Keep It in the Fairway!

Having a game plan on how to approach a certain golf course is crucial to having a low score for the round, as well as having fun playing the game! There are some courses where you know you won't be hitting your driver off the tee because of hazards, or certain pin placements you know you won't aim for because if you miss by just a little, your ball is going for a swim.

What we like about this chapter by Dylan Retzinger and Kellie Sharp-Hoskins is how they use PARS to develop a structure for pre-designed courses that emphasizes making such structures personal, accessible, responsive, and strategic. All of this is grounded via design that is inclusive and not exclusive. It asks faculty and administrators to embrace the personal nature of teaching and become a leader. All of these moves are difficult, but with a plan in place, you can be creative while building new and supportive relationships in and out of your classrooms.

Chapter 15. Third Personal, U Variable: Complicating PARS and UX in Pre-Designed OWI Courses

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Abstract: In this chapter, we consider how a PARS approach to online writing instruction (OWI) takes shape in the context of pre-designed or "master" courses, which are courses designed by those who may not be teaching them and taught by instructors who cannot substantively change or personalize them. In the context of our own university, and within the constraints of Quality Matters, we reflect on the ways our conceptualization of PARS principles shifted in creating pre-designed courses. We document these shifts in relation to each element of PARS—personal, accessible, responsive, strategic—identifying how the difficulties designing courses for others can invite creative strategies in OWI that do not sacrifice ethical or pedagogical commitments. We offer concrete strategies developed in our own context, modeling for those with a similar charge how they might enact PARS principles in circumstances heavily constrained by institutional expectations and multiple layers of administrative oversight. We end with four guiding principles for implementing PARS for pre-designed courses: focus on relationships, create opportunities for personalized assessment, build from commonplaces, and get creative.

Keywords: pre-designed courses, master courses, online writing instruction, user experience, administration, Quality Matters

In 2020, our R2, land grant, Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) teed up U-O (University Online). Aiming to increase enrollment and revenue by offering fully online degree programs directed toward adult learners who need more flexibility when pursuing their education, U-O was conceived of as an administrative division responsible for leveraging campus resources to create fully online programs. Such resources as related to general education writing courses were initially imagined by U-O in terms of instructor sharing, wherein academic departments, and in our case, the writing program, would send recommendations for adjunct instructors to U-O to teach pre-designed courses (PDCs)—ready to go courses, complete with syllabi, schedules, assignments, and gradebooks that needed only an instructor to deliver. In practice this meant that we were being asked to staff PDCs that U-O had created without us. In the writing program (WP), we had a different vision: If the courses were going to be taught by our instructors, they should be informed by our curriculum. Negotiations ensued.

We wanted instructor agency and a localized, place-based curriculum—or in Jessie Borgman and Casey McArdle's (2019) PARS terms, the ability for instructors to *personalize* the learning and teaching experience in ways that are culturally and materially *accessible*, *responsive*, and *strategic*. As a WP in an HSI and land-grant institution, we recognize how body and geopolitics shape learning experiences and understand the value of meeting students where they are by building on (and building in) instructor and student literacies. Our WP currently (and historically) offers writing courses in person and online; framed by common goals, they are designed and taught by graduate assistant, adjunct, college-track, and tenure-track instructors, who have access and contribute to shared resources, textbooks, and professional development opportunities. Programmatically, this means that our curriculum is discursively shaped by a community of instructors who ultimately design their own courses in a manner that not only reflects their pedagogical commitments and personalities, but also facilitates opportunities for reflection and revision. We view this agency and responsibility as being instrumental to the professional development of our instructors and to the goal of creating learning experiences for students that are personalized in terms of content and design.

U-O, by contrast, wanted consistency and repeatability—what they see as the keys to accreditation and successful user experience (UX)—so that no matter who the instructor or student, the course would be strategic and accessible in the same ways. This consistency was articulated primarily around course design and interface and realized through accordance with Quality Matters (QM) standards[1]. Courses should *look* the same, with information in (online) places that can be anticipated by the student across courses, promoting accessibility and eliminating confusion. For U-O, consistency means that students don't need to learn a new logic for each course in their program of study; instead, they learn one time how the *interface* works and can then focus on the *content* of the course. Content and usability are imagined as unrelated.

