

Hybrid and Online Instruction Programming Working Group

Progress Report

June 2021

Working Group Members

Name	Department/Office/School
Edward Adams	Senior Registrar, Registrar's Office
David Birdsell	Marxe Dean, Marxe School of Public and International Affairs
Ann Clarkson	Associate Dean, Division of Continuing and Professional Studies, College Now, Online Learning, and Special Liaison/Project Manager for the President
Arthur Downing	Vice President for Information Services and Dean of the Library
Mary Gorman	Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Academic Initiatives
H. Fenwick Huss	Willem Kooyker Dean, Zicklin School of Business
Samuel Johnson	Chair, Baruch College Faculty Senate
Art King	Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
Jessica Lang	Interim Dean, Weissman School of Arts and Sciences
Christina Latouf	Vice President for Communications, External Relations & Economic Development
Myung-Soo Lee	Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Allison Lehr Samuels	Director, Baruch Center for Teaching and Learning, Lecturer, Narendra Paul Loomba Department for Management, Field Mentor, Lawrence N. Field Programs in Entrepreneurship
Dennis Slavin	Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning and Assistant Vice President

Working Sub-Groups

Sub-Group #1 : Faculty and Staff Engagement and Communications

- Dennis Slavin – Provost Office – Group Lead
- Samuel Johnson – Co-chair

Scope of Responsibilities

- Feedback Loops
- Engagement/Communications
- Learning Resources (Pedagogical considerations)
- Learning Assessment Tools (Academic aspects)

Sub-Group #2 : Technical and Software Infrastructure

- Arthur Downing – BCTC/Library – Group Lead

Scope of Responsibilities

- Technical Resources
- Learning Resources (s/w support, licensing, etc.)
- Learning Assessment Tools (s/w, licensing, etc.)

Sub-Group #3 : Student Support Infrastructure

- Mary Gorman – Enrollment Management and Strategic Academic Initiatives – Group Lead

Scope of Responsibilities

- Student Support Systems
- Online/Hybrid Scheduling
- Learning Resources (Pedagogical considerations)
- Learning Assessment Tools (Academic aspects)

Sub-Group #4 : Training and Instructional Design Infrastructure

- Allison Lehr Samuel – Center for Teaching and Learning – Group Lead

Scope of Responsibilities

- Training and Instructions
- Instructional Design Resources (Syn/Asynchronous)
- Learning Resources (Faculty support)

Introduction

The Hybrid and Online Instruction Programming Working Group was convened for several reasons. One such reason was in response to the Taskforce for the Future (<https://president.baruch.cuny.edu/task-force-for-the-future/>) findings. The College recognized the need to focus ways and means of supporting online instruction in its various forms. It was agreed that the working group would conduct extensive research and develop comprehensive solutions to challenges previously identified and those found in the group's deeper dive. Additionally, it was understood that through the team's research we would also identify highly effective areas that would require more resources to expand support and foster a stronger academic experience for students, faculty and staff.

The second and highly pertinent reason for the working group was in response to the rapid adaption of online learning due to the COVID pandemic. While the shift was challenging, overall it was also found to be an achievement. The initial success of the shift to online has inspired the College to commit to providing up to 25% of instruction through those three modalities going forward. In response to the shift in modalities and the mass adoption of online, hybrid and hyflex models of instruction, the College has also recognized the need to expand services to our community and improve support to foster success. The working group was tasked to explore what that means from the perspective of students, staff and faculty

From the beginning it was understood that the team would need to find both short and long-term challenges and solutions. Based on initial findings many improvements have already been implemented. Those developments are included in the updates below. But our initial charge included the following:

- Create an existing practice inventory,
- Develop/expand cross campus online learning communities,
- Engage faculty and students for feedback,
- Scale training and instructional design support,
- Build online Student Support,
- Strengthen/build technical support systems,
- Explore online instructional standards and continuous improvement processes, and
- Adapt and adjust key operations (i.e. hybrid scheduling, academic calendars, etc.).

In the pages of this working group update below, the progress report of each sub-group has been included with recommendations for moving forward. Again, it is the intent of the College to maintain the working group for the long-term, but evolve its mission and members in response to findings along the way. In this initial formal progress report, it is understood that this is only the first phase in the effort to foster the strongest possible academic support for all members of the Baruch team. In the months and years ahead, the working group will explore our internal institutional experience and findings along with cutting edge, global research in online learning. It is expected that with the efforts of the Working group and our community we will continue to offer exceptional service to our entire community.

Progress Updates from the Working Groups

Sub-Group #1: Faculty and Staff Engagement and Communications

Dennis Slavin, Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning, Lead

Members of the sub-group:

Professor Allison Hahn, Communication Studies, Weissman School
Professor Sonia Gilbukh, Real Estate, Zicklin School
Professor Samuel Johnson, Psychology, Weissman School, Chair of Faculty Senate
Professor Ted Joyce, Economics and Finance, Zicklin School
Professor Nicholas Sibrava, Psychology, Weissman School
Professor Don Waisanen, Marx School

The four areas that our sub-group was charged with addressing (a-d, above) figure significantly in what became the overarching focus of our work. That focus, limned below, and the analysis and eventual decisions that will be associated with its conclusions, are ongoing.

In March 2020, all instruction at Baruch College (and almost everywhere else) moved online and remained there (with a small number of exceptions) through Spring 2021. Students and faculty were simply told that as of March 23 (?) 2020, classes would take place online, making use of systems such as Blackboard (long used to distribute to student's course materials, such as syllabi and assignments, and to communicate via message and discussion boards) and Zoom, little used until then, but quickly taken up for synchronous teaching by many members of the faculty.

Members of the administration and some faculty at Baruch had long been interested in increasing the amount of online teaching and, since 2013 the college had done so incrementally: by Fall 2019 the goal of 20% set in the college's Strategic Plan of 2013-2019 for online and hybrid instruction had nearly been reached.¹ But by the end of March 2020, virtually overnight, 100% of classes at Baruch were being taught online.

Teaching and Learning During the Pandemic

This report will not rehearse the years of scholarly research on online teaching. We will focus on the conclusion reached by many such studies related to student assessment, in brief: that students who entered such classes with high grade point averages tended to receive grades in the online classes that were as good or better as the GPAs they came in with, and that students with lower GPAs were likely to achieve grades that were comparable or lower than the ones they had achieved in face-to-face classes. In other words, in multiple studies, including at Baruch College, the performance gap between the two groups has tended to widen.²

¹ The percentage of "online instruction" may be measured in different ways (e.g., number of courses, sections, numbers/percentage of students taking classes, etc.) with somewhat different results. Our Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) measured several of these, concluding that from 2013-2019 there was a gradual increase from less than 5% to the neighborhood of 20%.

² See the excellent double-blind study led by Prof. Ted Joyce of Baruch's Department of Economics and Finance, which included similar results: Ted Joyce, Sean Crockett, David A. Jaeger, Onur Altindag, and Stephen D.

One main focus of our work regards whether this widening gap occurred over the 15 months (March 2020-May 2021) of the pandemic. Did the grade gap between our “best” students and the most challenged students grow? If so, did that correspond to a gap in student learning?

