

WORKING PAPER SERIES



2020

Volume 3 | Special Issue 2

Higher Education and COVID-19

Navigating Careers in the Academy: Gender, Race, and Class



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***Invited articles.**

EDITOR'S NOTE

Support and Inclusion for Transformative Action

Mangala Subramaniam*

Purdue University

We are all facing challenges because of the uncertainties posed by COVID-19. We also continue to grapple with supporting faculty colleagues and hearing about their stress and anxiety as each of us is looking for ways to cope with our own concerns. While I have support networks within Purdue and outside, I am compelled to rely on a virtual mode to connect with extended family across borders. The time difference across countries also impacts work and life. Anwer's invited article in this issue speaks poignantly to the issue of life-work balance as a foreign-born faculty member. She says, "... I have to confess that achieving even a modicum of a work-life balance has been cruelly impossible for me, and no doubt, others like me who have been unable to travel because of the pandemic. It's hard to explain what time at 'home,' in one's country of origin, means for one's psychological and physical wellbeing" (p. 11). Well-being and support are critical for everyone on this campus and worldwide and people are learning to cope with the challenges as the pandemic continues to spread across countries.

In fact, Fox and Anderson, in their article in this special issue, provide a snapshot into how people on their campus were feeling about the virus, their sense of job security, and work-life balance. Discussing the findings from a survey that was conducted during the peak of the coronavirus wave in Massachusetts, they note that inequalities – gender and rank (including faculty versus staff) - in "normal times" appear to be exacerbated during these extraordinary times. Two instances of how inequalities come into play during these times are discussed by Allsopp and Bhojwani et al.

Shifts in the mode of teaching early in the pandemic, mid-spring 2020 semester - required faculty to quickly become familiar with online delivery of course content. Recognizing that such a disruption could provide skewed teaching evaluations, Purdue announced that (a) evaluations for the spring 2020 semester will not be considered in evaluations and (b) two open-ended questions will be included for all courses and it was up to faculty members to access the responses. In her article, Allsopp examines student feedback for two of her courses taught during the spring 2020 semester. Let me note that it is very courageous on her part to confront the overall negative comments from the students. As a woman faculty member of color who is currently an assistant professor, such evaluations can directly influence motivation and success that in turn can impact retention. While there is a new set of guidelines – [Provost Guidelines](#) – for teaching evaluations presented to the Senate in April 2020 and now in place for fall, I believe there is a need for a

* **Corresponding Author:** Mangala Subramaniam, Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence, Purdue University, Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 361, 155 S. Grant Street, West Lafayette, IN 47907. Email: mangala@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Subramaniam, Mangala. "Support and Inclusion for Transformative Action." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 1-3.

more comprehensive approach to evaluating teaching recognizing the experiences of women of color in the classroom and how they could be advised and mentored about teaching. Allsopp's experiences powerfully speak to the ways in which teaching evaluations can be gendered and racialized. These experiences have implications for teaching recognition during 'normal' times and even more so during the pandemic.

In contrast to Allsopp, Bhojwani et al. discuss findings from a survey of a non-probabilistic sample of graduate students' experiences during the pandemic. These experiences cover the multiple ways their finances, housing, health, and future security have been compromised despite their articulation of what they need from their universities, professors, and peers to feel protected. Yet, the vast majority reported not receiving what they need from their institutions. Both Allsopp and Bhojwani et al. remind us to be attentive to the ways in which the experiences of individuals intersect with the institution. University policies and procedures should consider the differential impact on various groups – faculty and students.

The individual-institution intersection is also evident in the ways in which undergraduates chose to adjust their lives as described by Zook and Mayes. Adjustment was not restricted to students, it was also an important aspect for teaching in general, and especially for courses with multiple sections and different instructors. Hall et al. provide useful suggestions to manage instructor and student uncertainty in transitioning to online delivery in the current context of the pandemic. They detail the actions they took and the lessons they learned. Perhaps this can prove helpful for managing such large multi-section course in fall 2020.

Examining and understanding the institutional dimension in responding to COVID-19 is much needed and is the focus of two articles in this special issue. Gonzalvo and Schumann describe a Purdue College of Pharmacy-led project aimed at addressing temporary food insecurity needs during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Involving pharmacy students, the project relied on existing institutional structures of pharmacies offering medication delivery to distribute food boxes because of being homebound or due to economic hardship. Institutional structure is also the emphasis of the article by Clark et al. Describing the work of UMASS ADVANCE, Clark et al discuss institutional transformation by cultivating faculty equity through collaboration in three arenas - research, community building, and shared decision-making. They share their work with the institution to respond to the pandemic. The role of the university and the needs of the faculty during COVID-19 affected faculty research and teaching and therefore mechanisms to provide support and address evaluation parameters. The article provides useful suggestions for universities by being attentive to organizational structure and culture to enable institutional transformation

As is evident from the articles, COVID-19 is impacting us all, in higher education, in different ways. It raises some key conceptual ideas that need to be thoughtfully translated into action. First, is the importance of recognizing 'difference' and the varying life experiences in understanding impacts on people. This recognition is also key for enabling inclusion. Inclusion does not lie only in representation but also in the practices we adopt and recommend. In this vein consider Zanotti's detailed suggestions for creating inclusive syllabi. It is a great beginning for the practice of inclusion. Representation allows for bringing people and voices to the table, but

which voices are heard, and which of them convert to meaningful action sets the tone for transformation. Additionally, how do we support faculty in the current conditions?

The Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence (SBBCLE) has made some efforts towards providing support in response to concerns raised by faculty. First, the existing [Coaching and Resource Network \(CRN\)](#) (in partnership with ADVANCE-Purdue) that pairs an assistant or associate professor with a full professor who is a CRN member can be an important connection for both, the mentee and the coach. Second, this month (September), we announced the [Support Circle](#) with Faculty Allies as a flexible network for faculty to utilize at their convenience. Both these initiatives are made possible because of the commitment of Purdue's faculty – their generosity, empathy, and their steadfast willingness to enable the success of their colleagues is laudable. The Center remains grateful to the faculty members. Third, just like a few other institutions, we too, at SBBCLE are creating Best Practice Tools such as how and what faculty can document as impacts due to COVID-19 and what the University can provide.

Additionally, in an effort to respond to the ongoing anti-racial protests, the Center is hosting a panel session on Friday, November 13 to address key questions such as, how can institutions of higher education confront racism and address privilege? What kinds of strategic actions – policies and practices- can facilitate inclusion? How can leaders remain cognizant about their own positions to address systemic racism? As a woman faculty member of color and Director of the Center I have worked with a group of about 14 faculty members and the University Provost, through the summer, to facilitate the creation of a new committee focused on faculty diversity – the Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion-Faculty - which will be chaired by the Provost and Chief Diversity Officer.

Initiatives and structures are a crucial step towards transformation. But it requires transparency, cohesive planning and functioning to facilitate action by hearing carefully what faculty are experiencing, enabling inclusion by being attentive to differences, and responding in thoughtful ways including deterring attempts to stymie meaningful mechanisms for support and change. Change is slow and complex but a multipronged effort that lays out key goals can be an effective means. University leaders can use channels such as SBBCLE through which faculty members convey challenges they are facing and by uncritically trying to understand the impacts of the pandemic on faculty members.

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Academic Labor and the Global Pandemic: Revisiting Life-Work Balance under COVID-19

Megha Anwer*
Purdue University

In an essay that appeared in the Fall 2019 issue of the Butler Center's *Working Paper Series*, I'd suggested that conversations around "work-life balance" needed urgent reframing.² My central arguments were that any neat distinction between work and life did not do justice to the particularity of what academics do. Furthermore, I proposed that there was an ethical imperative upon university administrations and communities, in their conceptualization of the struggle for a healthy work-life balance, to consider the well-being of non-normative academics – single women and mothers, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and international scholars, queer and trans professors.

With the global pandemic, most of us have been compelled to recalibrate, or maybe even altogether lose grip over, our carefully culled life-work balance. Perhaps, more than ever before, at least in our lifetimes, the boundaries between life and work have become unremittingly blurred. To be sure, university faculty are all too familiar with what it means to take work home. And yet, the COVID-19 lockdown, and the sudden pivot to remote teaching-learning, has meant that all our work has relocated to the site of the 'domestic' (with all its expansive connotations). In the last few months, we have watched ourselves, and witnessed friends and colleagues frantically hustle kitchen tables, hallways, bedrooms, living room couches, and garages into itinerant work-zones.

Even more jarringly, our pleasure-inducing, routine-establishing life-chores have become tainted by a morbid, anxiety-inducing tonality: shopping for groceries has turned into a nerve-racking, fate-tempting expedition; the erstwhile end-of-day joy of spending time with one's child(ren) feels substantially less blissful now that the entire day is constituted by Olympiad-level acrobatics, as we manage their needs with our own professional commitments. All the components of our life that we'd outsourced to others – child-care workers, school teachers, domestic workers – have returned to us as work we weren't quite ready for. And, all the non-domestic pleasures of our lives – coffee shops work-sessions, drinks at a bar with friends, browsing in bookshops, movie theatre outings, gym workouts, impromptu chats with neighbors have, in one fell sweep, ceased to be on offer as rehabilitative rituals that punctuated our work-life. In fact, the pandemic has had a tragically individualizing effect on our lives; as our social

* **Corresponding Author:** Megha Anwer, Clinical Assistant Professor and the Director of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity, Purdue Honors College, 1101 3rd Street, West Lafayette, IN 47906. Email: manwer@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Anwer, Megha. 2020. "Academic Labor and the Global Pandemic: Revisiting Life-Work Balance under COVID-19." Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series 3(2) Special Issue: 5-13.

² See <https://www.purdue.edu/butler/working-paper-series/2019/fall.html>.

circles have shrunk, our reliance on the insularity of normative family structures and/or primary romantic-marital partners has become, if it were possible, even more entrenched.

To be Productive or Not to be Productive

With the tizzy of adjusting to the new normal came, once again, a flurry of articles proposing life-hacks for “how to avoid a burnout in the middle of a pandemic” (Fairbank 2020). In keeping with a neoliberal ethic of individualizing self-care, such articles have always perpetuated the rhetoric and logic of resiliency, a logic grounded in the belief that each one of us is singularly responsible for our survival and success, never mind the truth of just how asymmetrical or inequitable these processes are. It’s important to note that implicit in these resiliency recommendations, particularly in this moment, is an insidious normalization of relentless productivity, and a demand that no matter how exceptional our personal circumstances, or even global conditions may be, we must not allow a slip-up in our work rhythms. The memes reminding us of all that Shakespeare and Newton accomplished during pandemics, and social media posts championing experiments with new culinary or artistic skills seem intent on looking at the silver lining of the pandemic, celebrating it as an opportunity to recover the untapped parts of our lives.

The unspoken goal of these life-hacks, however, is to re-infuse tenacity into our destabilized work(er)-selves; the baking, yoga classes and poetry workshops are meant to distract and revive us to keep ‘going’ to work, albeit from home. Aisha Ahmad’s important piece, suggesting that we ignore all “Coronavirus-inspired productivity pressure” draws attention to just how cruel, “profoundly daft” and “delusional” it is to insist on normal patterns of scholarly productivity at a time when the world as we know it has come to a grinding halt and is in the process of being irrecoverably altered (2020).

In many ways, the necessity of, and over-reliance on, the language of self-optimization, that alternately coaxes and berates us to “prove our metal” or “shine against all odds,” is rooted in the innate precarity of life under neoliberalism. As Laurie Penny so astutely observes, the “doctrine of workism” or the “cult of productivity” are symptoms of fear and hypervigilance, produced by an economic system which blames individuals – their laziness, their incapacity to be industrious or entrepreneurial enough – for being out of jobs during global catastrophes (2020). We are encouraged to “internalize the collective failures of the ruling class as personal failings that could be fixed by working smarter, or harder, or both” (Penny 2020). A focus on the self, and its deficiencies, also has the assuaging effect of letting us imagine we have more agency than we actually do.

It’s hard to come to terms with the fact that as academics, we too have been recruited to do the bidding of what Naomi Klein calls “disaster capitalism” (2007). It’s unsettling to recognize the ways in which our overwhelming sense of dispensability, induced by an increasingly privatized university life and alienating academic labor market, have turned us into workers for whom the “treadmill feels normal” (Penny 2020). COVID-19 has really brought this reality home (quite literally) – all we want is to be able to secure our place back on the treadmill. And yet, the crisis of conscience and the interruptions in the materiality of our daily routines – of life and work – that have accompanied the pandemic make an ‘innocent’ return to the old work-life balance untenable. This is because the framing of the current crisis not only demands that we squeeze out

the last dregs of our most ingenious, entrepreneurial selves, but also that we do so even as our working conditions, and the terrain on which they operate, are dramatically reconfigured.

The Reconfiguration of Academic Labor

My goal here isn't to exceptionalize the COVID-19 related challenges that academics face, or to suggest that academic vulnerability/anxieties somehow supersede the enormous emotional-physical suffering, and material precarity that the pandemic has imposed upon millions of people (faculty included). In assessing the ways in which the work-lives of faculty have shifted under a virus-regulated dispensation, I do not wish to cast our experience as extraordinary; indeed, in many respects, university faculty share much in common with the challenges faced by countless others in different professions. In fact, the process of recovery from this economic and health crisis will require that we use our shared experiences, and the overlaps in our struggles, to collectively formulate a future in which everyone is more secure. However, such a path to recovery will also require that we stay alert to the particularity of the new pressures, or, in some cases, the new contours of old pressures that each profession confronts. This section is dedicated simply to honoring some specific ways in which academic work stands transformed; to exploring the (new) dilemmas that the present moment enacts upon our profession.

Crucially, the pandemic has heightened job insecurity, especially for non-tenured faculty. As Penny (2020) puts it: "If we've been furloughed or lost our jobs, we're scrambling to make up the shortfall. If we're still employed, we're worried about the long term, and if we're relatively secure, we're wrestling with survivor's guilt."³ Sadly, this sense of precarity is not new for university teachers.⁴ For a while now, academics have operated under threats of budget-cuts and a shrinking job market. Most of us have intimate knowledge of how the university's austerity measures have refurbished the nature of academic labor. I discuss some of these in my previous essay on life-work balance (Anwer 2019). However, a sustained slow-moving process, a three-decade-long, systematic chipping-away at the sanctity of and security in the academic profession, has (potentially) been given a new, accelerated lease of life as a result of the pandemic. Many university professors worry that the involuntary and inescapable adoption of online teaching necessitated by the pandemic could well mark the end of our struggle against the expansion of online education as a substitute for in-person learning.⁵ In a moment where traditional face-to-face teaching is hard to execute, it may seem difficult (not impossible, but difficult) to argue against the repurposing of public funds and university budgets towards online teaching. As Anna Kornbluh in "Academe's Coronavirus Shock Doctrine" argues, the pandemic will furnish the

³ As clarification: This is not to argue that the actual loss of employment compares to the anxiety of losing one's job, or the guilt at having retained it. I cite Penny as a way to elucidate the exacerbation of precarity that faculty face.

⁴ For more on the decline of job openings, particularly in the humanities, read Kevin Carey's piece "The Bleak Job Landscape of Adjunctopia for Ph.Ds.," which was published just before the nation-wide lockdown.

⁵ For a quick account on the research that has found online education inadequate in offering quality education, particularly to students from racially and economically disenfranchised backgrounds, read Paul Fain's "Takedown of Online Education." <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/01/16/online-learning-fails-deliver-finds-report-aimed-discouraging> (2019). To be sure, there is significant research that also recommends ways to counteract their shortcomings in online teaching.

pretext to push through measures that universities have been looking to do for a while now (2020).

Remarkably, though, this ostensible opportunity to expand (exclusively) online education, has been accompanied by the unequivocal realization that virtual interactions cannot replace in-person learning. Many students and faculty, who had never contended with this choice, have had to investigate the preferentiality of one over the other, and resoundingly, both have come out on the side that favors in-person learning. Importantly, then, the very moment that marks the universalization of online-teaching also offers a resurgence of a discourse that recommits – ideologically and pragmatically – to an investment in the irreplaceability of campus-life and face-to-face classrooms interactions. Thus the pressure on faculty to incorporate at least some form of in-person engagement in our fall courses.

At the same time, the recognition that something unique transpires when we're all physically present together in a classroom has led to an added pressure on faculty. We're now expected to recreate the distinctiveness of the in-person experience in virtual pedagogical modules. The rush of articles offering valuable tools to make online teaching "first-rate" (Hersh 2020), to implement strategies that make it more personal, collaborative, dynamic – everything that the traditional classroom represents – attests to this pressure. However, the more we adapt our most cherished pedagogical rituals and tools to online formats (a format most of us did not choose in pursuing this profession), the more we contribute to the success of online teaching, the more we might be paving the way for a system that treats us as defunct. This explains, then, another trend in articles about higher-education that caution against over-investing in the transfer to virtual learning. They remind us why we should be doing a "bad job" (Barrett-Fox 2020) of transferring courses online, as a way to ensure that these emergency-contingent, "temporary exertions" don't become "permanent expectations" (Kornbluh 2020).

Either way, this is a terrible political-ethical-professional dilemma to find oneself in. On the one hand, all attempts at non-compliance or any failure (concerted or unwitting) to optimize our skills in the current moment can be used as grounds to "pull up" individuals or even entire departments. On the other hand, all sincerity exerted in excelling at this transition might mean there is no turning back the clock. But, the absurd-tragedy of this Sophie's choice rests in something even more basic: it lies in that university faculty actually *want* to teach, and *teach well*. Despite grueling course loads; the tedium of grading; the "publish or perish" imperative; the emotional-psychological toll that high-intensity engagement with students (inside and outside the classroom) takes on us; or the steady escalation in our administrative responsibilities, we continue to remain dedicated teachers. This is what explains why as a collective, notwithstanding our strong misgivings about a blanket transition to distance learning, we have spent the last four months attending countless webinars and online courses, reading many articles and books, on how to be better teachers during a global pandemic;⁶ on mastering new technologies; practicing our recorded voices to create online lectures; re-planning *all* our courses for virtual/hybrid delivery in the fall; joining new committees and attending interminable hours of meetings to deliberate on what will best serve our students. Significantly, all this during our unpaid summer

⁶ Here, much gratitude is owed to centers of instructional excellence, scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) experts, and faculty with online-teaching experience, who have worked overtime to put together invaluable resources to share with others.

months, which we usually use to move forward on our research projects (without which there is no hope for regularization or promotions).⁷

Even more, this, while grieving⁸ the loss of what we most love about teaching; what, today, we know to be integral to, and the irrefutable essence of a successful classroom; what Peter Boumgarden and Abram Van Engen in their beautifully elegiac piece “In Praise of Classrooms”⁹ call “the communal aspect of attentiveness crafted by coming together in a shared space” (2020). It is perhaps only now, as we confront the loss of an ideal that we chased each time we entered our classrooms, that we are able to articulate so vividly what we have always felt in our bones: that,

When we teach, we thrive on response—nodding heads, raised hands, levity and laughter (even the polite sort of chuckle offered for our poorest jokes). We could not have taught what we taught in the way we did without a basic sense of trust. The space made possible the bonds of learning that support and extend beyond the content of any course.

This is just one of hundred other challenges/conundrums that faculty currently face. The present juncture, demands that we undertake a massive overhaul of what we do, of what we know to do, and what we love doing. The uncertainties of a post-pandemic university-system weigh heavy on our hopes of a return to normalcy.¹⁰ What remains to be seen is how faculty across the country come together to imagine, demand, and actualize the future of their work.

The Differentiated Labors of Minoritized Academics or How Life-Work Balance is Always-Already Skewed for Some

In my previous essay on the issue of faculty life-work balance, I had argued that we must protect our notion of “life” from being hijacked by a “normative understanding of how non-work hours are spent or ought to be spent.” I asked that academic communities and administrations center the experiences of non-normative academics, that we develop an “intersectional conceptualization of the lives that faculty lead,” and begin to pay attention to the inconsistencies in the “structures of care” afforded to people, because some of us struggle much harder to “find community and a sense of belonging” (Anwer 2019:54).

COVID-19, and the spate of socio-political developments that have accompanied it – especially the public lynching of George Floyd (among the countless other cases of anti-black police

⁷ Within days of the nation-wide pivot to online teaching, a support group for university teachers called “Pandemic Pedagogy” emerged on Facebook. Today, it has over 30,000 members. The frequency of posts and comments exchanged, the resiliency of the advice offered and solace extended on this group are a testament to the generosity with which university teachers are approaching this moment.

⁸ For the idea of “grief” as a response to COVID-19, read an interview (2020) with David Kessler, the renowned co-author (along with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross) of *On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief through the Five Stages of Loss* (2005). <https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief>.

⁹ I am grateful to Kristina Bross for drawing my attention to this article.

¹⁰ For more on the innumerable possibilities that await us, read “How will the Pandemic Change Higher Education” (2020) in which faculty and administrators offer vastly variegated visions of what the future of the university might look like.

brutality and vigilante violence) – have painfully aggravated the disparity between who gets and who doesn’t get to feel secure about making it to the other side of the pandemic. In a terribly tenuous world, even the slightest shifts in our already fragile ecosystems make all the difference. Needless to say, having to negotiate a racist medical infrastructure during a pandemic that disproportionately affects and kills blacks (because of the long history of health and environmental inequities they’ve suffered); witnessing a police personnel fatally suffocate a human being, no less during a global health-crisis that ironically effects our respiratory system; being tear-gassed and tasered at peaceful protests by combat-ready, hyper-militarized police forces – these would be enough to dismantle just about anyone’s sense of security. It is hard to fathom the enormity of the trauma that the black community, and our black colleagues, have endured in these past few months. And yet, fathom we must, because without a conscious and conscientious grappling with their trauma, with its long legacy and this legacy’s manifestations within the academy, we cannot engage in a meaningful conversation about anything, really, let alone an ethical or sincere discussion about faculty work-life balance.

In 2016, Patricia Matthew wrote a piece about the “invisible labor” done by professors of color; labor that is all too often bypassed by institutions in their evaluation of “faculty work.” Matthew gives a detailed account of the “extra burden on minority faculty,” particularly women of color, who undertake service engagements in far greater proportion to similar work done by their white male counterparts. When it comes to doing the work of building diverse and inclusive university communities, the responsibility falls heavily on the shoulders of faculty of color. We can be sure that black faculty, and faculty of color more generally, will face (and are already facing) an intensification of the demands on their time, their intellectual-emotional resources. They will find themselves in a bind – to add to their already mammoth workloads or forgo serving on committees, letting them be steered by predominantly white faculty and administrators, as they try to ‘fix’ the problem of racist campuses. This quandary – to participate in the toxicity of being tokenized or risk being left out altogether – predates COVID-19, of course. Either scenario only adds to the challenges of finding a work-life equilibrium for BIPOC faculty.

Come fall, universities must prepare to support their black faculty who will have to incur, even more than usual, the ethical burden of supporting students of color; these students will, no doubt, arrive onto our campuses and into virtual classrooms with new anxieties produced by the pandemic and their encounters with racist state apparatuses. Furthermore, our academic institutions must be ready to protect their black and brown faculty against a ‘whitelash’ (white backlash) that will be directed against them in retaliation against the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement. We know that historically, all assertions of black dignity and black rights have been met by bullying, intimidation and threats of violence (if not actual violence); universities have no excuse to be ill-equipped to combat incidents of hate-speech and hate-crime against their faculty of color. Equally, universities must undertake real, non-tokenistic and broad-spectrum measures to ensure institutional action around issues of inclusion. It is not enough to simply hire faculty of color in response to the demand for institutional racial equity. University leaderships must enact concrete plans to not just diversify the academy but also build them as spaces where anti-racist and decolonial work can thrive, and faculty of color feel secure and sure of their success. Among these measures must include a massive re-assessment of the efficacy and ethicality of using teaching evaluations to assess faculty performance. We know that these

months of political-social crisis will exacerbate the experiential inequities that faculty of color, especially women, already face within academia.

As a foreign-born faculty member, I have to confess that achieving even a modicum of a work-life balance has been cruelly impossible for me, and no doubt, others like me who have been unable to travel because of the pandemic. It's hard to explain what time at 'home,' in one's country of origin, means for one's psychological and physical wellbeing. It's what re-orientates and grounds us; reminds us to not succumb to the myopia, the insularity of our work, but to connect it to the global, transnational networks to which we invariably belong. It is difficult to capture the profoundly therapeutic power of savoring the foods we grew up eating; to picnic with one's girlfriends in the shade of 600-year old monuments, under a scorching 100-degree sun; to catch-up on all the latest films my best friend and I carefully catalogue during our months apart, for us to watch when we are finally together. Each time I embrace my parents, my partner, my best friend, I am not only trying to make up for the months of missing their corporeal presence, I'm also asking for their forgiveness for having left, for having risked the improvisation of a work-life balance that takes shape thousands of miles away from them (they would, of course, never concede that this is something that needed forgiveness). COVID-19 has brutally disrupted the rituals that allow international faculty to sustain their life-bonds – the very things that make us the best version of our academic selves. I have had to forge new and exhausting ways to compensate for not being able to see my loved ones in India this summer: my screen-time includes not just the 8-10 hours/day I spend doing work on my laptop but also the hours of video-chatting I've had to instate into my daily schedule. I wouldn't have it any other way, no matter the effect this has on my eyes, or my sleep pattern. For over a month, I've worried about my mother who did contract COVID-19 and, as I write this, is on her 35th day of fever. I worry endlessly for my 65-year old father who risks his life each time he has to walk our little dog, Chinchin (who, I ungrudgingly suspect, he loves almost as much as me).

What has compounded these personal challenges are the government's attacks on our work-futures. Once again, we are not new to the political scapegoating of immigrants in times of economic crisis. The stoppage of new work, immigrant, and dependent visas, the embargo on international students to continue their remote learning while residing in the country, continue to instill in us a sense of our dispensability; after all, many of us began our journeys in the US as international students. The state's expression of indifference towards their wellbeing, then, feels like an attack on our own past and future in this country. Those of us who are here already may be safe, for now. But, it's hard not to panic in anticipation of a time when this too might change, as it already is for many scholars impacted by work-visa-bans and the impossibility of securing consulate appointments because of the pandemic.

An important and final note on the gendered dimension of our differentially distributed capacities/opportunities to develop a life-work balance. In late April, a research conducted on academic journal submission data suggested that women's research productivity had declined under COVID-19; editors reported never having seen such a skewed distribution in the gender-ratios of the authors who were submitting papers. It is not as though men are not overwhelmed by COVID-19; but "women already juggle more domestic and affective, or emotional, labor with their actual work prior to the pandemic", writes Colleen Flaherty (2020). "The coronavirus has simply exacerbated these inequities by stripping away what supports women had in place to walk

this tightrope.” Already, we live in a society that doesn’t value women’s labor as “work.” Quite expectedly, people’s care needs have escalated during the pandemic; we know that it is women’s social reproductive labor that is going to fulfill this increase in demand for care-giving. Even as we fight the long-term battle for a more gender-equitable distribution of life-responsibilities, it is up to us to demand that universities do not punish women, by impeding their career advancement, for the added work on their plates.

A higher-education system, which is truly invested in helping its faculty achieve a healthy work-life balance, must not treat these, and other, differently marginalized faculty groups as being in competition with one another for the university’s financial, legal, mentoring resources. Instead, it must seek to put in place an institutional structure that empowers and secures its faculty both individually, and collectively.

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Experiences of Life in a Pandemic: A university community coping with coronavirus

Kimberly E. Fox*

Norma J. Anderson

Bridgewater State University, Massachusetts

The genesis of our project

COVID-19 disrupted all our lives, upending and, in many cases, suspending our normal routines. Those of us fortunate enough to be able to “shelter in place”, found ourselves unable to participate in life outside our homes and, often, felt real anxiety and fear as the pandemic spread around us. This paper discusses preliminary findings from a convenience survey we undertook during the spring 2020 lockdown period, designed to learn how our faculty, librarians, and staff were managing the pandemic.

Like so many others during the period of lockdown, we were trying to make sense of all the changes happening around us, living with uncertainty and disruption. As sociologists, we focus on the intersection of personal biography and social history but, often, to learn how disasters impact communities and individuals, our only option is to look back, since many disasters are fast-moving events (hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, etc.). Normally we are relegated to looking at the past, reconstructing people’s ideas and feelings through their memories or written texts, but during March and April we realized we had the unique opportunity to get a sense of how individuals were feeling as normal lives were upset.

Early on in the pandemic, our university leadership began writing emails saying, “We got this!” as a way of encouraging positivity and commitment to our work, possibly endeavoring to impose a sense of purpose and community (Burrow and Hill 2020). Many people, though, were working from home, trying to balance full-time employment with emergency homeschooling or daycare of their children, and others were worrying about their health, their jobs, or their partners’ or family members’ health and jobs.

For many of us, “We got this!” in no way represented how we actually felt during that period of time (or feel still). Yet, were we to look back at email and text communications, we might get the impression that our university community had come together, finding strength in our work and commitment to our students. Over time, it is possible that this positivity might override individual memories or, at least, smooth their sharper edges. Assmann (2008) writes that once

* **Corresponding Author:** Kimberly E. Fox, Department of Sociology, Bridgewater State University, 231 Hart Hall, 131 Summer Street, Bridgewater, MA 02325. Email: kimberly.fox@bridgew.edu.

Recommended Citation: Fox, Kimberly E. and Norma J. Anderson. 2020. “Experiences of Life in a Pandemic: A university community coping with coronavirus.” *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 14-28.

Acknowledgements: We appreciate the thoughtful comments and suggestions from the anonymous reviewers and the editor that made this work stronger.

individual memories are shared, in the form of a narrative, they become part of a symbolic system outside the individual which can be changed, contested, even usurped. Furthermore, “it is sometimes notoriously difficult to distinguish what one has experienced oneself from what one has been told and afterward incorporated into one’s own stock of autobiographical memories” (50).

To understand how people were feeling, we decided to conduct a convenience sample survey of faculty, librarians, and staff at our institution during Massachusetts’s intensive surge of COVID-19’s first wave. By conducting a survey during lockdown, we captured a moment in time, a moment of extreme uncertainty, when our community members were mostly physically isolated from each other. We wanted to ensure that we captured people’s feelings and experiences while we were ‘in the thick of it’ and before our individual and collective understandings and experiences moved beyond the intensity of that first wave. We also felt that these initial findings would provide a guide for qualitative interviews that we plan to conduct in the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021 to see how people’s feelings and memories have or have not changed.

In this working paper, we explore the most interesting preliminary findings of our survey. We focus primarily on a few general themes: experience of the virus, public health measures, and trust in government information; faculty and staff differences during the lockdown; and gendered and parenting experiences of the pandemic.

COVID-19 in eastern Massachusetts

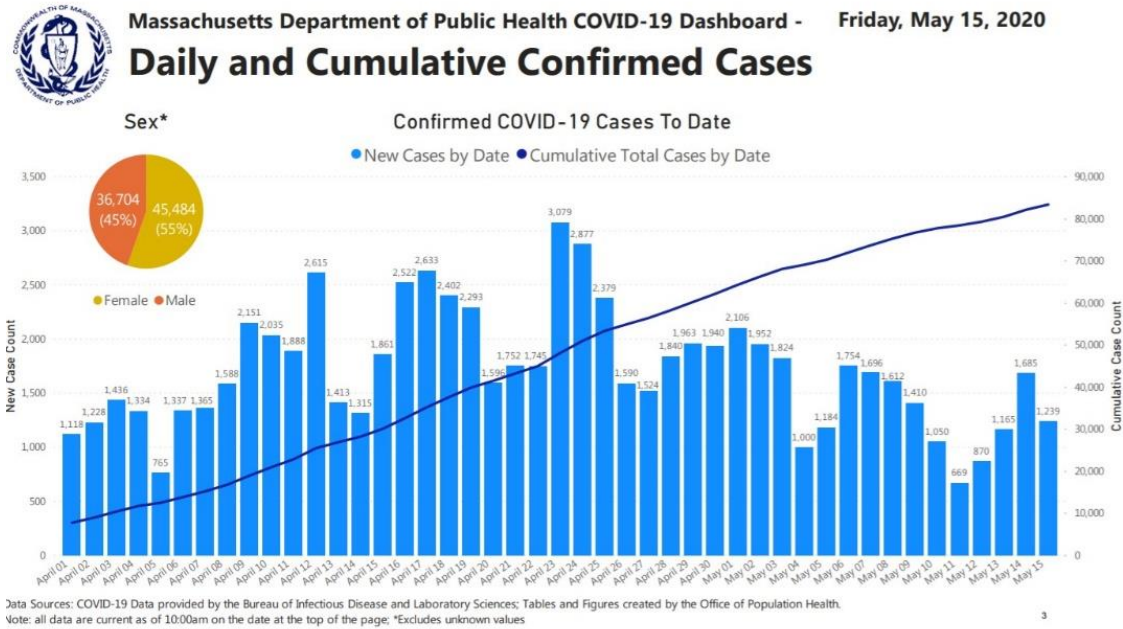
It is important to understand how coronavirus affected the region where our university is located at the time in which people responded to our survey. Massachusetts, particularly eastern Massachusetts, where we are located, was hard-hit by the virus early in the first wave, having the third-highest death toll of all states as of May 26th (Reilly 2020). We entered our “surge” in early-to-mid- April and though it had begun slowing by the end of April, we were not out of our surge until mid-May, as seen in Figure 1. Plymouth, the county in which the campus is located, had very high rates of coronavirus and nearby counties, including Suffolk County (metro Boston) where many faculty and staff live, had the highest rate in the state (Dashboard 2020).

