A Guide to Designing and Teaching Your Online Course

Department of Comparative Studies

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I. Introduction

Welcome to online teaching (and perhaps welcome to teaching in general)! As a department, Comparative Studies is deeply committed to providing quality, provocative learning experiences for our students. We are also committed to linking our teachers, of whatever career stage, to resources for creating intentional, engaging, and productive courses.

We began the process of implementing online courses in 2019. Caroline Toy, PhD candidate, and Elizabeth Marsch Vu, Academic Program Coordinator and Associated Faculty, designed a new version of Comparative Studies 1100, Introduction to the Humanities, as a model online course. This manual is based on that course design process, and includes what we learned from sources around campus, including the Office of Distance Education and eLearning (ODEE), ASCtech, the Innovate Conference, the University Institute for Teaching and Learning (UITL), the Exploring Learning Technologies (ELT) working group, and instructional design staff. We also drew on our combined 30 years of experience teaching online, in college classrooms, and other settings to emphasize student engagement.

The course development and supporting materials were made possible, in part, from a UITL grant, department funds, and volunteered time.

A. Who and What this Manual Is for

This manual is intended for all Comparative Studies faculty, instructors, and graduate teaching associates. It primarily provides guidance for people new to, or developing their toolbox in, teaching online. However, new instructors who are not teaching online will also find Chapter Two, a detailed guide to course design and syllabus development, applicable for classroom teaching as well.

For online teachers, the manual also addresses strategies and tools for teaching online, including student needs and expectations, effective ways to present information, interactive activities at a distance, enhanced use of CarmenCanvas, and developing course media like videos. We also include information about the many resources available on campus to help instructors learn more about online teaching and pedagogy in general. For instructors designing new online courses or new online implementations of existing courses, we provide information on how to navigate the process of getting your course approved.

This manual is not a technical user guide to Carmen or media production software. Online course designers and teachers will still need to consult Carmen Support services, ODEE’s tutorials, and ASCtech for detailed instruction beyond what we are able to provide. However, we hope to point you to what is possible and how you can effectively use these technologies, emphasizing options that have good on-campus support and/or are easy to use.
II. The Basics – How to Shape Your Course

Good online course design starts from the same point as good in-person course design: knowing what you want your students to take away and working back from takeaways to assignments, content, and activities. If you have never designed a college course before, we recommend spending a lot of time with this section, even if you are adapting someone else’s syllabus. If you are adapting your own syllabus or you have a lot of experience creating courses and a lot of expertise in the subject area your course will cover, this section may seem less important to you. However, a good online course is not merely a digital implementation of what you’ve done in the classroom. Some activities do not have a natural equivalent: students report that long online lecture videos are not effective, for example. In order to think creatively about how and what, you will also need to get back to the core why behind your course.

This section of the manual is based on a course development model called “Backwards Design” that begins not with what material you have to cover, but with what you want students to take away from your course. With this model, designing your course is a matter of working “backwards” (or inward) into how you accomplish those goals. Vanderbilt University’s Center for Teaching hosts a good overview of Backwards Design if you would like more information on the model: https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/understanding-by-design/. Here, we discuss how we implemented it and give you a road map for using it to set goals, objectives, and outcomes.

A. The “Big Rocks”

Our first step in designing the pilot online 1100 was to evaluate our big rocks. The root metaphor (adapted from UITL’s Course Design Institute): if you’re trying to fill a jar with rocks and you put all the small ones in first, your big, awkward-shaped ones aren’t going to fit. If you put the big ones in first and then fit the small ones around them, you’ll get everything in the jar.

Big rocks are the most important aspects of your class—the things without which the class would not be the class. In some cases, GEs are necessary big rocks, but your own visions for the course may shape how you articulate those GEs. If you see a course as having an ethical imperative in addition to skill or content requirements in the GE, that’s a big rock. Things that are not big rocks: assignments, specific pieces of content, even ideas that are key stepping stones in your vision for the course’s trajectory. Big rocks are the core of the course.

Starting with your big rocks helps you organize your thoughts and keeps your course coherent; by the time you get to actually writing the syllabus and building the modules, you will have a clearer idea of what you’re doing and be less susceptible to tangents and unnecessary add-ons. It may be helpful to develop your big rocks in conversation with someone else.

For our course, we determined that the Big Rocks included (in addition to obvious things like reading literature):

- Understanding power, privilege, and oppression
- Understanding identity and intersectionality as a necessary component of understanding other people’s perspectives in literature
- Recognizing that intentions and effects are not the same—that is, that one can be nice and still be part of systemic oppression (this is what we mean by an ethical imperative)
We saw 1100 as having an ethical outcome that could *practically* impact (we hope) how students act as global citizens. For us as teachers, that is the core of the course. Our other big rocks are about focusing the ideas of the course toward its ethical imperative. For us, the GEs were conceptually secondary—we saw them as goals that could be accomplished among our course-specific big rocks.

**B. Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes**

It is very difficult to skip straight from big rocks to syllabus successfully. Building from conceptual goals (more specific than your big rocks) to concrete outcomes systematically provides a solid foundation on which to design a course.

Goals and outcomes are familiar terms from OSU’s General Education descriptions, which consist of a goal and two or more outcomes for each GE designation. These tend to be very general and as a result, the outcomes are rarely concrete. While meeting the designated GE outcomes is essential, it is helpful to think about your goals and how they map to the GEs—and to develop more specific outcomes that fit the requirements of the GE, but express what you want your students to take from this class.

As a reminder, these are the GEs for 1100:

**Global Studies:** Students will understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

- **Outcome 1:** Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world’s nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
- **Outcome 2:** Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

**Literary Studies:** Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing.

- **Outcome 1:** Students analyze, interpret, and critique significant literary works.
- **Outcome 2:** Through reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students appraise and evaluate the personal and social values of their own and other cultures.

The goal/outcome model is common in educational design. Goals are what you want (or what you want students) to do in the course, and hopefully be able to transfer to other contexts later. Outcomes are specific things to be accomplished; curriculum is generally designed with multiple outcomes that support each goal and make its achievement verifiable.

Many educators use a three-part model—goals, **objectives**, and outcomes—instead of the simpler two-part model used in the GEs. Objectives are an intermediary step between goal and outcome. (You might also recognize the goal/objective/outcome triad from grant writing—it means more or less the same
thing here.) If goals tell us what we’re planning to do or think about, and outcomes tell us what students are going to demonstrate, objectives tell us more specifically what students need to do to get to the outcomes. This section walks you through differentiating goals, objectives, and outcomes.

i. Goals
Creating goals is your first step after determining your “big rocks”. Think about your desired takeaways, especially the types of skills you want students to develop. You might find it useful to examine the GE goals you’re required to meet and figure out how you would articulate that goal for this specific course. Then progress to developing additional goals that are distinct from the GEs.

We developed five goals for the pilot online 1100—three original in addition to the two GEs (which we annotated in our notes):

**Goal 1 (Global Studies GE):** Students will understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

**Goal 2 (Literary Studies GE):** Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing.

**Goal 3:** Students explore how systems of power are intertwined with individual identity and experiences.

**Goal 4:** Students improve information literacy by critically reading multiple types of texts to evaluate sources, biases, and purposes.

**Goal 5:** Students assess the impact of their perspectives/identity positions, intentional and unintentional, on the world.

Each of these goals is distinct. It may look like Goal 2 (Lit GE) and Goal 4 (also about critical reading) are the same, but while they do have some overlap, Goal 2 is about literary analysis as an academic competency, and Goal 4 is primarily about broader information literacy and recognition of context, a transferable skill. Likewise, Goals 3 and 5 have interesting intersections with Goal 1, but—as our objectives will show—are more concerned with transferability and the socio-political weight of analyzing global literature.

Good verb phrases for goals are things like *explore, examine, gain skills in, improve, understand,* or *question.* A good goal provides plenty of room for *how* you’re going to accomplish and assess something, but is fairly specific about the relevant ideas and skills. (Note that GE goals are often not very good goals because they try to cover too much and remain vague in a way that might not function well for our current purposes.)

ii. Objectives
As mentioned previously, objectives are an intermediary step between goals and outcomes. It can be tempting to skip this step, particularly since you are provided with “outcomes” by the GE standards. But outcomes tend to be much more specific and easier to assess if you go through the objectives step first to determine what you’re actually going to do. Objectives don’t tell you *how* you (or your students) are going to meet goals or be assessed on them, but they do tell you what students are going to be up to. If that sounds like the GE outcomes, you’re thinking about it correctly; the GE outcomes for Global Studies and Literary Studies are closer to objectives. **When you are designing a GE course, it may help to think**
of the GE outcomes as objectives, and then add your own specific outcomes that accomplish the GE but are more relevant to your class. See the Outcomes section below.

Let’s look at an example of the relationship between goals and objectives from the goals above. (Later on, we’ll add outcomes to this.)

**Goal 3:** Students explore how systems of power are intertwined with individual identity and experiences.

**Objective 3.1:** Students engage with ideas like gender, race, sexual identity, class, ability, religion, and national origin as categories that shape individual lives.

**Objective 3.2:** Students recognize the structures through which oppression and inequality operate rather than conceiving of these problems as rooted solely in intent.

**Objective 3.3:** Students consider why and how systemic oppression and structural inequities might be addressed.

You can see here that the objectives are things we’re going to do, but not yet things we can easily assess. Each goal should have multiple objectives, showing what your course will stress about that goal. To create these objectives, we carefully reread the goal and determined that it’s about two things that we want students to realize are inseparable: identity and systems of power. What do we need students to do to accomplish that? First, they need to recognize what they mean and how they work. Objective 3.1 addresses different identity categories and how they affect lives. Objective 3.2 addresses structures of unequal power as pervasive. Objective 3.3, which could be seen as a corollary of 3.2, indicates that students will do more than recognize the important components of the goal; they also think about alternatives. These objectives are not the only possible ways of addressing the goal, so we’re getting increasingly specific about the nature of the class. But on the other hand, they don’t indicate how we’re going to accomplish the goal. That’s fine; outcomes serve that purpose.

Good verb phrases for objectives include things like engage, analyze, recognize, consider, develop, and apply. Compared to verb phrases for goals, these are much more oriented toward actions than ideas your course will address. If you are struggling to figure out what distinguishes an objective from a goal or an outcome, you can (as mentioned above) use a GE “outcome” as an objective; working from that toward more specific outcomes will help you see the difference.

### iii. Outcomes

Outcomes are specific and assessable things students will achieve by the end of your course that clearly accomplish parts of the goal. If objectives are things your students will do in general, outcomes set up what that will look like in practice. Again, these are not assignments, but they are things that would emerge distinctly in assignments. You might incorporate them into an essay prompt, assess them through an exam, or achieve them through required materials on the syllabus. When you’re writing your outcomes you may already have assignments in mind, but that isn’t necessary. The next chapter of this manual discusses getting from outcomes to assignments.

Here are sample outcomes that go with the goal and objectives discussed above:

**Goal 3:** Students explore how systems of power are intertwined with individual identity and experiences.
**Objective 3.1:** Students engage with ideas like gender, race, sexual identity, class, ability, religion, and national origin as categories that shape individual lives.

**Outcome 3.1.1:** Students identify several identity categories and conceptualize intersectional identities.

**Outcome 3.1.2:** Students treat identity categories as mutable and functioning beyond demographic descriptions.

**Outcome 3.1.3:** Students articulate the identity categories to which they belong and how those positions differentiate them from others.

