



# Course Format Guide Introduction

Four distinct course types (In-Person, Hybrid, Remote, and Online) were adopted by the campus community. We offer this document as a guide to help faculty and students make informed decisions. It is intended as a **guide only** and is NOT proposed as policy. The features of each course type are suggestions that we hope will help faculty and students envision the type of instruction that may characterize each course type. The examples provided are hypothetical and are only a few examples of the many creative ways that each of these course types could be brought to life by our faculty.

For each course type we have also included a notation of the possible “locations” for the course format. Faculty will choose the location of their course when they choose their course format and this information will be visible to students registered for a course to help students determine if instruction will take place in a physical space, virtual environment, or both.

Faculty approach their teaching with creativity and a clear sense of their pedagogical perspectives. Ultimately, faculty, departments, and schools/colleges decide what courses will look like. We hope that this guide is useful and will help faculty to characterize the teaching and learning environment that they will be creating. We also hope that with slightly more precise definitions of the course type’s faculty can more easily communicate with their students about their course format and expectations.

## Two important definitions:

**Synchronous** learning is when classes occur on set schedules and time frames. Students and instructors are either online or in the classroom at the same time participating simultaneously since lectures, discussions, presentations, and other course activities take place at specific hours. Students are expected to meet at set meeting times.

**Asynchronous** learning does not require real-time interaction and there are no set simultaneous live class sessions; instead, content is available online for students to access when it best suits their schedules, and assignments are completed to deadlines. Students are not expected to meet with their class at a specific time.

# In-Person

Taught primarily on-campus at pre-scheduled meeting times.

## Features of In-Person Course:

Most instruction (approximately 90 percent or more) involves direct interaction between faculty and students and occurs synchronously and in a physical classroom.

If all of the instruction does not occur synchronously in a physical classroom, then the remainder of instruction could be carried out either synchronously or asynchronously through the delivery of content, activities, labs, discussions, group work, peer interaction, etc. that is moderated, guided, facilitated or reviewed by faculty and occurs virtually.

Because students must schedule multiple courses, synchronous sessions occur at pre-scheduled times indicated in the course schedule.

**Example 1:** Irene teaches her In-Person, upper-division Mechanical Engineering class in the North Classroom building. Her class of 10 enrolled students meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30 am – 10:45 am. Irene was able to get a classroom that accommodates her entire class so all of her students attend class on-campus twice a week. When her class meets, Irene presents short lectures, asks students to solve problems in small groups, moderates discussion, and facilitates student presentations. Irene assigns students problem sets as homework which they bring to class to discuss.

**Example 2:** For the Anthropology class he teaches, Gerardo intersperses lecture with small group discussion. The class is scheduled to meet on Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:00 am – 12:15 pm, but because the room only accommodates 15 students, Gerardo can only have half of his students physically in the classroom at one time. Gerardo has split his class into two groups (A & B). Each group attends class in-person once a week. The remainder of the students sign into Zoom to attend virtually. For the small-group discussions, Gerardo uses Zoom Breakout rooms so the students attending virtually can have a similar learning experience to those in the classroom. For each class session, Gerardo delivers new material and discussion prompts.

## Location:

- Location = Building Name and Room # (classes with enrollment caps that can be accommodated by room capacity and class meets as a whole in a classroom)
- Location = Building Name and Room # and Zoom (classes with enrollment caps larger than room capacity where cohorts of students rotate attendance)



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# Remote:

Taught virtually (using Zoom) with pre-scheduled meeting times and flexible-schedule online learning components. No on-campus component.

## Features of Remote Courses:

- Approximately 20-90 percent or more of instruction involves direct interaction between faculty and students and occurs synchronously and in a virtual environment. There may be additional flexible-schedule online learning components.
- Instruction could be carried out either synchronously or asynchronously through the delivery of content, activities, labs, discussions, group work, peer interaction, etc. that is moderated, guided, facilitated, or reviewed by faculty and occurs virtually.
- Because students must schedule multiple courses, synchronous sessions occur at pre-scheduled times indicated in the course schedule.

