



A
Community
in
Dispersion

Georgetown
SCS
2020 Dean's
Report

“I am encouraged
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by our
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how we have
come together.



As I reflect on the past year and our community's collective accomplishments, challenges, and pivotal moments, I can't help but marvel at how successfully we have adapted to our "*communitas ad dispersionem*" or our community in dispersion. This concept arises out of the early Jesuits' history of remaining connected through the technology of their day—handwritten letters that were thoughtfully crafted and shared—despite experiencing their own disruptions and separations. Through these letters, each of them continued to feel united as one community with common values and one shared mission.

Here at Georgetown's School of Continuing Studies (SCS), we serve nearly 10,000 students, a growing network of more than 8,000 alumni distributed across the world, and a robust structure of faculty, staff, and industry partners. When the COVID-19 pandemic descended upon us in March of this year, we were forced to make the unexpected and abrupt transition to a completely remote learning environment. Our community as we knew it immediately took a different shape, requiring us to connect and learn in unforeseen ways with our classmates and colleagues. We began relying on virtual technologies and creating new opportunities to forge ties and communicate with one another; instructors transitioned to using new varieties of methods to engage students in the virtual classroom and through co-curricular events; and alums stepped forward to lend their expertise and knowledge from their sectors, offering mentorship and guidance to current students.

Across SCS, we made rapid adjustments to our academic delivery and leveraged our online course and program development infrastructure to create new resources. Despite being physically apart, it was inspiring to see the level of collaboration and connectedness that contributed to ensuring that our standards of education quality were being met while we expanded the modalities for teaching and learning.

Students, faculty, and staff alike leaned in on extraordinary levels and created a new kind of community space using technologies and channels like never before. I believe it was in this unfamiliar environment that the true values and heart of our institution shined through.

Although this upcoming academic year will be different from years past, I am encouraged and energized by our "community in dispersion" and how we have come together. May we continue to embrace that communal spirit and adapt to these unique forms of teaching and learning with the utmost compassion and respect for one another.

All my best,

Kelly J. Otter, Ph.D.

DEAN
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Discovering Innovation and Inspiration During a Global Pandemic



Shenita Ray, Ph.D.

**VICE DEAN, EDUCATION AND FACULTY AFFAIRS
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

Throughout my personal and professional life, I have lived through a number of crises where the only option available is to act. There was no time for fear, worry, or anxiety as the situation demanded focus, clarity, creativity, determination, and perseverance in order to respond to the emergency at hand. While the scale and scope of COVID-19 was unlike any crisis I've ever experienced, when I reflect on what it was like to transition the School of Continuing Studies' on-campus courses to remote delivery in a matter of days due to a global health crisis, these human qualities were activated within me and across the SCS community.

Undoubtedly, the School and the University worked quickly and tirelessly to implement systems and processes to transition teaching and learning from a physical classroom to a virtual learning environment. A few of the processes include:

- SCS initiated daily instructional continuity Zoom meetings with all the faculty directors, academic leaders, and the Dean;
- During the daily instructional continuity meetings, the 20+ member team worked collaboratively to solve teaching and learning challenges as they arose;
- The SCS online team developed a framework that describes how to design and teach courses delivered remotely;
- The faculty directors and academic leaders met with faculty regularly, sometimes daily, to coach

them through the process of designing courses in Canvas;

- CNDLS developed and hosted ongoing training and webinars to support faculty in their efforts to create remote courses in Canvas;
- SCS established a cross-functional COVID-19 working group that met daily to review issues and challenges across all functional areas;
- SCS implemented ongoing data collection and analysis.

On the whole, I witnessed faculty and staff deepening their commitment to students, to the School, and to the entire Georgetown community. We came together as a united front and heightened our focus, clarity, creativity, determination, and perseverance to ensure the continued success of all SCS students and the learning and teaching enterprise. These human qualities are the tools that underpinned and gave structure to the systems and processes the School implemented to serve students in the midst of a pandemic.

Numerous lessons about effective teaching and learning were acquired in these early days, which led to the invention of new strategies to improve how we deliver engaging and interactive learning environments using technology. For instance, in collaboration with CNDLS, we designed a master course shell that includes examples of best practices and features of teaching in a remote learning environment. We also created a rubric for



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faculty that provides guidance on the essential elements of teaching and course design to advance excellence in interactivity and engagement.

I never imagined I would experience a global pandemic, let alone feel prideful and privileged during

the crisis. Nonetheless, I do. I am proud of the work that SCS faculty and staff did to transition to a remote learning environment. I feel privileged that I was able to bear witness to extraordinary human qualities that reflect the essence of our Jesuit values and the spirit of Georgetown.

TEFL Certificate Online: A Different Transition



Sherry L. Steeley

**ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROFESSOR
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

When the COVID-19 pandemic led Georgetown to transition to remote instruction, my initial thought was that nothing would change in my Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) Certificate Online course and that the instructional model would remain intact, a source of stability for my students, even as other facets of my students' lives were upended. How wrong I was. Academically, the class continued largely as planned, while other aspects of course activities and the class community evolved significantly, and largely positively. This included a tightening of the fabric of work and class relations, and an additional dimension of planning for a different context in which students could put their TEFL Certificate learning into practice.

