Balancing Accountability and Flexibility in Asynchronous Online Courses

Missy Kofoed

Lecturer | Chemistry & Biochemistry

Online Courses

30% of all students have taken at least one online course.

At USU:

- 500+ online credit courses, 60+ online degrees
- Since 1995, over 150,000 students from 50 states and 55 countries

Numerous Benefits:

- Convenient
- Scheduling Flexibility
- Geographical Flexibility
- Pace Flexibility
- Lower total costs

Challenges:

- Require good time management skills
- Easy to procrastinate
- Fewer direct instructor contact hours

Allen & Seaman, 2017. Distance Education Enrollment Report

How can we balance accountability and flexibility in asynchronous online courses?

Objectives

How to incorporate practical, evidence-based strategies in course design to:

- Establish boundaries and expectations
- Provide opportunities for self-reflection
- Allow for flexibility without encouraging procrastination

Establish Boundaries and Expectations

Share Information about Course Type, Course Format and Course Design

- ➢ Can Include in the Course Syllabus, Introductory Information lecture, or Orientation Module

For example, CHEM 1010 is:

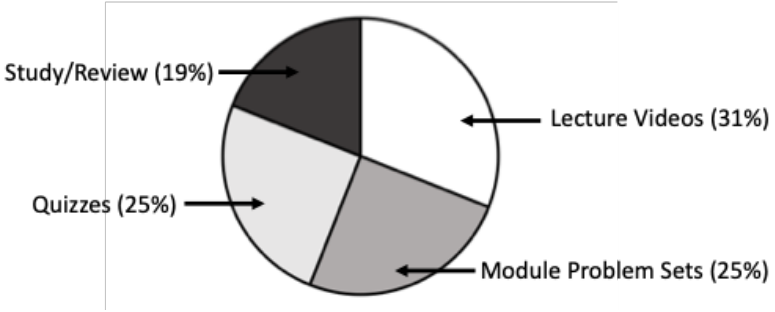
- an asynchronous online course
- semi self-paced
- fulfills BPS (breadth physical science) general education requirement

Establish Boundaries and Expectations

Share Estimates to Help Students Manage Their Time

- From my syllabus:

A 3-credit course offered during the 15-week semester requires a time commitment of approximately 2.5 hours of "in-class" time (lecture videos) and 5-6 hours of time spent out of class (working on problem sets, taking quizzes, reviewing notes) for a total of approximately 8 hours/week.



Lecture Videos	2.5 hours
Module Problem Sets	2 hours
Quizzes	2 hours
Study/Review	1.5 hours
Total:	**8 hours/week**

Nilson L. B (2007). *The graphic syllabus and the outcomes map: Communicating your course*