At the beginning of the crisis, our university took one extra week of spring break (March 16-20) and went online March 23rd. The governor of Massachusetts ordered the closing of all non-essential businesses and public spaces on March 24th, asking people to stay home simultaneously (Press Release A 2020). We distributed our survey May 1st, one week after Massachusetts saw its greatest number of new cases, 3,079, on April 23rd, about six weeks after the closing of businesses, and when the rate of coronavirus in our county was between 1,078.1 and 1,520.7 per 100,000 (Dashboard 2020). Massachusetts residents were ordered to wear masks in all public places beginning May 6th, 2020 (Press Release B 2020). Thus, faculty and staff took our survey when they had been home, isolated for a month and a half, and were living with daily updates of very high numbers of new cases.

Exploring feelings and experiences: data and methods

Bridgewater State University (BSU) is a mid-sized, regional, state university in southeastern Massachusetts that draws students from the greater Boston area, Cape Cod, and other New

Figure 1
Coronavirus cases Massachusetts, April 1-May 15, 2020 (Dashboard 2020)



England states. BSU enrolls just over 10,000 students annually, has 36 undergraduate majors and 80 graduate programs, employs 354 full-time faculty, 434 part-time faculty, and 726 staff and administrators (Office of Institutional Research 2019). We deployed the survey using Qualtrics and distributed it using campus listservs for faculty and staff as well as through employee unions. Given bureaucratic issues, we sent the survey out only once and received 291 responses with 254 complete surveys for analysis. Of the 254 complete surveys, 113 faculty or librarians and 141 staff responded, a response rate of about 14.3% and 19.4% respectively.

While we focus on faculty and staff generally, there are times we look at differences within these groups. Staff at our university are divided into two union categories, professional – Association for Professional Administrators (APA) and classified – American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) staff. These distinctions are not exact but professional staff often have higher status roles (for example, admissions or residential life) whereas classified staff are typically in clerical and facilities positions. Out of 141 staff responses, 73 respondents were professional staff and 60 were classified staff. Additionally, 113 faculty participated but our university, like so many others, relies on part-time faculty and we surveyed full and part-time faculty; 43 part-time faculty and 62 full-time faculty participated. The remaining staff and faculty members did not identify their specific status.

Table 1 breaks down the categories that provide the guide for our analysis. Twenty-six percent of respondents identify as men, 68.5% of respondents identify as women, and 8% of respondents identified as another gender category or preferred not to answer. We provided multiple categories for race in our survey but decided to condense survey results into two racial categories – white and non-white – because keeping racial categories separate could lead to the identification of a particular staff or faculty member. As such, 87.4% of our respondents identify

as white while 12.6 % identify as non-white. Similarly, we combine faculty and librarians into one group for two reasons: they are part of the same collective bargaining unit and distinguishing librarians might allow one to identify a certain librarian. Our sample slightly undersamples the faculty but largely represents the racial and gender divisions within the faculty, librarian, and staff ranks. Finally, because of media focus on school and daycare closures and the experiences of parents during the pandemic (McClain 2020; Strauss 2020) we asked questions about individuals' parenting status. Thirty-six percent of our respondents have no children, 45.3% have minor children, and 18.6% have adult children.

Table 1
Relevant participant demographics (percentages)

	Faculty and Librarians n = 113	Staff and Administrators n = 141	Total n = 254
<i>Gender</i>			
Men	26.5	25.5	26.0
Women	65.5	70.9	68.5
Other	8.0	3.5	5.5
<i>Parental Status</i>			
No Children at Home	56.4	53.2	54.6
Children at Home	43.6	46.7	45.3
<i>Job Role and Status</i>			
Staff – Professional (APA)	-	51.7	28.7
Staff – Classified (AFSCME)	-	42.6	23.6
Staff – Not Identified	-	5.7	3.1
Faculty or Librarian – Full-Time	56.6	-	25.2
Faculty – Part-Time or Temporary	38.9	-	17.3
Faculty or Librarian – Not Identified	4.4	-	2.0

Our survey consisted of personal demographics and questions relating to individuals' experiences, including how often individuals or those in their household leave the house and whether they follow advice to wear a mask and keep a six-foot distance from others when out. We asked about how much people have been touched by coronavirus, how much knowledge they have, how they get their information, and who they trust. In addition, we included questions about how the pandemic has affected their levels of stress and anxiety, concerns for personal safety, larger societal issues, and specific questions for their experiences as staff members, faculty and librarians, and parents. Finally, we allowed for an open-ended response for additional information and asked if people would be willing to take part in qualitative interviews about their experience at a later date.

This paper highlights several interesting preliminary findings from our survey. We show that the overall knowledge of and adherence to coronavirus advice is high in our sample and is boosted by a high rate of personal experience with COVID-19. After examining the general trends in coronavirus experience, we look more exclusively at social roles that impact individuals' responses, including staff and faculty roles, gender, and parental status. People's day to day experiences are influenced by their societal roles and expectations, and inequalities that exist in "normal" times do not disappear during a pandemic; rather, they are likely exacerbated. We

underscore those areas where these differences and inequalities are most visible, highlighting how these differences may impact individuals' experiences of the coronavirus shut down. An intersectional approach suggests that different experiences are not divided along single dimensions, such as gender, work status, or parenting roles, but this approach is extremely effective in identifying differences within our sample and pointing us to the ways that these roles impact experience and perception.

We also provided space for open-ended responses and asked if the respondent could be contacted for a qualitative interview. Forty percent of respondents included comprehensive open-ended responses and 49.2% were willing to be contacted for interviews; the high rates of response to these options suggest that people are interested in telling their stories of the pandemic. We plan to use these preliminary findings to guide our future in-depth, qualitative interviews. By incorporating a qualitative component, we hope to better understand how these various roles intersect to impact individuals' experience of the pandemic.

Knowledge, trust, anxiety, and adherence

Given high rates of coronavirus in Massachusetts at the time of our survey, the newness and total uncertainty of the spread of the virus, and the large amount of news coverage, we anticipated that many respondents would be keeping up with information about the virus, trying to make sense of our new quotidian reality. People may be critical of, or develop cynicism toward, the media and/or government which can impede belief in news of a pandemic or public health adherence (Davis et al. 2014; Wei et al. 2018). Additionally, social media allows for unimpeded sharing of information and research has shown that false information tends to be shared more widely than factual data (Pulido et al. 2020; Seymour et al. 2015). As a result, we were curious about how much people were consuming news as well as the extent to which people trusted government officials with regards to the pandemic, believing this might impact people's willingness to participate in public health measures. While universities are presumed to be extremely liberal, and we are located in very blue Massachusetts, our university is located in a red part of the state: Trump received 49.2% of votes while Clinton received 44.6% of votes in our town (Fujiwara 2016). Though faculty also live in Providence, Rhode Island, or Boston and its suburbs, many faculty *and* staff live in this area and we wondered how this conservatism might influence trust and adherence.

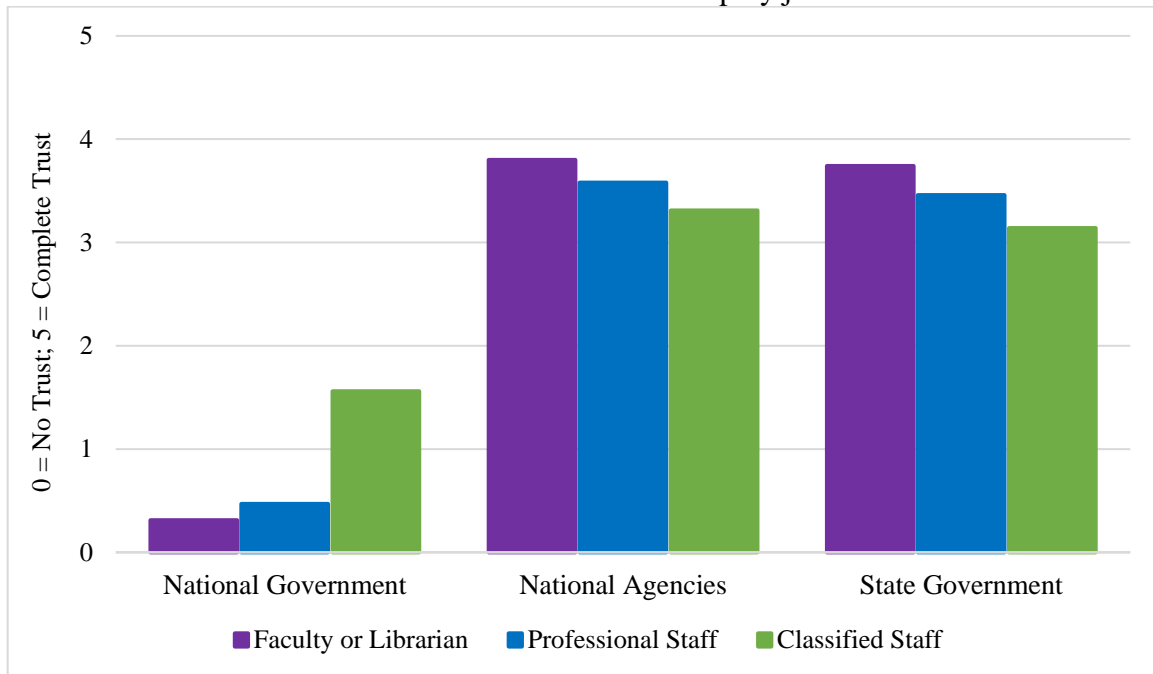
To examine this, we asked respondents how much they trust coronavirus information from the national government (the Trump administration), national agencies (CDC, NIH), and one's state government. There is a significant difference in trust of the Trump administration with classified staff showing the most support, rating their trust in the government at 1.56 on a 5-point scale, compared to much lower professional staff and faculty trust at 0.47 and 0.31 respectively ($p < .001$; see Figure 2). However, even with this higher level of trust among classified staff, these ratings are very low compared to trust levels for national health agencies ($p < .10$) and regional state governments ($p < .05$), which ranged from 3.14-3.80.

The high level of support for national agencies and state governments as compared to the national government may lead to more adherence to public health guidelines to wear masks, physical distance, follow stay-at-home orders, and wash hands more frequently. As we have seen in the U.S., adherence to these practices is decidedly uneven and may be linked to political

viewpoints (Aratani 2020). Among all our respondents, however, we found that adherence to physical distancing and masking orders was high. Approximately 61% of faculty and 72% of staff responded that they always/usually wore masks when leaving home. High adherence and low trust was especially striking, particularly among staff who viewed the national government

Figure 2

Trust in state and national leadership by job status



more favorably. While this defies easy narratives about left-right politics in the age of coronavirus, it may also be because of people’s personal experiences with COVID-19.

One of the greatest surprises in our data was the high numbers of respondents who knew someone who had COVID-19. More than half of the sample (57.1%) responded that they knew someone who *thought* they had coronavirus but was not actually tested for it. At the time, testing was hard to access; only people with very specific symptoms or travel histories were able to access COVID tests. Given fear of the virus, it is unsurprising that many people might think they had the virus without knowing for sure. But, more incredibly, 69.3% of our respondents said they knew someone who *had tested positive* for coronavirus. Even given the rates of coronavirus in Massachusetts, this high response indicates just how “real” the virus was to people taking our survey. Indeed, in response to an open-ended question, a staff member wrote:

I know of 3 people who have died from COVID. It has made the pandemic ‘hit home’ and caused my family to take the disease/safety precautions/attention to hygiene/social distancing/NOT venturing from my house for any reason/NOT venturing into public very seriously. Real people who had lives, jobs, family and friends, futures to look forward to are painfully ill and too many suddenly DEAD.

While some parts of the United States were seeing few cases, questioning how serious the virus was, we were truly in the midst of a horrible outbreak. Above all other personal concerns, including losing one's job, getting the virus oneself, or one's children getting the virus, the greatest fear for all respondents was an adult family member or friend contracting the virus, with mean responses of 4.12 for both faculty and staff, indicating to us that people were very worried about the virus, particularly the well-reported dangers for older people.

Given community members' lived experience with coronavirus, we expected that the virus could be causing stress and anxiety for people, albeit in varying ways. We asked several questions about how strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with whether the virus was causing anxiety. There were no statistically significant differences in responses to these questions between faculty and staff overall or between full-time and part-time faculty and librarians; however, we did find statistically significant differences between staff roles and gender (see Table 2).

Table 2
Mean differences in feelings about coronavirus

	Work Role		Gender	
	Professional 73	Classified 60	Men 66	Women 174
Coronavirus causing Anxiety	2.90**	2.57	2.59**	2.87
Being at Home is Stressful	2.41**	2.03	2.32*	2.09
Too Much Time Alone	2.03	1.88	2.09*	1.86
Stay Home Longer is Okay	3.12	3.15	2.95**	3.22

*p<.10; **p<.05

More professional staff report heightened anxiety as a result of the virus as opposed to classified staff (2.90 to 2.57; p<.05) and greater stress at being at home (2.41 to 2.03; p<.05). One staff member, who worked remotely, wrote:

I don't think employers genuinely appreciate the stress staff are experiencing. They are being expected to perform even more despite all of the additional pressures now placed upon them. It's made me as stressed, depressed, and anxious. There is little joy in life right now. Just an awful groundhog day repeated every day. I don't enjoy the time I have with my family because of the amount of pressure and stress I feel.

Differences among staff roles are interesting because it suggests that classified staff are feeling less stress and anxiety than professional staff, even though more classified staff are considered essential and, therefore, still going in to work. We wonder if this may be because, by keeping a semi-normal schedule, essential staff are able to connect with people at work and feel less isolated than those at home. Physical distancing, while curtailing viral spread, also creates psychological distress (Osofsky, Osofsky, and Mamon 2020).

Some differences in anxiety might also be connected to media consumption. As one staff member wrote, "I believe the short and long term effects of high-frequency media exposure, discrepancies in messages received from national, federal and local agencies, and the constant need to plan and manage personal and professional responsibilities without consistently reliable

information is and will continue taking a significant toll on everyone's well-being." We examined this possibility by looking at those employees who identified as essential and needed to go to campus regularly versus those who were working from home. Anxiety about the virus was lower among essential employees than other groups and, interestingly, there are significant differences in time spent online, with essential, on-campus staff, spending less time online (just over 3 hours versus 5 or more hours for non-essential employees; $p < .05$). We also see a low to moderate (0.293) positive relationship between anxiety and learning information from TV news for non-essential workers. Potentially, people staying home have more time to be online and keep up with the news which may heighten their anxiety.

It is clear that while a majority of respondents know someone who had COVID-19 and everyone was experiencing a new reality in the pandemic, people were experiencing the virus differently. In this section we showed that there was general anxiety about the virus among our respondents but there are additional anxieties and stressors caused by the pandemic, and the response to it, that may be felt differently by people in varied demographic groups. In the next section, we consider how people's standpoint may have impacted their experience of the shutdown.

Same virus, different experience: job status, gender, and parenting

As we showed in the previous section, anxiety about the virus among our respondents was significant and, conceivably, was connected to the high likelihood that people knew someone who tested positive for COVID-19. But in this section, we explore how job status, gender, and parenting identities likely influenced people's experience of the pandemic. While overall anxiety about the virus was real, anxieties related to people's different roles were equally real and, importantly, broke down along already-existing inequalities such as job security and gendered expectations.

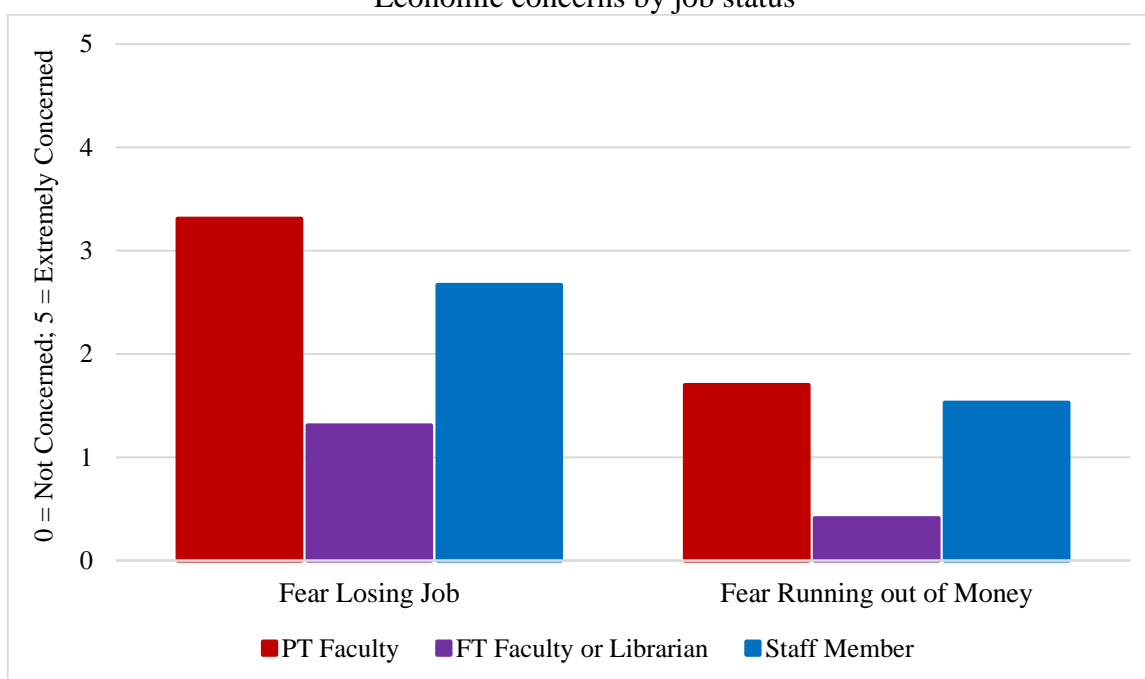
Job status

Different job status, work responsibilities, and contractual disparities helped create uncertainty and anxiety among our respondents. Our data indicate that some of people's anxiety about the virus was connected to their position at the university. When we asked about various personal fears, staff reported greater concern about losing their jobs than faculty (2.67 to 2.23; $p < .10$) and were more concerned about running out of money (1.53 to 1.08; n.s.). This is not surprising given that faculty are somewhat insulated by tenure.

Looking at full-time versus part-time faculty, an even starker inequality is accentuated. Part-time faculty were more likely to report worry about losing their jobs than tenured or pre-tenured full-time faculty *and* staff. Part-time faculty reported fear of job loss a full two points higher than full-time faculty (1.31 to 3.31; $p < .001$) and .64 points higher than staff (n.s.) and reported worry about running out of money nearly 1.3 points higher than full-time faculty (1.70 to 0.41; $p < .001$; see Figure 3). A part-time faculty member wrote, "As a long-time part-time faculty member, the messaging by Admin. that many of us will likely lose our positions, without knowing for sure, has been incredibly stressful and demoralizing as I pull out all the stops and work long hours to make my students' online education worthwhile." And another wrote, "I am positive I will lose my PT teaching job at BSU, which will put me in a financial bind...That is the scariest part of this virus is the financial implications for a lot of folks."

Even while part-time faculty were struggling to migrate courses online, craft quality classes for their students, and remain responsive to students' needs, they were receiving messages about the tenuousness of their positions. While the difference between full-time and part-time faculty is hardly surprising, the fact that part-time faculty are far more worried about job loss than staff emphasizes not only the privileged position of faculty who have (or are on track to have) tenure but also the potential power of unionized labor among staff as well. Still, while on union contracts, staff do not have the same job protections as tenured faculty and report greater fears about losing their jobs.

Figure 3
Economic concerns by job status

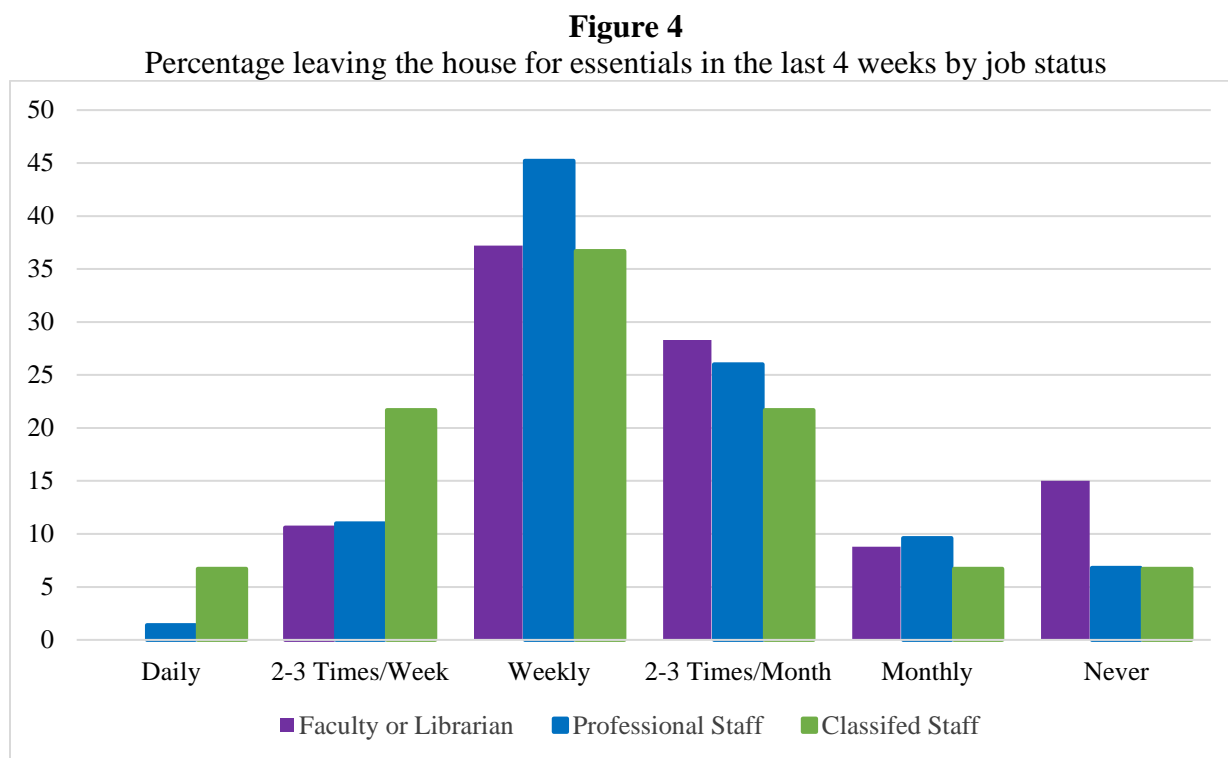


Lastly, with relation to job status, it is important to note that while faculty (both full-time and part-time) were not considered essential and worked from home, some staff and librarians were considered essential and, thus, were not able to remain at home every day. As we discussed above, because the virus was so present in our respondents' experience, it likely impacted how they responded to news as well as precautions they took against the virus. For example, classified staff were more likely to leave their homes daily or 2-3 times per week to shop for essentials (such as grocery shopping) than professional staff or faculty and librarians. In fact, none of the faculty and librarians responded that they left the house daily and only 10 percent left more than weekly, while nearly 30 percent of classified staff left the house more than weekly (see Figure 4). It is likely that these classified staff members were leaving the house more regularly for work and were then more comfortable or resigned to leaving the house or shopping for essentials while out.

For staff who had to go to campus, there were limitations on how much control they had to ensure proper public-health procedure. Upon leaving home, faculty and librarians were likely to interact with fewer people than staff. Almost 28% of staff came within six feet of three or more

people when they left the house compared to about 14% of faculty. So even though staff reported greater adherence to masking, they were not able to physical distance to the same degree as faculty. Lohm et al. (2015) write that people appreciate virus protection measures because they provide a sense of security against the uncertainties of risk. Masking may be one way that staff felt they were able to protect themselves.

Stress levels varied based on people’s job status and role as our campus shut down and many people stayed home while others could not, a choice made by administrators. One staff member



wrote, “As an essential employee I don’t believe my health or my loved ones at home has been valued by management,” and another said, “Lack of communication and consideration of staff safety (requiring reopening or pushing being back on campus too soon) has been a greater stress than getting sick.” While part-time faculty were much more worried about losing their jobs, staff were more likely to be facing difficult choices in coming to work—coming into contact with more people and having to leave the house more often. Though staff and part-time faculty experienced stress, fear, and anxiety about the virus, their experiences differed based on their job status with part-time faculty being most job-insecure but with essential staff the most unable to ensure a safe environment for themselves.

Gender and parenting

Among various differences reported by our respondents, our data show that women report greater worry and concern with what we call “global” or “societal” issues—those things that impact people beyond the individual or household. Women reported greater levels of concern than men about high levels of death and suffering as a result of COVID-19, health system overload, an unknown end to the pandemic, and a lack of recovery in the United States. While

the differences are not extreme, they do point to an interesting synchronicity with gendered norms and expectations namely, that women are more empathetic and “others-focused” than men are. These gendered expectations are well-known, and it has even been suggested that women-led countries have fared better during the pandemic because of women’s “empathic” leadership (Taub 2020).

Despite, or perhaps because of, traditional gender roles, our overall findings show that women experienced less stress being home than men (2.09 to 2.32; $p < .10$), were less likely to feel that they were alone too much (1.86 to 2.09; $p < .10$), and more likely to agree that extending stay at home orders would be okay (3.22 to 2.95; $p < .05$). However, these general differences do not account for the different impact that stay-at-home orders had on parents.

As parents were beginning to work remotely, their school-age children were beginning to learn remotely. And parents who, heretofore, had childcare, found themselves caring for young children while trying to work at the same time. This meant an abundance of togetherness and a sometimes-difficult transition to a vastly new work-life balancing act. Research suggests that though men participate in childcare more than in the past, women still do the yeoman’s share of childcare and housework in most heterosexual partnerships (Bianchi et al. 2000; Bianchi et al. 2012; Fetterolf and Rudman 2014; Hook 2017) and the pandemic has likely exacerbated that reality. As a staff member wrote:

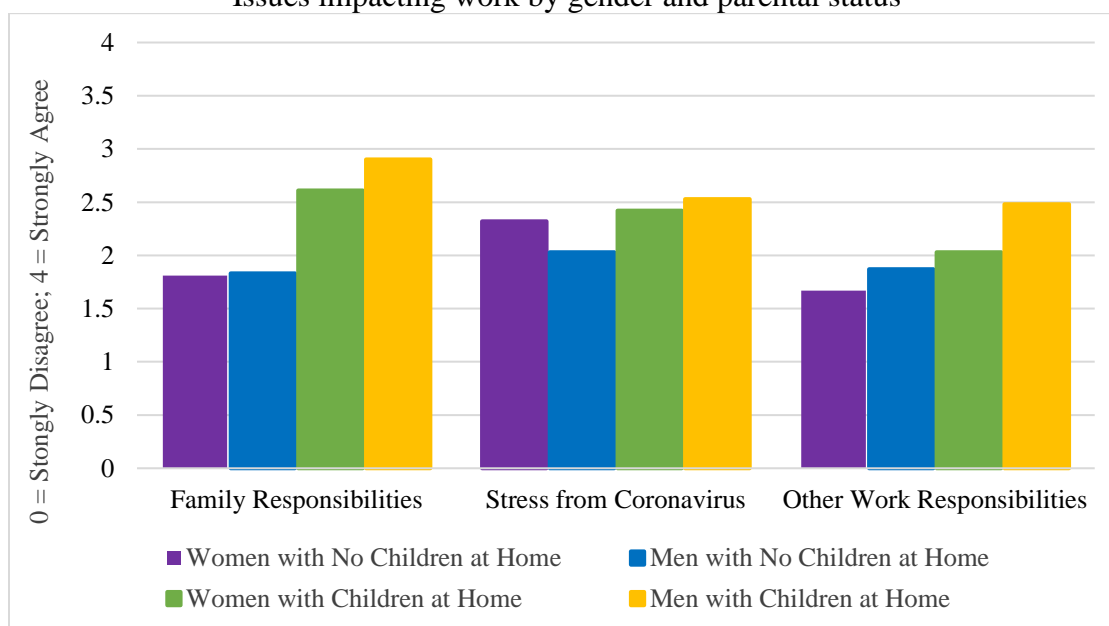
I’m either neglecting my children or neglecting my work. I feel tremendous guilt on both sides and am very concerned at the emotional effects this is having on my children... Even though my husband and I both are working full time from home, I’m bearing the brunt of caring for the kids which results in my putting in less work hours... my work gets pushed to the side more. I try to work late at night but much of my job is supposed to be student facing during the day so I conduct those virtual appointments but then the rest of my work (projects, etc.) gets pushed back and I feel behind. This feels impossible.

Much of the parenting narrative suggests that working at home while raising and teaching children has been particularly detrimental for women (Cohen and Hsu 2020; Frederickson 2020; Lewis 2020; North 2020; Perelman 2020), and while we do not dispute this, our data show a parallel story. Separating respondents by parental status, there are significant differences between individuals with children at home and those without. Unsurprisingly, parents with children at home expressed more difficulty getting work done because of family responsibilities (2.70 to 1.83; $p < .001$) and other work (2.17 to 1.76; $p < .001$) but no significant difference between the stress of the coronavirus on completing one’s work (2.47 to 2.29; n.s.), underscoring the impact of parenting on one’s work-life (see Figure 5). These responses indicate that men *and* women with children at home felt that family responsibilities, general stress, and other work all negatively impacted their university work far more than men and women without children at home. Since care and family responsibilities go beyond childcare, we did ask about other types of care, specifically elder care, but few people reported elder care responsibilities (9.8%). Therefore, we focus on the issue of childcare which was predominant for respondents.

Interestingly, family responsibilities and other household labor created more difficulties for men, indicating again that women’s everyday “invisible labor” aided women’s transition into the

pandemic lockdown while, for men, who don't see that labor or shoulder that burden, the transition was more dramatic. There were no gender differences in ability to get work done for those individuals without children at home but we find that men were slightly more likely to respond that they had trouble completing their university work due to stress from the coronavirus (2.53 to 2.42; n.s.) and family responsibilities (2.90 to 2.61; n.s.). As one faculty member said, "Working from home for full-time job makes focusing on teaching from home difficult. The

Figure 5
Issues impacting work by gender and parental status



noise level between my wife, kids, [elderly family member], and pets while I'm working makes performing essential tasks infuriating." Most curious, however, is "other work" where men with children at home expressed more difficulty completing their university work than women because of other responsibilities (2.48 to 2.03; $p < .05$). We cannot say conclusively what "other work" is but suspect that it may indicate housework, childcare, or household chores, given that most of those answering our survey are full-time employees of the university. We surmise that though women likely found themselves doing even more household labor and childcare than normal, they are also more accustomed to this imbalance in gendered work and, thus, possibly experienced less of an initial shock than men did. We are curious to explore these issues in interviews, learning how parenting roles and stresses have or have not changed.

Summary and future research

These preliminary findings cover some of the most interesting information gleaned from our survey of faculty, librarians, and staff at the height of the first wave of coronavirus in Massachusetts. And while much of what we've discussed here is not surprising—many of our respondents know someone who had coronavirus; faculty and staff experience job security differently and part-time faculty are the most job insecure; women and men are balancing family and work in new ways but men report more stress as a result—it is important to note that inequalities in "normal times" seem to be exacerbated during this extraordinary time in our

history. Our survey data provides a sense of how faculty and staff were experiencing the move to remote work – where possible – and the inequalities in these experiences.

Because we used a simple convenience sample, our findings are not generalizable; that was not our goal, however. Going forward, we intend to use these results as a guide to conduct open-ended, in-depth interviews with respondents who offered to participate. Our interviews will allow us to get a more nuanced perspective of different people's situations such as job experience, parental status, stresses related to taking care of (or not being able to see) elderly relatives, social identities, and those without social supports at home during the pandemic. As Anwer (2020) argues in this issue, work-life concerns of "non-normative academics – single women and mothers, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and international scholars, queer and trans professors" were likely "always-already-skewed" and should be acknowledged and addressed by university administrators. Our interviews will tease out the experiences of these academics and the inconsistencies and speculations we raised here by getting a deeper sense of how individuals are handling work and life during the pandemic. We are curious to find out whether people's recollections of their anxieties differ from our data, given the passage of time. Because while we in Massachusetts have made it through our surge, it is clear to us that many faculty and staff did not feel like "We got this!" during the surge and we believe those voices can help us better understand inequalities and social realities, not just during a pandemic, but when we are finally past it as well.

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Contemplating Course Comments, COVID-19 Crisis Communication Challenges, and Considerations – Change vs Color?

Marie Allsopp*
Purdue University

On March 10, 2020, when President Mitch Daniels announced that all faculty would be asked to move their classes online to resume the semester virtually after Spring Break in the wake of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) global pandemic (Purdue University – Newsroom 2020), I am sure that many faculty (myself included) did not quite know what to expect. Nevertheless, in a short period, the COVID-19 pandemic flipped institutions of higher education upside down (Lederman 2020). Scientists hypothesize that disparities related to inequity, job security, work functions (i.e., teaching, research, and service) will also affect women, particularly those from racial and ethnic minorities disproportionately in the wake of COVID-19 (Malisch et al. 2020). I believe that the lingering effects of the virus, in the absence of a vaccine, could have far-reaching consequences for part-time and non-tenure track faculty of color.

