Tips and tools to strengthen participation and engagement in online learning contexts

American English Webinar Series

February 17, 2016

Presented by Andy Halvorsen & Jennifer Rice



Agenda for our webinar

1. **Different course formats**
   - ✓ Face-to-face
   - ✓ Blended/Hybrid
   - ✓ Online
   - ✓ MOOCS

2. **Tips for choosing and participating in online courses**

3. **Tips for strengthening your online teaching skills**



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Planning for your learning



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- ✓ Consider the different course types
- ✓ Understand your own motivation as a learner
- ✓ Think about what course type might be right for you

Defining some terms

Face-to-face (F2F) course: A traditional course meeting in a classroom and face-to-face with other students and teachers

Fully online course: All learning takes place online

Blended/hybrid course: Some F2F learning in the classroom combined with some online learning

MOOC: Massive Open Online Course with no limit on student numbers

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Shaping the Way We Teach English, 1: The Landscape of English Language Teaching

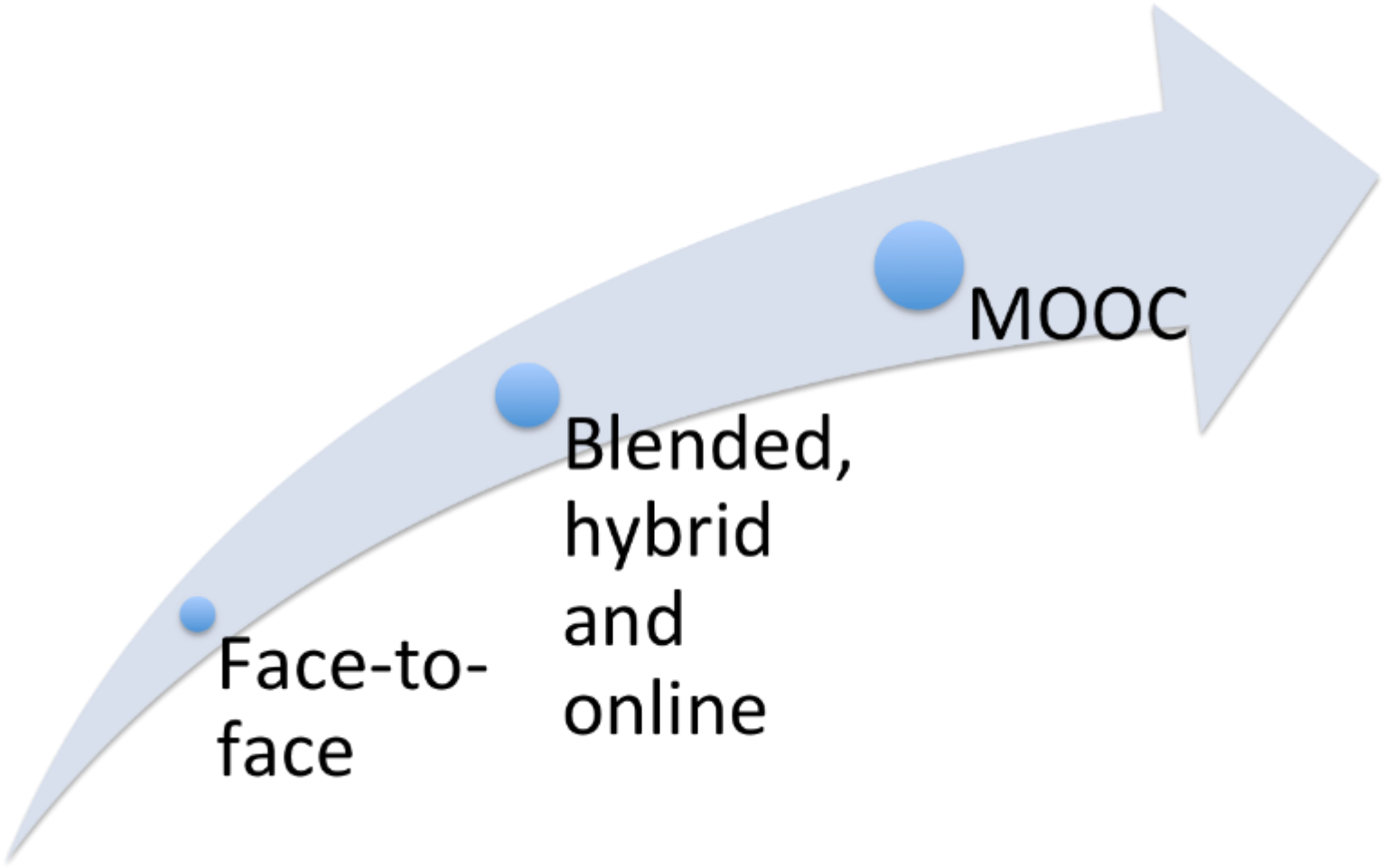


Learn effective approaches to English language teaching. This is the first of two teacher training courses based on the internationally-recognized Shaping the Way We Teach English videos and resources and sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the University of Oregon. You can begin with either course.

Course types and characteristics

Face-to-face	✓ Located in a classroom or learning space ✓ Interactions are **synchronous** ✓ Student and teacher numbers are limited
Blended/Hybrid	✓ Partly in a classroom and partly online ✓ Interactions may be both synchronous and **asynchronous** ✓ Student and teacher numbers are limited ✓ Online tools often support face-to-face learning