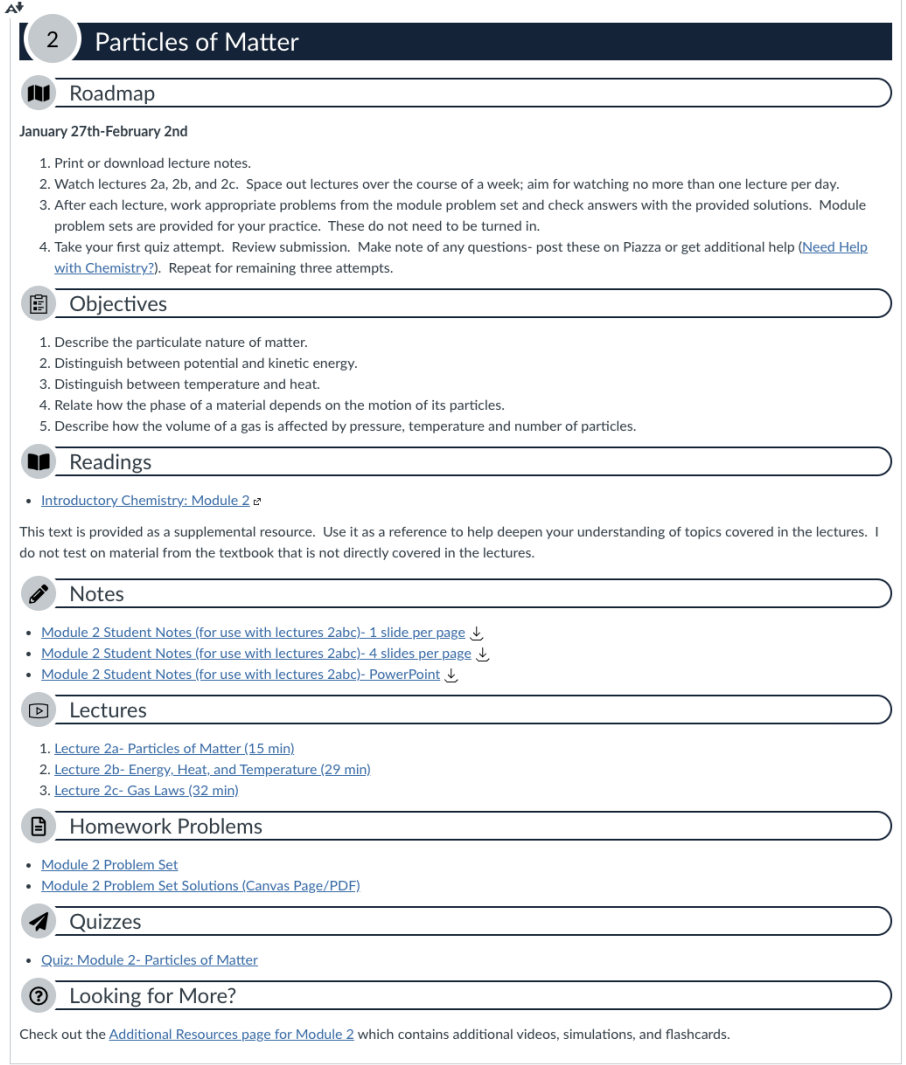
Establish Boundaries and Expectations

Provide a Module Roadmap

- Well designed courses have consistency in language and consistency in experience
- Include a sequence or order of tasks to complete.

Other Suggestions:

- Include an Orientation Module
- Set an early timeline to preempt student issues.



2 Particles of Matter

Roadmap

January 27th-February 2nd

1. Print or download lecture notes.
2. Watch lectures 2a, 2b, and 2c. Space out lectures over the course of a week; aim for watching no more than one lecture per day.
3. After each lecture, work appropriate problems from the module problem set and check answers with the provided solutions. Module problem sets are provided for your practice. These do not need to be turned in.
4. Take your first quiz attempt. Review submission. Make note of any questions- post these on Piazza or get additional help (Need Help with Chemistry?). Repeat for remaining three attempts.

Objectives

1. Describe the particulate nature of matter.
2. Distinguish between potential and kinetic energy.
3. Distinguish between temperature and heat.
4. Relate how the phase of a material depends on the motion of its particles.
5. Describe how the volume of a gas is affected by pressure, temperature and number of particles.

Readings

- Introductory Chemistry: Module 2

This text is provided as a supplemental resource. Use it as a reference to help deepen your understanding of topics covered in the lectures. I do not test on material from the textbook that is not directly covered in the lectures.

Notes

- Module 2 Student Notes (for use with lectures 2abc)- 1 slide per page
- Module 2 Student Notes (for use with lectures 2abc)- 4 slides per page
- Module 2 Student Notes (for use with lectures 2abc)- PowerPoint

Lectures

1. Lecture 2a- Particles of Matter (15 min)
2. Lecture 2b- Energy, Heat, and Temperature (29 min)
3. Lecture 2c- Gas Laws (32 min)

Homework Problems

- Module 2 Problem Set
- Module 2 Problem Set Solutions (Canvas Page/PDF)

Quizzes

- Quiz: Module 2- Particles of Matter

Looking for More?

