

Adapting the Classroom Environment for Flexible Teaching Models

CTLT TA Institute
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Icebreaker

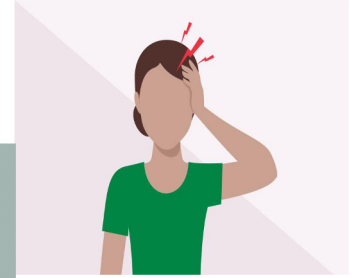
- How do you feel about in-person learning and online learning?
- Add an image to each of the next 2 slides to show us how you feel about both types of learning!
- Be prepared to say a few words about the image you chose!

In-Person Learning



BIOHAZARD

Online Learning



Agenda

- ~~Icebreaker~~
- Reflect & Theme: the “what” and “why” of a supportive classroom environment
- Time-Lapse: Resolving problems Before/During/After they arise
- Rapid Response: Crash Course in Transitioning Quickly to Different Teaching Styles
- Wrap-Up

Land Acknowledgement:

We would like to acknowledge that this workshop is provided by UBC's Vancouver campus, which sits on the traditional, ancestral & unceded territory of the Musqueam First Nation.

Learning Objectives

BTEOTLYWBAT:

- Reflect on and discuss the importance of creating and maintaining a supportive classroom environment
- Consider different approaches to cultivate a supportive environment in online & face-to-face settings
- Prepare plans of action for transitioning quickly from online to in-person learning

How supported do you tend to feel...

...in an online class?

Not at all



A lot!

...in an in-person class?

Not at all



A lot!

Activity: Reflect

Think about an **in-person** class you've attended throughout which you felt **supported**.

Think about an **in-person** class you've attended throughout which you felt **unsupported**.

How would you describe the environment of these classrooms? How did this help/hurt your experience as a learner?

Now re-do with **online** learning experiences instead.

Activity: Theme

Odd numbered groups will read over the responses for in-person classes.
Even numbered groups will read over the responses for online classes.

Find common themes:

Based off of the responses, identify key words that describe

- **What** a supportive classroom looks like
- **Why** having a supportive classroom environment is important

Afterwards you'll share your themes with the group.

Supportive Classroom Environments



What:

Flexibility and Engagement

- Flexibility
- Quick reply to questions
- Troubleshooting support
- Frequent check-ins
- Learning-focused rather than performance-focused
- Encourage risk-taking
- Encourage sharing ideas
- Encourage students to support each other - collaboration individual relationship and rapport with the instructor
- Encourages more than the initial participation



Why:

- Reduces stress, efficiency improved, improved mental health - overall better retention of material

Having a support network (including prof, TA's, and/or other students (with a network developed through group activities, perhaps) improves both retention of the material and students' mental health (which in turn also improves academic performance)

Online vs face-to-face

- Are there qualities of a supportive classroom environment that are particularly important for online or face-to-face learning?
- Why are these aspects more important in this setting?

Time-Lapse: Before/During/After

- Based on your pre-session responses, we have identified 3 areas of teaching that can be challenging for TAs in both in-person & online environments: **facilitating group work, providing assessment and feedback**, and **student engagement and participation**
- In groups, brainstorm ways to respond to **one** of these challenges in **either** an in-person or online environment in 3 segments: before the issue arises (preventative measures), as the issue arises (in the moment), and after the issue has taken place (follow-up and reflection)
- After brainstorming ideas for each segment, pick your strongest before, during, and after, and share it with the group!

#1. (Online): You plan to put students into small groups over Zoom for a discussion

What issues may arise during this activity? How can you plan to prevent them from taking place?	If preventing the issues doesn't work, how can you resolve them in the moment?	What can you do after the fact to help prevent these issues from arising in future classes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusion• Time is spent with inefficiencies, time-wasted• How to find groups? Pre-emptively assign groups after enrollment• Instructions are not understood. Comprehensively explaining how the groups is going to work and verify understanding (visually)• Unfamiliar with every new breakout room. Keep the same group assignment throughout the session, it will help build some	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeat messages of instructions or pop-ups to show in every group• Attempt to simplify work if too complicated for group work in the moment• Keep checking inside the groups to verify they understand the instructions• Share screen or encourage the students to write down their answers• Ask more specific questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there are new students in every group, it creates additional need to break the ice. Follow-up engagement and repeat members as said prior.• Attempt to simplify work if too complicated for group work in the moment - can work the middle column or last

#1. (In-Person): You plan to have students discuss material in small groups in class