Note that several additional factors might have influenced grades during the pandemic. One factor is that any gap might have been mitigated owing to the emphasis on increased empathy and flexibility that the college and the university quite reasonably urged on our faculty, who might have been more lenient in their grading over the past year (AKA “grade inflation”). Alternatively, of course, struggles by students, both physical and emotional, might have led to lower grades. Another factor that might have militated against the expected gap is the large increase in reported cases of academic dishonesty during the pandemic: this increase also might cloud the grading data.³

But two factors that seem extremely important have perhaps not been adequately discussed. First, the studies over the last decade that have consistently demonstrated this performance gap have focused on courses taught by faculty who in many cases had been trained to teach online and/or who had experience teaching online. In most cases those faculty members had *chosen* to try that mode of instruction. Second, while the students who had enrolled in those online classes over the past decade had chosen to study online—for whatever motivating reasons—Baruch’s students in Spring 2020 had no choice. We must therefore take into account that *in Spring 2020, most students and faculty at Baruch (and elsewhere) moved to online teaching and learning without training and without choice.*

In late May 2020, Institutional Research sent our sub-group data on the grades of roughly 10,000 students taking the same courses (mostly from the Zicklin “core”) in Fall 2019 and Fall 2020. I had requested funding to hire a research assistant to begin to analyze the data, which includes such factors as the student’s GPA and whether they qualify for TAP funding. That assistant will be hired later in the summer, if the funding is forthcoming. Meanwhile Prof. Ted Joyce has volunteered to begin the initial phases of the analysis. We look forward to his results and to beginning a deeper dive in the fall.

The concern here is basic to Baruch’s mission. *At a time when, as an institution, we project increased emphasis on an online teaching and learning environment, a performance gap associated with those modes of instruction would present our students with learning choices that are neither inclusive nor equitable.*

How can we address these issues? Our sub-group has focused on three approaches—doubtless others will emerge over time:

- Preparing students to learn online
- Doing a much better job of getting students to seek help from academic support services
- Improving how we prepare faculty to teach online

O’Connell, “Does classroom time matter,” *Economics of Education Review* 46 (2015) 64-77. The reasons for this disparity in performance are not straightforward, but one suspicion is that students who usually receive high grades are more motivated, more independent learners, and that those with lower GPAs need more of the attention and support that might be available in face-to-face classroom environments.

³ We don’t have final data for Spring 2021, but Baruch’s Office of the Dean of Students reported a sixfold increase in the number of students reported for violation of academic integrity principles in Fall 2020 over Fall 2019.

Preparing students to learn online

Baruch's first-year seminar is an obvious starting point for the first two bullets. This summer, VP King and I plan to discuss integrating them into the seminar. One issue is the propensity of students to disengage from their online classes. This is encouraged by CUNY's insistence that our faculty not require students to use their web cameras: a recurrent theme in faculty discussions has become teaching to a Zoom screen of black boxes, with no feedback from students. Anecdotal reports from faculty suggest that students who *do* turn on their cameras and *do* participate almost invariably perform better than those who do not. While there can be legitimate issues of privacy that prevent some students from turning on their cameras, those are not be pervasive. Students need to get the message that they will learn more ("get better grades") if they turn on their cameras and participate in discussions. Student training also needs to include the time management and technical skills that go with online learning.

Academic support services

The second bullet relates to the extraordinary assistance available through Baruch's tutoring center (SACC), Writing Center, and Tools for Clear Speech program. The table below represents the work of the Writing Center in Fall 2020 in response to Baruch's "Early Alert" system, in which faculty teaching classes with first-year students report to the college students who are struggling early in the semester. The students are directed to our academic support services (the largest number are Math students directed to SACC) and the services reach out to those students.

The table below makes clear the differences in performance among the students in the left-hand column, who attended the Writing Center, with those on the right who did not. The differences in grades and withdrawal rates (both **emboldened** in the table) are stark.

The Impact of Writing Center support⁴

Fall 2020: Students with academic alerts in English			
Visited the Writing Center		Did not visit	
# of students	15	# of Students	146
Average grade	3.16 (B/B+)	Average grade	2.24 (C/C+)
Pass rate:	86.67% (13)	Pass rate:	45.89% (67)
Withdrawal rate:	6.67% (1)	Withdrawal rate:	45.21% (66)
Fail rate:	0.00%	Fail rate:	2.74% (4)
NC rate:	6.67% (1)	NC rate:	6.16% (9)

The table includes a relatively small sample of students (161), but "these numbers mirror similar patterns across larger samples: about 10% of the 5,000 students enrolled in English courses each semester visit the Writing Center, and those who visit also have higher GPAs and lower withdrawal rates."⁵

⁴ This table was compiled by Dr. Diana Hamilton, Director of Baruch's Writing Center.

⁵ The quoted passage is from Dr. Hamilton, who adds "While we certainly cannot assume a causal relationship between tutoring and academic success, this correlation suggests that we should keep encouraging students to seek one-to-one support."

As I implied above, getting the message to students that *tutoring works* will be one of the goals of our first-year seminar starting in Fall 2021. But the need to communicate with the students' instructors is at least as strong: I am meeting this week with members of OCMPA and several faculty to discuss general communications with faculty.

Preparing faculty to teach online

Our sub-group's discussions about how to improve faculty preparation to teach online were in conjunction with Allison Lehr Samuels, Director of the CTL and leader of sub-group #4. We heartily support her proposal to create such a course and to offer stipends to faculty who take the seminar; we endorse her request for funding to that end. We further suggest that the seminar be mandatory—at least for faculty such as those discussed in the next section. Perhaps a brief “refresher” course should be required for all faculty teaching online.

Towards Oversight of Online Classes

Another major issue discussed at length by our committee was the general one of oversight of online classes. Anecdotal evidence from students and many faculty, especially chairs, strongly suggested that some members of the Baruch faculty had particular difficulty in adapting to online modes of instruction—especially to synchronous instruction—from the end of March through the end of the semester on May 2020. In the summer of 2020, tremendous support for faculty with such difficulties, especially technical difficulties, was forthcoming with the help of teaching assistants (BCTC was particularly supportive) and experienced colleagues.

To some extent those problems were addressed by the assistance provided in Fall 2020. But it can't be surprising that complaints against some members of our faculty continued to reach the ears of chairs and other administrators throughout Spring 2021. Our sub-group discussed these issues with colleagues in our schools and departments and came up with the following recommendations for overseeing online instruction as we move over the next two semesters away from the need to teach exclusively online.

Recommendations of Sub-Group #1⁶

1. Departments should create an online review committee(s) to evaluate proposals to teach online. This could begin in the early fall so as to have some impact on the spring scheduling.
2. One of the charges of the committees would be that they meet with the CTL to discuss best practices as an aid to learning how to evaluate course proposals and to make suggestions.
3. Faculty with poor teaching evaluations and peer evaluations should not be allowed to teach large sections online

⁶ This version of our recommendations is an edited version of the one that we circulated to chairs in April 2021, discussed at the chairs' meeting. The edits are based on feedback, mostly from department chairs, including a survey sent to the chairs in May.

