Faculty AHA! Moments

Fall 2020

Seton Hall University

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FACULTY AHA! MOMENTS
FROM FALL 2020 TEACHING

"Aha Moments" appeared as a weekly series of teaching tips for remote/HyFlex instruction submitted by the faculty at Seton Hall University throughout the fall 2020 semester. They showcase faculty discoveries, strategies, and innovations, as they learned how to teach in new environments and with new tools. The Aha Moments are grouped into the following categories:

- Assessment Strategies
- Pre- and Post- Class Activities
- Approaches to Group Work
- Strategies for Encouraging Discussion
- Enhancing Student Engagement
- Adapting Tools/Materials/Approaches

At the end of the document are "Tech Tips from the TLTC," which were also part of the weekly Aha Moments.

I hope you find these ideas both helpful and inspiring, as I have.

Mary Balkun
Prof. of English/Director of Faculty Development

Assessment Strategies

Giuseppe M. Fazari, Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice Department
In the past, I incorporated a mid-semester assessment in which students anonymously write something positive and negative (if anything) about the course onto an index card. The pointer was shared during my new faculty orientation and it has served me well in making minor changes during the semester, but more importantly, has provided me with additional perspective as I continue to teach the course. Given our circumstances, I couldn't do the index card assessment and so I created a very brief survey through Qualtrics and sent the link to all of the students taking a course with me this semester. I mention it in class, assure them that it is anonymous, and send the link via email and Blackboard. The students who have previously taken me are already familiar with my index card assessment and so they are already acquainted with it.
Survey:

> Which of the following courses are you completing this survey for?
> Thus far, what are the positive aspects of the course and things the instructor should continue to do?
> Thus far, what are the negative aspects of the course and things the instructor should consider changing?

Sanna Fogt, English Department
In order to make sure students are keeping up with the reading assignments in Core English I, I've implemented quick (3-minute) quizzes in my classes. These quizzes ask that the students take 3-minutes to quickly summarize the reading as best they can and with as much detail as they can recall. This way, if there are students who are in-person and students who are remote, the remote students cannot simply have the text open to look up specific questions, thus giving them an advantage over my in-person students. I set up the quiz using a Blackboard Discussion Board and set the specifics of the forum so that students cannot see other threads created until they create and post their own threads.

James Kimble, Communication and the Arts Department
Since our new environment increases opportunities for cheating on exams, I now place the following statement on Blackboard so that students encounter it before they begin:

> IMPORTANT: By entering the password for this examination, you are agreeing to the following statement: *I affirm that I am a student enrolled in this course, that I will not consult with anyone else during the examination, and that I will not share either the questions or my responses with anyone else, whether during or after the examination.*
> Please note that you MAY use your class notes as well as the course readings while you take the examination.

Does it have an effect? It's hard to say, but perhaps!

Pre- and Post-Class Activities

Grace May, Educational Studies Department
I create a weekly agenda that I pre-post to the Teams site before each class. Within it I have the following information:

Course Housekeeping-
What's due before the next class and where to locate it in Blackboard. This is really helpful for my two freshmen courses.

Groups for the Week-
I create a table with the group names and the members. I highlight who the leader will be for the channel/group so that gets things started.
I include the guidelines for the work they will do that week and remind them to post it all in the OneNote Notebook attached to their channel/group.

Content for the Week-
I outline the flow of our conversation for the day, pose key questions, include live links to things we will watch, and include screen shots of parts of texts I want us all to consider.
It's been helpful. This is simple, but keeps me on track and the students always have a reference point during class and afterward.

Erik Hill, Biology and Microbiology Department
For my large remote classes in spring and fall, I play music for around 10 min before the course lecture starts. It can feel overwhelming and ominous to enter a quiet room. Think of the worst doctor's offices; even long elevator rides have Muzak. So I pipe music/YouTube through my phone placed near the computer microphone (rather than playing directly through the computer - streaming music has had technical issues). 1) It relaxes the atmosphere before class. 2) It allows the students to check that their sound is functioning. 3) It confirms to the class that my microphone is working. 4) I get 'constructive' feedback from them on how to 'improve' my musical selections.

