Managing Teaching Evaluation During COVID

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FEC Chair
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MRFA Get Cracking!

MRFA Faculty Evaluation Committee

The Faculty Evaluation Committee recommends policy on pre-tenure, post-tenure, limited-term and contract faculty evaluation, monitors evaluation processes, and provides information to members on evaluation practices. The committee is authorized to act for the Association in recommending changes to the Annual Report as stipulated in the Performance Review of Faculty article of the Collective Agreement (Article 12).
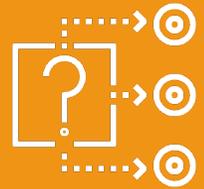
To date, FEC has:

- met twice, with the third meeting right after this session.
- Received directives from MRFA Exec to:
  - Review the impact of COVID-19 on faculty evaluations and make recommendations
  - Review the new Faculty Annual Reporting system, F180 for its effects on faculty and its adherence to the CA (esp. Appendix B)
- Prioritized among FEC members to:
  - Review the faculty evaluation process with respect to equity and diversity (EDI)
  - Review and recommend contract faculty work during COVID-19
  - Review student evaluations in the counselling context
- Received a request from DEC to:
  - Research whether or not MRU has standardized instructions for conducting faculty evaluations for online instruction. If they exist, are they universal or only specific to their unit? → do we need a form (not the same one for in-class evals)? If a form exists, are they adequate? Are there discrepancies?

Review from Higher Education websites

Greene, Jody. "How (Not) to Evaluate During a Pandemic" *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* April 6, 2020

Jodi Greene asks "How might we rethink and remake our practices of 'evaluating teaching effectiveness' during the Covid-19 pandemic, and in the years ahead?" Her advice is twofold:

- If we're going to assess anything about this year's teaching, let's limit it to a cautious and compassionate evaluation of what — if anything — we have learned about *specific* technological tools and flexible teaching practices. What worked in this crisis? What didn't?

- Don't imagine that we can meaningfully assess the capacities of people rapidly deploying those tools and practices, with minimal support, in conditions unlikely to be repeated (one would hope) in quite this way ever again.

She proposes we shift from rankings and metrics to narrative and reflection
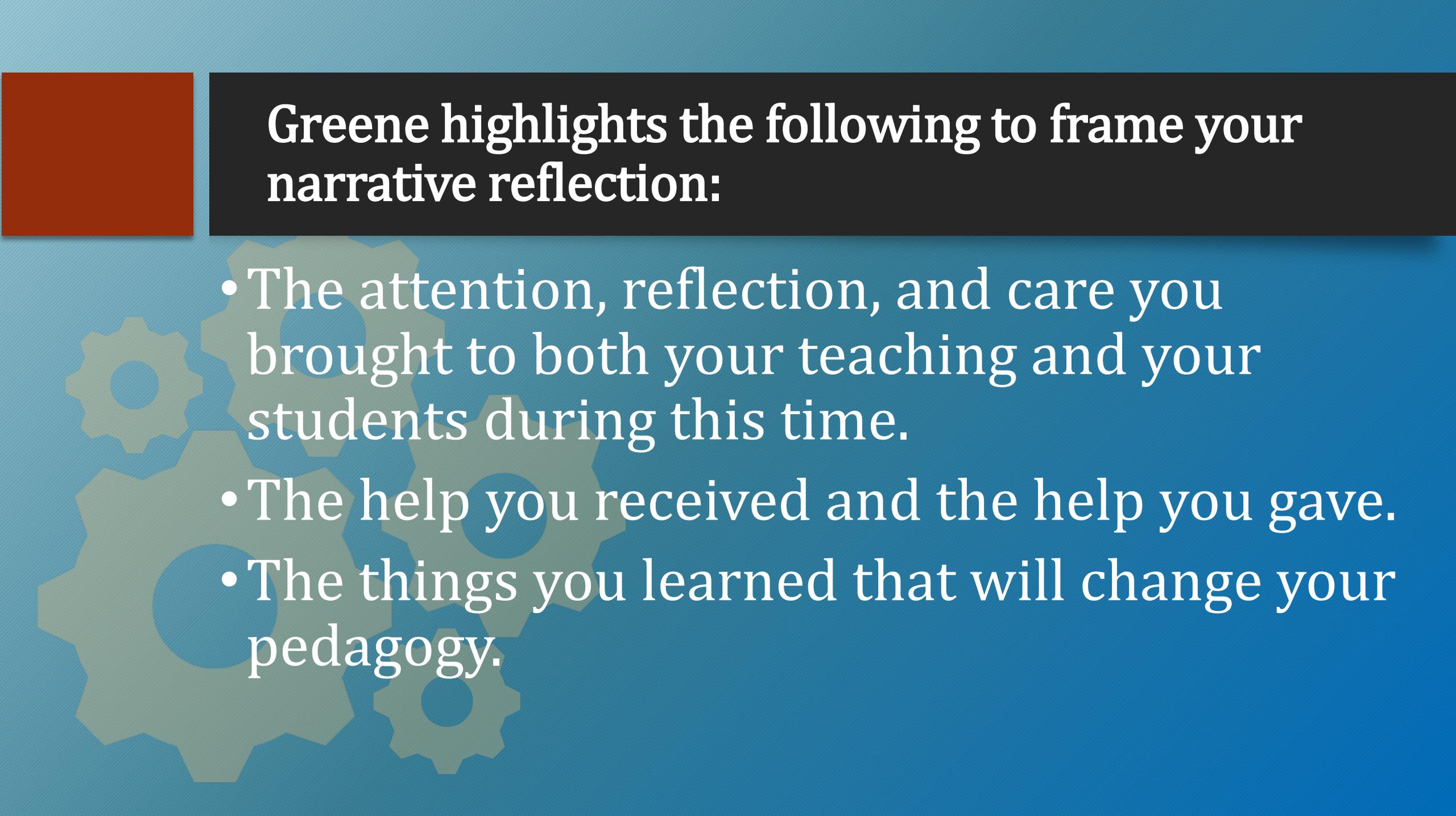
Green ctd.

