PAMPLIN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ONLINE LEARNING TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT

05/20/20

Abstract

This Report details Pamplin's Online Task Force Findings and Recommendations for Online Learning.

I would like to thank task force members for their hard work and dedication to enhancing student learning and faculty success this fall.

Kevin D. Carlson, Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs

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Executive Summary

The spread of COVID-19 required the conversion of courses from face-to-face to online delivery during the spring semester of 2020. With uncertainty about whether face-to-face classes will be possible this fall, or to what extent, Dean Sumichrast authorized the creation of an online learning task force to examine the challenges and opportunities facing the college and to develop recommendations to help expand and enhance the effectiveness of the college's online learning efforts. The task force was composed of 18 faculty and student volunteers with experience in online education or instructional design from individuals recommended by the college's deans and department heads. The task force also included Pamplin's Director of IT, the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the Executive Director of Technology-enhanced Learning and Online Strategies (TLOS). The task force was formed April 15th and completed its sprint and offered recommendations in Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, May 6th.

Guided by the "80/20 rule", the task force sought to identify a limited number of recommendations that could substantively improve the quality of online education offered in Pamplin for this summer and fall. Discussions built on the expertise of task force members, supplemented by reviews of the online learning literature and surveys of Pamplin faculty and students. These discussions produced the following insights about online learning and its current deployment in Pamplin:

- *Student reactions to the rapid conversion of Spring 2020 classes from face-to-face to online instruction produced mixed results which faculty can use to guide course modifications for the fall*
- *It is unlikely that the uncertainty about face-to-face classes this fall will be resolved soon*
- *Faculty are at different points in their journey to develop expertise in creating and delivering online learning, suggesting solutions customized to individual faculty will be most useful*
- *Everyone is learning how to adjust. Students as well as faculty are learning how to function in online classes*
- *The university has excellent resources to support developing and delivering online learning education (e.g., CETL, TLOS)—we do not need to duplicate these efforts*

Strategic Recommendations

These insights and task force discussions led to the development of a series of strategic recommendations offered to faculty as they prepare their courses for the summer and fall of 2020. The first type of recommendations offer conceptual guidance for how to approach course design. These include:

- *Build your courses to be taught online*
    - Given the uncertainty about social distancing for the fall, we advise all faculty to build their courses so they can deliver them online. Courses designed for online delivery can be flexed to incorporate face-to-face elements more effectively than flexing face-to-face elements to online delivery
    - Build all courses in Canvas. Doing so provides a common navigation structure for students, provides common communication and access tools, and aids continuity of instruction if a faculty member is ill.
- *Show your students you "care" about them:*
    - Complete and publish Canvas sites at least two days before the course begins
    - Demonstrate competence in the tools you choose to use in your courses
    - Limit changes to graded assignments and due dates during the course
- *Create engagement to enhance positive student experience:*
    - Create logically organized and easily navigable Canvas Sites
    - Provide ongoing communication with students before and during the course

- o Build in opportunities for faculty-student and peer-to-peer student engagement
- *Good pedagogical practice is the same for online and face-to-face education*
  - o *Many of the recommendations for creating good online instruction are the same recommendations used to guide the development of effective face-to-face instruction (e.g., start with the learning objectives).*
- *Assess for success while fostering academic integrity*
  - o Respondus with Monitor is available to lock down web browsers during online exams, but its use increases student anxiety and may signal we do not trust them
  - o Replace big high-stakes exams (>25% of course grade) with several smaller low-stakes authentic assessments that build knowledge and skills progressively
  - o Peer-to-peer learning is a powerful pedagogical tool. Encourage students to work with and help each other on activities, but provide clear instructions when it is appropriate to do so in your course
  - o Focus assessments on "doing" learning objectives using activities (e.g., papers, projects, posters, case analyses, worked problems) graded with rubrics
- *Focus*
  - o Focus on the course learning objectives—the student outcomes—instead of specific activities. You may not need to convert everything currently in your course to online. Think about how best to help student learn by combining face-to-face and online tools
  - o Do not try to do too much. Focus on applying a few new approaches well. Online learning offers several new and potentially useful tools, but trying too much and executing is poorly can backfire
- *Ask for Help*
  - o There are many faculty in the college who are thoughtful instructional designers with experience online. They are great resources if you want to "kick around" new ideas about how to take courses online.
  - o CETL and TLOS have people with expertise in instructional design for online course delivery and the supporting technologies. They are here to help you. Use them.