Grace May, Education Studies Department
Combining tools - Nearpod and Kahoot:
For some denser content, with a lot of detail, I've prepared Nearpod lessons that students complete for homework prior to the start of the next class. I include quizzes and open ended questions in the Nearpod, but I know that some concepts may not be understood and "sticking" as well as others. To start off our next class period, I create a small Kahoot quiz around the most important points in the Nearpod. This provides an engaging start and shows the students (and me) what topics need more discussion and examples before moving forward.

Approaches to Group Work

Margaret Huryk, Undergraduate Nursing Department
I am teaching with the Hyflex model (18 students remote and 5 students in the classroom). I just had a great class last night in gerontology for our UG nursing students. I met with Riad Twal in the morning on creating break out groups with Bb collaborate ultra. Riad suggested using Teams channels. It was great. The students met with another student in a one on one session. To start I created a pair of students to see how it would work out. The students enjoyed the experience. I gave them exercises with each other to practice mental health assessments and creating a teaching plan for an older adult. As one student said as he was leaving the class: "Wow that class went really fast." I considered this a great

compliment. I also use Forms quizzes to test their understanding in real time. I complete the information that was not covered in class in an Echo lecture that also has a Microsoft Forms quiz so I can answer questions/misconceptions in the next class. I really feel encouraged after this class.

Martha Zornow, English Department

My students are doing group slide presentations of graphic memoirs in Collaborate Breakout Groups. I previewed a choice of five graphic memoirs, students made their selections, and are now working in Breakout Groups of 2-5 preparing in Google Slides a review of their memoir to present to the class. I gave Presenter privileges to students in Collaborate so they can load their slides in Share Files prior to class. Most of the class time for the class before the presentations is work time in Breakout Groups and I "circulate" to check in. The group presentations are a warm up for the book review they will be writing as their second paper.

Kelly Shea, English Department

I teach fully remotely, and I've been pretty happy with the way the Standard Channels are working in Teams for group work. So far I haven't assigned people to Private Channels: one member of the channel is assigned to start and end the meeting (top right corner, "Meet now"); the other members "Join"; and I can go into each channel while each group is meeting and visit (just like walking around the classroom). I've done this with peer review and with three-person groups working on a group Discussion Board forum. They can also keep notes in the chat in that channel. Also, during their channel meeting, students can ask me to come into their channel if they have questions by just choosing my name on the participant list and hitting "Request to Join." Or they can text me or email me to come into the channel.

The meeting-starter must "End meeting for all," and then each student must go back to the class meeting and hit "Resume" to re-join the main class period. While they're in the channel meetings, they appear as on "Hold" in the main meeting. You can tell when folks have returned because the microphone icon re-appears next to their names.

In order to create a Standard Channel, one needs to go into the 3-dot pull-down on the left in the main team (not in the General Channel). Choose "Add Channel"; name the channel (you can get creative, like "The Lemmings" or "English Channel" or you could just go with "Group 1" or "Group A" and so on); add a description if you wish; then choose the settings. For this purpose you'd choose "Standard – Accessible to Everyone on the Team" (rather than "Private…") and also click on "Automatically show this channel in everyone's channel list." Then click "Add."

I have found that having a bunch of generic channels in my Team and assigning groups each time as needed is quite convenient. The history in the channel (i.e., who was in each meeting and the chat history) is there, so I can also see who worked together before if I want to mix it up.

Martha Zornow, English Department
I teach remotely using Collaborate. I have had good luck with having students respond to a text in a Journal or Discussion prior to class, putting them into Breakout Groups of 4-5 with a related topic, "circulating" through the groups, and then having a representative of each group share back in the Main Room. As a side note, I offer a bit of extra credit for registering to vote, if eligible, or registering another new voter if not eligible.

Jonathan Farina, Associate Professor, Department of English
I assigned a semester-long experiential group project this semester in my class on the relevance of nineteenth-century British novels. Working in groups of three, the students had to articulate how one or more novels resonates with present concerns in any medium of their choice: a research paper, a magazine-style essay or story, a website, a movie, a PowerPoint or Prezi, a sequel in prose or verse, an adaptation, Tweets, Tik Toks, dating profiles, or whatever else they could imagine, so long as it (1) made a clear argument about the novel, or novels; (2) used at least 3 peer-reviewed sources; (3) and analyzed specific passages of text. My goals were not only to encourage students to engage personally with these novels and to think collectively about how they matter to the present but also to compensate for some of the social engagement lost to HyFlex and remote learning and to incorporate 21st-century workplace skills into a traditional humanities course.

