As you put your class online:

1. Do not require synchronous work. Students should not need to show up at a specific time for anything.

3. Do not record lectures unless you need to. (This is fundamentally different from designing an online course, where recorded information is, I think, really important.) They will be a low priority for students, and they take up a lot of resources on your end and on theirs. You have already built a rapport with them, and they don't need to hear your voice to remember that.

4. Do record lectures if you need to. When information cannot be learned otherwise, include a lecture. Your university already some kind of tech to record lectures. DO NOT simply record in PowerPoint as the audio quality is low. While many people recommend lectures of only 5 minutes, I find that my students really do listen to longer lectures. Still, remember that your students will be frequently interrupted in their listening, so a good rule is 1 concept per lecture. So, rather than a lecture on ALL of, say, gender inequality in your Intro to Soc course, deliver 5 minutes on pay inequity (or 15 minutes or 20 minutes, if that's what you need) and then a separate lecture on #MeToo and yet another on domestic violence. Closed caption them using the video recording software your university provides. Note that YouTube also generates closed captions [edited to add: they are not ADA compliant, though]. If you don't have to include images, skip the video recording and do a podcast instead.

5. Don't fuss too much about the videos. You don't need to edit out the "umms" or the postal carrier ringing the doorbell. Editing is a waste of your time right now.

6. Make all work due on the same day and time for the rest of the semester. I recommend Sunday night at 11:59 pm. Students who are now stay-at-home parents will need help from others to get everything done, and that help is more likely to arrive on a weekend. While, in general, I dislike 11:59 due dates because work done that late is typically of lower quality, some people will need to work after the kids go to bed, so setting the deadline at 9 or 10 pm just doesn't give them enough time.

7. If you use a textbook, your publisher probably has tests that you can download directly into your learning management system (LMS). Now is the time to use them. Despite publishers' best efforts, these tests quickly float around online, so take a few minutes to add some anti-cheating protections. First, organize questions into test banks and have them fed to students at random. For example, if you want to ask two questions about pay inequity, select 5 of them from the test bank, and have your LMS feed two of them to students at random. This makes it MUCH harder for students to work together, because they will never get the same exact test as a peer. Second, change the wording on the questions so they can't easily paste them into Google. In example questions, changing the name of the person in the example is one fast way to make the questions harder to locate online.

8. Allow every exam or quiz to be taken at least twice, and tell students that this means that if there is a tech problem on the first attempt, the second attempt is their chance to correct it. This will save you from the work of resetting tests or quizzes when the internet fails or some other tech problem happens. And since it can be very hard to discern when such failures are really failures or students trying to win a second attempt at a quiz or test, you avoid having to deal with cheaters.

9. Do NOT require students to use online proctoring or force them to have themselves recorded during exams or quizzes. This is a fundamental violation of their privacy, and they did NOT sign up for that when they enrolled in your course. Plus, they are in the privacy of their homes, sometimes with children who will interrupt them. It may be impossible for them to take a test without interruption. Circumvent the need for proctoring by making every exam open-notes, open-book, and open-internet. The best way to avoid them taking tests together or sharing answers is to use a large test bank.

10. You have already had some kind of in-class work, I'm guessing, so you do not need to further authenticate their identities on exams. If you are suspicious that a student is cheating–for example, someone was previously performing very poorly on in-class assessments and is now scoring very well, which might make you think that they've hired someone else to take the class for them–address that situation individually.

11. Remind them of due dates. It might feel like handholding, but be honest: Don't you appreciate the text reminder from your dentist that you have an appointment tomorrow? Your LMS has an announcement system that allows you to write an announcement now and post it later. As you put your materials online, write an announcement reminding them of the due date to be released 24 hours before it is due. The morning of, send a note to everyone who has not yet turned it in. (In Canvas and Blackboard, you do this by going into your gradebook and right clicking on the header of the assignment. You'll see an option to email all students who have not yet completed the work. It takes less than 1 minute if you are already logged in.)

12. Alert them to any material that is not appropriate for children to watch, including minute markers for scenes of violence or nudity. Again, you need to assume that they are doing their work with children in the background.

13. Make everything self-grading if you can (yes, multiple choice and T/F on quizzes and tests) or low-stakes (completed/not completed).

14. Don't do too much. Right now, your students don't need it. They need time to do the other things they need to do.

15. Listen for them asking for help. They may be anxious. They may be tired. Many students are returning to their parents' home where they may not be welcome. School has been a safe place for them, and now it's not available to them. Your class may matter to them a lot when they are able to focus on it, but it may not matter much now, in contrast to all the other things they have to deal with. Don't let that hurt your feelings, and don't hold it against them in future semesters or when they come back to ask for a letter of recommendation.

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From the AHEAD Webpage

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