

Kaffeeklatsch

Hosted by: Amelia Kaiser (Student Affairs) & Anne Sommerfeld (CTLT)
Topic: "What is going well, what can be better"
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2020
Time: 11:00am to 12:00pm
Collaborate Link: <https://bit.ly/unbc-kaffeeklatsch>

What is going well:

- MBA - Instructors have adapted well, able to be one giant cohort, working collaboratively
- Grad Course Instructor – Breakout rooms in Collaborate Webconferencing working well – not quite like in-person, but students like this. Working on collaborative document together & report back.
- Learning Commons: students are accessing to connect with tutors and student services.
- Co-op: Jobs still being posted, business as 'usual', info session coming up – dates on Learning Commons
- "The Learning Commons has been a great centralized referral for our students seeking academic supports."
- **Communication Q: Has there been enough? How has it been to this point?**
 - E-mail sometime overwhelming with IT info, etc. Can it be streamlined?
 - Lack of communication from UNBC Clubs to students – are there virtual clubs? - Go to the UNBC Clubs Facebook page for info and nugss.unbc.ca/slos-and-policy/slos-list
 - Unsure what messaging students are receiving from which sources/departments (academic program, marketing, recruitment, etc)
 - **Northern British Columbia Graduate Student Society** posts on FB, Twitter, or Instagram - They post a lot of the clubs' advertisements so that they are easier to find for grad students
- The NBCGSS have been doing a "Behind the Plexyglass" series on our social media so that we can interview staff at UNBC and connect them further with the Grad Student community. Feel free to email me if you would like to get involved 😊 gssdit@unbc.ca

New things people have tried this semester:

- Video calls with co-workers (working separately but together, chance for little conversations periodically that you would normally have with co-workers, comforting sounds of people around you)
- Recruitment and the Registrar's Office have set up a Staying Connected Committee. To well...stay connected...
- MS Teams to keep in contact with co-workers and even students can get a Team created (send an e-mail it ITS support support@unbc.ca) It has real-time chat, file sharing, virtual team meetings. 7/8 of those classes using MTeams are using it simply as a chat tool.
- Slack channels are nice. Can even typeset math in the chat, for us math nerds
- TA's can communicate using the course where they did the TA workshop in learn.unbc.ca

- Microsoft 365 apps and downloadable desktop versions of MS Word, Powerpoint, Excel, OneNote, and tons more apps available to all UNBC employees, Faculty & students at office.com - sign in with UNBC credentials
- Students doing group work for a specific course can request that their Instructor create a 'Group section' in the Blackboard course, complete with a Discussion Board, file sharing and Collaborate Webconference room just for their group members.
- Old-school pen pal program created by Dakota for students to connect
- Dakota has hosted a virtual movie night, considering packets of physical materials to mail out related to events for students who sign up
- textbooks, many introductory subjects have free, vetted, online textbooks on libretexts.org

Study Spaces Bookable at : <https://unbc.libcal.com/reserve/study-rooms>

List of Study Spaces with Individual study carrels being moved around campus

Bookable Group Study spaces available

Individual Technology Bookable Spaces (for synchronous courses with mic and camera/computer)

Library opening with extended hours soon!

3 computer labs are open now in addition to 1st floor library lab and First Nations Centre lab.

Virtual study spaces: students struggling to know how to do group work and connect virtually

Student Study Spaces

Library 1st Floor

Monday-Friday 8 am – 8 pm

Saturday noon - 6 pm

Sunday noon - 8 pm

Includes, social study space, computer lab, and bookable study space as per below

Bookable Group Study

5-153 (Room 5)

5-171 (Room 6)

5-174 (Room 7)

5-176 (Room 8)

Bookable Individual Technology Room

5-139 B (Room 1),

5-139 D (Room 2)

5-139 E (Room 3)

5-139 G (Room 4)

Computer Labs:

Lab 7-105

Lab 8-362

Lab 10-3034

First Nation Centre

Monday to Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Computer Lab

Individual study options (quiet and conversational style study)

Global Lounge

Small group and individual study options

Open 24/7

What can be better:

- Amount of contact points for students to access departments is overwhelming (Facebook Pages for each dept., Tik Tok, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, UNBC webpages, etc.)
- The unknowns make things hard – missing student faces, hard to direct students to resources, no knowledge of how other instructors are delivering courses
- socializing is really important. It facilitates learning, and builds valuable relationships. Communication technologies are essential, but so is getting the right conditions for human connection.

