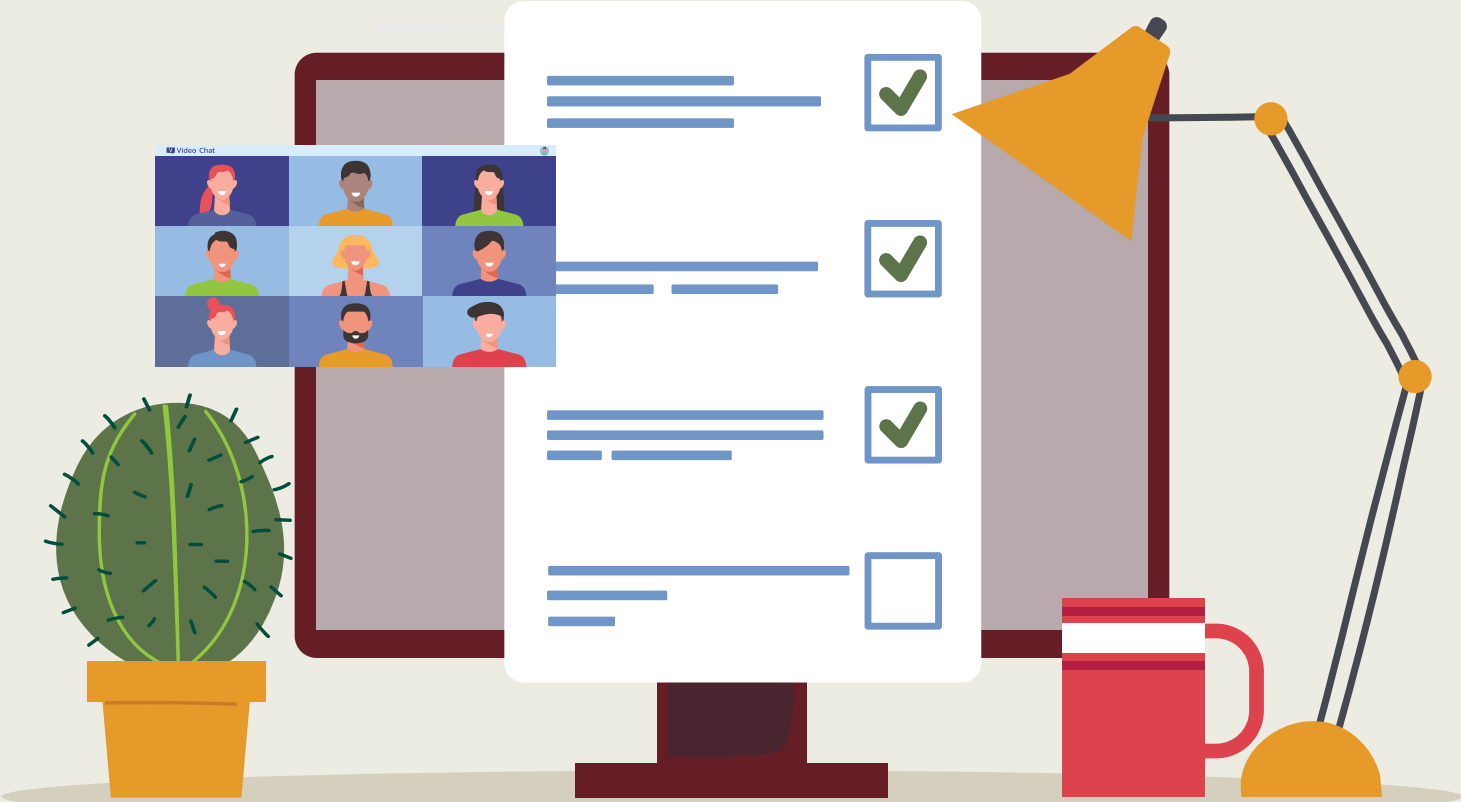


2022 EDUCAUSE Horizon Action Plan: Hybrid Learning



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Jenay Robert and Kathe Pelletier, *2022 EDUCAUSE Horizon Action Plan: Hybrid Learning*
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EDUCAUSE

