



TEACHING ONLINE

Two Quick Tips

For my online classes, I create short, specific videos for each assignment. I explain the assignment directions and provide tips on how to be the most successful on that assignment. The video is posted directly above the assignment so students can watch the video at any time to help them ensure that they are completing the assignment correctly. This has cut down on the amount of email questions I receive, and I have found that students are doing better on the assignments.

I have also incorporated short, weekly discussion questions to help students feel more connected and engaged. They can be serious questions asking students to describe concepts or assignments they are struggling with, or they can be fun questions to ponder such as “What would you do with a million dollars if you won the lottery?”

Megan Dotson
West Kentucky Community & Technical College



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Teaching Writing and Developing Community through Student Videos

While every writing class seeks to build a sense of community, I have found this feeling of belonging to be especially vital to students in developmental writing courses. In small, face-to-face classes, students naturally get to know one another and share in each other's writing, but when my classes became exclusively online, I struggled to create a sense of connection among the students in my asynchronous courses. My discovery of Flipgrid changed everything.



Flipgrid allows students to create brief, free video responses to a topic of the teacher's choosing. Every week, I put a question or series of questions on Flipgrid. I start out with simple questions: Where are you from? What's your intended major? What was the best and worst part of your last writing experience? As the class becomes more comfortable with the idea of the videos, the questions become deeper. I particularly like to use the videos for self-reflection on their rough drafts: What was the most difficult part of the draft? Read the sentence you're most proud of in this draft. Would you like to do anything differently in your revision?

I also break the class up into groups for certain questions: What is a comma splice? Give an example and offer your best tip on how to find comma splices in your own work. Students get pretty creative with this one.

What has surprised me is how engaged the students become, both in creating their own videos and in responding to those of their classmates. They are truly thinking about the material, and it's translated to growth in their writing and more interaction between students outside of class. Many have even formed online peer review groups.

I always give a video response to each student. At around a minute for each video, this doesn't take much of my time, but it gives us an opportunity to interact across space and time, something the students appreciate greatly.

Elizabeth Burton
Hopkinsville Community College

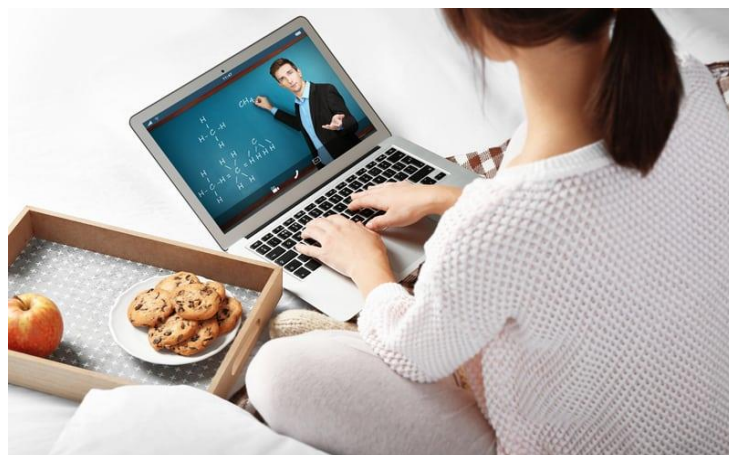
TUTORING VIRTUALLY

Teaching Writing and Developing Community through Student Videos

Through March 2020, our tutoring center at Murray State University (MSU) offered face-to-face tutoring where students could drop in and receive help. This free tutoring program was set up so students did not need an appointment. We had a set time blocked off every afternoon, Monday through Thursday, where students could stop by and stay as long as they needed to. All of our tutors, whom we pay, are MSU students who have already taken the courses they cover. We tutor in a variety of general education courses. Unfortunately, when the pandemic hit the United States, we had to close the doors to our tutoring center because we did not have a virtual option to provide to our students at that time.

After spending the summer meeting via Zoom with several tutoring companies, we partnered with Penji. Penji is a free app that students can either download on their phone or access through the Penji website. The main reason we went with Penji is because we are still able to use, and pay, our own students as tutors. Tutors can fill in their available times and days within the program. Now, instead of a certain time block Monday through Thursday, our tutors have the option of tutoring Sunday through Friday at all different times throughout the day. After downloading the free app, our students who need tutoring sign in with their MSU credentials and search for the course they need help in. They choose a day and time for their session that works best for their schedule, and then a Zoom link is sent to them. When it is time for their session, they simply click on the Zoom link and are good to go. And the best part? It's completely free for all of our current students.

*Shauna Mullins
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REGISTER FOR THE 2021 NOSS CONFERENCE AT THENOSS.ORG

Typically, the NOSS Conference is held in late February-early March of each year. Due to COVID, the 2021 NOSS Conference has been postponed to June 15-18 and the venue has been changed from Las Vegas to virtual. Details are at www.thenoss.org.



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