

C-19 Innovation Team Outputs

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TO: C-19 Innovation Team

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SUBJECT: Design Sprint output

BACKGROUND: The C-19 Innovation Team, organized by Professor J.P. Stephens, formed as a team of faculty, staff, and students to augment the work of various [FSCUE committees](#), seeking to garner additional student perspective as input for generating ideas to “Enhance the CWRU 2020-2021 Student Experience.” Particular attention focused on identifying “gaps” which might be otherwise overlooked. As a member of the team, I volunteered to facilitate three separate Design Sprints via Zoom with undergraduates who had taken my MGMT201 class in past semesters (hereafter referred to as “sessions”). This document serves to share key findings from these sessions and to offer a set of recommendations for enhancing the student experience during a period of time when college life will incorporate significant virtual components.

FOCUS: The focus of these sessions—like the aim of the committee itself—was to identify opportunities and not solve problems, as plenty of other work has necessarily focused on critical operational problems to be addresses. As such, the goal was to identify (low-cost or no cost) “Quick Hit” ideas to help overcome elements of pre-corona crisis campus life which will be missing in the 2020-2021 academic year. Wanted were new experiential aspects of student life to introduce that were not or could not be offered in purely face-to-face environment. Instead of trying to just replicate or replace past practices—one likely to be poor substitutions for the past, the effort instead placed focus on generating unique experiences to help define a new and better future—if not better than before, certainly better than would occur if these experiences were no to be introduced

PROCESS: Sessions employed the commonly used Design Sprint process of Understand-Converge-Diverge-Build-Test. Understanding of the “student experience” consisted of respecting each student-participant’s tacit knowledge as CWRU students, allowing session time to wholly devoted to the Converge step, i.e. generating ideas. For this, the Six Thinking Hats technique was predominantly, in combination with a handful of other facilitation techniques. The interpretive work crafting this memo serves as the Converge step (or beginnings of it), with Build and Test to be conducted for any recommendations selected for implementation.

CONCLUSIONS: Employing these five *Guiding Experience Principles* will be critical to providing enhanced student experiences in 2020-2021:

1) Maximize Accessibility (MA) – Create opportunities to provide students with unprecedented access to experiences not previously offered (or operationally infeasible) in traditional face-to-face settings.

2) Leverage Outdoor Spaces (OS) – Utilize outside spaces (parking lots, rooftops, athletic fields, green spaces, and particularly the Quad) as places to experience a portfolio of activities (at least through the Fall Semester), in lieu of indoor venues.

3) Use the Virtual to Create the Communal (V4C) – Utilize Zoom (and/or other virtual meeting platforms) to offer ways to form and interact in communities heretofore unavailable or neglected.

4) Host Transparent Conversations (TC) – Provide informal platforms for ongoing administration-to-student, faculty-to-student, and student-to-student communications dialogue, not relying solely upon periodically packaged communications and announcements.

5) Invent New Rituals (NR)– Charge student leaders (student government, clubs officers, fraternity/sorority, athletic team captains, etc.) with challenging peers to treat the coming year as time to create new campus rituals to both “mark” the times as well as establish new ongoing traditions.

NEXT STEPS: See the accompanying “Quick Hit” list of specific ideas, guided by these principles, generated in the Design Sprints as means to enhance the 2020-2021 student experience at CWRU.

QUICK HIT IDEAS

Maximize Accessibility (MA)

- Liberalize policies to audit virtual classes, both to survey classes for courses under consideration for future semesters *and* to attend classes from previously taken courses as means to review, refresh, and reinforce learning (above and beyond auditing entire courses). Open such audits to prospective high school students as means to sample Case classes—versus previous limitation to sitting in when visiting campus. (Password protected; perhaps with policy of auditing students in class with video off, actual students with video on.)
- Encourage professors to pair up with other professors, ideally representing two different schools (or departments within schools) for joint Zoom-based office hours, perhaps occurring on weekly or fortnightly basis, at the same designated day of the week and hours of the day (also **V4C** idea). Publish/post schedule for students, and let them “surf” office hours—akin to rules of Open Space

Technology (look it up). Students get to experience initial *cross-discipline* conversations occurring between professors in different fields of study. Professors willing to participate could find own pairings, or be randomly assigned to Zoom rooms each week.

