AE3 Student Panel (10/7/20)

Full recording available at: https://mediaspace.illinois.edu/media/t/1_smwb3t02

<u>Key Ideas from Panelists</u> (based on pre-announced questions):

Tell us one or two times when you were very engaged in the online class setting. What did the teacher do? Why was it engaging?	● Use humor and novelty (jokes, memes, themed videos); have some fun and encourage students to highlight their personalities (e.g. Zoom backgrounds) ● Consider gamification; encourage volunteers in games/activities ● Flipped instruction (video lectures and synchronous problem-solving sessions)
Is there a particularly good combination of teaching strategies that work well? [flipped videos, live Zoom, discussion boards, breakout rooms, (team) projects, labs, office hours, review sessions, etc]?	● A blending of synchronous and asynchronous activities ● Flipped videos (lectures) with team projects to follow synchronous breakout spaces ● Flipped videos followed by synchronous sessions to expand on topics and answer real-time questions ● Use breakout spaces so students can talk to each other, but consider: a) setting consistent breakout rooms that change only every few weeks, and b) adding measures of accountability to make sure most students are prepared for discussions in those spaces ● Record your lectures; students are using them and appreciate having that information to return to later ● Consider having a TA available for private or whole class chats; have TA share questions directly with professors, if necessary ● Live review sessions going over assignments or practice problems
What kind of assessments/tests have worked well in this new online/hybrid teaching setting?	● Use frequent, short formative assessments to help you and your students gauge learning in progress and make adjustments, if necessary ● Provide regular feedback to students ● Offer flexible assessment schedules/formats ● Consider using a variety of assessment formats/platforms (CBTF, ProctorU, take-home, other)

What can professors do to motivate or inspire students in this remote environment?	● Ask your students how they are doing and how their class experience is going to gather informal feedback; don't just use a general email though, but rather create a form that support their feedback/reflection and gives more focused areas for consideration ● Use video and encourage students to use video (whenever possible) ● Share information about class performance to help students understand their individual performance in light of the class performance overall ● Don't structure your synchronous online lectures in such a way that they feel like a recorded video--Encourage class engagement and participation and be in the moment with your students ● Give students time to type questions in chat ● Consider giving 10-15 minutes of time in each class session for "discussion time." Students can use open mic or chat space
How are you interacting with your peers now? (a) how are you casually/informally completing coursework with others? What tools/resources are you using to do this? (b) how are you engaging with others personally to sustain peer relationships and practice self-care?	● Use online communication tools (Groupme, Piazza, Discord, Campuswire, Zoom links for collaborative HW time)--students are relying on these a lot more now ● Some students are networking with peers through social media after they see them engaged in class sessions; encourage participation in class, so these connections might be possible ● Consider a structured Slack channel/Discord server for the course ● Keep the same communication tools in each class for the whole semester; it's okay that different classes use various tools though

Questions from Attendees and Panelist Responses:

1. Do most students have their videos on or off? Do the instructors give any type of guideline or preference for students having videos on or off?
   ○ Most don't require video, but it could be really helpful and inviting, if encouraged
   ○ Most students have video off and professors don't require them to be turned on, but having video on results in more engagement and participation from my experiences
2. Does participating in online courses make you feel more like part of an "audience" and less like part of a class? Why or why not?
   ○ Sometimes it does just feel like we are in an audience, just watching a presentation, so being in a face-to-face class can feel differently (more engaged)

