Ten Ways to Improve Blended Course Design

A Magna Online Seminar presented on March 6, 2012 by Ivan A. Shibley, Jr. (Ike), associate professor of chemistry, Penn State Berks.

Blended course design combines online learning and F2F instruction. This seminar shows you why blended course design is an effective option for today’s educational institutions.

Blended Course Design:

- **Solves physical space issues.** With capital construction projects put on hold, blended course design can help you work effectively with the space you have, while allowing for enrollment growth.

- **Enables students to work more and enjoy greater flexibility.** Tuition costs continue to increase, which is driving more students into the workplace. Blended course design provides them with the flexibility they need to hold down a job while still pursuing an education.

- **Provides today’s most effective education model.** A 2009 Department of Education report suggested that blended course design offers the greatest change for student success in a course.

- **Is an expected choice for a new generation of students.** Today’s student is online, and expects their services to be on-demand. This is a format readily accepted and expected by new students.

Editor’s note:

This is a written transcript of an audio recording. Our policy is to edit only the occasional unintelligible phrase. Everything else appears exactly as it was spoken.

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Rob Kelly: Hello, and welcome to Ten Ways to Improve Blended Course Design cosponsored by Magna Publications and The Teaching Professor. I’m Rob Kelly, editor of The Teaching Professor and today’s moderator. I’m pleased you can join us.

Before we begin, I’d just like to let you know that we will be breaking for questions about halfway through. If you want to ask your questions at any time, you can send them in, and we will break at, you know, about halfway through and then address some at the end as well. And now I’d like to introduce our presenter, Ike Shibley. I don’t have your bio, Ike. Maybe you could introduce yourself.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: I can do that.

Rob Kelly: Actually, there is a, actually, I do have a brief bio. He is associate professor of chemistry at Penn State Berks, a small four-year college within the Penn State system. Welcome, Ike Shibley.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Thanks, Rob. So we’re talking about blended course design. And we’re not going to be able to talk a lot about the institutional concerns, but right up front, I think we need to clear the air that some of the drivers behind the blended design are from politicians, administrators thinking that blended design is going to save money.

And that may be a legitimate driver, but I’m here to tell you that it provides you guys an opportunity to use the driver to create increased learning. I’ve been teaching blended design for almost a decade now, and I’ve been doing research on it. There’s still not enough research to my mind, but we’re accumulating more and more evidence that suggests that if you combine the best of face-to-face and online learning, you get a robust pedagogically effective design.

So let’s start by clearing up what a blended course is. I’ve got a graph here that shows on the Y axis the amount of time in the classroom and the X axis the amount of technology. At the far right, we’ve got face-to-face, which is traditional classroom. It’s taught by credit hours, and those credit hours are the amount of time the faculty is actually in the class facing the students.

If you move up, you get to Web-assisted where you still have the same amount of time in the classroom, but you put more material online. You’ve enhanced the opportunities for students to learn with technology. On the far left then is the online component where there’s no time in the classroom, that everything that you’re doing in the course is technology driven in some way, shape, or form.
The question with the online is whether to do synchronous or asynchronous, and we’re not going to talk much about that today. But in between the two extremes there is your blended design. And the blended design ideally uses the online, the technology portion to make the face-to-face portion even more effective.

And in some ways, it forces you to, because you want the face-to-face to be as pedagogically effective as possible. So let’s look at a quote. This was from a 2008 book that Garrison and Vaughan wrote, and the word here that I like is thoughtful. We’re going to start with the very first rule. The very first way to improve blended learning is to be more thoughtful in your design.

And so we’re going to do that by approaching it through the way course designers do, which is an ADDIE approach. Before we get to the top ten reasons here, let’s at least make sure everyone is on the same page, that a blended design lowers the amount of class time. How you lower that is really up to the creativity of the faculty member.

Now some of this is driven by administrative needs that you’re supposed to cut maybe half the time, but a true blended design is some reduction in face-to-face time. And then the faculty member designs out-of-class experiences to help the students.

So the second bullet there isn’t the only way to approach this, but I’m going to suggest that we still use face-to-face time as kind of the central focus of our online and that we’re going to look at how you get students prepared for face-to-face time and how you help the students after they’ve been in class face to face, which means that you start with the face-to-face and think about using the online for the other two times when students interact with material.

In order to do that, when I started doing blended design, I had an administrator who was unrelenting saying, Ike, you need to throw away all preconceived notions, because I kept trying to fit what we were doing with the blended design into a more traditional format. And he wanted us more than anything else, as a design team, there were six members on it, to start from scratch, to start building the way I’m going to explain to you in the very first way.

So reconceptualizing learning is not easy. It’s not easy for faculty members who have been teaching for a while. It’s not even easy for new faculty members, because we are products of an education system in the graduate education that focuses on content more than anything else. And
because of that, we think the content is key, and we forget about the learner.

But the learner is who you need to be thinking about as we go through this seminar. I’m not going to spend much time on these first ten, because we’re going to jump right into them. But I do at least want to let you know what the ten strategies are. These are the ten ways to improve blended learning. And we will talk about each of them in substantial detail. We will stop after five when we get to the justify the rationale.

We’ll, I’ll take some questions. I should point out that I’ve attended these seminars on the other end where you are, and I’m imagining that for a lot of sites out there, you’re sitting in a room with colleagues. We can’t hear you. It’s, I think it’s perfectly fine if I raise points to talk about it right then and there. Magna is going to send you a CD copy of this. You can certainly go back and look at what you’ve missed.

And I should also point out that there’s a lot of supplementary material that I’ve put together thinking about this kind of as a blended course. I’m not going to talk a lot about the supplemental material, but it’s there for you afterwards to keep thinking through some of what we’re talking about in here. So we’re not going to hear you. I’m not in any way going to be offended.

If you start talking among yourselves, and you raise a question, send it into us. Rob will be accumulating those questions. And we will then take some time both halfway through and near the end to answer them. But you guys can also answer questions right then and there. There just aren’t enough opportunities, I don’t think, at campuses for faculty to talk. So I don’t want you to feel like you have to sit there for 90 minutes with your mouth closed, you know, just waiting until the end to talk.

So use this as an opportunity to maybe start some discussions. Okay. So having said that, we’re going to go through these ten, and in each one of these, I’m going to start with what I see as a fundamental misconception about education. And so this first one is about designing courses. And the teaching myth there is one that I think permeates all of higher education.

Again, it’s because in some ways of the way we’re taught that the content is king. And we often, beginnings teachers often try to have their students get a drink of water from a fire hose, because they throw all this content at them knowing the content is a prerequisite to being an effective teacher.

But the second prerequisite is understanding pedagogy. And the more time I spend thinking about pedagogy, the more time I spend mentoring faculty, the more time I spend on design teams, the more I realize that the
pedagogy is more complicated than the content. When you think about what the learner needs and how the learner is approaching the content, it changes the way you teach. It’s not just about you presenting lots of information.

