
FEBRUARY 2022 | VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO. 3

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS BULLETIN

Those who can, do. Those who understand, teach. ~Lee Shulman



LOS ALAMOS

DEAN'S MESSAGE

Our new semester is off to a great start! Students are coming back! Our enrollments have increased by 220 students(!), and both our headcount and student credit hours are up by significant amounts. What's key for us now is **RETENTION!**

There are multiple strategies you can use to improve student retention in the first few weeks of class as well as across the semester. We've highlighted some of these below in the Student Learning section. The first is to have meaningful contacts with your students through making connections to students and their careers. Have a teaching persona or "presence" that suggests accessibility and willingness to help as well as enthusiasm for the subject/discipline. Design your courses to help students learn. Use low-stakes and scaffolded assignments. Provide good, meaningful feedback early. Tie all assignments explicitly to the course learning outcomes and explain that with transparency. Use rubrics. Allow students the opportunity to provide feedback. Demonstrate the value of your course by showing its relevance for their academic and career pathways. All instructors should please consider buffering due dates, being flexible these first few months, providing other ways to complete assignments for students who become ill, etc. And please remember to send [Early Alerts forms](#) as soon as you see students having difficulties or not attending.

The more students we have, the better our future funding opportunities, which impacts our ability to both retain and expand the faculty ranks. But we also get the satisfaction of having helped more students overcome barriers and embrace opportunities!

I'd also like to highlight that this past month UNM-LA, with support from the RDC, launched a new scholarship opportunity. Beginning immediately, the 'Scholarship for Education and Economic Development (SEED)' will award free tuition and fees for up to 6 credits per semester for an employee of a Los Alamos County business who works half-time or more. This will provide an "employee benefit" for small businesses that might not be able to offer this benefit to employees otherwise. Please let people know!





OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION

We are in the process of finalizing all contracts for spring term and getting ready to start the process of scheduling for Summer and Fall. At the same time, we'll be thinking about budgeting for the 2022-23 academic year. We have numerous open faculty positions and will begin to think strategically about replacements to maximize our impact in future years.

- We are pleased to announce that Dr. Linda Barril joins our team as the Instructional Media Specialist for the PASE grant. Dr. Barril has a Ph.D. in Organizational Learning and Instructional Technology, and her focus was on the cultural constructs associated with students' preferred ways of learning in the online environment, which dovetails nicely with our PASE goals. She is an adjunct faculty member for the ABQ campus in Organization, Information, and Learning Sciences as well as a consultant in Instructional and eLearning Design. Her duties will be focused on a variety of online course design issues, Canvas transition support, and assisting faculty with improving online teaching and the student online experience through improved online pedagogies. She joins Cindy Budge and Kevin Rosenberger to fill out our remote learning team, led by Irina Alvestad. Look for this team to be reaching out to you for a variety of things as we seek to improve online delivery standards and expectations and make the move to Canvas in the coming months.
- [UNM COVID-19 Call Center Process Changes](#): To better manage volume and streamline processes, the UNM COVID-19 Call Center has implemented a new secure online symptom survey. This survey implementation replaces the former "call the UNM Call Center" guidance and instead employees will utilize this new survey to communicate their individual situations.



IMPORTANT DATES

- **February** - Black History Month
- **February 18** - OTeX Conference (Online Teaching Extravaganza) [see the Remote Learning Corner for more information]
- **February 25** - Visit by ABQ Campus representatives [see Collaborative Opportunities section]
- **March 3-4** - Spring Teaching Conference
- **March 14-18** - Spring Break

ACADEMIC DIVISIONS

Handwritten mathematical notes and diagrams covering physics and calculus. The notes include:

- Equations: $v^2 = 2as$, $= \sqrt{2gh}$, $s = 2mv_1 - 0$, $s = mv - mv_1$, $v_1 = \frac{1}{3}v$, $LM = \frac{1}{3}\sqrt{2gh}$.
- Diagrams: Circular motion with velocity vectors v_P and v_Q ; projectile motion with velocity components $aw \cos wt$ and $aw \sin wt$; a graph of velocity v vs time t showing a shaded area under a curve; a diagram of a rod of length a with points B, M, P, A and distances x and $(a-x)$; a diagram of a triangle with sides a, b, c and angles α, β, γ ; a diagram of a rod of length a with points B, M, P, A and distances x and $(a-x)$; a diagram of a rod of length a with points B, M, P, A and distances x and $(a-x)$; a diagram of a rod of length a with points B, M, P, A and distances x and $(a-x)$.
- Calculus: $a = \frac{dv}{dt} = \cos \pi t \Rightarrow \int_0^a v = \int_0^a \cos \pi t dt$; $v = \frac{ds}{dt} \Rightarrow \int dt = \int \frac{1}{v} ds \Rightarrow t = \int \frac{1}{v} ds$; $\int_{s_1}^{s_2} \frac{1}{v} ds$; $s(m) = \frac{1}{v(m \cdot s^{-1})}$; $6m - \frac{1}{v}$; $\frac{s}{v} = \frac{0}{2} | \frac{4}{3} | \frac{6}{8} | \frac{8}{12}$; $\frac{s}{v} = \frac{0}{2} | \frac{4}{3} | \frac{6}{8} | \frac{8}{12}$; $AP = \frac{2\lambda}{a} (a - x)$; $= \frac{\lambda}{a} (a - 2x)$; $TB = \frac{\lambda}{a} (a + 2x)$; $v^2 = n^2(a^2 - x^2)$.

MATHEMATICS AND ENGINEERING DIVISION

It's great to return to a new academic semester when students are on campus!

The enrollment in math and engineering classes mirrors the growth that Dean Allen mentioned in his message. This is a testament to the great work that faculty demonstrate every day and to their commitment to our institution and the success of our students. In particular, I would like to give thanks to Mathematics faculty Gina Peterson and Dr. Min Ro for their flexibility and support. Following a faculty resignation shortly before the spring semester started, Gina stepped in and agreed to teach an additional class.

This is much appreciated given the length of time it takes to hire new adjuncts.

Dr. Ro has been implementing innovative technology in his classes and is teaching his calculus III class online. Please see the Faculty Spotlight section for more on his creative ways to stay technologically current and relevant in today's learning environment.

We are happy to have a new mathematics adjunct faculty in the Division: Ayla Attanasio. She is a recent graduate from New Mexico Tech with a Master of Science degree in Mathematics. Ayla has four years of experience teaching and tutoring lower-level mathematics courses, both face-to-face and online. She is attuned to the difficulties that some students encounter in their early studies in mathematics and has demonstrated a strong commitment to student success.

Continued...

In her online classes, she uses a combination of synchronous lectures and other materials that she makes available through the Learning Management System. Ayla is teaching two courses: Calculus I for STEM majors and Applications to Calculus. We welcome her and hope you have the chance to introduce yourselves.

Faculty members Zack Baker (Engineering) and Mike McNaughton (Physics) are working together to identify and share electronic and testing equipment for labs in their respective disciplines. Zack teaches computer logic design and uses this type of equipment on digital logic switching speed experiments. In his physics labs, Mike uses the equipment to explain classical electricity and magnetism. We welcome these types of cross-disciplinary collaborations and thank Mike and Zack for their work.

The pre-engineering program continues to see growth in enrollment; we received 18 new applicants into the program this semester, plus 2 returning or major switching students. In addition to seven core courses in the pre-engineering program, we also offer two upper-level BSME classes: ME 306 Dynamics and ME 317L Fluid Mechanics. Drs. Mario Velardi and Nima Fathi, respectively, are the instructors of these courses; they remain heavily involved in the activities of the program.

We continue to develop the mechanical engineering laboratory capacities on our campus and plan to establish a fluids lab later this semester. We look forward to sharing more information and details in a future Bulletin.



Scientists investigate that which already is; Engineers create that which has never been.

~ Albert Einstein

FINE ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES DIVISION

We are pleased to welcome Debi Smith to UNM-LA. Debi came last fall and has been reviving our Ceramics program. Already we can see the difference and it's good to have the program back after the departure of Barbara Yarnell and the covid-induced slowdown. This semester Debi has added Sculpture back into the mix. Debi has an MA in 3D art from Cal State, Northridge and, in addition to being a ceramics artist herself, brings a wealth of teaching experience to our program. Please visit her in the Ceramics studio on Wednesdays and consider taking one of her classes!

We would also like to welcome back Harimander Khalsa, who this semester resurrects our Yoga class.

