

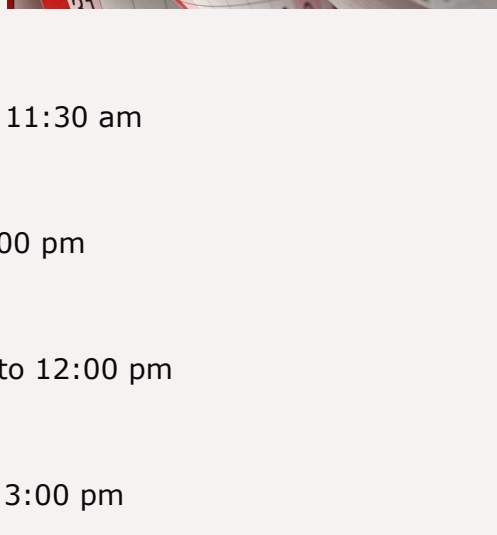
November 2020

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

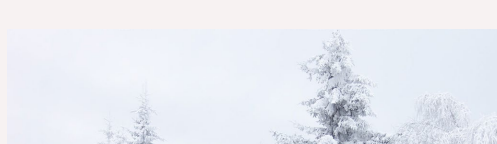
- [Introduction to PebblePlus](#)
Monday, November 23 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- [Extended Reality Community of Practice Session](#)
Thursday, November 26 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm
- [Introduction to Assessments in Pebble Pad: ATLAS: Part 1](#)
Thursday, November 26 from 9:30 am to 11:30 am
- [Integrating PebblePad Retreat](#)
Monday, December 7 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
- [Getting Started in LEARN](#)
Wednesday, December 9 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- [Getting Started in LEARN](#)
Thursday, December 10 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm



SAVE THE DATE!

12TH ANNUAL TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE

The [12th Annual University of Waterloo Teaching and Learning Conference](#) will be held online **Wednesday, April 28** and **Thursday, April 29, 2021**. Please note that due to our 2020 UW Teaching and Learning Conference being cancelled, the theme of our upcoming conference will remain the same: *Learning through Assessment*.

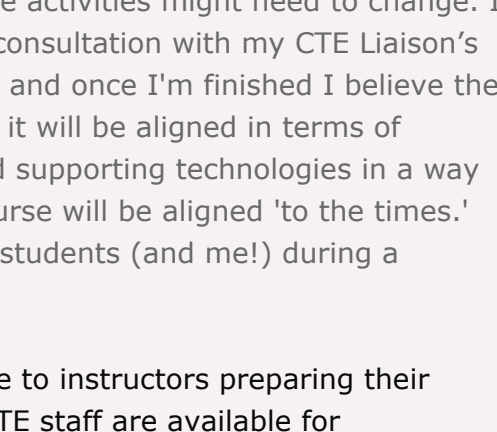


Our [Call for Proposals](#) is now open as well. We invite you to submit proposals for presentations, panel discussions, workshops, poster presentations, and assessment showcase items. Deadline: **January 20, 2021**.

Stay tuned for more information concerning registration and the online nature of this event.

iReCoDE: PREPPING FOR THE WINTER TERM

Since last August, more than 60 Waterloo instructors have registered for CTE's Independent Remote Course Design Essentials (iReCoDE) workshop. iReCoDE is a self-paced, independent experience developed in LEARN that guides instructors through the steps of preparing a new remote course or redesigning an existing course for the remote teaching and learning context. Philosophy's Katy Fulfer has this to say about her experience:

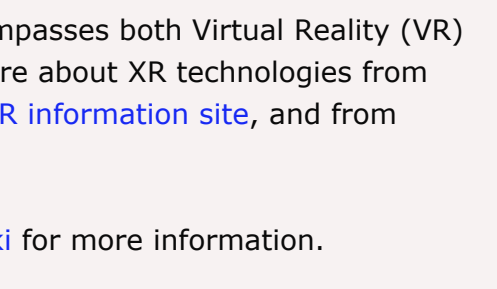


"Working through iReCoDe is helping me address the challenges of teaching a new, discussion-centered seminar remotely. And because I haven't taught since last Winter, I have some nervousness to overcome about the remote environment. The worksheets help me work through the course systematically and reflect on how learning outcomes, assessment, and course activities might need to change. I usually revise the worksheets several times in consultation with my CTE Liaison's feedback. I'm about half-way through iReCoDe, and once I'm finished I believe the course will be better aligned in two ways. First, it will be aligned in terms of outcomes, assessments, learning activities, and supporting technologies in a way that is transparent to students. Second, the course will be aligned 'to the times.' In other words, it will be more manageable for students (and me!) during a stressful and new learning environment."