Online	✓ Fully online, no physical classroom space ✓ Interactions may be both synchronous and asynchronous ✓ Student and teacher numbers are limited
MOOC	✓ Fully online, no physical classroom space ✓ Interactions generally asynchronous ✓ Unlimited student and teacher numbers

Internal learner motivation



General advice

What course type is right for you?

Be sure to consider…



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globaloria#/media/ File:Globaloria_students_working.jpg

- ✓ Your own level of motivation
- ✓ Your needs as a learner

Pause and think!

If someone asked you for advice about being a successful student in an online course, what would you suggest?



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7 tips for successfully participating in online courses!

1. Review basic technical needs
2. Understand course objectives, tools, and requirements
3. Plan your time
4. Plan to work both offline and online
5. Find an appropriate work space
6. Develop a consistent routine
7. Create a peer support community

1. Review basic technical needs

- ✓ Which OS? Mac or PC?
- ✓ Which browser? Firefox, Chrome, IE, other?
- ✓ What type of devices? Smartphone, laptop, tablet, desktop?
- ✓ Necessary software? MS Word, other?
- ✓ Video capabilities? Can I access YouTube?
- ✓ Social media? Facebook, Twitter, other?



PC:

- **Processor**: Intel Core 2 Duo
- **RAM**: 4 GB
- **Available Hard Drive Space**: 1 GB
- **Operating System**: Vista, Windows 7 or 8

Mac:

- **Processor**: Intel Core 2 Duo
- **RAM**: 4 GB
- **Available Hard Drive Space**: 1 GB
- **Operating System**: 10.7 or better

REQUIRED SOFTWARE

PC:

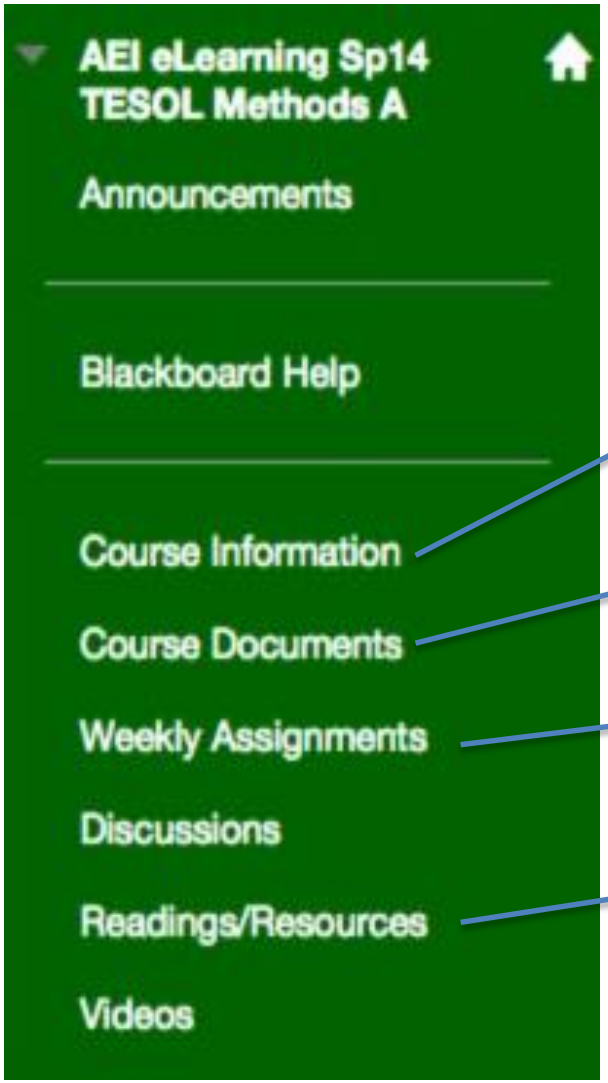
- **Office Suite**: MS Office 2007 or newer
- **Browser**: The most recent version of the following: Chrome, Firefox or Internet Explorer
- **Plug-Ins**: The most recent version of Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash and Java