EDUCAUSE is a higher education technology association and the largest community of IT leaders and professionals committed to advancing higher education. Technology, IT roles and responsibilities, and higher education are dynamically changing. Formed in 1998, EDUCAUSE supports those who lead, manage, and use information technology to anticipate and adapt to these changes, advancing strategic IT decision-making at every level within higher education. EDUCAUSE is a global nonprofit organization whose members include U.S. and international higher education institutions, corporations, not-for-profit organizations, and K-12 institutions. With a community of more than 100,000 individuals at member organizations located around the world, EDUCAUSE encourages diversity in perspective, opinion, and representation. For more information, please visit [educause.edu](https://www.educause.edu).

The adoption of remote and hybrid models for every aspect of life is accelerating rapidly. From catching up with family and friends to clocking in for work, videoconferencing and other remote tools are quickly becoming a regular part of our daily routines. This increased demand for hybrid life and work has even been proposed as one **driver of The Great Resignation**. With such transformative and far-reaching impacts, what role will hybrid modalities play in the future of higher education? Will we evolve and grow with the rest of the world, or will we be left behind?

Approaching these questions with a spirit of hope and optimism, a panel of higher education teaching and learning experts from a range of institution types assembled to describe an optimized future of hybrid learning, focusing on a 10-year timescale. Using a 10-year horizon provides the teaching and learning community an opportunity to consider significant advancements in society, technology, politics, the economy, and the environment, without looking so far into the future that any projections become unrealistic. Building on the trends, technologies, and practices described in the *2022 Horizon Report: Teaching and Learning Edition*, the panel crafted its vision of the future along with practical action items the teaching and learning community can employ to make this future a reality. Any stakeholder in higher education who teaches in or supports hybrid learning modalities will find this report helpful in preparing for the future of hybrid learning. The future we want is within reach, but only if we work together.

Activity: Imagine Future You

Imagining the future can be challenging. Our day-to-day lives require us to be cognizant of the present, considering threats and opportunities that already exist around us. So before you embark on a journey into the future in the pages ahead, take a minute or two to jump-start your creativity and foresight by answering the following questions:

- What will your life look like 10 years from today? Envision your home, hobbies, family, and friends.
- What will your work look like 10 years from today? Envision your work space, daily activities, and colleagues.

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GOALS FOR OUR FUTURE STATE

Asked to describe the goals and elements of hybrid learning that they would like to see 10 years from now, panelists collaboratively constructed their preferred future for institutions, students, instructors, and staff.

Institutions

Higher education is available on demand. Institutions provide on-demand training and microcredentials for cross-institutional degree programs, professional and workforce development, and technical career training. As the call for specific types of courses rises, institutions meet that demand by leveraging hybrid modalities instead of creating more course sections. On-demand learning transcends limitations imposed by time-bound instruction.

Learning is not measured by seat time. Incremental learning credentials document both formal and informal learning activities, including experiential learning, in all modalities. Grades and seat time no longer serve as the primary evidence of learning in higher education. Further, grades and seat time are no longer favored by governmental and accrediting bodies to inform policies around institutional funding and financial aid.

Collaboration across institutions facilitates advancement. Institutions have removed barriers to collaborate with each other, industry partners, and professional associations. These collaborations support national and international degree programs, multi-institutional learning pathways, microcredentials, resource sharing (e.g., open educational resources), and professional development opportunities. Together, institutions and their partners have created sustainable, international hybrid learning pathways that allow students to earn credentials for learning experiences from multiple sources.

College and university campuses are not the sole locations for learning spaces. Institutions leverage partnerships with community members in their local area to augment learning opportunities and support career networking. Local industries and nonprofit organizations are

also locations for students to learn and earn higher education credentials. Cross-institutional collaborations promote students' travel to college and university hubs (i.e., physical campuses with strong community connections) to learn from a variety of communities.

Students, Instructors, and Staff

Everything is hybrid. The "online versus face-to-face" dichotomy has been replaced by a continuum of instructional modalities. Instructors think strategically about learning modalities, optimizing in-person instruction for activities that are pedagogically better in a shared physical location. Learners' needs are met through flexible and efficient pedagogy, often through modular, remote course offerings.