Academic Shifts

Launched in 2008 as a program to prepare individuals for professional work in the field of Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language, Georgetown's TEFL Certificate Program comprises 15 weeks online and a five-day in-person practicum. While the status of the in-person practicum was initially unknown, the online course would continue as planned. Nevertheless, much of the real world observation and analysis critical to the student experience would be impossible.

Although online, coursework entails interface with authentic TEFL/TESL classrooms; normally, students spend at least 10 hours observing in professional language schools, public sector programs, or volunteer or non-profit organizations. These, however, had abruptly shifted to online instruction, jeopardizing the students' opportunity to conduct the observations that provide real life enactment of theory and practice.

Creativity was required in order to meaningfully recreate this essential real-world experience. Fortunately, as some previous students had shared videos of themselves teaching, I had access to hours of authentic content available and my students were to observe these classrooms, albeit remotely. As the analytical reports rolled in, I realized that students were able to extract a depth of meaning that I had feared would be lost on-screen. This provided a viable alternative to live observation, and one that I will offer future cohorts, possibly using video annotation tools and/or live collaboration for group analysis.

Another significant shift was the postponement of the student teaching practicum. Students would face a significant gap between the completion of 15 weeks of preparation and what would have been the culminating experience of the program, now delayed. In order

to allay student concerns regarding lost momentum, I published the course sites, so that students could access the framework and continue preparation in the interim. To that end, we also arranged for additional (informal) class meetings to provide a refresher of all their preparatory work for the experience that would occur six months later than originally anticipated.

Strengthening the Class Community

As in many online classes, much of the TEFL course is asynchronous (although not self-paced – like any university course, the syllabus follows a tightly sequenced weekly progression with interactive course material, discussions, extensive instructor feedback, and assignments). While synchronous whole-class, small group, and individual meetings also took place, it soon emerged that there was a greater need for live interaction during the pandemic-induced shutdown than usual.

Our course was, essentially, one of the few points of stability for students who were suddenly working remotely—experiencing various quarantine restrictions, caring for family members, or adjusting to life without engagement with the outside world altogether. An initial, optional class meeting resulted in nearly complete attendance, and after some cursory discussion of academics, conversation shifted to students' quarantine experiences. These differed widely. One student lived in a country with an order to leave the house once weekly for supplies. Another had relied on the internet at work to access the course and had no connectivity at home. Others were coping with unsettling travel to rejoin family members, attempting to organize households unaccustomed to remote work or learning, providing virtual instruction to their own students, or simply stranded, cut off from the daily professional and personal contacts that had heretofore constituted the bulk of their face-to-face interactions.

These open-ended meetings continued. Sometimes students came with questions about the course, but more often, they came for contact with others who had previously been only professional and academic colleagues. Relationships deepened. In our formal course discussions, people had more time for reflection and interaction. I became acquainted with my students on a deeper level than ever would have been the case without the pandemic.

Planning for the Future

Normally toward the end of the program, we focus on next professional steps as students contemplate how to put their learning into meaningful practice. From outset of the shutdown until the end of our course, many educational programs had made an impressive pivot to remote instruction, including those serving the most at-risk students. These programs were continuing to recruit volunteer and professional teachers. I had confidence that my students were prepared pedagogically and practically and began to provide them with resources that would also equip them to put their knowledge into use in a virtual context.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the fabric of society in the U.S. and around the world. Nevertheless, it has represented an opportunity for communication and continuity in an online educational environment and a deeper level of interpersonal connection. I am proud of my students, grateful for the learning that has emerged from this challenging situation, and confident that all are strengthened in their determination to fulfill their initial intent to strengthen the lives of those they will serve. From my perspective, it has renewed my commitment to the very human enterprise at the heart of our mission as educators as we seek to guide our students, and in turn, all the lives of all those our students will impact as they move forward to strengthen our global community.



Building Stronger Connections in a Virtual Classroom



Jim Lindsay

**LECTURER, SCS MPS INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

In late February, I realized my much sought-after class, Marketing for Entrepreneurs, would have to go virtual due to the emerging COVID-19 crisis. Frankly, I was hesitant about the transition and automatically disliked the idea of instructing the entire class in a virtual environment—it was something I was not accustomed to. However, I soon realized that Zoom offered innovative and unique features that made the virtual classroom environment an entirely different, and positive, experience than I had been anticipating.