One silver lining in this global crisis is that a number of tertiary institutions permitted faculty to opt out of collecting student ratings of their teaching for the winter and spring terms (Lederman 2020). Other institutions of higher education planned to collect evaluations during the pandemic but did not use them in assessing faculty performance (Lederman 2020).

In this article, I provide a thematic analysis of students' evaluation comments for the two courses, Physiology And Nutrition During The Life Cycle (NUTR 365) and Communication Techniques In Foods And Nutrition (NUTR 424) that I taught in spring 2020 (see Appendix A for course descriptions), when the university suddenly switched to online teaching. My analysis considers the gender and racial biases in the comments, and the ways in which these experiences might point to long-term consequences for teaching evaluations of underrepresented minority (URM) faculty. Overall, my paper makes an important argument and contribution to the literature on ways in which teaching is understood in crises and how biases continue or are amplified. I also provide numerous examples from students' course evaluation comments to support five themes pertaining to communication challenges that I faced.

An Overview of Past Scholarship

The academy has its work cut out with respect to making strides toward achieving racial and gender equity (Huston 2006). While diversifying faculty in higher education has long been sought after across many college campuses, and even more so now in the midst of the national

* **Corresponding Author:** Marie Allsopp, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Nutrition Science, 700 W. State Street, Stone Hall, G1-J, West Lafayette, IN 47907. Email: mallsopp@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Allsopp, Marie. 2020. "Contemplating Course Comments, COVID-19 Crisis Communication Challenges, and Considerations – Change vs Color?" *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 29-46.

Acknowledgements: The author would like to thank Dr. Mangala Subramaniam and two anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments.

racial climate (Flaherty 2016), yet the growing diversification has primarily occurred in part-time and non-tenure track positions, which tend to lack stability (Finkelstein, Conley, and Schuster 2016). Ironically, this demographic shift in higher education has been accompanied by a decrease of tenure-track positions, which has further hampered diversity efforts higher up the academe career ladder, especially for minority women faculty (Finkelstein et al. 2016). Moreover, Pratt-Clarke (2020) contends that the way in which Americans are “socialized” to observe race and gender contributes to the “precariousness” and “tenuousness” of the academic pathways of faculty of color (Pratt-Clarke 2020).

Our skin color as black and brown people distinguishes us. We show up as color in the often predominantly White spaces of the academy. We stand out. We feel it. We enter spaces in classrooms, labs, ...conferences, meetings, and we instantly are made to feel that we do not belong. We enter these departments as...faculty, as staff, as employees, with our Blackness and Brownness, and especially our womanness, or dreadlockness, and we feel it. It is a feeling that we have been conditioned and socialized to recognize (Pratt-Clarke 2020).

Upon examination of the progress made by women and underrepresented minorities in the academy, it is evident that inequity and bias co-exist as persistent impediments to progress (Huston 2006). According to Subramaniam (2018) female faculty of color are often expected to conform to standards of “niceness” imposed through the lens of colorism and gendered stereotypes. Subramaniam (2018) has hypothesized the following.

Women of color, irrespective of professorial rank, who are serious about their work and accomplishments are more likely to be described as aggressive and/or angry than other women and men (2018:9).

Therefore, I think it is appropriate that Pratt-Clarke (2020) believes that “when people of color, and women of color... get promoted, become tenured and also full professors, and become leaders, and deans, and presidents” they are miraculous events worthy of celebration. One of the areas where bias and inequity rear their ugly head is in relation to the use of student evaluations of teaching to evaluate faculty, because they are sources of hidden biases for female members of faculty in male-dominated fields, and for all minority members of faculty (Huston 2006). A recent study found that “common uses for student evaluations of teaching can easily produce many unfair outcomes when those evaluations are extremely reliable, unbiased against any group, and moderately correlated with true faculty quality” (Esarey and Valdes 2020:11). Although they are dreaded and resented by many in the academy, student evaluations do not appear to be going away (Patton 2015). Despite the measured, multi-dimensional approach to assessing faculty teaching as recommended by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP 2015), student evaluations continue to play a critical role in crucial decisions concerning promotion and tenure of faculty (Hornstein 2017).

My Path to the Academy, Position, and Philosophy of Teaching

Before I detail my experiences of spring 2020, I will elaborate on how I arrived at this point. My journey as a woman of color to the academy began roughly a decade ago, when after working as a registered dietitian in clinical, community, and customer service settings in the South, I began

teaching an introductory nutrition course as an adjunct instructor at a community college. While in that role, after teaching part time for a couple of years, I felt called to earn a doctoral degree to transition into full-time academia. Having been moved by the health disparities and food access issues I observed in my own clients, I evaluated efforts to improve access to locally grown produce in food insecure populations throughout the state of New York as part of my dissertation research. After completing my doctorate, I worked in academic institutions in Mississippi and Ohio where I pursued pedagogical practices to increase undergraduate student engagement. I have received recognition professionally both as a practitioner and (assistant) professor for dedication and devotion to my clients and students, respectively.

I am a Clinical Assistant Professor at Purdue University in the Department of Nutrition Science, where I am currently the only Black faculty member. I teach four undergraduate Nutrition Science courses and I have occupied the position since January of 2019. My line of scholarship of teaching and learning includes using multi-media to engage students, collaborative learning, service learning, and flipped classrooms. In the fall of 2019, I was a fellow of Instruction Matters: Purdue Academic Course Transformation, which was a *Chronicle of Higher Education* 2018 Innovator for promoting classroom culture change. My philosophy is to bring fun and excitement, as well as emotional responses into the classroom. My goal is to teach effectively in a way that incorporates both inductive and deductive methods, while sharing real-life situations from my field experience. Hence, I endeavor to make learning fun and exciting for students by involving them in auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning activities.

Thematic Analysis

I used the thematic analysis approach to analyze students' comments provided as part of course evaluation (anonymously) for NUTR 365 and NUTR 424 that I taught in spring 2020, when the university suddenly shifted to online teaching. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (2006:79). This technique also defines and categorizes data sets meticulously (Braun and Clarke 2006).

NUTR 365 is a content-rich, required core course offered in the third year of study in the spring semester for certain baccalaureate programs in the Department of Nutrition Science.

NUTR 365 has significant course requirements, which increase throughout the duration of the semester. In spring 2020, there were 69 students enrolled. NUTR 424 is a required core course offered in the fourth year of study in the fall or spring semester for certain baccalaureate programs in the Department of Nutrition Science. NUTR 424 has had a long history of being a labor-intensive course, as it entails two three-hour labs and one hour of lecture. It has had instructor turnover in recent years and has anecdotally been considered as a difficult course to teach and a demanding course to take. In spring 2020, NUTR 424 had 29 students enrolled.

I selected two open-ended questions as suggested for the spring 2020-course evaluations because of adjustments made due to COVID-19 (Office of the Provost, Purdue University 2020) for investigation.

Q2: Make a suggestion(s) for improving the course (a criticism alone is not helpful; tell your instructor how you would fix any problem).

Q3: Given the unexpected change to remote instruction necessitated by the pandemic, what guidance can you offer to your instructor about the manner in which they delivered the rest of the course? Which aspects of remote instruction worked well, and which could be improved?

While students were prompted to reflect specifically on a given course prior to the suspension of in-person instruction (Office of the Provost, Purdue University 2020), I elected to include question two because the wide-scale disruption triggered by the pandemic would likely influence students' views of the first half of the semester, and to account for any overlapping student responses. I received response rates of 69.57% and 93.10% for NUTR 365 and NUTR 424 course evaluations, respectively. Purdue's Human Research Protection Program IRB-2020-972 confirmed it is exempt from IRB review.

The five themes that emerged from my analysis are prohibitive pandemic email policies, taskmaster persona, social media insensitivity, and controlling and hostile behavior toward students.

Prohibitive Pandemic Email Policies

Scholarship suggests that compassion should be a foundational aspect of teaching and needs to be at the center of the teacher-student relationship (White 2017). While I believe that all faculty should embrace compassionate pedagogy, I argue that compassionate pedagogy needs to go both ways. This is especially critical, as undergraduate students have tended to err on the side of having impractical expectations of their instructors regarding must-have qualities, such as responding promptly which can make them dissatisfied with courses (Trammell and Aldrich 2016).

One week into the transition to remote learning I was so overwhelmed by the sheer volume of emails inundating my inbox that I found it difficult to respond in a timely fashion to students in my NUTR 365 (N=69) course. I was relieved when one of my TAs agreed to assume responsibility for responding to student emails by the end of the first week of remote learning. Subsequently, the TA sent out an announcement via Blackboard on March 27, 2020, diplomatically asking students (per my request) to use her as the contact person moving forward, while providing the rationale for doing so. Little did I know that my decision to delegate that task would lead to me receiving such disparaging feedback and I was therefore surprised to read the following comments.

We were banned from emailing the professor after the online switch. We were banned from emailing the second TA as well. I did email her once to give Sam a break, and I got a response from DR Allsopp instructing me not to email that TA again.

This professor told us to stop sending her emails and to send them to the TAs instead. That made me, personally, feel like I was a valued member of the class. This made me feel as if I could not rely on Dr. Allsopp. There was also a lot of misinformation that was given during this time about assignments and the correct answers to questions which made this class very confusing during these trying times.

One thing that could be improved is communication. Communication was cut by two-thirds, only allowing us to email one person during the online period.

Don't ban us from emailing the professor or a TA?

My reaction to reading these comments is that students intentionally used the word “ban” to portray me in a harsh manner because of negative connotations associated with that word. The Oxford American Dictionary defines ban as to “officially forbid something or prevent someone from doing something” (Lindberg and Zimmer 2008:55). Neither my TA nor I ever used that kind of language. Moreover, my decision to have one TA handle emails was justified as the other TA was new to the role and the students were well aware of that. The fact that I modified course practices in the middle of a crisis to manage my time more efficiently does not equate to me devaluing my students. Unfortunately, some of my students perceived my inability to be at their beck and call as a glaring deficiency. Jasmine Roberts writes the following...

Rather than demonstrating reciprocal grace, COVID-19 amplified some of my students' ...need to “mammy” me. Like the house slave figure romanticized in the White imagination, as a Black woman, I am expected to be unconditionally nurturing, understanding, hardworking, and mothering without an ounce of regard for my humanity or my emotional and mental health boundaries (Roberts 2020).

According to the Oxford American Dictionary a “mammy” is an offensive term for a “black nursemaid or nanny in charge of white children” previously in the South (Lindberg and Zimmer 2008:497). African American female faculty at predominantly white universities have metaphorically been referred to as “the maids of academe” because they have been viewed as having less privilege than their contemporaries who are not from underrepresented minorities (Harley 2008).

Taskmaster Persona

In order to address the issues of increased rates of failure and lower the number of students dropping out of universities, institutions have developed approaches to track online student engagement through measurable activities (Dyment, Stone, and Milthorpe 2020). However, Dyment, Stone, and Milthorpe (2020) have found that these measures may be met with student resistance.

The risk is that these are perceived by students as arbitrary and alienating ‘busy work,’ deployed more for their effectiveness as surveillance than as authentic means towards engagement with course materials or learning. (Dyment et al. 2020:12).

This kind of student resistance may have also been explained in part by academic entitlement, referred to as “expectations of high grades for modest effort and demanding attitudes toward teachers” (Greenberger et al. 2008:1193). At the foundation of one of the defining characteristics of academic entitlement is “external locus of control”, which indicates that students do not see themselves as active participants in their learning (Sessoms, Finney, and Kopp 2016).

The first characteristic, external locus of control regarding academics, manifests in three beliefs: education should be delivered by instructors in a manner that requires minimum effort on the part of the student, educators are responsible for structuring the learning process, and educators are primarily responsible for the student's academic failures (Sessoms et al. 2016:243).

Teaching for me is a calling and something I am very passionate about, therefore in transitioning to remote learning I made sure that my students would not be shortchanged. I wanted to communicate to them that I cared enough to make every effort to give them a high-quality virtual experience. With that said, I fully embraced the compassionate pandemic pedagogical practices promoted by Purdue, which included flexibility with assignment deadlines and open-book tests. Furthermore, I provided additional extra-credit assignments that incorporated student reactions to COVID-19. However, my zeal to integrate COVID-19 content into coursework and provide students with an online experience comparable to their face-to-face experience backfired, as can be surmised from the following comments.

Reflections shouldn't have been made longer. It was said that this was done due to us having more time being online, but I think it added even more to our plate than we were doing in-person.

Lessen the workload. We may be in college, but we also have 4-5 other classes to worry about. I would suggest that you lessen the workload on your students by including the lecture content in class. Making students watch 2 hours of lectures outside of class and then doing 3 hours during the week makes the 3 credit hour course seem like it should be 5.

...since moving to remote learning, i feel like there has been extra work put on us.

I personally found it challenging to complete the amount of work offered on top of my other courses.

I feel the professor thought that since we were online it meant she needed to add on more work. I don't think since we were put online that means we should have more work. We would have to watch four 20-40min lecture videos, and the lectures videos were supposed to be equivalent to 1 class. The professor also lengthened our weekly reflections just because we were online.

I did not appreciate that it seemed like Dr. Allsopp tried to make the course more challenging after the transition to online learning. The lecture videos were longer as were the reflections after the transition.

The course load felt even heavier than it was when classes were held on campus.

The pandemic was traumatic and created a new environment for everyone. She gave us more work to do to prove we were doing the work.

The pandemic severely impaired my ability to finish my semester. Professors should have lowered the workload. As an international student being separated from my family and stuck alone in campus...proved extremely difficult and impacted my mental health...

...when the class became an online platform, there was a significantly large amount of small tedious required tasks implemented into the course that required a lot of time to complete such as tweeting and referencing multiple accounts, along with also emailing those respective guest speakers...

I think that many of the participation activities assigned, following the online transition, were just busy work...

Remove busy work

Maybe have less “discussion” in an online class. This would have helped me more because I was busier doing other things...instead of logging onto blackboard or twitter to post something.

After course went remote, the one improvement I had was the challenge with keeping up with tweets and lectures.

I think in the future, it would be better to try to stick as close to in person format.there were so many random activities and participation activities added in for the online format.

We did not need more work during this time.

She has many menial tasks required of the students to prove their participation.

In hindsight, I probably could have decreased the workload, as it would have made life easier not just for my students but also for me. Based on the commentary, my goal to incorporate active-learning activities in an asynchronous online platform in NUTR 424 fell flat and was perceived as “busy work.” Additionally, my goal to integrate relevant COVID-19 content into reflections by lengthening them a bit in NUTR 365 also had the same outcome. This was in spite of the fact that in my estimation, the online lectures and activities would not have been more time consuming than the face-to-face format. It certainly did not help the situation that the course content in NUTR 365 naturally increased in the second half of the semester. The same can be said of NUTR 424, which has had a history of being a typically labor-intensive course not connected to the pandemic.

While I concede that I may have erred on the side of excess, rather than less, with regard to coursework, I was unable to locate any mention of the additional pandemic extra-credit opportunities I graciously provided to the students in both courses. I would be remiss however if I did not confess that I was also motivated to act accordingly from having a previous flipped course of mine at Purdue labeled as “lazy teaching.” I was also influenced in part by the intense

pressure I feel as a Black academic to work “twice as hard” in order to prove that I belong, in spite of my qualifications.

Having to go the extra mile in order to achieve success is not a new phenomenon for women faculty of color in the academy (Harley 2008). My experience in the academy and in teaching this spring 2020 appears to mirror the sentiments expressed in the following quote.

I regard working harder and pushing ourselves and students harder as a metaphor for our internal mastery— proving ourselves worthy in a system that defines us as “other.” Creating solidarity with one another provides a testament to our collective legitimacy within the academy (Gutiérrez y Muhs et al. 2012:261).

Therefore, predominantly white institutions would be well served to recognize that women faculty of color may be at higher risk for burnout and should take proactive steps to address potential problems.

Social Media Insensitivity

Regardless of privacy concerns, faculty believe that social media sites are beneficial in teaching (Moran, Seaman, and Tinti-Kane 2011). Social media can be influential in learning, teaching, and engaging in institutions of higher learning (Moody 2010). Furthermore, faculty have described that students have reacted positively to their use of Twitter in the classroom (Hull and Dodd 2015).

When I taught NUTR 424 for the first time in fall 2019, I implemented a Twitter account requirement to coincide with current course content and promote community building as well as active learning. The Social Media requirement was detailed in the NUTR 424 syllabus. I also included a consent statement regarding being photographed and having photographs shared on Twitter, which I asked students to complete at the start of the semester as part of the NUTR 424 syllabus contract.

We used #NUTR424 as the course hashtag. Based on the fall 2019 feedback, students seemed to enjoy using Twitter and therefore I had no reason to anticipate issues in the spring 2020 semester with continuing the social media requirement.

- Social Media Requirement – NUTR 424 Syllabus
 - “An active Twitter account is required for NUTR 424. We will be using Twitter this semester with #NUTR424 and #Purdue on every course-related tweet. I expect each of you to follow me @Marie_RD_CHES on Twitter for class participation.”

In the spring 2020 semester, all students consented to have their photographs shared on Twitter and I included that consent as part of the syllabus contract.

- Consent – NUTR 424 Syllabus Contract

- “As a student in this course I acknowledge that I have read the syllabus and agree to abide by guidelines and policies laid out in it. I consent to have my photos taken and posted via Social Media and other means.”

Much to my surprise, some students took issue with the use of Twitter in the course and this was amplified during the pandemic, as per the following comments.

Also having a tweet be more open as to what needs to be in it because tightly regulating and requiring certain hashtags or phrases for grading to what we put out on social media is not ok and against our rights. We did sign a waiver in the beginning of class however, if you didn't sign it you basically couldn't get a good grade in the class

The instructor also wanted students to use a hashtag, "#Covid19college" in our tweets for class. Myself and MANY other students found this hashtag insensitive and inappropriate, and did not use it in our tweets (while still using all the other hashtags the instructor required). Her response was to take away points for these participation assignments unless we used every hashtag she wanted us to. I believe if students are communicating to you that they do not find something appropriate, or do not want it associated with their own personal/professional social media accounts, an instructor should be more flexible and not punish students for trying to control how they present themselves on social media.

She asked us to tweet on Twitter using #covid19college after several students stated that they felt that it was insensitive and did not want it on their professional personal account. She did not reply to emails and told us we would not receive credit if we did not complete the "Twitter Assignments".

Several students expressed their concern to Dr. Allsopp about an inappropriate hashtag she made students use on twitter. She chose to respond to some students concerns by not really addressing the issue and also did not respond to other student that expressed their concerns. There were moments where I personally spoke with Dr. Allsopp about a concern and felt that she did not understand or care to really listen to my concerns. I felt that she really just made excuses and treated concerns as they were not important.

One hashtag was offensive and made me uncomfortable, I did not use it and emailed her about how I felt. She did not email me back.

I do not feel it is appropriate to ask students to post specific information on Twitter...

The “Covid19College” hashtag that students were opposed to using described efforts made by institutions of higher education to facilitate the transition to online learning at the beginning of the pandemic, therefore there was nothing overtly offensive about using it. My students’ objections would have carried more weight if I had insisted on them using #COVID19 in their tweets, but that was not the case. Further to that, I continued to use Twitter to foster a sense of community in the course after we shifted to remote learning. Therefore, I believe these comments negatively misrepresent my character. In addition, the hashtag only became an issue when I offered additional bonus points for a pandemic Twitter extra-credit assignment that I was

kind enough to offer to NUTR 424 students. When I saw that only a handful of students met the requirements for the bonus points, I sent out an announcement encouraging students to follow the instructions fully to benefit from the extra credit assignment. I did respond to the only email message I recall receiving about the hashtag, in which the student filed a lengthy complaint without expressing an ounce of gratitude for the opportunity to earn bonus points.

Inhumane Pandemic Response

Student complaints about my response to COVID-19 in relation to teaching is an issue that is particularly troubling to me. Consequently, the following quote by Roberts (2020) was a source of comfort in learning that my experience this spring 2020 was not unique.

I want to focus on the professors, like me, who made extraordinary efforts to ensure an inclusive and accommodating learning environment during this odd time, yet it never seems to be enough for some. It is those extra efforts from faculty that not only deserve to be respected, acknowledged and seen, but also met with grace when we don't always meet the mark (Roberts 2020).

As a faculty member who was genuinely concerned about my students' welfare, I took great lengths to record an online welcome video for each course at the onset of the transition to online learning. In each video I specifically said, "Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any concerns." Additionally, that was the first of three videos I recorded, with the second being a check-in video with instructions to earn extra credit, and the third which was a farewell video to thank students for their participation and wish them well. On top of that, I sacrificed part of my Spring Break to binge record video lectures for NUTR 365 in the Video Express rooms at Purdue, to ensure that they would be accessible with closed captions in the event of a shutdown, which later took place. Despite my efforts, the students' comments, as shown below, are about my lack of concern.

Considering the challenging circumstances, it would have been nice if Dr. Allsopp had been more understanding that the situation was difficult for the students as well as the instructors.

This instructor had absolutely no regard for the unforeseen circumstances and showed no concern for students during this pandemic.

This professor delivered to the rest of the course as if the pandemic did not happen... It was unrealistic the way she wanted to complete the course and it made things very awkward and uncomfortable for the guest speakers and ourselves.

Due to everything taking longer to complete with the transformation on the online class platform along with the addition of multiple tasks, I do not believe the instructor was very cognizant of this and was not very helpful in the transition from in-person classroom to remote instruction. In the future, the instructor should try to decrease or refrain from adding small tasks that are very tedious and require the whole day to complete.

I also disliked that an assignment was removed from the syllabus when classes switched to online, then was added back two days before it was due. I think this is very unfair, and while the syllabus does say it is subject to change, re-adding an assignment two days before it is due is stressful to students.

Again, my attempts to provide an exceptional online experience for students were not perceived as such. While I did receive and respond to feedback in NUTR 424 about the workload, I did not receive any feedback from students in NUTR 365. Therefore, this was yet another example of miscommunication. With regard to including an assignment that had been removed in the updated remote learning syllabus, I understand the student's concerns, but once more that student could have relayed those concerns to me and/or the TA for NUTR 424. That additional assignment was somewhat beyond my control as it came at the request of a guest lecturer, a "guru" in nutrition communication. This is an additional instance in which my efforts to provide a high-quality, interactive virtual learning experience for students was not valued as such.

Controlling and Hostile Behavior toward Students

As a scholar and teacher, I strongly believe that my pedagogy should stem from evidence-based practice. Consequently, I use scholarship of teaching and learning literature to inform my class policies on multitasking, notetaking, and participation in active learning. Even with communicating that to my students, they remained unreceptive to change. This however should not be surprising, because as Rodriguez (2009) states, the authority of female faculty of color is typically questioned before they even set foot into classrooms with predominantly white students. It has also been reported that since students do not normally see Black people in positions of power, particularly Black women, this may result in them being skeptical about Black women's leadership and academic abilities (Harlow 2003). Students' level of distrust of Black women faculty increases if those professors have a youthful appearance (Harlow 2003) as is the case with me.

The students' rhetoric in the following course evaluation comments could also be explained by two characteristics of academic entitlement. Students who are academically entitled believe that they have the right to influence course policies and view themselves as consumers who expect good customer service in order to be satisfied with educational products (Sessoms et al. 2016).

I don't think we needed to spend soooo much time lecturing, and on top of that we weren't allowed to use phones or laptops. I understand it can be disrespectful, but we generally spent nearly 5-7 hours on lecture some weeks and it was really hard not to get distracted. Also, I'm paying a lot of money to go this school, it's my decision if I want to take 5 minutes every once in a while to take a mental break and look through my phone.

I did not like the method of note-taking that was, essentially, forced upon us for this class. As a senior, I know what style of note-taking works best for me. I would recommend allowing students to take notes the way that works for them – even if this means allowing students to use their laptops.

I also do not agree with regulating how we take notes during the class. For me, I felt as though I had no control over how I should take notes.

Marie Allsopp has specific expectation and expects everyone to complete tasks and projects exactly the way she wants. She wants to be in control of the products. She micromanages the students and treats them like they are younger with strict rules. She has a no electronic policy, which she publicly singled people out for violations. She tries to incorporate the class tactics, but makes things awkward. Her emails come off as passive aggressive and matter of fact. She has complained that students are biased against her race which is why she gets negative reviews. This was even more off putting and made me uncomfortable around her.

I often felt as though Dr. Allsopp tried to micromanage students. It was patronizing and frustrating being treated as though I could not be held responsible for my own learning. I think the instructor needs to realize that she cannot control how her students behave in class when it comes to paying attention, and all the steps she took to avoid us being distracted only built resentment in students.

Listen to students more often. There were several times during the semester where myself and other students contacted this instructor and got a you-get-what-you-get styled answer. It really discourages learning.

I do not feel Dr. Allsopp enforced policies that are appropriate for upperclassmen in college. As a student who learns best when I type my notes, I did not appreciate the fact that laptops and cell phones were not to be used and participation points would be deducted if they were. I don't think it is a fair policy, especially when Dr. Allsopp proceeded to use her electronic devices throughout most guest speaker lectures.

Threaten us with points if we were not watching the whole video the entire time, because she was tracking involvement. Required us to use Twitter and threaten to not give us participation for not using her specific hashtags.

The instructor also sent multiple "threats" that she would be monitoring our activity on Blackboard, and became more strict when the switch was made. This is the opposite of what the instructor should have done. The pandemic is a stressful time... and is not the time to become more strict with higher expectations for students, as instructors have no idea what students are going through during this time.

My NUTR 424 syllabus policy pertaining to participation states, "As a part of class participation, I will be asking you to submit photos of your handwritten/electronic notes from class sessions." Furthermore, my NUTR 424 syllabus states that "I will deduct two point five (2.5) points per each offense if you do not silence your cell phone and cause a disruption in class (for a non-emergency related call) and/or for unauthorized use of computer i.e. laptops for non-class related activity) or other electronic devices during class."

These policies are supported by literature that discuss the detrimental effects (that is as a source of distraction) associated with cell phone use in class (Tindell and Bohlander 2012; Elder 2013). Additionally, taking notes with laptops leads to word for word copying of lecture material

without students being able to process it at a deeper level, as they would have to with traditional pen and paper notetaking (Mueller and Oppenheimer 2014).

While I accept the “guilty” charge of using my cell phone, I do not feel guilty because I was using my phone to take class photos and to conduct course-related Twitter activity. The student who wrote that comment was well aware of that because I notified the entire class, but nonetheless I am convinced that his/her sole motivation for doing so was to denigrate my character. The timing of #NUTR424 tweets can provide further proof of this. Additionally, after sitting through the guest lectures in the fall 2019 semester, I decided to utilize classroom time more productively to free up my evenings from course-related Twitter activity to engage in self-care.

In spite of the qualifications I possess, my students seem to resent the fact that I have the right to employ class policies I deem appropriate for learning and applying course content. I faced opposition even though the policies are supported by scholarly evidence and align with the course content concerning attributes (refraining from excessive electronic device use) that employers are seeking in the workplace. With respect to application of course content, engaging in active listening in a communication class is challenging if one is multi-tasking on a phone or laptop.

Their use of terms such as “passive aggressive”, “forced”, “micromanage”, “threats”, and “threaten” all carry significant undesirable connotations. Likewise, they serve to purposely portray me as an “angry Black woman” as I especially find the use of “threats” and “threaten” offensive. As Ashley (2013) writes the “angry Black woman” label likely evolved as a means for survival.

Many characteristics of the angry Black woman stereotype, including hostility, rage, aggressiveness, and bitterness may be reflective of survival skills developed by Black women in the face of social, economic, and political oppression (Ashley 2013:28).

The prevalence of the “angry Black woman” stereotype is problematic, affecting Black women’s self-confidence and how they are regarded by others (Morgan and Bennett 2006), which can be detrimental to the welfare of Black women in the academy by potentially interfering with their mental health (Williams 2001) and their overall success (Hughes et al. 2014), including promotion.

Concluding Thoughts

Many of my experiences this semester in the face-to-face environment have mirrored those of other faculty of color with regard to recognizing classrooms as cruel places and sources of pervasive “disregard and disrespect” (Pittman 2010), as well as racially motivated emotional harm (Mowatt 2019). Much of what I have detailed in this paper reflects those of other Black members of the academy, including racial differences in their evaluations of teaching effectiveness at predominately white institutions (Smith and Hawkins 2011), the ramifications of speaking about race in white spaces, and having behaviors assessed through “highly stereotypical lenses and racialized interpretations imposed on them” (Daniel 2019:28).

I would like to point out that in addition to the five themes that emerged this spring 2020, I was also labeled as not being articulate enough and smart enough to teach the two courses in question.

Dr. Allsopp, herself, seems uncomfortable with public speaking and lacks good communication.

I wonder if she could even pass this class.

During my short career at Purdue (even while employing more relaxed policies and less labor-intensive pedagogy), I have not been exempt from receiving harsh student evaluation comments (Allsopp 2020). However, this pandemic has placed my policies and pedagogy under a greater level of scrutiny and wrath. This phenomenon has been referred to as the magnification of the “mammification” of the roles of Black female faculty during the COVID-19 crisis, which existed prior to the pandemic (Roberts 2020). To quote the author of “The Angry Black Woman Scholar” I would like to pose a series of questions to which all the answers are “no”:

Am I being too sensitive?

Am I overreacting?

Am I misreading the situation? (Williams 2001:94-95)

According to the National Alliance for Inclusive and Diverse STEM Faculty, introducing questions to evaluations to ascertain what worked well in online classes, after the transition to remote learning, may increase the racial and gender bias of evaluations (Gonzalez and Griffin 2020). Although this might help to explain my recent experiences, I fully support the decision made by the Office of the Provost to include the question regarding remote instruction during the pandemic, because it provided insight into the mindset of students, which will be beneficial to tailoring teaching methodology as the COVID-19 pandemic continues into the foreseeable future. While it is helpful that my spring 2020-student evaluations will not count at Purdue, it does not discount the fact that the rhetoric in them was hurtful. Stereotyping on the part of students has been detrimental to me as an instructor and has taken an emotional toll on me. Therefore, writing this paper has been a type of catharsis for me. Looking ahead to the fall, I sincerely hope that students do not show similar abhorrence towards faculty of color, such as myself, but would be willing to comply with Protect Purdue classroom policies. I find this concerning, because even in fall 2020, with the “new normal” semester of pandemic teaching, COVID-19 will likely exacerbate unfavorable effects on teaching evaluations for faculty of color.

In closing, my efforts to improve and streamline communication during the pandemic, integrate pandemic-focused student experiences into the virtual classroom, deliver high-quality online teaching, and engage in evidence-based teaching pedagogy were received by several students in ways that made them question my authority and right to set class policies. Some of my students questioned new communication norms put in place to improve efficiency, misperceived course policies to promote continued dialogue and discussion remotely, misunderstood the amount of work, care, sacrifice, and effort I put into online teaching, and viewed my assignments as “busy work” rather than forms of pedagogy. Not only do these reveal student bias and academic

entitlement in undergraduate teaching, but also may impact faculty specifically with respect to teaching record and wellbeing.

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Appendix A

Course Descriptions

NUTR 36500 - Physiology And Nutrition During The Life Cycle. This course “explores the life stages of pregnancy, childhood, adulthood and older adulthood from physiological, social, and behavioral perspectives, focusing on the biological underpinnings of special nutritional needs for each life stage for optimal growth and development, maturation, aging, and overall health and well-being” (MyPurdue Self-Service 2020a).

NUTR 42400 - Communication Techniques In Foods And Nutrition. This course covers the “communication of foods and nutrition information to lay and professional audiences through oral, written, and mass media channels” (MyPurdue Self-Service 2020b).

Being an International Student in the Age of COVID-19

Jaya Bhojwani*

Eileen Joy

Abigail Hoxsey

Amanda Case

Purdue University

Over the past twelve years, there has been a consistent increase in international student attendance at U.S. postsecondary institutions, with approximately 6% (1.1 million) of all enrolled higher education students being international (Institute of International Education [IIE] 2020). The push to increase the number of international students is largely driven by administrators and government policy, as international students are known to significantly benefit their schools and domestic peers (International Association of Universities 2014). Specifically, faculty report that international students contribute to research, establish international ties, provide different perspectives, and create multicultural environments that benefit domestic students (Trice 2003). International students also provide a consistent source of revenue for their institutions, paying double or triple the tuition of in-state students in addition to room and board (Cantwell 2015) and additional fees (Lewin 2012). Despite the scholarly, cultural, and economic contributions international students make to their institutions, they are underserved in the best of times and unprotected in times of crisis (Cluett 2002; Rose-Redwood and Rose-Redwood 2017; Wu, Garza, and Guzman 2015). Our goal for this paper is to utilize quantitative and qualitative survey data to capture and elevate the voices and experiences of international students in the U.S. as they endure the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who Are International Students?

International students are incredibly diverse, representing over 229 countries and territories (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement [ICE] 2018), with the majority coming from China (369,548), India (202,014), South Korea (52,250), and Saudi Arabia in the 2018/2019 academic year (37,080; IIE 2020). Although the majority of international students pursue degrees at the graduate level and often in STEM or business fields, hundreds of thousands earn their undergraduate degree, and tens of thousands major in the social sciences, fine arts, education, or other fields (IIE 2020). Although their motivations for pursuing higher education at U.S. institutions are diverse, prestige of the institution, assistantships or financial assistance, and special education programs appear to influence international students' choices to study in the U.S.

* **Corresponding Author:** Jaya Bhojwani, College of Education, 100 N. University St., West Lafayette, IN 47907. Email: jbhjwan@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Bhojwani, Jaya, Eileen Joy, Abigail Hoxsey, and Amanda Case. 2020. "Being an International Student in the Age of COVID-19." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 47-60.

