

HyFlex FAQs for Faculty

This document addresses issues commonly asked about by faculty in relation to the HyFlex model. Additional topics will be added as we continue to develop the model.

Classroom Management

Q: Will I need to wear a mask while teaching?

A: All faculty and staff will wear masks while indoors, which does include teaching. If you get claustrophobia, out of breath, or have trouble being heard when trying to talk in a heavy cloth mask these are two options:

1. The university has ordered a supply of clear masks (<https://www.theclearmask.com/product>). They make it very easy to breath and easy to be heard. Students can see your facial expressions. The downside is the mask rubs on your nose and chin and might become uncomfortable after a long period. Contact your dean know if you would like to try one.
2. Another option is the disposable blue mask. They are comfortable, light, easy to breath in, and don't muffle your voice. Every dean's office will have a supply of these available.

Each of these masks can be reused if stored in a paper bag for at least two days after each usage.

Q: Will students who are participating in the classroom have a device with them?

A: They may have a device. Almost every student carries at least a phone, but the HyFlex model does not require students who are in the class to have a device. Monitors have been placed in classrooms so that students do not have to join via Zoom while in the classroom. There are also some problems with feedback and other sounds problems if in class-participants join on Zoom. In continuing our current practice, faculty can establish classroom norms for electronics in the classroom that best fit their course and teaching style. Faculty should not expect that in class students will have laptops for taking notes.

As a strategy to help all students, and in recognition of some of the unique challenges certain populations will encounter, we do recommend developing or suggesting a collaborative note-taking approach that would fit your class. For example, if a student is managing the chat for the class, they may not be able to take notes. There also may be some students who miss some statements due to being an English language learner and/or an individual speaking quietly. For these reasons and more, encouraging students to share notes can be a way to promote student success.

Q: How will students be assigned to attend class? How will students know when to come to class in HyFlex?

A: Some classes will be small enough or in a large enough room that all students can attend in person every class session. In this context, the HyFlex model will still be applied if a student cannot attend on a given day due to health concerns.

For many classes, students will rotate between remote and in-person class in the HyFlex Model. For these classes, we've tried to juggle rooms so that as few classes as possible are divided into more than

two groups. Additionally, some students will be remote all semester for health reasons and other students with accommodations may be in person for every class.

For classes that must be divided, an attendance calendar is being developed to mark the days that in-person students will attend. Before the start of the semester, faculty will:

- 1) Be informed which of their classes must be divided and into how many groups.
- 2) Review all course rosters to identify students who will be fully remote and/or fully in-person (this information is being tracked by the Office of Student Success and Advising).
- 3) Divide students into equal-sized groups by last name (Group A, B, etc.).
- 4) Inform their students via Discovery what group they are in. Commuter students who are interested in changing groups may contact the professor to see if an accommodation can be made. If it works, it's good to let them switch. On-campus (dorms and Red Lion students) have the lowest priority for requests to change groups.

Due to the moving parts in the HyFlex models, it may be challenging for students to track their expected attendance dates. Weekly email updates to students are recommended to assist with communicating attendance groups, assignments, etc. We do expect that there will be times that a student arrives on the wrong day or does not attend on their group day. Please show understanding in these situations.

Q: How should I go about keeping attendance records?

A: For the first three weeks of the semester, all faculty need to keep attendance records for traditional courses via Discovery. Be sure to review the instructions provided by Lynette Sorenson for this process.

For the remainder of the semester, you can maintain records in any way that works for you. This semester in particular it will be important to require attendance as many students are likely to need extra structure and accountability. There are multiple ways to take attendance in a HyFlex classroom. As well as more traditional methods such as calling roll, exercises like exit tickets, quizzes, and small group activities can be very effective.

To help with our student success efforts, please keep a close watch on students who seem to be disengaged. For example, if a student misses multiple classes and/or assignments, please notify Traci Grant (traci.grant@northwestu.edu) to initiate follow up.

Graduate courses will also input attendance on Discovery with timelines based on program delivery.

Q: Will we have in-person classes for the entire semester?

A: That is the hope and what we are planning. However, whether they will be in person or not for the entire semester will depend on the evolving situation with COVID-19 and our state's policies. Please design classes in a flexible manner so they could move to become fully remote at any time.

Q: Will the HyFlex model still be implemented if all students can fit in the classroom?

A: Yes. Faculty need to plan on teaching within the HyFlex model due to the possibility of students who need to participate in a fully remote fashion as well as students who may get sick in some way and are unable to attend classes for a day or an extended period of time. If all students are able to attend in the classroom on a given day, the HyFlex model does not need to be used, but the class session should be recorded.