These differences in commitments shaped many conversations, but by spring 2022, we agreed to create two pre-designed writing courses (first-year composition and introduction to technical and professional communication [TPC]) for U-O. Aside from being pre-designed, U-O's expectations and our writing program's constraints for the courses were that they needed to

- be eight weeks long,
- use asynchronous delivery,

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1.   QM is a for-profit organization that helps affiliated institutions certify the "quality" of their online courses by implementing course development processes (such as a "course map" that facilitates developing a schedule and aligns learning outcomes with assignments) and evaluating courses based on a rubric of standards (i.e., Course Overview and Introduction, Learning Objectives, Assessment and Measurement, Instructional Materials, Learning Activities and Learner Interaction, Course Technology, Learner Support, Accessibility and Usability).

- meet QM standards,
- have a five-year shelf life,
- be taught primarily by adjuncts,
- use e-books only, and
- be co-designed and peer reviewed by U-O.

Such expectations flew in the face of many of our commonplaces and practices (16-week terms, discipline-oriented standard, constant reflection and revision, to name a few) and so—to extend Borgman and McArdle's (2019) golf analogy—the task of creating two pre-designed online writing (OW) courses was *a lie in the rough*. Simply *put(t)*, we had to learn a new style of PARS for the course. In this chapter, we describe our experience navigating this new terrain and our reimagining of the PARS principles for PDCs. *Fore!* It gets complicated.

Theory & Practice

Reimagining PARS Principles

In *Personal, Accessible, Responsive, Strategic: Resources and Strategies for Online Writing Instructors*, Borgman and McArdle (2019) create "a distinct approach to OWI . . . that encompasses the theory and practice from decades of previous research" (p. 5). More specifically, grounded in user experience (UX) theory as a humanizing vehicle (see also Greer & Harris, 2018), the PARS principles help OW instructors navigate issues related to building relationships with students (personal), designing usable student learning experiences (accessible), affirming the presence of students and instructors in learning management systems (responsive)*,* and a host of administrative concerns (strategic). From another vantage, PARS is a situated alternative to rubrics like QM, whereby PARS refashions generalized checklists or rescales QM "standards" (see Oswal & Melonçon, 2017) as principles for the unique contexts of OWI. Whereas QM treats online education as a question of interface, focusing almost exclusively on countable, measurable features of pedagogical delivery, PARS is principle-based, encouraging pedagogical decisions that consider complex relationships between students, teachers, institutions, *and* interfaces. Borgman and McArdle (2021) even point out that PARS is not a checklist: "To be clear, the PARS approach is not a checklist—it is a holistic approach to online instruction that acknowledges the complexity of course design and its facilitation in digital spaces" (p. 4). Zooming out, whereas both PARS and QM can be seen as efforts to address an ongoing stigma of online education—namely, that online courses are the faux counterpart to face-to-face classes—the latter can unwittingly reify the stigma, equating effective teaching with effective interface design. Historically, this stigma is especially pertinent to the territory of this chapter, PDCs, or what Shelley Rodrigo and Cristina Ramírez (2017) identify as

> master online courses, fully developed online courses that are used to teach multiple sections of the same course . . . sometimes referred to pejoratively as template or "canned" courses with ready syllabi, assignment and activity prompts, scaffolded course schedules, and gradebook categories predesigned for instructors who merely deliver the course. For many instructors, *delivery* literally includes making announcements and grading work. (p. 317)

For OW instructors, PARS is an approach that creates a community and a heuristic to help them navigate and better articulate the traps and bunkers of a stigmatized game by focusing on the UX of students through the lens of teachers as UX designers. But what happens when the game being played is, in fact, a canned UX? Borgman and McArdle begin to answer this question in their 2019 introduction to PARS and 2021 edited collection, *PARS in Practice*. Building on their work, in this chapter we share our experiences creating pre-designed writing courses and articulate strategies for negotiating the hazards along the way.

When we began designing courses that others would teach, unknown persons in an unknown timescale, we recognized that the "personal" element of PARS organizes the relationships among the other terms (accessible, responsive, and strategic) and to student and instructor users. This is perhaps, in the words of Borgman and McArdle (2019), because "being personal is one of the most important things you can do as an online writing instructor. Personalizing the classroom, your instruction, or (if you're in administration) the way that you handle your writing instructors is key to success" (p. 17). Indeed, student satisfaction and retention in online writing courses are highly correlated with instructor presence, rapport, and interpersonal relationships (Glazier, 2021; Glazier & Harris, 2020, 2021; Ruecker, 2021). Yet in the context of the PDCs intended to prioritize repeatability via *de*-personalized design, we struggled to apply this principle: How could we make a course personal when neither of our persons would be involved? How could we make the experience of teaching and taking a PDC *personal* for students and instructors?

