

Goldie: Hello, everybody and welcome to our webinar. I'm Goldie Blumenstyk. I'm a longtime reporter and writer here at the Chronicle of Higher Education. As many of you know, online education has been the biggest source of enrollment growth in U.S. higher education over the past few years. And that's even before we began, worrying about a worldwide health pandemic. Public and private nonprofit colleges, either working with online program managers or on their own are actually dominating this market. And at the same time, we've seen growing need for more educational offerings that reflect and even teach us about the diverse nature of our world. Our intercultural and inter religious differences have become part of curricular and co-curricular life on many college campuses. But for the most part, this development has been taking place in residential and face to face settings Not in the growing realm of online education. And that's the big disconnect that we're going to be addressing today in this webinar. And to do that, I have the help of two guests who are really on the cutting edge of their fields. Suzanne Gibbs Howard, is an educator and a designer who's been a longtime leader at the design firm IDEO. And she's the founder of its new IDEO U division. This isn't listed on her bio, but she also happened to have spent two years at Divinity School. So she's got some, more personal affinity for today's topic and not just some professional interest. Paul LeBlanc, the president of Southern New Hampshire University, may be a bit more familiar to many of you, not only because you may have seen him in some of the TV commercials for his university, but also because he's been leading Southern New Hampshire to a period of phenomenal growth and change. And he's kept it at the forefront of innovation in online education and a lot more. Paul and Suzanne, I'm so grateful to both of you for joining us today for this webinar. I think it's going to really be a fascinating conversation.

Suzanne: Thanks for having us Goldie.

Goldie: Before we begin a little housekeeping to the audience, to the folks and audience, please you can submit a question at any time in the box in the lower part of your screen. And if you would like to ask a question anonymously, indicate that at the beginning of your query, I should let you know we also have about more than 1,000 people registered for this. So, apologies in advance if we don't actually get to your question, I expect they may be many. Before we begin, my colleague, Maura Mahoney, who's helping me here with the webinar has a quick message from our sponsor.

Maura: Thank you, Goldie. We'd like to thank our sponsor, IFYC, IFYC is a national nonprofit working in higher education to equip the next generation of educated citizens and exceptional professionals for leadership in a religiously diverse world. Now back to you Goldie.

Goldie: Wait, all right I will start this conversation off here with Paul LeBlanc. Paul, sort of at the top level, what are the big intercultural competencies that you think belong in a 21st century college curriculum.

Paul: Yeah, thank you, Goldie. It's pleasure to be with you. I think what we're seeing for our people, for our students and remember with online, we are dealing primarily with adults an average age of 28, 29 years old. And 86% of them are working already, most have children. So they're juggling a lot of things. And they often come back to college you think how hard it is to do work and family and now going to squeeze in an education as well. I mean, they're, really kind of remarkable students in that sense. But you know, what drives them back to do this I think they are often trying to unlock an opportunity. They're focused on improving their lives. And that often means, I need a better job, I need to move up the ladder within my organization, you know, any number of versions of that. So, you often start the conversation really focused on that that unlocking your job unlocking an opportunity, and that can get be very quickly focused on what job and what competencies and what skills. But interestingly, what we are learning from the research and from employers is that and what we know some people call soft skills, I think a better term for it is adorable, our endurance skills, are becoming much, much more important people are seeing in, I think the workplace and the sire generally You know, it's the move increasingly diverse society that they need people who have competence emotional competence can work in teams, can work with diverse populations, and then a more general enduring skills that all employers now talk about. I think it's about 57% of employers are putting more emphasis on durable skills over hard skills. And these will include critical thinking, communications, systems and design thinking. These are really important and as more jobs are either displaced or automated. It's going to be these very distinctly human traits that become increasingly important. So, we have to really focus on this. The workforce world is telling us this. It's in the data. It's in the research.

Goldie: And, I know this is still somewhat of a new experiment for you guys, if you're entering into this world, but can it be done online? I think we tend to think of this as primarily something that's being done, you know, in the residential settings.

Paul: Yeah, I mean, I think there... so I think we often think about developing these skills and sort of, as you suggested, around a seminar table when we are face to face, and that somehow is a critical factor in this. But we know that incredibly rich interactions happen psychologically, emotionally and otherwise, in online environments, but it does take careful design. And you do this by the way you structure the work and the projects and how you assess, right? So you have to think about these things, I think carefully. But by and large, we've gotten to a place with the design of online learning but there's very little that we think about not being able to do any longer. Right? We have programs now in mechanical engineering and nursing, you know, they may have clinical components. But now, we can do this online. And we have great examples of this, you know, we're developing a micro-credential right now, a wholly online pilot, to work with people in call centers or customer service centers, to help them when they're dealing with people with different languages and different cultural backgrounds. So, more than 10% of America today, we have people, more than 10% of the population, has a language or that a non-English language is more comfortable to them. So if someone's calling me and I'm a customer service representative for an insurance company, for example, what happens when that starts to break down? How

do I sort of move through them? How do I remain culturally sensitive to them? We're doing this with nursing as well, right, where we engage with interfaith scenarios. So yeah, simulations, the types of hypothetical that's well structured assignments etc.

Goldie: So when people talk about online education as being just this, like delivery of a course, you know, that it's, you know, much more of I think people have this thought about it that's kind of instrumental, you know it's download a module, do the module, do you think there's still room, in a system for that. There's room in the pedagogy.

