

TOPcast Episode 36 (bonus): Online Learning Experiences from the Students' Perspective

- TOM I know a couple of folks on the panel, in full disclosure. We have at least one employee (*laughter*) on the panel that work here at CDL. So, they have kind of an inside view, but they're also online students. So, I'm going to go ahead and let each person introduce themselves. Tell us [whether you're] undergraduate, graduate, major, how long you've been at UCF, and maybe just a sense of the number and type of online courses you've taken, whether they're fully online or if they're mixed mode or whatever. So, we can start right here.
- PAMELA I'm Pamela Robinson. I'm an undergraduate majoring in journalism. I've taken both mixed mode and fully online classes, and I've been here a little over a year.
- ALYSSA D. I am Alyssa Davis. I am a computer science major with minors in business and leadership. Probably half of the classes I've taken in the three years that I've been here have been online classes, and both mixed mode and totally online. I think I answered all the questions.
- TOM Mhmm. Good job, Alyssa.
- BRIAN I'm Brian Greenly. I'm working on a master's degree in engineering management in the department of industrial engineering and management systems, and I've been at UCF for about two years. Most of the courses I've taken (out of the five that I've taken so far) have been onsite, but they usually have also a remote section. I took one course where I missed the onsite registration so I did take the remote section, but so far, my experiences have been pretty good with the courses that I've taken.
- ALEXANDRA My name is Alexandra. I'm a digital media major. I've been at UCF for about six years. I did my first bachelor's in communications, but I want to say that I've probably taken about one or two online classes a semester.
- ALYSSA L. I'm Alyssa Luis. I started at UCF in 2008 for undergrad with a psychology degree, and then for graduate school I jumped around a little bit as I found myself, and I was in mental health counseling. Hi Dr. Hagedorn! (*laughter*) And then I went into teaching and I've been a teacher, but most recently I've been in my master's degree for instructional design and technology with a focus on eLearning, and this is my last semester. I'm interning with CDL.
- TOM So, we've got a pretty broad representation. There were a couple of questions that were sent ahead of time, so I'm going to cherry pick a few of those, but then think to yourselves about questions that you might want to ask the panel. They have not been prepped to say anything nice or bad, so, anything can come out of their mouths (and usually does when we do these panels). So, it's unvarnished from the students themselves that you will be teaching, and it's a great opportunity for you to kind of hear an unmediated opinion about how this works. So, let's start with the spicy stuff. One of the questions was, "What are some online components that frustrate you or cause you stress within the class?" Anybody can kind of jump in on that one if you want.
- ALYSSA L. The modules are really great, as far as organization, but sometimes professors have most

things in modules and then there's random files in other spots, and then it becomes hard to know what is where as I try to navigate the course. Sometimes I just happen upon things, and it's like, "Oh! I didn't even know that was there!" So, having everything in a module is always better.

ALEXANDRA

And going back on the modules, I mean, like she said, they are great, but sometimes they can be a little bland if it's just pure text. I've had professors that just add a bunch of text in paragraphs, and although it's useful information, it just gets a little boring to read. Last semester I had a professor that actually put some memes there. Although they might not have so much to do with the course itself, it just makes it a little more interactive and a little more fun to go over those modules.

BRIAN

I hate to say me, too, but I would agree that one of the things that's difficult with the online part of it is that if there's not good organization, if there's not good descriptions in file names of files that are uploaded, then it's really difficult to find content that you're looking for.

ALYSSA D.

I'm going to be different here. One of the things that is most frustrating for me is definitely PDFs and PowerPoint slides just being a random file. Because I work at CDL, I know that professors have access to tools to put that stuff into your modules and not just have me download a PDF 8,000 times, because one time it ends up in my downloads folder, one time I'm downloading it on my phone, one time I'm downloading it on a different device, so I end up with 17 copies of the syllabus by the end of the semester because I have to keep looking at it. That is really frustrating for me. Just put the actual syllabus text in the syllabus section. That would probably be the biggest thing for me is instead of having to download—I know it's easier for you guys to just put the PDF on there, and say, "Okay, cool. I'm done." But it's a lot harder for me, and if the PDF is just slightly off, if it wasn't generated correctly, if something happened, and I'm having to zoom in on your super tiny text on my relatively small device, it's kind of annoying.

