FD Newsletter

FD NEWSLETTER

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

TOKYO, JAPAN

Vol. 25
No. 1
September 2020

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Introduction

Hiroyuki KOSE
Director, Center for Teaching and Learning

By the time this issue of the *FD Newsletter* goes to print, our Autumn Term will be under way. Benumbed as we are personally by the relentless barrage of news on the coronavirus pandemic, universities around the world have had to galvanize to make the switch to remote learning.

We continue to face these practical challenges every day. In addition to transforming the way we all live and work, this global crisis has ushered in a dramatic change for higher education. I believe that this in itself has been valuable in that this has enabled universities, which are the institutions responsible for fostering the next generation of human beings who are capable of responding and adapting to our rapidly changing world, to experience firsthand the impact that this pandemic is having. Moreover, despite the suddenness of our transition to remote learning, the advantages and potential of online education have been evident. Many of these features will surely be retained and further developed, and even incorporated into in-person classes after they resume in the future.

Undoubtedly, some of the merits of online education are such that it may be difficult for us to return to our former face-to-face classrooms. Although the merits and demerits will be subject to future reviews and research, they will inevitably have an impact on the nature of ICU's liberal arts education and the dialogue that we value so highly.

With no end to this pandemic in sight, online education will remain in place for the foreseeable future. Yet while grappling with the immediate task of supporting and enhancing online education, we should also be mindful of what has been lost in this transition, or what might have been lost. Sharing the same physical space in real time, being swayed by a train as we ruminate on a class, jotting down feedback on a form by hand, tuning in to the enthusiasm of the classroom or the sound of our students dozing off in exhaustion, sensing the seasons changing through the classroom window . . . It's true that we can still conduct lessons with or without these things. Nevertheless, can the success of lessons be measured merely by the extent to which educational objectives are achieved? In these times of continual change, I feel it is important for us to stop for a moment and consider what has been lost, or what might have been lost, along the way.

ICT Support for Remote Learning and CTL's Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak

1. ICT Support for Remote Learning

In response to the COVID-19 situation, ICU rapidly switched to remote learning from April.

Classes were held online following our regular schedule. For us, this brought back memories of the 2003 SARS outbreak, when universities in Hong Kong had to close their campuses and switch to remote learning. We also remember preparing to adjust our course delivery at ICU during the 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak and in the aftermath of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake. Our FD Director at the time was determined to enable ICU students to graduate in June as planned, and our office made every effort to avoid canceling classes. Fortunately, back then, classes did not need to be canceled, but we were prepared to offer classes on Moodle if necessary.

Learning Management System (LMS)

From around 2002, we started implementing a learning management system (LMS) called WebCT. Having compared other systems such as NetCommons and Blackboard LMS, we introduced Moodle in the 2006 Winter Term. We gradually expanded the use of Moodle, and over the past few years between 160 and 180 courses have been using it (see Fig. 1, p. 4). Recently, some courses have started using Google Classroom as well.

Blended learning through an LMS enables faculty to not only upload teaching materials and facilitate the online submission of reports, but also continue discussions after class through the provision of an asynchronous discussion forum. Lecturers who teach in English have given us positive feedback on the impact of an LMS since the early days, saying that online discussions encouraged more participation by students who do not usually speak up in a physical classroom setting.

Using Videos in Class

The inverted classroom model, in which students can watch prerecorded videos of lectures on Moodle in advance, enables lecturers to use actual class time for discussion or exploring issues in more depth. It is also useful for students learning in their non-native language, as they can watch videos as many times as they need to for comprehension with the help of closed captions. Recordings of live lectures have been helpful for students with special needs, and now more students can benefit if such lecture recordings are made available on Moodle for them to listen to again after class.

Having tested various software for creating flipped learning videos and recording presentations, we introduced a video platform called Kaltura in 2019. Integrated with Moodle, Kaltura facilitates video creation. Students can now create video presentations, and videos can be created and shared outside class time, with comments and discussions online.

Virtual Exchange with Other Universities

In the early 2000s, we used Polycom's videoconferencing system to connect with classes overseas in various subjects, such as the exchange between ICU's Mandarin classes and Peking University's Japanese classes. We shared discussions, listened to presentations by guest speakers, and even connected with elementary schools.

In March 2015, as part of the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA), we were involved in an initiative called the Global Course Connection. We connected classes as well as specific groups for group work using web conferencing technology, so that groups could create video presentations and share them online. In terms of technology, we moved from the expensive early videoconferencing system to much simpler web conferencing systems such as Skype, and then to Google Hangouts and Zoom. These initiatives have been useful for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) classes.

Toward Remote Learning

For ICU's switch to remote learning, our capacity to distribute and discuss videos on demand through an LMS such as Moodle, and our use of web conferencing technology were all essential. Moreover, the virtual exchanges with other universities was already a form of hybrid learning

in which some students are in face-to-face lessons with other students participating remotely. All these efforts at ICU over the years helped to ease the switch to remote learning. Moreover, our transition was also helped by the fact that ICT tools have become increasingly easier to use in recent years.

2. CTL's Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak

In response to the decision made at a university meeting on March 16 to switch to remote learning, we considered what kind of suggestions we should make to ensure that all classes can be moved online. Given the limited time we had to prepare and the fact that some new faculty members would be teaching at ICU for the first time, we focused on four tools for support (Zoom, Moodle, Kaltura, Google Meet), as summarized below.