Harimander has been teaching yoga since the early 80s and has completed level II training in kundalini yoga. In the last couple of years, he has also completed the yoga training for addiction and 200 hours of the 1200-hour yoga therapy training including yoga for PTSD sufferers. If you've ever wanted to try yoga, now's your opportunity!

Peninah would like to remind you that she has open office hours for discussing departmental concerns, assessment, or anything else. Times available are Mondays and Wednesdays on campus (in 623F), and Tuesdays and Thursdays via Zoom!





SCIENCES DIVISION

In recent weeks, faculty in the Science Division have been "cleaning house" in the Science Lab (rm. 515). Susan Schauer, the Division Chair, Laura Reyes, the Science Lab Technician, and Science instructors, Mike McNaughton, Sarah Fisher, & Pete Worland, began planning in November and hope to be finished by the end of February. The team hopes to remove the clutter of unused items, to create space for existing and anticipated new items, to allow for reorganization of materials and update the labeling of cabinet contents to facilitate efficiency of use, to allow new instructors to find materials relevant to their courses, and

to identify any hazardous materials in the lab so as to allow for proper disposal or safety protocols to be developed. Some recent new additions to the lab supplies include: 10 microscopes, several triple-beam-balances, new glassware-graduated cylinders, new rocks and minerals, two new heat engine/gas law apparatus and a rotational inertia demonstrator, a number of smaller items such as magnifying lenses and clipboards, and possibly adding new oscilloscopes this semester. At this time there is no need for new equipment, as outdated equipment had already been replaced.



APPLIED DISCIPLINES DIVISION

We would like to welcome a few new and returning faculty:

Stephen Webster, currently a construction superintendent at LANL, will be teaching arc welding on Friday evenings. He brings many years of experience as a certified welding inspector to our welding program.

Corey Kahiwa will be teaching a class on Programmable Logic Controllers in the Robotics program. This is an essential aspect of the modern manufacturing industry. Corey has worked all over the world manufacturing everything from high-end skis to granite countertops before settling in Los Alamos as an R&D Engineer at LANL.

Erica Frye will be teaching in the Accounting Department. She has recently moved to Los Alamos from Orlando, Florida and brings experience as an accountant from a diverse array of businesses.

Saad Hussein is teaching ACCT 2110Y and ACCT 1125 online. He is a Visiting Researcher at the Main Campus and has many years of teaching face-to-face accounting classes behind him.

In addition to these new hires, we are welcoming back Dean Moya to the welding program.

Welcome or Welcome Back to UNM-LA!



STUDENT LEARNING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Assessment: Please come and talk with Peninah in 623F, for any questions regarding Assessments, assignment alignment, or even refining your SLO's! Times available Mondays and Wednesdays on campus, and Tuesdays and Thursdays via Zoom! Make an appointment today! peninah@unm.edu

Best Practices and Suggested Action Strategies for Student Retention:

The strategies below have been demonstrated by research to have an important and measurable impact on student retention.

1. STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE PERSONAL, MEANINGFUL, AND MULTIPLE CONTACTS WITH FACULTY (IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM). IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, THIS SHOULD BE A MENTORING EXPERIENCE.

- a. Learn student names
- b. Make connections to students and their careers – just don't be overly personal
- c. Create a promissory syllabus (see Ken Bain) with student involvement
- d. Require meeting with you during office hours as part of their participation grade

e. Have a teaching persona or “presence” that suggests accessibility and willingness to help as well as enthusiasm for the subject/discipline – move around the room. Don't sit. Be vibrant! Be immediate. Be open. Be spontaneous. Renew what you do regularly so that your presence for these students is not eroded.

2. DON'T WASTE THE FIRST DAYS

- a. Don't just go over the syllabus and course guidelines (or even: this can be accomplished through an online, repeatable quiz that establishes early investment by students)
 - b. Teach on the first day something that relates to the overall ideas of the course – like an introduction to a book would do (e.g. illustrative story)
 - c. Allow students to connect with a classroom peer so they have support
- 3. Design courses to help students learn**
- a. Create early “wins” to boost self-confidence of students
 - b. Conduct frequent formative assessment [don't rely solely on quizzes and tests]
 - c. Provide good, meaningful feedback early and often

Continued...

