

Four Things I learned about Teaching, Remote Teaching, Human Connection and Resiliency

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The Best Laid Plans...

Spring Semester 2020 was my first time teaching EVER.

- I had meticulously planned out my syllabus, curated my class reading materials, selected engaging Harvard Case Studies and created my lecture slides.
- I couldn't wait to start teaching my class of 34 Senior Marketing majors, launch their capstone marketing project with our client, and begin guiding them through the intricate principles of Marketing Strategy.



Lesson #1: Be Present and Authentic

During my 8 years as a college student, I had encountered many different teaching styles. From these experiences, I knew that with my students I wanted to:

- Be authentic, present and engaged in the classroom.
- Teach them the way that I would want to be taught.
- Respect their thoughts and opinions, even if I didn't necessarily agree.
- Treat them as adults, because they *are* adults.



Lesson #2: Expect the Unexpected

In a flash, Spring Break 2020 transformed from a lazy vacation to a frantic “transition your class to an online format in 5 days” marathon.

- With my syllabus, lectures and exams already online in Canvas, my academic material was technically set to go.
- I was more concerned with the lack of a physical classroom, the possible lack of energy in an online setting, and how that would affect my teaching abilities and my relationships with my students.



Lesson #3: Human Connection Transcends Physical Space

Our first online class took by breath away. I was privileged to see my students in a way that I had never seen them before:

- Sitting on their beds surrounded by stuffed animals.
- Kicking back with headsets in their gaming chairs.
- Sitting at their kitchen tables with piles of dirty dishes in the sink.

I was touched by this intimate glimpse into their private lives and honored to be connected to my students in such a personal and special way.



Lesson #4: Young People Are Incredibly Resilient

Maintaining a sense of normalcy was my top priority. I was concerned that anxiety and fear might cloud their academic focus.

- But they showed up for each and every online class. They engaged, collaborated, discussed and debated, and they even laughed with one another and with me.
- When they presented their final marketing plans to our client via Zoom, each student was a consummate professional.
- My heart burst with pride to witness these young people, who had been robbed of so many of their senior year milestones, rise to the occasion and deliver on their commitments to our client.

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