Mac:

- **Office Suite**: MS Office 2011 or newer
- **Browser**: The most recent version of the following: Chrome, Firefox or Safari
- **Plug-Ins**: The most recent version of Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash and Java

http://online.belhaven.edu/college_computer_requirements.htm

2. Understand course objectives, tools, and requirements



General information about the course

Syllabus and other documents

Week-by-week guide

Different readings and materials

Discussions on the Ning



Reply by Ahmed yesterday

Hi Jennifer

May be you will not believe it , but let me tell you the truth .My goal in life is to make everybody in my country and in the world speak English language and to do this , I have established my group (Learning English , ' Ask and we shall answer ') . Beside , we have a big forum in it is called (Middle East Forum) .In this forum , we gather all teachers of weak level and give them courses in spoken English for free though we buy our Macmillan books by DHL from London with 200$ for one level (course) only .In addition , we have a session each Friday and in this session people of different professions come to practice spoken English even if the know nothing about , but it is a start .Finally , for me , English is the key that can open the whole doors of the world and everybody has to learn how to use it .

Wish you the best of the best with your project .

▶ Reply



Reply by Jennifer Rice yesterday

Wow, Ahmed. That is inspiring. Thank you for sharing this and your love of English with so many people!

Smiles,

Jennifer, USA

▶ Reply



Reply by Saida on Saturday

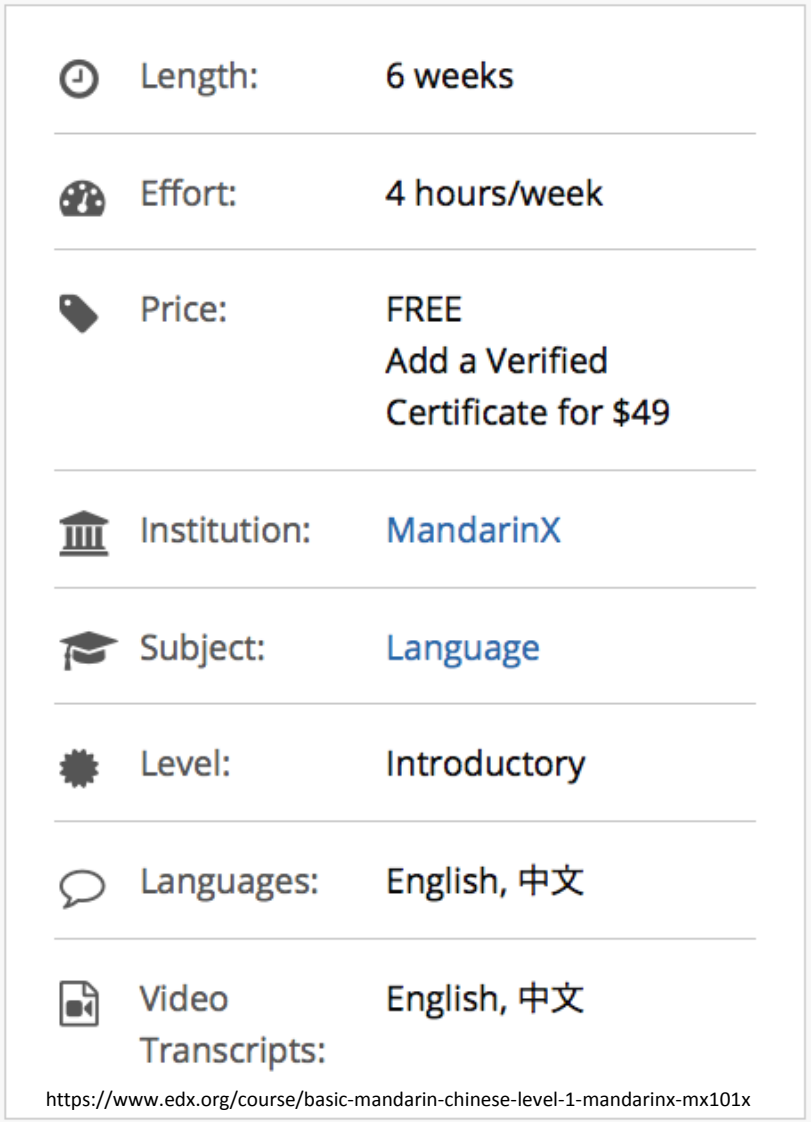
Dear Ahmed,

I agree with you that the topic of Webinar is very interesting and motivating. It is great that you teach online free of charge. Coursera courses are free of charge too. There are some courses which are not. The weekly payment is either $49, or $99. Accounting and Finances are more expensive and more difficult for non professionals.

Saida

▶ Reply

3. Plan your time



