Supporting Successful Live Online Classes: Good Instructional Design is Not Enough
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Session Evaluations
Your Presenters

**Matthea Marquart**, Online Support Project Manager
Columbia University, School of Continuing Education

In her current role, Matthea supports the smooth execution of virtual class sessions in Adobe Connect, coaches faculty on online instructional strategies and tools, and collaborates on continually improving the school's online courses. For the last ten years, her professional life has focused on education and training, both online and in person.

**Michael Fleming**, Director of Online Support and Delivery
Columbia University, School of Continuing Education

Michael provides technical oversight, management, and administration across all SCE online courses. He oversees a team of dedicated online support staff who work to ensure the successful execution of online courses being delivered each term. He has a rich background in web-conferencing, technical support, and synchronous learning.
What’s in it for you?

Example of a support & coaching model for live online classes + elements you can use anywhere

Techniques to support online faculty

Ways to improve the execution of live online classes

Ideas to make live online classes more engaging for students
Polls

Green (yes) or red (no):

• Do you work with live online classes now?
• Do you consider yourself a beginner with live online classes?
• Is there anything else you’re hoping to get from this session?
Our support framework:

- Planning
- Support
- Continuous improvement

Disclaimer: We believe instructional design is very important. In fact, we plan our live online classes collaboratively with the design team and faculty...

...but we don’t believe good design alone could possibly be enough to execute quality live online classes.
Creating an online course is a group effort
But when the course launches, the instructor can be left all alone.
Online faculty need support for smooth live sessions
Welcome.

The School of Continuing Education offers a diverse portfolio that includes master’s degrees, courses for career advancement and graduate school preparation, certifications of professional achievement, high school programs, and English language studies.

**Master’s Degrees**

- Information and Knowledge Strategy
- Strategic Communications
- Technology Management

**Certificates**

- Actuarial Science
- Bioethics Certificate
- Business Certificate

Of the 13 professional master’s degree programs offered by the School of Continuing Education, the “Executive Trio” are the main programs we work with for the online initiative. These are three master’s programs that are a hybrid low-residency format with some online and some face-to-face components. They are geared toward working professionals. We also work with several non-degree and certificate programs to offer singular online courses, or complete online offerings (such as the Business Certificate).

[http://ce.columbia.edu/](http://ce.columbia.edu/)
How we approach online course development...

Development Lifecycle

Design | Deliver | Support
Our Values

1. Focus on the student learning experience online
2. Fostering meaningful Instructor presence online
3. Compelling, rigorous, academic content
4. Social, interactive, and engaging course design
5. Innovative use of educational technologies
6. Facilitating live interaction and dynamic collaboration
7. Proactive, polite, and professional online support
# Sample Student Week

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<tr>
<td>Reading &amp; Media (2-3 hours)</td>
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<td>Exercise (1-2 hours)</td>
<td>Live Session (1-2 hours)</td>
<td>Group Activity (2-5 hours)</td>
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6-10 hours per week
What is a “Live Session”? Live sessions are synchronous meetings that allow an online class to get together in real time. Live sessions occur weekly or bi-weekly – and depending on the particular course may be either required or optional elements of the learning experience. We currently hold all Live Sessions on Adobe Connect. Adobe Connect is a web conferencing solution for web meetings, eLearning and webinars.

Live sessions are always managed by a Webinar Support who assist faculty and students with any technical issues that may occur during the course of the event. Generally, live events are staffed, additionally, by the course Facilitator(s) who serve to answer student questions, interact during break-outs, respond to polls, etc.
Interactive Lecture with Polls

The strongest brands are clear about what they stand for and deliver it consistently.