On March 31, we released a Moodle course on how to use ICT tools, and from April 3 to 6, we hosted a webinar by faculty on how these tools could be implemented in classes.

After the start of term, we started individual consultations on Zoom, enhanced our FAQs for students and faculty, accumulated information necessary for online classes, and provided support as the term progressed in line with course needs. CTL's teaching and learning support services were put to good use, including:

1. Roll call (Moodle/Zoom)
2. Sharing class materials (Moodle)
3. Lecture videos (Synchronous: Zoom/ Nonsynchronous: Kaltura)
4. Discussions (Moodle/Zoom/Google Meet)
5. Presentations (Zoom/Kaltura)
6. Submission of Assignments (Moodle/Kaltura)
7. Submission of Comment Sheets (via Moodle's Assignments function) (Moodle)

ICU's Internal Support System (see Fig. 2, p. 4)
In order to implement remote learning, collaboration with other groups, divisions, and colleagues was essential. Despite reports of problems relating to internet access at other Japanese universities, ICU avoided any major issues in this regard thanks to the efforts of the IT Center.

From March 24, we started receiving a wide range of inquiries via our online form, which we consolidated using Google Forms. By using Google Sheets for sharing progress and Google Hangouts (chat) for information sharing, we established a simple process and system that could be accessed by everyone, whether they were in different groups and divisions or working from home.

At CTL, we sorted the inquiries and delegated them appropriately among all our staff. We fielded over 600 inquiries smoothly, as our specialist staff were able to focus on resolving the more technical problems while other staff dealt with general inquiries. Faculty cooperation was also essential in our switch to remote learning, as many members rose to the challenge to support their peers.

Online Tools in Spring Term Courses
Until this year, Moodle had been used by about 70 percent of courses each term. However, most of these courses only used Moodle for uploading course materials rather than for anything close to online learning. Just before ICU's switch to remote learning and online classes, we had 290 registrations (111 FT faculty, 127 PTLs and TAs, 50 staff members, and 2 others) for the Moodle course, "Application Workshop for Online Class 2020" (see Fig. 3, p. 5). Of the 330 Moodle courses in the Spring Term, 209 used Moodle for synchronous lectures (Zoom/Google Meet), 90 for asynchronous lectures (Kaltura), and more than 200 for discussions and assignments (see Fig. 4, p. 5).

Remote learning has highlighted new challenges such as using mathematical formulas, audio submissions in interpreting and language courses, time limits for online tests, and dealing with students in different time zones. At CTL, we are continuing our efforts to resolve issues and prepare for the start of hybrid learning in the Autumn Term, as well as for the post-pandemic classroom.

Conclusion
The urgency of the COVID-19 situation suddenly prompted the entire university to move online for remote learning this year. Even if we fully return to face-to-face classes, things will never be exactly the same as before.

Faculty and student responses to our questionnaires on e-learning have been instructive. For example,

"Questions on chat and polls stimulate communication"; "E-learning facilitates inclusive education"; "Students seem to be better prepared when I distribute the course materials in advance"; "The capacity to view videos in English repeatedly improves comprehension compared to face-to-face lessons"; "Online discussion forums enable me to consider other people's opinions while carefully developing and communicating my own ideas." Indeed, the remote learning experience has helped us all to recognize and appreciate the usefulness and advantages of the ICT tools that we have been using so far.

We think that our switch to remote learning and online courses this year has led us to reflect on hybrid learning, that is, how to combine traditional face-to-face and e-learning options in future. It has also been an opportunity to consider the aspects of learning for which a physical classroom setting is essential.

(KOBAYASHI and ASANO,
Center for Teaching and Learning)

[References]
Application Workshop for Online Class 2020*: https://moodle3.icu.ac.jp/course/view.php?id=2533
Moodle FAQ*: https://sites.google.com/icu.ac.jp/moodle-3-instruction/moodle-faq-2020
"How do you teach online?" (CTL Website): https://office.icu.ac.jp/ctl/en/OnlineClass/
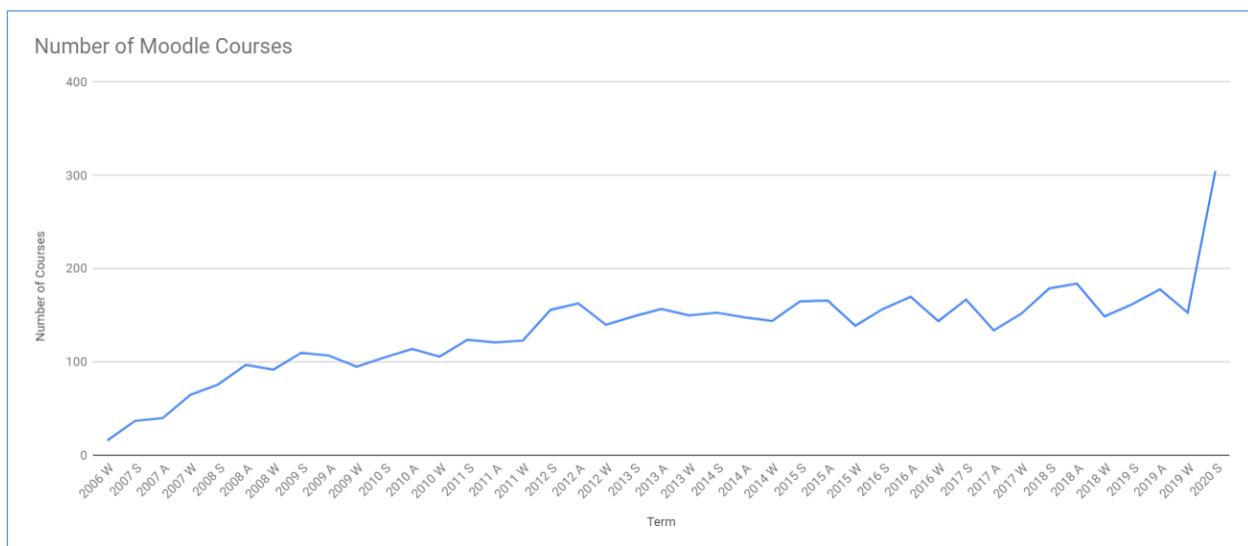*Accessible by the ICU users only.