TOM

How do you really feel, Alyssa?

AUDIENCE

(laughter)

PAMELA

Two things. One, in answer to her, I'm old-school, as you can tell. I'm from the old generation, so I print out everything. I like hard copies of stuff, and then I can refer to it and take notes on it. I do work with the technology okay, but I still like my old-school paper. The second thing I really want to point out—and this is sensitive. I had an instructor last semester that posted a video. It was part of a movie. There was no warning ahead of time, and it had a violent scene in it. Because I have been a victim of a violent crime, it brought back a lot of memories, and I had a rough time with it. So, I did tell her, "Please give people a warning that you're going to do that," so I could have chosen not to watch the movie. So, that's one thing that's a frustration. Please let us know if there's going to be something violent. You don't know what your students have experienced.

- ALYSSA D. Sorry. Real quick with that. Because I have friends who have similar issues, that they don't like to watch certain types of content, so saying, "Hey, this kind of content will be in the video roughly around this part" allows—If it's an hour-long movie and there's a violent scene for five minutes, you can say, "By the way, this violent scene happens at this point, and if you want to skip it, you can skip it." So, adding to that, saying, "This is where it is," and if it is just a short video, it's okay to skip, but if you feel that there is other content that's valuable in that longer video, then putting that little specific section in there makes it easier for us.
- TOM One theme I heard from the first couple of comments is something that we've heard before, which has to do with structure. That online students tend to really appreciate a well-structured course, a course that has consistency in design and in presentation. Even with the timing of assignments being due maybe on a consistent regular basis. Everything's due Sunday night or whatever. Would you agree with that?
- BRIAN Yes.
- ALYSSA L. Absolutely.
- TOM Am I summarizing that correctly?
- ALYSSA D. With that consistency, a lot of our classes are everything is due at 11:59 on "insert day here", and then I have some professors that are like, "I'm going to make everything due at 8AM." For the love of all that is holy, please don't do that.
- AUDIENCE *(laughter)*
- ALEXANDRA I agree. I agree. Sticking to 11:59PM all across would be ideal. I haven't had an issue where that happened, but I have a couple friends that would get really frustrated when the times are completely different, because most students will have it due at 11:59PM, and then other students will have it due at 8PM. Like, random times.
- TOM I've heard that. Some of you may know Alicia Janowski in psychology, and she's talked about this when we've had faculty panels, where she, at one point, had a class where I think everything was due at like 9:00 in the morning on a Monday, and the students freaked out.
- AUDIENCE *(laughter)*
- PAMELA I know why.
- TOM Okay.
- PAMELA I have studied this closely. I have a daughter who's a UCF student, also. Pardon me to the young people here. They tend to wait until the last minute. It's due at 12:00 and at 11:45,

they're signing on to do the assignment. Me? I do it hours ahead so I don't have to worry about that, but that's why they do that. They all wait until—sorry, guys. They all wait until the last minute to do their assignments.

TOM Yeah, well, she ended up switching it back to 11:59 on Sunday night because she was like, “Well, it's the same seven days in the week and 24 hours a day. Couldn't you just adjust when you do it?” She got tired of fighting it and answering the emails that she got, so she just switched it back. So, note to self: 11:59 on Sunday night seems to work. Alright, so—Oh! There's a hand! Sorry!

AUDIENCE MEMBER Is there a preference to what day of the week on 11:59PM?

ALYSSA L. Well, I'll actually say that I've had some professors who've opened...Like, they lock a module until a certain date and then it's due a certain date. Sometimes what happens is in graduate school, most people are working at the same time, and I had a professor who would open up the module on Mondays and then it would be due on a Friday at 11:59, and we're all working, so usually, in grad school, you use the weekend, then, to work on your assignments, so I would say, especially for graduate school, a Sunday is always great because then you can still do all your work week stuff during the week and then on the weekend you can work [on school].