Student equity is centered in all modalities. Institutional programs support equitable access to education with flexible modalities, personal devices, and ubiquitous internet access. In all learning modalities, instruction is designed to support equitable engagement through inclusive pedagogy (e.g., universal design). Teaching and learning experiences are built from and centered on the needs of students.

Professional development is ongoing, integrated, and valued. Not only are instructors compensated for ongoing professional development—professional development is considered as part of evaluation and advancement. Instructors mentor each other through remote-enabled apprenticeships, focusing on teaching in multiple modalities. Students, instructors, and staff are skilled at "modality switching."

Panelists generated a list of actions for the teaching and learning community to arrive at this preferred future in 10 years. Every institution has its own unique needs and challenges, but the community as a whole can work together to effect change. From small, local actions to large, international collaborations, everyone has an opportunity to contribute.

INSTITUTIONAL AND DEPARTMENTAL ACTIONS

EASIER

- **Use research-based methodologies and frameworks.** Educational research provides foundational knowledge for the design and evaluation of hybrid programs and courses. Optimize research-based practices for your institution type and for your stakeholders' particular needs.
- **Make professional development a foundational part of instructors' jobs.** Compensate instructors with time, money, and recognition for participating in professional development. The number of instructors isn't as important to the success of hybrid learning as supporting the development of instructors to thrive in this modality.
- **Support international hybrid learning.** Place the burden of cost for participating in higher education from abroad on institutions rather than students. Recruit and train instructors from all over the world so that students have local resources and touchpoints.
- **Learn more about students' comprehensive needs.** Leverage institutional research to learn what your students believe will enable them to best prepare for their futures. This insight will help institutions serve students holistically and develop resources that help students become more well-rounded individuals.
- **Include experiential learning in all academic programs.** Expand the concept of hybrid learning and what counts as a learning space. Provide opportunities for all students to engage in experiences such as internships, volunteer work, and study-abroad programs across the continuum of instructional modalities. Incentivize academic programs to develop and integrate experiential learning, a well-known **high-impact practice**.
- **Expand instructional design capacity.** As part of The Great Resignation, higher education institutions are competing with industry for the best instructional designers. Increasing compensation and status will go a long way toward solidifying this essential role for supporting hybrid learning at colleges and universities.

HARDER

CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL ACTIONS

EASIER

- **Establish best practices for sustainable technology-enhanced learning spaces.** The construction and ongoing maintenance of technology-enhanced learning spaces are still challenging aspects of hybrid learning. Institutions should work together to establish and share best practices. Focus on installing reusable classroom technology and minimizing ongoing costs.
- **Develop and share best practices for equitable teaching and learning.** The rise of technology-supported learning environments has heightened the need to focus on equity and accessibility. Start by creating a shared understanding of vocabulary, challenges, and goals.
- **Define privacy standards for higher education.** Increasingly hybrid learning and work environments have amplified the need for broadly accepted standards for the ethical use of stakeholder data. Through institutional partnerships, create policies establishing stakeholders' rights and responsibilities and protecting their privacy.
- **Develop funding models for expanding technology access across institutions.** Technology to support hybrid learning can be prohibitively expensive for institutions and students. Work collaboratively with other institutions and funding agencies to develop new and improved funding models for high-quality technology without increasing students' financial burden.
- **Develop a nonacademic credit pipeline.** Learning can happen anywhere. Effectively preparing students to reach their goals should not be limited to the classroom. Collaborate with industry partners to develop new mechanisms, such as microcredentials, for students to earn credit from real-world experiences.
- **Establish cross-institutional programs and credentials.** In a geographically dispersed higher education landscape, institutions need new models that allow learners to attend anywhere, from anywhere. Use cross-institutional partnerships to share instructional materials, "rock star" instructors, lessons learned, and more.
- **Reimagine tenure.** Engage in global discussions about tenure in higher education, considering the new implications that have arisen from hybrid learning and work. What is the relevance of tenure in today's higher education landscape, and what should tenure look like?
- **Reevaluate the role of the higher education institution in a consumer-driven world.** Students have always been consumers of higher education. Given that student populations are becoming increasingly diverse and that competition for those students is growing, rise to the challenge and establish higher education institutions as students' best option for postsecondary learning.
- **Define state and national standards for hybrid learning.** Work with partner institutions, industry, and professional associations such as EDUCAUSE to develop standards for multimodal and multilocation learning, including frameworks, definitions, and implications for accreditation, credit transfer, and curriculum. Standards should address best practices for hybrid learning while honoring place-specific learning opportunities.
- **Change federal government funding models.** Federal funding for institutions and financial aid are tied to seat time, limiting the development of hybrid learning for some institutions. Modify funding models to support what is best for students.

