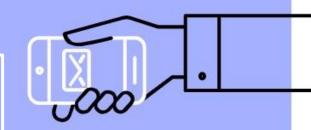


Student Perspectives on COVID-19 Learning

Kristin Common Undergraduate Assistant EMU Faculty Development Center December 2020



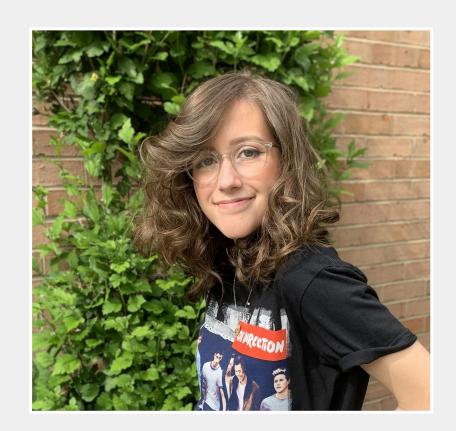


Hello!

My name is Kristin Common and I am the Undergraduate Assistant in the Faculty Development Center. I am working toward my degree in Secondary Education Social Studies/History.

This presentation is in regards to research and findings of student perspectives and needs during online learning, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am excited to share my findings with you!



As a student...

I often hear students talk about how they had many things they wish professor's and/or faculty knew.

Goal of this Project:

Being a student myself through the college of education, and working for the Faculty Development Center, I wanted to combine these roles to provide resources and tips to faculty on how to accommodate the needs of students directly.



Agenda for PPT

- Introduction to interviewees
- Responses to four interview questions
- Resources provided in regards to responses





Dr. Michael McVey

- Professor of teacher education technology
 - Undergrad course: LTEC 330: Instructional Applications of Media and Technology
 - Upper level courses: LTEC 510, LTEC 602, LTEC 627, LTEC 653, LTEC 695
- Saline Area Schools Trustee
- Board of Directors of the Internal Society or Technology in Education
- Classroom teacher for 19 years
- Been at EMU since 2007



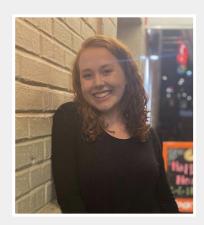
Dr. Beth Henschen

- Associate professor of Political Science
 - PLSC 112: American Government
 - PLSC 217: Introduction to Law and Courts
 - PLSC 305: Law and Policy in a Constitutional Democracy
- Textbook and Scholarly Article Author
 - GOVT 10: Principles of American Government (with E. Sidlow), Boston, MA: Cengage Learning (2019/2018).
- Been at EMU since 1996
- Worked in higher education since 1979



Racheal Armstrong

- Earned her Bachelor's in Health Administration
- Second year Masters Higher Education Student Affairs (HESA) student at EMU
- Academic Advisor Intern at the EMU University Advising and Career Development Center (UACDC)
- Graduate Assistant to the Faculty Development Center (FDC)



Taylor Gardiner

- Secondary Education Social Studies/History Major
 - Looking forward to teaching career
- 4th year as an EMU student
- Scholarship recipient "Friends of History" from the EMU History Department, and the TRUEMU Scholarship
- EMU Dean's List



Luis Romero

- Political Science and Economics Major
- Student Body President



Colton Ray

- Sociology and Philosophy Major
- Student Body Vice President
- Chapter of the Student Body Senate
- President Community Service Chair for Phi Sigma Phi-Lambda



Sean

Woolf
 Associate Director of Wellness
 and Community Responsibility



Nicholas Pomante

- Wellness Coordinator of Wellness and Community Responsibility
 - o Since 2018
- Masters Degree from EMU



Julia Heck

- Associate Director of Office of the Ombuds
- Five years at EMU
- Working on her Ph.D

Interview Questions

- There will be four interview questions:
 - 1. What are the top three needs of students right now?
 - 2. Have you noticed anything specific (to online/remote learning) that has had a negative impact on students/yourself as a student?
 - 3. Have you noticed anything specific (to online/remote learning) that has had a positive impact on students/yourself as a student?
 - 4. What is one way you have received or given accommodations that has been successful for students?