This opportunity is one of the supports available to instructors preparing their remote courses for Winter 2021 and beyond. CTE staff are available for consultations as instructors move through the iReCoDE modules. Please self-register in LEARN. Further instructions can be found at the [iReCoDE workshop page](#).

EXTENDED REALITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

On **Thursday, November 26 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm**, Waterloo's [Extended Reality Community of Practice](#) will host an online session in which several instructors (including Thorsten Dieckmann, Anne Grant, Amna Idrees, David Wang, and Shi Cao) will provide updates on their use of and investigation into Extended Reality technologies, especially in the context of remote teaching and learning.



All are welcome to virtually attend this session.

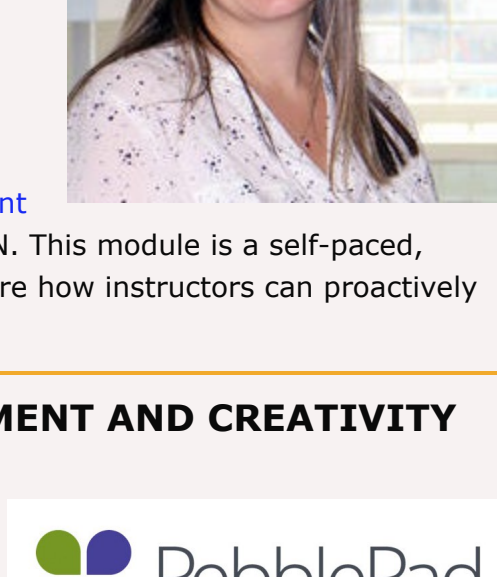
Visit the [workshop's event page](#) for more information and to register.

Extended Reality (XR) is a term that now encompasses both Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR). You can learn more about XR technologies from this [CTE Teaching Tip Sheet](#), from Waterloo's [XR information site](#), and from this [recent CTE news item](#).

Please contact [Mark Morton](#) or [Gillian Dabrowski](#) for more information.

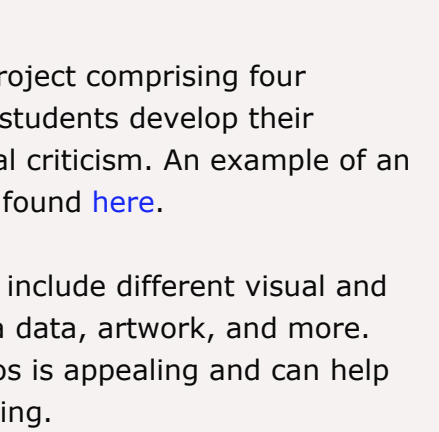
WANTED: RESILIENCY STORIES

The Resiliency Working Group is looking for faculty, staff, students, and postdoctoral fellows to share their personal stories of resilience. Help us build a sense of belonging and campus culture where adversity is normalized and expected. These stories will be housed on the [stories of resiliency webpage](#). If you are interested in participating, [please use this online form](#) to submit a personal story of resilience.



NEW MENTAL HEALTH WIDGET FOR LEARN

CTE is proud of Jordan Rettinger, Faculty Liaison for AHS, for helping to champion the development of a mental health widget for LEARN. The widget will be embedded into all courses, and provides [links to resources](#) available to students.

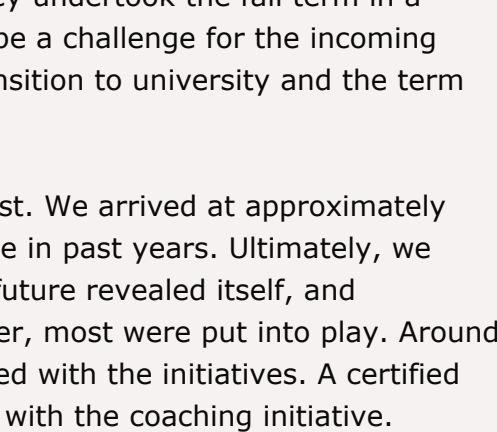


CEL and ITMS contributed technical support to this project.

