

CHSS Online Teaching Initiative Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 1
October 30, 2020

IMPROVING ONLINE TEACHING EXPERIENCE

IN THIS ISSUE:

Results of the Recent Faculty Survey

The purpose of this first edition of the Online Teaching Initiative’s (OTI) newsletter is to answer the needs of the faculty in the college. The CHSS faculty are working during unprecedented times, facing many challenges. Many have to balance their family obligations and new work requirements. According to the most recent numbers provided by Dean Ryden, the college is currently offering 810 course sections, 697 of which are taught completely online.

In early September of 2020, the faculty had a chance to share their thoughts and reflect on teaching during the pandemic. Around 70 faculty members participated in the survey. The charts below present basic demographic information about the participants.

Results of the Faculty Satisfaction Survey in September of 2020

This overview presents the results of the faculty satisfaction survey administered in September of 2020.

Pages 1- 2

Online Teaching Tips from Dr. Wayne Schmadeka

Dr. Wayne Schmadeka has been teaching online for the past 15 years. He shares his valuable tips for managing expectations and creating engaging course content.

Pages 3-7

Figure 1. Pre-Survey: Participants (69 total)

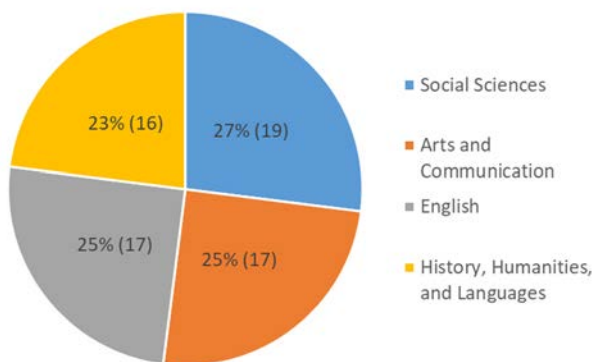
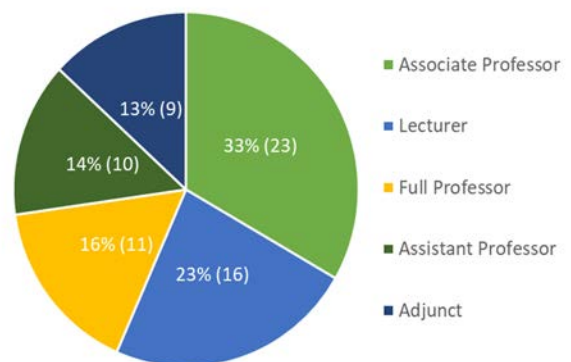


Figure 2: Participants' Ranks



In the past, many of those who responded taught regular face-to-face classes.

The situation changed drastically in the spring and fall of 2020. See Figures 3 and 4 below.