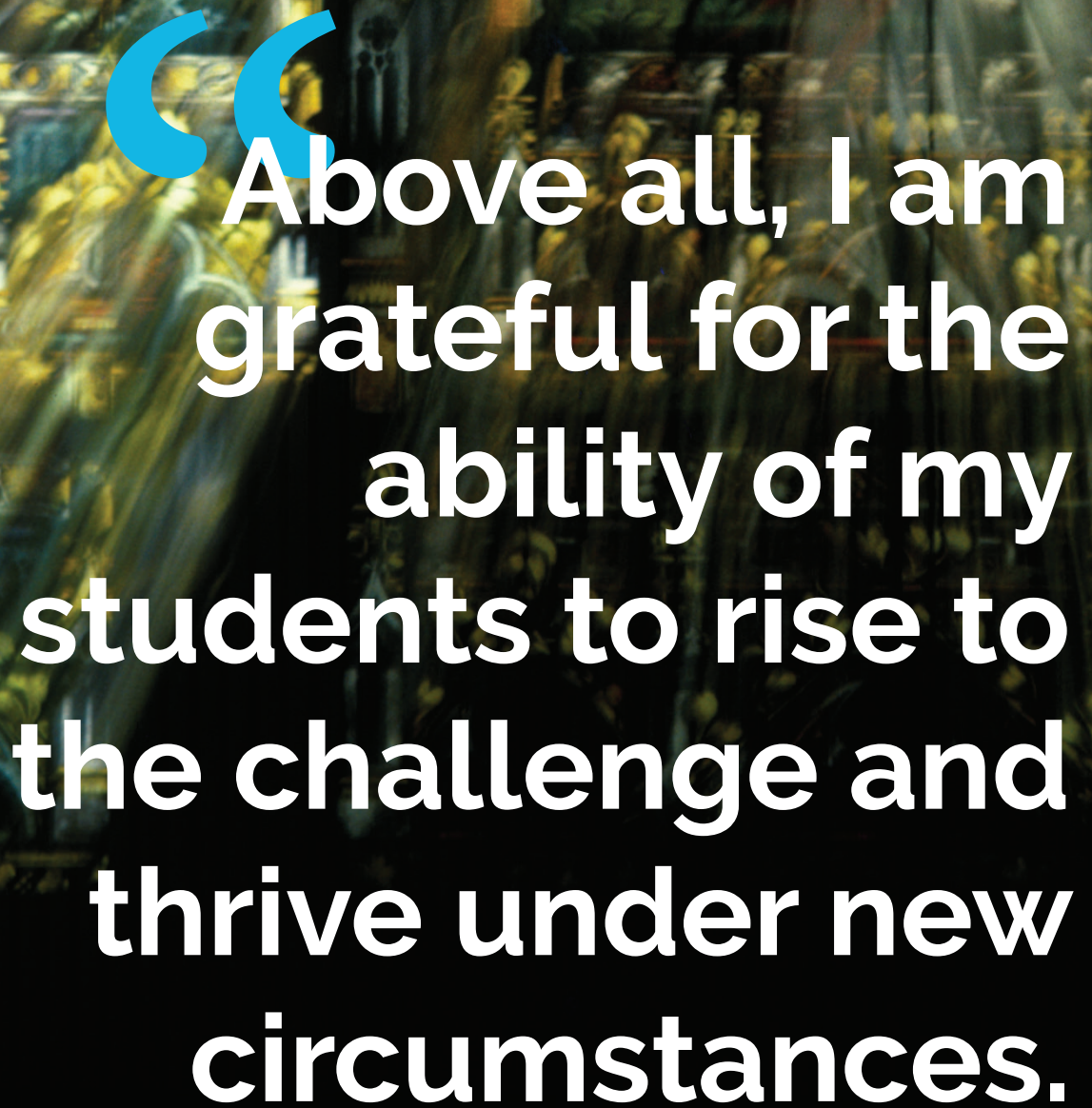
I have been teaching at Georgetown's School of Continuing Studies for five years. I started out teaching in the certificate programs that are offered at SCS, and then subsequently moved into instructing in the Master of Professional Studies program in Integrated Marketing Communications.

The course that I teach relies heavily on in-person interactions and I worried that going virtual would dismantle that crucial, human element. When the pandemic forced us to transition to virtual learning, I thought the bond that students create amongst themselves, and especially between me and the class,

would be nonexistent this time around. To my surprise, the class immediately took to one another and seamlessly connected, despite our physical distance.

Students joined the class virtually from all over the country. I had students in Georgia, North Carolina, and Colorado, as well as from all parts of the D.C. region, convene every week to interact, learn, and expand their knowledge together. At the end of the term, the class ended with Shark-Tank style oral presentations by the students to a panel of professional marketing experts from around the country—all conducted effortlessly through Zoom.

What struck me most about our unique circumstances this year was that we were able to relate to each other and see each other on a level that otherwise wouldn't have been possible. Each student saw the others in their organic setting at home, with cats and kids and all sorts of personalization not attainable in a physical classroom. One class member had been undergoing chemotherapy during the class sessions and would not have been able to make any in-person classes. Fortunately, his cancer went into remission and we, as a class, were able to share in the joyous news together and applaud his healing.



Above all, I am grateful for the ability of my students to rise to the challenge and thrive under new circumstances.

Over Zoom, the class shared personal stories and struggles, living rooms, chemo challenges, wildly barking dogs, bad hair days, and weather updates. The lives of the students began to mold into one living whole and I wondered how a group of people who had never met in person, could have bonded so completely in such a short amount of time. Here was a group of fellow learners all moving together as one, towards a common goal.

Although the class has since ended, the lifelong bonds remain. These will be stories forever shared and friendships formed, and I am humbled to have been a part of it. Above all, I am grateful for the ability of my students to rise to the challenge and thrive under new circumstances. They have completely changed my perspective on what I initially thought was an unfavorable situation, transforming it into one of my most cherished experiences.

Regaining a Sense of Normalcy in a Unique Moment



Charles McNelis
PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

The sudden transition to remote learning in the spring undoubtedly upset expectations and classroom dynamics. I was somewhat lucky when it came to the transition to remote teaching in that years ago I had worked closely with CNDLS to develop an entirely asynchronous course for the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies program, and the pedagogical strategies I acquired when planning that course were a huge help during the transition. And from a broader perspective, even Georgetown's support of instructional continuity during events like inclement weather had also fostered a sense of comfort in dealing with remote teaching. Experience, then, was the best teacher.