- I know of a few issues that International Students have been facing in terms of getting Text book materials from outside of Canada, as well as feeling really isolated if they are students who were not able to go home due to the Pandemic and are away from their families.
- Zoom Fatigue nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/coronavirus-zoom-fatigue-is-taxing-the-brain-here-is-why-that-happens
- Connect faculty & staff better, resources around working from home (Academic Success Centre has some resources around this)
- Canceling meetings? Clearing some time for thinking/processing/reflecting/getting caught up is crucial and we're getting more and more into our calendars. How are we building space for ourselves and our students to process and reflect and be still?
- Why don't we have a fall break?
- 50 minute meetings so there are breaks in between virtual meetings

Ideas for Stay Connected Virtually

1. Host a Netflix Party (<https://www.netflixparty.com/>) and watch a film or documentary together. See the link for more information.
2. Host a virtual book club. Pick an SLO relevant book and read it together.
3. Buy a sketchbook/journal and send it from one member to another to add information – maps from home, pictures, drawings, poetry, etc., and at the end of the year you have a SLO memento documenting the year.
4. Pick a mascot and send the mascot out to each member. Each member takes a photo with the SLO mascot in a cool local place and uploads the photo to the SLO page.
5. Host a monthly ethnic meal night. If you have members in different countries, pick a regional recipe and share it with the group to cook and eat together.
6. Virtual Trivia Contest - Name that tune! Challenge your group members with fun rounds of trivia. Pick your poison: Current events, politics, history, sports, music, film or any topic related to your organization's goals and interests. (Offering a prize to the winner or winning group goes a long way to boosting participation!)
7. Virtual Board Games - Maintain the recommended social distance while challenging your competitive spirit by organizing an online board game meetup with friends. This is a fun and budget-friendly way to get together and connect with friends and group members you might not know very well yet.
8. Lunch & Learn - Gather your group members together for an informative BYOS session (Bring Your Own Snacks), whether you're studying for an upcoming exam, planning an event with your team of officers, working together on a collaborative project or inviting a professor or industry pro to give a talk or lead a discussion group. Package your virtual gathering however you like: A Coffee Chat, Lunch & Learn, Brown Bag Lunch or Thirsty Thursday Happy Hour.

9. Virtual Field Trip - Organize a virtual field trip based on your group's interests: Art, science, history, archeology and more! Many of the world's most famous museums are offering virtual museum tours to share their incredible collections while promoting social distancing. As a group leader, you can simply pick a deadline, create a virtual field trip and encourage members to attend the tour either at the same time or explore at their own convenience. Depending on museum regulations, you might share and discuss photos, insights and comments on your group feed, or alternatively set up a follow up webinar to host a discussion about the tour.
11. Organize and Share Volunteer Opportunities - Take on volunteer and leadership roles in your community or virtually. Keep it local: Help with grocery shopping for an elderly neighbor or offer babysitting services to the family next door. Donate money, food or volunteer at local food banks, foster a shelter pet, volunteer with Meals on Wheels or other philanthropic organizations, or lead an on-the-ground effort by organizing a fundraiser to help struggling small businesses or displaced workers in your community.
12. Daily Share - It's a stressful time. Inspire each other by asking members to take turns sharing a thought-provoking or fun quote, meme, video, poem, etc. Assign one member to share per day and ask them to explain what their selection means to them.