

Michael Eure Show – Episode 36: Engaging Students Virtually

INTRODUCTION: Hello, this is Michael Eure, and I'd like to invite you to the Michael Eure Show, featuring student hosts and very special guests talking about a variety of interesting topics. You can find us on the Eagle Stream YouTube channel.

MICHAEL EURE: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Michael Eure Show. Today, we have some very, very special guests. We have some students, and we're gonna be talking about student engagement in the virtual world. So, we're gonna start off by each of them briefly introducing themselves, and I'll start with Sean and then do Tionna and then to Daniel and then Kameron. OK? Thank you. All right.

SEAN ROWAN: Well, thank you, Mr. Eure, for, for hosting us and, and having us on the stream. Hello, everyone out there. My name is Sean Rowan. I'm a student at Wake Tech studying engineering. Right now, I'm, I'm really looking forward to some of the topics we're, we're gonna talk about today, and I think I should provide some helpful information, as I've served, or studied, both on campus and in online learning environments.

EURE: Thank you. Tionna?

TIONNA CHANCELLOR: Hello, my name is Tionna Chancellor, and I am a nursing major. Basically, I have been at Wake Tech for, since, I think, summer of 2019, and I just enjoy everything that it has to offer. Really enjoyed myself this go-around.

EURE: All right. Daniel?

DANIEL BLAKE: Hello. Thank you again for having all of us on for this awesome conversation. I'm Daniel Blake. I am a student at Wake Tech. This is actually my first semester, and so, I hope to be able to give some valuable input.

KAMERON THOMPSON: Thank you. My name is Kameron, and this is currently my second semester at Wake Tech. I plan on getting my associate's in order to transfer out, but this could change in the future. Just so, like, glad to be here. Happy about it.

EURE: Well, thank all of you. And right now, I think Sara's gonna move us over to the side, and we're gonna go through the Student Impact Coach page. So, this is student impact coaches, of which I am one, and you can make an appointment or just kind of go on our

page and see what we do. And scroll down to the resources, and we can stop right here. We have these buttons that you can push, and we're gonna do one, but we have the Career Employment Resources. We have Wellness. We have the Libraries, just all kinds of resources. But right now, one that we use a lot is the ILC, so I'm gonna ask her. Yes, open it up, and this is for any students that have not used it. You can go in and click, make an appointment. You can do math, you can do English, you can do writing. They have workshops, and I just wanted you to see how easy it was. So, the impact coaches will help guide you, but you can also do this on your own, and the website is always available. Just go to Wake Tech, look for impact coaches, and it'll take you directly to our page, and those various resources will be there.

Now, Tionna, I'm gonna put her on the spot because the one thing we don't have on that is Financial Aid, and, and she works in Financial Aid part time. And if, could you tell the students what they need to know about what they need to be doing in financial aid right now? Tionna? Oh, you're, you're muted. She disappeared. Well, we'll come back.

ROWAN: Mr. Eure, I think you're on mute as well.

EURE: Thank you. You remember so well, Mr. Public Information Officer. Thank you. What were some, some of your experiences taking classes online that differ from the seated classes? And that's everybody. We'll come back to you later, Tionna, about that. But we're talking about the difference between online and seated classes and what were your experiences. And we'll start with, well, let's start with Sean and then go to Tionna and then Kameron and then Daniel. And I know that some of you may not have taken any seated classes yet.

ROWAN: Right, so that, that's a great question. What's the difference, or what are some of the differences between online learning and, and on-campus learning? And I think they're very similar in a lot of ways, but I think the main aspect is how you communicate with your professors and your students and just how you're meeting people in general, you know. On campus, you can literally turn right next to you, talk to a student. You can raise your hand, talk with a professor. In that way, get direct answers. There's physical office hours where you can get help.

So, online, we still have all these, these great things, and, and we can still do them. They're just a little bit different. And a main advantage of the online learning that I found is its flexibility. And in your, of your option to, to work from anywhere and, and, and anytime. So, those, those are some, some of the key differences that I've noticed.

