

be devoted to lectures but rather to discussion and student engagement through collaborative work. Despite the challenges of working remotely, I also maintained group projects and ensured that students would complete them and present their findings to the class.

Price, Gregory N. 2020. "1 in 10 HBCUs Were Financially Fragile Before COVID-19 Endangered All Colleges and Universities." *The Conversation*, June 24. Available at <https://theconversation.com/1-in-10-hbcus-were-financially-fragile-before-covid-19-endangered-all-colleges-and-universities-140528>.

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*This calls for a pedagogy of care, not because our students are incapable of facing and surmounting challenges but rather because they are already in a disadvantaged position, which compounds the effects of the pandemic.*

Although the syllabus content and reading materials remained unchanged, the class discussions tied our current collective predicament to IR theories and concepts. The final exam, which—under normal conditions—would have consisted of a set of short answers and multiple-choice questions, was changed to a long essay. The exam asked, "What IR theories and concepts can help us make sense of the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on world politics (broadly defined)?"

Students' responses to this question demonstrated a range of serious and personal engagement with IR theories and the pandemic, as well as the ways in which it disproportionately affected racial and ethnic minorities, low-income families, and otherwise vulnerable populations in the United States. Drawing from Marxist and postcolonial theories and a critique of capitalism, many students argued that COVID-19 was one of numerous other medical and social "pandemics" that can be traced to the legacies of unequal distribution of power and opportunities in the United States and around the world.

A pandemic pedagogy of care therefore opens up the possibility of "doing IR as if people mattered."<sup>4</sup> In this instance, for a student population of young Black men in America, the COVID-19 pandemic along with the police and state violence and Black Lives Matter movement that flared up this summer are all central to how we make sense of and relate to the world of (international) politics. Ultimately, if we accept Inayatullah's (2019, 18) polemic that "Teaching is impossible. Learning is unlikely... [W]e enter the classroom to encounter others. With them, we can meditate on the possibility of our own learning," perhaps then a pandemic pedagogy of care is simply that: encountering our students so we may all meditate on our collective predicament. ■

## NOTES

1. United Negro College Fund, "HBCUs Make America Strong: The Positive Impact of Historically Black Colleges and Universities." Available at [https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU\\_Consumer\\_Brochure\\_FINAL\\_APPROVED.pdf?\\_ga=2.17028409.1251354321.1593346115-1364471786.1593346115](https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?_ga=2.17028409.1251354321.1593346115-1364471786.1593346115).
2. Morehouse College's Mission, available at [www.morehouse.edu/about/mission.html](http://www.morehouse.edu/about/mission.html).
3. See Morehouse College's campaign to raise funds to support students experiencing hardship. Available at <https://ignite.morehouse.edu/project/20382>.
4. I am grateful to Jonneke Koomen, from whom I first heard this expression.

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## TEACHING IN TIMES OF CRISIS: COVID-19 AND CLASSROOM PEDAGOGY

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COVID-19 brought unexpected challenges to institutions of higher learning. Like most academics, as a full-time faculty member teaching political science at a liberal arts college, I also experienced the dramatic changes that came with the transition to distance delivery and remote instruction. My institution shifted to online instruction in mid-March. Although there are major barriers to online teaching (Keengwe and Kidd 2010), this article outlines positive lessons I drew from the transition: what worked and what did not. The methods I used applied to all of my courses for spring 2020.

I teach relatively small classes between 15 and 25 students. This allows for better engagement and made online teaching via Zoom simpler. I found the use of Zoom and Panopto especially helpful in adapting students to a smoother online delivery (Mohanty and Yaqub 2020). Both Zoom and Panopto allowed me to combine elements of both synchronous and asynchronous teaching.

First, I held my classes during regularly scheduled times to mimic the in-class experience. The delivery was mostly a mix of slides and discussions, sometimes using the chat feature and breakout rooms. Synchronous lectures were recorded on Panopto and uploaded to Moodle for students who were unable to attend live meetings. This helped many students who suggested in their end-of-course assessment that recorded lectures kept them informed about the course material when they were unable to attend the synchronous classes. Students who were working, had difficult home environments, or were experiencing personal hardships and could not regularly attend the live lectures benefited most from the recorded lectures.

Second, given the difficult circumstances in which students found themselves, I relaxed my attendance rules for spring 2020. It was not mandatory for them to be present during synchronous sessions, especially for those who had additional jobs or who could not attend due to time constraints and other reasons.