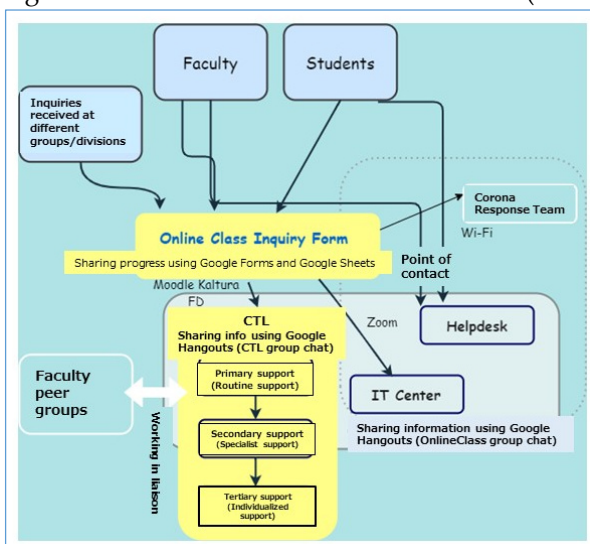Figure 1: Number of Moodle courses at ICU (2006–2020)
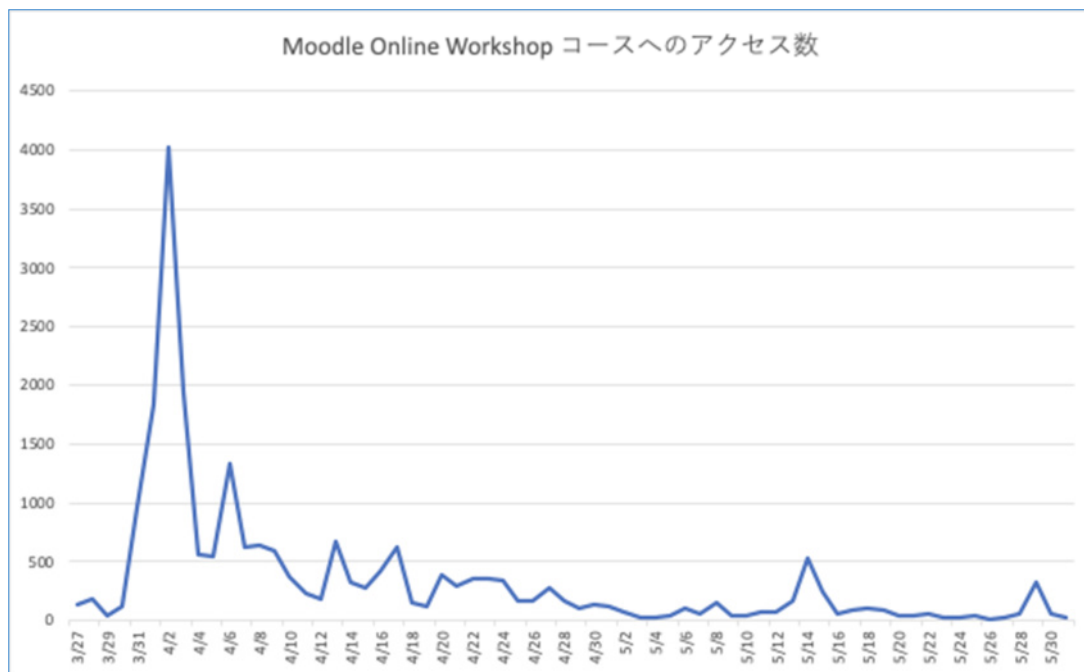

Figure 2: ICU's internal support system.

