

July 15, 2020

## Technology and Online Learning Updates

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the spring and the abrupt transition to remote learning, the Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology (TLT) at Becker College has spent the summer with faculty to enhance remote teaching and learning in preparation for the fall.

The TLT has been implementing changes to accommodate faculty and students taking part in online and hybrid learning experiences, and has created and beginning to implement pedagogical training on the following topics:

- Leveraging the Canvas LMS
- Maximizing Learning Strategies for Instructional Success
- Engaging Students in Course Content
- Teacher Presence Online
- Planning & Facilitating Effective Discussions and Course Assessment Online
- Accessibility, Equity, and Inclusion

The TLT has developed these faculty training courses to help faculty make their courses more interactive and engaging, as well as to provide assistance in adhering to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to ensure accessibility, equity, and inclusion in courses. Faculty training courses are being held online in both synchronous and asynchronous formats. The TLT is working with faculty to train some to be faculty peer mentors so they may assist their colleagues with new teaching strategies and tools.

In addition to Becker-designed and delivered trainings, TLT has partnered with Microsoft Education Group (Natick, MA) to facilitate training for all Becker faculty and students through the summer and fall on all of its platforms. Current technology platforms are being leveraged to their fullest potential. This will help ensure Microsoft 365 is fully leveraged and faculty are prepared to use the various capabilities of Microsoft Teams, especially video conferencing.

Traditionally, online learning can be very text heavy. Students often must do a lot more reading and writing than if they were to take a face-to-face course. This is why it was important to adopt new technologies that would allow the College to bring all types of media into online classrooms. New technology tools have been implemented to make online courses more interactive and engaging.

- **Harmonize** is asynchronous discussion tool that allows for embedded pictures, video, and audio recording in the discussion itself. Students and instructors will have the ability to utilize this option. In addition, there are many other options when posting, including writing computer code within an online discussion, which can be very useful for Interactive Media and Computer Science students.

- **Canvas Studio** is an embedded screencast tool in Canvas. Students and instructors will be able to record, upload, post, edit, etc., all of their videos with this tool. This tool will allow for seamless video interactions with important capabilities such as auto-captioning while simplifying the video upload process.
- **Portfolium** is an eportfolio community integrated into Canvas that will connect Becker students, past and present, with faculty, staff, and potential employers for networking. It also has features that will assist the College with assessment efforts.
- **Kahoot!** is a quizzing platform intended to increase student participation through gamification. It enables faculty to “see” that all students are actively participating in live online class sessions. By stopping the lecture to ask questions using Kahoot!, faculty can use the data analytics to get a sense of how all students are doing understanding the material. This allows a faculty member to intervene at earlier stage if it doesn't look like students are understanding the course material.

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