TOM That's what I hear from the students that I teach. In fact, I even got a comment this semester. They appreciated—I think I used Sunday at 11:59—because they worked all week and they timed their work for the weekend to kind of catch up.

Did I see a hand over here?

AUDIENCE MEMBER Yes. Thank you. Last semester I taught close to 1,000 students in different courses, and so, I kind of saw the whole spectrum. I had students taking advantage of the fact that weekends should not be a time when the assignments come out or should be...So, I tried to explain to them, but I don't know how I can get away with it. What do you say about it? I mean, I understand what you guys are saying. I would love that I can have or take advantage of the whole week, and by week, I mean, not the business week but rather the whole week. So, I have had students getting upset that I would start the assignment, let's say, right after Sunday and then, you know, they would have the whole week (including Saturday). What do you say to these students if they come and complain?

TOM So, the question is the students are taking issue with the fact that there's expectations for them to turn something in on a weekend and the weekend is their off time? Yeah, I'm not very sympathetic to that.

AUDIENCE TOM *(laughter)*

I would say that if that's an issue, do the work and turn it in on Friday, you know? They have all week to turn it in. In 99% of the courses that I've seen designed, they have that

freedom and flexibility. That's the beauty of having an online class is that they can set their own schedule within these deadline parameters of whatever they might be. Would you all agree with that?

- ALEXANDRA Not completely. I still think that Sunday would just be the best time because I don't know what level you teach, like if it's freshmen or senior classes, but as you get into your major more, most of us do part-time jobs, most of us have internships or a combination of both. So, for the most part, Sunday is an ideal time, because you have pretty much the whole week to work on it. So, I don't really think that's an excuse for anyone to say. I mean, if they want to do something fun for the weekend, then they have the whole week to do it, you know?
- TOM I would say, if you're taking a face-to-face class, you're doing homework on the weekends. I hope, right?
- ALYSSA L. I mean, I teach sixth graders, and they have to do homework on the weekend sometimes. So, if a sixth grader has to do it, I'm pretty sure a college student can do it. *(laughter)*
- PAMELA I also think by... You're teaching the students when you give them assignments that they need to learn time management.
- BRIAN In the most recent course I took, the assignments were typically released at 11:59 on Tuesday and then due at 11:59 on Sunday, and I don't recall seeing any complaints from any of the students, and there were a lot of students in both of the sections of that course.
- TOM Question over here?
- AUDIENCE MEMBER That was what I was going to ask. What would be the ideal time—I guess, there may not be one for every course—but to release a module and then as far as turnaround for having assignments due?
- PAMELA Monday. First thing Monday or Sunday night at midnight you can unlock it, and then have it due the following Sunday at midnight or the following Saturday at midnight. Or, Monday morning, because that gives... If I work, which I did during school, that gave me the entire time to plan out my calendar. I told you I'm a paper person. I don't go anywhere without my calendar book. So, I color-coded everything in my book so I knew when it was due.
- ALYSSA D. So, I'm actually kind of going to touch on all of these questions. I personally really, really don't like modules that are locked. I understand the point of them, but I don't necessarily work at the pace that the class is designed to. I have had this complaint since I was in kindergarten when we were reading books out loud where I would be four pages ahead of them reading out loud, and I do the same thing in my online classes now, where these three sections will be related, so I will read them all at the same time, but if I don't know what the assignment is going to be or if I have a class where most of the content is

in the module and I'm not using an outside textbook, I want to be able to see a few weeks in advance because maybe there's a paper due in three weeks, and I want to know what are the instructions for that or what's kind of the narrowing of that assignment, because these classes are not exactly super small. On the date/time thing, I honestly don't care if you open them on Tuesdays or Sundays or Thursdays or any day of the week. I just want seven days, and that's the other part of locking modules is I can't see in advance when assignments are due, because I've had professors that one week the assignments are due on Thursday and the next week they're due on Tuesday, and I want nothing to do with that. (*laughter*) I want consistency more than everything's due on Sunday. If I know that everything in this class is going to be due on Tuesday the entire semester, that's fine. That's kind of my thing.

