

# Teaching ALP Online

sharing experiences & teaching strategies  
Monday, October 19, 2020

**Faculty responses  
to my query about  
teaching ALP  
online varied  
greatly**

**Some said students doing just  
about the same as face-to-face**

**Many thought students doing  
worse (low energy & inability to  
work independently)**

**A few said students doing as  
well or better online**

# Discussion: Observations about teaching Eng 12A0 online

- General sense that a mix of synchronous & asynchronous learning works best for online ALP students.
- Some 12A0 students have trouble applying what they learn.
- Difficulties with Blackboard can hinder learning. Plus a strange loop exists: Students have trouble using Blackboard, but the tool we have to help them is . . . Blackboard. This impediment may be removed as facility with digital learning improves.
- Many students don't "dare" to be on camera. Reasons: passive learning required in other classes; language barriers; unwillingness to share their working environment

# The evolving English 12A0 ALP population

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Even without the shift to online instruction, your English 12A0 group may have been different this semester

- Proficiency Index implemented in Spring 2020 affects Fall placement
- Students who received W/WN/WU/F in Spring 2020 may be retaking the class now in greater numbers
- ECI opened to ALP again. (Not a bad thing! Just a shift.)
- Greater number of students registering for classes right as the semester begins

**Brainstorming: What strategies have helped you to engage English 12A0 students this term?**

# Strategies to encourage participation in 12A0 (and 1200!)

- **Focus on building community, which is what makes the ALP model work.**
  - **Individually: provide opportunities for students to bond, for example with WhatsApp**
  - **Programmatically: See if it's possible to get more pre-formed links where students know each other through ACE.**
- **Reframe Office Hours as “Drop In Sessions” or “Writing Studios” where students can come and go as needed.**
- **Tell students to use BB app if their other tech doesn't work; just be aware that some functionality is compromised.**
- **Use chat (in Zoom/BB Collaborate) to encourage participation in live discussion.**

# More strategies to encourage participation in 12A0/1200

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- Use the Journal feature of Blackboard to check in informally with students
- Outreach before the semester begins
  - email how-to manuals or syllabus before the semester begins;
  - mail hard copy course packs to students (Reach out to Gene for info on this strategy);
  - encourage students by email to take the “Are You Ready” course before the term begins;
  - have a pre-semester meeting with students--couldn't be mandated, but perhaps could build community (Possibility of mandating pre-semester hours in the future?)
  - create how-to videos to help students navigate the sections of BB you intend to use. (Ex. Journal)

# More strategies to encourage participation in 12A0/1200

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- Record meetings to encourage students to review live sessions; could set a time limit on availability to set a sense of urgency for watching them. (Remember we cannot mandate meetings outside of the class sessions posted on BB.)
- Contact Tony Iantosca to see if a tutor is available to help out with your ALP section.
- More general advice: Set up library session for your classes. Could be live or some librarians will make a video you can post.

# More strategies to encourage participation in 12A0/1200

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- **Create Permanent Teams with rotating Team Leaders to provide a built-in system of support for students. (Contact Lea for more information on this strategy.)**
- **Use multiple platforms in a single session to increase understanding/participation. For example: Begin by describing the assignment in Zoom; then move to a shared Google doc or the Discussion Board to engage in an activity; then reconvene on Zoom.**

Remember to check out the KCC  
Composition page for Comp I &  
Comp II teaching resources

<https://kccenglish.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>