

Planning Template to Prepare for, Identify, and Preempt Student Crisis Points



The following is a course timeline that includes instructional or learning issues that may arise for both learners and faculty members as they become involved in teaching and learning in an online environment. Issues mentioned may be further complicated with increased use of technology and the accompanying unpredictability of an online course, especially if it is being taught for the first time. Any foreseeing or anticipation of issues that could compromise the learning experience can assist faculty members and staff in preparing and planning, which could result in increased retention. Take a moment to consider the *Instructional/Learning Issues or Concerns* and then suggest some strategies that you might be able to employ in addressing these in an online course. Use additional sheets as necessary.

Time	Instructional/Learning Issues or Concerns	Strategies
Pre - Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners may be eager, nervous, or ambivalent. • Learners may have never accessed any course management systems and may not be aware of the helpdesk or other resources. • Instructors may be eager, nervous, or anxious. They prepare for the course by reviewing materials and the system. • Instructors may be teaching in a new course delivery mode for the first time and be planning some spontaneous course design or revision in lieu of advance planning. • Staff members may be anxious, working long hours, stressful. They help the instructors orient themselves to the course. 	
First Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology (in and/or out of class) may or may not work as intended. • Instructors set the tone, review the requirements, and explain course interactions. • Members of the class are introduced to each other. • Instructors may spend significantly more time overcoming technological housekeeping and start-up work than anticipated. • Learners may feel overwhelmed or confused by the technology requirements or expectations of the course, of which they were unaware at the time they enrolled. • Learners may be unaware of the time demands of an online course. 	

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First Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners may be adding and dropping courses. • Instructors get to know the learners and respond to first activities/assignments. • Instructors become aware of who is not accessing course materials, but may be unable to reach those learners. • Designers and staff members attend to problems as reported. 	
First Five Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners may be confused, feel isolated, or start procrastinating. • Learners may require and ask for extra support as they become used to online assignments, feedback, and communication. • Instructors may be overwhelmed with student communication, are gradually adjusting to flow of online courses, and beginning to anticipate what will work and what needs work in course design. May request o implement course revisions mid-stream. • Designers and staff members begin to check data that is being collected, through learning system, instructors, or learners, and monitoring problems and concerns. 	

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Mid-semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners may have anxiety about grades, or overwhelmed by expectations in face-to-face and online courses. • Instructors make sure learners have enough information about progress, analyze course pace and learner progress, and make adjustments as needed. • Instructors may have added or compressed coursework to compensate for earlier delays in delivering curriculum earlier in the course. 	
Second five weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners may be overwhelmed, withdrawn from course activities, missing assignments. • Learners may begin to prepare or anticipate their first online final exam. • Instructors may begin to fatigue of online ‘presence.’ • Course evaluations are conducted anytime until end of the course. • Designers and staff members are working on the next cycle of courses, checking collected course data, monitoring problems and concerns. 	
Final Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners turn in final work, request final information and feedback from instructor, and complete course evaluation. • Instructor grades final work, calculates final grade, and notes changes for course design changes. • Designers and staff members review collected data, meet with instructor to determine areas in need of improvement. 	

Additional Sheets

Time	Instructional/Learning Issues or Concerns	Strategies