**Course Policies Video Transcript**

Hi, I’m Evan Mallen, Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Teaching and Learning. In this video, I’ll explain how to update your course policies in response to new situational factors as you transition from face-to-face to remote teaching.

**Learning Objectives**

After completing this video and associated exercises, you should be able to:

* Recognize new situational factors affecting your students while teaching remotely
* Write fair and flexible policies for your course

**Moving Online**

Imagine that you are enrolled in a class that expects perfect attendance and frequent in-class participation. Now imagine that class meeting at 3 AM. Suddenly these expectations sound far less reasonable. With students attending Georgia Tech classes from all over the world, this may be the reality for some students in your class.

You’ve no doubt noticed that moving a face-to-face course online requires some substantial changes to your course policies. In this new environment, we need to plan for an entirely new learning environment and situational factors not normally present here on campus. In this video we’ll discuss important considerations for online course policies, including attendance, participation, and late work.

**Attendance**

First, let’s discuss attendance. Many online classes include both synchronous and asynchronous activities. Synchronous activities happen all at the same time, like live lectures through BlueJeans, while asynchronous activities can be done individually at the student’s own pace, like reviewing recorded videos or Canvas modules. Since we are teaching students across the world, it may be difficult for those in distant time zones to attend live BlueJeans discussions. Consider using alternative methods of attendance such as viewing recorded lectures. Alternatively, consider dropping the attendance requirement altogether in favor of other types of formative assessment. Similarly, your scheduled office hours may not work for some students to attend live. Be prepared to set alternative meetings or consult via email when possible so you can still be available for all your students.

**Participation**

Building on attendance considerations, participation will also be difficult to grade using conventional in-class measures. Consider providing a wide variety of options your students can demonstrate their engagement with the course and make them explicit in your syllabus. In addition to live discussions or chat questions in BlueJeans, consider also encouraging offline discussions through Piazza. Offer participation credit to students who ask and answer discussion questions or keep a small readings reflection journal or blog. Offer low-stakes daily or weekly quizzes on Canvas to help keep track of student learning and engagement. Even attending office hours shows engagement with the course and should be rewarded. Be sure to keep track of these measures as you progress through the course to make your grading for this component more objective.

**Late Work**

Finally, remember that your students are each going through this major disruption just as you are. They may have new family or work obligations they do not usually have on campus. As a result, your late work policies may need to be more flexible than usual in this new learning environment. Make a rule about when to ask for extensions and how they will be treated. Alternatively, consider opening assignments for longer than usual to give your students the flexibility to complete it when their schedule allows.

**Situational Factor Survey**

Shifting your course online will require substantial updates to your course policies to ensure your students can thrive in this new environment and will vary significantly by class. Consider starting your course with a survey to get to know your students and their unique situations so you can tailor your policies if necessary. Ask about their time zone, whether they are working part- or full-time while away from campus, whether they have children or other dependents, or any other factors that may influence their performance in your class. You’ll learn quickly how you might need to adjust your policies, and how to set yourself and your students up for a successful semester.

In this video you learned how to recognize situational factors that could affect your students’ performance as we transition online, and how to create fair and flexible course policies that will help you and your students thrive in this new learning environment. Keep these in mind from start to finish and your students will certainly appreciate your effort.

