

Teaching Strategies for Instructor or Student Absences

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This guide is meant to assist instructors in continuing course delivery in case of necessary student or instructor absence, in alignment with Senate [policy 42-27, Class Attendance](#). When instructor absences are necessary, instruction needs to be offered in a different format. Instructors may choose to record lectures or stream courses for students who are temporarily unable to join in person, but are not required to do so. Instructors are encouraged to communicate their contingency plans in advance so that students are aware of expectations in case of necessary instructor or student absence.

If your course requires a different way of handling necessary absences, you are encouraged to investigate the [Flexible Instruction Teaching Guide](#) (developed during the pandemic), [Contingency Planning for Undergraduate Education](#), the [Hours of Instructional Activity \(HIA\) Estimator](#), and to reach out to your local learning design resources, your unit leadership, and/or the [Learning Design Clearinghouse](#) for other options.

Activity (If you have...)	Suggestions for necessary and temporary instructor absence	Suggestions for necessary and temporary student absence	Supporting resources
Lecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give or record a Zoom Lecture and possibly provide a worksheet to go along with the recording • Use Kaltura or Zoom to record lecture and use Kaltura to add engagement/assessment • Invite a guest speaker • Have a TA take the lead (with plan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record classroom lecture in Zoom and post in Media Gallery in Canvas • Use Top Hat content assigned as homework • If the student is able, then consider participation via Zoom • Ask classmates to share their notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable Media Gallery LTI • Capturing Instructional Content with Video • Add Media to Course Media Gallery • Top Hat: How to Use in Teaching and Learning • Find all Your Zoom Recordings in Kaltura
Class Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a TA take the lead (with plan) • Move to asynchronous or synchronous discussion using Canvas or Top Hat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize in class discussion for student (even if student joins via Zoom, as they may not be able to hear discussion) • Have students share three most important points from discussion in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas Learning Center – Create and Manage Discussions • Top Hat: Creating Discussions

		<p>Canvas, then offer additional discussion points or pose additional questions for students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask students to bring up a related example/case ▪ Ask students to pose a question as a response to other students' posts • Offer guiding questions for reading assignments for all students to ensure discussions stay focused and guide absent students 	
Group Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a TA take the lead (with plan) • Make the activity asynchronous in Canvas; utilize a clearly defined step-sequence or deliverables • Utilize Google Docs or SharePoint for collaboration • Utilize Zoom breakout rooms if delivering class through Zoom • If group activity includes equations, graphs, or chemistry, consider using EquatIO • Use Office 365 in Canvas to share files for collaboration • Create a peer review assignment in Canvas, review, and receive feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If >1 student absent, group students together to do activity asynchronously • Ask student's group members to bring absent student up-to-speed • As a preventative measure, develop a peer-mentoring plan prior to any student absences. • Offer as a timed, individualized activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://accessibility.psu.edu/math/equatio/ • G-Suite for Education Learning Path – Creating and Editing Docs, Sheets, Slides, and Forms • G-Suite for Education Learning Path – Use Groups to Facilitate Collaboration • Office 365 LTI in Canvas • Create Peer Review Assignments in Canvas • Zoom Learning Path for Hosts (Contains Breakout Room resources)
Hands-on Activity (labs, physical education, arts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reschedule the hands-on activity • Pre-record a demo, post video and questions that require higher level thinking • Have a TA facilitate (with plan) • Use online simulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make-up hands-on activity time • Develop an alternative assessment (e.g., student logging for physical education classes, student-produced videos for art or physical education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do it Yourself Video Recording • OASIS (source for potential online simulations) • PhET (Source for potential online simulations; can be embedded in

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer the hands-on or physical activity as an individual activity captured using Kaltura or logging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider sharing sample data for your students to analyze (as if students completed the experiment) so they can still have practice working with the data • Consider creating a video recording of your lab experiment that students can watch and learn from online • Look for existing online lab simulations that might fit with your curriculum • Have the student complete a self-tape of the activity if they have the necessary materials 	<p>Canvas; utilize HTML5 versions to ensure accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online science labs curated by POD • Kaltura MediaSpace Quick Start Guide for Android and iOS Phones
Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a TA or guest instructor facilitate • Use a testing center • Offer the exam in Canvas • Utilize Zoom and Zoom breakout rooms to proctor Canvas exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize online proctoring • Reschedule makeup exam • Consider providing an alternative assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Options, Penn State Keep Teaching • Remote Exam Proctoring Options, Penn State Keep Teaching
STEM activities (problem sets, chemistry equations, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a TA facilitate (with plan) • Record a video using Zoom/Kaltura and embed a quiz/homework set to the Kaltura recording • Add slides to Top Hat and include assignments for students to complete synchronously or asynchronously • Ask students to re-write a problem and exchange with their peers to solve it. • Ask students to create their own exam-worthy questions/problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider using EquatIO and having students collaborate utilizing the EquatIO toolset • Assign content in Top Hat for students to review and/or complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaltura Learning Path for Canvas Users • https://accessibility.psu.edu/math/equatio/ • Assign content in Top Hat (instructors) • Instructions for students to answer assigned questions in Top Hat