

**CELINE
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HOOVER:**

Hello and welcome to my online classroom. My name is Celine Bonnotte-Hoover. And I'm an instructor in the Department of French.

After a year of teaching online, I'm back on campus and teaching one course in HyFlex and one course in person only. In this session, I want to talk about how both of those modalities are working in my classrooms. And first a little bit of context on those courses.

In HyFlex, I teach FREN 3702, which is a third-year French writing course. I currently have 26 students enrolled. This course is part of our major. And it's offered once per term. Given the importance of the course for our students and given that the topic lends itself to alternative modes of delivery, HyFlex was an appealing modality for it.

The other course that I teach is FREN 1100 or French III, which is an intermediate French language course. There are nine sections of this course offered this term with a variety of formats. But my section is the only one that is in-person only. This means that the students who registered in my section knew that they would be expected to come to campus twice a week until April as the course is a full year course.

So let's start with HyFlex and a very common question. Does it work? And, yes, it does with some challenges, but it does work. I've been very lucky in that I'm teaching in a HyFlex Plus room, which means I have a video technician taking care of the technology for me.

The support has removed a lot of stress from the experience. And it has allowed me to focus on the pedagogical side. In the classroom, I use the model that worked well for my online class last year a flipped classroom approach with discussions and exercises in the synchronous sessions. And I only see my students once a week synchronously.

In terms of what is actually happening in the classroom and how it feels teaching in HyFlex, despite some awkwardness, the course is going well. I say awkwardness because teaching in a flexible modality during the pandemic means that I've been seeing more students shift to online attendance and that the few students who still attend in person are masked, very distanced, and their level of interest is very hard to gauge. In addition, I teach French. So I teach in a language that is not a student's first language. And that definitely has an impact on their participation. I do often wonder if the course is going well.

But attendance has been holding steady since the start of term despite the fact that I record our sessions and post them online after every class. Engagement has been lower than when I taught fully online. Online The Chat was very active. But, currently, those attending in HyFlex seem more engaged than those in the physical classroom. My next goal is actually to work on activities and strategies to make sure that the students who are coming in person can enjoy the HyFlex.

So my general advice for HyFlex is to attend training sessions and to do a room orientation with real activities prepared to get a sense of how it will feel when it's time to teach to a room full or in my case not so full of students. On my end, I've been keeping things very simple. Student interaction is based on how they're attending.

I use breakout rooms for online students and conversation groups for those in class. And then we summarize together. I prepare activities that work regardless of group size since I never know what to expect in person or online either. And I post a handout before class so students can bring the document with them to work on.

Now, a few words for in-person. Several challenges that exist in the in-person component of HyFlex do come up in the in-person only course. We're still in the pandemic context, so masks, distance, shyness, et cetera. But I found that the overall conditions are very close to what they were pre-pandemic.

My students did pick an in-person class. So they are comfortable being in the classroom and socializing with each other. And they're actually doing so to a level that I've never seen before.

Within the first couple of weeks of classes, they already had little groups formed. And you could tell that there were bonds forming between them. They're also very highly motivated to overcome the challenges that masks and distance pose to group work and conversation groups. I found them very eager to participate and very understanding of the situation that we find ourselves in together.

My last piece of advice for both HyFlex and in-person teaching is the importance of communication. At the beginning of the term, I had several conversations with my students about the particular challenges that we were going to be facing this year, about what I was doing to create the best environment I could, and about what was required of them to contribute to a positive course experience. I'm convinced that this helped us get to a place where class is enjoyable and conducive to a good learning experience. So this has been a general summary of the things we'll talk about in the session. To find out more, please join us for my Welcome to my Online Classroom session.