

# Transcript

[0:01] (music)

**Alex Oxner:** [0:05] My name is Alex Oxner and today I'm serving as a guest host for Leading Lines. I'm taking over for a moment from Derek Bruff, to focus on instructors from a specific kind of institutional context. I'm currently an instructor in the English department at Nashville State Community College. This basically means I teach literature, but mostly writing courses to students from a really wide range of backgrounds, from age, to race, gender, ability, educational background, social class. I get a pretty diverse group of students every semester. And I've been thinking about my teaching a lot, in the wake of the Spring 2020 semester. We experienced a cyber incident at my community college, which left us without campus resources for weeks. And then a devastating tornado hit our city, Nashville, Tennessee, leaving a lot of my students in precarious positions in terms of housing, power, resources. Then the COVID-19 pandemic affected us all, plus the toll of important cultural events that are occurring, like the Black Lives Matter protests. We're teaching during a really important time. So given our current context, I really wanted to hear from instructors at institutions that typically serve non-traditional student populations or a wider range of students. We're gonna hear from three instructors, including myself, who currently teach at community colleges, and one from an HBCU, or historically black college or university. And we're gonna focus somewhat specifically on COVID-19, which of course forced a lot of higher education facilities to move online. This was a challenge for teachers and students at all levels and institutions. And I want to honor that and not diminish the hard work that everyone put forth to teach during a pandemic. But shifting online can pose particular challenges to folks at community colleges, due to issues of access, technology, resources, childcare for adult learners, Internet access and more. And as we look forward to teaching in potentially unfamiliar formats in the fall, and potentially beyond, I hope that our conversations can be helpful to a wide range of instructors. (music)

**Alex:** [2:30] So I'm sitting in my living room [right now in Ashland City, Tennessee and I'm in a

Zoom conference, like a lot of people, I think, across the world, across the United States. I have three other professors here with me. And I want to let them introduce themselves so that you can put a name to the different voices, as you listen throughout the podcast. I would love if each of you introduce yourselves and your institutional context and then maybe just start by sharing either a major challenge you faced, when shifting online, or an activity or teaching method, something that you think worked especially well. And I'll just volunteer, Adam, Dr. Miller, to start first.

**Adam Miller:** [3:09] Well, hi, my name's Adam Miller. I'm a full-time instructor of English at Bluegrass Community and Technical College, which is primarily based in Lexington, Kentucky, although in spring of 2020, I was teaching both on one of our downtown campuses and out at one of our kind of regional campuses, which was in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, which is considerably more rural. And so the question about what some of the challenges were with the transition to remote learning, were felt kind of a little bit differently by those two student populations. But certainly, the biggest one was internet access for my students, especially the rural students. So figuring out how to make sure they had a means of staying connected with all of our classes was probably one of the biggest priorities that the whole college tried to tackle.

**Alex:** [4:10] Yeah, I think that a lot of us probably shared experience with our students. Roxane, do you want to introduce yourself?

**Roxane Pajoul:** [4:18] Sure. I'm Roxanne Pajoul. I'm an Assistant Professor of French at Tennessee State University, which is an HBCU in Nashville. I've been teaching there for three years. And the biggest challenge for me was very similar, access to technology. So many issues with the internet, computers. And even, the one activity that worked really well for me was using Kahoot! and unfortunately, some students could not use Kahoot! like either on their computer or cell phone or some of them were Zooming from their cell phones, which prevented them from participating in Kahoot! so it was kind of tricky for them.

**Alex:** [5:02] Ayesha?

**Ayesha Keller:** [5:08] Hi, my name is Ayesha Keller, I am a social work instructor or professor now at Nashville State Community College. And one of the challenges I ran into, was trying to replicate the kind of robust, discussion and interaction that we've had in the classroom, online. That was very difficult. And it's something that I knew that I would miss, but I didn't

know that my students were going to miss it as much as they did. And so we did Zoom, which was successful, but it's not quite the same. And so that was one of the challenges that I ran into. One of the successes was actually having to contact my students, personally, which was a challenge, but it ended up being a success. Students' challenge was they don't check their school email, they don't really care. So I was having to personally text every student, call them, keep texting them from my personal cell phone, which was fine. And so that was kind of a challenge and a success. Once I was able to do that, I was able to reach them.

