



Guidance for Course & Teaching Adjustments Fall 2020

Tulane University is striving to provide students with as much in-person classroom time as possible for Fall 2020. However, necessary physical distancing guidelines will restrict the number of students permitted in a classroom or lab at any point in time. Some non-traditional spaces are being converted to classrooms so that large classes may still be able to meet in person. However, to further address potential restrictions on physical gatherings and reduce the pressures on the limited large physical spaces available, hybrid teaching techniques will be necessary in most courses. In addition to helping to address safety concerns and space limitations, this delivery model will allow for more flexibility in adapting to changing public health conditions. All faculty should be prepared to move their on-campus class into a virtual mode, as necessary, if the COVID-19 conditions change.

This planning document provides faculty with teaching adjustment options that allow for maximum faculty-student and student-student engagement while maintaining safe physical distancing requirements.

General Pool classrooms will be outfitted with extensive new technology including lecture capture equipment/software to facilitate many of the options listed below. There will be in-class student workers/TAs to help manage technological issues.

Course & Teaching Adjustments:

General Recommendation for all Faculty:

1. *CELT/ILC Online Teacher Training*

Faculty should complete the *Online Teaching Training* offered by CELT/ILC to learn about best practices for online teaching and, with the help of Instructional Designers, develop course modules and materials that are most appropriate for their courses and teaching styles. Sign up here: <https://airtable.com/shrNQPva7hUzo4Bld>. You must register for the next session by Friday June 19th and the course will begin on June 29, 2020.

2. *Accommodating for Slightly Reduced Course Meeting Times*

For Fall 2020, the beginning and end times of classes will be staggered and shortened by 5 minutes to increase “pass time” (the time students have in-between classes) and reduce congestion in hallways and stairwells. For example, a MWF course will lose 5 minutes of each class session for a total 15 minutes per week; a class that only meets once a week will only lose 5 minutes per week. Instructors will have to provide asynchronous work to make up this “learning time” lost (see below for clarification on “learning time”.)

In-Person Courses:

Faculty teaching courses that will be able to accommodate all students in person for each scheduled meeting time will still need to be prepared to modify the course structure/syllabus from what has traditionally been offered in order to accommodate students who may be unable to attend in-person class sessions. See below for suggested strategies.

Large Online Courses:

A limited number of large enrollment (80-100+ students) fully online courses will be offered. These courses may be added to the currently posted schedule of classes, but may not have a scheduled time like traditional courses, although they will try to include synchronous activities. Faculty will work with Instructional Designers to develop the course framework and materials appropriate for the content.

Medium Sized Online Courses:

A limited number of medium enrollment (40-80 students) courses may also be created. Again, these courses will most likely be added to the currently posted schedule of courses and, if so may not have a scheduled time like traditional courses, although they will try to include synchronous activities. Faculty will work with Instructional Designers to develop the course framework and materials appropriate for the content.

Hybrid Courses:

Most Fall 2020 courses will have to be offered in one of several hybrid forms. Hybrid courses will have some required in-person meetings at their scheduled time as well as asynchronous assignments and activities and perhaps synchronous online sessions. There is no standard definition of how much content must be delivered online vs. in-person, but hybrid courses in the Fall 2020 semester will be expected to be 33 – 50% online. Faculty may receive assistance from Instructional Designers to develop the course framework and materials appropriate for the content.

Hybrid Option 1: Flipped Classroom, Modified with Smaller Groups of Students

A “flipped” classroom provides students with the resources (e.g. readings, exercises, online lectures) they need asynchronously (online) thus reserving classroom time for more engagement, problem solving, discussion, and overall application of knowledge. In this option, faculty members will provide varied course materials (e.g. readings, recorded lectures, power points, etc.) to students through Canvas. Rather than meet as one large class, faculty members will assign smaller groups of students to in-classroom participation during specific scheduled meeting times.

Example: To meet physical distancing requirements, a faculty member with a course scheduled to meet for 3 hours per week (M,W,F) assigns 1/3 of the class to the Monday meeting time; 1/3 to the Wednesday meeting time; and the final 1/3 to Friday. Meeting time is used for in-depth activities, such as small group work, discussions and/or student presentations. Lectures, other course content, and assignments to both assess completion of assigned work and to prepare students for participation in their in-person session are delivered online asynchronously.

