

# CATESOL NEWSLETTER

SERVING TEACHERS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



## *CATESOL 2020 Virtual State Conference a Success*

This past October 8-11, CATESOL hosted its state conference online, featuring several keynote speakers, presentations, workshops, exhibits, and networking opportunities. Themed around the idea of *resiliency*, CATESOL has offered many opportunities for professional development as schools, colleges, and universities were forced to shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CATESOL Board Members and affiliates worked tirelessly together in planning, executing, and hosting a successful virtual conference this year and CATESOL would like to take this opportunity to express its gratitude to all who have supported this organization during these unprecedented times.

Special thanks to Amy Pascucci and Margi Wald, CATESOL State Conference 2020 Co-Chairs for their work on putting on a fantastic, timely, and memorable conference for all.

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# CATESOL 2020 Summer Professional Development

BY MARSHA CHAN, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, INTEREST GROUP CHAIR, EVENT REGISTRAR, WEB MANAGER, TOP-IG CO-COORDINATOR



CATESOL leaders shared a wealth of knowledge and skills in our Summer 2020 Professional Development (PD) series. Our goal was to engage our interest groups, levels, and chapters in meetings as close to face-to-face as possible during shelter-in-place and to use the summer days to help prepare teachers for the demands of full-fledged distance education destined for Fall term, if not before. These events continued the kind of coaching workshops that were provided in March for the general membership, this time tailoring the topics to those that would appeal to particular level and interest

group members.

Under direction and guidance from President Susan Gaer, in early June, I approached our Chapter, Level, and Interest Group Coordinators and invited them to organize an event using the CATESOL Zoom room. I held a virtual meeting with Interest Group Coordinators, prepared a video clip, created a Google Form “2020 Summer Zoom Room Engagement Proposal” and informed our Board members. Our Memberleap platform had recently integrated Zoom, making it possible to schedule the Zoom room, arrange a calendar event, and set up event registration within the platform.

A total of 34 Summer PD events, one to two hours in length, were scheduled from June 30 through September 17. Some events were designed as webinars with audience participation, incorporating discussion and practice using breakout groups; others were more informal meetings featuring a mix of academic, pedagogical and social discussions and sharing. Attendance ranged from a handful to 83. Nine events were scheduled in collaboration with the City College of San Francisco ESL Colloquium, as CATESOL offered a safe and secure platform for their first virtual conference. With the exception of the Online Course Design Institute for Speaking and Writing (held over two sessions and leading to a poster session at the State Conference), all events were offered free of charge to CATESOL members (and CCSF associates for the ESL Colloquium sessions). For non-members, most events were free, while a few charged non-members \$2.

25 events were hosted by CATESOL TOP-IG, OT-IG, TELL-IG, MW-IG, NNLEI-IG, RW-IG, K-12 Level, and SD-Chapter, in addition to the nine workshops organized by CCSF August 11-13. Altogether the events attracted 1,164 registrants. The most popular sessions were *Using Zoom to Teach ESL Learners on Computers and Phones*, *10 Interactive Activities for Synchronous Online Teaching* (OT-IG), and *Are you Remotely Concerned with Teaching Pronunciation?* (TOP-IG). 14 events brought in \$381 from users not only in California but also from other states in the U.S. as well as Europe and Asia. CATESOL

# *CATESOL Summer 2020 Professional Development continued...*

*membership increased through Summer PD, with 24 new members and renewals bringing in \$1,980.*

Several IG coordinators have expressed an intent to hold PD events during the school year, and most have organized at least a business and networking session, if not an academic session, at the State Conference in October 2020.

The following is a list of the Summer PD events. The sessions in **boldface** type were recorded. To view the videos, members may log into [www.catesol.org](http://www.catesol.org) and access Resources > Online Training > Summer 2020 PD Series.

For future events, members are invited to fill out this [Zoom Room Request and Proposal](#).

## *Free Materials Development Workshops for CATESOL Members*

BY NICOLE BRUN-MERCER, MW-IG COORDINATOR

Are you an instructor; curriculum developer; materials researcher, editor, or publisher? Are you looking for a community of professionals with whom you can share ideas or even collaborate on projects? Join the CATESOL Material Writers Interest Group!

This year we will be hosting monthly workshops on Zoom which are free to CATESOL members (\$2 for non-members). These events will be hands-on sessions where participants can learn new tools for developing materials as well as discover publication venues for the materials they are creating. After each workshop, attendees can network, share ideas, and find partners for future collaboration. Sign up for the workshop at [catesol.org](http://catesol.org). You will find a link to registration under "Upcoming Events." Also consider hosting a workshop yourself. As instructors, we are all materials developers and have some valuable tips and techniques to share. Contact Nicole at [nmb244@nau.edu](mailto:nmb244@nau.edu) to host a workshop.

Our first Zoom workshop will be held Friday, November 6 from 10-11:30 am PST. The session will focus on using Padlet for synchronous and asynchronous courses. Building on the CATESOL 2020 session "Online Materials Development that Saves Time and Boosts Student Engagement," this workshop is an opportunity for participants to work in groups creating Padlet spaces for different types of remote classes, from IEP to adult education, from integrated skills to a content-based curriculum. Free for CATESOL members. \$2 for non-members.



# Teaching Online: Student Engagement

BY CHRISTIE SOSA, CATESOL NEWSLETTER EDITOR

“Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepacked assignments and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning write about it, relate it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.”

*Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* (1987) by Chickering & Gamson

So, if students must actively participate in learning—how does this translate to an online setting? How do we engage our students in the learning process?

## What is engagement?

Many teachers might define engagement as students taking an active role in their learning. Signs of engagement might include raising a hand to answer a question, attending office hours, or even, simply, taking notes. Dixon (2015) provides a simple, yet comprehensive definition of engagement in their piece, “Measuring Student Engagement in an Online Course: The Online Student Engagement Scale” as “the extent to which students actively engage by thinking, talking, and interacting with the content of a course, the other students in the course, and the instructor.”

## Student Engagement Online

With this definition in mind, in an online course, engagement would include students responding to discussion boards, sending messages to the instructor or their peers, and also any interaction with the course content (e.g., annotating a reading, completing a quiz, etc.

## Promoting Student Engagement Online

Notable research conducted by Martin and Bolliger (2018) on the effectiveness of online engagement strategies revealed the best way to promote student engagement is quite simple...let's just say it doesn't involve using third-party apps or emoticons.

1. Announcements: Weekly announcements and/or email reminders about what should be accomplished for the upcoming week or reminders about assignment due dates are effective in both reminding students you are present.
2. Rubrics: Students appreciate knowing how they are being assessed on assignments—from discussion board posts to more comprehensive assessments—students want to know why they received a certain grade.
3. Scenario-Based Assignments: Are your assignments or activities realistic? In other words, are you situating your instruction so that students understand how it is applicable to their real lives?
4. Structured Discussions: Discussions are a major part of online course work, so providing clear instructions on how and what students should post in addition to how they should engage with their peers should be clearly outlined in the directions.
5. Collaborative Work: Successful collaborative work provides clear directions, gives each group member a clear role, and make sure the deliverables for each role is clear.

Many of you likely already incorporate many of these practices in your face-to-face classes and it turns out, they are effective when utilized in an online setting as well. While there is an array of tech to choose from to incorporate into your online classroom, remember: when it comes to engagement, simple and consistent communication is key to engaging your students throughout their entire time throughout your online course.