EURE: Thank you. And Tionna?

CHANCELLOR: So, I'll say some of the key differences, I agree absolutely with what Sean said as far as online. But it's something that you really have to, like, schedule to do because the teacher just tells you this is what has to be turned in, and then it's up to you to figure out the time to study, the time to schedule, maybe, some time with ILC. And, as far as me, I prefer being one-on-one with the teacher, having someone kind of next to me, just because I don't understand. You know, you kind of build that camaraderie with the, the students in the class, kind of make your little, own little study groups. As far as that versus online, it's kind of, you know, solo. It's all you, and you have to figure out the schedule that works best for you. So, if you like to do things by yourself, online is the perfect tool for you. If you're more social like some of us, or someone who's been out of school since 1998, maybe a more seated course is a best fit. So, you know, you take a little bit of both and see which one works best for you.

EURE: Thank you. Daniel?

BLAKE: Yeah, I can 100 percent agree with what both Sean and Tionna said. I think it's vital to be able to make these connections at not only school, but the community surrounding that. And while online isn't ideal, obviously, I think we'd all love to work toward an area where we can get in person, but, for now, I think it's an excellent opportunity to reach out to teachers and to fellow students to actually build that community online again. It's just excellent. I think Wake Tech has done a great job at facilitating that.

EURE: And I will jump in and say Wake Tech is the number one online community college in the United States, even before the pandemic. So, now you, Kameron.

THOMPSON: Right. Yeah, I definitely do agree with what Tionna was saying and what Daniel was saying and Sean. I think it's probably more of a solitary choice, and what I've noticed when it comes to online learning, definitely it might be more straightforward. People can ask questions still, you know, their professors. But like what Sean was saying, it's sort of more solitary. But that isn't necessarily a bad thing. It really just depends on the person and what they are trying to achieve or how best they learn, like in their environments. I definitely do think that it's, it's definitely a good choice.

EURE: All right. Thanks. Do, do any of you come on campus for classes, or are there any what we call hybrids, or are all of them completely online?

BLAKE: I, for my transition English class, it is a hybrid class, though most students do elect to stay at home. We have the virtual call on the one day that we do, or are allowed to, come in. And while I have not yet been able to come to campus to actually, like, experience that in-person class, I think it, regardless, it's been a great experience. And I, while I cannot wait for in-person classes to continue, I think we've done such a good job with the online, a lot better than some schools, not to, not to rag on any, but I think it's very imperative building those relationships. I think we've done excellent job with that.

ROWAN: Daniel, I just want to say I love your optimism, and I wanted to bring up something that, that you said. You know, it's a great, we're in a different situation right now than, than we're typically in, but that gives us a great opportunity, like you said, to, to start building and, and meeting those new people, and, and we just, our way of doing that is just different. So, you know those opportunities are still there. I just wanted to, to point that out.

EURE: OK. All right. Thank you. We have a question in the chat. OK, this is from Dr. Chris O'Riordan-Adjah from Engineering. "What do you all think about online integrity? Can faculty trust that you can all do your work independently without consulting and soliciting any information? Basically, how do you build online trust?" And that's for any or all of you.

CHANCELLOR: So, at the end of the day, it's like your own personal integrity. You get assigned work and can find workarounds for anything they throw against you. What are you learning? Because right now, you're building a foundation for what you want to do further in life. So, if you're using other resources, what really are you learning when it comes to, like, test time? Now, they have responded. We have lock down our browsers, and you don't have to use, like, a camera, things like that. I feel like that would discourage cheating. But at the end of the day, who are you really cheating? If you use other workarounds to get through your classes, what really are you learning, is how I feel about it. It's just about your own personal integrity. And for some, most teachers find a way to make it a little harder, I feel like, maybe, on line so you can't cheat, you know, like make questions that's not even [indecipherable]. So, that kind of sucks for us who have no intention on cheating, but like, you know, I mean, you have to do what you have to do. But I think it's your personally integrity.

