Lessons Learned: Student Perspectives on Virtual/Hybrid Learning in AY20/21
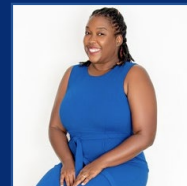
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Introduction to Session

- Summary of lessons learned from the AY20/21 academic year

- Moderated discussion about a specific course taught by Krystal Lee

- Moderated open discussion
  - Post questions in the chat or raise your hand!

Teaching Council

➤ Participants are members of the AY21/22 Teaching Council, and all served as Peer Faculty Teaching Mentors or Senior TA's during the AY20/21 Year

➤ This group is a resource for faculty and TA's from across the school, to nurture a culture of teaching excellence

➤ Resource for 1:1 conversations as well as workshops and office hours (including one yesterday!)

➤ http://ctltoolkit.s3.amazonaws.com/VirtualClassroom2021/TeachingCouncilAndTeachingFellowsAY21-22.pdf

Today's Discussion

➢ Provide a summary of lessons learned from students and faculty from last year

➢ How can we help students make the most of their experience this year, especially for virtual and hybrid classes?

Working Group on Lessons Learned from AY 2020-2021

➢ In 4th term, Peer Faculty Mentors and Senior TA's split into working groups to collate learnings from the past year

➢ Our workgroup focused on lessons learned around the shift from in-person to virtual learning
   ► Included representation across Departments and CTL

➢ Prepared 2 Google Forms to share with faculty, teaching assistants, and students:
   ► What were your biggest challenges with virtual learning?
   ► What were your biggest successes?
   ► What are your key takeaways from this academic year?

Lessons Learned from AY 2020-2021: Methods & Results

➤ Questionnaires shared with faculty and students through Academic Coordinators as well as faculty & student communication channels

➤ Received 126 responses in last 3 weeks of 4th term
- ► Faculty/TA's: 39 responses from 5 departments (22 tenure track; 9 non-tenure track; 7 TA)
- ► Students: 52 responses from 5 departments + 34 response from a similar survey in Epidemiology

➤ Reviewed each questionnaire & identified themes separately from the teaching perspective (faculty and TA's) and learners' perspective (students)
- ► Compared results & summarized cross-cutting findings as lessons learned
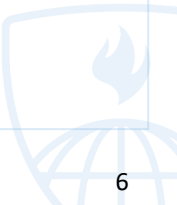
High-Level Findings from Faculty, TA's & Students on Virtual Learning

➢ Adaptation is possible in supportive and communicative environments

➢ Engagement is a priority, but definitions vary and may need to be broadened

➢ Flexibility should be balanced with maintaining academic rigor

➢ High-quality virtual instruction is important to avoid an opportunity gap among students receiving online vs in-person training

https://www.dreamstime.com/illustration/distance-call.html

Specific Findings from Faculty, TA's & Students on Hybrid Instruction
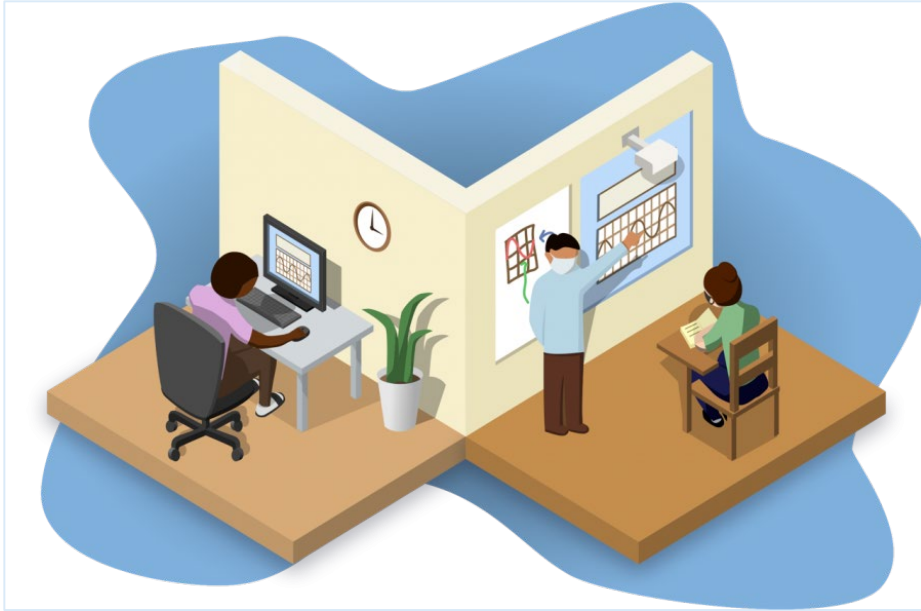
Successes:

➢ Guest lecturers could participate more easily via Zoom
➢ Greater attendance flexibility

Challenges:

➢ Time zone differences among students attending remotely
➢ Expectations varied for in-person vs virtual students
➢ Use of complex technology while simultaneously engaging students attending in-person & those attending on Zoom

https://thecirclevoice.org/4861/archived/vol-50-issue-1-2/hybrid-learning/

Student-Specific Findings: Successes

➢ Flexibility of virtual learning
  ► Working from home cut down on commute times
  ► Self-pacing facilitated learning for many

➢ Taking time to understand own approaches to learning
  ► What do I need to learn?
  ► What boundaries do I need to set?
  ► What supports do I need to seek out?