Acknowledgements: First and foremost, we want to thank every international student that participated in this study, and acknowledge the emotional labor they took on in sharing their challenges and experiences with us, even amidst a global health pandemic. We also want to thank Dr. Mangala Subramaniam as well as the two anonymous reviewers whose feedback helped improve this paper.

(Lee 2008). However, the process of entering the U.S. to study can be cumbersome and expensive.

The majority of international students hold a F-1 visa for completing full-time academic programs at any level of education, while others may hold a M-1 visa for completing vocational programs or a J-1 visa for participating in a visitor exchange program for full-time study in higher education (ICE 2018). Each visa has specific legal requirements and limitations. Those with F-1 and M-1 visas must provide proof of funding for their first year of study, whereas those with J-1 visas must provide proof of funding for their entire length of study, the majority of which must come from outside sponsorships (U.S. Department of Homeland Security 2020). After being accepted to a school and proving they can pay for their educations, international student visa holders typically must also pay a SEVIS fee for a visa interview appointment (\$220 to \$350), a visa application fee (\$160), and any SEVIS or international student administrative fees from their school (ICE 2020a; Purdue University 2020). Restrictions with these visas include needing to maintain a residence abroad while living in the U.S., limitations on employment and internship opportunities, and staying enrolled full time (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2020). However, this is not the only hurdle that international students face. In fact, although international students are clearly not a monolith, they nonetheless experience common barriers when studying at U.S. institutions, such as financial difficulties, lowered employment opportunities, and lack of culturally acceptable resources.

International Students Challenges

Research has shown that international students are consistently underserved by their U.S. higher education institutions (Wu et al. 2015; Rosser et al. 2007). Across campus, resources are tailored to serve domestic students, with little to no alternatives that may be more accessible or culturally acceptable for international students. For example, international students are less likely to access services through university counseling centers because those centers are designed for domestic students and do not provide services that are culturally acceptable to international students (Kim, Oh, and Mumbauer 2019). International students also describe feeling ignored, overlooked, or ostracized by professors and peers, which they attribute to the lack of cultural inclusivity in the structure of courses and extracurriculars (Wu et al. 2015). Because the majority of schools (75%) certified to host international students enroll less than 50 international students, individual schools may not feel pressured to meet the needs of these students (ICE 2018). Moreover, programs with the potential to support students, such as international student offices, function more like immigration gatekeepers (Rosser et al. 2007).

This lack of culturally acceptable resources for international students is especially problematic given the additional challenges and inequitable accommodations these students face. As a result of discrimination, difficulties adjusting to an unfamiliar country, and immigration concerns, international students may experience academic challenges, social isolation, low access to internships or employment, and financial difficulties (Choudaha and Schulmann 2014; Rose-Redwood and Rose-Redwood 2017; Wu et al. 2015). These concerns show that even at the best of times, international students are too often left to navigate U.S. higher education systems and immigration procedures on their own (Choudaha and Schulmann 2014).

International Students During Crises

In times of crisis, international students are often disproportionately impacted while simultaneously being forgotten by their institutions. For example, after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (9/11), Muslim, Middle Eastern, and South Asian international students faced discrimination and all international students faced uncertainty about their legal status within the country (Cluett 2002; Harvard Civil Rights Project 2003; Lee and Rice 2007; Owens 2002). Such uncertainties proved prescient as changes to visa-specific regulations and paperwork made it more difficult for foreigners to study in the U.S. after 9/11 (Rosser et al. 2007).

However, instead of serving as safe havens during times of heightened xenophobic rhetoric and policy, higher education institutions often replicate racist and ethnocentric policies and practices ranging from discriminatory academic restrictions to ostracization by peers (Yakaboski, Perez-Velez and Almutairi 2017).

In addition to failing to protect international students during crises, U.S. institutions have often used international students for economic prosperity or to further their multicultural standing. For example, following the 2008 global financial crisis, international student enrollment and recruitment, particularly from wealthier nations, increased as institutions took advantage of international student tuition to defray financial losses (Fischer 2019; Macrander 2017). Prior to this, Cold War U.S. policy increased international education to gather the best minds to improve U.S. scientific and economic progress while also promoting American ways of life globally (Bu 1999). However, many international students who were enrolled in U.S. higher education institutions during the Cold War failed to graduate due to insufficient academic and social support (Bu 1999).

Half a century later, another global crisis is illuminating how many of the aforementioned issues have not been rectified and how, in some ways, neglect of international student wellbeing has worsened. Since the 2016 U.S. election, international student populations have continued to rise (IIE 2019). However, the “America First” policies of the administration, including the “Muslim travel ban” (Rose-Redwood and Rose-Redwood 2017), travel restrictions since COVID-19, and the recent ICE decision regarding online enrollment restrictions have left international students with increased stress about their status and future in the country (Johnson 2018; Mitchell et al. 2017; Rose-Redwood and Rose-Redwood 2017). Despite this, it does not seem that U.S. higher education institutions have done much to support their international students. Rather, in a moment when international students are being uniquely targeted, institutions have again siphoned away the limited resources supporting these students and forgotten international students in responding to the crisis (Fernandez and Shaw 2020; Kelsay 2007; Mitroff, Diamond, and Alpaslan 2006).

Current Study

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, xenophobic “America First” policies (Anderson 2020) have likely created additional hurdles for international students studying in the U.S. However, the particular ways international students have been affected by the pandemic, and what could be done to best support those students, is still unclear. The purpose of the current study is to understand and explain the experiences of international students during this pandemic and give voice to their perspectives on how higher education institutions can better support them.

Methods

After obtaining IRB approval, the authors posted the survey link to social media groups focused on international student issues. This was done so that international student experiences from across the country could be captured without the involvement of their university officials in the study. In addition, the study was distributed via the Office Institutional Data and Analytics, Office of the Provost, to 300 international students at Purdue, selected at random, which yielded a low response rate ($N = 9$). Participants were solicited by posting a description of the study and a link to an online Qualtrics survey that was open from April 20-May 17, 2020 and no incentive was provided to complete the survey. The survey (Appendix A) consisted of open- and close-ended questions asking respondents about concerns they may have experienced during the pandemic as well as how the pandemic impacted them personally. Respondents were asked to share the kinds of support they received from their university versus what they needed from their university. Finally, students were asked to rate how anxious they felt about some of the common worries international students may experience as a result of the pandemic.

Participants

Participants included 120 international students enrolled in either graduate (45%) or undergraduate (55%) programs at U.S. institutions across the country. The undergraduates were distributed fairly equally across years, with 12.5% identifying as first years, 15.0% as sophomores, 10.8% as juniors, and 16.7% as seniors. Nearly two-thirds (63.3%) of participants self-identified as women and 36.7% as men. The home countries of the majority of respondents were located in Asia (46.7%), followed by countries in Europe (14.2%), Africa (11.7%), the Middle Eastern Region (10%), Central America and the Caribbean (10%), South America (5.8%), and North America (1.7%). Racially, 45% self-identified as Asian (45%), with the remainder self-identifying as White (16.7%), Hispanic (12.5%), Black (11.7%), Middle Eastern (9.2%), or Biracial (5%). Participants were overwhelmingly F-1 visa holders (95%), with the remainder stating they were on J-1 (0.8%) or some other form of visa (4.2%).

Analysis

We ran basic descriptive statistics using the survey data. The open ended responses were analyzed by a team of four researchers – one faculty member and three doctoral students – using a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). To begin, all four researchers independently read and identified themes in 20 randomly selected open-ended responses. The team discussed these themes and developed an initial coding scheme. Each researcher independently tested this initial coding scheme on responses from ten additional respondents, and then discussed and finalized the coding criteria and definitions. The final coding scheme was used to analyze all open ended responses, with two researchers analyzing each participant's data independently and then comparing and arriving at a consensus.

Results

Results revealed the respondents had a significant number and variety of concerns related to the pandemic. In addition to expressing “moderate” to “extreme” concern about a range of anticipated topics (see Table 1), respondents also identified additional, unanticipated concerns such as uncertainties about traveling home, worries about the COVID-19 situation in their home countries, feelings of “isolation” and “loneliness,” and a general sentiment of being forgotten by university and government officials. In addition, students also articulated the interconnectedness

between all of these concerns resulting in a sense of “uncertainty” that impacted their mental health and compromised their productivity, motivation, and academic performance.

Table 1
Numbers and Proportions of Respondents Rating Concerns as
"Moderately" to "Extremely" Worrying

Concern	Number of Endorsements	Proportion of Respondents
Future job	67	55.9%
Current income	64	53.3%
Health insurance	49	40.8%
Discrimination and racism	38	31.7%
Processing OPT application	37	30.8%
Housing	35	29.2%
Visa/passport expiration	35	29.1%
Food security	24	20.0%

Concerns About Finances

In their responses, participants made it clear that being an international student in the U.S. during the coronavirus pandemic has left them with significant financial concerns that hold calamitous consequences. For example, as one student described,

I rely on my [on campus job] to pay my bills since my parents cannot afford to help me out. Even though I can stay on campus I don't have much money left. I don't know how I will afford to pay my future bills such as my health insurance, my textbooks, and saving up to pay for my OPT bills (male undergraduate student from Libya).

For this student and many others, their financial situation during COVID-19 was closely tied to their positions on campus and their visa status. As another student explained, “international students have a uniquely hard time of not being legally allowed to apply for [off-campus] jobs even if we [are] desperate for financial support” (female graduate student from Singapore). This often means that international students are “depending on [their] campus job for money, but now that the campus is closed, [they] don't have that income” (male undergraduate student from El Salvador).

For international and domestic students alike, the loss of on-campus jobs due to campus closures can be devastating. However, because international students cannot work elsewhere for money as a result of visa restrictions, some have been left without the ability to support themselves, leaving them with significant financial struggles. One student shared: “I am severely struggling from economic hardship. I haven't been able to pay rent, college tuition, and am living on food aid given by a local organization” (female undergraduate from Nepal). However, international students are not only worrying about their own financial situations. As one graduate student explained, “I also usually send some of my assistantship money home to support my family, but

my university cut my assistantship for the summer and I am left without [that] extra money” (female graduate student from South Africa).

Concerns About Future Employment

In addition to facing current financial concerns, many participants described fearing future financial instability as a result of being unemployed after graduation. As one student explained,

It is also important to remember that jobs...had already become increasingly difficult for international students to find...largely due to the fear that many U.S. employers have with the thought of having to sponsor an employee in the future. With a pandemic, the job search process has only become harder (female graduate student from Singapore).

Another student echoed this idea, stating:

I am a graduating senior and I don't have a job lined up post grad. There are already few job positions available for my major and now I feel as though there are even fewer positions. I am worried I need to go back home after graduation because I won't be able to find a job (male undergraduate student from Israel).

These participants articulated how the challenges due to COVID-19 uniquely intersected with the challenges they already faced as international students. In particular, as a result of historic, newly implemented, and anticipated immigration policies and travel restrictions, international students are facing uncertainty about their finances, job prospects, and futures in the U.S.

Concerns About Housing

Another theme that emerged from the data was the displacement and uncertainty about housing which international students have experienced since COVID-19. While some students were allowed to stay on campus throughout the summer “for a fee,” others described feeling “worried” about where they would live because their “universities had not given any direction” to them as to whether or not living on campus would be possible during the summer and the following fall semester. Yet others described having immediate and current housing insecurity after their universities shut down, forcing them to move in with their friends, families, or into temporary housing off campus, sometimes in different states. As one student shared:

My campus closed right away when the pandemic was starting up, and I went to my friend's place to stay...now I have been here for so long ... and I don't even know if our campus will have classes in the fall (male graduate student from Palestine).

Another student shared his experience of moving into an Airbnb: “My campus is closed and I'm living in an Airbnb because I didn't know where else to go. I may have to move in with the family of one of my friends in the city” (male undergraduate student from Turkey). Here we see that international students are not only facing immediate housing insecurity, but future housing insecurity as well.

Concerns About Healthcare Access and Needs

An additional concern the participants spoke about was healthcare access. International students are often required to get health insurance through their universities, and they describe it as being “expensive” with very few benefits. As such, students in the study described being afraid of “getting sick,” which would require them to “navigat[e] a complex healthcare system which might not prioritize them” (female undergraduate student from India) and pay “fees [that] are so expensive [that] many [international students] cannot afford” (female undergraduate student from Zimbabwe).

Particularly concerning for the participants in the study was the lack of available mental health care due to insurance limitations and university closures. For example, one student stated, “from what I have observed, mental health services are very limited to those on campus and [the university is] not addressing [those concerns] fully” (female undergraduate student from Ukraine). This is especially alarming given so many of the participants described how their interconnected financial stressors, housing instability, and uncertainty about the future caused significant “mental health concerns” and feelings of “isolation,” “loneliness” and as if they have been “othered.” For example, one participant stated,

I think people don’t understand the *isolating* experience of being an international student. We have no support in this country, and it feels like no one really cares about us. Even though my professors are supportive, they don’t understand my experiences (female undergraduate student from Morocco).

Another student emphasized this idea, sharing: “there is also a greater feeling of helplessness and other-ness because we have no voice in any legislative or political decisions being taken to combat this crisis here in the US” (female graduate student from India).

As a result of these experiences of otherness, isolation, and stress, many of the students described an increased need for mental health support but no option to obtain that support. For example, one participant wrote “mental health support would be really nice because I feel really isolated and lonely away from my family with no one around” (female undergraduate student from Italy) while others stated that their “counseling center is closed” (male undergraduate student from Turkey) but they “want mental health support” (male graduate student from India).

Concerns about Discrimination and Racism

Participants also described feeling a sense of isolation and otherness as a result of discrimination. Although students described experiencing discrimination before the pandemic, they made it clear that since COVID-19, experiences and fears of discrimination have increased. For example, one student stated:

There is a lot of discrimination against Asians now because of the virus. Even though I have not personally experienced it, I am really worried people here [in the U.S.] will be racist towards me eventually (male graduate student from Korea).

For some students, increased discrimination made them fear for their future visa status as well:

Discrimination towards black and brown people in enforcing social distancing rules is much higher than discrimination towards white people. I am brown and I am worried that if I make a mistake, that it will jeopardize my status in the US (male graduate student from Palestine).

Relatedly, other students also expressed how feelings of “otherness” have increased since the start of the pandemic. Highlighting this sentiment, one student shared that “situations like this point out the inequality. If you are international you are not treated the same, even though we pay taxes and contribute just like everyone else” (female graduate student from Belgium). Others echoed this sentiment stating, “international students are obviously not the first priority for [the U.S.] government” (female undergraduate student from the Caribbean). These feelings of discrimination and otherness were compounded by the fact that many of the respondents felt they and their needs were not being acknowledged or addressed by their institutions. In fact, several of the respondents used the word “forgotten” to describe their institution’s treatment of international students: “I feel as though we are being forgotten, and our universities don’t care about us now that we have finished pay[ing] tuition” (male undergraduate student from Israel). As a result, students seemed to feel even more ignored, erased, and discarded by their institutions than they previously were, leading to considerable deterioration in their mental wellbeing.

Another theme that emerged from that data was that international students not only have to navigate their own worries around safety and wellbeing in the U.S., but also those of their families and home countries. As one student stated: “I always feel double [the] pressure; on the one hand, [I have to] be responsible for myself here in the U.S. and on the other hand [also] be aware of my family situation in my country” (male graduate student from Columbia). Students described feeling “worried” about their “elderly relatives,” while also “experiencing grief about not being able to be home at this time with family” (female graduate student from South Africa). One student heartbreakingly described losing her grandfather during the pandemic and not being able to mourn his death with family at home; many others shared fears of similar situations happening to their families in the future.

Academic Consequences

Finally, students discussed the massive toll that these complex concerns have had on their academic performance. Students that returned to their home countries at the beginning of the pandemic described multiple concerns related to managing time zone differences for synchronous classes: “I have zoom classes at 4 in the morning... [and have to] adjust [my] sleeping schedules to an inconvenient pattern to attend them” (female undergraduate student from Japan). Many other students described “decreased productivity” and a “lack of motivation” to perform up to normal academic standards, while others described feeling “pressured to maintain progress” in their graduate studies despite the many other concerns they have navigate.

Needed University Support

Because of the severity of their concerns and the fact that they felt abandoned to navigate those concerns on their own, the respondents called for their institutions to consider their unique needs during the pandemic. Less than half (48.3%) of the participants reported receiving support from their universities during the pandemic, which varied from receiving information about their legal status (27.5%), to being provided mental health support (25%), to being given some form of

financial support, mostly through on-campus jobs or partial tuition reimbursement (18.3%). As a result, many participants shared that they needed more from their institutions—more information, more resources, more guidance, and even just more consideration.

One point that the participants made abundantly clear in their responses, was that they are feeling “worried” and “confused” about the lack of “clear guidelines or regulations from the authorities/government” (female graduate student from Honduras) and that they want guidance from their universities’ international student offices that they are not getting. As one student said: “[The international student office] keep telling us to ‘ask a lawyer’ every time we ask them questions. I cannot afford a lawyer!” (male undergraduate student from Singapore).

Students also appealed for financial assistance such as on-campus jobs, payment of work study money, scholarships, and debt forgiveness. One student stated “the college cannot expect us to pay taxes or other loans in the current economic downturn, it was hard enough to do so before with an annual salary of about \$2,300, but in the current moment it is an impossible challenge” (male undergraduate student from Israel). Other students asked for a similar “reimbursement” that was provided to domestic students that could leave campus. Finally, other students spoke to the private, high interest loans that they had to undertake from the university to complete their studies, asking that repayments be “postpone[d] for 3-4 months.” Other resources that students asked for included a “promise of housing and food,” as well as “mental health support” and “counseling access.” Students also called for academic adjustments, including time difference adjustments, leniency on deadlines, and flexibility from professors. Finally, students asked that their universities advocate on their behalf of them by “lobbying for OPT extensions.” However, what it seemed the students were needing the most was a sense of “understanding” from their universities, their professors, their peers, and everyone around them.

Discussion

The findings of the study paint a disturbing picture of the ways international students have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants detailed multiple ways their finances, housing, health, and future security have been compromised; they also articulated what they need from their universities, professors, and peers to feel protected. Yet, the vast majority reported not receiving what they need from their institutions. For decades, international students have received insufficient support from their institutions (Choudaha and Schulmann 2014; Wu et al. 2015) to the extent that many stopped asking for assistance in order to protect themselves from disappointment and anxiety (Bradley 2000). In considering how to support international students during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to reflect on the ways higher education has failed them during past crises: capitalizing on their academic contributions and “multicultural” viewpoints while ignoring their specific needs, and even replicating the xenophobic, racist patterns of broader society (Yakaboski et al. 2017). Given all that international students bring to U.S. institutions in terms of economic gains (Mitchell et al. 2017), scholarly productivity, and global perspectives (Trice 2003), one would hope U.S. colleges and universities would have responded to the pandemic in ways that valued the human dignity, rights, and worth of these students. But, again, this has not been the case.

In general, many participants described feeling frustrated by and sad about how their colleges and universities responded to the pandemic, explaining that institutional responses made them

feel forgotten, othered, and discriminated against. Furthermore, they attributed this response to a systemic problem of universities consistently treating international students as nothing more than a “diversity statistic” that they can forget about “after tuition is paid.” Reading the experiences shared by the respondents, it is clear that their treatment during the global pandemic has been unacceptable. In the end, what emerged from the data is a story of students who, having already faced significant challenges before COVID-19, have been left on their own to manage a global pandemic while being isolated from their families and support networks.

Compounding the hurt and pain exposed in the participants’ experiences is the fact that none of the concerns raised by respondents are difficult to address. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed in March 2020 provided more than \$14 billion dollars in emergency funding to higher education institutions, more than \$6 billion of which was earmarked for emergency financial aid grants to students (NASFAA 2020). A portion of this funding should be allocated specifically to international students who are ineligible to receive government subsidies in times of crisis. A portion of every university’s CARES funding should be allocated to ensure secure housing and stable food for international students, who come to the U.S., in many cases, with the university community as their only support system in an otherwise foreign country.

Additionally, academic staff and faculty need to be made aware of the difficult situations international students are in and be urged to work with international students in their classes to create academic plans that meets their needs. The data made evident that international students are being held to the same academic standards as their domestic peers despite often being in different time zones, having to move to new and unpredictable housing, and worrying about their visa status in the country as immigration policies shift. No student should have to take classes at 4 am, and no student should need to prioritize their dissertation progress over the health, safety, and wellbeing of themselves or family members. Professors must work with their international students to ensure that this does not continue to occur. Finally, respondents also made clear the importance of mental health access during a time when they are feeling othered and forgotten, as well as experiencing overall lower levels of mental wellbeing than before. In the data, students explained that they do not have access to this mental health care, oftentimes because of poor health insurance, financial stressors, or reliance on now closed counseling centers. Universities can and should provide mental health services to their students. Telehealth services have been on the rise since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (Warren and Smalley 2020) and universities can tap into these or other resources to provide much needed relief to their international students.

This study is limited by the timeframe and the methods in which the data was gathered. Even though the data speaks a very powerful message, there are some important limitations which must be addressed. Firstly, the sample collected was a convenience sample rather than a systematic probabilistic sample. The participants were primarily recruited through social media sources which could have excluded some international students that do not have social media accounts or could not access it in their home country. Additionally, the sample was gathered in a narrow time frame. As COVID-19 continues to evolve, the challenges faced by international students will continue to change, and the dataset is inherently unable to capture those changes.

Since this data was collected, international F-1 student concerns likely increased as they witnessed how their universities responded to the short-lived ICE policy that threatened to deport international students should their universities choose to teach fully online in the fall (ICE 2020b). As a result of the policy and their institutions' response to the policy, study participants are likely experiencing even more stress, greater feelings of isolation and otherness, and increased experiences of discrimination. Therefore, it is more urgent that postsecondary institutions respond to the concerns of international students and help them feel valued. As the results of this study show, international students know exactly what they need from their universities. Now it is time for universities to step up. It is not enough to recruit international students to U.S. universities. It is imperative that international students are supported and treated humanely and with respect.

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Appendix A

Survey Questions

1. What do you believe are some unique challenges that international students are experiencing during the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. What challenges have you personally come across due to the Covid-19 pandemic?
3. Has your university addressed international student specific challenges?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
4. If yes, to 3: What types of resources have been offered to you from your university?
 - a) Financial Support
 - b) Mental Health Support
 - c) Information about Legal Status
 - d) Other (Please State) _____
5. If no to 3, jump to 5: What other resources or services would you like to have that have not been provided by your university?
6. How confident do you feel about the U.S.'s response to coronavirus?
 - a) Not at all confident, Slightly confident, Somewhat confident, Moderately confident, Extremely confident
7. Below are some worries that international students may have during this time. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being not anxious at all and 5 being extremely anxious) rate how anxious you feel about the follow issues: [[Not at all anxious, Slightly anxious, Somewhat anxious, Moderately anxious, Extremely anxious, Not applicable]]
 - a) Housing
 - b) Food stability
 - c) Health Insurance
 - d) Visa/Passport Expiration
 - e) Processing OPT Application
 - f) Job Security after Graduation
 - g) Current Income (Work Study)
 - h) Discrimination
8. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being not worried at all and 5 being extremely worried), how worried do you currently feel about the coronavirus spread in the U.S.?
 - a) Not at all worried, Slightly worried, Somewhat worried, Moderately Worried, Extremely worried
9. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being not worried at all and 5 being extremely worried), how worried do you currently feel about the coronavirus spread in your home country?
 - a) Not at all worried, Slightly worried, Somewhat worried, Moderately Worried, Extremely worried
10. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being not worried at all and 5 being extremely worried), how worried do you currently feel about the racist events towards Asians and Asian Americans in the United States?
 - a) Not at all worried, Slightly worried, Somewhat worried, Moderately Worried, Extremely worried
11. What else would you like to share about your experience as an international student in the U.S. during the pandemic?

Stranded on Calypso's Island: Cornerstone, COVID, and power of transformative texts

Amanda Mayes*
Melinda S. Zook
Purdue University

As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery
(Cavafy 1992)

A Memorable Day

March 10, 2020 was a memorable day in the lives of Purdue students. On that day, they learned in an email from President Mitch Daniels and Provost Jay Akridge that their coursework would be conducted online for the next three weeks. Many felt shock and dismay. For most, their attention to the spread of the Coronavirus in mainland China had been limited at best. The death of basketball great, Kobe Bryant, on January 26 had made a bigger impression. Now they felt a sense of disbelief. We went to our Chemistry midterm like zombies, recalled one. "Everything I had looked forward to for the end of my first year at college seemed to fall apart," wrote another (Baladad 2020). Some took the news in stride, feeling at first like a "snow day" had just been announced, merely an extended Spring Break. But the full impact began to set in as parents called and texted, "come home," and Spring Break travel plans were cancelled. Over their break, bad news arrived with every email. Study Abroad and summer internships were cancelled. On March 16, President Daniels announced that online instruction would continue for the remainder of the semester. "I lost all hope of going back to school; Mitch Daniels soon confirmed that campus would be closed. I moved out of my dorm ... without being able to say bye to any of my friends or even my roommate. Worst part of it all, classes were online for the rest of the semester" (Al-Awadi 2020).

This is the story of how students in the Cornerstone program reacted and adapted to the shutdown and quarantine amid the COVID-19 pandemic of March and April 2020, based on their own words. It is also the story of how both students and faculty in Cornerstone adapted to

* **Corresponding Author:** Amanda Mayes, Student Life Curricular Integration & Research Administrator, Office of the Vice Provost for Student Life, Visiting Assistant Professor, Cornerstone Integrated Liberal Arts, 475 W. Stadium Ave., West Lafayette, IN 47907. Email: asmayes@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Mayes, Amanda and Melinda S. Zook. 2020. "Stranded on Calypso's Island: Cornerstone, COVID, and power of transformative texts." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 61-72.

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank the Cornerstone instructors for permission to use their personal communications and Cornerstone students for permission to quote their writing directly within this essay. Special thanks to Dr. Jody Watkins who read an earlier version of this essay and the anonymous reviewers for the helpful and encouraging comments. This work was supported by Purdue President Mitch Daniels' student enrichment fund.

the transition to online learning. Faculty had less than two weeks to figure out the best delivery methods for the last third of their courses, upload material, reorient their syllabi, and experiment with new technologies. How would they maintain the dynamism of a class built around discussion? How would they continue to connect and mentor students? Students, bewildered by the suddenness of the change, had to cope with finding themselves back in their childhood bedrooms, separated from their friends and campus routines, under the new rules of quarantine and the new online delivery of their courses. “I think the students are still quite discombobulated,” observed one Cornerstone instructor on March 30th (C. Campbell, personal communication 2020).

But adapt they did. Quarantine was not easy for them, according to their own stories, especially at first. They missed their friends; they missed Purdue. Many struggled with loneliness and depression, boredom and anxiety. But all of them turned a corner and felt a reawakening as they settled into life under quarantine. Many gained a new appreciation of family; many renewed old hobbies or learned new ones. They also felt a new connection to the texts they were reading in Cornerstone and were able to relate the feelings and words of some of the world’s greatest literature. From the poetry of Homer’s *Odyssey* to the apocalyptic landscape of Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road*, the transformational literature in Cornerstone’s new first year sequence took on a new poignancy for the students, proving one of the central tenets of the program: that classic literature is inspirational and that students want to be moved by ideas, by the feelings, and by the richness of “transformative texts.”

Perspectives

The student and faculty experiences shared in this paper are told through the positioning of the two researchers, both scholars and teachers. Dr. Amanda Mayes has over a decade of experience teaching at the K-12 level in communities with high poverty levels and is particularly interested in leveraging the power of the humanities to close achievement gaps. Dr. Melinda Zook is a highly published historian and an award-winning teacher. She is the current director of the Cornerstone program. While both researchers hold positions of authority within the academy, they share a deep sense of accountability to the faculty and the students in Cornerstone. In this essay, Mayes and Zook strive to record the authentic voices of Purdue students. As often as possible, they directly quote both students and faculty, enabling the reader to draw their own conclusions. Naturally, the impact of the quarantine on the students was as varied as the students themselves. However, among their essays, reoccurring themes were noted, and they are reflected in this essay.

The Cornerstone Program

Cornerstone Integrated Liberal Arts, a 15-hour certificate program, was launched in 2017, primarily as an outreach program for STEM students. Designed by faculty, Cornerstone provides an enriched first-year sequence, inspiring students from across campus to see their majors whether engineering, healthcare, computer science, forestry or pharmacy from the perspective of a humanist or social scientist. The program begins with a two semester-sequence, Transformative Texts I and II (SCLA 10100 and 10200) designed for first-year students. These courses develop Purdue students’ communication skills as they engage with classic literature, along with film, art, and theatre. Students then move on to complete three more Liberal Arts courses arranged in

Themes like “Science and Technology,” “Environment and Sustainably,” or “Healthcare and Medicine.”

Students discuss a range of texts - treatises, poetry, plays, novels, speeches, short stories, scientific writings, etc., - with a Liberal Arts faculty member in Transformative Texts I and II. These courses are based around active learning. Students and faculty grapple with big questions about life, death, friendship, hope, truth, science and the supernatural. The synergy of Transformative Texts springs from human interaction, not merely discussion; but debate, teamwork, competitions, presentations, and peer review. Faculty also take their students out of the classroom with visits to the theater, simulcast operas, galleries and museums.

The other key component to this first-year sequence is mentorship. Office hours and one-on-one instruction are vital to the program. Cornerstone instructors seek to guide students, hone their communication skills, foster their interests, and continue to be a resource throughout their college career. Faculty are also prepared to handle “students in crisis.” But all the training and preparation by the Cornerstone faculty was predicated on a bricks and mortar, in-class, on-campus experience.

The pandemic tested the faculty and the program in completely unforeseen ways. In the Spring semester of 2020, 36 Cornerstone faculty offered 59 sections of SCLA 101 and 102 to 1,724 students. Everything was running smoothly prior to mid-March. We held faculty workshops such as “How I Teach This Text,” in which faculty shared assignments, best practices, and lunch. We organized a film fest for students centered on *The Big Lebowski*, wherein they compared the philosophy of “the dude” to the carefree Daoism of *Zhuangzi*. Faculty took their students to *Walk On: The Rosa Parks Story*; Purdue Theater’s *Angels in America*; and the new feature film, *1917*. Some were preparing to have their students attend Neil Simon’s *A Bronx Tale* later that spring. But after March 11, all such outings were canceled, along with everything else.

Purdue faculty had only a short window of time to transition from classroom teaching to online instruction. On March 10, Cornerstone faculty received an email from the Director asking them to consider how they might deliver their instruction online “in the event that our campus suspends classroom instruction” (M. Zook, personal communication, 2020). On March 11, the “event” occurred. Faculty had the remainder of the week of March 9 and Spring Break to take their active learning classes into cyberspace. They relayed the news to their students on March 12 and 13. “At our last meeting, students bemoaned the fact that ‘the discussion board wouldn’t be the same’ as our in-person class,” wrote one faculty member (D. Kane, personal communication, March 13, 2020). Almost immediately, several others asked Zook if they could still hold office hours. Panicked students were emailing them, “would they still be willing to meet with them?” Sadly, no. It was too unsafe and as the full realization of the shutdown began to seep in, students packed their belongings and left campus.

Losing Ithaca

For most students, going home wasn’t easy and sometimes the journey itself was unnerving. Alex Lin flew first-class back to Taiwan but nonetheless had to wear his face mask for the thirteen-hour journey, “along with a full-body disposable raincoat, my CHEM 115 goggles and disposable latex gloves.” Nor was a single meal served. “That is a once in a lifetime experience,”

he quipped (Lin 2020). When Lin arrived in Taiwan, he discovered he was not permitted to use public transportation. Instead, he was loaded into a government issued quarantine taxi, after being “showered in alcohol spray from head to toe.” Kareem Ekanem, returning to his small, quiet town located in Kent County, Delaware, got his first taste of the new realities of a world in crisis at the airport. The TSA agents wore full hazmat suits, airplanes were sprayed with disinfectants, and everyone had their temperature taken when deboarding. Along with other students, he was surprised and dismayed by the precautions of his parents, who met him at the airport but wouldn’t touch him, “instead they gave me a mask and I sat in the car quiet until I got home. Once we arrived, my parents made me leave my luggage in the garage for 48 hours so the virus could die ... They also made me take a shower before doing anything else” (Ekanem 2020). Others received similar receptions upon their return. “I [had] hoped to be greeted with warm hugs and comforting food,” wrote Shobana Iyer, who found the environment at home bleak instead. “For the next couple of days, I would ask my family ‘isn’t the grief-stricken state of our world unsettling enough, so why exactly should that same aura be present in our home?’” (Iyer 2020).

The choice to stay on at the increasingly deserted campus or return home was particularly difficult for international students. With flights being rapidly cancelled, students had to make tough decisions quickly. Many feared they would not be able to return if they left. Arjun Harbhajanka described a stress-filled time trying to decide if he should return home to India, stay at Purdue, or head to his uncle’s house in Houston. “My plans were changing by the minute,” he wrote, “at one moment it got so stressful, I started doing pushups in the middle of my residence hall lobby” (2020). Ultimately, Arjun and several friends made the decision to return home and had a mere twelve hours to pack the content of their lives at Purdue. Gowri Harish made a similar decision to return home to India. She finished an evening final exam and stayed up all night to pack. “I didn’t get time to say goodbye to my friends, it was hard leaving the college life I loved so much not knowing when I would return” (2020).