HARDER

Considering a big, bold future is an important element of action planning, but real progress can only be made when individuals like you make things happen. Use the following activities to solidify your vision of the future and make plans to take action.

Activity: Understand Your Institution's Needs

The best plan of action always starts with understanding the starting line. Use this activity to explore the needs and interests of stakeholders at your institution.

- Make a list of key stakeholders at your institution who will be interested in shaping the future of hybrid learning. Consider a wide range of perspectives: instructors, students, instructional designers, administrators, and others. Also consider a variety of instructional, administrative, and operational units: undergraduate and graduate education, student affairs, information technology, information security and privacy, institutional research, teaching and learning centers, and so on.
- Select a sample of individuals from your list and talk to them about the present and future state of hybrid learning at your institution. Some guiding questions are:
 - » What is our current demand for hybrid learning?
 - » How do we support hybrid learning?
 - » What are our biggest challenges related to hybrid learning?
 - » What are our greatest assets related to hybrid learning?
- Take notes on key takeaways from your conversation. Include references for resources and documents such as websites and institutional policies.
- Reflect on your findings and consider how they align with the findings in this report. Is your institutional vision aligned with our panelists' ideas? Are there individuals at your institution who are ready to take some of the actions described in this report?
- Make a plan for next steps. Usually, this starts with identifying key members of your professional network who can partner with you. Consider stakeholders who are ready to hit the ground running, colleagues who already have considerable influence and can break down barriers, and colleagues or units that might be resistant to change and need help seeing your vision.

Your Role in the Future of Hybrid Learning

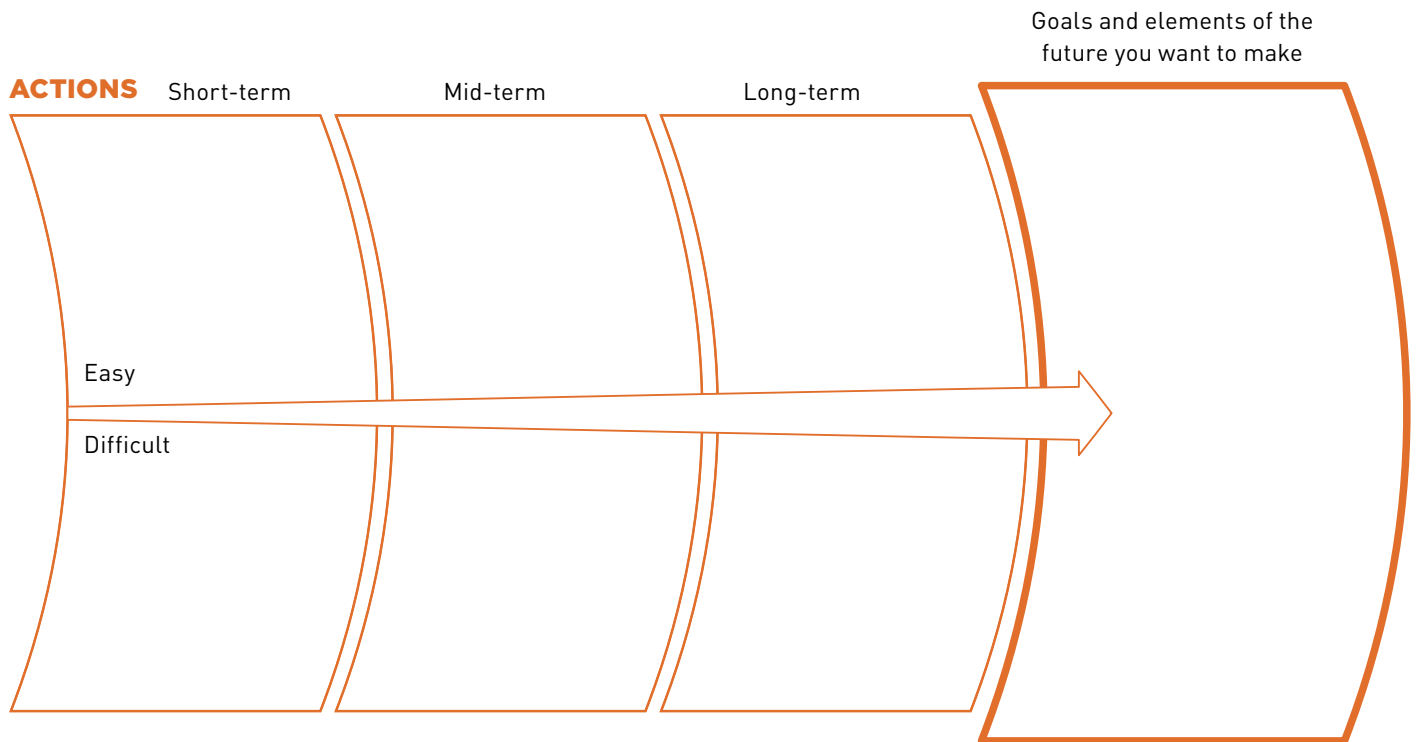
As you embark on the journey, consider the following questions:

