Educational Technology Corner | April 2020

Get the latest updates on educational technology, including Brightspace, TopHat and more.

Focus on Distance Teaching

There has be a complete shift from Face-to-Face to online delivery of content to our students. This challenge to education is unprecedented. This section has customarily focused on changes and improvements to our Educational Technology systems. This article will focus on the use of technology to engage your students from afar.

You will see many links in this article. The links will take you to OEI and vendor created tutorials and release notes, to help you make the most of the technology tools available.

The Office of Educational Improvement has developed a website dedicated to Distance Education and available resources. This site gives a thorough overview, with links to vendors and help articles.

For your consideration

- Students are all over the country (possibly the world). If you schedule small group work, keep time zones in mind. Our 8 AM is California's 6AM. As of this writing (April 9, 2020) we are in Central Daylight Savings Time (CDT)
- Connectivity can vary from region to region. Those who are in a rural setting may have a mobile or satellite connection that caps data, or throttles to a slow speed once a certain amount of data is used. Even in 2020, rural users do face access challenges.
- Be mindful of file sizes. Posting large files, with animations and complex graphics, will be difficult for students to download. Consider linking to complex content. Here is a tutorial on how to compress your PowerPoint files before you post them.
- Did you know that you can create a movie from your voice over PowerPoint? This is useful for immediate upload to Panopto. Here is how:
  - Open your PowerPoint file and click the Slideshow tab.
  - Record your lecture from the Record Slide Show button.
  - After recording, click on the transitions tab, and be sure that the Advance Slide section is set to advance based on timecode, not mouse click (time will vary, depending on the length of the audio).
  - Click on Save As > in the file type pulldown (under the file name) choose .mp4.
  - Or, you can use the File > Export. Either process takes some time, be mindful of the progress bar along the bottom of the PowerPoint interface.

Options for Connecting with Students

Microsoft Teams
All MCW users have access to Office 365, a full online suite of the well-known Microsoft

Products. We all have Word, Excel and PowerPoint installed on our computers. The online suite opens a new world of connectivity software, free of charge! And, it is intuitive to use. Teams will not disappoint. Call or chat with your students, set up meetings, share files directly from OneDrive with the built-in synchronization. Very handy for virtual office hours, small groups, or meetings with your colleagues. For your convenience, Kerrie Quirk and Meaghan Hayes have authored a [tutorial to help you set up your Teams classroom](#)

WebEx Cloud;
MCW has invested in connectivity for large groups. As recently announced, WebEx Cloud is now available for large meetings. To get started, [login to WebEx Cloud](#). You will have to complete your account setup to access this tool. Each meeting can host up to 1,000 connections. Know that WebEx Legacy (meet.mcw.edu) does not interact with WebEx Cloud.

Brightspace Virtual Classroom
We now offer expanded access to the Bongo [Virtual Classroom](#), through Brightspace. This offers instructors and students video class time within the Brightspace course. Features are similar to video conferencing. Because you access this tool through a course, there is no need to send emails for access, simply post add your students to your Virtual Classroom session. For your convenience, here is a [video showing how to set up your virtual classroom](#). Contact [lmshelp@mcw.edu](#) for information and use of this tool. For full use, review the [Bongo Release notes](#).

Video Assignments

Brightspace

Students can upload self-created videos to Brightspace Assignments and Discussions. The file size limit is 1GB. It is recommended that student use a lower resolution setting to save space and increase upload/download time. This can be adjusted in the end user's camera settings. Ideally 640x480 is desired, but this can vary by camera. The file format should be .mp4.

Instructors may need to download the video for viewing, as Brightspace does not have a built-in video player.

Panopto Assignments folder

In the Panopto setting instructors can set up Assignments folders, for students to upload video. The advantage to this is the Panopto video player. There is no need to move the video out to view. You can read about how this is accomplished on the [Panopto support site](#) (start at Figure 2).

Brightspace
[April 2020 Updates](#)

Brightspace offers a [full menu of tutorials](#) to transfer your course to online.

Quick Eval Tool
The Quick Eval Tool is now available to Instructors. Use this tool from the top-level navigation bar, to access Discussion topic, Assignments and Quizzes that are unevaluated. You can sort by course or by activity. The evaluations will appear in the traditional evaluation window, and any comments will be posted to the appropriate course and student.

Aquifer
Aquifer is now offering their complete catalog. If you have not done so, please login and see what they have to offer. 1:1 coaching on use and teaching ideas is also available, directly from Aquifer.