4. Faculty with poor teaching evaluations but who for health reasons will not teach in person should be assigned multiple sections of smaller classes. Rewarding poor teaching with large jumbo sections is particularly harmful to students. Given that online classes are not restricted by physical space, assigning multiple small classes makes this approach to scheduling feasible and encourages faculty to improve their pedagogy.
5. To help ensure student learning (and to help measure it), we should push departments with large sections of introductory business courses to give common finals where possible. Common finals not only provide supervision of sections taught by adjuncts, but they push faculty with course coordinators to interact and structure a common curriculum, a salutatory exercise.

As alluded to in #3 and #4, above, the contractual features in place to evaluate teaching (peer observations and student evaluations) remain in force and should figure prominently in departmental decisions on scheduling. In many departments, senior faculty who have not been the subject of peer evaluation for many years should be observed and evaluated, and the results of those evaluations should inform decisions on online teaching. Observers themselves should undergo training in how to evaluate online classes.⁷

We anticipate pushback on grounds of academic freedom and restrictions of our collective bargaining agreement. But the sub-group believes strongly that academic freedom is not a license for negligent teaching. A department has not just the right, but the obligation to ensure a minimal level of quality instruction based on best practices that have evolved over time. And our contract gives chairs and the department executive committees great leeway in structuring departmental scheduling and grades.

→ We call for the support from Baruch's administrative units. Dean's offices can use carrots and sticks to encourage departments to adopt these changes. Buy-in from administrators and departments will be key. Endorsement from department and school executive committees should be sought with annual updates from those committees as to progress and issues.

“Minimum Expectations”

In April of 2020, the provost asked an ad hoc committee of administrators and faculty to create a document that would set out basic guidelines for online teaching, including definitions of terms and explication of CUNY's restrictions. “Minimum Expectations for Teaching in a Distance Learning Environment During COVID-19” was sent campus-wide at the end of May. Over the summer, based on consultation with department chairs and other faculty, the document was revised and re-circulated in August as “Guidelines for Teaching in a Distance Learning Environment During COVID-19.”

→ We suggest that another version of the guidelines, based on what we have learned during AY 2020-21, be written and circulated to all Baruch faculty before Fall 2021 begins.

Other Recommendations

Members of sub-group were asked to do their own informal research by talking with colleagues at Baruch and other colleges. Many ideas and recommendations flowed from these

⁷ Our contract allows for observing senior faculty, albeit not as regularly as observations of faculty within their first ten semesters.

conversations and from explorations of the web and other resources. The list below, in no particular order, includes some of the recommendations featured above simply because they came up multiple times though outreach to faculty:

- Departmental committees should review proposals to teach online
- We should make some form of faculty training to teach online mandatory, including regular updates/refreshers
- We should make some form of training mandatory for faculty who are peer observers
- We should make some form of training mandatory for students—training in technological skills as well as time management
- Students who fell behind last year might be reluctant to return to campus. We owe those students mentoring opportunities with faculty and some baseline expectations for quality in online classes.
- Department chairs should be able to approve whether a faculty member can teach online or in person, perhaps on the basis of teaching evaluations: this approach should be easy to implement and will incentivize online instructors to improve their teaching.
- The student evaluation should add questions that can help the chairs make decisions regarding teaching online, such as “Do you think you would have learned more had this class been held in person?”
- We need to develop mechanisms to get information back to campus decision makers about the impact of the choices they make so that adjustments on the fly can be made or unintended consequences can be addressed. Perhaps we need ways in place for faculty to send feedback to executives and department heads regarding how they experience changes in operation or procedures on campus.
- Everyone acknowledges that the faculty is overwhelmed by the volume of communications from administrative offices and departments. What can we do to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of campus-wide communications?
- Executive MBA and MPA classes want NO online classes from here forward—they pay a lot for our classes and they’re there for the in-person, cohort experience
- An urgent concern is the degree to which students will be at even greater risk of falling through the cracks with regard to advisement and professional development as the college moves more courses online. Students will have fewer opportunities for the type of informal advisement that happens in the classroom and in office hours, and will be at even greater risk of falling through the cracks with regard to advisement and professional development.
 - Perhaps we could require some minimum percentage of in-person courses as part of the degree requirement equation.
 - Instructors will need to be incentivized to engage in advisement and mentorship.
 - Perhaps the college could develop an alumni mentorship program to further assist students to navigate the “unwritten rules” of how to succeed in school and in the early phases of their career and job search.
- If it is indeed true that students with higher GPAs thrive in online classes while students with lower GPAs struggle, perhaps there should be a GPA cut-off: those above that number may take online courses; those with lower GPAs who wish to take online courses may do so only if they sign up for regular tutoring. (Clearly, the details of this would need to be worked out, but we do not believe that a low GPA should bar a student from the online experience.)

Sub-Group #2: Technical and Software Infrastructure

Arthur Downing, VP for Information Services and Dean of the Library – Lead
Allison Lehr Samuels, Director of Center for Teaching and Learning

In addition to the President’s Cabinet, the following members of the Baruch College community have participated in the planning and implementation of the work described in this report.

I. Alarcon	Assoc. Director, Technology Services, MSPIA
J. Albanese	Manager, Instructional Spaces, BCTC
A. Arcelay	Director, Enterprise Software and Services, BCTC
D. Cayas	Technology Manager, WSAS
J. Chandler	Director, Technology Support Services, BCTC
M. Finnen	AVP for Finance
T. Gaimaro	Director, Facilities Planning, Campus Facilities & Operations
J. Lynch	Manager, Technology Loan Services, Newman Library
D. Oquendo	Director, Purchasing
M. Richichi	AVP for IT, BCTC
M. Rivers	AVP for Budget and Planning
D. Ruiz	Purchasing Agent, Purchasing Department
G. Smith	Director, Technology Services, ZSB
P. Tejera	Information Security Officer, BCTC
M. Waldman	Head, Collection Management, Newman Library
K. Wolff	Instructional Designer, BCTC
W. Young	Director, IT Infrastructure Services, BCTC

Introduction

Subgroup 2 was charged with addressing technical resources, learning resources, and learning assessment tools. Arthur Downing, Vice President for Information Services & Dean of the Library, and Allison Lehr Samuels, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning formed the core membership of the subgroup. Given the broad scope of the infrastructure issues involved, many colleagues from across the College contributed to the work (See Appendix). The

Subgroup's accomplishments and work that remains to be done are organized by the following ten categories:

- Network Infrastructure
- Communication & Collaboration Software
- Remote Access & Remote Work
- Classrooms
- Equipment for Students, Faculty and Staff
- Software
- Technology Training
- Course Content
- WiFi
- Staffing for Technology Support

I. Network Infrastructure

The planned upgrade of the College's network is the foundation for achieving a wide range of improvements to the campus technology experience and is an essential prerequisite for key components of the hybrid and online instruction initiative, such as HyFlex classrooms. The following projects are currently in progress:

- Field Building (17 Lex) – Installation of fiber optic riser cable from the building's main distribution frame in the data center to equipment racks (intermediate distribution frames) on the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 12th, and 15th floors. Also, 149 CAT 6A copper cabling runs on floors 1-16. The contract has just been awarded to the vendor that will perform the work. In addition to improving performance on the wired network, once this is completed we will be able to install new WiFi access points throughout the building.
- Upgrade of the network core switches in buildings A, B and H – Delivery is expected at the end of August.
- Network Storage Array – The purchase order is with NYC for final review, as this is a Reso-A capital project.
- Edge Switch Upgrades – One-third of the 189 switches have been ordered with delivery expected by September. The remainder should be purchased in FY22.
- Firewall Upgrade – This was completed in spring 2021.