Michael McVey (Professor):

- 1. "I believe students off campus need stable access to the internet. I have heard of too many students doing homework using library/Mcdonald's/Grandma's wifi.
- 2. I believe students off campus need to have devices or, at the very least, online instruction designed with the needs of the mobile learner in mind.
- 3. I believe students need flexibility and support from their instructors."

Beth Henschen (Professor):

- 1. Response from professors/faculty quickly. Get back to students within a day or two at least, even if you do not have the full answer or response, let them know.
- 2. Students need flexibility in time periods. Dr. Henschen wanted me to tell faculty: "YES! The students can have more time." Students are juggling other classes and life.
- 3. Students need the essentials, so communicate this to them. The rest is extra what is important to take away from the material?

Racheal Armstrong (Graduate Student/Academic Advisor Intern):

- 1. Flexibility from instructors
- 2. Clear communication
 - a. Everyone has a lot on their plate, but it can be frustrating to email your professor with a question and not hear from them at all. As an intern academic advisor, undergraduate students express the same frustration when I ask them how their Fall classes are going.
- 3. Reliable internet connection
 - a. When I am meeting with students during advising appointments, sometimes their connection is unstable and the appointment gets cut short, so I can only imagine how challenging it is to have fully online classes with poor internet.
 - b. I've been kicked off of Adobe Connect a few times myself and it makes it hard to fully focus in class.

Taylor Gardiner (Education Student):

- 1. Flexibility
- 2. Understanding
- 3. Support

During the COVID pandemic, everyone has been dealing with stress and anxiety. When you add classes and entirely online learning to the mix, I think that many students, including myself, are struggling with trying to balance this new normal.

Allowing flexibility with online courses, and having instructors be understanding and provide support for students who are dealing with hardships right now would be very beneficial. I have seen support given in my classes involving the pandemic which is nice to see.

Colton Ray (Student Body Vice President):

1. Retention Support

- a. Struggling with coursework (motivation, engagement, comprehension) and financial need. It is hard to focus on classwork when basic needs are in jeopardy.
- b. First-generation, pell grant eligible, Hispanic, and Black students have been the most likely to drop out and this trend may worsen over time.

2. Mental Health Support

- now experiencing them. The pandemic, social injustice, social isolation, and substance use/misuse has worsened many students' mental health, and elevated depression, stress, and anxiety. This increase in depression and anxiety has been increasing among young people even before the pandemic.
- 3. Affordable Housing
 - a. Many students have moved to off campus apartments due to high cost of on-campus housing. Some students who live at home or who have moved back home with their parents would much prefer living on campus or in an apartment if they could afford to do so. Rent continues to increase in Ypsilanti, as well as on campus housing.

Luis Romero (Student Body President):

- 1. I would say first and foremost, money is in-need by students. This time of year is already tough for students with COVID and things being locked down, which has made things worse.
- 2. Students need professors to be lenient. I think that most professors are understanding, but I've heard of some stories to the contrary.
- 3. Mental health support is a need for students. Studies have shown that too much self isolation is negatively affecting the mental health of college students. I will add, I am not sure completely sure what can be done to help but we need to keep working to find ways to help students.

Sean Woolf (Associate Director of Wellness and Community Responsibility)

- 1. Give students classroom time
 - a. Use breakout rooms
 - b. Give time that would normally be in the classroom, but online
- 2. Give more time to students who need it
 - a. Flexibility in scheduling
- 3. Students need consistency
 - a. More academic integrity violations than ever before connect with students and their needs and it may reduce this.
 - i. Students feel that trust has been broken with the university, because they aren't getting the semester they thought the could get
 - b. Professors are switching up the schedules from asynchronous to synchronous and vice versa
 - c. If professors have the time, maybe meet with each student for ten minutes during office hours to get that connection

Nicholas Pomante (Wellness Coordinator of Wellness and Community Responsibility)

- 1. Outlets for socialization
 - a. Many students are having trouble connecting
 - b. Not in physical spaces that they normally find themselves in and it has not been figured out how to really recreate that
- 2. Sense of routine
 - a. Students are struggling with this right now
 - b. Days tend to bleed together right now and having a schedule and/or structure would help them perform better
 - i. Many students have to self-motivate, and this can be difficult
- 3. Students want synchronous
 - a. They need the social element
 - b. Adding extra time to foster the organic connections between each other
 - c. Be intentional about the work you want students to do and drop in on them to check in