d. Decode your discipline – know what assumptions you make as an expert and design assignments that help students learn the steps hidden in your assumptions

e. Tie all assignments explicitly to the course learning outcomes and make sure students know the connection

f. Provide rubrics

4. ALLOW STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

a. Frequently ask students about their learning

b. Do surveys

c. Do critical incident questionnaires

5. DEMONSTRATE THE VALUE OF YOUR COURSE

a. Connect the material to student interests

b. Provide authentic, real-world tasks

c. Show relevance to students' current academic lives

d. Demonstrate relevance of what they'll learn for future professional lives

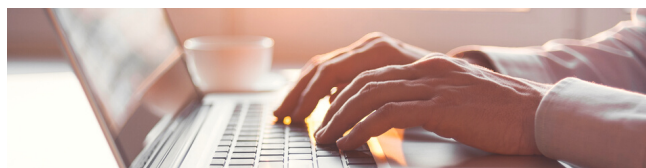
e. Identify explicitly and reward what you value



*Not everything that is faced
can be changed. But nothing
can be changed until it is
faced.*

~ James Baldwin

REMOTE LEARNING CORNER



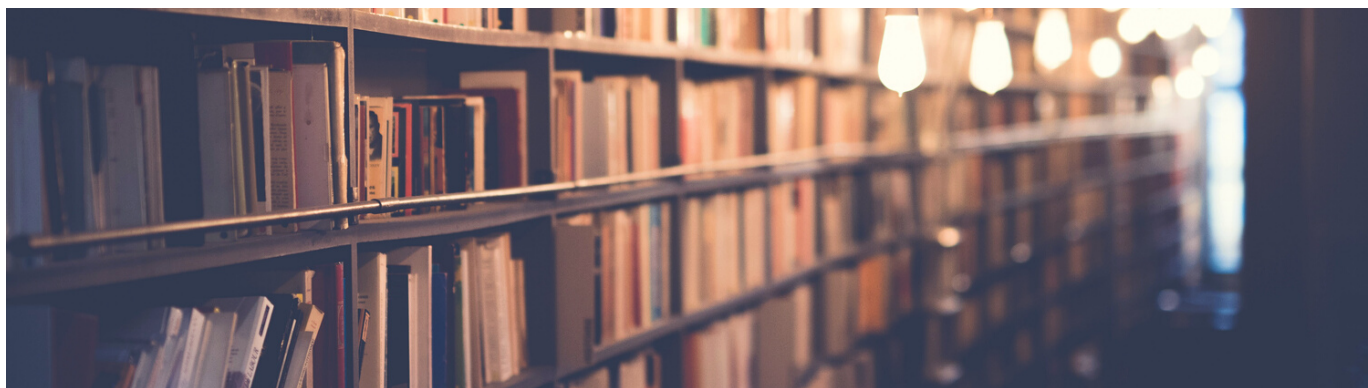
Canvas Update

- For those of you teaching or planning to teach online, we would direct you to the resources at:
<https://losalamos.unm.edu/academics/online-learning/faculty/index.html>
- Blackboard (Bb) Learn Summer 2021 and Fall 2021 content will be migrated to Canvas this month.
 - A course migration request form will soon be available for Bb courses taught before Summer 2022.
 - Canvas Support will email an announcement when migration is complete along with information on how to request a temporary course shell.
 - These “temp shells” may be used for familiarizing yourself with Canvas and for building your Summer and Fall 2022 courses. The content from temp shells can be later imported into your Canvas Banner course(s) (available in April).
 - Bb migrated content will be read-only, but it is accessible and moveable to your temp shell.
 - In April, Summer 2022 and Fall 2022 Banner courses will be available in Canvas.
 - You may import your migrated course content and/or your temp shell content into your new Canvas course, but some cleanup for migrated content will be required.
 - A migration cleanup checklist will be made available.
- The eLearning Committee is developing a Canvas course template for faculty.
- Linda and Cindy are developing Canvas migration and online teaching best practices resources and workshops.
- A new Canvas training schedule offered by Main Campus is available at: <https://ctl.unm.edu/instructors/support/workshops/index.html>. Please note that the Bridge to Canvas course carries the following disclaimer: Note: This course offering is dependent on Blackboard migrated course content and Canvas temporary shells being available. If those are not available by your chosen start date, we'll reach out to you to get you rescheduled to a later session.

Online Teaching Conference

UNM-Valencia is hosting the virtual OTEEx Conference (Online Teaching Extravaganza) on February 18, 2022. Visit the [OTEx 2022 website](#) for updated information.