**Objective 3.2:** Students recognize the structures through which oppression and inequality operate rather than conceiving of these problems as rooted solely in intent.

**Outcome 3.2.1:** Students use assigned texts to describe the impact of intersections of personal intent and structural inequities on individuals and communities.

**Objective 3.3:** Students consider why and how systemic oppression and structural inequities might be addressed.

**Outcome 3.3.1:** Students examine how systemic changes might affect individual and community experiences within assigned texts.

**Outcome 3.3.2:** Students apply these analytic strategies to real-world or historical parallels.

You should notice a couple of things here. First, objectives have varying numbers of related outcomes. That’s fine, particularly in cases where an outcome might serve more than one objective (as the outcomes for 3.2 and 3.3, especially 3.3.2, do here). Second, these are much more specific than the objectives. Later, you should be able to map them to assignments (and map assignments to them). Good outcomes could be handed off to another instructor and that instructor could easily come up with modes of accomplishing them, or even assignments. This is particularly important if you are teaching a course that is frequently offered by different instructors.

Remember from above that GE “outcomes” are not particularly well-written outcomes in our model. We strongly recommend that if you are teaching a GE course, you think of the required outcomes as objectives and **write your own outcomes that apply to your course** and that still accomplish the GE. If you’re new to course design, do that before you start generating other outcomes for your own goals and objectives so you can practice differentiating objectives and outcomes. We did this for both 1100 GEs, and here’s how it looked for the Literary Studies GE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES (remember, these are the original GE outcomes!)</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical | Students analyze, interpret, and critique significant literary works. | **A:** Students produce analysis of literary texts that demonstrates awareness of the importance of context, historical response, and perceived aesthetic value.  
**B:** Students apply these analytic skills to works not on the syllabus. |
listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing.  

| Through reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students appraise and evaluate the personal and social values of their own and other cultures. | C: Students read or watch a variety of texts from outside the United States, and can identify the significance of their origin in relation to U.S. or Anglophone cultural influence. | D: Students trace the significance of identity and systems of power within these literary works. |

This made it much easier to see how the GE is connected to our “big rocks” for 1100, and to our other goals.

Good verb phrases for outcomes are things like *create, produce, identify, articulate, demonstrate, discuss, assess,* and the like—verbs that have a product we can evaluate. But verb phrases like those used in objectives may also be appropriate (*apply, analyze, recognize*) as long as the outcome is clearly assessable.

Note that outcomes are not simply assignments—in fact, at this stage, we’re not talking about assignments at all, even if you might have some ideas about how you want to accomplish outcomes. Students do not meet an outcome by passing an exam (though an exam may be a tool you use to assess whether students are meeting the outcome). Ideally, outcomes represent transferrable skills. Assignments—which you’ll develop later—are ways of accomplishing objectives or demonstrating outcomes, not the outcomes themselves. You may have assignments in mind when you are creating outcomes, though. (Writing GE courses may be an exception because the outcomes can only be demonstrated by certain types of assignments—but even then, some creativity is possible.)
iv. Road Map: Big Rocks, Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

It may be tempting, especially if you are adapting a course you’ve taught before (from older curriculum, from a different institution, or to an online format), to skip or condense the process of clarifying your goals, objectives, and outcomes. We recommend you don’t. Between the two of us doing the 1100 redesign, we have over 30 years of teaching experience in various contexts and we found it useful! Paying careful attention to the big picture will help you identify uncertainties in your design, weaker readings, and points of flexibility where you can plan to adapt future iterations of the course. If you are designing online for the first time, this is especially important: the difference in how you deliver the course will affect how your outcomes fit together as much as how you achieve them.

With that in mind...

Step 1: Start with articulating your big rocks (and your GE requirements in the back of your head). What is going to make this course your course? What are the takeaways? Ethical imperatives? Key skills or ideas?

Step 2: From your big rocks, develop your goals. The GEs are essentially required goals. Think of three additional major course goals you want to accomplish. These are general things toward which your students should be building throughout the course. You want your goals to be discrete, but interconnected. They should, as a group, show how you’re going to tie together your big rocks, but they probably will not be your big rocks.

Step 3: For each goal, think about objectives: what kinds of things you (or students) need to do to meet the goals. What skills do students need? What ideas do they need to be exposed to? You’re still thinking broadly here, but less conceptually. What are the kinds of things you’re going to do in your class? You will have more than one objective per goal.

Step 4: Develop outcomes. You may or may not have more than one outcome per objective. The difference between an outcome and an objective is that an outcome is something that students can demonstrate and you can assess with a minimum of subjectivity; either they did it, or they didn’t.

By the time you’ve gotten through this, you should have two things you didn’t have at the “big rocks” stage: an idea of what types of content your students need, and probably some more specific ideas about how they’re going to demonstrate the outcomes. This sets you up for the next stages: developing your assignments and choosing your content.
C. Getting Concrete: Assignments and Content

With your goals, objectives, and outcomes in mind, you’re ready to work on what you and your students will do in the course. You probably already have some ideas about content you want to use or assignments you plan to give. In some cases, these might be tied to the purpose of the course or GE requirements: for example, a prerequisite course probably has a somewhat standard reading list, and a second-level writing GE requires you to assign multiple papers, including at least one research assignment. But you might also have a lot of flexibility. Where to start?

There are different schools of thought on this. The backwards design method, which is where the goals-objectives-outcomes process described above comes from, and which is used in OSU’s Course Design Institute, coaches instructors to choose assignments before content. Some instructors have strong existing content priorities and want to change up their approach to teaching and learning. Still others (like most experiential educators) see course design as being about structure, progressing through phases where content and skill mastery are achieved together to move on to more independent ways of learning. These all have situational advantages and disadvantages, and which you use may be a matter of your training, comfort, and specific needs for your course design project. In our case, we did something between assignment-first backwards design and progression-driven design for transfer of learning. Here we explain what we did. If you are a new(er) instructor, we recommend backwards design for simplicity.

i. Assignments

What is an assignment? You will “assign” your students various tasks, like doing the reading or showing up for an in-person class, that are not assignments. For our purposes, assignments are things you have your students do that answer “yes” to both of the following questions:

- Is it a specific and concrete task with an identifiable product of some kind?
- Are you going to evaluate it somehow?

Many college courses tend to rely on fairly limited types of assignments: quizzes, exams, response papers, formal essays, presentations, Carmen posts, and the occasional small group or multimedia project. This is very limiting for learning and accessibility. A wider range of assignments means a more varied and interesting course, as well as more opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery, particularly if they have trouble with traditional written modes of assessment.

OSU units like the University Institute for Teaching and Learning (UITL, which as of 2019 includes the former UCAT), the Office of Distance Education and E-Learning (ODEE), the Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing (CSTW), and the English Department’s Digital Media and Composition (DMAC) Institute offer workshops on how to make your assignments more varied and accessible. Schedules are available on their websites; see the resource list at the end of this manual. Comparative Studies colleagues also have a rich array of experiences with ethnographic, field-based, mobile device-mediated, and/or gamified assignments. Many of these can be used in online and offline contexts. See the appendices for some basic suggestions and resources. That said, there are some pitfalls to assignment creativity, which we’ll address specifically in relation to online courses.
So how did we arrive at assignments for the online 1100? It was a matter of collecting our ideas and then evaluating how they could build on each other productively. In some cases, we knew from the outcomes process that certain assignments would make sense. For example, many outcomes reflected a need for students to individually produce some kind of analysis of course readings; the most obvious way to do that is an essay-based midterm or a paper. In other cases, we had creative ideas about assignments that we knew would suit the course’s big rocks. These could be designed to meet some of our outcomes without requiring more written assignments. The “Yo, Is This Racist?”-style advice podcast assignment, which we describe below, is one example.

We thought a lot about how assignments would build on each other. In our 1100, we push students to attain critical thinking skills specifically about subjects that make a lot of them uncomfortable, and to apply those skills beyond class texts. Accomplishing that requires careful planning and structuring of the course over the entire semester. Student readiness is often seen as being about knowledge and skill competencies (like writing). It’s fairly standard in a writing course, for example, to assign a shorter paper early in the semester and a longer one later so the instructor can identify students’ weaknesses and help them work toward a more complex final product. But in many cases readiness also requires a sustained trajectory of increasingly complicated thought over the course of a semester. Carefully chosen assignments provide that structure. Creating assignments that build on one another to support development of a complicated skill or idea is often referred to as “scaffolding.”

That led us to consider our assignments from an experiential point of view: what would students take away from each one, and how could we then ask them to “level up” and apply that learning with more independence to the next assignment? Experiential learning is usually based on concrete (i.e., embodied) experiences, but the theory can also be applied to other kinds of learning progressions. The key idea is that students should both analyze an experience (tangible or reading) and be ready to apply it to different situations; skills and thinking prepare students to “level up”.
A case in point is the advice podcast project. This assignment required students to work in small groups, producing a product designed for the general public, in this case, a podcast or written advice column. That would have been very difficult for students if the assignment had come out of nowhere. Instead, from the beginning of the term, students were asked to write entries in what we called a diary of Systemic Injustices. These were short journal entries designed to coach students into training themselves to identify and analyze systemic injustices they encounter. They receive some feedback on those entries, and were encouraged to deepen their understanding as the term progressed. Their best entry was then expanded and shared with their classmates who commented on the analysis using course concepts we were learning. That experience then lead students into sharing an idea for a "Yo is this Racist"-style advice podcast or column with group members. Together, several members of the group described a phenomenon of systemic injustice and discuss it together in a complex, interesting piece for public consumption. This one assignment was scaffolded with several activities and feedback checkpoints along the way to guide students toward the major assignment. It also included several increasingly wider layers of communication—first just with the instructor, then to the class, then to a wider public.

While we wanted to be just as inventive and intentional with major assignments as we would be in an in-person class, the online format of this course does affect what we assign—including how much
written/responsory work we give. Remember, in addition to the usual amount of time students would spend doing reading and homework, you have at least three additional hours, substituting for actual class time, that you can reasonably ask them to work. While we don’t recommend assigning more reading than you would for an in-person course, you can give a heavier load of regular weekly assignments (Carmen response posts, integrated activities, etc) than you might in a regular class. At the same time, be reasonable, especially if the week’s assignments ask them to learn a new technology (see “Tools and Parallel Content” below). We used the standard Carnegie hours model to determine how much work was appropriate to assign for the course.

ii. **Content**

Content is all the material you have your students work with during the course. That includes readings; viewings; performances, events, or exhibits they must attend; and anything you use for in-class or Carmen exercises. Content is not just the stuff listed on your syllabus. However, you’ll probably build out from the major content you include on the syllabus.

When you start designing your course, you’ll probably have some things in mind that you definitely want to include as well as some blank spaces. Think about how the works you already have in mind fit together or build on each other (just like assignments). What’s most accessible? For what readings do students need more preparation and practice? What content might serve as a bridge? Is there content that is tied to specific assignments? It’s a good idea to collect content as you go through the design process, creating an archive you can find later. You may not use it all (but it could be useful in a future course), or you may find that some pieces fit into your overall course trajectory in unexpected ways. The 1100 Resource Bank that we’ve made available to you is a curated archive of potential content.