- What role do you want to take in these big plans?
- Will you focus on local, national, or international actions?
- What is the current state of hybrid learning at your institution, and where will your institution be 10 years from now?

Activity: Build an Action Roadmap

Now that you have a clear picture of where you are, where you want to go, and who is going to help, you're ready to develop an Action Roadmap (adapted from the [Institute for the Future](#)). This activity is best accomplished collaboratively, so consider working with some of the individuals you identified in the activity Understand Your Institution's Needs. Start with the right side of this tool, describing the goals and elements of your preferred future, using the future described in this report as inspiration. Then, review the findings you generated with Understand Your Institution's Needs and describe the short-, mid-, and long-term actions that will carry you from today's reality to the future you want to see.

BUILD AN ACTION ROADMAP



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The *Horizon Action Plan: Hybrid Learning* is grounded in the perspectives and knowledge of an expert panel of practitioners and thought leaders from across the United States who represent the higher education teaching and learning community. The members of this group were sought out for their unique viewpoints, as well as their contributions and leadership within their domains. The panel reflects the current state of the higher education teaching profession, with members representing a range of institution types. Dependent as the *Horizon Report* efforts are on the voices of its panel, every effort was made to ensure those voices were diverse and that each could uniquely enrich the group's work.

For this Action Plan we adopted and adapted different components of the Institute for the Future (IFF) foresight methodology. First, we asked panelists to review the trends, technologies and practices, and scenarios from the 2022 *EDUCAUSE Horizon Report: Teaching and Learning Edition* and describe their own vision of the preferred future of hybrid learning. Second, panelists were directed to list the threats and opportunities that might imperil or bring momentum to their preferred future and brainstorm possible actions in response to those threats and opportunities. Third, panelists were asked to collectively and collaboratively rate the actions on a continuum of high to low impact. Finally, panelists were asked to individually rate each action on a continuum of higher to low effort, where effort was defined as “a general measure of the resources, time, skill set, and capacity required to carry out an action.” The data produced as a result of these efforts have been used to create the action plan featured in this report.

EDUCAUSE staff provided group facilitation and technical support but minimal influence on the content of the panel's inputs and discussions. This was done to reduce the potential introduction of bias into the results and to allow for this organized group of experts themselves to discuss and converge on a set of actions for the future, based on their own expertise and knowledge.

The panel discussions were held remotely on July 14, 2022, by Zoom.

EXPERT PANEL ROSTER

We would like to acknowledge and express our deepest gratitude to the panel of experts listed below, who were responsible for generating all of the big ideas summarized throughout this resource. Their brilliant thinking and rich discussions were the foundation of this work, and this resource simply would not exist had it not been for their dedication to this project and their passion for serving the larger higher education profession.

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