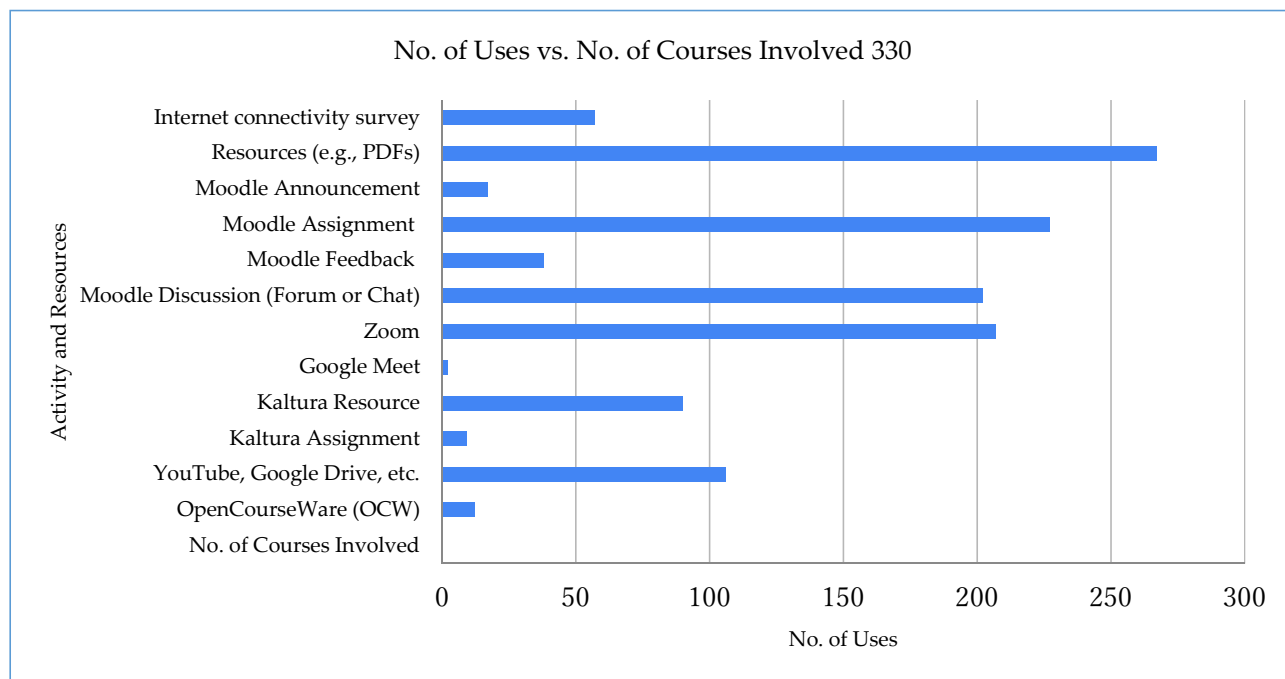Figure 3: Number of visits to the "Application Workshop for Online Class 2020" Moodle course page.
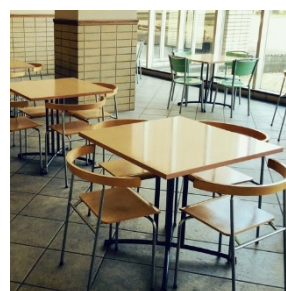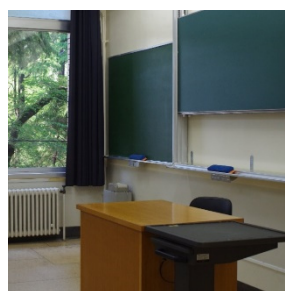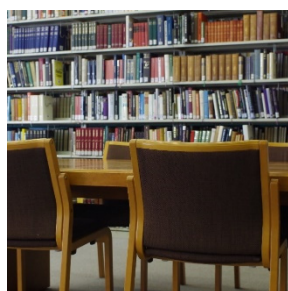

Figure 4: Online tools used in Moodle courses (Spring Term, 2020)

Results of the Online Class Survey for Students

We conducted an Online Class Survey for Students in May.

In order to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19, we decided at an early stage to provide all of our Spring Term (April to June) classes online. We have offered a variety of courses by combining real-time interactive classes using applications such as Zoom and on-demand, prerecorded video classes that students can access any time they please.

Some positive comments from the questionnaire on interactive classes included: "One of the classes I took was delivered from an archeological site. There are about 150 students registered in this class, so I believe it would have been impossible as a face-to-face class. It was an exciting and informative experience," "There were multiple tools available for exchanging views (live discussion, chat, Moodle, etc.). So, I think it was helpful for those who are not good at verbally expressing their thoughts because they could choose whatever tool fit best for them." Comments on on-demand classes included: "The topic-specific videos were good (brief videos of about 30 minutes per clip). I was able to really concentrate on them."

Online courses that were rated highly by students are introduced on the website below as "Good Practice" along with comments from both students and the faculty.
https://sites.google.com/info.icu.ac.jp/onlineclass-e/good-practice

The disadvantages of online classes were also pointed out. "It was difficult to understand the contents because there was no writing on the blackboard." "There were communication problems between the students and the faculty." Some students complained about health conditions such as eyestrain and backache caused by watching the screen for prolonged times. Students did not feel much difference between online and face-to-face classes in making presentations, but many commented that online classes made it harder to engage in discussions compared to face-to-face classes.

The survey results (summary and excerpts) are here:
https://sites.google.com/info.icu.ac.jp/onlineclass-e/home

Courses during the Autumn Term (September to the end of November) will be taught either online or in hybrid mode depending on the course. Hybrid mode refers to classes that will be taught both online and face-to-face. Based on the feedback we received in the survey, we will strive further to provide the quality learning and dialogue-oriented classes that have always been the hallmark of ICU.