On a related note, instructors might also be interested in undertaking the [Supporting Student Mental Health](#) module that is available in LEARN. This module is a self-paced, independent learning experience that will explore how instructors can proactively support student mental health in their courses.

SUPPORTING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND CREATIVITY

[Élise Lepage](#) introduced PebblePad ePortfolios into her graduate courses to facilitate student engagement with their peers and with their instructor, and to challenge students to reflect and be creative in their work. Each element of their portfolio was shared throughout the term for peer-review via the feedback tool that's built into [PebblePad](#).



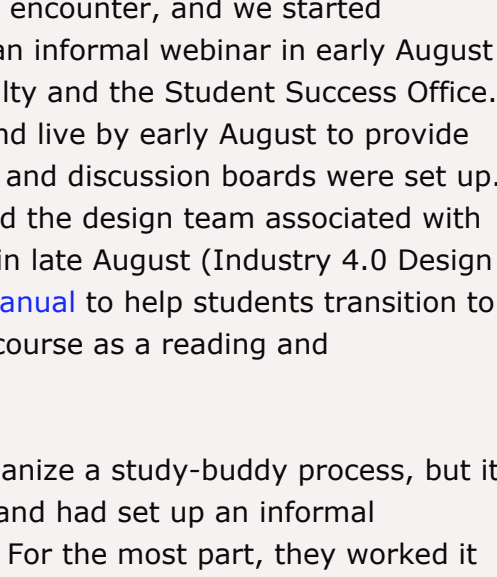
Each student's ePortfolio is essentially a research project comprising four separately evaluated elements, aiming at ensuring students develop their creativity skills, as well as skills in literary and visual criticism. An example of an ePortfolio created by one of Élise's students can be found [here](#).

With their ePortfolios, students can be creative and include different visual and auditory elements, such as music files, social media data, artwork, and more. Capturing the visual and audio artifacts in ePortfolios is appealing and can help motivate and further engage students in their learning.

Find out more about how Élise uses ePortfolios in her graduate courses [here](#).

ONBOARDING INITIATIVES FOR INCOMING STUDENTS

Waterloo's Department of Management Sciences developed a highly effective program for onboarding new students in the remote teaching and learning context. As instructors might already be starting to plan their courses for the winter term, CTE invited Management Sciences to tell us more about that onboarding initiative.



At the end of May, the Department of Management Sciences (MSCI) established a number of online onboarding initiatives to welcome and support incoming students in the Management Engineering program as they undertook the fall term in a remote learning context. The fall was going to be a challenge for the incoming students in many ways, including the usual transition to university and the term being online.

We hoped for the best, but planned for the worst. We arrived at approximately twenty or so initiatives which had not been done in past years. Ultimately, we ended up adopting several initiatives once the future revealed itself, and discovered that a few were not needed. However, most were put into play. Around 185 volunteers (current students, alumni) helped with the initiatives. A certified coach ([Erm Lombardi](#)) also volunteered to help with the coaching initiative.

In the Management Engineering program for the incoming we have what is called a concept course (MSCI 100) and that served as the anchor for the engagement and support initiatives. The course was redesigned to be "live" online and every week there were three to four team "breakout" activities where students could meet their new classmates, and a term "team" project started in week one. The students also had a weekly reflection to write about what they were learning each week; not the facts and knowledge, but what were they learning about themselves, the transition to university. The 100 students were split into three informal sections and the sections were taught at 9:00 am, 11:00 am, and 4:00 pm – to provide a smaller class size and improve the dynamics. Special time-shifted labs and design/case days were run for students in extreme time zones (e.g., 4:30, 5:30 AM).

By early to mid-July we had a coordination platform (Slack) set up for all of the incoming students and volunteers. We contacted and discussed the fall term with the other instructors whom the incoming would encounter, and we started emailing and contacting the students. We had an informal webinar in early August in addition to the activities planned by the Faculty and the Student Success Office. The concept course/LEARN site was mounted and live by early August to provide an information/contact source for the incoming and discussion boards were set up. Alumni volunteers organized a meet & greet and the design team associated with the program ran a special student competition in late August (Industry 4.0 Design Team). In the last week of August, an [online manual](#) to help students transition to university was opened and integrated into the course as a reading and summarization assignment.