It’s about finding ways to help students master that content. So ADDIE is a critically important way to help you up front with the design. So these are the five stages. We’ll go through each of these fairly quickly. If you have a course designer on campus, they’ll know this. Let’s start.

Analysis. Faculty want to skip this. Faculty often don’t want to thoroughly analyze courses. They think, again, because they know the content, they know what to do. But students bring a host of baggage with them, and I’ll use the term baggage deliberately, because sometimes it’s misconceptions.

Sometimes they have knowledge that they haven’t yet uncovered. They have knowledge that they haven’t connected to your course. We teach in silos. Students seem to often learn in silos. We’re amazed when a student who has a prerequisite course doesn’t know something that we expect them to know.

It’s important for you to at least get a handle on what students might know, what they might not know, and within the content, which, where do the students struggle the most, because that’s where you’re going to want to put your focus for some of the online pieces of your blended course. If you’ve analyzed appropriately, you move into the design phase, and this is, again, a phase that faculty are sometimes loathe to do.

Learning objectives. If faculty think that they know, they’ve been told this by accrediting agencies, they’ve been told it by administrators, yes, yes, yes, I know how to do a learning objective, yet, creating detailed learning objectives is one of the most challenging pedagogical activities that you can image, because we so often use phrases like understand the causes of the Civil War, know molecular orbital theory.

Those phrases, know, understand, learn, they are not enough. You’ve got to use active verbs. And I know a lot of you have probably heard this, but in designing the blended course, you need to have a clear understanding of how you’re going to design it. You have to look at learning objectives. You have to understand at least some of the technologies that are out there in order for you to start pulling together kind of a storyboard of how your whole course is going to cohere.

Then you’re going to develop the course. And this is a lot of work, especially if you’re creating multimedia activities, some games. If you’re doing an online quiz bank, if you’re creating blogs, if you want to have a
lot of information online for students to access, you need to put that together, and you need to develop it slowly, because you want to have the course ready to go when you launch it.

You can get away with kind of making things up as you go along in a traditional face-to-face course. You can’t in a blended course. You really want the whole course design up front. It will still change. You will not get it perfect. But kind of like students who, when we do writing drafts, when a student hears the term draft, they think, oh, I’ll slap some things together. That’s not what we want.

Those of you who teach writing know this. We want a finished product, because from that finished product, then we can start making effective revisions that help it get even better. So develop a course, over the summer maybe, certainly at least that long. It takes time. Then you’re ready to launch.

I’ve done this a multiple, multiple ways. But one of the things that I like the best, I think, is designing the course over an academic year doing the first three phases, the analysis, the design, and the development and then implementing it in the summer. The summer usually has a lower enrollment.

I feel like I’m not maybe messing up the learning for as many students if I don’t get it quite right. And that gives me an opportunity to then make changes. I sometimes have more time in the summer. So I’ve actually taught summer courses with the intent of implementing a blended design and kind of trying it out.

The last ADDIE phase is the evaluation phase, and this is assessment. And you really need to understand assessment, because you want to build it in in the design and development phase, because you want to know what your students have accomplished, how much time they’re spending on certain aspects of the online piece, how much they’re, if you have a survey, how beneficial do the students think that some of your games were? Closing the loop in assessment is one of the hardest activities.

We’re very good as educators at collecting more data. What we’re not so good at is acting on it. But you want to close the loop, make the course better, and then do it as an editor of process. By the way, if you do effective evaluation, it’s going to help your accrediting agencies also, and it makes it a lot easier when an administrator says, hey, we need to have some assessment. You’ve been doing it all along.

And the online piece helps collect that assessment data. So that’s your ADDIE design. And that’s the number one way to improve blended
learning, is the next time you’re developing a course, use this. And even if you’re already in a course, then start with the E, and then move back to A and the D’s and the I. Okay.

Teaching myth number two. My goodness, this is humbling. I don’t know that everyone will believe me, but your students can learn without you. They do have the cognitive ability to understand some of the content. And, therefore, you need to leverage some of that before students ever get to your class. We’ll be looking at this over the next three numbers, and we’re going to work up Bloom’s Taxonomy. This is the revised version.

I like the older version also. There are slight differences but a little bit of theory here. Although this isn’t hard and fast, I really like the notion of thinking about the two lower levels as what students can accomplish before they ever get into the classroom. And then we’ll move into the higher levels as we move into the next two ways, ways three and four of improving blended learning. I’ll let you read this.

A lot of people think that this quote could be replaced by books also. And technology now is replacing lectures. But my mentor, Maryellen Weimer, always says that she’s not against lecture. I am, and I’m not going to pull any punches about that. We know enough about how students learn, that students do not learn well by just having information thrown at them. And I know in a 90-minute talk I’m throwing a lot of information at you.

And in some ways this is violating some of that rule, but that’s why I also recommended you talk and take a break and come back and look at this later. We’re live, so I need to get through this in 90 minutes. But your students can take time before they get into class and do the reading. And then you can have some kind of activity, an online quiz, something that they do before they ever come into class.

Barbara Walvoord, actually, is the one who introduced me to this concept of first exposure. The first time students meet the content of your course should not be when they come into your classroom. And I think it’s a major failing of education that teachers think that unless they’re talking about the information, there’s no way possible the students can get it. You’re using those online pieces before students come into class.

You’re using a class guide, which is kind of an online syllabus. You maybe have some drop boxes for them to maybe do a short writing assignment or do a couple simple homework that they’re putting in the drop box, or you have an online pre-reading quiz. Assign some points to it.

They can be a nominal amount of points, but you have to, I think assigning points, because students use points as a way to gauge whether the activity
is worthy of their time. If you just tell students to do this up front, they’re going to think that they don’t have to do it, and then they’re going to come to class, they’re not going to be prepared. The tendency then is for the faculty member to revert back to lecture format and say, well, this is what you should have gotten.

You’re going to have to resist that. I think the hardest thing, if you haven’t taught blended courses, is that first day that you come in after you tell them that there’s an online assignment to not talk a lot about the assignment, to just launch into whatever you’re going to do during class. So those online exercises are designed to get students thinking before they come into the classroom. I’ve got some examples that I just listed.

There’s technology in the supplemental materials. You’ve got to think what works for you. And you’ll see in a later suggestion that I have that you don’t want to do this alone. You want to utilize as many people on campus as you can to create some of this. Course designers are great for coming up with the class guides.

If you like teaching with PowerPoint, I would suggest as a first step in your ADDIE design to think about just putting your PowerPoints online, to think about finding a way to utilize what you’ve already developed but move it at the beginning of, not the beginning of class but before class even starts. Move it online. Have students interact with those PowerPoints before they get to you.

You can use Camtasia. It’s a software that does screen capture. If you want to do mini lectures, that’s great. I have a colleague who used to like to tell stories in class, and she found that it used a lot of class time. So what she does now is require students to listen to a podcast. They can download it on their iPod and listen to it in between their music. But the podcast has to be completed before class.