Length:	6 weeks
Effort:	4 hours/week
Price:	FREE Add a Verified Certificate for $49
Institution:	MandarinX
Subject:	Language
Level:	Introductory
Languages:	English, 中文
Video Transcripts:	English, 中文

https://www.edx.org/course/basic-mandarin-chinese-level-1-mandarinx-mx101x

- ✓ Know the total number of weeks
- ✓ Know the teacher's expectation for hours per week
- ✓ Plan a weekly schedule according to when you will be available

4. Plan to work both offline and online

Many of us have limited Internet connectivity.

To help with this you can…

- ✓ Download (and print) readings to do offline
- ✓ Take screenshots of instructions and online materials to review later
- ✓ Focus your online time on participating in discussions with others

5. Find an appropriate work space



- ✓ We all work differently
- ✓ What is your preferred workspace?
- ✓ Find a space that works for you and try to be consistent

Pause and think!

1. Are you a morning or a night person?
2. What time of day do you work best?
3. When will you be free from distractions each day?



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6. Develop a consistent routine



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- ✓ Plan a time each day to work on the course
- ✓ Log in to the course site at least 3 times per week
- ✓ Consistently check the course site and email for updates

7. Create a peer support community



https://www.flickr.com/photos/mkhmarketing/8468788107

- ✓ Connecting with peers can facilitate learning
- ✓ Connect with participants through social media
- ✓ Set up course support pages on Facebook
- ✓ Use in-course discussions
- ✓ Reach out to your instructors as needed

Finally, some tips from experience…

In my years of experience with teaching online courses, I've noticed that the most successful participants…

- ✓ Login several times throughout the week
- ✓ Ask questions when they don't understand
- ✓ Reply early to discussion questions to get more feedback
- ✓ Fully explore and understand the features of the course site