- Akin to TAs, have ZAs—on-call Zoom Assistants to assist professors with technical issues (perhaps as a specialty arm of [U]Tech).
- Provide access to individual and group therapy service.
- Have multi-participant Navigator forums to augment one-on-one counseling,

Outside Spaces (OS) – assume all would have social distance “markers” (properly spaced dots or lines):

- Designate outdoor workout areas with outdoor exercise equipment; could be fenced and locked, or staffed with security.
- Designate areas for outdoor small-group gatherings.
- Create outdoor study areas with socially distanced “Study Chairs.”
- Once weather turns colder, place outdoor heaters and heat lamps at certain spots.
- Designate outdoor eating spots; place picnic tables throughout campus, especially near dining halls.
- Transportation: operate open-air vehicles, such as pedicabs or open-top shuttle buses as alternatives to enclosed Safe Ride vans and buses.
- Conduct socially distanced events outdoors on the Quad: movie nights, concerts, talent shows
- Allow outdoor Jolly Scholar events, extending porch to also include outside area between Thwing Hall and Mather House.
- Designate area(s) for socially distanced tents: some students may be open to residing in a secured “Tent City” (in East Bell Commons, Nord Family Greenway).
- Designate area(s) for socially distanced hammocks (as spots to study)
- Theme kiosks and bulletin boards, versus all having similar array of flyers; example: designate a prominently placed kiosk as the “Joke” board, or as “Postcards from Remote Students” board.
- Encourage clubs and Greek organizations to stage “movable” outdoor events, such as hikes (especially to replace previous genres of indoor social activity).
- Conduct scavenger hunts to “find” objects on a solo or dyad basis (perhaps using Pokéman GO).

Virtual for Communal (V4C) – many of the ideas below are simply a function of creating event-specific Zoom rooms, accessed on a recurring basis:

- Foster virtual dining parties in Zoom, in which students enter designated Zoom “dining rooms” and are assigned dining partners at random using break-room functionality (also **NR** idea). Promote these virtual dining experiences in the pick-up packaging from Dining Services. Nights per week could be themed (e.g., “Pizza Party,” “Vegan Night”) and/or limited to promote participation.
- Ask for on-campus student volunteers willing to be “Pen Pal” with remote students, especially those based internationally.
- Create “V-Volunteering” partnerships with community organizations (via clubs or as alternative to clubs).
- Routinely schedule TED Talk-like presentations from select CWRU professors open to all students, with breakout room afterwards for small group discussions about the talk.
- Offer other virtual cross-culture meetings.
- Crowdsource (ideally with near 100% student participation) an virtual event to generate and vote on Top X slogans for students to use as screensavers, zoom backgrounds, custom-made facemasks, and the like. (One suggestion in Design Sprint: “Don’t Be an Idiot.”) The key is to use this as vehicle to have *student-led* awareness instead of administrative-fed directives.
- Provide platform for student-led cooking classes; schedule to sign-up a host(s).
- Host/sponsor multi-player video game competitions.
- Conduct virtual karaoke events.
- Offer virtual concerts.
- Create 24/7 Zoom-enabled piano room (or guitar), with student sign-ups to play for viewing peers.
- Have students develop and conduct virtual game shows.

Transparent Communications (TC) – assume all would be socially distanced

- Hold ongoing “Open Mike” forums for students to share concerns and ask questions of Administration representatives.
- Create a performance “Dashboard,” tracking semester-to-date CWRU Covid-19 performance, providing a quick snapshot of campus status (akin to “Days without a workplace accident” info posted at factories). Perhaps coordinate as competition with other peer schools of Cleveland area colleges.
- Create the equivalent of [U]Tech for asking Covid-19 related questions: a 24/7 [U]Safe staff and phone number.
- Re-image the Spirit Wall with less emphasis on being a billboard promoting (what were largely in-person) events, and instead use as a storyboard with 2X or 3X

the number of spots open for painting, by dividing the wall into 2-3 rows of multiple columns.. Introduce weekly or fortnightly themes for matrixed wall as focus on messaging.

- Post master schedule of all non-academic virtual events (also **V4C** idea).

New Rituals (NR)

- Find student organizations (all clubs, Greek houses, teams) to promote a Facemask Contest to take place the first week of classes in the Fall, with prizes awarded for different categories. The event would not only add an element of fun to returning to campus, but also double as a means to promote awareness of the importance of mask-wearing.
- As similar “awareness cue,” promote the first week on campus as “Umbrella Week” in which all students, staff, and faculty use umbrellas whenever outside—rain or shine—as means to remind all to socially distance. Thereafter, promote one day a week as “Umbrella Day,” say Mondays, to set weekly tone—rain or shine, or snow!
- At appointed hour each evening after sunset, ask all students to participate in nightly light show using smartphone flashlight apps, actual flashlights, handheld spotlights, and the like (akin to New York City’s 7:00 p.m. balcony cheer for frontline workers).

BASICS

Additional ideas addressing fundamental concerns

- Establish clearly understood testing protocols.
- In advance of any such occurrence, clearly communicate universally known procedures in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.
- Address the potential “super-spreader” spots where groups naturally congregate when traversing campus, starting with the crossing at Euclid and Alberton; find ways to space and stagger individuals as to not form single mass.
- Address #1 threat to having a campus-wide COVID-19 surge: the reality of off-campus in-house parties.