And then when the students come into class, they get into small groups, and they start analyzing the example. And the teacher doesn’t have to take the ten minutes that she normally would have taken to talk through that. The interactive Web activities are the gaming-type things. When you see pictures of gamers engaged in a game, they are wrapped in attention. And they are not engaged because there is someone lecturing to them.

They’re engaged because their brain is fully interacting with what’s going on. We can’t quite hope to achieve what games do. There are full-time people that, you know, know the appropriate challenge to give students. But I think in higher education, we don’t think enough about the appropriate levels of challenge and support.
You don’t want to over-stimulate students, but you don’t want to make it so easy that they don’t really think about it. So there are other examples here, pre-class writing, homework problems. You can come up with more, think drop box, think making students do something to ensure that they’ve prepared before they ever set foot in the classroom.

Now you’re in the classroom. And the teaching myth number three there has to deal with kind of an anti-constructivist view that so many teachers want to show students how to do things. I remember having a conversation with a colleague who said, I showed students a sample problem. They had some, they didn’t seem to have a lot of questions, so I showed them again the next day. They asked a couple questions. And then I gave them a quiz on it.

They didn’t do well on the quiz. I said, what did you do then? Well, I showed them again. And then they still did it poorly on the exam. And I thought, well, it’s because at each stage you’ve showed them something, you haven’t allowed them to interact, you haven’t scaffolded the problems, you haven’t asked them to analyze the problem ahead of time.

In a blended design, in what I think are the most robust blended designs, the classroom time no longer looks like a traditional classroom. You are no longer Socrates or Plato lecturing to your class. You are facilitating discussions, in some ways maybe a Socratic dialogue, maybe it’s small group work. But during class, it should be a time for you to take advantage of what you’ve created before the students have gotten there.

So in a Bloom’s Taxonomy, you are at a higher level of cognitive skill. You’re asking students now to apply some of the vocabulary, some of the definitions, the basic equations that they had to learn before class, and now you’re asking them to use them to solve particular problems, to give them case studies perhaps. That’s more an analysis. But application and analysis are what we should be expecting of students during class time.

So this is a picture actually from my institution. That’s Dr. James Karlinsey, and it looks like he’s lecturing. And I’m showing you a slide that says keep lecturing to a minimum, and this is deliberate, because behind him, and it’s a little hard to see, he’s actually got clicker questions open. He has given students a question, and they wrestled with it. You can kind of see some small groups. The students aren’t sitting in neat rows.

They’ve tried to figure out how to apply a concept that they should have gotten from the pre-class assignment. Then he does a brief discussion of why the correct answer is the way it was. And then the clickers have been designed so that the very next question builds on what the students should be getting out of that particular question. And the entire 75-minute class
unfolds this way with question, a debrief, more questions. And I’ll show you a little later that small group work is essential to help in-class problem solving.

Creativity is another great opportunity, and, again, I don’t want to just keep using examples, but they’re the ones that I kind of know. And that’s me with my bald head standing outside the building where I teach. And that is an alpaca in the lower left of that picture. This was an advanced mammalian physiology course where the teacher spent most of the semester giving students some online activities that deal with humans.

And the last quarter of the semester was students had to prepare for a particular mammal. And they had to take the human physiology and talk about the differences that a particular mammal had from the humans. And so there’s all kinds of creative ways to do this. I taught this course once, and students actually used a whale, and they did it in a pair. One student was the trainer of the whale, and the other was the whale.

And the whale then answered questions about their physiology. This was an example of the student who chose an alpaca and brought the alpaca to class. No way could you get this online, right? This is an experience that has to be face to face. But, my goodness, it was the pre-class getting ready for some of the differences. Students post some activities for the students to do some information before class, and then students can come in and see the alpaca.

And they are now focused on this really cool animal. And they got to spend time with the alpaca, and so I wanted to go out and see the alpaca too, because it’s really cool. Okay. So the simple message here, if you’re thinking about ways to improve blended learning, you want to use the technology to make face-to-face time better.

You have to think of ways to get students ready so that, in this picture you can see better the students in small groups. I should also point out that in the bottom center, there is a student in a black shirt. She’s got black hair. She’s standing. She’s what we call a chemistry peer mentor. She’s helping students in their small groups. She’s already taken the course. She took a course in training, and she gets a small stipend from Penn State to help inside the classroom.

We’ve cut class time, but we improve learning, and these peer mentors help in a lot of ways. They answer student questions right then and there. So while students are applying the knowledge, they get answers when they get stuck. It’s really an incredibly effective design that we now teach every general chemistry course in this format, 9 sections a year, usually about 60 students in each class, 60 to 70.
Now students have left class. Your responsibility seemingly is done. You’ve taught. I have, I sometimes hear comments that, well, if you’re teaching a blended course, you don’t have to do nearly as much work as a teacher. Wow. So I should blend my course, because then I won’t have to be on campus as much. I won’t have to do as much work. Oh, really? Really?

Your responsibility, just like the students, doesn’t end when the student leaves class. In a blended design, you’re trying to create opportunities for rehearsal, for students to move to higher levels. Now after class, you also want them maybe to give possibly a quiz that deals with some of those lower level thinking, maybe the definitions, maybe some applications.

But you may also want to try, and it doesn’t have to be after every single class, but outside of class, you want opportunities for students to create, to evaluate, the old terminology is synthesize. You want students to bring a lot of that information together. They need to construct it in their brain. And the only way they do that is to spend time on task.

So these are questions more for you, because I guarantee you, when you need to learn something, you don’t just say, well, I’m going to watch lecture after lecture after lecture. If you really want to learn it, you often watch a YouTube video and then practice it. I, at the last Teaching Professor Conference, I wanted to learn how to do a bowtie, because I was presenting with Dave Yearwood, and if you know Dave Yearwood, Dave always bowties.

So I wanted to know how to do a bowtie. I did not sit there and watch the YouTube video ten times and then say, I got it, turn it off, and then go tie a bowtie. Are you kidding? I watched it once. I tied it, got it wrong. I paused as I was going through. I did this the other day for folding napkins at a dinner table. We were having a dinner party, and I wanted to learn how to make a bishop’s hat.

If you haven’t done an activity like this, I encourage it, because it will put you firmly in the realm of the learners that you often think should be getting things quicker. I guarantee, if you don’t know how to fold napkins, you’re not going to pick it up simply by watching the YouTube video unless, maybe it’s me, but I suspect that you’re going to take a while to continually rehearse, practice it.

Even when you get it right once, you’re not going to be able to turn it off and then say, oh, I can do it again. You’re going to need to do it several times. In fact, even by the eighth bishop’s hat that I made, and I had all the tables, if you asked me to make one now, I would not be able to do it, so
I’d need to go back and rehearse some more. So your job is to try to make activities to get students to want to spend time with the content.