Choosing content can be a more organic process than building a progression of assignments, but it’s not a separate task. If you are building a fairly tight progression of skills and inquiry, you will need to be very intentional with the content you use to get there. If you are planning a survey approach and assignments that are less tied to each other, you might have more flexibility to include content that would feel tangential in a more tightly structured class.

Note, though, that teaching 1100 or another survey course doesn’t mean you can’t have a structured progression. To complement our progression of assignments, we chose readings and viewings that include perspectives from all over the world and increasingly complex examples of intercultural encounter. We also made sure that our content makes talking about key concepts related to identity and power, like gender, race, religion, and immigration, not just possible but inevitable.

A note on that: make sure your content includes diverse voices. An informal survey of content assigned in past 1100 courses that we did early in this design process revealed that in the past few years, despite some progress and commitment to including a wider range of voices, we have still mostly been teaching white men’s work (especially in film selections). We have also been teaching a lot of U.S.-based work, but the GE s for this course indicate we should be seeking out more global writers and creators. For many students, 1100 is their first and often only opportunity in college to be exposed to the voices of people they think of as “other”. Also consider how you can include these voices and address identity categories without ghettoizing them by having a week on gender, a week on race, a week on immigration, etc. And if you do have parts of your course where you talk more about gender, talk about
masculinity as well as women and trans* people. Likewise, when you discuss race as a category, talk about whiteness as well as Blackness and brownness. Exposing and marking unmarked “defaults” is an excellent exercise for 1100 students that can be supported by careful selection of course materials.

In addition to selecting a diverse range of authors and creators, you will also want to pay some attention to whether you want to include a diverse range of media. To do this, you will need to spend some time considering how students will access and consume what you assign, but one of the wonderful potentialities of online education is the diversification and subsequent inclusion of a wider range of materials, potentially expanding status quo ideas about knowledge production.

A list of our major content can be found in the syllabus, Appendix [x].

iii. Tools and Parallel Content

If content is the material students work with and assignments are the specific, evaluated tasks they do, tools are how they accomplish it. (Learning how to use these tools is sometimes called “parallel content”.) In many cases, you are not expected to teach tools. For example, you should be able to presume students know how to use some kind of word processing software, or that they can get help with that elsewhere in the university. Or you might offer multiple options to complete an assignment with the warning that you are not going to teach the optional technologies (such as a podcast option for a research project whose “default” format is a paper). In general, with in-person classes in Comparative Studies, we don’t have to think too much about teaching students to use tools. In fact, probably the most common parallel content we include is how to use the libraries.

With online teaching, you will be using a lot more technologies, and chances are at least one of them will be new to your students. Although you aren’t teaching a computer skills course and you don’t need to be on-call tech support, you do need to make sure students (1) have resources to learn how to use the tech, and (2) know how they will be expected to use it in your class. Therefore, parallel content could become a not-insignificant part of what you’re teaching. Rein yourself in when it comes to tech so you don’t end up needing to spend tons of time teaching it. Try to limit the number of new and exciting tools you deploy, and especially limit the number of technologies students will have to learn for a one-off assignment.

Take our class as an example. To facilitate the assignments discussed above, we chose the following technologies:

- Carmen Canvas, including¹
  - Modules
  - Discussions
  - Groups
  - CarmenZoom
- U.OSU blogging platform
- Secure Media Library

¹ We also used the Pages tool ourselves to build modules, as will be described later, but we only asked students to navigate and use the four Carmen technologies listed here.
• Audacity audio editing software

Of these, it’s pretty likely that a non-first-year student has used Carmen modules and discussions, and that’s it. If you want your students to succeed, you will have to provide some guidance on your expectations and how to get tutorials at the very least. For this course, we wrote up a Tech Guide describing the purpose of each tool, how they’re expected to use it, and where to get more information. The Tech Guide is not an instruction manual, but it does provide expectations and resources. See Appendix [X].

A tip on technologies we’ll revisit later: it is in your best interests to choose tools that are OSU-provided whenever possible. ODEE, ASCtech, and the CAS Curriculum Committee have specific requirements about privacy and accessibility, and OSU-provided technologies have already been vetted. For software, choose programs that are available in the Digital Union labs on campus and/or are available free, without requiring cloud storage (a security concern). Audacity meets both those criteria.

D. Structuring the Course

In addition to thinking about assignments, content, and parallel content, online courses require strategizing about structure. We are used to having a structure handed to us by the course meeting times: do we meet once a week? Twice? Three times? We also have calendar factors: is it spring (one long break), fall (two shorter breaks), or summer (compressed schedule)? Some of this applies to online courses—for example, you still have to respect scheduled breaks. But in transitioning your course to online, you lose the structure of bi- or tri-weekly meetings. Even if you’re replicating an existing class including all the reading and assignments, the change in structure will still be a factor.

It is helpful to think of an online course as if it meets once a week. You will likely be building one module for each week of the term and then asking students to interact with it in different ways at different times. To keep things coherent, all the reading and assignments for that week should be focused around one set of goals. If you don’t already do so in your lesson planning, it’s a particularly good idea to write out objectives for each week so you can keep yourself accountable and ensure the weekly modules are focused. You likely won’t be able to do a sudden midweek switch in topics; what might work in the classroom will come across as scattered, abrupt, or tangential in the online context. Maintaining coherence may indeed affect what you can teach.

This is particularly important because in a classroom setting, you have the ability to make pivots sensibly and respond quickly if students aren’t seeing the connection. Online, you don’t have body language, affect, and other immediate signs of comprehension and engagement to tell you if people are getting it. You can assess the quality of participation and adjust accordingly, but it takes several days to gather that information. When you start building the actual modules for the course, you’ll need to be very intentional about how structure facilitates comprehension. We’ll talk more about that when we discuss how to build modules.

You can attempt to stick with a twice-a-week or three-times-a-week structure by requiring participation on specific days, requiring synchronous sessions (i.e., livestreamed lectures and discussions)\(^2\), and even

\(^2\) Some instructors do this, but the advice we received from an instructional technologist was to avoid it. Too many students cannot attend. See the technologies section for more details.
making multiple modules a week. However, there are good reasons not to do this. First, one of the advantages of online courses for students is flexibility. You will likely have on-campus students; students based out of Columbus, out of state, or even in different time zones; and students who are working full time or caring for others. The last group may or may not have consistent work or care schedules. In short, many students register for online courses because they can’t be present at set times two or three times a week. Second, building modules and facilitating discussion boards is a lot of work (especially if you have not worked with all of Carmen’s features before). Any content you present has to be created in student-ready, accessible, polished format. Students also produce a lot more work that has to be evaluated. In some ways this is great, because you can require everyone to “talk in class,” but remember that the more sessions you have a week, the more work you will do.

For these reasons, we opted for a once-a-week module that required participation in discussions at least twice a week. For the 15-week course, our “week” was Wednesday-Sunday instead of Monday-Friday (see the next section for more details). For the 6-week version, we opted for a Tuesday-Saturday week. That allows flexibility for students who are busier during the weekends and for students who have more time to devote to the class on the weekends. Participation requirements were flexible enough to allow students to do most of the work when it suited them. Think about what will work for you and your students.

E. The Syllabus

Some of you have written many syllabi, and probably some have written only a few (or none, if you are a GTA). If you are an experienced course creator, skip down to the subheading “Syllabi for Online Courses”. If you don’t have much experience creating syllabi, here are some thoughts.

The syllabus is the road map for your course that both you and students will follow. It is, to all intents and purposes, a contract. As such, it needs to be clear, consistent, and mostly fixed. Students will understand if you need to make one or two changes to readings over the course of the semester (especially if changes are in their favor). If you deviate wildly from the syllabus as originally distributed, things will get tense and also more difficult for you. You cannot say “your question is covered on the syllabus” if your syllabus is not reliable!

The syllabus should include a description of the course, a list of materials and tools students need to complete it, all your policies, relevant OSU policies (e.g., academic dishonesty, accessibility, etc), an overview of evaluation, an overview of assignments, and the course schedule. The College of Arts and Sciences provides a list of what should be included in a syllabus here: https://asccas.osu.edu/curriculum/asc-syllabus-elements.

The syllabus is also one of your first opportunities to establish both boundaries and rapport with your students. If a policy is non-negotiable, say so; if it is negotiable, say how. It’s especially important for new and younger instructors (those who do not get the automatic respect granted to teachers who embody professorial stereotypes) to make it clear that you have authority over the course. Women and instructors of color are, unfortunately, more likely to have their authority and teaching ability questioned; a clear, firm syllabus can help you establish yourself. At the same time, the syllabus gives you a chance to show that (and how) you recognize students are human beings who sometimes need
help. You may wish to include campus and hotline resources for physical, mental, and academic wellness (appendix [x]; please check the phone numbers if you use it after 2019), for example.

i. Syllabi for Online Courses

The Office of Distance Education and E-Learning (ODEE) and the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee have more specific requirements for online courses. In addition to the syllabus elements listed at the link above, you are required to include additional information about course technology, participation requirements (that is, what students are required to do besides turning in assignments on due dates), and instructor response time information. ODEE provides a template for online course syllabi that is formatted to work with screen readers for accessibility, and is also familiar to the ASC Curriculum Committee. We recommend it in general, and especially for instructors who are developing a new online course or new online implementation of an existing course that needs to be reviewed by the Committee (using this template may expedite approval). The template can be found on this page: https://odee.osu.edu/plan-your-course. Our syllabus in Appendix [x] is an example of how it looks in practice.

As mentioned, the primary additional elements of the online syllabus, beyond what you would provide already, are the following:

- Course technology requirements
- Specific participation requirements
- Instructor communication and response time information

You also need to think more carefully about the following things that should be in any syllabus:

- Accessibility
- Calendar and course structure

Let’s go through each of them.

Course technology requirements at the most basic level are a list of hardware, software, any cloud services used, and technical skills needed to complete the course. This should go to the most basic level: students need access to a computer and web-browsing skills, and you need to say so. Any additional peripherals, software, or skills need to be clearly indicated, including how to get them. You must also include information about how to get technical support. In the “Tools and Parallel Content” section, we mentioned that it’s best to use OSU-provided technologies. This is one reason: for all OSU technologies, you just need to list the basic tech support info (cio.osu.edu/selfservice; 614-688-HELP; 8help@osu.edu; 614-688-8743 for TDD). You do not need to be in the business of providing tech support, but you do need to tell your students where they can get tech support.

In addition, you must provide information about technology accessibility and privacy. For OSU services, accessibility information is already available online; you just need to link to the appropriate pages for Carmen, U.OSU, and whatever else you use. If you are using non-OSU technology, you are responsible for finding and linking accessibility information. If some technologies are not accessible (for example, a D/deaf or hard of hearing student is not going to succeed with a sound-based project even if the audio editing tool has accessibility features for other disabilities), indicate that alternatives are available. OSU
is also concerned about privacy and security. OSU information technology services are vetted to ensure they meet the University’s security standards, and require students to agree to a privacy policy—but other cloud-based tools do not. The rule is that if students have to use a non-OSU tool that requires them to have or make an account, you need to provide privacy information. OCIO and ODEE strongly discourage the use of non-OSU technologies where private information is collected for security and liability reasons. Non-OSU technologies where information is not collected are generally OK.

The list of available and vetted technologies is constantly evolving as OSU adopts new tools, changes platforms, etc. If you have a project in mind or you notice a particularly frustrating part of the course that could be improved, it will be helpful to consult with an instructional designer to learn what emerging technologies may have become available since the course was created.