Tactical Recommendations and Resources

The second set of recommendations reflect specific tactical recommendations to faculty. These recommendations are available in Canvas site called "Pamplin Online Learning" (https://canvas.vt.edu/courses/112922). All faculty are participants in course. The Canvas site organizes task force recommendations according to: (1) The course design feature it influences and (2) the specific student challenge a faculty member may wish to try to overcome. For each recommendation the task force provides: (a) A brief description of the recommendation, (b) an example of its use, (c) a discussion of when this recommendation may be useful and why, (d) guidance on how to implement the recommendation, and (e) the name of someone in the college to contact who can talk about that recommendation. If you do not have access, please contact Jean Lacoste lacoste@vt.edu. The Canvas site also includes:

- An archive of online learning resources identified by task force members
- Links to templates that can be used to create additional tactical recommendations
- Templates for Canvas course sites that offer useful examples of good organization and course navigation
- Links to the web pages for CETL and TLOS

In addition to course design recommendations, three structural recommendations to support online learning are offered to college administrators. These include:

- Create a college-level adhoc committee to continue the work of the task force to promote excellence in online learning and student learning generally.
- Create positions for one or more instructional designers in the college to support faculty and to coordinate with CETL and TLOS. These could be full or part-time faculty experts given course releases to provide this support.
- Look for ways to use upper-level undergraduate students to provide support for enhanced collaborative and experiential activities and student communication for undergraduate classes offered during 20-21.

Online Learning Task Force Report

Task Force Charge

COVID-19 require the conversion of face-to-face to online classes during the spring semester of 2020. With uncertainty about whether face-to-face classes will be possible this fall, or to what extent, Dean Sumichrast authorized the creation of an online learning task force to examine the challenges and opportunities facing the college and to develop recommendations. Associate Dean Kevin Carlson volunteered to lead the task force.

Formation of the Task Force

The first step in creating the online learning task force was to make requests of each department head for the name of a faculty member who was experienced in online learning or instructional design. In addition, a request for nominations for student members was sent to the Associate Deans for Undergraduate and Graduate programs. Nine faculty names were received and seven student names (five undergraduate and two graduate students). Upon receiving these nominations, each individual received an email inviting them to join the task force. Of the initial 17 individuals invited, 15 accepted the invitation. In addition, invitations to join the task force were made to Jim Dickhans, Pamplin IT Director, Kim Filer, Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and Associate Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning and Dale Pike, Director of Technology-Enhanced Learning and Online Strategies (TLOS), who each agreed to participate on the task force. In addition, Associate Deans Lara Khansa and Kevin Carlson participated. Bryanna Meredith provided administrative support. While the task force was operating, an additional faculty member volunteered. We provide a list of the full membership of the Task Force here:

- Nicholas Brown, PhD Student, Business Information Technology
- Kevin Carlson, Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs
- Brian Collins, Department of Marketing
- Joshua Del Rosario, UG Student, Department of Accounting and Information Systems
- Jim Dickhans, Director of IT, Pamplin College of Business
- John Easterwood, Department of Finance, Insurance and Business Law
- Jonathan Everett, Center for Excellence in Real Estate
- Kim Filer, Director of CETL and Associate Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning
- Howard Haines, APEX Center for Entrepreneurs
- Barbara Hoopes, Department of Business Information Technology
- Lara Khansa, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs
- Jean Lacoste, Department of Accounting and Information Systems
- Kristin Lamoureux, Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Bryanna Meredith, Administrative Assistant, Office of the Dean
- Quinton Nottingham, Department of Business Information Technology
- Dale Pike, Director of Technology-Enhanced Learning and Online Strategies
- Sarah Shelton, UG Student, Department of Marketing
- Jacob Shortt, Department of Accounting and Information Systems
- Paul Speshock, MBA Student
- Rachitha Tholasi, UG Student, Department of Business Information Technology
- David Townsend, Department of Management
- Luke Voivoda, UG Student, Department of Management