TOM We've heard this kind of feedback from others, specifically to your question. It doesn't matter as long as it's consistent. Don't switch it up week to week because then people get confused, but if you set an expectation that you're consistent, it tends to be more appreciated by the students in the class. I'll echo the comment about locking modules. That is a pedagogical decision that you all have individual authority to make for your course. I would just ask you to think very seriously about it. Have a good reason for locking something and not exposing it to the class from the beginning. There are good reasons for doing that, but just make sure that you have a good reason for doing it and it's not just "I want to control the pace" because we've got a lot more particularly non-traditional learners, fully online learners that travel, that have family commitments that will work ahead so that they can manage this, and if you're not allowing them to do that, then it becomes a time management issue for them. Again, I'm not saying, "Don't do it." I'm just saying, "Make sure that you understand the reasons why you're doing it," and that there's a good pedagogical rationale behind it.

ALYSSA D. For example, hi!

DR.
TWYFORD Hi!

ALYSSA D. I was in her class, and I'm terrible with names, so I'm sorry that I don't remember your name.

TOM Dr. Twyford.

ALYSSA D. You have a really interesting name, and we work right around the corner from each other. I was going to be out of the area and not really have access to internet for a while. Actually, I was doing an interview. I sent Dr. Twyford a message, and I said, "Hey! Can I get the instructions for this assignment because I won't be able to complete it at the scheduled time?" And she sent me the instructions, and that was fine. So, that was kind of my thing. I understand that you all have the ability to lock your modules and control the pace, but also, be aware that if I do ask, please don't be like, "Wait until that week, and have a nice day," because I've also had professors say that. Like, "I'm not going to

give you anything past what you're currently working on," and that's not super cool.

ALYSSA L. I had a situation similar where I was going out of the country, and I asked a professor to open up a module early so that I could complete it ahead of time so that I didn't have to worry about internet access while I was out of the country, and they refused to. So, while I was out of the country, I had to find internet access and work on it, which thankfully, I mean, I was able to, but it would have definitely been convenient if the module had been opened or if it would have been open just for that one exception. That would have been a much better experience, and I would have felt a much better connection to the professor, as well.

TOM So, another question that was sent ahead of time has to do with discussions. "I have had students say that at times the discussions can become tedious. What other activities do you find interesting that could take the place of some of the discussions and still have students interacting with each other? I'd also say, have you had experiences where the discussions were not tedious, and what was good about that?"

ALEXANDRA I think what makes them tedious is the fact that for the most part, my professors tell you, "Make a discussion post, and then comment to three people." I think it's a fact that you have to comment to multiple people. I feel like if maybe you had to comment to maybe one or two, it would be okay because you could have a more personal discussion in regards of what you're talking about. I think when you have multiple people that you have to comment to, you just write the same thing just worded differently and that's it. You're not really giving them the feedback that they actually need.

ALYSSA L. I think as long as the discussion is purposeful. There's been times where you have a discussion and it feels like busywork instead of that I'm actually going to take something out of this discussion and learn from it, and the replies then even become more tedious when it doesn't feel purposeful because it's just like, "Hey! That was a great point! I never thought about it that way before!" and then you move on because there was nothing purposeful to say. It was just a random discussion for a grade.

TOM We've heard this before, too. You don't want perfunctory discussions. You want something that would simulate an active classroom discussion where people are sharing ideas, and it's relevant to the topic, and it's interesting, and so, yeah. You guys are echoing comments that we've heard elsewhere. Are there other kinds of interaction/communication tools or experiences that you've had that are not discussion-based?

ALYSSA D. So, I'm going to kind of answer that but not really, because it was a discussion. Actually, it was also in Dr. Twyford's class. One of the discussions was to take this quiz where you got a mind map. It was in a leadership class, for reference. You did a mind map about where you fell on a spectrum of different issues and that kind of thing, and we had to post that mind map that we did and then talk about the stuff related to that mind map and discuss with each other about what our feedback was on the mind map and how it related

to the class.