For all that, various problems emerged: Zoom fatigue, and I quickly figured out I needed a new pair of glasses. But the major challenge for me as an instructor was that my courses revolve around abstract ideas—such as the human relationship with the divine or one community's view of outsiders—as represented in complex readings. In addition to the challenging texts that we read, the very questions themselves demand that we use those readings to step back and to confront, to rehash, to interrogate, and to analyze crucial ideas. In

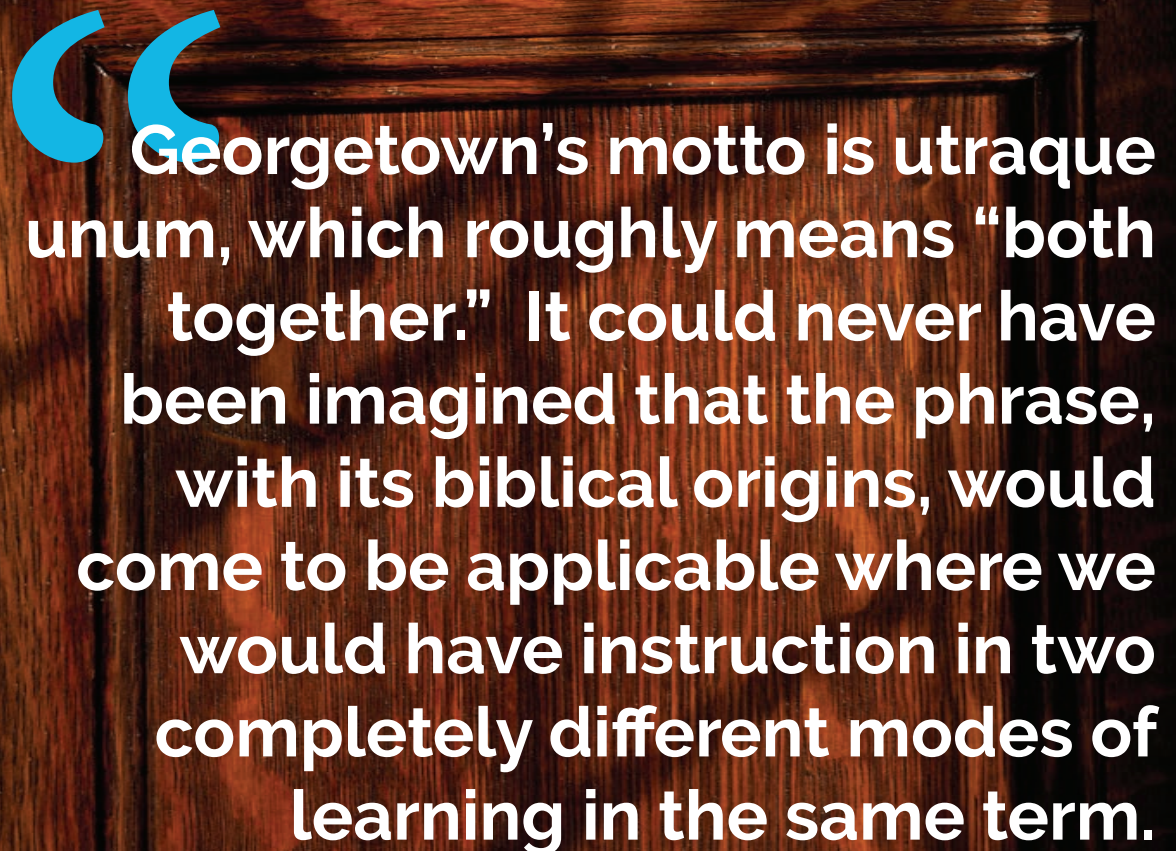
person, we do that through extensive discussion and questioning. I was worried that our class would not maintain the same level of conversation, but the students had mastered strategies and approaches that allowed us to continue to work with the ideas at a level that was the same as—or at least close to—what we were doing in person. Students continued to hear from classmates, to develop ideas, and also to modify or to disagree with comments and the ideas contained in the texts. In fact, in one of my courses, a student passed along the perspective that he felt that as much as was possible, the remote environment worked very much like our in-class sessions. The remote exchanges continued to build a sense of community that allowed us, I think, to talk about and reflect upon our individual experiences during our immediate circumstances of the quarantine. In many ways, the whole experience provided me with a heightened awareness of the importance of the questions we address in the humanities.

During the summer session, I taught a language course that met for three hours per day. It was actually helpful to have previously experienced the fatigue that comes from remote instruction, so I thought the largest issue

was to ensure focused interaction over a long period of time. Again, the basis of the course was a rich set of readings from the ancient world that concerned politics and the challenges of forging unity within a community, and I suspect that once again the ideas contained within the texts allowed us to form our own group. The course required translation, so by rotating around the grid of squares on the Zoom screen it was easy enough to hear from everyone during the session, but it was also useful to have the students become presenters of ideas that emerged from the common readings, and that allowed everyone to have a sense of ownership or participation in the work. And more often than not, students asked questions that emerged from their own interpretations of the readings and prompted meaningful discussions. But as with teaching in the spring, while students overwhelmingly noted that they would prefer to have in-person classes, many also added that they were grateful for the opportunity to continue to learn and to have a sense of “normalcy” in such a unique moment. Again,

the value of serious and challenging ideas seemed to inspire students in the midst of troubled times.