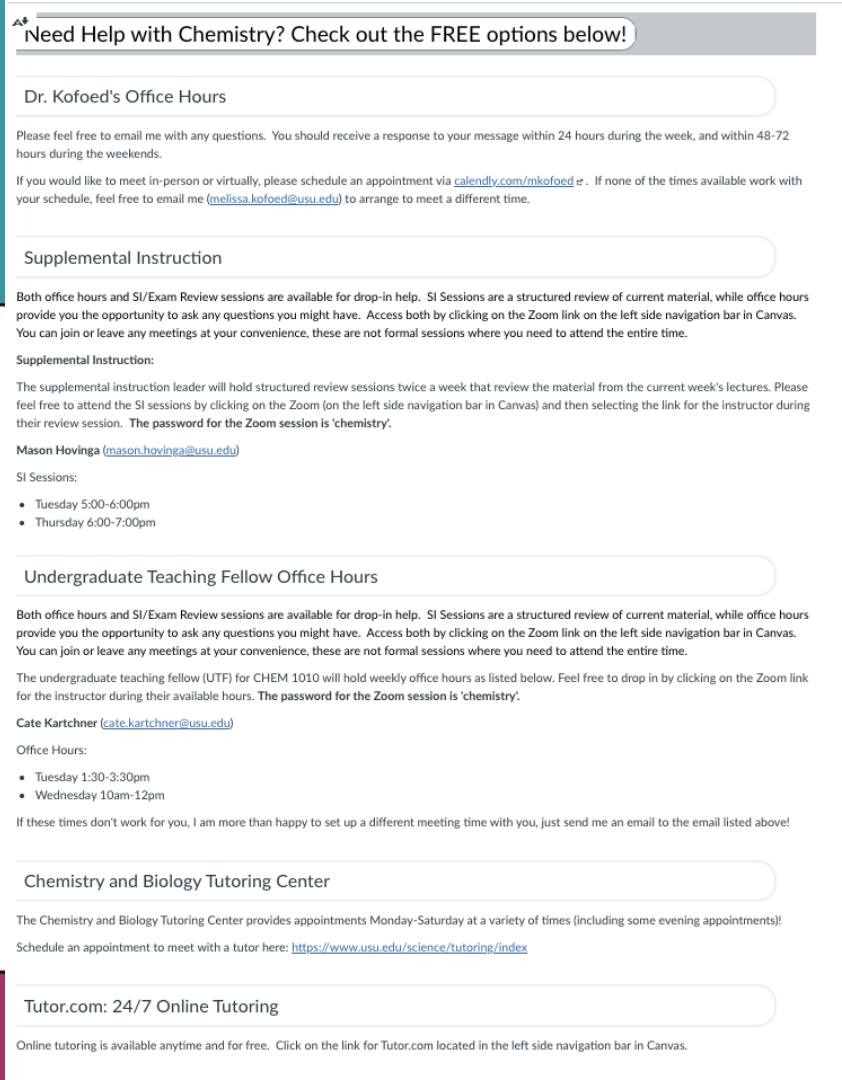
Check out the Additional Resources page for Module 2 which contains additional videos, simulations, and flashcards.

Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R.-M. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2nd ed.).

Establish Boundaries and Expectations

Share Availability and Boundaries

- Indicate a time frame within to expect an email response.
- Outline other options for students to receive immediate feedback or help in the course.
- Use an online discussion forum (like Piazza) for content related questions.



Need Help with Chemistry? Check out the FREE options below!

Dr. Kofoed's Office Hours

Please feel free to email me with any questions. You should receive a response to your message within 24 hours during the week, and within 48-72 hours during the weekends.

If you would like to meet in-person or virtually, please schedule an appointment via calendly.com/mkofoed. If none of the times available work with your schedule, feel free to email me (melissa.kofoed@usu.edu) to arrange to meet a different time.

Supplemental Instruction

Both office hours and SI/Exam Review sessions are available for drop-in help. SI Sessions are a structured review of current material, while office hours provide you the opportunity to ask any questions you might have. Access both by clicking on the Zoom link on the left side navigation bar in Canvas. You can join or leave any meetings at your convenience, these are not formal sessions where you need to attend the entire time.

Supplemental Instruction:

The supplemental instruction leader will hold structured review sessions twice a week that review the material from the current week's lectures. Please feel free to attend the SI sessions by clicking on the Zoom (on the left side navigation bar in Canvas) and then selecting the link for the instructor during their review session. **The password for the Zoom session is 'chemistry'.**

Mason Hovinga (mason.hovinga@usu.edu)

SI Sessions:

- Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm
- Thursday 6:00-7:00pm

Undergraduate Teaching Fellow Office Hours

Both office hours and SI/Exam Review sessions are available for drop-in help. SI Sessions are a structured review of current material, while office hours provide you the opportunity to ask any questions you might have. Access both by clicking on the Zoom link on the left side navigation bar in Canvas. You can join or leave any meetings at your convenience, these are not formal sessions where you need to attend the entire time.

The undergraduate teaching fellow (UTF) for CHEM 1010 will hold weekly office hours as listed below. Feel free to drop in by clicking on the Zoom link for the instructor during their available hours. **The password for the Zoom session is 'chemistry'.**

Cate Kartchner (cate.kartchner@usu.edu)

Office Hours:

- Tuesday 1:30-3:30pm
- Wednesday 10am-12pm

If these times don't work for you, I am more than happy to set up a different meeting time with you, just send me an email to the email listed above!

Chemistry and Biology Tutoring Center

The Chemistry and Biology Tutoring Center provides appointments Monday-Saturday at a variety of times (including some evening appointments)!

Schedule an appointment to meet with a tutor here: https://www.usu.edu/science/tutoring/index

Tutor.com: 24/7 Online Tutoring

Online tutoring is available anytime and for free. Click on the link for Tutor.com located in the left side navigation bar in Canvas.

Spencer, John. (2020). *Empowered at a Distance.* Blend Education

Provide Opportunities that Encourage Self-Reflection and Accountability

Provide Opportunities for Student Practice

Low stakes assignments.
Pause points during microlectures.
Self-grading quizzes that students can retake.