What issues may arise during this activity? How can you plan to prevent them from taking place?	If preventing the issues doesn't work, how can you resolve them in the moment?	What can you do after the fact to help prevent these issues from arising in future classes?
<p>Providing specific pointers or discussion ideas.</p> <p>Making the activity as a game.</p> <p>Give clear instructions.</p> <p>Having visible prompts to remind students of discussion topics/questions.</p> <p>Allow students to assemble in groups by themselves.</p>	<p>Going around the small groups to help.</p> <p>Make adjustments to activity to promote engagement.</p> <p>Perhaps take a step back into an icebreaker to help people feel more comfortable.</p>	<p>Introduce incentives in the future? Maybe material related to an assessment?</p> <p>Come up with other types of participation in class rather than breaking them up into groups.</p>

#2. (Online): Halfway through the term, your students are feeling defeated in tutorials, and don't understand why they aren't succeeding. What do you do?

What issues may arise during this activity? How can you plan to prevent them from taking place?	If preventing the issues doesn't work, how can you resolve them in the moment?	What can you do after the fact to help prevent these issues from arising in future classes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Clear learning goals or objectives for each tutorial- Have a built in check-in for student feedback from tutorials (delivery etc.) prior to the middle of the term	<p>-inviting students to help brainstorm ways that the tutorial can be more effective, acknowledge how they are feeling and respond appropriately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reminder for email or office hours to help go over student concerns- Check in with other tutorials (if applicable), compare if other section are having similar issues (ex. Instruction clarity vs. delivery)	<p>-Invite the students to give feedback that you will try to respond to in future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- try to implement student suggestions to help with learning/accessibility-Ensure that instructions for assignments and the course are clear/thorough explanations. (This will probably be a discussion with the instructor)

#2. (In-Person): Halfway through the term, your students are feeling defeated in tutorials, and don't understand why they aren't succeeding. What do you do?

What issues may arise during this activity? How can you plan to prevent them from taking place?	If preventing the issues doesn't work, how can you resolve them in the moment?	What can you do after the fact to help prevent these issues from arising in future classes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Regular check ins and times for questions- Let them know that they can ask questions- Establish expectations for the tutorial at the beginning of the term- Put students into groups and have them come up with questions- Encourage students to attend office hours if they have questions about assignments or course material- Be approachable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review / refresh sessions- Discuss questions students have sent in	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ask students for feedback- Make sure they know about options for help with creating study plans etc- Let them know that they can ask questions- (Let students know there's a TA they can refer to)- Encourage students to seek help at the time, rather than let the problems accumulate- Provide information about study strategies support and mental health support on campus

#3. (Online): You are trying to facilitate discussion with your class over Zoom, but students are not responding via their microphones or in the chat.

What issues may arise during this activity? How can you plan to prevent them from taking place?	If preventing the issues doesn't work, how can you resolve them in the moment?	What can you do after the fact to help prevent these issues from arising in future classes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● As TA/instructor you can't find out if students are listening/learning or not.● In the course syllabus mention participation and engagement is highly important and grade is considered for that.● Engaging the students in facilitating parts of the class (presentation, discussion leading)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use poll over Zoom● Ask them to use emojis● Get them to use the annotate tool or the reaction buttons● Use breakout rooms to encourage participating in a less stressful environment● Icebreaking with an unrelated question to get them to speak● Anonymous survey on why they are not participating (main difficulties)● Ask if there is something you can do to make students feel more comfortable responding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Engagement points connected to responding/participating● Use multiple tools and platforms to allow engagement. Like Jamboard, mural etc.● Use canvas discussion posts to prepare them for classes● Have pre-class check-ins or small low stakes quizzes to verify they are doing the prep work

#3. (In-Person): Every time you ask the students a question, no one raises their hand to answer.

What issues may arise during this activity? How can you plan to prevent them from taking place?	If preventing the issues doesn't work, how can you resolve them in the moment?	What can you do after the fact to help prevent these issues from arising in future classes?
<p>Small number of avidly participant students, while others remain silent. Explain that you will ask randomly for participation prompts, keeping in mind that those that do not feel comfortable may want to do it a few times only.</p> <p>Presenting material to the class so that they have it in front of them.</p> <p>Ensuring that it is a safe environment.</p>	<p>Respond positively.</p> <p>There might be a chance that the instructor may not raise questions clearly, so let students speak about what they understand about the questions.</p>	<p>Have a friendly conversation with participants to know why they did not feel comfortable participating.</p> <p>Use a survey via email or some electronic option.</p>

Review:

- There is no way to predict or plan for every situation that might come up while you're teaching; all we can do is try to anticipate issues, respond appropriately when they come up, and learn from these experiences!
- Remember to use the resources available to you (especially talking to other TAs!) to plan for problems in the classroom



Remember Friday, March 13th, 2020?



Friday, March 13th, 2020...