Q: What will students know about the HyFlex model?

A: The concept of our approach for this fall has been introduced in broad communication emails sent by President Castleberry and Jim Heugel. During orientation for new traditional students, a 30-minute session will be conducted for all new students to learn about the model. Sessions will also be offered on August 30 for continuing students. Additionally, the Teaching Contingencies committee will work on a FAQ document for students.

Graduate programs will conduct orientation activities for their own students so sessions can be tailored for their own needs.

Q: What are the steps for a professor to follow when feeling sick?

A: The following guidelines have been developed based on differing scenarios.

Professor experiences symptoms or mild sickness, but still plans to teach

1. Professor emails dean and cc Traci Grant
2. Professor emails Denise Johnson (in Wellness Center) and follows proper protocols
3. Dean arranges a TA for as long as needed to maintain Hyflex teaching
4. Until a TA is in place, Professor teaches a remote-only class and Dean puts a sign on the classroom announcing remote only class
5. Professor maintains email communication with students to let them know the status of the class—remote or Hyflex

Professor experiences more severe sickness and is unable to teach

1. Professor emails dean and cc's Traci Grant
2. Professor emails Denise Johnson and follows proper protocols
3. Professor emails students to cancel class
4. Dean puts class cancellation sign on classroom

If the illness will last for more than a week.

1. Professor stays in communication with the dean.
2. Dean works to arrange a substitute if possible
3. Professor (if able) helps substitute with lesson planning

Q: Do I need to add any language about the HyFlex model to my syllabus?

A: The following content can be tailored for class syllabi:

HyFlex is a term that represents a modality of teaching and classroom set up that is a hybrid of in-class teaching and remote teaching that is intentionally designed to be flexible to accommodate a variety of student and instructor needs while still providing a rich, interactive learning experience. This may include a rotating attendance practice with students having designated days to be in class on some instructional days and designated days to attend class via zoom. This rotation will be determined by the size of the class, the capacity of the room, and the number of days the class meets. All students and instructors attending in class must wear masks while in class and inside campus buildings. Within the HyFlex teaching model, regardless of whether they are in class or on zoom, students will be able to interact with the instructor and all members of the class. Additionally, any student accommodations will be honored within the HyFlex modality. Students also have the option to attend class remotely for all class sessions.

If a student falls ill or needs to quarantine for some reason and cannot attend class in person, please contact the instructor and Traci Grant (traci.grant@northwestu.edu) in the Academic Success and Advising Office.

In our classroom, you will see markings for how to enter and exit the classroom to maintain social distancing. Please heed these directional signs. Additionally, you will see designated desks/ chairs that are available and those that are not. This is to ensure social distancing. Before the start of each class session, students will be asked to clean the area where they will be sitting.

Our class will be split into two groups, based upon the alphabet, according to last name. The first half of the alphabet (Group A) will attend in-class on Tuesdays and remotely on Thursdays. The second half of the alphabet (Group B) will attend in-class on Thursdays and remotely on Tuesdays. This will allow us to reduce the number of students in the room at one time, to maintain social distancing, and to protect everyone's safety while still engaging with the same curriculum.

Teaching and Learning

Q: How should I approach having guest speakers in my class?

A: Guest speakers are allowed, but the way to go about this will depend on their relationship to NU. A professor or staff member who is familiar with the HyFlex model could join as a guest speaker in the classroom. On the other hand, we encourage inviting external guests to join via Zoom if possible. Guest speakers on campus need to follow the appropriate health protocols as specified by the university.

Q: How will grading be approached for the fall semester?

A: In the spring, we asked everyone to be especially gracious with grading. We probably need to move more back to normal this fall, but this is still going to be a very challenging time for students. We are asking faculty to apply a regular approach to grading that is matched with a high level of support. For example, make sure that students make use of tutoring, advising etc. If you see a student struggling,

reach out to them to help. In general, be clearly available for questions, such as through virtual office hours, responding to email, etc.

Q: What are my options for quizzes and exams in this model?

A: There are several considerations when planning assessments for the fall semester. For example, it is possible that a course that previously incorporated a few exams could incorporate more quizzes, which can be offered through Discovery on a timed basis outside of the classroom time. An additional option is to replace an exam with a different type of assessment that allows for evaluating learning.

