

High-Impact Practices Online: Challenges and Unique Opportunities



First-year seminars and experiences

- ✓ There are many different formats for FYS experiences to explore (including several hybrid/blended models).
- ✓ The FYE as a whole includes many other high-impact practices (HIPs) that could be integrated and explored together.
- ✓ Unlike traditional first-year students in face-to-face courses, the population engaging in the FYE online is very diverse and may need different support structures.



Common intellectual experiences

- ✓ How do you provide a common intellectual experience when the population of students in higher education is becoming more and more diverse?
- ✓ Common intellectual experiences (CIEs) require quite a bit of logistical oversight to design and implement, so scaling to an online environment can pose many challenges.
- ✓ Who gets to decide what the CIEs should be?



Learning communities

- ✓ Learning communities come in lots of different models that incorporate online and hybrid/blended elements.
- ✓ Online environments provide the possibility of increased diversity for student learning communities.

Learning communities (continued)

- ✓ Many online students bring work or other lived experiences as part of their background, which can offer unique contributions to a learning community.



Writing intensive classes

- ✓ Online courses are already text-heavy with required writing to engage in the learning experience.
- ✓ Writing needed for online engagement may be different than the academic writing skills we are imparting.
- ✓ The authenticity of writing assignments may help online students to better engage in the process.



Collaborative assignments and projects

- ✓ Asynchronous online environments create challenges for designing collaborative assignments.
- ✓ Online tools and technologies offer unique possibilities for online collaboration in real-time or asynchronously.
- ✓ Like other pedagogical elements, collaborative activities online should be designed intentionally.



Undergraduate research in the humanities / sciences

- ✓ Instructors need to plan for distributed students in remote research facilities or hands-on lab-based experiences.
- ✓ Instructors will need to consider ways to maintain project consistency and quality with remote coordination of a collaborative project.
- ✓ Take the opportunity to build modern collaboration skills with digital tools for project management and documentation.



Diversity and global learning

- ✓ Think of ways to bring together diversity of thought, lived experience, culture, and ideas with students and the instructor.
- ✓ Conversations about diversity and inclusivity can be sensitive or challenging in any environment, but there are additional considerations in remote discussions.
- ✓ Online learning allows you to view the same curriculum through the lens of a different part of the country or world.



eService-learning

- ✓ There are many options for eSL – including group, individual, remote, or location-based opportunities.
- ✓ It is important to add applied experience for distance learners.
- ✓ Connecting the learner back to their own community or creating a new community with a shared goal and experience should be a priority.



Internships

- ✓ The coordination and consistency of experiences across learners and sites can be a challenge.
- ✓ The addition of applied experience in related degree field for distance learners is one main benefit.
- ✓ Internships can increase relevancy and strengthen the program of study with direct connection back to the employers and community.



Capstone courses and projects

- ✓ Remote mentoring can offer new challenges and opportunities for distance communication.
- ✓ Adding transferable value of a capstone project for graduates is key.
- ✓ Try to juggle variability across learner experience and resulting projects.



ePortfolios

- ✓ Making meaning of and synthesizing a learner’s full academic journey, especially online, can be overwhelming and very diverse.
- ✓ Since most, if not all, of the student’s work is already digital, ePortfolios are well suited for the online space.
- ✓ As a “meta-HIP,” ePortfolios integrate seamlessly with any of the other HIPs and highlights the learning that occurs.