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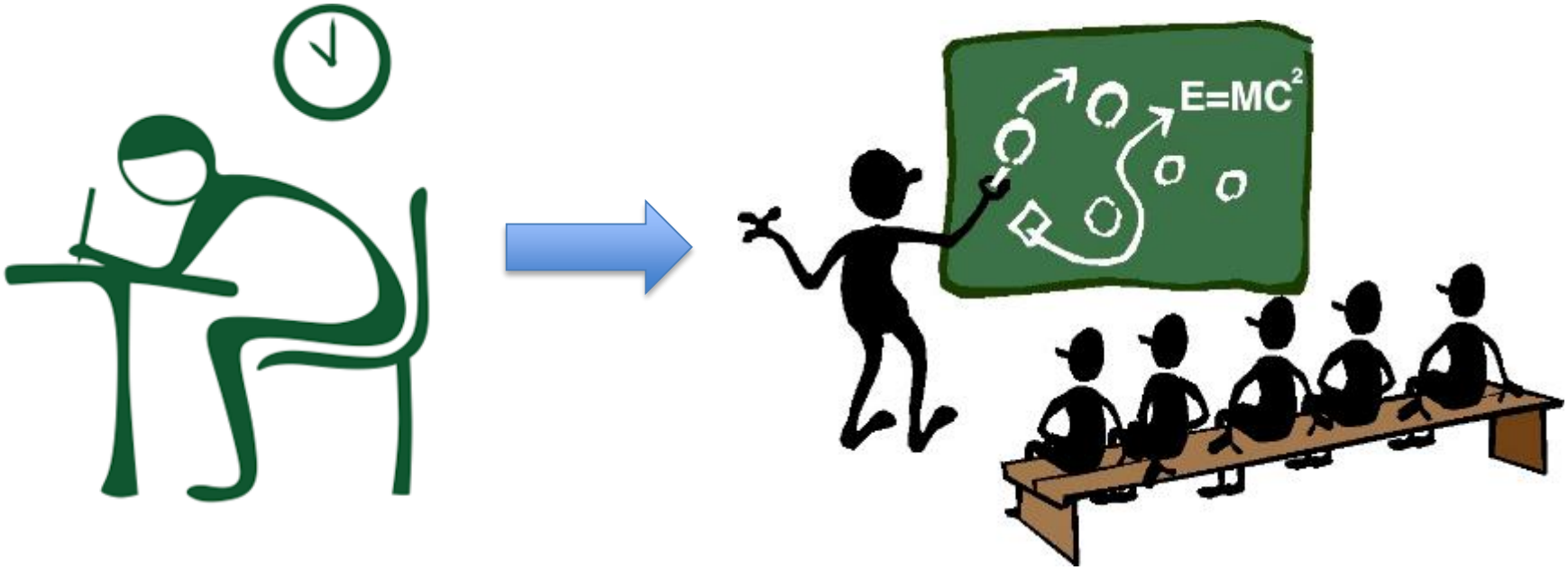
Transition to focus on what instructors can do