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Overview of the survey
Survey period: May 22–31, 2020
Target: All undergraduate and graduate students (3,190 students)
Number of respondents: 1,229 (38.5%)
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(Center for Teaching and Learning)

Introducing Our New Initiative: "Brown Bag Lunch & Learn"

Inspired by a suggestion from Professor Insung Jung in the Department of Education and Language Education, we have started lunchtime get-togethers for faculty and staff, called "Brown Bag Lunch & Learn." Our aim is to enable people from different parts of the university to network, socialize, and share their ideas and thoughts on teaching and learning.

Although the get-togethers were initially intended to be face-to-face over lunch, we had to hold them online. In the Spring Term, we had three sessions, each of which were attended by about 10 lecturers, as well as staff from CTL and the IT Center. In the Autumn Term, we will invite staff from other ICU groups and divisions to join us as well.

The theme of our first two Brown Bag Lunch & Learn sessions, on May 11 and May 22, was "Challenges and Successes of Online Teaching." We discussed the pros and cons of the online medium, introduced new tools, and shared ideas and experiences. Some of the faculty were meeting for the first time, but we became so engrossed in our discussions that one session even ran overtime. By participating ourselves, we were also able to understand and respond promptly to the concerns and issues around online learning and teaching tools (e.g., graphic tablets and Zoom/ Moodle usage guides).

The third session was toward the end of the Spring Term, on June 18. Our topic was "Reflecting on Your Experience This Spring Term," facilitated by Professor Natsumi Ikoma from the CTL Steering Committee and FD Committee. The session was attended by 10 lecturers and five staff members from CTL and the IT Center. Examples of the participants' reflections from our discussion are listed below.

- I became more careful and considerate in the way I communicate because I was not able to have eye contact with my students all the time.
- Given that there are so many online resources available these days, such as massive open online courses (MOOCs), I have been thinking a lot about what makes real-time ICU courses unique.
- For students whose main or first language is not English, I found that the online lesson format was beneficial because questions and answers could be presented in writing.
- I decided to stay online on Zoom after class because I found that many students find it easier to talk then and use it as an opportunity to ask questions that they might not ask during class.
- I find that the importance of student engagement has increased significantly.
- It's very important to continue motivating students to learn, so I make sure to schedule time for various activities, quizzes, and reading materials on Moodle during class.
- After a group work session using breakout rooms on Zoom, my students entered their responses simultaneously in a Google Document. This was a useful exercise, which I would like to continue even when we go back to face-to-face lessons.
- My students responded positively and with great interest to an assignment on COVID-19.
- Group work sessions using breakout rooms on Zoom enabled effective communication between students, as senior students used the opportunity to advise first-year students on aspects of student life and how to approach group work.

We plan to hold three more Brown Bag Lunch and Learn sessions in the Autumn Term—in September, October, and November—facilitated by members of the CTL Steering Committee and FD Committee.

(ONO, Center for Teaching and Learning)

Oxford EMI (English Medium Instruction) Training Program

The Oxford EMI Training Program was held online from March 9 to 15, 2020.

This program aims to improve classes taught in English in countries where English is not the first language. It feature lectures on methods for teaching in English by Oxford EMI Training instructors. The program had been held at ICU in August 2018 and March 2019, and it was scheduled to take place at ICU's Othmer Library again this year. However, owing to the spread of COVID-19, a rapid decision was made to deliver the program remotely. Altogether, 25 lecturers in total from 10 higher education institutions across Japan, including six ICU lecturers, participated in the program.

The course was delivered using the web conference system Zoom and the learning management system Moodle. The first day consisted of an overview of the course and its structure, and a lecture by one of the instructors, titled "Internationalisation of Higher Education." The participants were also assigned into teams for five days of training.

The schedule each day was as follows: the participants completed the assignments posted on Moodle individually and in groups by 4 p.m., and the instructors provided feedback in a lecture from 6 p.m. on Zoom.

In the five days of training, through advice given by the instructors, group work, and discussion, the participants learned how to design interactive classes for students at different levels of English proficiency and students with different personalities, as well as techniques to further students' understanding. In the final part of the program, participants were tasked with sending a video of their own class to Oxford EMI, after which they received feedback.

The following are some of the comments from lecturers who participated in the program: "It provided an opportunity to learn about methods for teaching in English and active learning." "It was good to meet faculty from other universities and other fields." In addition, many of the participants commented that they found it very helpful for teaching classes online in the Spring Term.

(HOSONO, Center for Teaching and Learning)

Hideki OKAMURA, Department of Natural Sciences

The Oxford EMI Program, which is usually held face-to-face, switched to remote learning because of this year's COVID-19 outbreak. As remote learning was new to most of the faculty, I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience it at such an early stage, especially from the viewpoint of a learner. Even after the program, my fellow participants and I continued to share new ideas and information. Through this process, we accumulated a great deal of knowledge. To my great joy, this enabled us to assist other faculty in the Spring Term.

This program is well structured and highly instructive. I felt that many of the detailed tips were useful for making my physics classes more accessible for students – for example, it's important for the instructor to use accurate terminology, point to terminology on slides while explaining them, and pause purposefully before each term (as this is more effective for comprehension than speaking slowly). In physics classes we tend to use the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) model, but I learned that the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) model could be more effective. I was astonished that to successfully implement this model, the instructor would have to control students' seating. In exploring different teaching methods, we watched many of Eric Mazur's flipped learning videos, which helped me to envision new lesson formats.

