



Example: Note to the Instructor

Overview & Rationale

If you are developing a course that will be taught by someone else, it could be helpful to a future instructor of the course to provide an overview of the course and why certain decisions were made. For example:

The course provides students with a foundational understanding of the field and introduces them to important theories and practices. Due to the foundational nature of the course, discussions are a significant component and determine a substantial portion of the course grade. Encouraging frequent discussion in the course allows the instructor to identify gaps and areas that may need to be revisited and provides students an opportunity to interact with each other.

In addition to discussion forums, instructors are encouraged to engage with students using Zoom to provide virtual office hours and/or live sessions.

The final project is equal in weight to the discussions. The decision to have a final project rather than a test was made to better assess how students apply what they've learned to a given situation.

Course Components

Providing a general outline of the course can be helpful. For example:

- Each unit is 3 weeks and requires students to complete the following:
 - Assigned reading(s)
 - Engage in a VoiceThread discussion
 - A knowledge check
- Proctored midterm
- Final project in lieu of final exam

Content Delivery Methods

Provide the future instructor with an overview of the resources used in the course. Resources generally include items such as YouTube videos, TedTalk, etc. For example:

To make the course as low cost as possible, no textbook will be used. Instead, the course relies on free, vetted resources, a handbook created by me the developer using copyright free materials, and content created by Academic Outreach and Innovation. Each lesson includes a brief overview and short recorded lecture, and is supplemented with TedTalks, free journal readings, and/or animations where appropriate.

Let's explore the possibilities together!



Tools Descriptions

If your course incorporates additional tools, please explain which tools are used and how. Please see the suggested language below:

Zoom

Zoom, built-in to Canvas, allows synchronous live-sessions in a course (sessions can be recorded) and was implemented to increase student-to-instructor engagement.

How it's Used: Zoom allows real time (synchronous) activities within a virtual space such as live lectures, small group discussions, one-to-one virtual office hours, etc.

Discussion Forums

Discussion forums are a built-in feature of Canvas that offer students the opportunity to engage with both their peers and the instructor to have asynchronous (not occurring at the same time) conversations. Implementation of discussion forums was chosen to increase student-to-student and student-to-instructor engagement and overall student retention rates.

How it's Used: Discussion forums are used to provide an asynchronous means of discussing specific course content.

Panopto

Panopto is a screen-recording platform that is available through Canvas. Both students and instructors can use the app to create robust recordings. Panopto is used to provide a closer look at specific course content.

How it's Used: Panopto is used to provide brief presentations that highlight specific or key topics within the course—often topics that learners tend to struggle with. Many students appreciate the way Panopto videos mimic aspects of an in-class lecture.

Perusall (external site)

Perusall is a group annotation web app that allows students to read, annotate, and discuss a text in small groups. The app was chosen to increase student-student engagement and shared learning.

How it's used: Perusall is used as means through which readers process what they are reading and to foster asynchronous discussion among students.

VoiceThread (external site)

VoiceThread is a user-friendly tool that both students and instructors can use to not only create narrated presentations, but also to provide feedback or comment on one another's presentations. The app was chosen to increase student-to-student engagement and shared learning.

How it's used: VoiceThread is used to replicate, in a virtual environment, the opportunities to create and give presentations normally done in a face-to-face classroom.

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