The groups met with each other weekly via private Teams channels to discuss the readings outside of the formality of the class period and to imagine and create their projects together; every other week I joined them to discuss their projects and thinking, and to reflect openly about group dynamics. The group project counted for 40% of the course grade, and half of the grade for each group member was assigned by the rest of the students on the team, to foster accountability. Groups presented their projects to the class during "remote learning week," in order to cultivate their platform or presentation skills. I was thrilled with the projects: a visually-stunning, professional quality real-estate website that analyzed the way that we rely upon homes as expressions of character; *Yorkshire Daily,* a newspaper that imitated the form of nineteenth-century periodical miscellanies and accommodated divergent student interests in the pandemic, ghosts, spirituality, and class in *Wuthering Heights*; a brilliant application of Tik Tok trends as heuristics to understand the way female characters appropriate misogynist conventions to feminist ends; and a hilarious, sustained, and smart analysis of how *The Bachelor* and online dating profiles reproduce the formal features of the realist novel. Students LOVED the experience, particularly the presentations.

Daniel Cymbala, English Department
Some ideas from my little back-to-the-future classroom:
- To help fend off the dangers of "bumps on logs" phenomenon, I've given students "jobs."
  - Note-takers (3 students each week, rotate primary role, the other 2 responsible to add, delete, modify)
  - Attendance-taker (this saves on lost teaching time)
  - Chat-watcher (If I'm sharing my screen, I can't see hands or comments, and anyway I'm not good a mulit-tasking online, so they do it for me.)
  - Each week it is the job of the current week person to find the next week person (I have enough to do)
  - All part of the participation grade.
  - Keeps students interacting with each other and on their toes during class.

- I'm using the Teams Class Notebook to post the agenda for the day's lesson/activities – obvious functionality… and a skeleton for the Note Takers.
- I DO, WE DO, YOU DO: Mini lesson with example; the class works an example. Groups/pairs work several examples on their own. They then report back to the whole class.

Strategies for Encouraging Discussion

Susan Nolan, Psychology Department
I give students two or three discussion questions before showing brief videos in class. I then encourage them to use the chat during the video to start answering the questions, so they're primed for a discussion afterward. The follow-up discussion can be either with the whole class or in their break-out groups.

Elizabeth Redwine, English Department
During the writing workshop part of Core English II, I normally walk around the classroom and talk to each student about their papers. This, of course, is now impossible. Yesterday, I texted over Teams with each student both in person and on screen about the status of their paper, their concerns, etc. Some copied and pasted paragraphs that we discussed. When an issue came up that seemed to apply to the class as a whole, I would speak to all of them. I was concerned about how this would work, but I think it worked well. The students are almost more comfortable sharing their writing concerns in a text-like platform than in person!

Dawn Apgar, Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice Department
When I am sharing my screen in Teams, I cannot view remote students. I want to make sure that remote students are engaged so I ask students a lot of questions about the material and use my class roster to call on those who are not physically present in the classroom. I ensure that everyone has been called on at least twice during the class session. I use my knowledge of student performance to match questions to students' areas of interest/strengths so that there are lots of successes. In addition, I have created a "phone a friend" feature (adapted from the *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* gameshow). After a student answers a question, I ask a follow-up and the remote student calls on another remote student to help out and answer the follow-up. It has become fun and a way to keep remote students interacting with one another.

Eric Johnston, Undergraduate Theology Department
I know—from my own experience—that our attention can tend to drift when we're in an online meeting where we don't talk much. My solution is to make sure that students are talking and to keep them on their toes, so that they have to be ready to talk at all times, not just once or twice when they happen to check in. I use several means to make this happen:

1. I let discussion be a little random. I even encourage a little randomness. Just because a student doesn't have an idea that exactly follows what the previous student said shouldn't prevent them from speaking. If you have something to add, please add it. Maybe on topic, maybe a little off topic. Some people are very sequential learners, some aren't. Although academia often treats sequential learners as the privileged class, for the purposes of discussion, a bit more of a scattered

approach gives students the opportunity to participate, even if they can't summon the exact sequential idea that should follow next. Say anything, anything at all! "What are you thinking about?" I ask. "What can you add?" "Good," I say, to absolutely every contribution. And I try to knit them together a little, and amplify their best points, in my own responses to their comments, even if they are scattered. Anything to keep students involved in the conversation; anything to avoid them feeling like they have no contribution, nothing to say, no reason to be part of it. (I do note—and sometimes email them after class about—cases where their response suggests that they weren't paying attention. But there is often a very clear difference between someone who is not paying attention and someone who knows that their comment is not sequential.)

