

## Quick Tips for Continuity of Learning

*when students quarantine or their attendance is interrupted*

The fall semester will require [flexible strategies](#) for course design and delivery, especially if a student needs to quarantine or miss in-person activities for a period of time. As always, when a student is too ill to continue coursework, traditional options should be explored: for example, a personalized make-up plan, an incomplete, or withdrawal from the class. We offer the following strategies as starting points with the understanding that “one size does not fit all” across the disciplines. In addition to resources on the [Teach Anywhere](#) website, [TLAI staff can consult](#) on adapting general advice to your specific instructional context.

### General Guidelines

We can proactively design our courses in a way that lessens the impact of an interruption due to quarantine or other reasons. We’ve learned that many students feel uncomfortable learning remotely and experience difficulties with motivation and organization while also feeling isolated and anxious. Adopting some of the following strategies in advance and giving students practice at establishing networks within your course will go a long way to help students stay on track if they need to quarantine.

- **Have a Plan.** If a student must quarantine, instructors should proactively establish a specific plan for participation and communication to avoid ambiguity and confusion later on. The plan can include expectations for how the student will participate in class meetings, complete activities and assignments, and stay in touch with the instructor and their peers (e.g., required office hours).
- **Stay in Touch.** Frequent, low-stakes feedback on progress and performance enhances student motivation. This may range from the personalized (e.g., instructor comments) to the automated (e.g., feedback on quiz results). In addition, students have expressed appreciation for the concern faculty showed about students’ wellbeing. Check in with a quarantined student and offer encouragement.
- **Repurpose Office Hours.** Faculty often express dismay that students never attend office hours. Consider using office hours to hold scheduled, informal chats or review sessions that focus on relevant topics of the unit. This strategy can encourage greater student engagement outside of class meetings, especially if a student needs to quarantine. You can record office hours on Zoom and post them to your Canvas shell.
- **Foster a Learning Community.** Opening a Q+A or “Class Lounge” discussion board on Canvas for students to share and respond to each other’s questions and comments can strengthen the class community while clarifying points of confusion. Consider making note-taking a collective activity, using Google Docs or another collaborative platform, and posting student-generated notes to the Canvas shell.
- **Form Teams.** Sustained peer groups or teams that complete activities and communicate regularly (over virtual channels) provide students with a support network if they miss class or need help. Peer groups also provide a sense of social ties and belonging in the class community for students who must be remote.
- **Get (even more) Organized.** A clear course structure allows students to focus their cognitive energy on learning as opposed to figuring out what they are supposed to be doing. Sequencing course activities with Canvas modules, regardless of the delivery mode, will ensure that an instructor doesn’t have to face the

unexpected and onerous task of “moving” material to a digital format when a student needs to quarantine. Make it a regular practice to archive class notes, outlines, slides, etc., so that students may seamlessly catch up on what they’ve missed or review when they need more practice. Be sure to explain expectations for participation, activities, assignments, and grading in easy-to-find, intuitive locations.

- **Encourage Students to Seek Out Support.** Quarantined or not, students can take advantage of the University’s free tutoring and academic support services. Consider adding the “Looking for help with your classes?” Canvas page (available on Canvas Commons) to all course shells. UK also maintains [a web-based list of all academic student support resources](#). Many students are not aware of these services, and even if they are, they may be reluctant to seek them out if an instructor doesn’t encourage them to.

## Accommodating Student Absences

In addition to the proactive strategies above, we can adjust our instruction strategically when a student needs to miss class. Consider the activities a student will miss along with the approaches outlined below. It’s likely that a combination of strategies will be needed. In many cases, instructors will not need to adjust dramatically. For all options, it will be important to stay in touch with students and make sure they have what they need to succeed.

- **Self-paced activities require little adjustment on the instructor’s part.** So long as a student is healthy enough to continue coursework, and they stay in regular communication with their instructor, self-paced activities may continue as usual. This includes homework for in-person classes as well as structured activities for asynchronous online courses (or courses that include asynchronous online elements).
- **If in-person meetings already are streamed for remote learners, quarantined students may continue to participate remotely.** Beyond listening to lectures and presentations that are streamed live, remote students may also interact with the class via the video platform (e.g., video, chat, breakout rooms) or other apps (e.g., Google Suite or Office365, polling and surveys, Slack, blogs).
- **Classes without a remote audience may still be broadcast or recorded for remote students.** If live class meetings are critical to learning in the course, an instructor may broadcast via a laptop or in-class camera for the student(s) who cannot attend in person. Alternatively, instructors may record these class meetings for remote students to review. If quality interaction is not feasible remotely but remains essential to the course (e.g., a small discussion section), students may use office hours or submit reflections that respond to aspects of the class meeting.
- **Alternate activities and assignments can accommodate students who would miss in-person learning.** The instructor may designate an alternate activity sequence or module for the student to complete with appropriate guidance and feedback. Depending on the discipline and course goals, these activities may involve case study or project-based applications, independent research and reporting, digital production and design, or creative adaptations of course content.
- **Instructors may develop, ahead of time, one or more “packaged” modules that may be assigned to quarantined students at certain points during the semester.** For example, an instructor might design alternative modules for early semester, mid-semester, and late-semester. These modules would address significant learning goals of that particular moment of the term with a robust set of content and activities. While this represents more work up front, it also means less work when a student needs to go remote.