II. Communication & Collaboration Software

The University recently committed to a three-year license extension for Zoom, which will allow us to plan around its assured availability, including the potential for setting up Zoom Rooms to support instructional and administrative videoconferencing. In response to increasing demand the College has acquired additional Zoom licenses specifically for large meetings and webinars.

The Microsoft Exchange Mail system that we host on premises for faculty/staff email should be replaced by Office 365, as we had done for student email years ago. Baruch and other CUNY campuses are working with CUNY CIS on a migration plan. Email is the only module of CUNY's Office 365 that is not available to faculty and staff, which limits the collaborative use of the other modules with students.

We have been encouraging departments to investigate the use of MS Teams. The University is committed to the long-term availability of Teams as part of the Office 365 suite that is available to all students, faculty, and staff. As described in the section on Technology Training below, we achieved strong staff attendance at the Teams training sessions this past year. Some departments have successfully applied Teams to support internal business processes while working remotely. We should find opportunities for those departments to gain recognition for their work, share their accomplishments with other departments, and provide peer support. This will also advance the application of the [70-30 principle](#) at the College.

One of the challenges to be addressed is the ability of staff and faculty to use the College's phone system to place and receive calls from a remote location as if they were on campus. One of the Reso-A capital projects that the University pushed to later years was our migration to a Voice-over-IP (VoIP) system. Even if the project were given the authorization to proceed now, the other components of the network upgrade would have to precede it. Fortunately, cloud-based VoIP has matured sufficiently to provide the College with possible alternatives-- one of those is an integration with MS Teams. The University is close to upgrading our license with Microsoft to allow for this service and Queens College will be piloting Teams for phone service on its campus. In the meantime, BCTC is working with a vendor to purchase a one-year service plan for accounts linked to a group of Baruch phone numbers. The test will be done with the Enrollment Management Division to help advance the one-stop for student services.

III. Remote Access & Remote Work

Whenever possible the College is licensing cloud-based software to enable access from anywhere and avoid the costs associated with on-premises administration. The College has relied on its VPN service to provide faculty and staff with remote access to their desktops. The next batch of laptops distributed to staff for remote work will be specially configured for ease of access to work-related software, VPN use, and other security measures. BCTC is field testing some of these laptops now.

As a long-term strategy the College should implement a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), which many commercial firms use to support a mobile workforce. With a virtualized desktop the application software that would have been installed on the user's device is managed centrally. This ensures that everyone is working from the same, most up-to-date version and accesses the software and its associated files securely. VDI enables organizations to deploy less expensive thin clients and extends the life of laptops and desktops already deployed, because the computing power is provided centrally. This is an important consideration, as the laptops that the College is distributing now are being purchased using one-time funds. Although there are cloud-based VDI services available, the College should take advantage of current one-time funding to build an on-premises VDI now.

For student access to software on desktops in the campus computer labs, BCTC implemented a remote lab application (onlinelabs.baruch.cuny.edu). In the past academic year 2,876 unique students used the service. To remain compliant with the terms of our licensing agreements, the application allows for only as many simultaneous users as there are desktops on which the software is loaded. In addition to supporting access during the past year when the labs have

been closed, it has introduced 24-hour remote access on a permanent basis. When the College returns to 100% occupancy there is the possibility that the combined number of simultaneous onsite and remote users could exceed the number of lab computers, which would deny access to some users at peak use times. For that reason, student access to lab software should also be part of the planning for VDI.

IV. Classrooms

There are 278 spaces in which the Registrar schedules classes.⁸ They fall into the general categories listed in Tables 1 and 2 below. The seating capacities and room types will help us to estimate the equipment and installation costs for upgrades based on the specifications that we already have for rooms according to size and function.

Table 1. Seating Capacity in Rooms Designated for Instruction

Capacity	Number
8-18	37
20-29	112
30-39	33
40-49	29
50-59	29
60-85	17
100-199	11
200+	10

Table 2. Types of Rooms Designated for Instruction

Type of Room	Quantity
Classroom	158
Conference Room (including Conference Center)	44
Computer Lab	36
Science Lab	19
Lecture Hall	5
Other (performance space, auditorium, etc.)	16

The presentation equipment in these rooms is overdue for replacement, with some equipment 12 years old. To support instruction that will increasingly involve a mix of onsite and remote students who must communicate as if they were in the same physical space, a simple swap of new equipment for the legacy units will not suffice. We need to equip them to support interaction among onsite and remote users and correct for acoustic limitations in the rooms (e.g., using multiple displays and enhanced audio systems with microphone arrays). The College is working to equip 5-7 rooms as HyFlex for fall 2021 as listed in Table 3. Some light

⁸ Source: D. Mazzia. Revised Room Listing, May 2020. Supplied by E. Adams, Senior Registrar on June 22, 2021.

construction, electrical work, and cabling are necessary for these rooms to be outfitted to achieve the quality of experience that we are seeking. That work and the difficulty of obtaining the equipment while suppliers are facing heavy demand present a challenge with meeting the target for the fall.

Table 3. HyFlex Classrooms Planned for Fall 2021

Room	Capacity	Primary Users for Instruction
B-12-150	79	ZSB Graduate Courses
B-14-230	50	ZSB Executive Program
B-14-235	50	ZSB Executive Program – may be delayed due to construction
B-14-240	50	ZSB Executive Program
B-14-245	50	ZSB Executive Program – may be delayed due to construction
B-14-270	24	MSPIA Executive Program
B-14-280	24	MSPIA Executive Program

In addition to equipping the HyFlex classrooms, the media services team in BCTC plans to assign cameras and other audiovisual equipment to support faculty whose classes will include a mix of onsite and remote learners.

To address the remaining instructional spaces, the College will need to undertake a large-scale equipment upgrade project similar to the multimillion-dollar effort that Lehman College will be starting with recent approval from the CUNY Board of Trustees.⁹ Fortunately, funding for this project may be available. As Senior Vice Chancellor & CFO Matthew Sapienza stated at the meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee of the Board regarding the Lehman project, “[B]ecause this is related to enhancing distance learning modality, ... it’s the expectation that the majority, if not all of these costs, are going to be eligible to be reimbursed from federal stimulus funds.”¹⁰

V. Equipment for Students, Faculty and Staff

To support online learning in FY21 the College mailed an additional 2,388 pieces of equipment to students and faculty beyond what was already provided during the first few months that the campus was closed. These included laptops, MacBooks, iPads, Chromebooks, WiFi hotspots, Wacom tablets, and other peripherals. The distribution to students was handled via a CUNY form accessible to registered students in CUNYfirst. The form also provides optional survey

⁹ Board of Trustees of The City University of New York Resolution to Authorize the Purchase of Audio Visual Equipment and a Contract with Mason Technologies, Inc. for Services Related to Upgrading Lehman College Classrooms to Networked Digital Hyflex Technology. June 7, 2021. Meeting held June 28. <https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/trustees/meetings-of-the-board/CAL0621rev.pdf>. (p. 38)

¹⁰ M. Sapienza. CUNY Board of Trustees. Committee on Fiscal Affairs, June 7, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D77hORkAs7s> (at 49:48).

questions that allow us to collect more detailed information about our students' technology needs and use. We are using that information to plan for future purchases.

