Reflecting on Your Remote Teaching

Congratulations! Spring 2020 semester is nearly over and you’re finishing up teaching your remote courses. Although the sudden transition to remote teaching may not represent an ideal teaching situation, you might still find value in reflecting on and learning from your spring 2020 teaching experience. What changes did you need to make to courses for remote teaching? What worked and what didn’t seem to work? How did you grow as an educator through your experience this semester? Here we provide you with examples of some guiding questions that you might use for self-reflection on your remote teaching experience, to identify strengths in your courses that you want to build on and consider possible improvements for your future teaching in any delivery format—face-to-face, hybrid, site-based, remote, or online.

GUIDING QUESTIONS ABOUT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- What did you most want your course to accomplish for your students when you started in January? Did any of those goals change over the semester?
- How were the goals of your course accomplished (or not accomplished) this semester?
- How did your students demonstrate the course learning outcomes?
- What did student feedback and grade distributions tell you about learner success in your course?
- What changes did you make in the content, activities, and/or assessments in your course, in response to remote teaching and learning? Will you incorporate any of those in future courses?

GUIDING QUESTIONS ABOUT COMMUNICATION

- How did you communicate with students—about technologies, assignments, or learning strategies?
- How did you help students know what they could expect and when to expect it (e.g., grading and feedback)?
- How did students most effectively contact you during the remote course?
- How did you support students in a challenging learning environment, particularly those who were having difficulty with new processes and tasks?
- How did you request and use student feedback about their learning during the course?

GUIDING QUESTIONS ABOUT LEARNING & LEARNER SUPPORT

- How did you prepare students for success, particularly as we transitioned to the remote learning environment?
- How did students learn from you (as instructor), learn from course content, and learn from each other during the course?
- How did you design and use opportunities for active learning and/or community building in your remote course?
• How did you practice inclusive and/or flexible teaching in your course—for instance, by attending to accessibility in course design, representing and inviting diverse perspectives, and/or engaging with students who required special support or alternative assignments in order to be successful?

GUIDING QUESTIONS ABOUT COURSE DESIGN AND REDESIGN

• What new skills, knowledge, and/or insights did you acquire that most enhanced your teaching this semester?
• What were your most significant surprises or challenges in teaching this semester, and how did you cope with them?
• How did you learn from colleagues, and/or contribute to colleagues’ learning about teaching, during the semester?
• Overall, what are three top practices from your course that you would share or recommend to other faculty teaching remotely?
• How could any of your new knowledge, skills, or approaches be modified for future courses, in remote learning or other modalities?

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING

• Based on these reflections, what do you plan to keep doing, stop doing, and/or start doing (new or differently) in your future courses?
• What priorities can you set for improving course materials, teaching approaches, and/or student experiences in your future courses?
• What resources—including Stearns Center resources, Mason Impact or Mason Libraries resources, local academic unit resources, and national or disciplinary resources—can you keep or start using to support future courses? What resources do you feel that you’ll need in the future? How may Stearns Center help you with such resources?

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Reflecting on your teaching is part of the cycle of continuous improvement for teaching and learning. As you plan, build, and teach your course, it’s helpful to review and reflect on questions like these. Since we know that “good teaching” is never done, this process can help you continue making small but meaningful changes every time you teach your course.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE


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