Operation of the Task Force

The task force organized its work as a "sprint"—an attempt to create as much value as possible over a short period of concentrated effort. The task force was formed on April 15th and conducted its first meeting on Thursday April 16th. The task force met twice each week for the next two weeks (Tuesdays and Thursdays). Two additional meetings were

scheduled on Friday, May 1st and Monday, May 4th. The task force ended with the presentation of an online Town Hall meeting presentation to faculty on Wednesday, May 6th from 9:00-10:00 am.

Prior to each meeting, task force members completed a common data-generating task. Each task force member had access to this information prior to each meeting, creating a foundation for discussion. The agenda, task, and minutes of each task force meeting are included in the appendix.

Insights into Online Learning Heading Into Summer and Fall 2020

Guided by the "80/20 rule", the task force sought to understand the current state of online learning in Pamplin and to identify a limited number of recommendations the task agreed could substantively improve the quality of online education. Discussions built on the expertise of task force members, supplemented by reviews of the literature, and surveys of Pamplin faculty and students conducted within several of the departments. These discussions produced the following insights about online learning and its current deployment in Pamplin:

Student Reactions to the Spring Course Conversions were Mixed

Student comments suggest that the conversion of courses from face-to-face during the spring semester produced mixed results. In some cases, anecdotally around 40% of students' courses, the results of the conversions were very good. Faculty communicated effectively with students, helping them transition to a new delivery model and were sympathetic to the challenges the conversions created. In other instances, the experiences appeared to be less successful. An archetype of a less effective conversion building across comments would include the following. While the course was in Canvas, the course site was hard to navigate, students found it hard to know when assignment were due, or the due dates and perhaps the assignments themselves might change without changing the related gradebook features. Full-length lectures made available on line, but students found it difficult to process the information in the long recordings and students had difficulties connecting with faculty to gain clarifications. Anecdotal data suggests students missed the student-to-student and faculty-student interactions that had been common in their courses. Finally, the most negative student reactions were generated in situations where they perceived that faculty did not care. The university has agreed that no SPOT data from the Spring 2020 semester will be used in any administrative evaluation of faculty members. However, individual faculty may find the information in Spring 2020 SPOT Evaluations of their courses useful when considering any course modifications for the summer or fall semesters.

It is Unlikely that the Uncertainty about Face-to-Face Classes this Fall will be Resolved Soon

A critical decision point for the university will be whether, to what extent and how it conduct face-to-face classes at any or all of its campuses this fall. Not bringing student back on campus fundamentally changes the dynamics of education that may impact enrollment and the university's auxiliary operations. It is assumed the that the university will try to bring students back on campus if it is feasible to do so safely. The development of operational plans to attempt to bring students back on campus are underway, but the details of these plans have not yet been released. Critical components of these plans will include the availability of personal protective equipment, acceptable levels of student density (in classrooms and living areas), and personal handwashing and facility disinfecting strategies.

While the university can develop its plans, a number of significant factors influencing the capacity of the university to bring students back on campus will be outside of the university's control. This includes the rate of spread of the virus in the Commonwealth and other locations from which students originate and virus spread in the New River Valley between now and August.

Even if circumstances permit students to return to campus safely, it is not clear that those conditions will continue throughout the fall semester. The potential exists for a fall surge of COVID-19 cases and any virus outbreak on campus would like lead to calls to end face-to-face classes. Further, even if students can return, it is not clear that all students will feel comfortable returning to Blacksburg, or if they do, whether they will be, and will remain, comfortable in attending face-to-face classes. This also applies to faculty and staff. Anecdotal information from two departments

suggests that upwards of 50% of department faculty indicate, as of now, they would feel uncomfortable teaching face-to-face classes this fall.

