

# Instructional Continuity (<http://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/>)

Georgetown University  
(<http://www.georgetown.edu>)



IC Home (<http://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/>) >> Pedagogies & Strategies

(<http://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/pedagogies-and-strategies/>) >> Hybrid / HyFlex Teaching

## Hybrid Modality: HyFlex Teaching

### Table of Contents

**What is Hybrid? What is HyFlex?**

---

**Principles for Teaching and Learning**

---

**Established Challenges & Proposed Solutions**

---

**Accessibility**

---

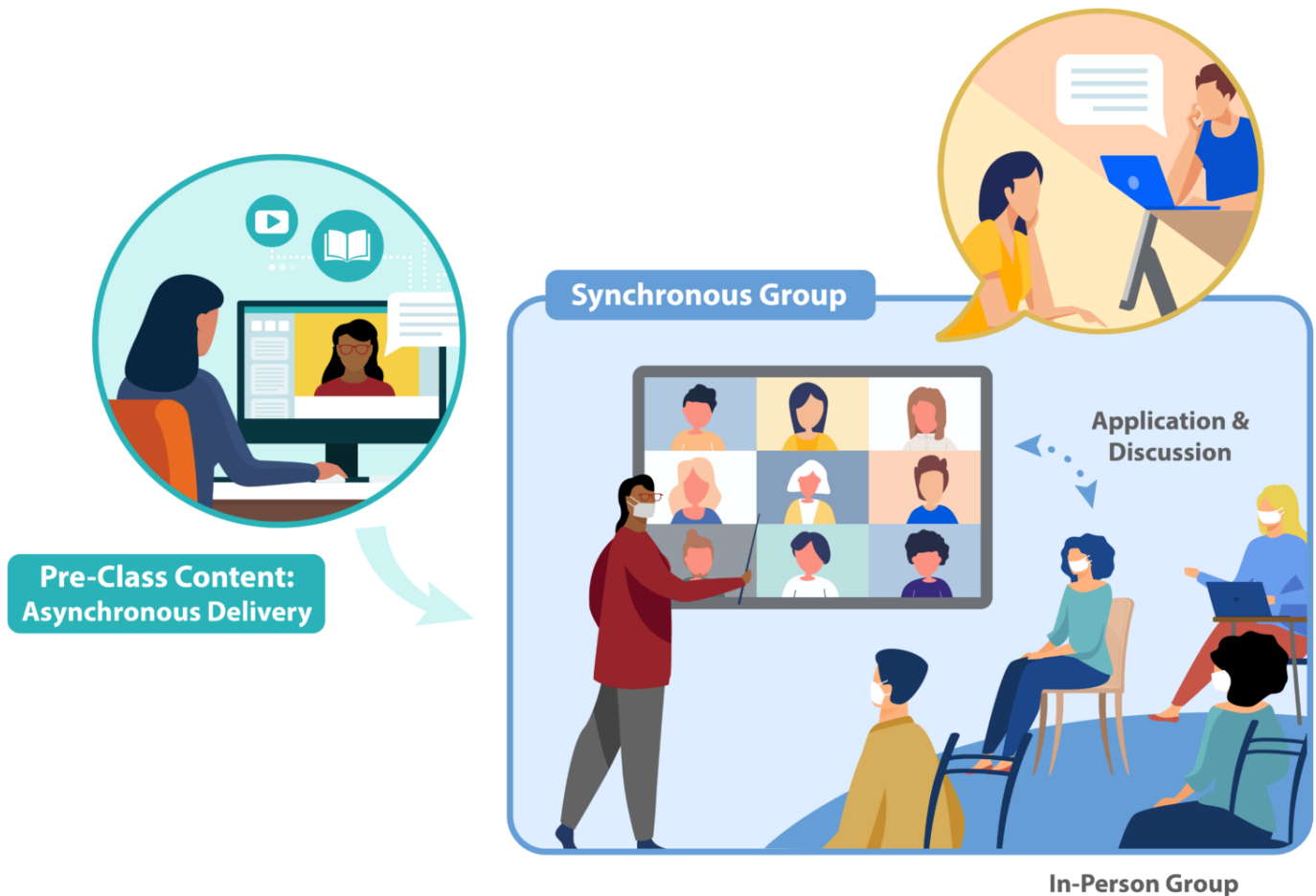
**Conclusion**

---

**Bibliography**

---

**Additional Resources**



(<http://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Hyflex-Diagram.png>)

## What is Hybrid?

Before the Pandemic, **Hybrid** described courses that combine face-to-face classroom instruction with computer-based learning. Hybrid courses move a significant part of course learning online and, as a result, reduce the amount of classroom seat time.

