Online Preparedness Task Force
Ongoing Academic Support Working Group

Access Issues

Recommendation: Equitable access to course content.
To ensure accessibility to all students, all lectures and online classroom activities should be video and audio recorded and made available on the learning management system (Moodle)

Rationale: St. Francis Xavier University attracts students from across Canada and around the world. In the synchronous online classroom, students could be attending classes at what would be unusual times based on their geographic location. Offering recordings of lectures and classroom activities will also help to accommodate students whose first language is not English. For instance, recorded lectures, when uploaded to MS Stream, which is supported by our IT Services, can generate transcripts and closed captioning, providing students with an enhanced learning experience. Finally, unreliable internet access is very common for students in some regions. The result is that some students will undoubtedly lose portions of a classroom session. Access to class recordings will support the goal of equitable access to education.

What's Next

1) Coordinate with IT Services to develop a video/short tutorial on how faculty members can record and store a lecture.

2) Coordinate with IT Services to develop a video/short tutorial for students on how they can access the video.

3) Draft standard communications for both faculty and students that outlines intellectual property and copyright guidelines, proper respect of copyright and repercussions for violation of these academic integrity issued and make this communication available in each online course syllabus.

Recommendation: Faculty should provide their students with articles/documents in original PDF format or via links to documents instead of scanned photocopies whenever possible.

Rationale: In an online environment, scanned documents are inaccessible to students using assistive technology such as screen reader software. Secondly, faculty risk violating copyright if posting scanned copies of monographs/journal articles on the learning management system.

What's Next

1) Consult with library services for copyright issues regarding the posting of scanned copies of chapters/journal articles on the learning management system.

2) Consult with Tramble Center on the usage of Screen Reader for students using assistive technology.

3) Consider offering PD sessions for faculty on intellectual property, copyright, and use of secondary sources and library resources in the online environment.