

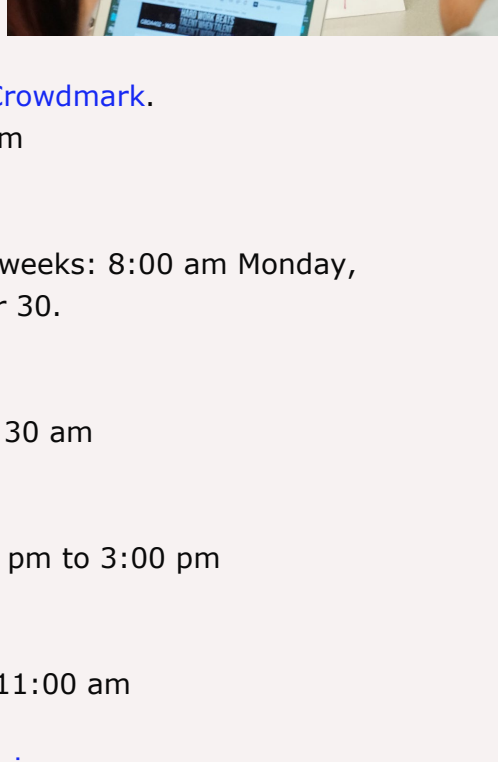
September 2020

Contents

- [Upcoming Workshops](#)
- [LITE Grant Updates](#)
- [Updated and Enhanced Strategies for Remote Teaching](#)
- [Instructor Presence in Remote and Online Courses](#)
- [Waterloo Ready to Write](#)
- [CTE Staffing Updates](#)
- [Leadership in Educational Development](#)
- [ePortfolios](#)
- [Lessons Learned on Remote Teaching from Management Sciences](#)
- [Correction](#)
- [More Fast Facts about CTE](#)

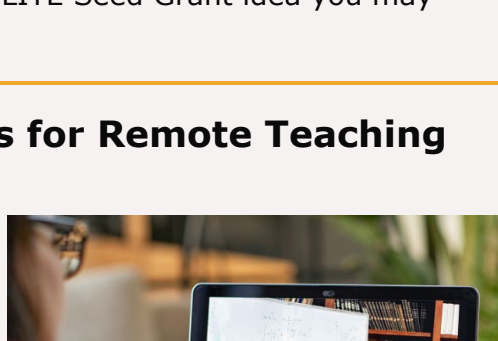
Upcoming Workshops

- **Independent Remote Course Design Essentials.**
Ongoing until December 21 (a self-paced, independent experience)
- **LEARN for TAs.**
Tuesday, September 15, 2020 — 10:00 am to 11:30 AM
- **LEARN for TAs.**
Wednesday, September 16, 2020 — 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm
- **Grading Your Remote Assessments with Crowdmark.**
Friday, September 18 — 12 pm to 1:00 pm
- **Online Instructional Skills Workshop.**
Approximately six hours per week for six weeks: 8:00 am Monday, September 21 to 4:00 pm Friday, October 30.
- **Introduction to PebblePlus.**
Monday, September 21 — 9:30 am to 11:30 am
- **ATLAS: Part 2.**
Wednesday, September 30, 2020 — 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- **Assessment Design Cafe.**
Tuesday, October 6, 2020 — 9:30 am to 11:00 am
- **Learning from Our Remote Teaching Experiences.**
Tuesday, October 20, 2020 — 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
- **PebblePad Users Group.**
Wednesday, October 21, 2020 — 1:00 pm to 2:00 PM
- **Integrative and Experiential Learning Session.**
Wednesday, October 28, 2020 — 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
- **Remote Course Design Essentials.**
8:30 am Wednesday, November 11, 2020 — to 4:30 Tuesday, November 17 (this workshop includes two synchronous sessions: see the full description for details)
- **Assessment Design Cafe.**
Friday, November 20, 2020 — 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm
- **Introduction to PebblePlus.**
Monday, November 23, 2020 — 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- **ATLAS: Part 1.**
Thursday, November 26, 2020 — 9:30 am to 11:30 am
- **Integrating PebblePad Retreat.**
Monday, December 7, 2020 — 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm



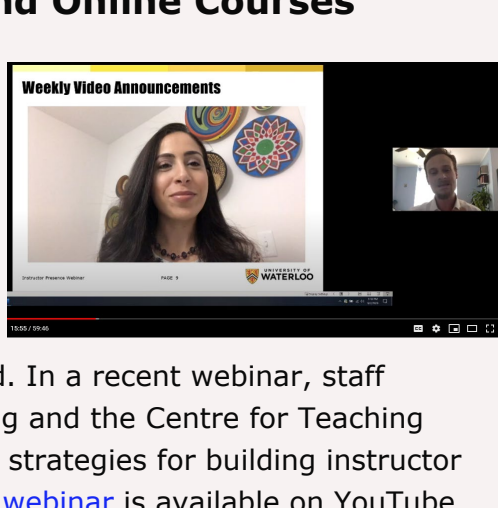
LITE Grant Updates

The 2020 LITE Full Grant round has been suspended, and in its place an **additional LITE Seed Grant round** will be held. This additional round of LITE Seed Grants will be due October 1, 2020 and will adhere to the already established LITE Seed Grant guidelines. LITE Seed Grants can help you investigate small-scale teaching and learning research projects and attend activities to develop your instructional skills. Please get in touch with Kyle Scholz (kwscholz@uwaterloo.ca) or Kristen Archbell (kristen.archbell@uwaterloo.ca) to discuss any LITE Seed Grant idea you may have.



Updated and Enhanced Strategies for Remote Teaching

Recent instructor and [student surveys](#) at Waterloo have highlighted what is working well and what measures could improve online and remote courses. In light of this feedback, Waterloo's Keep Learning website has updated and enhanced its [Strategies for Remote Teaching](#) page.



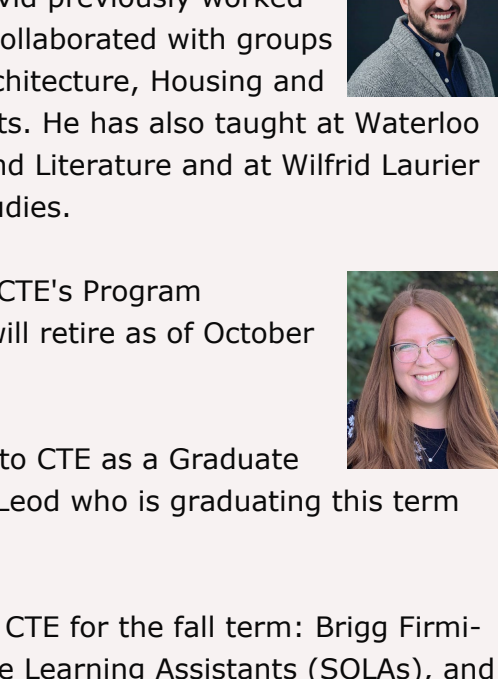
Instructor Presence in Remote and Online Courses

Following the spring pivot to remote teaching, many students and instructors have reported feeling a sense of disconnect between learners and faculty in the remote course environment. Research and experience affirms that students who experience their remote or online instructors as present and invested in their courses are substantially more likely to succeed. In a recent webinar, staff members from the Centre for Extended Learning and the Centre for Teaching Excellence presented several easy but effective strategies for building instructor presence online. A [recording of that 60-minute webinar](#) is available on YouTube.



Waterloo Ready to Write

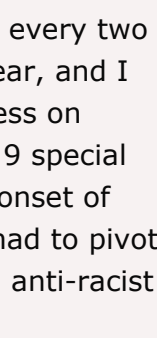
The Writing and Communication Centre has launched a new program to support first-year undergraduate students with the challenges of university writing and communication tasks. Called "Waterloo Ready to Write," the program offers accessible, virtual content on a range of topics relevant to first-years, including high school vs. university writing, breaking down your assignments, writing to learn, and more. The program blends short workshops, resources, and weekly live chats to help students navigate the shift to university-level writing while learning online. To sign up, or to share the program with colleagues and students. For more information, contact [Clare Bermingham](#).



CTE Staffing Updates

Here are some CTE staffing updates:

- **Dr. David Thiessen** recently joined CTE as Educational Developer, Curriculum and Quality Enhancement. David previously worked in the Centre for Career Action, and has collaborated with groups across campus including the School of Architecture, Housing and Residences, WatPD, and the Faculty of Arts. He has also taught at Waterloo in the Department of English Language and Literature and at Wilfrid Laurier in the Department of English and Film Studies.
- **Brianna Bennett** has taken on the role of CTE's Program Coordinator, replacing Verna Keller who will retire as of October 1.
- PhD student **Laura Williams** has returned to CTE as a Graduate Educational Developer, replacing Matt McLeod who is graduating this term and is heading to Cornell.
- Four undergraduate students have joined CTE for the fall term: Brigg Firmi-Medensky and Cynthia Ye as Senior Online Learning Assistants (SOLAs), and Justin Lim and Emily Arnold as our Centre's co-op students.



Leadership in Educational Development: Donna Ellis, Director, CTE

As some of you may be aware, I started a one-year term in March 2020 as president of the [Professional and Organizational Development \(POD\) Network](#), which is the oldest and largest educational development (ED) professional association in the world. This organization is based out of the United States and has more than 1,400 members located in over 20 different countries. The POD Network has been the main source of professional development for me during my 24-year career as an educational developer. As such, I'm honoured to be serving this organization in this leadership role.