**Alex:** [6:08] Yeah, I think my, my major challenges sound really similar to you, to all of you about technology where at Nashville State, or at TSU too, probably, we had also experienced a tornado just a few weeks earlier that took out a lot of my students' homes. And so they were contacting me about not only lack of technology, but lack of housing, lack of ability to get to work, because their cars had been damaged. And so I lost, I lost touch with a lot of my students and there was a lot of texting from my personal number trying to call them. We had librarians reaching out to students, at one point. So I think that that was one of our biggest kind of challenges too. Did any of you attempt synchronous online learning? Does anybody want to share how that went? I'm curious. I have thoughts.

**Roxane:** [7:03] Basically, I teach twice a week for an hour and 25 minutes. So it's a Monday, Wednesday, or Tuesday, Thursday type of thing. And so at first, the first two weeks, I tried to teach all of my classes synchronous. Very quickly I realized that this was going to be tricky, but I didn't want to let go completely because my students, we have developed some rituals and I feel like some of them, they need to see me on a regular basis just to keep on working. And I feel like I'm sure this is kind of true for all of us. So what I decided to do was to teach synchronous on Mondays and Tuesdays. And then on Wednesdays and Thursdays, I would either make short videos for them or I would ask them to work on their own specific projects. I think it worked okay for the most part. Just like, just like some of you, I lost some of my students due to technology. They, they could not connect. They could not connect either because of technology or sometimes it was because of the time, now that they were back home. Some of them had to find jobs. And so they really, they could not come to class anymore. Some of them had issues with their families. I mean, lots and lots of things. So I managed to keep, I would say like maybe 70% of my students, this way. But then I would say that the other 30% really struggled to keep on learning French.

**Alex:** [8:34] Yeah and you were teaching four classes, right, last semester?

**Roxane:** [8:38] Yes.

**Alex:** [8:39] 70% is good.

**Adam:** [8:42] That's amazing.

**Alex:** [8:44] That's probably a little higher than my numbers. Did anybody else do synchronous work?

**Ayesha:** [8:49] I tried to do like a Zoom meeting every other week with my students and my thinking in that was, because everyone was having so many issue with jobs and family, even sickness and tornado. There was just so much going on and I didn't think that it would be helpful to them to try to do at every Tuesday and Thursday, which are the days that typically I teach. And so what my students ended up saying to me was, "well, I wanted to meet more." And I'm like, I'm trying to accommodate you in your very challenging life, which a lot of them have. And so it was kind of a situation where I didn't know who to please or kind of what to do. And so I just kinda did what I thought was best sort of, made a note for next time, if we are in the situation, come fall. But I did notice that, and I had about maybe 80% of the students. Now mind you, my classes are usually much smaller than other people's. My program in social work is pretty small. It's a small program. And I'm the advisor for all social work students and I'm the only social work professor. So I have a little bit more of a closer relationship with all of them where I know them already. I usually have cell phone numbers already. And so that's why that number's a little higher, but they were kind of disappointed that we weren't meeting more often and I thought I was doing them a favor, but there were still some who I just lost. They just kind of fell off into the world and I'm still hoping and praying they're fine.