Really, it’s easy, too easy, for you to say at the end of class, all right, read the book, and we’ll start the next chapter. How does that help students, read the book? What are they supposed to exactly get out of it, especially if you haven’t made learning goals, if you haven’t given them opportunities to practice some of the applications of work in the chapter? You need to help students. That’s our role as teachers.

And in a blended design, thinking about what happens after class is sometimes the hardest part of being a teacher, because coming up with these activities is not easy. Online homework is just one example. You can think of this in terms of papers you want to do, online quizzes, but these are some of the questions you really should ask yourself. What are you trying to accomplish with that activity?

What should students be getting out of the activity? How many points are you going to assign? How do those points fit into the overall scheme? If you don’t assign points, and I know some people, teachers really don’t like giving small amounts of points, but what the students hear when you tell them to do something and don’t assign points is that you really don’t think it’s important.

Now you’re going to say, oh, but I do, I do think it’s important. You’re not going to be able to convince the students of that unless you give them some nominal points, because students will do the work then, because that’s the currency of the realm for students, earning points in a course that gets them closer to their grade.

So even when you’ve assigned a particular activity, think about what other opportunities there are besides online homework or besides online quizzes, besides an activity where they rehearse and then answer some questions afterward, besides a drop box. Think about it. We’re taking a break after this, just so you know, so be thinking of some questions, because question and answer is some of my favorite time. It gets me to hear a little bit what you’re thinking.

But our fifth myth, and this is one that is also humbling. In fact, I guess a lot of the myths that I’m debunking cause some consternation among teachers. Faculty often think that they are the most important part of a course. And in a lot of ways, they’re critically important. You are critically important.

But students can learn from each other, especially as they’re starting to apply, because the students have just done what you’ve asked. You’ve
created a climate so that they’ve done the work ahead of time. When they come into class, or even when you create activities online for them to engage, you want students to help each other.

Different students will know to take different things out of some of your definitions, some of your basic examples. When you start moving up the cognitive ladder, students often know what their colleagues are thinking, and they can say, oh, yeah, yeah, I got confused at that point too. This is what I think they meant. Students can help each other, because they’re at the same point.

The small group work, again, I keep showing classes from a small group example, because I really think that the more you get students talking to each other in, an upcoming slide talks about authentic assignments where the students know that this is going to be something that shows up on the exam. When you tell them that this is like a test question, students perk up, and they help each other.

I can remember walking around and a student asking a question, and I gave a pretty nice, what I thought was a detailed explanation in an organic chemistry course using nucleophile and electrophile and electron motion. And as I walked away, I heard one of the group mates say, yeah, yeah, yeah, he just means you take this and move it over there. And the student said, oh, my gosh. Okay. I got it.

No fancy terminology, no nucleophile, no electrophile, just move this from here to there. And the student kind of got it. Now maybe I can say, well, I primed the student for that. But students can help each other. We know from cognitive psychology, we know about learning theory that students learn while they’re teaching also.

And when students hear about content from one of their classmates, they’re hearing it in a different context from the way you presented it. It’s going to stick. It’s like putting Velcro on the concrete wall. You’re preparing for the Velcro ball to stick. I think too often teachers think that they can take a Velcro ball, and if they just push hard enough, it’s going to stick to concrete.

And then we yell at the students because their brains are the concrete that won’t stick to the Velcro ball. Our job as teachers though is to create opportunities to make their brains stickier, to get some Velcro on that brain so that the content can adhere.

Authentic assignments are assignments that students don’t view as busy work. It’s not always easy to create them, especially not in small groups but assignments that kind of lead students to a better understanding of
content, that lead students to questions that are going to be similar to exam questions. In the laboratory, I’m a scientist, lab work is great in groups, because the students know that they’ve got to work together to get something done and get results.

And a lot of our instructors now use group post-labs, we require individual pre-labs in organic chemistry, but group post-labs so the students have to learn to work as a team. I coordinate the science program at our institution, and so I have a science advisory council that meets twice a year and provides feedback for what we should be doing with learners.

And one of the most humbling suggestions that continually comes up from this council is we don’t really care what content you teach. We want students who can think critically, work as a member of a team, develop some leadership skills. That’s what, in Maryellen Weimer’s book, *Learner-Centered Teaching*, she talks about one of the five things that needs to change is function of content.

Content shouldn’t be an end in and of itself. Content can be used to help students develop other skills, because in developing those skills, they’re developing the stickiness that helps the Velcro to stick. Woo. One more example, and then we’re going to take a break with questions. I think online interactions in small group work is one of the most challenging activities for faculty.

And in a blended course, I think it seems inauthentic to students, because they are getting together in small groups. In a fully online course, discussion boards and blogs can be critically important, because students never really get together. If you’re using a way for students to wrestle with content ahead of time, a lot of times what you’re doing is getting them to volunteer information online so that when they get into class, they’re more likely to want to share.

You guys have all dealt, I’m sure, with classes where you ask a question, and the students stare at you. We don’t like that look. It makes teaching seem very awkward, and we don’t feel good. And, you know, the defensive knee-jerk reaction is, oh, why aren’t the students asking questions? It’s their fault.

But your role is to figure out how to prepare them to ask questions. So this is an example. It raises some rhetorical questions. I don’t have easy answers. But, again, if you’re using ADDIE to help design the course, you need to be thinking about questions like this to help yourself. Now we can take a break.
Rob Kelly: Okay. While we’re waiting for some questions to come in, and you can do that by clicking on the conversation bubble icon, I have a question that sort of came to mind as you were talking about setting expectations for students. Blended learning can be a new experience for students. What advice do you have on telling, what to tell students about this learning environment?

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: So we’ve talked about moving this blended design into the developmental course. There’s a chemistry course where if students don’t place well, they have to take this developmental course. It seems like a great opportunity for blending, but because there’s not a lot of blended design in high school, because students have to be in class a certain number of hours, and high schools don’t have the flexibility of telling students to just go home and work on their own, we’re not sure.

So it’s, I think for lower-level courses, blending becomes a little trickier, because students aren’t ready for it. I also think institutionally, as students see it more, they’ll, they start to understand what a blended design is. I taught a nutrition course for the first time as a blended design. It was the first truly blended design. I guess I cut half the time.

So the chemistry course that I talked about, we used to have four hours a week, and one of them was a review session. We didn’t need the review session, so we cut class time by 25%. But in this nutrition class, I’d cut it in half. So what I decided to do was teach on a Saturday morning to let students know that it was a very different course.

That seemed to work the first time, because there weren’t a lot of blended courses at our institution five years ago, but now I teach it just on a Tuesday or a Thursday. And students kind of know that that’s the way the course runs. They know that they have to do things, do activities in drop boxes, and they have to prepare for class. They have online quizzes before they ever get there.

And there are some of these authentic assignments they have to read, Michael Pollan’s *In Defense of Food*, and they have to write, like that’s what I was grading before this seminar. It’s my spring break, and so I have a lot of papers, 50 papers, to grade on *In Defense of Food*.

