

11:48:43 Okay, in 3, 2, one.

11:48:48 Hi, everyone! Thanks for listening to our podcast. We do this every day.

11:48:53 I'm Pat Mulroy, the director of the World Learning Institute, the World of Learning Institute provides virtual world language, instruction, and other courses like calculus and chemistry.

11:49:03 When it's difficult for a school district to find a teacher.

11:49:06 We're here to talk to you about what we do every day.

11:49:11 That makes virtual learning authentic, relevant, and engaging.

11:49:13 You can contact me at P. M. U. L r o y.

11:49:16 At world of Learning institute.com for more information, and today is one of our impromptu discussions, and we have been having a conversation at the world of Learning Institute about the relevance of synchronous and asynchronous meetings in the virtual setting and I have Lauren

11:49:41 McMin and Erin Siverd, 2 virtual learning specialists with me today to talk about their take on some of the strategies we use and some things that we could probably do better.

11:49:54 And it all started with a conversation about adding chemistry, because it's a little different and outside of our wheelhouse, and we've also all been reading quite a bit.

11:50:04 So, Lauren, do you want to start us off? And then Erin will have you kick in some of what you're thinking about.

11:50:27 Absolutely.

11:50:12 Sure. Thanks for having me back pat. I love these little impromptu conversations, cause our meetings are always so interesting and vibrant and so it's fun to kind of share and get even more perspectives on the kind of things that we're thinking about I think for me it's this

11:50:30 is particularly timely and relevant because I I'm in asynchronous student right now, and I haven't been a student in a long time.

11:50:40 I, you know, got my masters in 2009, and I was in person, I mean, just like, you know, grad student program.

11:50:48 I started teaching virtually 4 years ago, and now I'm getting my certificate for instructional technology specialists at Point Park University. And it's an asynchronous program.

11:50:59 So it's the first time I've ever really been a virtual learner, and it's really opened my eyes to, you know, when you're a learner you feel it's so much different than when you're the teacher right.

11:51:11 So things that I'm really enjoying in my class is that my instructor starts every module, every new, every week.

11:51:20 We we have a module and she starts with a little video, a little personalized video.

11:51:24 And I love that. I like seeing her face. I like hearing from her, in that way every week, and that she's kind of highlighting what's important things that we should be looking at every week and that the world of learning we send out Monday morning messages and our teachers do such an amazing job with

11:51:39 those, though they're they feel personal. They are often, you know, they include information to students about what they cover.

11:51:48 Last week, I should say feedback to the students from what they did last week, information about the upcoming week, and they make some teachers are making these

beautiful sway.

11:51:57 Microsoft Sway Presentations, even if it's just a simple message, it's really nice to hear from your teacher every week, and it made me think about how to incorporate.

11:52:07 Maybe video messages, too, to really kind of help students to keep that.

11:52:13 You know that human connection which we never wanna lose win the online space.

11:52:19 Yeah, I don't know. Erin. Have you ever done the video?

11:52:23 Mmm, I have not done one. And now I feel really inspired from just.

11:52:24 No, but I just put that in my notes, Lauren, because, you know, I think that we talked about in one of our virtual learning newsletters about using audio for feedback instead of always giving the students feedback.

11:52:39 You know written feedback. What about giving them some audio to put a little bit of personalization?

11:52:43 That audio piece. I think sometimes that personalizes a little bit more than just having a bunch of text onto the course.

11:52:53 And so I definitely think that that's something I wanna add into my Mmms.

11:52:57 Maybe I'll try that for next week, since Monday's already went out, having that little bit of a personal touch to see, you know how the students receive.

11:53:05 That would be great also kind of thinking along the line of an asynchronous.

11:53:09 You know, we are a 100% asynchronous.

11:53:12 We do have synchronous sessions with our students.

11:53:14 So thinking about what those synchronous sessions should look like, and then kind of what the asynchronous course looks like.

11:53:22 So shifting, thinking of that flip classroom.

11:53:25 You know our asynchronous courses really filling in that flip classroom perspective, and then bringing in our synchronous discussions.