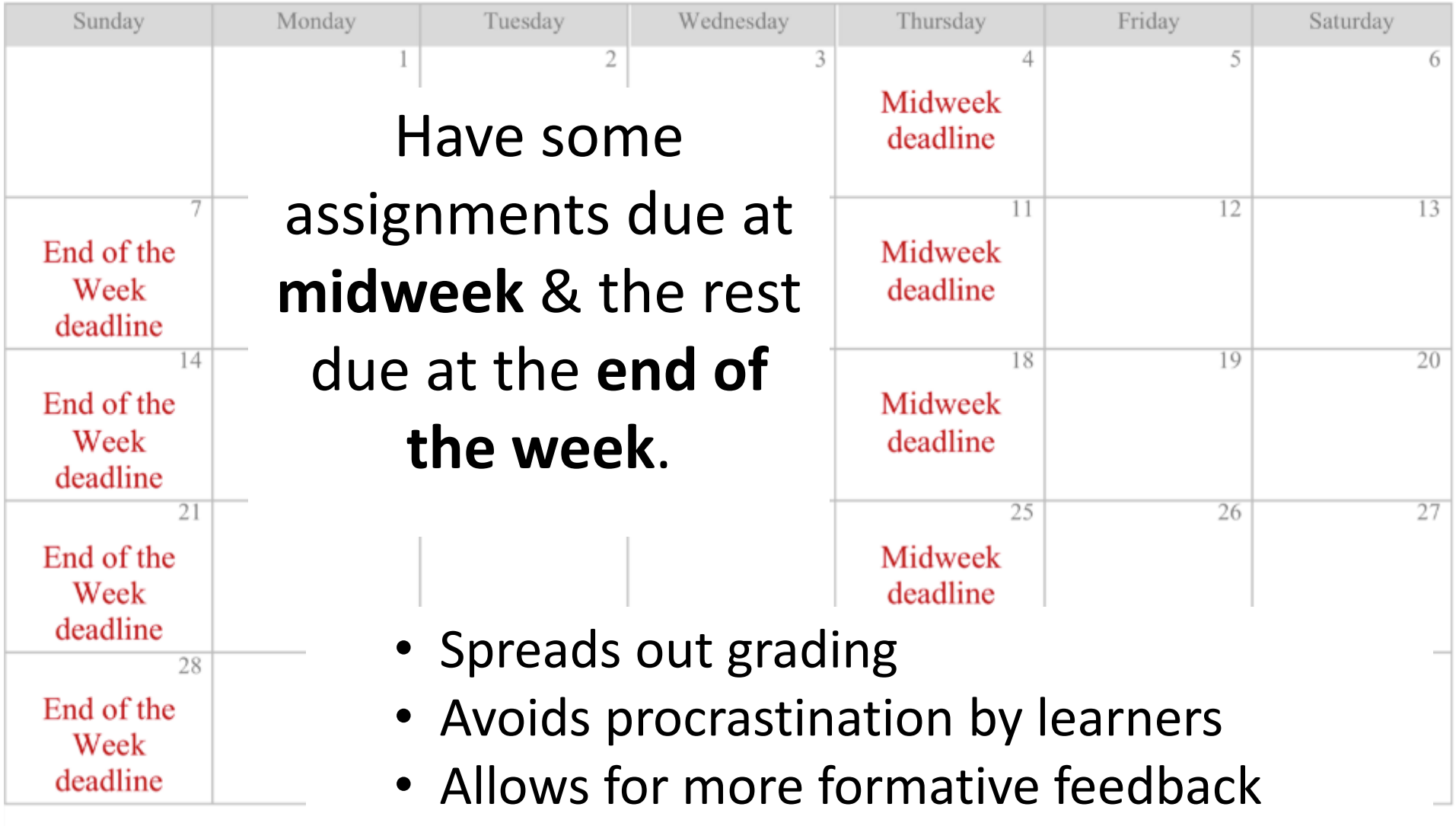
Tips for online instructors



Teaching ESL by Flickr CC Rex Pe
http://teach-english-travel-overseas.com/teaching-tips/benefits-teaching-esl-japan

Useful for engaging learners in face-to-face situations, too!

Tip 1



Have some assignments due at **midweek** & the rest due at the **end of the week**.

- Spreads out grading
- Avoids procrastination by learners
- Allows for more formative feedback (peers & instructor)

Tip 2
Regulate instructor feedback/input



Do not jump in to discussions right away.

Allow other learners to respond first if possible, and then agree/disagree with them.

Regulate instructor feedback/input



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Redirect if off-track with questions of clarification posted where all learners can see.

* Always include one or more positive statements along with your question or clarification! *

Example of a respectful response

“Hi Nester. Thanks for posting. I like how you’ve clearly explained (Y). Nicely done. I have a question about (X) though. What did you mean when you wrote _____? When you have time, could you clarify that for me?”

Regulate instructor feedback/input


https://www.flickr.com/photos/rahulrodriguez/9162677329

Use email…

- to check up on learners.
- to give a weekly summary of what's to come & how it ties into previous lesson.

Regulate instructor feedback/input



CC no attribution required

Do your best to spread your comments around to all learners in the course, not just the same people each week.

Tip 3
Consider using groups



Scott Maxwell link at thegoldguys.blogspot.com/ or www.lumaxart.com/

- Create groups of 3-6 people (4 is ideal) that change every week
- Focus on balancing eager learners with more reluctant ones
- Still have whole-class activities/discussions, too

Tip 4
Plan for engagement from the beginning of the course

Give examples of effective/non-effective participation and refer to that when giving scores.

0 points = no posting, a late posting, or a plagiarized posting

1 point = a very brief posting that is unclear, off-topic, or incorrect.

3 points = Approaching standard; not linked to what others have said or offers no new information or ideas

5 points = Exceeds standard; linked to what others have said and offers more information or ideas; clear, concise, and furthers the discussion.

