Where to start...?

This is an unusual event. In this circumstance it may be best to ask yourself what are the key learning objectives for my course? Once you reflect on these you can begin thinking through the technology and logistics to accomplish those key objectives. Whether you will be assessing those objectives during the alternative delivery time or when face-to-face meetings resume, you’ll need to consider what instructional materials and activities are needed to help students reach the course goals and objectives in the interim.

Here are some steps you may want to follow when switching modalities on short notice.

1. Identify learning objectives and subtopics that will need alternative delivery.
2. Create a course outline, by creating modules in Canvas. Sometimes considering what you plan on assessing will help you determine how to structure your outline.
3. As you weigh what to condense, where appropriate, consider what content, activities, and assessments are essential to those outcomes.
4. Identify teaching materials that you’re already using that can be easily uploaded to Canvas.
5. Develop a communication strategy for conveying information that you would normally only mention in class (through Canvas email).
6. Identify gaps in teaching materials and consider how you will address them. This might mean the creation of additional documents and resources, recorded lectures, online meetings, etc.
7. Consider how you’d like to include interactive elements of your class. This could mean web meetings during scheduled class time, Blackboard Collaborate Ultra in Canvas meetings with students.
8. Use only tools and technologies supported by UW-River Falls Distance Learning Environment to include Canvas, Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, and Kaltura.

Please keep in mind: Your students will likely be directly impacted by this event and that may affect their ability to participate.

How can I present information to my class?

Record lectures

When you want to record some of your course lectures, think about chunking up your lecture into about 10-minute segments so that students will be able to space out the material. It is also good practice to consider the “drop-off” rate for students watching videos, which is about at 6-7 minutes. Here’s how to use the Kaltura recorder:
How do I present information during class time online?

With synchronous sessions you and your students communicate and view materials at the same time. This is possible via the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra in Canvas tool.

- **Caveats**: It may not be possible for all students in your classes to attend the web meeting, so be thoughtful about how you might share out the recording later. Students might also be hesitant to share audio so encourage them to ask questions via the “chat” feature.
- In Canvas, add “Collaborate Ultra” to the course navigation menu and set up your room: [https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-12933-415257079](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-12933-415257079)
- Collaborate Ultra overview for instructors [https://technology.uwrf.edu/TDClient/1979/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=15880](https://technology.uwrf.edu/TDClient/1979/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=15880)

How do I upload materials to Canvas?

Instructors interested in using Canvas as a central repository for the class can make use of the Home/Modules page to organize materials and store them in one place. This page, [https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-12689-415241427](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-12689-415241427), illustrates how to create and upload files (and pages and assignments) to your Canvas course. “Pages” can add extra functionality over files since they work like webpages (active links, embedded images, etc.), but need to be created within Canvas instead of via external apps like Word or PowerPoint.

Class communications

How does the class discuss course content?

Blackboard Collaborate Ultra in Canvas is a video conferencing tool for synchronous discussion with your students. (see links above)

Asynchronous discussions, like the Discussions tool in Canvas, allow students to interact with one another around a topic throughout an extended window of time that can span hours, days, weeks, or your entire course.
When holding online discussions, instructors often follow one of two paths. The first is more of a monologue, or 1-on-1 question and response, in which students respond to a prompt to show you that they’re familiar with the material. This can be valuable for a knowledge check, but also has value in that students can compare their own knowledge and application to their peers.

The second path is more of a true discussion, in that students may pick one or more perspectives to support with materials you’ve covered as a class and/or external research. Because there is more than one “correct” answer, this type of discussion can lead to greater back-and-forth between students, and more robust responses from students to one another.

To learn more about using the Discussions tool in Canvas, see this page, https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-13016-4152724374.

**Online meetings (e.g., Office Hours, Advising, etc.)**

In addition to allowing you to present materials, Blackboard Collaborate Ultra also allows your students to speak over their microphone, call in with a phone, share materials, utilize a whiteboard, and work in “break-out groups.” To learn more about Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, see the section above titled “Hold synchronous sessions.”

Please note: If you should need to meet with colleagues online, you may do so through [MyUW System Portal -Web Conferencing (Blackboard)].

**Chat**

Canvas has a built-in chat feature. Consider enabling it for informal, real-time communication inside of Canvas. [https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-12933-415257079](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-12933-415257079)

**How do I communicate with the students and keep them connected to the class?**

Your students may not be accustomed to being online students. This may require extra communication on your part to keep everyone on track. Consider developing a weekly schedule for yourself, reminding you when to send out information on the week’s activities, approaching deadlines, motivational messages, class-based feedback, and reminder messages.

**Getting help**

The following resources are available to you and your students. In the event of a prolonged campus closure, consider communicating available resources to your students through email, Canvas, or whatever means you choose.
Canvas 24/7 help in Canvas
Faculty: 1 (833) 826.8718
Student: 1 (833) 826.8717
Email through Canvas Help
Guides
Faculty:
Students: