**Facilitating Learning in Synchronous Environments**

**Unit 3: Weeks 4, 5, and 6**

**Description:**Unit 3 focuses on preparing and planning for delivering a synchronous activity or course. You are introduced to specific concepts related to event planning for real-time learning, including the process of creating storyboards, planning visuals and learning activities to maximize student engagement, and managing logistical issues. As well, you will examine the characteristics of different types of media that are useful to consider in the design and delivery of synchronous learning activities. You will also become familiar with the process of conducting a systematic audience analysis to ensure that the students’ primary needs are addressed. Finally, this unit addresses how to prepare students for synchronous learning so that they can get the most of the specific medium used and how to select/organize learning activities that promote presence and active participation.

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| Time | Instructor Activities (What will the instructor do?) | Learning/Learner Activities (what will the learner do?) | Resources (Handouts, PPT, video, etc.) |
| Week 3 | Ensure students have teams established and that they have selected the synchronous tools they will be using for the brainstorming session. | In teams, students will brainstorm topics and session outcomes for Assignment 2: Synchronous Lesson Design that takes place in Unit 4.  Students are asked to consider the various tools identified in the Best Practices class document developed in Assignment 1. This brainstorming activity will be conducted in teams using a synchronous tool chosen by each team.  Students are asked to Identify the audience for their presentation, prepare a draft audience analysis document and upload it to the assignment dropbox at the end of week 4. | Entin, E.B., Sidman, J., & Neal, L. (2009). [*Computer-supported collaborative learning: Best practices and principles for instructors. Development of online distributed training: Practical considerations and lessons learned.*](http://elearnmag.acm.org/featured.cfm?aid=1599451) eLearn Magazine.  Fahy, P.J., (2008). [Chapter six: Media characteristics and online learning technology](http://cde.athabascau.ca/online_book/ch6.html). In T. Anderson & F. Elloum (Eds.), Theory and practice of online learning. Athabasca University.  Finkelstein, J. (2006). Learning in real time: Synchronous teaching and learning online. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (Chapter 5, pp. 93 -98 and Chapter 6).  Hyder, K., Kwinn, A., Miazga, R., & Murray, M. (2007). [The eLearning guild’s handbook on synchronous e-learning.](http://ebookee.org/The-eLearning-Guild-s-Handbook-on-Synchronous-e-Learning_1058693.html) Santa Rosa, CA: The e-Learning Guild. (Chapters 3, 4, and 5). Video resources Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching Effectiveness, U. of Saskatchewan. (2012, November 28). [Guest lecturers in online courses](http://youtu.be/1gWPnrj1YpQ). (watch to 3min mark)‬‬‬‬. ‬‬‬‬  Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching Effectiveness, U. of Saskatchewan. (2012, November 28). |
| Week 4 | Ensure the topic(s), dates, and expectations have been established for the Week 5 plenary discussion. | Students will upload their draft audience analysis document to the designated assignment dropbox by the end of this week. | Readings Finkelstein, J. (2006). Learning in real time: Synchronous teaching and learning online. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (Chapter 5, pp. 65 - 93).  Hyder, K., Kwinn, A., Miazga, R., & Murray, M. (2007). [The eLearning guild’s handbook on synchronous e-learning.](http://ebookee.org/The-eLearning-Guild-s-Handbook-on-Synchronous-e-Learning_1058693.html) Santa Rosa, CA: The e-Learning Guild. (Chapter 3, pp. 43-44; Chapter 6 and 7).  Stewart. A.R., Harlow, D.B. & DeBacco, K. (2011). [Students’ experience of synchronous learning in distributed environments](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01587919.2011.610289). Distance Education, 32 (3), 357–381. DOI: 10.1080/01587919.2011.610289. Video resources Rothler, D. (Presenter). (2013, May 30). |
| Week 5 | Facilitate and participate in the plenary discussion forum. | Students will participate in a discussion forum: Plenary discussion as a class. |  |