Examples

1 Point =

"Yes, I am in favor of using a four-skills approach in language teaching. This is a good idea because it gives students a chance to practice listening, writing, speaking and listening. Thanks. -Jennifer, USA"

3 Points =

"Hi everyone! It's been great to read what you wrote. Regarding the article that I read about CT, I found Sumner's contribution to CT very interesting because he states that, 'the critical faculty is a product of education and training. It is a mental habit and power'. This means that to develop our critical thinking skills requires, constant education in the method and investment of time to create the habit. Sometimes as teachers we tend to maintain our teaching and what we teach under control: thinking in a way that our students are unable to think, analyze, reflect, give relevant opinions, agree or disagree and share their ideas and beliefs with others. Thanks. -Jennifer, USA"

5 Points =

"I think that this article is interesting, but let me tell you about my experience teaching young learners (post continues with no reference to the article). Thanks. -Jennifer, USA" Nargas. The four-skills approach is an excellent way to teach language. However, I think depending on your field, some skills are more important than others. For example, if you are a researcher, you probably need more reading and writing skills. However, if you are a salesperson for an international company, you probably need to do negotiations and meet clients face to face, so speaking and listening skills are important. Some people say you cannot separate the skills, which is true, but I think certain skills are more important than others depending on the situation. For more on this topic, I recommend the article: http://www.cal.org/resources/Digest/0105oxford.html Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom (2001) from Rebecca Oxford, University of Maryland. Thanks. -Jennifer, USA"

Plagiarism



By Carrot Lord (Paint.NET) [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

Plan for engagement from the beginning of the course

Ask learners to apply skills or concepts covered in class to their own context/situation.

- Cuts down on plagiarism
- Makes it really “stick”



Copy machine

Plan for engagement from the beginning of the course

Move beyond simple questions to more complex tasks that require **critical thinking**

- Fill in chart
- Sequence
- Categorize
- Rank

25 learners averaged over 300 meaningful posts per week with these types of questions!

Fill in a chart

Jennifer Rice posted 5 months ago (last edited 2 months ago)

Wk 04 REQUIRED: Communicative competence

Please feel free to copy and paste this chart into your posting (or recreate it as needed). You should complete it by giving examples of language skills needed for each of the four areas of communicative competence proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). Follow the example provided in the first column and create at least one language skill needed by the specified learner in each box. Try to include a variety of skill areas--- listening, speaking, reading and writing--- but you don't have to cover them all. You can also make a new column on the right for **your** specific target learner population, if you would like, but it is not required.

NOTE: If you get a reply from an online colleague the gives you a suggestion, and you want to incorporate it into your post, please revise your original post to reflect that revision instead of posting a new message. You can do this by clicking on your original post, clicking "edit", making any changes you would like, and then clicking "submit" again. This way it will be easier to keep track of your ideas. Thanks!

Be sure to read and reply substantively to at least one of your online colleague's postings before the deadline. Thanks.

Communicative competence	*Target Learner Populations*		
	EGP	**EAP medicine**	**EOP tourism**
Linguistic Competence	a. Writing a story using correct verb tenses. b. Using conditional forms to express hypotheses.		
Sociolinguistic Competence	a. Making polite conversation at a party. b. Addressing people in formal and informal ways.		
Discourse Competence	a. Beginning and ending a personal letter. b. Predicting what will come next while listening to train station announcements.		

Learners write their own ideas in here.

Sequence

Jennifer Rice

posted 4 months ago (last edited 2 months ago)

Wk05: START HERE: How to sequence the communication goals?

After studying the Scientific Presentations course map, think about the following list of target goals/tasks for an EOP-Business course (listed in random order).

How would you sequence the following Business Communication Tasks and why? In your rationale include the criterion or criteria that you used to prioritize the goals (e.g. simple to complex; when needed (urgency); confidence building; etc.) that were introduced in our first two readings.

NOTE: If you get a reply from an online colleague the gives you a suggestion, and you want to incorporate it into your post, please revise your original post to reflect that revision instead of posting a new message. You can do this by clicking on your original post, clicking "edit", making any changes you would like, and then clicking "submit" again. This way it will be easier to keep track of your ideas. Thanks!

Please respond to at least one of your online colleague's posts in a substantive way in this thread, okay? Thanks!

Business Communication Tasks:

- Participating in a business meeting
- Making small talk at a business function
- Taking a phone message
- Writing a public relations letter... Click here for more information on what this is: http://www.publicityinsider.com/pitch.asp
- Writing a business memorandum for internal messages... Click here for more information on what this is: http://www.writinghelp-central.com/business-memo.html
- Negotiating a solution to an interpersonal conflict
- Making a telephone call
- Making a formal presentation

Reply | Edit | Delete

Learners sequence a list of items and provide a rationale for their sequence.