Hybrid Option 2: Rotating In-Classroom and Online

Classes are held in the assigned classroom at the scheduled time, but with a smaller portion of the enrolled students. Students not physically in the classroom during a scheduled meeting time, will engage via a live feed of the class meeting. The group of students who meet in-person in the classroom will rotate based on meeting schedule, class size, and room space.

Example: The class is divided into two groups and those groups alternate between in-person and online. Alternating can be on a weekly basis (Group 1 is in-person one week while Group 2 is participating live online, and then switch the next week) or based on each scheduled meeting time (Group 1 is in-person on Tuesdays and participating live online on Thursdays, and vice versa for Group 2).

Modular Courses:

Faculty teach the course in modules to accommodate more than one smaller group of students. Both in-classroom time and independent student work online are expected.

Example: Faculty could organize the class into 8 two-week modules where the first week involves in-class instruction and the second week involves working independently on an assignment. Group 1 would meet in class week 1 and then week 2 work independently on a task. During week 2, Group 2 would meet in class and then during week 3 they would work independently on the task.

Meeting Requirements to Award Credit

Theoretically, one should be able to measure any course, regardless of delivery method, by the description of content covered, the course objectives and expected learning outcomes. However, this can be challenging. As a result, typically time is measured to determine credit awarded.

The practice within U.S. higher education is that 1 credit hour requires 15 hours of classroom time plus an additional 30-45 hours of out-of-classroom time for students. However, focusing on total “learning time” as opposed to in-classroom and out-of-classroom time can allow for extending this traditional notion to hybrid and online course delivery.

“Learning time” — the total time spent by a student in a course — includes not only classroom time, but time spent in active online discussion, studying and completing assignments (e.g., reading, research, writing, individual and group projects). Regardless of the delivery method, the amount of “learning time” in any course should meet the guideline of a minimum total of 45 hours for one semester credit (in a traditional lecture class this breaks down into 15 hours of instruction plus 30 hours of student work/study out of class). The hours per week vary depending upon the length of the course (see below).

1 Credit Class

Weeks	Hour per Week (Minimum) of Student Learning Time	Total Hours (Minimum) of Student Learning Time
15	3	45
14	3 1/4	45
7	6 1/2	45
5	9	45
3	15	45

3 Credit Class

Weeks	Hour per Week (Minimum) of Student Learning Time	Total Hours (Minimum) of Student Learning Time
15	9	135
14	9 3/4	135
7	19 1/3	135
5	27	135
3	45	135

Determining & Documenting “Learning Time”

For in-person classes, faculty already assess the workload of a class when constructing their syllabi and assignments. For online/hybrid classes they must do the same but must become more intentional about it and document the process. In order to ensure achieving the minimum hours of student learning time for a hybrid or online course, faculty developing and teaching hybrid or online courses must calculate how much time a student doing satisfactory work would take to complete the assigned asynchronous work of the course, which may include:

- Viewing recorded “lectures” (segments of no more than 15-20 minutes) including links to extended resources/viewing materials
- Traditional reading materials (textbooks, essays, etc.)
- Participation in online discussions (discussion sites, blogs; peer-reviewing/commenting on other’s postings, etc.)
- Conducting research
- Writing papers
- Completing projects and other assignments
- Completing assessments or knowledge checks

There are a variety of methods to estimate the amount of time it would take a student to complete a task:

- Previous experience of the time it takes a typical student to successfully complete an assignment.¹
- Wake Forest University’s [Workload Estimator 2.0](#)
Based on Rice University’s Center for Teaching Excellence original workload estimator:
<https://cte.rice.edu/workload>
- The Carnegie Mellon University² recommended rule of thumb for faculty that students will typically take three to four times longer to read an article than they will.
(<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/strat-lackmotivation/lackmotivation-05.html#strat1>)

The estimation of “learning time” tied to completing the outside of classroom coursework combined with the time in-class must meet the minimum “learning time” required for the course.

