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**CONVEYING CONTENT ONLINE – Starting Point**

**Brief description:**In online courses or activities, any content needs to be delivered online. This may involve either a presentation created specifically by the instructor for this group of students, or the use of existing materials available in the literature (referred to as “readings”, although they may involve a variety of multi-media besides text).

**Potential/desired benefits:**

* Convey content/information to students in the most effective way possible.
* Enhance students’ understanding of the materials by providing them with the opportunity to review content at their own speed, interrupting and repeating as needed, and possibly using different modalities that may be more conducive to their learning preferences.
* *Add additional potential benefits*

**Potential limitations/concerns:**

* Students do not have the immediate opportunity to ask clarifying questions to the instructor – although there may be ways to reduce this limitations
* *Add additional potential benefits*

**Possible ways of doing it *(as modeled in this course so far)*:**

1. **Instructor’s “video lecture”** *(ex: Preliminary assignment)*
2. **Instructor’s “narrated Powerpoint”** *(ex: Week 2, Raffaella’s presentation)*
3. **Published text** *(ex: Week 2+3 and 5+6 – most reading assignments)*
4. **Published webpage/ hyperlinked documents** *(ex: Week 2+3: website on Connected Learning***)**
5. **Videos/documentaries** *(ex: Week 2+3 – video by Brown)*

*Add other possible options if you can think of any*

**Key implementation questions and related insights:**

1. ***What are pros and cons for each option, and tips to make the most of it?***

* *Add insights for each of the options*

1. ***What are some best practices/tips that cut across options?*** *Make sure to address at least the following issues:*
   * *How can you “orient” students to the contents you want them to engage with?*
   * *When and how should we give students choices about content?*
   * *When would you want to include an instructor’s lecture vs. published content?*

*Add specific insights*

**Additional notes/comments:**

* *Add*

**FOR Instructors’ notes only:**

*NOTE: Do not try to get all of this out the first time around!*

***A. How can we convey content/information most effectively to students online, prior to class?*** *(identify pros and cons for each option, and tips to make the most of each option)***:**

* ***Instructor’s video-taped lectures:*** 
  + each lectureneeds to be short (to hold students’ attention, and to make it easier to review specific pieces);
  + try to “chunk” as much as possible, and give titles that can make it easier to remember what each “chuck” is about;
  + quality of video may matter – especially if lectures are long;
  + video-taping actually lectures done in a previous class may or may not work ;
  + captioning required if there is a deaf student in the class *(check into software options for captioning)*
* ***Instructor’s narrated Powerpoint presentations*** *(w/ notes and/or voice over):*
  + Simple, but very effective way to present materials
  + Best if you can have the option for students to either read your notes or hear your voice over – as it can fit different learning preferences, and also purposes (ex: first time around vs. looking back for some specific information)
  + Keep it short – or at least make sure students can stop and come back at any time;
  + Try to keep the text on the slides to a minimum (without repeating voice or notes); add as much visuals as possible (photos, diagrams, etc.)
  + Remember power of PP to include multimedia such as short videos and Internet links
* ***Instructor’s Panopto recordings:*** *(ex: Dave’s introductory video; Martin Lynch’s motivation course):*
  + Again,keep short or “chuck” (no more than 5-10 minutes each)
  + Use of index important for longer recordings (see Martin’s)
  + may be better than taped lecture if you need to refer to visuals; easier/ more natural for the instructor if “self-taped”
* ***Animations:***
  + Could be especially useful to explain some complex concept or scientific phenomenon
  + May be more challenging to create – but there may be commercially available animations you may be able to use
* ***Readings:***
  + Most simple way to convey content without face-to-face!
  + Carefully decide amount and level of complexity of readings for each week/module
  + Remember that documents to be read may be not just text-based, but increasingly multi-media (especially when made available online) – such as videos, documentaries, websites, etc.
  + If readings include multi-media documents, make sure students have the software to access them fully
  + Helpful to give students some idea about why specific readings were selected and how we expect them to “read” them (i.e., what we want them to get out of each document)

**B.How can students engage productively with this online content/information?**

* ***Provide information about “how to use/ what to look for” in specific documents:***
  + Whether it is readings or instructor’s presentations, it is useful to provide a bit of context, so students know what they are trying to get from that “piece of content” and thus what to do with it
  + Valuable information may include: why the document was chosen/included, where it comes from, what we hope students to get from it, “how to read it” (ex: skim for certain information vs. memorize or fully understand everything in preparation for a test)
* ***Have students “do something” with the information – online assignments:*** 
  + We know from research that people remember more of what they read/listened to if they “do something with it”
  + It provides assurance that students indeed read/listened to what was assigned (even if their presence cannot be monitored as with attendance in a face-to-face course)
  + Student engagement with content could involve several levels – r*emember Bloom Taxonomy (****LIST 6 levels****)* – and we should try not to only stay at the lower levels
  + **Collect and examine specific examples**
* ***Online (low-stakes) quizzes:***
  + Can be a quick way to make sure students did the readings/ watched the instructor’s presentations!
  + Can also be helpful to signal to students what we think is most important for them to get out of the readings (i.e., the questions could almost act as a “study guide”)
  + Tends to be at the lower levels of Bloom’s taxonomy – so needs to be complemented by other activities as well
  + If they want, students could find easy way to “cheat” in there quizzes – but making them frequent and low stakes will act as a deterrent
* ***Discussion boards:*** *see separate document*

**Additional notes:**