2. I call on students who have not raised their hands. I try to alternate between in class hands, online hands, and students not raising their hands. I try to focus especially on students whose faces are not on the screen, students who have fallen into that faceless tray at the bottom of the screen. I know that professors are nervous about calling on people who are shy. But I think we should also be nervous about shy students disappearing off the screen, nervous about confirming their belief that they have nothing to say and should not be part of the conversation. I try to be extremely nurturing, to give the greatest compliments to the weakest or most frightened students—and, especially, as I said above, to allow them to say anything at all. I email and talk to them outside of class if they seem to be having trouble, try to help them come up with strategies for having something to say. But I do not let them disappear. On that note, I also demand that all cameras stay on, unless there is a very serious reason to the contrary. Disappearing is not an option, and I do not believe it is kind to our students to let them fade away. By all means, cover your background—but we want to see your face; we don't want to treat you as faceless.

3. Finally, I use "the cards." A colleague suggested this idea to me years back, and I have found it especially helpful for HyFlex. I have a deck of playing cards. With permanent marker I wrote each student's name on a card (and set aside the rest of the deck). I shuffle the cards and pull them out at random. If Theresa's name comes up, it is Theresa's turn to talk. This helps avoid my over-preference for particular students—and sometimes to remind me of students I have forgotten. Sometimes I reshuffle the cards half way through the deck—you should never have the idea that if you've spoken once, you're done for the day. I typically fiddle with my cards all through class, turning them up one by one, returning to the back of the deck people who are talking on their own, finding a card of someone I ought to call on, calling on people with hands raised, calling on people at the bottom of the screen, calling on people from the cards—anything to "shuffle the deck," and make sure that I don't get predictable, so that students feel they can check out.

Anecdotally, many of my students have told me they really enjoy this level of participation, really enjoy, even, the way it keeps them on their toes, knowing that they have to keep paying attention. It makes class fun, and makes sure they keep thinking, rather than checking out. Or at least it helps a little.

Chris McGunnigle, English Department
I see that in many of my colleagues' reflections on their HyFlex experience, holding class discussion has become more cumbersome. There is often a long delay as students fumble with unmuting. A successful trick that I introduced was a Google Sheets discussion roll call. Google Sheets is like a Google Doc Excel program which can be modified remotely and in real time. I put together a roster of my students' names, modified for privacy, which I then show on sharescreen or even post on Blackboard. I incorporate discussion into my role call so that students are marked present when they respond to questions. Through the Google Sheet, students can see what order they are responding and as I go down the roll call, see who is presently speaking and who is up next. The Google Sheet allows students to see me move from one name to another. This gives students time to prepare their response, prepare to unmute, and also provides more awareness of the names of other students. I have found students refer back to what other students have said and address their classmates by name more frequently. I have also set up Google Sheets with students in groups as well.

Enhancing Student Engagement

Anthony Haynor, Sociology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice Department
In my remote teaching in the Spring and now this Fall I have implemented three practices seemingly producing positive results:
1. Devoting the first 15-20 minutes of each session to students' sharing their experiences (issues that they are dealing with in their families, what is happening at SHU, etc.). The rationale here is pretty simple—to send a clear message to students that we are living in very challenging times and that I as their professor acknowledge that reality.
2. Posting responses to focus questions on the assigned reading in advance of our meeting. I have been finding that this has increased student engagement and fosters a livelier class discussion. I have been getting 50%-75% of the class posting substantial comments each week.
3. Providing students with considerable latitude and guidance in the selection of topics and texts for their term projects. Again the goal here is enhancing student engagement by matching topics/texts to what students have a passionate interest in. It is not that I didn't focus on this in the past, but I find that I am devoting more attention to working with students on their topics and choice of sources. There is a work-in-progress presentation at the end of the semester, and these tend to be livelier if students are genuinely interested in what they have been reading.

   In the case of (2) and (3) I require that students respond to the posts of some of their classmates. This tends to build community within the class.