Now, the term **Hybrid** describes courses that combine face-to-face classroom instruction *with online and offline approaches in and out of the classroom*. Hybrid courses move a significant part of course learning online *to reduce the number of students in the classroom*. Classroom seat time may or may not be reduced. Blended learning is an instructional approach that includes a combination of online and in-person learning activities

## What is HyFlex?

HyFlex (a term coined by Brian Beatty (<https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex>)) stands for a combination of “hybrid,” meaning alternating between face-to-face meetings and remote interactions, and “flexible,” meaning students move between these participation options.

**In a HyFlex course, courses are delivered both in person and online at the same time by the same faculty member.**

For any given class meeting, some students might participate in person, while others might participate at the same time online, made possible by a combination of cameras, microphones, displays, and other technology in the classroom.

Georgetown is currently upgrading classrooms so that they all have the ability to allow remote students to zoom in and join the class. **We will update this guidebook as these preparations continue**, but for the moment this set of notes and resources for hybrid teaching in spring 2021 should help (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/pedagogies-and-strategies/notes-resources-hybrid/>).

The underlying design of the HyFlex Model is flexibility (Maloney (<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/learning-innovation/fall-scenario-13-hyflex-model>), 2020). Features of a HyFlex classroom include frequent small-group engagement and collaborative work, which might call for team meetings, conducted virtually or in person (Educause (<https://library.educause.edu/resources/2010/11/7-things-you-should-know-about-the-hyflex-course-model>), 2010).

HyFlex—in its original conception—was designed for students who live on or close to campus. “It was not meant as a solution for distance education, but rather as a means to give residential and commuter students the flexibility to attend class in person or remotely. This flexibility is attractive right now, when the effects of the pandemic are forcing schools to make decisions about how many students can fit into a classroom on campus, even if they live on or near campus” (Maloney (<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/learning-innovation/fall-scenario-13-hyflex-model>), 2020).

Lessons learned (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/faculty-examples-static/>) from teaching in-person classes, as well as from teaching fully remote or online classes, are stepping stones to being successful teaching a HyFlex class. In their book *Small Teaching Online*, Darby and Lang note the relevance of principles for online learning in hybrid learning environments (Darby and Lang (<https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Small+Teaching+Online%3A+Applying+Learning+Science+in+Online+Classes-p-9781119619093>), 2019, xxix). For example, making use of Canvas in your course design for remote and in-person learners is an important first step. You should be organizing your learning materials and activities in a way that allows all students, regardless of modality, the same access and information. Lessons learned about student engagement in online teaching will also improve the impact of HyFlex activities and interactions. Similarly, the fact that many faculty members have gained comfort with web-conferencing applications such as Zoom is helpful not only for fully online courses, but for many learning situations that necessitate any kind of flexibility.

We hope that the principles and practices that follow will help you in your preparations for the fall. If you have any questions regarding how you might adjust your course design and preparation for teaching in a HyFlex classroom environment, please email [cncls@georgetown.edu](mailto:cncls@georgetown.edu) (<mailto:cncls@georgetown.edu>). Here is a resource ([https://philonedtech.com/updates-summary-of-student-surveys-page-and-sample-hyflex-class-plan/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=updates-summary-of-student-surveys-page-and-sample-hyflex-class-plan](https://philonedtech.com/updates-summary-of-student-surveys-page-and-sample-hyflex-class-plan/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=updates-summary-of-student-surveys-page-and-sample-hyflex-class-plan)) from educational technologist Phil Hill that may help you as you contemplate adapting your course.

The video below was created by our partners at Classroom Educational Technology Services (CETS) (<https://cets.georgetown.edu/>) highlighting hyflex capabilities at Georgetown.



02:26



---

## Some considerations for Hybrid Teaching and Learning

The physical campus constraints and health guidelines will make teaching in a HyFlex environment in the fall challenging:

- Room scheduling will require social distancing guidelines to be met, this means student in the classroom will be seated 6.5' apart and masks will need to be worn by everyone
- The rooms will have a camera and microphones, but you should consider asking your student to bring in their laptops/devices to make HyFlex possible.

