Guiding Principles for Synchronous Online Teaching

1. Synchronous learning opportunities are best carried out using institutionally supported technology.

Synchronous learning opportunities scheduled at regular times and consistent intervals are more predictable and will be more accessible to all students enrolled in the course.

2. It is more equitable not to require students to attend synchronous sessions and to provide timely access to any course content delivered synchronously after delivery.

3. Remember to articulate clear learning outcomes for any synchronous lesson and communicate these well in advance along with any instructions for preparation students should complete prior to the lesson.

4. Offering students opportunities to ask questions and build relationships with their instructor and peers during synchronous lessons encourages active student engagement and better learning.

5. Be mindful that maintaining sustained student attention and effort is challenging, particularly online, so consider chunking your synchronous lessons into logical, cohesive segments.

6. Consider establishing and communicating guidelines for appropriate and respectful online communication prior to or during your first synchronous lesson.

7. To support class rapport and decorum, apply settings to limit student access to interactive tools and synchronous communication tools as appropriate.

8. Given the complexities of synchronous online teaching and learning, it is likely best not to perceive or use participation in synchronous sessions as a measure of student involvement and engagement in an online course.

9. Remember that synchronous lessons, like all of our methods of instruction, must adhere to AODA regulations and that required accommodations, such as live captioning, must be made available for students.

10. If graded activities are conducted within synchronous sessions, it is recommended that an equitable alternative be made available for students who are unable to attend.

11. Recording, captioning and posting synchronous lessons to Blackboard course sites supports persistent access to course resources for all students.

12. Posting raw files shared during synchronous instruction to Blackboard course sites (i.e. PowerPoint slides, documents, images) supports student learning.