



CREATE A SOCIAL SPACE

CHALLENGE IN CREATING A SOCIAL SPACE IN ONLINE COURSES

Many students find it difficult to maintain their motivation in online teaching, partly because the relationships are different and because there is not the same level of obligation as in-person teaching. This affects their academic outcomes. We also know that students use their study groups less. Therefore, an extra effort is necessary to establish a trusting, interactive social space.

SOLUTIONS

- **Be particularly clear in your presentation about what you want and your expectations for the students.**
Set a structure at the start of teaching and clarify what will be happening in self-study periods and group work between lessons. Explain how students can be good participants and how they can get the most out of online teaching. Being aware of the structure will forge a sense of security in students and make them more efficient.
- **Create opportunities for students to form relationships.**
Ask them to upload pictures to their Absalon profiles.
Help them organise working groups from the start and give them time to introduce themselves and chat a little the first few times they work in their groups. Initiate a group activity at the start in which the groups have to produce something specific and academically relevant, but with the ultimate purpose of forming networks. Having a fixed working group makes a huge difference for student attendance and commitment, and they may even contact group members who fail to show up and ask whether they are okay.
- **Do something to create relationships with your students.**
Ask your students to have their camera turned on for teaching. Chat with the students who log-in to the course room early. Find out about your student's academic skills in advance or at the start of the course using polls or presentations and refer to this knowledge regularly. Invite students to ask additional questions after class or make yourself available in some other way.
Remember that lively body language and passionate communication is still important for keeping the students' attention, even though this may be hard when you are looking into a webcam.

TOOLS

- Gilly Salmon's 5-stage model for successful online learning:
<https://www.gillysalmon.com/five-stage-model.htmlgger>



LECTURES FOR 100+

THE CHALLENGE IN ONLINE LECTURES FOR 100+

Lectures are generally a passive teaching style and they place great demands on the student's concentration skills and their ability to actively acquire the knowledge being communicated. If students are poorly prepared or do not match the academic level, their learning outcomes will often be very limited. We know that these challenges are reinforced if you merely stream your lecture without interaction.

SOLUTIONS

More preparation

- The best and radical solution is to use the Flipped Classroom method.
- Require something from your students before the lecture by preparing a quiz in Absalon or start your lecture with questions in an online quiz. This will help students to focus and evaluate their learning, and it will provide you with input on their level of achievement. You can encourage the students to repeat the quiz after the lecture to demonstrate their progress or to identify what they need to work on.

Strengthen interaction

- Make quizzes or Zoom Polls part of your teaching. Make sure that the questions are sufficiently difficult.
- Encourage students to ask questions in the chat. Have breaks in your lecture every 10-15 minutes and answer questions. Have student moderators keep an eye on the chat, and ask you the best or most important questions. You can collect the students' questions on sli.do, which has a function whereby students can vote on each others' questions, so that the most popular questions are always at the top of the list.
- An online version of group work or "talk to your neighbour" can be organised in the breakout rooms in Zoom. Set up breakout rooms in advance, so students are always placed in their study group. By doing this, you will save the time that would otherwise be spent on saying hello and negotiating roles in random groups. Remember that the assignment must be crystal clear for everyone before they are sent into groups, as it is difficult to ask the teacher clarifying questions during. You can conclude with a quiz, get the groups to ask a question about the material, have a representative from the group present the group's work, or ask the students to write a summary they can share with the whole group on Padlet.
- Encourage your students to be together physically with their study group during online teaching, so that they can talk to each other when you ask a discussion question. This will help their concentration and reduce procrastination.

TOOLS

- Inspiration for Flipped-Classroom teaching: <https://obl.ku.dk/theme/flipped-learning/>
- Case with flipped-classroom teaching: <https://obl.ku.dk/case/more-time-for-one-on-one-interaction-with-flipped-classroom-teaching/>
- Quiz with clickers: <https://obl.ku.dk/tool/engage-your-students-with-student-response-systems-2nd-generation-clickers/>
- Breakout rooms on Padlet: <https://obl.ku.dk/tool/collaborative-notes/>
- Live polls: <https://blog.sli.do/classroom-interaction-live-polls/>
- Collecting questions in sli.do: link missing



FLIPPED CLASSROOM

CHALLENGE WITH POORLY PREPARED STUDENTS

A well-known challenge in many types of teaching is that many students turn up without having prepared adequately. This often leads to teaching becoming an introduction to the basic academic points, and students are left to deal with any additional reading and reflection on their own.

SOLUTIONS

A flipped classroom reverses the roles, so that the students are responsible for acquiring the basic knowledge about a topic area and then passing information on to the teacher about where they need expert help.

If all students are fully prepared on the basics, time with the teacher and all their fellow students can be spent interactively on the most complex material or matters that require collaboration or discussion.

