

Transcript

[0:01] (music)

Derek Bruff: [0:06] This is Leading Lines. I'm Derek Bruff. I'm recording this at the start of winter break, taking some time to reflect on the semester past and making plans for the semester ahead. And maybe catching up on some of my podcast work. When you hear this, it will probably be January and many of our listeners will be knee deep in spring course preparation. This makes it a great time to share an interview I recorded a few weeks ago with Heeryoon Shin, Mellon assistant professor of Asian art here at Vanderbilt.

[0:33] Heeryoon was in one of the cohorts I led during the summer 2020 Online Course Design Institute, or OCDI for short. And I was impressed at the creativity she brought to her online course planning. I wanted to check in with her late in the semester to see how her online courses had turned up. Heeryoon teaches courses on the art and architecture of Asia with a special emphasis on South Asia. Her research interests include sacred and urban space, cross-cultural encounters, and architectural historiography in early modern and colonial South Asia. I really like having a chance to say historiography.

[1:13] In our conversation Heeryoon reflects on her first full semester of teaching online, what worked and what didn't, and what changes she's making for her spring courses. She talks about her decision to make portions of her courses asynchronous, her changing use of recorded video lectures, some successes in leading discussions on Zoom and a lot more.
(music)

[1:39] Welcome to Leading Lines, Heeryoon. We're glad to have you here today chatting with us about your teaching experiences this fall.

Heeryoon Shin: [1:44] Thank you, Derek. Thanks for having me.

Derek: [1:47] So I'm going to start with a question I like to ask most of our guests. It's a looking back question. Can you tell us about a time you realized you wanted to be an educator?

Heeryoon: [2:01] Well, my parents are both professors in South Korea, so this has been the only career path that I know, (laughs) that I'm most familiar with, but I have to say I was terrified when I had to TA for the first time in graduate school because I was a nervous wreck. So I was this awkward and terrible teaching assistant, but it got better and I could find myself getting better at it as I became more familiar with teaching.

[2:27] And I think I realized that I really enjoy teaching when I first got to teach a course on my own. When I was still in graduate school, I taught for a month at Colorado College, a survey course on South Asian art. And I think it was just really exciting to design and prepare all this material on my own to teach students what they were learning about art history and especially South Asian art, which is my field, for the first time. So just doing it on my own.

Derek: [3:00] Yes, I can relate to that, that first opportunity to kind of run the course yourself and figure out all the big pieces. That's great. Well, what are some of the courses that you teach at Vanderbilt? And who are the students that take those courses?

Heeryoon: [3:14] So I am in the history of art and architecture department, so I teach various courses on Asian art history. Most of them are lecture courses with about 20 to 30 students. And this semester I'm teaching a thousand level writing course titled Art and Visual in Asia, which is a survey of visual art across Asia, but with writing. And I'm also teaching a survey of Korean art, Arts of Korea, this semester. And because they're mostly low-level lecture courses and they fulfill the AXLE requirement, I tend to get more non majors than art history majors, I think. And since they're also jointly offered with Asian Studies, I do get some Asian Studies majors as well. And so for many students my courses are their first art history class, so there's a lot of pressure.

[4:08] And I think I'm the happiest when I hear from students about how they were not really interested in art history, they were just taking those for their requirements, but now they're inspired to take more art history classes. They voluntarily go to museums or they notice new things when they look at works of art.

Derek: [4:27] That's great. That's really positive feedback for a survey course or a non-major

course like that.

Heeryoon: [4:34] I don't always get them. (both laugh) Sometimes. It's very, yes, rewarding.

Derek: [4:43] Well, I took a history of art course in college, I think my sophomore year, and I enjoyed it so much that the next year I came back and took a history of Asian art course.

Heeryoon: [4:52] Yay! You're the ideal student.

Derek: [4:57] Yes, I mean, I did grow up to be a teaching center director so something about teaching and learning quite appealed to me. Well good. So let me confirm, so prior to 2020, did you have any experience teaching online at all?