Andrea Bartoli, University Core
I would title my HyFlex strategy "Integrated Engagement." It assumes that students are constantly moving and in need of adjustment. In this environment, they can do all classes remotely as they see fit. Yet, physical participation in the classroom is encouraged and - somewhat - privileged.

Unfortunately, the Schwartz room where I teach 2 of my 3 classes doesn't have microphones to allow students in the class to interact with those participating remotely. So, I use a sanitizer and share my mic every time a student needs to speak to the entire class.

All students have access to a shared Word document on OneDrive and to the slides for the class. The shared document allows me to monitor engagement in real-time. Students are listed randomly each class and intervene in that order. They were paired randomly at the beginning of the semester and continue to do activities as pairs in each class.

Since CORE 2101 is a writing-intensive course, students write before, during, and after class. The Writing Center is deeply and actively involved. Next week there will be the class feedback exercise facilitated by student volunteers.

Rory Murphy, Chemistry and Biochemistry Department

My Aha Moment is to try something I read about in what I recall was a *NYT* opinion piece about increasing student engagement. The suggestion was to use more of an Oxford type model of meeting with the students individually. While I have too many to do that, what I've done is broken the class up into small groups of five or six and meet with them every week for at least thirty minutes over Teams. I do this instead of office hours for the students in my class. In these meetings, I have started with having the students introduce one another and talk about how to handle college. I try to get each one to do a little talking and engage a bit. It is still early, but I have hopes that it will give the students some connection to me and to each other. I suspect once we have our first test, the questions will come.

I also find it helps me to feel less isolated from the students. I'm giving HyFlex lectures, but the spread out room, masks, and other physical distancing measures limit the ability to engage the students as I would like. As I have a hearing impairment, not being able to see their faces and maintaining physical distance makes it tough for me. This way I can do more of what I used to do before and after class. Going up to the student, chatting a bit, and getting them to open up.

Bryan Pilkington, School of Health and Medical Sciences

Community Responsibility: Sharing the Burden to Avoid Second-Class Citizenship in a Hyflex Classroom

I have concerns about the pedagogical soundness of the HyFlex model. Those concerns are, in part, due to the "second class citizen" status of those who are not physically in the room. The challenges of occupying this status can be exacerbated when only a few student screens are visible on the monitor in the classroom and when moving between the main screen, in-class students, lecture notes, and slides can keep me from noticing the usual cues. The cues I have in mind are those indications from students that indicate a question they have but don't want to ask, a thought that should be offered but needs encouragement, or an insight – that wonderful lightbulb – that should be praised and highlighted for everyone. I've spent 15 years teaching in different undergraduate and graduate capacities but, until this term, never employing a HyFlex model. I've struggled with how to hone, in just a few weeks, the kinds of sensibilities that took me a while to develop and that are essential to good teaching.

In trying to remedy this defect, two possibilities emerged. I could center my focus on the laptop screen – all the in-class students are on their computers anyway and, in essence, I could run an online class while being physically in the room. This option is not as available to me as you might think because I'm not comfortable forcing students to keep their videos turned on. It would be nice if they did, but knowing that students join the class discussions from different locations, with different resources, and with different demands on their work spaces, I know there may be reasons that they don't have their screens on. Forcing the issue – even for some – would highlight this for all.

Instead, I embraced the idea that we're all in this together. As corny as that may sound, it is and has been true of the kinds of classrooms of which I seek to be a part. Once I reflected on this, a better answer became clear: ask all members of the classroom community to become a bit more comfortable cutting me off during a lecture and paying a bit more attention to their peers. This means that if I miss a hand raised or a line in the chat while unpacking some argument on a slide, I have 35 community partners who can unmute and draw my attention.

I doubt this will work for every classroom, and even in those I am a part of, my concerns about failing the "second class citizenry" haven't been fully assuaged. However, I'd encourage faculty to invite students both to a greater awareness of their classroom community members, but also to jump in, even if they would be cutting you off. Briefly talking over one another is a cost I'll happily pay for a collective awareness that might substitute, even if imperfectly, for the sensibilities that haven't translated to HyFlex encounters.

Fanli Jia, Psychology Department

We usually engage students via in-class activities. However, Hyflex teaching makes it difficult. Here is a simple activity (communicating cultural messages) in my cultural psychology class to demonstrate how the message (especially for the message that is out of their cultural norms) can be misinterpreted.