11:53:33 And you know, in chemistry, looking at those simulations and having that the discussions about what's the students understood what they didn't understand, how can we elaborate on whatever they've posted? You know?

11:53:45 If they don't understand a concept or something like that.

11:53:48 So really trying to harness that flipped classroom model in our synchronous sessions.

11:53:57 And if teachers want to put out an instructional lecture type, video, they can put that into the asynchronous course.

11:54:06 Yeah.

11:54:04 So students can rewind right one thing kind of discussed before this was using a flip classroom in an in person like students don't need to kind of be taught how to do that.

11:54:17 The benefits of rewind. You know you can rewind in.

11:54:21 I am also taking, you know, a 100% asynchronous courses as well, and being on that end, and just going through one of my modules on Sunday night and thinking like, Oh, I need to rewind that I didn't quite catch what what the professor said and taking

11:54:38 my notes from that. So you know, just kinda telling the students they do have that ability, because I think sometimes they don't know that they can do that or won't do that.

11:54:49 Well, I think that modeling that you're talking about is super important.

11:54:48 But.

11:54:52 I think you both really brought that up, you know, in different ways.

11:54:55 But that modeling, and I think Aaron, you were talking about it before we jumped in here about how important it is to kind of demonstrate it for students, first, because this is a new.

11:55:06 This is new for all of us, and I think, Lauren, you were talking about.

11:55:10 You know, you just talked about your own professor, but also like bringing in another voice.

11:55:14 That's an expert, you know, like. And then just that 5 min clip, we all know everybody.

11:55:19 Detention span is really short, and you know that whole idea, Erin, that you brought back up about the feedback being sometimes, you know, using your voice.

11:55:32 And Fiona Gruen. When we interviewed her a couple of weeks ago, was talking about the value of also having directions read, not just for people who have visual problems, or you know our visual disability, but for everybody because that cognitive load.

11:55:48 I mean we were you know, we've been having conversations about cognitive load.

11:55:53 And how do we reduce that cognitive load? And I think one of the pieces also.

11:55:57 That's super important that we talked about with Beth and our podcast just one time ago was the value of learning in social groups.

11:56:07 She talked about outward bound and how like you're learning in a in a group, and how you reduce the cognitive load when it's kind of on everybody to learn together.

11:56:17 And I think, how do we capture that? And I think that's some of what we're talking about.

11:56:21 We haven't done it a lot, and I think at the world of learning.

11:56:26 Fortunately, like we meet together in this virtual space all the time, and look at each other's faces, and for the short number of times I've met you all face to face.

11:56:37 I feel like I have a great relationship like I know about your family, like, you know. Lauren's petting her cat right now.

11:56:45 Brand new cat in the house, you know, like used my dogs in the background, you know.

11:56:48 Yeah.

11:56:49 So snoring away. It's like, so we've got these like real connectors over space and time.

11:56:56 That didn't exist before, but I feel like heartfully connected to you all in ways that I haven't always felt connected to people that I've been colleagues with.

11:57:10 And so you know, and I think about that with some of our teachers who I've known over a long period of time, I feel very dear that there are my very dear friends. And then and how do we harness that as we move through this kind of revolutionary time, in education?

11:57:27 Yeah, and I think a lot of that is, you know, I think online learning has a little bit of a bad rep from the pandemic.

11:57:35 And you know, I think there are extremes right? And the nice thing I think about our model.

11:57:42 And I know I'm just. You know, I'm like, Yeah, we're the best.

11:57:45 But something I really like about our model is that you know you can harness the power of the asynchronous.

11:57:49 So like, you know, asynchronous, you can criticize it for being like oh, you're disconnected, you know.

11:57:54 You don't like come together and all those things. But if we have the benefits of asynchronous like oh, the students can go at their own pace when it works for them, they can rewind.

11:58:04 We have that aspect, we can have all those positives, and then, when we have that synchronous, it's like, you know, the students are actually coming together.

11:58:12 They're having that face-to-face. And so I think, bringing the best of both worlds together.

11:58:15 Kind of makes that a really great environment for students to learn.