Heeryoon: [5:14] No. No, not at all. Not at all. So I had to make that big transition last spring in March, and that was my first time teaching online.

Derek: [5:23] So and, you know, we're talking late in the fall semester, so you had that transition time back in the spring. And for a lot of instructors, we adapted as we could and made the best of it. But for the fall, you're teaching all online courses, right?

Heeryoon: [5:38] Yeah.

Derek: [5:39] And you had some time this summer to prepare. I know that in part because you were in our course design institute.

Heeryoon: [5:46] Which was very helpful. So I'm an ideal student as well. (both laugh)

Derek: [5:51] Well first, your fall courses, had you taught those before, in-person?

Heeryoon: [5:58] Yes. So the Art and Visual Asia writing course, I taught it almost every semester and Arts of Korea is relatively new. I've taught it only once, but I did have some materials going.

Derek: [6:10] Okay, so here's the big question. How did you approach the courses differently this fall as fully online courses?

Heeryoon: [6:17] Well, again, the OCDI was extremely useful for redesigning my course. I

think the biggest difference was designing my Brightspace page, especially for the asynchronous session. So I had an asynchronous session at least once a week. Most of the lectures were asynchronous and recorded. And I took the advice about Zoom fatigue to heart. So I made sure that I divided the lectures into shorter segments, mostly under 15 minutes, usually three videos, if not more. And I uploaded them on a Brightspace and that actually got a lot of positive feedback from students, that it made them much easier to focus or take notes.

[7:05] Another thing that I really took away, I actually copied from the OCDI, was the Brightspace design, the model design. So before and in the spring when I made that quick transition, all I had on my Brightspace, I had it divided by week under contents. And I would just have lecture slides and related readings under one big folder. But after taking the OCDI course, I had learned to organize the activities necessary for each module into the specific order that I wanted the students to follow. And using header images to make that even clearer. So I would have readings that need to be completed before the class time. And then the series of the lecture videos they needed to watch. And then the final additional activity, such as using the discussion board or responding to some questions or self-reviewing activities that I designed for the students.

Derek: [8:07] What kind of impact do you think that approach had for your students?

Heeryoon: [8:12] I think it just made it so much clearer to follow the order. I've found that especially with online teaching, you really need to make sure the students are on the same page as you are that they've read the syllabus, that they've read the instructions. And it's harder to do that because you can't keep checking during an in-person session. So having that laid out on Brightspace in a very clear format gives them the organization, the order that they need to successfully complete each module.

Derek: [8:48] I, as it happens, I was doing a focus group with some undergraduates this morning. And this was one of the things that they praised in some of their instructors was that it was really clear what to do before class time, what to do after class time. And I think that's generally true of online. I think it's probably especially true this fall, given all of the challenges in students' lives.

Heeryoon: [9:11] Yes. I mean, to be honest, I think I got it occasionally annoyed when students would ask me questions that are already on the syllabus. But then I had to keep

reminding myself that this isn't the only online course that they're taking, right? So they're juggling like four or five different Brightspace pages all with different requirements and organization. So I learned that I would have to just keep reminding them.

Derek: [9:34] Yeah. What about, so your decision, you mentioned Zoom fatigue and that each of your classes had at least one session a week that was asynchronous. Can you say a little bit more about why you made that decision and how it played out?

Heeryoon: [9:46] Well, because I thought the Zoom sessions were better suited for more spontaneous discussion sessions. So I wanted to keep what could be done outside the Zoom sessions on Brightspace and asynchronous. And also because I had some students who were in different time zones. So for them the lectures had to be recorded anyway. And I actually did a pre-semester survey for both my classes and asked how many synchronous sessions a week would you want or how many asynchronous sessions? And I just followed their response.

Derek: [10:22] Ok, so the students expressed an interest in having a blend like that?

Heeryoon: [10:27] Well, my question, I think my question was how many synchronous sessions do you want? Do you want all class sessions to be synchronous or would you want once a week because this semester, both of our classes meet twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays. And most students wanted once a week synchronous sessions. But it's such a mixed reaction. You can't please everyone, right?

