Reinventing the 21st Century Professor
(...well, I’m trying.)

John Boyer
(joboyer@vt.edu)
Dept. of Geography
Virginia Tech
Twitter: @plaidavenger
My 21st century path to this place....
PHASE II
Old School
Bigger &
PHASE III
Super-Sized
Lecture Outline for World Regions

Click on the topic for lecture outline and video links

1. Intro
2. World Population Dynamics
3. World Religions
4. World Energy
5. World Economic Systems
7. Europe Region
8. Russia Region
9. Central Asia Region
10. Middle East Region
11. Sub-Saharan Africa Region
12. South Asia Region
13. East Asia Region
14. Australia Region

Office Hours 4-2

Recorded live on April 2, 2012 7:58pm ET
...and now...

VS.

PHASE V Stylistic Showdown!
So what have I learned along the way?
A handful of things we’ve learned/experimented with along the way...

Thing #1: There are a few inconvenient truths to accept

Thing #2: Increase the bandwidth

Thing #3: Expand options

Thing #4: Make a class into a community

Thing #5: The end is near
Thing #1: There are a few inconvenient truths to accept
Thing #1: There are a few inconvenient truths to accept

Information/facts are cheap. They don’t need you for that.

Your exams and assessments are well crafted, thoughtful, and challenging. They have all the answers.

Social media totally sucks. And you should embrace it.

Laptops/phones in the classroom totally suck. And you should embrace them.

The AGE of the SAGE on the STAGE is slipping away... ...which is why we need to...
The technology tools now available to communicate and to deliver content are AWESOME!!!

Thing #2: Increase the bandwidth

...but don’t be forced into compliance, nor lulled into complacency....
Thing #2: Increase the bandwidth

Your students are already interacting in this space (and often interacting about YOU)
Tools that students use to interact with other students

Top Messenger Apps by Country [September 2018]
[Based on the Apple App Store Rank for each country in September 2018]

WhatsApp
Facebook Messenger
Viber
WeChat
Line
Telegram
SKK

Source: Similarweb.com | September 2018 | Based on the Apple App Store Rank for each country
Illustrated by Lany Kim | MobileMonkey.com

Know some “languages” in order to communicate more effectively with them
Tools that help give students a voice during class, building a sense of active involvement.

What news story should Prof. Boyer cover today?

Text a **KEYWORD** to **37607** or Tweet @poll and a **KEYWORD**

Submit a **KEYWORD** to **http://PollEv.com**

- Russia & China VETO Moves on Syria: VETO (30%)
- Assad Regime Bombards Homs: ASSAD (5%)
- Turkey and Gulf States Squeeze Syria: SYRIA (44%)
- Blasts Rock Central Nigeria: NIGERIA (6%)
- Volatile Week in the Philippines: VOLATILE (15%)

Total Results: 124
Tools that help connect the professor to the students

Creating a powerful PERCEPTION of availability

Facebook/Twitter - class notices, quick polling, instant feedback & casual interaction

ONLINE Office hours
...which ties into...
- Flexibility in lecture content availability accommodates different schedules
Thing #3: Use technology to expand options

- Flexibility in lecture content availability accommodates different schedules.
- Flexibility in assignments/assessments accommodates different learning styles and testing strengths.
A diversity of student assessment options

1) 13 weekly quizzes x 30 pts = 400 (+10 for doing all 13)
2) Midterm Exam = 125
3) Final Exam = 125
4) World Leaders Exam 50 x 2 = 100
5) Films 5 x 20 pts = 100 (20/each up to 100 points max)
6) Geographic Film Scripting = 150 (50/each up to 150 points max)
7) Non-class events paper = 150 (25/each up to 150 point max)
8) Atlas quizzes (11) = 110
9) Twitter Assignment = 200
10) World Leaders Bio = 50
11) Forum Commenting (13 wks) = 200 (15/each week)
12) Storify New Curation = 180 (15/each up to 180 points max)
13) International Interview = 50
14) Flash Quizzes = ???

Total 2000+ ???