I also learned how to create interactive online lessons using the online assessment tool Socrative. For our transition to remote learning in the spring term, I learned from my fellow faculty, tried out Kahoot, and used the interactive presentation software Mentimeter and the online platform Quizalize to check my students' comprehension and progress during lessons. So far, I have been using optical character recognition (OCR) for aggregation and roll calls, but I have decided to switch to these more convenient tools. I wish to express my gratitude to Ms. Kobayashi from CTL and my fellow participants for this valuable learning opportunity.

### Heather MONTGOMERY, Department of Economics and Business

I think I was the only participant in this year's Oxford EMI Training whose native language and academic language is English. I participated at the urging of a colleague who assured me it would be useful to anyone – regardless of linguistic background – who teaches in English to students whose "first" language is not English. He was so right and I encourage any other interested ICU faculty members to join at the next opportunity.

If, like me, you are a veteran in the classroom who has already been teaching English Medium Instruction for more than a decade, you may feel that you don't have much to learn. Indeed, most ICU faculty probably already instinctively implement many of the tools and techniques introduced in the Training.

However, the Training showed me that some of the things we instinctively do to simplify English Medium Instruction for our students are counterproductive to both their motivation and learning. And many of the highly effective techniques that we may be instinctively using to make our classes more fun and engaging for students are demonstrated by research to yield better learning outcomes.

The EMI Training introduced me to Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning (see graphic from Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching). I realized that I was unconsciously focusing on learning lower on the pyramid in lower-level classes like General Education and on learning higher on the pyramid in 200- and 300-level classes or the senior thesis.

The EMI course gave me the confidence (and research evidence) to implement higher-level learning throughout the curriculum, including my GE and Foundation courses. My main takeaway from this Training is that for EMI students, higher-level learning is even more important.
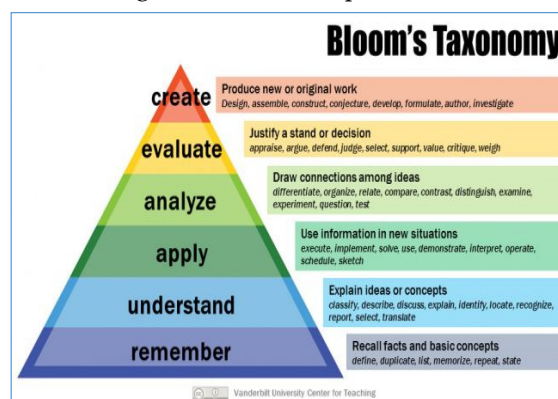
Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

Mari TSUJITA, Department of Education and Language Education

"My first online course"

I was fortunate to be able to participate in the five-day intensive program on English Medium Instruction (EMI). My expectations for the course were to learn about the theories and practical skills related to EMI, and to interact with lecturers in various disciplines and institutions. Both were fulfilled, though in an unexpected way: online.

The first day opened with a Zoom session of introductory lectures, followed by a self-study period with Moodle (e.g., readings, videos, surveys, quizzes, and forum discussions). Then, there was a whole-class live session, where we received feedback on our forum posts. Suddenly, as everything went online in the Spring Term, I used all the Zoom and Moodle functions I learned. I also utilized Slack, an SNS tool used in schools and workplaces, which I also adopted from my training. It made the communication among students, the TA, and the instructor very smooth. The skills I learned were all immediately and directly applicable.

Many of the theoretical concepts covered were familiar to me, since they were taken from applied linguistics and pedagogy (e.g., comprehensible input, higher-order thinking skills). Still, it was beneficial in that it prompted me to apply the skills in an actual class, especially encouraging students to think critically and creatively, by assigning reflection questions in place of the usual comment sheets. By utilizing the Q&A Forum function in Moodle, the students were able to learn from each other. We also learned different ways to modify speech (e.g., intonation, vocabulary, grammar), which were useful for communicating with students from diverse backgrounds.

One missing piece was an opportunity for face-to-face teaching. I look forward to completing "the project" when we return to classrooms again.

Hiroyuki AOKI, Department of Education and Language Education

For university lecturers such as me, notwithstanding the time and energy that we devote to our specializations, there are few opportunities for practical teacher training and development. My experience of the Oxford EMI Program led me to think beyond its focus on English as a medium of instruction to reflect on ways to improve the overall quality of university education.

Many Oxford EMI participants acknowledge that the program has taught them perspectives that are helpful for teaching classes in Japanese as well as in English. Because linguistic issues may have a negative impact on students' understanding, it is not sufficient to simply convert conventional Japanese classes into English; rather, various strategies are needed to recover the deficit. One such strategy, which is popularly known as "active learning," was something I learned through this program.

I would like to see such opportunities continued after the Oxford EMI Program. Could we adopt this bidirectional approach in learning about other topics besides EMI? In keeping up with technological and social developments, such as our data-driven society and diversity, we could use study workshops on such topics as an opportunity for faculty to learn practical teaching skills as well.

For example, how about an FD workshop for digital learning, which we could call DMI (Digital Medium Instruction), playing on the name EMI? We could focus on the use of modern visual and communication aids (not the old CMI, which uses a computer for processing test scores), sharing research on pedagogy and education technology, rather than simply teaching how to use the technology. Observing and analyzing model classes was particularly instructive in the Oxford EMI Program. The program offered an invaluable opportunity for faculty from different fields and universities to share their lessons and ideas and reflect objectively on the state of education and contribute to its improvement.