Julia Heck (Associate Director of Office of the Ombuds):

- 1. Flexibility with deadlines and assignments
 - a. Due to several factors impacting the student's ability to meet deadlines to complete assignments, many students require greater flexibility with deadlines that do not impact their performance in class.
 - b. While the University has extended all other deadlines, students' day-to-day classroom experience is not always reflective of the student centered assistance needed in response to their daily stressors and needs.
- 2. Community connection
 - a. For many students, their professors are the only people they are communicating with at the University, shrinking their access to community drastically. Building a community among students is proving challenging as in-person instruction allowed for more connection.
- 3. Maintain student dignity
 - a. When students and professors are interacting, it is critical that professors remain aware of their tone and student perception of messaging. Through respectful and compassionate dialogue professors can remain open to understanding and facilitating success to all students.

Myself:

- 1. Flexibility
- 2. Compassion
- 3. Communication

Flexibility within the structure is essential. Knowing it is okay for students to ask for help and to be honest is more important than many professors and faculty realize. When professors make due dates flexible, provide time for revision, or other needs, it provides students with a sense of calm.

I understand faculty and professors are going through their own frustrations and heavy work loads. Many times have I been responded with lack of compassion when I needed help. Providing empathy, support, and understanding is stress relieving.

Communication is important, and many students often worry in the time they wait for a response to a problem by email. Being timely about emailing, and providing open discussion between professors and students about issues is important.

Question #1 Overview

→ To summarize student needs:

- Access to the internet with devices
- Retention support
- ♦ Flexibility, understanding, compassion
- Consistent communication
 - Quick response time
- Keep material relevant to the course learning objectives
 - Avoid extra "fluff"
- Mental Health Support
- ◆ Affordable Housing
 - Financial need
- Sense of routine
- Maintain student dignity

Faculty Resources

- While many of these are out of the faculty's control, it is important to advocate for student needs and find alternatives.
- Simply listening to these needs is important, and being aware of them.
- Some of these responses are straight forward, so it is important to take into utilize the accounts of the EMU community.
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Swoop's Pantry
- <u>Library Study Spaces</u>
- Being Human Online During COVID-19

Michael McVey (Professor):

• One problem I have seen is the consistent absence of regular opportunities for interactions with a cadre of classmates whom they can interact, bounce ideas off, argue with, study with, and whom they can grow academically.

Beth Henschen (Professor):

• The biggest thing is that students are having trouble managing all of the bits and pieces of their classes. Coming to class and having a reminder is especially important during online and remote. The volume of work can be overwhelming all at once on a screen.

Racheal Armstrong (Graduate Student and Academic Advisor Intern):

- It has been harder to keep track of due dates, class meeting times, and managing my time in general. I am extremely busy this semester, and not actually having a place to be can make it hard for me to separate work, school, and home.
- Some professors don't understand Canvas fully, so they think we have access to a discussion or quiz when we don't, then the due dates often get switched around.
- Lack of interaction is something I miss. Zoom fatigue is a big issue between advising students online, classes online, meeting with group members for projects through Zoom, and a lot of the undergrads I advise have expressed this challenge to me as well.

Colton Ray (Student Body Vice President):

• For online/remote learning, students are struggling with motivation, engagement, and social and material support. Some students feel as though they're "teaching themselves," while other students are struggling to prioritize classwork and attend class. Reliable internet connection also presents an issue, along with anxiety about participating in class discussions over Zoom and comprehending and retaining information.

Luis Romero (Student Body President, also speaking as a student):

- Zoom fatigue, zoom fatigue, zoom fatigue. In all honesty, this has been the roughest semester for myself and most students here, and I have a few specific topics.
 - Communication. In my classes, I have been told by others that conversations between classmates has been quite low this semester, along with professor to students as well. I would personally like to see professors encouraging students to use Discord, GroupMe, or a messaging system to communicate.
 - Adding feedback from professors on homework assignments, quizzes, and/or exams.
 Sometimes it feels like students have to teach themselves the content.
 - Zoom fatigue. Screen times have been just about doubling for students and it has shown to have negative effects on mental health, happening at about every college.