As a result, the likelihood of the university being able to deliver courses this fall in a traditional face-to-face format for all students seems highly unlikely, though some amount of face-to-face instruction may be possible. Consequently, in order to plan effectively for uncertain course delivery this fall, the task force recommends that all faculty develop their courses so that they instruction can be delivered fully online. We believe this to be the best approach for faculty, because, courses designed to be taught online, due to the greater attention to course structure required in online development, can be modified to move any synchronous component to face-to-face delivery, while traditional face-to-face instruction may not be easily transitioned to online under short notice. Preparing courses to be delivered online offers faculty the greatest flexibility to adjust to whatever course delivery context we encounter this fall.

Faculty Are At Different Points In Their Journey To Develop Expertise In Creating And Delivering Online Learning, Suggesting Solutions Customized To Individual Faculty Will Be Most Useful.

Several Pamplin faculty had not delivered an online course, in full or in part, prior to this spring. However, the college delivers a number of programs, like the MIT and BXBR, fully online or with hybrid delivery and have done so for a number of years. As a result, several faculty have extensive online experience, including completion of faculty development programs to improve online course design and deliver skills. Still other faculty have had some experiences with online teaching or the use of some online tools. This results in Pamplin faculty having widely varying expertise and comfort in the development, delivery and execution of online learning.

However, while we believe CETL and TLOS offer significant insight into the mechanics of development, they may not have deep insight into the context of business education or some of the pedagogical approaches currently used. So while they can help faculty implement specific curriculum development actions, they may, at this time, be less well-positioned to offer strategies for moving some aspects of business courses to online delivery. We believe it is possible they will gain this insight after working with a sufficient number of business school faculty.

Everyone Is Learning How To Adjust.

While we are likely more aware of the challenges facing faculty in converting to and delivering their courses online, student input suggests students are also facing challenges as they move to online courses. Data from around the university summarized by CETL suggests students are feeling overwhelmed, perceive online courses as increasing their work load, are struggling to stay engaged, are finding time management difficult, particularly for those who returned home who are dealing with increased distractions and inconsistent internet access, and they are worried about the future. Students dealing with any of these feelings are likely to find it more difficult to learn when they are isolated and/or facing an unstructured learning environment.

While it is important to make sure we are providing the support necessary to help faculty make effective transitions to online learning, we must also consider what else we might do to provide support for students. The task force believed a town hall format would be a good option for helping provide support for faculty. Student members of the task force suggested that a town hall focused on student challenges heading into the fall, might also be well received.

The University Has Excellent Resources To Support Developing And Delivering Online Learning Education (E.G., CETL, TLOS)—We Do Not Need To Duplicate These Efforts.

CETL and TLOS both have offered support for curriculum developing, improvement in teaching delivery skills and support for using new technologies in the classroom. They have strong foundational curriculum in the tools and techniques of higher education. The task force recognizes those strengths and believes the college should not duplicate services that are already available elsewhere on campus. Rather, a college's role should be to help faculty find the resources that would be most useful to them.

Task force members believe most faculty will unlikely to take the time to engage in multi-day courses to learn new online skills. However, they believe such courses would be useful for faculty members who are just beginning to develop their skillsets and may not be comfortable in their pedagogical foundations (i.e., may not have had specific instruction in how to develop courses). For faculty who self-identify, the task force would suggest attending the four-day instructional design course offered jointly by CETL and TLOS. It is great introduction for faculty who want a better understanding of the basics of course development and the basic tools for online delivery.

Most faculty on the task force perceive faculty need targeted support in the development of specific capabilities or help solving specific challenges in their courses, whether it be around increasing student engagement, designing materials to fulfill learning objectives, or addressing the challenges of online assessments. The task force encouraged CETL and TLOS to develop a series of 1-2 hour modules designed to address these specific challenges.

