Spring 2020

Faculty COVID-19 Reflection 19

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Spring 2020 | COVID-19 Reflection

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How My Work Has Changed during COVID-19

• The Good
  o Improved relationships with my students: many students have opened up about their lives and challenges during this time. I have had several students emailing me weekly with check-ins. I had them sending me funny quarantine-memes. Scheduled an online pizza party with my seminar class...the students loved meeting together on Teams to socialize and learn. I was also able to open up to my students. Improved communication & camaraderie.
  o Became very familiar with lots of technology: Zoom, Teams, Webinars, GoToMeeting...found so many creative ways to transfer daily work online.
  o Lots of collaboration with JSU faculty, my department, and with other educators around the country who are going through this same thing. Lots of creative solutions and collective brainstorming. Really felt like camaraderie with other faculty has also been quite high.
  o Was able to attend an online genetics conference which was amazing.

• The Bad
  o Learned the limitations of technology (and so did my students). So many issues with putting content online. Slow upload times, difficulty transferring lab courses to online environment, etc.
  o Learned limitations of life in the pandemic. Many students could not meet synchronously so most of my coursework went to asynchronous (which then limited peer-to-peer discussion and study). Lots of students with work, family, & personal technology issues that made deadlines very challenging.
  o Difficulty finding a way to give online exams that were rigorous and fair. I gave too much time to complete each test and thus may have accidentally incentivized cheating. I think my grades for this semester are artificially inflated—I have learned from this and will adjust for Summer & Fall 2020.

• The Ugly
  o Had to transfer required MFT test to an online proctored environment. The company that produces the exam (ETS) partnered with Proctor U to provide the testing for our seniors. It was a nightmare. ETS & Proctor U had 2 different sets of system requirements (which conflicted). Scheduling was consistently clogged as all graduating undergrads were using the system at the same time. IT and tech support for ETS & Proctor U were nonexistent. And my students were worried about passing my class / graduating as this exam is required for graduation. We figured it out, but it was the worst headache of the whole ordeal.