Check-in on Students:

Notice and acknowledge those that are on pace.
Encourage those that are behind schedule.

Share Research on Growth Mindset Early in the Course

Include Links Back to Resources from Prior Modules

Direct Students to a Course Discussion Board for Content Related Questions

Offer a Opportunity to Complete a Returned Test Analysis or Reflection on Completed Assignment

Provide Flexibility

Offer Choice When Appropriate

- Different Types of Assignment Submissions and Formats
- Choices of Topics or Content
- Choices of How Students Learn the Material

Provide Flexibility

Empower Students to Own the Time Management Process

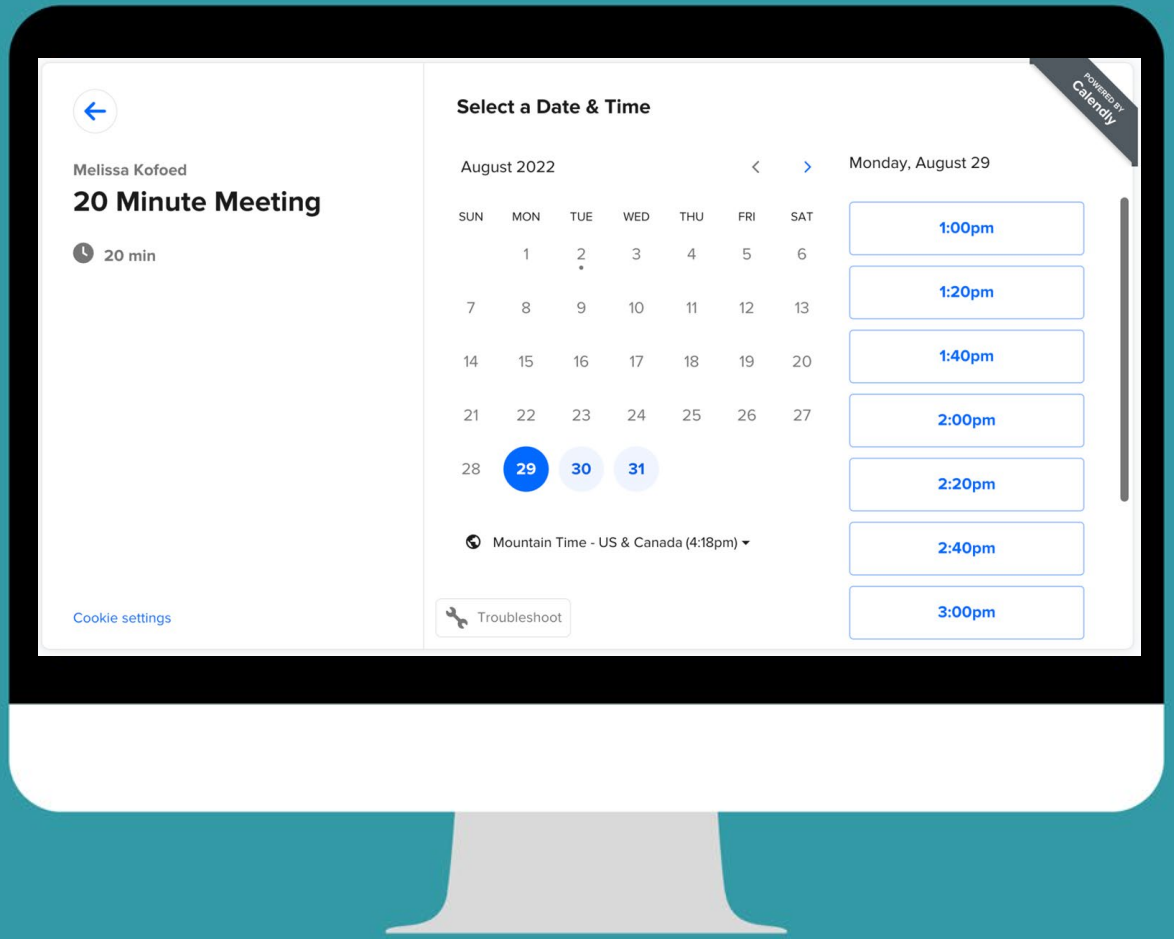
- Create Videos that Allow for Self-Pacing and Self-Checks
- Share time estimates for videos and assignments.
- Encourage students to spend longer when needed, move more quickly through concepts they find easier

Spencer, John. (2020). *Empowered at a Distance.* Blend Education

Provide Flexibility

Calendly for Office Hours

- Offer more varied hours.
- Limit the number of appointments per day.
- Define amount of advance notice required for new appointments.
- Syncs to Outlook.



Thank you!

Any questions?

melissa.kofoed@usu.edu