As we further considered personalization, we began to better understand how the "personal" of PARS is also highly relational and political. For example, our design choices affect the presence (see Gunawardena, 1995) of the instructor and students, our instructional language creates a persona (see Warnock, 2009) that shapes the relationship between students and instructors, and the politics of our content choices—e.g., assignments related to race (see Bomberger, 2004)—create learning contexts that not all instructors might be comfortable with or capable of navigating. At the same time, we didn't want to create sterile courses that pandered to what Sushil Oswal and Lisa Meloncon (2017) described as "ideologies of normalcy" (p. 63) in online writing courses. We recognized that users, personas, and presences—i.e., affects of our online identities (Nakamura, 2002)—are embodied through our language, content, and design choices, and we came to see

that personal was the transgressive principle, i.e., designers are people, too. With the politics of persons in play, we recognized that *personal* never exists outside of larger, including institutional, contexts and relationships. In this capacity, we propose that online writing instruction built on the personal is successful when teachers and students are welcome to engage as whole persons, to bring their expertise and idiosyncrasies, their languages and literacies, to their presence, interactions, and assignments in the course. When a course invites this type of engagement—no matter who designed it—it *feels* personal.

Inspired by this shift, we began to *responsively* rethink PARS principles as a situated politics of relation—or, in other words, as the framework through which relationships (between teacher, students, course content, university, and place) can emerge. In the following sections we thus attend to each principle in turn, first explaining how we reframed it for our context before offering suggestions and strategies for others.

(Third) Personal

One of the biggest obstacles for embedding the personal in a PDC was that we would not be participants in the course. In our own courses (that we design *and* teach), students get to know us through our assignments, instructions, and feedback, but how does that translate in PDCs? In this section we identify three shifts in our thinking about what it means to "personalize" a course and how we implemented each in the context of pre-design.

[1] Designers are People, Too

While a PARS approach centers the person of students, teachers, and (to a lesser extent) administrators, in its earlier articulations the *designer* is often synonymous with the teacher (or sometimes, administrator). In our context, however, creating a PDC for U-O meant design by team. This included three curricular designers (the WP team that we assembled) and one U-O designer, who was in practice a QM guide and U-O's representative for quality control. Working with an instructional designer from U-O and acting as instructional designers ourselves, however, we began to see designers as unmarked persons shaping the course. Indeed, even a course pre-designed by a textbook company, for example, draws on people—content experts, instructional designers, and usability testers—to create a successful product. Whereas such products might be rhetorically styled to depersonalize content (away from its designers), we considered how as designers we might "show up" in the interface in concrete ways. Accordingly, we

- recognized the importance of creating a diverse design team (in terms of institutional positions, embodiments, and experiences);
- created an "About This Course" page (see Figure 15.1) to introduce ourselves and the WP;

- drew on readings that we would use in our own classes;
- used our expertises to shape descriptions, explanations, and assignments,
- adopted a conversational tone; and
- used pronouns like "we" and "us" to better relate to students and instructors.

With these (simple) strategies, we hoped to create familiarity for students and teachers, so despite the unilateral direction of design and communication (from us to them), they would have a sense of the people who built the class. We also wanted to avoid creating an ethos based on a disembodied and distant "master teacher"; as much as possible, we wanted the course to represent the diversity of our program so that instructors wouldn't feel like they would be "filling in," so to speak, for an unidentified "expert." Instead, we wanted to create opportunities for instructors to relate to and identify with course content and design.
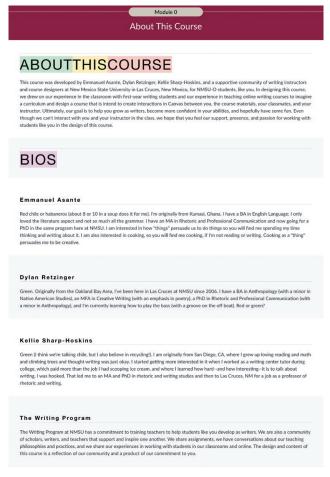

Figure 15.1. "About This Course" page.

