

Teaching Commons Remediation Options

In light of the resumption of classes during the current labour disruption, the TC offers some suggestions for those instructors who seek assistance in resuming their courses. Our role is to locate resources including evidence-informed pedagogical approaches and to make those available to colleagues. Instructors may wish to consider these options when planning the remainder of the term, bearing in mind that the decisions regarding approaches to teaching remain with those instructors.

We provide this resource to the University as a whole, while recognizing the diversity of context and needs in Faculties, departments and units. Instructors should confer with Chairs and others within their program and refer to the Faculty-specific guidelines such as each Faculty's Remediation Framework. The suggestions that follow adhere to the Institutional Remediation Guidelines for Senate Executive.

The points below address three issues:

1. Completing a course that is already underway within a reduced timeframe.
2. Amending a course where the original design is no longer possible.
3. Supporting students who do not attend campus during the labour disruption.

Academic integrity – 'Principle: All students will have an opportunity to meet the learning outcomes of the course with the understanding that it may be necessary to meet those outcomes in alternative ways' (Remediation Guidelines for Senate Executive, March 2015, *see below for link to the full document*).

1. Completing courses within a reduced timeframe N.B. Refer to your unit for the specific dates that now apply to your course.

a. Begin by identifying the course learning outcomes (CLOs).

There is a difference between covering all of the material you originally planned for the course and meeting the course learning outcomes. Different instructors approach the same course in different ways, there is rarely a single way to do this. Many of us think about courses in terms of content, but rather than aiming to cover all the intended material, think about what it is that you want the students to be able to do by the end of the course.

CLOs are the top level outcomes for your course and usually number 4 to 6 statements. e.g. *by the end of this course students will be able to compare and contrast the phonetic system of Hexagonal and Canadian French.*

b. Map the CLOs to the assessment strategy for the course.

How do you know if students have achieved the outcomes? e.g. *As part of the mid-term exam students complete a problem which requires them to compare and contrast the two phonetic systems.*

c. Identify which CLOs have already been assessed and which remain un-assessed.

Looking at the assessments that have already been completed – how many of the CLOs have already been assessed? The Senate guidelines permit the assessment policy to be changed including changing the weighting of previous

assessments. Assessments in the final two weeks of the course may not constitute more than 20% of the total grade.

Given the time and resources available, do you need to amend the course activities and or planned assessments?

Once any gaps have been identified select activities and assessment approaches that best enable the students to achieve the CLOs with the current constraints of time and resource.

d. Communication

Once you have decided on a revised format for the course be sure to communicate this in the clearest terms to the students. Bear in mind students are likely to have a range of needs and responses to the circumstances. This may include:

- Students who wish to complete the course as near to the original timeframe as possible
- Students who wish to discuss the context of the labour disruption and its wider impact, including on themselves
- Students who are unwilling to cross the picket line, and therefore need reassurance that they will be able to complete the course.

In all cases it is important to clearly state the content, structure and assessment requirements for the remainder of the course. This may include three options, one for students who resume attending classes at the earliest possibility, another for those who access course material without attending classes, and another for those who do not resume their studies until the conclusion of the labour disruption.

Students are likely to appreciate hearing from the instructor as soon as possible so that they can plan their time accordingly. Some students will be more heavily impacted than others by the changes to the course. You may wish to poll your students to find out how many intend resuming classes and how many will observe the picket line. Some students may be unwilling to attend in person on campus but be willing to access the materials online. Moodle has the facility to enable anonymous responses to these questions (*see the link to Moodle assistance below*).

Students, particularly those in the first year, may appreciate efforts to keep the sense of a class community, so when planning changes, you may wish to include activities that enhance group cohesion.

2. Amending a course where the original design is no longer possible.

a. Alternative activities

In the absence of tutorials, you may wish to consider how to create support for students through self-study groups or other guided activities. Moodle can be used to provide guidance to students, or indeed students can meet online within Moodle. When asking students to work together, provide clear instructions for the group activity including, where appropriate, guided questions.

One possible group activity is to have students to create a poster to demonstrate their understanding of a topic or concept. Use the posters in class with students visiting each other's posters so that they learn from each other.

Another strategy is to have students create annotated bibliographies or concept maps for each other. This is a way for students to share the readings and review the key concepts.

With respect to labs, consider the impact if they are not available. This may not be an option in some programs, for example a professional body may require a certain number of contact hours (eg Engineering). However if you do have a choice and feel it is vital to teach a concept or demonstrate a technique for example, consider providing a demonstration in a lecture, or video-record the demonstration and make the video available on Moodle.