**Participation requirements** spell out how students must be involved with the course beyond turning in assignments. Most of us have something in our in-person syllabi about participation expectations in the classroom, but for an online course, it’s necessary to lay it out more specifically. Do students need to participate in discussion once a week? Twice a week? More? How many posts or replies? In what area of Carmen? Have you created a calendar reminder? Is there a specific minimum word count? Are live sessions required? What options are available if students cannot attend them? Do you have policies about periods of non-participation (the equivalent of absences)? Make clear how often, when, where, and how students need to participate, and what the consequences of non-participation are.

(Quick note: it was recommended to us that we not attempt to have required live sessions because of scheduling, technology, and accessibility difficulties. This is not policy, but is the wisdom of an experienced instructional designer. If you have a live session, record it for asynchronous viewing later.)

**Instructor communication and response time information:** How can students contact you? How will you contact them? How long do you take to read their weekly posts? To grade their papers? Since you don’t have in-person office hours, how can they arrange a consultation? Make sure all this is clear. If you have policies about when you will and will not respond to email, how often they need to check their email, and whether they need to have Carmen notifications turned on, this is the place to lay that out. You may want to establish a backup plan for cases of technology failure so you can communicate with your students if Carmen is down. These may well be policies you have for an in-person class too, but they are higher-stakes here. Articulating what students can expect then meeting those expectations creates trust necessary in an online learning environment.

**Accessibility** is different in an online course because, as we will see, a good online course is built on principles of “universal design”—that is, it’s accessible to start out with rather than something that can be adapted for students with disabilities. (This is good practice for all courses in general, but, from our perspective, required from the outset when designing online course materials.) In addition to the normal required statement about disability accommodations that goes in all syllabi, you should be thinking about technological approaches. See the accessibility section below. You also need to ensure that the syllabus itself is formatted with accessibility in mind (even if you don’t like ASCtech’s syllabus template, which we used, it has the advantage of being built for screen-reader compatibility). Readings should be available in a screen-reader-accessible format (you will need to convert scanned PDFs). If you have concerns about how best to do this, or are confused about what accessibility means in a fully online course, we recommend setting up a consultation with an instructional designer at ODEE, ASCtech, or UITL.
Calendar and course structure, as discussed previously, are different when you do not have set meeting times every week. You need to be very specific about structure in the syllabus. We are used to a M-F work week, but that may not be the most logical thing for your online course. For one thing, having modules available M-F means you have to do the bulk of your work on the weekend! It also makes the course harder for people who are working a standard M-F/9-5 job, especially if they also have families; those students may need the weekends to do work. For our 1100, we decided the week would start on Wednesdays and end on Sundays in order to give students a variety of times to do classwork. That means new modules go live on Wednesdays, all regularly weekly module work and discussion comments are due by Sunday night, and the instructor has Monday and Tuesday to follow up on discussions, prepare the next week’s recap video, and ensure that any other prep tasks are complete. We also have an intermediate deadline of Friday at noon for the first round of discussion posts (students must post once by Friday and again between Friday and Sunday, but when they do the bulk of the reading and module is up to them). A non-traditional work week needs to be put in writing as clearly as possible.

ii. Road Map: Assignments, Content, Parallel Content, Structure, and the Syllabus

We can see that a lot of planning an online course resembles planning an in-person one, but we have to think carefully about how as well as what. As an online instructor, you will have less flexibility to respond to students’ needs in the moment, so while you shouldn’t assume you can plan for everything, you do need to plan ahead thoroughly.

With that in mind...

Step 0: Figure out how much time you have. How many weeks are in the semester? Are some of them partial (respect students’ limited time in those weeks even though you aren’t missing an in-person contact day)? When will you be interrupted by breaks? You cannot assign modules during breaks, and it’s kind to reduce the amount of work in partial weeks (the week of Thanksgiving, MLK Day, etc).

Step 1: Look at your outcomes, which tell you what your students will do. What kinds of assignments and/or regular tasks give them opportunities to do those things? Make a list, and create a rough order in which assignments build on each other and on regular tasks. You can do this alongside Step 2.

Step 2: Look at your outcomes again, particularly the ones related to concepts or types of content. What materials can you use to get at those ideas? How do they fit together? Are some more accessible than others? Make a list and create a rough order. You can do this alongside Step 1. Make sure that the assignments and readings scheduled together make sense together, and that if an assignment is going to require a specific piece of content (e.g., an essay on works from the first three weeks), you allow enough time after the content for students to accomplish the task.

If you are like us, you may work through Step 1 and Step 2 at the same time, matching assignments to materials and filling in gaps so content and products both support your outcomes. We thought about progressions of difficulty and scaffolded cumulative products (each assignment built on the last). A white board or some of those giant sticky notes may be helpful if you are a visual thinker.
Step 3: Consider the tools students will need to accomplish regular tasks and specific assignments, and also your methods of content delivery. (Content delivery could include buying books, accessible PDFs on Carmen, films streamed from the SML, etc.) What technologies are you planning to use? Which ones do students already know, and which ones will be new? Are they easy? Are they accessible? Are you willing to devote time to teaching them, and if so how much? Is there an OSU-approved equivalent? Make a list, and figure out (in comparison with your rough outline of assignments and content) when you will need to insert the parallel content of learning how to use the tools for the first time. Technologies can give you lots of cool ideas, but the more you use, the more work and potential technical difficulties you create for students and yourself. The advice we received from an instructional technologist was that if you’re only using a technology for one thing, unless it’s a special project, see if you can do it with another technology you’re already using.

Step x: We recommend that as you do steps 1-3, you make a grid that includes columns for the date, content, parallel content, regular tasks, and assignment due dates. Think of it as a preliminary version of the syllabus schedule, and a way to visualize matching assignments to content and planning when you will need to do things like distribute assignment descriptions. See Appendix [Y] for an example.

Step 4: Once you have a semester’s worth of assignments, content, and parallel content, determine the course structure. Explore what amount of reading and other work students can do in a week, and how to draw the combination of tasks and material assigned into a coherent module that students complete on their own time. Figure out what week-to-week structure will support your progression of ideas and assignments, and also make the course easy to navigate. If you’ve used the grid system we recommend, you may find yourself moving things around as you clarify your structure.

Step 5: Build your syllabus. Use the ODEE/ASC Curriculum Committee template to remind yourself what to include and ensure that your syllabus is screen reader compatible. Be very specific in your policies, requirements, and logistical information, especially if your syllabus is being reviewed by the Curriculum Committee.

F. Getting Your Course Approved

Course approval is a complicated process that will involve collaboration with the Academic Program Coordinator and the undergraduate studies committee. What (if anything) you need to do varies depending on the nature of your project.

- If you are teaching an existing online course (that is, a course that has been taught online before), you do not need to go through any approval process even if you elect to make a few changes to the modules or assignments.
- If you are teaching a new online version of a course that Comparative Studies already offers in an in-person format, you will need to go through a course approval process that stresses how you have made the course and syllabus accessible and whether you are maintaining OSU’s technology security standards. After receiving approval from the department’s undergraduate curriculum committee, the approval process involves an additional review by ASCtech before moving forward to the ASC Curriculum Committee and OAA. Work closely with the Academic Program Coordinator to determine how far in advance your syllabus needs to be submitted, but
plan on proposals being submitted to the curriculum.osu.edu portal (by the APC) at least a year prior to desired course launch.

- If you are teaching a brand-new course never offered before in Comparative Studies that is also online, you will need to go through a full course approval process that evaluates the course goals and outcomes, the potential GEs and their assessment, the level, accessibility, and the use of technology. This is a multi-step approval process similar to the one outlined above (department committee approval> ASC review> concurrences from related departments> ASC Curriculum Committee> OAA). Consult with the Academic Program Coordinator before you begin. While you can initiate the first two or three steps yourself, concurrences may be sought by you, the undergraduate committee chair, the APC, or the department chair and final steps must be initiated by the APC and approved by the chair before advancing through the process.

Whether you are creating a new course or not, you must follow ASCtech and ODEE’s accessibility requirements, as articulated in their standards for new online courses. See ASC’s annually-updated curriculum manual for details.
III. Teaching Online vs Teaching in the Classroom

A. Student Approaches and Needs

We have alluded several times to the fact that students in distance learning courses may or may not have similar needs and expectations to the student demographics we regularly see in our classrooms. You should expect 9-5 working professionals, students and professionals whose work schedules are too heavy or too unpredictable for in-person classes, students who have never taken in-person classes at OSU, part-time students, full-time traditional students, Program 60 students (retirees taking classes for enrichment), students with disabilities that make online courses more accessible, international students who may not be living in the US, people out of our time zone, people caring for other members of their households, and others. We have explored how this affects your scheduling choices. It will also affect how students participate, their writing skills, and their familiarity with college study. Having online courses allows us to reach all these populations who might not normally have access to classroom-based education. We have tried to incorporate Universal Design for Learning principles, broadly conceived, into every aspect of course delivery.

While we cannot predict all the circumstances of your students and the needs they may have, it’s important to remember that just as your in-person students have a variety of learning styles, individual students in online courses find some strategies more effective than others. While we can’t please everyone all the time, trying to appeal to a wide range of learning needs over the course of the class is helpful.

At OSU’s Innovate Conference in 2019, we attended a panel of online students and instructors who discussed what they found effective and ineffective. Here’s a partial list of their comments. Note that some of them are contradictory!

Things Students Liked

- Synchronous sessions when they could see and hear the instructor and classmates foster a sense of immediacy and connection; whereas fully asynchronous courses allowed for flexibility and autonomy in completing the course successfully
- Recordings of live lectures and sessions that they can access later when they are unable to attend
- Fully accessible course tools (especially for audio and video components)
- Live office hours
- Flexibility; balance of self-pacing during the week and structure
- Ability to access everything they need for the week at once and return to specific parts as necessary (no hunting for materials or not being able to see what’s coming up as they move through the module)
- Guest lectures and interviews and use of various media
- Smaller classes or small breakout discussion groups
- Opportunities to develop multiple skills

Students also liked elements of any good (online or in-person) teaching, like assignments that build on each other, transparency, and feedback so they don’t feel like assignments are “thrown into a void.”
Some of these likes are tricky to deliver in combination. For example, students like live discussion sessions and being able to access recordings of them later, and they also like fully accessible audio and video. How do you manage this? (Our strategy is to have two options for live discussion sessions, one video/audio-based and one text-based [and therefore accessible], both of which are recorded. That way something is accessible immediately even if it takes you some time to caption or transcribe the audio/video discussion.) Some praised flexibility and others prioritized synchronous meetings. How do you balance that? These are things to think about when you choose your teaching methods and technologies.

**Things Students Disliked or Were Concerned About**

- Overuse of discussion boards (especially for “reading check” questions rather than real discussions)
- Using tech tools just because they seem exciting, which makes assignments take longer and feels like hoops you have to jump through
- Course requirements that did not take into account that non-traditional students have other responsibilities and schedules
- Time commitment and schedule required for real-time discussions and lectures
- Narrow view of access that considers only disability and not other challenges to access like time and work commitments
- Long, boring videos or powerpoints
- Modules that are locked down so you can only access each page by fully completing the last one
- Loneliness/lack of community

You can see that some of the things some students liked were burdensome to others—for example, live sessions or using multiple tech tools (which might introduce new skills, but take a lot of extra time). Some of these dislikes are tricky; you will need to use Carmen’s discussion features, but carefully. Live opportunities are great when they work, but students need options.