[2] Making Personal Space(s)

While we initially imagined personalization as the effect of the *people* who populate a course (students and teachers), in the context of PDCs we had to consider how the *spaces* of the LMS (in our case, Canvas) could invite people to engage *as* individuals. In this context, we also had to acknowledge the need for personal space; that is, while we sought the affordances of personalization, we did not want to require participation that would threaten personal boundaries or privacy. One aspect of pedagogy *feeling* personal is about people making choices (rather than being conscripted). Without knowing the preferences or personalities of the teachers *or* students, then, we created assignments, activities, and assessments that offered options for personalization. For example, we

- invited students to invoke or reflect on personal and professional literacies *of their choosing* (throughout the semester),
- asked students to consider their personal relationships to prompts and subject matter as a prewriting exercise that would not necessarily show up in their writing (explicitly),
- alerted students ahead of time to any assignments that would be shared with peers,
- created different ways for students to relate to course content, e.g., giving students the opportunity to interact with the authors of the course textbook,
- used different spaces and modalities (e.g., discussions, peer reviews, images, videos) to vary peer interactions,
- created different ways for instructors to provide feedback and be present to students (e.g., through announcements, summative feedback, rubrics, participation in discussion boards), and
- added a little color to the U-O aesthetic, giving spaces distinct visual personalities.

[3] Post-Design Implementation & Personalization

The expectations of U-O meant that changing the design, content, assignments, and assessments of the course *in situ* would be unavailable to instructors, in effect eliminating key options for personalization, but as long-time writing teachers, we know that much of the relational work of writing instruction emerges as students turn in work and get instructor and peer feedback. For us, this meant shifting focus away from personalized *design* and toward personalization in practice. To support this shift, we

- discussed with instructors how—and where—the workload of teaching this class changes, away from lesson and assignment prep and toward more frequent and consistent engagement with student writing; and

- used significant scaffolding to encourage students and teachers to see drafting and revision work as opportunities for discussion and deliberation.

By helping teachers reimagine their allocation of time and energy, we see opportunities for instructors to affirm and engage with student experiences, ideas, literacies, and writing in ways that are *personal.* Where one line of professional development (curriculum design) might be blocked by PDCs, another line (personalized assessment) opens.

Accessible (for Who?): U Variable

"Accessible for who?" was the driving question for adopting PARS in our PDCs. Whereas in an instructor-created course, accessibility is centered around the UX of students (Borgman & Dockter, 2018), in creating a PDC we had to negotiate accessibility for students *and* instructors, each of whom access course interfaces, concepts, and assignments from particular embodied, culturally-situated perspectives (St.Amant & Sapienza, 2011). Stability was replaced by heterogeneity: Our users became one of many variables. Additionally, notions of accessibility were mediated by the requirements of U-O and, in particular, their deference to QM standards, which disarticulate content and form (in ways that don't always account for the situated peculiarities of OWI). While scholarship in OWI rightly critiques QM metrics, which articulate accessibility in terms of a checklist instead of in terms of dynamic, relational embodiment (Oswal & Melonçon, 2017), in this section we discuss ways in which we approached accessibility for our different audiences in the context of PDCs that *would* ultimately be assessed by QM standards.

[1] Instructors

Borgman and McArdle (2019) advocate for courses to be designed for students, as students are the primary users, but we had to design these courses with the instructor in mind. We thus considered instructors—rather than students—to be our first audience since they would have to understand the course content, logic, and design in order to teach the class. Instructor accessibility in our context is (importantly) complicated by the diversity of our instructors and by our own pedagogical commitments; as designers, we were mindful to account for variables in position, academic background, experience teaching, digital/learning management system literacy, pedagogy, linguistic, and cultural/embodied identities. We recognized that while many instructors would be teaching these courses with expectations reflecting prior (online/teaching) experience, others might be relatively new to the learning management system (LMS), the institution, or to teaching online. As course designers with our own histories, experiences, and commitments, we had to remind ourselves that we would not be the primary users of the PDCs; the courses might be staffed by instructors with backgrounds in literature, creative writing, or English studies, who might imagine the

courses—or interpret their learning outcomes—much differently than we do. In order to make our courses accessible to instructors we

- created an "Instructor Guide" module to help instructors anticipate some of the quirks and logistics of the course,
- requested major assignments from instructors (from our main campus programs) with different levels and kinds of experience teaching writing,
- used collected assignments to brainstorm and craft the PDCs,
- used textbooks and readings shared by main-campus courses, and
- created a design team that represented different contingencies of the WP, each with different relationships to teaching and disciplinary knowledge.