- Planning, as you will see below, will be crucial, as will involving your students. For starters, you may want to share our brief guide for students in hybrid courses (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/student-guide/students-hybrid/>).
- Audio: Ensure that everyone in the classroom has their laptop speakers muted. Only the classroom speakers should be enabled when online students are speaking. (Laptop microphones should be enabled).
- ITAs: Please visit this page (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/itas/>) to learn more about the Instructional Technology Aide program (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/itas/>). It's important to note that ITAs are students, not CETS staff members, and their involvement is primarily to ensure connection between the online and in-person students.

These challenges will mean that careful, intentional planning will key to success. The follow principles are meant to help you get started.

# Principles for Hybrid Teaching and Learning

## Involve Your Students!

As you think about the possibility of a HyFlex approach to teaching in the fall, the most important step is to involve your students.

First of all, make sure they're clear on your expectations for how they should approach class (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/student-guide/students-hybrid/>).

Second, keep in mind that you will be juggling a lot. From the technology in the classroom, to making sure the students who are online are engaged, to...well...teaching the material. This is a lot to manage. Your students can help.

Consider assigning rotating roles to your students (and making these roles part of the expectations of the course). Some possible roles to think about:

- Technology assistant to help make sure the room is set up if you are remote
- Chat monitor(s) to help engage with your remote students questions
- Note taker to help share notes with students who are both remote and in person

There are plenty other roles, from coordinating collaborations to helping make sure people online hear what you've said in class.

In addition to roles, you might consider pairing or clustering students, so there is always at least one student from a cluster in class at any given time. This would give all your students a way of staying connected. You might build collaborative projects around this pairing.

Involving your students will not only help you, but it will help them engage with the material and understand the difficulty of the challenge of teaching in this environment. This would mirror active learning principles, and they will likely become more invested, not less, in the course.

## Increase Time for Activity Planning

Both your experience teaching in person and what you've learned teaching online will help, but this set-up is a unique environment. It is important to allocate extra time to think through activities, to plan assessments for a mixed-mode class of students, and to consider the intentional creation of spaces "in" which students may congregate and communicate on equal footing. See this class plan [external link (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gokdIjWbfERADiswIUBL4hE81hEnNiEYmBzRUeDfUdk/edit>)] as one model of planning a 50 and 75 minute class.

For example, small group meetings may be conducted in virtual spaces, even when students are present and together in a room. They may stay seated at their assigned desks and collaborate via a host of online collaboration tools, which will help negate the distance between the remote and in-person students. These kinds of adaptations to your planned course activities will require some forethought to facilitate activities that will run smoothly whether your students are in person or joining in online.

Preparation is also a key component for knowing how to react or adjust when something inevitably goes wrong. Even if you do everything right, there are times when the internet slows down, a student is unable to make it to class, or your plan isn't quite working out. Having a back-up plan, sharing digital resources ahead of time, and even just becoming more familiar with the technology can all boost your confidence going into class.

<b>Time</b>	Build in additional time to design your course activities.
<b>Review</b>	Budget additional time to review and prepare for each class.
<b>Adapt</b>	Have a back-up plan as you go into each class session's activities.
<b>Share</b>	Preview a course outline, digital resources, or an agenda before class sessions to foreground the activities.
<b>Upskill</b>	Practice using the classroom technology to gain confidence teaching in the room with a mixed audience, as well as any software you are using, such as Zoom or Canvas.

## Faculty Insight

---

*To make HyFlex work, it helps to have*

- *the right software: a mix of videoconference or streaming app with asynchronous tools (an LMS, web content, social media, Hypothesis, etc.).*
- *A changed pedagogy: I taught myself to always connect, integrate remote with in-person students.*

*Eventually I thought of it as bifocals, a way of combined seeing.*

- *A changed student awareness: they all had to learn how to respect these two combined forms of classroom presence.*

–Bryan Alexander, Learning, Design, and Technology program, GSAS

*My students organized collective note-taking in a shared Google doc, which meant that students could benefit from Zoom recordings and transcripts, along with robust notes as records of each class session. Super helpful. It goes without saying that engaging with remote students may not be intuitive for many of us, so planning ahead on how and at what interval to engage remote students is key. If it's not intentional, it can easily fall by the wayside.*

–Michelle Ohnona, LDT and Women's/Gender Studies

## Establish Ground Rules for Engagement

When it comes to norms for communication in a traditional in-person classroom setting, instructors typically use the first day or first few weeks to develop norms and expectations with students (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/student-guide/students-hybrid/>). In both online and HyFlex class sessions, having a plan to establish a set of norms and expectations for your class can go a long way in helping both groups of students make the most of their learning together. However, these norms and expectations can quickly shift to uncertainty or else become distractions. For HyFlex classrooms in particular, it is easy for remote students to disengage or else be disregarded by those participating in the room.

