

# Current Topics in Educational Technologies

*Tips to help you get started this semester; resources for making your course more accessible; and technology for in-person teaching and hybrid teaching*



*Image of chalkboard with Back to School written on it*

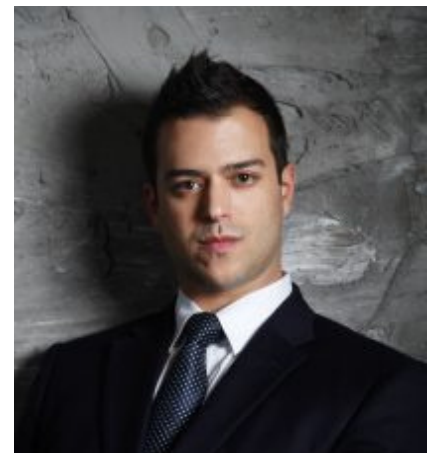
## WELCOME BACK!

Last year, you had to adjust your teaching in ways that you never anticipated. Now, as you transition back to in-person teaching, you have the opportunity to apply what you learned about teaching remotely to your teaching in the classroom. This month's newsletter focuses on ways to help you prep for Fall 2021 by offering pre-semester reminders, accessibility pointers, and tips to revamp your lectures for both online and in-person teaching.

## STUDENT AUTHENTICATION FOR ONLINE CLASSES

For classes being taught remotely this semester (designated as WW or DL), instructors are required to provide 2 measures to authenticate student identity. The minimum requirement is to make HuskyCT the primary place to access course materials and assessments, but there are other steps that instructors can take to authenticate student identity. [You can read more about student authentication on eCampus's website.](#)

### MEET THE ED TECHIE



*Image of Jordan Vinikoor*

Jordan Vinikoor has worked in the EdTech office since April 2021. He is a licensed educator with a diverse background in training, communication, presentation, and language learning both in the US and internationally (South Korea, Hong Kong, Turkey). His pandemic hobbies included bird watching, living room yoga, and baking bagels. He runs several workshops on FINS so keep an eye out for his stimulating and informative sessions.

# Back to School Checklist

*We get it; there's a lot to do before the semester starts! Here are some reminders to help you stay on track this month:*

## 1. FIND YOUR COURSE IN HUSKYCT

HuskyCT sites for lectures and discussions being taught in Fall 2021 have been created and should be listed in HuskyCT beneath the Fall 2021 term. You can access the Fall 2021 term by clicking on the "Courses" tab in HuskyCT and then clicking on the dropdown next to "Current Courses" at the top of the page. If you don't see you the Fall 2021 option in the dropdown or don't see your course listed in HuskyCT, [you can request to have your course made following these directions on our Instructor Resource Site.](#)

## 2. COPY COURSE CONTENT OR PICK A HUSKYCT TEMPLATE

If you would like a course restore from a previous semester, you request this by [filling out our Course Restore Form.](#) You can use the same form to [combine your course sections as well.](#)

If you are looking for a new course design, consider using one of [eCampus's HuskyCT templates.](#)

## 3. UPDATE YOUR SYLLABUS

It's tempting to just swap out last year's class time with this year's and be done with it, but it's worth giving your syllabus a more thorough review. To help you make sure that your syllabus is clear, accessible, and up to date with UConn policy, [check out CETL's page about creating a strong syllabus.](#) This resource includes [a downloadable syllabus template](#) and plenty of info about what to include in your syllabus.

## 4. ADD A TA OR COLLEAGUE TO YOUR HUSKYCT SITE

While your student roster will automatically be populated in HuskyCT, you can add other instructors and TAs directly to your course yourself. You can find [directions how to add a user on our Instructor Resource Site.](#)

*NB: HuskyCT runs a few hours behind Student Admin, so you may notice some differences between their respective student rosters during add/drop.*

## 5. CHOOSE WHEN YOU WANT TO OPEN YOUR COURSE

HuskyCT courses open to students by default on the first day of the semester. [However, you can open your course anytime.](#) To do this, go inside your course, click on the "Customization" tab, and then the "Properties" tab below it. On the "Properties" page, you can adjust your course dates under "Set Course Duration." Don't forget to hit submit to save your changes!