It has been a tough few years for all of us teaching online and/or training and supporting those who do. We can grow and support each other by sharing our experiences and knowledge. Consider submitting an [application to present](#) either a 10-minute teaching tip or a 30-minute presentation. The deadline for proposal submission is January 31, 2022.



LIBRARY/LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

While we await the greatly anticipated move back into the library, the following are the hours and services for the Spring Semester. We encourage both you and your students to utilize our resources and services!

- Hours: Monday - Thursday, 8 am to 6 pm; Friday, 8 am to 4 pm
 - In-person assistance during open hours
 - Zoom Help sessions: Tuesday 9 am to 12 pm; Wednesday 1 to 4 pm
 - Email help (contact us at ulalib@unm.edu)
- Computers and printers (Internet Access; Microsoft Office Suite; FREE printing)
- Scanning and color printing
- Access to many online resources - **see our how-to video on the website, for accessing our databases!**
 - Ebooks (over 200,000 titles) - **see our how-to video on the website, for searching and using Ebooks!**
 - Journals and magazines (over 165,000 titles)
 - Videos
 - Reference materials
 - Subject Research Guides
- Access to a selection of print newspapers and magazines
- Interlibrary loan - need a print book? We can order it for you from another library, free of charge!
- Copy machine (10 cents per copy)
- Wireless Internet
- Study spaces
- ID cards

Key multi-disciplinary databases: LIBROS-WorldCat Discovery (the online catalog), Academic Search Complete, ProQuest, Opposing Viewpoints, and Films on Demand

For more information, visit our website at: <http://losalamos.unm.edu/library>.

The only thing you absolutely have to know is the location of the library.

~ Albert Einstein

ADULT EDUCATION/COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

The Adult Learning Center began classes on January 18 with seven high school equivalency (HSE) and work skills classes and ten English as a Second Language (ESL) and Civics/Citizenship classes.

Students in the HSE classes continue to work towards earning their high school equivalency degrees. Instructor Claudia Ress reports that numeracy and literacy classes are helping students intensively focus on problem areas. Professional development sponsored by the Adult Education Division of NMHED in the STAR (Student Achievement in Reading) program has helped her target students' individual literacy issues. We congratulate the six students in Los Alamos and Torreon, at Delancey Street Foundation and working for the Pueblo of Pojoaque Corporate Enterprises Businesses on earning their HSE credentials this past semester.

Instructor Cat Ozment says that students in the UNM-LA evening multi-level ESL class are spending a few weeks talking

about folklore. From American stories like Robin Hood and Jack and the Beanstalk, to vampire myths from across the globe, folklore has common threads throughout the world. While practicing verb tenses and gaining new vocabulary, students have been sharing stories from their home countries, looking for similarities and differences in the ways we use storytelling to create and pass culture from generation to generation. ESL and Civics/Citizenship instructor Madeline Hernandez has students that are studying ESL to achieve many goals. One student is honing her English language skills as she prepares to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) in order to enter graduate school in accounting. Other ESL students are working towards their citizenship requirements so that they can re-enter the professional fields they previously worked in, including teaching, social work, counseling, and culinary arts. We are looking forward to the day when one of our current students successfully opens her planned bakery in Los Alamos!

I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which [one] has overcome while trying to succeed.

~ Booker T. Washington





The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind.

~ William James

PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Chronicle of Higher Education is currently running a free [Virtual Event](#) series called “Talking About Teaching”, offered on Fridays. The first episode, featuring Vijay Sathy of UNC-Chapel Hill (whom I’ve talked about before), Isis Artze-Vega of the Aspen Award-winning Valencia College, and Regan Gurung of Oregon State, can be found [here](#). Highly recommended.

Inside Higher Ed is doing a [free webinar](#) on **How to Use Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Online Learning** on Thursday, February 10 at 12pm.

And don’t forget about these other opportunities for Professional Activities this Spring.

- Want help integrating inclusive practices into your courses? Try working with the Student Experience Project today! (UNM faculty are invited to join at <https://studentexperienceproject.org/>)
- Sign up for the Spring Teaching Conference! (save the date! March 3rd-4th)
- Register for Safe Zone Training (Feb. 7th and 11th via Zoom: register at <https://forms.unm.edu/forms/branchsz22>).

COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES



On February 25th, a group of administrators and faculty from UNM-ABQ will visit the Los Alamos Campus.

These individuals include Pamela Cheek (Associate Provost for Student Success), Eric Lau (Dean, Honors and University Colleges), Anita Grierson (Grand Challenges), Sarita Cargas (Basic Needs Project), Sarah Dominguez (Transfer Specialist), and Tim Schroeder (Undergraduate Research, Arts & Design Network, and NSF ECURE program). The focus areas represented by these individuals include: early student success, honors, two-year to four-year transitions, grand challenges, food insecurity among students, and undergraduate research, arts & design.

The goals for the visit are:

- To meet faculty and staff who are engaged in, or are interested in, the above focus areas
- To foster conversations that may lead to future collaborations
- To learn from existing Los Alamos Campus initiatives and innovations in the focus areas
- To update our faculty and staff of new engagement opportunities in the focus areas

They hope to see presentations from faculty about your innovative efforts. Please plan to attend and share! Your Division Chairs will reach out to you for suggestions.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

In January 2019, Dr. Min Yong Ro was appointed Instructor III in Mathematics, but he was no stranger to UNM-LA even then, the following semester already receiving a Faculty Service Award for 10 semesters of teaching! Both events were a testament to Min's dedication, service, and commitment to our campus and community and how much his work is valued and appreciated. He has continued to display those qualities in heaps during the subsequent years, making his appointment a terrific investment for UNM-LA.

Dr. Ro received his B.S. in Mathematics and Economics from The Ohio State University and his MS and Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Oregon. In addition to teaching the full range of Mathematics courses, Min has worked as the Academic Support Center Math Coordinator, served

on multiple hiring committees, and is the campus representative to the UNM Curriculum Committee. We interviewed him last month.

Can you tell us about your innovative teaching approach with the new OWL system?

Due to scheduling conflicts, I've had to record my lectures for one of my classes this semester. For most of the term, I used a webcam mounted on a tripod along with a lapel microphone. The OWL is a device with a 360-degree camera and a built-in microphone. I'm not really using it for its intended purpose. For example, it has a feature of moving to face the person who's talking. But I've just been having it look at the blackboard. There are some pros and cons compared to the previous setup.

Continued...

What was your experience with teaching the differential equations class?

I enjoyed teaching the differential equations class and would love to be able to teach other 300-level classes in the future as well. One thing of interest is that this is explicitly an “applied” course. As a “pure” mathematician, there were lots of new facets of this topic that I didn’t learn when I was taking the equivalent “pure” version of this class. I feel like I should make up for being too single-mindedly a mathematician in my earlier days and try to work with other departments to provide a cross-disciplinary education for our students.

I understand you are involved in a gaming club on campus. Can you elaborate on that?

Los Alamos Gaming (LAG) club is a non-academic club where students can come in to play tabletop games. A few years ago, I noticed a new ad for LAG and decided to join in.

Sometime after I was asked if I could take over as advisor. I feel like non-academic activities are generally a good idea to help build a feeling of community on campus here. Many of the members are graduating soon, so it’d be good if we could get some new members.

Is there any other academic-related fact that we don't know?

I've been trying to improve my teaching by reading up on pedagogical techniques and

subscribing to some MAA journals (MAA Focus, Math Horizons, Math Magazine). I haven’t developed any ideas far enough yet to discuss those, unfortunately. As an example of some baby steps I’ve been taking, during the pandemic, I came across an article by Dr. Pengelley (NMSU) entitled [“From Lecture to Active Learning: Rewards for All, and Is It Really So Difficult?”](#) I used the idea of reading assignments (though in my own style and adapted for online-only classes) from this article to structure my online classes during the shutdown period.

I've extended the use of these reading assignments to this term (especially since the risk of going back online only was looming), though I perhaps didn’t really consider how the in-person lectures would affect these assignments.

Are there any other interests or hobbies you have that you would like to share?

I enjoy playing games, both tabletop games and video games. What might be of interest is the connection between playing games and math. I recently picked up a book [“Teaching Mathematics Through Games”](#) on the subject, which I hope might be used to provide some ways of teaching active learning in my classes. There’s a lot of mathematical structure in games, which makes them interesting to me as a mathematician, but also seems like a good opportunity to help teach math.