

## First and foremost:

**As a minimal move**, consider moving at least half of what would happen in a normal 3-hour class to asynchronous methods. Record part of your typical lecture (10-15 minutes) and post it for students to view when it is convenient for them. They can view it more than once if merited. There are several easy ways to record (Youtube, recorded Collaborate or Zoom, etc.) or check with your institution's IT Help for the options they support. Recorded audiop is also an option if the topic does not require visuals - just keep it short.

- **Why not just record my lectures?** Part 7 of the Tony Bates piece, Online Learning for Beginners [Online learning for beginners: 7. Why not just record my lectures?](#)
- **Transitioning to Online Lectures** [Transitioning to Online Lectures | Centre for Teaching Excellence](#)

**More importantly**, think about content delivery as multi-faceted (text, articles, videos, podcasts, etc.) There are lots of small steps you can take to gently move away from long synchronous lectures. Many online courses have few or no whole class synchronous meetings. They embrace varied methods of content delivery and student engagement strategies. It takes a bit of time and work to redesign a face-to-face course into an effective and enjoyable course that relies primarily on asynchronous interactions. For now, just start with a few, add a few more when you are ready. Who knows, if and when you are back in a face-to-face classroom you may find that many of the new strategies you employed online work just great in your face-to-face course, too.

**Avoid death by powerpoint!** This TEDx talk will give you tips on making the most of your slides

• <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo&list=PLq4uKB7HRNyeUDvftTe67pyRBg6sCaIQf&index=75>

## During the days prior to a synchronous session

Think about what would prepare students to take best advantage of those precious hours/minutes in synchronous sessions.

**Encourage students to complete the assigned readings (There are several ways to do this.)**

- 1) Post a brief video (5-10) minutes, highlighting important and, hopefully interesting, sections of the readings. Motivate/inspire students to anticipate the content. Think about

posing a problem or situations that the readings will help solve. This will help focus students as they watch for clues to addressing the situation or problem.

- 2) Students complete readings and post "Muddiest Point " to a forum set so they do not see other students' posts or do not see them until they have posted their own muddiest point. (Alternatively, the muddiest points could be submitted as assignments, sent via email, submitted as the response to a questionnaire, survey or short answer quiz/test.) The instructor gathers responses prior to 10:00 and decides how best to address them. What is the most common area of confusion? What are the most important points to clarify? A few options are:
  - Clarify in text or audio/video and post to course
  - Post the most important muddiest points to different discussion threads and require students to post a single paragraph explanation to at least one of the points
  - Plan to clarify some of the points in the first 10 minutes of the synchronous session
- 3) Students complete readings and take an ungraded, online quiz. The instructor can determine what areas they should address/clarify in another way. Maybe in one of the ways listed above.
- 4) Put students into asynchronous discussion groups and ask them to participate in a discussion of the readings. Each week, a different student in the group can be the discussion facilitator. The instructor can drop into the discussions to see how things are going and occasionally contribute or can require the facilitator to submit a brief summary/report.

**Help students anticipate and interact with some of the concepts they will encounter in readings, videos or lectures. Here are a few ways to do this:**

- 1) Ask students to "interview" someone - parent, roommate, friend, co-worker, social media friends, etc. Offer at least one question related to up-coming content for them to ask and encourage them to follow-up with ones they construct. Examples for a couple of subject areas:
  - a) What do you know about residential Building Codes?
  - b) What do you think are the most important things to remember when dealing with an Alzheimer's family member?
  - c) What are the similarities and differences between Fascism and Populism?
- 2) Ask students to list 5 things they already know or have heard about the concept.
- 3) Have students to predict:
  - a) What they think the author's view would be on a related topic
  - b) The six countries with the lowest per capita consumption of electricity
  - c) The 3 top reasons people give for not reporting child abuse
- 4) Do a 'Minute Paper' activity (or have them draw a concept map) at the beginning of the week/session/lecture and another one at the end. Ask students to assess the change. Or collect and you assess the change.