Vidit Shah had a smooth trip home back to India but an eventful arrival. The government authorities in India monitored Vidit from the moment he arrived, with the local municipality corporation sanitizing his home as well as the homes of his neighbors. “Further, they also stuck a big notice pamphlet on the front door of my house saying that I should remain in quarantine for the next fourteen days and that all outsiders should stay away from my residence.” This was followed by house visits from a doctor and several nurses as well as police officers to ensure he was at home. Vidit had to install a state-sponsored app and send his location via the app to authorities every hour and mandatory morning and evening health questionnaires (2020).

Time and again, students both in the States and abroad, spoke of their grief and boredom, often comparing life at Purdue before the pandemic to their new reality. Prior to quarantine, Isaiah Koeninger had troubles with depression and loneliness but he could still, “visit friends and go bowling or to the arcade in the union. I could play pool in the community center across the street from my apartment in Purdue Village.” Now, “I’m sitting in my room for hours at a time each day at home, the loneliness is only amplified” (2020). The students grieved over the loss of their “Purdue family” or “my Purdue friends;” and many compared their grief to Odysseus missing Ithaca (Horz 2020; Iwu 2020). Their scheduled campus lives - going to class, dining at Owen, off to Co-Rec, studying at the WALC - all ended abruptly. Wrote one first-year student, “I [had just]

started to love Purdue and where I was in life, and right now, as I am sitting in my home, back in the small town of Union Mills, Indiana, [and] I am missing Purdue more than anything.” Then the boredom. Students reported falling into a repetitive cycle: “Every day is the same” and “more depressing” than the last (Halbleib 2020). “We have only been in quarantine for about five weeks now,” wrote Michael Epperson, “but it feels like an eternity. The days and weeks inch by as each day seems to be a repeat of the last” (2020). Several reported feeling depressed and anxious. Many of them knew someone affected by the virus; friends and neighbors, who had experienced sickness and death. Many felt the stress of being constantly worried about their loved ones: fathers who were first responders; mothers who were nurses; parents who lost their jobs; younger siblings yearning to be free; older siblings graduating without job prospects.

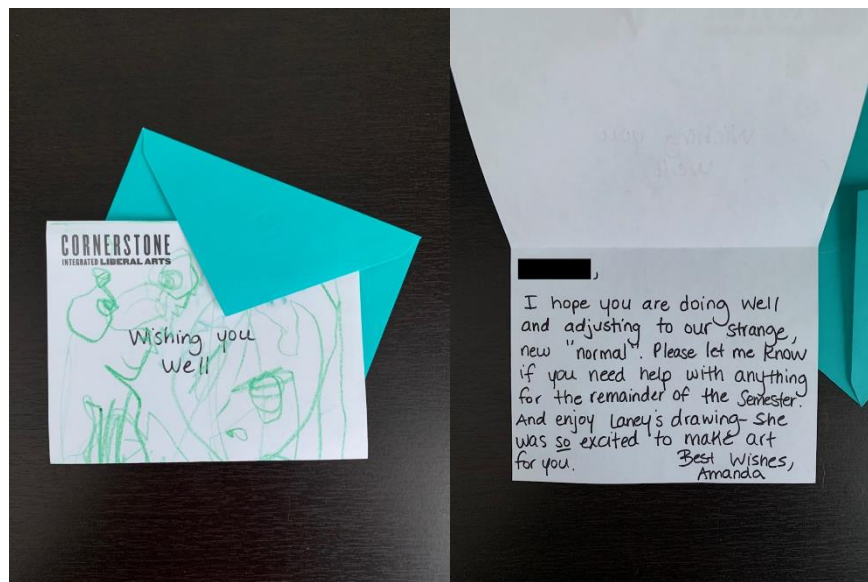
Some students had the added burden of dealing with the anti-Asian discrimination that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic. The proliferation of anti-Chinese rhetoric prompted the Human Rights Watch to issue a statement urging governments to take steps to prevent and prosecute racial attacks against Asians and people of Asian descent (Human Rights Watch 2020). Yiduo Huo reported that four of his Chinese friends were accosted walking back to their apartments near campus. The assailants called them, “Chinese viruses” and taunted them to, “roll back to China” (2020). Chinese American student Samuel Zhang wrote at length about the uptick in race-baiting directed toward Asians in America. Growing up in California, he had always thought of himself as American first, Asian second. “Whenever I walked outside of my dorm, I purposely avoided other Asian students wearing face masks and was quick to profile them as potential carriers.” But news of attacks against Asians began to trouble him and he collected the stories from around the US. At home, he found himself wary of how others might see him. Walking in his neighborhood, “I took off my face mask and slid it into my pocket as fast as I could ... I had removed the one item of protection I had in fear that I would be profiled as an Asian with coronavirus. ... Was I willing to sacrifice my physical health, and potentially the health of my family, to be more socially accepted in public?” Samuel ends his essay feeling fortunate for never having felt discriminated against but also perplexed, “my world is torn between choosing which I value more: my American identity or my Asian heritage” (2020).

Online Learning

Of course, both students and faculty were challenged by the shutdown. Cornerstone faculty sought to retain the vitality of the in-class experience in their online versions of Transformative Texts, experimenting with a wide array of online platforms and other tools: Hotseat, Discord, OneDrive, Google Meet, and Camtasia among others. Delivering content was not an issue. But maintaining lively discussion and simply connecting and mentoring students in some human way was a source of concern. Some scheduled synchronous meetings with students; others, phone calls on Facetime. “I want to communicate with the students in as human a manner as possible because I am concerned about the psychological impact of social distancing on students who lack a support system,” wrote one Cornerstone instructor (Leverage, personal communication, March 12, 2020).

It soon became apparent that many students were unable to manage their time and meet deadlines, “I received more requests for extensions than usual, and I had to be flexible. Illnesses, bereavement in the family, internet connectivity, and evictions were among their reasons” (Marazka, personal communication, May 4, 2020). Silence from students, especially among

those once active in classroom discussions, was one of the most troubling issues for faculty. What do you do about students who simply stop communicating? “The biggest issue I face,” wrote one instructor, “is the uncertainty and disconnect of this type of teaching. There are ways that students can contact me, of course, but when things are relatively silent, you are not sure if it means that everything is OK from their end or if some are falling off and just not making that known” (Watkins, personal communication, March 27, 2020). Professor Amanda Mayes, hoping to connect with her students, in a more human, less technological way, mailed handwritten notes, with drawings by her toddler, to each of her students. Many of her students responded in kind with selfies and drawings. Alyssa DeLouise wrote, “I got your letter in the mail last night. It means a lot to me. Missing Purdue a lot right now” (personal communication, April 9, 2020).



Handwritten note sent to student by Prof. Mayes

Over time, Cornerstone faculty became increasingly inventive with their online instruction. One termed his thrice-weekly lessons, “Wilbur Radio,” after his cat, whose antics were already known to the students. Starting their day with “Wilbur Radio” (a mix of lecture, close reading, and interpretation along with cat pictures) was so agreeable to students, that even parents became fans. Another professor seeking new ways of reaching the students “in lieu of face-to-face interaction,” filmed her lecture on John Keats’ “Ode to a Nightingale” at Happy Hollow Park in West Lafayette to emphasize the importance of nature to the Romantics (Frketich, personal communication, March 27, 2020). This was met by students creating and sharing their own videos and photos of their favorite corners of nature that reminded them of what Keats was trying to express. Another instructor, conceding to the simple fact that was most on the minds of the students was the virus, had them each produce a shareable work on the medium of their choice with the broad theme, coronavirus. Students could create short films, infographics, public service announcements, comics, trailers, an animated work, or a series of photographs.

Certainly, students needed a way to reflect upon and express what was happening to them as a result of the virus and the shutdown. The “My Quarantine Story” contest became that vehicle. Amanda Mayes was inspired by Brandon Stanton’s Humans of New York (HONY), a photography project aimed at documenting 10,000 inhabitants of New York City. The project,

started in 2010, has grown to include the stories of the photography subjects. HONY has over 20 million followers on social media -- a testament for the very human need to tell and read stories (Stanton n.d.). This aligned with the ideas of Transformative Texts and students were asked to tell their stories by reflecting on how their readings helped them think about their new life under quarantine. Students had the options to write a short reflective essay of three to five pages or give a three to five minutes speech. Cornerstone director, Melinda Zook and Professor Mayes developed the following prompts as suggestions to help, but students were asked to write/speak from the heart and tell their stories however they saw fit:

Prompt 1: I never thought I would be able to relate to [character from a transformative text], but now....

Prompt 2: [transformative text title] is a work of fiction but now strikes a chord because...

The winning essay received a \$100 Amazon gift card, while second and five honorary mentions received \$75 and \$50 Amazon gift cards, respectively. Purdue President Mitch Daniels' student enrichment fund for Cornerstone provided the prizes. Many instructors adopted the contest in place of other assignments or for extra credit. A total of seventy submissions were received and judged by a panel of seven Cornerstone faculty. Naturally, among the seventy entries there was a great deal of diversity. A handful of students stayed on campus; some returned to their homelands abroad; but most moved back in with their families in the States. There was, however, a pattern to the vast majority of the stories, regardless of where the student was or to what character or book they related. They spoke to their grief about suddenly leaving campus; the often-difficult adjustment to quarantine and online education; and finally, to a turning-point, a moment at which they not only adapted to their new life, but began to improve and even enjoy their circumstances.

According to their stories, the onset of their online classes, beginning March 23, posed a real challenge for most students. Gibson Spencer's comment that online instruction was "a chore instead of a learning experience," was echoed time and again (2020). Students missed the energy of classroom discussions and the opportunity to talk to their instructors during office hours. They found themselves easily distracted and had trouble comprehending online materials. Above all, retaining the information coming at them from their laptops was a problem. "I learn better with face to face interaction," wrote Robert Silinghia, "and being in a class room gives me an emotional trigger that helps me retain more of the information in contrast to watching the lectures online and not being able to retain as much as if I were in a classroom" (2020). There were exceptions. A few spoke of the transition to online education as a saving grace. One suffered from panic attacks on campus and found the isolation of quarantine conducive for learning; another self-described "introverted personality" was more comfortable with learning from her family home than having to trudge across campus to class (Harrison, 2020). But the majority felt adrift from the education they had come to expect at Purdue and for those that needed "personal attention," remote learning was a disaster. "My grades dropping," wrote one, "I am neither understanding nor receiving attention. For example, multi-variable calculus is not really something that is easy to learn on your own. Quarantine has taken quite a negative toll on me, unfortunately" (Al-Awadi 2020).

The Transformation

Yet despite the toll quarantine brought to their lives – the anxiety, the boredom, the loneliness – most of the students reached a point in which they decided to turn things around, shake themselves out of their doldrums, learn to appreciate what they had, and embark on new habits of self-improvement. Their moment of catharsis was never dramatic, but rather a slow realization that life was not going to be the same again anytime soon and that only they had the power to change their lives. Often, they began new routines: dieting, calisthenics, yoga, jogging and biking. Many rediscovered old hobbies - puzzles, watercolor painting, and piano – or began new ones like cooking, golfing, and guitar. They often found that the best instructors they had were their parents.

Indeed, reconnecting with their families was part of their recovery. “After a month and a half of being locked in my house with my parents and sister, one would think that I got so sick and tired of their shenanigans that I decided to run away from home and never come back,” wrote Evan Kamm. Yet, he asserted that “spending all this time with my family helped me realize how great they are.” As part of Evan’s program to “improve upon myself as a person,” he started cooking with his mother and golfing with his father (2020).

Of course, parents themselves had different methods of coping with the return of their adult children. Some students report parents whose new quarantine safety rules were too strict and the cause of friction; others speak of parents working from home, glued to their laptops; still others who were fixated with online shopping; and some who went perhaps overboard in their efforts to keep everyone occupied. “I am quarantining with all 5 members of my family, and my cat, and although we are sick of each other,” wrote Veronica Reynolds. “I know we are all grateful to have each other.” Her father bought 36 wooden birdhouses for Veronica and her sisters to paint,



Birdhouse painted by student Veronica Reynolds

“a quarantine craft to keep us busy We hang up the finished ones in the trees by the sidewalk in the front of our house so that the people taking walks can look at them.” After seeing how popular they were, her father bought, “more things to paint. We are still not finished with the

original 36 birdhouses, but he bought us wooden trays, jewelry boxes, canvases, wooden lighthouses, picture frames, and even bigger birdhouses to paint” (2020).

Johans Baladad began his quarantine upset and frustrated. The Grand Prix, March Madness, spring intramurals, and “my church’s spring mission trip to Florida which I had been looking forward to since Christmas” were all cancelled. But he too turned a corner, and “despite all the disappointments that arose, there are opportunities and hidden blessings behind all experiences. Just as the world literally distanced itself, I have never felt closer to my family.” His family also set up “zoom calls every weekend with my extended family that reaches all corners of the world like Texas, California, Canada, England, and the Philippines” (2020). Zoom and Facetime calls with grandparents were frequently mentioned by students as particularly special and part of their healing process. Margaret Hutchinson’s quarantine shift happened on Zoom calls with her mother’s extended family. Relatives she typically only saw once a year, now checked in weekly to laugh and catch up. Margaret eloquently stated, “This period of our lives has not been lost but instead changed” (2020).

The students’ quarantine stories were made all the more poignant by the connections they drew between their own situation and those they had read about and discussed in Transformative Texts. The range of literature they cited was vast: Cormac McCarthy, Michael de Montaigne, Mary Shelley, Victor Hugo, Franz Kafka, Edgar Allen Poe, Robert Frost, Viktor Frankl, and M. T. Anderson, among others. From their readings, they found the words and images that helped them think about what was happening to them and their world. Odysseus and his long trek back to Ithaca in Homer’s *Odyssey* became a touchstone for many. “Just like Odysseus struggled to return home to his old way of life,” opined Collin Stroup, “we too are struggling to get back to life the way we once knew it” (Stroup, 2020). Trapped on Calypso’s Island, Odysseus grieves for his family and his kingdom. “Likewise, I have felt lonely and helpless,” wrote Andrea Romero, separated from her father as well as “the home I built at Purdue. I wish I could hug my dad. I wish I could spend another night in my dorm with my best friend. I wish I could go to lunch with my closest friends ... But most of all, I look forward to my return to ‘Ithaca’” (2020).

Another student, who read Steinbeck’s *Travels with Charlie*, wrote that while travelling back to Singapore, “I realized why Steinbeck would choose to bring a dog [on his travels], a creature with naturally positive disposition, and speak so casually to it as if to another human.” Sometimes connecting with other humans, especially in times of grief, is the hardest thing of all. “Perhaps more dejecting than the circumstances that surrounds each one of us is the inability to express it. I could not find a more poignant encapsulation of that feeling than when Steinbeck said, “[a] sad soul can kill you quicker, far quicker, than a germ” (Shing, 2020).

Many related their feelings of grief and loss to the profound sorrow of Gilgamesh when his best friend, Enkidu, dies in the ancient epic, *Gilgamesh*. “Obviously,” wrote Miles Tipton, “my grief for the loss of my friends is temporary because I will most assuredly see them again, while Gilgamesh will not [see Enkidu again]. But a lot can be said about losing a friend without any warning. In both Gilgamesh’s and my case, there was no forewarning that soon we would be without all of our friends” (2020). Students not only reflected on their own sadness; they were moved by the destruction of the pandemic. They saw that although they might be safe, others

were not. One of the most thoughtful stories reflected on the Polish poet, Czeslaw Milosz's poem, "A Song on the End of the World." The poem begins,

On the day the world ends
A bee circles a clover,
A fisherman mends a glimmering net.
Happy porpoises jump in the sea,
By the rainspout young sparrows are playing
And the snake is gold-skinned as it should always be
(Milosz 2011).

On the day the world ends, according to Milosz, "No thing, animal, or person is out of place in the natural flow of daily life," wrote Hannah Harrison.

Only one wise old man is aware of what is happening and even he does not stray from his normal routine. Because there are no dramatic or chaotic accompaniments to the end of their world, the people simply deny it is happening. The innocence and naivety of those people mirrors that of many people during this troubling time of disease and quarantine, including myself. I am lucky enough to be virtually unaffected by the COVID-19 outbreak, as my family is financially stable and has a safe and secure place to self-quarantine. For a multitude of people, COVID-19 has brought with it family struggles, financial ruin, and even loss of life (2020).

The stories Purdue students told about their quarantine in March and April of 2020 may well be similar to stories told around the globe amid the pandemic. Gloom, grief, boredom, anxiety – all common to the human experience in those sad times. But there was also resilience. These young adults faced tipping points when they learned to adapt and to accept their new reality and forge ahead. "I keep going back to Odysseus and his travels," so Collin Stroup (2020) concludes his essay:

he could've easily given up during his many years of trying to return home. He didn't lose sight of his end goal which is the most important thing. When you're trying to get out of a hardship, you cannot give up regardless of the circumstances. ... We have to have a similar mindset to Odysseus and keep persevering through our troubles. ... Can you imagine having to struggle for ten years to get back to your home?

Going home was by no means easy for Purdue students. But quarantine also opened new opportunities and avenues of self-discovery. They endured; they even thrived. "Contrary to Odysseus," wrote Matthew Kwan, "I have no gods out to ruin or support me on this journey of discovery." "What I do share with him, however, is a loving family that believed in and supported me through all my struggles, leading me home as I pushed through adversity to reach a happier life. ... In the end, these trying times, rather than isolating me, have all but strengthened my bonds with my friends and family, and rekindled my love for the things I had forgotten about" (2020).

The transitions both faculty and students made in the spring of 2020 were certainly significant, certainly life changing. Cornerstone faculty became adept at new technologies, some with fear and trepidation, others with great ease and enthusiasm. They were delighted when their students (most students) continued to participate and engage with their readings; and they were dismayed and anxious when met by silence from a few. “My aspiration,” wrote one instructor, “is that they can take from this whole experience something worthwhile that ...[they] learn life-lessons as well as bookish lessons from this very unusual situation” (S. Robertson, personal communication, March 27, 2020). Indeed, that their road might be long, but filled with discovery. The stories Cornerstone students told about their quarantine suggested that it was a journey of self-discovery and that they also looked forward to their return to Ithaca.

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Managing Uncertainty in a Pandemic: Transitioning multi-section courses to online delivery

Jennifer Hall*
Bailey C. Benedict
Elise Taylor
Seth P. McCulloch
Purdue University

What do Neil Armstrong, Rita Colwell, and Mercedes Lackey have in common? All three -- astronomer, scientist, and author -- completed their bachelor's degrees at Purdue University, and likely took a version of the introductory speech communication course, COM 114, which is a course that fulfills the oral communication requirement for the major of Purdue's students. COM 114 has existed in one form or another for well over sixty years and is one of the largest public speaking courses in the United States.

What Armstrong, Colwell, and Lackey did not experience in their time at Purdue University was a global pandemic, one that would upheave the way all in-person courses were delivered. The virus began spreading in late 2019 but did not seriously impact the United States until early 2020. On December 31, 2019, 27 pneumonia patients were treated in Wuhan, China (World Health Organization, 2019). The pneumonia cases stemmed from an unknown etiology, which was later identified as the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) that was caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. After the initial outbreak in Wuhan, China, COVID-19 spread around the world in a matter of weeks. Currently, there have been over 10.5 million cases and over 500,000 deaths globally (World Health Organization 2020). Health organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization have recommended protocols such as strict social distancing, contact tracing, and the use of face coverings to reduce the spread of COVID-19 until a vaccine becomes available. This, in turn, drastically impacted the way that most businesses operated. For some businesses, such as grocery stores, these changes came in the form of fewer people allowed in the store and floor markers placed throughout the store to help shoppers maintain physical distance from one another. For others, such as schools and universities, many responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by adopting online modalities.

Colleges and universities around the world varied in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with many institutes of higher education focusing on how to quickly and efficiently transition to digital teaching and delivery methods and transfer face-to-face instructional materials to online

* **Corresponding Author:** Jennifer Hall, Brian Lamb School of Communication, 100 N. University Street, BRNG 2114, West Lafayette, IN 47907. Email: jgibb@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Hall, Jennifer, Bailey C. Benedict, Elise Taylor, and Seth P. McCulloch. 2020. "Managing Uncertainty in a Pandemic: Transitioning multi-section courses to online delivery." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 73-83.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to thank all the COM 114 instructors for their diligence and grace and the students for their patience and flexibility as we navigated the transition online.

content (Crawford et al. 2020). In addition, college instructors faced numerous barriers that impeded their ability to effectively disseminate information to their students. For instance, students' learning could be significantly limited by having reduced Internet access outside of a college campus (Adnan & Anwar 2020). Further, some classes, such as those with labs or those requiring hands-on materials, are structured such that they are simply incompatible with online instruction.

On March 10, 2020, the administrative team for COM 114 learned that we would be transitioning the entirety of COM 114 to online delivery due to the spread of COVID-19. Fortunately, this news came right before spring break, giving us time to learn about the virus and plan for how the remaining six weeks of the course could be offered without in-person contact. The COM 114 administrative team had twelve days, twelve hours, and thirty minutes to move 64 sections comprised of nearly 1,600 students online, while coordinating 40 instructors whose experience varied drastically. Somehow, we had to find a way to provide a high-quality learning experience them while not shortchanging our students. The countdown was on.

The purpose of this paper is to outline how the COM 114 administrative team (consisting of the four authors of this paper) sought to manage instructor and student uncertainty as we transitioned a massive multi-section course to online delivery in a pandemic. We begin by describing our key concerns when transitioning a presentational speaking course online, the actions we took to transition the course online, and lessons we learned from the transition.

Concerns for Transitioning COM 114 Online

COM 114 is a skills-based course. Students engage in discussions and activities that enable them to practice aspects of presentation construction and verbal and nonverbal presentation delivery. Throughout the semester, four presentations are delivered in class to an audience of peers and one video presentation is created. The goal of COM 114 is to give students an opportunity to learn about and practice communication skills that will help them deliver effective presentations in their college classes and beyond.

The objectives for COM 114 have evolved over the past sixty years, but currently consist of four learning outcomes. First, students learn to employ effective verbal and nonverbal delivery techniques while delivering a presentation. Second, they are instructed how to conduct audience analysis and adapt presentations to diverse audiences' needs. Third, students learn about organizational strategies for informational and persuasive presentations. Fourth, they practice finding and incorporating supporting evidence to craft credible messages within their presentations. Although our duties require us to ensure students can achieve course objectives, our primary concern was for the well-being of instructors and students when transitioning COM 114 online.

Many people are employed by the university to offer COM 114. The COM 114 administrative team is staffed by a course director, Dr. Jennifer Hall, and three assistant course directors who are PhD students in Brian Lamb School of Communication. The instructors include graduate students in Communication who are required to teach the course in the first year of their graduate studies at Purdue University, graduate students hired from other departments, adjunct instructors,

continuing lecturers, and sometimes assistant, associate, or full professors. Therefore, instructors have varying levels of teaching experience and technological proficiency.

In a given year, there are typically around 150 sections of COM 114 taught in-person on Purdue's campus, with a select few sections offered completely online. Classes are capped at 24 students per section. Most COM 114 students are in their first year at Purdue University. Students who take COM 114 later in their career seem to "put off" taking the course, often due to fear of public speaking. Therefore, we knew many students likely had not yet experienced online learning and may experience anxiety related to the course, online learning, and the virus. Our two key concerns were related to how we would teach a traditionally face-to-face course in an online environment and what we could do to help instructors and students manage their uncertainty.

Teaching Presentational Speaking Online

To some, the idea of teaching a public speaking course online may seem like a contradiction, but such courses have been taught throughout the country for over twenty years, and for over a decade at Purdue. The online introductory course reimagines what the course can be by considering how we can eliminate passive learning (such as reading a textbook or attending lectures) and instead replacing it with active learning methods such as reflection and dialogue with student colleagues. Fink (2005) identifies three core ideas of an active learning approach. To start, experience must be gained by observing and doing either real or simulated scenarios. Next, information and ideas should be accessed via primary and secondary sources throughout all aspect of one's life (i.e., in class and out of class and in both personal and professional environments). Finally, reflective dialogue techniques, such as journaling and discussion, can be used to enrich learning experiences. Of course, active learning does not exist in a distance learning vacuum and becomes doubly important when attempting to engage students in online learning.

Online courses have unique opportunities to achieve these objectives using tools that simply are not available within traditional spaces. Furthermore, delivering presentations online also provides an opportunity to prepare students for *different* speaking opportunities that they are likely to encounter in their careers. For example, a newly created assignment for our introductory course involves creating an introduction to webinar. This sort of modification allows instructors to adapt their material, as opposed to attempting to reconstruct the traditional lecture within an online setting (Ward 2016).

Some have aptly pointed out that the teaching situation we found ourselves in due to the COVID-19 pandemic was *not* distance learning, and was not even "resilient teaching," which facilitates learning that is designed to be flexible amid changing circumstances (Quintana & DeVaney 2020). Instructors engaged in emergency remote teaching (DeVaney & Quintana 2020). Emergency remote teaching involves a temporary shift to an alternative delivery mode where instruction can be quickly and reliably accessed during a crisis (Hodges et al. 2020). The cognitive, emotional, and physical demands placed on instructors and students are incredibly high during emergency remote teaching. Therefore, most instructors, we included, took to the task at hand with one primary goal: to finish the semester. Nonetheless, we still sought methods of ensuring actual knowledge and skill transfer between instructor and students.

One benefit the team had when planning for the transition was that complete online sections of the course had been taught multiple times. That being said, this course that was set up from the beginning to be delivered remotely was structured differently than the on-campus sections; while there were many teaching strategies and activities from which we could pull material, we could not simply duplicate the current distance shell. We knew that students who opted into a distance section of the course had the technology and internet access needed to complete the course and assignments, something that was not guaranteed. Additionally, a major assignment in the on-campus sections was a semester-long group project that culminates in a group presentation, so we had to develop a plan for facilitating student's work and delivery of their group project. Being that groupwork can be uncomfortable and challenging to coordinate in normal environments, managing the uncertainty of group work in a pandemic was even more important.

Managing Uncertainty

Along with ensuring the course objectives were achieved, our primary goal was to reduce and help manage the uncertainty of instructors and students. Uncertainty can be understood as the inability to derive meaning from a situation (Brashers 2001), the difference between available and needed information (Goldhaber 1993), or the inability to explain or predict (Salem & Williams 1984). Both instructors and students likely experienced job-related uncertainty, in particular, which is related to whether and how a job will be performed under changed conditions (Driskill & Goldstein 1986). In addition, people experienced micro-interactional uncertainty (e.g., in particular messages or conversations related to COVID-19), short-term uncertainty (e.g., about how the semester would unfold), and ongoing uncertainty (e.g., related to the trajectory of one's life which may or may not be related to COVID-19; Brashers 2001). With COVID-19, people initially lacked the information they needed to understand what moving COM 114 online meant for them and what to expect in the last part of the semester (i.e., short-term uncertainty), but may have experienced compounding effects with micro-interactional and ongoing uncertainty.

Uncertainty reduction and management theories guided our approach to communicating with instructors and students. Uncertainty reduction theory suggests uncertainty is reduced by information and people seek information to reduce their uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese 1975), despite other theories arguing that more information can sometimes bring about more uncertainty (Levinson 1983). We also recognized that instructors and students may use other strategies to manage their uncertainty, like avoiding information or seeking social support, consistent with uncertainty management theory (Brashers 2001). As suggested by Young and Post (1993), representatives should communicate with employees about organizational change as soon as possible. Therefore, our goal was to provide instructors with information quickly, comprehensively, and supportively to facilitate them doing the same for students.

Uncertainty management theory also recognizes that the uncertainties of life are interconnected (Brashers 2001), meaning instructors' concerns about COM 114 may be raised or lowered by their other life circumstances (i.e., parenthood, pre-existing conditions, or their own coursework). We wanted to provide structure for instructors experiencing more uncertainty and offer flexibility to instructors experiencing less uncertainty, while recognizing instructors and students may have differing levels of online communication and learning technology literacy and

may have lower or higher needs for social support. With people's responses to uncertainty being shaped by their appraisals of and emotional reactions to the experience (Brashers 2001), our goal was to provide concrete support in the form of instructional materials and psychological support in the form of consistent and supportive messaging.

Actions Taken to Transition COM 114 Online

When Purdue announced it would be moving to remote instruction for at least a period of time following spring break, our team had two primary tasks: transitioning the course to a completely online format and communicating with a large team of instructors who were understandably concerned and eager for concrete information and plans. The small amount of time we had to accomplish along with the many unknowns about the situation, including if, and when, we might resume on-campus instruction, made this especially challenging. In the following sections, we discuss the ways we adapted the curriculum and course delivery for an online environment, along with how we communicated with instructors throughout the transition and suggestions we gave instructors for communicating with students.

Ways We Adapted the Curriculum and Course Delivery

While all instructors teach from a common syllabus, work to meet the same learning objectives, and have the same major assignments, individual instructors are typically encouraged (and have the autonomy to) develop their own lesson plans, lectures, and activities. One of the early decisions we made as a team was that we would lean heavily towards the side of structure and consistency. This meant that all sections would be completing the same activities and working on the same schedule for the remainder of the semester. Being more prescriptive in our instructions and approach provided several benefits. From a management standpoint, it made it easier for our team to address and respond to instructor questions. By laying out a plan for delivering the course remotely, we also knew that students would be getting the content they needed to meet the course learning objectives. For instructors, the majority of whom were graduate students, having a specific plan to follow alleviated some of the uncertainty and lessened the burden on individual instructors to develop a remote instruction plan.

Based on recommendations from the university regarding access, we planned for a completely asynchronous format for remote learning. The first change we made was to shift from a course schedule based on class days to a course schedule organized by weeks. Each week instructors posted quizzes, online activities, and short videos that discussed the week's content. In order to maintain consistency, all activities for each week were due on the same day. This helped students to plan for the week and avoided having multiple dates they had to keep track of.

As was previously stated, there are inherent difficulties in developing presentational skills in a distance format, but we were able to draw on our existing distance courses to create activities and adapt assignments so students could still achieve the learning outcomes. For example, Linardopoulos (2010) suggests that presentations should require audience members, something required of students in our traditional distance courses. Typically, students use their friends, extended family, and so forth. Unfortunately, as many of our students were sheltering in place alone, or with a minimal number of family members or roommates, we had to eliminate this requirement. Instead, we informed students that their videos would be posted into the learning management system and would be visible to the instructor and their classmates, so they needed

to think of their class as their audience. Additionally, the normal distance learning sections of the course assumes that a student has a base level of technical competence, and access to a high-speed internet connection; neither of those were a certainty with our students who were forced into their current predicament. Consequently, assignments needed to be modified for those students. One tool we used to help students navigate the new challenges of virtual presentations was recording a series of instructional videos on using different tools.

A core element of our course, which is common to many small, discussion and activity-based courses is interactive activities that allow students the opportunity to practice speaking in front of others. Online activities were created to include some of these elements. Examples of activities include having students post short video clips responding to a discussion prompt, asking students to share examples of course concepts they found online, and using discussion boards for students to comment on classmates' activities and presentations. Students continued to work on their group project using online collaboration tools and guidance on how to create and share a video presentation of their ideas based on an example template created by the course director.

How We Communicated with Instructors

As was previously discussed, instructors and students were in a situation with multiple unknowns, including if we would resume on campus instruction. To alleviate some of the anxiety and tension cause by the uncertainty, we engaged in strategic communication with instructors. Our approach to sharing information with instructors focused on six points.

1. Communicated Frequently

Frequent communication was important because it kept us connected to our instructors during a time where we were not seeing one another on campus. Because new information about COVID-19, as well as Purdue's plans for the duration of the semester, continued to evolve and be shared at a rapid rate, frequent communication about the implications of that information kept instructors informed. Another benefit of frequent communication was that it enabled us to shorten the length of the emails and reduce the information density of individual messages. We had a massive amount of information to convey about how to manage the transition and deal with the situation. Additionally, instructors were also receiving information from multiple other sources and, we assumed, were dealing with information overload on top of anxiety. Focusing on one or two key topics in an email or video message made it easier for instructors to process the message.

2. Provided Information as Soon as it Became Available

As soon as we had definitive information to share, we shared it. This served to both minimize some of uncertainty instructors were feeling and preempt many questions about future happenings, as people quickly learned that we would communicate information as it came to us.

3. Avoided Speculation

In addition to sharing definitive information and plans, we were very careful to avoid speculation and lengthy discussion of "what ifs" when communicating to the broader team. Instructors understandably had many questions about how the semester would proceed but communicating possibilities or our thoughts about the likelihood of classes resuming on campus or the semester ending early were not beneficial or productive and distracted from the immediate tasks at hand.

4. Acknowledged What was Unknown

We were also very upfront with sharing what we did not know and acknowledging the uncertainty of the situation. It was important to be as transparent and honest as possible to maintain a sense of trust from the instructors.

5. Made Recommendations and Plans as Consistently as Possible

Another key strategy we used was to be as consistent as possible with the recommendations and plans that we conveyed to instructors. It was essential that we avoided presenting conflicting information that could add to confusion and uncertainty. Some of our other principles such as avoiding speculation and focusing on what we knew for sure helped us to be able to stay consistent in our approach.

