

## ***Focusing on the Future: More of a Looking in the Mirror than a Crystal Ball***

The following responses in **BLUE** were provided by the participants in the Chat Discussion during the session on May 26, 2021.

Responses in **BLACK** were obtained by participants in the Online Course Design Institute and through workshops at other conferences.

### **Q1. What were the best practices implemented at your institution?**

- Beginning with empathy - for both students and staff.
- JIT [Just In Time] training for people who had never taught online
- We had never used Zoom before, and although it is not the be-all, end-all, it proved a useful platform for remote work. Remote learning increased access for some (eliminated transportation barriers, and changed childcare challenges), threw up additional barriers for others (access, digital literacy).
- Our institution was behind on moving towards online and hybrid for students and this forced the move...and it did benefit our students.
- Digital literacy as part of all program Orientation, and in-program as well.
- Flexibility!
- Free lap top use and emergency technology funding for students who need it.
- We created a program to provide laptops to students who lack technology. This was necessary as computer labs and the library were closed. There is a huge need for technological access (equipment, internet, etc.) for our students so this will need to continue to be provided as we continue to teach online/hybrid.
- As Kristi said, for our institution also, this has propelled us toward hybrid and flex models - and COVID relief funding has also brought us new resources to move quickly!
- In SOME cases (not enough), got us away from teacher-centered to self-directed learning.
- WIFI hotspots for students
- Communications, case management of students impacted by covid, adjusting and supporting technology needs for students and staff working remotely. Rallying resources.
  
- creating an LMS training course
- Offering synchronous and asynchronous options, abundant resources and training
- helping with technology equipment and anything we needed to do it from home
- Our eLearning Team spent many hours meeting with faculty to help get their courses converted, we also offered many sections of online teaching crash courses
- Instructional designers went on full speed giving training after training
- Our organization was great. Had abundance of communication and support. Faculty stepped up to help other faculty. Supervisors were helpful and encouraging.
- Empathy. I felt we were supported with empathy as faculty, and we were encouraged to share that with our students as well. We have learned to give our administrators and our students so much grace.
- Training on teaching through Blackboard Collaborate and also strongly encouraging faculty not to jump on every shiny toy they find online. My goal was to ensure students didn't need to learn how to learn.

- Team of 1 + 1 part time + a team member stolen from another team, no sleep, lots of hours and tons and tons of documentation and training
- Had departmental Zooms and breakouts by individual courses for support. Subject online coordinator provided lots of support.
- training and support for new learners and faculty mentors assigned to those new to online
- We also created a Teach Anywhere for faculty and Learn Anywhere trainings for students
- At the VPAA level - they paid for 95% of our faculty to get some form of QM training (YAY!!) so many people took advantage of at least the Introduction to online learning course

## Q2. What were the practices at your institution that needed improvement?

- Some faculty have never taught online or used the LMS. They struggled because they tried to replicate their face to face courses online
- Digital literacy of instructors and staff! PD for staff, and not enough qualified trainers.
- People had to work round the clock to make it happen and many faculty did not have the expertise to teach online or tech background.
- Systems for accountability of students for asynchronous learning (actually, in some programs this emerged as a strength).
- Supporting employees under great pressures and working remote. Many struggle with the "COVID" effect of "all hands on deck" and the ongoing expectation to work tirelessly without a break or time off. The blur of work into home life as we are all "working from home" ...
- For a long time, the campus was closed to face-to-face skills-based instruction, due to health and safety. This was on one's fault but COVID's, but it meant extending programs indefinitely until required hands-on instruction until the pandemic conditions improved.
- It would have been great to have more passive training tools, such as video tutorials we could watch at our convenience. This would be particularly helpful for "chat" software such as Microsoft Teams.
- Sometimes overload of information. Too many Zoom meetings (Zoom fatigue).
- I think the most frustrating thing was that some "resistant" faculty (thankfully few and far between) did not do their best as a way - I think - to ensure that online learning did not "catch on" This was by far not the norm, but they and their students suffered.
- Using tools that the University fully supported. Was also hard to get faculty to leverage more asynchronous practices since they were used to teaching face-to-face in real time.
- Totally agree with the information overload
- Non-savvy admins with little technology experience trying to dictate operations
- Getting faculty up to speed who were not using the LMS
- We had issues with having adequate hardware and getting technical training for new devices, cameras, etc. Faculty were panicked when classes started in August
- From a faculty perspective what stood out was the slow response from the administration. Almost all of the training and innovation happened at the department level and came from faculty within the department rather than being a campus-wide effort. Much of what we developed as a department was shared with other departments because they had nothing.
- We had lot of faculties who had not taught online before including myself and so that was a biggest challenge but fortunately we have a great instructional support department and had tons of training in the extra week of spring break for students so that was helpful.