Communicate consistently about what kinds of habits, practices, and dispositions will lead to a successful learning experience. Students will have an easier time adjusting to a HyFlex classroom environment when they know what the expectations are through seeing you model behavior and explicitly discuss it.

In addition to the below, **it's always crucial to ask your in-person students to bring their devices to class with them**. Based on our experiences teaching and learning in HyFlex environments in the Learning, Design, and Technology (LDT) program, we've identified a few principles that you might consider discussing or applying with your students.

### Flexibility

Teaching and learning in this mixed environment takes practice, experimentation, and adjustments to expectations. Being upfront about the need to be flexible, for both in-person and remote students, will help in an environment where changes may arise, and where everyone is learning to adapt.

### Proactive Communication

Remote students "zooming in" to an in-person classroom sometimes hesitate to speak up. It can feel awkward and delayed, and they may be unsure how visible they are when they indicate that they want to join in. Encourage your remote students to jump in proactively in whatever way makes the most sense in your context. Maybe they could simply unmute and speak up during class, or else an in-person student could speak up on their behalf

**Flexibility** when they notice their remote peers wanting to speak. Teaching and learning in this mixed environment takes practice, experimentation, and adjustments to expectations. Being upfront about the need to be flexible, for both in-person and remote students, will help in an environment where changes may arise, and where everyone is learning to adapt.

**Empathy** For in-person students, and even at times for the instructor, it can be all too easy to speak and act in the classroom as if the only participants are those who are physically present. Maybe there's a paper handout rather than a digital one, or perhaps the instructor facilitates a discussion without keeping an eye on the folks online to see if they want to speak. Helping students to develop empathy for their peers—and nurturing that empathy in oneself—will help lead naturally to solutions.

**Technology Expectations** Knowing how and where to communicate during class, as well as between classes, is an essential part of empowering students to engage with you and each other in a mixed environment. Explore practices such as encouraging in-person students to face the camera and microphone while sharing out with the class, or encouraging students to engage actively in online discussions and dialogue outside of class.

**Follow-Up Before and After Class** Communicating in the online environment before and after class becomes even more important in a mixed-mode environment. Making regular use of announcements in Canvas, posting your slides in Canvas, recapping any assignments or next steps discussed in class can be especially helpful for remote students who might benefit from clear and concise follow-up. These actions will also increase your visibility for all students, and increase their connection to both you and the course content (Yearwood et al., 2016).

## Faculty Insight

---

*Pre-course surveys are so important to understanding what limitations people might have in participating, from bandwidth to kids in the background to comfort with the technology. Devote time to getting everyone as comfortable as possible with the set up and the technology, so that you can troubleshoot in a low-stakes environment. Open and clear lines of communication, from what to do if something does go wrong to asking them to let the instructor know if anything in the situation does change, which might affect their ability to participate remotely.*

— Lee Skallerup Bessette, Learning, Design, and Technology, GSAS

*I arrange my classroom in a horseshoe facing the camera/video of the remote students so that the remote student can see all their classmates. I spotcheck from each seat before the beginning of class to make sure that all face-to-face students are visible (and audible) to the remote students. Another basic tip is that I*



*always assign students to groups for group work rather than saying something like “get into groups of three” so that the pressure is not on remote students to integrate themselves with their in-person classmates. A class Slack channel (to which they may or may not invite me) also helps a lot with building community and coherence between in-person and remote students both during class and asynchronously. It has to seem student-led though so that it can operate organically.*

–Shannon Mooney, Learning, Design, and Technology, GSAS

## Communicate in Shared Online Environments

For all of your students, it can be difficult to communicate naturally with each other the same way they might in a normal class. Think about how and where you can create spaces for communication. Seek or recruit help to manage online chats and other backchannels, as well as presentations and lecture Q&A. If you are lucky enough to have a TA, they can play a crucial role in helping to moderate or direct the flow of communication and questions. For classes without a TA, think about how you might recruit your students to actively play a role in helping each other. Perhaps students can rotate in responsibility for actively checking the chat in Zoom for questions and relevant comments, or maybe you as a facilitator might plan to pause regularly to check for yourself.