Currently, I'm in a class at another institution where I have three discussion posts that I have to make every week. A 300-word introductory post and two 200-word replies. That is relevant because I understand the point of word counts because there are students who are just like, "Oh, I'm going to write 'That was a great point' and leave it at that." But, that's a lot when I also have an assignment, a quiz, and a test in that class every week, and it just becomes very, very tedious where I'm just writing "and" and "the" and "in" and these little tiny words just so that I can fill the word count, because there are other people who, when I'm doing my replies, they didn't write anything of substance, and I can't reply to anything. So, I might have written—and I did this past week—I wrote a 400-word introductory post, and a lot of other people in the class just wrote that minimum 300 words, and it was a lot of "in", "the", "of", that kind of stuff, and I didn't have anything to reply to, so my 200-word response to them was the same thing. It's really frustrating for me, because I like talking! Maybe you all have noticed.

AUDIENCE *(laughter)*

ALYSSA D. I don't feel like putting a word count on a discussion makes that discussion any more valuable.

TOM Okay. Let's talk about group assignments. Here's one of the questions that has to do with group assignments in the online classroom, and the question was, "Do they work or not?" And I'll preface this by... There's a class I teach occasionally here that does have group work in it. Not throughout the entire semester, but [in] a couple of modules there's some group work. Generally, the feedback I get it is 60/40, 70/30 "I hate this" and "This was the best part of the course." So, for some students, they seem to really like the group work and then other students generally don't. It often is a complaint of so-and-so wasn't pulling their weight or something, and there are things you can do about that, but I wonder if you have all taken any online classes that have group work. What were your impressions of that? What worked about it? What didn't work? Any advice for our faculty here? Pamela? You're looking at me like you've got something to say.

PAMELA I despise group work.

AUDIENCE *(laughter)*

PAMELA I hate it with passion.

TOM You're in that 60-70%.

PAMELA I hate it, and I have looked on RateMyProfessor, and if it says, "Professor has a group assignment," I usually go, "Well! We won't be taking that professor!" I live in Melbourne. It's over an hour's drive from here. I also work. Where am I going to meet with these people who have dayshift hours of nothing to do and I'm at work? It's really

difficult for me.

TOM Were you able to do virtual meetings with these people or are you talking about only physical meetings with these people?

PAMELA Physical meetings.

TOM Okay.

PAMELA So, I just don't like group work, but that's my personal opinion.

ALYSSA L. I think that most people who've had group work have had a bad experience at some point. My master's in instructional design was all online or has been all online, and there's a lot of group work, because in the field, you work together in groups. So, I at least felt like, "Well, this is relatable. It's preparing me for the future." But having Google Hangouts or the Blue Button through Webcourses or things like that really made a difference. It can be challenging if you have a group member that's not working and you have to pick up the slack. It kind of prepares you for real life. Do I enjoy that? Absolutely not, but it happens. I think that as long as there seems to be a reason behind it and there's a way to hold people accountable—so, there's some kind of evaluation system—I think it works. It can be challenging. For instance, I had, last semester, a group project online. Everyone was in different parts of Florida, and we would meet online, but some people didn't get out of work until 8:00 at night. So, we were meeting at 9:00 at night, and so, it becomes challenging. You're meeting from 9 to 11:30 a couple nights a week. It becomes challenging, but I think that there's some value there.

BRIAN The experience I've had with group work has been always with some of the students who are onsite and some of the students also remote. It's important in the beginning of a group project to establish—I don't want to say a hierarchy—but establish everyone's role. Maybe there's a leader who organizes everybody else's activities, but everyone has to know what they're doing. It does prepare for real life because in the job that I have now, most of the people who do what I do work remotely, and we have to collaborate remotely either via email or conference calls. So, I know that some people don't like group work, but I think it has value. But again, the structure early on in the project is really important.

ALEXANDRA I completely agree with that. I think that if—Well personally, I like when you can choose your own group. I know that a lot of people don't. They'd just rather get random people. I prefer if I could choose my own so I know exactly who I'm working with, what their strengths are, [and] what their weakness are. Last semester, I took a project management class where we had to create an online application. We got to choose our own group. We each posted our idea, and then depending on that, people that wanted to be in your group would comment, "Hey! I think that's a great idea! I have this that I can bring into the group," so you kind of see who you want in your group and what exactly their position is going to be. Definitely organization when it comes to that is the most important thing.

