

Teaching Law Online Summer 2020

Experiences, Reflections
and

Food for Thought and Planning



Overview

- Context
- Courses taught
- My approach
- Student feedback
- Comments
- Questions, Discussion

Context

Context to evaluate what follows

- Two courses
- No prior experience with online teaching
- 6 weeks prep time while wrapping up the spring term
- 10 week compressed timeline for classes

My Courses

Two Courses

Administrative Law

- 2 Units, 38 Students
- Substantive Law course
- 1st 4 weeks: 6 hrs/week, then 4 hrs/week
- *Vavilov*

Children and the Law

- 1.5 Units, 9 Students
- Usually a seminar style course
- 4 hrs/week
- I had not taught the course in 8 years

First Student Survey

- Email to students registered in the two courses
- Early April, one month prior to start of classes
- Questions
 - What works for you for online learning?
- Responses
 - Structure: real time classes
 - Flexibility due to other responsibilities
 - They appreciated being consulted

Teaching Begins

Getting started

- Zoom and Coursespaces
- A very steep technology learning curve
- Very good student attendance
- Online teaching is time consuming
- Pre-recorded lectures are time consuming (15-25 min. each)
- Monitoring the zoom screen while teaching is extra effort
- Teaching from home for me is much more complicated
- Overall, 8 – 10 hrs/week the first time through is definitely exhausting, at least as I did this

Second Student Survey

- Survey Monkey: end of second week of classes
- Questions
 - How is your online learning experience going?
 - What is working and what is not working?
 - Are you having opportunities to have your questions answered?
- Responses
 - Experience was generally positive
 - They like pre-recorded lectures

Third Student Survey

- Survey Monkey: six weeks in
- Questions
 - Workload?
 - Are you having opportunities to have your questions answered?
 - How does the experience compare between a semester online and a semester at the School?
- Responses
 - Need to shorten classes to compensate for pre-recorded lectures
 - For some students online learning is much more stressful

Question:

What will online teaching be like for you?

Answer:

It depends.

(the usual legal answer, that most students dislike)

It depends:
There are many more variables

Some aspects are the same

- Course content
- Professor preferences for pedagogy

What is Different and Can Make a Difference

What is recommended for online learning

- Multi-modality
- Pre-recorded lectures

The students' learning experiences

Managing the technology

- Time consuming, consumes mental energy, ex. dealing with class recordings

Your teaching environment

- Home versus school
- What your home is like

Discussion Points

Planning Your Teaching: Considerations

- Your teaching experience in your course
- Your students' learning experience in your course
- Your students' experiences across their course load

And the interconnections

Your Teaching Experience

- Managing the Zoom screen and all its functionality
 - Reading the room
 - Chat, Admitting students, Hands up, etc.
- Reduced student attention span
- Some benefits
 - Breakout groups are efficient, Polls
- Guest presenters
 - Expect connection problems

Your Students' Experience of Your Course

- Challenges in managing all the digital files and materials
- Multi-modality
 - Positive feedback about pre-recorded lectures
- Disconnection from class mates
 - This is harder for some students than other
- Less mutual support between students
- Students with children or other family members who need care, learning from home

Your Students' Experience Across Their Course Load

- This will likely be different for every student
- Cumulative zoom time is exhausting
- Good zoom functions used too often are not so good
 - Breakout rooms
- Digital communication overload
 - Compounded by different methods between courses

Questions, Discussion

If you want to discuss anything related to my experiences or perspective on online teaching, just contact me.

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- Zoom, if necessary

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