Example 1: Utilizing “modules” in Canvas, faculty can detail the assignments, discussions, quizzes, and other learning materials for each “module” or course section. This is also a useful organizational method for breaking down the coursework and helping to ensure that the “learning time” meets requirements. An example “module matrix” of one-week duration for a 4-credit course (COMM 3150 Film Analysis) is below.

Module #/Name	Module Learning Outcome	Course Learning Outcome	Asynchronous Course Materials	Asynchronous Student Engagement Activities	In-Person Activities	Estimated Learning Hours
Narrative Film Form, Classic Hollywood Cinema and Neo Formalism as an Approach	1. Identify and recognize the elements of narrative film form 2. Analyze narrative film structure (plot/story; digetic/non digetic, etc.).	1. Precisely identify and extensively analyze formal elements in films, formal patterns of repetition and difference, and the significance of form and style for film meaning.	4 " Lecture " units (15-20 mins each). Assigned 'traditional' readings (20-40 pages). Assigned further readings/links.	Comprehension /completion assessments (quizzes for each lecture unit). Discussion questions for readings with required peer responses.	One Class Discussion and Application	4
	2. Analyze how narrative form is deployed by Classical Hollywood Cinema	2. Demonstrate visual literacy.	Film Screening: <i>North by Northwest</i> (1959) 136 min. Watch Online.	Completion assessment (film viewing quiz) and Analytical Assignment (Critical video annotations of clips posted to Canvas)		4
	3. Understand and apply Neo Formalism as a theoretical approach 4. Develop new insights about narrative form based on knowledge of critical debates.	3. Apply critical and theoretical terms and concept to course films 4. Write effectively about film	3 " Lecture " units (15-20 min each). Assigned 'traditional' readings (20-40 pages). Assigned further readings/links.	Comprehension / completion assessment (quiz or such)/ Analytical Assignment (Blog/Discussion Board)	One Class Discussion and Application	4
						12

Example 2: One week (9 hours) of learning tasks or activities and respective completion times for an online 15-week, 3-credit course³:

- Four, 20-minute recorded lectures that cover one course topic each; links to illustrative web resources are included in each mini-lecture (1 ½ hour).
- Assume that students spend additional time to review these lectures and explore the links to web resources (½ hour).
- After reading/viewing the mini-lectures, students will post a short “knowledge check” self-assessment statement to the course drop box. This activity will help the student gauge his/her understanding and retention of the lecture material (½ hour).
- Assign readings (1 hour).
- Require students to complete a 10-item online quiz to check their understanding of key terms and concepts from the readings and lectures (1 hour).
- Assign a discussion topic on a contemporary issue with a triple-layer response requirement (i.e., original post, responses to three classmates’ posts, responses to responses) (2 hours).
- Stipulate that small groups meet in their web-conferencing “room” and/or asynchronous discussion area to work on an iterative deliverable for their group project; for example, discussing and producing an outline of their final report (1 hour).
- Work on final research paper and presentation, which are due at the end of the course (1 ½ hours).

Whether using a “module matrix” or not, the **estimated learning time must be documented** in order to ensure compliance with federal financial aid and accreditation requirements. One method of documentation is annotating the course syllabus with the estimated time it will take the typical student to successfully complete each assignment along with the in-person classroom time.

¹ McDaniel, E. A. (2011). Level of student effort should replace contact time in course design. *Journal of Information Technology Education*, 10(10).

² Carnegie Mellon University. Solve a teaching problem: Assign a reasonable amount of work. <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching//solveproblem/strat-lackmotivation/lackmotivation-05.html#strat1>.

³ Turner, T. (2005). Student workload in the online course: Balancing on a rule-of-thumb. *Educator’s Voice*, 6(3). <http://ecollege.com/Newsletter/EducatorsVoice/EducatorsVoice-Vol6Iss3.learn>.

This document has been adapted from two primary resources:

Rochester Institute of Technology, Innovative Learning Institute Teaching and Learning Services. [Online Course Design: Time on Task](#)
Maryland Institute of College of Art’s (2020). *General Guidance for Adaptive Course Redesign*.