

# Digital Teaching Summer Camp

Introduction to Hyflex

(Or, “You Can’t Always Get What You Want”)



When you think towards the fall semester, what causes you the most stress?

Share your thoughts in the public chat.

Building compassion, care, and flexibility into your courses now can relieve a lot of stress in the future.

“Hyflex” instructional design is one way of thinking about designing for uncertainty or crisis.

Hyflex was pioneered by Brian Beatty at San Francisco State University in 2006.

Check out his book, *Hybrid-Flexible Course Design: Implementing Student-Directed Hybrid Classes*, freely available at <https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex>.

# Okay, Brenna, so what the heck is “hyflex”?

- Portmanteau of “hybrid” and “flexible.”
- “Hyflex” courses:
  - allow students to shift between in-person, live online, and asynchronous course materials; AND
  - allow students to change between course delivery “streams” day-to-day.
- “Hyflex” assignment design:
  - allow students to make choices about assessment format and weighting, with flexibility as the semester progresses.

# An example of two students in the same hyflex classroom.

- Melody enrolls in a required course that meets Tuesdays from 2:30 – 5:30. She prefers face-to-face learning and intends to attend class. Three weeks into the term, she's offered a contract at work that requires her to work one Tuesday a month. On those days, she watches the asynchronous video updates after work instead of attending class.
- Janet enrolls in the same class, but she knows she can't attend because of childcare. She attends the first half of class every week synchronously, and then leaves to pick up her son from daycare, watching the second half after he goes to bed. Midway through term, her parents offer to take her son on Tuesday evenings, so she starts attending the face-to-face sessions every week instead.

# An example of two students in the same hyflex classroom.

- Justin knows he isn't the strongest writer and struggles managing time when working alone, so when he decides on his assignment breakdown, he opts to weigh his exams more heavily than his essay and choose an optional creative group project.
  - Essay: 20%
  - Midterm 1: 20%
  - Midterm 2: 20%
  - Group Project: 20%
  - Final Exam: 20%
- Daniel loves writing but suffers from anxiety that causes him to struggle in timed exams and group assessment settings. He decides to switch one exam for a second essay, and do a reflective project instead of the group assessment.
  - Essay 1: 20%
  - Essay 2: 20%
  - Midterm 1: 20%
  - Reflective Project: 20%
  - Final Exam: 20%

# In a Covid context...

- We know most of us will be teaching remotely for Fall. But what about Winter? Will we go back to class, only to see a resurgence of the virus and a return to remote instruction mid-term again?
- Hyflex requires a lot of up-front planning, but it prepares you for individual student needs, requires less accommodation later, and means you're ready for quick and complex changes that might be our "new normal" for some time.
- Consider **at least** planning ahead for what a class looks like if a final assessment is not possible, and always provide an asynchronous (anytime) option or alternative for every synchronous (real time) one.
- A well-prepared hyflex course is ready for you to step back from if you need to.

# It's not all or nothing.

Are there elements of these aspects you can take with you today to build a more flexible course for the fall?

# The goals of Hyflex design:

- Foreground Learning Outcomes (everything can be flexible as long as those are achieved).
- Centre student choice and flexibility.
- Maximize opportunities for learning around student responsibilities like work and caregiving.
- Prioritize:
  - Equivalency;
  - Reusability; and
  - Accessibility.

# Foregrounding Learning Outcomes

- Start with what students need to know when they leave the course; strip this back to core outcomes (review your curriculum guidelines!).
- How many different ways can these outcomes reasonably be achieved? Where can you insert choice?
- Rethink your practice: maybe you always evaluate using one format (an essay or exam). Is that the only way?

# Centre Choice / Maximize Opportunities

- It's not business as usual, right? So can we reasonably teach and evaluate as if it is?
- Giving students added choice – even in small ways – can help them maneuver their own stresses and traumas without giving up on their learning.
- There's a long-running body of research that suggests students learn more in courses where they are given responsibility for their learning; choice is one way to signal this.

# Equivalency, Reusability, Accessibility

- Students will have **different but equivalent** experiences of the course.
- Hyflex courses are designed for **sustainability**, with components that can be reused and repurposed (we'll talk about this more when we talk about Academic Integrity).
- We maximize **access** when we design courses for a range of possible student experiences.

Again, you don't have to do it all (and face-to-face isn't an option anyway). But...

... the more you think about how different circumstances for your course can still be equivalent **now**, the less you have to panic when the unexpected happens, and the better you can accommodate students.

# Congratulations!

You've earned a badge!

You'll see this appear on your Moodle later today; it also includes a very brief summary of the workshop that might be useful for your APAR/PRC.

Remember that if you complete eight of these sessions this summer, you'll earn our Certificate of Digital Competency to recognize your hard work and engagement.