Finally, the task force sees an opportunity to add value by helping faculty think strategically about what they could or should do to build better online courses. Some faculty may not have the necessary foundations to be ask the right questions to get the resources they need. In these cases, the task force believes that faculty mentors in the college could help faculty think through course options. Once they have a sense of what they may want to pursue, then these mentors could also help them find the right CETL or TLOS resources. The task force was clear that development support and actual modification of courses is beyond PCOB faculty mentor responsibilities. CETL and TLOS resources are prepared to provide that support.

Strategic Recommendations for Improving Online Education

These insights and task force discussions led to the development of a series of strategic recommendations for faculty as they prepare their courses for the summer and fall of 2020. The first type of recommendations offer conceptual guidance for how to approach course design. These include:

Build your courses to be taught online using Canvas

Given the uncertainty about social distancing for the fall, we advise all faculty to build their courses so they can deliver them online. It is much easier to "flex" courses designed for online delivery to incorporate face-to-face elements effectively than it is to flex face-to-face elements to online delivery.

Faculty should build and deliver all courses using Canvas. Having all faculty use Canvas provides three important benefits. First, delivering all courses through Canvas requires that students only need to learn how to navigate one course support system. Second, Canvas provides a common tool set for faculty and students to learn. Third, having all courses in Canvas aids continuity of instruction should an instructor become ill and not be able to teach a course for a an extended period of time.

Show your students you "care" about them:

There are a number of means of directly and indirectly showing student that you care about them and the courses you teach. Some of the direct ways we show we care is in the language and tone of the communications we have with students, whether in video messages, announcements or in one-on-one communications with students. Student feedback provides insight into other ways that students infer whether faculty care about them. For example, completing and publishing the Canvas site for the course at least two days before the course begins sends the message that you are taking the course seriously and are doing the necessary preparation for the course ahead of time. Further, once you publish the course, try to limit the number of changes you make to assignments and due dates. These actions signal that you may not be prepared, even if you are.

Demonstrate competence in the tools you choose to use in your courses. One of the surest ways to signal to your students that you are not ready to teach your course is to try to use tools in your class that you struggle to use effectively. For example, if you are going to use Canvas, develop at least minimum proficiency in creating a course

structure, creating assignments and setting up the gradebook. If you are going to use Zoom for group work, make sure you know how to use the necessary Zoom functionality. A bit of practice can create confidence in your students that you cared enough to figure out how these tools worked before you tried to use them in class.

Create engagement to enhance positive student experience

Building student engagement in the classroom can start with their initial reaction to the course site. If you create a logically organized and easily navigable Canvas site, you make it easy for students to understand what you expect of them during the semester and they can ask meaningful questions to you about those expectations. Then conversations can move more quickly to the substance of the course, rather than the mechanics of course activities and grades.

Provide ongoing communication with students before and during the course. A common feature of courses in which students had good experiences was that the faculty in these courses communicated early and often with their students. Often, those communications acknowledge the challenges for faculty and students in moving courses online and help send the message that we will all try to work through this together. Communicating before the class begins can help reduce anxieties and help set expectations. This is important as students are attempting to navigate several courses including yours.

Build in opportunities for faculty-student and peer-to-peer student engagement. Many students, although not all, felt the loss of community and connection with others caused by the move to online classes this spring. Faculty instructions to move as much learning as possible to asynchronous instruction, due to the compressed time line for conversation (10 days) likely contributed to those perceptions. To the extent that faculty can use the tools in Canvas and Zoom to provide opportunities to team or group interactions, or to interact live with faculty before and after classes or during office hours, those steps are likely to be perceived positively by at least some students.