We had thought about helping the students organize a study-buddy process, but it turned out that the students were ahead of us and had set up an informal message/chat situation for themselves in June. For the most part, they worked it out, and the team project from the first week helped others find people to work with. Not a 100% success, but most of the students, found "their people."

The main initiatives took place during the term. With the help of the professional coach and the volunteers, we were able to do a mandatory one-to-one coaching activity with supporting documentation and aids. We have approximately 100 students and we had more volunteers than students offer to help. Twenty alumni also helped backstop the student coaches. According to a recent survey, over 85% of the students found the coaching helpful with over 70% giving the activity 4 or 5 out of 5. It turned out the backstop assistance by alumni was not needed in most of the cases, but did help in some situations.

We had planned to do weekly engagement activities (e.g., ask-us-anything, meet alumni, etc.) and it turned out that the students did not want/need this weekly. A student club (Industrial and Systems Engineering) organized a number of activities during the fall, as did the department – they were good to have occasionally, but were not needed weekly. We also thought about creating a hangout place for the students each day, a Management Café. That was not needed. The students created their own hangout and group chat.

To help with the connection, we involved the alumni and senior students with the term project, making some "clients." Every year in the concept course, we would coffee-chats are done with students and the instructor. We thought we would try this with all of the students instead of the usual 30-60%, but it turned out that most did not want the small chats and we had the traditional 30% participation. The incoming class has good class reps (formal and informal) and they helped with monitoring and adjusting the engagement activities.

Senior students also supported secondary tutoring akin to bumping into a senior student in the hall and asking them a question about calculus, physics, etc. We had separate tutoring classes set up in [Campuswire](#) for this.

It is our impression that the incoming class has benefited from the initiatives and that there is a good feeling of being connected to each other and to the program. The relationship program had to start early and have multiple, repeated interactions. The incoming had to be engaged, and had to be part of the adapting and adjustment – we regularly sought feedback from the students. They were part of their own support program. The class engagement is impressive. We get an average 94% attendance for the live lectures, three-hour labs when they occur, and engagement in the reflections.

The heavy hitters? The extensive teamwork in the concept course, weekly reflections, online manual, the one-to-one coaching, and special tutoring from our side. The self-organizing and good communication on the incoming side. The amazing volunteer effort – current students and alumni.

The next phase of engagement and support is about to launch. With the help of a student startup ([Lumaki Labs](#)), the coach, and volunteers, we will be helping the students with their resumes, interview skills, and job hunting strategies. This will take place later in December and early January. We are also surveying and sorting out what support is needed in the winter – coaching, tutoring, etc.

In Management Engineering, there is an underlying theme of understanding cause/effect, organizing and orchestrating resources to achieve desired outcomes, making things more effective and efficient. This year we tried to practice what we teach and have included the onboarding initiative as mini-narratives and discussions as part of the concept course. We are happy to share our experiences and coaching material with others – it seems to have worked! Two other necessary ingredients: caring and empathy.

For more information about the Management Sciences onboarding initiatives, contact [Ken McKay](#).

More Fast Facts about CTE

Since March 9, 2020, CTE staff members have engaged in 3710 consultations with instructors and staff members. Of those consultations, 93.1% have been related to instructional guidance, and 6.9% to curriculum, research, or other topics.

Also...

Since [yesterday](#), CTE staff worked together to develop a [mission statement and vision statements](#) for our teaching centre. More recently, we also developed a set of values. They are the principles that ground us, the foundation upon which our work is built:

At CTE, we value being:

1. **Supportive.** We show care and respect to our colleagues and ourselves while also asking questions to help encourage growth and change
2. **Creative.** We develop ideas for the future, adapt evidence-based practices to fit evolving contexts, and foster the courage needed for risk-taking.
3. **Invested.** We take pride in our work, bringing our best every time, and show a clear commitment to our mandate, vision, and mission.

To subscribe to CTE's In the Loop newsletter, click here.

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CTE's Twitter

CTE's website

The Centre for Teaching Excellence acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River.

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