- I sent a private message to a remote student via teams and asked the student to act out to both remote and in-person students.
- One in-person student received the message from the remote student and then acted it out to another in-person student and went on to another student.
- If you have a tripod camera, you can move it to "Zoom" onto the in-person student. If you are in the Hyflex classroom (like mine), you can click the panel to show the student view and zoom in/out (take some time to find the in-person student).

I found the students enjoyed this simple activity. I suggest not to design a complex one to engage both in-person and remote students. Simple things work well, and especially remote students miss the simple interaction with each other.

Robyn Lemanski, English Department

In Core English II, I often have students read aloud. It is not easy to get volunteers in the best of times, and with HyFlex it is next ti impossible. I don't like to cold call on students to read, but there was so much time wasted waiting for a volunteer. So I informed students that I would expect them to read out loud, but I would make them aware of when they were going to be reading. I split the class into three groups of six and told them their group could

expect to be called upon to read every third class. Since they know they'll be called upon, they feel prepared. At the beginning of each class I remind the students which group will be readers for the day. This has worked out quite well! I don't feel like I am putting a student on the spot, and they're prepared before class to be called on to read. It's a small victory, but it has saved time and sanity!

Dena Arguelles, English Department
One change that I have made is offering two Live Sessions per week instead of one. Attendance and participation is now higher than past semesters. Another is talking through Discussion Boards as they are being created and shared in a Live Session. Another is Peer Edit Groups working in chat rooms then returning to whole class discussion of Edit Assignment Sheets. These targeted and short assignments are then shared. These changes have been successful.

Greg P. Licciardi, Marketing Department
I am finding that students, when asked to participate, enjoy it and like having a sense of community during the class. Using "improv" exercises in the classroom is helping with this! I did an improv exercise in class this week to show how important dynamic websites are that personalize the user experience. For the improv exercise, I picked one student in the classroom and one virtual (this is effective at balancing the attention across both types of students in the classroom). I had the student in the classroom ask the virtual student several questions (graduation year, major, favorite band, movie, food, where they grew up, etc.). I then had the two students go on mute, during which time I had the in-class student enter back into the conversation as if they had never spoken before. The virtual student became frustrated and said, "Didn't you listen to me! Was I on mute?" The other students were amused by the improv session and shared feedback on how important user experience is to being successful in the digital world. We ended up having a high engagement and high participation exercise which enriched the class and learning experience. I highly recommend using improv in the classroom.

Alisa Hindin, Educational Studies Department
I tried something new in my class this week and it worked well.
For this class session, I like to have students share their learnings from the reading before we discuss it as a class. Previously, we did this as a "chalk talk" where a student would add their ideas to the board and pass the marker to the next person who wanted to share. To do this with a Hyflex class, I used a Google Jamboard. It is like a virtual white board where students can write, type, and add a post-it. I created a Jamboard in Google Drive and then sent the students a link in our virtual chat. All of the students posted on the board and were able to add onto other students' comments with additional notes and examples.

Rachael Warmington, English Department
I have utilized digital tools to foster engagement and dialogues in my classes. One of the tools that I use is Hypothesis, an annotation tool that works though your browser and enables annotations of digital texts. For example, I had students use Hypothesis to analyze adaptations of "Little Red Riding Hood."

Students looked for common themes, differences, moments that stood out to them, and commented on each version of the text using Hypothesis. Students were also asked to respond to at least one comment made by a peer. All comments are viewable as soon as they are posted.

I also use the textual analysis tool Voyant. This tool enables students to analyze one text or a group of texts digitally. Texts can be uploaded to Voyant by either copying and pasting into the submission space or by adding the url to access a digital copy of a text. Once the texts have been compiled into a corpus, students can access multiple tools in Voyant to analyze the connections between words and word pairings in the texts. Some of these tools include word clouds, graphs, charts and bubblelines. The corpus can be shared via a link or embedded in Blackboard.

Another perk to using these tools is that students can actively participate in class without being on camera for the entire time. I like to give my students screen breaks, but I also want to make sure that everyone is participating in class. By using digital tools I am able to create multiple forms of student engagement while also enabling them to have screen breaks. For example, the class can view the annotations in Hypothesis and take turns talking about what has been annotated in the texts. In addition, students can view the corpus in Voyant and utilize the interactive tools to talk about the connections between the texts. These are just some of the ways that students can participate in class without being on camera for the entire class.

