

FCET Guidelines for Online Virtual Classrooms

This summer, FCET is offering a new Virtual Classroom format for online classes.

The Virtual Classroom provides students an opportunity to attend a weekly online class on a scheduled day and time. Virtual Classrooms include a combination of **synchronous** real-time activity led by the instructor, which is normally recorded, complemented with **asynchronous** activities.

Below are some general guidelines to provide an overview of expectations and timelines associated with the delivery, assessment, and communication of FCET's new online virtual classrooms.

Overall Expectations

- Faculty will teach content that is based on the subject outline and communicated via a clear weekly schedule/addendum (to be submitted and approved by the program area prior to the start of class).
- Faculty will create and post all content relating to course delivery and assessment (e.g. lecture notes, recordings, assignments, quizzes) to the course Blackboard.
 - Course materials should be posted at least two days prior to any scheduled synchronous activity to give students time to prepare.
- At least 30% of the total course hours must be delivered synchronously using one of Seneca's approved virtual conferencing tools (e.g. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Big Blue Button).
 - For a 42-hour course, this translates to a minimum of 13 hours of synchronous activity.
 - Synchronous classes should typically be scheduled for 1-2 hours in duration (some exceptions apply – to be discussed with coordinator/manager).
 - Faculty should ensure that the virtual sessions are recorded and made available for students.
- In addition to synchronous delivery, each faculty will arrange a weekly Virtual Office Hour.
 - At least 30 minutes of scheduled class time (for example, between 7 and 10 pm) should be reserved for student Q&A/consultation
 - Virtual Office Hour can be arranged using synchronous or asynchronous tools (for example, web conferencing or Blackboard discussion board)
- As with every term, Faculty will ensure they have met the My.Seneca requirements (see Appendix A)
- Faculty are responsible for maintaining consistent communication with students throughout the term (see Appendix B)

Addendum/Weekly Schedule Expectations

- All addenda should clearly indicate the following:
 - Specific dates and times associated with all synchronous classes
 - The specific tool(s) being used to facilitate synchronous classes
 - For example: “May 19 - 7 – 8 pm via Big Blue Button”
 - If applicable, Faculty can include direct access link to synchronous class
 - All assignment due dates and platforms, where applicable (e.g. Presentation # 1 via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra)
 - Specific time(s) and meeting link (if applicable) for Virtual Office Hour
 - The following overview of the Virtual Classroom mode of delivery:

Mode of Delivery	Online - Virtual Classroom This course is being offered as a virtual classroom, providing students an opportunity to attend a weekly online class with a scheduled day and time. Classes will include a combination of synchronous* real-time, activity led by the instructor, which is normally recorded, complemented with asynchronous** activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are expected to attend and participate in each scheduled synchronous session for this course at the time specified.• Asynchronous activities (e.g. discussion board, weekly quizzes) can be completed anytime during the scheduled week up to the specified due date at the end of the week.
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Additional Faculty Resources

Seneca's Academic Continuity Site	The Seneca Academic Continuity site provides instructors with strategies and resources for teaching and assessing virtually when face-to-face and blended classrooms are not possible. Being prepared to teach your course online will minimize the effects of a disruption to normal campus operations and scheduled courses.
Academic Continuity: Action Plan	This resource helps faculty identify and implement adjustments to course delivery that meet course learning outcomes and maintain learning objectives.
Academic Continuity: Learning Activities	This resource provides an overview of the various tools available for the facilitation of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.
Academic Continuity: Assessments	This resource provides ideas and tools for developing alternatives in assessment.

Appendix A

My.Seneca Minimum Requirements

As per Seneca's Academic Policy, students benefit from a consistent approach in the use of My.Seneca. To support this, faculty are required to complete the following for each course section before the first day of the course, where applicable

- Post the approved course outline and accessible versions of the addendum and/or proposed schedule and weighted evaluation breakdown
- Set up the Grade Centre to reflect the weighted evaluation breakdown and make grades available to students
- Post their contact information, including preferred method of communication
- Make the course available to students in My.Seneca
- Use the announcement tool to post a welcome announcement and ongoing course updates
- Review with students their My.Seneca course, its contents and the expectations for student-use.

Appendix B

Communication with Students: Faculty Guidelines and Commitment

Timing	Activity	Details
Minimum of once every 2 days	Log in to your assigned course section(s)	Reply to any student inquiries received via discussion board (if applicable)
Within 2 days of receipt	Respond to emails using only your Seneca employee account for all email correspondence with students.	Reply to all emails, regardless of the message. So, even if you are not sure of the answer, please advise the sender that you are looking into their inquiry and will get back to them.
Within one week of the due date	Mark tests and assignments and return to students	Students need timely marking and detailed feedback in order to progress with their studies. Where applicable, provide inline comments, custom feedback and completed rubrics that indicate where a student performed well or has room for improvement. Contact the Program Coordinator or Manager if you need any guidance with this.