So, what does this role entail and how does it inform my role as CTE director? As president, I plan and convene an executive committee meeting every two weeks and a full board meeting twice a year, and I scope out, contribute to, and guide progress on organization-wide projects and initiatives. We have 14 committees and 9 special interest groups that do much of the work of the organization. With the onset of COVID and the high-profile racist incidents in North America, we have had to pivot our focus to help our members prepare to support remote teaching and anti-racist and inclusive pedagogies.

While this role takes time and energy, the experiences I'm having are helping me as a leader at Waterloo.

First, I'm learning an incredible amount about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Our board is engaging in training about inclusive leadership and ways to uncover and change systemic discrimination within our organization, and we have multiple DEI projects underway, including a communications campaign to keep our members updated on our progress.

Second, I'm learning more about the importance yet challenge of communicating effectively. I communicate daily with colleagues on the POD executive, I have started [monthly emails to all members](#), and I am now on the board of an international organization that represents ED associations globally. This work has reminded me about how hard it is to achieve clarity and show respect for the various contexts of the recipients of my messages.

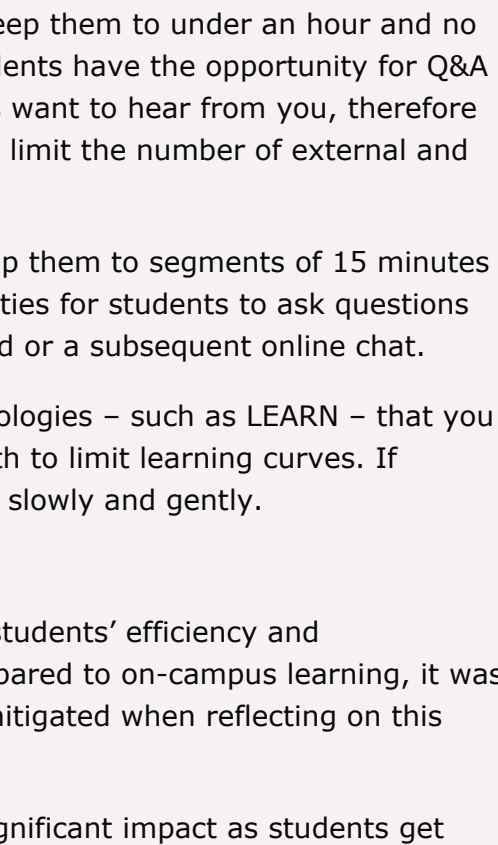
Third, I'm expanding my professional network: I have new or strengthened connections with ED colleagues around the world who can assist me or other CTE staff members in our work.

Finally, I'm being pushed to speak up more than ever. I am more of a "behind the scenes" person who prefers to influence thinking and decisions indirectly. In this role, I am getting more experience at using my own voice to do this work directly, which increases my feelings of confidence and competence.

Overall, I'm learning new knowledge and skills and I'm pushing myself to be more reflective, connected, and vocal. I'm grateful to Waterloo for supporting me in taking on this service role outside our organization. Like any type of special assignment, this experience benefits both my professional development and Waterloo.

ePortfolios

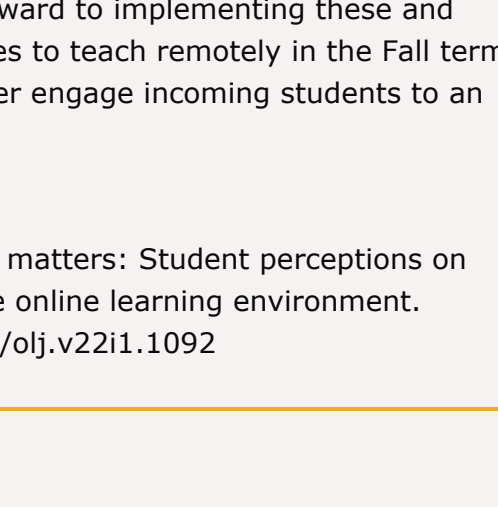
In the spring 2020 term, CTE employed eight Senior Online Learning Assistants (SOLAs), a new role created to help instructors transition their courses to the online environment. Using the ePortfolio platform PebblePad, the SOLAs completed weekly journals reflecting on their current tasks, lessons learned, skills developed, and plans for moving forward. Their portfolios, presented below with their permission, demonstrate how "ePortfolio thinking" can help students deepen and integrate their learning and experiences:



- [Sara Ahmed](#)
- [Megan Fluit](#)
- [Sarah Vu Nguyen](#)
- [Krishian Camargo](#)
- [Danielle Seunareine](#)

Lessons Learned on Remote Teaching from Management Sciences

Here's another story in a series from the [Centre for Teaching Excellence](#) to facilitate cross-institutional sharing of strategies for remote teaching. This story is a follow-up to the [Management Sciences' Collaborative Approach to Remote Teaching](#) article.