Paul: Yeah, and I think, yes, I know, it's, a common misconception that somehow it's just merely kind of transactional, and that it's really content driven. But if you really to talk to any of our academic advisors, and some of our faculty what you'd hear as where we keep coming back to the very distinctly human interactions that are critical, you know our academic advisors spend as much time with students as life coaches in some ways as they are academic coaches. And, I think for our faculty, those are the rich conversations. So you have to think differently about how you support those human interactions, but they remain critical. I mean, a part of most great teaching and learning is that's relational, right? It's not transactional.

Suzanne: So, I know Southern New Hampshire is kind of famous for adopting the philosophy of that, you know, you're providing an education for the job, that's the job to be done—an old Clay Christensen term. What if you know your students are coming in? Many of them, like you said, working adults, limited time on their hands, kind of coming in for a specific purpose. If you see some tension in that in maybe some of these students might not see the need for some of this, they might see it as, you know, maybe.

Paul: I would say this, adult learners tend to be time constrained, and they really want clarity about what we need to get done. So sometimes you'll see resistance around teamwork, for example, like oh my god I have to juggle this and have to coordinate with other people like can I just do it myself? And, if you think about some of the things we're talking about, interface sensitivity, cultural sensitivities, right these are sort of competencies that we think are important. I think we do better when we frame those, if I can put it this way, in the business case. So when we say look, you work for this large national retail organization. You are a store manager. This is an important job to you as this is a recent promotion. And then somebody tells you that they can't be in on a certain day because of a religious holiday. But, this isn't part of the company pledge. So, how do you negotiate that in a constructive, positive way that doesn't backfire on you? You need to keep right like this is your performance at stake here. And there are lots of really great examples. And if you talk to Eboo Patel, president of the Interfaith Youth Core, he has these wonderful business case scenarios around this. If we talk to our students who, you know, you aspire to have a career with company X, and that might mean that at some point you're going to be transferred to the American Southwest. Are you comfortable negotiating that as culture that's very different

than the one you grew up with in New Hampshire? When you put it that way, there's a kind of practicality to that, that makes it matter to them differently. And then when you get into the material, the materials compelling, right? So then, then they still catch the fire. But I think to get them to overcome the initial resistance, you kind of have to show why this is important in practical ways.

Goldie: Makes a lot of sense. I know we're going to talk a little bit more extensively about how you're doing this at Southern New Hampshire. But I thought we might want to focus on a couple of these examples. Right from the start, you mentioned it briefly in the conversation. You're doing this micro-credential pilot for employees to understand sort of cultural sensitivity. What does that look like?

Paul: Yeah, so they'll walk them through sort of five skills of intercultural competencies. They are all designed with rubrics. There's training around how the mind processes language like little help you understand what's going on here. Look, give them exercises and how to fix a conversation that's going awry. So, you know, if you're in a customer service role and someone is unhappy, right? It's very easy to have a conversation escalate. So what are the strategies that you can sort of connect with them convey empathy and understanding, but yet get that conversation back on track? So it's really, you know, in some ways, it's communications one on one. But things that if you've been in that field, you come to know, but you know, we all watch the news and kind of see our public discourse, it feels to me like these are competencies that are sometimes addressed in our culture right now. So it's really building simulations that allow people to engage a modeling, right? So model for simulations to practice giving students a great deal of clarity. I think you know, one of the things we're very dedicated to competency-based learning here and we even in our traditional courses are now being mapped to competencies. We want to be very clear about what the rubrics are to that make that transparent to students.

Goldie: And I, you also mentioned briefly nursing seems almost that way almost be an obvious one. Obviously, people are being put into a lot of situations where they're dealing with people very quickly from different cultures and different religions, religious traditions, and that comes into play at some of the most important times of people's lives. Are there other disciplines where you think these inter cultural or inter religious themes really belong, or maybe where they're a hard to fit?

Paul: I think that, I think they belong throughout the curriculum, and we're trying to move away from the notion of kind of DEI as a module.

Goldie: Can you explain DEI?

Paul: DEI Oh, I'm sorry, diversity, equity and inclusivity. Right. So inclusion, so broadly speaking, those three things, we really want to try to integrate them throughout the curriculum. Because often times, they get treated as a module. And it's kind of a checkbox, right, so where are they harder? So if we look at the business curriculum, we might say, accounting, this gets a little harder or finance, right? These are disciplines that have their rule based, process based, disciplines. They tend to lend themselves a little bit less well to this, but we have an Islamic banking course for example, which gave that department an opportunity to talk about, you know, even our rules and structures of finance are contextually situated and context often includes strong cultural biases and strong religious biases. And there's you know, so the idea of lending is not a sort of in a rule of nature that is a construct and what are the ways other cultures might think about that? So you try to think through, I think context is our best lens on this which is on any given discipline or topic. These things have been created or constructed in the context. And context almost always includes distinctly human qualities and biases and beliefs, etc. What are those? Can we surface those? Can we unpack those? So, yeah.

Goldie: Yeah, that's great. Well, we're going to come back to you in a minute or two. I want to get Suzanne to this conversation. Paul's in New Hampshire, Suzanne's in San Francisco. Suzanne, I invited IDEO to be part of this, because I was really intrigued that a company known for teaching things like collaboration and creativity was doing had start to do this online as well. Can you just talk for a minute about why IDEO kind of got into this business of online learning?