- Allow max flex in assignments, so peeps can do things they are best at to 'prove' their knowledge (or at least demonstrate effort/work)

... and WORK is hard to FAKE

1300 points = A,
1200 points = B
1000 points = C
etc., etc.
The CORE assignments:

- Weekly vid quizzes
- Weekly reading quizzes
The more old school conventional assessments:

Midterm Exam
Final Exam
World Leader Exams

Which leader does Osama Bin Laden hate the MOST?
The newer technology-infused assignments:

“FLASH” quiz podcasts
World Leader Twitter
International Film quizzes
A word on our Twitter assignment.....

http://twitter.com/#!/list/plaidavenger/world-leaders
“Flash” Quiz Mania!

My “wild card” that I play to trick them into learning more!

Encourage students to pick topics, and even develop new assessments to demonstrate their knowledge and work...
.....and harnesses their knowledge, creativity, interests, and energies

3.5 NON-CLASS EVENTS PAPERS

To encourage you to attend outside internationally-focused events outside the classroom, (of which there are many every semester) I will allow you to earn points towards your grade by writing up a short paper from these pre-approved activities. Outside Event requests must be sent to me, or your designated TA, for approval before you attend the event. I encourage you all to send me any events that you think are applicable and that you may even want to advertise in class. I will select one or two events per week based upon your recommendations and post them on the course calendar and announce them in class.
Say what? What the heck is that?

*Any environment where peeps---openly and willingly---work with other peeps*
Some ways I’ve encouraged community-building via assignments...

Twitter team...
A word on our Film assignment COMMUNITY.....
What the heck.
Encourage them to cheat.
Work together.
Share.
Community building is not all academically-oriented just to your single class either…

Other creative/explore your campus/build community assignments:

Outside Event Write-up
International Interviews

Learn from real people: fellow students, faculty, etc. ...
WHERE’S WALDO?

Our local variant:
PLACE my PROFESSOR
A COMMUNITY feels comfortable and even compelled to add to the class in a great diversity of ways...
a class of INDIVIDUALS does not
....and on a personal note: I want to create courses that completely eliminate geographic barriers, but also destroy social barriers in their entirety: students interacting with each other, and me, on equal footing, but also with politicians and scientists and everyone else....by building community.
A COMMUNITY working together can achieve more than an INDIVIDUAL can on their own...and can make the impossible possible with the new power of a collective voice as demonstrated via social media and crowd-sourcing.

...GROUP SYNERGY evolves organically
But there is just one catch....

You can’t actually “make” a community.
AND speaking of ‘catches’....
there are some things that need to be recognized about this higher ed /ed tech ‘revolution’...
...and teaching ‘good’ to ‘great’ class, be they live or online....

-It is a ton of work. Especially up front.
-The more successful you are, the more time consuming it can become.
-Administration and support have to pony up
-Administration and support have to encourage experimentation, and not condemn failure
-Harness the tools to serve you....don’t serve them.
-It will all change tomorrow...and the end is near...
Thing #5: The end is near

I will now use my experience and great powers of perception to predict with 100% certainty the future of higher education in ten years:

NOT THIS

...so it is time for educators/academics/researchers to invent the future
First off: Future Teachers = Educational Curators

Just SO much good info out there
- Curating is a skill
- Supplement with your unique skill set
  (EXCLUSIVE expertise, deep knowledge and insight)

Craft the storyline of the course
A few specific thoughts I have on the future…

Secondly: Future Trends many of us would likely agree are increasing…

- Perception is as important as reality
- The idea of college degree as the new age “apprenticeship”
- Audience is shifting: both in quality of average undergrads as well as mature continuing ed
- Digital engagement will be more important
- Online education will boom
  (once someone figures out real acceptable online accreditation = EXPLOSION)

- Shake down is coming: a lot of smaller schools are not going to survive
Third: MODULEIZE the CONTENT

BY EXPLODING THE 3-credit COURSE MODEL ENTIRELY
THE AGE OF THE SAGE ON THE STAGE may be fading away…

but great teachers are great communicators, and are great at communicating stuff. And we happen to live in an awesome age of where technologies are making the communicating of stuff even more fun, creative and available to more people than ever before.

SO LET’S CREATE A BOLD NEW EDUCATIONAL WORLD BY BRING THE CLASSROOM INTO THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD INTO THE CLASSROOM