Outside of Zoom, there are other digital environments that can help make digital communications feel like a bridge between everyone. Google Docs and Slides can serve as a great shared space to generate ideas, and Canvas has a built-in chat feature you might include with your course—or else you might look into something more visual and adventurous such as a Google Jamboard session where students can collaborate on an online digital whiteboard. You might also consider polling features that can help craft more interesting conversations, such as the native polling tools in Zoom or additional options such as PollEverywhere. These digital tools can give students more agency to interact with each other and engage with the ideas being explored in class.

<b>Recruit</b>	Recruit help from your students to keep track of digital communication, whether formally or informally.
<b>Pause</b>	As the facilitator, plan to regularly pause and check for questions and comments that have been posted in Zoom or other spaces.
<b>Identify</b>	Identify other software tools that can help create a bridge between your in-person and online students to learn and engage together during class.

## *Faculty Insight*

---

*I assign partners that include one online student and one face-to-face (f2f) student. This creates a shared responsibility between faculty and students for integrating the online students. Consider assigning*

*permanent partners for consistency. Also, consider rotating the role of chat monitor among the students throughout the semester.*

–Maggie Debelius, Learning, Design, and Technology, GSAS

*I have all students join the Zoom session, both remote and on-campus, so that they all see themselves as part of the class. I ask those in class not to connect their computer audio in Zoom, so that it doesn't cause audio feedback challenges. Because everyone is in Zoom from the start of class, it makes it easier (less time consuming) to create break-out groups and engage in small group activities.*

–Yianna Vovides, Learning, Design, and Technology, GSAS

## Established Challenges & Proposed Solutions

The information in the table below was adapted from Natalie Parker at Texas Wesleyan University and Chris Heard at Pepperdine University.

### Challenges

### Possible Solutions

How to comply with public health regulations due to COVID-19?

- 6-foot physical distancing
- Masks over nose and mouth
- Chairs in fixed locations in the room
- Minimization of student contact with shared surfaces and objects, such as whiteboards

What do pair/small-group work or class discussions look like when students who are in-person have to stay 6-feet apart?

- Since it's not possible to share a paper or look at the same computer, students will need to use digital tools to collaborate.
  - Zoom whiteboard or annotation tools
  - Google docs in Canvas collaborations
  - Google Jamboard
  - Canvas discussion boards
  - Canvas "Groups"
  - Voicethread
  - Hypothes.is
- Consider using peer-learning, peer-teaching (pairs may be easier than larger groups)

## Challenges

## Possible Solutions

Engaging two sets of students—one remote and the other F2F, but socially-distanced

- Use polling software.
- Use brainstorming tools that allow users to submit text or graphics to a communal whiteboard, such as the “Google Jamboard” app, or the shared whiteboard in Zoom.
- Conduct breakout groups using collaborative tools such as Google Docs. Rather than speak, groups of students would interact via chat, on a document, etc.
- Provide individual whiteboards (or ask students to bring their own). They can solve problems and/or write answers down and hold them up. If students need to share these whiteboards, sanitation would have to be considered. Students may choose to use their phones as document cameras.
- Create discussion groups in Canvas or Google Docs, then ask students in each group to discuss a prompt and then share the agreed-upon solution with the class at large.
- Use the fish bowl method. One group of students can role play or mime a solution (from a safe distance and within view of the camera) as others watch, interpret, critique, etc.
- Consider ways to have digital back-channel options (like Slack, zoom chat, padlet) for full group discussions. Where appropriate, these environments can serve as a virtual alternative to whispering/note-passing during class and a low-stakes way for students to stay connected to one another outside of class.

Balancing faculty attention between in-person students and online students

- Advance planning on how to integrate these two groups is essential. Try to plan activities that help you see and engage with both groups of students, or that help them engage with each other.
- Pair online students with f2f students as continuous partners throughout the semester in order to help catch any questions that arise either during or after class. For example, in-person students might help interject on behalf of their partners during class when they have a question or comment.

Overall adjustments to preparation and teaching practice

- Plan transitions and activities further in advance.
- Enlist students as partners and co-creators. Ensure activities that allow for participation by all members: digital presentations, etc.

