

Tips for Teaching Online via LIFT

gvsu.edu/idel/

GVSU has adopted a student evaluation instrument from IA Systems to collect feedback about courses and instructors. This initiative is called: “Laker Impressions of Faculty Teaching (LIFT)”.

In short, LIFT is GVSU’s university-wide system for collecting student feedback about courses and instructors. All course sections (with limited exceptions) use the online LIFT surveys to collect student feedback. LIFT is administered by the Office Of Institutional Analysis, under the oversight of the LIFT Advisory Committee.

Courses delivered via distance education, such as GVSU’s online and hybrid classes use a special LIFT GVSU Distance Education form.

Key Design Tips

The questions that connect most directly to teaching online are compiled below, within a category of pedagogical focus:

Instructor Presence

- LIFT QUESTION: The instructor’s contribution to the course was:
- LIFT QUESTION: The instructor’s effectiveness in teaching the subject matter was:
- LIFT QUESTION: Student confidence in instructor’s knowledge was:
- LIFT QUESTION: Online interactions to accomplish learning outcomes were:

TEACHING ONLINE TIPS: Be present and engaged in your online or hybrid class. If students do not see announcements, posts in discussions, or emails, it may feel to them that there isn’t an instructor teaching the class.

Discussion threads are a popular component of Blackboard courses, but an online conversation is just one of many ways you can help students demonstrate knowledge or practice skills.

Think beyond the discussion forum: given your course content, how might you build in multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge or mastery of a skill across a variety of activities? How will you reinforce skills or knowledge learned in one portion of the course in a future activity? What short assignments might you ask students to engage in and post for quick feedback?

Faculty Feedback

- LIFT QUESTION: Timeliness of instructor responses was:
- LIFT QUESTION: Quality/helpfulness of instructor feedback was:

TEACHING ONLINE TIPS: Students need (and want!) to know how they're doing throughout the semester, so your timely feedback on assignments, discussions, and course activities is essential. And each time you provide feedback to students, you make your presence known—key to making students feel connected to your course and supported in their work.

As you craft assignments, consider the frequency of and methods by which you'll provide feedback to students' work. Try audio recording feedback to students' writing, or giving formative, brief feedback more frequently during an assignment to encourage students' reflection and learning.

Establish a goal of responding to students' inquiries or activities on Blackboard within 24 hours Monday – Friday, or on Mondays for activities students may complete over the weekend.

Maximize student retention by proactively contacting inactive students, students with missing deadlines, or poor performance. The Blackboard [Grade Center](#) shows the date of last course access for students. The [Retention Center](#), [Performance Dashboard](#) and [Item Statistics](#) provide faculty with information about student activity as well as the ability to monitor students at-risk. Use these tools to determine whether any students in your class are falling behind or neglecting to check Blackboard regularly. Intervene early on, so they get back on track quickly.

Course Navigation/Menu

- LIFT QUESTION: The organization and ease of navigation of the course website was:

TEACHING ONLINE TIPS: Review your course from the viewpoint of a student. Is information clearly labeled by its function and easy to find? In addition to using consistent formatting and terminology, consider adding features such as Blackboard assignment due dates, guideposts, assignment checklists, multiple representations of essential information (reading assignments listed in the syllabus as well as in a course calendar), and introductory text or audio overviews with each folder/module.

Will it be crystal clear to students when assignments are due? Which readings are required or optional? How much time should students expect to spend on a quiz or project? Ensuring this information is easy to find and clearly stated will go a long way toward helping students stay on track.

In short, pay close attention to the overall navigation of your course. For example, if your menu is too long this can be confusing for students. The goal is to keep your menu short and simple with a focus on getting students where they need to be to access your weekly content, learning activities, and assessments.

Technology Preparation/Orientation

- LIFT QUESTION: Instructor's use of technology to support learning outcomes was:
- LIFT QUESTION: Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements was:

TEACHING ONLINE TIPS: Be sure to welcome your students and orient them to your course. You can do this via email, announcements, or a brief video. [Flipgrid](#) can be an effective tool to use as an icebreaker for students to get to know one another and to feel like part of a learning community.

To help students assess their preparation on the online/hybrid learning experience, you may wish to assign your students the [online self-assessment](#). In an easy-to-find location, provide students direct links to resources such as the [Blackboard student support](#), [GVSU IT HelpDesk](#), and other relevant student support services.

Form Preview Close
W1 - GVSU Distance Ed

RATING SCALE	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Very Poor (0)
1. The course as a whole was:						
2. The course content was:						
3. The instructor's contribution to the course was:						
4. The instructor's effectiveness in teaching the subject matter was:						
5. Student confidence in instructor's knowledge was:						
6. Timeliness of instructor responses was:						
7. Quality/helpfulness of instructor feedback was:						
8. Clarity of course objectives was:						
9. The organization and ease of navigation of the course website was:						
10. Usefulness of assignments in understanding course content was:						
11. Online interactions to accomplish learning outcomes were:						
12. Instructor's use of technology to support learning outcomes was:						
13. Relevance and usefulness of course content were:						
14. Evaluative and grading techniques (tests, papers, projects, etc.) were:						
15. Reasonableness of assigned work was:						
16. Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements was:						