The equipment needs of full-time and adjunct faculty were identified primarily through the deans. We are already in the process of collecting the faculty equipment requests for fall 2021.

The equipment needs of administrative staff are being identified through members of the President's Cabinet. The coordination of the requests at the divisional level is necessary to achieve a cohesive approach to delivering services and the equitable allocation of resources to staff.

VI. Software

By working with the deans of the three schools and their technology coordinators BCTC has identified and licensed the application software that faculty requested for hybrid/online instruction. The only issue that the College needs to take into account is that each purchase requires review and approval of the license agreement by CUNY Legal. This process can require significant lead time, especially if the terms of the license require negotiation with the vendor. There is also the possibility that the vendor's terms may be unacceptable to the University, which will prevent the purchase from proceeding.

VII. Technology Training

Technology training for staff was identified as a priority by the Task Force for the Future. We worked with Human Resources and Cabinet members to encourage staff to attend the training sessions that the University was already offering. Based on a report from CUNY CIS these efforts were successful as a first step. 116 unique participants from Baruch College attended 3 CIS Training webinars each, on average. This placed Baruch attendance well above all other CUNY schools, but still leaves considerable room for growth in staff participation. We will continue to work with the Deans, VPs and the Center for Teaching and Learning to expand delivery of training to staff and faculty. We should also try to foster communities of practice around the use of technology for business processes.

BCTC works closely with Center for Teaching and Learning to coordinate training opportunities so that they are complementary.

As a partnership between BCTC and OCMPA, the Web Content Editors Forum also delivered training to approximately 150 staff across the College who are responsible for creating and maintaining content on our web site. The first session was mandatory to ensure that all content editors know basic WordPress functions and accessibility requirements. The team offered 7 repeat sessions over a 2 month period and now offers it regularly on the 3rd Thursday of the month for new editors. The last forum for this year addressed writing for the Web, creating content for Search Engine Optimization, and understanding Copyright with respect to the use of images.

VIII. Course Content

The College is in the process of equipping a small studio for faculty to record lectures, problem-solving and review sessions, and other types of content for asynchronous instruction. The room, H-308 in the Information Technology Building, will have recording equipment along with interactive displays, teleprompter, green screen, and glass whiteboard. The specifications for the room were developed with the Center for Teaching and Learning and a detailed design was provided by an audiovisual consulting firm. The equipment will be purchased in early FY22.

The College has also purchased 5 portable recording packages of equipment developed selected by the Center for Teaching and Learning. These will be available for loan to faculty in fall 2021.

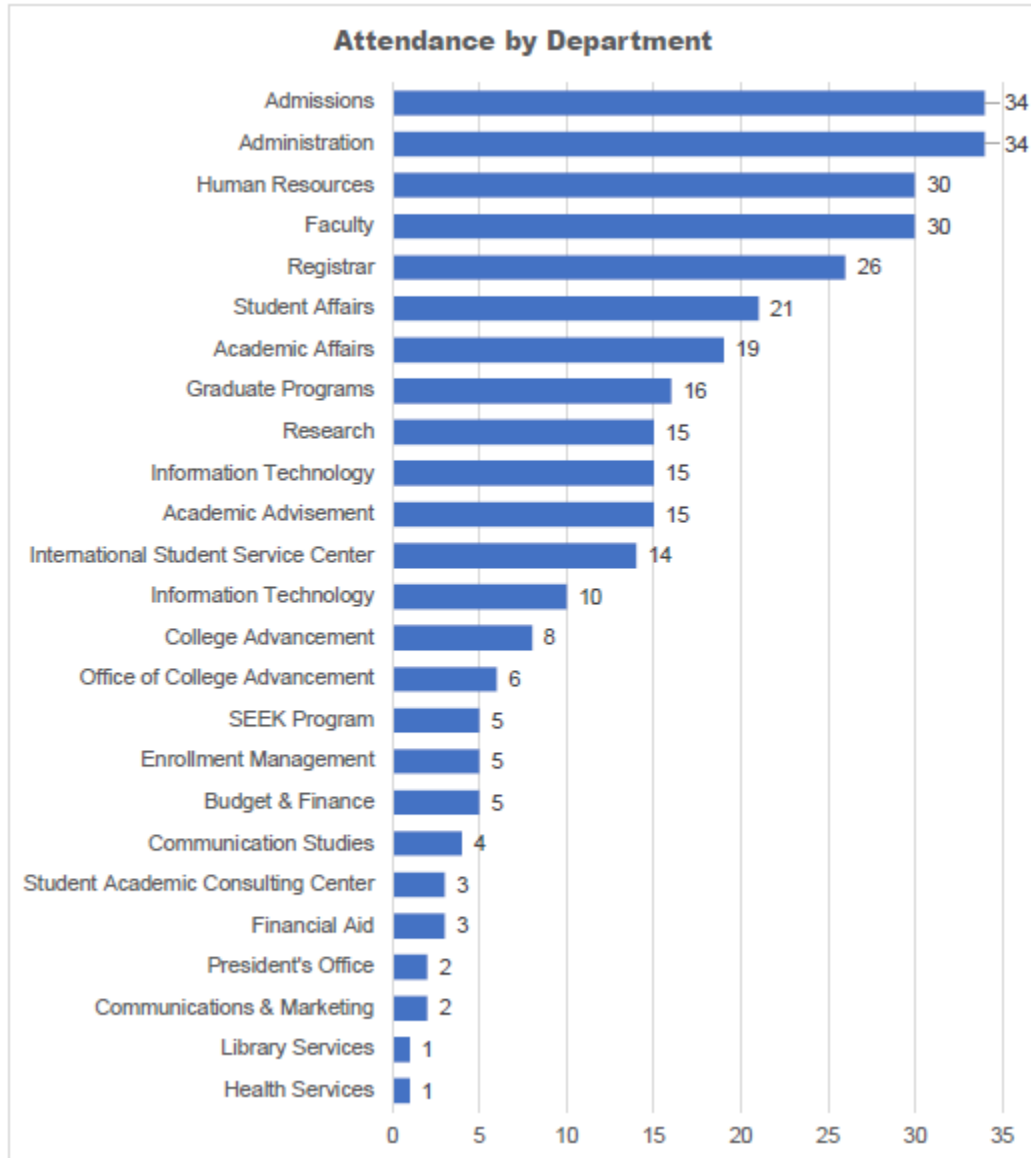
BCTC is developing procedures to assist faculty with managing the storage of their recorded course content, whether recorded using Zoom, portable equipment, or the planned studio.