Figure 3: Teaching Modalities in the Past Several Years

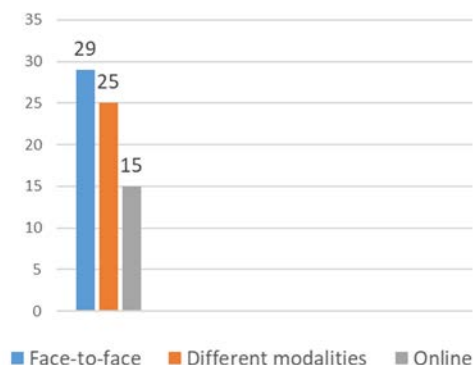
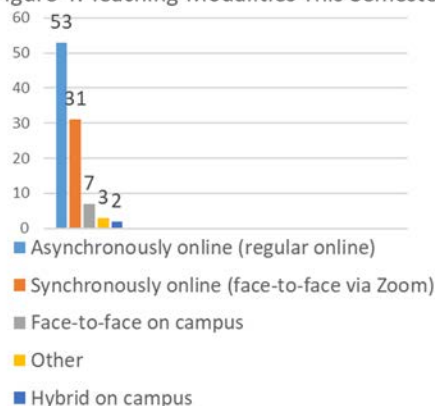
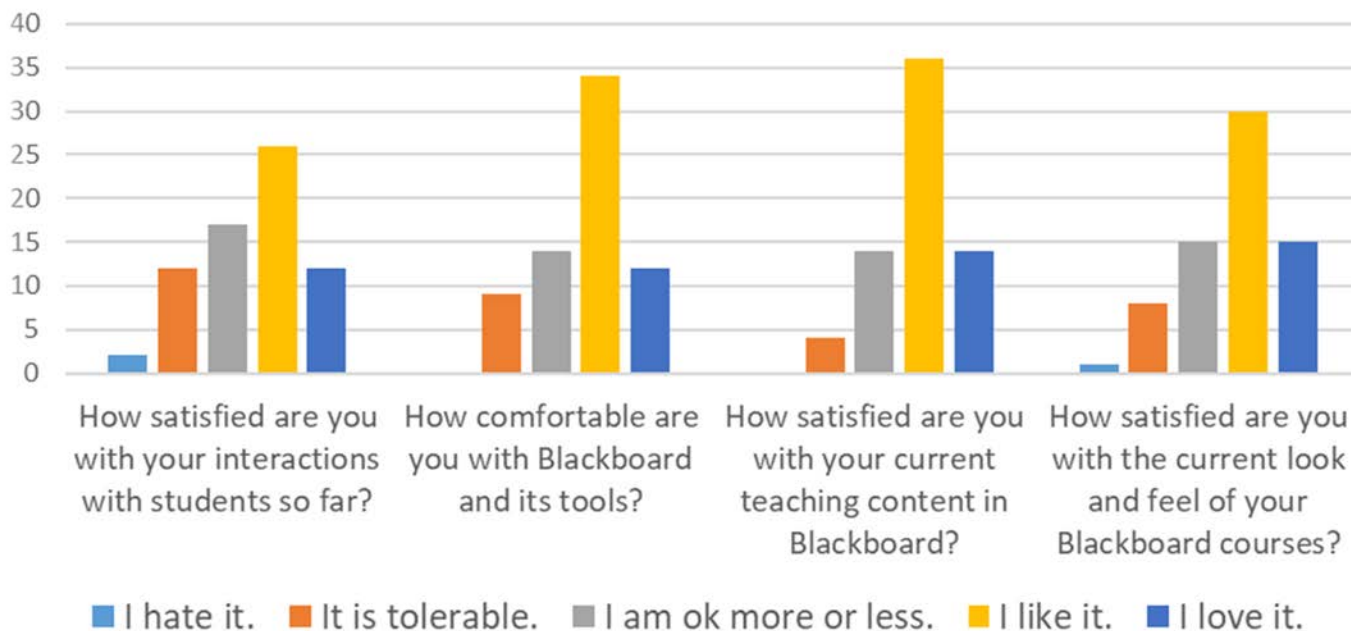


Figure 4: Teaching Modalities This Semester



The main purpose of the survey was to understand the level of the faculty’s comfort and satisfaction with the new way of teaching regarding interaction with students, Blackboard and its tools, teaching content, and the look and feel of their course shells. The results show that the vast majority of the participants feel comfortable with the current teaching situation. See Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Participants' Level of Comfort and Satisfaction with Current Teaching



The results are encouraging as the spring 2021 semester will raise new questions about allowed teaching modalities and potential challenges with school closures during the pandemic. The TTLC and CTLE work tirelessly to provide faculty with resources and training opportunities to assist those who need help. The CHSS Curriculum Support Committee and Online Teaching Initiative are also here to support faculty and provide ways for faculty to share their expertise and improve their teaching during these difficult times.

Online Teaching Tips from Dr. Wayne Schmadeka



Do you want to save time and effort designing, implementing, and refining your online courses? A recent interview with Dr. Wayne Schmadeka gives us an opportunity to do so. Wayne founded and ran an educational software firm throughout the 1990s. He now serves as an adjunct in the Technical Communication program at UHD. He reflected on his 15 years of developing and delivering online instruction at UHD. His online course demonstration is available through the [Online Teaching Initiative's website](#).

Relying heavily on his educational software experience, QM and OLC workshops, and resources available through UHD, he transitioned from face-to-face to hybrid, then to fully online. He believes online courses can effectively attract and retain students and support student achievement of learning outcomes (LOs) if the course design and implementation accomplish the following:

1. **Engage students with each other and the facilitator through meaningful exchange of ideas and experiences.**
Example: Discussion topics ask students to consider how their experiences and lessons learned compare with those of their classmates and the observations and conclusions of various authors.
2. **Show the alignment of LOs with the activities that support the achievement of those LOs.**
Examples: The descriptions of course activities, learning modules, and/or assignments contain overviews and purpose statements to signal why students are asked to complete the tasks.



