

# Converting Your Face-to-Face Class into an Online Course

## 1. Course planning and general analysis

Online course design is a front-loaded process that requires the course to be ready before the start of the course since students will have access to the whole course once it goes live. An ideal course design process may take at least three months to complete. Our current situation requires us to put together core materials and assignments in Blackboard to ensure a smooth launch of the summer courses within a limited time frame.

To begin with, faculty need to conduct a course review based on the syllabus and plan for online conversion considering learning goals, instructional activities, and assignments/assessments. Faculty should analyze their current face-to-face course and determine what components can be adapted into the online platform (learning materials, activities and assignments).

Faculty are encouraged to contact [VITAL](#) and [UNIT-CIT](#) for pedagogical and technological consultations to start the course design project ASAP.

What do you need to pay attention when moving course online?

- Faculty are online facilitators - change of role from sage on the stage
- Explicit instructions for course introductions, activities and assignments
- Provide due dates and grades for online assignments
- Give credit for participating in online synchronous and asynchronous discussions
- Frequently communicate with students and provide timely support
- Revise syllabus to reflect online teaching format (Refer to [Online Course Syllabus Development Guide](#))

## 2. Set up Blackboard course template

Each student is experiencing the course on his or her own – without the opportunity to turn immediately to a neighbor if confused or unclear about something in the course. As Blackboard is the major platform where students have access to course materials and communicate with faculty and other students, the course needs to have a user-friendly, organized, and consistent structure that is easy to navigate.

Faculty may contact [UNIT-CIT](#) to request to use a course template in their summer online course.

To view screen captures of course templates in Blackboard, please click on the following: [course navigation](#), [Home page with welcome and introduction information](#), and [sample learning module page](#).

### 3. Chunk course content into learning modules

Chunk course content into learning modules, organized by topics or dates. Learning modules are self-contained segments that can be used to assess student mastery of that module before moving forward in the course. This organization style assists online learners in easily finding, understanding and accessing discrete learning units and associated details in an online course.

### 4. Fit your course content into course template

Based on your Blackboard course template, faculty need to update the home page message to welcome students and give a detailed, conspicuous course outline. You are encouraged to provide a brief course orientation video and an instructor self-introduction video. These type of add-ons bring a level of personalization to your course from the beginning and signal to your students that you are interested in developing a relationship with them.

Post the course syllabus, policies, expectations, and objectives on the course website.

Once you chunk course materials into manageable pieces, you may need to fill each module template in Blackboard with your course content by articulating module objectives, module overview information, module materials, module activities, module assignments, and live meeting information.

Instructions for class activities such as online discussions and online assignments need to be explicitly communicated. You may also consider utilizing rubrics to introduce instructions and evaluate students.

Additional support is available:

- Contact [VITAL](#) to discuss module alignment plan and opportunities to engage students.
- Consult with [UNIT-CIT](#) for technical support (e.g. select tools, set up activities and assignments in Blackboard with due dates and grades).
- Work with UNIT-Multimedia Technologies to develop micro-lectures (10 minutes or less).

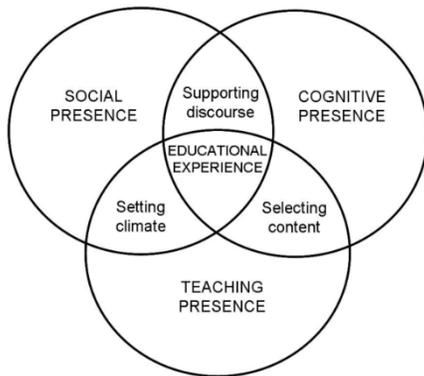
Once the course is complete in Blackboard, faculty can refer to [Guiding Practices for Setting Up Your Course in an LMS](#) as a checklist to assure course quality.

### 5. Communication

Due to the lack of visual cues and body languages in online course, faculty need to deliberately provide chances for learners to interact with their peers and the instructor to exchange ideas, acquire new information, and make meaningful interpretation of the

interactions.

The framework of Communities of Inquiry can highly engage learners in the co-creation, discovery and development of knowledge, capabilities and skills in the collaborative and social activities (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000).



The following provides a number of concrete examples and suggested activities for creating an effective online [Community of Inquiry](#):

- [Teaching presence](#)
- [Social presence](#)
- [Cognitive presence](#)

(Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000)

## 6. Assessing Student Learning

In assessing online learning, faculty need to create a “mix” of assignments that cover the multiple dimensions of learning that online courses can employ. Faculty are encouraged to break down major assignments and projects into smaller tasks to alleviate student anxiety and more easily receive feedback for future revisions.

Faculty need to communicate course requirements and instructor expectations clearly such as specific grading guidelines/rubrics for course activities and assignments (Refer to [Grading with Rubrics](#)). Faculty also need to keep track of student performance by updating gradebook and providing prompt feedback.

Faculty can collect feedback from mid-term survey, instructor/course evaluation, and observation to inform course revisions and future modifications.