**Going Online Quickly**

**Spring 2020**

We realize that going fully online so quickly is challenging. In addition to taking advantage of CTLET webinars and support, we encourage you to think about how to provide content and activities for students that are equivalent to what would happen in face-to-face classes. As you redesign your classes, please consider:

1. How will you teach content and skills and how will your students participate actively in their own learning?
2. How will your students be interacting with you in an online format?
3. How will your students be interacting with each other in an online format?

We find that students often do better when these courses are *modular and recursive*--when they are asked to use the same tools/do the same kinds of things weekly. So for example, it is better to use a tool consistently in the same way weekly rather than to use multiple tools in multiple ways that vary week to week.

**Below are some further recommendations**

* **Keep things simple**: Do not feel that you have to start using all the tools on Blackboard just because they are there. Start with the tools you already know or pick 1-2 to familiarize yourself with and work with them. (**Discussion Board** and **Collaborate Ultra** are good ones to start with.)
* **Discussion**: As mentioned, the **Discussion Board** is a useful tool ([quick 2 min tutorial here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1M1v5YDxnXo)) to manage class discussion.  If you have grades for student-led discussion, you can assign individual students or groups to mediate discussion by asking them to create threads. You can also participate in and moderate threads. We recommend setting up a new Forum for each week to keep the number of posts manageable. Discussion boards can also be graded very easily if you wish. The "Keep Teaching and Learning Link" below includes instructions for how to do that.
* **Content delivery**: Rather than emailing students materials, we recommend uploading files with lecture notes, readings, links, and videos to**Course Materials**. That way if a student needs to go back to read something or misses an announcement, they know where to find everything.
* **Lectures**: If you're planning to record video lectures instead of holding synchronous webinars, aim to keep those short (5-10 minutes) to maximize content retention. You might also consider close-captioning, both for the sake of accommodations and for students who might need to watch the content without sound. There is an easy way to do this via YouTube and Andie Silva (asilva@york.cuny.edu) is happy to provide resources.
* **Papers and grading**: The easiest way to manage submission and grading of papers is the **Assignments** tool. You can create rubrics on Blackboard or grade papers holistically. Assignments are automatically added to the student's gradebook. If you prefer to receive papers via email, make sure there is a plan in place for returning graded papers and providing feedback.
* **Technology Barriers**: It's possible and even likely you will have students who don't have computers and/or regular internet access at home. You may remind them that the college will remain open if they wish to use the library, but you should also have an accommodation plan in place for students who are not willing or able to utilize campus resources.***Students should not be penalized for technological issues beyond their control. The same is true for students with special needs*.**
* **Plan ahead**: Students will need to have access to materials within a reasonable time and be made aware of new deadlines for submitting work that counts as class participation and for weekly class time. Remind students that online work requires a lot more self-guidance and that they need to budget extra time to complete weekly assignments on top of regular papers and homework. You might expect to see more students during office hours for that reason, so consider whether you might want to hold meeting times via Skype or Collaborate Ultra.