Checklist for Continuing GSIs
Getting Started in Teaching Remotely
GSI Teaching & Resource Center

I. Things to Do
Read the document [Addressing GSIs Concerns: Fall 2020 Instruction FAQs](#) which contains important information for GSIs about teaching remotely.

II. Have a pre-semester meeting with the faculty member teaching the course to review the course syllabus and your responsibilities, giving attention to the topics below. If the professor does not initiate this meeting, reach out and ask when it will be scheduled. Given the shift to remote instruction, we recommend prioritizing the following questions:

- How much of the course will the professor teach synchronously vs. asynchronously? Will the GSI be required to attend and assist during the professor's synchronous sessions? For example, will the GSI monitor Zoom chat?
- Will the professor's synchronous sessions be recorded? Will the recordings be housed on bCourses or elsewhere?
- How many hours per week are the GSIs expected to meet synchronously with their students and how many hours of asynchronous learning activities should they plan (note that the Instructor of Record is responsible for this decision)?
- Does the professor expect the GSIs to record their synchronous sessions? Where does the professor want the recordings to be housed?
- Is student attendance in synchronous lecture and/or section meetings required?
- Given that teaching remotely may take longer than teaching done in person, how should GSIs track their use of time and communicate with the faculty member so as not to exceed the workload and hours designated for the position?
- Has the faculty member created (or asked IT to create) separate bCourses section sites? This is advised since it gives GSIs full functionality to create Modules and Pages.
- How will requests for accommodations for students with disabilities be handled?. Who will oversee the provision of the accommodation? Can the faculty member make one or more GSIs their proxy for the DSP portal to access Letters of Accommodation for their students?
- What are the GSIs' responsibilities in managing and proctoring remote exams and responding to cases of suspected plagiarism or cheating?
- What will be the regular meeting time for the faculty member and the GSIs throughout the semester? Will the same Zoom link be used for all of these meetings?

III. Prepare for the Semester and First Week

- Set up class meetings and office hours through Zoom.

- Create a section syllabus (see below) so that students have clarity about how they can succeed in your course/section/studio/lab. Specify your expectations for such things as synchronous and asynchronous work and guidelines for participation on bCourses and Zoom. In addition, provide information about university resources that students can tap into, e.g., the Basic Needs Center, CAPS, DSP, Path to Care, the Student Learning Center. Include a statement on community standards that describes how students should engage with each other on bCourses and Zoom as well.
- Send out a pre-semester survey (see below) to collect information about students' tech access, geographic location, and any other information to facilitate community building a week before your section begins.
- Visit the GSI Remote Teaching Hub (launching Friday, August 21, 2020) to familiarize yourself with best practices, tools, support options, and campus policies.
- Plan out goals and activities for student learning (synchronous or asynchronous) for the first week. Display them clearly on your section bCourses site and/or map them out in your lesson plan.

General Tips for Writing a Syllabus for Remote Instruction

Writing a section or course syllabus for remote instruction requires more forethought into the ways technology will be implemented in the classroom at every level. Writing a robust online syllabus will save both you and your students time and energy spent clarifying what the expectations are and how to use the technology provided. In many cases, you are asking students to use external apps, e-textbooks, or third-party sites, so you should ensure that proper information is included in your syllabus that explains where they can obtain these tools and resources, how to set up any necessary external accounts, and how to use them. You should assume that every student coming into your classroom knows nothing about the online tools you intend to use, as it may challenge you to think backwards as to what should be included.

❖ In order to make sure everyone is comfortable and competent with the technology being used in the classroom, consider creating a low stakes assignment for the first week that asks students to take a practice quiz, submit homework, test out external applications, or communicate in discussion forums to make sure there are no technical difficulties. This is especially important for incoming freshmen who may not be familiar with Canvas or other Berkeley technology. It's important to at least check in with students during the first week so no one falls behind, and also so that GSIs do not wind up tying up their valuable labor hours solving IT issues!