Suzanne: Absolutely. So for those who don't know IDEO, IDEO is a global design and innovation company. We've been around for 40 years. So for the first 20 years, we were really heavily focused on helping to create more innovations in the world helping other companies create innovative solutions around some of the world's toughest challenges in healthcare, tech, food, technology, education. But in the last 20 years, people like myself and others have come into IDEO, and we've really been helping to unlock more innovators in the world, helping the people, the teams, the organizations that we work with, to literally become the creative problem solvers they've been looking for. And so as we've been teaching more in the work that we do, what we've seen is that there's a massive hunger from people all around the globe who want to work in more creative, more innovative ways. And it was just a need that we couldn't be any longer with face to face workshops and consulting. And so about five years ago, I helped IDEO to start IDEO U. So that's become our online platform where anyone, anywhere they are all around the world can learn to solve their own challenges more creatively. And a lot of the things that we teach, are directly connected to all the things you and Paul are bringing up. We believe that diversity, equity inclusion, all of these things are the fuel for creativity and innovation. Without diverse perspectives or understanding of difference in the world, you can't design the right solutions. And you need a range of people to be involved in getting us to those solutions and to everything Paul's saying, we need to be better collaborators that are co-creators in order to get there. So these human skills are at the center of where we all need to go in our education and in the workplace.

Goldie: And I think it's telling, I sort of stole your phrase, when you and I were talking about this webinar, you used the phrase called the sort of gray zone educational skills. They're not the hard skills, you know. They're not accounting, they're not some of these harder skills, but they're certainly life skills. And they're important. And I think it's so interesting that a company like yours has gotten, you know, as decided that it needs to have sort of a timeline to constitute this.

Suzanne: Absolutely. Yeah, I mean to me, they're not only if you think so Burning Glass, Burning Glass Technologies produced a study on the human factor. These soft skills are one of the places where we're seeing these, this kind of data coming out. And what they're telling us is that these skills, these gray zone skills, these durable skills, 21st century skills, they're not only desirable and durable, but they're hard to hire for. Businesses are having trouble finding the people that have excellent communication skills, excellent creative problem-solving skills. And so at IDEO U when we started this, we knew that we needed to lean into that space and figure out how to teach these things in a scalable, sustainable online environment. And so, what we wanted to lean into today was a little bit more of just an example of how and the thoughtfulness that goes into creating these experiences building off of everything Paul's already shared.

Goldie: Right, yeah so we'll have the next slide up on that sort of shows this a little bit. And that's Suzanne and I was asking her to sort of give us all a little sense of how IDEO approaches this. Obviously, this is one methodology colleges can have a lot of other methodologies as they approach it but to think about teaching something that is not so black and white, something that is a little grayer. Suzanne, can you talk to us a little bit about how, how IDEO is approaching this?

Suzanne: Absolutely. Yeah, I mean, to start off, I think one of the things I should say is that we have been learning as we go and so over the last five years, we've taught over 75,000 learners from over 100 different countries. So the community is diverse by nature, and we've been experimenting and pushing the edges of how to teach these things. And one of the things we've come back to is that a lot of these things are things set. We're sure we can integrate very high tech in order to get there. But some of these things are not that far out from behaviors we all have in other parts of our life, and just working with educators to bring these kinds of things that they naturally do in the classroom into an online world. So starting off, just sharing our approach very much with these kinds of gray zone skills or 21st century skills is that you have to learn them by doing them. You can't, just like working out, you can't watch a video of somebody working out and get fit. Yeah, you can't get more empathic by watching somebody else talk to you about empathy, you have to try it, you have to do it. And so our approach is to really move people through a cycle of see, try, share and reflect. So short videos and case studies from diverse places all around the world. Two levels of trying both online through simulation, questions and activities, but also bringing it project based into the world, and sharing to the community and then reflecting. So I can illustrate this for you a little bit more through a course that we've just launched that is 100% about collaboration.

And so we've released a course last year that's about creative collaboration. And the very beginning of it is about building the foundation for trust and respect, so that the rest of the collaboration can go well. And so while this whole course is on that I think these are things that can be built in across any range of curriculum. So if we dive--

Goldie: Before we do that for a second, I just kind of want to make it clear to everybody, this is a course about collaboration. Can you just help us all sort of understand how does this connect to sort of inter-teaching, you know, Intercultural Studies-- or rather inter-religious studies or diversity? How did you know, why are we talking about collaboration here?

Suzanne: Yeah, so whatever work we're doing today, I think at the roots of collaboration We need empathy and respect for diversity of opinions. It's that same thing and almost anything that we do. We've also outside of IDEO U, just at IDEO, we've created curricula for people who are lawyers. We've worked with Adam Foss, who's an assistant DA in the Boston area, and he is a prosecutor. And he's trying to teach prosecutors that it's not about the sheer volume of cases you can win and the number of people you can prosecute. But it's about having true empathy, not only for the individual who might be prosecuted, but also for everything else in the social system around it so that you're creating the best solutions for society. We've seen other things in the spaces of educating people working in hospitals as well. How do you create respect across a traditionally hierarchical system, in a hospital when we're coming together all-around patient care? We've been there nurses and nutritionists and dietetic people to have as much of the same the patient care as the physician. So in all of these practices, people need to respect each other, develop trust, and then be able to collaborate toward better solutions, whether it's patients or prosecution.

Goldie: Okay, so while we're talking to you about this course on collaboration, the lessons here can apply to a lot of broader, broader kinds of topics.

Suzanne: Absolutely.

Goldie: All right fine I just wanted to make sure-- everyone understood why, why we sort of chose this topic here, of course, all right, take it away.

