

Resources and ideas for remote learning

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To: University Communications <UniComm@westfield.ma.edu>

Good Morning,

I'm sending this to the UniCom list rather than just to the faculty list because there are many staff members actively supporting instruction.

There are many instructor-created lists of things to consider in moving instruction online quickly, but I thought I would highlight a few items that relate to issues we've seen here at Westfield State this week:

Pick tools and approaches familiar to you and your students. Introducing too many new technologies at once can contribute to students feeling overwhelmed. I've heard from some students who are struggling in this new environment. Keeping it simple is a good approach, and introducing new technologies slowly also helps.

Be careful with synchronous/live activities. Some of our students have switched to new jobs, are taking care of children, and have new schedules, so their regular class times are causing challenges. In general, asynchronous learning (though less interactive) can give students more flexibility to do work when they are able. This includes recording and posting lectures rather than holding them live, taking questions by email or message application when possible, while still offering some live time for more interactive discussion, such as live office hours on Zoom. Some students have reported unstable or slow internet connections and some trouble with live lectures. With a recorded lecture they can go back and watch sections again to catch things they may have missed.

Students with disabilities: Some students require special considerations or accommodations for these changes. For information about how to manage this for your students, please contact Banacos Academic Center Disability Services: ds@westfield.ma.edu They will work closely with the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) to find solutions.

Another thing we've seen this week is tremendous flexibility and patience shown between students and instructors as they adjust to new ways of doing things. It often takes a few tries to get it right, and that understanding has gone a long way.

More resources:

- The first comes from our own Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning: [Resources for Remote Teaching](#).
- The [CIT](#) has further links to helpful resources and approaches to remote instruction.

Support:

While we can best support university-contracted systems such as PLATO (BlackBoard) and Zoom, we are ready to help with whatever system you are using.

- Please contact [Media Services](#) about support for Zoom or teleconferencing
- [CIT](#) can help with PLATO and general instructional support matters

- [Technology Support](#) can help with hardware, software, account, and connection issues, and are also prepared to help with any general technology questions
- [Ely Library](#) has extensive material online, including e-books, videos, and journals. The library has also been busy digitizing course reserve materials and lending laptops. If you need a laptop for remote work, please follow the procedure I sent earlier to this email list.

Thanks to all of these staff members and librarians for their work supporting instruction through this challenging time!

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