**Example 1:** Donna teaches a chemistry class that she now delivers as a Remote course. Donna joins her students each Tuesday and Thursday between 2-3:15 pm for class in a Zoom room. During class time, Donna lectures and has students work in small breakout rooms on problem sets.

**Example 2:** Franklin teaches a Remote history class. For most of the semester, Franklin holds lecture and discussion sessions using Zoom during the regularly scheduled class times. During the last 2 weeks of the semester, however, regular class meetings cease, while students work in groups to complete a major project that synthesizes their learning over the semester. Students work in groups and Franklin drops into their Zoom sessions to coach them and give them feedback on their projects as they progress. In addition, during these last four weeks, students post in the discussion board on Canvas where both Franklin and their peers provide feedback and support.

**Example 3:** Ana teaches a Remote marketing class. The students only meet synchronously once a week on Mondays between 9:30-10:45 am for class in a Zoom room. During these synchronous sessions, Ana lectures and facilitates group discussion. The rest of the course is taught asynchronously. Students work through content and activities organized into modules and Ana gives students feedback on their discussions and assignments.

**Location:** Location = Zoom



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# Hybrid:

Taught with a mix of pre-scheduled on-campus meetings, flexible-schedule online learning components, and may include pre-scheduled virtual meetings.

## Features of Hybrid Courses:

- Approximately 20 to 80 percent of instruction is synchronous in-person direct instruction. There are also flexible online learning components and there may be synchronous virtual direct instruction.
- **Hybrid courses must have at least one in-person, on-campus meeting.** If you cannot hold the synchronous portion on campus, please classify your course as Remote.
- The remainder of instruction is mainly carried out virtually, including asynchronously through the delivery of content, activities, labs, discussions, group work, peer interaction, etc. that is moderated, guided, facilitated, or reviewed by faculty and occurs virtually and/or may also include synchronous virtual direct instruction.
- Because students must schedule multiple courses, all synchronous sessions occur at pre-scheduled times indicated in the course schedule.

**Example 1:** In a class scheduled to meet once per week, Maryam meets with her 3-credit hour Criminal Justice class in-person, on-campus every Monday morning between 3:30-4:45 pm for the entire semester. For the remaining instructional time, Maryam has designed challenging discussion prompts, activities, and thought problems. To address these, students post videos, discussion posts, and complete peer editing of written products. Maryam facilitates the online discussion and guides students as they engage in activities in a virtual setting.

**Example 2:** Hue asks her Architecture students to come into class for the first five weeks of the semester. After that, Hue assigns the students to groups and uses Problem Based Learning techniques to challenge students to address foundational concepts and skills. Hue meets with the student groups over Zoom to coach them on their problem solving. She reviews drafts of their presentations and provides feedback on the solutions they have developed.

**Example 3:** For the 3-credit hour Philosophy class he teaches, Chris intersperses lecture with small group discussion. The class is scheduled to meet on Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:00 am – 12:15 pm, but because the room only accommodates 15 students, Chris can only have half of his students physically in the classroom at one time. Chris has split his class into two groups (A & B). Each group attends class in-person once a week. Chris repeats his lecture and discussion for the week (Group A hears it on Monday and Group B on Wednesdays). For the rest of the week, both groups work independently on activities in Canvas.

## Location:

- Location = Building Name and Room # (classes with in-person meetings)



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# Online:\*

Taught using online learning materials with a flexible schedule. Class takes place entirely online. There are no on-campus components.

## Features of Online Courses:

• All instruction is carried out through the delivery of content, activities, labs, discussions, group work peer interaction etc. that occurs virtually and is moderated, guided, facilitated, and reviewed by faculty.

**Example 1:** Doug teaches an introduction to art course online. He has students work through content and activities organized into modules and gives students feedback on their discussions and assignments. There are no required meeting times although Doug does offer an optional study hall session for an hour a week in a Zoom room.

**Example 2:** Nora teaches an online accounting class. Students are required to meet once at the beginning of the semester (with a remote option) to establish community and to demonstrate how to use the accounting software. There are no other required meetings during the semester and students work through weekly content and activities in Canvas.

## Location:

- Location = Online

\*Note: some online programs may have classes that have some in-person meetings and/or synchronous



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