

Tips for MIT Faculty Designing AY21-22 Courses

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About

This document is meant to be a resource for faculty resuming in-person teaching for the 2021-2022 academic year, and developing courses with available technology like Canvas in mind. This resource highlights general practices that will work for a large portion of the MIT community; however, if you have a specific need or circumstance that isn't met by these strategies or you have further questions, feel free to reach out to the Open Learning Residential Education team at ol-residential@mit.edu.

Strategies from AY20-21 to Continue Leveraging

We acknowledge that a lot of time, effort, and resources went into creating digital and remote learning experiences for students last academic year. There are certain strategies that enhanced teaching and learning during the remote time to continue leveraging for on-campus courses. **Consider:**

[Centralizing course materials](#) on your Canvas site so faculty, TAs, and students can easily keep track of and navigate to materials.

Associated tool(s):

- Canvas

Setting routines and communicating expectations (such as where, when, and how to access course materials) helps reduce clicks and mitigate navigation issues for all.

Integrating ample opportunities for [active learning](#), both during class time (hands-on work, labs, discussions, coaching) and outside of class (leveraging digital tools like those on/integrated with Canvas).

Associated tool(s):

- Canvas – Assignments, Quizzes, Surveys, Discussions
- Panopto, Lightboard – videos
- Piazza, Slack – collaboration and community-building

Authentic, real-world problems and contexts keep students engaged and motivated, leading to persistence. Fostering a community of learners where students feel a sense of belonging and work through challenges together also keeps them engaged. [Learn more about active learning [here](#), from [TLL](#)]

Maintaining a [mix](#) of synchronous + asynchronous learning activities.

Associated tool(s):

- Panopto, Lightboard – videos
- Canvas, MITx – host/post videos

Multiple modalities for presenting content keep students engaged and help them actively process information. When using videos as a modality (such as for asynchronous study), “chunk” the content and keep each video short. [Learn more about recording and creating lecture videos [here](#).]

Providing ample opportunities for giving actionable feedback to students.	
<u>Associated tool(s):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas – SpeedGrader • Gradescope 	<i>Clear, timely, specific, improvement-focused feedback helps students to master skills and content.</i> <i>[Learn more about technology mediated feedback here.]</i>

Giving frequent, low-stakes assessments.	
<u>Associated tool(s):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas, Gradescope, MITx – quizzes • Panopto – embed questions 	<i>Regular low-stakes testing encourages retrieval practice, which constitutes effortful work for students and leads to durable learning.</i> <i>[Learn more about innovative assessments & assignments here.]</i>

Building in opportunities for students to be in direct communication with the instructor/teaching team.	
<u>Associated tool(s):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom – host online, flexible office hours • Slack, Piazza – respond to student questions 	<i>A key learning from Fall 2020 is that students valued the many opportunities there were for direct interaction with instructors. In addition to these interactions occurring during class time or traditional in-person office hours, they can also be facilitated through technology like Zoom, Slack, and Piazza.</i>

Considerations for Reusing Materials from AY20-21

If you are interested in reusing materials you created for last year’s emergency remote instruction, particularly videos, check out [this resource](#) with considerations for material reuse.

Additional Resources and Support

There are also resources/support for creating new materials and engaging learning experiences:

- [MIT Canvas Resources for Instructors](#)
- From [IS&T Knowledge Base](#):
 - [Canvas Resources](#)
 - [Panopto Resources](#)
 - [Piazza Resources](#)
 - [Gradescope Resources](#)
 - [Slack Resources](#)
 - [Zoom Resources](#)
 - [MITx Residential Resources](#)
 - Additionally: [Lightboard Resources](#)
- You can also get support from:
 - [DLL scientists and fellows](#)
 - [OL Residential Education team](#)
 - [Canvas Guides](#)

For questions or to schedule a consultation, please contact [Aaron Kessler](#) or [Lauren Totino](#).