Takashi KABURAGI, Department of Natural Sciences

The Oxford EMI program was far more meaningful than I expected. I participated in the program with the members who participated in the New Faculty Development Program (NFDP) last autumn.

There was a lecture on EMI at the NFDP, but I wasn't sure about how I could use it in my classes. The week I spent with the Oxford EMI program was a very intellectual and exciting one. It was just as the new coronavirus was spreading, and the program was held online.

One of the most inspiring words of the program was, "Teachers are not there to transmit knowledge." Some of the lectures I have been giving were a typical "knowledge transmission," where I divide the contents of a textbook into a 10-week schedule. There is indeed a certain amount of knowledge that should be conveyed in lectures. However, I should ask myself whether I want to share this knowledge with the students in a classroom where we have very limited time or whether I could let the students prepare in advance on their own from books or the internet.

Furthermore, having the program online was a perfect opportunity in this circumstance. The EMI program online was full of practical ways to teach, which we could apply to our online courses. Each morning, the program offered materials to read and watch, forums where participants can exchange their opinions, collaborative assignments, and quizzes. After completing the tasks, we had a Zoom meeting at night, where we could get feedback. The program was conducted very much interactively, completely different from other online courses I had experienced before.

After attending this program, I was eager to try the various teaching methods that I learned in the program and put them into practice to provide better lectures to my students.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge ICU for the funding, the colleagues who helped me get through the program, and the CTL staff members for their support.

Yukako UENO, English for Liberal Arts Program

Attending the online Oxford EMI course last March became a precious opportunity for me to prepare for the online courses at ICU in the Spring Term. Though I was not willing to participate in an online course initially, I was later grateful for it because I was able to experience the online course as a learner and understand their feelings.

The course also led me to think about the roles of language instructors at the university. One impressive idea was that EMI professors generally had lecture-based classes and were interested in the way language instructors teach, such as small group activities where students have discussions.

Another point that struck me was a tendency in most EMI universities around the world to have little communication between EMI professors and English language instructors. When I decided to participate in this course, I wondered what I should learn since I am an English instructor and not an EMI professor. Therefore, learning this fact was notable for me. According to Ms. Dearden, the Director of the Oxford EMI, the most advanced EMI program in the world was the School of Political Science and Economics of Waseda University. The program had a full-time EMI instructor, and she developed the curriculum and materials with EMI professors. It was interesting that the program offered academic writing courses not only for English learners but also for native-speaking students. Ms. Dearden stated that language instructors could contribute to EMI education as language specialists. I found it insightful because language instructors generally did not have high positions in universities, or were sometimes even asked to teach EMI courses due to their language abilities.

I highly recommend this course to language instructors.

Oxford EMI Training: https://www.oxfordemi.co.uk/
Other articles on the Oxford EMI Training Program:
FD Newsletter Vol. 24, No. 1; Vol. 23, No. 2; Vol. 22, No. 2; Vol. 22, No. 1

Implementation of the New TA System

Faculty Seminars: Working with TAs

In preparation for ICU's new TA system this year, in January and February, CTL held five seminars for faculty on working effectively with TAs. About 90 faculty members attended these 20-minute seminars at lunchtime on the first floor of the Othmer Library. We were pleased that, despite the time limitations, we were able to introduce the new system and share insights on the TA role and relationship.

The new TA system provides graduate students with part-time employment in assisting faculty with undergraduate courses. It aims to give these students experience for their future careers as educators and researchers, while also enhancing the quality of undergraduate education at ICU.

CTL Director Hiroyuki Kose began the seminars with an overview of the new TA system. Each seminar then had a different guest speaker from the ICU faculty, who shared their insights and advice on how to work effectively with TAs (see below).

Overview of the New TA System

At the beginning of each seminar, Professor Kose explained the following four points:

- Create a "TA Hiring Plan" for each course. When designing your course, consider the role of your TA.
- Undergraduate students in their senior year are also eligible to be TAs, but only in the "Tutor" category out of the three TA categories.
- TAs are to submit a "TA Activity Report" each term.
- Remember: Hiring TAs increases the burden on faculty.

Professor Kose then noted that ICU recommends undergraduate students for the "CS" role to do administrative work in a part-time capacity (*arubaito*) for undergraduate courses taught by part-time faculty. He also urged faculty to be mindful about issues of power and harassment—raising examples of harassment of TAs by faculty or students and harassment of students by TAs—and emphasized that TAs should be acknowledged and

treated by all parties as part-time lecturers.

Image 1: Poster for the Faculty Seminars

Insights from Professor Jeremiah ALBERG
(Philosophy and Religion and Peace Studies majors)

- How he views TAs has changed. He used to think that TAs were students who were working for him, but now he asks himself, "What kind of tasks could I assign to TAs to help them acquire the advanced skills required to become specialist educators?"
- Nurturing and supporting our TAs is beneficial for both faculty and students.
- One TA created a Japanese vocabulary list and summary for an E/J course and uploaded them to Moodle, which the students found really helpful.
- It's also important for TAs to learn how to systematically prepare for classes by, for example, setting up classrooms and handling the recording of lectures.
- The acquisition of all these different skills contributes to the TAs' professional growth and development as educators

Insights from Professor Tatsuo NUNOSHIBA
(Biology and Environmental Studies majors)

- The TA system contributes to the nurturing of the next generation of educators.
- In the Biology major, TAs generally assist in the lab with experiments.
- He starts by asking TAs what they want to learn from their work and then considers how he can create learning opportunities for them to achieve their goals.
- At the end of the term, he and his TA reflect on the experience together, articulate what they have learned, and reevaluate their awareness and understanding.

