Hybrid Courses and Learning

I. Definitions and examples: hybrid and online courses

Hybrid Courses: courses that combine on-line and traditional classroom instruction. The percentage of online material vs. classroom sessions can vary depending on the individual course. These are often referred to as Blended Learning courses.

Example:

FSL472H1 Reading and Writing Fiction and Non-Fiction in French[36L]

Hybrid course designed for students who wish to further develop their reading and writing skills in French. Through a combination of traditional classroom time and online instruction, students will acquire analytic tools to comprehend, analyze and write fiction and non-fiction texts. Multimedia approach to understanding the cultural experiences of francophone world.

Prerequisite: FSL 375Y1Y
Distribution Requirement Status: This is a Humanities course
Breadth Requirement: Creative and Cultural Representations (1)

Online Courses: courses that do not meet in traditional classrooms, with the possible exception of scheduled exams.
Example:

**FCS292H1  Special Topics in French Cultural Studies I: Love, Sex and Desire in French Literature and Cinema**

This course explores the themes of love, sex and desire in French literature through close reading and interpretative analysis of novels from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. A comparative approach using various examples taken from literary texts and film adaptations explores the concept of love and its many definitions.

Prerequisite: None  
Distribution Requirement Status: This is a Humanities course  
Breadth Requirement: Creative and Cultural Representations (1)  
Available Online: consult Faculty or Graduate Unit for details

II. Designing a Hybrid Course

Questions to consider *before* designing a Hybrid Course:

1. What are your learning objectives? What are the advantages in reducing the class time and adding an on-line component?
2. What specific technologies will you use for the online and face-to-face portions of your course?
3. How do you plan to prepare students for the on-line portion of your course? What proactive steps can you take to assist students to become familiar with your course website and those instructional technologies?
4. If students need help with technology later in the course, how will you provide support?
5. How will you schedule the percent of time between the face-to-face and online portion of your course, i.e., one two hour face-to-face followed by one two hour online session every two weeks?
Suggestions: Start with a *Pedagogical Planner*

- Instructional Design (component integration; review examples)
- Innovative Teaching (new methods; lecture-based video clips)
- Online Organization and Design (accessibility, easy navigation)
- Learner Support and Resources (course specific resources; library support)
- Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning (face-to-face and online)

### III. Developing Online Pedagogical Tools for Hybrid Courses

**Questions to consider during course design:**

1. How can you adapt your best practices from the face-to-face classroom to the online learning environment?
2. What are the challenges?
3. How do you engage students in their learning?

   **Suggestions:**

   - **Review** design of lessons and learning environments that support the social aspect of learning (discussion board forum, collaborative projects, experiential learning units)

   - **Provide Various Means of Representation** (design that provides multiple and varied opportunities for students to access and comprehend information)

   - **Vary Methods of Expression** (design that provides multiple and varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge and monitor their own learning)

   - **Provide information for background knowledge and encourage student research** on topics to be discussed in class (integrate online thematic terminology and dictionaries, facilitate use of open-access reading and writing support materials, multimedia resources, include optional reading/viewing activities)

   - **Clarify tasks and activities** in terms of what tool/communication mode is to be used (online course sessions, library research) necessary for understanding specific content
IV. Assessment and evaluation

Questions to consider:

1. How will you divide the course-grading scheme between face-to-face and online activities? What means will you use to assess student work in each of these two components?
2. How will you evaluate the student workload as compared to a traditional class?

Suggestions:

- Review your methods of assessment and evaluation and select specific activities, tests that could be adapted to the online environment
- Ensure that clear instructions are provided for each course assignment and allow extensions for students who need accommodations
- Provide regular feedback on completed assignments
- Use Participation in the Course Discussion Board as a formative assessment tool
- Use Blackboard Reports from Grade Centre for Monitoring Student Activity throughout the course:

Examples of techniques used in FCS292H1S, FSL 472

- Center Discussion forum sessions on course relevant questions that optimize individual choice and autonomy
- Encourage reflection on specific cultural topics and assign course work that foster collaboration
V. Benefits and challenges of teaching hybrid courses

Benefits:
- create an effective and flexible learning environment
- rethink teaching roles for a student-centered learning: help students take responsibility for own learning
- make effective use of new technologies in learning through collaboration with other teaching faculty, online director and share on-going review of methods of teaching, techniques to be adapted to online learning
- create good design models that can be easily adapted for future hybrid and online courses, useful for program/course curriculum review, integration of experiential units, etc.
- respond to a variety of students' needs and learning styles

Challenges:
- change: teaching faculty will need to change some of the methods used in the traditional classroom in order to design a hybrid course
- time: proposing, planning and designing a hybrid course requires a substantial amount of time
- teaching faculty tend to overload the design of the hybrid course: effective integration of the face-to-face and the online component is sometimes difficult to achieve
- use of some high-tech activities (streaming video) in the online portion of the course could be problematic: some technologies are not easy to use
- student expectations: most students at University of Toronto are not familiar with the hybrid model: they make assumptions about coursework and assignments: they expect to work less, are unsure about which assignments could be completed online
REFERENCES/ WEB RESOURCES


California State University’s Quality Online Learning & Teaching, Instructor (Self) and Peer-Review Course Assessment Instrument. http://courseredesign.csuprojects.org/wp/qolt-contacts/


Hybrid Courses: Obstacles and Solutions for Faculty and Students https://dtlconference.wisc.edu/


Sloan-C Effective Practices sloanconsortium.org/effective

Ten Questions to consider when redesigning a course for hybrid teaching and learning http://www4.uwm.edu/ltc/hybrid/faculty_resources/questions.cfm

USC Chico’s Rubric for Online Instruction www.csuchico.edu/celt/roi/index.shtml