Categorize and rank



Jennifer Rice

posted 4 months ago (last edited 1 month ago)

Wk06: START HERE: Authentic Materials

1. Read the article about authenticity in the Readings folder (#1 & 2). Pay particular attention to Jordan's definition and to the third paragraph on P. 15 of Thomas's article.

2. Then consider these 10 possible teaching materials for EAP- Law learners. Which are authentic **according to Jordan and Thomas**?

3. Finally, rank these materials in order of usefulness (1 = most useful... 10 = least useful), **regardless** of their authenticity, for **high-intermediate level EAP-Law** learners. **Please include a brief rationale for your ranking.** The websites provided are there for you to get more information about the materials listed. How ... you are ranking the materials listed, not the websites.

NOTE: If you get a reply from an online colleague the gives you a suggestion, and you want to incorporate it into your post, please revise your original post to ... posting a new message. You can do this by clicking on your original post, clicking "edit", making any changes you would like, and then clicking "submit" again. This way it will be easier to keep track of yo...

Please respond to at least one of your online colleague's posts in a substantive way in this thread, okay? Thanks!

A. Law textbook for first year law students in the USA - http://www.amazon.com/Pharmacy-Law-Textbook-Review-ebook/dp/...

B. Recording of a talk at Environmental Law Conference at the University of Oregon - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZ...

C. TED lecture on Law - http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/philip_howard.html

D. ESP Law textbook - http://www.amazon.com/English-Contract-Company-Law-Harris/dp/1847034462/ref=sr_1_1?s...

E. ESP podcast for law students

F. "Crime & Punishment", a novel by Dostoyevsky -http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crime_and_Punishment

G. BBC podcast "Unreliable Evidence" about law-related issues - http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00k9d82

H. "News For You" story on law-related issue - http://www.newsforyouonline.com/about.asp (Subscription is rec... if it's authentic. Also, you can read a sample article for free.)

I. Recorded lecture from a law class at UC Berkeley - http://webcast.berkeley.edu/playlist#c,d,Law,F51816806B113198

J. Dave's ESL Cafe lesson for a mock trial - http://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?display:953803707-8999.txt

Learners categorize items into two groups. After that, learners rank the items and provide a rationale for their ranking.

Plan for engagement from the beginning of the course

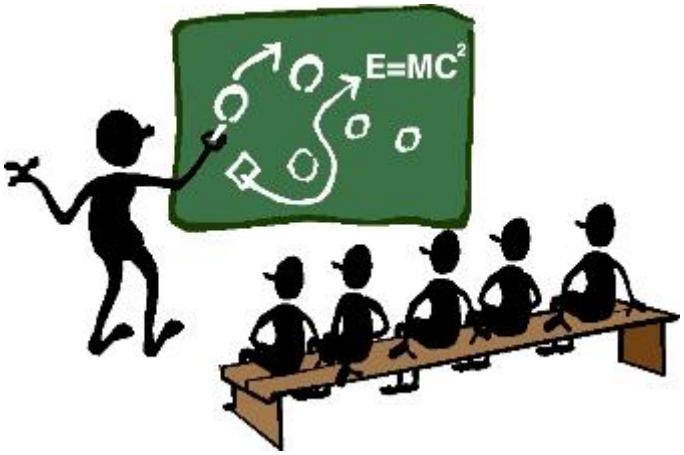


Surprise learners with answers after the deadline has passed.

- gives an example answer so learners can self-assess
- allows learners to freely comment peer-to-peer
- limits need for instructor input before deadline

Summary of tips for teaching online

1. Have midweek deadlines
2. Regulate instructor feedback
3. Consider using groups
4. Plan for engagement from the beginning of the course



Summary of tips for participating in online courses

1. Review basic technical needs
2. Understand course objectives, tools, and requirements
3. Plan your time
4. Plan to work both offline and online
5. Find an appropriate work space
6. Develop a consistent routine
7. Create a peer support community
8. Login several times throughout the week
9. Reply early to discussion questions to get more feedback



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https://www.coursera.org/course/shaping2paths

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http://essentialsofonlinecoursedesign.com/table-of-contents/

Thank you!

We look forward to seeing you on the Ning discussion board.