You just want to make sure that all your group members are going to do the same amount of work just in different roles within it.

I did have a group member that lived about an hour away, so whenever she couldn't make it, we just did Skype conversations. We've used Discord, as well. So, pretty much all of the work was able to be distributed evenly, even if she wasn't there. So, just taking advantage of any online source is also good.

ALYSSA D. Alyssa kind of said having the ability to give feedback on the other people in the group. I had a bunch of friends who were in a class together, and they chose to be in a group together, and at the end of the class, the professor said, "You have to rank everybody." Not say, "This person did well" or "This person didn't do well." A ranking of 1 to 5, and you had to rank everyone between 1 to 5, and you could not rank anyone with the same rank. So, you had to pick someone that was the worst person even if there wasn't a worst person. So, maybe like, "Oh, one guy didn't show up to a meeting so he gets the 1." That sucks.

AUDIENCE *(laughter)*

TOM Yeah.

ALYSSA L. I've never had that. That sounds awful.

ALEXANDRA Yeah, that sounds awful. Don't do that.

TOM That's harsh. May the odds be ever in your favor.

AUDIENCE *(laughter)*

AUDIENCE MEMBER So, I do a lot of group activity within the context of the course that I'm working on, and I'm curious when being asked to do peer evaluations and actually give feedback of your peers to faculty members, what have you felt was an effective method of communicating both good and bad feedback about your peers? What was effective not in terms of just being able to express yourself but in terms of your perceptions on whether or not the faculty actually heard what you were saying?

ALYSSA D. Well, for me, the feedback in all of my classes has been at the end of the semester, so, I have felt like there's been zero faculty feedback. I had one class—it was actually in high school, I think, but I took a lot of online classes in high school, as well—where there was kind of a check-in of "How are you guys doing? How are you guys working together? Is there anything that you need help with?" That kind of stuff. That was a lot more valuable, but as far as I can remember, 100% of my classes at UCF have been "How was this group?" on the last day of class. It doesn't matter!

ALYSSA L. My last semester I had seven group projects with the same group throughout the same

course, and the professor had it so that after every project was due, you turned in an evaluation, and there was criteria. There was different categories as far as effort, things like that, and that was helpful. If there was something... If a group member was rated low, then we had to kind of had a discussion with the professor, so nobody really wanted that. *(laughter)* But, if that happened, there would be accountability and not just, “Well, I turned it in, and we’ll see what happens.”

ALYSSA D. I think that’s part of the big issue with group projects. They’re almost always, in my classes, due at the end of the semester, and you don’t really have any way to gauge what is going to come out of that until you see your grade in myUCF, and then you’re like, “Oh! I guess we did okay,” or “Crap, why did we not do well on that?” I had a class—it was kind of a mixed mode class—where the big group project of the semester was due two weeks before the end of the semester. So, we had kind of the ability to get some feedback and for the professor to say, “This is where your weakness were,” and he also gave us the ability to edit, because it was both a presentation and a paper that we had to turn in. He gave us the ability to edit that paper, and from his feedback, turn it in for a slightly better grade. I think he did it in that whatever points you got off, you were allowed to make up completely, but I’ve had other professors where it’s like, “You got 10 points off and you can make up a third of that or half of that.” That kind of thing.

TOM Is there a question? Yeah.

AUDIENCE MEMBER Can everybody hear me? I have a question. Since we don’t always get to have honest engagements with our students (our face-to-face ones), when you guys are talking about collaboration and group projects and such, obviously Webcourses has a lot of tools built into it, but I’m wondering if there are other tools, other platforms that students feel particularly like they can use more intuitively than maybe some of the ones that Webcourses is suggesting.

ALYSSA L. I’ve used Webcourses tools as well as other ones, but we tend to use Google Hangouts a lot. You can share screens, and it just becomes a really easy process of logging in and out. I haven’t had many connection issues there. So, Google Hangouts, I would say, is the one that I’ve used most often.