6. Focused on Short Term Plans and Goals

Our first message to instructors went out within 24 hours of Purdue announcing the transition to remote learning after Spring Break. While we did not have a specific plan to communicate, we let instructors know that we would be working on a plan and that gave them dates for when initial information about assignments and activities would be available to them. After that, we sent out emails every few days as we progressed in our plans for moving the course online. In addition to emails, we recorded videos demonstrating how to use different technologies that instructors would need to use such as screen capture software for recording short lectures. Once remote instruction began and continued throughout the semester the course director recorded a weekly video no longer than ten minutes that addressed the upcoming week.

Advice We Gave for Communicating with Students

As we worked to develop a plan and communicate that plan to the instructors, instructors were tasked with communicating the course changes to their students and assist them in managing their own uncertainties and anxieties. As we gave advice to our instructors on communicating with students, we encouraged instructors to adopt many of the same principles that we used. At the beginning of the situation, it was important to communicate to students that, while there was not an exact plan in place, there would be a very specific plan ready and communicated to them when classes resumed after Spring Break.

When classes resumed, we encouraged instructors to post a weekly video or announcement that gave an overview of the week and the activities and assignments that were due. Additionally, since students were not used to the weekly format, a weekly list of all readings, quizzes, activities, and assignments was posted at the beginning of each week's content. We encouraged instructors to keep the format of these lists the same each week so students would know exactly what to expect.

Because of the switch to remote learning, some key changes had to be made to the major assignments and syllabus. First, students had to record their presentation and upload them to the learning management system. As a team we created a series of how-to videos for students demonstrating how to record presentations, use visual aids during the presentation, and upload and share the presentation to be viewed by their classmates. We shared these videos with

instructors to share with students. For the assignment descriptions and the syllabus, we included all changes in red so that students would be able to quickly see what changes were made.

Finally, we encouraged our instructors to be compassionate and flexible in their communication with students. We recognized that students were dealing with the upheaval of leaving campus, taking all their courses online, and living everyday life in the general stress and confusion caused by the pandemic. Furthermore, as we were learning how to teach online, we knew that our students were *learning how to learn online*. This meant that some students would struggle to get assignments turned in on time or would struggle to adapt to new technologies and we wanted to be as supportive as possible.

Lessons Learned from Transitioning COM 114 Online

At the end of the semester the team took some time to reflect on what went well during remote learning, the challenges we faced, how we were able to reduce and manage uncertainty, and what lessons we learned from the strengths and challenges that we could use in the future. Feedback from instructors throughout the semester and qualitative comments from semester course evaluations provided additional information about student and instructor perceptions of the semester.

Things That Went Well

Based on instructor feedback and student course evaluations, having a set structure for each week in terms of content, activities, assignments, and due dates was very helpful in reducing confusion and uncertainty. Students reported that the organization of the course into weeks and a standard format made it easier to follow and they knew what to expect. Instructors appreciated having specific suggestions for how to organize the course and what activities to include as it took a lot of the mental load of decision making off instructors' task lists.

The administrative team was fortunate to have already developed a distance learning modality for COM 114. As a result, our own uncertainty about transitioning the presentational speaking course online was reduced, because we knew that it was possible for students to build their communication skills in virtual setting and achieve the course objectives. From our previous experiences, we knew what assignments and guidelines were easiest and most effective to implement in an online environment and what to avoid. Large, multi-section introductory courses, especially with general education requirements, should consider offering a distance learning version of their course in the future to help build a reservoir of information and contingency plans in the case of emergency.

Having frequent, smaller pieces of communication also was an effective way of keeping instructors informed and aware but not feeling paralyzed by the amount of information coming at them. Although the initial thought of instructors that they wanted to have all the information and answers as to how the class would run at the beginning, given the ever-changing nature of the situation, this was not possible. Having shorter emails to go through or a video focused on one specific tool allowed instructors to focus on the key message with few distractions. Instructors were also able to go back and search for a specific email that addressed a concern or issue they were having. Knowing that information would be sent out this way also helped to alleviate some of the uncertainty and discomfort instructors were feeling due to lack of knowing what to expect.

Challenges

We experienced challenges related to the lack of reciprocated communication from instructors with the administrative team. While we always encouraged instructors to reach out with any questions and concerns and many did, many also did not. We had no way of knowing if instructors were reading emails or watching the videos we provided. Uncertainty management theory acknowledges that individuals sometimes avoid communication to manipulate their level of uncertainty (Brashers 2001). Instructors may have understandably chosen to disregard our messages and tackle the transition with their own strategies as a way of dealing with their personal circumstances.

We had a small number of instructors who struggled to transition to remote teaching for a variety of reasons who did not reach out for assistance. As the semester progressed, problems arose when some instructors became non-responsive with their students. Some students voiced concerns about lack of communication from their instructors and about not receiving feedback on activities and presentations in a timely matter. Although it is unlikely that issues like these could be completely avoided, having a set mechanism for instructor feedback, gradebook reviews, or periodic check-ins would be beneficial.

Another challenge, for both instructors and students, was being able to effectively navigate the new technologies that were incorporated into the course. For example, students struggled to film themselves with visual aids as many were not familiar with screen capture technology. Some students who did not have reliable internet access had trouble uploading large files such as presentations. In addition to step by step written instructions, videos that we created specifically for our course seemed to work better than sharing videos created by the technology companies as we could demonstrate exactly what it would look like in our courses. Many students and instructors commented that these were helpful. We also became aware of University support for students with poor Internet connections and so we could proactively refer students to those support structures in the future. The reality, though, was that there will always be technical issues when we are heavily reliant on technology to deliver the educational experience. As the world relies more and more on mediated forms of communication, course delivery issues like access and technical ability need to be considered.

Conclusion

Uncertainty can be a very difficult state for people to live and work in. Students, instructors, and university administrators were thrust into a nearly constant state of uncertainty when COVID-19 hit Purdue in before spring break in 2020. As a small team worked to transition multiple sections of a public speaking courses, there was the challenge of delivering course content remotely, as well as the challenge of making and communicating those plans during uncertain times.

Uncertainty management theory (Brashers 2001), provides a lens to critique and better understand the role of communication and course design in helping to mitigate some of the negative impacts of uncertainty on both instructors and students. Based on feedback and observation we found that the core principles that guided our team's communication were successful in that mitigation process and as our team moves forward to continue to address the uncertainty brought to our world and university due to the pandemic, these principles will continue to guide our planning and actions.

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Increasing Access to Food through a Rural Community Pharmacy Initiative

Jasmine Gonzalvo*

Purdue University

Claire Schumann

Northwestern Memorial Hospital

Introduction

In this reflection paper, we describe a Purdue College of Pharmacy-led project aimed at addressing temporary food insecurity needs during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Jasmine Gonzalvo, Director of the Center for Health Equity and Innovation (CHEI), led a small team of four doctoral pharmacy students to reach out to independent pharmacies providing medication delivery services to their clients. The intent was to utilize the existing infrastructure of medication delivery for food box distribution to those who were most in need, either due to being homebound or due to economic hardship.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, from 2013-2016, 48.4% of Americans reported taking a prescription medication in the last 30 days.² Community pharmacists play a vital role filling these prescription medications for individuals with acute or chronic conditions. In Indiana, there are almost 800 community pharmacies (i.e. CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, etc.) and over 200 independently-owned pharmacies.³ During the COVID-19 pandemic, community pharmacies have either continued or implemented new medication delivery services to ensure that individuals in their communities continue to receive needed medications. In an effort to support social distancing, The Center for Health Equity and Innovation (CHEI) at Purdue in collaboration with two doctoral pharmacy students created a statewide resource listing Indiana-based pharmacies with drive-thru and delivery services.⁴ The resource was distributed widely to the public on social media and available on a variety of websites. See Appendix A.

The Purdue University College of Pharmacy graduates approximately 150 doctoral-level pharmacy students annually. Students complete two years of pre-pharmacy requirements before applying to the four-year professional phase of the pharmacy curriculum. During the professional phase, classroom learning spans clinical pharmacy concepts, public health, administrative, and

* **Corresponding Author:** Jasmine Gonzalvo, PharmD, Department of Pharmacy Practice, College of Pharmacy, 640 Eskenazi Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Email: jgonzalv@purdue.edu.

Recommended Citation: Gonzalvo, Jasmine and Claire Schumann. 2020. "Increasing Access to Food through a Rural Community Pharmacy Initiative." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 84-91.

Acknowledgements: We'd like to thank the pharmacists and staff at JR Pharmacy and Baesler's Market for their enthusiasm in supporting their communities during the pandemic. We'd also like to thank the Indiana Association for Diabetes Care and Education Specialists for providing the funding for this project.

²<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/drug-use-therapeutic.htm>

³ Pharmacy numbers were compiled from information available on cvs.com, walgreens.com, and pcamnet.org

⁴ Resource available at: bit.ly/PurduePharmacyCOVID.

patient safety topics and is supplemented by experiential learning through hands-on laboratories and a final year of experiential rotations. During the final year, student pharmacists serve patients in community pharmacies, medical clinics, hospitals, and non-traditional environments across a variety of local and international settings. Pharmacy students are commonly encouraged to engage in outreach projects, oftentimes through student organizations or faculty projects.

Development of Our Project

The Indiana Association for Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (IN ADCES) was offering a funding opportunity of \$1000 in support of a local COVID-related initiative. In response to this opportunity, four pharmacy students in collaboration with CHEqI decided to identify a community pharmacy that can provide food assistance to their existing clients who may be facing food insecurity. As mentioned previously, community pharmacies commonly offer medication delivery services. These services are often offered free of charge to pharmacy clientele within a certain geographic radius. We wanted to add food boxes to the existing infrastructure of free medication delivery. The proposed idea presented an innovative solution for food insecurity using existing processes offered by a community pharmacy.

Early in the pandemic, we assumed that unemployment rates would continue to rise and that food assistance needs would also increase for Hoosier families. For example, food banks and pantries were making increasing requests, on social media, for volunteers and donations as the pandemic continued. This assumption was subsequently supported by the Monthly Management Report from the Division of Family Resources with the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration that lists Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) monthly statistics across Indiana. According to the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, statewide, greater numbers of Hoosier families required SNAP and TANF benefits in April and May 2020 compared to previous months.⁵ These trends stood out to the team as an area to use our resources to help.

The pharmacy students utilized the aforementioned resource listing of pharmacies offering medication delivery to reach out by phone to assess initial interest in and feasibility of this initiative. Several pharmacies expressed interest, although one pharmacy clearly stood out from the rest – JR Pharmacy, an independent community pharmacy with four branches across Terre Haute, Indiana. One of their pharmacies is located in Baesler’s Market and presented a unique opportunity to provide food assistance. Not only was the pharmacy conveniently located in the Market, but the staff members were eager for an opportunity to support their clientele and meet food insecurity needs during the pandemic. According to the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration information for Vigo County, JR Pharmacy has also seen a consistent increase in the numbers of families requiring TANF and SNAP benefits.⁶

The leadership team with IN ADCES subsequently selected our initiative for the \$1000 COVID-relief fund grant. To facilitate the implementation of this project for the pharmacy and market staff, the pharmacy students then provided a brief food screening assessment and a listing of sample food items to include in a nutritious food box. Food screening questions included, “We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more. Was that often

⁵ https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/MMR-STATEWIDE-en-us_May-2020.pdf

⁶ <https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/counties/MMR-Vigo-en-us.pdf>

true, sometimes true, or never true for your household in the last few weeks?” and “The food we bought just didn’t last, and we didn’t have money to get more. Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for your household in the last few weeks?” A response of “often true” or “sometimes true” to either question indicated a positive screen for food insecurity. Some suggestions on the list of foods developed by the students included canned protein (tuna, chicken, or ham), canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned beans, peanut butter, soup, pasta, oatmeal, nuts, rice, and others. See Appendix B.

The pharmacy staff worked with employees of Baesler’s Market to purchase and assemble the food boxes that contained the non-perishable foods on the lists provided by the students. The food boxes were stored in the pharmacy until they were scheduled to go out with the medication deliveries. The pharmacy staff and medication delivery drivers’ familiarity with JR Pharmacy clientele allowed them to easily identify families facing food insecurity.

Our Reflections on Project Efforts

Baesler’s market staff was able to assemble a total of 36 food boxes using the suggested food items at a cost of just under \$28.00 each. Food boxes were then distributed free of charge over the following three weeks through the medication delivery services.

Mywabashvalley.com, a local Wabash/West Vigo news station featured our collaboration with a short news story.⁷ Lori Eldred, a pharmacist at JR Pharmacy, involved with the food box project commented, “We already provide free delivery for prescriptions, and so we’re able to deliver this while we are delivering prescriptions to people and so it worked out well that we were able to coordinate the two. We’re sure it will help, I mean unfortunately I have some patients that have to choose between buying their prescriptions or paying another bill or you know filling up their grocery cart, so I’m sure it will help several people in the community.”

Although we did not conduct a formal assessment for this project, based on verbal feedback, the project had a positive impact for the clients of JR Pharmacy. Ron Vencel, president of JR Pharmacy said, “Once members of the community heard about this program, we started getting calls from more people who needed help getting enough food for their families. There isn’t a shortage of people who need help right now. The people who received this food assistance were really grateful.”

The doctoral pharmacy students and CHEqI faculty appreciated the opportunity to partner with the pharmacists dedicating time and effort to this initiative. Rachael Smith, a recent pharmacy graduate who participated in this project, commented, “Having just finished three months of rotations at an independent pharmacy offering everything from free delivery to diabetes education classes, I saw firsthand how much a pharmacy could do for their patients and the impact they could have in their community. With the sudden shift in everyday life due to COVID-19, I knew those patients were relying on their pharmacies for more than just medications. I leapt at the chance to work with a pharmacy to further expand their patient services in a time of crisis – especially those with food insecurities who need essential items.” Claire Schumann, another recent pharmacy graduate supporting this project said, “I think that it

⁷ <https://www.mywabashvalley.com/top-news/jr-pharmacy-and-baeslers-making-food-baskets-for-the-community/>

is easy during this time to feel stuck, like you can't do anything to help when there are so many people who need it. When this opportunity presented itself, I was eager to team up with my peers to make even just a small impact on our community here in Indiana."

We were impressed by JR pharmacy staff's willingness to engage with our team in the spirit of helping their clients. The pharmacy staff were not interested in the modest amount of money. They were grateful for the idea and took immediate action to get the food to their clients in need. This effort was motivated and accomplished by pharmacy and market staff who simply care about their community. The pharmacy and market staff in this Hoosier community stepped up during a time when their clients were in need of assistance.

A similar positive attitude from volunteers and staff is necessary to support the success of anyone looking to replicate and scale this project to reach larger numbers of people. One factor limiting the scalability of this project is the funding required to procure the non-perishable food items. Community pharmacies located within larger grocers may have the opportunity for food supplies to be donated on a larger scale and subsequently distributed with the medication deliveries through the pharmacy. Alternatively, particularly in urban areas, the opportunity exists to partner with food banks who could provide pre-prepared food boxes to pharmacies who in turn would be responsible for distribution to those who may be homebound and otherwise unable to receive services from a food bank. The convenience of having non-perishable foods and medications delivered together in rural or urban settings presents a novel area of research suitable for a larger-scale project.

From the pharmacy student perspective, students could advocate for comparable initiatives while on experiential rotations or while working in community pharmacies. Student organizations could organize food donation drives and subsequently partner with community pharmacies providing medication delivery services. Pharmacy students could collaborate with other Colleges and Departments across the University, such as Nutrition Science, Agriculture, or Public Health to enhance collective efforts and impact. Given adequate time and resources, students would likely greatly improve the impact and scalability of this effort.

Discussion and Conclusion

This project was a unique collaboration between a community pharmacy, doctoral pharmacy students, CHEqI, and IN ADCES. We made every effort to maximize the use of existing infrastructure without placing additional strain on the pharmacy or market staff. In reality, pharmacy staff did not implement the brief food security screening questions for two reasons. Firstly, pharmacy staff were able to easily identify specific clients who they knew were in need of immediate food assistance. Secondly, implementation of the food assessment screening required additional outreach time and effort to identify food insecure clients. Responsibilities related to medication filling, dispensing, and counseling took priority over activities related to this project.

Food costs likely could have been decreased through collaboration with a food bank partner or low-cost grocer, which would have allowed for a greater number of food boxes to be distributed. However, in initial exploratory discussions of this project, it became clear that during the COVID-19 pandemic, food bank resources were already operating beyond capacity given the

substantial increase in food insecurity across the State. JR Pharmacy's position within Baesler's Market presented the convenient opportunity for the objectives of this effort, while partnership with a food bank or low-cost grocer outside of the pharmacy environment would have required additional time, effort, and resources to coordinate.

The \$1000 used to fund this effort provided 36 families with temporary food assistance in an area with increased numbers of people with food insecurity in the midst of the pandemic. Sustained funding for this initiative likely could have resulted in continued food sources for families with food insecurity and process improvements which would have helped inform similar projects in the future. Although IN ADCES explored other funding opportunities, none proved fruitful.

JR Pharmacy was a unique community pharmacy with altruistic staff members who were willing to go above and beyond to help their clients. This connection to the community facilitated the success of our initiative, consistent with other types of COVID-related projects motivated by the spirit of altruism. Larger community pharmacies, such as Walgreens, CVS, or Walmart, are also traditionally located alongside food resources and may offer delivery in certain areas, which presents an opportunity for similar initiatives. Hospital pharmacies offering medication delivery services and with access to food services could also use a similar model in times of need.

Community pharmacies who offer local delivery services located within grocery stores present a unique opportunity to provide food assistance along with free medication deliveries. Other pharmacies with medication delivery options may consider implementing similar initiatives during times of need. The key components of this effort were a local not-for-profit organization with modest resources to fund a small initiative, utilization of existing infrastructure to facilitate project objectives, and individuals with a strong willingness to help.

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Walgreens Newsroom. 2019. Store Count by State (Online). Retrieved 10 August 2020. (<https://news.walgreens.com/fact-sheets/store-count-by-state.htm>).

Appendix A
Websites who shared Pharmacy Resource

Organization	Website
1340 AM WBIW	http://www.wbiw.com/2020/04/02/covid-19-resources-for-older-adults-and-their-families/
Bona Vista	http://bonavista.org/coronavirus-covid-19-agency-updates/
Family Voices Indiana	https://www.scribd.com/document/454642636/Indiana-Pharmacy-Social-Distancing-Options
Indiana FSSA Division of Aging	https://www.in.gov/fssa/files/COVID-19_Resources_4_older_adults_families.pdf
Indiana Pharmacists Association	https://www.indianapharmacists.org/covid-19-resources/
Indiana Senate Democrats	https://www.indianasenatedemocrats.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Indiana-Pharmacy-Social-Distancing-Options.pdf
Indiana University, Child and Adolescent Mental Health	https://camhecho.iu.edu/resources/downloads/COVID%20Resources%20from%203-26-20.pdf
Purdue University College of Pharmacy, Office of Continuing Education	https://ce.pharmacy.purdue.edu/continue-education/covid-19
Purdue University Human Resources website	https://www.purdue.edu/hr/COVID-19/index.php
The Herald Bulletin	https://www.heraldbulletin.com/opinion/letters_to_the_editor/guest-viewpoint-indiana-pharmacists-association-offers-ways-to-help-protect-pharmacists/article_505ce2ae-71fa-11ea-ae24-ef255e60a404.html

Appendix B
Food Screening Questionnaire



Food Security Screening

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Correct Address Confirmed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

I'm going to read you two statements that people have made about their food situation. For each statement, please tell me whether the statement was **often true**, **sometimes true**, or **never true** for your household in the last 12 months.

1. "We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more."

Was that **often true**, **sometimes true**, or **never true** for your household in the last 2-4 weeks?

- ☐ Often True
☐ Sometimes True
☐ Never True

2. "The food we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have money to get more."

Was that **often true**, **sometimes true**, or **never true** for your household in the last 2-4 weeks?

- ☐ Often True
☐ Sometimes True
☐ Never True

A response of "often true" or "sometimes true" to either question = positive screen for Food Insecurity and qualifies for food boxes.

Reflections on Institutional Equity for Faculty in Response to COVID-19

Dessie Clark*

Ethel L. Mickey

Joya Misra

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Feminist scholars have long documented the complex, multiple ways in which academic institutions reproduce gender inequalities (National Academy of Sciences 2007). In times of crisis, institutional commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion may be sidelined (Tulshyan 2020). As institutions of higher education navigate the impacts of COVID-19, the need for gender equity projects is more urgent than ever. As members of the University of Massachusetts (UMass) ADVANCE team, we focus on institutional transformation by cultivating faculty equity through collaboration in three arenas – research, community building, and shared decision-making. In this reflection paper, we describe the role of a gender equity program at one large, public, research-intensive university in addressing the institutional response as the pandemic rapidly changed our community. Funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), ADVANCE Institutional Transformation (IT) grants fund systemic solutions to increase the participation and advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in science and engineering faculty. Since 2001, ADVANCE-IT grants have funded interdisciplinary faculty teams to address gender equity issues at their universities through institutional solutions, including evidence-based interventions to improve climate, policies, and opportunities for women and underrepresented minorities. But, how do we support faculty in ways that are equitable and foster inclusion when the very nature of faculty work has shifted, and the future of higher education is uncertain?

Amid an abrupt shift to online operations, our university rapidly responded to faculty concerns with a mind towards equity. We suggest that key to our university's response to COVID-19 has been coordination across campus units, paired with a shared commitment to sustainable equity. Efforts to achieve institutional gender equity are often met with deep ambivalence or resistance (Acker 2000; Austin and Foxcroft 2010; Hearn 2000; Stewart and Valian 2018; van den Brink and Stobbe 2014). Scholars note that true, lasting institutional transformation requires both

* **Corresponding Author:** Dessie Clark, PhD, Research Collaboration Coordinator, 216 S Barnard St, Howell, MI, 48843. Email: dessieclark@umass.edu.

Recommended Citation: Clark, Dessie, Ethel L. Mickey, Joya Misra. 2020. "Reflections on Institutional Equity for Faculty in Response to COVID-19." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 92-114.

Acknowledgements: We would like to acknowledge and thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions. We thank the members of the UMass community who were interviewed for this project, including Michelle Budig and Eve Weinbaum, and several others who contributed ideas to the paper, including the members of our UMass ADVANCE team. This research was funded by NSF ADVANCE-IT Award #1824090, "Collaboration and Equity: The Resources, Relationships, and Recognition (R3) Model for Advancing Women and Underrepresented Faculty in Science and Engineering." All findings and opinions are the authors' and do not necessarily represent those of the National Science Foundation (NSF).

structural and cultural change: “Understanding, buy-in and support from grassroots organizational members regarding the need for activities of culture change are just as important as strong support from institutional leaders and senior organizational members” (Bilimoria, Joy, and Liang 2008:436; cf. Bird 2011; Rosser and Chameau 2006). Structural changes without popular support do not get implemented, and popular supports without formal structural support do not lead to long-term changes; both types of change are necessary. In our case, a formal structural response to COVID-19 came quickly from the University Provost after consultation with senior administrators and faculty liaisons, most notably the faculty union. While many ADVANCE programs have historically found it difficult to embed structural change due to the lack of leadership buy-in (Bilimoria et al. 2008; Rosser and Chameau 2006), UMass leadership changed tenure, promotion, and review policies; adapted teaching expectations and evaluations; and formally recognized intensified caregiving demands. ADVANCE then invited administrators to participate in a virtual panel on faculty evaluation in response to COVID-19, during which documentation emerged as a central faculty concern. The Provost followed up with the addition of an optional Pandemic Impact Statement for faculty to include in their annual reviews, likely be extended to personal statements for promotion and tenure cases, and ADVANCE created a best practice tool on evaluating faculty equitably during the pandemic, as well as organizing trainings for both faculty members and evaluators in Fall 2020. These policy adjustments by institutional leaders reflect the urgent equity priorities central to the mission of ADVANCE.

Academia must enact responses to COVID-19 that will retain and promote diverse women faculty who are already disadvantaged in their institution. We suggest that the continual role of ADVANCE will be ensuring that rapid structural shifts lead to deep, cultural change, embedding the current administration’s commitment to equity into the institution. We view our role moving forward as fostering buy-in from other community members, including College Deans, department chairs, and committees tasked with evaluating faculty, to ensure the effective implementation of policies across organizational levels, such that policy becomes practice. After outlining relevant literature on gender equity in higher education, we present our university case study, including next steps and ongoing challenges for the UMass ADVANCE team. We aim for this reflection to inform equity programs and diversity efforts in higher education more broadly as we navigate this current moment.

Gender Equity and Institutional Transformation in Higher Education

Universities are gendered organizations, with discrimination against women embedded in the structure and culture of institutions (Acker 2006; Britton 2017). This is especially true in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), where women represent a statistical minority across faculty ranks in most disciplines (Stewart and Valian 2018; Fox 2001). Organizational structure includes the distribution of power and authority through bureaucratic hierarchies and policies that uphold normative practices and cultural values (Acker 1992; Britton 2017). In STEM, power and authority are disproportionately concentrated in the hands of white men (McIlwee and Robinson 1992). Culture includes images, symbols, and ideologies that justify and legitimize organizations (Acker 1992), and STEM culture is traditionally masculine, with gender status beliefs shaping ideas about competence and leadership abilities (Ridgeway 2011). Organizational structures and culture are mutually reinforcing, with gender implicated to create continual patterns of inequitable treatment for women. The “chilly climate” for women STEM faculty (Hall and Sandler 1982; Britton 2017) is “at best bothersome and at worst hostile and

excluding” (Bystydzienski and Bird 2006:5). Features of the chilly climate include inequitable work allocations, biases in evaluation and reward procedures, and policies that penalize women’s greater family responsibilities (Bilimoria and Liang 2014; Fox, Sonnert, and Nikiforova 2009). The chilly climate is exacerbated for women who face intersecting systems of oppression including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, age, and/or ability (e.g. Collins 2000; Branch 2016; Zambrana 2018; Turner 2002; Ong, Smith, and Ko 2018; Cech and Pham 2017).

Organizational culture preserves exclusionary structures in academia without scrutiny of their existence or validity (Sturm 2006). The organizational logic of STEM fosters a masculine ideal scientist as fully devoted and unencumbered by outside (familial) obligations (NAS 2007; Morimoto and Zajicek 2014). Cultural assumptions about the ideal scientist are embedded into structures of higher education evidenced, for example, by narrow indicators of academic excellence and tenure and promotion policies (Sonnert and Holton 1995; Bailyn 2003). Institutional faculty evaluation practices seem gender-neutral but nonetheless depict white, middle-class men as the “neutral and objective standard” (Nentwich 2006). Evaluation criteria disadvantage women and women from underrepresented racial minority groups most of all, with women of color less likely than white women or men of any racial group to be awarded tenure (Leggon 2006; Lisnic, Zajicek, and Morimoto 2018). While all academics with families must navigate competing demands of work and childrearing, women have particular difficulty negotiating tenure clock demands with the “biological clock” of childbearing (Hochschild 1975), and many institutions resist policies designed to pause tenure clocks during parental leave.

The understanding that chilly climates exist and need to be thawed informs efforts to promote gender equity in STEM (Britton 2017; Stewart and Valian 2018). The underrepresentation of women faculty is no longer framed around individual competencies or choices of women, or the “women as deficient” model (Rosser 2004). Instead, achieving women’s full participation in academia requires an institutional perspective, one critically examining multiple levels of practices, cultural norms, and underlying structures (Ely and Meyerson 2000). Improving women’s representation is insufficient, but institutions must also upend gender and racial hierarchies for women to feel fully included and supported, creating equal opportunities for them to achieve on par with men (Branch 2016; Fox 2001; Stewart and Valian 2018).

Despite shifts towards institutional solutions, gender equity projects face challenges due to the unique structure and culture of academia, as programs within gendered settings can be experience simultaneous resistance and transformation (Clark, Bauchspies, and Nawyn 2019). Universities are bureaucratic organizations with fragmented authority structures, a combination making institutional change difficult to achieve (Bird 2011; Ely and Meyerson 2000; Valian 1998; Sturm 2006; Austin and Laursen 2015). Men may view gender equity programs as a threat to their careers, potentially perceiving women’s advancement as undermining their relative advantages in power, pay, or status (Acker 2000; Cockburn 1991). Promoting groups on the basis of identities also conflicts with the deeply held academic value of meritocracy (Bagilhole and Goode 2001; Lamont 2009). Finally, with Titles VII and IX outlawing gender discrimination in the workplace and education, respectively, gender inequality may be perceived as a thing of the past, previously addressed by academia (van den Brink and Stobbe 2014).

In response to documented challenges to institutional equity, the U.S. National Science Foundation has funded the ADVANCE program since 2001 to increase the participation and advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in academic science and engineering careers. ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grants fund institutional solutions to empower women STEM faculty to fully participate in their careers (Stewart, Malley, and LaVaque-Manty 2007; Rosser 2004). The five-year awards support the development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative systemic change strategies within a single higher education institution. While ADVANCE-awarded institutions have not been uniformly successful, many ADVANCE awards contributed to concrete changes to advance women in science (Bilimoria et al. 2008; Morimoto and Zajicek 2014; Zippel and Ferree 2019). A continual tension for ADVANCE is pairing support for individual faculty with interventions targeting institutional mechanisms reproducing inequalities (Morimoto et al. 2013). And while ADVANCE recently made dismantling intersecting systems of oppression a central focus of solicitations and awards, the program historically privileged gender, thereby centering the experiences of white, middle- and upper-class women scientists (Hunt et al. 2012).

In our case, these tensions have been somewhat alleviated by current university leadership already-sensitized to equity issues by a climate survey in 2016, which publicly identified a number of issues. While some previous leaders were less likely to recognize how gender and racial inequities limit faculty careers, the Chancellor, Provost, and current STEM Deans recognize and are willing to address these issues. Successfully implementing change through ADVANCE requires broad institutional commitment and embrace of equity and inclusion (Bilimoria et al. 2008; Hardcastle et al. 2019). Additionally, along with ADVANCE, the faculty union proved essential in serving as conduit between individual faculty and the administration, allowing individuals to feel heard in the implementation of larger interventions. In many ways, the fragmented university authority structure worked favorably, with various campus units partnering to quickly enact policies. Nonetheless, we address remaining tensions as we continue navigating the impact of COVID-19 on faculty.

Context: UMass ADVANCE and COVID-19

UMass ADVANCE was midway through its second year of its IT award on March 11, 2020 when the university shifted all operations online in response to COVID-19. UMass is a large research-intensive, doctoral-granting public university. Women comprise approximately 40% of all Department Chairs and Deans, comparable to other land grant universities. The Deans of both the College of Natural Sciences and the College of Information and Computer Science are women, although women make up a smaller proportion of Chairs in STEM departments. Among tenure-line faculty members, men and women faculty typically have similar chances of earning tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, but women are less likely to be promoted to Professor than men, and achieve promotion to Professor more slowly than men. UMass ADVANCE focuses on retaining and supporting diverse faculty through research collaboration, inclusive community, and shared governance (see Misra et al. 2017). UMass ADVANCE maintains a visible presence on-campus through faculty workshops, working closely with Deans and department chairs on best practices, and also interacting with the faculty unions and university offices, including the Provost's Office, to make policy and procedure recommendations. ADVANCE Principal Investigators meet monthly with the Provost's Office to

discuss priorities around equity and inclusion, including ways to collaborate on other initiatives spearheaded by the administration.

As COVID-19 disrupted our campus community, UMass ADVANCE focused on ensuring faculty equity and inclusion in institutional responses.² As we will describe, the initial, structural changes made by campus administrators included attention to equity concerns. This orientation reflects the active presence of an ADVANCE-IT program on campus for almost two years, including our regular meetings with the Provost, as well as the writing and execution of the grant requiring earlier coordination of interests and investments of institutional stakeholders (Morimoto et al. 2013). While our team did not directly determine the university's response to COVID-19, a broad goal of ADVANCE awards is to subtly shift day-to-day operations and ways of thinking with a mind towards equity (Fox 2008). Since the initial announcement of policy adjustments, ADVANCE has collaborated with campus units, including the Provost's Office, to facilitate follow-up implementation and share best practices. We aim for continued attention to equity in short-term adjustments and their long-term impacts on faculty careers. We seek to help create transparency and implement practices that will ensure equitable structures and an inclusive campus culture for diverse faculty. In the remainder of this paper, we use our institution as a case study to outline best practices for institutional responses to COVID-19, and describe challenges and future directions for our program.

Supporting Faculty: A Campus Response

Our case study results from information compiled through informational interviews, both formal and informal conversations with campus stakeholders, official university memos and communications, information from relevant workshops, and the authors' first-hand experiences and observations from the last five months. This essay offers both a recounting of the COVID-19 response by members of the ADVANCE team and the ways in which ADVANCE became involved as the response evolved, building on the momentum of university administration. Our involvement included hosting a virtual panel of administrative leaders and creating a tool to address the impacts of COVID-19 on faculty. The COVID-19 crisis has been fluid, with new and occasionally contradictory information occurring on a daily basis. As such, our case study represents the landscape from when it was written. We expect that the response to COVID-19 will continue to evolve, leading to new approaches.

COVID-19 has amplified many pre-existing inequities in academia, creating distinct challenges to differently situated faculty members (Anwer 2020; Gonzalez and Griffin 2020; Douglas-Gabriel 2020; Zahneis 2020). Given our mission, UMass ADVANCE has been closely following the university response to COVID-19 for faculty concerns. We present an overview of pivots and adjustments UMass made for faculty in response to COVID-19, and describe how these steps may inform further adjustments and programming. We suggest that a critical aspect of UMass's response has been structural changes in policy and procedure that reflect a culture that recognizes challenges faculty face under the pandemic. We maintain that addressing structure and cultural culture simultaneously is key to enacting institutional transformation.