- Make the teaching materials and the “lecture” available in good time before class. Make one or several short videos or podcasts where you talk about the topic for the day. Divide it up into “sections” of 5-20 minutes, each with a separate point or conclusion. Prepare exercises or questions for students to answer before class, preferably in a form which gives you information about what causes them difficulties.
A good method is to prepare a quiz with questions about the material that students can complete several times and which they must have answered correctly before class.
- Start the class by asking the students what they found difficult. If you have given a quiz the day before, you can begin by focusing on the questions the students had difficulty answering.
You can introduce exercises, cases or something else for the students to work on while you are present. You are primarily there to help and clarify things in the material that the students have difficulties with.
Some teachers use all their in-person teaching time to answer questions and to have discussions. This takes some getting used to, but it will enable you to establish a culture in which it is almost impossible for students to be attend class unprepared.

TOOLS

- Inspiration for Flipped Classroom teaching: <https://obl.ku.dk/theme/flipped-learning/>
- Record yourself via Zoom: <https://obl.ku.dk/theme/live-streaming-dk/> (in Danish). Or record a video using your webcam, mobile phone or another video camera, and make it available in Absalon <https://obl.ku.dk/ku-absalon/make-a-screen-capture-in-absalon/>
- Share video: <https://obl.ku.dk/ku-absalon/how-to-upload-a-media-in-absalon-and-share-with-your-students/>
- Polls in Zoom: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-Meetings>
- Quiz med Socrative (<https://obl.ku.dk/files/2015/03/SocrativeQuickguide-2018.pdf>) or Shakespeak (<https://obl.ku.dk/files/2015/03/QuickguideShakespeak-2018.pdf>)



ONLINE DISCUSSION

THE CHALLENGE OF ONLINE DISCUSSION

In both physical and online teaching, it is important that students have the opportunity to process and discuss the material. Both to retain what they have learned and to ensure sufficient understanding. However, these discussions, even in small classes, are often characterised by limited time, unprepared or inattentive students and a few individual students who dominate the debate. Furthermore, it is not optimal for learning that class discussions require fast responses without the opportunity to check sources or facts.

It is very easy to be passive during online teaching and it is also time-consuming to moderate discussions and take the floor - this adds to the time pressure.

SOLUTIONS

One solution could be to set up the central complex discussions as long-term asynchronous written online discussions in Absalon. This would give the students time to formulate their responses, fact check and elaborate on their comments. It would also make it easier for all students to participate.

It may be necessary to:

- Create a participation requirement e.g. that all students contribute at least two qualified comments to the debate within 48 hours.
- Divide large classes into several discussion threads that each have a moderator who is responsible for keeping the discussion on track and summing up at the end.
- Have the teacher or teaching assistant join the discussion a few times and maybe ask new qualifying questions.

In many cases, these asynchronous discussions can be carried out before the class and can form the basis of the teacher's preparation for teaching.

And remember, regardless of whether participation is mandatory, you must clearly explain how the activity helps the students reach their learning objectives.

TOOLS

Asynchronous discussions in Absalon: <https://obl.ku.dk/ku-absalon/discussions-in-absalon/>



USING A VIRTUAL WHITEBOARD

THE CHALLENGES OF USING A VIRTUAL WHITEBOARD

If you are used to using a whiteboard for notes or calculations, it can be a challenge when you switch to online teaching. If you live stream your teaching, it can be difficult for students to read and follow along with what you're writing on the board.

SOLUTIONS

You can hook a digital drawing pad or newer iPad up to your computer. Once you have done this, you will be able to share your screen with your students in Zoom, so they can see what you are drawing.

In this example, you can see how the teacher has prepared asynchronous whiteboard teaching that students can watch on Absalon before class: <https://obl.ku.dk/case/what-students-do-between-large-lectures/>

TOOLS

- Pencil - teaching formulas online: <https://obl.ku.dk/tool/pencil-record-your-formulas/>
- Use Zoom via Absalon: <https://obl.ku.dk/ku-absalon/zoom-in-absalon/> and read more about using Zoom here: <https://obl.ku.dk/theme/zoom/>



GOOD QUIZ QUESTIONS

THE CHALLENGES OF CREATING GOOD QUIZ QUESTIONS

Many teachers do not think that fixed response categories in multiple-choice questions are relevant to the learning objectives of their course. If you ask students to provide qualitative responses, as a teacher, you need to read and interpret large quantities of text very quickly if the quiz takes place during class. The advantage of using quizzes rather than asking questions to the group as a whole, is that far more people have to think about the questions and thereby become aware of whether they can answer them or not.

SOLUTIONS

A traditional solution is to ask students to determine the veracity of different statements or to ask them to clarify various definitions.

It is easier to produce correct statements and answers rather than incorrect ones. Therefore: create many correct statements and maybe a single incorrect one, and then ask the students to identify the incorrect one.

Hold off on revealing the correct answer and let the students' answers or misunderstandings form the basis for a dialogue focusing on their reasoning and thought-processes rather than correct answers.

Repeat a question at the end of class or during the next class to highlight their progress and to repeat the material.

You can also use quizzes to receive honest anonymous answers from students on how well prepared they are, on their group work or for immediate feedback on the day's class.