Faculty teaching in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program had similar experiences. Many were already comfortable with teaching remotely, and their commitment to student learning during the quarantine was remarkable. The rewarding content of the program inspires faculty to give it their all, and the performance of students provides additional motivation to offer the best we can. Students regularly noted that they preferred meeting their classmates and instructors in person, but the classes went as well as they could have after the quarantine. Georgetown’s motto is *utraque unum*, which roughly means “both together.” It could never have been imagined that the phrase, with its biblical origins, would come to be applicable where we would have instruction in two completely different modes of learning in the same term. But the implied unity of the phrase is apt for what the University, students, and faculty have achieved.



Georgetown’s motto is *utraque unum*, which roughly means “both together.” It could never have been imagined that the phrase, with its biblical origins, would come to be applicable where we would have instruction in two completely different modes of learning in the same term.

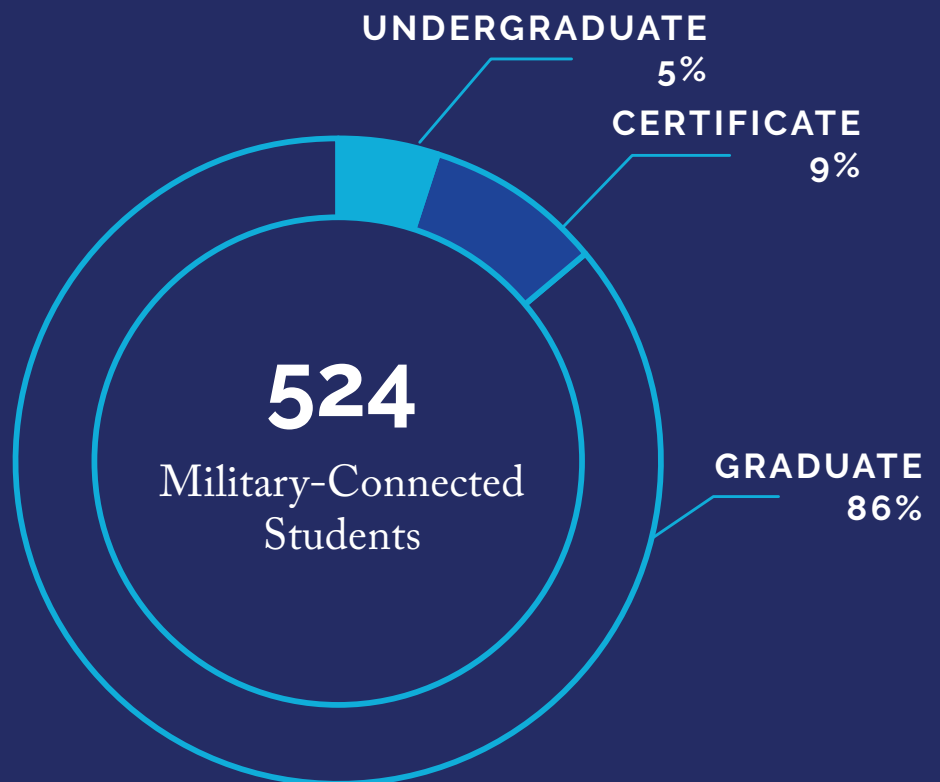
SCS BY THE NUMBERS

9,750

STUDENTS
SERVED
PER YEAR

12-90

AGE
RANGE



Degree Program Student Body at a Glance

3,346 STUDENTS
SERVED
PER YEAR

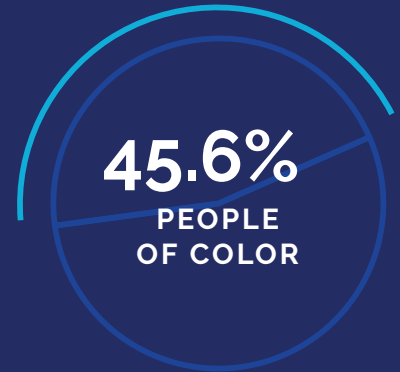
ON CAMPUS
47%

FULL-TIME
22%

PART-TIME
78%



ONLINE/HYBRID
53%



Non-Degree Program Enrollments

2,365

CERTIFICATE, CORPORATE,
VISITING, AND CUSTOM
EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENTS

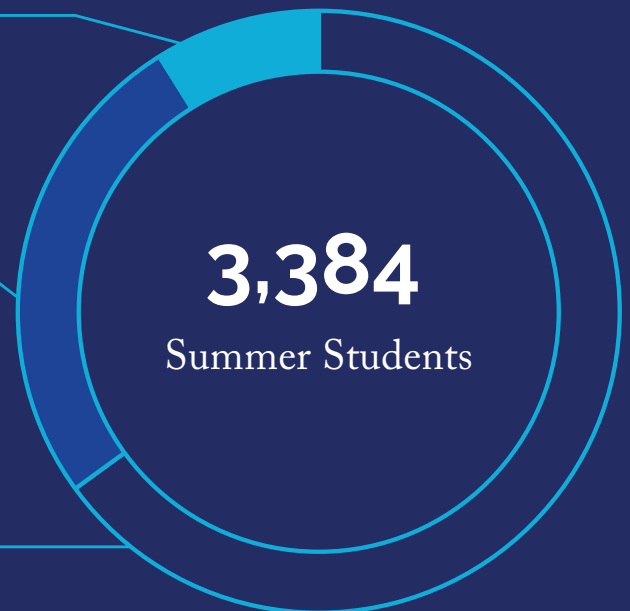
475

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
EDUCATION STUDENTS

GRADUATE
13.5%

HIGH SCHOOL
35%

UNDERGRADUATE
51.5%



3,384

Summer Students

Countries of Citizenship

4,024
United
States

60
Brazil

77
Saudi
Arabia

77
Columbia

302
China

38
Japan

47
Spain

44
Qatar

41
Canada

43
India

124
Total
Countries

Students and Faculty See Challenges & Benefits to Moving Online

Larry Hardy



When SCS caught up with Richard Lee a few weeks ago at his home in Taiwan, he was still trying to sell the Celine Dion ticket he was holding for what was supposed to be a March 12 concert at Capital One Arena.

Some background might be in order: Last spring, Lee, who works for Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs, was nearing the end of a nine-month program at Georgetown's English Language Center. On March 11, he and three friends from the center—another student from Taiwan and two other young people from France and Morocco—were looking forward to the concert the next night.

“It can make our schedules faster, more productive, rather than spending all day going from one meeting to another...”

Why Celine Dion, a singer more well-known to their parents' generation than theirs? Well, they were living in Washington, soaking up the culture, and taking advantage of every possible opportunity that came their way, superstar concerts included. Moreover, Lee added, who knew when Dion would be coming to Taipei?

In retrospect, the end of this story should come as no surprise. Because of the pandemic, Dion postponed her concert until at least November. But, more concerning for Lee and his friends, Georgetown announced it was moving all classes online. The change meant that, instead of coming to class and socializing with his instructors and peers from all over the world, he would be largely confined to the computer in his apartment.

In another sense, however, the story doesn't end there, because SCS administrators and faculty, working quickly and on short notice, did everything they could to take the classroom environment Lee was experiencing and recreate it online.

