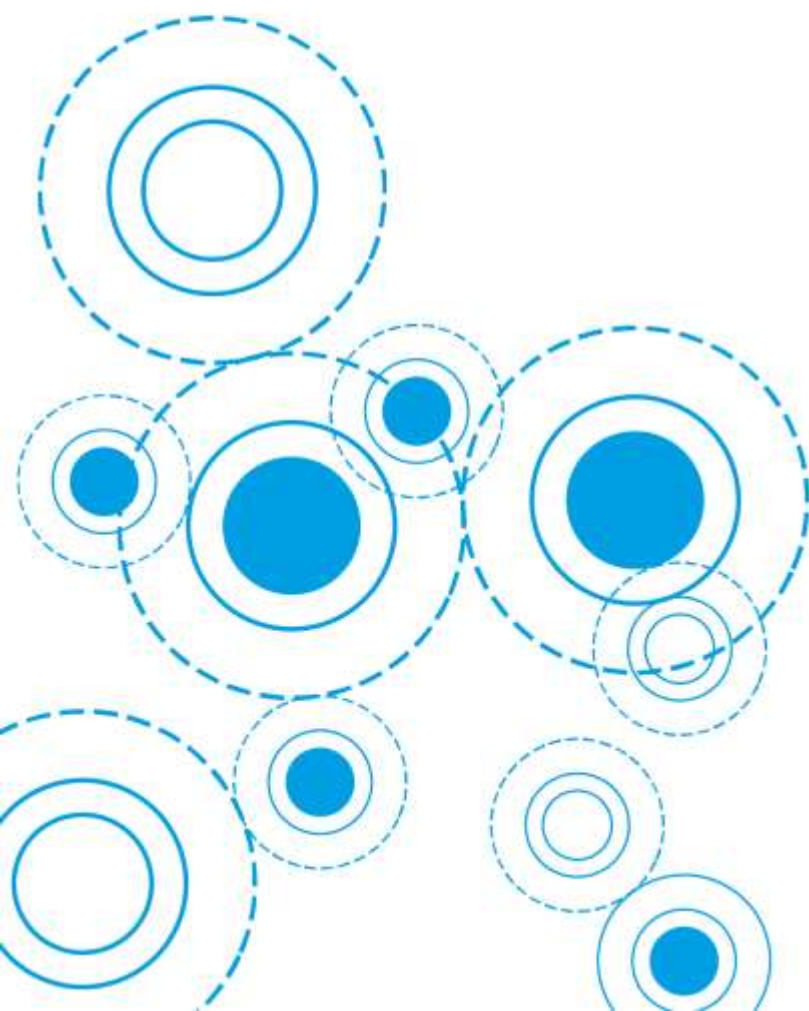




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Tools that can help you while structuring your online courses





Structuring your online course in Nestor

If you want to structure your course online in Nestor there are a few things to keep in mind. In this flyer you will find an overview of the most common tools in Nestor, including links to manuals to help you set them up. For more information about online teaching at the University of Groningen we refer you to the [Online Teaching | Education](#) website.

We advise you to structure your online course in Nestor per week. Within each week you give an overview for the students of the different steps and their sequence for that week. You can add literature, assignments, quizzes, and (a)synchronous lectures to each week.

If you require students to use certain tools in Nestor, be sure to add instructions for students about the usage of these tools.

In an online course you will not be seeing as much of your students as with a face-to-face course. It is therefore important to make clear to students how and when you are available for communication and questions. You can for instance make use of online office hours in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and reply to questions on a Discussion Board on set times.

Below you will find an overview of useful tools in Nestor with a description of the functionality of the tool and information on how to use it. Each tool can be used multiple times per week. We advise you to vary in the tools that you use between the weeks to keep students engaged.

For efficiency purposes, as a lot of student materials will be placed on Nestor, we advise you to make use of the [Grade Center - Uses](#) in Nestor.

For more help or information on Nestor you can visit the [Nestor Knowledge Base](#).