4. Have you ever participated in a branding project?

- yes: 76.9% (10)
- no: 23.0% (3)
- No Vote

Chat:

- Kai: @david, it's important to ensure strategy doesn't conflate a business but has lessons for Sony, electronics does this well.
- Carla: Sorry, wanted to add to what makes for an effective brand strategy: wanted to add that.
- Carla: Also I think that flexibility & ability to measure is key.
- Donna: yes
- Kennie: yes
- Christine: That was really interesting.
- Candace: good case study
- Milra: brand being consistent was what stood out to me.
- Kennie: I was mentioning that I could see your slides before!
Real-time Demonstrations

COLOR: Pantone

“Pantone Matching System”
Video Content
Webcam Discussions
Discussion Seminar with Breakouts
You’ve designed an amazing course – how do you make sure it succeeds?
Chat conversations need monitoring.

Student participation needs tracking.

Interactive activities need setup and planning.

The virtual classroom may have technical issues.

Users may have technical issues.

Instructor needs to focus on teaching.

Instructor may feel overwhelmed by the technology.

Student participation needs tracking.
Quality support is the key to success
How we support online faculty

- Dedicated webinar specialist for each course
- Training on tools and techniques
- Ongoing coaching – focused on the instructor’s strengths, to build strengths and confidence

**Before class**
- Weekly planning & coaching meeting
- Prepare the Adobe Connect classroom with all lecture materials and activity assets
- New instructional strategies when the instructor is ready

**During class**
- Real-time technical support for the instructor and students
- Support for interactive activities, e.g. polls and breakouts

**After class**
- Debrief with verbal coaching
- Report after every class
- Details of attendance & participation
- Proposed solutions for any issues
- Written coaching tips
We provide ongoing technical and instructional support
Before the Course Begins

• Designing a live session strategy
• Creating storyboards for each week
• Training on Adobe Connect and Canvas
Before Class

• Preflight meeting (discussing the plan)
• Prepare the virtual classroom with assets
• Sound check / tech check
• Coaching
During Class

• Real-time support and troubleshooting
• Facilitation of learning activities
• Instructor focuses on teaching; we take care of the rest
After Class

• Debrief with faculty
• Participation report and analytics
• Qualitative feedback to help with the instructor’s learning curve

Live Session Participation Report

Faculty Name: Anne Kershaw
Course Name: Information Policy and Regulatory Issues
Session Week and Date: Week 1, Thursday Sep 6, 2012
URL of Archive: http://columbia.eideconnect.com/Syserr38fmrw/

What went well?
1. This was a very successful first class. The students were engaged, we utilized many different tools on the platform and there were no technical issues.
2. The lecture ran smoothly and we were able to get through all of the material. I agree with Julie’s comment that you may want to consider making your slides more concise in the interest of time.
3. The breakouts worked very well and the students really used the time well. The exercise prompt and PPT slide in the breakout room were very useful to start the group collaboration process.

What can be improved?
1. I know Julie asked about tips for generating meaningful dialogue in the chat. Here are some thoughts for next time: 1. If you are going to use a poll, make sure the students are “rewarded” for answering. What I mean is, if students are taking the time to interact with a poll, the results should be discussed and elaborated upon. Use the polls to open up an exciting conversation. 2. Ask interest-arousing and hypothetical questions in the chat. This will get the students thinking and can generate a parallel conversation that reflects the material being covered in the lecture. 3. Promote reflective dialogue in the chat. If a student asks a really great question in the chat then
Support → Smooth live online classes and continuous improvement

School
• CU SCE has found that this support and coaching model has facilitated technically smooth live online classes that are continually improving.

Faculty
• Instructors say that they could not have done it without their webinar specialist partners – with this support, they are able to focus on instruction and engage their students.

Students
• Students say that they appreciate the responsive technical support and ability to focus on learning rather than extraneous technical issues, and they rate their online courses and instructors well.
Discussions with your partner – how might you adapt some of the strategies from today’s session for your institution?

The handout includes best practice tips and ideas for modifying them to fit a range of staffing levels and budgets.
Additional tips and techniques for you:

We will compile and distribute the ideas you share on the half-page feedback slips. Please take a minute to write down your top takeaway, as well as any feedback on this session. If you would like your name credited for your idea, please write legibly.
Thank you for joining us today!
Acknowledgements

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