❖ Additionally, consider creating a low stakes quiz or assessment that tests whether your students have read the syllabus to make sure that they understand their responsibilities. As there will be less interaction with students early on and students may not be carefully reading, it's important to establish the importance of reading and engaging with announcements and instructions on bCourses. This will greatly lessen the risk of GSI workloads becoming strained with individual emails with students.

❖ Consider including external resources on your syllabus not only for technology assistance at Berkeley, but also video tutorials that might help students better participate in class. For example, it is highly recommended that students in the social sciences and the humanities who will have heavy reading loads get used to the tools and functionality of Adobe Acrobat Pro for example. All Berkeley students have free access to the Adobe Suite and Acrobat will allow students to properly annotate text and export comments as separate documents.

❖ Make sure that your syllabus clearly outlines requirements for weekly participation, especially when you are teaching both synchronously and asynchronously. As bCourses becomes a more important platform for tracking student activity, consider thinking early on about how you might use the Canvas analytic tools to gauge how much and how frequently students are on the site. For example, during the first week you may want to reach out to any students who have not yet logged into the site and make sure they have read through the online syllabus.

❖ Determine a policy for how students should contact you. You might consider limiting communications on homework and information about content to a bCourses discussion forums or to the bCourses Chat tool so that students can answer each other's questions. Professors and GSIs can check in periodically so that all students get answers to common questions. You may also consider setting up an appointment system that students can register in to set up meetings with you on a case by case basis.

- ❖ Deadlines should be made clear at the outset of the course, but it is also important to consider whether they are treated as rolling deadlines or hard deadlines, based on the type of assignment. Is it possible to set a softer deadline for less critical assignments that is followed by a harder deadline? For example, you might consider setting a deadline and taking off one point for each day late.
- ❖ Consider scaffolding larger assignments or preparation for larger exams into smaller chunks that have lower stakes. This will allow for ongoing assessment of student progress and help students find success in meeting deadlines for assignments or exams with higher stakes.
- ❖ Make sure that any required reading material or textbooks have an e-book version, and that there are instructions on how to purchase it. Check to make sure that if an ebook version is not available, that there are copies available through bookstores that students can obtain without having to wait multiple weeks for it to arrive. If an ebook version is available, check to see if that version is available in an accessible format. If it is not, communicate this to students ahead of time (prior to the start of the semester) so they can obtain the necessary support in converting the text.
- ❖ In addition to a detailed semester calendar, write a shorter schedule that can be easily and quickly accessed on the Announcements page of the bCourses site. Ideally all dates would be input into the bCourses calendar as well.
- ❖ Make sure that all written descriptions of assignments are posted in multiple locations: on the syllabus, on weekly modules, in weekly announcements to students, and in synchronous classrooms.
- ❖ If you are an instructor, determine what your own optimal digital workflow looks like and preferences. For example, set file type limits for assignment submissions of bCourses so that digital file handling is more streamlined. This is especially key when considering the additional work GSIs do when grading. If graders have to open multiple programs to review student work, request different formats of files from them, or convert files for differences between operating systems, additional time will be added. Additionally, not all GSIs want to review student writing in Gradescope or Speedgrader, especially longer essays, as it can significantly slow down reading times-- especially if one has a small screen. On the other hand, if you prefer to grade all assignments on Gradescope or Speedgrader, check ahead of time to ensure assignments that are linked to external platforms are compatible with these grading systems.
- ❖ As the last point suggests, it is essential to take some time BEFORE your course starts to think about setting boundaries and limits around your own labor as a GSI. If you want to determine that you take the weekends off from email, or will not be able to respond to student emails after 5pm, or can only offer the review thesis statements and not entire drafts, or what have you-- it is key to identify these needs and boundaries to ensure that every waking hour does not become subsumed into an "always on" availability. This will set a healthy example for your students, and will hopefully optimize the time you spend!

