ISSUE 1 · FALL 2020

TILL TALK
the newsletter

Dear Friends of the TILL,

Welcome to the first edition of the Teaching Innovation Learning Lab's newsletter, TILL Talk! We want to create a space to share faculty stories as well as updates, online resources, workshops and faculty learning communities. Our goal is to cultivate and support the scholarly development, investigation and dissemination of innovative and evidence-based teaching at UofL.

In this edition of TILL Talk, we highlight online and hybrid teaching by focusing on the work of the **Hybrid Course Design FLC.** It is an honor to serve you!

ONLINE AND HYBRID TEACHING

INNOVATIONS

Faculty learning community designs their fall 2020 hybrid courses together

Beginning in July, an interdisciplinary group of 14 faculty began meeting weekly as the **Hybrid Course Design** faculty learning community. Representing seven academic units, the group considers questions around building and implementing plans to foster learning in hybrid courses. In sharing their experiences with each other, the group is gaining new ideas and strategies for teaching in the fall, including the following:

- Technology tools for online engagement
- Strategies for increasing student engagement and building class community in hybrid settings
- Increased flexibility in syllabi, curricula and delivery to meet the needs of all students
- Safe and effective group activities for the face-to-face portions of hybrid teaching
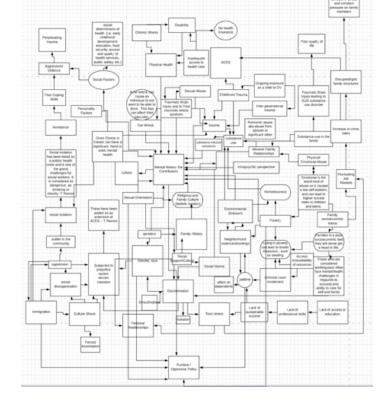
Members of the FLC include Jen Anderson (Delphi Center/A&S), Jennifer Bobo (Social Work), Lauren Fletcher (CEHD), Rebecca Gesler (Nursing), Seana Golder (Social Work), Melissa Groenewold A&S), Paul Himes (A&S), Abby Koenig (Business), Scott LaJoie (SPHIS), Sharon Sanders (Social Work), Lorna Segall (Music), Carla Vidoni (CEHD), Jerry Willing (Speed), and Lisa Wagner (A&S).

CLASSROOM INNOVATION

The transition to remote teaching has offered an unexpected opportunity for teaching innovation. Learn more about faculty members' teaching strategies for student engagement in online teaching environments.

Making meaning through concept mapping

Jennifer Bobo and Sharon Sanders, full-

time teaching faculty members at the Kent School of Social Work, wanted their students to consider factors that contribute to mental illness. To encourage students to consider relationships between contributing factors, they assign their students to create a **concept map** using free trials from tools such as **miro.com**.

Students can create up to three charts for free and submit their work on Blackboard. Bobo and Sanders found students considered many more factors when given this assignment prompt compared to when given an essay assignment. The concept map pictured is the work of one of their students. Students also reported that they enjoyed creating their unique concept maps.

Jennifer Bobo (left)

Sharon Sanders (right)

Adobe Spark enhances creativity

Jen Anderson, part-time faculty member in political science, offered students the choice between writing a paper or creating an **Adobe Spark Page** for their end-of-semester project to evaluate a political campaign.

Half of her students chose Adobe Spark, where they were assessed by an identical grading rubric as the paper, but supplemented their main ideas with visuals rather than written prose.

Anderson reported that grading the Spark Pages was quicker and more interesting than grading papers. Students expressed appreciation for having an alternate, more creative option for the project.
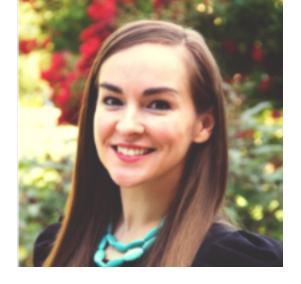
Most also volunteered to share their work with the class, promoting idea exchange that did not take place among those choosing the written option.

Adobe Spark is a free program that is intuitive and user-friendly.

Anderson provided students the web address for Spark (**https://spark.adobe.com**), and they created the pages without the need for support or tutorials.

Jen Anderson

Q&A with Robin Zahrndt, Delphi Center Instructional Designer

Hybrid and online teaching during COVID bring unique challenges.

Instructional designer Robin Zahrndt works with faculty across UofL during their transition to new types of instruction. Learn more about her experiences over the past 6 months.

Question: *What would you say has been the most common challenge about which faculty are inquiring as they move their courses to online or hybrid formats?*

Robin: *Creating a community is one I hear a lot.*

Question: *What resources are available for faculty interesting in building community in their courses?*

Robin: *Every faculty member has access to the* ***"Pivot to Fall***

*2020" **Blackboard organization**. The resources there for synchronous and asynchronous communication have been very helpful. Using Collaborate Ultra to still have that element of synchronous conversation is proving very important to many. At the root of the worry is losing that special thing that made a class "yours." Most of the time that element is about how instructors engage with students, and the move to hybrid is completely changing that engagement piece.*

Want more information on building community and increasing student engagement through synchronous and asynchronous communication? Log into the **Pivot to Fall 2020** Blackboard organization to explore the resources Robin mentioned and many more.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITES

Reading Circles

Two **fall Reading Circles** will launch in mid-September to discuss the books *Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science to Online Class* and *Switch: How to Changes Things When Change Is Hard*. **Learn more and register.**

Tell us what you think!

What did you like best about this new TILL newsletter format?

Hybrid Design FLC Updates

Classroom Innovations

Q&A with Robin Zahrndt

Something Else

Contact Us

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