

# Adapting course materials and activities for asynchronous online learning

April Edwards

Professor of Cyber Science

US Naval Academy

# Etiquette for today

In person – please raise hands

- I will try to repeat questions for those online

Online – please mute your microphones

- I will regularly check the chat box for feedback/questions
- Unmute only when speaking to the whole group

# Three things to remember ....

- Think about the learning, not the teaching
- Learning is an active process
- The students should be doing more work than you are

# Why Asynchronous?

- Students can learn at their own pace
- Students may have intermittent access to technology
- Allows for a variety of different activities; can be adapted for different learning styles

# What is asynchronous learning?

- No requirement that all students be available at the same place/time
- Activities can (typically) be broken into smaller chunks
- Can (and should) still use group work, discussions, etc.

# Asynchronous is not ....

- ... merely recording lectures for students to watch
- ... just creating online powerpoints for students to read
- ... assigning extra reading

BUT

- All of these things have a place in asynchronous instruction

# One way to think about going online ...

- For a 3 credit hour course students typically
  - Spend 3 hours in the classroom
  - Spend 6-9 hours outside of the classroom
- So, for online, students should still be spending 9-12 hours per week for a 3 credit hour course

# Adapting in class activities ...

If you typically use an interactive lecture, you could ...

1. Create a series of short videos on the topics you would cover
  - Ensure that students watch the videos through quizzes, reflection pieces, etc.
    - Keep these short for grading purposes!
2. Provide students with power points or notes or assigned readings and ask them to create videos or animations covering the topic (individually or in groups)
  - Annotate your power point presentations with voice over (quick demo)
3. Ask students (individually or in groups) to find the youtube or slideshare video that best explains the topic, in their opinion
  - And send you the link and an explanation for why they think it's the best

# Adapting in class activities ...

## If you typically use small group activities ...

- Put students into groups that meet at their convenience
  - Require both the group and the individual to turn in something (reflection, video, etc.)
  - They can use google hangout and record the session so you can spot check it
  - Mix up the groups every week or two
- Use online discussion forums curated by the groups
  - You can provide the prompts or require students to develop them
  - Require a certain number of posts AND a certain number of replies from each student
- You can actually require larger/longer activities, because they are online and not restricted by the 50 minute time block

# Adapting in class activities ...

If you typically use large group discussion ...

- Students individually post audio or video recordings (30 seconds)
  - Can require this for multiple questions/prompts
  - Others have to listen and respond
    - Make sure to require a certain number of responses
- Traditional discussion boards
  - Instructor posts prompt
    - Students respond to instructor and each other
  - Instructor evaluates responses, continues prompts to keep discussion going
  - Require online activity every day (or most days)

# Adapting in class activities ...

If you typically require presentations ...

- Keep requiring them!!
  - Individually or in groups
- Provide ways for other students to provide evaluation/feedback to ensure they watch the presentations from their classmates
  - Forms/surveys, etc.

# Evaluating student work

- Lots of low-stakes assignments (2-3 per week)
  - **Low stakes for you and for students!**
  - Quizzes that can be repeated as often as they want
  - Short reflection pieces
  - Anything they can do to show you that they have learned the material
  - As a bonus, can be used for attendance/engagement
  - Goal is that everyone gets 100%
- Some medium-level assignments (1 per week)
  - Bigger project (individual or group)
  - Graded – individual or group grades (or both)

# Evaluating student work (continued)

- Papers/Projects
  - Luckily, these don't have to change much
  - Considering adding a multi-media component (annotated ppt, video, website, audio, etc.)
- Exams
  - Think about the “rules” (open/closed book, notes, etc.)
    - I typically say open book/notes but absolutely no collaboration
    - I also typically limit the time period (to a 24 hour window, for example)
  - Think of exams as a learning activity
    - What do you want them to learn while taking the exam?
    - In other words, how can you change the exam, so that having the book/notes helps, but does not give them the answers
  - Incorporate signing of an honor pledge as part of the exam

# Workshop – small group discussion at tables

- What were you planning to cover this week?
- How could you adapt it to an online environment?
  - Let your imagination run wild!
- Share ideas with table
  - Those of you online – you are one giant group – please use the chat feature

10 minutes – then we will share best ideas from 2-3 groups

# Final points

- Communicate, communicate, communicate
  - The worst thing for students is to be stuck and unable to reach you
  - Set specific times for being online, but also set boundaries
- Let go of a little bit of control
  - This will be hard for most of us!
  - Our job is to create an environment where learning can happen
  - Who knows, we may all learn something from our students!
- Use a variety of different media

# And ... Remember this advice:

- Think about the **learning**, not the teaching
- Learning is an active process
- The students should be doing more work than you are



Questions?