

Online Teaching Best Practices

This tutorial discusses Online Teaching best practices. It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** to review these best practices to ensure students have an easier transition to online learning.

REQUIRED:

- + **Closed captioning** on all videos
- + **Record every live stream** and make it available ASAP, not all students have good internet

RECOMMENDED:

Avenue:

- + **Read the Avenue Best Practices tutorial** (<http://mechfaculty.mcmaster.ca/onlinemat/1.8%20Avenue%20Best%20Practices.pdf>)
- + **Make your Avenue course organized** and easy to navigate (examples in the above link)
- + **Set up the gradebook and assignments** so students see all deadlines and grade distributions right away (<http://mechfaculty.mcmaster.ca/onlinemat/> - Avenue Tab)

Videos:

- + **Create a “Watch this first”** video to outline course and introduce yourself
- + **Use Webcam** when possible so students have sense of human being on other end
- + **Pre-recorded videos** should be about 15 min
- + Students want **engagement** more than high production

Student Engagement:

- + **Reply** to students quickly—or assign a TA to do so
- + Host **digital office hours**
- + **Create notes** that students can fill in

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NOT RECOMMENDED

Student Engagement:

- ✗ **Just posting your notes** online without any discussion or presentation
- ✗ **Ignoring student emails** or failing to attend live office hours
- ✗ **Make Live Lecture attendance mandatory** – students may not have consistent internet access

Technology:

- ✗ Use technology that those with **low bandwidth** cannot reliably access
- ✗ **Use sites other than Avenue for course organization** – students are less likely to keep up when they have to go to external sites
- ✗ **Record using PowerPoint**—it is a very poor experience for students

Content:

- ✗ **Add quizzes on top of a lot of other assessments** for the sake of engagement. A lot of assessments can do more harm than good for the student. Consider using short quizzes as a feedback tool for yourself rather than a grading opportunity.
- ✗ Make **content more difficult** or increase work
- ✗ **Have a disorganized Avenue shell**—this can quickly negatively affect students' experience