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Teaching

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OVERVIEW

INTERACTIVITY IN A PHYSICALLY DISTANCED CLASSROOM

In order to practice social distancing in a college classroom, physical separation or spacing out of the students (and the instructor) in the room will be required. This arrangement will naturally pose some unique challenges to teaching and learning and faculty may have to re-imagine many aspects of in-person lessons.

While the exact parameters of how distancing will occur in a classroom at USF will vary based on a number of factors, including room size and discipline, the ideas presented below are meant to serve as a starting point to help faculty adapt their pedagogy to this new environment.

A NOTE ABOUT OVERCOMING NOISE

Maintaining interactivity is possible in the physically distanced classroom. However, you'll need to make adjustments about just how the students communicate when separated by distance. The central problem to overcome, of course, is excess noise. The strategies about noise listed below can be used to implement many different kinds of **active learning techniques**:

- Central notes table
 - Place your worked example on the empty table in the middle. one at a time, group members peruse all of them to see differences - without touching
 - Will not work in fixed seating lecture halls
- Virtual central notes table
 - Use collaborative tools like Google Docs, Sheets, or Slides
 - Upload class notes or files in your class-team on Microsoft Teams
 - Virtual whiteboards like **Padlet** or the whiteboard feature in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra (accessible from your Canvas course)
- Full volume
 - Would need to train students to respond to "return to attention" mode (flicker lights? **Google timer**? There's no way to out-shout them)
- "Library voice"
 - Keep distance but speak no louder than you have to - instead of whispering, speak in a hushed tone
- "Bring your own device"-mediated (voice)
 - Party call with earphones (so low talking) - can use things like WhatsApp, Google Voice, etc. instead of phone numbers
 - Discord group
 - Microsoft Teams meeting
- "Bring your own device"-mediated (text-based)

- Direct texting
- GroupMe
- Microsoft Teams chat
- Canvas groups, using the Canvas app

INTERACTIVITY THROUGH ONLINE TOOLS

Our guide to **Teaching Dual Audiences** includes numerous ideas for using apps and programs, especially MS-Teams, to provide interactivity. While these were written with dual audiences in mind, they could be used with an exclusively face-to-face audience as well, as a further way to overcome the problem of excess noise.

ACTIVE LEARNING IDEAS

Student Action: Individual

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
Entry/Exit Ticket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage retrieval 	Students complete a 3 question quiz worth 3 points in the first 5 minutes of class or the last 5 minutes of class. Can be done on paper and left on student's desk. Alternatively, responses can be emailed, submitted through online adaptive release quizzes in Canvas, or done through online quizzing tools like Kahoot .
Minute Paper/Quickwrite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check understanding • summarize/apply concepts 	Students write for one minute on a specific question (which might be generalized to "what was the most important thing you learned today"). Responses can be posted on discussion boards, emailed, or done on paper and left at the student's desk. Best used at the end of the class session.
Muddiest Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check understanding 	Like the Minute Paper, but asks for the "most confusing" point instead. Best used at the end of the class session. Use the same techniques for response, but consider using anonymity if sharing with the class.

Student Action: Pairs

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
Think-Pair-Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage collaboration • strengthen understanding 	Assign partners in the classroom that are able to talk 6 ft apart. Alternatively, students can "talk" through texts on platforms such as Group Me , Microsoft Teams or through a shared Google Doc,

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
		<p>when distance would make the volume in the room too loud for some students to learn.</p> <p>Another variation could be to send pairs out of class for easier socially distanced discussions elsewhere on campus with a set return time.</p>

Student Action: Groups

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
Concept Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen understanding make connections between concepts 	Use an online tool (such as Mindmeister or Coggle), to have students work collaboratively in real-time to add to the concept map.
Backchannel Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage students encourage discussion 	While the instructor presents, students use chat platforms such as Group Me , Discord or the Chat feature in Canvas to engage in a conversation that can be projected alongside the instructor (or occasionally checked by the instructor). Students ask questions, make comments, and share relevant resources. The instructor periodically ties the conversation into their presentation.
Group Fishbowl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate knowledge build community discuss ideas 	One small group of students will engage in a discussion or presentation while the rest of the class watches. A backchannel discussion can occur simultaneously to encourage class engagement.

LECTURING

Engaging Students

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
Polling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check understanding spark curiosity/ introduce new concept 	Use an online polling feature (such as Pollev Everywhere or the polling features in Microsoft Teams and Blackboard Collaborate Ultra) and share results with the class in real time. Students without a device can use colored cards, hands, or vertical movement to indicate their

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
		choice.
Partial Outline/Worksheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain focus • encourage active note-taking 	Create a set of class notes or a worked example with blanks for important information and share on Canvas. Have students download it and fill in the blanks during the class session.

Classroom Presence

	Goal(s)	Physically Distanced
Mini-Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide assistance and feedback • build rapport 	Because it will be difficult to circulate around the room during group work or activities, arrange for students to come up to the front of the room (either in small groups or one-by-one) to receive help and/or feedback from you.

Credits

This list has been adapted in part from:

- the document "[Active Learning while Physical Distancing](#)" by Louisiana State University
- the blog post [Active Learning in Hybrid and Socially Distanced Classrooms](#) by Derek Bruff, the director of Vanderbilt University's Center for Teaching

OTHER PAGES FOR TEACHING IN FALL 2020

- **Classroom Management with Social Distancing:** ideas to ensure compliance with health-related directives for face coverings and physical distancing
- **Teaching Dual Audiences:** suggestions for helping faculty teach online and face-to-face students simultaneously
- **Teaching with Masks:** strategies and workarounds for how to teach, and how students should interact, when everyone is wearing a mask



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