



At Columbia, the School of Social Work has been successfully integrating remote participation into face-to-face classes for several years (Marquart et al., 2018). General recommendations from experienced HyFlex instructors in the CSSW program include the following:

- Preparatory guidance for both instructors and students ahead of the HyFlex course on ways of creating and maintaining community.
- Flexibility for when technology fails or students have difficulty with access.
- Designation of a dedicated TA or student associate to assist with technology and chat monitoring during the class session, to lessen the cognitive load on the instructor. See details about this assistance at the end of this module.
- Consideration of setting up camera views to give remote participants a sense of participating in the class, in addition to viewing the instructor or slides.

For examples of Hybrid/HyFlex teaching and learning at Columbia, view the [submissions](#) to the Voices of Hybrid & Online Teaching and Learning initiative, and [share your voice](#).

Strategies for Successful Implementation

What are the planning considerations for a HyFlex course? How does one engage all learners in a HyFlex course regardless of the path students chose? How does an instructor manage interactions that are occurring in-person and online simultaneously?

The following strategies can help address these common questions.

Plan Ahead

Create class session plans

With the course learning objectives, the diversity of your learners, and classroom setup in mind, plan each class session. Allocate time for setting-up, engaging in informal check-ins with in-person and remote students, pausing to check chat and answer student questions, providing guidance and clear instructions to in-person and remote learners, learning activities, and to debrief of those activities. View [example plans for a 50-minute and 75-minute class session](#) from Kevin Kelly of San Francisco State University, and consider how

you might create your own and adjust expectations of how much can be accomplished during a synchronous class session.

Share these session plans with TA(s) (as applicable) and session agendas with students in advance of synchronous class sessions so that they can remain focused and know what to expect and when to engage with course materials and participate.

Familiarize yourself with the technology in your classroom

Before the start of the course, visit your assigned classroom and test out the technology available in the room – projector, microphones, audio, adjusting camera(s)), connecting your own device(s), and your positioning in the space (e.g., will you need to stay close to the instructor station/podium or your computer so your remote students can hear you?).

For classrooms supported by CUIT, schedule a training by emailing

EROoms@columbia.edu.

If using the chalkboard or whiteboard, make sure it will be visible to your remote students, or consider using a device and stylus to project in-class and to your remote learners.

Based on your initial experience, you may need to adjust your HyFlex plans accordingly.

Know who to contact for classroom technology support before or during a class session.

For classrooms supported by CUIT contact the classroom support team at 212-854-3633.

With the classroom technology in mind and knowing that issues may arise, prepare a back-up plan and tell your students what you will do and what they should do in case of tech issues.

Engage All Students

Include in-person and remote learners

For live class sessions, it is important to design and plan for inclusion of in-person and remote learners.

- Provide guidelines and speak with your students about norms in your HyFlex classroom. Discuss what technology features will be used and how (e.g., ask all in-person students to mute microphones to avoid audio feedback), the options students will have to participate, and the expectations for instructor-student or TA-student, and peer-to-peer interactions. Communicate the technology needs and setup for all learners.
- Devote attention to both in-person and remote synchronous students. If teaching as a team with a co-instructor or TA, ask them to monitor the chat and address remote questions, or share contributions in real time. If teaching on your own, consider asking students to take on the role of chat monitor on a rotating basis, and/or build in specific moments when to address remote participants directly.

Make materials accessible

HyFlex instructors repeatedly emphasize the importance of pre-class announcements, instructions to students for testing equipment or features, and explicit written directives

during class activities to minimize the chance that class time is wasted managing confusion about how to engage (Bower et al., 2014).

- Post all materials (including class agenda, links to collaborative documents, instructions, engagement and assessment opportunities) that students will need for a synchronous class session ahead of time in CourseWorks, and set-up mechanisms for all students to turn in work they develop in class ahead of time.
- Post recordings of class sessions and plan for engagement with the materials. This may include CourseWorks discussion threads, prompts for annotating or further developing slides or other materials presented in class, peer editing exercises, or interactive reflection or journaling prompts.

Promote student interaction

Create community through activities that engage all students and connect in-person and remote students with each other.

- Build in activities that create a sense of belonging and motivation among all students, whether or not they are in the same room or on the same screen.
 - Set up icebreaker activities that require universal participation and distributed attention; these could be as simple as staging a ‘wave’ across all students, pairing students between zones to introduce each other to the rest of the class, or setting up call and response activities in chats or discussion boards. (Marquart et al., 2018).
 - Live polls and collaborative documents can give in-person and synchronous remote students quick ways to express themselves and work collectively. Questions or provocations posted on discussion boards can help asynchronous students step into the flow of class.

Enlist Support: Roles in the HyFlex Classroom

Facilitating a HyFlex class is complex enlisting co-facilitators or assistants with defined responsibilities can help with managing the interaction and engagement.

Partner with Teaching Assistants

In addition to traditional TA roles, TAs in HyFlex classes can provide crucial technical and monitoring support during class sessions. These can include:

- Helping the instructor test equipment and software ahead of class, perhaps adopting the position of a remote student in order to help surface any technical or access issues.
- Monitoring a live chat session to ensure that remote students are not experiencing technical problems and are clear about directions—and offering just-in-time help when needed.

- Setting up breakout rooms and visiting them during small group activities, to ensure that remote students are clear about what to do, to answer questions, or to gather feedback to share with the instructor.

Assign rotating student roles

HyFlex instructors without designated TAs may consider asking students in the class to provide assistance. It can help to assign a very specific role with defined expectations, such as a Chat Monitor who will raise their hand anytime a remote student answers a question during discussion. This role can then be assigned to a new student each class, distributing the responsibility and bolstering inclusion.

Pair up students: peer ‘buddies’

In smaller classes such as seminars, HyFlex instructors may consider pairing up in-person and synchronous remote students into buddies. Each in-person student has a device with a camera connected to their remote buddy, and takes responsibility for positioning the camera, consulting with their buddy, and making sure their buddy is able to contribute to discussion. You may ask in-person students to keep their microphones muted while whole class discussion is taking place; if using breakout rooms, in-person students will want to use headsets to help reduce audio feedback.

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