There are a couple of pretty firm takeaways here, though. First, be understanding of the fact that you generally cannot require students to do their work on a fixed schedule. Second, do not use long canned videos or even long live lectures that do not allow for much participation. (Our rule of thumb is that if it is longer than a TED talk [about 20 mins], it’s probably too long, in part because attention spans are short and in part because some students are only able to work half an hour at a time.) Third, consider providing some live/synchronous components, but not too many. Fourth, think intentionally about how to foster positive peer interaction using live and asynchronous strategies to reach the largest number of people. In general, think about how you can develop practices that support your educational values through course delivery methods.

**B. The Form of Your Course**

At OSU, all online courses are built in Carmen, and its tools are the primary shapers of the form of your class. Carmen provides for different modes of interactivity, types of content you can present and ways
of accessing it, evaluation tools, and other affordances. A number of non-Canvas services have been integrated into Carmen, including Zoom (videoconferencing), Office 365, and MediaSite (which allows storage of videos, including classroom recordings). As of Summer 2019, ODEE is looking to add additional services like Hypothes.is (a collaborative annotation tool) and others. You also have access to approved extensions. This section and the materials on technology will not cover all possible Carmen integrations. Here we cover how to use the basic Carmen tools that build your course in ways that are educationally effective.

OSU is also more heavily emphasizing ADA compliance lately. You should expect to do a regular check for advancements to support ADA compliance at the start of each semester.

i. Modules as Teaching Tool
Your primary way of delivering course content is through Carmen’s Modules feature. Many people already use this feature to organize course readings, assignments, and other materials, because it is far easier to navigate than the Files and Pages features. (In fact, we recommend you turn off student access to Pages to avoid chaos.) Modules let you clearly present the content and assignments for a given week in a coherent way, indicating what order students should do them in and integrating dropboxes, discussions, readings, videos, and content pages.

On the “Modules” page for the course, students will be able to see any modules you have made live as menus. Expanded module menus look something like this (a bird’s-eye view of our first week):
The module menu is provided this way so students can easily access the parts of the module they need when re-reading. However, students generally experience the module as a progression of pages and other elements, moving from one to the next without returning to the menu. A page within the module looks like this and includes buttons to continue to the next page or go back to the previous:
A week's module should be transparently organized, easy to read and navigate, and comprehensive; there should be no work for the week that is not at least mentioned in the module, and it is best to embed required activities and/or include links. There should be no surprises, and preferably no need to refer back to the syllabus to know what you’re supposed to do. The components within the module should be logically ordered, visually friendly, and fully accessible.

Most of the content within a module is delivered via pages, which are essentially webpages constructed through a Carmen rich-text interface (the ambitious among you may use HTML, but web editing skills are not necessary). Carmen can deliver pages through the Pages menu item (visible in the image above on the left), but if students cannot see the repository of pages, they can still access them through modules in the order you want them presented. One of your most significant tasks in developing an online course will be learning to make visually appealing, accessible, engaging pages. Further guidance about actually making pages is available in the next section.

ii. What Can Pages Do?

Pages can include all kinds of content, such as text, images, embedded video (from certain sources, including YouTube and MediaSite), external links, and internal links to Carmen discussions, surveys, quizzes, files, and other components that are generated automatically. As
such, they can serve as a one-stop shop for delivering a combination of content and interactive components. In the image below, you can see images, embedded YouTube video, links, and textual content.

Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story

Background

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (1977-present) is a renowned Nigerian novelist and short story writer. She was born and raised in Nigeria, earned college and graduate degrees in the United States, and now lives part time in both countries. Adichie writes about Nigerians in Nigeria, and also Nigerians encountering Americans and the United States. Her career was inspired in part by the works of Nigeria’s most celebrated writer, Chinua Achebe (1933-2013), whose book Things Fall Apart we will read this semester.

“The Danger of a Single Story”

In 2009, Adichie gave a TED talk, “The Danger of a Single Story,” which has been viewed over 10 million times in the ten years since. As a novelist, Adichie uses complicated characters and situations to comment on differences in the real world—a power of fiction that many of the authors we’ll read this semester also use. In this TED talk, she asks us to consider a problem with stories: the limitations of what we tell ourselves about the lives of other people.

Image is a screenshot of a module titled “Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story”. Content includes a decorative banner image of the OSU Oval, an image of Adichie speaking at OSU in the upper left with wrapped text giving background information, an embedded YouTube video showing a still of Adichie on stage at her TED Talk, and a set of reflection questions.

a. What Can I Use Them For?

Pages can deliver and contextualize most forms of content and activities you want your students to engage with. You can use them to talk directly to your students. In the example above, a page centered around Chimamanda Adichie’s well-known TED Talk “The Danger of a Single Story” includes background about Adichie, context for the TED Talk, the video, a link out to the video on the TED site (with transcript), and a set of reflection questions for taking personal notes.\(^3\) The

\(^3\) Note: this is a case in which we were not able to embed video from certain sources, namely the TED website. You can always link to videos you can’t embed, but the visual presentation is less appealing. For that reason, we found a version of the video on YouTube and linked to the original with its superior transcript. This is a reminder to consider appearance, appeal, and ease of use in addition to getting the content out there.
major things we use pages for are setting expectations for the week, wrapping things up, providing context for content, introducing guidance on how to do activities, and presenting content itself.

You can do other things with the Pages function. It is possible to grant students editing access to a limited set of pages, which you can use to construct a class wiki. Carmen also has a small group area function described in the next section in which students can create pages and use them to collaborate or present information for each other. Pages are one of Carmen’s most versatile features, but it takes some time to get used to building them. You should think about how to use them in ways that make things easier and clearer (for you and students), rather than maximizing every possible thing they can do.

Beyond creating pages and ensuring they’re in a logical order (which is easy to do via drag-and-drop from the menu page, with the inter-page links automatically updating), creating modules also involves bringing in other content. On the Modules menu page, you can add things to your module like links, assignments, files, and so on, using the “+” button at the top of the module, which brings up a lot of options:

Image shows the “Add item to module” tool, with the drop-down menu for content types to add activated.

You can add existing pages, assignments, quizzes, and discussions (a list of stuff already in your course will populate when you choose the content type to add), or create new ones. You can also add external links, tools, and text headers (bold text lines in the module that make its organization clear). Once these items are added, they will be integrated into the flow of the module and students will be able to navigate to them using the “Previous” and “Next” buttons. This is important for files, which are the only type of content that pages cannot generate automatic links for. Placing files within the modules allows you to present contextual material, send students directly to the reading or viewing, and then bring them back to further material that helps them think through what they read/saw/heard.
Overall, modules help you keep the class organized and perform the all-important function of making the week's structure, rationales, expectations, and content transparent to students. As in the case of the syllabus, clarity is even more important in an online course’s materials than in an in-person one because students in an online course expect to have a very clear idea of what they’re being asked to do. Good modules significantly decrease the possibility of frustration for everyone.

iii. Staying Organized in Carmen

We mentioned parenthetically above that we recommend turning off student access to the Pages menu. That is because that section is not organized by default, and can be very confusing. (This is also true of the Files section if you don’t organize the readings clearly.) Removing students’ ability to get lost in Pages funnels them into Modules as a way of experiencing the course, and will help you avoid questions about where the materials are. This will not interfere with their ability to see the pages that are in the modules, just their access to the unsorted repository of pages. If you are not going to sort your files into folders carefully, you may wish to hide the Files area as well.

You can adjust what Carmen areas and functions students can see and access using the Settings menu. Choose the “Navigation” tab and drag-and-drop things you don’t want students to see to the lower menu. Don’t forget to click “Save” at the very bottom, and then check using “Student View” that everything you want hidden is hidden.

iv. Types of Materials

Teaching online allows you to use a wide variety of materials, although you may have to learn some new technological skills to do so. The following are easily used in conjunction with Carmen:

- **Readings**: Readings remain the staple of our courses, and especially of 1100 (since it is a literature course). You can ask students to buy print or digital materials as you usually would and provide shorter readings on Carmen. One important requirement you may be unused to is that, in keeping with the principles of Universal Design, any materials you provide on Carmen should be accessible. That means creating accessible PDFs, making sure your videos are captioned, providing transcripts for any audio, and ensuring images have alt-text. An ODEE instructional designer or someone from ASCtech can help you with this (as can some librarians if you are putting materials on course reserve, or Student Life Disability Services if you have a registered student specifically requesting an accommodation). We will describe alt-text in the next chapter.

- **Videos**: You can use videos that you create and videos online (e.g., YouTube). You can embed YouTube videos directly into pages, and MediaSite, OSU’s storage service for videos you create, also integrates with Carmen. Again, by OSU policy videos must be captioned; choose YouTube videos that have good captions, and if you are creating your own videos, ask the ASCtech studio folks to explain the caption creation process. You can also assign films in your course; check the Secure Media Library and the OSU Libraries streaming services for content. These services do not integrate into Carmen, but you can provide links. We recommend no videos longer than 20 minutes. The videos we created for 1100 are archived in Box and available for your use. If you create a suitable lecture video, please contact Elizabeth for inclusion in the archive.
• Videoconferencing/live sessions: Zoom is integrated into Carmen. OSU provides business-level Zoom access to instructors, allowing you to host large meetings. If you have a free account, you will need to associate it with your OSU account, or create a new account using your OSU email. Consult OCIO’s support materials or Zoom.us for more information. Skype is not an OSU-approved service for this purpose.

C. Interactivity and Group Work

Many people have the misconception that online courses are essentially correspondence courses: you provide materials, students consume them and complete assignments. But as the student panelists we mentioned in earlier indicated, this is boring and lonely (not to mention ineffective for the kinds of learning we want our students to do). You will want to avoid giving big chunks of content and expecting big chunks of response (aka, weekly response papers, lots of major individual projects, etc). That’s not to say that you can’t use lots of content or expect plenty of work, but a wide variety of types of content and work in smaller chunks can be more engaging for students. An important way to do this is to make some assignments interactive among students, and between you and students.

i. What Carmen Provides

Carmen provides discussion boards, including discussions that can be limited to small groups, and videoconferencing. You may have used the Carmen Discussions function before for reading responses, most likely with a single all-class forum for each week. You can, however, create a single discussion and label it a “group discussion”, meaning pre-determined groups of students can see and respond to only the conversation happening in their group. We will explain how to do this in the next chapter. Creating groups at the beginning of the semester allows you to ensure each student is experiencing the class with a small group of others—actually a smaller class experience than you could achieve in the classroom.

Carmen also provides small group areas, again based on pre-determined, assigned groups created by you. These areas allow students to create their own discussions, pages, and other content, and can be useful for collaborative projects. However, there are some navigability concerns, and these tools are definitely parallel content that will require some teaching. While they are powerful, be thoughtful about how you use them.

It is also possible to set certain pages in Carmen so that students can edit them. You could use this option to create a class wiki.4 Note that pages do not allow simultaneous editing and unlike wikipedia, they do not track changes to material. That is, if a student deletes another student’s contribution to the page accidentally, you cannot recover it. Use with caution. The Word 365 integration does allow simultaneous editing (and for OSU security reasons, you should use it in place of Google Docs if you need a tool that will do that).

