



# CEST

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## COVID-19: moving from the classroom to the virtual environment

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The existing stigma and prejudice towards online Education are overturned by the imperative need to move the classroom to the virtual environment, as the COVID-19 pandemic forces everyone into social isolation.

This drastic and immediate change generates conflict, confusion, and anxiety among those involved with Education since this moving is not or should not be automatic.

Different learning spaces require different approaches, methodologies, strategies, and views. Just moving a class once offered face-to-face into the virtual environment is not appropriate.

In this period of changes, professional interactions and collaboration become relevant and meaningful for the development and improvement of online teaching. Multidisciplinary teachers from different educational institutions can also work jointly.

Therefore, it is essential to encourage ongoing professional contacts, discussions, and reflections on online practices and strategies and to reinforce the need for cooperation and collaboration.

Among teachers, there are questions about systems, methods, and time for moving the classroom to the virtual space. And also, the crucial question of how long the constraints will determine face-to-face distancing.

What does a teacher have to observe to make the moving to the virtual environment successful? How can the work of the online teacher in the design, organization, and planning of the new educational

proposal be a stimulus for students' meaningful learning?

The tripod of collaboration, empathy, and time (of teaching and learning) must be thought and evaluated by both experienced teachers and new professionals in training in these new virtual environments.

Never has it been more necessary to place issues related to synchronous and asynchronous interactions in the foreground as in times of going online.

An important issue is a joint work between teachers and students, and students with each other, with the knowledge. Such work contributes to the students' better qualification since it awakens in them the interest in the search for their path of development as citizens.

Collaborative work in the teaching and learning process is fundamental for active and meaningful learning. And it is in seeking this collaborative balance, respecting the peculiarities of the group that the solutions will emerge with the first successes and eventual mistakes. It is fundamental to remember that learning is a

process that involves trial and error.

The following is a comparative table that highlights some differences between face-to-face classes and classes in totally virtual environments.

**Learning is a process that involves trials and errors.**







## Comparative Table

### I. Regarding organization and structuring: planning, strategies, resources, and evaluation

Traditional Classroom	Online Classroom
With rare exceptions, there is no previous elaboration of students' profiles.	Importance of a previous analysis of each student's profile.
Time-related to classroom period.	Time flexibility: synchronous and asynchronous learning.
Based on past experience.	Involves teacher's risk-taking when confronting unexpected students' questions.
Well-defined and fixed objectives.	Broader and more changeable objectives.
Planning done for semester or year.	Planning done per class with evaluations and didactic-pedagogical changes needed along the way.
Clear and well-planned learning objectives and well-defined group expectations.	Clear and well-planned learning objectives and learning expectations. Student's learning pace and time are carefully observed.
In general, lessons planned for all students in the group.	Customized lessons based on the observations of the student's difficulties and needs.
Different strategies for engaging students in the teaching and learning process.	In addition to different strategies, it is necessary to rethink the pace of learning that, in the case of online, is another.
Use of diverse resources, materials, and activities.	Varied and well-planned resources, materials, and activities to create learner's motivation, interest, and engagement that in these settings are critical to learning and to discourage dropouts.
Classroom or laboratory activities (depending on the needs of the discipline). Sometimes, there are recommendations for library activities or online research.	All activities are done online in a synchronous (chats, recorded videos, lives, etc.) or asynchronous (as in discussion forums) way.



<b>Traditional Classroom</b>	<b>Online Classroom</b>
Students do the activities in the classroom or laboratory (depending on the needs of the discipline). Sometimes there are recommendations for library activities and online research.	Activities are done all the time online in synchronous (chats, recorded videos, lives, etc.) or asynchronous (as in discussion forums) way.
Digital media may or may not be used at the time of the classroom lesson or as a complement to the classroom lesson.	Use of online teaching platforms with their synchronous and asynchronous tools and several digital media, such as recordings, videos, Slide-share, hangout, wikis, notes, and schedules.
Less traditional classes have adopted the flipped-classroom type. Students access the material or content previously suggested by the teacher and discuss doubts and approaches in the classroom.	The flipped classroom can be part of the online activities, where students previously access the scheduled content, before discussing it and working in virtual forums or chats, for example.
Initial diagnostic evaluation is not normally done.	Initial diagnostic evaluation through, for example, a multiple-choice questionnaire helps the teacher to draw the student's profile.
Occasional evaluations, through works, exhibitions, for example.	Process evaluations along the educational path for planning and new proposals based on students' needs and difficulties.
Final evaluation through tests or final work to check what the student has learned.	According to the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC), final evaluation to check what the student has learned requires the presence of the student in an educational institution to take the exam.

### Comparative Table

#### II. Regarding the teacher and the student in the educational process

<b>Traditional Class</b>	<b>Online Class</b>
Teacher agent of knowledge	Student is part of the learning process.
Teacher responsible for the teaching and learning process.	Teacher and students are partners in the educational process.
Time determined for class planning related to the curriculum.	It requires more time for class planning, as the script is different from that of the face-to-face classes.
Students passive agents of the educational process.	Autonomous, active, and collaborative students.
Familiarity with digital tools and media is not mandatory.	Familiarity with tools and digital media necessary and mandatory.
Institutional technical support is not normally required.	Institutional technical support is often required for video recordings, for example.
Institutional technical support is not required.	Technical support from the institution to adapt the material and content to the electronic medium.

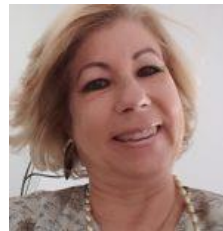
Traditional Classroom	Online Classroom
Teachers do not necessarily need a volunteer monitor for classes.	It is recommended that the teacher has a volunteer monitor to assist in absence and attendance control.
Poor communication and interaction between teacher and students.	Emphasis on digital communication and teacher and student interaction with knowledge.
Communication and interaction generally done in the classroom.	Communication and interaction done in virtual environments in a synchronous and asynchronous way.
Motivational factor is not considered since the teacher is responsible for the dissemination of knowledge.	Important motivational factor for learning, engaging, and maintaining the student in virtual spaces.

Given the new scenario presented to teachers and students, experiments, and experiences in virtual environments, where exchanges are more fluid and collaborative, will contribute to new ways of teaching and learning, which will no longer be the same. Even with the return of the social life in the educational institutions.

This collective learning will have reflections on new perspectives on Education. The class in the virtual environment under the contingency should not bring the feeling of “it's this or nothing”, or the pressure of the moment, but throw light on new learning.



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This article is a result of the authors' ascertainment and analysis, without compulsorily reflecting CEST's opinion.