three suggestions for instructors:

- Keep detailed records.
- Check in with your students
- Don't be afraid to course-correct frequently.

three suggestions for evaluators:

- Be compassionate, but mostly, be amazed.
- Put student complaints about a course into context.
- Be more interested in learning than in grading.

Greene highlights the following to frame your narrative reflection:

- The attention, reflection, and care you brought to both your teaching and your students during this time.
- The help you received and the help you gave.
- The things you learned that will change your pedagogy.
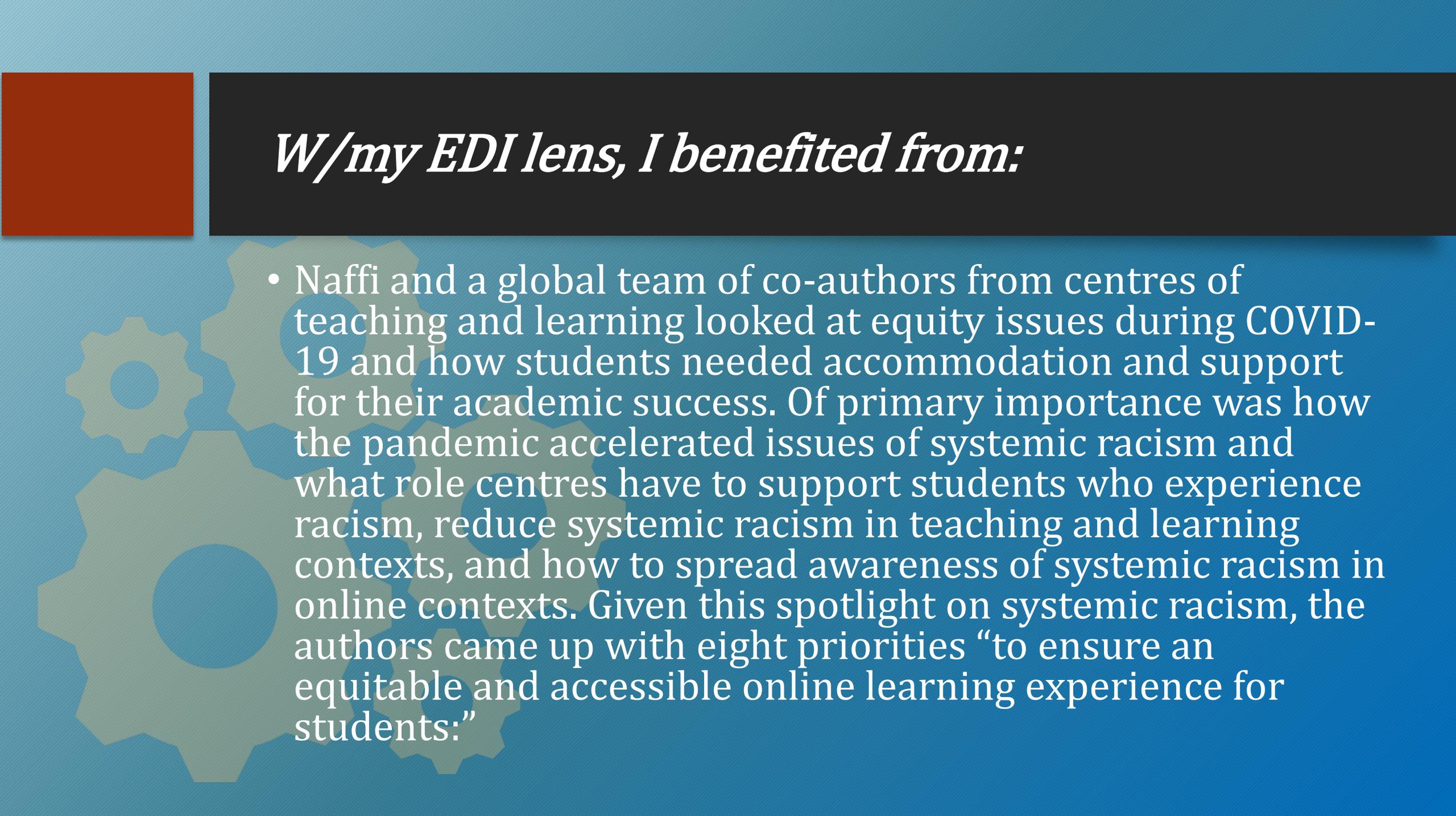
W/my EDI lens, I benefited from:

- Naffi and a global team of co-authors from centres of teaching and learning looked at equity issues during COVID-19 and how students needed accommodation and support for their academic success. Of primary importance was how the pandemic accelerated issues of systemic racism and what role centres have to support students who experience racism, reduce systemic racism in teaching and learning contexts, and how to spread awareness of systemic racism in online contexts. Given this spotlight on systemic racism, the authors came up with eight priorities "to ensure an equitable and accessible online learning experience for students:"

Naffi, et. al, ctd:

1. Create accessible materials.
2. Choose adequate digital technologies
3. Record lectures, and caption videos and audio content
4. Adopt inclusive culturally responsive teaching
5. Adopt a flexible approach to student participation
6. Ensure financial support and equipment
7. Understand student needs
8. Address systemic racism

SPoT "front page"

Fall 2020 Student Perception of Teaching for INST 1111 Intro: Intl Perspectives-INST1111001 41412 (Renae Watchman)

Dear [R$FN],

Welcome to the Student Perception of Teaching (SPoT) questionnaire.

The survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete depending on your responses.

Instructions:

If using a mobile device: to save your answers and move onto the next section, just click NEXT.
You can save your feedback at any time using the SAVE button.
Your available classes are also on BlackBoard in the Instructor Feedback section.

Your participation provides valuable feedback to your instructors and MRU on how to continue improving on your learning experience.

Please provide a fair an honest assessment of your learning experience.

Feedback will not be given to your instructor until after final grades have been posted and even then, your instructor will not be able to connect your responses to you name.

For more information or to address questions visit mru.ca/SPoT or contact evaluate@mtroyal.ca

Thank you.

This questionnaire is administered under the oversight of the Provost and Vice President Academic. The information you provide is collected under the authority of the *Post Secondary Learning Act* and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Section 33(c)*.

NOTE: the deadline for task list completion (to modify and customize your SPoTs) is tonight at midnight.

Feedback on Instruction

In my opinion, the instructor:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Basis for Opinion
Provides explanations of course concepts that are clear.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Uses examples, illustrations or applications effectively to clarify concepts.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Facilitates online learning experiences in an organized, well-planned manner.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Provides feedback that supports my learning.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Provides opportunities to become actively involved during class.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

If you have comments pertaining to the items above, please share them below. Please be sure that your comments are fair, constructive, useful and relevant. Your responses are anonymous to your professor, and will not be shared with them until final grades have been submitted to the Registrar.

Fall 2020 Student Perception of Teaching for INST 1111 Intro: Intl Perspectives-INST1111001 41412 (Renae Watchman)

Feedback on Instruction

In my opinion, the instructor:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Basis for Opinion
Is someone I feel comfortable contacting for course related assistance.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is available for course-related assistance (e.g. email, telephone, website, in-person) .	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fosters an online environment in which students feel comfortable participating.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is helpful when responding to questions.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Shows respect for students.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Shows interest in and concern for student progress.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

If you have comments pertaining to the items above, please share them below. Please be sure that your comments are fair, constructive, useful and relevant. Your responses are anonymous to your professor, and will not be shared with them until final grades have been submitted to the Registrar.

