

Colleagues,

While hectic, we do seem to be getting more into a new normal of activity. Zoom is becoming stable. Learning to function at home. And not a single new major crisis to handle – at least from our Cornell teaching responsibility side.

This message has gotten so long, that I've split it into two messages; one issues and one teaching.

My current outlook:



**Cornell Faculty:** Finally, a chance to look at the bigger picture and consider how to be effective in our new roles. Moving from logistics



**Zoom Engineer:** My vision of a typical engineer at Zoom trying to keep the house of cards that has become our mainstay for

of a home office, we now consider the more challenging, but also more satisfying, effort to optimize our students' learning.

communication working. I'm sure the same can be said for numerous other support groups managing our infrastructure.

Contents:

- Training and links to past trainings
- Announcements, concerns, hints, updates, etc.
- Final suggestions on course content and interactions (separate e-mail)
- Attachment: Academic Integrity commentary for students and faculty

**Training and links to past trainings:**

**Wednesday training around moderating webinars – highly recommend having your TAs attend:**

- Rob Parker – Wednesday, April 1, 3:00-4:00 pm: **Remote Teaching – Even More Advanced Chat and Breakout**
  - <https://cornell.zoom.us/j/223792023> [confirmed]

Previous recordings below.

- Fri. 3/27 (2:30 pm – Celia Evans): [Toolbox for effective online learning: low hanging fruit!](#) (slides available on [MTEI website](#))
- Thur. 3/26 (5:00 pm – Rob Parker): [Using Panopto, Zoom and Kaltura from Canvas and a Few Remote Lecture Tips](#)
- Wed. 3/25 (3:30 pm – Rob Parker): [Teaching Remotely: Advanced Zooming](#)
- Wed. 3/25 (3:00 pm – Rob Parker): [Teaching Remotely: Options for using video and where to begin](#)

**Immediate steps:**

- If you have not already done so, send an announcement (through Canvas) to your class letting them know when the first class will occur ... and to let them know that you are on top of this new teaching thing.
- Test... test... and retest. Explore your own limitations.

#### Announcements, concerns, hints, updates, etc.:

- **Help-line for support with virtual instruction:** Requests related to hardware, software or pedagogy around virtual teaching can be directed to the [coecis-help@cornell.edu](mailto:coecis-help@cornell.edu) mailbox. These requests will be routed to the best resource to help you.
- **Want a Zoom moderator?** Zoom effectiveness can be tremendously improved with a TA acting as a moderator – monitoring the Chat window, watching for students raising hands, coordinating breakout rooms, etc. **If you do not have a TA and would like someone to serve as this moderator, send** a request to the [coecis-help@cornell.edu](mailto:coecis-help@cornell.edu) mailbox. We will try to accommodate requests using available staff and/or work-study students. While they are unlikely to be subject matter experts, we will provide training on Zoom functionality and moderator functions.
- **MTEI Virtual Teaching Tips Page:** Kathy and her group have opened a page at <https://www.engineering.cornell.edu/MTEI/information-teaching-remotely> to collect teaching tips and cheat sheets. This page will be linked from the College's Coronavirus page as well.
- **FERPA and the virtual world:** A tip-sheet on FERPA and the various tools for on-line instruction (Canvas, Zoom, YouTube) is being reviewed by counsel and I hope to provide it tomorrow.
- **Impact of S/U on course and team dynamics:** As you think about assessment, be aware of potential impacts from the S/U policy and the resultant “asymmetric” effort by students. This may be particularly challenging for teams with varying commitment and engagement.
- **Test your video upload strategy:** Talking about asymmetry, most home internet connections are extremely asymmetric with high download rates (50-100 Mbps) but very slow upload rates (1-2 Mbps). Even a compressed 1-hr lecture (300 MB) likely requires half an hour to upload (not a good feature for those of us with a just-in-time teaching habits).

- **Zoom default changes:** If you have not heard about “Zoom bombing,” I suggest Googling it. To counter this, Zoom defaults seem to have shifted to “don’t allow screen sharing.” Be aware and prepared to override this as necessary.
- **Academic Integrity in the virtual environment:** Charlie van Loan spearheaded an effort to develop guidelines and expectations for students and faculty around academic integrity (AI) issues. See the attached current draft version (likely close to final) – and note the faculty expectations around being sensitive to challenges for students.
- **Contacting students in China:** China remains a concern for remote instruction. Continue to use Canvas for notifications and be sensitive to network restrictions that may come and go.
- **Exams and Assessments:** Haven’t forgotten about this. I will provide more on everything from timed exams (with 24-hour window of opportunity) to virtual poster sessions soon.
- **Emotional impacts on students:** With the number of cases in NYC, you can expect most students will know someone that has contracted the virus, many will know someone hospitalized, and some have felt the impact within their close community. Many others are in families that are economically impacted through layoffs, and many never expected to be living at home again, and are now dealing with changed expectations. Be sensitive to the impact this crisis is having as you structure and work through your course.
- **Faculty emotional health:** Don’t forget to also take care of yourself. Expect that your teaching will continuously evolve and improve over the next few weeks. Students are not expecting immediate perfection and will be growing with us in this brave new world. You and they all need to understand and accept that there will be glitches on your part and on theirs.
- **Teaching backup plans:** Not a big issue, but it’s probably worth thinking about your backup plan in the event you fall ill. CS has implemented a “buddy system”; other alternatives might include a colleague, your TA, or even a very strong graduate student.
- **Humor is really the Best Medicine:** There is great fun on the web around the Coronavirus – and I’d even encourage you to have some fun and explore. I pass on only one for your enjoyment: “I Will Survive ...” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCe5PaeAew>.

While we are supposed to avoid contact with others, do take a quiet stroll in the woods, or burn some of that increasingly inexpensive gas just tooling around!

Stay safe, healthy and sane!

Mike

Prof. Michael Thompson

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs

College of Engineering, Cornell University

177 Rhodes Hall

Phone: (607) 255-0393

email: [mot1@cornell.edu](mailto:mot1@cornell.edu)