EURE: Anybody else?

BLAKE: I 100 percent agree. I think Tionna makes an excellent point, saying, "Who are you really cheating?" You're not cheating the school. You're cheating yourself by not actually

working hard and studying and not putting in the effort to get the good grades because you are putting that effort in. And while building trust is extremely important, I think it is 100 percent possible. It is very difficult because it is hard to monitor student activity from a teacher point of view. I think, though, a very essential point is that, regardless of cheating, regardless of the effort that is put in, regardless of how hard the class is, I think we just need to be very charitable with each other, especially in this very difficult time for all of us.

If a student doesn't have time to study, or maybe did do, or don't think they're going to do super-well on a thing and they find a resource while they're doing it, I think that's not a failing on the teacher. That's just a way that a teacher can try and do a bit better for our students, or their students, to try and, like, be better and make sure that every one of your students is getting the education they need. And then, in turn, each student being charitable to the teacher, make sure that they're reaching out, make sure that they're communicating properly, make sure that they're saying, "Hey, I'm struggling with this. Can I get some help, or can you link me to a resource where I can get some help?" And that's where I think, I think the ILC comes in greatly. It is an awesome place to go to if you ever need the resources or to reach out to get the resources that you need to learn.

EURE: All right. You pick, and we gotta move along because we got a lot to do. The next question is, have any of you used the ILC virtually or on campus, and how effective was it?

CHANCELLOR: I'd love to start this one off. When I first started it, I didn't want people to know I didn't understand. So, I was embarrassed to use the ILC because I didn't want people to know I just needed that extra time. So, I signed up with my teacher, who was in ILC, and I have used every ILC [indecipherable] there is. Everybody has a little different way of teaching. I can't say enough about the math ILC. I think I used them for my Spanish class. Like they are there to help. They're just waiting to help, and they're all excellent. They all have their own different way of teaching, but I hate that I started my first semester without using the ILC because they definitely made my grades improve.

EURE: Thank you. Anybody else?

THOMPSON: I definitely agree with, with Tionna. In my first semester, I, I, I believe I only used the ILC maybe once or twice, so that really has changed this semester. Like Tionna said, everyone has their own way of teaching, but at the end of the day, really, it's, they're just a really good source when it comes to, like, giving advice, when it comes to feedback. I, I use the ILC mostly for my, my Math-171 class, and so far, it's been just a really positive experience. I probably, I remember meeting one of the faculty there, Mr. Arshady, if I'm

pronouncing his name correctly. It's just really cool getting to see, like, his personality when he was teaching. I really remember our meeting. I look back on it fondly. So, it, it's been a really good source.

EURE: If anybody has any questions, please put them in the chat. Anybody else have any comments?

ROWAN: Yeah. I just wanted to add one more thing on that. The ILC definitely, to reiterate, is a great source, like, and I'm glad everybody feels the same way. One thing that I really like about the ILC is its versatility. You can go there, you can set up a single day to go over a particular assignment, to help with a particular question. Or as Miss, Mr. Eure suggested to me is plan out scheduled dates several times in the ILC a week, and it, and it kind of acts as like a supplement to class time. That's something that's really, really helped me. It's just attending the ILC regularly and getting that extra help. It, it's, it's been a, a great change for me.

EURE: All right. Thank you. We have another question in the chat from Will Kincy from Pathways. Pathways is male mentoring. "Going through this experience, are you more than likely to primarily choose virtual classes? In other words, do you feel that the current experiences have made you a stronger student?"

BLAKE: I would love to take head on this one. While I'm a new, a fresh college student – this was my first semester – and I don't know what the in-person experience will be like at college, I can definitely say that, if this is as strong as it gets, or if in-person can be any better than this, then regardless, I will be satisfied. While I don't think a lot of us could say we're the best people or the best students we could be right now, we're in a very difficult situation. I think it's evident that a lot of us have put in the effort and put in the time, teachers and students, to make this experience the best that it can be.