Sean Woolf (Associate Director of Wellness and Community Responsibility):

- Sense of disconnect
- Students are feeling a sense of loss
 - o In college for four years, and the pandemic and online learning is one of them
 - This is another year in the faculty career. You cannot get college years back.

Nicholas Pomante (Wellness Coordinator of Wellness and Community Responsibility):

- Class is labeled as synchronous but it is not actually ran that way
- Communication is low, and email is not consistent often
- Students may have the expectation to be in the classroom in some way, but they are not getting this

Julia Heck (Associate Director of Office of Ombuds)

Isolation

 Students, especially those in asynchronous online classes have expressed an increased sense of isolation and overall disconnection. Students have described not knowing anyone or being able to interact with classmates to ask simple questions that they wouldn't feel comfortable asking a professor.

Responsiveness

- Students have expressed increased difficulty in receiving timely and sufficient responses from faculty.
- Inconsistency in delivery of instruction
 - Students have expressed challenges due to a lack of clarity regarding the format of instruction
 - Deviations from the formats specified on record versus the formats being implemented by instructors
 - Inconsistency among classes in the ways Canvas is or is not utilized

Taylor Gardiner (Education Student):

• I think that one thing that has made a negative impact on me during this online semester is not being able to be on campus and have normal instruction for my classes. I feel like a lot of the time, I have been teaching myself the content. I also think at times, I'm trying to complete the assignment before the deadline instead of properly learning the content.

Myself:

 Not having the in-person courses, and set schedule. While online courses give more time for flexibility, it was nice to have that structure of being needed in a place, at a certain time, for coursework. Often, the supplemental work that is provided for students can feel like extra homework instead of in-class work. I am also trying to complete an assignment before the due date, rather than learn the content.

Question #2 Overview

Negative impact summary:

- Lack of social interaction
 - Zoom fatigue
- Managing online assignments
 - Keeping track of due dates
- Inconsistency in delivery of instruction
 - Lack of Canvas knowledge
 - Lack of clarity in class format
- Teaching oneself the content
 - Supplemental work can feel like homework
 - Do the assignment because it is due
- Internet connection
- Sense of loss of the college experience

Faculty Resources

- How to Mitigate and Combat "Zoom Fatigue" in the Online Classroom by University of Nebraska
- FDC Online & Remote Teaching
 - 24/7 Canvas Help Desk: 833.277.2150
 - Course connection problems and instructional design: elearning@emich.edu
 - Add Canvas calendar to Google
 Calendar
- Utilize applications like GroupMe, Remind, Discord
 - The Secret Weapon of Good Online
 Teaching: Discussion Forums

Michael McVey (Professor):

• I believe the absence of a commute has helped students with time management and that more students are beginning to use the affordances we have for them at EMU (i.e. Google Calendar). They are gaining confidence in their ability to interact virtually and ot reach out to instructors if they need help, support, or academic guidance.

Beth Henschen (Professor):

• Students are allowed to manage their own time, or arrange their tasks differently. Students can be spaced in class with the many meetings, assignments, classes, etc., which causes low engagement. Students can prioritize their time and choose time to be less distracted. Some students work better in the morning, some work better at 2:00 AM. Also, students who manage in this environment will have great skills in life after this for scheduling, work, and professional life.

Colton Ray (Student Body Vice President):

Some students who are taking all asynchronous courses have felt they're better able to make time
within their schedules to work on classwork. Students taking synchronous courses are less likely
to miss class due to transportation issues or other potential conflicts. Students who struggle with
social anxiety also seemed to prefer asynchronous courses.

Luis Romero (Student Body President):

- Flexibility and accessibility. Generally having the ability to study when the student is able to is beneficial.
- For some students, having online classes has been beneficial for them and they prefer that style.