And it feels like an authentic assignment, because Pollan argues, actually, that nutrition courses give students a false impression of what nutrition is, and they really shouldn’t feel like they have to study nutrition to understand nutrition, which I love. And students write these great letters to their parents or their friends. And so it’s, it feels like, to me, like an authentic assignment.
I’ve surveyed the students, and they seem to benefit from it. But anyway, I think it’s because the institution has had a lot of blended courses that the students are more likely to accept it. So some of your institutions are probably further ahead than others as far as blending. So some questions?

Rob Kelly: Yeah, actually in that time, we have a bunch of questions that just came in.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Whoa, thanks, guys. All right. So I may not be able to get to all of these. I’m looking over Rob’s shoulder here, so . . .

Rob Kelly: Okay. And this is my first time seeing the questions. So what happens when students are the ones resisting not being lectured or shown all the content? I guess that’s sort of in line with what I just asked.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: It is, but it’s an important question, and it’s one that I fear that faculty use as kind of an excuse not to do blending. The first time you blend, you’re going to get resistance. I have a slide coming up where I tell you, you really need to justify to students, oh, that’s this slide, why you’re doing it. Millennial generation, I’m not a big fan of lumping students, but that’s the term that we use for the current traditional-age students.

And returning adults also, they want to know why they should be doing something. So I know that there’s resistance. The first time we talked chemistry eight, seven years ago, I guess, one of the comments that I heard in the hallway was, yeah, I’m learning a lot in this course, but I wish the teacher would teach. It’s a change for the students as well as for the teachers, because we don’t think of teaching in a blended-type format.

We think of teaching as telling. So you’ve got to be strong, teachers. Don’t let the students think that just because they’re complaining doesn’t mean you should revert. Change takes time. Oh, please, be strong. All right. A couple more, and then we’ll get to some of these near the end too.

Rob Kelly: Okay. Well, let’s see here.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Wow, there are a lot.

Rob Kelly: There sure are.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Wow. And I’ll answer these, by the way. Magna sends them to me, and I put together a typed list. So fear not. This is a true blended design, because it’s not just what we’re doing face to face.

Rob Kelly: Okay. How would you apply blended learning to a practical skill class?
Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: So practical skills often have to be rehearsed. So sometimes you can give them some of the practical skills, right, if it’s lists, or I’ll use cooking as an example. If you’re going to teach a cooking class, one of the things you may want to do up front is at least make sure students understand the list of ingredients that goes into something.

Make them understand the purpose of baking soda versus salt versus flour and what they bring to that particular recipe. And then in class, that’s where you kind of look over their shoulder, have them do the practical aspects, and then afterwards, maybe have them create their own recipe based on what they’ve learned. So, again, that’s a small example, but I think there’s ways even in a practical course, to get students ready.

I know in labs, you can give them little videos of what they should expect as a setup. Give them a pre-lab quiz online. And that allows the lab period to be shortened, because you can get done a little faster. So I think there are ways of doing it. Maybe one more, and then we’ll keep going, and then we’ll answer some more at the end.

Rob Kelly: Okay. I’ve heard that it can take a 20 to 1 ratio to develop a course using ADDIE methods. How can it be streamlined?

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: That’s a tough question. It does take an awful lot of time. At least from what I’ve seen, I spent a lot of time in the first blended design. But then as I learned the technology, as I learned how to use our learning management system, as I kind of was taught how to fish rather than someone fishing for me, I got to the point where even though it took probably 20 to 1 the first time, the second course I did it was maybe a 10 to 1 ratio.

In other words, it took me like ten hours for every hour of content. So doing the online quizzes became a little more standard, and I got better at the, our institution has been very good at supporting this. So I’ve been able to hire student interns who then work. I give them one question, and then they have to modify it to come up with six or seven other questions, make sure they check the answers, type them all in, and we develop a huge quiz bank then.

I can tell you that I just saw the student who was my intern who’s now in her first year of graduate school. And because of her experience working on the course design, all her other classmates got put into general chemistry, and she actually got put into an upper level biochemistry for her teaching assistance because of all the pedagogical experience she had as the intern working on blended design.

So we didn’t pay a lot, but it gave the student an opportunity to work on campus. And so there may be ways of, you know, nudging your
administrators for just small amounts of money to hire a student intern. It’ll help the student, and it’ll help you. So these are great questions, and I see more, so, okay, I will try to get to some of them. Let me get through the last five here. These go a little quicker, so we should have some time near the end to answer some more questions.

So the question that came up that I used rationale is important, because you can’t just come into class and say, hey, this is a blended design, like it or lump it. You may want to switch. No, you want to tell students why you’ve decided to do this, why it’s going to improve their learning. And don’t forget to emphasize the positive aspect that you’re only in class, you’re in class less time than you normally would be in a face-to-face class.

And I’ve had colleagues say, again, oh, well, that, you’re just taking the easy road, because you’re not in classes much. No, I would put my blended learning students in my nutrition class up against the traditional blended, the traditional nutrition class, and those students have three hours every week. Mine only have 90 minutes. I think my students are learning just as much.

In fact, we have pretty standardized exams that we have to give, and my students are doing very well on them. So, but I’ve explained to them what their responsibilities are, and I explain it to them weekly. I continually remind them. So this is one of my favorite examples. If you can’t read that, please, Ms. Sweeney, may I ask where we’re going with all this? Students want to know that, especially millennial generation.

This is from, I saw Robert Fulghum. I don’t know how many of you remember him, Every thing I Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten, and he said that he got confused when he was teaching, because teachers would wear buttons that tell their students to question authority. I’m from Pennsylvania, so I can tell you that Rick Santorum is claiming that higher education has a liberal agenda where we’re getting students to question authority.

But then we’re also giving students the implicit message, hey, I’m your teacher, trust me. Maybe not even trust me but just, hey, I’m your teacher, you need to do what I tell you, because there’s that implicit trust. But if you can find a happy medium where you’re explaining to students why you’ve spent so much time, why you’ve done that 20 to 1 to prepare this course for them, and you’ve created authentic assignments, students will respond.

I know we’re often disparaging of the amount of work students want to put in. And students are busy folks. Returning adults have busy lives.
They want to know that the time they’re investing is going to pay off in increased learning. So taking a few minutes to explain to them both online and face to face why you’re doing this, repeating that message, I think you’ll be better off in overcoming some of that student resistance.

It’s a genuine concern, and there are ways of dealing with it. So this is kind of the motivation versus intimidation. We’re going to talk about motivation with the next one. You don’t want students to just have to do what you tell them. They’re adults. They’re, even our 19- and 20-year-olds, they may not act like it sometimes, but they’re adults. They’re classified as adults.

They want to know why they should be spending time with a textbook or doing an online quiz. I can tell you that with an effective blended design, students no longer ask me why they have to take the quiz. They just do it. In fact, I have quizzes, online quizzes that have a huge quiz bank, so they never get the same quiz twice. And I let them take it three times, and only their highest score counts.