[10:54] So after the mid semester survey, because I did one with Center for Teaching, I found that some students still preferred a fully synchronous Zoom session. So for one of my classes, I switched to one synchronous and one completely, well, sorry, one asynchronous and one completely synchronous session. So the lecturers would be synchronous as well because some students still prefer the kind of spontaneous interaction in the lectures.

Derek: [11:28] What's your preference? Having now done some prepared lecture videos, what do you think, or maybe not preference, but what do you see as some of the pros and cons of those two different approaches?

Heeryoon: [11:39] Well, so again, building off student responses, I think having them, again, having them divided into shorter segments makes it easier for them to take notes. And some

of them have told me that they do so much better when it's shorter rather than having this long chunk of a lecture. But others who wanted to have synchronous lecture sessions have said that they wanted to, they actually learn better when the instructor is actively making it more interactive, asking them questions, asking review questions, asking them what they think. So it's just, it's difficult, I think finding a balance between those two.

Derek: [12:29] Yeah. And I'm hearing that from other faculty too, where there's a lot of balances to strike these days, right, in terms of workload and pacing and format. Yeah.

Heeryoon: [12:43] Yeah. I mean, I learned, one thing I learned about the workload is that so I have, you know, first I had 15, three 15-minute videos, so I had 45 minutes of lecturers and I thought that would be more than enough time because my classes were 75 minutes and students can do discussion questions or come to a 30-minute Zoom session. But I learned after actually talking to the students, that they do not complete the lecture videos, a 45-minute lecture video online does not mean 45 minutes because when they're watching them, they pause the videos to take notes, they rewind if anything's unclear. So it actually takes so much longer. So I would expect students to have completed the videos before joining the Zoom session, when in fact they didn't, because they didn't have enough time. So I started cutting the videos to be even shorter. So after the midterm survey, I've cut the videos to be 35 to 40 minutes.

Derek: [13:46] That makes me think though, about traditional face-to-face classrooms and how we manage the pacing. Do you think that experience will change how you approach lecturing in a traditional classroom in the future?

Heeryoon: [14:02] Absolutely. I mean another thing about the recorded lecture is that it doesn't have a lot of interactive segments. I mean, sometimes I would ask a question and pause for a couple of minutes, but it still doesn't take as much time as having a couple of students raise their hand and call on them and have them answer and I respond. So you know, you don't take that time in. But I think the positive response I had about dividing the lecture, the larger lecture into say, three parts. I think that's something that I might keep doing in my future in-person classes, I think again because, you know, art history has a lot of images and a lot of historical facts to memorize. And I often, the feedback that I often get from students is that it's really hard to take notes during class.

[14:53] So, and for one of the fully synchronous lecture sessions, what I did was I divided the

lecture into half. So after one segment, I had a small group discussion and had them discuss a related image. And then we came back to the larger lecture room and that had a positive response. So I might have these little breaks scheduled in an in-person setting in the future.

Derek: [15:18] Right. And it may be, I mean, it sounds like some of the interaction happens somewhat organically when you're in a lecture classroom. But to think strategically about part one, part two and activity kind of changing things up every 15 or 20 minutes.

Heeryoon: [15:34] Yeah. And I found that you have to be so much more planned on Zoom. So the organic questions, when I lecture, I like asking questions. I like pausing and asking students what they think, you know, can you guess what this is? But I found that kind of interaction is very difficult to facilitate on Zoom. First of all, I'm seeing a lot of reluctance, on the part of students, to speak up during Zoom meetings, for some reason they find it really difficult, especially for a large lecture class, like the ones I teach.

Derek: [16:12] So what do you do about that?

Heeryoon: [16:15] Yeah so I really struggled. I really struggled.

Derek: [16:16] You're not the only one who's struggling with this.

Heeryoon: [16:18] I mean, I even made a meme about it and showed it to my class. (laughs) Yeah, you know, I don't know if you knew the experimental composer John Cage's four minutes and 33 seconds?

