

**From:** [Office of the MSU Provost](#)  
**Subject:** Communication plan for Course Delivery in Spring 2021 classes  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 14, 2020 9:27:03 AM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)

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**MONTANA**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost

Dear Colleagues,

After extensive discussions with faculty, students and parents about pandemically constrained MSU course delivery this Fall, we are implementing a plan to improve communication with students and parents about instructional delivery in courses offered Spring 2021.

***Requested Action:***

**We ask all faculty who are teaching this Spring, to compose and submit brief descriptions of their delivery plans that address: i) Instructional Synchronicity, ii) Instructional Location and iii) Instructional Approach and Media.**

Clarification of these terms and example descriptions are provided in the latter part of this message.

**Purpose:**

The goal is to provide students with important details about the instruction methods that will be used in each course, beyond the labels provided in My Info, and to make that information available to students, parents and advisors in advance of registration. These details will help students understand course organization when selecting classes, promote better compliance with course expectations during the semester, and enhance student learning and success.

**Expectations in Face-to-face (In-Person) and Synchronous Online Classes:**

MSU prioritizes in-person instruction. Students enrolling in an in-person class will be expected to attend class unless sick or quarantined. Accommodations will be made for students who miss class for sanctioned reasons. These accommodations, however, will not normally extend to complete delivery of the course in an alternative modality. Similarly, in synchronous online courses, students will be expected to participate in the class at the time it is offered. Provisions for participation through asynchronous viewing should not be expected by students. These standard expectations can be raised at the discretion of course instructors in ways that promote student success.

**Expectations in Blended Classes:**

Because of the many different ways that instructors implement blended courses, we will provide students with a brief description of the delivery plan in each course. A publicly accessible searchable webpage is available in which instructor-created

descriptions of all Spring 2021 blended course sections will be filed.

For consistency and coherence, we request that the descriptions address three, inter-related details.

**1. Instructional Synchronicity:**

Describe **when** course lectures, materials and activities are available to students.

Recognize, this description does not immediately follow from the listing of a specific meeting time for the course in MyInfo. An instructor may, for example, *choose* to make both live-streamed and captured lectures available to students who are not accommodated on a given day in the classroom, and thus give them the option to virtually access the classroom either synchronously or asynchronously. Similarly, a course might mix synchronous active learning sessions, with the posting of all lecture materials online for asynchronous access. Overall, rather than a simple binary selection (synchronous/asynchronous), instructors should describe the ways in which the various course materials and activities will be made accessible to students.

**2. Instructional Location:**

Describe **where** course lectures, materials and activities are available to students.

Indicate where course meetings – including lectures, discussion, experiential learning and group activities will take place. Locations of blended course will include an assigned room on campus, and other locations, such as the student’s residence or favorite WiFi location. Make sure to inform students of their responsibility to attend class as scheduled.

**3. Instructional Approach and Media:**

Describe **how** course lectures, materials and activities are available to students.

Indicate, for L-type courses, whether course content is delivered *primarily* through: a) conventional *lectures*, given either in the classroom or synchronously online; or b) through flipped pedagogy, with content placed online and received outside of class-time, and with class time utilized for active learning experiences detailed in the description.

**Sample Course Descriptions:**

*A. Instruction will use a blended modality that supports attendance of half of the total enrollment on each of the two class days per week. The instruction will primarily involve in-class lectures plus discussion, which will be both synchronously live-streamed, and captured and archived in D2L for asynchronous viewing. With these options, in-class seating may accommodate students whose preference is to attend both in class lectures each week.*

*B. Instruction will use a blended modality that supports attendance of one-third of the total enrollment on each of the three class days per week. The instruction will be delivered primarily online with the in-class time used for active learning activities. Classroom attendance, as scheduled, is necessary to engage in the active learning activities.*

*C. Instruction will use a blended modality that supports attendance of one-third of the total enrollment on each of the three class days per week. Students will attend class in-person one time per week on a specified day, engaging in in-class discussions and exercises with the instructor and other students. In place of the other two class times, students will watch videos, read the textbook and write discussion posts on the material for that week. The in-class activity and discussion for that week will be recorded and made available in D2L.*

Your descriptions should be brief like the Samples above. Please keep it simple. When the descriptions are ready, we ask you to upload them at <https://www.montana.edu/registrar/course-narrative>.

Use the filters at the top of the page to find your course sections, then click on the **“Add Blended Course Delivery Description”** button to open a page where you can paste the description in the **“Blended Course Delivery Description”** box. Make sure to double-check the Course Information at the top of the page, add your email address in the appropriate box, and click the **Submit Description** button to complete the submission.

We appreciate that instructors are accumulating a wealth of experience and knowledge that informs how they will manage student expectations and guide students’ success. We are all learning together. Instructors have worked very hard to provide quality instruction and valuable learning opportunities for our students this semester. We are adopting suggestions from faculty about successful practices in course delivery to help make Spring 2021 even more successful for the entire MSU community.

We thank you for all that you do for MSU. We also thank everyone who worked with the Faculty Senate Task Forces, the Tactical Enrollment Team and the webmavens who created the Course Delivery page for moving this plan forward.

Most Sincerely,



Dr. Robert L. Mokwa | Executive Vice President and Provost



Kandi Gresswell, EdD | Interim Registrar/Director of Enrollment Services

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