So early on, I had students say, oh, you know, the first time, I really didn’t understand this stuff. Can I take it one more time? I got a 95%, but I think I can get it perfect. And my initial response was, well, that’s not fair, you know, if I bump it up to four. But then what I do is I just send a note to the whole class and say, hey, you know what? I’ve decided to open this quiz one more time, so if you haven’t taken it, if you’ve already taken it three times, you can take it a fourth.

Students are asking to spend time on task. They’re asking to spend another 30 to 45 minutes taking the online quiz. Oh, it’s a thing of beauty. So that’s a question that you want to ask with your online quizzes. I’ve done courses where I used the online quiz. My nutrition course, they actually take the quiz beforehand. Nutrition is fairly low-level information.

They need to know water soluble versus fat soluble vitamins. That I can quiz them on beforehand. But in my organic chemistry course, the quiz afterwards is much more on analysis and an application. They have to analyze problems.

They have to apply some of what they’ve learned to new compounds. So you have to think about why you’re giving that quiz and then explain it to students. And I have to point out again I don’t want you to walk away from this thinking, oh, well, I gave the online quiz example. It’s for any activity that you decide to use, anything. You should be able to answer some of these questions. And you need to have a really long talk with yourself.
Think about this on a walk or on your commute home. Take time to reflect about your goals, because the more clear you are about why you’re using a particular blended technique, a particular technology, whether you’ve put it before class, after class, or during class, the students are much more likely to buy in. And the buy-in isn’t important in and of itself other than when students buy in they’ll have a better learning experience.

One of the teaching myths that I just, I’m always saddened to hear is when faculty say, it’s not my job to motivate students. If they don’t have it, I can’t help them. They either want to learn, or they don’t. Well, I disagree with that. I think we’re intrinsic learners. We like questions. And I’m going to give you an example of that shortly.

But I want to talk briefly, this is a Magna seminar, and the folks here at Magna always say, ike, make it practical. But I need a little theory here. If you don’t know about self-efficacy theory, you at least need to understand this idea that if a student doesn’t think that any effort, any more effort on their part is going to result in a higher grade, they’ll work less.

You need to find a learning climate that meets students’ developmental needs where they are, and, again, some of this can be done with pre-class surveys, trying to figure out what knowledge students bring. By the way, I should point out here that one of my favorite books lately is called How Learning Works, and there’s seven researched-based principles.

It’s on resources, and it’s really a nice description of motivation and student organization and prior knowledge. So a lot of pedagogy is embedded in that one book. So anyway, I highly recommend it. Self-efficacy theory is part of this, that if you’re helping students master what the content is, and they see that the more work they put in, the better they’re going to be in the course, they’ll do it.

Think about games. I know I use games a lot, but I’ve watched, both my children are in college now, but I watched them play a lot of games. And my son especially would find games that found just the right amount of challenge. He’d get frustrated. He’d be like, oh, this is so stupid. And then 15 minutes later, he’d come back like, I can do this. And he would work until he got to the next level.

That’s kind of what self-efficacy theory is. You want to help students get frustrated but not so frustrated that they don’t want to come back and say, all right, I’m going to try this again. Crossword puzzle designers are good at this. I do the daily New York Times crossword puzzle, and Mondays are where I started, because Mondays are the easiest. And so I did Mondays for a while, and then I gradually started trying Tuesdays.
And I’m at the point where most of the time I’ll try Fridays. Saturdays I still don’t do much with. Sundays, surprisingly, if you’re not a crossword puzzler, are not the hardest. They’re just bigger, but they’re more on like a Wednesday scale. But Wednesday through Saturday, this is a perfect metaphor, I think, for getting students to work harder so they can move to the next level.

So here’s just a brief example. Take a minute. There’s a question. I’m going to take a drink of water while you’re thinking. I’m hoping that you know enough about Brad Pitt films that maybe you’ve come up with one of them or a couple. There are actually five. If you thought *The Mexican*, it’s actually two words, but I would count that.

But think how much different, the question up there is, which is more fun, doing that, thinking about Brad Pitt films, and if we had a functional MRI on your brains, and if you were doing this task, we would see that a lot of different areas were lighting up as you tried to access information about films that you’ve seen with Brad Pitt. Think how much different it would be if I did that and just moved right on.

This at least gives you something to latch onto. Again, it’s, I don’t want to keep belaboring the Velcro analogy, but you now have activated parts of your brain, because I asked you to think of something. I asked you to engage. So this is why I really like clickers. I really like quizzes, because they ask questions, and they’re easy to assign points to.

And I can tell you, this is back to the justification, when we started using clickers, students were complaining that it was an extra cost, that they didn’t understand why we were doing it, why aren’t you teaching, why do we have to answer all these questions ourselves? Now we’ve, again, the culture has changed at our institution, so clickers have now been adopted university wide.

Students use the same clickers through their entire time at Penn State no matter what campus they go to. And students no longer complain about the cost. And when they come to class, they still might not like it. It’s like, oh, questions. But they get engaged even though, and this goes back to the question that Rob asked that someone wrote in, students would much rather do this, come to class, sit down, teach me. I’ll take some notes.

Well, I’m telling you, the students are not going to be very engaged, and students think that they can just learn the information on their own later. You’re using face-to-face time now to engage students, I don’t know, vigorously with the content. Oh, think engagement, and don’t just do it in class. Think about ways to engage them out of class. Okay.
Fear. I know that faculty use grading as kind of a Damocles sword over students. That’s a high stakes grade. Weimer points out also that we should use grading differently. And I think we need to use low-stakes grading also. But I have a slide that’s deliberately blank, because your expression when I ask this is often befuddlement. Oh, what do you mean? I have to assign a grade. That’s my job.

If that’s all you’re using grading for though, you’re missing such an opportunity, because low-stakes grading, clicker questions, quizzes, short writing assignments, you don’t need ten-page essays. You can have short, one-paragraph assignments that will get students to make sure they’ve read a short snippet, a case study, listen to a podcast. You can use grading to help the motivation. You don’t want to only use high-stakes grading.

And this is kind of my opportunity to get you to think high stakes and low stakes. One of my favorite Teaching Professor pieces was about what metaphors we use as teachers. And the metaphor you choose, and we don’t have time to let you think about this, but I would encourage you to think through this, we often say, oh, I’m teaching students to swim. Well, are you teaching them with floaties, are you teaching them some of the basic strokes, or are you expecting them to already know a whole lot, and you’re just creating activities to help them build on their strengths? Swim teachers and Olympic coaches are different skill sets, but your task, should you choose to accept it, is to try to use a blended design to help remediate students who need it.

You might need to teach someone the proper butterfly form. Maybe they’re good at the other three strokes, the major ones, breast stroke, sorry, I was a swimmer, breast stroke, back stroke, freestyle, but they need butterfly. You can have a module that shows them butterfliers, show them images of Michael Phelps, break it down, maybe do a Camtasia overlay where you’re talking about some aspects of it.