11:58:19 I think wanna.

11:58:19 I'm also really appreciating, like asynchronously, I have time to think and craft my responses I mean, there's just like different, you know, skill sets like students that are really extroverted might shine in a live session.

11:58:32 But student who's more introverted might really shine on the discussion board. You know.

11:58:34 And so I think that it's nice that our model allows students to kind of grow in some areas.

11:58:40 Right.

11:58:39 And then also, you know, work you know. I don't know.

11:58:43 Like shine in their natural way, but then grow in other areas that maybe they need to grow.

11:58:45 Well, and whenever we're like kinda talking to people about the program like recently, like Olivia will always make sure she points out.

11:58:53 Listen. We're not just virtual. Our kids are in those classrooms.

11:58:57 And I think Aaron, you highlight that pretty regularly to an error in your newest to the team.

11:59:02 Tell us about your experience with that.

11:59:05 Yeah. So that's you know, one benefit, I think, is that the students are in the classroom together.

11:59:13 And so the in that asynchronous part, as we look at our courses, and you and you said it best.

11:59:19 You know, the students still can collaborate right? They can still do collaboration together in that asynchronous part, and then pull it back together in that live session that instructor can put back together in that live session. So even though we're not physically in the space with

11:59:35 them during that asynchronous time, they still can have those interactions which I think is a benefit, you know, to being in in a classroom, in a brick and mortar classroom with that asynchronous model being present and that was kind of what brought me to the

11:59:50 world of learning is because the students are in brick and mortar. School.

11:59:56 They, you know still have the ability, and especially in sciences.

12:00:01 You know, we we need to have the ability to collaborate right?

12:00:03 We're not isolated when we're when we're doing experimentation right? We're collaborating with with our science peers.

12:00:11 And so having that when we look at 100% online programs, I think that kind of

downfall, it is a downfall.

12:00:19 Yeah, like, putting them in the study carol, and saying, Go at, go for it.

12:00:24 And yeah, yeah, that's totally true.

12:00:28 I will say, like having this asynchronous experience.

12:00:31 I am really surprised. You know it is stretching me in that way to think you know more about how you can really leverage the accelerometer piece and get people feeling like they're in a community.

12:00:42 Even if you're not meeting at a regularly scheduled time face-to-face. And there's people doing really cool stuff out there asynchronously.

12:00:51 Well, you know you're both taking an asynchronous course, so like, you know, Erin, are you having that same experience like?

12:00:56 Is that driven? Maybe Lauren by the teacher who says, Okay, every month, every Monday you're gonna watch this video, and that's gonna guide.

12:01:02 What you do versus just saying, Okay, here's a course.

12:01:06 How about it?

12:01:07 That's right. Yeah, where I'm noticing these things that really help.

12:01:10 Yeah, and I. And so I guess I have a different perspective.

12:01:14 Because right now, I just was given the course right. And it's like have at it, you know, here's your syllabus, here's the layout weeks one to 8, you know.

12:01:22 It. You have your due dates when you have to have things done.

12:01:25 If you wanna work ahead you can. It looks like you can work ahead.

12:01:29 There's no, there hasn't been, I mean, other than the comments there really hasn't been any personalization to the course.

12:01:35 Now I'm only week one in, so maybe that will come.

12:01:39 We'll see.

12:01:39 Yeah.

12:01:40 But it's interesting because my program is online, like, you know, instructional technology specialists.

12:01:47 So that's their field, you know. So they're really like best practices integrated in with the course which is cool to see.

12:01:54 Yeah, that is really great. Well, I would love to hear like one more, but because, I promise you guys, I wouldn't keep you long today that this is just going to be one of our fun impromptu podcast weeks.

12:02:07 So, Erin, you want to give us a little tip or insight that you'd like to leave people with. Then.

12:02:16 You know, hopefully, just looking at, even if you are, if you're a subscriber and you are a brick and mortar teacher, thinking about those best practices in brick and mortar like, how can you you know leverage the technology so that you are best situated for the students you know enhancing

12:02:34 their learning. It's not just a screen in front of their faces that they are using to be able to provide those interactions that are meaningful.