Third, a significant component of my online pedagogy was the use of a discussion forum. Based on each week's course readings, I posted one focused question and students were given a two-to-three-day window to submit their responses. The same questions, including student responses, were revisited during synchronous lectures. Maintaining an overarching theme/question enabled students to address the learning outcomes for the course. This

method also was used to replace in-class discussions by giving students the opportunity to participate virtually. The discussion forum comprised 15% of their overall grade. I maintained a tally of weekly points for students who used the forum. The results were somewhat mixed. Most students who had been fairly engaged continued to post to the forum; others apparently ignored it. As online delivery continues into the fall, use of the discussion forum will be tweaked to make it mandatory for all students to submit at least one response every week—even if that response is a brief reflection or comment (Christopher, Thomas, and Tallent-Runnels 2003).

Fourth, I gave students the option to upload their papers through Turnitin or email. I preferred receiving papers as Word documents via email so I could use the “track changes” function to edit and grade. This was an easier option because I find some Turnitin editing and commenting features to be unwieldy. The final exam—a combination of three- to five-sentence conceptual definitions and five 150-word short essay questions—was altered to a take-home-exam format. Students were provided a template with the final-exam questions two weeks in advance. Papers were to be returned on an assigned due date during the scheduled final-exam period. Most students were diligent and found it quite easy to follow these instructions. Although I returned student papers within a week, grading online was significantly labor intensive (Lao and Gonzales 2005; Sellani and Harrington 2002).

At the end of the course, I used a Feedback tool on Moodle to compile my own evaluations that asked students basic questions on course content in addition to the main tools they preferred in remote learning. Most students were pleased to have the option of both synchronous meetings and recorded lectures. Many reported that they were satisfied with my communication and that I had maintained the same momentum as an in-person class by keeping the content, structure, and objectives the same. Although I managed to use online tools in the spring and will continue using them in the fall, teaching daily classes on Zoom can be exhausting—especially with a higher teaching load. There is something deeply limiting about not having the physical and mental space to move around in the classroom. Interpersonal interactions also are more difficult, making student participation challenging. Mutual respect and setting ground rules are important principles for me, especially as a female instructor. Student privacy is an important concern; however, if synchronous lectures become the norm in the fall, then—in this spirit of mutual respect—I will expect my students to be present at all online meetings for my courses.

Key to managing online instruction without too many obstacles—at least in my case—were flexibility and communication (Jones, Kolloff, and Kolloff 2008). I cannot emphasize this enough. Given the unnatural circumstances in which both faculty and students find themselves, being flexible and clearly communicating ideas are crucial. This means relaxing unreasonable expectations of students. Successful online instruction depends on delivering course content as simply as possible without complicating or adding to/revising the curriculum. ■

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## SIMULATING “NORMALCY” IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC: SYNCHRONOUS E-LEARNING AND THE ETHICS OF CARE IN TEACHING

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The benefits of using simulations as an active-learning activity in the political science classroom are well documented (Asal and Blake 2006, 1–18; Newmann and Twigg 2000, 835–42). Insights from the pedagogy literature in the discipline already address a variety of formats, including simulations developed for in-person learning in or outside of the classroom or entirely online (Taylor 2013, 134–49). Yet the COVID-19 pandemic presents new opportunities and challenges. Instructors may need to consider whether and how an in-person simulation can be conducted while maintaining physical distancing, determine if and how it can be conducted remotely, and reassess the balance between synchronous and asynchronous learning.<sup>1</sup>

This article builds on our experience, as instructor and students,<sup>2</sup> in remotely conducting an in-class simulation in the context of emergency e-learning as part of a fourth-year undergraduate seminar in international relations at a Canadian university. We offer practical advice on how to move simulations online as well as broader insight into the value of a hybrid approach to remote learning that combines asynchronous and synchronous components and how this can be grounded in a pedagogy of care (Smith and Hornsby 2020). The voices of student coauthors, identified by their first name, are woven in throughout the following discussion. Our hope is that this contribution will inform how students, educators, and administrators approach the so-called new normal in postsecondary education.

In this particular course, the transition to emergency e-learning entailed adapting an in-class, two-week simulation of a diplomatic negotiation between parties to the South China Sea disputes for remote instruction in less than a week. This decision was made amid emerging discussions about synchronous versus asynchronous learning in an emergency context (Barrett-Fox 2020; Flaherty 2020). Most of the structure of the simulation, which involved both synchronous and asynchronous components, was preserved, and the structure and timeline were adjusted so that the assignment could be conducted via Zoom. The simulation also became optional: students could choose an alternative (i.e., fully asynchronous) assignment.