- It was difficult to keep up - with a small support team - with all the different tools instructors were trying. Kudos to them for trying to be creative, so appreciative of that - but no time for us to review licensing, privacy, terms of use, etc. or to develop support materials.

**Q3. What were the successful communication practices that you used with your students, faculty colleagues, staff and administration?**

- I teach all online, however, I did need to increase communication with students
- Frequent, brief check-ins at student and all staff levels.
- Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of both Zoom and Microsoft Teams, and using them each appropriately.
- Student Affairs Supervisors met with the Dean of Students daily via ZOOM
- Some programs devised more automated forms of communication, and this is an area we need to continue to develop.
- For our student and campus services we used the website and social media. We did personal phone calls to all the students to see how they were doing. We emailed and also still connect via us mail.
- We use Microsoft Teams extensively. It is great to be able to chat with people, create an impromptu meeting, and share documents/collaboratively work. It is great for statewide meetings that I am able to now participate in.
- Yes..->TEAMS and ZOOM!
- Many students responded better to texts (or WhatsApp) than to emails.
- Doing more team-based work, so students had connection with each other.
- Zoom meetings. Constant emails that reminded students they were not alone.
- zoom/collaborate meetings increased. More YouTube videos for class and announcements. More announcements in class. Google sites for sharing class materials.
- Our College started to have biweekly townhalls for faculty. occasional townhalls for students as well. All hosted over Blackboard Collaborate.
- More frequent announcements in my classes, so my students still touched base with me a few times a week. Also, sending students personalized emails if they weren't logging in to LMS
- We added lots of links to our email signatures to self-help guides and offered Zoom office hours
- I sent a lot of announcements out in my class and I tried to check in with them individually - I teach a fully online course
- Zoom Q&A Sessions, groups in Blackboard, announcement and video how-tos
- ZOOM!!! had never used it pre-COVID
- Our administration did HUGE web-page updates for students, faculty, and staff
- ZOOM ZOOM ZOOM ZOOM :-)

#### Q4. Was your course already designed to teach using a dual delivery model?

- X [No]
- Y [Yes]
- I wish I was teaching so I could have experienced this! (I think....)
- [The split for this YES/NO question was very even (50-50) for those who responded in Reactions area in Zoom.]
  
- No.
- Yes, except for the lab component which no one was really prepared for.
- Yes
- Most of my faculty are traditional, on-ground, with no online experience. I was so proud of the immense work they did to make the pivot
- Primarily No, luckily I had hosted a lot of training on our web conferencing tool, so there were faculty ready to leverage that for emergency remote instruction
- Chat results will be compiled and shared
- delivering a face to face lab experience.
- communicating the change to students and reassuring them it will be okay
- biology

#### Q5. How did you change your teaching practice as you moved your course(s) online?

- My course is basically a student directed/self-paced online course. It had a couple of optional zoom check in meetings. However, during the pandemic students requested MORE scheduled zoom meetings....I think they wanted/needed more human support during this time....
- Used more of a flipped classroom model
- Formerly team-based, hands-on participatory activities had to be rethought. Some were converted creatively to Zoom Breakout Room activities, in other cases, more videos were introduced to provide examples for discussion. Some Nurse Aide classes even had students videoing themselves practicing skills on a family member or stuffed animal. Culinary students photographed food prepared in their home kitchen - but we have not figure out how to taste and smell remotely!
- Students learned new tools for making projects and presentations, such as Animoto (video presentations).
  
