Student Partners' Recommendations Regarding Remote Teaching and Learning

These recommendations were gathered from pedagogical partnership program directors and student partners who worked with faculty members at nine different institutions through the shift to online teaching and learning in Spring-2020. These institutions include Bryn Mawr College, Florida Gulf Coast University, Haverford College, Reed College, Smith College, Tufts University, University of Denver, Ursinus College, and Vassar College.

"Be present...be communicative...be flexible...be encouraging." -Student Partner, Florida Gulf Coast University

Start with and Sustain the Human

"Be intentional about checking in with your students not only on their academics, but their well-being and stability of where they are living/staying as well. Show genuine care and understanding, and ask students how you can best be a support to them during the period of online learning." -Student Partner, Bryn Mawr College

Resources and strategies:
- Consult resources compiled by Mays Imad on trauma-informed teaching: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VrMrpeY73yKuaM84hceEdu42EAGlUfhU
- Begin with a questionnaire or survey that invites students to share what they are comfortable sharing about their living/studying situation, their state of mind/mental health, their access to technology and resources.
- If students are living in different places and time zones, consider how to make course meetings and activities accessible and flexible (more on this below). For example, create a space for asynchronous participation so that students in different time zones/with at-home responsibilities can participate equitably.
- Recognize that different students will be experiencing these times in different ways, acknowledge that, and provide the support and guidance you can throughout the semester.

Embrace Equitable and Accessible Practices

Embracing practices that are equitable and accessible is always important, especially when inequities and lack of access are exacerbated by the pandemic and the different contexts and circumstances students experience in remote learning.

Just a few suggestions and resources:
- Offer flexibility (especially around participation)
  - Create small discussion groups with students in the class, along with your faculty partner, so students in the class get an opportunity to talk to the Prof in a smaller, more comfortable environment. [Student Partner, Vassar College]
- Create and publish class outlines for your students so they can recall what concepts were discussed at certain times during specific class recordings
- Don't increase the amount of work required of students merely due to the transition to remote learning or due to fear of a loss of rigor
- Record lectures, including if they happen live over Zoom
- Consider ways to communicate and check in with your classes and/or individual students
  - In one of my classes we held a zoom party after the semester was over with my professor and classmates. It had nothing to do with our academics but was a really great way to talk to one another and feel connected in a time of isolation. I would encourage these kinds of social gatherings, especially for smaller classes, to talk to one another and check in. [Student Partner, Bryn Mawr College]
- Continuously ask for feedback through different channels/modalities. [Student Partner, Tufts University]

- Make intentional use of Zoom features
  - Take advantage of the unique opportunity to giver shyer students written participation options. [Student Partner, Ursinus College]
  - Encourage use of 'raise hand' icon on Zoom (shyer students may be hesitant to speak as it harder to read a room on Zoom and the same folks may continue to participate. [Student Partner, Vassar College]
  - Use the chat room on Zoom to give small grammar reminders [in a language course] while students were speaking to continue teaching without interrupting or disrupting [Student Partner, Reed College]
- If you notice a reduced involvement from a particular student, reach out in a compassionate manner. Make sure they know that you are reaching out not to add burden, but to offer help.
- Here's a resource of accessible practices you might find helpful (Note: this was not created with remote learning in mind): https://udlbico.wixsite.com/udlbico

Offer Students Choices

With so many things unknown right now, and everyone's lives looking so different, the ability to choose can be really powerful for students.

Examples of giving students choices:
- Different options for assessments, such as exams, essays, creative work, etc. Faculty and students in different disciplines may need to think through what would be at once flexible, equitable, and fair.
  - Students may have different goals for what they aim to get out of a class, so this approach offers the option to learn what most aligns with their goals.
- Different ways to participate, including discussion boards and other written options (which may be preferable to shy or introverted students especially).
  - Some students may prefer an audio or video option, as long as they are able to record it by themselves and not be expected to speak extemporaneously, like they would in class.
  - Give students credit for participating in more informal, community-building discussion boards. These boards may be places where students can post helpful resources, funny stories or articles, things from popular culture that relate to the class, etc. In a time when world events may make participating "academically"— critically and complexly—difficult due to the amount of energy required, these types of boards allow students to earn credit for contributing to the class in other important ways.
- Post recorded lectures and class resources in various formats (Youtube and Google Drive in addition to Panopto, and .pdf in addition to .doc)
- Find a balance between deadlines and flexibility for submitting completed assignments.
  - While some students need or want flexibility, others thrive with set deadlines. Finding a way to be flexible but also providing needed structure for all kinds of students would be helpful.

Create Regular Opportunities to Assess Learning Goals

This time can be used as an opportunity to "start looking toward [the] impact on learning as opposed to assigning work to meet the minimum hours needed to work on the class." - Student Partner, Haverford College

- Focus on the goals you want students to achieve and consider the ways to do that under the current circumstances.
- Offer a platform for students to submit concern, suggestion, or question anonymously (e.g. Google Form)