Suzanne: So I wanted to dive in and just give people an experience because I love learning by doing of what happens inside of a course. So, if we move on, you'll get a little taste of what Try is like. So they are, I think that one of the challenges that we see in a lot of online courses are people translating something from the real world into online and that is they just stick up a huge video of somebody. So inside of our courses, we always break up small videos, we always make it participatory. And inside of this course, one thing I want to share that we talked about is a particular case study from Google. They studied 180 teams and brought them together to understand what is the common denominator. And what they saw

was that people needed to understand each other have trust and respect. And when they did, this is the business case for diversity and trust. They saw that these teams were likely to bring in more revenue and that they were rated twice as effective by other leaders in that company. And so at the roots of any great teamwork, which is all the work in the modern workforce, you need psychological safety. And this means that these are the conditions where team members feel they can suggest ideas, they can admit mistakes to each other, and they can take those risks in order to make progress. And so what we're doing inside of this course as we start to move into Try is helping people understand this abstract concept of psychological safety. So this is something I'm going to invite everyone to do right now, who's listening in.

Goldie: This is like the audience, I think we promised a little audience participation on this webinar, this is our audience participation part. If you're the kind of person who at this part of a conference, you can, like, you know, go get yourself a drink of water, but we're going to do this little piece here, including me actually.

Suzanne: Yeah, so I want everyone to think back. I know, right now, we're in a lot of meetings. A lot of them are moving into the remote and virtual world very fast. But think that your recent meeting last few days or even last week, and I want you to reflect on whether or not you've heard these phrases or seen these behaviors inside of your work environment. Which of these did you see, which of these didn't you experience? So for example, have you heard phrases like, "I wonder if", or "I don't know", or "I need help" or with the behavior have you seen things like people literally asking for feedback? Or somebody not only noticing attention in the room, but actually getting curious about it, or people admitting failures. And so, as people do that--

Goldie: Look, we'll give everybody like a minute or two to think about that.

Suzanne: And yeah, and as you think about that specific meeting, rate yourself on a scale from one to 10, one being low 10 being high, how much psychological safety did you feel? So, this is something that we do literally inside of our courses.

Goldie: So, am ready to say, I know what I've done is I'm looking back at that list. What can I learn from I know I, I don't really have that. I sometimes-- it's for me, it depends on who says it. There is a question--the wonder if question. I know, or I don't know I think I often go into a meeting with feeling like I know it all, that's a very good moment to stop thinking that way. But on the other side of that side, the voicing the opposing opinions. I'm very good at that, actually.

Suzanne: Yeah, I'm the cultural note these things shift in different cultural environments. New York might be very different than Tokyo with regard to these kinds of behaviors in the

workforce so people can connect with what's going on in their own culture, what's going on inside of themselves, what's acceptable in their work environment?

Goldie: I just want to make sure people also understand what's the value of I mean, is this a tool that you're suggesting that people could use in a course and teaching a class on like diversity, you know, if they're trying to include some diversity elements in an a nursing course or something like how—how do you go about this?

Suzanne: Absolutely, I think so many times in a learning environments, we do a quick get to know you, if possible. But sometimes when it's face-to-face and at the scale of a seminar, we just speed into the content. And so it's so important to understand who's in the classroom with you is we're in so many more peer based learning environments. And as that's coming online, how do you go slow in order to go fast? How do you make a little time and space for people to understand where everyone is and then move forward with learning from there? And the same thing in a work environment? We're seeing this all over the workforce, from frontline employees to people working in financial services, you know, how do you understand who people are, what they're bringing into the workplace, and then learn how to leverage that to get to better work environments with each other. And so, these are some of the tools that we're teaching people and we think elements of this can be dropped into absolutely any curriculum.

Goldie: I know, hopefully, by now, everyone has sort of taken a moment to reflect on their own meeting skills and thinking about what they do in a meeting and then possibly, I guess thinking a little bit more how they might bring this into a classroom environment. We can kind of go on to the Try section now here. What exactly--

Suzanne: So one of the things that we think is really important in teaching these kinds of soft skills is also making sure we bring it offline and bringing it into the real world. And so after people try things in a simulated environment online, we also ask them to take it on in their real life to find a meeting, a place where they've noticed tension, most people come back and they haven't rated everything is 10--we're feeling psychological safe in every environment. You know, what is one where there might be a little bit of tension? How do you positively engage with that and set the conditions for more understanding, more respect, more trust. And so this is an example of one of the kinds of exercises where we invite people to set agreements with their team to think as much about how the work gets done, as what they need to get done. And so they move in, they have different activities that they can do with a team. And then they get to a certain place with agreements for how they want to work. I think the important thing here is that after doing this, then they come back and they share those things to the community of people who are learning alongside them. So there are always a couple hundred people inside of our courses from all over the world. They share what they're learning, and then they reflect on those learnings. And so what you see here, are people coming back and learning a bit about themselves. And so I think, just like Goldie

was kind of modeling for us, we get a range of responses after people have shared. And so what they do is they start to reflect on the fact that, first they look at other people, usually, and they say, "Oh, I noticed that this person was talking more than others, and they were really dominating the conversation." But over time, and as we've designed these reflection points to be really fruitful for these kinds of conversations. We see people starting to reflect on oh, well, maybe it's something I could have done. Maybe I could have asked better questions. Or maybe I could have actually listened to the answers that people were giving, like Young here in the lower right-hand corner, he's realizing that he was part of the problem for some of the things he might have been overlooking. And so this like cycle--

Goldie: Before we do that, can we go back to that Share slide for a second here

Suzanne: Yeah .