By drawing on resources from a variety of teachers, we shifted away from our specific expertises and toward a more commonly held programmatic expertise. We saw this as a way to make the courses accessible not only to main-campus teachers who might take on a U-O class but to an even broader range of teachers that might staff U-O in the future.

[2] Students

When thinking about what accessibility means for students in a PDC, one key complication is that instructors may not be able to readily answer questions about the course content or design (especially if it would be their first time teaching the course). Student questions or confusion, of course, can range from issues of clarity, instruction, and design to issues of expectation: What does the teacher expect? What is the goal of the assignment? Our goal was to, as much as possible, anticipate the needs and questions of students in order to take that burden off of instructors. This took shape in several ways as we

- contextualized word choice/jargon to account for our specific disciplinary training,
- linked to supplemental handouts to explain terms that instructors might take for granted (i.e., words like "concept" and "idea"),
- specified expectations for length and format of *every* assignment (from quick activities to longer, more formal projects) to eliminate ambiguity,
- formally integrated expectations into grading criteria for each assignment,
- modeled format expectations for every assignment, and
- focused on consistency within courses, using different assignment types to create weekly rituals, and across courses, so that once a student took our composition course the structure of the TPC course would feel familiar.

[3] Quality Matters

As writing instructors, we understand accessibility in capacious terms—as referring to physical and digital infrastructure and interfaces as well as linguistic and

cultural concepts and commonplaces. U-O, by contrast, relies on QM standards to assess the accessibility of its courses in more bounded terms that prioritized the interface. In practice, this meant that the resources U-O shared with us (like course templates and course maps) modeled accessibility in formal ways. Rather than attempt to use those forms, we found it necessary to *build* a structure recognizable to QM standards *and* to our writing teachers; we thus

- created overviews and introductions at *each* level of the course: module, assignment, activity, etc.;
- correlated named assignment *types* with specific weekly due dates to create patterns and a pace for the class (i.e., "Reading Discussions" due Monday, "Writing Exercises" due Tuesday, etc.); and
- inserted grading criteria with specific requirements for each assignment.

While this course design appears *motivated* by QM, in practice, our conversations and internal review practices centered our pedagogical values and the students' needs, rather than QM standards explicitly. That is, even though we knew QM review was imminent, we made online writing instruction and student accessibility (in its complexity) preeminent in our conversations.

Responsive (by Design)

Like the other elements of PARS, the responsiveness of a course fundamentally shifts in a PDC, and this, of course, is by design. Whereas a course designed and delivered by the same person might *become* responsive in practice, as instructors respond to the students in the class, or as administrators to the needs of faculty (Borgman & McArdle, 2019), a PDC does not have the same flexibility because decision-making is less kairotic. As Rodrigo and Ramírez (2017) suggest, PDCs intentionally reduce the number of decisions an instructor has to make, supporting them by giving them specific boundaries. In our particular context and from our purview, the ability of our administrators to be responsive was also reduced because the courses are ultimately under the administration of U-O, who not only hire the teachers but also authorize and allocate funding for us to design and update the course. While restrictive, the limitations invited us to conceive of different *kinds* of response by design.

[1] Embedding Responsiveness

In the design of our PDCs, we tried to think of ways responsiveness could be considered a feature of course, i.e., responsive *architecture*. Such features included

- readings and assignments that are place-based and culturally sensitive, i.e., responsive and local to the region;
- instructions (embedded within activities and assignments) directing students to ask questions of their instructors in order to promote a responsive relationship;

- required drafts spaced out to ensure sufficient time for instructor response feedback;
- assignments and activities centered on student perspectives and experiences in response to curricular content;
- reflective writing assignments, inviting students to respond to their experience of the course; and
- structured but flexible due dates that respond to the varying schedules of students and teachers (see Figure 15.2).
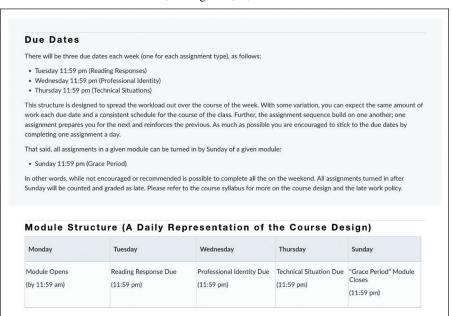
Due Dates

There will be three due dates each week (one for each assignment type), as follows:

- Tuesday 11:59 pm (Reading Responses)
- Wednesday 11:59 pm (Professional Identity)
- Thursday 11:59 pm (Technical Situations)

This structure is designed to spread the workload out over the course of the week. With some variation, you can expect the same amount of work each due date and a consistent schedule for the course of the class. Further, the assignment sequence build on one another; one assignment prepares you for the next and reinforces the previous. As much as possible you are encouraged to stick to the due dates by completing one assignment a day.

