

Guidelines for Technology Adoption

Fall 2020

Introduction

There was a time before COVID-19. In Spring 2019, a national survey from EDUCAUSE found that the majority of faculty at universities like WCU found technological tools to be helpful to some extent, but that, for the most part, they also preferred teaching face-to-face and using online tools like the learning management system as a way of fostering communication, enhancing collaboration outside of class, and assessing and tracking grades. A small number of our faculty answered the survey, and by looking at the national numbers, we discovered that our faculty also generally preferred face-to-face teaching. Spring semester 2020 gave us all a new perspective on how things can change. As we are all collectively planning for the multiple possibilities of the Fall 2020 semester, we are walking through the stages of transitioning from our preferences to what will work best for the students, given the new constraints with which we are faced. The Coulter Faculty Commons and the Division of IT has put together the following list of available digital and technological services along with some general guidelines for use, adoption, and support.

Below there are two lists of tools. The **first list is academic technology tools**, including those that are more tied to the physical classroom and those that allow for more optimal online teaching and learning; **the second list refers to other campus technology needs** which may involve additional video deliveries.

Some course structure issues to think about related to successfully engaging the unknown factors for Fall 2020 are:

Related to “Live” Meetings for Courses

- There are advantages and disadvantages to using synchronous and asynchronous activities in online and hybrid learning; in most cases, **asynchronous activities provide the best experiences** for students. In our testing scenarios, **attempts at synchronous activities using Zoom or Collaborate resulted in less-than-desired experiences**, and were not comparable to using Zoom in a private meeting space.
- We must recognize that mixing one group with synchronous digital technologies and one group with live synchronous meeting will increase both instructor and student difficulty (i.e., just turning on Zoom for the half of the class who isn’t physically in the classroom).
- Consider whether your arrangements and the limitations of the technologies are **equitable** for all students.
 - Particularly consider whether your activities are appropriate given the computer requirements for students in the university and in your department.
 - Consider the student experience, including their access (or lack thereof) to sufficient broadband speeds.
- Limit your use of streaming technologies to **WCU-supported platforms** (Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, and MS Teams).
- Faculty are advised that **capturing identifiable images of students** and the separate act of distributing those images (whether photos or videos) require that the student (and/or parent if student is a minor) complete a photo waiver. The faculty member or department will need to work with the Office of University Counsel to craft the waiver. More information on this can be found here: [Western Carolina University Policy 122 – Video Capture](#).

Related to Assessments, Test, and Quizzes

- Think carefully about using the video proctoring solution for all assessments.
- In blended and online environments, other sorts of assessments such as problem, inquiry, and project-based learning, projects, reflections, and other assessments, may prove to be more effective. Assessments which require students to apply the concepts and knowledge learned prove more effective in determining whether or not learning objectives have been met. If students can use a search engine to locate the correct answer, or quickly ask a nearby friend, our assessment efforts are thwarted.

Related to the General Use of Technology

- Online instruction, including the online extension of face-to-face instruction, has different constraints due to law and the nature of the global internet. As employees of the State of North Carolina, we all have an obligation to keep student data safe. Many units of the university work hard to guard student data from inappropriate use or exposure. These efforts are codified in **University Policy 97** (Data Security and Stewardship) and **University Policy 106** (Identity Theft Protection). By university policy, federal law, and North Carolina law, faculty own their personally-created instructional material as intellectual property owners, and students own their intellectual property. Student work product can be organized and reused for assessment purposes, but cannot and should not be published or disseminated without written student permission. WCU-contracted tools allow for options that protect student privacy while allowing the sharing of information for course and assessment purposes. Many “free” available tools and apps do not.
- The contracts that we have with our current service providers (Microsoft, Ellucian (Banner), Blackboard, Panopto, etc.) obligates these businesses to respect all WCU data policies and procedures and to comply with federal regulations like FERPA (and HIPPA where the contract specifies).
- **University employees who violate university policy, including the policies mentioned above, take upon themselves the risk of personal legal liability** for student legal action, and may be subject to discipline or dismissal, regardless of tenure status. Please refer to the policies mentioned as well as the Faculty Handbook for more information.
- We urge you to manage your own risk, and the risk of our students, by **using the tools from vendors with whom we have contracted** or by following the appropriate procedure for technical, budgetary, and legal review for new products.

