

COVID PROFESSOR TESTIMONIES

Professor Mike McBride:

Professor of Political Science at Whittier College

Department of Political Science

McBride via email, October 16, 2020.

“The most significant area is getting used to the technology. Since I am not very tech oriented, I have had to learn how to use Moodle more effectively and how to navigate the Zoom system. I think I have done a reasonable job with the basics (set up meetings, share screens, use breakout rooms), but I am not yet able to do some of the more elaborate things that others might be doing. Second, and perhaps the most annoying, is that I miss the personal interactions that can occur in the classroom -- it is much harder to engage students through Zoom than can occur in the classroom setting where you can see the body language and reactions of the class to what is going on. Third, I miss interactions on campus -- students dropping in, lunch with faculty in the CI, etc. That socializing and sharing of ideas is an important part of being a faculty member and I miss it. Fourth, I have had to adjust how I measure student outcomes -- exams, etc. -- and I'm not sure I will have as good a sense of how students have actually done in the class as I do when I can see them in and talk to them in person about how they are doing. However, one benefit has been the ability to bring in outside speakers for my classes without having to worry about travel or other logistical elements. I have already had four presentations by former students who are involved in international relations type careers for my class on International Relations, and I have already lined up several for the next two modules.”

Summary: In a quick interview via email Mike McBride, a professor of Political Science, explains four significant ways COVID-19 had impacted him as a teacher. McBride reveals his struggle in learning to use Moodle effectively and navigating Zoom. He also states he misses personal interactions between students that would occur in a normal classroom setting. Along with the interactions on campus with both faculty and students. Lastly he mentions his adjustment toward student outcomes, which he states “I’m not sure I will have a good sense of how students have actually done in the class...” Some pros he has found is that as a result of COVID he can easily bring guest speakers without having to worry about travel and whatnot.