And so, to that question, would I pursue virtual classes in the future? Of course. I've already planned my Summer and Spring semesters out. I plan to take some virtual classes. It's, well, a lot more convenient sometimes than driving around to different campuses or even driving to one campus. But at, the, the bottom line is it's a great experience, and regardless of what happens in the future, I'm glad to have had it.

EURE: Anybody else? OK. Now we gotta, we're gonna go into student activities. We know that you do the academics, and we'll get back to that. But we have a lot of student activities, and we're gonna talk with Tionna for a minute because she went on a trip. We

took some students to Elizabeth City State, and we all, so that was a, right before the pandemic. We were so lucky. Then, she also participated in books, and I got a chance to help facilitate that. But could you tell us about those two experiences, Tionna?

CHANCELLOR: Sure. My ACH teacher was [indecipherable] Elizabeth City State University. [Indecipherable] It was the most amazing experience. It was like a different world. I probably dated myself a little bit with that one. But it just showed college life. You saw the sorority/fraternity life. We got to eat in the caf. They had some of the best food I've ever had in my life. They just kind of showed us, they have like a mini, we got to see the band. We got to see the dancers. We talked to the dean. They have, like, an aerospace kind of situation down there. There, it, it was, it was just able to get out of the city and go see something that you never thought that, maybe, you, you know, ever sign up for. I think like it was, it was, I can't speak enough of it. My son now wants to go there. It's it was just, you know, college. It's about seeing different things, and I'm, actually it was, it was so good. It was so good.

And then we did ...

EURE: Go ahead.

CHANCELLOR: No, go ahead.

EURE: I was gonna say they have a great aviation program as well, and tuition is only \$500.

CHANCELLOR: Yeah. And everyone was like [indecipherable].

EURE: Well, she's gone, but she'll be back. Sean, you work in student government. Tell us about what's going on virtually and what you're planning for the upcoming. Or do you know? I know you're doing, you did a virtual race and we did that virtual book reading, and Richard Redding, who's a student success coach for Pathways, and I got to facilitate. And "The Hate U Give" was my favorite, and he liked the book "Dear Martin."

And Tionna, I think, went to Denmark, but I'm gonna let you talk about it, Sean. Talk about some of the things you do and, and, and, invite students to become part of student government.

ROWAN: Yeah, absolutely. So, Student Government Association is, is the hub and the club that helps facilitate Wake Tech's events and activities, helps with clubs and things of that nature. So, this year was, was definitely a challenge for all of us in, in the Student

Government Association. But nonetheless, we were still all trying to hold as many events as possible. We had a several online virtual events, like Mr. Eure was saying. We had book drives, virtual runs, fundraisers that that were actually very successful. So, you know, we're, we're trying to put all that focus on virtual events this semester.

But even with that, we, we were actually having some socially distanced events. For example, there was a, like, I think the, the book, the book event was you had to go, you, you actually got to go to campus and, and pick up a book. And we also had a cake day, and we can go in and pick up a free cake. So, we're, we're trying to come up with ways to, to, you know, keep students involved and engaged. And we got, we got a lot planned for the upcoming semester. I think, in the fall, they're, Wake Tech is going to add a lot more in-person classes, and, of course, that depends on, on the situation. But we're hoping to, to start posting more events, getting more students together and just, just keeping the engagement up.

EURE: Thank you. Tionna, you have anything else that we, that you wanna talk about before we lost you for a minute? Mic is muted.

BLAKE: Mr. Eure, your mic is muted.

ROWAN: Mr. Eure, I think your mic is still muted.

EURE: While you wait with your professors now, are you able to interact and ask questions in class and afterwards, maybe office hours? And is that different than what happens when you're face to face? Sean?