“At first, it was quite hard because we came all the way to Washington, D.C., to see what the city has to offer,” said Lee, who completed the Intensive Professional English program online. “But I have to say our professors have done an extraordinary job in these extraordinary circumstances.”

An Unexpected Benefit



Filippo Boccalini, a recent graduate of the certificate program in Business Administration, came to Washington two years ago to work as a project engineer on DC Water's Northeast Boundary Tunnel, a massive project that will greatly increase the District's sewer capacity. In college and graduate school in his native Italy, he was accustomed to lecture courses with little classroom interaction. So, when he came to Georgetown, he was pleasantly surprised by the frequent interaction with instructors and fellow students.

That changed in mid-March when classes went online. But while Boccalini missed the in-person experience, he was impressed with how quickly his instructors were able to set up Zoom discussion groups. And that got him thinking about how moving some meetings online could improve efficiency at his work.

“It can make our schedules faster, more productive, rather than spending all day going from one meeting to

another,” Boccalini said. “Since August, all the meetings have become online, and we still do that same meeting. I don’t see any difference.”

From Georgetown’s perspective, it was important to replicate as much of the in-person experience as possible while taking advantage of the benefits offered online.

“It was very important for us not to have our learners log into Zoom and just sit in front of a screen and listen to someone talk,” said Jeffrey Warner, Senior Director for Professional Development & Certificates. “That’s not the educational experience we gave in the classroom, and that’s not the educational experience we were going to give now.”

Certainly, some facets of an in-person class could not be replicated. “We used to chat about— “Oh, this is a story that I’m doing: What do you think?”” said Journalism student Priscilla Segnini. “And now we don’t have that.”

But she appreciated how, for example, Jesse Holland, her instructor for Cultural Reporting, added guest speakers, online breakout sessions, and instant class polls on a variety of subjects to keep the students engaged.

More Candid Discussions



Jacob Daniel, a senior at Millburn High School in Northern New Jersey, knew that attending the Summer High School Session’s weeklong American Politics Academy from home would be different than being in

Washington. But while that meant no field trips to the Capitol and other sites, the new format did offer some unexpected, if more subtle, benefits.

In these polarized times, students might have been reluctant to express contrary views in an in-person class, Daniel said. But in the privacy of their homes, they could be more candid as they discussed hot-button issues like capital punishment, the national debt, and policy toward Israel.

“If we were in person, all together physically, they might be reluctant to share their true political learnings,” Daniel said. “So I feel like everyone was very open and honest, and I really respected that.”

Disappointments, regrets, but also unexpected opportunities—that’s what living through the pandemic has been like for so many people, including the diverse assortment of students who look to the School of Continuing Studies to further their education and careers. Back in Taiwan, Lee has returned to his job at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, where he encourages Taiwanese companies to invest in Singapore and the Middle East, his two areas of concentration.

“You can always learn new things in new situations,” he said. “Like, take this pandemic, for example. We’re living in a digital era. So, the pandemic has, to some extent, helped us to fast-forward digitalization, and it forced us to learn new technologies and new ways to cope with new situations. So I think, in that sense, it has some upsides in our lives.”