➢ Finding solidarity with cohort or classmates
  ► Proactive communication
  ► Zoom writing groups
  ► Non-academic Zoom activities (for some)

Student-Specific Findings: Challenges

► **Burnout was common**
  ► Zoom and screen fatigue
  ► Feeling drained by engagement efforts

► **Lack of resources for doing work at home**
  ► Household distractions
  ► Lack of work/life boundaries

► **Feeling underprepared for comps, oral exams, or higher-level coursework**

► **Communication with faculty**

► **Peer connection**

How might faculty partner with students to promote virtual engagement?

➢ Consider asking your students to reflect on:
  ▶ What will it mean for me to be engaged in this course/program?
    ● Using Zoom video?
    ● Participating in class discussions?
    ● Reading and reflection?
  ▶ What will frustrate me, cause anxiety, or lead to burnout?

➢ Encourage students to communicate reflections & course expectations to faculty, TAs, and house/roommates
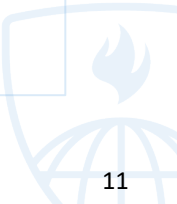
Practical Recommendations for Students in Virtual Environments

➢ Take breaks!
- ► Pomodoro method for writing, homework, and other tasks
- ► Lunch breaks

➢ Reduce screen time
- ► Suggest implementing the 20/20/20 method to reduce eye strain

➢ Reduce distractions
- ► Time limits on apps
- ► Zoom in full-screen mode

➢ If feeling overwhelmed, reach out to Johns Hopkins Student Assistance Program (JHSAP)
- ► Video calls & phone consultations available

Pomodoro Technique
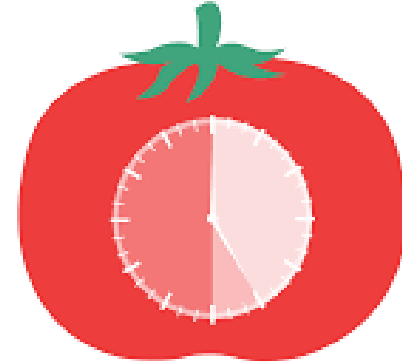
25 min working
5 min resting

From clockwise

Practical Recommendations for Hybrid Instruction

- Practice with the hybrid classroom technology before the start of the term
  - During the term, plan to be in the classroom, at least 5 minutes prior to class with TA(s) to set up
  - Test viable set-ups prior to the start of the term

- Practice lecturing in a mask

- Set clear expectations for participation and attendance
  - Consider engagement for both in-person and virtual learners
  - Delegate responsibilities like monitoring participation on Zoom to TAs or co-instructors
  - Consider recording class sessions and options for sharing recordings with students

Experiences from the Virtual Classroom

▶ Course name: Foundations of University Teaching and Learning
  ▶ Department: Health, Behavior and Society

▶ Style of Course: Discussion based seminar style course
  ▶ # students enrolled: 6 – 8

▶ Co-taught by Dr. Krystal Lee and Dr. Tyler Derreth

▶ The course was offered for the first time in 4th term 2020, right as lockdowns began

▶ It was taught 100% virtual and synchronous

▶ Let's hear from an instructor and a student about their experiences!

Thank You and Resources

► Big thanks to today's presenters! Additional big thanks to Audrey Buckland for helping with preparations for the presentation and to workgroup members Batel Blechter, Linda Chyr, Kathy Gresh, ME Hughes, Liz Thomas and Heidi DiFrancesca.

► Email Liz Stuart (estuart@jhu.edu) with any questions, comments, or suggestions

► CTL Virtual and Hybrid Teaching Resources page: https://my.jhsph.edu/sites/ctlt/Pages/resources.aspx

► MS Teams group to continue the conversation: "JHSPH Discussions on Virtual Instruction Strategies" https://livejohnshopkins.sharepoint.com/sites/Office365Hub/SitePages/Teams.aspx

► Reach out to your Department's Teaching Council member and/or Teaching Fellows for help

  http://ctltoolkit.s3.amazonaws.com/VirtualClassroom2021/TeachingCouncilAndTeachingFellowsAY21-22.pdf

► CTL CoursePlus blog: https://ctl.jhsph.edu/blog/

► Multimedia help ticket to try out a room: https://my.jhsph.edu/Offices/InformationTechnology/forms/Multimedia%20and%20Production%20Request%20Form.aspx