The College must also be prepared to invest in additional OER initiatives and licensed resources as sources of content. Since FY2018 the Governor's budget has included \$4,000,000 annually to support Open Educational Resource (OER) initiatives at CUNY. The Center for Teaching and Learning has led Baruch College's work with its portion of the funds. The work accomplished by the faculty has yielded resources and approaches to teaching that support zero textbook cost and hybrid/online instruction. The Library will also consult with faculty to identify OER in their discipline areas. We do not know when the funding from New York State will end.

The rapid shift to online instruction due to Covid-19 increased the demand for certain types of digital collections from the Library. For example, there was a sharp increase in the use of licensed films for streaming use in courses. We should take advantage of the availability of one-time funds to purchase rights to digital collections that can support hybrid and online teaching (e.g., backfiles of journals, business cases, research archives, streaming film collections).

Table 3. CUNY CIST Training Attendance in AY2020-21

Source: Anastasiya Fatiy, Technology Training Manager, CUNY CIS, May 26, 2020.



Note: Department names were assigned by CUNY CIS based on information obtained at registration.

IX. WiFi

The necessity of delivering all instruction online and working entirely remotely due to Covid-19 revealed some critical issues regarding WiFi that are relevant to long-term planning around hybrid/online instruction. First, many Baruch students do not have sufficient Internet service at

home to participate effectively in online courses. They have depended on being on campus or at work for high-speed Internet service or have relied on their cell phones for connectivity. As a result, the College has loaned 600 WiFi hotspots to students with data plans that are active for another year. We need to plan for the type of support we will be able to provide once CARES reimbursement expires.

Some hotspots have also been distributed to faculty who have reported being unable to deliver online instruction with the limitations of their home service. Some of this may be due to the special circumstances posed by Covid-19, which caused entire families to be at home competing for limited bandwidth. Moreover, faculty did not have time to prepare for asynchronous delivery of course content, so they relied on a synchronous lecture format, which requires greater Internet resources. The College cannot plan on providing home Internet service to instructors in the long-term. Going forward the schools will need to ensure that full-time and adjunct faculty who elect to teach an online course from off-campus, do so with the understanding that they have the requisite Internet service to deliver the course effectively.

The discussions with faculty who are preparing to teach HyFlex courses in fall 2021 indicated that robust WiFi service in the classroom will be an important part of class interaction. There are scenarios where students will be expected to use their laptops to engage with classmates who are co-present in the room and those who are attending remotely. They may need to be working with cloud-based application software or in virtual collaboration environments. For this reason, the classroom upgrade project will include the enhancement of WiFi capability. The Reso-A project to upgrade the network infrastructure in the Field Building described in Section I above will make it possible to provide that same capability there.

X. Staffing for Technology Support

The Task Force for the Future recommended that the following positions be added in BCTC to support hybrid/online instruction:¹¹

- One Senior Level Classroom Support person
- Several additional technologists in BCTC that are critical for College operations
- Additional help desk personnel
- Full-time/part-time personnel to handle logistics of hardware allocation to faculty/students
- Dedicated full-time academic software specialist
- Full-time documentation and training specialist
- Additional part-time staff to be able to provide on-demand phone support for instructors, staff, and students in online courses and work

The FY22 financial plan for BCTC includes several full-time positions to address some of these areas. Pending approval from the CUNY Vacancy Review Board, these positions will be recruited using existing budget; no additional funding was received. A vacant help desk position

¹¹ Baruch Fall 2020 and Beyond: A secondary report of Baruch's Task Force for the Future. September 2020, p.11. <https://president.baruch.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2021/01/Phase-Two-Task-Force-Report-Final-REV-1.12.2020.pdf>

will be restored, which will enable BCTC to extend Zoom-based help from 2 days per week to 5. Two media services technicians will be hired; one will focus on the upgrade of the classrooms. The student technology fee plan includes part-time student staff in the HyFlex classrooms to provide immediate assistance to instructors. A full-time Blackboard assistant will be recruited for the Instruction technology team to accelerate the creation of course shells, respond more quickly to faculty requests, and help faculty with Blackboard features and settings that they have not used before.

The need to address the remaining staffing deficiencies will remain a priority. Also, there needs to be a formal review of the distribution of support between BCTC and the school technology teams to ensure that faculty teaching hybrid and online courses receive the best possible service.

Sub-Group #3: Student Support Infrastructure

Mary Gorman, Vice President for Enrollment Management & Strategic Academic Initiatives –
Lead

The Working Sub-Group includes:

Edward Adams, Senior Registrar

David Birdsell, Dean, Marxe School of Public and International Affairs

H. Fenwick Huss, Dean, Zicklin School of Business

Art King, Vice President for Student Affairs

Jessica Lang, Interim Dean of the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences

Kannan Mohan, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Innovation, Zicklin School of
Business

Scheduling: Fall 2021

Baruch College opened registration for Fall 2021 in early April, ahead of most CUNY campuses and with a particularly ambitious schedule of classes (relative to the pandemic) that included approximately one-third of sections fully in-person, and an additional almost 15% in hybrid format. Almost two months later, in light of improving pandemic conditions and a new proposed vaccine mandate for students, the CUNY Chancellor challenged campuses to aim to offer a minimum of 60% of courses either in-person or in hybrid format for the spring semester. Led chiefly by members of the sub-committee, more than 300 additional sections (or 15% of all offerings) were converted from fully online to hybrid or in-person offerings. As of this writing, 32.87% of Fall sections at Baruch will be in-person, a larger proportion than any of the senior or community colleges in CUNY, despite the dense physical layout of the campus. In addition, 27.36% of sections will be hybrid, for a combined 60.23%, making Baruch one of very few campuses to meet the Chancellor's target.

Scheduling activity for the Spring 2022 semester has already begun, with a current goal of 75% of course offerings to be fully in person or hybrid.

Technology

The Office of the Registrar will compile the Spring 2022 scheduled primarily through CUNY's recently-acquired scheduling software, Coursedog. In future semesters, Coursedog will permit departmental and deans' office-based schedulers to create their schedules directly into the system, eventually eliminating the need for the Registrar's office to act as intermediary for

scheduling functions other than room assignments. Coursedog training for faculty and staff in the academic units will begin in July.

For the past year, students have been able to make use of Schedule Builder, which offers a more user-friendly interface for students to select classes than doing so directly in CUNYfirst. Next term's registration period beginning in October for Spring 2022, all student registration activity will take place through Schedule Builder.

Test Center Pilot

As Baruch moves forward into a future that will inevitably include a substantial portion of classes being offered in remote and hybrid modality, an interest in providing instructors the option to offer in-person exams for remote courses has arisen. Fall 2021 will see a modest pilot for such an effort. In total, 28 sections will participate: eight from the Mathematics department in the Weissman School, and 20 from the Zicklin School, including 13 sections of Economics 1001, and seven others from across four disciplines. Some sections will require in-person exams (students are apprised of this in advance), while others will offer a choice between an in-person exam or a remote exam under electronic surveillance (again, with advance notice). The offices of the Registrar and Testing & Evaluation, as well as BCTC, will provide support to this effort.

If the pilot is successful and expanding a testing center concept to scale is deemed desirable, a significant investment of dedicated space will be required (and likely some human resource investment as well); the College does not currently have the capacity to accommodate a large-scale testing center.