Goldie: Because I want to talk about that, nature of feedback, because I think that's what happens a lot in courses too, those opportunities for feedback. And a lot of different ways, You identify here, you talked a little bit about the team agreements, but in this little slide you have here you're showing posted notes and other kinds of ways to sort of for students and for the people in the course, in your case, maybe a lot more peers in an online education class, maybe an instructor and students. Can you talk a little bit about the different ways for having different forms of feedback and how these is different forms of feedback can make a difference?

Suzanne: Yes, I mean, feedback is one of the most important parts. As we were designing a course, the idea of having a gallery or a place where people can share the work that they're doing is critically important. One of the puzzles you had to solve for--

Goldie: Not just the student to the professor, but in a in a more of a public way?

Suzanne: Absolutely. And that was all about the making the most of the diverse community that is coming together inside of these kinds of courses. And so we knew a lot of times in the beginning, we will see people go off and try something in the real world and then getting them to bring it back online was challenging. So certainly, we built it into the requirements for the coursework, but what we start to see is that once people start sharing and commenting on each other's work that's when the real deep learning starts to happen. And so that comparing across seeing what somebody else has done, understanding how you could have done something even better, or something that you did really well, those are the kinds of comparisons that really build that deep respect, understanding of difference. And the value, you know, and so we've got people in these courses, the students are literally from all over the globe. And at the same time, we also have one of the things that you can't do as easily in the real world is to have an incredibly diverse teaching team. So we've got instructors and

teaching team members who are from Saudi Arabia at the same time as they're from Singapore, and the same time they're from South Bend, you know, they're just all over the map. And you get that diversity of industry, diversity of background diversity of perspective, giving feedback.

Goldie: Yeah, I think a lot of traditional colleges probably have maybe not quite that level of diversity in their classes. I mean, obviously in an online course, it gives them a little bit more opportunity for that than some other kind of courses. But is there something about the classroom experience that they can take from this? I mean, I guess I'm trying to sort of really take it back down to the classroom experience or the online classroom experience. You know, is there something that instructors can do with these kinds of added class assignments that the students to do to reflect more diversity into the classroom then there might naturally be just because maybe there's a classroom of adult students, as you know, from all different parts of the country, in the world, like the ones at Southern New Hampshire, that maybe they're just a lot of, you know, 18 to 22-year-olds from the same community? How do you start to get that diversity of into the mix?

Suzanne: Yeah, I think there are two key moments that we often advise other educators working to bring their experience online to be extra thoughtful about when, I think Paul was mentioning this, you design those interactive moments in the learning experience. What are the assignments like? How do you build reflection points and relational touch points into those moments so that there's dialogue not just between student and instructor but also dialogue across? And so, I think being really thoughtful about activities and assignments and how they're reflected back in the conversation around them is critical. The second key moment that we spend a lot of time thinking about build respect and trust and diversity, are these group touch points. So, a lot of times when, organizations are designing online courses, they're recording a lot of content and putting it up online. And that's a fantastic start. But how do you weave just the right amount of human touch into experience, still keeping it scalable, but adding an interpersonal moment? And so that can be a kickoff lecture at the beginning and at the end? It can be even, if the majority of the experiences recorded video, how do you bring people together for office hours? And all of these things can be done using fairly mainstream technologies right now. We heavily use Zoom for video conferencing. And we use things like Slack so that are more common in the workplace. We have TAs host breakout sessions. One of the things that we learned is that actually some of these discussions when you want get into conversations about diversity and difference, they might actually be harder if you're with people that you have to work with, or live with, or see face to face every day. Sometimes they're a little bit better if you're with people that you're developing a relationship with, but you might never meet them face to face. There's actually a deeper degree of comfort in having certain kinds of conversations about diversity in those environments.

Goldie: Well, great--

Paul: If I may add Goldie, this has been one of the things that I think she just said in passing. But, one of the beauties of online education is that you get sometimes dazzling diversity in your class. Right, you have, you've mentioned adding students from around the globe, Suzanne. So, it's kind of baked into the actual, you know, who's in the conversation together. You're dealing with it right out of the gate in a wonderful way.

Goldie: And then, for both of you, how do you make sure that you take advantage of that diversity? You know, and not just let it just be happen, it just happens to be the fact that it doesn't actually make a difference?

Suzanne: Yeah, I think what the TAs and teaching team members on the platform, one of the principles that we hold true is that they're facilitating a peer-based learning environment. So, it's less go to the instructor and the instructor gives you the answer or the feedback. But, we build, we played around with many dynamics for what the culture of feedback needs to be inside of a course. So as part of setting the agreements for the courses that people take with IDEO U, in particular, we tell them that they will be asked to give feedback to other people. And we instantiate those behaviors just at the beginning of the course when people are introducing themselves at the beginning of a course, we say greet the person before you and then introduce yourself. So little small micro behaviors are the kinds of things that set the culture and the community inside of the course. And then allow those things to really shine and deepen the learning experience around relationships.

Goldie: So, you might you not only teach it, but you model it in the class with this sort.

Suzanne: Absolutely.

Goldie: Cultural feedback, that's great. Paul, I want kind of come back to you right now, we mentioned some of these examples and some of these things that you're doing at New Hampshire right now, want dig a little bit deeper into it because I think Suzanne's examples are, are very important—broad contexts. But, it might be easier for people to sort of get a feel for it as we take it back there. Back to the, this is happening right now on a college campus just like yours. I know you talked a little bit about the competency based education program and how you're trying to sort of include diversity education in that. Can you tell us a little bit about some of these examples? Some of what you're seeing in the CBE course that you're doing to put more cross-cultural training in the classroom or in the classroom experience?