Module 1 - Outcomes and Components

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, you will be

1. Navigate the course
2. Demonstrate knowledge of course policies
3. Post to the discussion board
4. Preview the rubric for an assignment
5. Attach a file and submit an assignment
6. Access the textbook
7. Demonstrate knowledge of the importance and

Components

This module consists of readings, quizzes, discussions

- Readings
 - Syllabus
 - Ch. 1 Effective Business Communication
- Quizzes (1 point each)
 - Basics of the Courses
 - Navigation
 - Ch. 1 Effective Business Communication

3. **Lead students to understand and believe in the value and role of the course to their future achievement.**

Example: Discussion topics address the role and importance of communication in their personal and professional lives, the impact of technology on their communication, networking and personal branding, essentials of effective communication, and other relevant topics.

Effective
Business
Communication
- Due Sept. 2,
to be GRADED



Forum is no
longer available.
Available until:
Wednesday,
September 2,
2020 11:59:00 PM
CDT.



Image by flickr user Ivan Walsh and used under Creative Commons license

The purposes of this discussion topic are to

- Introduce the free textbook
- Emphasize the nature and impacts of communication
- Introduce identifying the source(s) of your response
- Introduce replying specifically and constructively to others

To complete this discussion topic

1. Familiarize yourself with McLean's Chapter 1
2. Copy the four prompts under the Prompts heading:
 - Yours
 - McLean's - identify the page number(s)
3. Reply to two of your classmates' statements; replies may be written or short videos.

4. **Encourage students to take a degree of ownership of the course.**

Example: An optional extra credit discussion invites students to identify problems with the design and implementation of the course and propose solutions to any such shortcomings.

Help - Q&A and
P&S - Optional
Extra Credit



Image by flickr user Ivan Walsh and used under Creative Commons license

The purposes of this extra credit are to encourage you

I encourage you to post to this discussion if and when

- You have a question about anything directly related to the course
- You have an answer to someone's question, offer a solution
- You identify a problem with the design or any aspect of the course
- You have a possible solution to a course design problem

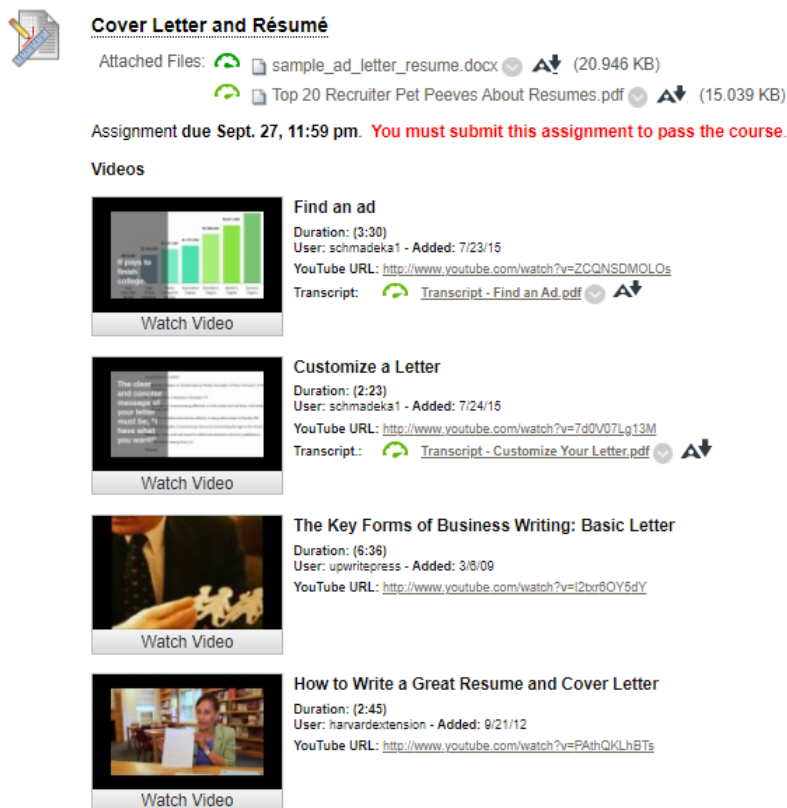
You can earn up to **1 point of extra credit** for each question you post.

