



EMPATHIZING WITH STUDENTS

UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS, BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT IN ONLINE CLASSROOMS

CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS

- They may be emotionally exhausted
 - Fear of COVID-19
 - Fear of illness of parent/loved one
 - Fear of economic consequences of social isolation
 - They may not be safe in their home
 - Domestic violence
 - LGBTQA students
 - Other factors limiting emotions?

CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS

- Time limitation
 - They may be sick
 - They may be caring for a sick family member
 - They may be caring for children that are out of school
 - They may be sharing the computer with other family members
 - Other time limiting factors?

CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS

- They may be unable to access or learn from content.
 - They may not have a computer or high speed internet.
 - They may have an audio-visual processing challenges that limits their ability to learn from Zoom or other videos.
 - They may be gender fluid and unable to participate in BBLearn discussion boards because it is dangerous for them to be “outed”.

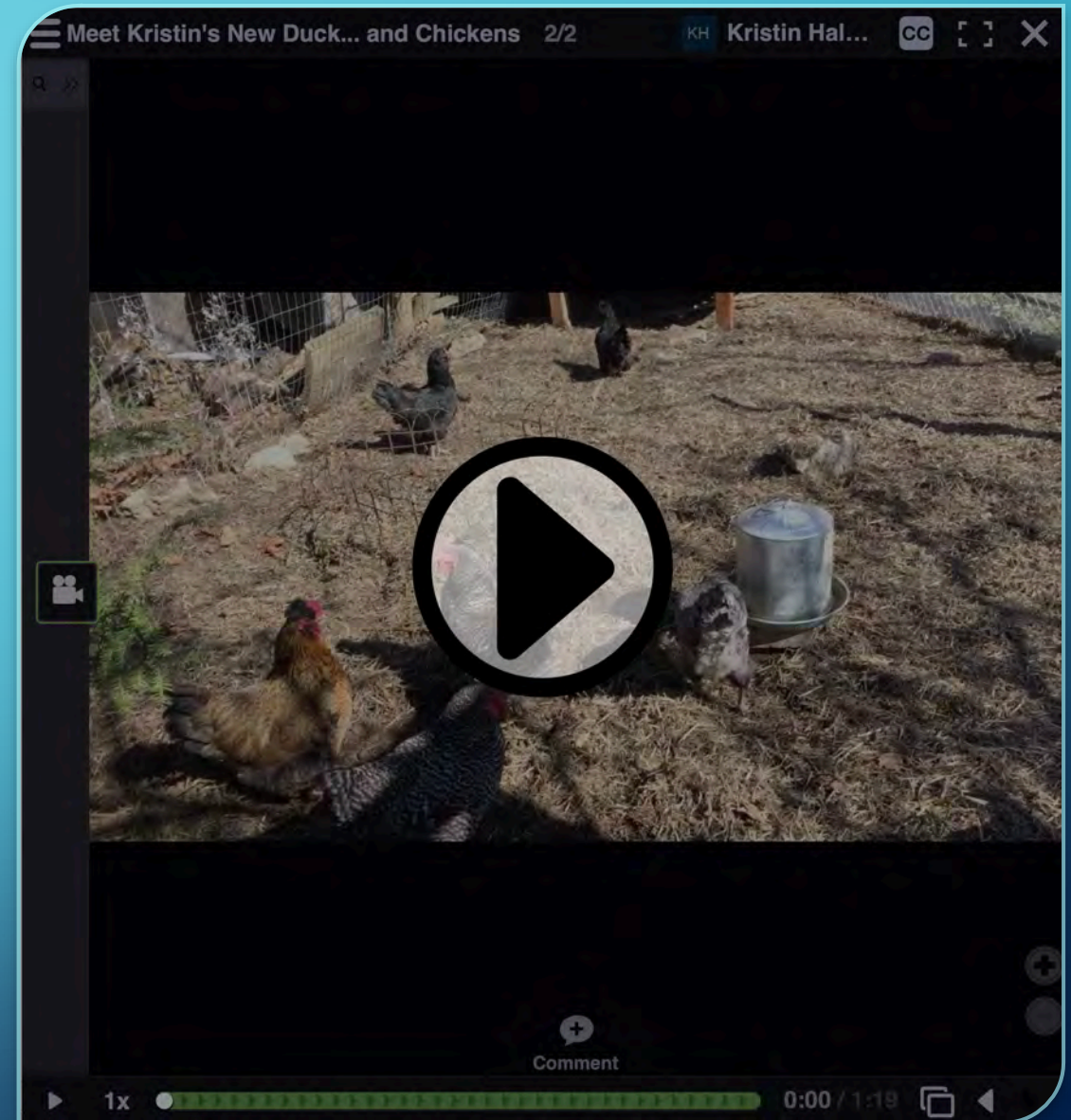


LITTLE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAKE CLASS MORE ACCESSIBLE

- Eliminate due dates – except for a final deadline
- Make class content asynchronous
- Use a tool that transcribes your video content (YouTube, others)
- Offer content in a variety of formats
- Don't use discussion boards in BbLearn (replace with Flip Grid or Voice Thread)
- When thinking about assignments – consider the outcomes you seek and adjust them as needed.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP PROVIDE EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- Have weekly “check ins”
 - Voice Thread videos
 - Journal entries with no grades
 - Email
 - Other?
- Be empathetic in your communication – name the feelings
- Communicate regularly – try to maintain community
 - Be funny



PERSPECTIVE

- All of the technologies we are discussing are dependent on a potentially fragile infrastructure.
- Not every student or community has wifi, and while zoom works telephonically, we know what cellular service is like in this state/region, even under optimal conditions. This then begs the question: what if a student cannot conveniently, effectively, or successfully access either signal for the duration of the instructional interval for each class session? Is it reasonable or unreasonable to assume or expect that a student will “find a way”?

PERSPECTIVE → SOLUTIONS

- “I was planning to hold zoom classes during the same time as my scheduled classes (aka synchronous meetings). However, as many of us may be experiencing with new responsibilities of working from home (e.g., child care), many of our students may struggle to keep up with synchronous meetings too - not to mention concerns about accessing the internet, concerns about roommates, and who knows what else given this time). So I plan to record lectures that students can watch at any time. To incentivize them actually watching it, I’m making really short quizzes on BBLearn where they answers some questions about what was said in the lecture and will use those quiz scores as attendance/participation”.

BALANCING ACTS?

- One thing to consider is hosting a few live sessions, with a way to share what was accomplished with those who couldn't make it. I think the key for such sessions (for every class, really) is for it to be something without which some vital aspect of learning cannot be accomplished...or something so cool or critical that the students would agree "yeah, we really needed to be there for that." And it's really hard not to think that way about every class we teach.
- I also think about the "more cowbell!" episode of SNL a lot and ask, do the students necessarily need more cowbell.

ALTERNATIVES

- [Videoconferencing Alternatives: How Low-Bandwidth Teaching Will Save Us All](#) by Daniel Stanford
- Learn more at: <https://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/cetl/teaching-online.asp>