- Started using video elements. Challenges are technology. Required more understanding on my part.
- A lot more outreach to students, trying to check in and see if there were things I could help them with either in the course or connecting the dots to student services
- dissections are still difficult
- Hmmmm - trying to figure out what could stay synchronous and what could go online - and how not to make MORE work for the students.
- Assessments and group work, individual communication with students - more phone calls/emails
- I needed much more preparation time to get activities online.
- synchronous/recorded lectures and online exams proctored through Honorlock
- (I should have said what could be done online synchronous and what should be online asynchronous)

- Revamp our process for courses to enter the QM Pipeline to prepare all courses to be taught online by Fall2020.
- Loved Speedgrader--will never collect a paper again
- lot of paper assignments like paper labs were shifted to canvas where students can upload it, tests through Honorlock and recorded lecture videos and uploaded through Microsoft stream
- Particularly training for multiple applications.
- Upload worksheets to be graded in Speedgrader
- yes Speedgrader is amazing
- Converting paper exams to online exams.
- All great ideas!
- Yes!
- Yes
- Yes - zero sleep for weeks
- As an instructional designer, my role changed from helping excited faculty who wanted to teach online to supporting the panicked faculty who had been tech-shy and avoiding online
- LOL - job postings yes! Have been trying to hire someone since May
- Yes
- Hours were long... Role evolved into quite a bit more technical support. The need for a help desk that could field high level blackboard questions was very glaring by the end of April.
- We have a fairly large eLearning department and we all had to come together, split into schools, and we used the Teamwork Desk ticketing system. We would find faculty from our assigned schools and went to work. It was pretty intense for a few weeks.
- we didn't have an ID, until someone remembered my resume from a job interview for a completely different job...instant job
- I'm an online subject coordinator and worked 24/7 during the spring because I was the expert for online instruction that most traditional instructor could not do
- Great information and thanks for sharing!
- We had a high demand of faculty lined up to take QM Workshops.

#### **Q6. What were the biggest challenges for your students as you moved online?**

- Attention span of students was reduced - not paying attention to Zoom, distractions in the background, etc.
- Very mixed. Some students loved it, and many enjoyed learning new skills. Some drifted away - did not even want to attempt it.
- I was surprised on how many students don't have computers. I can't imagine trying to do all the activities required for a course on a phone.
- Students and family members were directly affected by COVID or related issues (having children out of school and at home, working from home).
- Even with technology and access, you need a quiet space to work. Kids and parents in different rooms trying to all work remotely!
- Internet Access
- Technology, balance family/home life with school, feeling overwhelmed with the difference in modality.

- Increased work hours, so less time for school work. Many were overwhelmed and fell off the wagon
- Students suffering through 3.5 hours of boring lectures....online, synchronous...
- Time management
- distractions at home
- Access was a huge issue. We had to get hotspots in the parking lots
- Agree to the increased work hours. I had a few in that predicament.
- Digital barriers
- some were fine with it but others were very anxious about it as we entered into the uncertainty.
- The biggest challenge for my students was access to the internet and having a device that can be used.
- in a low income area...not everyone had the devices they needed
- many struggled with internet so had to design assignments and labs that could be accessed through smart phones
- \*devices
- Some students are not self-motivated and so were lost as everything went online and not many had reliable internet service and proper technology
- So many students complained about the workload doubling - difficulties with faculty being able to gauge [gauge] the time required for online interactions and activities. Also so much remote distance no-change speaking at the camera.
- They had to park in the lot and work
- Our school did the hotspots as well. They parked in the parking lot, too.
- [Our school] opened up nearly all public location access points - libraries mainly.
- yes our school had hotspots in parking lot too
- Students also really struggled with time management
- [Our school] added hot spots in parking lots and advertised it to the community
- Zoom fatigue was a big issue for students too.
- I think that logically it would follow that by fall the classes would be better but I don't think that happened in practice. By the time summer rolled around everyone was really fatigued and if they had time off they took it or if they taught in the summer they had to focus on those classes and it didn't necessarily follow that courses were better by fall.
- Zoom fatigue was a big issue for faculty and students too!
- My student workers and my college-age children (at other universities) have really been vocal about those instructors who clearly are designing for online now and those who still aren't

**Q7. What was your biggest challenge in teaching during the pandemic?**

- Knowing how to support staff in doing something I had never done myself.
- Meeting the needs of students, they took a lot more care
- Getting my physical space set up at home - chair, computer, office tools, etc.
- On the non-instructional side, I was amazed at how productive I could be working remotely. I did think I would have more personal time without a 2-hour commute each day, but I worked longer days than ever!
- [I] agree with [non-instructional side comment].
- Yes, we all need a work/life balance!