- The subject of the question and the completeness of the answer
- The significance of the problem and usefulness of the solution

You can earn a maximum of **5 points of extra credit** for the entire course.

5. Encourage independent learning.

Example: Students select, review, summarize, and/or analyze a variety of materials including videos and links to web resources to complete assignments and discussion topics.



Cover Letter and Résumé

Attached Files: sample_ad_letter_resume.docx (20.946 KB) Top 20 Recruiter Pet Peeves About Resumes.pdf (15.039 KB)

Assignment due **Sept. 27, 11:59 pm**. You must submit this assignment to pass the course.

Videos

Find an ad
Duration: (3:30)
User: schmadeka1 - Added: 7/23/15
YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCQNSDMOLOs>
Transcript: Transcript - Find an Ad.pdf

Customize a Letter
Duration: (2:23)
User: schmadeka1 - Added: 7/24/15
YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7d0V07Lg13M>
Transcript: Transcript - Customize Your Letter.pdf

The Key Forms of Business Writing: Basic Letter
Duration: (6:36)
User: upwritepress - Added: 3/6/09
YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2br60Y5dY>

How to Write a Great Resume and Cover Letter
Duration: (2:45)
User: harvardextension - Added: 9/21/12
YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAthQKLhBTs>

6. Implement software user experience fundamentals.

Example: Make navigation simple and intuitive. Avoid text dense pages. Use headings and white space. Use numbered and bulleted lists for procedures and important lists. Use infographics to convey information and add visual interest.

Course Description

TCOM 3302 Business and Technical Report Writing provides you the opportunity to sharpen your personal and professional written communication through presentation of technical information, with emphasis on report writing.

Instructor's Short Biography

- Wayne Schmadeka received a Ph.D. in 1976 from Michigan State University.
- He has taught full and part time at UHD since 2002. Throughout the 1990's, he ran a small educational software development and sales company.
- He occasionally consults with organizations about their training and documentation needs.

Instructor's Contact Information

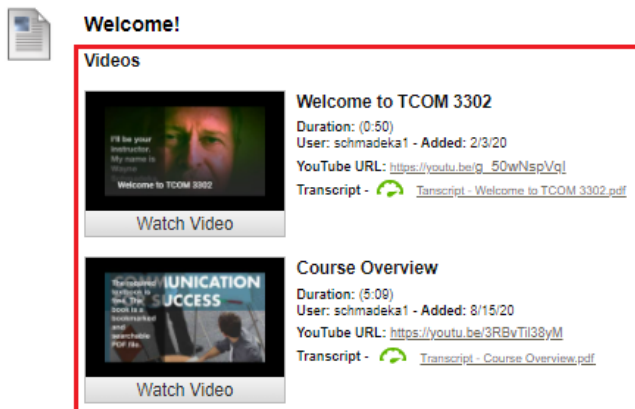
- Text or talk: 713 854-7070 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM
- Email: schmadekaway@uhd.edu 24/7
- Office location: online only

To get started

1. Watch the *Welcome to TCOM 3302* and *Course Overview* videos.
2. In the navigation pane on the left, under Course Outcomes and Organization, select **Course Overview** and preview the page to get an overview.
3. In the navigation pane on the left, under Course Outcomes and Organization, select **Module 1 - Orientation** and read the brief descriptive text.
4. In the navigation pane on the left, under Credit Activities, select **Assignments and Quizzes**.
5. On the Assignments and Quizzes page, select the **Orientation activities (Module 1)** folder, which is the folder nearest the top the page.

7. Are welcoming and easy to start using.

Example: Welcome and Course Overview videos on the Start Here page and course orientation activities on the assignments pages invite students to engage with course materials.



Welcome!

Videos

Welcome to TCOM 3302
 Duration: (0:50)
 User: schmadeka1 - Added: 2/3/20
 YouTube URL: https://youtu.be/g_50wNspVqI
 Transcript - [Transcript - Welcome to TCOM 3302.pdf](#)

Course Overview
 Duration: (5:09)
 User: schmadeka1 - Added: 8/15/20
 YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/3RBvTil38yM>
 Transcript - [Transcript - Course Overview.pdf](#)

Course Description

TCOM 3302 Business and Technical Report Writing provides you the opportunity to sharpen your personal and professional written communication skills. The course emphasizes through presentation of technical information, with emphasis on report writing.

