



Highlights

- Equity, accessibility and quality learning remain core principles of a Concordia education.
- As much as possible, course content must be delivered in an asynchronous format to accommodate students who are unable to come to campus. Planned synchronous activities should account for this reality.
- In some cases, in-person components will be necessary in order for students to acquire the necessary skills, competencies, and know-how needed to successfully complete the course. Such cases will be approved by the Deans and be considered for approval if not running them would lead to the cancellation of the course. Detailed protocols will be forthcoming later this week.
 - Physical distancing will be enforced at all times when an activity must be done on campus. If physical distancing is not possible, an in-person component cannot be run.
 - Strict protocols for access to the campus will be followed. In the case of a confirmed case, emergency protocols must be followed. Details of these procedures will be provided at a later date by the University.
- It is expected that students and faculty will have the needed equipment in order to take part in online education. Faculty should state these requirements in their syllabus. In doing so, they should consider how readily available these resources may be. Minimum requirements are a computer, functioning webcam, access to wi-fi or a data plan, and microphone.
 - Limited resources are available through the University for students who do not have this equipment.
 - Faculty and staff will need to install the Concordia Virtual Private Network in order to access some software.
- Specific language to include in Fall 2020 syllabi will be forthcoming.
- Given how uncertain conditions will be for years to come, adaptation of courses to a flexible delivery model will ensure readiness for the future.

Development and Preparation of Courses

Fall 2020

- In supporting faculty to prepare quality online courses, the CTL and KnowledgeOne will collaborate a coordinated support service. In doing so, a “community of practice” approach will be taken for each department. To facilitate this work:
 - All faculty should review the [Online Course Design Toolkit](#).
 - A self-assessment for faculty has been developed that will allow faculty to assess how prepared they are to put and deliver their courses online. The assessment results will allow the team to prepare more targeted assistance to the faculty.
 - Communities of practice have been shown to be the most effective way to implement best practices and support in. For more on communities of practice, see [Wenger 1998](#); [Senge 1990](#); [Saroyan & Trigwell 2015](#).



- In each Department, they can be formed in any number of ways. A few examples are:
 - By program
 - By “course type” (foundational courses; coordinated courses)
 - By faculty groupings (more experienced profs with less experienced profs)
- Once formed, Department Chairs can identify any disciplinary needs ***not met through online resources or through the communities of practice*** and make a request to the CTL team for further support. To make the support the most effective, it is essential that targeted and specific needs are identified that cannot be met through the online resources.
- Through the results of the self-assessment and with input from the Chair and other key stakeholders (UPD, GPDs, course coordinators) KnowledgeOne can assist faculty in preparing up to 50 courses for Fall 2020. A first call will be issued very shortly, with a second call to follow in the next week.

Expectations for Course Design

- As much as possible, courses will be prepared with the following formats in mind:
 - **Moodle** will be used as the University-wide Learning Management System. No other platforms should be used to house announcements, course content, and grades. Consistency across courses is essential for students navigating their online courses.
 - Several new Moodle tools will be rolled out this summer to add functionality to the platform. If you have suggestions on tools or functionality you would like to see added, be in touch with the Teaching & Learning Working Group (vpitl@concordia.ca).
 - Lectures and other methods for delivering content should be pre-recorded, edited into digestible pieces and available in an asynchronous format. Segments of lectures should follow major themes (chunks), but should not exceed 20-30 mins in length.
 - Chunking information into small units of related information facilitates mastery learning and student progression at their own pace.
 - CTL staff will support faculty in learning some basic editing skills. In some exceptional cases, cut and edit the videos on behalf of faculty.
 - Online activities are **essential** to good online design as they help provide students with an opportunity to engage with the content, fellow students, the professor, and to reflect on their own learning. No quality online course should be designed without activities planned as frequently as possible. The CTL has prepared a [guide](#) for designing online activities.
 - Synchronous activities should prioritize student engagement, not teaching: group work, discussion, office hours, project work, etc. In cases where students do not wish to be recorded, or discussion is sensitive, a recording of the synchronous activities are not mandatory. However, faculty must consider the needs of the students who are not able to join for synchronous activities.
 - Synchronous activities will use Zoom. If you are interested in piloting the use of Teams for these activities, be in touch with the CTL (teaching@concordia.ca). NOTE: Students and faculty must have an Office 365 email address in order to use Teams.