Derek: [16:32] I do. It's a song that's fully silent.

Heeryoon: [16:34] Yes, yes. So I made a meme (both laugh) because that really resonated with me. But one thing I figured out, and I figured this out last week. So I wish I had done it sooner, is instead of, you know, keep fantasizing about the spontaneous discussion that I'll have on Zoom, I had it planned. I gave them the questions I was going to ask in advance, so the response questions, the images I wanted them to think about in advance before class. And that actually really helped. I had so many more students speaking out and participating because they knew what I was going to ask them beforehand. They had written it down and I felt more comfortable and less guilty calling on the students because I knew that they have responded to the questions.

Derek: [17:27] Yeah. So let me tease this out a little bit. So in your traditional classrooms, how would you decide which students to call on?

Heeryoon: [17:35] Oh, I never call on, Derek. Confession, I did not say a single word in class in my first semester of graduate school. And I'm very grateful for all my professors for not calling me out, putting me on the spot. I mean, that's the introvert's worst nightmare. So I do sympathize with students who are reluctant to speak on Zoom. So that's kind of my policy, my rule that I never randomly call on students. I ask them beforehand, is it ok, you brought this point up in your response, is it okay if I call on you?

Derek: [18:10] Yeah. And so that carried over to your Zoom classes?

Heeryoon: [18:14] Yes. Yes. But it's just that, you know, in an in-person setting because students find it easier to speak up, again, for some reason. You usually have a group of more enthusiastic speakers who will fill the void, who would fill the silence. But I found that I couldn't rely on them when I'm teaching a course on Zoom because even they're not usually vocal. So yeah, I would keep trying to plan my discussions in advance, just accept the fact that I'm not, I may not have the kind of organic, spontaneous Q and A session that I'm used to having, giving them the responses in advance.

[18:58] And another thing I do when I am sharing the screen or when we're watching a video in class is utilizing the chat window because some students, you know, they might feel that it's easier to type instead of using their vocal cords. Or some people and some students have internet connectivity issues. So they have to use the chat window. Yeah, and when we're watching a video, so I kind of created this Netflix Party environment. So students are kind of more informally chiming in and so I might utilize the chat window function more as well.

Derek: [19:36] Ok. So when watching a video, you would actively encourage students to kind of make some observations along the way?

Heeryoon: [19:42] Yes. Yes. And I would also type in silly informal things. Yeah.

Derek: [19:48] Okay. Just to keep it a little bit light?

Heeryoon: [19:50] Yeah.

Derek: [19:51] Well, I'm wondering if you're noticing because you mentioned a couple of different strategies to try to get more engagement in the Zoom session. One is giving students the questions in advance or the pieces of art in advance to kind of start them mulling them over. And the other is kind of an intentional use of the chat. I'm wondering, you also said that in your traditional classroom, sometimes it would be the same vocal students again and again. Do you think you're actually helping more students participate actively during class with these different avenues?

Heeryoon: [20:18] Yes, I think it's really important to provide different avenues. Whereas for students who are not as inclined to speak up in class, I think that's when the discussion board or the responses come in. And I shared my syllabus. So I had the annotate the syllabus exercise in my first day of class. And I made sure in the syllabus saying that, you know, I'm not going to give you penalties because you are not speaking up on Zoom because I knew that just because you're not speaking, that doesn't mean you're not engaging from one introvert to another. (both laugh) And they really responded very positively to that. They said they wanted other avenues for engaging. And I think again, most of the students have been very articulate and engaged on the written discussion board responses.

Derek: [21:13] Well, and I think I'm hearing that from a lot of faculty too, who are, you know, we're pretty comfortable kind of measuring participation in one way, which is vocal participation in class. And now are looking at lots of different ways that students can be engaged and participate with their voice, but also in writing, either real-time or asynchronously.

Heeryoon: [21:32] So yeah, I think it's important to provide both.

Derek: [21:36] Okay. So you mentioned the annotate your syllabus activity. I want to hear more about that. What led to that and how did it work?

