you wish, but we have set the defaults to what we believe are optimal settings. Once you click save, you will see a screen that provides information about your Zoom meeting. You can copy the URL and email it to students and/or you can paste that link into a page in Canvas.

To start a Zoom meeting, log in to Zoom and click “Meetings.” Find your Meeting in the list and click “Start.” [This video](#) will give you visual and audio instructions for scheduling and starting Zoom meetings.

**In-Meeting Controls:** Once you have a meeting open, Zoom provides a series of controls that you can access by hovering your mouse on the screen. This video gives a more complete overview than I am able to do here, but the following lists available controls and their basic functions, working from bottom left to bottom right of the screen:

- **Mute/microphone icon:** controls your audio. Clicking on the button will mute/unmute. Clicking on the carat next to the button will give you access to audio controls.
- **Video/camera icon:** controls your video feed. Clicking on the button will toggle your video on/off. Clicking on the carat next to the button will give you access to video controls.
- **Invite:** allows you to create an invitation to the meeting that can be emailed to others.
- **Manage participants:** gives you control over the video and audio feeds of participants. Use this to mute the annoying sound of someone hammering away on the keyboard.
- **Polls:** allows you to survey participants.
- **Share:** allows you to share your screen or a single app/program with participants.
- **Chat:** opens a text-based chat window.

- **Record:** toggles on/off the cloud recording feature
- **Closed caption:** this will allow for conversations to be captioned. Please note that this is not automatic; someone must actually be typing the captions!
- **Breakout rooms:** allows you to segment a Zoom meeting into small groups for discussion.

**Recording in Zoom:** Recording in Zoom is easy. During times of campus disruption, we will set Zoom to auto-record all sessions. Once you have completed your Zoom session, the video will take some time to process, after which you can retrieve it by doing the following:

1. Log in to Zoom
2. Click on “recordings”
3. Click on the link for the recording you want to download or share.
4. Use the download button to download video, audio, and transcript of video. From there you can edit using a video editing package or you can upload to YouTube.
5. Use the “share” link to get a link to share the cloud-based video with students (or anyone else to whom you send it).

Please note that cloud recordings last only 120 days normally, and fewer than that (most likely 60 during times of campus disruption). If you wish to keep a recording longer than that, please download the file.

## Appendix B: Accommodations and Inclusivity

Those who have gone through training on Quality Matters, the rubrics that we use to certify online courses, know that one of the hardest tasks in designing an online course is meeting all of the accessibility standards. This section of the guide seeks to identify first what we as faculty are obligated to do to meet the needs of learners with disabilities and second what we can do to make the online learning experience as effective as possible for the most learners.

### Accommodations

As a rule, LR faculty are obligated to comply with formal letters from the office of Sherry Proctor notifying us of accommodations to which students are entitled. Some of the more common ones (as well as strategies for meeting those accommodations in an online environment) are as follows:

- **Extra Time:** In Canvas, it is easy to give extra time on tests and quizzes for students who need it using the Canvas Quizzes tool. Detailed instructions for giving extra time [can be found here](#).
- **Quiet Testing Environment:** This one seems obvious, right? Students aren't all together in a class, so they can just take tests at the dining room table. Please bear in mind that we do not know the living circumstances of our students, and their home environments may not be quiet at all. If they ask to take a test late at night to get that quiet space, please be gracious and accommodate.
- **Captioning:** This one is a little trickier. For live Zoom sessions, students who have access to a captioning service can have Zoom sessions captioned. Zoom offers a fairly detailed [help section](#). For recorded videos, the most practical option may be to upload videos to YouTube, which has an automatic captioning feature. Because that captioning feature is sometimes inadequate, you may need to [edit those captions for accuracy](#). If you have time, the best option will be to write a script for your videos. It will make your videos better, and you can add the script as captions in YouTube.

For audio files, we are obligated to provide a script rather than captions.

In all cases, please contact the Center for Teaching & Learning or Sherry Proctor if you need help.

- **Screen Readers:** Students with accommodations for screen readers will need to be considered individually. If you have a student with such an accommodation, the Office of Disabilities Services will be in touch to determine how best to proceed.
- **Note Taking:** If you opt to hold classes synchronously, please use Zoom and please record the sessions so that notetakers can go back and watch the video later to ensure that notes are accurate. During any disruption of operations, LR will set Zoom to automatically record in the

cloud, and recordings will last for 60 days.

## Inclusiveness<sup>6</sup>

At LR we pride ourselves on striving to create environments in which all students can learn. Maintaining that kind of environment when forced to move to an online format can be challenging, but there are steps that faculty can take to make it happen. Broadly speaking, efforts towards inclusiveness in remote learning involve paying attention both to the digital dimension and the human dimension.

### *The Human Dimension*

We grow accustomed in our face to face classes to listening to our students' needs. If Jessie needs a few minutes to jot down ideas before being called on, we usually let that happen. When Cam has a death in the family, we work around schedules. In short, being inclusive means listening to students, and that doesn't change in the online environment. However, we have additional things to listen for:

- **Technological Challenges:** Listen for your students to let you know when they're struggling to meet your expectations because they're running into technological challenges. Remember that having 24/7 access to high-speed internet access is a point of privilege that not all of our students will have. Do your best to work with them.
- **Family Challenges:** When our students return home, they don't all return to healthy living situations. If a student reports that the living situation is getting in the way of learning, work with the student to adjust. That doesn't mean lowering your standards, but it might mean being flexible with due dates or even just listening and caring.
- **Learning Challenges:** Remember when you were asked to convert your class to being fully online? Your reaction may have ranged from "not too much hassle" to "I just don't know if I can do that." Your students probably have the same range of reactions to being forced to learn online. Provide resources to help them navigate this process. Suggestions include:
  - Johns Hopkins University's [5 Essential Online Learning Strategies](#)
  - Florida International University's [How to Prepare for Online Classes](#)
  - Rice University's [Tips for Learning During a Time of Disruption](#)
  - LR's Office of Student Success and Retention
- **Health Challenges:** If a disruption to operations occurs because of a pandemic, it is entirely possible that students will become ill. Listen to them. Be flexible on due dates.

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<sup>6</sup> Much of the information in this section is adapted to the LR setting from [the Rice University Center for Teaching Excellence](#).

### *The Technological Dimension*

As faculty, there are steps that we can take in the process of converting our courses to an online format that will ease potential burdens on students

- **Reduce Video**: your students may be experiencing five or six courses on mobile devices. Video eats data. Don't be afraid to use video, but use it as sparingly as possible.
- **File Format**: whenever possible, post files in PDF format. It's good practice in case a user ever needs a screen-reader, and it will be easier to read on a mobile device than many other file formats.
- **Read Like a Student**: reread all instructions for assignments. Make sure that the expectations and requirements are clear, and make sure that the assignment requires as little use of new technologies as possible.
- **Use Existing Tools**: avoid the temptation to go outside of LR-provided tools (Canvas, Zoom, etc.) unless it's absolutely essential. The fact that you prefer Google Hangouts to Zoom does not make it absolutely essential.
- **Guide and Model**: Here the human dimension and the technological collide. We all know that in online environments, people behave differently. ("Don't read the comments!") Work with your students to establish guidelines for appropriate online behavior and speech, and model that behavior and speech for them.