Carmen does periodically add other interactive tools. When planning your course, check the ODEE website for any announcements of new Carmen integrations or changes.

4 Note that if you do a google search about building a wiki in Canvas, you may see that there used to be a more intentional wiki tool integration. That is not available to us.
ii. **Other Options**

U.OSU (OSU’s personal blog-hosting service at u.osu.edu, based on WordPress) allows you to create a course blog and add your students to it, ensuring everyone can post. This is great for assignments where you want students to comment on each other’s work. If you typically have students give contextual presentations in class (e.g., researching background on an author or issue to help others understand the reading), and you’d rather not do it via a discussion board, a class blog can serve a similar function. Because Wordpress also allows the creation of website-style pages, you could use it to create a class wiki as well. You can also ask students to create their own individual blogs and keep journals related to class on them, but we do not recommend that; it will make grading complicated and you cannot absolutely ensure that the information is private.

iii. **Types of Interactive Assignments**

The classic interactive assignment in online courses is discussion, whether full-class or small-group. You have other options, some of which we’ve alluded to here: wikis, collaborative content creation (e.g., research projects, which could be presented in a module form), live discussion, and so on. You can also assign other types of projects that require students to work together. We asked students to create an advice-column-style podcast in pairs or small groups, where they recorded themselves in conversation.\(^5\) We chose this in part because it had a real-time component that allowed them to hear each other even if they never met; distance students could record the conversation by phone or Zoom. The idea was to produce an interesting conversation that applied course material to the real world, and to do it in a way that made classmates more real to each other. As with any kind of group project, you should build in a way to assess that the work was evenly distributed.

It’s also possible to include assignments that ask students to interact with people other than their classmates. It’s feasible to ask them to do things in the “real world” as long as they do not require physical presence on the OSU campus: a walking audit of their neighborhood (where they pay close attention to some assigned theme in their everyday surroundings, looking for stuff they might normally miss), a site visit, attending and summarizing a lecture, etc. Think of ways to get them away from their screens if doing so supports your course.

iv. **Example Interactive Exercises**

Here are a few example assignments that are interactive and online-course-friendly:

- **Peer review:** Prior to an exam, give the students a sample exam essay question and have them prepare an outline (with or without a thesis statement). Have students exchange outlines with a peer and provide feedback. In particular, ask them to think about whether they can follow an argument in their peer’s outline, and whether there is other material the writer could incorporate. Peer review is also a great assignment for papers.
- **Course blog:** Have students rotate posting on a U.OSU course blog; require others to read and comment. This could serve as a substitute for other types of discussions, particularly if you want to have students take on the role of discussant as a major assignment.
- **Small group live sessions:** Have students schedule (or assist them in scheduling) live discussions as a substitute for forum-style discussion some weeks. Small groups may be easier to schedule than full-class live sessions. Carmen’s group area will allow students in a pre-existing group

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\(^5\) This assignment included a non-audio accessible option that required collaboration but was not sound-based.
created by you to initiate their own small group conferences via (as of August 2019) Big Blue Button, a videoconferencing tool. Big Blue Button also has a live text-based group chat function.

- Co-created assignments: group projects on a small, lower-stakes scale. Carmen’s Collaborations tool, Office 365 (which integrates with BuckeyeBox), and other tools facilitate co-created documents, presentations, and the like. Such collaborations can be loosely interactive and ongoing, like creating shared reading notes or a group dictionary of key terms. These tools are a good substitute for Google Suite, which requires an account and therefore is not recommended under OSU’s security policies.

D. Special Concerns with Online Class Dynamics

As we’ve discussed, you can include many varied types of materials and activities to generate active engagement, just as you would in the classroom. Online courses can stress active participation in ways in-person courses cannot, and may in fact be easier for some students to participate in than speaking in front of peers. But even though we can achieve student engagement, teaching online has its own special concerns when it comes to group dynamics and “classroom” behavior.

You can (and should) set the same standards of behavior, language, and respect you would use in an in-person class—but while doing so, remember that humans interact differently with the idea of a person on the other side of a screen than with a person they’re looking in the face. This may make them less sympathetic or respectful to others, including you, in discussion and in private communications. On the other hand, asynchronous participation allows students to reflect on and edit their comments before sharing and often comments turn out more thoughtful and fully articulated than they are in person.

There are multiple ways to handle this. It is advisable to include a direct statement in the syllabus establishing a zero-tolerance policy for trolling, accompanied by a milder request that we consider how our different standards of communication online affect our learning. Establishing expectations is important, and so is monitoring them. Check in on every small group discussion several times a week, and pay attention to tone. Who is being heard and who is being excluded or ignored? Each small group should receive some participation from you regularly, not just if there’s a problem, but establishing an expectation that you are “there” with them provides a platform for you to intervene without it seeming automatically punitive. The same goes for large-group discussions; you have a moderator function as well as an instructional function. You can also use recap videos—a video at the start of each week’s module that reviews the previous week’s student discussions and frames them leading into the current week—to address concerns across the course, if you think the overall tone needs to be adjusted. Making yourself available and open to conversations with students is also an important part of managing class dynamics; it increases your presence as an instructor, and also helps students feel comfortable contacting you with a concern.

E. Accessibility

Accessibility is something we should all pay attention to in every course, but it is especially important in online courses. Because the forms of our interaction with online students are limited, we need to be
certain that everyone can use the materials we choose and complete assignments successfully. OSU mandates full accessibility in online courses; failure to do so puts the university in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which is why the online course approval process includes such close scrutiny of your technological choices.

Current research and training in “universal design” (also known as “universal design for learning”) suggests that the best way to make courses accessible for students with disabilities is to make them accessible by default. That is, instead of providing alternatives for students who use a screen-reader or require visual-only materials, we provide opportunities for everyone to access information and demonstrate their knowledge. Thus accessibility isn’t just about accessible PDFs (although you need those); it’s also about assignments that have multiple avenues for completion and content that engages students in multiple ways. Rather than thinking of accessibility as establishing a baseline common denominator that everyone can use, UDL suggests we seek not a one-size-fits-all solution but ways of designing courses so that students can interact with them in different ways. This makes learning more accessible and equitable for everyone. Many of the strategies we’ve discussed so far support accessibility on this broad level. We recommend seeking additional training in accessibility and universal design through UITL, ODEE, and the Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing.

That said, teaching online does involve using a lot of technologies. A person who has typical ability with seeing, hearing, reading, speaking, and typing has usually learned to use such technologies in ways that work for the majority of non-disabled people, but probably has not learned how to accommodate users who interact with the internet through screenreaders or with a word processor through speech-to-text. In the next section of this manual, we discuss accessibility in relation to each general category of technology. We focus on basic ideas and tools that are minimum best practices.
### IV. THE TECHNOLOGIES

The previous section covered how you can use different technologies to develop the form of your course and choose tools for delivery. This chapter considers different technologies in more detail, and addresses common accessibility concerns in the context of each technology. It does not replace the user manuals.

#### I. CarmenCanvas

This manual is not intended to cover all the possible uses of Carmen or problems you might run into. Carmen support is available through ODEE, which provides a comprehensive set of resources at [https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmencanvas](https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmencanvas). If the Carmen resource center does not answer your questions, you can consult the Canvas user guides (created by the software manufacturer for users at all institutions): [https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides](https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides). Be aware that OSU restricts some possible uses of Canvas, so you may still find inconsistencies between the Canvas user guides and your experience. If that's the case, contact ODEE or ASCTech with your question.

As mentioned in the last chapter, you will use Carmen’s Modules interface to organize and deliver content, assignments, and interactive experiences to your students. The Modules interface is a way of managing how students access parts of the course (or, as the last chapter discussed, creating the form of your course), but is not in itself a form of making course content. Content and assignments are created in other Carmen tools and are added (by you) to your course modules to ensure a logical flow and progression of learning. The other Carmen tools you’re most likely to use are Pages (discussed in the last section), Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussions. Designing and presenting these components on the instructor end is very similar. Other tools like CarmenZoom (videoconferencing), the Groups areas (where students can control their own pages, discussions, etc), and the Office 365 integration work differently.

#### i. Basic Design for Pages, Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussions

Pages, Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussions all use a very similar rich-text design interface to enable you to present content to students in visually interesting and accessible ways. You do not need specialized computer or web design skills to create any of these elements (though if you know a little HTML and CSS, you may be able to create subtly different visual layouts). In all of these tools, you add and edit content through a simple visual editor that formats text, embeds video and images, creates tables, and other functions you’ll find useful for creating interesting and attractive components.

The editor looks like this, minus the annotations we’ve added to show what different buttons do. The first line of formatting buttons is probably familiar to you; it works a lot like Word. The second line includes special media functions. The right sidebar allows you to link internally to various other components of your Carmen course.
If you look at this closely (or better yet, experiment with creating some pages, discussions, or the like in Carmen yourself), you will see that there are two ways of integrating things into any given Carmen component. One is to actually include it in the component you’re making: for example, by embedding a YouTube video, adding an image, or creating a chart. The other is to link to it, whether it’s within Carmen, on another OSU service like Box or MediaSite, or an external link. The set of buttons for linking to items within Carmen (on the right) are extremely useful because they let you direct students straight to a reading, a discussion area, a quiz, or another page that might be out of the order of the module. Better yet, they do not break if you move the target (e.g., if you reorganize your course files). You’ll probably use these a lot—although they are not a good substitute for actually including all the components of a module in the Modules view for that week.

The tools you are most likely to use when creating and editing content are the ordinary formatting functions (which we will not describe here because they are exactly like nearly every word processing program), the video embedder, the image inserter, the Box and MediaSite integrations, and the style selector.

ii. Video Embedder
This is fairly straightforward. Click the “Insert/Edit Media” button and paste in the URL for your video in the “General” tab. The dimensions will automatically set themselves. Hit OK. There are other things you can do, but they are more advanced and rarely necessary.

Carmen does not embed all video sources (for example, the Adichie video embedded in some of the examples above is from YouTube, but the same video from the TED website would not embed properly).
This may be a changeable security issue. If you are using a web-based video that will not embed, just put a link instead. It’s clunkier because students can’t watch from within Carmen, but it works.

iii. Image Inserter and Accessibility
This tool lets you insert still images, of course. (It can also handle animated gifs.) But it has some other important functions you need to pay attention to, especially setting alt-text.

Alt-text is not the same as a caption. This is the text that appears (usually in a little box) when you roll your mouse over an image, and it is also the text that screen-readers reference. That is, a user who interacts with your page through audio only will hear whatever the alt-text says rather than seeing the image. This is an important accessibility feature.

By default, Carmen sets the alt-text to the file name, which is pretty useless. What you should provide here is image description for visually impaired users. An image description literally describes what is in the picture, including relevant details. Consider this image of Rep. John Lewis in front of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where he was savagely beaten during a civil rights march:

![Rep. John Lewis](image1.jpg)

A marginal image description says what is in the image. A good image description will give us a strong sense of what is in the image and what it conveys. In this case, “a Black man in a suit, with a bridge behind him” is technically true, but not very evocative. A better description would be “an older Black man in a blue suit and tie stares directly at the camera while standing on a road. Behind him is an old metal-truss bridge with a sign reading “Edmund Pettus Bridge.” Notice that this description only covers what is in the picture (you’d still caption this something like “Rep. John Lewis revisits the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, where he was beaten as a civil rights protestor”), but it gives a sense of what the viewer would take away from the image, not just its contents. Do not be shy about describing things like race if it’s relevant (it usually is). You are not writing a description for a forensic sketch artist, though. Be selective in the details you provide and use your judgment about what’s relevant in the specific context in which you embed the picture.