ALEXANDRA Yeah. For me, it’s been Skype. I don’t really use many of the Webcourses tools, honestly. Skype just always has been super reliable. Everyone, for the most part, knows how to use it, too, so I think that one is sufficient for group work, especially for people that can’t meet on campus.

ALYSSA D. For those of you taking notes—we’ve got one up here right in the front—don’t start suggesting Hangouts because Hangouts is also going to be dying in the next few months. Sorry. Google is changing where you can get Hangouts. So, yes, Hangouts, but there are a lot of different chat clients. Discord is a new one. It’s primarily marketed to gamers—I’m sorry—but it’s a really interesting system where it’s a Skype-chat program. It’s got voice calling in it. It’s got screen sharing. It’s a lot less heavy and not owned by

Microsoft, and there are a lot of people who really have a thing against Microsoft. So, there are a lot of different programs. Discord is probably, for me, one of the biggest ones, and then obviously, just text messages and Facebook.

TOM Let me make a suggestion, too. Alyssa's a digital media student, so she's probably in the weeds on some of this stuff, but the university is a Microsoft school. Thank you, Alyssa.

AUDIENCE *(laughter)*

ALYSSA D. Hey! I want to be a Microsoft intern! I'm just saying there are people who exist, not that I personally share those views.

TOM So, we support at an enterprise level—we being the university UCF IT—Skype for Business, which is the old Microsoft Lync. It's a Microsoft product, and it does have an awful lot of video capabilities, screen sharing, you can record, there's a chat. Canvas Instructure is in the process of integrating that more closely into the platform itself through some integration standards. Google's a little more integrated now [with] Google Docs and Google Drive, but Microsoft's coming. We've already got OneDrive that's integrated in, and some of these other tools are coming. So, that's a really good one, I think, to suggest to students. One, because, they can call the Help Desk if they have an issue and it's supported enterprise-wide at the university, and it's got a lot of features that do a lot of these same things, so it's worth trying. And you all have accounts for that, as well, so you could be in some of these rooms with students if you wanted to. So, I'm getting the hi sign, so maybe we have time for one more question if anybody has one.

Okay. Well, we're recording, so here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER My name is Ingrid. I do the health service administration internship program. My biggest thing with students are, "What did you learn from your education that you can transfer into the real world?" Because I hear things sometimes about the discussion posts are needless for those of us who've worked for eons. We know that we can do the same paper or question to an employer over and over again, so do you have anything in particular that you've learned from everything that you've mentioned that didn't go your way? I.e. the modules weren't in the way that you want to see it or you weren't able to get paperwork information ahead of time. Can you guys use that at any point or now working? Can you use that in your career field as a transferable skill?

ALYSSA L. I think it requires you to be really organized. When you're taking an online course, you have to manage the different due dates and there's nobody sitting there every time you go to a lecture saying, "Remember! Tomorrow, this is happening." It requires you to be more organized, and so I think that skill is helpful. There does have to be some flexibility, because you have to work with different professors and the way that they've organized their courses in different ways, and I think that flexibility transfers to a lot of different careers.

ALEXANDRA And it also allows you to meet deadlines. For example, like the professors that want to lock the modules. Well, if they're going to lock them, then you have to do them at that specific time. So, when you go out in the workforce and you have deadlines, sometimes you can't tell your boss, "Hey, can I get an extension?" So, it also allows you to do that.

TOM Okay. Well, I think we're out of time. Let me just make one quick comment that you probably will have other questions that come to you or things that maybe you would like to know about how to design courses that are going to be the most effective for your students. The instructional designer that is working with you is your point of contact to kind of navigate all of these questions. They'd be happy to talk to you about whether it's collaboration tools or discussion strategies or whether it makes sense to lock your modules in an adaptive release format or to just open them up. I mean, these are all the kinds of questions that your instructional designer can help you navigate.

So, with that, I'm standing between you and lunch. Please join me in thanking our panel. They did a great job.

AUDIENCE *(applause)*