Announcements

Under the tab Announcements you can place important messages regarding your course. You could use this tool to inform students about changes that occur during the course or to remind students about, for instance, an upcoming deadline.

For more information on announcements, see the [Blackboard website](#).

Items

You can create an Item to make content available for students. You could use this tool, for instance, to add literature sources as attachments to make clear for students what the required reading is.

We advise you to contact the publishers of the books you use to see which online materials are already available, such as exam questions, whitepapers, assignments, etc.

More information on creating items can be found on the [instructions and tips](#) from Blackboard.

Adding articles

The goal of reading an article is for example to provide a deeper understanding of the content. Keep an eye on the length of the article, this should be between 300 and 1000 words. If you want to use the content of long (academic) papers it might be advisable to write a summary or highlight parts for the students to read. There are some regulations for the publication of links to articles or other online resources. For more information you can contact one of the license managers from the University of Groningen Library.

For more information on how to create reliable links, [click here](#).

Adding video's

Visualization is a great way to enhance learning. If you want to use videos, think about *what* you want to show your students. Furthermore, think about a question that your students should be thinking of when watching the video. Be sure to check the copyright of the videos that you upload.

For information on how to post a prerecorded lecture on Nestor, please scroll down to Presentations2Go.

Groups

In Nestor you can divide your students in the course into subgroups. Per group different options are made available such as a group homepage, an email function and a discussion board. Communicating within the group is made easier this way.

For more information on how to make groups in Nestor, [click here](#).

Discussion Board

Discussion boards are effective in actively engaging your students and finding out what they still struggle with or have further questions on. It's asynchronous, which means that students can post at a time that works for them, within a timeframe that you set for them. Discussion boards can also be used to have students reflect on the theory shown in a preceding article or video. Another way to use the discussion board is as a brainstorm step at the start of a new week or topic to get the learner to think for themselves first. You can make a general discussion board for the course and have a separate discussion board per week.

For more information on how to use a discussion board, [see the information from Blackboard](#).

(Ephorus) Assignments

Assignments are another way for students to show their understanding of the course content. You can ask students to write an essay, upload a picture, post a video, make an audio-recording, etc. It is advisable to spread out the assignments over the course as they require more time from a student. You can use peer review here or review the assignments yourself, depending on the goal of the assignment. We advise to limit the number of peer review assignments per course.

For more information on how to create an assignment, see the [Blackboard Help pages](#).

Assignments that are handed in through Ephorus assignments will be checked for plagiarism. Students can be given (Ephorus) assignments and asked to hand these in through the Grade Center.

For more information on how to create an Ephorus assignment, [click here](#).

For more information on how to grade an Ephorus assignment, [click here](#).

Quiz/Test

It can be even harder to know how your students are doing in an online course compared to a face-to-face class. For your students, too, it's harder to know if they are on track to reach the course's learning outcomes. For this reason, it's especially useful to build in several moments of formative feedback and assessment. This can be everything from quick check-ins with students at the end of an online lecture, ungraded quizzes before meetings, to low stakes assignments, such as reading responses.

For more information on how to create a test, [see the information from Blackboard](#)

Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

In Collaborate you can host live lectures for up to 250 students. Collaborate also gives you the option to record your lectures or to pre-record them. This can be an option for those lecturers who want to offer their classes asynchronously (i.e. not in real time). In Collaborate you can also organize small discussion groups or you can, for example, respond to a discussion question posted on the discussion board on Nestor.

For more information on the use of Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, [click here](#).

For a webinar on how to use Blackboard Collaborate Ultra for your classes, [click here](#).

Presentations2Go

If you have recorded your lectures in the past, they are already available in your Nestor course via Presentations2Go Item. You can choose to publish an old recording and let your students watch this first. Then, for instance, use the discussion board to post questions, provide answers and share it with the other students so that interactive teaching moments can still take place.

For more information on how to upload previously recorded lectures, [click here](#).

Presentations2Go video assignments

Presentations2Go also offers the opportunity to create video assignments for students. This type of assignment can, for instance, be used instead of an essay.

For more information on how to create a video assignment, [click here](#).