

The upcoming Summer and Fall semesters are mostly taking place on our new **Virtual Campus.**

Non-credit CTD courses are cancelled.

Please note the building of Dawson College remains restricted.

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For the past two weeks, many teachers have become students learning all about online teaching platforms. They have also been working hard to adapt course outlines and figure out how to present their material online while maintaining academic integrity and continuing to engage their students.

Dawson’s Communications Office spoke with two teachers about

**TEACHERS SAVING THE SEMESTER BY GOING ONLINE**

resuming teaching online.

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## Anick Legault, Psychology



Anick Legault, a Psychology teacher with 15 years of teaching experience, has also never taught online before even though she has been using Moodle in class for years. “When it became clear that we may close, I asked my students to download Zoom on their devices while we were in our last class before the study break,” she said.

### Moodle in class but not online

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Anick was already using Moodle for lectures and quizzes in and out of the class. “With Zoom integrated into Moodle, it is easy for me to transition to a virtual class and online office hours.”

Anick has a lot of experience using technology in a classroom setting but not online. “Currently, I am working with Catherine Fichten and the rest of the Adaptech Research Network team on an ECQ grant to include the use of smartphones in the classroom. I also like using a live polling app (PollEverywhere.com) on the phone, which is great for getting input from students. They may be reluctant to share openly, and using the app helps increase and deepen the participation of all.”

### Communicating with students

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The work that Anick has been doing in this confinement period is to prepare students for the impending online course. “I had to let them know how Zoom works. For example, they can only enter the Zoom meeting when class is on. I sent a detailed note to my students all about Zoom, letting them know they can also participate by phone if Internet fails them.”

On Sunday, March 29, Anick contacted her students and asked them to let her know if they had any issues joining her classes. “One student wrote to me: ‘I cannot wait to start!’ I have left some exercises on Moodle unhidden and some of my students surprised me by completing them last week. I think they are bored!”

## Reaching out

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From her MIO message, Anick could see that 73 out of 75 students had seen her message about the resumption of her classes. “I will reach out by telephone to the two students I have not heard from and see what I can do to help support them, and send them to the proper Dawson resources.”

Anick is grateful for the support of the Dawson community in general and especially to her department. “Madeleine Côté, our chair, has been extremely active and encouraging. All colleagues are sharing tricks and supporting each other – we rock! Teachers who are teaching the same class are meeting together to determine what they will offer as a team so that equity is respected.”

## Adaptation

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Anick’s adaptation to online teaching includes developing new smaller comprehension assignments following an asynchronous lecture/lesson on Moodle, doing more participation assignments during her Zoom online mini classes and adding some polling integrated to the Zoom virtual class. “I am not an expert with a virtual classroom, but I will do my best to help and support my students in this learning experience for all.”

Anick has two 3-hour classes that meet once a week. “We are easing into this and not forcing them to be present online for three consecutive hours. My first online course this week with each group will be to reconnect with students, try out Zoom and some of its functions/features (e.g., raising hand, thumb up, chatting, etc.) together as a class, talk about the changes made to our course, and plan for the remainder of the semester.”

## Smaller groups, less time

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Knowing that the attention span is not as high online as in person, Anick is thinking of dividing her classes into smaller groups and meeting for one hour with each subgroup. There is also the option of creating “break rooms” in Zoom, where students will discuss and complete mini assignments in small groups. The general idea is to keep them engaged and motivated in the lessons.

“As Rajesh Malik, my colleague in Psychology said: ‘we are living through a period like wartime,’” Anick said. “Nothing is destroyed but everything is restricted. We just want to save the semester and help our students move on.”

As a self-described “homebody,” Anick is looking at the positive side: I’m in my best place with my favourite person, my husband, and I am feeling happy despite these challenging times.”

## Well-being and self-care

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Anick shared how she is taking care of herself: “I am taking sun every day, and my husband and I have increased our yoga and exercise time to one hour a day. Thanks to the Physical Education Department for their great article in D News reminding us that we don’t necessarily need a gym to keep fit!

“I have also taken the guided meditations with Daniel Goldsmith, and it felt so good to connect with others in these moments of calmness. I keep in touch with my colleagues in our department with regular Zoom meetings and this way, I feel productive and energized.”

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Last Modified: March 30, 2020