Student Support Infrastructure

EAB Navigate

CUNY contracted with EAB some three years ago for their student success platform, Navigate, and implementation began approximately two and a half years ago. Baruch was a "wave 3" school in this implementation, and as such did not begin roll-out until after the start of the pandemic lockdown. Nonetheless, the team moved swiftly, and the tool could not have arrived at a better time. When fully implemented, Navigate will provide not only predictive analytics for academic advisement (it was originally designed as an academic advising software), but appointment scheduling and record-keeping functions for a wide variety of student service areas. Navigate also offers a student portal that can highlight specific/personalized student success action items for the user, but also allow students to access up to date information about activities and events on campus. Navigate also allows for push messaging through email, text, and/or the student portal to students around any topic the institution deems appropriate – from reminders about upcoming deadlines (e.g. course withdrawals), to-do items (e.g. pick up your campus ID card!), to appointment campaigns launched by individual faculty or staff users (e.g. any student on a particular advisor's caseload who is currently on academic probation). With these communications capabilities, widespread adoption of Navigate by students will mitigate

the need for College administrators to rely heavily on the current outdated and difficult to use CRM, while CUNY enters its third year of seeking a replacement.

Baruch launched Navigate in the middle of the Fall 2020 semester, initially to undergraduates only and with users in Undergraduate Advisement & Orientation, SEEK, Honors Program, and Student Success offices. By winter, graduate students had been added to the platform, and access was expanded to include graduate program staff in all three schools, as well as undergraduate studies offices in Zicklin and Marxe. In the spring, a small pilot around specific course interventions involving a handful of Zicklin faculty was launched. The College's traditional "Early Alert" interventions for first semester undergraduates migrated onto Navigate in Spring as well.

To date, almost 12,000 Baruch students have downloaded the Navigate app, and more than 8,000 academic advising appointments were made through Navigate in the Spring 2021 semester alone. We are, at the moment, the second heaviest users of Navigate in CUNY, despite being 18 months behind most of the larger campuses in implementation.

As we prepare for a return to campus in August, and mindful of the need to avoid long lines and crowded conditions, the Navigate implementation team is moving aggressively to roll out appointment-making capabilities in the app to as many student-facing areas as possible. ISSC, Financial Aid Services, the Bursar, the ID Center, Library, and the Registrar are all slotted to be included by, or just after, the start of the fall semester.

BernieBot

Early in Fall 2020, the College also piloted an artificial intelligence-driven chat function across six student-facing websites: Undergraduate Admissions, Financial Aid Services, Undergraduate Advisement & Orientation, International Student Services, Testing & Evaluation, and Registrar. The launch was a partnership between the CIO and EMSAI division; the vendor, Ivy, was part of a larger CUNY contract. Since launch, the Bot has fielded 22,443 queries, with a 94% (and improving) accuracy rate; the largest number of queries came, not surprisingly, to Undergraduate Admissions (8,716), with a 95% accuracy rate, followed by Registrar (7,930, also 95%).

In Spring, demos of the BernieBot's capabilities were held for key decision-makers in Student Affairs, Academic Affairs (including three schools), and Finance & Administration. Interest in expanding the Bot to cover all student-facing areas of the Baruch website was overwhelming. Purchasing/vendor negotiations are currently underway. Fully implemented, the BernieBot will allow students and other visitors to access information on demand 24/7. In the coming academic year, the Bot will also begin to offer individualized information (e.g. bursar bill or GPA calculation) to authenticated users; some student service areas may also opt to run live-chat (i.e., human-staffed) sessions through the BernieBot.

One Stop Shop

Experiences throughout the past academic year including departmental virtual front desk operations; special pop-up virtual information events put on via collaborations through EMSAI and Student Affairs; and the emergency info hub prompted by the abrupt eleventh hour shift in CUNY's academic policy around CR/NC at the end of Fall 2020, have laid significant groundwork for a modest virtual one-stop shop effort that launched late in the Spring 2021 semester. Currently operating two hours per day, and through goodwill staffing by the participating student service offices, the yet-to-be-named one stop has been serving a steady stream of students who simply aren't sure where to turn for help.

So far, the emphasis has been on academic and financial matters, with Undergraduate Academic Advisement, Registrar, Bursar, and Enrollment Management and/or Financial Aid participating in every session to date. During the week in June when the shift in fall course modalities was announced to students, participants also included representatives from the undergraduate program offices in Weissman and Zicklin. As July approaches, the Dean of Students office (Student Affairs) will be incorporated into the virtual operation, greatly expanding the range of topics that can be addressed swiftly and easily by the one stop. Participating staff all speak very positively of the experience, and are enthusiastic about the cross-campus collaboration and the informal cross-training it affords.

The chief challenge to scaling up the one stop is resources. The desk cannot operate all day every day, as it should, without dedicated staff. Modestly, one full-time professional to manage and oversee perhaps a half-dozen well-trained part-time (student?) staff, will be necessary to fully launch. A simultaneous in-person and virtual one-stop will require more investment in staff, as well as the identification of space to house such a service. Some part of the soon-to-be-vacated bookstore space would be ideal for both a one stop and welcome center.

Website

BCTC and OCMPA completed the Baruch website migration to WordPress this past winter. The new platform allows local page owners to update content quickly and easily, ideally in service of better, more timely, and more accessible information for students and other visitors. Both the 2020 Middle States accreditation site visit team and the Task Force for the Future identified the College's website as a weakness to be addressed, in particular for students operating in a remote and likely permanently hybrid environment.

Important first steps toward improving usability include the complete overhaul of the Student landing page <https://students.baruch.cuny.edu/> around frequent activity rather than department (managed by EMSAI, but encompassing a broad swath of college functions), and professional development for website content editors – most of whom have little, if any, relevant experience – coordinated by OCMPA.

Looking Ahead

The president challenges us as a community to “establish a fully integrated model for Student Success—including physical and digital one-stop-shop where students experience seamless and integrated support from academic advising to financial aid, life coaching, and career services and development so their distinctive needs and aspirations can be met.” We have made important progress to lay the foundation for such a model, but important decisions – about philosophy, form, and funding – remain to be made.

Sub-Group #4: Training and Instructional Design Infrastructure

Group Lead: Allison Lehr Samuels, Director of Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Members: Deans David Birdsell, Fenwick Huss, and Jessica Lang

Background:

This scope of responsibilities for this group include:

- Training and Instructions**
- Instructional Design Resources** (Synchronous/Asynchronous)
- Learning Resources (Faculty support)

Over the spring 2021 semester the following questions guided the group's approach and progress:

- In a post-COVID world what should online and hybrid instruction be like?
- What will be our best practices?
- What will we need to carry out these best practices?
- Over time how can we constantly and gently evolve in ways that makes sense for us, our students, and discipline?
- Is there any way we can start piloting some of these ideas in Fall 21?

To start answering these questions, we reached out to faculty, spoke with senior administrators, attended department meetings, and referred to feedback from student surveys. We wanted to know the lessons learned from our time teaching online during COVID and use this as a foundation for thinking about the future.

From our conversations with faculty, the following themes surfaced and fell into two categories: teaching and administrative/policy questions.

