

Five strategies to maintain engagement in your FlexSync and Synchronous online courses

1. Drive Students to D2L for All Course Activities

Use D2L (during and in between class meetings) to share access to and organization of all course activities.

- Synchronous activities: This helps make sure all learners whether joining in-person or by video conference can access necessary materials through D2L Brightspace.
- Asynchronous activities: Give outside of class online homework and assessments, by linking to [Existing Activities from Content](#) to tools like Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussions.

2. Check-in with Your Students

Check-in with your students frequently about their ability to meet the expectations for the course and determine changes in technology needed for them to find success in your courses. As you develop your plan for checking with students, review the [Four Keys for Success](#) as they may guide your communication strategy:

Revisit Course Expectations

Weekly, choose a relevant course policy and remind students of where they can locate those (ideally in the course syllabus). Some policies that may be of great importance are:

- Synchronous Participation: Be sure to distinguish between:
 - In-Person Participation (rotation and plan)
 - Video Conference Participation (what are your netiquette expectations)
- Asynchronous Participation: Homework, assessments, exams, watch class recordings or mini-lecture videos (provide due dates and share where to find those). Consider offering synchronous exam reviews and days to connect virtually to ask questions about assignments.

Ask About Technology Needs

After the class has been running for a while, check-in to see if students have experienced changes in their access to technology. Connect students with the technology resources on campus.

Remind Students About Course Organization and Important Dates

- Use Announcements in D2L Brightspace to share upcoming class topics and due date reminders.
- Explain how students can access the course schedule or syllabus that outlines due dates and learning activities.
- Add [Content](#) modules or topics and [include Due Dates to all topics](#) to communicate to students when they need to engage with what content. Example of module/topic structure:
 - Week 8 (Start Date - End Date)
 - Before Class Meeting Activities (Due: Date, Time)
 - In-Class Meeting Activities: Date, Time
 - After Class Activities (Due: Date, Time)

3. Actively Engage Students Synchronously

Utilize a few [active learning strategies](#) to keep your students engaged in your real-time meetings whether they are in-person or video conferencing (Don't try to use them; start with one or two until you feel comfortable). Here are some specific strategies to consider for FlexSync and synchronous online classes:

- Attendance: Use [Self-Enroll Groups with a Capacity in D2L Brightspace](#) to allow students to select in-person or video conference attendance in your classes.
- Small-Group Work: Make small group work efficient in video conferences by [pre-assigning students to breakout rooms](#) in Zoom. Consider one or more of these [10 Strategies for Engaging Learners with Online Meetings](#)
- Active Learning: Get comfortable with the [text chat feature in Zoom](#), consider [in meeting Zoom polling](#) or [Poll Everywhere](#) for active learning. This would be a great way to engage your [Student Academic Support](#) worker to enhance learning activities.

4. Add Asynchronous Activities

Use D2L as an [asynchronous online learning](#) space to enhance student learning. If you haven't already, you may want to consider:

- Recording and Sharing Meetings. For maximum flexibility, record class meetings with the cloud recording feature in Zoom and sharing the video in D2L.
- Learning Activities. Adopt an [engagement strategy](#) for the remainder of the semester. Some to consider are: 1) Lecture capture, 2) Interactive e-learning, 3) Audience response systems.

5. Review Your Tools for Assessment

There are many tools available to assist you with assessment and asynchronous methods are recommended. For example:

- Go through your D2L site and attach [Grades Items](#) to all [Quizzes](#), [Assignments](#), and [Discussions](#) to update the grade book.
- Create an online exam or [Quiz](#). To inhibit cheating and the sharing of questions/answers, adopt these design [strategies](#). For added security, consider the purchase or use of online exam security software. Several options are [available](#).
- Consider using [Media Space](#) to create graded video quizzes.