Make sure you include a good image description in the alt-text field for every image you use in your course. Failure to do so is a major accessibility problem akin to using videos that do not have captions available.

The only circumstance under which you do not need to provide descriptive alt-text is for decorative images (e.g., if you have a banner at the top and/or bottom of your pages just to make things look polished) that has absolutely no bearing on content. If that’s the case, check the “decorative image” box and move on.
iv. Box and MediaSite Integrations

The Box integration simply inserts links to Box files while preserving your access restrictions. It does not embed the content in the component you’re creating—but it is useful if you have a large file on Box you want students to access. Remember you will have to set the permissions accordingly on Box.

The MediaSite integration is found under the “V” in the menu (which also includes some science textbook tools and the Office 365 integration). It’s important because Mediasite is the best way to store large lecture videos and present them to students easily. This integration allows them to watch such videos directly on Carmen. You must upload your videos to Mediasite first (see the section on video production and distribution below (“Making Videos”). Using the integration tool is straightforward: select the Mediasite option and choose “Presentation” under “Add Existing Media”. You will be able to choose from all the videos you’ve uploaded to Mediasite. The “Player Only” embedding option looks similar to an embedded YouTube video; if you have detailed description information attached to the video in Mediasite, you may want to use the “Abstract + Player” option.

v. Style Selector and Accessibility

On the right of the formatting toolbar in the diagram above, you see a button that says “Para”. This actually reads “paragraph” but is attenuated in the diagram because many laptop screens aren’t wide enough for it to render completely. It’s actually a drop-down menu that includes options such as “Paragraph”, “Heading 2”, “Heading 3”, “Heading 4”, and “preformatted”. The default style is “paragraph.” The headings render with different styles and spacing (2 is largest, then 3, then 4) to create major divisions and subdivisions of your work.

But you could do this with font sizes, bold, underline, etc, right? Actually, no; the styles have much more important effects on accessibility. Screen readers detect text that is classified as headings; for users, headings are like a table of contents that help them navigate the page, skip or return to specific sections, and determine the overall flow of information. They are a must. They also have a cleaner, more consistent look and are easier than fiddling with fonts (which don’t always render consistently across browsers).

“Heading 1” is not an option because it is the default for the page title. Use “Heading 2” for the titles of all major divisions of the content. Nested division titles should use “Heading 3,” and double-nested should use “Heading 4” (this would be rare). Note that when you hit return after a heading-formatted line, Carmen defaults back to “Paragraph,” which is appropriate. Basically, anything that’s a complete sentence or a list should be in “Paragraph” style, and headings should use whatever heading style is appropriate given the layout of your page.

Here’s an example, from one of our introduction-to-the-week roadmap pages. All the headings with icons are styled “Heading 2”. “Heading 3” is used for the slightly smaller subheadings that indicate the specific dates by which certain items must be completed.
Using styles correctly is an important part of meeting OSU’s accessibility standards for online teaching. It is also a good habit to get into; Word has a similar function in the “Styles” menu (which you should use when creating your syllabus for the same reason) that also permits tricks like creating an automatic table of contents.

vi. Fun HTML/CSS Tricks
This manual cannot teach HTML, the standard markup language for webpage formatting, or CSS, a way of modifying HTML to create more interesting and/or consistent formatting. However, if you are interested, a little markup language knowledge lets you make some cosmetic design changes—for example, text that wraps around a picture (which uses the <div> tag and “float” attribute). There are many HTML tutorials and CSS glossaries online, and instructional designers often know quick tricks as well. If you already know or decide to learn a little HTML, you can access the HTML editing interface within the regular editing interface simply by clicking the “HTML Editor” link above the regular visual editor. Note that making mistakes in the HTML Editor interface can cause really weird things to happen to your work, as Carmen will attempt to strip out any markup that it cannot interpret. For most of us, the easiest way to use the HTML Editor is not to use the HTML Editor.
II. Making Videos

While you will likely use many videos in your course, they must be made outside of Carmen. Making videos is a skill beyond the scope of this manual, but we offer some information here on different types of videos you may want to include, tools for making them, accessibility, and the process of working with ASCtech to create more formal video lectures.

i. Informal videos

Creating an informal check-in or recap video each week is a good way to respond to the work your students have produced and maintain your presence as a real, responsive person. In our course, we decided to open each week with a video recapping students’ contributions the previous week, especially because our use of group discussions meant that students could not see the entire class’s comments.

To create an informal video, you can use equipment you already have, like the camera in your computer or, if you have an appropriate mount, your phone. This allows you to make videos relatively quickly, at home, and without having to schedule studio time and wait for editing (as you’ll read in the section on working with ASCtech below, it is not possible for them to work with you fast enough to produce weekly recap videos).

Depending on what type of equipment you use, you will create video in different formats, which may affect how you edit. If you create video with an Apple device, iMovie software (which comes included on most Macs and is widely available on campus) is the easiest way to edit. Some newer iPads and iPhones have their own limited tools for video editing. Windows and Android-based devices have different software. You also have access to Zoom recording (which will helpfully create an AI-generated streaming caption you can edit). Online resources like Wikihow can help you determine what to do, and how.

Even though informal videos are informal and often conversational, you will have false starts and things you want to edit, so you should expect to spend time doing that. It will get faster the more videos you make. Simple video editing software lets you do things like add text to the screen, cut out parts of the video, reorder clips, and so on. Explore an online tutorial for the software you use to identify the easiest ways to do common tasks.

According to OSU’s online teaching standards, all videos, no matter how informal, must be captioned. See the accessibility sections below for more information on how to do that. If you are in an absolute bind with captioning, you may provide a transcript, but the transcript must include text descriptions of any pertinent visual content (even if it’s something like gesturing) so students do not miss the connection between visual content and your words.

Informal videos will need to be uploaded to Mediasite and embedded in your Carmen content. You can host them on a personal YouTube account if you so choose, but they will not have the same privacy protections. You should not upload them directly to Carmen due to storage limitations.

ii. Classroom session, screencast, and slide show capture

Many of us like to be able to show slides while we are lecturing. Perhaps you’d like to record audio (and video) and show slides from your computer in the same video presentation. Maybe you are teaching in an hybrid format or hosting a special in-person session that needs to be captured live in a classroom and made available on Carmen. These special video types can be made with Mediasite or Zoom.
We talk a little later about how Mediasite can be used to store and embed videos created in the studio or on your computer, but the actual intended purpose of the software (as opposed to its usefulness as OSU-provided storage we’ve discussed elsewhere) is to make these types of videos. Other software for similar purposes exists, but this is the OSU-approved tool that integrates with our available video hosting.

Some classrooms at OSU are equipped with hardware for this purpose, mainly large lecture halls, but in most cases, you will probably not be recording this type of video in a live class context. (If you do want to record a live class session on campus, we recommend consulting ASCtech, who can provide a cameraperson, equipment, and other assistance.) Any classroom computer or your personal computer can be equipped with Mediasite’s Desktop Recorder software, which works better for recording slide presentations with voiceover than live lectures. Consult the OSU Mediasite support website and/or ODEE for more information.

iii. Formal Lecture Videos and Working with ASCtech

Formal lecture videos are prepared talks that are produced in a more polished way. We encourage you to make these and contribute them to the Comparative Studies archive of “guest lectures” that can be used in future courses! You may find, in fact, that useful guest lecture videos already exist, and you are welcome to use them.

(Note: these videos are the property of Comparative Studies and their creators, and are for use in Comparative Studies courses at OSU only; you may not use them at other institutions or in other contexts. If you want to use them for any purpose other than their original intent, contact the featured lecturer[s] for permission.)

For making your own videos, preparing your remarks in advance is highly recommended. You should try to limit the length to 10-20 minutes (as we’ve mentioned, attention spans are short). One strategy we found helpful for spicing up the typical lecture video was to also film some interviews or discussions between multiple experts (a maximum of three people will fit on screen). Explain terms and background concepts clearly. Describe in words what any images you are using look like.

Formal videos are typically shot in a studio with professional-grade equipment. Fortunately, ASCtech has two studios on campus for this purpose, one in Hagerty Hall and one in Hopkins Hall. The Hopkins studio features a lightboard, which allows you to write “on air” and have handwritten text appear onscreen with you. The Hagerty studio does not have a lightboard but includes all other video equipment as well as an audio recording studio. You can reserve time in either studio.

Studio time reservations must be made in advance through the ASCtech website. The staff prefer to book slots of 2-3 hours, so try to prepare multiple guest lectures and shoot them all the same day. (Tip: if you don’t want your videos to look like they were all shot the same day, bring a blazer or sweater you can wear in some and not others.)

On filming day, ASCtech provides a cameraperson, all equipment, and some basic coaching on how to project professionalism on screen. (Being filmed can be nerve-wracking, but they do their best to make it a pleasant experience.) They also have a teleprompter; plan to submit any bullet points or written lectures at least 24 hours in advance so they can format it. During filming, they can do multiple takes. If you flub a small part of your talk, they can retake only that and edit later.
After you film, ASCtech staff will provide you with raw videos. You will complete a document called an Edit Decision List, in which you tell them exactly what parts you want to cut and if you want anything reordered. You can also ask for on-screen text and images, insertion of slides instead of your face while audio continues, and similar changes. You will need to provide all text, slides, and still images.

Once you submit the edit sheet, staff will do the actual editing. You will then be able to confer with them about any final changes.

ASCtech staff also assist with captioning (which is required; they will not help you make videos without captions). You will have to do some parts of this process yourself to ensure that captions are correct. Consult with them about their current process; it may require meeting with the editor.

You’ll notice this is a lot of steps. It does not happen quickly! ASCtech provides these services for the entire College of Arts & Sciences, and their workload can be heavy. It’s best to make all your lecture videos the term before you want to use them so you aren’t in a rush to get them done.

iv. Video Accessibility

As we’ve mentioned several times, all videos must be captioned. (This also applies to videos found on the internet; if you definitely cannot find a captioned version, transcribe the video yourself or use other materials.) For ASCtech-created formal videos, you will have assistance. ASCtech can also recommend software you can use to caption videos you create yourself.

Another option you have is to create captions through YouTube. You can upload your videos to YouTube (making them private) and use YouTube’s caption generator to create basic captions. You will need to correct those captions, however, since YouTube assumes the speaker has a newscaster standard accent and it cannot interpret uncommon theoretical terms. When you are captioning a video with more than one speaker, make sure you indicate in the captions who is talking when the speaker changes.

For informal videos shot with your mobile device, you may be able to generate automatic captions while recording. For example, the Clips app in iOS (iPhone, iPad, etc) has an option to generate live subtitles that are editable later. AutoCap has similar functions for Android.6 Zoom has similar functionality. The caption quality may vary based on your accent and recording clarity, but it is a decent tool for getting started. If you want to use Clips or a similar app, please seek tutorials online.

v. Storing and Distributing Videos

Once your video is shot, edited, and captioned, you will need to identify a way to distribute it to students. Carmen’s storage limits generally make it a bad idea to upload your videos directly there. BuckeyeBox is a possibility, but a cumbersome one (and it may limit your students’ ability to see captions without downloading the entire video).

