Hybrid Teaching Tips

Hybrid teaching is a somewhat imprecise term because it can refer either to classes in which students are remote and in person at the same time, or it can refer to a scenario in which everyone in the class meets remotely on some days and in-person on others. The first type of hybrid teaching, concurrent hybrid teaching, is the most difficult to do because it requires good technological hardware and tends to privilege the in-person experience, making the students who are participating remotely observers rather than participants.

These guidelines are designed to help faculty plan for different types of hybrid teaching and assumes scenarios in which students, not the faculty member, are testing positive and thus are unable to attend class. For guidelines for faculty who are unable to teach in person due to Covid protocols, please see the Academic Division Covid-19 Protocols for AY 2021-22 Spring Semester, linked [here](#).

A few general principles
There is more than one way to run a course in a hybrid format. You might, depending on cases and health concerns, offer one week of course in which everyone in the class joins remotely, then return to in-person meetings the following week. This is a hybrid course. Alternatively, you might have everyone meet on Zoom one day, then work asynchronously the next, then meet in-person the third day, which is also hybrid teaching. Similarly, if you have only two students who need remote access to the course but everyone else is meeting in person, and you provide access via Zoom for the two remote students, that's a hybrid course.

Online teaching $\neq$ Zoom. Online teaching does not have to mean using Zoom exclusively, though it often can and does include Zoom. There are other synchronous and asynchronous formats that are effective for teaching students remotely. Ideally, any hybrid or online class would include a mix of both synchronous and asynchronous activities.

Having a "home base" where all students, remote or in-person, can find all of the materials they need with a clear schedule of meeting dates, times, locations, and necessary links, is especially important for hybrid courses. Your Canvas course is an obvious place to provide all of this information, and if you choose to use Canvas, encourage your students (remote or in-person) to check there daily for updates and critical information.

A handful of students are joining remotely
If you are teaching a hybrid concurrent class in which some of your students are online and some are in person, using a webcam or a rotating camera such as the Owl 360 camera will allow the remote students better to see their in-person classmates. Colorado College ITS has webcams and some Owl 360 cameras available for faculty teaching in hybrid formats to use, so please contact the Solution Center to arrange to have one set up in your classroom. (Note: The Owl 360 cameras work best for circular seating configurations, which may be hard to do with larger classes or because of public health guidelines.)

Any hybrid concurrent setup in which the remote students join an in-person class through Zoom should include speakers and microphones. Colorado College ITS has both available for faculty teaching remote or hybrid courses. Again, please contact the Solutions Center to ensure your classroom setup is optimized for everyone to hear one another. Difficulty hearing what is said is one of the most frequent complaints students have about hybrid concurrent courses.

For hybrid concurrent classes, it's helpful for the instructor to screen share PowerPoint presentations or other items being projected in the classroom through a platform like Zoom so the remote students can see the presentations more clearly. It's difficult for these students to see presentations through an Owl or

webcam. Alternatively, instructors can email PowerPoints to students ahead of time so that students joining remotely can follow along more easily.

For larger concurrent hybrid courses, breaking the class into groups can make the logistics of everyone hearing and seeing clearly more feasible. You might, for example, alternate so that one group of students works asynchronously (e.g., reads and annotates a PDF together using Hypothesis, posts to an online discussion or Slack channel, completes an online activity related to the day's focus, or spends time developing a discussion question for a synchronous meeting) while the other group meets synchronously, then switch.

For classes in which a hybrid concurrent format will last more than a few days, it might be helpful to pair or group students working remotely with students attending in person and require them to connect via Slack, Zoom, or Group Me each day about the in-person meeting to reduce disconnect and to enhance interaction for the remote students.

A majority of the class must attend remotely
In this scenario, you will have to shift the entire class to a remote format for part of the block. This might mean a few days or a couple weeks, in the worst case. In such instances, planning for a mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities is a good idea. You might alternate synchronous and asynchronous days, for example, so some days might only include a Zoom meeting for everyone or for a group of the class, depending on class size, while the next day might include a Slack or VoiceThread discussion with independent work for the students to do.

Using the asynchronous tools CC has available can make your hybrid remote class more engaging and easier for you. These tools include Zoom, of course, as well as tools such as Hypothesis (a social annotation tool for close reading), VoiceThread (a tool that allows video or voice-based discussions or lecture/presentations), and GoBoard (a tool that provides a whiteboard for anything but which is particularly helpful for graphing, equations, and math). Hypothesis, VoiceThread, and GoBoard are already integrated into Canvas. Please contact Jennifer Golightly for help getting them set up in your class.

Planning
The hybrid teaching you do when only a couple students are joining remotely is different than the hybrid teaching you'll need to do when a critical mass of the class must join remotely. Planning before the start of the block for both possibilities is a lot of work up front but can save time and stress later. It might be helpful to think about the threshold of students needing to join class remotely that would require moving your class from one format into the other (and possibly even into fully remote mode). Having that threshold in mind and at least a loose plan for what your in-person class would look like in a couple different hybrid scenarios can make the upheavals required for teaching in a pandemic world more manageable.

Finally, please feel comfortable in asking for help. There is a lot of support for faculty at Colorado College. If you need help with cameras, mics, and speakers, please contact the AV department in ITS. If you need help with software licenses or have general hardware questions, please contact the Solutions Center. If you have questions about online pedagogy or academic technology, please contact Jennifer Golightly.