- ○ Makes me feel like more of an audience because I am not as easily able to interact with the professor and other peers in my classes
3. Do you feel like you are spending more time now that many courses have pre-lecture videos; online, synchronous lectures; and also make recordings available after class?
    - ○ We seem to be spending more time now in the remote/hybrid models, but that is also in part due to distractions we have at home, stopping videos briefly, etc..
    - ○ We aren't doing all of our primary learning in a 50-minute class session, and, in some cases, professors' lectures are running way over the 50-minute timeframe anyway.
    - ○ It's good to have the lecture recordings, but it means more time if we watch them after attending a synchronous session.
4. Overall, do you like remote learning better than in-person right now? Do you crave more interaction with others?
    - ○ It depends; for some, highly technical courses have been better online, but more theoretical courses seem better in a face-to-face setting
    - ○ I prefer in person especially because it is easier to collaborate with peers
5. Have you had any issues with downloading software, using specific course platforms, and/or computer security?
    - ○ Generally there have not been many issues with the platforms being used for online learning. However, it would be a good idea for professors to go over some features that would facilitate the students' participation. (Example: the raise hand feature in Zoom to ask for help when in Breakout Rooms)
    - ○ I personally haven't had issues with remotely accessing the EWS computers, but I know many of my peers have had issue with that
6. Is there a preference for any particular course/communication tools, or a combination of tools (e.g. Zoom, Teams, Compass 2g, Discord, Piazza, etc.)?
    - ○ Just keep the same tools in each course for the whole semester
    - ○ Don't use more tools than necessary or introduce resources you don't plan to keep up-to-date
    - ○ Discord was mentioned as being more robust than other platforms
7. How can we best engage students who are far away, even in vastly different time zones?
    - ○ Check with students about what time zone they are in; be sure to group students in similar time zones to make group work more feasible
    - ○ Be sure you have office hours at a time that is "neutral," so that people in different time zones might be able to participate (reasonably)
8. How has your hybrid/virtual lab experiences been?
    - ○ Have in-person lab participants "host" virtual participants; they can carry around their laptops, tablets, phones, and share with their peers not present
    - ○ Some professors are recording themselves going through the whole lab experience, from start to finish
    - ○ Discuss previous labs in the following class/lab session (for those who could not participate)
9. How do you think we can support students who are going into course experiences who don't already have peer networks or collaborators? How can we help develop those connections?
    - ○ Discord groups--see all people and message them
    - ○ Campuswire--chatroom for all enrolled students

- ○ Encourage homework that asks for collaborators
10. How is your overall workload this semester?
    - ○ It can be more, with added activities like post-lecture quizzes and expanded homework or other new activities created for the hybrid/remote environment
    - ○ It may take additional time to seek support, instead of conversations before or after class sessions (in person)
11. Do you like it when professors and/or TAs check in during breakout sessions?
    - ○ Generally this is favorable
12. Do you find yourself procrastinating more now in hybrid/remote learning than you did in F2F classes?
    - ○ These students seemed to have developed organizational tools that enabled them to stay on top of material (paper post-its, Google Keep), but it is harder. While they did not admit to procrastination, tasks do pile up quicker now than in previous semesters. Professors need to have some empathy for the current situation and accommodate for special cases.
13. What are the best tools for students to engage in collaborative work, especially in problem-solving?
    - ○ Discord was preferred overall; multifunctional
    - ○ Zoom whiteboard (w/ tablet or iPad) can be very helpful; more than one person can annotate the same whiteboard
    - ○ Zoom also allows students to manage another student's computer (can be very helpful for activities like coding)
14. What are the best deadlines for course assignments? Is 11:59PM the preferred option?
    - ○ No consensus on timelines/deadlines, but keep them consistent. Some prefer midnight, others the start of class or an hour or two before
    - ○ Please just recognize that students need to sleep and deadlines may impact that
    - ○ Also keep in mind that not all students are in the Central Time Zone when creating and posting deadlines
15. How can faculty members best communicate course information to students?
    - ○ Ultimately students are responsible for staying informed
    - ○ Use class forums; try to avoid to many singular, short e-mails
    - ○ Consider multiple modes of communication (Compass 2g AND Piazza)
    - ○ Try to avoid over-communication; you don't need to repeat announcements about established routines. Two reminders about major projects, tests, etc. is sufficient.
    - ○ A weekly update (schedule) can be very helpful
16. Are you learning as much now as you did before? Why or why not?
    - ○ Learning as much as before, but it is taking more time and effort. Not as efficient as regular in-person classes.
    - ○ Motivation matters; students are more likely to put the extra time and effort into classes that they see usefulness to their future careers and academic studies