When teaching online, creating an environment where students can actively engage with their instructors, peers, and course content "increases student satisfaction, enhances student motivation to learn, reduces the sense of isolation, and improves student performance in online courses" (Bolliger & Martin, 2018). This document consists of some of the many lessons that Waterloo's Management Sciences (MSCI) department learned in the spring term about fostering engagement in a remote teaching context.

Student-instructor engagement

Student-instructor engagement can have a significant impact on student learning and affect learning outcomes (Bolliger & Martin, 2018), enhancing the quality of teaching and student learning experience. Here are some ways to foster mutual engagement in remote teaching that the MSCI team found useful.

1. Devise strategies and opportunities to foster connection more frequently throughout the term, beyond what you might do in a face-to-face course.
2. Offer several live Q&A sessions, personalise your emails to students, and communicate your targeted turnaround time for responding.
3. Create frequent, anonymous feedback opportunities for your students to share perceived challenges and provide management-style constructive feedback – how they think the problem can best be resolved.

Student-content engagement

Student-content engagement is especially important for students to support their own learning in a remote setting. Here are some ways from MSCI's experience to help students effectively engage with the course content.

4. Consider a partially flipped-classroom approach to create opportunities for students to engage in online activities that promote active learning. For example, students can be given a weekly short assignment based on the next week's topics to become prepared for future lessons – this creates a cascade in the course content.
5. Incorporate higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in the learning activities and assessments to support learning outcomes that promote depth in student learning. This can include discussions about assumptions and reflection activities; encourage students to think about the learning process and develop their metacognitive skills.
6. Provide students with a weekly schedule and checklist of required activities and assignments. Remember to establish a pattern to not be late with your deliverables, deliver what is promised and don't surprise students by announcing that there will be a quiz or test the next day.
7. If you are live streaming your lectures, keep them to under an hour and no more than twice a week. Ensure that students have the opportunity for Q&A – even up to half of the session. Students want to hear from you, therefore be sure to keep lectures personalized and limit the number of external and third-party resources.
8. If you are prerecording your lectures, keep them to segments of 15 minutes or less and provide coordinated opportunities for students to ask questions after – for example, via a discussion board or a subsequent online chat.
9. When possible, stick to educational technologies – such as LEARN – that you and your students are already familiar with to limit learning curves. If you have to introduce something new, go slowly and gently.

Lessons to mitigate

While the MSCI team had anticipated that the students' efficiency and effectiveness would be impacted remotely compared to on-campus learning, it was noted that a number of factors were not fully mitigated when reflecting on this past term.

10. The first and last week of the term has significant impact as students get their bearings and sort things out, including dealing with multiple end-of-term assessments and projects. This needs to be accounted in expectations on students' capacity and capability.
11. The duration and impact of numerous assignments and assessments students need to be accounted for, particularly in a remote setting. It's important to be flexible, compassionate and not overload students as they are also navigating tools on their own.
12. Students interpret the efforts that instructors put in moving classes online as an indication that the instructor cares and is trying to provide a quality experience.
13. While it was advised that instructors make and stick to schedules, this can be difficult, and delays in uploading deliverables on time, or changing due dates can have major impacts on the students – more than expected.

The Management Science department looks forward to implementing these and other lessons learned as the university continues to teach remotely in the Fall term and has planned onboarding initiatives to further engage incoming students to an online learning environment.

References:

Martin, F. & Bolliger, D.U. (2018). Engagement matters: Student perceptions on the importance of engagement strategies in the online learning environment. *Online Learning* 22(1), 205- 222. doi:10.24059/olj.v22i1.1092

Correction

Last month's In the Loop included a teaching story entitled "Fostering Student Motivation and Engagement in Remote Teaching." That story should have noted that staff members in the Centre for Extended Learning helped to develop the interactive slide shows, Mobius practice exercises, assessment plan, and reward system that were implemented in Anton Mosunov's Math 135 course.

More Fast Facts about CTE

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, CTE...

- provided 3,669 consultations to 1,203 instructors
- offered 112 curriculum events and consultations in 35 departments
- had 10 staff members review journal articles and conference proposals

And we received some very positive feedback along the way, too, such as...

"I credit CTE with helping me transform from being a barely adequate teacher into one who enjoyed success in the classroom. When I first started attending CTE workshops, I was receiving student evaluations along the lines of (these are actual quotes) – "he has the amazing ability to take an interesting topic and make it boring," or my favourite, "When Lowell teaches, I feel like I am in an old folks home." The first workshop I attended, where CTE taught me how to develop concept maps and do alignment, changed my teaching profoundly." – Lowell Ewert, recipient of the 2019-2020 [Distinguished Teacher Award](#), and Associate Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies, Conrad Grebel University College