Cecilia H. Marzabadi, Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
The extra credit assignment I gave my Organic Chemistry I class (CHEM 2321) this semester was to show the relationship between organic chemistry and the arts and humanities by turning in a one-page creative work. This could include such things as a drawing, a flyer, a cartoon, a poem, a haiku or ode, a Christmas card, an ornament, or a song. Thus far I've received approximately 35 submissions and, overall, the students have had a lot of fun doing this.

For example, one student created a flyer about "Aroma Chemistry: The Chemical Structures of the Nostalgic Smell of the Pine (Christmas) Tree." Another designed a holiday card featuring a tree surrounded by chemical molecules and with the saying "Smells Like Christmas."

There were poems about the experience of taking Organic Chemistry and learning that "Stability is the key for a mechanism reaction/Tertiary carbocation for the fastest rate action" ("Perspective from a College Student in Organic Chemistry") and about "To Name an Alkane," starting with "find the Parent chain" and ending with "Now go register for Orgo I, I promise you will survive." There was even a cartoon titled "Caffeine Chemistry," in which one character explains to another what a caffeine molecule looks like. The results have been not only informative but also creative and entertaining.

Brian Nichols, Biology and Microbiology Department
Designating a student in class to read questions that pop up in the comments has helped me engage the students at home. I just ask for volunteers. The students have been very helpful and understanding this year so far.

Adapting Tools/Materials/Approaches

Peter Savastano, Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice Department
This tip is about furniture. Faced with having to stand for 2.5 hours in front of a podium and unable to move in order to interact with both students in the classroom and those taking the class remotely, I learned that in certain HyFlex Teams classrooms, the instructor's chair can actually be raised so as to function like a bar stool. Hint: for those of you faced with a similar challenge and the locked knees to prove it, you will know if the instructor's chair is adjustable to bar stool height if it has a circular foot rest at the base. Mundane, I know, but everything matters and counts these days.

Mark Holtzman, Accounting and Taxation Department
A lot of us are using polling. I find the easiest way to do this is using the "thumbs up" feature in the chat box. I type in each choice as a separate chat message and ask the students to "like" the answer they agree with. When I do a number problem, I ask them to enter their answer into the chat box, or "thumbs up" someone else's answer if they agree.

In the classroom, we can only see two screens, the one on our pc and the one in the back of the room. If I'm working a problem in Microsoft Excel on my screen, then I can't see the chat. To see it, I open Teams on my iPhone and view the chats there.

The whiteboard in Teams is not very popular with our faculty – it seems buggy. I use MS Excel instead. The grid format in Excel is well suited for use as an impromptu whiteboard in any discipline, whether you're using numbers of not.

One more: remote students having trouble with their PC's can access Teams on their smartphones.

Christine Fernandez, Physician Assistant Program.
To be sure you know what you are displaying either on Zoom, Teams, or Collaborate, I suggest joining the meeting on your phone in addition to your computer so you can see what the student sees.

Eric Johnston, Undergraduate Theology Department
This is more of an appreciation or affirmation than a strategy. I've had a couple really awful tech days. On the first day of Hybrid, we were forty-five minutes into one of my classes, with two tech guys trying to make the system work for me, my class time devoted to discussion thus far thwarted, and I felt so discouraged: "Why are we even bothering to try to have students in class," I thought to myself. Then I looked up, and it was just a joy to be in the same room with students. In the next class, one of my majors joked, "Dr. Johnston, no offense, but I am so sick of seeing your face on my screen!" In other words, boy is it great to be in the same room. Since then, many of my students have asked if they could come on both A and B days, just because they like to be in the classroom. I'm still struggling with some of the technology, but when I feel frustrated, I just come back to this affirmation: what a joy to be in a classroom together!

Benjamin Lowe, Management Department
One tip: Beware of deleting a channel within a class when working with Microsoft Teams. I attempted to delete 1 out of 8 channels and it ended up deleting all the channels, including the class. I believe it is a bug in the software since it should not have done this. IT was not able to rebuild the class, which means all the previous notes the students wrote within the channels are gone. I ended up creating 8 separate Teams to get the class going again. Also, by deleting the class in Teams, it eliminates the email group in Outlook for the class.