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To get started

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3. In the navigation pane on the left, under Course Outcomes and Organization, select **Module 1 - Orientation** and read the brief descriptions of the orientation learning activities.
4. In the navigation pane on the left, under Credit Activities, select **Assignments and Quizzes**.
5. On the Assignments and Quizzes page, select the **Orientation activities (Module 1)** folder, which is the folder nearest the top of the page, and complete the orientation activities.



Due Sept. 2 - Orientation activities (Module 1)

Enabled: Adaptive Release, Statistics Tracking

The orientation activities are **due 11:59 PM Sept.2.**

The six for-credit orientation activities are

- Open-book quizzes on
 - Course navigation
 - Basics of the course
 - Ch. 1 - Effective Business Communication
- Discussion board postings
 - Introduce Yourself
 - Ch. 1 - Effective Business Communication
- Practice assignment

The purposes of the open-book quizzes are to introduce the

- Course navigation
- Basics of the course, including the syllabus and free textb

The purposes of the discussion topics are to encourage you to

- Introduce yourself to your classmates and begin to know t
- Familiarize yourself with the procedure for posting to a dis
- Recognize the importance of effective communication to y

The purpose of the practice assignment is encourage you to fami

8. Make grading criteria explicit and transparent to students and save time grading.

Example: Use rubrics for grading.

| Name | Proposal | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Description | Grading criteria for the Proposal assignment | | | | |
| Rubric Detail | | | | | |
| Criteria | Levels of Achievement | | | | |
| | Woefully inadequate | Needs considerable work | Needs some work | Needs a little work | Well done |
| Introduction clearly, logically, and concisely states the purpose, potential benefit, and audience for the recommendation report you propose to write | 0 Points omitted or very ineffective | 0.4 Points very unclear, wordy, incomplete, and/or illogical | 0.6 Points somewhat clear, concise, complete, and logical | 0.8 Points mostly clear, concise, complete, and logical | 1 Points clear, concise, complete, and logical |
| Background clearly and effectively elaborates appropriately on the history, scope, significance, and trends of the problem/opportunity and the importance of an effective response | 0 Points omitted or very ineffective | 0.8 Points very unclear, wordy, incomplete, and/or illogical | 1.2 Points somewhat clear, concise, complete, and logical | 1.6 Points mostly clear, concise, complete, and logical | 2 Points clear, concise, complete, and logical |
| 2 MLA-formatted references with in-text citations that effectively support the persuasiveness of your proposal | 0 Points references omitted or in-text citations add little to the persuasiveness of your proposal | 0.8 Points format, in-text citations, and/or effectiveness of support of the persuasiveness of your proposal are markedly improper or ineffective | 1.2 Points format, in-text citations, and/or effectiveness of support of the persuasiveness of your proposal are somewhat improper and/or ineffective | 1.6 Points format, in-text citations, or effectiveness of support of the persuasiveness of your proposal are mostly proper and effective | 2 Points format, in-text citations, or effectiveness of support of the persuasiveness of your proposal are proper and effective |
| Description of Project section clearly identifies and briefly describes the topics the proposed report will cover and their significance | 0 Points omitted or very ineffective | 0.4 Points very unclear, incomplete, and/or illogical | 0.6 Points somewhat unclear, incomplete, and/or illogical | 0.8 Points mostly clear, complete, and logical | 1 Points clear, complete, and logical |
| Specific Plan section clearly describes, in detail, anything you have already done and what you will do to complete each topic identified in the Description of Project section | 0 Points omitted or very ineffective | 0.8 Points very unclear, incomplete, or illogical | 1.2 Points somewhat unclear, incomplete, and/or illogical | 1.6 Points mostly clear, complete, and logical | 2 Points clear, complete, and logical |
| Qualifications and Conclusion sections are clear, concise, and persuasive | 0 Points omitted or very ineffective | 0.4 Points very unclear, incomplete, and/or illogical | 0.6 Points somewhat unclear, incomplete, and/or illogical | 0.8 Points mostly clear, complete, and logical | 1 Points clear, complete, and logical |

In summary, Dr. Schmadeka suggests, “Don’t eat the whole sandwich in one bite.” Take it a bite at a time. Prioritize your tasks. Don’t beat yourself up. Remember that it gets easier with practice.

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