**Alex:** [10:18] Yeah, I have several students I still haven't really heard from. So I hope that they're safe, that they're well. We, Nashville State, conducted a survey for students that was not exhaustive, I don't think because of all the issues that we've been discussing around whether or not they even received the email or checked their emails, had access to that. But that there was a lot of students who are commenting that they wish their instructors had done more synchronous learning or that they had recorded prerecorded lectures and put that material online. And one of my issues with it was I didn't even attempt synchronous learning this semester. I felt like that wasn't going to meet the needs of the majority of my students. A lot of them I think would have benefited from that, but most of them I don't think

would have been able to participate and that posed a kind of ethical or equity issue for me. But I find it interesting that students often want us to just kind of approximate the in-person learning environment. So they say record your lectures or just put this material into a YouTube video where I can at least see you speaking. And so I tried to do that work, but I don't think students always understand that online learning doesn't have, to, good online learning doesn't necessarily have to look like in-person instruction. So right now I'm toggling between, do I do that because it's what's familiar to them? And even if it might not be the best instructional method long-term, it's at least what's going to be the easiest for them to kind of jump back into? Or do I try a different approach? So hearing those thoughts is really interesting.

**Ayesha:** [11:57] What I learned was that my students who are on-ground want to be on-ground, they kind of resented having to go online.

**Alex:** [12:04] I think that's a good word.

**Ayesha:** [12:07] Yeah, and I think in our minds it's like, "Oh, these millennials or these Gen Z's, they just want to be on the phone and they just want to be on the computer," and they do, but not for class. If they signed up for an on-ground class, they want to be on-ground and they were kind of not happy. And so it was like, well, but if I have you try and meet twice a week, are you actually going to be there? Which is, I think, the problem Roxane ran into. So I don't know what the balance is, but I guess we'll figure it out if we have to.

**Alex:** [12:37] Yeah, are any of you teaching summer courses this time around?

**Ayesha:** [12:43] No.

**Adam:** [12:43] No. (laughs) I need a break.

**Alex:** [12:47] Yeah, I think that's fair.

**Roxane:** [12:49] I know that I had the possibility to teach online, but they were asking usually when we teach summer, they ask a minimum of ten students, when it's in-person. This time they were asking for 20 students, to do online. And so I never have 20 students in French online. I mean, I never have 20 students in French usually. And then having them online is even more difficult, so they cancelled the class. But yeah, just to go back to that idea before, I

feel like our students also need a lot of connection, like personal connection. So that's why for them, even if it's not in-person, just seeing us, and having us rephrase the content, helped them a lot. And I think that's what, at least even if it's not the best solution, they were kind of like, how do you say, like grasping for that or they were trying to cling to that idea. Like if I can see them, if I can hear them, it's going to be much more helpful than just reading a book, at least that's how they presented it to me.

**Alex:** [13:52] I want to stay focused on student reactions. Ayesha, you mentioned resentment as one emotion that might have been felt. Did anybody else get a strong sense of how students might have responded to COVID-19, to the shift online, to any of this? Did you have any kind of memorable student moments or interactions that helped shape how you kind of planned out things?

**Roxane:** [14:17] So what happened is, whenever I teach in-person, we always have the first few minutes of class where students are supposed to tell me, in French, what they've done during the weekend or if they did anything fun, they discovered something in Nashville. Usually we start in French and then we switch to English for like two or three or five minutes. What I realized, switching online, is that there was a need to vent, like really to vent. They had, they were completely lost. At first, the first week they were so excited, like, "We're going home! We're not going to work as much!" And then the second week, their faces were just like, "Oh my gosh man, this is so difficult." I am stuck between my parents and my siblings and I had a job, I don't have a job anymore. I mean, all of these things, all of these questions. And so again, our classes are an hour and 25 minutes. We honestly spend easily ten to 15 minutes, at the beginning of each synchronous class, just venting, I just told them, what do you want to share? What do you want to say? And they would just kind of all say what they were feeling. Sometimes they were just they were telling each other, "Yes, this is exactly what I'm feeling." And so I think it helped a lot. And it also helped me understand better what they were feeling because at first, I was just like guys, we're gonna continue. I have things to teach you. But then I realized I have to be much more compassionate with my expectations because some of them were really struggling. And especially because I teach at an HBCU, you, a lot of my students are students of color. As you know, the, the black community was particularly impacted by COVID and several of my students lost family members. And that was really difficult to just understanding that this was not, for a while, we were not sure what is COVID and what is happening? And suddenly it was like, wow, I just lost my aunt, I just lost my mother. I just lost, you know, suddenly you have this realization. So a lot of venting.