You may wish to consider extending support outside the remaining scheduled hours of class, online or in person—this requires the consent of the students.

For other strategies see the TC website <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources-2/teaching-strategies/>

b. Alternative assessment methods

The specific course context (numbers, type of activity used to date, external requirements) may not allow for changes to the final exam. If this is the case and if the labour disruption continues, it will not be possible for the exam to be graded until later. In this case, you may wish to consider accommodations for those students for whom a delay in receiving their grade will cause hardship (e.g. international students expecting to return home, students who have applications for grad school or job offers pending final grades, etc.). One such accommodation is to provide an interim grade based on the *pro rata* of grades awarded so far, on the understanding that the final grade will be awarded and communicated to the student once the final exam has been assessed.

If changes are possible, then you may wish to consider some of the following:

Adapt written assignments or presentations to include a quiz or test portion with possibly some multiple choice questions if appropriate.

Engage students in peer assessment. There are multiple ways to do this including grouping students in 3s or 4s, setting a task such as writing a review of an article, then requiring the students to grade each other. The subsequent discussion over differences in grades can be illuminating for all involved. If there is great disparity you may need to moderate but typically students reach a consensus on a grade. It is imperative to provide a marking scheme or rubric.

If collaborative work is a feature of the course, set a group project or problem which requires all group members to contribute to the solution for which the whole group is given the same grade, and also require them to provide a grade to each other based on their contribution to the group work. This may be done online or in person.

See the TC website for further suggestions <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources-2/assessment/>

3. Supporting students who do not attend campus during the labour disruption.

Some students may elect to stay off campus during the labour disruption, those students must not be penalized for this decision therefore alternatives must be provided to enable those students to complete the course. If several students elect to stay away from campus this may impact on those who do attend particularly if this results in very small classes.

Where possible devise solutions that meet the needs of the whole class as this is simpler in the long run for all concerned. However it is not always feasible to do so. Ensure that any new schedule is clearly communicated to all.

Some options to make material available are:

Record lectures e.g. using Camtasia Relay (see <http://computing.yorku.ca/faculty-staff/teaching-research-computing/lecture-recording-york/camtasia-relay/>) these can be accessed by all students.

Offer the class as a synchronous online meeting – this can be run using Moodle online discussions, or you could elect to use conference calls to enable participants to hear each other.

Store course materials on Moodle, including online discussion areas to replace face-to-face discussions. Once students return, set a timeline for them to complete the course requirements.

Offer make-up sessions after the disruption has ended.

Some final thoughts

Dealing with smaller than usual classes

If you decide to offer the class fully online instead of face to face, it may be possible for the whole class to take part. Poll the students to ask who intends to return to class, and plan accordingly. Consider changing the planned activities to account for smaller numbers, for example an in-class discussion instead of group work. You might have the students work in pairs to discuss an issue then share with the rest of the class.

First day of resumed class

It is worth bearing in mind that students may not return to class in the same frame of mind or at the same stage of thinking as they were when you last met. In particular students in early years in particular may need time to adjust to the return to class. It may not be necessary to cover all of the material listed in the original course description, but you may wish to encourage students to look at the readings in their own time. You could start with a review session to remind students where they were when they last met and what remains in the course.

It is extremely important to spend some time explaining the revised course structure and the adjustments that have been made so students have a clear understanding of the expectations. Resist the temptation to resume the class at a quicker pace than before; it is preferable to engage the students at a pace they can manage than to race through the material. Keep the CLOs in mind rather than the content – what do you want the students to be able to do by the end of the course? Reassure students that they can still achieve the intended learning outcomes and that you are there to support them in their learning.

Support and Information

TC Workshop/drop-in sessions Those instructors who would like to discuss their plans and options with an educational developer and or other instructors are invited to attend drop-in sessions at the TC.

These will take place in the TC lounge area in TEL 1050 every day from 10 to 11am and 2 to 3pm from Thursday March 19th until Friday March 27th, **except** Monday 23rd.

How to write learning outcomes Refer to the TC website for guidance on writing CLOs - <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources-2/curriculum-and-course-design/#support>

Moodle Support <https://moodle.yorku.ca/instructors/training/index.html>

General IT support – refer to your local IT support <https://moodle.yorku.ca/instructors/contact/index.html>

Senate Policy on the academic implications of disruptions: <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-implications-of-disruptions-or-cessations-of-university-business-due-to-labour-disputes-or-other-causes-senate-policy-on-the/>

Institutional Remediation Guidelines for Senate Executive. <http://vpap.info.yorku.ca/files/2015/03/Institutional-Remediation-Guidelines-for-Senate-Executive.pdf>