## Active-ate your live session

**Realize that most, if not all, students require time and engagement to properly process information.** Class discussion is fine, but generally does not engage all students. Often it becomes a discussion between the instructor and a few students with the rest just, hopefully, listening. Minds tend to wander. Even in a face-to-face class instructors cannot know if students are giving their full attention or if they have something else on their minds. There are lots of activities that can help students engage as well as give the instructor an indication of what students are understanding and what they are not.



Created by Creative Stall  
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- How to Use Active Learning in an Online Lecture  
<https://tophat.com/blog/how-to-use-active-learning-in-an-online-lecture>
- Active Learning for Your Online Classroom<https://ctl.columbia.edu/resZoom> : Five Strategies Using  
[htources-and-technology/teaching-with-technology/teaching-online/active-learning/](https://sources-and-technology/teaching-with-technology/teaching-online/active-learning/)

### Break up your lecture

Think of your lecture as a series of mini-lectures, each between five and fifteen minutes long. You may identify 3-5 segments in a typical hour-long lecture. Perhaps more for a three-hour lecture. To help you focus the intent as well as actual outcomes of the segments, ask:

- What is the main point(s) of this section? Are there one or two examples I can give? Is there a story to tell? Are there visuals that can make an impact?
- What is important for students to know? Can I sharpen the focus and remove unneeded material? What should they be able to state as their primary take-aways from this segment?
- How will I know if students 'got it'? How can they demonstrate their understanding?

Once the mini-lectures are identified, consider:

- Which might be recorded via audio or video, posted to the online course and available for students to view at their convenience before a certain date.
- Choose or create an activity that asks students to interact with the content. You'll want to plan something consistent with the importance of the understanding.
- Are there one or two that need to be done synchronously? Why?
- Might any be effectively viewed after a synchronous session? Perhaps one that can be wrapped into a more extended asynchronous interaction or assignment. One quick example: Post the video in a discussion forum and ask students to post comments/questions thereby continuing the discussion beyond the live session.

Transforming Your Lectures into Online Videos [Transforming Your Lectures into Online Videos](#)

## Short activities to “interrupt a lecture” can be interspersed with lecture segments

**2 Main Take-Aways and a Question:** Often referred to as **Minute Paper**. Give students 1 minute to write 2 things they learned and one question they still have. Depending on the size of the class, responses can be submitted through the chat, as the response to a survey, short answer quiz questions or through the assignment submission feature of your LMS.

**Two Test Questions:** Ask students to craft 2 questions that they might expect on a test based on this lecture segment. These can be collected/shared in lots of ways but you might try using [Padlet](https://padlet.com/) (<https://padlet.com/>), [EtherPad](https://etherpad.org/) (<https://etherpad.org/>) or other online tools.

**Explain the concept:** Give students 1-2 minutes to write what they would say if trying to explain this concept to someone not taking this course (12 year old cousin, 65 year old grandparent, someone from another country, etc.)

**Poll:** Post a short (maybe 2-3 questions) poll and allow students to respond anonymously. Alternatively, ask a series of questions and students can reply in the chat area using emoticons. The poll can be about student reactions to the content or their feelings about their own understanding.

**Breakout Rooms:** Putting students into breakout rooms where they can collaborate on one of the above tasks or perhaps something a bit more time-consuming can be very effective. Just schedule the appropriate amount of time and be sure the instructions are clear.

**Practice Quiz:** Give students just a few minutes to complete a very short quiz that will test their understanding of a segment. Set it so that students get feedback immediately.

**Q&A:** Encourage students to ask questions over the content just presented. You, as the instructor, can respond to the questions or call on other students to help out. You could also do this in a Fishbowl environment.

**Fishbowl:** Call on 3-5 students to be part of the fishbowl (or ask for volunteers.) These students will interact as the other students look on. This can be a simple Q&A session or you can structure the discussion around pros & cons, debate, etc.

Alternatives to Lecture offers an example of an asynchronous ‘Fishbowl’ activity:

[ALTERNATIVES TO LECTURE](#)



## Map out your synchronous sessions to ensure you have thought of everything!

### Examples:

1. [The lesson Plan for Bootcamp Day 1 Opening Session](#)
2. [One Way to Approach a 1-hour synchronous session](#)
3. [Example of a Session Plan for a First Class](#)
4. [A Bad Example](#)
5. [Download a generic Lesson Plan Template](#)