Example Syllabus Additions for Remote Instruction

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These syllabus statements specifically address components of courses that are impacted by remote learning. They are examples that you may consider adapting for your own course syllabus.

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Technical Requirements
- This course is built on a Learning Management System (LMS) called Canvas and UC Berkeley's version is called [bCourses](). It can be accessed with a computer, tablet, or smartphone.
- If you are having technical difficulties, please alert one of the instructors immediately. In addition, please email tech support immediately to resolve any issues.
  - In bCourses, click on "Help" in the panel on the left.
- We will use [Zoom]() for synchronous meetings (e.g., lecture, discussion, and office hours).
  - [Activate your free UC Berkeley Zoom account]() and always join the Zoom meeting with your Berkeley account.
  - You may join a Zoom meeting with a computer, tablet, smartphone, or by calling in. Please join with a computer with a camera and microphone (built-in or external) if possible as it will give you the best access to content.
- We will use [Gradescope]() for assignments (e.g., homework, midterms, and the final exam).
  - Gradescope can be accessed with a computer, tablet, or smartphone.
  - You do not need a printer/scanner to submit your Gradescope assignments. For handwritten work, please use a free scanning app like Scannable.

Lecture
- Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM PST via [Zoom]()
- Zoom meetings will be scheduled through bCourses.
  - The lecture and zoom link will appear on your bCourses calendar.
  - The zoom link will also be in the Module for each week.
  - Your primary email in bCourses must match your email address in Zoom.
- Lecture videos will be available to stream on bCourses within 24 hours after the lecture.
- We encourage students to attend lecture, but we understand that this may not always be possible due to your unique circumstances or technical difficulty. Therefore, lecture attendance will not be graded. If you miss a lecture please watch the lecture video on bCourses as soon as you are able.

Zoom Policies
- Please keep the Zoom link private—do not share with anyone outside of the course.
- Please set your Zoom name to be the name you would like the instructors to call you. You may optionally include your personal pronouns.
  - Example: Elizabeth (she/her)

- Please set your Zoom picture to an appropriate profile picture of you to foster a sense of community and enhance interactions. If you are not comfortable using an image of yourself, you may use an appropriate picture of an avatar.
- We encourage participating in class and discussion with your video on to foster a sense of community and enhance interactions. However, we understand that some students are not comfortable with video or may not be able to participate by video.
- We will be recording all Zoom lectures. The instructor will announce when the recording is beginning during each lecture. If you do not wish to be recorded, please turn off your video, mute your audio, and use chat to ask questions. The chat record will be deleted immediately after class ends.
- Please leave your audio on mute during the lecture, but be prepared to unmute yourself to ask or answer questions or participate in breakout rooms.
- We will use Zoom features such as breakout rooms, polls, and the whiteboard as well as external tools such as Google Drive, Mentimeter, and bCourses. To maximize your ability to participate during lecture we recommend joining Zoom via a computer or tablet with a video camera and microphone.
- We understand that your specific situation may present challenges to class participation. Please contact the instructors if you would like to discuss your ability to access course material. The [Student Technology Equity Program](#) (STEP) is available to help students get access to a laptop, Wi-Fi hotspot, and other peripherals (e.g. webcam, headphones, etc.).

- **Zoom chat**
  - In this course we will use Zoom chat as a mechanism to build community and foster information and resource sharing among students. To these ends, chat will be enabled before class and during breaks. In addition, we will enable chat periodically to gather input on specific questions and activities to benefit the full group. The same expectations for respectful communication hold for chat as they do for face to face interaction.

- **Questions during lecture**
  - If there is a technical difficulty during lecture you may unmute yourself to notify the instructor (e.g., the instructor is on mute, screen sharing isn't working, etc.).
  - The "raise hand" feature and chat will not be continuously monitored during lecture.
  - The instructor will periodically pause and ask for questions. At this time please use the "raise hand" feature in Zoom and unmute yourself when the

instructor calls on you. You may also ask your question in the chat at this time.