TOOLS

- Zoom polls: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-Meetings>
- Create quizzes with Socrative (<https://obl.ku.dk/files/2015/03/SocrativeQuickguide-2018.pdf>) or Shakespeak (<https://obl.ku.dk/files/2015/03/QuickguideShakespeak-2018.pdf>)



SUMMING UP ONLINE

THE CHALLENGE OF SUMMING UP MATERIAL ONLINE

When teaching and carrying out activities online with your students, one of the major challenges can be summing up what students have worked on. The challenge usually lies in providing meaningful feedback to students on their work and on how they are interacting with you and their fellow students.

SOLUTIONS

Use breakout rooms

When your students do group work in breakout rooms, you can ask them to sum up by writing keywords in Padlet, which is a shared online whiteboard which everyone can see. Then, after the breakout rooms, you can highlight the most important responses or ask a group to expand on what they wrote. You can also move around their input on Padlet, so related input is collected in clusters.

Online matrix groups

It is possible to create online "matrix groups" where different "expert groups" work with different tasks or texts, and then create new presentation groups made up of one member from each group. Each member of the presentation group then presents their expert knowledge to the new group. However, you will have to determine beforehand who will be in which breakout room for both sessions and make clear that it is not crucial that the teacher is present for all presentations.

Make sure that groups or individual students present their academic work in the form of e.g. slides, problem solving or wiki-contributions, and share them with the class. Summing up or feedback takes place during the next class once fellow students and teachers have had time to review the material.

TOOLS

- How to use Breakout Rooms: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476093-Getting-Started-with-Breakout-Rooms>
- Working with Wiki: <https://obl.ku.dk/ku-absalon/collaborations/>



STUDENT MODERATORS

THE CHALLENGE OF TEACHING AND MODERATING AT THE SAME TIME

It requires a lot of concentration when some of your students are physically present and others are following along online. Many teachers know that they need a moderator to keep an eye on the chat and to sort through any questions, so they can focus solely on teaching.

SOLUTIONS

Select 2-5 students to moderate during each class. They should all take turns, so clearly define the task from the start. Select the required number rather than relying on volunteers.

The job of student moderators is to ensure the inclusion of online students during class and to support teaching activities by e.g. compiling questions in the chat. They can also help facilitate that all participants are given the opportunity to speak and that someone is responsible for reporting on their findings when students are sent into breakout rooms.

Adjust your teaching plan so you can pause every 10 minutes to let the moderator ask questions on behalf of the online students. This will improve interaction during your teaching. It is a good idea to use sli.do if you want to let the students “vote” on which questions are the most relevant.

Appointing student moderators solves a practical problem for you as a teacher while simultaneously giving the students shared responsibility for teaching - making successful teaching a group effort.

TOOLS

Live polls: <https://blog.sli.do/classroom-interaction-live-polls/>



FEEDBACK WHEN TEACHING ONLINE

THE CHALLENGE WITH FEEDBACK

Informal and non-verbal feedback can quickly disappear when teaching online. It therefore becomes important to create systematic and formalised feedback during teaching.

SOLUTIONS

Systematic approach

Systematise feedback so e.g. all speakers receive written feedback using the same feedback-template.

Clearly state whether you agree/disagree/require clarification when interacting verbally with your students.

PeerGrade, which can be accessed via Absalon, helps you ensure a systematic approach and anonymity in connection with peer feedback between students.

Quizzes during and after teaching also serve as feedback to students.

Clear framework

Create clear feedback rules so students know what to do when they give each other feedback. Clarify:

- Objective e.g. inspiration or correction
- Focus e.g. idea, outline, wording
- Type e.g. written or oral, anonymous or not
- Expected time expenditure
- Deadlines
- Responsibility

And make sure that your students have the chance to ask clarifying questions.

Clear criteria

Present examples of good subject-related work in different genres and analyse them together with your students rather than merely giving them a list of general criteria.

Let your students learn to use the subject-area's criteria by giving feedback to themselves and their peers.

TOOLS

- Inspiration for feedback: https://www.ind.ku.dk/online_ressourcer/feedback/
- Feedback in Absalon: <https://obl.ku.dk/case/training-activities/>
- Peer feedback in Absalon: <https://obl.ku.dk/ku-absalon/peerfeedback/>

MEET AN ONLINE TEACHER

Torben Heien Nielsen (padlet):
<https://obl.ku.dk/case/online-collaboration-in-class-using-padlet/>

Chresteria Neutzsky-Wulff (instructions and online feedback):
<https://obl.ku.dk/case/chresteria/>

Rikke Langebæk (flipped classroom):
<https://obl.ku.dk/case/more-time-for-one-on-one-interaction-with-flipped-classroom-teaching/>

Find inspiration for online teaching from your fellow teachers:
<https://samf.ku.dk/pcs>

NOTE: *Content is based on experience from previous teaching, experiences during the COVID-19 lockdown during the spring of 2020, as well as research and development work within university teaching at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Copenhagen.