Good pedagogical practice is the same for online and face-to-face education

Task force members, particularly those will strong backgrounds in course design and instructional pedagogy, note that many of the recommendations offered to help faculty improve the quality of online education are the same recommendations offered to improve the quality of face-to-face education. For instance, one of the tactical recommendations for faculty rethinking their courses for online delivery is to start with the learning objectives. Or for faculty looking to avoid large, high stakes exams to replace them will several smaller low stakes assessments. These are simply sound recommendations for improving the effectiveness of education generally. The process of developing good courses is the same, but online delivery offers some additional tools that are not available or are less frequently used in face-to-face instruction. Be willing to identify the best tools in the traditional face-to-face instruction and online instruction can create very strong learning designs.

Assess for Success while fostering academic integrity

Respondus with Monitor is software that is available within Canvas that faculty can use to lock down the student's web browser (Respondus) and video record a student using their camera while taking the exam to be viewed by faculty later (Monitor). These tools are available for faculty who need them. However, student feedback suggests that Respondus with Monitor increases student anxiety. It also signals to students that we do not trust them. In a world where most students do not cheat and students who want to cheat can develop means to defeat most technological solutions, there is an incentive to redesign courses to avoid high stakes online testing.

One of the ways to reduce big high-stakes exams (those that count for >25% of course grade), is to replace big high stakes exams with several smaller low-stakes authentic assessments. These increase the frequency of assessment, but because they are shorter can reduce the time required by faculty to provide feedback. Because each assessed activity represents a smaller part of the course grade, students may have less incentive to cheat on lower stakes assessments. Further, the use of more authentic assessments (described in the tactical recommendations) makes it more difficult for students to copy, or quickly look up, answers from other sources.

Peer-to-peer learning is also powerful pedagogical tool. When students teach each other how to complete exercises or learn concepts, both the provider and receiver learn from engaging with course content. This increases opportunities to recall important content, aiding long-term retention. For this reason, faculty should encourage students to work with and help each other on activities. But in some classes, students are prohibited from engaging in these activities, hence faculty should provide clear instructions when peer-to-peer learning it appropriate in your course (e.g., it is OK to work together on assignments, but each person must do their own work on exams).

In general, course designs attempt to achieve two broad categories of learning objectives. "Knowing" learning objectives focus on the body of knowledge that students should develop and be able to call upon to solve problems. "Doing" learning address capabilities or competencies that students are required to develop. In many settings, "knowing" is necessary to develop the capacity to "do". In many instances, courses that cover large bodies of "knowing" content often use large multiple-choice exams to assess learning. These are the types of high stakes exams that are most susceptible to student efforts to share correct answers. An alternative may be to focus assessments on "doing" learning objectives using activities (e.g., papers, projects, posters, case analyses, worked problems) graded with rubrics. Such production assessments make cheating harder, particularly when students must show their work. They are also more efficient, as demonstration of the capacity to make correct decisions as part of doing demonstrations also can infer knowing. Further, sharing grading rubrics with students before the assignments are due can also reduce grading time because students are more likely to produce materials that demonstrate the required capabilities. The most difficult assignments to grade are those where the student completely misunderstands the assignment. The use of rubrics to assess "doing" learning objectives can also provide course-embedded measures that can be easily incorporated into future college and department assessment of learning efforts.

Focus

One of the challenges of efforts to improve instruction is that these activities can appear overwhelming in the face of other faculty obligations. For that reason, the task force also attempts to account for the impact of these recommendations on faculty time. The task force does not recommend that any faculty member attempt to incorporate all of the recommendations offered in this document. Rather, we hope that the variety of strategic and tactical recommendations will offer each faculty member at least a few recommendations that they see as potentially useful.

A basic recommendation in all course design is to focus on the course learning objectives. Focusing on what you want the student to "know" and be able to "do" can help guide design choices. The alternative, which most faculty faced this spring, is to convert your existing activities to a different modality (from face-to-face to online). However, some of these activities may not be effective in an online course—if so converting them is not a good use of time. Also, think about how best to help student learn the learning objectives. Think about your current activities and if you cannot tie an activity to a learning objective, think about whether it needs to be in the course.