Chris McGunnigle, English Department
Using Teams involves a lot of modalities, including the videoconference audio and video, raising hands, and chat, as well as whatever is posted on Blackboard, if instructors are using Blackboard. However, I have found that students don't do well with instructions written on Blackboard and often have difficulty hearing me, so I have set up a redundancy system when giving instructions. I have instructions on Blackboard, read aloud those instructions, and then post a simplified version of the instructions in the Chat. It has helped increase comprehension of assignment directions drastically.

Jessica Cottrell, Biology and Microbiology Department
In an effort to reduce time/emails coordinating office hours to review exams with close to 300 students, I have been using a shared/editable google document with timeslots that I have shared with my class on blackboard. This methodology has reduced the number of emails I have received to coordinate office hours substantially. I paired this with the Teams Lobby Function which allows meet to admit the appropriate students during the designated timeslot thus allowing me to have private review sessions with each student. I have also adapted this idea for academic advising as well.

McKenna Schray, Communication and the Arts Department
For my communication and public relations courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, I utilize the following features within Microsoft Teams –
1. GIF and Meme function within the chat to allow students to create their visual understanding of topics and theories.
2. Breakout groups to facilitate small-group discussion and debates.
3. Channels to provides students working in team projects a vehicle to successfully complete the project.
4. The chat function for students to "tweet" their biggest takeaway from class. Many of them tag a peer within the chat to further advance engagement.
5. The Polly extension within the chat to facilitate live polling activities.
6. The lobby feature to simplify virtual office hours.

Rachael Warmington, English Department
I found it effective to have students type their thoughts and responses in the Teams chat as well as to engage in dialogue verbally. The key to HyFlex seems to be keeping students engaged and active in multiple ways. Sometimes I have students read what they typed and other times I refer to what a student has shared in the chat.

I was also able to have students complete in-class writing assignments in the Bb Discussion Board. Students did not have any issues being logged into Teams and toggling to Blackboard to complete and then share their writing. The instructor can also pull up the Discussion Board posts for everyone in the class to view via Teams.

Tech Tips from the TLTC

Sharing Sound in a Meeting: If you are sharing a video with sound, make sure to select the "include computer sound" checkbox before sharing your content. Please note this is not available on Mac laptops yet.

Speaker Feedback and Echo: To avoid speaker feedback and echo in the classroom, all students in the classroom must mute the microphone and speakers on their laptop if they are joining the virtual meeting. Instructor microphone and speaker should not be muted unless the instructor is in a Teams HyFlex classroom with the wall panel.

To avoid students joining multiple meetings ensure your course Team and calendar are only showing one meeting. In some cases, faculty created their own class meeting in addition to the automated IT meeting.

If you only hear your remote students through the laptop speakers, check the device settings in Teams by going to the three dots … and click Show Device Settings. Change the selected speaker option to the speakers in the room instead of your laptop speakers. Follow steps #6 and #7 in the HyFlex Guide.

Microsoft has just released the video spotlight feature. With Spotlight, educators will be able to lock their video for the whole class. This helps educators control the main video feed that a student sees during the meeting. It can only be enabled or disabled by the organizer or presenter. This is different from "Pin participant", which allows an individual to pin a video feed for their own view but not for the view of all meeting participants. A video guide is available here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6b39D1rfxXc&feature=youtu.be

Cybersecurity Month Tip: Update and Secure Your Devices.
Any device that connects to the internet should be considered vulnerable. Keep both hardware and software up to date, use anti-virus, firewalls, and ensure home Wi-Fi routers are secured. For more tips, visit the Cybersecurity Awareness Month homepage:
https://www.shu.edu/technology/cyber-security-month.cfm

System updates are critical to keep your laptop up to date, and to also receive the latest enhancements and security patches of each area. Step by Step directions can be found here:
https://tech.shu.edu/selfservice/kb_main.do?sysparm_kb=c39cf83d4fa3c740a9ef0f1f0310c775

RPNow Tip for Success: RPNow Practice exam should be given to students at least 5-7 days prior to taking the actual exam in RPNow to ensure they have a working camera and microphone. Practice exams should not be proctored. For more information on using RPNow please visit:
https://www.shu.edu/technology/hyflex-teaching.cfm