Heeryoon: [21:43] Well, first of all, I really wanted them to read the syllabus, so I felt that by annotating them, they would read it and also because I was trying out, I mean, I guess the transition to online teaching, but this was my first official online teaching semester. So I wanted to have their feedback in advance as much as possible. So I use Perusall. I uploaded my syllabus into Perusall and I just annotated on my own why I came up with this exercise, what I was thinking. And I also asked them questions. So we decided together on some of the assignments. What do you think about this assignment load, for example. And then they

came up with some answers.

Derek: [22:27] So just for our listeners, Perusall is a social annotation tool. So the students could annotate the syllabus and read each other's annotations, right? This was not an individual activity.

Heeryoon: [22:39] Right. And you could also divide them into smaller groups if you wanted to. But for the syllabus I opened it up to the entire class.

Derek: [22:48] What because, you know, that's something, again, something you could have done in the before times to help students read the syllabus.

Heeryoon: [22:59] I think I'll continue to do that.

Derek: [23:02] Yeah. What do you think you learned about your students through that activity or what impact did it have on them in terms of their engagement with the class?

Heeryoon: [23:08] Well, I could tell them that, well, you read this. (both laugh) I mean, to be honest, to be really honest, I found that even with that activity, you just have to keep reminding them about the requirements of the assignment, what percentage of the final grade this is, when we're meeting synchronously and asynchronously. But I think it was a good way to get started and just get an idea of what the students are like, what they're interested in. Because I had a lot of course content. I had the full course schedule on the syllabus and I could see they would respond to something, "oh, this sounds like a really interesting topic, I've studied this artist before." So it was a really good way to get to know them beforehand too.

Derek: [23:55] I like that. And I think one of the reasons, well, for my syllabus, I actually, this is a pedantic mathematician thing I do. So I have the course information sheet and then I have the course schedule. So the course information sheet is about policies and assignments and expectations. And then the schedule is the one that has the dates and the topics. And so really having students maybe annotate both of those components, right? Because part of it is hearing what topics they're interested in, what previous experience they have, what ideas they have. Do you think there were changes you made to the course as a result of that early feedback on the syllabus from your students?

Heeryoon: [24:41] Not really, but I think the issue was that for many of them, this was their first Korean art class, for example. So they didn't have a lot of experience or a strong preference going in, but I did know certain topics that they found more interesting, in advance. So I could call on them, "hey, you were interested in this. Are you excited to learn about this in class?"

Derek: [25:09] Did you do anything else with Perusall during the semester or was it just for the syllabus?

Heeryoon: [25:14] I use Perusall for more difficult reading. So more dense academic articles or more dense theoretical readings. And I had mixed reviews. So to prepare for this interview, I did a short survey of the students on what worked well and what didn't work, what they would want me to cut in my future classes and Perusall made it in both categories. (both laugh)

Derek: [25:43] What are the pros and cons that your students see with Perusall?

Heeryoon: [25:47] Well I mean so Perusall is the social reading, right? So they find, some students found it so much easier to engage with the article and understand it when they have these additional responses from their classmates and from their instructor as well. Because I would add my own annotations or explain some of the concepts or ask questions, ask response questions on my own before uploading, making the article available on Perusall.

[26:15] But some of the negative feedback that I've been getting is that it becomes overwhelming that they would prefer to read it on their own. It just takes so much longer to scroll through other students' responses. And another interesting feedback was that they don't feel comfortable sharing their views in public. So they would much rather submit an individual private response.

Derek: [26:42] So what are you gonna do with that?

Heeryoon: [26:44] I think, I mean, I wouldn't assign Perusall for all of my readings. And since I teach mostly survey courses, a lot of these readings are from survey textbooks. So I wouldn't use Perusall for those, but if I have a more focused or more dense scholarly article, I still might use that, but I would definitely consider dividing the Perusall group because I think the default on Perusall is 20 people. I think that's still too large. I would make it available to a

much smaller group so that the annotations do not become overwhelming. And one student told me that it's possible to hide other students' comments when you're reading it on Persuall.