For courses and/or content that necessitate exams, faculty can consider these possibilities:

1. Ask students to sit in front of a mirror on zoom so faculty could see their screen and workspace.
2. Have students take the exam on their laptop while logged into zoom on their phone so faculty can see their screen.
3. Timed quizzes and/or exams.
4. Quizzes and/or exams with questions focused on analysis such as writing prompts that require analysis.

Faculty are encouraged to join the Testing in the HyFlex model sessions in August to learn about more assessment approaches.

Q: What types of options are there in relation to field trips?

A: In-person walking fieldtrips in small groups are fine as long as students mask and socially distance. Off-campus field trips are generally not allowed. If a professor thinks there is a special reason why a fieldtrip is absolutely necessary he/she should talk with Dean and provost for consideration.

Technology

Q: Can the side monitors be moved?

A: The side monitors will all be on mobile TV stands and can be positioned in a variety of ways and have a 25ft extension for power/internet which should provide enough flexibility for movement around the front of the classroom. Mobile TV stands are available in 37 classrooms. There are 7 classrooms which needed a wall mount solution, which are mounted on full motion articulated arms but very limited compared to a mobile tv stand. Faculty will need to maintain physical distancing boundaries and be aware of the web camera view if moving the side monitor.

Q: The visual from the overhead camera appears small. Are there any other options?

A: There are three camera options for faculty to attempt to connect with remote students. The first option is the camera usually by the ceiling that has been used in the past for Panopto recordings. When

faculty use this camera, students can use the Speaker View on Zoom and enlarge the image, allowing for a good view.

The second possibility is for the professor to move in front of the webcam above the side monitor. This position will allow for a connection with remote students, though will need to be used sparingly to avoid turning your back on students in the classroom for extended period. When using this camera, be sure to maintain physical distancing from students in the classroom.

The third option is the document camera, which can be used as a way for a close up teaching approach for remote students along with providing examples. Keep in mind that the use of this camera will limit the space in which faculty can stand.

Q: What happens if there are technical issues while setting up the class and/or teaching?

A: Faculty are strongly encouraged to practice setting up the classroom technology multiple times to ensure a comfort level prior to the start of the semester. Throughout the semester, professors will need to arrive early in order to have time to set up technology. Should an issue come up prior to or during the class, faculty will need to contact IT as soon as possible.

Q: Will I be required to record class sessions?

A: Please do. Recording class sessions contributes to student success. There are many students who benefit from being able to go back and review some – or all – of a class session. Examples include specific material a student may be struggling with, technical issues that came up during a class, and students who are developing their English skills. Recordings on Zoom can be paused for discussions and activities if the material will not be beneficial when watching at a later time. Additionally, faculty may pause recordings if content is considered overly sensitive and/or student discussion may be limited due to privacy concerns.

Because Zoom will record students and professors, please add the following statement to your syllabi: Class sessions will be recorded through Zoom, Panopto or both. In accordance with FERPA regulations, these recordings are only for the use of students in the course and may not be shared or forwarded to anyone else.

Q: What can we expect as far as connectivity on campus?

A: The NU campus network is currently undergoing optimization. Working with our partner, Cyemptive, we are removing obsolete equipment, optimizing network paths, and looking at network traffic patterns to better load balance at peak times. We hope in FY21 to be able to segment and prioritize network traffic to best serve the priorities of faculty and students. Additionally, we will be looking at the wireless infrastructure, with the goal of modernizing equipment and expanding coverage to high demand areas on campus. This will take time, but we feel is the right approach. Should NU require additional bandwidth, then we will look to purchase.

From a HyFlex perspective, the set up in the NU classrooms adds very little network overhead. The majority of the new screen/pc units in each classroom are hard-wired into our network, so have zero impact on wireless traffic. With on premise students primarily learning in a “lids-down” mode, the burden of HyFlex on the NU network is minimal. Where the classroom experience may see challenges, is more to do with potential network or device challenges remote students may have wherever they remotely join the class. The Red Lion experience is still an unknown at this moment in time. The network bandwidth they have told us goes into the Red Lion should be sufficient, however, until the hotel is full loaded and in use, we will not know for sure. We have already made John Jordan aware of this and have contingency plans ready to implement should we see a sub-optimal student experience.

In Process

Q: How will the course evaluation system be impacted by the HyFlex model?

A: NU will continue to administer course evaluations. We anticipate that students will complete evaluations based on the entirety of their experience, which will include the ability to manage technology for a conducive learning environment. In order to reflect distinctions with the HyFlex model, the Deans Conferral is considering the addition of one or two questions specifically related to the model.