**Ayesha:** [16:18] My students I think were very stressed and overwhelmed by, not just by what was going on, but the switch to online. And so again, that was the resentment of like, I don't want to be online, but now I have to be. And one of my students was like, "Well, can I just get a grade for the two months, or however long we had been in class and then come back and get the rest them?" And I was like, "No, that's not how we're doing it this semester." And so they just really were, I had a lot of pushback for the online transition because students felt like, I tried to pare down my assignment a little bit. Just because I just felt like that was necessary, but even with the paring down, not all of them, but some of them, they still were so stressed and so overwhelmed and so, you know, again, resentful and they didn't understand why. They felt like, the sense that I got, was they felt that they were being punished for something that was not in their control. Like, I have to do more stuff and more work and be online and I don't want be here, and it's not my fault there's a pandemic. You know, that kind of thing. And so the venting sessions, definitely had those at the beginning of Zoom. And I did a bunch of group therapy type exercises because they have to learn that any way. Because it just was necessary. And I think that helped. Yes, stressed and overwhelmed.

**Adam:** [17:44] I had just as, all of the resentment. I don't know, they probably just didn't vent to me is as much, but that, that element was certainly there, especially that first week. My students expressed it as just missing each other, which was very sweet. I mean, definitely, resentment is right, but a lot of that, that emotion I think was not directed at me or at the college. It was directed to the rest of their lives. For example, students who were in various service industries being front-line workers without any compensation or protection. And they brought that into, into the classroom online. And that was kind of cool in the sense that they, they had one, they had to write a research paper. That was pretty much all that was left after spring break when we, when we left. And so a lot of them were able to take that energy and apply it to the last bit of writing that they had to do. And I had one student, and this is like an exception and I'm sure that proves the rule, who genuinely excelled in the online format and who had been struggling all semester. And I don't know why that was. Maybe it was transportation issues. Who knows about why the in-class work was never clicking for him. But for whatever reason, when we switched to online, he just completely was able to throw himself into all of the content that I was kind of producing and uploading, producing and uploading. And he was emailing me almost every other day. And that was one of those things where just as the instructor is like, I'm not going to ask any questions because I'm just really happy for this student, who whatever is motivating him right now. This works for him. That was not the majority of cases, but that really stuck out to me. And I don't, I honestly wouldn't

even know what to make of it. But just remembering that the material circumstances of all of our students can be so mixed and so varied that it's hard I think, to, to come up with a blanket solution. Kind of what Roxanne and Ayesha were mentioning at the beginning about, "Do you want online, do you want synchronicity? Not? I don't know." I don't think that, I don't think we'll ever get a unified answer on that, which is ok.

**Alex:** [20:09] Yeah. I'm curious about, it sounds like you're all really flexible, which is great and adapting. And I'm curious how you adapted assessment strategies. I feel like this is one of the things that I've been reading about the most on Chronicle of Higher Ed and other conversations taking place around this, is how did you adapt in terms of assessment or did you, were you able to kind of maintain what you had or did you have to shift it?

**Ayesha:** [20:37] I had some larger sort of research like papers at the end of a couple of my courses that were research projects that were group projects. It didn't feel like it would be fair to require them to do a group project, given everything that was going on. I didn't think it would be fair to say, "Get their phone number and Zoom each other." Like I just thought that was too much. So I ended up changing those group projects to individual papers or changing them to just exams, instead because they were replacing final exams. I felt like the learning process, I didn't collect the learning that they got from the exam. It was as robust, diverse, or whatever as a research group research project was. But I just didn't feel like it was feasible to continue doing that. And so I don't know if we end up going, staying online in the fall. I don't know how I will kind of fix that or make myself feel better about that. But I did have to do a little bit of a shift.