Richard Lee



Filippo Boccalini



Jacob Daniel



Priscilla White

Caring for a Community in Dispersion: How Mission Integration at SCS Responded to a Global Pandemic



Jamie Kralovec

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR MISSION INTEGRATION
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

On March 13, 2020, the day that Georgetown SCS transitioned to fully virtual operations in response to the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, I published a reflection on the school's Mission Blog: "Digitally Caring for the Whole Person at SCS in a Time of COVID-19." The post announced several digital activities that our SCS community of students, staff, faculty, and alumni could engage as a way of caring for the whole person during the indeterminate period of pandemic. This bedrock commitment to whole person development is enshrined in the Spirit of Georgetown, which communicates the many ways that the university's Jesuit values are embodied in our practices of study and work.

I knew that an abrupt digital transition would be challenging and I presented a menu of options in that initial post: daily digital meditations over Zoom during the work week, weekly blog reflections with suggestions and resources for practicing mindfulness and self-care, a space to share personal intentions for prayer, and links to other mission and ministry programs at Georgetown. Motivating that message was a recognition at an early

stage of life in lockdown that dislocation did not have to mean social isolation but an opportunity for connections with community. Mission integration at SCS continued throughout the summer and the fall to offer opportunities to care for the whole person by adapting virtual learning tools into reflective resources. While challenging, the transition to a fully virtual program of mission integration activities has helped meet needs in our community. There was also a recognition that these digital efforts were faithful to our university mission and Jesuit history: reimagining in-person resources in this dynamic way during a time of crisis felt consistent with the Jesuit tradition of education.

This motif for mission integration, a community in dispersion, comes from an article written early in the pandemic by Georgetown Jesuit and associate professor, Fr. Matthew Carnes, who reflected about how the early Jesuits on missions throughout the world utilized the technology of their day, written letters, to maintain deep connections with the global community in spite of their physical distance. The opportunity five centuries

later to use technology to deepen bonds at a time of physical distancing seemed like a novel manifestation of this original Jesuit inspiration. That innovation also felt particularly authentic at SCS, a dynamic learning community at Georgetown known for embracing technology to enhance the learning experiences of students across the lifespans of age and professional experience. Like the early Jesuits, with agility, adaptability, and flexibility, our mission integration work at SCS this year gave life to our values in new and unexpected ways.

Students, staff, faculty, alumni, and even parents have benefited from 15 minutes of silence in a sacred space made anew each day by those who Zoom into the session. Fridays of each work week are reserved for the Ignatian examen, a structured form of reflection developed by the Jesuits for growing in deeper consciousness about how our thoughts and feelings are leading us to act more generously in service of others.

Caring for the SCS community in dispersion has taken on many forms. Some activities replicate and translate in-person programming into a virtual mode and other activities incarnate mission and ministry offerings in ways that are unique to the digital environment. Here is a sample of significant activities during a time of pandemic:

- **Digital Daily Meditations:** The ancient traditions of meditation, reflected in both Eastern and Western practices, honor silence as a great teacher. It is in quieting our busy bodies and minds that we are able to develop our interiority, an inner strength that enables us to more mindfully and justly address the challenges in our exterior reality. Since the pandemic began, SCS has hosted a digital meditation every day of the work week and has attracted participation from across the Georgetown community.

- **Spiritual Continuity Messages:** The chaplains and staff of Georgetown’s Office of Mission and Ministry began offering short video reflections shortly after the pandemic began. Intended to inspire, educate, and accompany others on their spiritual journeys, these video messages testify to the depth of wisdom embodied in the many faith traditions represented at the university. I offered two reflections, one on expressing love in action consistent with St. Ignatius’s Contemplation to Attain Love and another reflection about the transformative power of presence and memory.
- **Mission in Motion Blog Reflections:** An anchor of SCS mission integration in this period has been weekly blog reflections. Presenting how mission and ministry resources might address the complex challenges facing our SCS community, these reflections have been amplified in a number of communications channels, including social media and weekly emails to faculty and staff. Mission in Motion has addressed a variety of issues of concern during the pandemic, including the Jesuit contribution to leadership development, nature walks as an antidote to Zoom fatigue, and how Jesuit pedagogy informs meaningful evaluation of virtual teaching strategies.

As part of a “Spiritual Continuity” series by staff and chaplains of Georgetown’s Office of Mission and Ministry, SCS Associate Director for Mission Integration, Jamie Kralovec, contributed a video about expressing love in action during difficult times.

Looking Forward



Kelly J. Otter, Ph.D.

DEAN

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY



Stephanie Kim

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE &

FACULTY DIRECTOR OF HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

The year 2020 has raised considerable challenges for higher education. What do you see as the most pressing, and how is SCS poised to meet that challenge?

This year higher education faced a confluence of challenges that required us to reflect on our models and values, and to re-examine the attributes that should and will endure, and those that warrant revision or replacement.

The pandemic forced us to suspend our notions of social engagement in work and education, and to learn to cope with different forms of isolation, which affect us all differently and disproportionately. We leaned on technology in new ways to facilitate communication and interaction; we changed our expectations and habits for use of space; and we were confronted by the societal inequities that illustrate how a health crisis and economic crisis go hand in hand for so many.