Insights from Professor Tomoyuki YOSHIDA
(Linguistics major)
·   TAs help to further students' understanding of the course content.
·   His TAs attend all the lectures to accurately grasp the content. Then they hold TA sessions (tutorials), which are separate to the regular lectures, in which students can ask questions about the lectures or assignments.
·   He has regular meetings with his TAs to check, for example, what kind of questions were raised in the TA sessions. He is mindful of any signs of harassment of his TAs by students.

Results of the 2019 TA Questionnaire
CTL distributes a questionnaire to all TAs, as well as CSs, each term. The results of the 2019 questionnaires are summarized below.

Last year's TAs were mainly involved in classroom management (e.g., booking, setting up and operating equipment), tasks related to course materials (printing and preparation), taking roll calls, sorting feedback forms, and maintaining assessment records. However, we also found that some TAs helped to field questions, assisted in group discussions, analyzed feedback and assignments, created and delivered presentations, and ran tutorial sessions. Increasing opportunities for TAs to experience more of such work relating to course content is an objective of the new TA system.

The questionnaire also confirmed the balance between the workload and salary. We found there were no major discrepancies between the workload, the number of TA points (salary), the initial TA Hiring Plan, and the actual work involved. Moreover, almost all of the respondents wrote that they thought their TA experience would be helpful or would be somewhat helpful for their future careers as educators and researchers. This was also evident from the many positive responses to our open-ended question, "Please share your thoughts on useful or helpful experiences or things you have learned from your professor, if any." Some excerpts from the responses are listed below.

·   I found it instructive for my future career to learn how to manage classes, speak to students and engage them, and respond appropriately to their questions.

·   The lecturer carefully organized the course in which students could develop their thoughts by creating an interactive atmosphere in the class. I've learned that it is the best way to raise a student's curiosity and intellectual ability to the fullest.

·   I learned a lot from how to organize exams for a large group of students (e.g., seating, test distribution, personal belongings, announcement). I think the experience of assisting in classes and exams with a large number of students will really be useful for me in future.

Table 1: TA Questionnaires, 2019

	Spring Term	Autumn Term	Winter Term
Number of Courses That Were Assigned TAs	338 (Not included in this number are ELA and JLP courses that were assigned TAs. For ELA and JLP, TAs are assigned to the program as a whole and not to individual courses.)		
Number of Responses	107	94	45
Survey Period	2019/6/17-7/3	2019/11/8-12/13	2020/2/18-4/9
Survey Method	Online (TAs were asked to submit a separate questionnaire for each of the courses to which they had been assigned.)		

Note: All respondents had worked as TAs in AY 2019 (total 246 respondents).

Future Prospects
For the new TA system, TAs will now be required to submit a TA Activity Report instead of the optional questionnaire. We hope that through the course of their work and involvement in classes, TAs will be mindful of how their work contributes to a course and the students' learning, as well as their own learning.

As all ICU courses moved online from the 2020 Spring Term, we are expecting to hear about the significant changes in the involvement of TAs in classes and the frequency and method of communication with their professor. Based on the TA Activity Reports, CTL will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the new TA system and the role of TAs in remote learning. Moreover, we plan to offer a skills development training program in response to the needs and concerns of TAs. For faculty, we will continue to share examples of successful working relationships with TAs.

(ONO and MATSUKI,
Center for Teaching and Learning)

Editor's Note

CTL was grappling with COVID-19 challenges from around February, before ICU's transition to remote learning.

We had been planning to hold the Oxford EMI Training Program at the Othmer Library from March 9, 2020. Although the Oxford EMI instructors decided not to cancel their trip to Japan, we were considering various options for delivery of the program. After we learned that the MoodleMoot events had suddenly been moved online, we inquired about the possibility of offering the program remotely. Fortunately, the EMI instructors responded enthusiastically. Some participants from other universities canceled their participation because they had been looking forward to the prospect of participating in group work in person. Nevertheless, in the end the experience taught us not only about EMI but also about online course management, which proved highly useful for our switch to remote learning in April.

During the EMI program, my lunchtime conversations with the participants naturally turned to digital learning, and we were able to share information and tips, as well as practice using Zoom and Google Meet. Those professors were later able to support other faculty in switching to remote teaching and learning.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the Oxford EMI instructors who successfully delivered the program remotely at such short notice, as well as the faculty members who volunteered to support their peers throughout the process.

Thanks to this online teaching and learning experience, ICT has become more accessible at ICU, in both virtual and physical classrooms. We aim to continue assisting our faculty in utilizing ICT to better accommodate and address the increasingly diverse needs of their students. Please get in touch with us at CTL if you have any questions about the use of ICT or if you would like to share your experiences with it.

Tomoko KOBAYASHI
Center for Teaching and Learning

From September 1, we have offered our learning area as a space for students who are attending online courses on their laptops.