**Alex:** [21:41] I replaced my, my final paper was meant to be more of a research paper in a more traditional literature class sort of way. And I ended up drastically paring down my course, like Ayesha was saying earlier, just to try to make it more accessible and navigable to my students. And I did, I did have to keep the research component because I think that's really important that they do that in a composition course. But I made it a personal essay instead, which I think went really well. I think it allowed for that outlet because I didn't have a lot of group therapy sessions. I had a lot of it happening through their writing, which was really interesting to see. They had to talk about a kind of way of knowing or way of being, how some influence in their life that has kind of shaped how they perceive the world. And at the time a lot of that was being influenced by the politics around them, COVID-19, just all the kind of social interactions that they were missing. So I think that actually worked pretty well. Usually I have them do the essay, the personal essay, at the beginning of the semester. But I



think having it kind of at the beginning, but in a different form at the end helped because I think they got to kind of witness a change in their writing, but it was reflected through their own reflections on themselves rather than on texts or films or any kind of object. So I think that might be something I might keep, as we move forward, online or otherwise.

**Roxane:** [23:12] I usually give quizzes and I give paper quizzes that they have to handwrite. And I do this every week or every other week. I also do, I also do cultural presentations. They have to present either a French-speaking country or they have to tell me about a practice in a French-speaking country. I mean, they can really pick whatever they want. I had to give up on their presentations because I tried to keep it with one of my classes that is very small. It only has five students. The higher we go, the more difficult it is to keep students committed to French. But I tried in one of my intermediate classes, and the students were just falling asleep, looking at other people's presentations. Usually in class, it's much more dynamic. We usually laugh and we usually chitchat. And, but here it was just like literally somebody showing slides. So I gave up on that. I kept the quizzes, but I had to make them online. And so of course there are ways for them to open different tabs. I know I could technically do the I forget the locked down or whatever. Yes. But actually, some of them could not, they didn't have the technology, again to follow the lockdown process, so they could not actually take the quiz. So I had to do just a regular quiz. And so obviously, I could see their answers were excellent. So I did something at the end where I just asked them to watch French films if they wanted to and to just reflect on the films. And one, parts of my research is on race in France. And so I, I recommended films that were mostly focused on race. And so that was very interesting because a lot of things came out. And that was before the protests, but all those things came out and that helped them to reflect again about themselves. So it kind of goes back to what you did, Alex. And so I think that was very helpful. So yeah, so definitely had to adapt. And I knew that if I have to do this again in the fall, I'm not sure yet. I've been thinking about what I could do differently and I'll definitely have to cut down on the written things and maybe do some more videos or audio recordings, so that at least they speak French because that's one thing also that they could not do as much.

**Ayesha:** [25:38] I think the video is a good idea. I posted in my discussion board, I included a lot of YouTube videos that they could watch it and comment on, and bounce ideas off each other and they seemed to really like that. As opposed, to just the turn in the paper, do the quiz, look at the lecture or the PowerPoint, they seemed to really get into the YouTube video stuff that I found actually related to our content and so I think that's a great idea I'll definitely

be adding more of that if we are back in this position.