Sean Woolf (Associate Director of Wellness and Community Responsibility)

- A benefit to some non-traditional students to access things a bit more easily
- Students are getting better at being online

Nicholas Pomante (Wellness Coordinator of Wellness and Community Responsibility)

- Gaining more skills online, because virtual will never go away. The virtual environment will always be here
- More time for self-care, such as sleep
- Not much positive effect on learning
- Their office offered an online employment opportunity and it got more response and attendance
 - Easier to engage from anywhere you like

Julia Heck (Associate Director of Office of the Ombuds):

- Lower risk of exposure to COVID-19:
 - O It may seem evident that online/remote learning can reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, but it is essential to note that COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting students of color and students in poverty. For those who do not have access to healthcare or health insurance, reducing exposure to COVID-19 is their only option for maintaining their safety and health.
- Transportation
 - Online/remote learning enables students off-campus to participate and attend classes without additional stress from determining transportation and the associated costs.
- Flexibility with scheduling
 - Online/remote learning allows for more flexibility with scheduling for those with increased work and family obligations, especially during these times.

Racheal Armstrong (Graduate Student, and Academic Advisor Intern):

• Since I don't have to commute, I am saving money on gas since it is a 40 minute drive for me to get to EMU. That's one positive for me as a student, graduate assistant, and intern at EMU. Advising appointments have less no-shows now that they are offered through Zoom. I think students are more willing to come to their scheduled appointments and it doesn't involve them having to be somewhere.

Taylor Gardiner (Education Student):

• A positive thing that has come out of remote learning is that I have the opportunity to work at my own pace on assignments.

Me:

 I am getting more sleep usual. Before remote learning, I often worked into the night, woke up early, with 4-5 hours of sleep piled on top of me throughout my week. Now, I can sleep in, work into the night if needed, and create my own routine. I can choose to work at night, which is what I prefer.

Question #3 Overview

Positive impact summary:

- Absence of a commute
 - Students more likely to show up to class meetings
- Utilizing more tools that EMU has to offer
- Confidence interacting virtually
 - Managing life during a pandemic will lead to other skills
- Managing time
 - Working at your own pace
 - Getting more sleep
- Ease on social anxiety
- Beneficial to non-traditional students
- Not much of a positive effect on learning
- Lower risk of exposure to COVID-19

Faculty Resources

- These are all tips and insight from students and faculty that can be useful for others to keep in mind.
- Advice from EMU Professors on How to Survive a Semester Online



Michael McVey (Professor):

• I have modified my own REMOTE course so we only meet through Zoom one day a week. The other day in the schedule is booked tentatively for anyone who has questions. I also make sure students know they can reach out to me beyond standard office hours if they have questions using email, Zoom, or whatever tool works for them.

Beth Henschen (Professor):

With in-class assignments, and especially in remote/online learning, the length of time is extended. With our class, two weeks are given to turn essays in. With extended time, students only rely on course material instead of Google, etc. Students will be able to rely on their course books rather than their memory, because the point of completing this exam is to show what a student learned, not about cramming for one exam to be forgotten later. Faculty should not take their in-person class directly to cyberspace. Make some adjustments, and you might like the tweaks you make even better.

Racheal Armstrong (Graduate Student and Academic Advisor Intern):

• My professors have been super understanding which makes me feel at ease during this stressful time. Two of my professors have expressed to us that the due dates aren't important as long as the work is turned in before the end of the semester. I like to turn all of my stuff in by the given due date just because I get feedback and we have the chance to re-submit work if we need to. I also feel more motivated to learn and be in class when I know my professors value our learning and mental health over a strict deadline.

Taylor Gardiner (Education Student):

In my in-person HIST 452 class this semester, my professors have made each of our exams online which
has made it easier to study and prepare for. I also allows more flexibility so I can take the exam from my
house.

Colton Ray (Student Body Vice President, also speaking as a student):

- I think that extending due dates (1-2 days before the date) has been helpful. Extending it too early makes students more inclined to push it off, while extending it too late can frustrate students who have already submitted the assignment and had "rushed" their work.
- Clear due dates on Canvas appear in the "To Do" section has helped me keep track of what I need to get done and when, which in turn helps me plan ahead better.
- Receiving written notifications on Canvas (not through email) that clarify more confusing assignments/projects has been helpful for me too.

