***Empathy – Adaptability – Clarity***

***Empathy***, our commitment to seeing the world through the eyes of students and the understanding that they are diverse in perspective and need – especially at this time resembling no other in living memory. Over 75% of my students were seniors, losing the spring of their senior year. Some of my students lost their summer jobs or internships, some were unable to return home – especially difficult for some of the Chinese students who experienced stigma and isolation. Many others returned home to frightened parents. Compassion for my students and myself has been a key catalyst for discernment in response to class management during this momentous change.

***Adaptability*** – We, 45 students and I, went from a class with large group work around diversity and inclusion accompanied with small group work culminating in class presentations plus a group paper. All the connections to that work normally facilitated in the classroom to weekly “3 hour Zooms”. Any means of accomplishing our goals relying on face-to-face interactions had to transform.

* Best changes made – Spring 2020;
  + Pre-zoom assignments, completed individually in the first hour of class, included discussion prompts for when we joined class live each week. When students had taken time to digest a brief reading or video and completed a google form on their thoughts, they were more comfortable sharing in class.
  + During that first hour I was “in class” on Zoom available for questions.
  + Rather than full class Zoom which lent itself to low participation, I utilized Round-Robin project presentations with small group to small group feedback collected by live video Q & A plus Google survey forms.
  + Acknowledging how hard the lockdown adjustments were;
    - Offering brief but clear public health information and resources about COVID-19
    - Occasionally we acknowledged what we were missing, even if it was only in the “chat” – time with friends, working out at the gym,
    - Very positive feedback from students on all of the above!
* Best changes made – Fall 2020;
  + Connected student lived experiences to the course topic (Human Relationships) for research questions in mixed-method small group projects. Groups designed and analyzed brief surveys to explore relationship changes since March 2020 – they had broad intuitive opportunity to focus on what impacted and interested them most. Randomly chosen student groups articulated research topics which ranged from quarantine family conflict, COVID-19 precaution negotiations with room-mates, to online learning impacts on feeling connected to professors.

***Clarity*** – maintaining accuracy and connection was a challenge in 2020. My best practices were;

* + Didn’t wait for students to utilize online office hours – they didn’t – met with individuals once and groups regularly – reducing class time to spare everyone from overload.
  + Assigned interim small group tasks and check-ins
  + Ongoing use of Pre-Zoom assignments which included class related queries, for example – “Do you have questions about your journal assignment?”
  + Class introduction survey that included questions about impacts of changes; for example, do you have access to stable internet, food, safe housing?