**Adam:** [26:09] The writing, I mean probably not too much changed, since at the end of the day you're writing that essay at home or in some other place. So for me, the strategy, and we basically got news over spring break that we weren't going to be coming back in person. So that was my week of just radically over hauling. Like I think all of you, I cut to the bone. Certainly, got rid of as much as I could and then produced as much content as I could, which was two things that I think were effective. One was just, you know, narrated PowerPoint lectures. And then the other was that I decided that I was just going to write the research paper with them and I filmed myself writing it. So because the theory being, as we all know, they you don't get the chance to ask questions as easily, to interrupt me. So the lectures, the PowerPoints, were just the basics. Here's what a thesis is, or whatever. And then I filmed every step of my writing process from prewriting, through drafting, through revision, and all of that was posted, as well. So the advantage for the writing classes, was that we had one goal. You guys have to write this paper to prove your proficiency. My students are all developmental writing students, as well. So they've come a long way by this point in the semester, already. And so I had the luxury, I think, of being able to say this is the target, you know exactly what you need to produce. And then it was just about figuring out through any method I could brainstorm over spring break, how to just get them there over that line. So I think some creativity came out of that. I wish I had that 70%, that Roxanne mentioned. God, that'd be amazing, but we did alright.

**Alex:** [28:06] Yeah, I think such a, that's such a good idea of modeling it by doing the process with them. I share examples of my written work throughout the semester and of student examples from previous semesters and their peers work and things like that, but I haven't taken the time to write along with them. Maybe that's something I could do for this summer. It sounds rough, but it sounds rewarding.

**Adam:** [28:31] Give it a shot. I would imagine it would work for, for anyone's field of study because we're all kind of experts in it. You get to kind of have fun in a way that in the classroom, that's really hard to do. Talk about people falling asleep while you're typing out your essay. Right. But with the video software, I mean, you can really kind of tighten it up so that they see just the kind of critical moments where, in the case of writing, you know, you've gotta make a choice. How do I want to present? Do I want to present the information this way or that way? And that is one of the advantages that I found that the forced shift to these other technologies, at least allowed for a little bit of innovation there.

**Alex:** [29:15] Yeah. That leads into another question I had which was, did you, did anybody else find surprising advantages in shifting online? One that I thought of was deadlines and how I, when we shifted online, my students, I had a vague set of deadlines for when I suggested that they submit things, but I basically didn't take off any points from their grade if they submitted anything late. And I for that whole month or month and a half, however long it was, they could submit things to me at will, as long as they submitted everything, they could do it on their own time, which was really exhausting for me, in the last week or so of class, when they all decided that was the time to do it. But I kind of expected that to happen when I allowed the policy. So I prepped myself, made sure I had a lot of extra coffee and a few beers around. And it worked really well because I think that they just appreciated. The way, the way I framed it was I'm doing this because I know a lot of your essential workers, a lot of you are now stay-at-home moms. And I think that regardless of when they turned things in, they just appreciate it that it was being acknowledged through the flexible deadline policy. And I had a lot of what Adam was describing. I actually had five or six students who really performed a lot better after we switched online. And I don't know if it was an accessibility issue, like Adam was describing, where maybe they just had trouble getting to campus sometimes, or maybe they had reduced work hours because of COVID-19 and could focus on schooling more. But I think it was just being able to do things a little bit more at their leisure. And so I have some kids in my summer class, not kids. I teach at a community college and a lot of them are not kids at all. But I have a lot of students who chose to take summer classes and some of them are on my online summer Lit class now. So yeah, that advantage of just being able to be a lot more fluid with deadlines because you're not trying to work on things in class in a set time, I think is something I'm going to try to somehow replicate in my in-person classes. I haven't figured out how that would work, but without killing myself a little bit through all the grading and drafting. But it's been, I think something that really helped my students and I keep in touch.

**Ayesha:** [31:36] I had, I did it sort of a version of that, where in my mind, I knew that I would accept things up until the last minute, but I didn't tell them. (everyone laughs) And so what that did, what that did was, the people who are going to be able to do things on time, did them on time and I could kind of stay on top of the grading, when people needed the extra time. When they emailed me and said, "hey, you know, this happened, I can't because of this or I need an extra time." I was like, "Oh yeah, no problem." Whatever, as long as you get it in by May, whatever. And so that was my way of kind of keeping it a little less stressful for me so that I wasn't getting tons and tons of things on the last week or two days before grading is

due so, I think that that helps. I have a colleague who is a psychology professor at Nashville State. And what he does is he has a lot of, which this is hard for writing, but a lot of his work is online and it's graded automatically. And so he kind of just throws all of the assignments at them, at the beginning of the semester and says this is when it's all due. So if you can turn it in by then, great and if you don't— and he also does this thing where he tells them, "You're starting off with an A, Everybody has an A. If you get it all in, you'll keep your A, if you don't then you won't." I don't think that would work for writing, different things to think about.