² While other campus units importantly addressed student learning and wellbeing, ADVANCE concentrates on supporting faculty.

On March 19, 2020, eight days after faculty were informed they must move all operations online, the Provost, Dr. John McCarthy, emailed all faculty identifying a number of key concerns resulting from discussions with faculty union leadership. The Massachusetts Society of Professors³ (MSP) had conveyed to the Provost's office faculty concerns about how the disruptions might affect how they are evaluated. Following this email, McCarthy released a memo (see Appendix A) with a series of concrete policy changes developed in consultation with the MSP. The timing of the memo release was key to addressing faculty questions promptly, and its content began to alleviate faculty concerns about whether or not the administration would consider the impact of COVID-19 in their future evaluations. In informational interviews, various campus leaders acknowledge that the Provost's memo involved a collaborative effort involving many campus stakeholders and groups including the Provost's Office, MSP, the Office on Faculty Development, and the Faculty Senate. This joint effort represents an important best practice for other universities working on COVID-19 concerns, as top leadership buy-in ensures structural changes, and transparent communication and trust across units maximizes input from diverse voices.

In the next three sections, we focus on the Provost's memo, as it represents a central institutional response to faculty and indicates the administration's awareness of relevant gender equity issues. Key elements included: recognizing disruptions to research, teaching, and service as inevitable, acknowledging the impact of caregiving, establishing tenure and promotion changes, suspending teaching evaluations, changing course structure to online or hybrid formats, and establishing emergency funds for childcare and technology. While policy change happened quickly, we see our role with ADVANCE as centering equity in the ongoing response and implementation of policy adjustments. Implementation often comes at a local level, and we are developing programming aimed at college and department leaders. We are focused on long-term institutional changes, such that the impact of COVID-19 will be acknowledged throughout the course of faculty careers.

Changes to Tenure, Promotion, and Review

The Provost's first action item in his memo immediately changed the timing of decisions on tenure, reappointment (usually pre-tenure), or continuing appointment (non-tenure-track faculty and librarians). Recognizing the enormous number of new and unexpected tasks of faculty, the Provost stated, "It is unreasonable to expect that normal progress can be made in all areas of faculty activity: research, teaching, and service." The statement explicated the many ways research productivity might be impacted, including reduced access to labs, travel cancellations, and suspension of research with human subjects. With productivity being crucial to faculty evaluation at research-intensive universities, and women STEM faculty already navigating gender biases in evaluation processes, the Provost's decision to delay tenure could mitigate the negative effects of COVID-19 on women. While almost all research has been somewhat disrupted by COVID-19, editors of academic journals have noted women have already submitted fewer papers in 2020 compared to previous years (Kitchener 2020), while articles by men have relatively increased (Cui, Ding, and Zhu 2020; Fazackerley 2020).

³ MSP represents librarians, tenure track faculty, lecturers, extension faculty, clinical faculty, and research faculty.

The announced tenure delay was an automatic one-year delay for all pre-tenure faculty members, meaning faculty members had to affirmatively *ask* to be reviewed on schedule. Thus, faculty members whose work is proceeding as normal can request to be reviewed at the normal time. Automatic delays of this sort tend to have an equalizing effect wherein it is outside of the norm to be reviewed on schedule, rather than the opposite. The Provost went on to make an unusual addendum to this; once a faculty member is tenured, the promotion salary increment would be made retroactive to when they were supposed to begin the tenure process, thus, ensuring they do not face an economic disadvantage from delaying their tenure. The Provost made the same automatic one-year delay available to faculty who were pre-tenure and needed to be reappointed through the tenure-decision year.

Non-tenure-track faculty and librarians who were up for continuing appointment were granted the option to delay their continuing appointment review. However, this option did not come with the same automatic timing, based on the assumption that these groups' career progression might be less based on research, and thus less disrupted. Even if delaying their continuing appointment decision, the semester counted for their progress toward promotion in rank, allowing them to receive more money and additional job security.

Finally, the Provost noted he would issue forthcoming guidance about the potential adverse effects of the semester in research, teaching, and service to departmental and college personnel committees who review tenure, promotion, and reappointment or continuing appointment cases. The guidance would not only point to the disruptions to faculty work, but would also recognize special contributions made by faculty to support the campus community during the pandemic, including advancing online teaching or additional service. Michelle Budig, Vice Provost for Faculty Development, described this as “rewarding faculty for things they did outside of the box” during the Spring 2020 semester. The Provost emphasized that the unexpected and very intense work faculty were doing would be recognized in assessing annual faculty reviews, as well as personnel decisions such as promotion, tenure, or continuing appointment. The Provost further mentioned he would develop relevant language for letters soliciting external reviews. However, as we will describe below, *how* these policies will actually be implemented in practice remains an ongoing, key priority for ADVANCE.

Changes to Teaching

Next, the Provost's memo announced the suspension of standardized student teaching evaluations. Eve Weinbaum, President of MSP, noted that the union and other campus administrators had recognized the biases built into student teaching evaluations well before the onset of COVID-19. When COVID-19 hit during contract negotiations, Weinbaum says “the discussions kind of became wrapped together” around teaching evaluations. Students already evaluate women faculty more harshly for failing to meet gendered expectations, and these extraordinary teaching circumstances may further exacerbate gendered and racialized teaching evaluation bias (Sprague and Massoni 2005). Women and women of color faculty also have hidden workloads as they are more likely than men to provide informal mentorship and emotional support to struggling students (Goodwin and Mitchneck 2020).

Given the abrupt shift to online learning, the Provost did not want negative evaluations to impact faculty progression. He noted that ad hoc evaluations could occur through Center for Teaching

and Learning or the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment, but would be given to the faculty member, not kept by the university to be used in assessment. This allows faculty to benefit from student feedback, without worrying the semester's disruption would negatively impact their personnel decisions. Along with this, the Provost changed Pass/Fail grading, in conjunction with the Rules Committee of the Faculty Senate, to allow students to decide whether to retroactively go pass/fail or not. Only grades benefitting students' GPA would be counted toward their GPA for the semester, further reducing the likelihood of negative teaching evaluations. Overall, the Provost's message reflected the concerns brought to MSP by many individual faculty members, and committees and working groups, and recognized faculty concerns as based on real teaching disruptions. It remains to be seen whether this adjustment will lead to long-term cultural change towards more holistic teaching evaluations.

Recognition of Intensified Caregiving Demands

Finally, we wish to highlight a third element of the Provost's memo: recognition of family and caregiving demands which may exacerbate negative impacts on faculty work. Shifts in childcare, eldercare, and household labor from COVID-19 place particular burdens on women (Minello 2020). The Provost noted, "Even high achievers, such as our UMass Amherst faculty, have limits, as they balance exceptional demands at work and home, particularly with schools closed." By declaring faculty members "high achievers" while also acknowledging their increased demands due to school and childcare center closings, the Provost effectively avoided any impression that faculty facing caregiving demands are less excellent than their colleagues, particularly women faculty members who already face gender bias. Additionally, with COVID-19 taking disproportionate health and financial tolls on racial minority and immigrant communities in the US, faculty of color - especially Black faculty and Black women - are more likely to be coping with family illness, unemployment, or the loss of loved ones (Gould and Wilson 2020; Eligon et al. 2020).

The university provided emergency funds for faculty caregiving assistance, including both eldercare and childcare. This was over and above existing paid care leave (for partners, parents, siblings, and children) offered through the existing union contract. Weinbaum said the union immediately negotiated around emergency childcare costs, under the assumption that childcare centers would remain open and be an option for faculty working at home. MSP had been working towards a pool for eldercare funds for over twenty years, and the crisis finally allowed such a fund to be agreed upon. The MSP Emergency Relief Fund also includes technology to support remote teaching or research including equipment like modems and routers, web cameras, new course software, or special programs for remote teaching. These funds will remain available as part of the new one-year contract beginning July 1, 2020. Often the burden of addressing work-life balance falls on individual faculty members (Anwer 2019). And, as Anwer outlines in this special issue, the pandemic only furthers the neoliberal ethic of "individualizing" people's work and life experiences (Anwer 2020). Addressing caregiving, and allocating funds to alleviate this burden, shifts some of this burden the institution and makes what is often "invisible" labor part of the conversation.

UMass ADVANCE: Continued Dialogue and Looking Forward

In the weeks following the Provost's memo release, UMass ADVANCE principal investigators met regularly with campus administrators, including the Provost, Associate Provost for Equity

and Inclusion, Vice Provost for Faculty Development, and various College Deans, to discuss ways to support faculty, especially diverse faculty. Various campus units noted the need to support individual faculty navigating deep disruptions to their work and the new organizational structures implemented by the Provost. The Associate Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Vice Provost for Faculty Development hosted sessions in May and June under the series title of “Supporting Faculty Resilience,” with over 500 faculty registering to participate in the various workshops. ADVANCE participated in the series by hosting a session for faculty to convey their concerns about COVID-19 impacts on their careers to the Provost, as well as the Deans of Natural Science and Engineering. ADVANCE shared its concerns (also held by some administrators) that the university would not remember the impacts of COVID-19 when assessing and evaluating faculty beyond the 2020-2021 academic year, and emphasized documentation as an urgent policy change.

The ADVANCE panel titled, “Recognizing the Impact of COVID-19 in Evaluating Faculty,” occurred on June 4, 2020. The Provost and two Deans virtually provided faculty with more information about how evaluation of their work would operate in reality. In part, we also hoped through this session to illustrate to the three administrators the anxiety felt by faculty members. We had a total of 134 registrations, with 104 of those registrants from STEM colleges and departments. Those who registered for the workshop could provide questions ahead of time for the panelists. We compiled and summarized questions to the panel beforehand. Key themes among faculty questions included anxiety about assessment and how COVID-19 might increase inequality. For example, caregiving mothers, expressed concern that people less responsible for caregiving might be increasing their productivity while their productivity was lowered. Questions included what guidance would be given to personnel committees around tenure and promotion, and how disparities between women and people of color might be taken into account in personnel cases.

Faculty attending the session mostly wanted to know how to document the impact of COVID-19 on their careers. A key question asked of the panel was: What kind of documentation should faculty keep that can be part of their personnel record to track ongoing impediments to their research and teaching programs, or the added expectations for their mentoring and service work? We had some discussion of including a separate COVID-19 impact statement for personnel reviews, including annual faculty reviews. The primary concern here, was that tenure delays, including additional delays beyond the initial automatic one-year delay, would be implemented fairly, and reflect a flexible understanding of how the pandemic might have variable effects on faculty careers. The ADVANCE team later followed up with our Internal Advisory Board, and the Deans of STEM colleges expressed interest in implementing an impact statement, which would help ensure this flexibility.

While we came to shared agreement that recording impediments to faculty work is critical, establishing procedures around an impact statement, including its implementation, remains ongoing. We communicated ideas to the Provost’s Office about how impact statements might appear, passing along resources shared within the national ADVANCE network, as well as conveying faculty concerns that had been shared with the ADVANCE team. On July 7, 2020, the Provost’s Office released a second memo (see Appendix B) with guidance on annual faculty reviews for the 2019-2020 academic year; these changes had been bargained with the faculty

union. The memo again reiterated how COVID-19 disrupted faculty research, teaching, and service, acknowledged the intensification of care work, and invited faculty to submit an optional Pandemic Impact Statement with their annual review due this fall, “describing the adjustments you have made, how your work in particular has been impacted by the health crisis, and your contributions to the University’s transition to remote work.” The memo stated that a new section will be added to the online review form specifically for the impact statement and encouraged individual faculty members to consult with their department chair or head and department personnel committees regarding what to document. It is clear that ADVANCE’s pushing has put documentation front and center on the Provost’s agenda.

While inclusion of an impact statement is an important, initial structural change, ADVANCE has been further working to ensure that the implementation of this policy is effective, putting policy into practice and establishing cultural norms around acknowledging impacts. To this end, we developed a best practice tool with specific steps for faculty to document the impacts of COVID-19 on their annual faculty review and as a separate pandemic impact statement included in tenure and promotion materials. This document specifies a wide variety of impacts that should be documented, if relevant, including new teaching, advising, and service responsibilities, changes and unexpected challenges in research and creative activities, as well as health challenges, additional caregiving, and other unforeseeable situations that reflect the effects of the pandemic (see Appendix C).

An urgent, remaining concern includes specifying how impact statements will be evaluated in tenure, promotion, and reappointment or continuing appointment cases, including guidance for external reviewers of personnel cases. We have been working toward a plan to train personnel committees in Fall 2020. ADVANCE will be incorporated into the regular training sessions, led by the MSP and the Provost’s Office. Additionally, ADVANCE will host Dr. Beth Mitchneck, an expert on faculty evaluation and bias, to specifically address evaluating faculty fairly in the context of COVID-19 at two separate trainings on evaluating faculty fairly, to Heads & Chairs, and to members of Personnel Committees. Key will be training evaluators to consider each person’s specific working conditions in evaluating their productivity, as specified through the pandemic impact statement, rather than comparing across faculty with different working conditions (for example, a theorist whose research has continued smoothly, versus a lab scientist who has been locked out of their lab; someone with no care responsibilities versus someone caring for a parent with COVID-19). Additionally, faculty with tenure delays must not be held to higher standards; this requirement has been bargained with the union, and included previously in the contract regarding delays related to caregiving. These sessions will incorporate best practices from the COVID-19 tool developed by ADVANCE. We are confident that training committee members towards sensitivity around how COVID-19 exacerbated inequities among faculty will contribute to our mission of creating long-term cultural changes in our organization.

On June 29th, 2020, UMass released a plan for reopening in Fall 2020. Shortly after the release of this plan, the Provost sent an email to the faculty reiterating his support for faculty as the campus reopens. He noted that no faculty member would be forced to teach face-to-face, and that most courses would be taught online, given the continuing risk of COVID-19. This was a relief to many faculty members, who had concerns about how to teach in-person classes without opening themselves to the risk of illness. However, with many schools in the area considering

partial in-person attendance in the Fall, faculty who remain uncertain how they will care for children at home while also teaching online courses.

In this correspondence, he addressed essential face-to-face and remote course designations, academic calendar and class day/time matrix, and faculty assistance and support with fully remote instruction. He provided new resources for faculty delivering courses in the fall semester. As COVID-19 remains a fluid situation, ADVANCE continues to follow up and meet with administrators, and partner with campus offices to ensure an ongoing institutional commitment to faculty inclusion and equity. Universities must continually respond to the evolving needs of faculty, as further disruptions may require additional accommodations for immediate needs and long-term concerns related to tenure and promotion.

Conclusion

The impacts of COVID-19 will be long-lasting for those in university settings, particularly faculty members, but concern remains across colleges and universities that institutional memory may not last as long. In terms of addressing the equity issues brought about by the pandemic, any institutional short-term memory loss will only further marginalize and hinder the careers of women faculty and faculty from underrepresented racial minority groups - potentially reversing any progress made in recent years. In this paper, we have outlined best practices implemented by our university to support faculty navigating COVID-19. We suggest attention to organizational structure and culture simultaneously will be key to enacting institutional transformation.

In our case, a formal structural response to faculty concerns around evaluation came quickly in the form of official policy changes by the University Provost in his March memo. While administrators on other campuses have resisted ADVANCE programs and other equity projects (see for example, Morimoto et al. 2013; Rosser and Chameau 2006), UMass leadership partnered with units across campus to adjust faculty evaluations in ways that prioritize equity. Our current Provost has an Associate Provost for Diversity and a Director of Academic Equity and Inclusion, who emphasize these issues, as well as a Vice Provost for Faculty Development, who advocates for faculty. Both of these leaders regularly meet and engage with the ADVANCE team. By attending to these issues quickly and thoughtfully, the Provost's office could assuage the deepest concerns of faculty. Individuals described the Provost's actions as "empathetic," "responsive," and "compassionate," with one ADVANCE team member noting: "It was a pretty amazing moment." The union, MSP, as well as the ADVANCE team, further served as conduits between faculty and administrators, pushing for policy around documentation. The Provost's messaging continued to reflect faculty concerns around disruption to their work in his second, July memo announcing the inclusion of a Pandemic Impact Statement in annual faculty reviews. Having a centralized sounding board for faculty in the form of the union, paired with transparent communication across organizational levels, shaped the university response. At UMass, the fragmented organizational structure worked favorably, as there was a commitment across units to collaborate to divide tasks, support faculty, and remain mindful of equity.

While important policy adjustments have been made, how organizational members react, implement, and support these changes at local university levels remain to be seen. A key component of ADVANCE's strategy broadly is to mobilize systemic change by serving as "organizational catalysts," leveraging knowledge, strategic relationships, and accountability

across domains and levels (Sturm 2006). A crucial role of organizational catalysts is to keep the pressure on, maintaining the institution's focus on gender as part of its core mission. Catalysts also serve as bridge builders to leverage change, and members of the ADVANCE team often operate at the convergence of different domains and levels at the institution, allowing them to bring attention to equity to other units working to support faculty, including the MSP, the Office on Faculty Development, and the Faculty Senate. UMass ADVANCE will continue to focus on applying pressure to transform our institution, while collaborating with stakeholders at other universities to develop best practices. We foresee our role as a campus partner, ensuring that rapid structural shifts will lead to deep, cultural changes, with the current administration's commitment to equity becoming embedded in the institution.

What does this work suggest about how other university administrators should respond? First, it is critical for administrators to have conduits, such as ADVANCE and the faculty union, conveying the concerns of faculty members, letting administrators understand how faculty members' work is affected by the pandemic. Administrators also need trusted partners, such as ADVANCE, which can identify best practices in addressing these concerns in ways that will not reinforce existing inequalities by gender and race. This requires long-term, rather than short-term relationships; in the case of UMass, Amherst, we believe that the response has only been so positive because relationships between different administrative offices, faculty union, and ADVANCE team were established and generally positive.

Fostering buy-in from other community members, including department chairs and committees tasked with evaluating faculty, will ensure the effective implementation of policies across organizational levels in order for policy to become practice. Organizational catalysts are not unique to ADVANCE, and we hope the best practices outlined here can be implemented in many settings. ADVANCE, with backing from the NSF, infuses legitimacy and resources into gender equity, and the need to foster faculty inclusion, equity, and success remains urgent with COVID-19.

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Appendix A

Dear Colleagues,

I am immensely grateful to all of you for your resilience and willingness to assume the extraordinary tasks of moving all instruction, service, and, where possible, scholarly activities to remote and online platforms for the duration of this health crisis. Just one of these efforts under normal circumstances would be arduous, and you are engaged on every front. I recognize your exceptional contributions and I thank you. We have been discussing with our colleagues in the MSP leadership the anxieties that many faculty and librarians share about how their work during this semester will be evaluated. I agree that you have enough challenges serving our students without this additional burden, so I want to set your mind at ease. All of these special conditions have been discussed with the MSP – and often suggested by them – and final language will be developed in consultation with them.

Changes in Timing of Decisions on Tenure, Reappointment, and Continuing Appointment

Given the monumental tasks we face this spring semester, it is unreasonable to expect that normal progress can be made in all areas of faculty activity: research, teaching, and service. The cancellation of conferences and research travel, reduced access to labs, the suspension of human-subjects research, and other factors compound the dampening effects of reduced time faculty have available for research/scholarly activity. Even high achievers, such as our Umass Amherst faculty, have limits, as they balance exceptional demands at work and home, particularly with schools closed. Because of this, and because current conditions may persist into the summer, I announce that all pre-tenure faculty members will be granted a one-year delay of their tenure decision, unless they alternatively elect to be reviewed on schedule. In addition, upon the award of tenure and promotion, the promotion increment in salary will be retroactive to the semester when promotion would have occurred without this one-year delay. The same delay will apply to reviews for reappointment through the tenure decision year (“4.2 reviews”). Reviews for tenure, promotion, and reappointment that are already in progress will continue as scheduled, because they are based on work that was done prior to the current crisis.

Reviews of non-tenure-track faculty and librarians for continuing appointment will also be delayed by one year, if they so choose. The current semester will be credited as service for all other purposes including eligibility for continuous appointment and promotion in rank for nontenure track faculty.

Guidance to Department Personnel Committees and Others

For all faculty and librarian reviews and personnel actions, in consultation with the MSP, I will issue guidance about the potential adverse effects of the Spring 2020 semester in each of the three areas of faculty responsibility. Moreover, this guidance will give weight to any special contributions made to advance teaching and learning during the COVID-19 health crisis, such as the leadership displayed by tech-savvy faculty who are helping their colleagues adapt to this mode of instruction. This guidance will be directed to personnel committees and other levels of review when assessing cases for promotion, tenure, or continuous appointment, AFRs or ARELs,

merit, and any other academic personnel actions. We will also develop relevant language for letters soliciting external reviews.

Suspension of Spring 2020 SRTIs

The administration of the SRTI is suspended for the Spring 2020 semester. Despite the wonderful and creative work of faculty members preparing to transition their courses to remote instruction in various modes, and although there will be many students who will quickly and smoothly adapt to these new modalities, there is likely to be dissatisfaction among some students about the unusual situation in which we find ourselves. Faculty who wish to do an ad hoc evaluation for their own purposes can consult the Center for Teaching and Learning or the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment for assistance, but the results will be available to the faculty member only and no record will be kept. We will also enlist the help of the faculty in understanding how student learning and student success have fared in remote instruction. Bear in mind that we have a variety of resources in place to help faculty members transition to remote instruction. Please see: [provost/disruption-resilient-instruction](#). Faculty who seek individual help can reach out to: instruct@umass.edu, where they can get support from IT, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the University Without Walls Instructional Design Engagement and Support Group (IDEAS).

Pass/fail Grading

Grading policy is set by the Faculty Senate, not the administration. At times when the Senate is not meeting, the Senate Rules Committee has authority to act on behalf of the Senate, subject to review when the Senate later meets. My office is in discussions with the Rules Committee about various grading options to help meet the needs of students and faculty. Any policy change will be coming from the Senate office.

Childcare and Technology Support

Under the MSP contract, the University provides various funds to support the professional activities of faculty and librarians including technology replacement and childcare assistance. We will re-budget among these funds to areas of greatest need, such as childcare and technology support, and we will supplement these funds if re-budgeting proves insufficient to meet the need.

In conclusion, please care for your health and safety, and that of your loved ones. Know that your efforts to carry on with educating and serving students in this time of outbreak are powerfully visible and keenly appreciated. In good conscience, I encourage you to pace yourselves with respect to research and service. The time will come to rededicate your commitments in these areas when the current crisis resolves.

With gratitude for all that you do,
John

John McCarthy
Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Distinguished Professor

Appendix B

Dear Colleagues:

If you are a faculty member with an appointment at 50% FTE or greater, you must complete the Annual Faculty Report and Evaluation (AFR) and submit it through the online Academic Personnel Workflow System (APWS). Your AFR for AY2019-20 will be due on or before October 15, 2020. Faculty with appointments at less than 50% are not required to submit an AFR. Nonetheless, departments should institute some means of evaluating the performance of those faculty who are not required to submit an AFR whether it be the AFR or some other instrument of the department's choice.

The AFR provides the official record on which many faculty personnel decisions are based, and it is vital to faculty development, both as an opportunity for self-reflection and as a basis for discussion among departmental and other colleagues. In the AFR faculty must document their teaching, student advising, research and creative activities, and service -- as appropriate to their appointment. We also want to encourage faculty to list any faculty mentoring they provided, including peer mentoring, in the service portion of the AFR.

Beginning in the Spring 2020 semester, faculty across the University experienced a significant disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the health crisis, all faculty moved their courses online, research facilities including labs and libraries were closed and all student evaluation of teaching was suspended. In conjunction with the disruptions experienced on-campus, many faculty were working out of their homes while simultaneously providing childcare due to closures of daycare facilities and K-12 schooling. Research disruptions, shifts in teaching modalities, limited childcare, and remote work persisted into Summer 2020. As such, we invite you to include a Pandemic Impact Statement with your AFR describing the adjustments you have made, how your work in particular has been impacted by the health crisis, and your contributions to the University's transition to remote work. A new section will be added under the Additional Activities portion of this year's AFR for this purpose.

Faculty, particularly those newer to UMass, should consult with their department chair or head and DPC chair to clarify departmental expectations regarding what should be documented on their AFRs. In addition, having a colleague review a draft of your AFR before submitting it can be very helpful.

AFR deadlines for AY2019-20:

- Faculty submit completed AFR in APWS by October 15, 2020.
- Department head/chair uploads job descriptions for NTT faculty only by October 30, 2020.
- DPC adds its review to each AFR and advances all AFRs to the department chair/head by December 17, 2020.
- Chair/head completes reviews of all AFRs in APWS by January 15, 2021.
- Faculty member responds to DPC and chair/head reviews or releases the AFR without response by January 25, 2021.

- Dean advances to Provost by February 24, 2021.

The AFRs must be completed in the Academic Personnel Workflow System using the online form under the “Create New Submission” tab. You may begin work on it at any time. You can save drafts and electronically “share” your draft with others before finally submitting the form.

Questions can be directed to the Provost’s Academic Personnel team at academic.personnel@umass.edu.

Appendix C

WHY DOCUMENT THE IMPACT?

The COVID-19 pandemic immediately impacted faculty members' [workloads](#). Most faculty members have had to do significantly more work, [moving courses online](#), [mentoring](#) students in need, reworking university programs and addressing [COVID-19 risks](#), and helping [communities](#) manage current realities. At the same time, many faculty members are experiencing damage to their productivity and research record, due to lack of access to labs and facilities, research sites, and research subjects, as well as canceled conferences and inability to travel to conduct research and meet with collaborators.



These effects are exacerbated by differences among faculty. Those with children at home that need care or homeschooling or other family members that need care, face [limited work time](#) ([research](#) shows that women are submitting fewer journal articles during the pandemic). Women and faculty of color were already burdened by [higher levels of mentoring](#) students, which takes on new weight during the pandemic. [Faculty of color](#) are more likely to be suffering losses, and providing care for extended family members. Those facing intersectional inequalities, such as women of color, face the highest burdens. Vulnerable faculty members may also be less comfortable drawing attention to COVID-19 impacts.

The impacts of the pandemic will resonate throughout faculty careers for many years. Documenting these impacts helps universities recognize the differential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic – allowing them to mitigate against unequal outcomes. Documenting the effects of COVID-19 allows universities to assess faculty members fairly, accounting for their different working conditions under the pandemic. Through careful documentation and thoughtful recognition of pandemic impacts in fair evaluation processes, the variable impacts of COVID will be less likely to worsen existing inequalities.

HOW CAN FACULTY MEMBERS DOCUMENT PANDEMIC IMPACTS?

Many faculty members may feel it is unnecessary to document the impact of COVID-19, since so many people have been affected. Yet, COVID-19 has *differential* impacts; internal and external evaluators may not understand or know the specific context in which faculty members' work was disrupted, depending on where they are located or their own experiences under COVID-19. In addition, over time, people may no longer recognize how disruptive COVID-19 was to faculty careers.

Below are ideas about how to document pandemic impacts through annual faculty reviews, and separate “pandemic impact statements” for personnel reviews (faculty might also list canceled fellowships, conferences or speaking engagements on CVs). These ideas are not meant to pressure all faculty into documenting every possible impact. Documenting should identify impacts that help others understand a person’s career trajectory given COVID-19, both in terms of new responsibilities as well as unexpected challenges. Documenting should make relevant but potentially invisible impacts visible.

Drawing on a [PNAS](#) article, we recommend keeping track of the following, and considering how to document these through annual faculty reviews or in pandemic impact statements:

- Identify scope of work during the pandemic. If granted “essential worker” status, what work did it apply to, and what new work was added.
- Document changes to courses, including moving courses online and new technologies. Faculty may identify how many additional hours each week focused on teaching to concretize these effects (e.g., 15-hour/week workload for X course shifted to 30-hour/week workload for 7 weeks).
- Point out specific challenges, such as lack of resources (high-speed broadband, software) for faculty and students, and trainings attended or led.
- Identify additional teaching responsibilities, including course overloads due to personnel changes, retirements, issues with teaching assistants, assisting others with technology, other workload changes.
- Address how advising changed, particularly as students navigated changing requirements. Identify any increases in advising load. Mention any additional support for students experiencing physical and or mental health, economic, and social consequences of the pandemic.
- Document mentoring impacts, including student progress, and additional mentoring time required with students/peers facing pandemic impacts.
- List attending/leading meetings, additional efforts made – any work that would not have occurred during a regular semester. List efforts to move meetings/events online e.g. commencement.
- List additional work needed to develop plans for closing and re-opening of laboratories, including: coordination among research teams, development of cleaning and distancing protocols in the laboratory space, etc.
- Identify contributions to any department, university, professional society, interdisciplinary, or community- engaged pandemic initiative.
- Identify how research or creative work was disrupted. For example, faculty might note loss of:
 - Research time due to increased or changed teaching and service responsibilities
 - Sabbatical time, other paid or unpaid leave (Fulbright, Guggenheim, etc.)
 - If willing and relevant, research time due to health issues or caregiving responsibilities
 - Access to necessary research facilities/labs/ computing resources (including impacts on longitudinal research), studios, or venues for creative works/performances
 - Access to research subjects, animals, cell cultures (including for longitudinal research)

- Travel and field research opportunities
- Funding to support personnel due to travel and visa restrictions or due to research restrictions
- Access to internal or external research funds
- Faculty should further note other kinds of impacts:
 - Additional teaching/preparations
 - Cancellations of seminars, presentations, visits with collaborators or research teams
 - Challenges due to increased time for review of submissions for funding or publication
 - Redirected funding for COVID-19 related topics
 - Pivoting/changing research agenda due to COVID-19 restrictions
 - Diversion of funds for PPE
 - Donation of supplies or personnel time to COVID-19 initiatives
 - Challenges due to travel/visa restrictions

HOW SHOULD EVALUATORS CONSIDER PERSONNEL CASES?

The Provost has made many changes recognizing pandemic impacts in his [tenure/promotion memo](#). Evaluators, including Personnel Committee members, Chairs/Heads, administrators, and external evaluators, should recognize the contributions faculty have made in various spheres, while considering each person's specific *working conditions*, rather than comparing across faculty with different working conditions. Increased caregiving responsibilities or lack of access to research facilities as a result of the pandemic should not affect assessments of faculty. This should be communicated to external reviewers. Following the contract, **faculty members with tenure-delays must not be held to higher standards.**

While not all faculty may wish to document health or caregiving impacts, reviewers should recognize that the documentation of caregiving responsibilities or efforts toward homeschooling children (including single parenthood) identifies the disparate impact COVID-19 had on worktime for faculty members. Similarly, documentation of illness, risk of illness (pre-existing conditions, partnership with an essential worker), or loss of loved ones, provides greater context for assessments.

Personnel Committees may write a standardized acknowledgement of pandemic impacts with particular attention to their field and expected disruptions to work for all faculty members. This statement could be inserted at the beginning of each PC memo responding to faculty submission as context for the annual review.

WHAT RESOURCES EXIST FOR ADDRESSING COVID IMPACTS?

- PNAS published an [op-ed](#) on evaluating faculty, as well as an [online supplement](#), which we drew on heavily for this brief.

- [ADVANCE](#) provides trainings for Personnel Committee members and Chairs/Heads on equitable evaluation in the COVID and post-COVID era.
 - The [Office of Faculty Development](#) and Associate Provost for Equity and Inclusion provide a [wide array of resources](#) that support faculty during COVID-19, including a [Resilience](#) series.
 - The [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) provides programming, aimed at the needs of members of underrepresented groups on campus.
 - The faculty union, Massachusetts Society of Professors, has won a number of excellent [provisions and supports](#), including care funds, technology funds, tenure delays, work credits for UMass faculty.
-

Through the power of collaboration UMass ADVANCE transforms the campus by cultivating faculty equity, inclusion and success. ADVANCE provides the resources, recognition and relationship building that are critical to equitable and successful collaboration in the 21st century academy. ADVANCE is funded by the National Science Foundation. For more information on ADVANCE go to <https://www.umass.edu/advance/>.

The Inclusive Syllabus Project

Laura Zanotti*
Purdue University

Syllabi are central to the innerworkings of academic life at institutions of higher education. As material artefacts with social lives, they are boundary objects¹ that mediate diverse forms and expressions of power: institutional requirements, academic freedom, student experiences, and curricular norms (Star and Greisemer 1989; see also Fornaciari and Dean 2014).² Syllabi have plural and multiple identities; they are at once considered legal and contractual documents (Nilson 2010) that set the academic standards and expectations for the course; they are powerful epistemic documents that curate content representing whose knowledge counts, why, and how; and they are meant as guides that structure temporal, relational, and substantive engagement among instructors, students, and content over a discrete period of time. Syllabi, in short, can reinforce normative aspects of institutional knowledge-making. Syllabi also can be sites of transformative change that disrupt silences, invisibilities, and oppressions.