Do not try to do too much. Moving to new modalities offer lots of interesting course delivery tools. Focus on applying a few new approaches well. Trying too much and executing poorly can backfire and make the course more difficult for you and your students.

Ask for Help

There are many faculty in the college who are thoughtful instructional designers with experience online, especially faculty members of the task force. They are great resources if you want to "kick around" new ideas about how to take courses online. Use them as mentors.

CETL and TLOS have people with expertise in instructional design for online course delivery and the supporting technologies. They are here to help you. Use them.

Tactical Recommendations

The second set of recommendations reflect specific tactical recommendations to faculty. These recommendations are available in Canvas in a course called "Pamplin Online Learning" (https://canvas.vt.edu/courses/112922). All faculty are encouraged to be participants in this course and have access to the materials included there. If you do not have access, please contact Jean Lacoste lacoste@vt.edu.

The Canvas site includes a set of course design tactical recommendations created by task force members. The site offers two frameworks for finding useful recommendations. They are organized by: (1) The course design feature the recommendation addresses or (2) the specific student challenge a faculty member may wish to try to overcome. Many of the recommendations are relevant to both frameworks. Several paths may lead to the same recommendation.

For each recommendation the task force provides: (a) A brief description of the recommendation, (b) an example of its use, (c) a discussion of when this recommendation may be useful and why, (d) guidance on how to implement the recommendation, and (e) the name of someone in the college to contact who can talk about that recommendation. We list the tactical recommendations titles alphabetically below, with the full details for each recommendation provided in the Appendix:

- Asynchronous Proctoring with Respondus
- Authentic Assessment
- Authentic Assessment Exam Example
- Begin with the Course's Learning Outcomes
- Encourage Collaboration
- Engagement Announcement Example
- Engagement/Humanization - Visual Communication
- Engagement/Humanization - Written Communication
- Experiential Learning Sample Assignment
- First Day Rules for Zoom
- Formative Assessment
- Integrate "To Do Lists" that aggregate required resources
- Learning Categories
- Lecture Videos for LO 1.1
- Course Templates
    - MGT Course Template Homepage
    - Module 1
    - Module 1 - The Perfect PBJ
    - Module 1: Course Overview and Introduction
- Multiple Uses for Canvas Discussions
- Online Experiential Learning Framework
- Parallel Structure
- Replace High Stakes Exams with Several Low Stakes Exams
- Structure Organization with Modules
- Synchronous Proctoring with Zoom
- Transcripts vs. Captions
- Use Rubrics to Assess Competency Development
- Using Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor
- Working Sample Problems Before Instruction

Each recommendation offers insight to a tool or technique that faculty might consider. The student challenges listed below draw from CETL discussions in departments from across the university. A substantial number of students in the university report struggling with each of these challenges. On the Canvas site, each of these links leads to a discussion of the challenge, what faculty might do to help alleviate the challenge and a list of tactical recommendations that can provide concrete guidance for potential mitigation strategies.

- Addressing Student Challenges
    - Disengaged
    - Increased Distractions
    - Increased Workload
    - Overwhelmed
    - Time Management
    - Worried About Future
- Smart Study with a Buddy (guidance for students)

Resources

Task force members were encouraged to identify learning resources to share with task force members. Any resource was included that might offer useful new insights into challenges to moving to more in depth online learning, support additional strategic or tactical recommendations, offer mitigation strategies to overcome implementation challenges, or highlight strategies that could be useful to support these efforts at a department, college or university level.

