

Episode 2: An All-In Approach to Teaching and Learning at a Distance

Important Reminders:

- Reminder of where we are in terms of the stages of the pandemic - we are still very much in the early phase
- Within a planning cycle we try to be prepared and to prevent, but there are going to be incidents that require our response
- It requires all of us to shift, adjust, and bend our thinking and our actions to an immediate emergency response
- Important to remind ourselves that we are adjustments now in the short term so that we can plan for the continuity phase and eventually shift smoothly into the recovery phase, however that may look
- See “uOttawa Pandemic Response Flow Chart”

What does it mean to be “All-In”?

1. Remain Mindful

- Not every home has a computer per learner and/or high-speed internet
 - Learners may not have the technology that we assume they might, and that the message that we are sending out may not always be received in the way we hoped or thought it might be
 - Not uncommon for students to be working off of their phones and other small/limited screens
- Even experienced and great teachers can lack expertise in creating online lessons and need support
 - Leaders have to be prepared to help such teachers migrate over to an online system
- Learning online is much different from learning face to face
 - Not everyone learns the same way and this is even more evident with a lack of face to face connection
 - Think about what kind of strategies might help your learners grasp new concepts, eg. concept maps and Cornell note-taking strategy
- Students with learning challenges can be the hardest to teach virtually
 - Parents will do their best but with added challenge of helping to support learning at home, we must be available to help as we can
- Schools and teachers provide more than academic skills
 - Nature of relationships and connectivity are vital
 - When schools are closed, students and teachers are cut off from an important social outlet
 - Create an environment where people can stay connected with each other

2. Commitments That Work

- Establish your presence right away

- Give your students a sense of what we are all navigating - will increase the sense of connectivity and community early
- Be available
 - Being “high touch” is more important than being high-tech
 - Students and families need to know when you’re available but also make sure to set clear boundaries - you cannot be available all the time
- Use online resources without infringing on copyright
 - You do not have to create everything yourself - use the resources that are available to you
 - Also teaches students how to sift through all the information in front of them in order to find valid and trustworthy sources
- Don’t lecture 100% of the time
 - Use stories and visuals
 - Allow for Q&A and other types of student engagement
- Make assignments clear
 - Clarity matters now more than ever
- Provide ongoing feedback
 - Make sure learners know that you are in this with them, and things can be discussed
 - Allow your learners, when it is appropriate, to mentor each other