Paul: Yeah, you know, I sometimes hear discussion of diversity in the classroom as a sort of value question. And we really the beauty of CV is it forces you to make claims for what your students will know and be able to do. So it actually surfaces I think, in very concrete ways, the work. And let me give you one example. In our one of our CV programs, there is an actual

competency around cross-cultural-communication and then students have to prepare a presentation to a culturally or multicultural audience, right? So they have to now think about cultural awareness. Who's going to be in that audience? How will certain language choices? How am I demonstrating my sensitivity to that audience? How do I think about content structure? How does that change in a multicultural audience? What biases do I bring to the way even we think about the design of slides? How do I think about inclusivity? In that respect, right? So we worked with Perkins School for the Blind to really coach our staff and train our coaches and our staff to train our instructors on how do we make sure we're thinking about sight impaired in that kind of context? And then what would that look like for the work? We partner with the landmark school on neuro diversity and you know, it's a little bit like universal design. If you design for neuro diversity, just like curb cuts were designed for people who might have some sort of disability to navigate a sidewalk, they actually turn about to be really good for seniors and they turn about really good for people pushing baby carriages, etc. If you design neuro diversity, you actually sort of it works better for everybody—the course design. So we're spending a lot of time in, in the work in the course design, to sort of bring this in and to think about inclusivity quite broadly. But, you know, might go back to your question about examples. We're working with our local medical center, Catholic Medical Center in the Manchester Veterans Administration on a whole set of partnerships around things like patient assessment, health literacy, where students are asked to think about working with diverse populations. And what are the best literacy practices, best health literacy practices for different populations? And you know, we're seeing and again, we use rubrics, obviously, like 91% proficiency demonstrated proficiency in that work. And, we feel like we're producing better health practitioners. And when we do that, I gave you the example of cross-cultural communication—

Goldie: That's fantastic--

Paul: We're trying to, you know, we're trying to think about this in a STEM context and try to serve a more diverse student population, whereas, you know, women are deeply underrepresented in fields like engineering. And we're understanding the challenges, the structural challenges students carry with them. So much of engineering is about weeding people out. So, we're having a conversation about our pathways to mass Success Program, which is really trying to bridge and bring more diverse learners into STEM—into engineering in particular.

Goldie: I want to, I want to make sure we get to some of the questions. I know, the questions are said to pile up. I just had one more question for both of you about sort of technology. Paul, I know you mentioned that there's some work going on now with using virtual reality and sort of looking at, you know, ways to sort of, I know, I've read a lot about how, and seeing how virtual reality can be used to really sort of teach empathy and put you in a different understanding. But how important, both of you, is technology and as part of this, I mean, when we're talking about an online environment, but do you really have to go to have

a VR environment? Do you have to really invest a lot in the, you know, gizmos to do this shows how much of that really matters?

Paul: So, I don't think you have to rely on technology. I think technologies like VR are unlocking opportunities to put students in different scenarios. And, they're transporting in that sense, right? So, there can be when they're well designed, a very powerful. So we're doing one for example, where students are placed in homicide scenes. Then we sort of use that to help educate them on different cultures environments. So this isn't design, right. So I don't want to suggest that we're furthering this along, but we just signed a partnership with the New York City Police Department, for example. And one of the things they cited was that they really love the focus on diversity and multiculturalism and our program. And, you know, today's police are challenged, and we see the pretty robust and sometimes difficult debate we are having nationally. But we think we got to build a sense, this is how we have to train, you know, more effective police forces in the future. We'll see what happens when this goes off the rails. So yeah, you don't have to rely on technology by any means. But it can be useful. And VR is just one example.

Goldie: Yeah, I mean, I--

Suzanne: No, I'd say pretty similarly, I feel like everyone does need to be aware and more technologically literate these days. But it's about the right level of technology for the right educational experience. And I think virtual reality is fascinating. Augmented intelligence is really fascinating. And how do we stay up on those as online educators but just pull in the right few things in the right instance to design the right learning experience.

Goldie: I know Paul provided us with a quote from one of the students to sort of talk a little bit about the effectiveness measures. We'll leave that up on the screen for a minute. We'll go to some of these questions. Someone asked, "What are the five skills for cultural competence?" Maybe, there are more than five, but maybe, can each of you to sort of talk a little bit about what we've been talking about when we're talking about cultural competence?

Paul: Suzanne, do you want to go first I would have?

Suzanne: Well, I don't know the concrete answer to that. I don't know exactly what the five skills are. Definitely what we see aren't that the powerful skills that we're seeing people can learn that can connect them as humans in the fast changing workforce around things like, being better communicators, being deeply empathic, being more creative problem solvers, having critical thinking skills, and being great collaborators are some of the qualities that we see as those enduring skills and soft skills that people are needing in the workforce.

Paul: I would add to that, Goldie, there's an aspect of self-awareness and understanding and becoming more aware of our own biases. I think we're-- how we, sort of the ways in which we have power or are unempowered and the way the power is present in in the room in which we find ourselves in the conversation which we find ourselves. So if you're training someone to be a manager, for example, there is an innate power relationship and it will change it will impact or shape the way conversation communication takes place. So I think there is, I think Suzanne so rightly puts an emphasis on the most important emphasis on empathy. But there is also sort of internal inventory of our own biases and where we are either situated well or not well, and they often shift in terms of our own power and privilege as well.