**Alex:** [32:56] Yeah, I like the, "everyone has an A" strategy. I remember when I was in college, one of my professors did that, and I felt so much more encouraged than starting the year working up. I had another question just about resources. And if you guys had anything that you think worked especially well, whether it's something you read or a technology you used. I don't know a lot about, Kahoot! for instance. Was there anything that you think would be beneficial for other instructors to hear about that you found surprisingly helpful?

**Adam:** [33:35] Well, I have a couple. So the first one that I'd mention is a screen recording software. I use Apowersoft, and it's free. And you can access it through your web browser. And I use, you can use that for recording lectures on your screen, but I actually primarily use it for giving feedback on student essays. So they'll email me a Word document, I'll film myself reading it and verbalize my commentary, and then send it back. I was actually doing that pre-COVID. And that's been very, very popular with students. So that's a great one. And then the other one that I jotted down, we'll just for in case anybody doesn't know, Microsoft 365, whatever the suite is, all of their automated design features now are fabulous, if you're like me and just don't have much sense for graphic design. They've got algorithms that automate that. They also have an ability for you to insert images through PowerPoint that have been pre-vetted as being part of the Creative Commons. So that you, and they'll auto, put in auto-citations, auto alt text as well for, for, for readability issues. So that tool has been very, saved my butt. I'll just put it that way. That was spring break, was me clicking "auto design, auto design." So those are the two that were massively helpful to me, in addition to the LMS that we used.

**Alex:** [35:27] I think that's a surprisingly important thing though, because when we are still teaching in person, I had general PowerPoint slides. I think that they were attractive enough, but I wasn't paying special attention to the design. And then I borrowed a colleague's PowerPoint for this lesson, because he already had it pre-built and it already looked good. And I told them at the beginning of class, I said, "This isn't my PowerPoint. And so there's

some weird graphics to it and some like weird design." And I warned them upfront because for me, it was a little overwhelming with all the different things going on in between each side and things like that and the students just absolutely loved it. They thought it was so cool. So when I was designing my things for online where I knew that they'd be in their living room bored, with no classroom environment to maybe spice things up, I tried to make my PowerPoints a little more snazzy. And I think that's a little thing that goes pretty far. Yeah.

**Roxanne:** [36:22] I've also used a Apowersoft. I forget the exact name, but yes exactly. I've used it before too, because I have some auditory learners and so they were obsessed about pronunciation and they kept telling me, "Ma'am, I cannot remember the words, I'm not saying them properly." So I had to record some of my PowerPoints, just reading the words really slowly and focusing on pronunciation. And I will just post them online, once in a while, whenever we were covering vocab. And so that time, I did the same thing whenever I was posting work on Wednesdays and Thursdays, I would record a voiceover of my PowerPoints, I would give extra explanations on things that might be a bit difficult. So I know that they like that. Kahoot! works really well for language classes or even in general, if you're trying, if you're trying to check their knowledge on specific things. So I know that maybe for writing classes if you're trying to check, I don't know if they know authors or, you know, is it MLA or not? So basically, you have a question and then you can have a picture too, and you have multiple choices, or you have a right or wrong, well, true or false. And so I know that this was amazing in class because I used it. So my students have to learn all the French-speaking countries in the world. We cover them five-by-five. And whenever we are in a traditional setting, they go to the board and they have a map and they have to put as many countries as possible, and they usually make a competition out of it. And we laugh a lot, and it's great. And going online, I was just thinking, "Oh my gosh, I don't know how I'm going to do this. This is going to be so boring." So on Kahoot! I was doing seven countries, every time we were meeting. I was showing them on a map and they had ten seconds to pick the country that it was. Again, lots of competition, but it was a lot of fun. And I also used it, whenever we do vocabulary, just showing them a picture. What is it? It's a jacket. It's this, it's that, all in French, of course. Or with verbs. I give you a verb and a subject, you have to conjugate, so just checking their knowledge. You can also do it with cultural aspects. "Do you remember what's the name of that pre-dinner drinks in France?" "Oh, Apéritif." And so you have all of these things, you know that they can. So we would do this, usually for ten minutes at the beginning of class, after the venting session. And also, if I see that they were falling asleep or they were kind of tired, I would do this as a break in the middle of class.