Derek: [27:26] Okay. I believe that. There's a lot of options on Persuall. I don't know them all.

Heeryoon: [27:31] So that's another option you might want to consider if it becomes too disrupting.

Derek: [27:39] Right. Maybe read through the article without the student comments and then go back and see what they had to say. Yeah, I like that. Sounds like you'll still use it, you'll just be a little more thoughtful about when and how.

Heeryoon: [27:50] Yeah, advanced preparation.

Derek: [27:53] Are there other tools that you experimented with this fall?

Heeryoon: [27:56] Yes. So another assignment that I got really mixed reviews was an Instagram assignment. Just because I'm on social media a lot. I'm on Twitter and Instagram a lot. So I wanted another platform to interact outside Brightspace and outside the computer screen. So I used that for my Korean art class. And I did do a survey beforehand asking students if they would be interested in a social media assignment and with the exception of one student who responded after I finished my syllabus, everyone said yes.

[28:30] So I did an Instagram assignment where students were asked to post two posts per week related to our class materials. And we decided on the numbers of the posts when we were annotating the syllabus. But none of us expected that it's actually still a lot during a semester. And I found it stressful to try to post two images every weekend. So we cut it down to one.

[29:03] And another issue was that I said in the guideline that it could be more informal so they could find an object from a museum collection that was related to class lecturers and provide their own thoughts, their own analysis. They could also find some objects from their daily lives or pop culture that reminded them of the things we've been seeing in class. Or they could make a meme, they could reenact the artwork, they could recreate the art work.

[29:33] But in my official class account, I only did the official work formal stuff. And so some students thought that's what they're supposed to do. So it became more of a chore than this informal exercise. So if I keep doing it, I would make my expectations very clear and keep reminding them. And, but other students have said that they really liked having this platform to interact with other, with not just me, but with their fellow students outside the class. And I think it works well if I give them very specific instructions.

[30:15] So one Instagram assignment that worked really well with really positive responses was we were talking about these 18th century Korean paintings of books and scholarly collectibles, which is essentially like a "shelfie." So it's supposed to show the owners cultured status and wealth. I did a "shelfie" challenge. I asked the students, post a shelfie via Instagram.

Derek: [30:41] Just to be clear, you're saying shelfie as in bookshelf?

Heeryoon: [30:46] Yes, it's a thing.

Derek: [30:47] Oh, I know, I want to make sure our listeners get that distinction.

Heeryoon: [30:49] Yes, "shelfies." So take a picture of their bookshelf and explain their collection, what they have and that worked really well. They were interacting with each other. There were commenting on each other's books. A lot of them had Harry Potter, so that was an interesting generational thing. Yeah, and students told me that they really like the opportunity to engage and connect outside class and not just talking about academic things.

Derek: [31:23] Right, right. Well and especially with the fully online classes as we talked about in the OCDI, I think, you know, creating opportunities for that social presence is important. A lot of the social presence that would happen quite naturally in the classroom, just from being in the same room with other people, you have to create opportunities for that. And I think having an informal space outside of the formal class structures is really smart. I'm probably going to try to use Microsoft Teams in the spring when I teach my first-year writing seminar for that. Because Teams is a little stuffy looking. I'm a little worried that it's not as informal as Slack or Discord or Instagram, but we do have a site license for it and so I get to use all the bells and whistles. And my hope is that it will have some channels there where students can be less formal and a little more personal. And I think that'll help.

Heeryoon: [32:15] Yeah. I mean, I think it's definitely, we're thinking about having this additional informal platform.

Derek: [32:21] Yeah, and I would agree having really specific assignments for that is helpful, right? The more open-ended often students aren't quite sure where to go with it.

Heeryoon: [32:30] Or make it not, instead of every week, I could say just do five posts during this semester, or making it less stressful. Because I never intended it to be stressful, but it turned out to be. (laughs)

Derek: [32:44] Well, and you may also find that, you know, if you do have kind of focus assignments there, some work and some don't. And so next semester you'll have, you'll try out a few new ones, right? The sheflie was a good one. So you can do more in that vein going forward. Yeah, it takes some trial and error sometimes.