- Changing assignments and dropping some so students were not overwhelmed
- Fighting for bandwidth with the rest of the house.
- Stay focused and motivated. Still making sure students were engaged in lecture. Staying on top of students.
- As someone who is proficient with our LMS I was challenged by trying to help several other faculty with learning the LMS while trying to do my own courses.
- kept major work dropped minor work
- I think the biggest gap was having a ready solution to maintain a sense of community and interaction (both student-to-student and student-to-teacher) Blackboard discussion boards lack a little ;-)
- other instructors totally unprepared and I had to provide support to them as well as my own students
- Amen!!
- Being humane to learners who are also challenged by the pandemic, yet are still trying to succeed. That has been a both a challenge and a privilege.
- amen!
- True
- Yes! A lot of grace and understanding
- And some extra credit ;)
- Yes!

**Q8. What kinds of support and professional development was available for online teaching implementation?**

- Our Instructional Design team, although VERY overworked, were AMAZING in supporting everyone with online courses.
- Our institution recruited faculty who were experienced online instructors to provide peer workshops and support during the conversion to remote. These peer workshops were very helpful.
- We had full workday Zoom sessions to support faculty with design and technology. Offered a series of 6 webinars to help go from Zero to capable in an online class, but tons of prepared material and 1:1 sessions available.
- No- but sooo much more prepared for the fall in providing PD this semester
- Our learning technologies office offered a lot of training opportunities (optional since many of us had taught online before). You could choose the ones you felt like you needed support in. They were also super quick to answer questions and help you if needed.
- We had self-paced online course in blackboard for online and hybrid instructors that we enrolled all faculty in went we moved online. The course taught backward course design, objective writing, alignment, etc. We also hosted more frequent training on specific tools like Panopto, Collaborate, Blackboard, etc.
- No, not CTL
- We had many similar trainings for LMS, online teaching best practices, reminding people that they are doing remote instruction not necessarily online instruction
- My department (Learning Technologies/Instructional Design), Fac Dev, and Institute for Academic Outreach - all really started working together to better coordinate our efforts
- WebEx and Zoom trainings and 1-on-1 sessions as well
- While we have instructional designers and a learning excellence center, it just wasn't up for the task to provide the support that everyone needed all at once. The part that helped me tremendously was

how the faculty in our department stepped up and we supported each other. That made it easier because we felt each other being supported in ways that maybe we wouldn't have felt by IT or another group.

- It was even better to learn the faculty who were thrown into the emergency remote teaching mode.
- I actually saw and worked with faculty I had only heard of before.
- same, my relationships with other faculty got a lot better because I had not gotten a chance to work with them before.
- in this time, patience
- A better appreciation for my basement office. ':-)
- Oh - yes - love my new home office and rotating schedule!!!! <3
- Relationships cross multiple campuses greatly improved

### Based on your reflections, what future forecasting would you make?

- I think we will be more nimble and not as risk-adverse. At least I hope so!
- Education needs to be nimble
- With the increase in online education, location advantage will no longer be relevant. We will be competing for students all over, not just in our backyard.
- If we do not become more "nimble and not as risk-averse," as [another participant] puts it, we will be creating an existential threat for our programs and institutions.
- Courses will need to be "shorter". Break down semester long courses into "chunks" so people can take and complete more easily and quickly...see success faster!
- We will need to focus on the equity of digitizing the educational platform. Hot spots, access to computers, and space for students to complete the courses.

**Zala Fashant – Presenter: Thanks for attending our presentation and sharing your experiences!**

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