

inSiGHT

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Going Fully Online

Lecturers adapting to remote teaching during COVID-19 Pandemic.



UNIMAS INSPIRE

Launching of UNIMAS
Inspiring Learning Spaces

*Embracing
The New
Normal
in Teaching and Learning*

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Chief Editor's Message

Dear readers,

In this edition of InSiGHT, we are presented with articles that are centred on the new normal in teaching and learning in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the movement control order imposed by the government. The sudden transition to online learning may not have caught higher education by surprise since blended learning has been implemented for a while, but the speed of the transition has caused quite a stir not only among faculty members but also students.

It is encouraging to see that UNIMAS academics have responded well to the efforts to mitigate the impact of emergency remote teaching. This is evident by the sharing of efforts made through the articles in this volume. Lecturers from diverse faculties have demonstrated how they modified their usual practices in order to support teaching and learning during the time when physical face-to-face interactions may not be possible.

While some shared their experience in coping with the shift to fully online learning mode, there are also lecturers who provided tips in producing teaching videos as well as effective strategies to carry out assessments and examination online. Indeed, it is heartwarming to see the tremendous commitment given by the academics. Kudos to everyone for making sure students are not left behind in their learning despite challenges faced during this period of uncertainty.

The Centre for Applied Learning and Multimedia (CALM) will continue to support the lecturers and students in this endeavour. I hope you enjoy reading the articles shared in this volume as much as I did and I would also like to invite you to contribute in our future volumes.

Keep calm and happy reading!

Professor Dr Chen Chwen Jen

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Non-Face to Face Drama: The New Normal in Teaching Theatre

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Studios are empty. The scene and properties shop located behind the Experimental Theatre stage is very quiet. The atmosphere is deserted. At this time of the year, after the mid-semester break is usually a period for all Drama and Theatre students to sit together in the midst of preparing a show. Sound from a machine will dominate the space and student voices can be heard practicing their line for the upcoming show. This is a common scenery for the Drama and Theatre Programme in the Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts, UNIMAS. Students will get an opportunity to involve and manage a theatre production as part of their class project. Year two students will be in charge for the performance while the first-year group will act in the show as part of their assessment. The courses in the Drama and Theatre Programme relies on this final production to conduct the class evaluation and give students an authentic experience working in a theatre production.

Covid-19 pandemic arrived when students and lecturers in Drama and Theatre Programme are still figuring their way in planning

and working for an upcoming theatre production. This an annual production will usually be organized in April and November by Unimastage. The pre-production process is already in the rehearsal mode. Students and their respective lecturer will attend a rehearsal every night from 7:30 PM up to 11:00 PM, depending on the scene involves. At these moments, lecturers have briefed and give students their assessment based on the production work as well as the final stage performance that they need to do in order to complete the courses. Everything is ready in place. All of a sudden, everything has to be stopped. Control Movement Order has been issued by the government where any activities involving a big group of people have to be postponed or canceled. This is the point where non-face to face drama begins. Therefore, this writing will evolve on the new normal on teaching theatre in higher education, specifically at University Malaysia Sarawak.

Practical Class

For those who are familiar with

theatre teaching, they will agree that the need of face to face contact during stage performance as well as teaching and learning is essential in order to help students moving forward and mastering skills needed in acting, directing, and designing. Unfortunately, this cannot be achieved by doing an online class. Practical is the core of theatre learning. Students need to go through rehearsal by rehearsal to practice their skills and mastering theory that they learned in class. The instructor or lecturer needs to be physically present in the room to give them immediate feedback on their acting or directing. For instance, in an acting course, students need to physically perform a short monologue to practice their skills. In the usual situation, the instructors or lecturer will give a direct comment after their attempt and the student will perform the monologue again based on what has been advised. The idea for performing monologue activity is to give the students an experience in developing character acting before they involve in the real theatre rehearsal. Besides, listening to the instructor or lecturer feedback helps to develop