CHECKLIST

Are you ready for Fall 2020?
Here are some suggestions to consider whether you are offering a new course or redesigning a course this semester.

BEFORE THE SEMESTER

☐ Rather than worrying first about which synchronous or asynchronous tools to use, you better start with your course goals and think about how to adapt them to an online environment. You need to make sure that course goals and learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessments are closely aligned with each other (Fink, 2003).

☐ Decide when and how often you will interact with students synchronously (lecture hours, office hours) or asynchronously (email, discussion forums).

☐ Decide how you will deliver the content to your students. Live sessions through online conferencing tools (e.g., BBCollaborate, Zoom, BigBlueButton), pre-recorded videos, and document sharing (e.g., PowerPoint slides, narrated slides, lecture notes) are commonly used options.

☐ Prepare a tentative list of expectations that will inform students which behaviors are expected of them in live sessions, in discussion forums, in emails, or in assignments/projects. See Example 1 (Live Class Expectations). Make sure to go over these expectations with your students in your first live meeting. You can also include statements about academic integrity.

☐ Decide how/when students will be assessed for grading and non-grading purposes. You may need to consider how assessments that you delivered in a face-to-face setting might need to change while still meeting the learning outcomes you have for this course. Make a decision regarding the grading policy. You may need to be flexible in due dates of assignments/projects as compared to previous semesters.

☐ Decide whether you are going to use social forums (e.g., ODTÜClass Forum module, Piazza) and for what purpose you are going to use it. It can be a Q&A forum in which students can ask/answer questions about the course and assignments as if they are in class. In that case, you need to monitor the forum closely to make sure that correct information is being shared (Darby & Lang, 2019). It can be a socializing environment for students in order to build a classroom community. You can also use forums as an academic discussion platform in which student participation is graded (available in ODTÜClass).

☐ Prepare/update the course syllabus considering the components suggested in ODTÜSyllabus (course goals and learning outcomes, tentative weekly outline, course textbook/materials, assessment of student learning, course grading, course policies, academic honesty).

☐ Prepare a welcome message for your students (can be a video or text file). In this message, you can introduce your course, like in your first meeting with students. You can talk about your expectations, including the technology requirements for your class. You can also guide students on how to navigate your course page in ODTÜClass.

☐ Consider creating a short video or a short text biography to introduce the course instructor(s).

☐ Designate a way to get continuous feedback/questions from your students about course format and logistics. You can develop a course feedback form using the “ODTÜClass Feedback Activity module.” Or alternatively, you can ask students to reflect on what you can KEEP, STOP, or START DOING to enhance their learning experience.
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER

☐ Send an email to students to welcome them to your course and to inform them about how to access the course page in ODTÜClass (especially if teaching first-year students). You can also include the link to your “welcome message.” In addition, it would be better to share information related to the course textbook (if required).

☐ Send a short student survey asking them to report their locations, technology accessible to them, and/or any other information needed to clarify how they will be able to participate in the course remotely. You can also ask their expectations from the course (e.g., What do you hope to gain from this course? Is there anything I should know that may impact your performance in the course?) You can use the ODTÜClass Questionnaire module or Google Forms. See Example 2 (Student Survey).

☐ Create an opportunity for students to meet each other in the first week of the course. You can use a discussion forum or a live session using an online conferencing tool (e.g., BBCollaborate, Zoom, BigBlueButton). You can also add an icebreaker activity.

☐ After meeting with students and obtaining information about them/their expectations, you can make final decisions regarding your instructional choices. Update your syllabus if needed and share the final version of the syllabus with students by email and/or posting to the ODTÜClass.

☐ Tell students how often they can expect to hear from you (e.g., daily, weekly) and through which ways (e.g., email, announcements in ODTÜClass, discussion forum). Also, tell students how they can contact you when they have private questions (email, online office hours, etc.).

☐ Share expectations of how frequent students should be visiting the course page in ODTÜClass.

DURING THE SEMESTER

☐ Better to organize the course page in ODTÜClass with a consistent order for materials, activities, and assessments for each week.

☐ Clearly label any resource or activity you post to ODTÜClass so that students know which content can be found in each resource. It is essential to ensure the accessibility of any online content you use or create in remote instruction. Please check resources created by the ODTÜ Disability Support Office.

☐ Consider how you will meet with students (synchronous and/or asynchronous approaches) to conduct office hours. Make sure that you provide explicit information regarding the options and expectations (for example, how to schedule/cancel an appointment). If you hold live office hours, then share the necessary information (e.g., time, link, the online conferencing tool to use) with students beforehand.

☐ Ensure that links students will need for live class sessions are available on the course page in ODTÜClass or sent to students through email at a fixed time (such as 15 minutes before the class start time).

☐ Create a rhythm and consistency with due dates, material posts, and/or announcements (for example, due dates of assignments on the day of the class at 11:59 pm).

☐ Make sure that each assessment task includes necessary directions for students to complete successfully. Clearly label if the task is graded or ungraded. Use “due dates” in ODTÜClass so that you can monitor late assignments easily.

☐ Create frequent opportunities for students to get feedback on their work.

☐ Always have a backup plan throughout the semester in case you experience technical difficulty.

☐ Inform the student what to do when they experience technical difficulty during live sessions, online exams, or while submitting an assignment.

☐ Monitor students’ access to the materials you posted to the ODTÜClass. If any student does not participate or show up regularly, you may spare time to keep in touch with them to see the problem. Occasionally, you can also send COVID Check-in Survey to check on student well-being.