- Assessments should assume we will not be able to offer in-person examinations. They should be re-designed for the online environment, specifically.
 - The [Concordia OnLine Exams \(COLE\) system](#) will be available to support exams. Faculty will provide a copy of their exam to the COLE support team who will prepare it for faculty review and validation. A set of deadlines for the submission of exams will be forthcoming.
 - Exams that require proctoring will need Dean approval. Upon approval, faculty must include in the course outline the required legal text informing students of the use of proctoring software for final exams. Students are advised to secure University resources as soon as possible if they do not have the needed equipment.
 - A sub-group of the Teaching and Learning Working Group will be addressing Academic Integrity and Assessments. Additional tools, guidelines for the adoption of proctoring solutions and necessary syllabus language will be forthcoming.

- Designing for accessibility not only helps our students with disabilities, it helps all students. This is the core tenet behind [Universal Design for Learning](#). The [Access Centre for Students with Disabilities](#), in collaboration with the CTL, are ready to help you design with accessibility in mind.
 - All pre-recorded materials should be captioned (eg, via [Yuja](#)).
 - A Moodle tool will be piloted this summer that will help you to understand how to make your course more accessible and to identify where it is not accessible.
 - A set of online modules will be available within the next month that will assist you in making your course more accessible.

- Where possible and available, high-quality, peer-reviewed [Open Educational Resources](#) or Library electronic resources, including the [Course Reserves](#) service, should be used to ease the financial burden on students. [Subject librarians](#) can be consulted for more information and assistance.

- Follett, the new bookstore service provider on campus, will prepare digital course materials and textbooks can be ordered by faculty. These will be shipped to students around the world. Please consult the Bookstore website for more details.

- Software and other educational resource needs for courses must be identified so that proper support can be given to Departments and courses. A form will be created to identify access to software for teaching and student learning. Details forthcoming.

- [Grad Pro Skills](#), the [Student Success Centre](#) and other Student Services, including [Campus Wellness & Support Services](#) should be seen as partners in supporting students to complete their studies, develop academic, time management and study skills, stay healthy, and cope with stress and other personal challenges.



Best Practices in Online Teaching & Design

As outlined in [Boettcher & Conrad \(2016\)](#), faculty are encouraged to adopt as many of these best practices for teaching online as possible:

1. Be present in your course. Make sure you find meaningful ways to connect with your students in your course as often as possible, and minimally each week.
2. Create a supportive online course community.
3. Develop a set of explicit and reasonable expectations for your learners and yourself as to how you will communicate and how much time students should be working on the course each week.
4. Consider using a variety of large group, small group and individual work experiences.
5. Use synchronous and asynchronous activities.
6. Ask for [informal feedback](#) early in the term and be prepared to adapt where you can.
7. Prepare discussion posts or pose questions that invite responses, more questions, discussions, and reflections.
8. Use content that is available in digital format, and that are open resources (without cost).
9. Plan a good closing and wrap activity for the course
10. Assess as you go by gathering evidence of learning. Consider lower-stakes assignments that allow students the time to learn from mistakes and practice. Offer students as much corrective, formative feedback as possible so that your expertise can help guide their learning.
11. Rigorously connect content to core concepts and learning outcomes.
12. Design experiences to help learners make progress on their novice-to-expert journey. Key to these experiences is your mentorship through corrective and formative feedback.

The Québec government, in collaboration with Université TELUQ, has commissioned an [online course](#) to train teachers across the province for online education. It is currently only available in French, but will be available in English soon.

Additionally, the University of New South Wales has offered a [Coursera course](#) (free for now) called Learning to Teach Online that is part of a larger certificate.