But not everyone in your class might have to use that. So a good design, I think, gives students opportunities to develop their knowledge if they want or if they think they need to. And you may have to give some self-assessment. If you can get a five or better on this quiz, or maybe if it’s a five-point quiz, a four or better, then you probably don’t need to watch the video.

We have activities, interactive activities, where students can test themselves. If you’ve done 80% or better on this quiz, you probably don’t need to practice this solubility module. But if you didn’t, there’s a module that you should try some examples, and you can try it first, and then we
have a narrated section for students if they’re still having trouble, because you need to provide feedback.

Too often, we design these activities without giving students the appropriate feedback. You can give them feedback right at that moment. You can give them feedback when they come to class, maybe if they’re doing something and bringing it and showing it in their group. But you have to think coherently about getting students the necessary skill set so that they can develop into whatever type of learner you want.

Now you are going to have to assign a grade, make no mistake, and not all your swimmers are Michael Phelps. So you’re going to have to give some of them probably even a failing grade, some C’s. But I think the tricky part is knowing when you’ve done enough as an educator, whether your course design has done enough to ensure that both beginning students and expert students still have appropriate tools to develop should they decide to meet that challenge.

So I have learning contracts on there as another opportunity for students to choose their own grade. It’s a lot of work to do that, but if you haven’t read a lot about learning contracts, I would encourage you to at least ask some people maybe at your site, or go to the literature and find some examples of learning contracts.

The high-stakes part of grading we often take for granted. We don’t think about how many points we assign. We don’t think about how it fits in with the rest. And you could use this if you’re in the humanities, and you have a high-stakes paper or a high-stakes presentation. Ask some of these questions about why you’re using that particular high-stakes mechanism and why it’s important for the students to prepare for that.

You want students to achieve those goals. I, maybe I shouldn’t admit this, but I tell my students that I don’t grade on a curve, and, therefore, if everyone in my class gets A’s, I would love it. I don’t know that my colleagues would or my administration would, and I haven’t gotten to that point. But I’ve had classes where the majority of students get A’s and B’s, and I go, okay, well, I’ve set out the learning objectives.

I’ve tried to give them all the tools. If they meet them, if they meet those criteria, then I am not going to grade them down just because I want a certain number of students to get C’s and D’s in my class. I want, ideally, all my students to succeed. I am pragmatic enough to know that that’s not going to happen, but after 16 years of teaching, I still think I’m getting better at helping more students get through my courses.
And I would argue that I’m not doing it by dumbing it down, although I know sometimes that’s one of the thoughts as teachers get older, and they lose some of the energy from their graduate school years, that they’re just, they’re less willing to really challenge students. I don’t think so. My tests, if you look back, I think they’re gotten more challenging, and, yet, I still have more students getting through.

And I think it’s because of the course design, and it’s not just because of me. So this myth, maybe I’m choosing a fairly bawdy metaphor, but, and I’m borrowing this from Jane Tompkins, who did Pedagogy of the Distressed, which is one of my favorite pedagogical articles of all time. But she said that what we do is we close the door. And what we do with our students no one else needs to know about.

This is an individualized approach. And I think some of this is predicated on the way we are training as educators. We’re told that we have to show that our independence, I know in my promotion in tenure, I was constantly being told that I shouldn’t keep collaborating with the folks that I worked with my graduate work on, even though we had similar goals, because I wasn’t exerting my independence. We do this with teaching too.

We think that teachers should do everything on their own, that they’re supermen and superwomen. We’re going to go through just a few ways to get assistance. These are folks that not every campus has, but if you have a teaching and learning center, utilize it. Talk to your IT staff. I mean, I just got an iPad2, which will be out of date as of tomorrow, I guess.

But the IT staff helped me learn how to use the iPad, because I want to start using it more in my teaching. The multimedia specialist is someone who often helps create games. The course designer is that big picture person. If you have a course management system like Blackboard, you often have someone on campus who knows it.

Call them when you have a problem rather than trying to do it on your own, because if you get it solved quickly, you’re less frustrated with the technology, and you’re more likely to use it. Get assistance from other colleagues and not just in your discipline. Find someone who has taught a blended or an online course in another discipline. Sit in on it. I love taking colleagues’ courses now, and all my colleagues don’t let me.

Some say that they’re too self-conscious, but if you find someone who you think is a pretty good educator, ask if you can sit in, and they’ll often help you come up with better ideas than you can do alone. So mentoring is critically important, not just in your discipline but also outside your discipline.
Assistance in funding. Ask for help for these peer mentors maybe. Ask if you can have a course release or maybe a supplemental summer salary, just a small amount, because designing a blended course takes time. And I just had one of our alumni come back and talk to current students. And someone asked him how he’s been so successful, and he gave a great answer.

He said, I always make my boss feel like what he’s doing for me helps him. And so this student was having the company pay for an MBA, and he said, because the company thinks that I’m going to be a great manager, and they’re willing to invest in me. But he’s done that by making his boss think that they’re getting a lot out of it.

This is an easy sell, because in a blended design, you’re cutting classroom space, your registrar will have more opportunities to schedule that room for other purposes, you’re freeing up some of that brick and mortar space, and you can say, hey, and I may be able to then turn around and get an external grant to help support future enhancements. So anyway, put it in terms that will help your institution and your administrators.

I’ve talked about peer mentors. Supplemental instructors is another way where the student just sits in the class and then runs review sessions. But that’s primarily in the lecture format. But you could still think about using undergrads. These are not graduate students. I mean, I think you can find creative ways to use undergrads. And if you’re at community colleges, students looking for opportunities to work on campus, this is a great way for them to stay on campus. It helps your current students. It also helps the mentors.

Lastly, student ratings. Student ratings are, often are these popularity contests, and faculty often say, well, you know, if you’re giving all A’s, then, of course, your student ratings are going to be high. What we know, and we know there’s a slight correlation, but there’s a stronger correlation between organization and student ratings. And I honestly think that organization may be the most important.

I’m just going to show you a couple windows here from courses that I’ve used. So this is organic chemistry two. This is a course I’m teaching right now. And you can see that there are a lot of folders in here, but they open as we go. And that keeps students focused on where they are at a particular time.

Within each folder are the online PowerPoints, the learning goals, and a quiz that they need to take with a date that the quiz closes so that the students know when they have to do it. So this is an example of by content. So it’s chapter by chapter. You can also do this by day. The
general chemistry course that I teach has every single day. That’s a lower level course. We want students focused every single day going on to the ANGEL site.

In my 400-level neurobiology course, I’ve got just four parts of the book, and each part then has different goals and different activities. So now I’ve just got really four folders, and the students are a little more savvy. They can navigate a little better. And this is a blended course, but it’s a blended course that deals more with students doing iMovies and using their iPod Touches.

I got a grant so that the students are using iPod Touches to create movies. And they have to present a chapter to their classmates, and they have to use kind of a blended approach. They have to make a ten-minute movie, have the students watch it, have an activity that students complete prior to class. Then that group in class is going to talk about the chapter.

