Teaching synchronously to local & remote students

Teala Heddleston & Helen Mongan-Rallis
Presentation at TIES Conference
December 14, 2015
(link: http://bit.ly/1QouCaA)
Overview of session

1. Background: Student (Teala) taking Helen’s courses at UMD via Google Hangout
2. Participants’ background
3. Modeling examples of how Teala participated in class from a distance
4. Summary of strategies used
5. Participant sharing their experience teaching or learning to remote students
6. Discussion
Teala’s story: taking courses remotely at UMD

- Student teaching for 2 semesters in southern MN
- Needed 2 more classes at UMD, but these offered only as hybrid courses in Duluth
- Helen said “sure!” - participate via Google Hangout
- Prior experience online
Helen’s story: teaching & learning from anywhere

- Belief in universal design for learning: designing teaching & learning so *all* students can learn
  - Where students & teacher are located should not matter
  - Having students and/or teacher participate remotely *adds* to the learning experience of *all*, rather than being an inconvenience
How did this come about?

- Started when Helen had to go to South Africa for family emergency
  - continued to teach from there
  - students all in classroom, Helen remote
- Daughter home sick: Helen taught from home, students from anywhere they liked
- campus fear of H1N1 flu outbreak
- … then why not anytime anyone is sick? Or just not on campus?
What are your experiences using web-conferencing?

- For personal uses?
- As a *student* participating synchronously from remote location?
- As a *teacher* participating synchronously from remote location?
- Using what technology & web-conferencing tools?
Let’s try it!

1. Getting started: Teala joins class remotely
   a. Texts me to remind me
   b. Accessing link via our Moodle site

2. Checking in with Teala

3. Introductions, how to communicate (between remote & local students)

4. Group work activity:
   a. Google slides
   b. Google drawing
Strategies: What is needed to make this work?

- On the human side:
  - A willingness by teacher & students to embrace uncertainty
  - Support for teacher & students to learn the necessary skills
Technology needed to make this possible

- Student access (device to connect, Internet access)
- Learning management system or other means of sharing resources
- Video web-conferencing tools (e.g. Skype, Google Hangout, Adobe Connect)
- Bandwidth
On the LMS (or on Teacher blog, Facebook page)

- Link to Google Hangout (or whatever web-conferencing system used)
- Cell phone number to text teacher in case of problems
Building trust and community

Both online (have intro forum, place for asking questions)

and

In person, synchronously:

- introductions
- create alliance
- encouragement
- talk with remote students

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Online orientation activities to complete by end of first week

Welcome to our Educ 2000 class everyone! As this is a hybrid class, each week some of our class time will be asynchronously online (meaning that you will work independently or with others online outside of class time). This week I start you out with a few online tasks for you to do before the end of this week (easy and fun -- no worries!). Please check these out below by clicking on the links to the tasks.

Note: I have not opened up the details on the rest of course yet -- all you can see so far is what you need to see to prepare for class next week.

I am looking forward to meeting you in person! Helen Mongan-Rallis

- Do first! Please watch this 2.5 video in which I introduce myself
- Pre-course survey: due date Sat 9/5
- Introducing yourself to the class (due by 11:55 p.m. 9/5 but sooner if you can)
- Update your Moodle profile (due by 11:55 p.m 9/5)
- Sign up for free online tools & create Google Doc list of your account details (due date: by start of 2nd class)
- Course & syllabus scavenger hunt (do AFTER all the above tasks are complete (complete this quiz by 11:55 p.m. Sat 9/5)

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Designing our Alliance: what we need to feel safe, value, & successful

Our class photo gallery (pictures of everyone)

Video of our Educ 5413 class pronouncing their names
Organization of LMS or online resources

- What to prepare for class
- In class activities
- Follow-up from class
- Clear due dates
- System for reminders

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Teaching digital citizenship (Week 13: Nov 23 - 29) [Thanksgiving Nov 26 & 27]

Prepare for class:
- Tasks to prepare for class on digital citizenship

In class activities
- Digital literacy & citizenship: overview & in-class tasks
- Video sharing option 1: upload to Google Drive or YouTube

Tasks to do as a follow-up from class:
- Blog entry on Digital Citizenship [Due date: 11:55 p.m. 12/5]
Teala’s perspective: What worked well

- Schedule flexibility
- Pace myself
- Application - job!
- Weebly Portfolio
- Peer Collaboration
- Connect with Helen as a student & as a professional
- Knowing where to go each week
- Being able to hear/see peers
- Being in large/small group activities
- Being able to share even at a distance
- Feeling part of the class
Teala’s perspective: what didn’t work as well

- Staying focused for 3 hours
- Group work (Semester 2)
- Peer communication
- Timeline flexibility
- Google Hangout cut out at times
- Helen’s accent
- Screen sharing
- Cell phone signal weak
- My own Internet access
Helen: key tips

- Have remote students turn off camera & mic unless they are talking.
- If you are showing local students something, share screen with remote students(s), hold object in front of camera, or point camera at board (if writing on board).
- Take photos of anything created locally & post on LMS.
- If local bandwidth slow, have only one device per group in f2f classroom.
- Have backup for audio in case (e.g. phone).
Tips (continued)

- If more than one remote student, have them in the same group.
- Be very intentional about keeping remote student(s) actively engaged in class.
- Teach & then remind local students how to include remote students.
- Have a local student also be in the hangout to monitor the chat window.
- Have a local student be point person to maintain text contact with remote student (in case Internet connection is lost).
Participant sharing & discussion

What have been your experiences with teaching students who are at a remote location?

- What has worked?
- What hasn’t?

What questions do you have for each other and for the presenters?
Presenter contact information

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