Heeryoon: [33:02] Absolutely.

Derek: [33:03] Were there other online activities or assignments that seemed to work well for your fall courses?

Heeryoon: [33:09] I think I've covered most of the things that I talked about. One thing that I would really love to try for my spring course is that I didn't want to add too many new tools to my Brightspace. So I stuck with the Brightspace discussion board. But I'm still not satisfied with how linear it feels when you're just kind of scrolling down and there's this time gala, especially since these are all asynchronous. So I would maybe explore other platforms for that, could substitute the Brightspace discussion board. I've been hearing good things about Padlet. So I might use this winter break to look into that. Yeah.

Derek: [33:57] Yeah. So Padlet is more of a kind of virtual white board, pin board. You can use images, you can use text pretty easily.

Heeryoon: [34:07] Yeah, and I heard that some professors also use it during their synchronous Zoom meetings and it works well.

Derek: [34:13] Yes, I've been hearing that as well. It's funny, you know, you may not know this, but years ago I wrote a book on teaching with classroom response systems, polling

systems of various sorts.

Heeryoon: [34:24] Oh, yeah.

Derek: [34:26] Padlet was kind of in the same category, but much less structured in the past, right? You don't get a bar graph that shows you kind of all of your students' responses altogether. But it is a space where all students can respond. They can all post something. And so yeah, I think it's, anyway, I went through a phase where I kept forgetting the name Padlet. I was like there's that one other tool. But now I think I've got it. I think I've got it. And I like your advice not to take on too many different tools at once for your own sake, but for your students' sake as well.

Heeryoon: [35:01] Yeah, yeah, and I would also make sure that I can easily integrate it into Brightspace because now almost everything takes place on Brightspace.

Derek: [35:12] Well, and you said you've heard good things about Padlet. Where do you go to get ideas for your teaching?

Heeryoon: [35:19] Twitter. (both laugh) Well, the Center for Teaching blogs and I interact with some academics on Twitter. Yeah, I read somebody saying that it works so well, especially if you make it anonymous, students feel free to post things even during a synchronous Zoom session.

Derek: [35:45] And one of the reasons I ask is I remember during our OCDI time this summer, that it seemed like you did a really good job of reaching out to other art history educators and seeing what they were doing in the shift to online.

Heeryoon: [35:57] Oh, I guess I was just talking to some colleagues for ideas since some of the things we have to deal with are very discipline specific, like working with images, switching from an in-person museum session to a virtual gallery. So yes, I've been, I did talk to some colleagues for their ideas.

Derek: [36:22] Yeah. Yeah. Which I admire. I think you're right, there's a lot that we can learn from each other across disciplines, but there are also parts of our teaching that are very discipline specific. And so I appreciated how you were, you kind of cast a wide net for ideas and inspiration this summer.

Heeryoon: [36:39] Thank you.

Derek: [36:40] I am curious, is there anything that does feel somewhat unique to the art history environment that you did this fall as a kind of adaptation to the online environment?

Heeryoon: [36:53] Well, I think it just enabled me to become so much more aware of the virtual online collections of objects because we couldn't use any in-person. I couldn't use the Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery collection. So it just made me much more aware of what's out there in terms of virtual museums or Google arts and culture. So I had students do a lot of image searching on their own for their various assignments so that they would also become familiar with searching images on Google or museum collections online.

Derek: [37:32] And that's something that probably wouldn't have been possible five to ten years ago.

Heeryoon: [37:36] Oh, no. (laughs) I'm just thinking about the transition from actual slides to PowerPoint because I was taught with slides when I was an undergrad and there was this incident when a student knocked down the slide tray and we couldn't have class. (both laugh)

Derek: [37:56] Because all the slides went everywhere?

Heeryoon: [37:57] Yeah, yeah.