This short article details some of the considerations that informed the creation of an inclusive syllabus project that was conceived during the fall semester when I was a 2018 Purdue University Faculty Retention and Success through Intergroup Dialogue fellow. Curating resources already available on inclusive syllabi, the appended guide provides a summary outline of guidelines and resources for faculty crafting their syllabi. The guide is not meant to be an exhaustive list of resources. Instead it is organized topically and thematically to bring together already established resources to present instructors with pathways to integrate inclusive and justice-oriented principles into their pedagogy. The guide also draws attention to ways in which instructors may signal diverse forms of support through syllabi curation. Thus, in suggesting syllabi have plural and multiple identities, the guide moves away from simply envisioning syllabi as legal and contractual documents, and instead invites instructors to imagine the possibilities for

***Corresponding Author:** Laura Zanotti, Professor, Department of Anthropology, 700 West State Street, Suite 219, West Lafayette, IN 47907. Email: lanotti@purdue.edu.

Recommended citation: Zanotti, Laura. 2020. "The Inclusive Syllabus Project." *Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence and ADVANCE Working Paper Series* 3(2) Special Issue: 115-126.

Acknowledgements: I acknowledge that we are located in the traditional homelands of the Woodland People. I honor and appreciate these Indigenous caretakers which include *the Bodéwadmik (Potawatomi)*, *Lenape (Delaware)*, *Myaamia (Miami)*, and *Shawnee People*. I want to thank the Faculty Retention and Success through Intergroup Dialogue organizers, faculty, and students. Many thanks to colleagues Sherylyn Briller, Amanda Veile, Mangala Subramaniam, Kimberly Marion Suiseeya, and Lindsay Weinberg for their suggestions and comments.

¹ Star and Greisemer (1989: 393) explain boundary objects as "objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites."

² See Fornaciari and Lund Dean (2014) on their review of scholarly literature on the syllabus, which they place in four categories: syllabus as contract, as power, as communication or signaling device, and as collaboration.

syllabi to unsettle and create inclusive, anti-racist, and decolonial change within the classroom, the university, and beyond.

This project is grounded in the assumption that the way syllabi are curated are representative of particular pedagogical philosophies and practices that reflect broader processes of knowledge making.³ Whereas some of the recent shifts in higher education have driven neoliberalisation of the academy and the production of performative knowledge economies (Olssen and Peters 2007), simultaneously, we have seen other shifts in pedagogical scholarship that seeks to challenge those very same extractive knowledge systems (Giroux 2003).⁴ On the pedagogical front, scholarly interventions are taking place toward constructivist approaches in the classroom, inclusive pedagogies, decolonizing pedagogies, and anti-racist education, amongst others (see Table 1). For example, many universities of higher education are shifting from a model that considers students as passive learners and consumers to approaches that prioritize recognizing the multiple, embodied and intersectional identities of students while at the same time moving away from faculty “narrating” an educational experience to one where students interact with each other and instructors to jointly generate knowledge (Davidson 2016). Syllabi reflect these

Table 1
Progressive and Anti-Racist Pedagogy Approaches

Approach	Definition
Constructivist Pedagogy	Active learning, service learning and community engagement, the flipped classroom, and other similarly situated approaches align with this constructivist approach. In this sense, “the implications of constructivism for a learning environment include using curricula customized to the students' prior knowledge, the tailoring of teaching strategies to student backgrounds and responses, and employing open-ended questions that promote extensive dialogue among learners” (Rovai 2004:21).
Inclusive Pedagogies	Are grounded in disabilities studies, critical race studies, and gender and sexuality studies and are “grounded in wider concerns about facilitating social justice and bringing about equity in an educational sphere traditionally seen as hierarchical, elitist and the domain of white upper/middle-class men (Leathwood and Read 2009)” (Stentiford and Koutsouris 2020:2). ⁵
Anti-Oppressive and Social Justice Education	“Brandes and Kelly (2004) give one of the most commonly understood meanings, stating that “anti-oppression education highlights diversity in schools and society and proposes ways of using the multiple perspectives brought forward by the diverse student population as an integral part of teaching” (p. 7). ... Social justice and anti-oppressive education also means challenging domination, and understanding how schools play a role in perpetuating economic and cultural inequality through regular classroom discourse, student–student and student–teacher interactions, and through the curriculum—especially the ideas taught, what is held to constitute valid knowledge, and how that knowledge is disseminated and assessed in cross-cultural teaching (Aikenhead, 1997, 2001).” (Stavrou and Miller 2017:98).

³ See Dweck’s work on a psychological approach to this topic: Dweck, C. (2015). Carol Dweck revisits the growth mindset. *Education Week*, 35(5), 20-24.

⁴ Giroux (2003) details the ways in which neoliberal projects have not only supported institutional racism but fostered new racism, color-blindness practices, and what he calls neoliberalism racism.

⁵ For a review of inclusive pedagogies see: Stentiford, L. and Koutsouris, G. (2020). What are inclusive pedagogies in higher education? A systematic scoping review. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-17.

Decolonizing Pedagogies	<p>“Decolonizing ... then is a process of unpacking the keeper current in education: its powerful Eurocentric assumptions of education, its narratives of race and difference in curriculum and pedagogy, its establishing culturalism or cultural racism as a justification of the status quo, and the advocacy for Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate education topic (Battiste 2013:105).</p> <p>“Decolonizing education is a counter-hegemonic framework for contesting colonization, racialization, and forced assimilation strategies, and generates empowerment for Indigenous knowledge systems, health, and well-being through education (Battiste, 1986, 2011). Thus, decolonizing and anti-oppressive education mean much more than the common understanding of promoting cultural diversity and non-Western perspectives. It requires identifying and challenging the root causes of oppression, how inequality is reproduced in the classroom, and finding strategies to counter educational discourses that position Western knowledge as superior and other knowledge (such as Indigenous knowledge) as inferior” (Stavrou and Miller 2017:99).</p>
Anti-Racist Pedagogies	<p>“Antiracist Pedagogy is a paradigm located within Critical Theory utilized to explain and counteract the persistence and impact of racism using praxis as its focus to promote social justice for the creation of a democratic society in every respect” (Blakeney 2005:119).</p> <p>“Antiracist pedagogy represents a shift from traditional university teaching practices and as such involves a change in thinking that will necessarily be unsettling for some students, as it requires them to move beyond their comfortable, deeply rooted views of the world. Any transformation in thinking necessarily entails a risk as one tries out new approaches and tests new beliefs and frameworks of understanding.” (Wagner 2005:263).</p>

philosophies in a multitude of ways through their presentation of routine items such as course descriptions, objectives, resources and assignments as well as required items, such as attendance policies, academic integrity, accessibility and non-discrimination statements. Yet, as instructors embed university and unit requirements in their syllabi, these are inevitably in articulation with diverse pedagogical philosophies and practices. Below is a short list of some topics or areas that an instructor may consider when developing their syllabus:

- the politics of the institution’s history and founding,
- statements and policies (the when, where, how and why they are presented),
- the design aesthetic and how it is responsive to differentially abled and positioned students,
- the rhetoric and categories used in the front and back matter,
- stated course objectives and modes of learning,
- the substantive content of the syllabus (what are the topics and units and what kinds of sources are considered credible, legitimate and authoritative),
- the descriptive representation of BIPOC⁶, women, and knowledge-holders of diverse and intersectional positionalities (who is represented and why),
- how students interact with each other and the faculty member in the classroom space,
- types of assignments and their descriptions (e.g. collaborative, universal design approaches, Transparency in Learning and Teaching-TILT⁷), and

⁶ BIPOC refers to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

⁷ <https://tilthighered.com/>

- what knowledge experiences are valued.

To give just one example of this in practice, Cathy Davidson (2016) demonstrates the generative outcomes of instituting a mutual and cooperative syllabus creation process among faculty and students for an American Literature course. The goal was to re-center students as part of inclusive pedagogical strategies and create a democratic classroom. In Davidson's (2016) efforts to create what she calls a "problem-posing" classroom, she draws upon Freire's (1970) work to show how she forged an engaged classroom space. Norming activities that established prioritizing voices of all students in the classroom⁸, generating a mutually agreed upon class constitution⁹, and directed assignments to assist with syllabus-making were all critical to cultivating the classroom faculty and students desired. Davidson's (2016) course and the associated syllabus is but one example that reflects the ways in which syllabus-making can align and reflect constructivist and inclusive philosophies and practices while simultaneously pushing boundaries of the academy to incite new pedagogies.

Other work highlights the importance of understanding classroom spaces as racialized, gendered, and classed landscapes of power where privilege operates in multiple and intersecting forms. These works engage with decolonizing, anti-racist, and social justice pedagogies to consider the possibilities for syllabi to promote and practice inclusivity and power-sharing. For example, scholars who created the Social Justice Syllabus Design Tool (SJSJT) did so with BIPOC students in mind so as to create an experience that "signals belongingness, growth mindset communal goals, clear and positive expectations, and success orientation" (Taylor et al. 2019:133) as BIPOC students often experience the classroom and university as an oppressive and an unwelcoming space. Taylor et al. (2019), for example, note that hostile campus climates, invisibility in the classroom, negative stereotypes, lack of cultural relevancy, and an instructor's fixed mindset about students are just some of the major ongoing challenges students of color face in the classroom. Taylor et al. also (2019) suggest that redesigning the syllabus can be one step to confront these challenges, disrupt privilege and oppressive norms. They recommend drawing from and leveraging literature on syllabus best practices, stereotype threats, and social justice pedagogies to redesign syllabi for social justice.

To this end, the SJSJT emphasizes relationships, community, and process as critical aspects of syllabus making. To cultivate positive relationships, Taylor et al. (2019) argue instructors should consider student-centered syllabi, use warm and inclusive language, and detail expectations for students *and* instructors. To cultivate community, using storytelling to share instructor information, providing engaging course descriptions, and creating course content that shows the value of scholarship from knowledge holders of diverse and intersectional groups is needed (ibid.). Finally, process-oriented considerations include incorporating a "growth mindset" in course objectives and learning outcomes, assignments and grading policies, course outlines, and course content (Taylor et al. 2020:154). The SJSJT provides a series of reflection questions for

⁸ Davidson describes how she from Savonick's (2016) recommendations on creating spaces for conversation <https://futuresinitiative.org/blog/2016/02/16/creating-spaces-for-conversation-three-strategies/>

⁹ See <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nPFmWZSlpvxukYbK3BEADM38fI2kRJsgXdRkxG2J-bE/edit?ts=56bba504> for an example of the class constitution.

instructors to consider as they create their syllabus and helpful resources on how to implement suggested ideas in practice.

While there is no one size fits all solution to syllabus-making, a considered syllabus can activate the possibilities supporting inclusion and diversity in the academy. While each course will invariably differ because of the course instructor, unit, curriculum requirements, size of the classroom, institution, class composition, and other factors, a syllabus can catalyze and reflect inclusion and academic transformation. To this end, I have suggested in this piece instructors should engage with syllabi not simply as textual, contract-based documents, but as boundary objects with plural identities that circuit through the academy with social lives of their own. The appended guide provides assistance to instructors on how they can support their students while at the same time promote socially and racially just course design. One compelling entry-point into this process is through activating specific philosophies that uphold inclusive, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, decolonial, and social justice pedagogies and practices.

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Guide for Designing an Inclusive Syllabus¹

Overview

A note on credit on where credit is due. This summary document curates resources from a diverse range of already published sources on inclusive syllabi projects. Footnotes and symbols indicate different source materials either by section or specific bullet points. A full list is provided at the end of the document.

+ Source - Pete's 100 Ways: Indigenizing and Decolonizing Academic programs: Pete, S. (2016). 100 Ways: Indigenizing & Decolonizing Academic Programs. *aboriginal policy studies*, 6(1).

<https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/aps/index.php/aps/article/viewFile/27455/pdf>

* Source - Inclusion by Design: <http://cte.virginia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Inclusion-by-Design-Survey-Your-Syllabus-Brantmeier-Broscheid-Moore-.pdf>

^ Source - Waggoner, Jess, Hailee Yoshizaki-Gibbons, Ashley Mog, Krystal Clearly, and Margaret Price, Facilitators. 2016. Workshop: Disability Access as Feminist Praxis at NWSA and Beyond. National Women's Studies Conference. Baltimore, Maryland. November 18, 2017.

https://www.academia.edu/35438137/Handout_Disability_Access_as_Feminist_Praxis_at_NWSA_and_Beyond_

Course Policies, Philosophies and Values²

What pedagogical philosophies and values will shape your teaching in the course and what policies will guide you? What values do you intend to instill in this course? (Examples: philosophies: constructivist, inclusive, decolonial, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, social justice, progressive pedagogy; values: inquiry, community, discipline, deliberation, critical thinking, value of difference)*

- ☐ **Inclusiveness and Interdependence:** How can your syllabus help you create an anti-racist and inclusive atmosphere that welcomes all students? How can your syllabus support the tenet of interdependency?^ Some instructors include statements inviting diverse forms of participation, honoring student diversity and differing points of view, or inviting requests for disability accommodations.
- ☐ **Integrity:** What are policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and misconduct in relation to materials and assignment for this course that upholds university policies but deescalates policing misconduct? For example, considering the types of work you are asking students to do, what do you want to communicate about working with data? How do you support students in understanding how to represent original sources and ask questions if they are unsure? What are forms of accountability for contributions to group projects?
- ☐ **Responsibility:** What do students need to know about expectations regarding assignments, attendance, online participation or classroom interactions? Other possibilities include policies regarding late work, make-up exams and preparation for class participation. How will you redefine this?^
- ☐ **Expectations for success:** How can students learn most successfully in your course? In the syllabus, you can express confidence that all students are capable of doing well and you can suggest strategies for success. For example, what strategies for learning are particularly important for this material? What resources — such as study centers, web tutorials or writing centers — are available to help students succeed in the course?

Vision and Goal Statement

- ☐ **People:** Who will most likely be in your class? (Consider student intersectional identities such as race, gender, age, class, dis/ability, religion, language, geographic region, sexual orientation, first generation college, other invisible identities, etc.)*

¹ Adapted from on <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/sites/default/files/TLI-TEFD-Checklist-Inclusive-Syllabus-20180613.pdf>.

² Adapted from the following source: <http://www.washington.edu/teaching/teaching-resources/preparing-to-teach/designing-your-course-and-syllabus/>

- ❑ **Pedagogy:** What are the pedagogical choices available to you in your discipline and how diverse are they? (Examples: student-centered, team-based learning, problem-based learning, socratic method, simulations, role-play, debate, service learning)
- ❑ **Racial Justice:** How will your classroom reflect tenets of anti-racist and anti-oppressive and socially-just pedagogies? Who is represented as knowledge-holders in your course and what types of knowledge is being valued? What are disciplinary resources available to you to diversify the descriptive, substantive, and epistemic representation in your syllabus? How will you confront difficult dialogues, hostile classroom climates, or micro-aggressions in the classroom?
 - Include work from BIPOC scholars in your fields
 - Recognize the racialized and gendered histories of your institution
 - Include antidiscrimination policy and resources on how to report hate and bias
 - Provide anti-racist resources for your students
 - Describe the conditions of conduct in the classroom, especially around difficult dialogues
 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Anti-Racist Pedagogy <https://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=756583&p=5976573>
 - Purdue - Black Lives Matter Library Guide: <https://guides.lib.purdue.edu/BLM>
 - Racial Justice Library Guide: <https://libguides.mit.edu/racial-justice>
 - Racial Politics of Citation: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/04/27/racial-exclusions-scholarly-citations-opinion>
 - Citation Matters: https://culanth.org/fieldsights/citation-matters-an-updated-reading-list-for-a-progressive-environmental-anthropology?_ga=2.247505039.960271752.1593194384-2114737357.1592772097
 - Institutionalized racism – a syllabus: https://daily.jstor.org/institutionalized-racism-a-syllabus/?_ga=2.124257871.472656224.1593189587-298924932.1530908801
 - Black Lives Matter Micro-Syllabus: <https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/anthropology/graduate/current-grads/resources.html>
 - From Racial Violence to Racial Justice: <https://library.ncte.org/journals/ee/issues/v49-2>
 - Racial Justice, Racial Equity, and Anti-Racism Reading List: <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty-research/library-knowledge-services/collections/diversity-inclusion-belonging/anti-racist>
 - The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights: https://civilrights.org/?_ga=2.19332605.472656224.1593189587-298924932.1530908801
 - Intersectionality Matters! <https://aapf.org/podcast>
 - White Racial Literacy Project: https://wrlpiupui.weebly.com/?_ga=2.219719057.960271752.1593194384-2114737357.1592772097
- ❑ **Decolonizing and Indigenizing the Academy**
 - Seek out and review the scholarship of Indigenous Peoples in your field+
 - Provide a Land Acknowledgement +
 - https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/consciouselders/pages/1529/attachments/original/1526921069/Honor_Native_Land_Guide.pdf?1526921069
 - Review and implement Universities Canada Principles on Indigenous Education+
 - <https://sass.uottawa.ca/en/aboriginal/principles> and https://teachingcommons.lakeheadu.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/ACDE_Accord_on_Indigenous_Education_0.pdf
 - Consider offering land-based learning opportunities.+
 - Consider the role that volunteering and community service can play in building cultural competency with your learners.
 - Consider the role that elders and traditional knowledge keepers can play in course reform and delivery.+
 - Consider arts-based and non-dominant forms of demonstrating understanding, including re-storying, photo essays, performance, reflective writing, etc.+
 - Name the dominant worldview; make visible non-dominant worldviews and work toward what Sefa Dei refers to as “synthesizing knowledges.”+
 - Consider the role that ceremony may play in your course design, and in department/faculty norms.+
 - Consider offering courses/programs in off-campus locations (i.e., introductory

- courses taught at the food bank, friendship center, public library, etc.).+
 - Use the traditional names of places in your territory.+
- ☐ **Content:** What different perspectives and viewpoints are included in the course content?*
- Include research and writings from authors of diverse backgrounds and offering multiple perspectives.
 - How to check your syllabus for gender balance: <https://jlsumner.shinyapps.io/syllabustool/>
- ☐ **Climate:** How will differences of positionality/opinion/thinking be handled in the classroom? How can you create safe spaces for both visible and invisible students of color? What are the ways in which your approach is caring and compassionate?

What and How Students Will Learn:

- ☐ Post your syllabus well before class begins.^
- ☐ Provide course schedule, student learning objectives related to course content, the required learning processes, and assignments/assessments are aligned
- ☐ Leave room for students to discuss their needs and experiences and allow time to accommodate changes^
- ☐ Redefine classroom expectations^
- ☐ Consider a TILT design: <https://tilthighered.com>
- ☐ Consider Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education: http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/planning_syllabus
- ☐ Culturally responsive teaching: To what extent do teaching activities meet the needs of diverse learners, diverse learning styles, diverse ways of processing information, diverse performative styles? (Examples: Experiential learning, collaborative group work, individual activities, peer teaching/editing/sharing, one on one instructor time.)*
- ☐ Diversity in Learning Style: Does your syllabus account for different types of learners (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc.)
- ☐ Formative assessment: Is there a variety of formative assessments (assignments) that provide students with immediate feedback and opportunities to improve?*
- ☐ Fixed and flexible options: Is divergent, creative thinking rewarded or do assessments require students to conform to one common norm?*
- ☐ Scaffolding of extensive assignments with options for review, feedback, revision
- ☐ Fair and clear assessment criteria: Rubrics, checklists, rationales for grading
- ☐ Interaction patterns: Do learning activities promote inclusive interactive patterns? Do students cooperatively learn together? Or is instruction based on one-directional information provision by the instructor?*
- ☐ Shared teaching: Do students have shared responsibility in their (and their fellow students') learning? For example, do students lead discussion groups, reteach concepts, or otherwise contribute to the teaching?*
- ☐ Co-design and collaborative teaching: Is the classroom student-centered?

Inclusive and Supportive Course Policies

- ☐ Move statements to the beginning, rather than end of syllabus.^
- ☐ Land Acknowledgement – **How do to a Land Acknowledgement**
- ☐ Disability Accommodation and Inclusive Learning Statement with hyperlinks to campus and other resources. Read outline the first day of class.^
- ☐ Diversity Statement: <https://ctl.yale.edu/DiversityStatements>
- ☐ Statement Against Hate and Bias
- ☐ Statement on Racial Justice
- ☐ Scent-free Policy or Statement^
- ☐ Statement on supporting student families and/or breastfeeding student mothers with hyperlinks

- The policy outlined here is a reflection of Dr. Amanda Veile's (Purdue University) personal commitment to student, staff, and faculty parents that you can adopt or adapt:
- Breastfeeding children are welcome in class as often as necessary. Indiana law allows a woman to breastfeed her child anywhere she has a right to be.
- For older children, I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to miss class to stay home with a child. While not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class to cover gaps in care is acceptable.
- I ask all students to help me create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
- In cases where babies and children come to class, please sit near the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met.
- I understand that parental tiredness can be a major barrier to completing course work. I maintain the same high expectation for all students in my class regardless of parenting status, but am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.
- ☐ Inviting Office Hours Statement
- ☐ Expansive Academic Honesty Statement with hyperlinks to campus and other resources
- ☐ Pronoun Policy
- ☐ Course Value & Norms Statement
- ☐ Take Care of Yourself and Mental Health Resources with hyperlinks to campus and other resources, for example see <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/syllabus/syllabussupport.html>
- ☐ Report Hate Bias Resources with hyperlinks to campus and other resources
- ☐ Sexual Harassment Resources with hyperlinks to campus and other resources
- ☐ University Statements on Diversity and Inclusion with hyperlinks to campus and other resources

Rhetoric³

- ☐ Welcoming, compassionate and inviting tone
- ☐ Use of personal pronouns
- ☐ Cooperative language
- ☐ Redundancy across modes
- ☐ Student Appeal
- ☐ Use of icons & logos
- ☐ Images of key authors, textbooks
- ☐ Visuals to represent main concepts
- ☐ Word clouds
- ☐ Visual representation of grade distribution
- ☐ Digital syllabus on course website

Readability and Accessibility⁴

- ☐ Multiformatting your syllabus[^]
- ☐ Clear hierarchical structure of document, using headings
- ☐ Table of Contents with in-document hyperlinks
- ☐ Text: 12-16 point sans serif font; 1.5 line spacing; bold or underline to emphasize text. See also[^]
- ☐ Text distribution: digestible sections for learners with reading disabilities, non-native English speakers, attention-deficits
- ☐ Accessible color design

³ Section adapted from: <https://www.umass.edu/ctl/sites/default/files/Handout%20Video%20Series-Six%20Principles%20of%20an%20Inclusive%20Syllabus.pdf>

⁴ Section adapted from: <https://www.umass.edu/ctl/sites/default/files/Handout%20Video%20Series-Six%20Principles%20of%20an%20Inclusive%20Syllabus.pdf>

- ☐ Check with accessibility checker
- ☐ Flexible text that can be altered by the user

Inclusion and Subtext*

- ☐ **Implicit rules:** What formal and informal rules, assumptions, values are important for the course but not stated in the syllabus?
- ☐ **Implicit messages:** What unwritten messages does the syllabus convey about the course, content, and learning? Is there a “hidden curriculum” embedded in the syllabus?
- ☐ **Hidden biases:** In which ways does the “hidden curriculum” potentially discriminate against some students? (For example, do you use only one type of assessment to determine grades, and does the disadvantage some of the students in ways unrelated to their learning?)
- ☐ **Teaching philosophy:** What is your teaching philosophy (student-centered learning, teacher-centered information dissemination, cooperative learning, etc.) and how does the syllabus communicate it to students? Do you clearly communicate your teaching philosophy to avoid biases?

Sources, Readings and Resources

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- The Progressive Pedagogy Group: <https://www.hastac.org/groups/progressive-pedagogy-group>
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Additional Resources

- Diagram Center - Making Images Accessible: <http://diagramcenter.org/making-images-accessible.html>
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- Ensuring Access through Collaboration and Technology (EnACT) project - Universal Design for Learning and your Syllabus: <http://mtsac.libguides.com/udl>

- James Madison University's Office of Disability Studies: <https://www.jmu.edu/ods/>
- Kairos PraxisWiki - Suggested practices for syllabus accessibility statements
- Knightlab – Storytelling Resources: <https://knightlab.northwestern.edu/>
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- Rebecca Thomas Two-Eyed Seeing <https://leapintothevoidwithme.wordpress.com/2016/07/29/etuaptmumk-two-eyed-seeing/>
- Rochester Racial Justice Toolkit: <https://thetoolkit.wixsite.com/toolkit>
- Universal Course Design online validation tool: <http://ucd.eeonline.org/validator/>
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Biographies of Authors

Marie Allsopp is a Clinical Assistant Professor at Purdue University in the Department of Nutrition Science, a position she started in January of 2019, and teaches four courses. She is passionate about pursuing pedagogical practices to increase undergraduate student engagement and her line of scholarship of teaching and learning includes using multi-media to engage students, collaborative learning, service-learning, and flipped classrooms. In fall of 2019, Marie Allsopp was a fellow of Instruction Matters: Purdue Academic Course Transformation (IMPACT). Prior to joining the academy, Marie Allsopp accrued over a decade of work experience as a registered dietitian in clinical, community, and customer service settings in North Georgia and South Florida. Subsequent to completing her doctorate in 2015, Marie Allsopp held full-time posts at Miami University (OH) and later at Mississippi State University. Marie Allsopp has received recognition professionally as a practitioner, program director, and assistant professor for her dedication and service.

Norma J. Anderson has been at Bridgewater State University since 2012 and is an Associate Professor of Sociology. Her research interests center around inequality and power with particular focus on African Studies. Often these days, you can find her thinking and writing about how we learn, how to confront our biases and assumptions, and how she can challenge her students to learn in ways that work for them. She takes pride in working at a teaching-focused school, introducing sociology to her students, and encouraging them to think critically and dynamically.

Megha Anwer, Ph.D., is a clinical assistant professor and the Director of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity at Purdue University's Honors College. Her research interests include Victorian and postcolonial literature and culture, film studies, urban studies, feminist studies and anti-racist/feminist/critical pedagogies. Anwer's work has appeared in journals such as *Review of Education, Pedagogy and Culture, Feminist Media Studies, Victorian Studies, Global South, ARIEL, Journal of Postcolonial Writing, Short Film Studies, Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, and *Wide Screen*. She is currently working on two book projects on Victorian women's urban mobility and post-liberalization Bollywood's representations gender, religious, and caste precarity. Her coedited volume on Bollywood's New Woman is forthcoming with Rutgers University Press.

Bailey C. Benedict (M.A., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) is a doctoral candidate in the Brian Lamb School of Communication at Purdue University. She studies organizational communication with interests in network theory and analysis, resilience, and uncertainty.

Jaya Bhojwani, M.S. Ed., is a doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology program at Purdue University. Her research interests include broadly focus on the ways in which sociopolitical and cultural components impact identity development, and the impact of multiculturalism on psychosocial development. She is also interested in systems-level interventions and changes and focusing on alternative model of health and wellness for marginalized communities.

Amanda S. Case, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the Counseling Psychology doctoral program at Purdue University. She earned her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from University of Wisconsin-Madison with a specialization in child/adolescent treatment and assessment. Her

research focuses on how families, schools, and community-based organizations can collaboratively promote educational equity, especially for students from economically marginalized backgrounds. She also consults with a range of community-based programs on data management and inclusive practices.

Dessie Clark is the Research Collaboration Coordinator for the [ADVANCE](#) program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Clark received her Master's in Education from Vanderbilt University in Community Development and Action and completed her PhD in Community Sustainability at Michigan State University. Clark is the former Managing Editor for the *Gendered Perspectives on International Development* paper series. Clark's research interests are broadly related to increasing quality of life for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. More specifically, Clark is interested in exploring the use of neurofeedback therapy in survivors who have experienced a traumatic brain injury.

Kimberly E. Fox is a sociologist with interests in work, family and gender and how single adults and individuals living alone contend with the multiple responsibilities of work, family and community. Trained in both quantitative and qualitative methods, including survey design and qualitative interviewing, she has been teaching at Bridgewater State University (BSU) since 2012. Before joining the BSU faculty, she managed the research relationship and activities at a Fortune 500 company for the interdisciplinary Work, Family, and Health Study. She also led the qualitative data collection and analysis for an NSF-funded ADVANCE IT-Catalyst grant investigating the work-life policies of full- and part-time faculty in a teaching-intensive environment and directed the initial stages of the Work and Well-being Initiative at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies. She regularly teaches classes on research methods and data analysis along with work, family, and inequality.

Jasmine D. Gonzalvo, PharmD, BCPS, BC-ADM, CDCES is a Clinical Professor of Pharmacy Practice in the College of Pharmacy at Purdue University. She is the Director of the Center for Health Equity and Innovation at Purdue. Her practice for Eskenazi Health involves the provision of Cardiovascular Risk Reduction services in an underserved population with mental illness and for those who primarily speak Spanish. Her research interests relate to community health workers, cardiovascular risk reduction in underserved populations, integration of the Spanish language into practice and academic settings, and diabetes self-management education and support in the pharmacy setting. She has served on the Board of Directors for the American Association of Diabetes Educators. She is the current Chair for the Certification Board for Diabetes Care and Education Specialists. She is active in advocacy efforts at the State and Federal levels. In 2018, she was appointed to the National Clinical Care Commission.

Jennifer Hall, Ph.D. (Purdue University) is a Lecturer and Director of the Basic Course in the Lamb School of Communication at Purdue University. She studies health and communication education. Specific topics of interest include narratives and identity, attitudes about public speaking instructor training.

Abigail Hoxsey, M.A. is a counseling psychology doctoral student at Purdue University. Her research interests include the implementation of culturally relevant individual- and systems-level interventions in therapy and education, psychotherapy processes, and restorative justice.

Eileen E. Joy, M.A., is a teaching assistant and doctoral student in counseling psychology in the Department of Educational Studies at Purdue University. Her research interests include examining the roles of poverty related stressors and cultural context in therapeutic processes, clinical decisions, mental health functioning, and well-being. She is also interested in strength-based approaches to recognizing marginalized communities' experiences with mental health.

Amanda Mayes is the founder of Second Act Research, Student Life Curricular Integration & Research Administrator in the Purdue University Office of the Vice Provost for Student Life, and a Visiting Assistant Professor in Cornerstone Integrated Liberal Arts. Mayes is responsible for leadership and oversight of Student Life research and curriculum efforts. She also serves as a research consultant for the Metropolitan Arts Council of Greater Kansas City and the Johnson County Community College, Carlsen Center. Mayes teaches the Transformative Texts course, has over a decade of experience teaching Visual Arts at the K-12 and collegiate level, and has won numerous teaching awards. Her research interests include academic and intrinsic impacts of arts experiences, program assessment, professional development, improving cultural competency, and arts advocacy.

Seth McCulloch is a Ph.D. student in Purdue University's Brian Lamb School of Communication. His research focuses on health communication. Specifically, he studies topics such as message design, information processing, and health inequalities due to social discrimination and stigmatization.

Ethel Mickey (Ph.D. Sociology) is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Massachusetts Amherst with the ADVANCE Program. Mickey is a sociologist of work and organizations, gender, race, and social networks. Her current research focuses on high-tech and STEM settings. Mickey's work appears in *Gender & Society*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, and *Feminist Formations*, and she co-edited a volume of *Research in the Sociology of Work* on race in the new economy. Previously, Mickey was a Visiting Lecturer of Sociology at Wellesley College, and an ARC Network Virtual Visiting Scholar.

Joya Misra is Professor of Sociology and Public Policy and Director of the Institute for Social Science Research at the University of Massachusetts. She is immediate Past Vice-President of the American Sociological Association, and edited the journal, *Gender & Society* from 2011-2015. She serves as a co-PI on the NSF-funded UMass ADVANCE-IT project, Collaboration and Equity (2018-2023), and Massachusetts Team Leader on the NSF-funded ADVANCE-IHE PLAN, Faculty Workload and Rewards Project (2015-2021). Misra is also an ARC Network Virtual Visiting Scholar for 2020-21. Her current research on higher education focuses on how race and gender impact faculty workload, research collaboration, inclusion and leadership.

Claire Schumann, PharmD, is a recent 2020 graduate of Purdue University College of Pharmacy. She is currently completing a PGY1 Pharmacy Residency at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. Her professional interests include oncology, critical care, and working with underserved and underrepresented patient populations.

Elise P. Taylor is a doctoral student at Purdue University, and one of the assistant course directors for Purdue's basic communication course, COM 114. She holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree in Communication from Northeastern Illinois University. Among other research topics, she is interested in online communities and how we consolidate our offline and online identities in the context of privacy management. Before her second career in academia, she spent ten years in the corporate world in a variety of training and operations leadership roles. In her spare time, she attempts to grow far too many tomatoes in far too little space.

Laura Zanotti, Ph.D., is a feminist political ecologist and interdisciplinary social scientist who partners with communities to support how Indigenous Peoples, Traditional Peoples, and Local Communities' livelihoods and well-being can be sustained and to identify the pathways that shape just futures. She specializes in collaborative, transdisciplinary projects and creating ethnographic teams. She prioritizes decolonial STEAM education as a critical space for engagement. Zanotti joined the Purdue Faculty in 2009 and is a Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Associate Director of the Center for the Environment.

Melinda S. Zook is a Professor of History and the Director of Cornerstone Integrated Liberal Arts. She has authored or co-edited five books, most recently, *Generations of Women Historians: Within and Beyond the Academy* (2018); *Challenging Orthodoxies: The Social and Cultural Worlds of Early Modern Women* (2014). Zook teaches courses in medieval and early modern European history, as well as the new Transformative Texts course, part of the Cornerstone program. Zook has received awards for her scholarship and her work on Cornerstone, including the Purdue University Faculty Scholar in 2018 and Helen B. Schleman Gold Medallion Award, Purdue Mortar Board Society in 2019.