Goldie: So there's a question directly into you. And I think Suzanne, you could sort of chime in with the students from what you hear from your conversations with other universities and other places. Well the question is, "What kind of faculty development do you offer at Southern New Hampshire to help the professor's and other instructors learn to structure these assessments and these assignments that incorporate diversity and inclusion?" And I mean, I, I know from spending time with you up there, you have a whole team at Southern New Hampshire that kind of focuses on developing the courses and building them out from a sort of a centralized center. But, how do you make— how do you then make sure that the faculty know how to then you know, sort of carry these things out?

Paul: Yeah so you--

Goldie: If it's true then how do you make sure it still happens.

Paul: Yeah, and it's challenging, right and I think one of the things we find typically, well not typically, but what we find often is faculty will often say they're quite nervous about approaching these subjects because they are afraid of a third vail; will I use language incorrectly? They see in places like the pages of the Chronicle, you know, faculty getting themselves in very public sorts of hot water on and sometimes without any ill intent but maybe clumsiness. Right, so there's a lot of training we do through our Center for Online Teaching and Learning. We, that's training as we onboard and get faculty ready, and then it's like periodic intermittent, intervention is the wrong word, but offerings of additional training. We had a pretty ambitious attempt to build a first-year seminar around DEI and those enormous amounts of training and faculty support and almost weekly touch bases. So faculty could come together and say, "Wow, this conversation sort of went off in a way that I wasn't prepared to manage and kind of do some coaching and sharing." Faculty learn best from each other we find. So, all those things, I think, it's that as you have put your finger on one of the most challenging aspects of this work.

Goldie: Yeah, especially it's not something that people might naturally think to include until somebody starts to say, hey, start naturally including it.

Suzanne: Yeah, I think it's been one of the pleasant surprises of how our work at IDEO U has evolved as well is that we literally retain a global teaching team and part of what we run as, as a part of our community, our ongoing communities of practice that run across the teaching team members. So not only does that get them up to speed on exactly, their curriculum, but it also facilitates an ongoing dialogue across them, so that they're continuing their own learning. They're sharing some of the things that each of them is doing as they develop peer learning experiences and dialogues with students. And that happens both through synchronous calls and video conferences as well as ongoing slack channels and breakout groups focused in on what are the best practices. So we really stitch that community together so that they keep learning in a facilitated way themselves.

Goldie: So question, sort of related actually, someone wants to know, how do you know what diversity you have in your class since it is online? And then to the effect what you earlier said is, you have to sort of consciously try to recognize the diversity that may be in your class, but then, you know, use that to some advantage perhaps, but how do you do that?

Suzanne: I mean, we asked people the questions at the beginning so there are multiple different touch points at which people can bring their whole self or as much of their self into the online classroom as possible. And so, we certainly have people do that in surveys, in chats. And then one of the really interesting ways that we help people gather and find topics that they're passionate about, maybe it's not the epicenter of their identity, their ethnicity, or their job is that we have options for breakout groups, some that we suggest, and some that they can put together themselves. And that's another way that we get a sense of what are in each particular program. What are some of the hot button issues that people are caring about or deeply experienced in?

Goldie: Paul, how would that work at a Southern New Hampshire class or any other, you know, public or even a public university class? Is that the kind of information that belongs in the class?

Paul: Yeah, no, it actually comes out more naturally than that. It comes in two ways and not dissimilar to what Suzanne said, which is in the beginning of every online class, we take the time to have students introduce themselves, talk a little bit about themselves, what do you want people to know about you? So there's enough after the first couple of times students get really proficient at that. So they tend to share more and more openly as they move through. So you get a lot of this surface. People share photos of themselves and more. And then as you move through the course itself, I think it sort of happens organically in the conversations, particularly when you have conversations around diversity, inclusivity and very intentional ways. So just, you know, wonderful examples. We have a fair number of military students, veterans, and a faculty member was describing to me a class in which he had a combination of veterans who may have been deployed in the Middle East and then he had a number of

students from Saudi Arabia and other parts of the Middle East, but most societies had a big Saudi population at the time of the story. The students in some ways took that conversation almost on their own to get into a conversation about Islam. And the faculty members training I think here was in some ways about restraint, about letting the students take that and when it felt like it might be very key describe their moments that got a little heated, right, I mean, you had people who were generally genuinely in life and death situations and sort of saying things about what that was like and what the culture was like. And, it's really become a great orchestrator of the conversation and a coach have a conversation facilitation skill, I think more than anything, so it happens. It happens almost organically. But again, with intentionality of design, right?

Goldie: Right.

Paul: Like I don't want to say you don't stumble into it. You do it and good, intentional design will surface, I think it's a better way of putting it.

Goldie: By the way, Paul, there's a couple questions coming about the source for that 57% that you had at the beginning here that 57% of employers are now favoring durable skills of hard skills.

Paul: Yeah, that's from 2018, Workplace Learning report from LinkedIn. So I saw the question come up on the screen. So I asked my innovation team, I chase that down for second

Goldie: Several people have a couple questions in the same vein, concise they said, examples of an effective online introduction exercise to build this kind of trust and safety that you're talking about before into the curriculum. Then you mentioned, Paul, people exchange pictures. Is there like a 20, 10 minute version that it's sort of a good one to let people be comfortable but not too vulnerable?