A number of resources where shared with the committee, which are now archived on the Canvas site. These include:

- Templates for Canvas course sites that offer useful examples of good organization and course navigation
- A checklist created by the College of Engineering to assure Canvas courses have the fundamental requirements for a good online student experience
- An archive of online learning resources identified by task force members, including
    - Online learning research resources from Hanover Research
    - Key articles produced by the Chronicle of Higher Education
    - Research articles examining aspects of online learning
- A recommendation template faculty can use to create and submit additional tactical recommendations
- Links to the web pages for CETL and TLOS

In addition, there are several books that one or more task force members found useful. These include:

- Beatty, B. J. (2019). *Hybrid-Flexible Course Design: Implementing student-directed hybrid classes*. EdTech Books: Retrieved from https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex/
- Brown, P. C., Roediger, H. L., III. & McDaniel, M. A. (2011). *Make it stick: The science of successful learning*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press.
- Conrad, R. & Donaldson, J. A. (2011). *Engaging the online learner: Activities and resources for creative instruction.* San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Palloff, R. M. & Pratt, K. (2009). *Assessing the online learner: Resources and Strategies for Faculty*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Schank, R. (2011). *Teaching minds: How cognitive science can save our schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Tagg, J. (2003). *The learning paradigm college*. San Francisco, CA: Anker Publishing/Jossey-Bass.

Administrative Recommendations

In addition to course design recommendations, the task force offers three structural recommendations to college administrators to support online learning. These include:

Create a college-level adhoc committee on pedagogy and learning excellence

The task force generated significant momentum for improving online learning in the college. With the end of the task force sprint, task force members voiced concern that momentum would dissipate and expressed interest in continuing this work. There is still much potential for improving the effectiveness of online learning in the college. The task force recommends the college create an adhoc committee on pedagogy and learning excellence. This committee, containing faculty and student members, should continue to work to enhance on line learning and overall learning excellence and to evaluate what tasks and responsibilities a committee of this type would have in the college governance structure.

Create positions for one or more instructional designers in the college

An important insight from the task force's review of online instructional design and pedagogical improvement was recognizing that effective course designs in any format requires sound pedagogical approaches, irrespective of modality. Therefore, there is an opportunity for the college to enhance learning effectiveness by providing systematic support for improved learning pedagogy. While critically important human resources in CETL and TLOS are available to support these efforts, it is not clear that these professionals have a strong contextual understanding of business education. Therefore, we could increase the college's efforts to leverage CETL and TLOS resources by having dedicated liaison to these departments. This would add value as we build the college's learning infrastructure as indicated in our strategic plan. These could be full or part-time or faculty experts given course release time to provide this type of support.

Leverage upper-level undergraduate students to support engagement and communication in undergraduate classes

Two common differentiators among courses in the spring were levels of engagement and quality and consistency of communications. These activities require additional faculty effort to create and administer. Further, faculty differ in their understanding of useful types of engagement, how best to foster peer-to-peer collaboration and how best to communicate effectively to students. Undergraduate students who have completed these courses can be extremely useful partners for faculty as they design and deliver instruction this fall. The Depart of Biology has a long history of using undergraduate students in these (non-grading) roles. The BIT Department also has experience using students in these roles. Hiring undergraduate students in these roles may help accelerate and "tune" the implementation of these activities in undergraduate classes this fall. The task force encourages the college to examine how we might deploy undergraduate students to support effective engagement and communications in fall undergraduate courses.

Summary and Conclusions

The results of spring 2020 course conversions from face-to-face to predominantly asynchronous online delivery are mixed. Data collected by the task force offers suggestions on the practices that help make these transitions effective and what to do to improve the effectiveness of course taught online during the summer and, if necessary, fall semesters. The task force recommends faculty design their courses to deliver them online as this provides the greatest opportunity to flex to whatever delivery modes are available this fall. To that end, the task force offers a series of strategic and tactical suggestions for faculty to consider as they prepare for their fall classes. Task force members created a Canvas site titled "Pamplin Online Learning" to model useful Canvas templates, store detailed recommendations with action steps and additional useful resource materials. These are available to all Pamplin faculty as are the members of the task force, if faculty want to engage task force faculty or students in strategic discussions about how to approach fall classes. Further, the task force recognizes the value that CETL and TLOS can provide faculty through who choose to participate in their multi-day workshops, focused seminars or one-on-one mentoring and coaching sessions. Finally, the task force offered three structural recommendations to support college online learning enhancement efforts.

Appendices