Luis Romero (Student Body President, also speaking as a student):

• A few weeks ago my grandfather caught COVID-19, and then I also had a family member who died from COVID-19 recently. It became difficult to focus, do my school work, and my professors have been understanding and letting me turn in my exams late and focus on my mental health and family. Professors being understanding of people's situations is something I have often heard from others.

Sean Woolf (Associate Director of Wellness and Community Responsibility)

- Do not know much about accommodations students have received to comment on it.
- More flexibility within action plans within their own office
- Heard of faculty responding more empathetically

Nicholas Pomante (Wellness Coordinator of Wellness and Community Responsibility)

• Having empathy is an important accommodation for students. It is truly meaningful for students to receive this from faculty.

Julia Heck (Associate Director of Office of the Ombuds):

- Increased potential for innovative instruction
 - Recorded lectures, transcripts from class, posting different forms of media (YouTube videos, podcasts, etc.)
- Increased success when instructors build a sense of community into class.
- Increased success for students when instructors are able to approach communication with their students in various ways such as offering office hours via the phone or Zoom, communicating via email consistently throughout the course, and checking in with students who may have lapsed in their engagement for a period of time.
- Increased success for both instructors and students when they have the time to build an environment that supports humanity, dignity, and care at its core.
 - Students have appreciated faculty who have taken the time to show that they both see and hear the student reaching out to them, seeing them as a person who is working to try and navigate significant challenges to be successful in the learning environment.

Me

- My professors this semester have been very kind, flexible, and compassionate. I worry that as we enter another mostly online semester, that professors will lose this compassion as we have been doing this remote/online work for a longer period of time.
- Professor McVey from my LTEC 330 course offers one Zoom class a week, with the other day for questions/concerns if needed.
- Professor Henschen for PLSC 305 offers her exams to be open for a wide range of time, untimed, with the ability to complete the exam at my leisure with my own notes. She also offers Zoom meetings once a month, typically before an exam.
- My in-person HIST 452 class has made it easier to study and prepare for exams by offering online exams. I tend to be a nervous test taker so it takes the stress off of being on time in person, and memorizing.

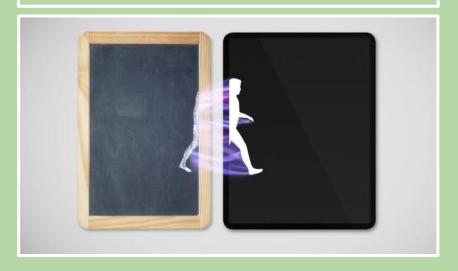
Question #4 Overview

Accommodations summary:

- Offering one Zoom meeting per week, or once a month
- Extended time on exams/assignments
 - Notes and course books used in exams
 - Due dates are tentative
- Adjusting original course schedule for in-person to work better for online
- Online exam for in-person class
- Canvas notifications
- Innovative instruction increase
 - Transcripts, lecture videos, etc.

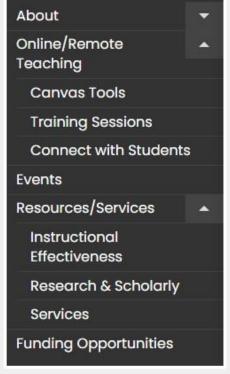
Faculty Resources

- Take in these accommodations, and they may be useful for you as a faculty and for your students.
- How Teaching Changed in the (Forced) Shift to Remote Learning
- Grading for a Pandemic
 - EMU Professor Steven D. Krause comments



Additional Resources

- Visit the FDC Website!
 - New design
 - Many resources and tips
 - My information will be on there as well





BRUCE K. NELSON FACULTY DEVELOPMENT CENTER





Online/Remote Teaching
Expand your virtual presence
and continue to provide
meaningful instruction
whether online, remote or
hybrid. We've got strategies
and resources no matter how
your course is delivered. Learn
more by visiting this page.



Virtual Office Operations
The Faculty Development
Center business hours are 8:30
a.m.-5 p.m. Director, Peggy
Liggit, is available through
email (pliggit@emich.edu)
and video conference. Or
drop-in through Virtual Office
Hours: M-F, 9-10 a.m. Join



Connect with Students
Good communication
practices can continue
virtually for providing office
hours, advising and web
conferencing. Check out
making videos and other
tips. Further your
communication techniques by



Thank you for your time!