That said, all assignments in a given module can be turned in by Sunday of a given module:

- Sunday 11:59 pm (Grace Period)

In other words, while not encouraged or recommended is possible to complete all the on the weekend. All assignments turned in after Sunday will be counted and graded as late. Please refer to the course syllabus for more on the course design and the late work policy.

Module Structure (A Daily Representation of the Course Design)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Sunday
Module Opens (by 11:59 am)	Reading Response Due (11:59 pm)	Professional Identity Due (11:59 pm)	Technical Situation Due (11:59 pm)	"Grace Period" Module Closes (11:59 pm)

Figure 15.2. A paced but flexible due date system.

By thinking about the ways that activities of the course could facilitate response, we disarticulated it from the *person* or *personality* of the instructor, embedding it in the course itself. Such embedding work invites students and instructors to enact responsiveness, prompting them to engage with one another in a variety of ways.

[2] Narrating Responsiveness

As OWI researchers with significant online teaching experience, we recognize the importance of responsiveness in our own classes. In fact, responsiveness is not only a best practice but also one of our values. One of the challenges we became aware of in the context of a PDC is that while we might be able to design for responsiveness as a practice, we had the responsibility of communicating our values. To do this we

- highlighted features of the course (in the assignment prompts and instructor guides) where responsiveness was *built in*, inviting instructors to (re)consider how and when they could respond to their students;
- shifted expectations for where (and on which activities) instructors would spend their time in a PDC (versus another course): less need for "prep" but more need for consistent interaction and more opportunities for responding to individual student writing (informal and formal);
- emphasized response as a dialogue between instructor and students (rather than one-way communication of instructor expectations) by using individualized/personalized questions to prompt such dialogue; and
- along with U-O, promoted opportunities to interact with students *outside* of response to assignments—through virtual or synchronous office hours, email and chat check-ins, announcements, etc.

In these capacities, we became aware of our responsibility to not only design the course but also to shape the narrative—to be aware of and account for the pedagogical arguments that we were making by design.

[3] Administering Response

At an administrative level, being responsive in PDCs is generally understood as being attentive to both the experiences of students and instructors (Borgman & McArdle, 2019). However, our contexts meant that we couldn't be responsive in ways that might be expected by students or instructors. We had to consider multiple levels of administration of these courses, which include, in our case, not only the WP, Department of English, and College of Arts & Sciences—administrative levels with which we were familiar—but U-O and its preferred metric for evaluating course design, QM. Our charge to enact responsiveness, then, became one of negotiating multiple layers of administration in order to allow the course to feel responsive to students and instructors. This required specific *strategies*, to which we turn below.

Strategic (to Use)

If being strategic is ultimately about pulling every*thing* together (Borgman & McArdle, 2019), when it comes to PDCs, we found that it must also revolve around pulling every*one* together. This means getting administrators, designers, and instructors to support one another in ways that are responsive to the experiences of students and instructors. One of the ways in which this can happen is to create UX feedback mechanisms and long-term plans. In this section, we discuss ways that administrators, designers, and instructors can strategize maintaining and updating pre-designed courses while working within their institutional constraints.

[1] Negotiating with Administration

When we began negotiating with administrators across multiple units and with varying degrees of administrative authority, it quickly became apparent that we had different visions in mind. Our initial game plan was to create an assignment catalog that left room for U-O instructors to personalize their courses, while U-O wanted QM-certified PDCs—an idea to which we were initially resistant. When we eventually came to terms with the expectations (understanding that they would be created with or without us), we quickly moved toward identifying strategies to work within the constraints. These strategies included

- organizing meetings for administrators across levels of scale,
- articulating and reiterating online writing instruction as a discipline with history and expertise *beyond* QM,
- requesting existing U-O PDCs (this included writing courses and courses outside of our discipline) so that we could better conceive of a range of possibilities,
- affirming the disciplinary and pedagogical expertise of instructors (at every meeting),
- coming to terms with the constraints of QM,
- learning how to work with the expertise of U-O's designer, and
- narrating our goals in terms valuable to U-O: Because we knew strategy and accessibility were values held in common, we leveraged them to make our position and expertise legible to administrators.