- **Breaks**
    - If you need to take a break for any reason during a Zoom meeting simply turn off your video and audio to avoid disruption. You do not need to request permission or message the instructor.

bCourses Site
- The bCourses site will be the central hub for all course information.
- Please set your bCourses notifications so that you do not miss any announcements or assignments.
- Check the bCourses site frequently (at least twice per week) to stay current with all course activity.

Gradescope
- New homework assignments will be posted in bCourses every Tuesday and due by the following Tuesday.
- We will do our best to grade your assignment and post solutions within 1 week of submission.
- You will upload your assignment to Gradescope. Be sure to assign the correct pages to each problem, the grader will only grade what has been designated for each problem. We recommend writing each problem on a new page.
- Use a free scanning app like Scannable to upload handwritten work. Graders will not grade work that is not legible. Whether you use Scannable or another means of converting written work to submittable formats, it is your responsibility to make sure that it is legible.
- You may use the regrade request feature in Gradescope. Regrade requests must be submitted within 1 week of the grades being posted. Please include a comment thoroughly explaining why you believe more points should be awarded based on the rubric. We will only regrade the requested problem.

Late Work
- In general, assignments must be submitted by the date. A 30% penalty will be deducted for work submitted up to 24 hours late, a 60% penalty for work up to 48 hours late, and the solutions will be posted 72 hours after the due date, at which point no late work will be accepted.

- If you are unable to meet the due date, contact the instructor in advance by email to discuss your specific situation. Late work may be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Office Hours
- Office hours will be an hour-long [Zoom](#) meeting each week at the listed times for each instructor and GSI.
- You may drop in to the Zoom meeting at any time during the office hour and leave at any time. You do not need to announce that you are leaving the Zoom meeting.
- All questions and answers will be heard by all participants in the Zoom meeting. If you have a question pertaining to your personal situation please email the instructor. The instructor may respond by email or schedule a short, private Zoom meeting.
- Please ask your question out loud. Questions typed into chat will only be taken if you are not able to use your microphone or unmute yourself.
- When you join the meeting, type in chat "I have a question". The instructor will call on students to ask their question in the order that they appear in the chat.
- Please be prepared to show your work if relevant to your question. The instructor will give you permission to share your screen. Please use a free scanning app in advance to create a PDF to share if you would like to show handwritten work. Alternatively, you may share a tablet or iPad screen to write work synchronously.

Discussion Section
- Section 1: Monday 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM PST via Zoom
- Section 2: Wednesday 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM PST via Zoom
- [Zoom](#) meetings will be scheduled through bCourses.
  - The discussion and zoom link will appear on your bCourses calendar.
  - The zoom link will also be in the Module for each week.
  - Your primary email in bCourses must match your email address in Zoom.
- Discussion videos will be available to stream on bCourses within 24 hours after the discussion.
- We encourage students to attend discussion, but we understand that this may not always be possible due to your unique circumstances or technical difficulty. Therefore, discussion attendance will not be graded. If you miss a discussion please watch the discussion video on bCourses as soon as you are able.
- Please attend only the discussion section that you are enrolled in. If you would like to change sections, contact the GSIs for permission.

Piazza

- We will use Piazza as an alternative format to Office Hours to ask questions about course content.
- The same expectations for respectful communication hold for Piazza as they do for face to face interaction.
- Instructors will check Piazza and respond to questions on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons. We may not be able to respond to every question.
- Respond to your peers! We encourage you to help each other by responding to students' questions. Please do not share complete answers to homework problems until the solutions have been posted.
- Anonymous posting has been activated, you may post your questions anonymously.

Students' Questions

- All questions about course content (e.g., homework problems, lecture concepts, due dates, exam format) must be asked during lecture or discussion section, during office hours, or over Piazza so that all may benefit from the answer.
- The only questions that may be asked by email are those related to your personal situation, such as a request to submit a late assignment or technical difficulties you are experiencing. We will do our best to respond to your email within 24 hours on weekdays.

