

# RIT “Flex” Option Fact Sheet

## Definition of “Flex”

A class with a “Flex” option is a blended or in-person course in which the faculty member has determined students can **achieve the learning outcomes via remote means**. The faculty member will make the decision as to whether or not to offer a Flex option for their course. If faculty designate a course as “Flex”, they acknowledge willingness to allow students to complete the course without physically attending class. It does not, however, mean that the Flex design will be equivalent to a fully online course experience.



There are two Flex approaches that are being suggested, but implementation is at the discretion of the faculty member, and the student must communicate their selection in advance of being absent from an in-person session.

### 1. Online Flex

A student selects this option if they are not able to attend **any** assigned in-person sessions of the course and will complete all course requirements **fully online**. The student will communicate this choice with the faculty member and the expectations for course completion will be outlined.

### 2. Full Flex

A student selects this option if they are not able to attend assigned in-person sessions of the course at any point in the semester, but **may choose to return to their in-person session if their personal situation changes**. While absent from the in-person sessions, the student will complete all course requirements online. If a student needs to transition to Online Flex, the student will communicate this to the instructor so that expectations for course completion can be outlined.



FULLY ONLINE



NO IN-PERSON



ONLINE / CHOOSE TO RETURN IN-PERSON



Faculty may choose to offer Online Flex and/or Full Flex, or neither. **No classes will be assigned this option without a request from the faculty member teaching the class.** It is anticipated that many courses may not be conducive to the addition of the Flex option due to any number of constraints.

### **Examples of class characteristics that align well with the “Flex” option:**

- Much of the course material has already been prepared to deliver online
- The faculty member is already using the blended A/B format in which some subset of the class attends remotely during each class session.
- The faculty member is teaching a blended class with lectures online and discussion sections held during class meeting times and is willing to allow students to join discussions via Zoom.
- The faculty member is willing to capture face to face class sessions and make them available (synchronously or asynchronously).

### **Examples of class characteristics that do NOT align well with the “Flex” option:**

- The course includes components that can only be completed in-person (e.g., lab or studio work).
- The course is aligned with an experiential learning objective that requires in-person experiences (e.g. wet-bench research, team design elements, etc.).
- The course has a co-requisite course that can only be completed in person.

### **Reasons to consider adding Online Flex and/or Full Flex to your courses:**

- To provide remote participation for students with DSO accommodations or disruptions in a student’s ability to attend class regularly.
- To more easily accommodate students who are in quarantine or isolation.
- To increase the ability of students to adopt a fully online schedule.

### **Expectations for faculty members choosing Online Flex and/or Full Flex:**

- Faculty will make all learning activities, including exams, available in some form online.
- Faculty members should include a syllabus statement(s) that:
  - explains how students choosing this option should access course material.
  - outlines the minimum technology requirements that students need to fully participate.
  - describes how a student will meet the course requirements through assignment submission, participation, etc. in they select the Flex Option.
- Faculty members should be available to discuss the Flex option with students in the week prior to the start of classes.
- Faculty will not penalize students for opting out of in-person attendance / participation.
- Faculty should not request that a certain number of students choose this option or pressure students to choose Online Flex option for any reason.

## Expectations for students choosing Online Flex and/or Full Flex

(if available in their course):

- Students will notify the instructor that they wish to pursue the Flex option, and if applicable which Flex option (Online or Full).
- Students must be willing and able to abide by the instructor's requirements for remote participation, and agree that their technology access will not limit their satisfying course expectations. The instructor requirements will be detailed in the course syllabus.
- Students will engage with all course materials and activities as outlined in the Flex expectations by their faculty member.
- Students will assume the added responsibility associated with remote participation in the course (e.g. internet access).

## Process for choosing the “Flex” option

- The faculty member elects to offer their course(s) with the Flex option, either Online, Full, or both.
- The faculty member informs their department chair and scheduling officer which course(s) to be designated with this option.
- The scheduling officer works with the Registrar's Office to code the course(s) in SIS.
- The faculty member communicates with students in the selected course(s) that they can choose the Flex option and detail their expectations of the student(s) who select this option.
- Students inform the faculty member if they wish to take the course in the Flex option.

## Examples of possible syllabus language surrounding the “Flex” Option(s):

Flex Option	Attend in-person classes?	Internet access needed?	All course requirements completed online	Elected how?
Online Flex	Never	Required	Required	Contact your instructor by August 19
Full Flex	Never, or as able	Required	When not in-person	Contact your instructor as soon as change is desired

- **Online Flex? Full Flex? What is this all about?** In efforts to support you in your learning during these challenging times, I am offering this course with both the Online Flex and Full Flex options. This means that you can choose to complete all course requirements online either for the entire semester (Online Flex) or as needed throughout the semester (Full Flex). Both of these options are available in this course, but in order to elect either of these options, you **MUST** communicate with me. If you have not identified as selecting the Online Flex or Full Flex option, and then are not present in my in-person class, this will count against your participation and completion of course expectations. Before not coming to your assigned in-person class – set up

a meeting with me and let's get things figured out! My most up to date contact information, including current office hour Zoom links, can be found on the front of our myCourses page.

- **Online Flex:** The Online Flex option in this course allows you, the student, the flexibility to participate in this course synchronously or asynchronously online. While this course is listed as having at least some in-person component, you will be able to meet all of the course requirements online, including all participation, assignments, and exams. This is not a fully online course design, but rather an option for you to elect to not be in the physical classroom space if that is better for you. To elect the Online Flex option, contact me immediately. We will set up a meeting to discuss your shift to the Flex option, and I will explain my expectations for how you will complete all of the course requirements online, and I will tell you how I will support you in that completion (e.g. where to find recorded class sessions, assignments to be completed, due dates, etc.). Selecting this option means that I will never see you in the classroom, but let's make sure that we are connecting online frequently to keep you on track to success in the course. By electing this option, you confirm that you have consistent, reliable internet access that will support you being online and streaming video daily.
- **Full Flex:** The Full Flex option in this course allows you, the student, the flexibility to participate in my course face-to-face, asynchronously online, or some combination of both throughout the semester. If you are unable to attend your assigned in-person section of this course, for any reason – at any time, please contact me immediately. We will set up a meeting to discuss your shift to the Flex option, and I will explain my expectations for how you will complete all of the course requirements online, and I will tell you how I will support you in that completion (e.g. where to find recorded class sessions, assignments to be completed, due dates, etc.) The difference between Full Flex and Online Flex is that in this Full Flex option, you may choose to come back to your assigned in-person session at any time – just let me know! By electing this option, you confirm that you have consistent, reliable internet access that will support you being online and streaming video daily.