And then they’re supposed to have some questions that the students, typical exam questions, and then I’ll pick, for that exam, I’m going to pick questions from what each group gives me. I’ll have to get back to you on the success of this. This is like teaching without a net a little bit. But I believe this. You may think your course is clear. You may see the clarity, but this is where colleagues are important too.

So you’ve got to work on organization, and this really goes back to the number one thing we did with ADDIE, that you’ve got to be able to launch the course all together. You’ve got to have it completely designed before you implement it. All right, analysis, design, development, then implementation, then evaluation, and helping it from there.

So I have some summary here. I’m not going to talk about that. You can read. I want to see if we can get to some more questions in the ten minutes we have left.

**Rob Kelly:** Okay.

**Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.:** What have we got, Rob?

**Rob Kelly:** Well, it sounds like what you recommend, doing face-to-face, is very similar to what you proposed to do online. Is there a fundamental difference between the two?

**Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.:** I’m not sure that there is a fundamental difference. I mean, you want students to learn, and so you want to engage them. To me, if they’re taking a quiz in class, you’re worried about academic integrity, which we were too. But by putting it online and giving them a quiz bank and giving them
multiple attempts with only the highest score counting and making it count for far less than the in-class exams, we felt like we dealt with some of those concerns, and we were able to move the quizzes outside of class.

It’s why every faculty member at every institution is going to have different parameters about what they’re comfortable with moving online. But the basic premise of engaging students stays the same whether you’re online or face to face.

I know this isn’t an online seminar, but when I teach online, I’m using a lot of the same techniques that I use in blended, that I’m using face to face in my Web-enhanced courses. So I just, I haven’t seen a lot of difference between the delivery formats if you’ve got solid pedagogy underlying it.

**Rob Kelly:** Okay. And we had a couple of participants ask about accelerated courses and teaching to adult learners in this format.

**Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.:** And this is something that Penn State is looking at. There’s kind of a push to do some of the accelerated courses. A blended course really allows you to do that. I mean, if you think about one way to blend, you could meet just for half a semester Monday, Wednesday, Friday, every day of the week, and then the rest of the time is online. You don’t have to double the amount of class time.

You can squeeze the semester and then make sure that students know again justification. You’re putting a lot more online, and they know that up front. This is an accelerated course. You’re going to have to do some work. It doesn’t have to be this way, but I always think weekends are a good time for the online component.

Like during the week, you’re laying out some of the application analysis, and then over the weekend, they’re doing the more robust kind of synthesis and creativity and evaluation, those higher cognitive skills on Bloom’s ladder, on Bloom’s pyramid.

**Rob Kelly:** Okay. Then for adults, is there, are there any special considerations?

**Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.:** For adults, I mean, I don’t think there are. I know I’ve read a lot of the adult literature, and I think what we talk about for adults often helps with undergrads also. Adults want to have a specific task. They want to know that, why they’re learning things. Well, so does the millennial generation according to the literature. So adults don’t want busy work. Well, really? Neither do your traditional-age undergraduates.

So I don’t see a big difference other than adults sometimes needing the time of the class. If they’re working, right, you need to teach more
evenings. You need, I think a blended course is almost not a necessity, but it would really help your adult learners, because they need accessibility issues. They need to be able to fit this in among their schedule. If they’ve got kids, if they’ve got a full-time job, they want to make time around their own schedule.

But, you know, I think this notion of traditional-age students who are just going to come and be residential and live a life of the mind for four glorious years, that’s no longer really the case, so, at least not at most institutions.

Rob Kelly: Okay. Let’s see. What guidance do you have about student complaints when the professor gets away from lecture, and the students feel that the professor should lecture more? This comes out a lot in evaluations.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Oh, my goodness. Yeah, you’ve opened up a can of worms. We only have four minutes. You want to, as much as you can, get administrative support up front. Explain to your department chair what you’re planning to do. Explain to your associate dean of academics or whoever you report to what you’re hoping to accomplish and that there may be some resistance.

We know from the pedagogical literature that anytime you try something new, your student ratings drop the first time. And too often, faculty use that as a reason to abandoned whatever they’ve tried. Just like learning, you’re not going to get it right the first time. You’re not. If you’re just learning to swim, you’re not going to get to an Olympic level right away.

So, my goodness, you just, you need administrators who are willing to then explain it to your colleagues so that when you get peer evaluations, especially on promotion and tenure, and I’ve worked as a reviewer, and I’ve been on committees, and I just see some of my colleagues saying, oh, my gosh, I don’t know what this person is doing. You know, they’re not even teaching as much as they’re supposed to be.

It takes an education institution-wide. You need to have administrative support. And I know I’m going long. I feel like someone on the Academy Awards going, I know, wrap up. The sense that your colleagues can’t all work together, when I talk about this at other institutions, and I say, oh, my gosh, our chemists all teach the same shell, we all use the same blended learning format, I get looks of surprise, because it’s like, oh, but that would never work in my department.

Everyone is kind of a lone wolf. Everyone wants, if you can find a way to bring everyone together, and then you’re all in the same boat, it will be a whole lot more fun. I love my colleagues in chemistry, because we talk almost daily about what we’re doing, and we all know what’s going on in
each other’s class. Anyway, try. I know it’s hard. And I know I didn’t get to all your questions. Let me review the ten things. Right?

So we have ADDIE. We have do things before class. Get students to do things before. Get students to do things during class. Get them to do things after. And really, they’re, as someone pointed out, they’re all very similar. You want to engage them. You want to encourage collaboration both online and face to face of your students. You can do that. Justify the rationale behind the design. You can do that too.

High- and low-stakes grading. Don’t just use grading to, you know, sort them like you’re sorting eggs. Your students are more than just eggs who you’re trying to, you know, sort for grad school or employers. Please. And then you need to look for assistance. You can do that. And you need to stay organized. I missed one. That’s okay. We’re wrapping up. You’ve got your ten. You’ve got your post-work in your supplemental materials.

Magna would like to hear from you. I want to thank you all for being here. I want to thank you for taking the time to think about blended learning. I hope, if nothing else, that I’ve at least, oh, I forgot motivation, but I’m hoping to provide some motivation for you so that you feel that the time you put into this is worthwhile. And I will point out that I will get to some of the questions that Rob didn’t get a chance to ask. I think I need, at this point, to turn it back over to you. Thank you so much, and take care.

Rob Kelly: All right. Thank you, Ike Shibley, and thank you all for participating. Ike did some of my closing remarks there.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Sorry.

Rob Kelly: Please take the survey, no, that’s great.

Ivan A. Shibley, Jr.: Okay.

Rob Kelly: Thanks for doing it. Thanks for making my job easier. Please take that survey and let us know what you think of today’s program. For information about our upcoming programs, please go to www.magnapubs.com. Thanks, again, for joining us, and have a great day.