

As the college responds to the health concerns of our community, faculty will transition to alternative delivery methods due to the closure of our campus. Preparation will require careful thought and flexible approaches, and this guide should be used to help faculty formulate and carry out their plans.



Before choosing an approach, consider your students' needs and explore options for staying connected with students. Then prepare to implement your plan by getting trained on the topics and tools you select. This resource will be updated as more ideas and resources become available.

## Consider Your Students' Needs

- Many Blue Ridge students have technology limitations including access to a computer, the internet, and equipment for advanced remote learning. Without a computer or reliable internet connection, even email communication will be disrupted for many students who cannot come to campus to use our resources. Poll your students to find out who has access to computers, smart phones, and the Internet.
- Courses in which students were not initially required to participate with a web feature, or those in which students were not oriented to technology will struggle the most to implement significant changes to modality. As best as you are able, establish congruence in your expectations for technology use during alternative arrangements.
- Accessibility of digital materials will be a concern of students with special needs. Revisit your accommodation letters from Disability Services and use that information to check any online materials you give students. Accommodations commonly provided to our students include –
  - *Extra test time* – Consider disabling the timer on low-stakes assessments you deliver in Blackboard or [set individual testing exceptions](#) for students with accommodations
  - *Note taking assistance* – Provide a [graphic organizer](#) or [guided notes](#) for students when heavy reading, video, or lectures are assigned
  - *Test reader/writer* – schedule [a web conference](#) to deliver the test to the student orally, or [make arrangements with Disability Services](#) to deliver the test orally

When possible, in light of circumstance, consider providing students with disabilities an alternative assignment that eliminates barriers equitably while still meeting course objectives and performance standards.

As a best practice, videos should be captioned or a transcript should be available, and any audio materials (e.g., podcasts) should also have a transcript available for students using assistive technologies. For training and resources on Universal Design for Learning, log in to your Blackboard account and click, **Universal Design & Accessibility**, in your My Courses list.

- Students are likely to experience initial confusion and, potentially, frustration. Please be patient, attentive to their needs, and responsive to their concerns as you work through a remote delivery arrangement.

## Choose an Alternative Delivery Method

### Blackboard

Transition your course to online learning using the college's learning management system, [Blackboard](#).

### Resource Packet

Create and distribute a resource packet with readings and web materials to keep students engaged with course content while they are off campus and to provide "take-home" assignments that can be collected via email or when face-to-face classes resume.

### Comprehensive Project

Design a comprehensive project that aligns with your course content and objectives for students to work on independently while campus is closed. Collect student submissions via email or when face-to-face classes resume.

### Communication Schedule

Distribute a communication schedule to students that details when and how to connect with you and the class while campus is closed.

## Stay Connected to Your Students

- Every course on the class schedule has a dedicated site in the college's learning management system, [Blackboard](#). You can use Blackboard to [share files](#) with students, [collect assignments](#), and communicate as a group using [Announcements](#) and the [Discussion Board](#). Check out the [Blackboard App](#) so you see what students using it may be experiencing.
- Email can be used easily to communicate with your class and with students individually, and is an effective way to send and receive files. Consider using emails to send learning materials to your students or to collect assignments from them remotely.
- For real-time communication with individual students over the phone, use Google's free [Voice feature](#) to provide students with a phone number to call or text without sharing your personal phone number. Google Voice forwards calls and texts to any device and allows you to set restrictions on when you are available.
- To set up a conference call for your class, use the free services [FreeConferenceCalling](#) or [Zoom](#). An internet or data connection from a smart phone or computer will be required for both you and your students to participate in video and screen-sharing features. [Click here for step-by-step set-up of Zoom](#), and link your students to [these directions for joining](#) your Zoom meeting.
- Real-time communication can cause challenges and isn't always necessary. Let students see your face and hear your voice by recording and sending video messages using [Loom](#). The tool can be downloaded as a [Google Chrome browser add-on](#) or as a [desktop version](#) and captures your screen, your webcam, or both. Videos are stored in the cloud so you can share a link easily. No downloads required.
- Another free and easy to use screen capture tool is [Screencast-O-Matic](#). The software is relatively intuitive, making it easy for faculty to adapt to quickly.

## Additional Options Now Available

Many publishers and educational technology vendors are making web resources available to faculty and students at no extra charge. Explore these options for free resources for you and your students –

- McGraw-Hill is offering a vast array of [digital learning resources and support services](#) at no cost to the institution or to your students for the remainder of the spring term.
- For colleges experiencing unplanned, mid-semester impacts due to COVID-19, [Cengage is offering students free access to all our digital platforms](#) and 14,000 ebooks through Cengage Unlimited, for the remainder of this semester.
- Lumen Learning is allowing [a shift of live classes to online courseware at no cost](#) to students for the remainder of the term. Faculty can be ready to teach the same day they make the change, and free services to support a successful transition are also provided.
- Kahoot is offering [free premium accounts to higher education faculty](#) through the spring semester.
- Browse these [resource collections](#) for free and openly licensed materials to support remote delivery.

## Take Advantage of Resources and Support as You Plan and Move Forward

- The E-Learning Help Desk has on-demand resources and guidance [available on its webpage](#).
- The E-Learning Help Desk has training webinars, web tutorials, and quick how-to resources for faculty and students available on [its YouTube channel](#).
- [Blackboard's Help site](#) for instructors includes helpful images, videos, and step-by-step guidance for all tasks and tools located in the learning management system.
- You may find this [communication plan template](#) helpful in providing to your students direction and expectations for new communication procedures.
- Harvard Business Publishing made a recording of their March 19 webinar, [Adapting Quickly to Teaching Online](#), that you can watch to help you plan and implement your new online course.
- *Quality Matters* [Emergency Remote Instruction \(ERI\) Checklist](#) may be a helpful guide for you, and you can [watch this video](#) of Dr. Bethany Simunich, Director of Research and Innovation at QM, explain the features of the checklist.
- The Chronicle of Higher Education released, [Moving Online Now](#), to support faculty across the nation in their transition to remote delivery.
- Magna Publications is offering the [Taking Your Teaching Online Program Collection](#) at no cost to help faculty learn what works in the online environment.
- Ashford University has compiled [this extensive list of resources](#) for faculty who are transitioning to remote instruction.

If you or your students need technical assistance with a course-related task, contact the E-Learning Help Desk at [ellearn@blueridgectc.edu](mailto:ellearn@blueridgectc.edu).