12:02:47 My gosh! I agree, like I think there are so many things that I took away from online learning that I wish it could retroactively pass back to myself as a classroom teacher.

12:02:59 I mean, they're just like, you know, with online teaching.

12:03:01 I think to it. You have to have all your ducks in a row like, for you know, when you set out to do a seminar, I mean, it has to be like locked and loaded ready to go, and that kind of vigilance and planning is just I mean that I know teachers are always

12:03:15 such, planners, but I feel like I have to in the online space.

12:03:20 You want to make sure that you know you have to build it out ahead of time.

12:03:22 It has to all kind of be there, and I think that that sort of backwards planning, doing all that is just really key, and it allows you then to be more responsive to the students in real time.

12:03:34 Then, because your focus isn't necessarily the content at that time, it's more like guiding them through it.

12:03:39 I remember like being in the frenzy like in my teaching, like trying to make photocopies and get everything ready for my class.

12:03:44 You know. And it's like with online learning. I feel like I could be in a much more place where, like, I had done all that stuff like, you know.

12:03:50 And it was ready to go, and then I was just sort of the facilitator right?

12:03:58 Yeah.

12:03:53 Like kind of, you know, going back to best conversation last week, Pat, about, you know, being more like a guy and less like the sage on the stage, right?

12:04:01 And so, yeah.

12:04:01 Yeah, and I think you know, like thinking about where Erin you are in this journey.

12:04:08 These conversations, that we've had like over the last 10 days have just been like like kind of like it.

12:04:15 I feel like like the tsunami is kind of like getting like less intense, like you've had all of this stuff.

12:04:24 You've been building a brand new course you've been teaching a brand new course you've been thinking about.

12:04:28 Their story, porting, and you know one of the things I think that's kind of like, you know, we've been able to like kind of pull the driftwood out, you know, like all of all the mess, and to really look at the best practices that are happening and I think about you know

12:04:44 Lauren, when you came on board to teach the courses were kind of set.

12:04:47 Did they need some improvement? Absolutely. But you didn't come to them in the first year when they were like exactly what Erin's doing right now, like they were the most bare bones, and like kind of getting built on.

12:04:58 And you talk about just talking about how you know it is.

12:05:01 Better when it's intentionally set out.

12:05:05 Now, do you stay on that path all the time? Absolutely not right.

12:05:09 We're all shaking our heads. No, but it's there.

12:05:13 But like right now, you know, Erin's building the yellow brick road right.

12:05:18 So it's real.

12:05:18 It's like she's not just like she's like in it, like, you know.

12:05:23 And I think that they're the kinds of things that it feels like.

12:05:27 First teacher year because you're doing it all like I think you know, like all of our first year teacher years are like, you know, we're building.

12:05:35 We're learning new skills. We're doing those kinds of things.

12:05:38 And I think anytime you move to like kind of a new organization with.

12:05:40 With, you know, like maybe different guides, different like boundaries, different expectations, you know.

12:05:47 It's kind of like, how do you like? Take all that quagmire and put it together?

12:05:51 So, Erin, I just wanna like talk you up to at this point, because, like, you're doing a lot, and it's going really well.

12:05:59 And so for those of you who think about best practices, I think you know Erin and Lauren just really outlined it well, that best practices are best practices, and technology is out there.

12:06:12 And just because we're a virtual program doesn't mean that we just like slap on technologies.

12:06:17 And there's no teacher effort, and I think you both highlighted that really.

12:06:22 Well, in talking about how much effort it takes to make asynchronous feel personal, and both of your experiences are a little different, based on who's providing that support in your classrooms so kudos to both of you for both taking classes building your knowledge, managing and running families g

12:06:45 Yeah.

12:06:44 getting new pets, Lauren, you know all of this, you know, is life a messy, so for those of you out there you can do this, and if you ever need anything, Erin is as a new guide on the side here, Lauren been with us.

12:06:59 We're here to help. We're glad to talk to you anytime, so have a great day.

12:07:03 Everybody.