Generally, your best options are YouTube and Mediasite. You can upload your videos to your own YouTube account and set them to “unlisted” (so they cannot be searched, but can be shared with a direct link). You can then embed the video in a Carmen page or link to it. Using YouTube is probably the easiest option. However, this requires you to have and use a personal YouTube/Google account, which

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6 We did not test AutoCap.
you may not wish to do. We request that you do not use this method for any videos from the Comparative Studies guest lecture library.

The strategy recommended by ODEE is to use Mediasite as a video hosting platform. As discussed earlier, Mediasite is intended to facilitate recording certain types of videos. However, you have nigh-unlimited storage and it’s easy to embed Mediasite videos into Carmen. To upload an existing video (of any kind, even though it says “presentation”), navigate to mediasite.osu.edu. After logging in, choose “Add Media” and then “I Want to Upload a File from my Computer”. Choose your file, enter the requested descriptive data, and upload. Once the file is loaded, you can use the Mediasite integration tool in Carmen to embed it where you need it (into a page, discussion, quiz, etc) as described above.

What precedes a small piece of what is possible for online course design, but should be plenty to get you started. If you find errors or outdated information as you are reading, please contact Elizabeth Vu (.191) to correct them.
V. RESOURCES

Office of Distance Education and eLearning (ODEE): Course Development

The Office of Distance Education and eLearning (ODEE) provides extensive information on online course development. Helpful information is given for every step of the development process, from your initial vision to the actual delivery of the course. Additional resources on the website include information about teaching through CarmenCanvas and more general information about distance education.

University Institute for Teaching and Learning (UITL): Course Design Institute

Although not specific to online courses, the University Institute for Teaching and Learning (UITL) offers a Course Design Institute. There is both an online and in-person option. The institute explains that “participants receive the tools, time and support they need as they work to build or rebuild effective, student-centered courses.”

Exploring Learning Technologies (ELT)

The Exploring Learning Technologies (ELT) group is a community of faculty and staff that are interested in “enhancing teaching and learning” by becoming more aware of new technology that can be used. The group meets the third Friday of every month from 10:30-12:00. This is the link to join their email list.

College for the Study and Teaching of Writing (CSTW): Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing Across the Curriculum is a program designed to help educators use their writing to enhance learning, write effective curriculum, and provide tips on creating an engaging curriculum.

Innovate Conference

The Innovate Conference is an annual conference that seeks to provide a place for educators and administrators to explore new advancements in technology, and effective ways to use new technology in teaching. The link to register is here.

College of Arts and Sciences Technology Services: Instructor eLearning Resources

General resources to help with administering online courses. There is also information about pedagogy specifically for online courses. Numerous eLearning workshops that are available through this resource.

CarmenCanvas Resource Page

On the CarmenCanvas Resource page there are primarily forms to request help. There are also helpful articles about how to use Canvas and how to get started. Additional links are given to the Carmen support webpage where there are guides and tutorials about how to use the website.

Digital Accessibility Center – and other resources concerning accessibility

The Digital Accessibility Center provides the minimum digital accessibility standards. Links to helpful training resources are also included on the website. The Student Life Disability Services (SLDS) has information about making media accessible.
Digital Union

The Digital Union is a computer lab that also provides help with technology. They can help with anything from merging PDF files to editing videos.

HTML and CSS
This document contains the goals, objectives, and outcomes from the other document with no notes, with the exception of the GEs, where our specific revisions are retained in blue. 6/2/19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Goals</th>
<th>Objectives (moved old outcomes to objectives)</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal A: SocDiv (GS) GE</strong></td>
<td>Students will understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.</td>
<td>Objective 1: Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S. Students engage with how political, economic, cultural, physical, social, legal, and/or philosophical [dynamics?] shape global relations.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>also covered under other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal B: Lit GE</strong></td>
<td>Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing. Specific reading/listening/viewing skills that appreciate aesthetics, context, cultural influence, and power as present in texts</td>
<td>Objective 2: Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens. Students recognize the ways in which their own positions and values shape how they see other people and their own role as global citizens.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Objective 3: Students analyze, interpret, and critique significant literary works. Students practice reading skills across genres and forms, including “canon” and non-canon texts.</td>
<td>Objective 3a: Students practice reading literary texts that demonstrate the importance of context and perceived aesthetic value.</td>
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<td>Objective 4: Through reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students appraise and evaluate the personal and social values of their own and other cultures. Through reading, discussing, and writing about global literature broadly conceived, students examine the features, roots, and effects of difference as depicted in literary works.</td>
<td>Outcome 4a: Students read texts from outside the U.S. to identify the significance of U.S. or Anglophone culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal C: Students explore how systems of power are intertwined with individual identity and experiences.</strong></td>
<td>Objective 5: Students engage with ideas like gender, race, sexual identity, class, ability, religion, and national origin as categories that shape individual lives.</td>
<td>Objective 5a: Students identify categories and conceptualize identities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Goal D: Students improve information literacy by critically reading multiple types of texts to evaluate sources, biases, and purposes | Objective 6a: Students recognize the structures through which oppression and inequality operate rather than conceiving of these problems as rooted solely in intent.  
Objective 6b: Students consider why and how systemic oppression and structural inequities might be addressed. | Outcome 6a: Students use strategies to real-world contexts |  
Objective 6b: Students evaluate the extent to which oppression and inequality are influenced by both intent and structural inequity.  
Outcome 6c: Students apply strategies to real-world contexts |  
Goal E: Students assess the impact of their perspectives/identity positions, intentional and unintentional, on the world. | Objective 7: Students develop the ability to recognize authorial intent, context, use/misuse of sources, assumed audience, and rhetorical style.  
Outcome 7: Students apply rhetorical analysis to evaluate the underpinnings of assignments and understand how these materials might be addressed. |  
Objective 7: Students develop the ability to recognize authorial intent, context, use/misuse of sources, assumed audience, and rhetorical style.  
Outcome 7: Students apply rhetorical analysis to evaluate the underpinnings of assignments and understand how these materials might be addressed.  
Outcome 8: Students disentangle ideologies and contexts, and analyze how aesthetic valuation can shape systems of oppression. |  
Objective 8: Students are able to analyze how these characteristics (in objective 7) are related to systems of power and writer or audience identities. |  
Objective 9: Students can recognize that identity positions shape not just opinions, but how we consume and act upon information. | Outcome 9: Students assess how their perspectives and identity positions shape their consumption and action. |  
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Objective 10: Students develop the ability to recognize authorial intent, context, use/misuse of sources, assumed audience, and rhetorical style.  
Outcome 10: Students apply rhetorical analysis to evaluate the underpinnings of assignments and understand how these materials might be addressed. |  
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Objective 11a: Students apply what they have learned about their identity positions and systems of power and oppression to evaluate their intentional and unintentional impact on the world.  
Objective 11b: Students independently strategize how they might shift that impact if desired | Outcome 11a: Students assess what they have learned about their own systems and identities |  
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Objective 11b: Students independently strategize how they might shift that impact if desired |  
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**Appendix B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Parallel Content (Tools)</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes (see key below)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/6-10</td>
<td>Adichie video</td>
<td>Discussion board</td>
<td>Introduction forum, Syllabus quiz</td>
<td>6a, 6b, 6c, 10, 11c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/13-17</td>
<td>Autoethnography TBD Ahmad “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory’”</td>
<td>Blog (or discussion groups?) wiki</td>
<td>5a, 5c, 6a, 6b, 6c, 8, 10, 11a, 11c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/20-24</td>
<td>King, “Letter” Lewis, <em>March</em></td>
<td>Live discussion</td>
<td>3a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 6c, 7, 10, 11a, 11b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1/27-31</td>
<td>Morrison, “Recitatif” Spivak “Can the Subaltern Speak” excerpts</td>
<td>DO, CR, D, DSI</td>
<td>3a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 7, 10, 11a, 11c</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/3-7</td>
<td>Achebe, <em>Things Fall Apart</em></td>
<td>DO, CR, D, DSI</td>
<td>3a, 4a, 4b, 5b, 6a, 7, 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/10-14</td>
<td>Satrapi, <em>Persepolis</em></td>
<td>Thesis exchange</td>
<td>3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6c, 7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/17-21</td>
<td><em>Persepolis</em> movie</td>
<td>Dropbox/turnitin</td>
<td>3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 7, 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2/24-28</td>
<td>Ko, <em>Leavers</em></td>
<td>DO, CR, D, DSI</td>
<td>3a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6c, 7, 10, 11b</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/2-6</td>
<td>Ko, <em>Leavers</em> (con’t) blog</td>
<td>Diarieshowcase</td>
<td>3a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6c, 7, 10, 11a, 11b, 11c</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>Lahiri, <em>Interpreter of Maladies</em> (excerpts)</td>
<td>Podcasting</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/16-20</td>
<td>Hamid, <em>Reluctant Fundamentalist</em></td>
<td>Live discussion</td>
<td>3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6c, 7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3/23-27</td>
<td>Sontag, <em>Regarding Pain of Others</em></td>
<td>Advice “column”</td>
<td>3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6c, 7, 8, 11a, 11b, 11c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3/30-4/3</td>
<td>Coogler, <em>Black Panther</em></td>
<td>Advice column responses</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/6-10</td>
<td>Kincaid “A Small Place”</td>
<td>Live discussion</td>
<td>3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6c, 7, 10, 11a, 11b, 11c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4/13-17</td>
<td>Kincaid “A Small Place”</td>
<td>Revisit autoethnography</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Learning Outcomes

In grid, outcomes in blue are fulfilled by content (and basic discussion thereof) and outcomes in red are fulfilled by assignments (i.e., additional assignments beyond regular discussion). Outcomes in purple are equally fulfilled by both.

Outcome 3a: Students produce analysis of literary texts that demonstrates awareness of the importance of context, historical response, and perceived aesthetic value.

Outcome 3b: Students apply these analytic skills to works not on the syllabus.

Outcome 4a: Students read or watch a variety of texts from outside the United States, and can identify the significance of their origin in relation to U.S. or Anglophone cultural influence.

Outcome 4b: Students trace the significance of identity and systems of power within these literary works.

Outcome 5a: Students identify several identity categories and conceptualize intersectional identities.

Outcome 5b: Students treat identity categories as mutable and functioning beyond demographic descriptors.

Outcome 5c: Students articulate the identity categories to which they belong and how those positions differentiate them from others.

Outcome 6a: Students use assigned texts to describe the impact of intersections of personal intent and structural inequities on individuals and communities.

Outcome 6b: Students examine how systemic changes might affect individual and community experiences within assigned texts.

Outcome 6c: Students apply these analytic strategies to real-world or historical parallels.

Outcome 7: Students apply literary and rhetorical analysis to evaluate the ideological underpinnings of assigned texts and other materials they encounter.

Outcome 8: Students discuss the impact of texts’ ideologies and contexts, and how modes of aesthetic valuation can subvert or reinforce systems of oppression.
Outcome 9: students assess how the ways we find, receive, recognize, and act upon information in circulation shape identities and systems of power - this is probably the least-frequent of our outcomes

Outcome 10: students define ideas like tokenism, equity, and privilege and assess how they shape institutions

Outcome 11a: Students ask questions of themselves about their own relations to power systems and identities

Outcome 11b: students recognize what active respect as opposed to passive respect entails in practice

Outcome 11c: Students articulate ways they can tailor their behaviors to create a more just world.