**Alex:** [38:56] Awesome. I wanted to just kind of end with those resources so that people could kind of take these conversations and see maybe what, what we use to implement them. So I want to thank you all for taking the time to meet with me, or see me on a screen, virtually meet with me and share your experiences during these times which are just so, so challenging and stressful. I think that the issues of equity and access that we discussed today are going to remain important for quite a while, whether we stay online, whether we have to move back in person with new structures. So I really appreciate you all sharing with me.  
(music)

**Derek Bruff:** [39:39] Hi, this is Derek Bruff, our usual host for Leading Lines. And that was Leading Lines guest producer, Alex Oxner, joined by her panelists, Adam Miller, Director of the Writing Center, and English Instructor at Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Ayesha Keller, Assistant Professor of Social Work at Nashville State Community College, and Roxanne Pajoule, Assistant Professor of French at Tennessee State University. I was struck by some comments Alex made to me this spring, when she noted that two of her students were living out of their cars and others were only able to participate in class using their phones. Remote learning is hard enough when you have a home and a laptop and good Wi-Fi. I can't imagine how challenging it would be if you lack those things. Thanks to Alex and her colleagues for providing some insight into the experience of remote Teaching and Learning at community colleges, an HBCU's and the ways they have worked and will work to support their students.

[40:37] Alex and I met a couple of years ago when she started working as a Graduate Teaching Fellow at the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. When she finished her PhD, she went on to work as an instructor of English at Nashville State Community College, as she noted in her introduction. Last fall, we met up at a conference and talked about her experience teaching at a community college. It was clear that the educational technology landscape in that context was far different than what I was used to at Vanderbilt. I realized that we hadn't talked to any community college faculty here on Leading Lines, an educational technology podcast. And I asked Alex if she would want to be a guest producer and interview some of her colleagues. She liked the idea, but knew that both she and her colleagues were very busy. They often teach hundreds of students each semester. By the time we reconnected after the conference, the COVID-19 pandemic had arrived and Alex and her colleagues were even busier. I'm glad, however that they took the time after the semester ended to record and share this conversation about their experiences with remote Teaching and Learning. Alex,

meanwhile, is heading to a new position this summer. She is the new Assistant Director of Inclusive Pedagogy at the Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Notre Dame. We'll miss Alex around Nashville, but we wish her the best of luck in her new job. It's a strange time to start a new position, but I know Alex will have a lot to offer her new teaching community. And thanks again, Alex, for bringing us today's conversation. For more on Alex and our panelists, see the show notes for some links. You'll find those show notes on our website, [leadinglinespod.com](https://leadinglinespod.com) Let us know what you thought about this episode and how you're approaching course planning for the fall. You can reach us via email at [leadinglinespod@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:leadinglinespod@vanderbilt.edu) or on Twitter, [@leadinglinespod](https://twitter.com/leadinglinespod). Leading Lines is produced by the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching and the Jean and Alexander Heard libraries. This episode was edited by Rhett McDaniel. Look for new episodes, when we publish them. I'm your host, Derek Bruff. Thanks for listening and be safe. (music)