Suzanne: Yeah, we have a good--

Goldie: not too vulnerable, right.

Suzanne: One of my favorites, definitely. I agree with Paul about the photo have yourself in an environment that you care about is one that literally we've been experimenting with. And I cannot look at those streams of new students joining a class without like welling up with tears. There's something just so emotional about that choice. But another one that's super playful that we often use it I do is the awkward object, you know, what is something in your

personal space that you can share with other people. So, sometimes people don't like putting pictures of themselves, but they can pick an object that represents something interesting or funny, or just kind of strange about themselves. And that's a really lovely way to encourage vulnerability, at the same time as making it just safe enough for people to do online.

Goldie: I mean, I think it's important to stop here for a second and realize what we haven't talked about at all today is like, what does it mean, you know, what's in the curriculum for Intercultural Studies or what's in the curriculum for inter-religious understanding? Because obviously, that's, I mean, that's sort of a content message that's a little bit different. But I think what we're talking about here is creating the environment where you could do that. I mean, clearly, professors are going to sort of decide what the content is for a class. But I think what we're trying to talk about is literally how you could take, you know, an online environment, the distant environment and, you know, take some of the conditions that might have existed in a face-to-face environment and apply that more broadly, to be across the way. Other some other—I know, we're getting sort of towards the end of our hour here. I'm wondering if there are some other points that Paul or Suzanne wants to raise right off the budget that we didn't hit on that we should probably make sure we hit we make sure we cover.

Suzanne: I mean, I think the only build I'd have on your point about the curriculum is that as Paul was saying, we start with awareness, we move into empathy for others. And then there are definitely components of not only being able to look at each other and have respect but then actually working together, which typically brings up moving through how to manage tension. I think that we're getting into place where people are getting deeper than just assuming everything's going to go great. As soon as we start working together and assuming that they're going to be tensions, seeing tension and friction as actually a gift toward progress. And I think things that we're not at that level in the global conversation yet, but that I think a lot of educators are aspiring to is teaching people how to work through tensions and get to a better place and make progress over time. And so that can be in a work environment in a political environment. All of those kinds of things are, are the kind of things that we hope to give people a greater appreciation of.

Paul: Yeah, and I think I'll go almost circle back to someplace where we started and you might even have, like a slide on this, but it's from one of our students who's an adult learner, she works as a customer service rep. in a, some would call a call center or contact center. And, and I think oftentimes as we started the beginning the sense that online is transactional and job focused. And in reality, any of us who are offering degree programs online have to take into account general education and much of the enduring skills conversation that we're having now with employers, really surfaces are sort of sites, qualities that we often associate with the humanities. In some ways, this is a there is a sort of new narrative, I think, that could be had around the humanities, and they're no less important in an online environment. And I don't know that I, I don't think I would argue that they're particularly difficult. Oh yeah, you have to quote in front of everybody. You know, this was somebody in a competency

based education program. working full time, I know this particular Students couple of kids. And so this is at the end of her program. And if I look at that, quote, I think, you know, if I was the president of a small liberal arts residential college someplace, I'd be really proud of my students writing this at the end of their experience to their degree experience. Right, she's talking about resolving conflict while working on teams listening skills, practice and giving and receiving feedback. These are some of those enduring skills. They're sort of key skills and they're on a continuum with inclusivity and diversity because they are about listening harder and being sympathetic, being empathetic, being humble. Right, having humility in the conversation, which I think Suzanne might have used that word earlier. Yeah, so...

Suzanne: I agree. I think there's so many things that we've started to make assumptions of that they only happen in a residential based experience, and we are at the point with the development of online experiences that we can bring those amazing qualities into an educational experience that stretches over the miles and across ever greater diverse communities.

Goldie: Well I think we, we might want to just leave it with that note there. I think Maura has a comment to say. But first before I wanted to just thank both of you for leading this conversation. I think we're really just at the beginning of this discussion about what the new dimension is in online learning. I love this concept of the gray zone, gray zone educational skills, I think that, gray is a great color. And I think we're going to continue to see these kinds of courses developing, these experiences developing. I'm really excited to see what happens at Southern New Hampshire as one of the leaders in this field but also see how this sort of catches on and other colleges around the country. I think we're going to see a lot of versions of this happening right now. And before we sign off here, I want to remind everybody that you can, you'll be able to have access to this webinar and all the slides and if you have questions, feel free to email me as well. Goldie@Chronicle.com And before we tune off on my colleague Maura has a message to share.

Maura: Right thanks, Goldie and thank you everyone. Once again, we just wanted to thank our sponsor, IFYC is a national nonprofit working in higher education to equip the next generation of educated citizens and exceptional professionals for leadership in religiously diverse world. And as Goldie said, just keep an eye out for an email in a couple of days and you will be getting notice that the on-demand version of this is available. So thank you Goldie back to you.

Paul: Maura, Goldie could you answer a question for me? There are lots of questions or people saying hey, can you share that framework? Can you share the rubric? If there's a way to get me these questions. I am happy to put them all together in like a single blog post or something big so I can respond to those questions for people.

Goldie: That's great.

Paul: Yeah, Perfect.

Goldie: Yeah, we'll definitely make sure that, that gets done.

Paul: Okay and even more so, thank you both for your time on this webinar.

Suzanne: Thanks Goldie, thanks Maura

Goldie: Bye everybody.

Suzanne and Paul: Bye.

Paul: Thank you Suzanne. Bye Bye.

Suzanne: Bye.