ROWAN: Yeah. Great question. So, me, I'm, I'm definitely a social person. I like to ask questions and give feedback. I, I love to collaborate with, with my classmates. So, I actually signed up for online classes, but we have scheduled meeting times on Teams, so we do get that face-to-face interaction, which is awesome. Yeah, so I, I think Wake Tech is, is going to have more and more of those, but I, I think, as everything transitioned online, the workload on a lot of the tutors and professors is a lot more. They have a, a lot more students, I mean, in each class, so that that could be a challenge. But, but I think that also gives us an opportunity to, to, you know, network in a new ways.

BLAKE: Yeah, I 100 percent agree. I think, fundamentally, the opportunity to reach out to your teachers and fellow students and faculty and different resources throughout the school is super-important. And navigating that has been made very easy through the

subset of, like, Blackboard and the Wake Tech student information pages and the Wake Tech, the page itself. It's made it quite easy to get any extra questions that I need answered if a teacher isn't available or if I have a the need for help outside of class. And if I need be, I can contact my teacher on Teams, and they can respond to my question whenever they're available. So, I think it's very useful, and I think it's a been done very well.

EURE: All right. Time goes by so quick. We have questions in the chat, so if I can get Daniel, Kameron and Sean to read those as they come across the screen. Daniel?

BLAKE: "Hello students." Thank you, Wake Tech ILC tutoring.

EURE: Thank you. Go ahead. I mean, they're wonderful, and thank you all for letting us know – free tutoring support for students in the ILC. And they are awesome. I, I'm telling you, I love them. Now, Sean, you could do this.

ROWAN: I'd love to. All right, so Wake Tech ILC tutoring says, "College is not a solitary journey, though we often we feel we should be able to be successful on our own. You have a family of support here at Wake Tech, including the ILC." Which is very true.

EURE: TheSuperKeem, that is, and Tionna will remember him, that's Professor Akeem McAllister. And he used to be in ACA, and he accompanied us to Elizabeth City State, where he's a graduate and he's working in his field. He's got his master's in biology and his bachelor's in chemistry and biology from Elizabeth City State. The master's is from Central. But since you know him. No, no, let's just get Kameron to read. I don't wanna feel like we're cheating. Go ahead, Kameron, read that.

THOMPSON: "The ILC is amazing. When I was an instructor at the wonderful Wake Tech, I pushed all my students to that resource."

EURE: Yes. Take turns, whoever wants to be next.

BLAKE: So, the Wake Tech ILC tutoring center says, "What wonderful ideas for student engagement in this time of COVID."

EURE: Wow. And this is, wow, more from Will Kincy. Go ahead. I'm gonna let you do that, Sean.

ROWAN: So, thank you. Mr. Kincy says, "This has been a great panel. Thanks students for taking the time out and, and giving us a lens into the current student experience." It was a pleasure.

EURE: And we are about to wind down, got about a minute. So, I'm gonna let each of the students make a closing statement, and then we'll just have to have you come back. But first, I wanna thank you and look forward to working with Daniel and Kameron since I'm just working with you for the first time this semester and continuing to work with Tionna and Sean. Quick closing. Thank you.

ROWAN: I just wanted to thank everybody again. I have one piece of advice before I go, is to get involved. Join clubs, get involved in the activities and do, use the resources that Wake Tech.

BLAKE: I'd love to echo what Sean says. Being a part of this community has been an excellent help, not only for my mental health, but also for my grades in general. So, it's been super-wonderful to be on here. Thank you for having me, and thank you everyone for participating.

EURE: Kameron?

THOMPSON: I just want to say thank you for having me on. This, this is the first ...

EURE: It's 12:30, and so the show has come to an end. But I'm gonna invite you back probably, maybe before the semester's over. Certainly, in the summer, we'll be doing 15-minute meetings in Scott, and we'll talk about that a little bit more, and you can kind of help interview some of these offices we talked about.

All right, so thank you. We'll see you in two weeks, 12 o'clock, 12:30 on the Michael Eure Show. Bye.