---

# Accessibility

In hybrid models, special attention needs to be paid to issues of access; mixed modes of presentation, the readability of digital materials, how to handle hearing or visual impairments in physically-distanced environments, or when online students are watching, etc. These considerations are important to examine both for the digital materials and environments you are using, as well as for the in-person discussions and activities.

Please consult our guidebook (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/guides/accommodations-and-accessibility/>) on principles and practices you should consider for facilitating an accessible course.

---

## Conclusion

Hybrid models of teaching requires effort on the part of faculty in terms of preparation and resilience. Likewise, students will get more out of the experience if they recognize the key role they have to play as partners in the class experience. Teaching and learning has always been a collective endeavor, and the HyFlex modality emphasizes the need for instructors and students to partner on the cultivation of a meaningful learning environment. As the Hyflex model becomes more widely adopted and adapted, the flexibility of this model affords faculty and students the opportunity to navigate the complex challenges posed by COVID-19.

## *Student Experience*

---

*Having the choice to attend classes either in-person or else online via Zoom was a game changer for me during my graduate program at Georgetown. My wife and I had just welcomed our first baby, an exciting and unplanned development, and it made for an intense set of adjustments for me as somebody who was both studying and working. Thankfully I was able to progress toward graduation with the full support of my professors and peers, albeit not quite in the way that I had planned for.*

–Randal Ellsworth, LDT Alumnus, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

---

## Resources

- Notes and Resources for Hybrid Teaching in Spring 2021 (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/pedagogies-and-strategies/notes-resources-hybrid/>)
- For Students in Hybrid Courses (<https://instructionalcontinuity.georgetown.edu/student-guide/students-hybrid/>)
- Hybrid Pilot Pedagogy Addendum: One-Page Brief for Faculty (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/135iKa34CZm727kkYnmUziG42b0kThXbCasaSn109JsU/edit>)

- Canvas Roll Call Instructions (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1svvp5klmnGj-TfcIPdzxiEMrDljpKaMBq6zFfaP6D5E/edit>)

# Bibliography

Beatty, Brian J. (2020). *Hybrid-Flexible Course Design: Implementing student-directed hybrid classes* (<https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex>). EdTech Books

Darby, F. & Lang, J.M. (2019). *Small Teaching Online*. San Francisco: Wiley.

ELI. (2010). 7 Things You Should Know About the HyFlex Course Model

(<https://library.educause.edu/resources/2010/11/7-things-you-should-know-about-the-hyflex-course-model>), Educause.

Hill, Phil. (2020). Updates: Summary of student surveys page and sample HyFlex class plan.

(<http://Updates: Summary of student surveys page and sample HyFlex class plan>)*Phil on Ed Tech*.

Maloney, E. & Kim, J. (2020). Fall Scenario #13: A HyFlex Model

(<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/learning-innovation/fall-scenario-13-hyflex-model>). *Inside Higher Ed*.

Malczych, B. (2019). Introducing Social Work to HyFlex Blended Learning: A Student-centered Approach

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08841233.2019.1652226>). *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 39 (4-5). (<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wtsw20/current>)

Miller, J.B., Risser, M.D., & Griffiths, R.P. (2013). Student Choice, Instructor Flexibility: Moving Beyond the

Blended Instructional Model (<https://journals.uair.arizona.edu/index.php/itet/article/view/16464/16485>). *Issues and Trends in Learning Technologies*, 1 (1).

Yearwood, D., Cox, R., & Cassidy, A. (2016). Connection-Engagement-Empowerment: A Course Design Model. *Transformative Dialogues: Teaching & Learning Journal*, 8(3).

## Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS)

### Georgetown University

3520 Prospect St. NW Suite 314

Washington, DC 20057

Phone: (202) 687-0625

Email: [cndls@georgetown.edu](mailto:cndls@georgetown.edu) (<mailto:cndls@georgetown.edu>)

Maps([Http://Maps.Georgetown.Edu/](http://Maps.Georgetown.Edu/)) Copyright([Https://Www.Georgetown.Edu/Copyright-Information/](https://www.Georgetown.Edu/Copyright-Information/))

Privacy([Https://Www.Georgetown.Edu/Privacy-Policy/](https://www.Georgetown.Edu/Privacy-Policy/))

Accessibility([Https://Accessibility.Georgetown.Edu/](https://Accessibility.Georgetown.Edu/))