Exams

- Exams will be submitted over Gradescope.
- The exams will be open-book, open-note–you may use any material you see fit. However, you may not collaborate or discuss the exam with other students. We rely on your academic integrity.

Academic Integrity

- It is considered academically dishonest to turn in work to be graded (homework, lab assignment, project, quiz, exam) that is not your own work, unless the assignment explicitly states otherwise. You may work with others in preparing homework and studying for exams, but the work you turn in must be the product of your own thinking. Academic dishonesty can result in no credit for an assignment or the course. It can also result in referral to UC Berkeley authorities for additional sanctions.

Example Pre-Course Survey Questions for Remote Instruction

Elizabeth R. Corson and Lorena Grundy

Implementing a pre-course survey allows instructors to gain valuable information about situational challenges that students face during remote instruction. These questions are examples that you may consider adding to your pre-course survey.

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1. The class time will be Tuesday/Thursday beginning at 10:00 AM PST. What time will this be in your time zone?
    a. Drop down selection: __:__ AM/PM

2. What time will the discussion section in which you are enrolled be offered in your time zone?
    a. Drop down selection: __:__ AM/PM

3. Is this your first semester at UC Berkeley?
    a. Yes
    b. No

4. Will your situation allow you to attend lecture in real time?
    a. Always
    b. Sometimes
    c. Never

5. Will your situation allow you to attend discussion section in real time?
    a. Always
    b. Sometimes
    c. Never

6. How will you join the Zoom meeting for lecture and discussion?
    a. Computer, Zoom app
    b. Tablet, Zoom app
    c. Smart phone, Zoom app
    d. Phone, call-in
    e. I am not able to access Zoom (please elaborate): _____

7. Would you like closed captions during the lecture (instructor's speech is automatically converted to text and scrolls above or below the presentation)?

(Please note that DSP accommodations for closed captioning will be handled separately.)

    a. Yes – that would be helpful for my understanding

    b. No – I would find that distracting

    c. I don't care either way

8. Do you have any technology or space limitations that may impede your ability to access course material? (Think about your internet connection, computer or other devices, power connections, video, audio, access to a quiet room, desk, etc.)

9. During interactive parts of the class (breakout rooms, asking questions) I will be able to participate by . . .

    a. Video and audio

    b. Audio only

    c. Chat only

    d. I will not be able to attend lecture in real time

10. I have access to the internet . . .

    a. Always

    b. Always, but with a slow connection

    c. Intermittently

11. Do you have access to a camera (including smartphone) with which you can scan written work?

    a. Yes

    b. No

12. Although we have not yet determined the format of the final exam, you can find our currently scheduled final exam time window here. Do you foresee having difficulty being online for that time period?

13. We encourage participating in class and discussion with your video on to foster a sense of community and enhance interactions. However, we understand that not every student is comfortable with video or may not be able to participate via video. Please let us know if you are comfortable/able to leave your video on during the class.

    a. Yes

    b. Sometimes

    c. No

14. I would like more information about how to use the following online tools that will be used in this course (select all that apply).
    a. Zoom – chat
    b. Zoom – breakout rooms
    c. Zoom – raising hand
    d. bCourses – assignments
    e. bCourses – discussion
    f. bCourses – quizzes and exams
    g. Gradescope
    h. Piazza

15. What strategies are most effective at helping you stay engaged with your peers and the instructor during remote learning? (For example, breakout rooms, ungraded mini quizzes, graded participation assignments, etc.)

16. Through your experience with other remote instruction courses, what concerns do you have about remote instruction in this class that may hinder your learning?

17. Through your experience with other remote instruction courses, what suggestions do you have for this course to improve your learning?

18. Is there anything you would like to share with the instructors about your specific situation this semester?