Additionally, the shocking events arising from racial injustice propelled new actions to address systemic

inequities. As a result, institutions of higher education are reprioritizing and repositioning our focus on the issues of racism and social injustice. We are rightfully being called upon as leaders in education to build inclusivity, along with social and racial justice, into our systems. We are charged to cultivate new levels of awareness and competence, both inside and outside the classroom, and to demonstrate the social and emotional skills that produce the resilience to lead in a more human way.

We must reframe this moment as an invitation to animate our values through new designs in teaching and working, and to prioritize affordability and access. We have an unprecedented window in which to align technology-mediated education, pedagogy, and content with emerging workforce needs and demand for education that supports employability.

One of the most disruptive changes in higher education due to the pandemic was the abrupt switch to remote learning. How did SCS meet students' needs during this

disruptive time? What are important lessons learned going forward?

We immediately recognized that students wanted frequent communication and information about how their courses would proceed, as well as what would be expected of them in a remote learning environment. Students wanted their programs to understand how their personal and professional lives were also being disrupted, and SCS was prepared to meet these needs.

The more we listened to students' concerns, the more we realized that beneath their frustrations was a longing for the maintenance of a sense of community. The disruptions caused students, faculty, and staff to seek assurance that they had a stable and predictable community. We were all forced to pivot from a space-based perspective to a virtual one and to build ways to maintain the social rapport and interpersonal dynamics that are so crucial to our relationships and certain aspects of our work. In that light, we focused on assuring our students that we were still fully present—creating new networking and social events, working endlessly to build courses with interactive, engaging features, both synchronous and asynchronous, to meet everyone's needs and demands that arose from the circumstances. Ultimately, regardless of how programs are typically delivered, the teaching and learning process is a social one. It is still built on relationships and mutual accountability.

The disruption caused by the pandemic forced colleges and universities to adopt education technology to connect with students. What was SCS's approach to implementing these technologies and engaging students in a virtual learning environment?.

Colleges and universities are learning from the technological, pedagogical models created in continuing education and are applying them in more traditional environments. Two positive outcomes over the past year are the convergence of continuing education expertise across institutions to help expand their knowledge and expertise with technology, but more importantly, how to use it to engage students and apply values-based approaches for a variety of learning audiences distributed across the globe and across time zones.

The approach we took at SCS was to work as a team: our academic leaders, full-time faculty, and instructional designers collaborated to build new resources to

support the migration of in-person courses to remotely delivered ones. SCS has a tech-savvy culture, and we offer about 20 online programs and hundreds of online courses. That said, we have almost as many courses delivered in in-person settings, so we needed to create a strategy to support faculty with little experience teaching with technology, to build high-quality courses by fall.

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I can envision continuing to provide models of research-based online course design, as well as structures of faculty support for the expansion of educational offerings. In doing so, we build and share new knowledge to serve an increasingly complex learning population on a global scale.

Education technology allows colleges and universities to re-envision their global initiatives. What are some developments in global programming and planning that are in store for SCS?

The SCS portfolio has been growing value on a global scale, and our expertise in online program design is a highly sought after resource. SCS has developed excellent models of graduate professional programs that incorporate global residencies using cities and countries around the world as laboratories. We have also hosted numerous executives from all over the world from a variety of sectors on our campus in Washington, D.C. We've launched new curricula in technology fields, emergency management, higher education administration, integrated marketing, and many others. Our international student population, about 13% of the total, comprises students who relocate to Washington, D.C. to study here and seek employment. However, the programs are increasingly in demand in regions across the globe with learners who do not wish to relocate, and to those who



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do not have access to graduate and professional degrees or high quality online programs. So, we are partnering across the globe, namely in the Middle East and Asia, with schools, ministries, and other organizations.

A very new development that has been accelerated by the pandemic, is that organizations are drawing from a diversity of perspectives, including those across generations, race, nationality, and gender from within their cultures to develop the competencies they need to remain relevant and to cultivate the competencies required in the 21st century. This is leading to increased interest in areas as executive leadership coaching, hospitality and tourism, and technology programs.

Looking beyond the pandemic, how must SCS adapt and innovate in response to uncertainty? What has the current moment revealed about the future of higher education?

We are all living through a crisis that is forcing us to adapt in ways we never anticipated. We are at an inflection point. In the current moment we must stabilize and prepare for the possibility of a return to what was once normal, while reimagining and redesigning our organizations for the current moment. We must consider how

to manage teaching and working in the present, as well as prepare to function in an uncertain future.

Access to education globally is now even more imperative, and to achieve that we need to address affordability and the economic stability of institutions. At SCS we think about access and affordability in our neighborhoods in Washington, Maryland, and Virginia, as well as across the globe where flexible models of higher education are increasingly in demand. We have an opportunity to take a holistic view of our institutions, the diversity of learners, and the diversity of needs, to meet and leverage the strengths embedded across the nation. In my opinion, there is an increased opportunity to thrive through both consolidation, as well as through the expansion of our models and through partnerships with other providers and sectors.

The formation of adults through professionally-oriented education is one of the strengths of SCS. Formation is at the core of a Jesuit education, and values such as *cura personalis*, care of the whole person, and striving for excellence in education and formation are aligned with some of the most important competencies for the 21st century: leadership, empathy, and creativity.



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