- UBC announced that all classes would be shifting from in-person to online learning by the following Monday
- TAs and instructors only had the weekend to plan how to transition their classes to online learning
- Now, we want you to do the opposite!
- Go through the following slides and write down what you will need to change/take into account when moving back to in-person learning
- Only write down the issues on the left-hand side; no solving problems yet!

Lecture:

<u>Problems</u>	<u>Solutions</u>
<p>In each tutorial, there might be some students who feel ill and can't come to the class</p> <p>Peopel still do not know each other.</p> <p>Synchronous again</p> <p>Having to commute to campus</p> <p>It will be some students first time on campus even if beyond first year (first time in university class in-person)</p> <p>Teaching wearing a mask (or two)</p> <p>Switching lectures from video recordings to powerpoints etc.</p> <p>Ensuring the lecture is physically safe for students and teachers</p> <p>Depending on how the material was being delivered online, this may now be synchronously presented as opposed to asynchronously. As a TA or instructor this means not relving on</p>	<p>Provide a grace period where students can transition to in-person. This might mean recording any live lectures and uploading them to canvas or uploading pre-recorded lectures to canvas for at least a few weeks.</p> <p>Face shield can be worn if two metres away (Depends on university safety regulations)</p> <p>Maybe teach in a hybrid way. Recognizing that there will be different kinds of attendance, provide pre-recorded lectures and use in-person class time for discussion. Expectations regarding attendance should be made clear.</p> <p>Make sure you provide students with clear instructions about how to locate resources and</p>

Marking:


<u>Problems</u>	<u>Solutions</u>
<p>If in person tests instead of online, who actually has time allocated to mark</p> <p>Depending on how assignments are structured this may mean that the way they are submitted is changed to in-person instead of online</p> <p>Students may ask about marking expectations or questions in class.</p> <p>Change of timelines for marking reports and reviews of marking</p> <p>Grading participation (keeping track of who is participating)</p> <p>Invigilation</p>	<p>The instructor you are working with is the one allocating your hours, if you are overwhelmed talk to them and find a solution together.</p> <p>Be clear about how and where assignments can be handed in so no assignments get lost (e.g., handed to prof, handed to TA, put in prof mailbox, etc.)</p> <p>Be ready to answer questions about rubrics, challenging a grade, etc.</p> <p>Discuss with prof if you will have to take longer to mark than before (e.g., Canvas marking multiple choice versus the TA marking manually)</p> <p>Having clear rubrics on how to mark.</p>

Discussion Group:


<u>Problems</u>	<u>Solutions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team members still have that unfamiliarity.• Having to commute to campus (yourself and students)• Thinking about whether in-person group discussions will take the place or complement online discussions (can they be integrated in some way?)• Having the space to enable students to group but maintain social distancing• How to create some kind of rapport for in-person interactions• How to engage those that felt more comfortable to speak without video and in an online environment• Recognizing students behind masks• Social anxiety• Students will likely sit with people they know - how do you get them to work with people they haven't met yet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a transition session with less coursework to break the ice and scan the in-person environment for cues of distress or need of additional support• Set up a suitable transition time for students to adjust to in-person, don't some element of online, possibly even for duration of term as some students may not be able to make switch back• Remind students of support resources in case of distress of any case• Canvas can be a very useful tool to continue using it even for in-person classes and continue discussions in it.• If pePeople don't know each others than you can randomize the groups• Providing discussion questions ahead of

Lab/Demo:

<u>Problems</u>	<u>Solutions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Scheduling according to occupancy limits at the in-person labs- Having to commute to campus (you and students)- space/equipment for all students instead of just online demos- Safety measures and protective personal equipment needed in an in-person environment- Quickly finding all needed equipment/specimens- small groups, people may be uncomfortable with the virus in small enclosed spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students may have done online versions of prerequisite labs, so aren't as aware of safety considerations of working with chemicals (we've had some mishaps this year in chemistry that likely wouldn't have happened had their first year labs (or similar) been in person• Lots of sickness-induced absenteeism (have to work under	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have more lab sections, so there are fewer students in the room and allow more space and social distancing• Open windows to improve airflow if possible• First few labs focus on lab safety and protocols, especially for chemistry and other more dangerous classes.• Online training videos• On-call list of TAs to replace sick TAs or have more TAs per course on a part-time basis.• Online version of the labs for people who are sick or in quarantine.• Make up options for people who miss classes



Open Q&A



Reminder:

- To receive a certificate for a theme, you must fully attend four sessions under that theme **and** complete the [post-assessment survey](#) for that theme by Jan 24th at 12:00 pm PDT.
- Please complete the brief End of session Feedback Form (link posted in chat!) to help us improve future sessions!