Derek: [38:00] Wow, right. Yes, yes. We often on this podcast, we often ask our guests, what is one of their favorite analog educational technologies? It sounds like maybe you would not pick slide projectors as a favorite.

Heeryoon: [38:16] Well, I mean, I enjoyed it. I was kind of the slide person when I was in undergrad, I was in charge of setting it up and I like the physical aspect of it. But yeah, I mean, it's I mean, it makes such a big difference for the instructors too, because you have to process your own slide film for your lectures if you didn't have them. So you have to have your lectures prepared in advance. Not one hour before class.

Derek: [38:44] (laughs) Right, right. You can't just Google your way to an image during class.

Heeryoon: [38:48] Yeah, but thinking about it, it does change the ways we lecture, right, because with the traditional, I mean, it's so long ago, but with the slide format, you don't have any texts on the screen. You just have the images up. But now with the PowerPoints, you tend to have more text, textual information. And I'm seeing from student feedback that they like having the textual information, more textual information on the screen to help them take notes. Especially when you're dealing with a lot of unfamiliar terms and names that they haven't heard before.

Derek: [39:24] I will say I was never a big flashcard user as a student. But when I took my course on The Art of China and Japan, I made a lot of flashcards.

Heeryoon: [39:44] Yes. And I mean, I really, I mean, I think it helps to again, have the physical aspect to just you know, make those flash cards and kind of write your notes. So I always tell my students at the beginning of the class that I allow, with in person classes as well, they can take notes with their computer, but writing notes with your hand is always better. And I tell them to draw.

Derek: [40:05] Well, Heeryoon, so let's imagine, you've got a colleague who was, I don't know, maybe they were on leave this fall and they haven't taught online yet, but they're going to do so in the spring. What kind of advice would you give them as they prepare for the spring semester?

Heeryoon: [40:22] So I would suggest doing a pre-semester survey, listen to the students' needs because they are going through as much as you're going through right now. And another thing that the students have told me is at the attitude of the instructor makes a big difference even when they're listening to the recorded lectures. So sounding positive, although you may not feel positive. Sounding positive and passionate really helps them to engage with the online lecture materials. And I would, if it's not too much work, I would definitely think about the Zoom fatigue and consider dividing up the lectures even if it's not recorded, you can still do that in synchronous sessions.

Derek: [41:11] Well, thank you so much for sharing your experiences today on the podcast here. It was great to hear how things have worked out for you.

Heeryoon: [41:17] Thank you for having me. (music)

Derek: [41:22] That was Heeryoon Shin, Mellon assistant professor of Asian art at Vanderbilt University. Thanks to Heeryoon for taking time to talk with me about her fall semester and her plans for the spring. I was struck by the pedagogical moves she made this fall that she plans to continue making in her future teaching. Sounds like she'll provide students questions and images in advance of class discussions in the future. She'll keep using Persuall for social annotation of challenging texts. But with some changes to how she does group sizes and break up her lecture classes into 15-minute chunks with group activities in between.

[42:00] On that last point, I'll put a link in the show notes to a classic article by Joan Middendorf and Alan Kalish titled "The 'Change-up' in Lectures" from 1996. It's full of ideas to break up a lecture class with useful activities for students. And it's just as timely now as it was in the nineties. I keep hearing from faculty and other instructors who have learned a lot about teaching and learning this fall. These weren't the conditions anyone wanted for teaching innovation, but I'm happy to find some silver lining during these dark days. I'll circle back to one lightbulb moment that Heeryoon mentioned when she realized that students take more than 45 minutes to watch 45 minutes worth of recorded lecture videos. Thanks to pausing and rewinding and such. It's a really interesting observation about students and I suspect that will inform Heeryoon's teaching in the spring and in the years to come.

[42:50] Leading Lines is produced by the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching and The Jean and Alexander Heard libraries. You can find us on Twitter @leadinglinespod and on the web at leadinglinespod.com. This episode was edited by Rhett McDaniel. Look for new episodes when we publish them. I'm your host, Derek Bruff. Thanks for listening and stay safe. (music)