## 6. WELCOME YOUR STUDENTS TO YOUR COURSE BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

If you have made your course available, send your students a welcome announcement via HuskyCT! That way, students not only get an email from you with information about the course, they also see your welcome message in your HuskyCT site. If you are waiting to release your HuskyCT course, [you can send an email to your students via the Student Admin class roster page.](#)

# Making your Course Accessible

*Accessibility is not limited to accommodation letters. It starts with course design.*

Universal Design for Learning is a method of creating course content that is accessible to the widest range of people without any need for adjustments. It is not a substitution for accommodations, but Universal Design goes a long way to create a more inclusive space. UConn's Center for Students with Disabilities offers an extensive [list of resources on instructional strategies](#) for you to check out as you design your course. In addition, this article highlights a few simple tips to make your course more accessible.

## TALK TO YOUR STUDENTS ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY

Including resources for your students about the Center for Students with Disabilities in your syllabus is great (and required!) but making a point of telling your students that you are committed to accessibility is also important. Requesting accommodations can be very stress-inducing for students and it is vital that your students know that their instructors are happy to work with them and the Center for Students with Disabilities.

## IF POSSIBLE, PROVIDE DIGITAL COPIES OF COURSE MATERIALS

While some students prefer to work with physical texts, many students benefit from having the text available digitally. Some students require the use of technology such as screen readers, while others benefit from the interactive options that come with digital texts. Check to see if the textbook you assigned has a digital version available for purchase and link assigned journal articles online through the library. If you are working with a PDF of your own, make sure to [follow the instructions for making accessible PDFs on UConn's IT Accessibility website](#).

## INCLUDE ALTERNATE TEXT

Images can be effective teaching aids as you share new concepts. However, for many students with visual impairments, receiving these resources without descriptions does much more harm than good. Whenever you add an image, make sure to include alternate text that clearly and accurately describes the image. [You can learn how to add alternate text to images in HuskyCT on our Instructor Resources Site.](#)

## REMEMBER TO CAPTION

If you are sharing a video, make sure to include a captions or a transcript. Our university-supported video recording technology, Kaltura, can [generate captions for you which you can then edit for accuracy](#). If you record a video using a different type of tech, [you can still upload your finished video to Kaltura to add captions](#).

## DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

It is ok if you are unsure about how to make your materials accessible. We're here to help! For questions about accessible web design, email ITS at [itaccessibility@uconn.edu](mailto:itaccessibility@uconn.edu). For more general questions about making your course more accessible, email CETL at [cetl@uconn.edu](mailto:cetl@uconn.edu).

# Revamping the Lecture

*Ways to make PowerPoint engaging, accessible, and interactive.*

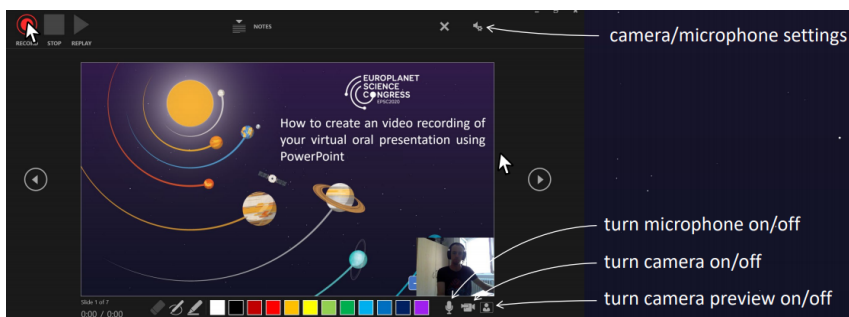
## Present Live: [\(Click for link\)](#)

By activating the 'Present Live' feature, PowerPoint integrates the presenter's microphone with Microsoft Translator, enabling the audience to receive real-time translated captioning in 60+ languages.

This feature supports accessibility and comprehensibility for international students, students with disabilities, those in noisy environments, or even those who want to catch every. Last. Word. Note: The Presentation must be saved in OneDrive and presented through a browser.

## Record with audio & video

With a webcam and microphone, PowerPoint now allows you to directly pre-record lecture content as a video file for asynchronous, remote, or flipped learning environments. This allows users to capture narrations, perfect slide timings, increase the quality of recorded presentations. Once the video is created, it can be uploaded to Kaltura so captions can be created and it can be shared.



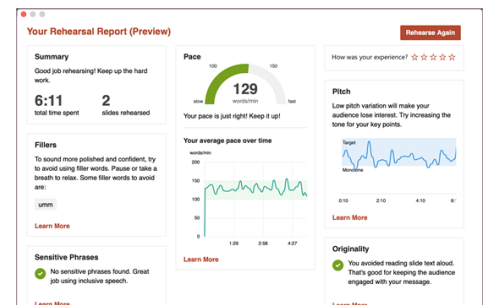
*Image of PowerPoint Video Settings*

## Design Ideas

This feature automatically analyzes and reconceptualizes the content on a slide, and offers a multiple slide design alternatives, allowing you to reimagine how your slide content appears. Rather than using the same layout on slide after slide, this tool suggests alternatives and if selected, it reformats the slide design for you automatically, without any painstaking effort.