Academic/Classroom Technology Tools

If I want to...	Available WCU tools:	Advantages:	Disadvantages:	How do I get started?	Support available:
manage student assignments and grades?	Blackboard Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built-In Grade Center • Students can access grades through the Blackboard Student App • You can manage most aspects of the course through the Blackboard Instructor App • Blackboard has an updated grading workflow in its new Blackboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard Written Instructions • Blackboard Tutorials • Annotation and Grading 	Help Desk CFC
have students work collaboratively, by class, by section, or by smaller groups?	Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams works very much like social media • Teams allows quick collaboration and spontaneous meetings without instructor intervention (after the student know the tool) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams requires manual creation of Teams by instructor or, if students create Teams, and the instructor wants to see them, by the students who must make the instructor a member • Teams is not currently integrated into Blackboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide for Blackboard Groups • A Video Overview of Microsoft Teams 	Help Desk CFC

	<p>Blackboard Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams can be accessed in the mobile app and is tied to the Outlook Calendar • Blackboard Groups are integrated into the LMS and you can preset and select students for groups • Blackboard Groups can have their own meeting room in Blackboard Collaborate, their own email list, journals, discussion boards and file exchange • Instructors can grade group discussion board interactions and group submissions within the LMS • Blackboard Groups can be monitored and interacted with in the Blackboard mobile apps 	<p>and Teams information is not retained as “course material” by the university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some instructors find Blackboard Groups difficult to manage • Blackboard Groups are not tied to the Outlook calendar unless the student specifically connects it 		
<p>share files with students or colleagues?</p>	<p>OneDrive</p> <p>Teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Drive is great when you have a file to which you want to give collaborative access (share as creator) or simply make available to read as a link • With OneDrive you retain ownership of the file • With Teams you can create a shared file space or share spontaneously in a shared area as a part of a collaboration • Both OneDrive and Teams are a part of the Microsoft Encrypted Environment at WCU and give more security than consumer level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OneDrive files expire 30 days after the owner leaves the university; the supervisor may retain access for up to one year upon request • Your files in OneDrive will need to be transferred if you want to keep them after you leave WCU 	<p>OneDrive: https://ithelp.wcu.edu/en-us/category/1317642</p> <p>Teams: https://ithelp.wcu.edu/en-us/category/1317636</p>	<p>Help Desk</p>

		<p>days after the creator leaves the university. Teams files are also shared in SharePoint and are backed up in the Microsoft environment, but they are owned by the Team Owners, which can be multiple users, not just by the email account of the user that created the file</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both OneDrive and Teams files can be linked to Blackboard with a shared link • With appropriate permissions, both OneDrive files and Teams files can be shared with people outside of WCU 	<p>especially with external file shares</p>		
do a poll or survey?	<p>Microsoft Forms</p> <p>PollEverywhere</p> <p>Poll Function in Synchronous Learning Platforms (Zoom, Bb Collaborate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft 365 (formerly Office 365) has a built-in easy form generator that can be accessed in multiple ways from the platform and can be shared like a Google Form (which WCU does NOT support and which places your participant data at risk) • Microsoft Forms is easy to use • PollEverywhere is great for one or a few questions to a specific audience in a live or hybrid session • Zoom and Blackboard Collaborate both have limited polling functions. These integrated polls may 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms has a limited number of question types • MS Forms is not currently integrated into Blackboard • PollEverywhere is primarily designed for live sessions • PollEverywhere's integration with Blackboard is still being tested • Both of these options would be challenging to manage with participants at a distance; also, they are 	<p>Microsoft Forms: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/forms</p> <p>Qualtrics: https://ithelp.wcu.edu/en-us/article/1323649</p>	Help Desk

	Qualtrics	<p>be sufficient for your fully online meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualtrics is the most fully functional survey tool at WCU 	<p>limited in the sorts of questions they offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualtrics is sometimes too complex a solution for simple question sets 		
create video?	Panopto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers creators the ability to simultaneously capture multiple screens, video, audio and slide presentations (PowerPoint & Keynote) for lecture capture • Functions like YouTube with better institutional security and access to created content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor training is often needed prior to using Panopto • Access/permission to view videos based on sharing settings passed from Blackboard may create trouble for students • Instructors must understand the Panopto/ Blackboard integration and set creator access for students • Simple editor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCU Panopto Training Playlist • IT Help Panopto Articles • Panopto Support Tutorials/Instructions 	<p>Help Desk CFC</p>
have a synchronous meeting?	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom is available for all WCU users at zoom.wcu.edu. • Zoom is very easy to launch and most people are familiar with the platform. • Zoom can launch from the browser with a single link and has the least confusing permissions pop-ups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important, especially for recording and rebroadcasting, that you familiarize yourself with Policy 122 regarding required video permissions • A fair amount of practice is recommended for all synchronous meeting platforms • Zoom recordings will expire after six months • Zoom does not integrate with the Blackboard Attendance tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom.wcu.edu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Desk • CFC
	Blackboard Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate functions well as a synchronous meeting within a Blackboard course. Guest access (attendee, moderator or presenter). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Collaborate, it is recommended that the main course room be locked to minimize student confusion for session locations 		