Fall 2020 Student Perception of Teaching for INST 1111 Intro: Intl Perspectives-INST1111001 41412 (Renae Watchman)

Feedback on the Course

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Basis for Opinion
I find the course intellectually stimulating.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find the course materials (e.g. readings, videos, websites, etc.) contribute to my learning of subject matter.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find the course's assigned work aligns with the course's goals.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find the course's assigned work contributes to my learning.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

I find the course content:
○ Very Difficult
○ Difficult
○ Moderately Difficult
○ Easy
○ Very Easy
○ No Basis of Opinion

In a typical 7-day week I spend approximately ___hours/week on this course outside of class preparing for class, reading, writing, doing homework, completing assignments, studying, etc.

If you have comments pertaining to The items above, or any other comments about your experience in this course, please share them below. Please be sure that your comments are fair, constructive, useful and relevant. Your responses are anonymous to your professor, and will not be shared with them until final grades have been submitted to the Registrar.

Fall 2020 Student Perception of Teaching for INST 1111 Intro: Intl Perspectives-INST1111001 41412 (Renae Watchman)

Student Background Section

For you, this course/component is:
○ a program requirement
○ a General Education requirement
○ an open elective
○ unsure

How many one-semester courses have you completed prior to this semester?
○ 0-9
○ 10-19
○ 20-29
○ 30-39
○ 40 or more

How often did you attend this course?
○ never or almost never
○ less than half of the time
○ about half of the time
○ more that half the time
○ almost always
○ always

Your final grade in this course is likely to be:
○ A
○ B
○ C
○ D
○ F
○ Withdrawal

From the "MRU SPoT Question Bank" (PDF, page 5)

172   The tutor explained the goal of the tutorial clearly.

Distance/Online

Note these items are specified for online learning environments; instructors should review other sections of the Bank for items related to communication, organization, respect for students, etc.

173   Online course technical support was available throughout the course.

174   The course instructor's online communications to students *(discussion posts, video capture, email, announcements, etc.)* were clear.

175   The course instructor's use of the online environment facilitated my understanding of the course material.

176   The course instructor encouraged online consultation with students through email, chat or other communication tools.

177   The course instructor encouraged online interactions among students within the course.

178   The course instructor responds in a timely manner to comments and questions sent by students.

179   Online collaborations with my peers improved my understanding of the course material.

180   Online content resources, library references, data sources, and web site links provided by the instructor

"COVID-19 and the Academic Workplace: Q & A"

CAUT

Question 17

Many academic staff are concerned that student evaluations of teaching will be affected by the shift to remote teaching. Should universities and colleges conduct student opinion surveys as usual?

At the best of times, student opinion surveys have been widely criticized as a poor and biased measurement of teaching effectiveness. CAUT policy is that the results of these surveys should not be used in decisions concerning tenure, renewal, promotion, and merit. The weaknesses in student opinion surveys are acute today, as the student experience has been adversely affected by the rapid transition from in-person to remote instruction in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some universities and colleges recognize this problem, and are not conducting student opinion surveys this semester. Where surveys are proceeding, the results should be provided only to instructors for their personal use. Some associations have negotiated policies where surveys containing discriminatory, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate comments are removed and neither provided to the instructor nor included in any aggregated results.

Select Resources

❖ Benton, Steve. "Comparing Course Evaluation Quantitative Data During COVID-19." *Campus Intelligence. ReImagining Data in Higher Ed.* Campus Labs, 2020. www.campusintelligence.com/2020/08/27/comparing-course-evaluations-quantitative-data-during-covid/

❖ Greene, Jody. "How (Not) to Evaluate During a Pandemic" *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* April 6, 2020. www.chronicle.com/article/how-not-to-evaluate-teaching-during-a-pandemic/?cid=gen_sign_in

❖ Lederman, Doug. "Evaluating Teaching During the Pandemic." *Inside Higher Ed.* April 8, 2020. www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2020/04/08/many-colleges-are-abandoning-or-downgrading-student-evaluations

❖ Lima, Karine Ramires, et. al. "Student Assessment of Online Tools to Foster Engagement Lint During the COVID-19 Quarantine." *Education Research.* Adv. Physiology Education 44:679-683, Aug. 2020; doi: 10.1152/advan.00131.2020. journals.physiology.org/doi/pdf/10.1152/advan.00131.2020

❖ Naffi, Nadia, et. al. "Online Learning During COVID-19: 8 Ways Universities Can Improve Equity and Access." *The Conversation. Academic Rigour, Journalistic Flair.* 2020. theconversation.com/online-learning-during-covid-19-8-ways-universities-can-improve-equity-and-access-145286