## Rehearse with Coach:

This is a fantastic tool that instructors can inform their students about as they practice for in-person or remote presentations. While using this tool, PowerPoint uses the microphone and listens to and analyzes spoken content. When finished, it provides a detailed Rehearsal Report which includes filler words, pace, pitch, even sensitive word choices! Note: The Presentation must be saved in OneDrive and presented through a browser.



*Image of PowerPoint Coach Analysis of Presentation*

# Increasing Student Engagement with Polling

Polling is a great way to provide formative and summative assessments. Below are some of the basics about iClicker Cloud, our university-supported polling application, and Slido which has recently been integrated into Webex. **\*Slido works well as an anonymous polling app.** If you want to talk more about incorporating polling into your teaching, sign up for one of our workshops at [fins.uconn.edu](https://fins.uconn.edu) or email Ed Tech for a consult at [edtech@uconn.edu](mailto:edtech@uconn.edu)

## iClicker Cloud

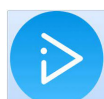


Image of iClicker icon

iClicker Cloud lets you run polls in real-time during class and easily sync student polling scores directly into your HuskyCT Grade Center.

Students can respond to questions using either their iClicker remotes or the iClicker Student App (formerly known as iClicker REEF). Students may purchase a remote and/or iClicker Student app subscription from the bookstore. Make sure to list iClickers with your required course materials. [Check out our iClicker Cloud instructor guide for more details.](#)

Instructors using iClicker Cloud can:

- **Check student comprehension:** Pause your lecture to run a quick poll to check if students need clarification about what you shared.
- **Foster student discussion:** Take a quick opinion poll to jumpstart dialogue in your class.
- **Communicate student progress:** Syncing student responses helps you keep track of how your students are progressing through the material in a low-stakes grading environment.

## Slido



Image of Slido icon

Slido is a polling technology that lets you create a poll during a Webex meeting or it can be used as a stand-alone application. You would use your [Webex credentials to access it.](#) Slido works well as an anonymous polling app.

Meeting hosts can:

- **Collect ideas, opinions, or feedback in a couple of seconds** – whether there are 10 people or hundreds in a meeting.
- **Run inclusive Q&A sessions:** Create a safe space for everyone to ask a question and upvote the most relevant ones.
- **Make more effective and inclusive decisions:** Streamline the decision-making process by putting a topic up for a vote and getting a quick pulse check of the room.
- **Run a fun quiz:** Bring the team together during team meetings or enhance the learning experience during training sessions with a bit of fun competition.

# Flip it!

*Maximize time for active learning in your classroom by moving some lectures and assessments online.*

You may be meeting your students in person this semester, but there are still a lot of uses for remote learning technology in your course, regardless of whether or not you have a physical classroom.

## CREATE MINI LECTURES WITH KALTURA

Give your students some time to digest new concepts and formulate questions before they step into the classroom by posting online lectures. Just remember to keep your videos short and sweet - ten minutes max is best. [For other tips, check out CETL's page on best practices for video design.](#)

You can also make your videos interactive by turning them into Kaltura quizzes.

Kaltura quizzes let you directly embed questions into your video to help students check their comprehension and reflect on what they have learned.

## START CLASS DISCUSSIONS ONLINE

You can start class discussions (or keep them going!) by using online discussion boards. You can use HuskyCT's discussion board tool to have class discussions that can be assessed directly in your grade center, or you can use Flipgrid for a more interactive discussion. Flipgrid is a Microsoft product which allows students to post voice and video discussions. You can learn more about Flipgrid on our Instructor Resource Site.

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## BYOD Testing & New LDB Live Proctoring

Bring your own device (BYOD) lets instructors use HuskyCT tests for their exams instead of using paper copies.

Students can bring their own devices to class to take exams or they can borrow devices from the Homer Babbidge Library. For more information: <https://edtech.uconn.edu/bring-your-own-device-byod-testing/>

Beginning in Fall 2021, LockDown Browser will include a new feature called Live Proctoring. This will allow instructors to synchronously proctor their students via a web conference session (Teams or Collaborate) while students take an online exam in LockDown Browser. This option is only recommended for small class sizes. For more information: <https://confluence.uconn.edu/x/4SxgBw>