Navigating the Hyflex Frontier


Considerations

Existing options
Reviewed what was already available on campus and being used in a limited capacity, including options that allowed for LMS integration.

User familiarity
Considered options that instructors and students might already be familiar with from personal use.

User experience
Explored accessibility (captions, transcripts, etc.) and engagement features (polling, whiteboards, etc.)

Class size adaptability
Looked for options that could accommodate a variety of class sizes, from small seminars to large lectures.

Security features
Prioritized platforms with strong security features to prevent meeting disruptions.

Bandwidth
Noticed that Zoom was using the least amount of bandwidth compared to Teams.

Cost
Investigated the cost of institutional licensing and examined cloud storage for retention of recorded classes/recording asynchronous sessions.

Evolving, and Sustaining Support

LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS

Technical support: Establish a robust technical support system to assist users with troubleshooting and ongoing technical needs.

Data security and privacy: Implement robust data security measures and ensure compliance with relevant data privacy regulations.

Regular evaluation: Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the technology and its impact on teaching and learning outcomes.

Recommendations

01 Gather Information
Gather information from the instructor about their goals, experience, preferences, concerns, etc. and work with them to find a pathway that will be successful.

02 Design
Design your course with hyflex in mind.

03 Engage
Find ways to engage students both on site and online (e.g., flipped classroom, student response systems, ice breakers).

04 Organize
Maintain an organized and consistent course in the LMS.

05 Feedback
Solicit student feedback via a start-stop-continue exercise.

06 Clear Expectations
Set clear expectations in your course outline for attendance, participation, technology use, and communication.

07 Breaks
Build in more breaks into lectures to allow the instructor or an assigned TA to collect common questions from the chat to then read and answer over the classroom microphone when returning from break.

08 Share
Watch for (and share!) exemplars of effective hyflex teaching.

Support

Webinars
These proved very popular during the initial shift to remote as instructors sought advice and information on how to shift their teaching strategies to a remote environment. However, over time as the initial panic and fear wore off, live webinars proved less popular.

Scheduled consultations (emergency remote)
Offered for those teaching in our web conferencing enabled classrooms, these consultations would be in a one-to-one or small group format. Instructional technology specialist (ITS) team members would explain and demonstrate the additional room technology and walk instructors through the process of connecting to the system, sharing content online, and providing answers to pedagogical questions about teaching in hyflex environments.

Large classroom demonstrations with Q&A
The ITS team offered large group sessions where instructors could register to see the web conferencing classroom technology in use using both Zoom and Teams as well as connecting via a PC or Mac. The team provided advice for teaching hyflex courses and provided answers to specific questions related to teaching in web conferencing classrooms.

Web conferencing classroom support drop-ins
After the initial emergency remote shift, demand for dedicated sessions lessened. We ended the individual bookings/small group bookings and shifted to dedicated drop-in dates/times for instructors to meet with the ITS team in web conferencing enabled classrooms on campus to assist with technological and pedagogical questions related to hyflex teaching at UofG. These sessions are still held to this day prior to the start of each semester.

One-on-one consultations
Leveraging our new dedicated demonstration web conferencing classroom in Day Hall, the ITS and classroom technical support (CTS) teams setup a sign up form allowing instructors to book a full consultation on hyflex teaching with an ITS or a more basic technical assistance check-in with the CTS team. We also provided the option to book the demonstration room without support for testing and experimentation with the technology.

Web resources
The emergency remote pivot led to the creation of OpenEd’s extensive Remote Teaching and Learning site that collected and organized resources from UofG, including a number created by OpenEd’s ITS team, as well as relevant resources from other institutions concerning all things remote and hyflex teaching. This site has since evolved into the more streamlined Teaching and Learning Technologies section of the OpenEd website we have available today.

Email support
The ITS team created dedicated email addresses for connecting with our team with questions regarding all things educational technology, including hyflex teaching at UofG.

Implementation

BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION

Needs assessment: Clearly define the educational goals and challenges you aim to address with technology.

User-centric approach: Consider the needs and comfort levels of instructors and students when evaluating technology options.

Involve partners: Get buy-in from faculty, staff, and students throughout the selection and implementation process.

Research and compare: Thoroughly research and compare different technology options based on functionality, security, accessibility, and integration capabilities.

Pilot testing: Conduct pilot programs with a small group of users with diverse use cases to identify and address any issues before wider adoption.

DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Comprehensive training: Provide instructors, teaching assistants, and students with training materials, workshops, and ongoing support to ensure smooth adoption.

Focus on pedagogy: Offer resources and guidance on how to integrate technology effectively within different teaching styles and hyflex environments.

Accessibility: Ensure the chosen technology properly accommodates accessibility needs like closed captioning, transcripts, and alternative formats to promote inclusivity for all learners.

Communication and feedback: Maintain open communication channels to gather feedback from instructors and students and address any emerging concerns.

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