

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chinyere Oparah, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
Council of Deans

FROM: Jo Loomis and Shirley McGuire, co-chairs
Joint University Curriculum Committee

SUBJECT: Recommendation: USF Instructional Modality Definitions and Guidelines

DATE: November 10, 2022

The Joint University Curriculum Committee (JUCC) recommends to Provost Oparah and the Council of Deans the following definitions for instructional modalities and guidelines for implementation starting Fall 2023 semester:

Definitions

In-Person: Course formats in which 100% of class sessions are delivered in person, with up to 10% of course meetings allowed to deviate from the in-person modality for planned pedagogical activities.

Online Synchronous: Course formats in which greater than or equal to 50%* of the class sessions are delivered through synchronous online meetings.

Online Asynchronous: Course formats in which greater than or equal to 50%* of the class sessions are delivered through asynchronous online instruction.

Hybrid: Course formats in which greater than or equal to 51%* of class sessions are delivered in person and less than 50%* are delivered online.

*Percentages are consistent with WASC Senior College and University Commission guidelines

Guidelines

1. Instructors will use current approval processes in their schools/College for using instructional modality changes to address emergency disruptions, illness, and other unexpected situations during the semester.
2. Class modality must be explained/delineated to students in the schedule, course

description, and syllabus prior to registration (e.g. expected dates or number of times students will meet in person).

3. Standardized language and the definitions be added to Banner and to the Simple Syllabus template describing these modalities.
4. Hyflex is considered a pedagogical context where the function of Hyflex can be made available through cross-listing in-person or hybrid/online synchronous sections. Students register for the instructional modality that they will use for the semester in a Hyflex pedagogical context.
5. The JUCC will continue to review input from the community about the instructional modalities, including the possibility of reintroducing Hyflex as an official instructional modality for at least one year.

Background

During spring 2022, the JUCC deliberated the definitions for instructional modalities proposed by the Student Hybrid Experience (SHE) committee based on their review of comparator schools and accreditation guidelines. Please see the JUCC website for [meeting minutes](#). Two main issues emerged during the spring meetings on February 10th, March 10th, and April 7th:

1. Balancing faculty pedagogical flexibility and course development needs with students' need for predictable schedules; and
2. Creating clear, uncomplicated descriptions of instructional modalities that are in line with USF's accreditor, WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

During the April 7th 2022 meeting, a motion was approved to create an Instructional Modalities Subcommittee to commence further review. The Instructional Modalities Subcommittee agreed to hone in on four definitions based discussions during JUCC meetings (i.e., *In-Person*, *Online Synchronous*, *Online Asynchronous*, and *Hybrid*) and to draft a set of recommended guidelines.

The subcommittee discussed initial recommendations with the JUCC on September 15th. The main points that emerged during the meeting were:

1. Guidelines were needed regarding deviations from assigned modality (e.g., procedures for emergencies and planned exceptions).
2. The impact of changing the course modality during a semester on students needed to be considered (e.g., international students and veterans whose financial aid is tied to in-person modality).
3. The possibility of considering HyFlex as a classroom management tool rather than a modality.

The four instructional modality definitions were unanimously approved by the JUCC membership and the subcommittee was tasked with revising the guidelines.

During the October 20th meeting, the JUCC membership unanimously approved updates to the four definitions for instructional modalities and accompanying guidelines with the suggestion that the JUCC continue to investigate Hyflex as a modality and collect feedback about the implementation of the instructional modalities for at least one year.