The key to administration (at all levels), of course, is to put everyone in a place to succeed, to understand what students and instructors are experiencing, and to allocate resources. To this end, being strategic about the administration of a PDC necessitates relationship building, forethought, and planning for uncertainties.

[2] Building Relationships

One of the biggest obstacles for our WP was that, like instructors of our PDCs, we lost a degree of autonomy and agency. As online writing instructors who value UX, we try to respond to the experiences of our students in a timely fashion (if something isn't working, we try to identify the issue and correct it). The challenge in PDCs becomes twofold: (1) any revisions or updates require communication, approval, funding, and coordination with another administration; (2) our UX feedback loop is structurally removed, relocated, and delayed. In other words, instead of being able to see for ourselves how students or instructors are experiencing the course, we need to work with instructors and U-O administrators to solicit that information and make changes. At an administrative level, this makes having strong relationships with instructors and administrative counterparts crucial. To build these relationships, we

- solicited assignments from instructors;
- consulted with instructors as usability testers;
- communicated, rather than concealed, the constraints and affordances of the courses with instructors; and
- learned and translated disciplinary and administrative jargon in meetings (to highlight different expertise without sacrificing communication).

Of course, the challenge of any relationship is that things are subject to change.

[3] Anticipating New Exigencies, Planning for Uncertainties

As OW instructors, we are used to iteratively revising and updating our courses to keep things fresh (e.g., drawing on current events to give ideas and practices exigency) and responsive (e.g., to the energy/personality of students, to the material conditions/seating arrangements of a classroom, or the introduction of new technology in an LMS). When it comes to PDCs, especially ones that are expected to have an extended shelf life, it's important to keep in mind that current events can go stale, the student makeup of a given course is unpredictable and complex, and LMSs themselves are updated. While we can't anticipate the news, plan for LMS updates, or predict changes in our student body, we can

- design to LMS features that are least likely to change,
- create exigencies for students to speak to current events and personal experiences, and
- choose readings with longer shelf lives.

Ultimately, we recognize that uncertainties and unanticipated experiences are not only to be expected but the vehicle for change. Since our experiences are still in the formative stage, in the conclusion we offer four overall strategies to shape the design and administration of PDCs.

Conclusion and Takeaways

Identifying strategies, as we have done in the previous sections, for creating successful PDCs, we understood that our work, in fact, was not only to learn how to *play* the course—which woods (assignments) and irons (activities), or how much force to put in our swing (design)—but how to collaboratively *build* one within our limitations, around the existing administrative, material, and temporal obstacles, and with respect to the contours of our university's terrain. Others who create PDCs will have different constraints. They, like us, will have to move beyond PARS as a generalized practice and imagine PARS for *their* course. While the play may vary, based on our experience, we close with four approaches to help others drive, wedge, and putt PDCs that are personal, accessible, responsive, and strategic:

- *Focus on relationships*: Assemble a team that represents the diversity of your program (so that your PDCs reflect and are welcoming to that diversity); develop strong working relationships with administrators and designers on multiple levels to create conditions for negotiation and shared expertise; take time to articulate shared goals and distinct expertises; and leverage those relationships to create feedback loops.
- *Focus on personalized assessment*: If you have concerns about PDCs stunting the development and agency of instructors (e.g., because they don't get to design the course or because their pedagogical expertise goes to waste), remember that personalized instructor *feedback* is not only one of the most important dimensions of any writing course (i.e., what students are likely to remember and learn from) but also a theory and practice that instructors can cultivate and exercise.
- *Build from commonplaces*: Create PDCs that reflect your WP's or department's theory *and* practices—understand how a variety of instructors individually (and in turn programmatically) approach the course, and draw on your team's expertise to integrate and synthesize *existing* resources into your PDC. This allows the experience and expertises of teachers to show up in the design and mitigates a top-down ethos of "master classes."
- *Get creative*: Be open to collaborating on assignments and using content that you might not have thought about or used in your own class; try to see administrative expectations and constraints as opportunities to support students and their writing.

Finally, PDC or DIYC (do-it-yourself course), we hope that our complicating of PARS serves to illustrate for all the importance of recognizing and accounting for the political and relational dimension of *personal* and more generally of OWI. Building a course for others to play means strategically setting them up for success, so they see themselves as players with style and skills welcome in the clubhouse and on the green, primed to take their best shots.

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