	<p>MS Teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate sessions include attendance, polling, chat breakout rooms, screen share, meeting recordings, session scheduling. <p>Microsoft Teams has a synchronous meeting function that works very well for groups that are already working in Teams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate session recordings can take a long time to process Tools available and the user interface may not be as intuitive as Zoom or Teams meetings We do not recommend that Teams meetings be promoted as a virtual classroom, unless the entire MS Teams experience is a part of the work of the course and the students are already familiar with Teams At this point, Teams recordings go directly into Microsoft Streams and cannot be shared with members outside of the Team without additional effort for security reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackboard Collaborate Help site for Students & Instructors Collaborate Training Webinar Playlist 	
<p>check my writing?</p>	<p>MS Word</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to understand that Microsoft Word Online is diverging in some ways from the desktop platform. Third party add-ins that WCU does not support because of security issues (like Grammarly) use artificial intelligence to look for suggestions in your grammar. Microsoft 365 can do the same. If you use the online platform instead of the version installed on your machine, you can have the Microsoft AI look for grammar issues by using the MS Editor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some users find that the paradigm shift of moving from a desktop version of Word to the online version of Word is difficult In Word Online, some right-click options are disabled for security reasons 	<p>Using the Editor in MS Word Online</p>	<p>Help Desk</p>

	<p>WaLC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Word Desktop Edition has a similar, but less powerful grammar error detector that uses algorithms and rules to detect your errors • The Writing and Learning Commons also has a number of tools available to aid with formatting and grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Word Desktop will not detect as many errors • The WaLC helps students with their writing. It doesn't really have services for faculty, though they have great information for you to share with your students 	<p>Grammar and Spelling Checks in MS Word Desktop (for PC) Grammar and Spelling Checks for Mac OS</p> <p>The WaLC</p>	<p>Writing and Learning Commons</p>
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Technology Tools for Events Outside the Classroom

If I want to...	Available WCU tools:	Advantages:	Disadvantages:	How do I get started?	Support available:
<p>advertise an event or inform an audience via text?</p>	<p>Campus OU (external)</p> <p>Engage (event calendar)</p> <p>Blackboard (internal)</p>	<p>The primary audiences for wcu.edu are prospective students, alumni, and community members</p> <p>We are transitioning our event calendars to the Engage calendar; if you are hosting an event, details can be added to the Engage calendar</p>		<p>Go to your web page editor for your department or http://go.wcu.edu/ucmrequest for bigger projects.</p> <p>Engage is a student engagement platform managed by Campus Activities</p>	<p>Communications & Marketing</p> <p>CFC</p>
<p>inform an audience via video?</p>	<p>Panopto (internal)</p> <p>YouTube (external)</p>			<p>http://go.wcu.edu/ucmrequest</p>	<p>CFC</p> <p>Communications & Marketing</p>

		The University Marketing Video team produces high quality video to meet institutional marketing and brand priorities. The team's priorities include recruitment and enrollment, chancellor priorities and university brand recognition	Due to resource constraints, the video team closely adheres to its stated project priorities		
inform an audience via video that's live and possibly interactive?	MS Teams or Zoom Blackboard Collaborate	Self-service for most users at WCU. High quality and fully licensed video conference options with screen sharing and workflows for both internal and external audiences	Format is designed around collaboration, which is not appropriate for all event types. Can be challenging to use in a highly public space and ensure no unwanted interruptions, due to locking audience capabilities	https://ithelp.wcu.edu/en-us/category/1308280	Help Desk CFC
inform an audience via video with preregistration, attendance tracking, follow-ups, and things like that?	Zoom Webinar	Ideal for formal events with large audiences. More robust audience management tools to help control the flow of events. Can be scaled to a large audience with purchase of license.	Licensing is expensive compared to normal Zoom, and the license must be obtained well in advance of the scheduled event. Much more complex administrative workflow that needs at least two individuals to run successfully	(KnowledgeBase article coming soon!)	Help Desk
share a live event with an internal or external (to campus) audience?	Zoom, Teams Broadcast, Panopto, YouTube, or Facebook	Ideal for events or productions that need to reach a broad, external audience. Different tools can be used to scale the production up to the appropriate size.	Additional staff and/or technology considerations may be required Publication to the general public must be coordinated with the university message.	Make a request to marketing	Communications & Marketing