Teaching:

- Crave student engagement and social interaction in their teaching
- Anxious about academic integrity
- Fear for the well-being of our students
- Question the pros and cons of being flexible with students: Does offering a lot of flexibility today hurt or help our students in the long-run? Will students be ready to meet the norms of the white-collar traditional workplace? How can we be flexibility and not dilute student learning and the quality of a Baruch education?
- Desire that we articulate communication norms: how do we (students, faculty, and staff) communicate with each other in a way that is constructive, professional, and respectful?
- Wonder what we mean by "high quality instruction"

Administrative/Policy:

- Appreciate the need to start defining how we do things, yet want to ensure that our process is not top-down and is flexible to department/local needs
- Request clarity about faculty intellectual property rights (i.e. work for hire policies, CUNY's IP policy on regular teaching, impact of using CUNY-provided digital tools, etc.)
- Worry how to manage increasing class sizes while trying to promoting interaction and student engagement

These conversations shaped the activities of our working group, informing our priorities, recommendations, and planned activities.

Spring 2021 Accomplishments

In addition to the above outreach and research, progress was made in carrying out some of recommendations made by the Task Force for the Future. These include:

- CTL hired 2 FTE (Associate Director and Digital Pedagogy Specials in Synchronous Learning)
- Proposed conversion of CTL classroom space into Hyflex space
- BCTC and CTL launch Baruch cohort of CUNY HyFlex Pilot (8 faculty, 10 courses, 2 schools)
- CTL deployed the COVID-19 Spring 2021 Student Experience Survey to learn about the experience of students taking courses in the Spring 2021, Fall 2020, Spring 2020, and Summer 2020 semesters
- Administered April cohort of CUNY Central/School of Professional Studies "Online Teaching Essentials" (171 faculty participated from Spring 2020 – Spring 2021)
- Support the Office of Provost to refine Baruch's Modes of Instruction for W22/SP22 classes
- Held the "[CTL Faculty Teaching Innovations Showcase](#)", a series that highlights teaching innovations that have emerged or solidified in the transition to online teaching
- Ran the Spring 2021 OER Seminar which included modules on backwards course design, accessibility and intellectual property (15 faculty of whom 7 converted a course to "zero textbook cost" or "lower textbook cost")

Summer 2021 Plans

Over the summer, work will be done in the following areas:

- BCTC and CTL launch Baruch HyFlex Pilot (augments CUNY HyFlex initiative)
- Administer July cohort of CUNY SPS "Online Teaching Essentials" (20 faculty admitted)
- Pilot scaled up CTL faculty development seminar "[Getting Ready for Fall 2021 – Fostering Student Engagement](#)" that encourages participants to interact with local academic and student affairs resources (project 57 participants who will be paid \$500 upon successful completion)

- Offer faculty development workshops (from August 2020 through May 2021 over 130 faculty workshops were developed and offered by the CTL with a primary focus on the transition to distance learning)
- Identify what should be included in Blogs@Baruch and Blackboard course templates
- Update the following digital resources:
 - Student Guide to Online and Hybrid Learning (seeking input from units across college)
 - [Teaching in the Time of COVID-19](#): Resources for Maintaining Instructional Continuity during COVID-19
 - [Teaching Online Guide](#): an asynchronous guide to developing an online course in 4-weeks
 - [Teaching with Zoom @ Baruch College Guide](#)
 - [Teach Hybrid](#)
- Create a FAQ regarding policies for Fall 2021 for each instruction mode
- Develop further guidance on how faculty AND students develop a constructive, professional, and respectful online presence

Longer-term plans

We anticipate that the working group will continue its activities in Fall 2021 and future semesters. Preliminary plans include:

- Define “high quality online instruction” (Update “best practices” August 2020 document)
- CTL revise and offer scaled up Hybrid Seminar with a focus on Experiential Learning
- Review Faculty Peer Course Evaluation process
- Consolidate and expand Academic Integrity resources
- Continue to identify current resources and initiatives across Baruch and CUNY
- Collaborate with school assessment leads and faculty to start discussion of how to create a flexible rubric that evaluates the quality that curriculum committees might adapt

Challenges

During the course of our work several key challenges emerged. By surfacing them, we hope to figure out solutions to more deeply address them in the future.

Immediate challenges include:

- Shifts in policy from CUNY and the state (i.e. use of web camera, etc.): can cause confusion, requires updates on how we support our faculty, and revision of digital resources
- Not all faculty know of how to apply current guidelines, policies, and best practices to the F2F, Hybrid and Online modalities for the Fall

- Feedback loops - not everyone consistently reads their email, not everyone who is relevant is part of conversations due to administrative structures
- Academic Integrity

Longer term challenges include:

- Lack of institutional definition of “high quality online and hybrid instruction” and inconsistent faculty teaching evaluation practices lead to quality control challenges
- Ambiguous importance of teaching in the P&B process impacts the level of faculty participation in faculty development offerings
- Scheduling of online/hybrid classes can be based upon what is convenient for the instructor, not what is good for the student and department life
- CTL dependence on grant funding prevents consistent yearly programming open to all faculty (versus grant-funded programming for specific faculty groups)

Recommendations

By focusing on these key areas in the months ahead we believe further progress can be made to efficiently meet our goals:

- Focus on defining “high quality online instruction” and Faculty Peer Course Evaluation process
 - Work with departmental curriculum committees
 - Update “best practices” August 2020 document
- Articulate course scheduling priorities and norms to balance faculty preference and ability; student preference and need; and a vibrant virtual and on-campus departmental and campus life
- Assert importance of teaching in the P&B process

CONCLUSION

Each of the reports above outlines the findings of the sub-groups along with their recommendations for next steps. At this point in the process our next steps will focus on implementation and the evolution of the team to respond to moving back on campus while maintaining the progress we have made in the online environment. The working group and subcommittees will continue to reach out to students, faculty and staff to ensure Baruch College remains an academically rigorous institution dedicated to continuous improvement.

It will be remiss if we do not recognize the contributions made by a huge number of faculty and staff who have been consulted in the process of each subgroup work. Also, we need to acknowledge the fact that the College has developed tremendous amount of institutional knowledge and best practices in hybrid/online teaching and learning. During the transition to online teaching, it became clear that many units and divisions took the initiative to work together across the college to develop and support various instructional modality innovations on campus despite the very difficult circumstances.

Credits should go to Baruch faculty and staff that made it possible to convert mostly in-person classes into online pedagogy over a very short period of time in Spring 2020 and had to teach and support learning virtually for the past academic year of 2020-2021. Collectively, the faculty and staff who not only survived but also innovated in hybrid and online teaching modalities and those accumulated capabilities should be an asset to the next stage of hybrid/online working group work.

In the spirit of 'A Dress Rehearsal for the Future' that President David Wu outlined in his most recent blog post, the coming academic year of 2021-2022 will give us the ample opportunity to experiment different instructional modalities by taking advantage of instructional technologies which have emerged during the pandemic challenges. One of the most urgent issues will be to establish comparable learning outcomes of hybrid/online teaching modalities to the traditional in-person teaching modality while promoting the cross campus collaboration and best practices that support student success and learning that have emerged from the pandemic.