

Top Ten Communication, Accommodation and Consolidation Tips

1. **Keep it Simple**

Keep your communications simple, to the point and in a familiar format each time.

Keep your accommodations simple, supportive, and easy for to use. Do not over complicate things with multiple versions of tests, complex adjustments for those with disabilities etc.

Keep your consolidation/summarization of classes, topics, and modules simple and focused, highlighting points and essential learning.

2. **Communicate in Short but Value-Added Bursts**

Communicate frequently but in small bursts of key information. This will help students stay focused and see the essential items.

3. **Communicate to Create Community**

Use your communications to build community. Staying in touch with students will help them feel connected and may be something they look forward to each day. Share a story. Invite stories to be shared. Engage frequently.

4. **Closed Captioning and Class Notes – Good Ideas for English as Additional Language Learners**

Closed captioning is coming to BlueJeans for live conversations having captions. Recorded classes provide transcripts for students to use for understanding spoken language. Anytime you can provide your notes, scripts for PowerPoint slides or have students take turns creating written summaries of the class – students who are learning English will be most grateful.

5. **Asynchronous Learning Benefits English as Additional Language Learners**

English as Additional Language Learners benefit from asynchronous learning because it gives them time to think, translate and produce more well-formed thoughts. Asynchronous learning also assists learners with limited bandwidth, access to technology and time zone changes. This does not mean you cannot do BlueJeans classes – just be aware that asynchronous is often thought of a more equitable form for all learners.

6. **Be Flexible: Benefit All Learners**

Flexibility must be your middle name! Digital learning is so full of unexpected twists and turns. Students will have many challenges too. Just go with the flow. Project a “we are all learning together” attitude!

7. **Consider Couple of Ways for Students to Access Content, Engage with Content, Demonstrate Learning**

Employing principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) you benefit all learners. Think of a couple of ways for students to engage with content (assignment, homework, quiz, group collaboration), a couple of ways to present content (handouts, narrated PowerPoints, screen-casted videos, PDFs, website) and a couple of ways for students to express/demonstrate their learning (quizzes, projects, assignments, reflections, oral exams).

8. **Consolidate Learning After Modules and Topics**

Provide a summary, concept map, reflection, overview of key points – some form of consolidation after each module, topic, week, period of learning. Students will appreciate having the ‘big ideas’ or ‘essential learning’ pieces. Have students create their own their take-aways. Any consolidation activity builds ongoing ‘study notes’ for students too!

9. **Put a Personal Spin on Summaries of Learning**

Anytime you can send an email or post a discussion post with your own learning from the week – you let students see you as part of their learning journey. You are learning too. You are sharing your own thoughts on the week. This will help build community and rapport with your students.

10. **Focus on the Positives of Digital Learning and Teaching!**

Sure there are going to be lots of days you are going to silently scream at your screen. The more you can see the positives and benefits of learning and bring that to the tone you set for your course – the better this will be for all. We need to be the constant positive driving force regardless of what new adventures this world is giving us!