

Hybrid Classroom Delivery: Showcasing Alternatives

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Changing student demographics have necessitated a move by universities from traditional classrooms with chalk or white boards to a digital classroom using the Internet. Many schools are moving to hybrid or completely online classes to be more responsive to students' working needs, more competitive with their peer institutions, and to accommodate growing student enrollment and shrinking classroom space. As more non-traditional students enter college, the need to offer classes that meet their work-life balance is paramount.

Many universities have gone almost totally online, but others, who have more traditional student populations, still have mostly on-ground classes. Hybrid delivery is one way to bridge the gap and offer the convenience of on-line with a high touch face-to-face environment. There are several different timing options for hybrid learning – front-loading, back-loading, and alternating weeks. Front loaded classes can be used when face-to-face interaction and content delivery is necessary in the beginning and students can spend the remainder of the time working on problems, papers, or other deliverables that are self-paced. Back loaded delivery is useful when students need to work on large projects, usually in groups, and present these projects to a client for feedback at the end of the course. Finally, an alternating week schedule is useful where face-to-face contact can be interspersed with on-line learning to allow students to complete projects or exercises and then receive personal feedback the following week through critiques, presentations, etc.

This presentation will begin with a definition of hybrid learning and how it differs from distance learning and traditional classroom environments. We will explore the aforementioned delivery options via personal experiences and highlight the advantages and disadvantages of each, including why hybrid learning can sometimes be more effective than traditional classes. We will also explore how traditional on-ground classes can be “flipped” to use many of the same delivery mechanisms that hybrid and on-line learning utilize such as video conferences, email, discussion boards, online homework systems, and video lectures. We will conclude with a demonstration of each of our hybrid class environments, provide some suggestions for transitioning your class to hybrid delivery, and illustrate what the future of hybrid learning might entail.