

CLASSROOM TO CYBERSPACE: PRESERVING STREET LAW'S INTERACTIVE AND STUDENT-CENTERED FOCUS DURING DISTANCE LEARNING

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I. Introduction

Street Law is a legal education methodology designed to increase civic engagement, further advocacy and analytical skills, and develop practical legal knowledge in non-lawyers. Using interactive and student-centered teaching strategies, these programs have been proven to be an effective method to teach critical thinking skills in high school students.²

When Street Law was founded at Georgetown University Law Center in 1972, the law students wanted the lessons to be relevant and relatable for their high school students, and, in a pioneering effort they also wanted the lessons to be responsive, engaging, and fun.³ Georgetown's Emeritus Street Law Professor Richard Roe explains:

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2 Sean Arthurs, *Street Law: Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today*, 19 (4) *Lewis & Clark L. Rev.* 925, 961 (2015).

3 Lee Arbetman, *Street Law, Inc.: Context, History and Future*, 2(1) *Int'l J. of Pub. Legal Educ.* 3 (2018).

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The hallmark Street Law methodology of highly participatory, interactive, and engaging activity-based instruction, where the learning is accomplished largely through the cognitive, expressive, and reflective work of the learners themselves in substantively rich, thoughtfully structured lessons, draws from both the hands-on model of clinical legal education as well as the best practices for effective teaching and learning generally.⁴

The three basic components of a successful Street Law program are practical content, interactive skills-based teaching strategies, and community involvement. The subject matter covered in Street Law programs around the world differs dramatically. That the topics are important and relevant to the students is key. From the start Street Law lessons have been student-centered. A common catchphrase for Street Law instructors is “talk less, teach more” meaning the high school students should be the ones talking, debating, advocating, arguing, negotiating, and crafting solutions.

When schools around the world switched to remote learning, Street Law programs struggled to re-imagine their interactive curriculum in a virtual setting. Decades of practical, in-person Street Law pedagogy was instantly upended. Professors and law student leaders wanted to continue to deliver legal instruction to non-lawyers but Street Law practitioners knew that it was not just what was being taught but how. This paper and subsequent research is designed to investigate whether it is possible to preserve the engaging Street Law methodology in a remote learning environment.

⁴ Richard Roe, Law School-High School, in *The Education Pipeline to the Professions, Programs That Work to Increase Diversity* 136 (Sarah E. Redfield ed., 2012).

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This paper includes: a background on the New York Law School (NYLS) Street Law program and the relationship with its partner high school, The Charter High School for Law and Social Justice (CHSLSJ); a description of the NYLS Street Law experience during emergency remote teaching in spring and summer 2020; a discussion of best practices developed through remote teaching; analysis of the implementation of those best practices in fall 2020; and conclusions and plans for further study.

II. Background

The NYLS Street Law program was established in the fall 2017. The program is modelled after the original Georgetown University Law Center clinic. The course is faculty taught and offered for credit in both the fall and spring semesters. Between eight and ten law students participate in Street Law at NYLS each semester. The law students attend seminars twice per week for three weeks before they start teaching. Once they start at their teaching site, the law students attend seminars each Tuesday where they review the substantive legal topic being addressed that week. The law students then work in pairs to prepare a lesson on Wednesday. We meet each Thursday to review the lesson and prepare the law students to teach on Friday.

The law students team-teach four or five classes at CHSLSJ located in the Bronx, New York. The high school was founded by an education law professor at NYLS and the

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schools continue to have a strong partnership.⁵ The law students typically teach criminal law in the fall semester, and criminal procedure in the spring. Each semester concludes with a final project – a mock trial in the fall and oral arguments for a moot court in the spring, both held at NYLS.

In addition to the credit-bearing course, NYLS law students are hired as instructors for the CHSLSJ Summer Law Program each year. The Summer Law Program is usually a three-week, twelve-day intensive program for all incoming ninth grade students at CHSLSJ. The instructors teach a range of subjects including an introduction to law, criminal law, contracts, and constitutional law. The second week of the program concludes with a mock senate hearing and the third week focuses entirely on mock trial.

Both the Summer Law Program and the Street Law course had run successfully for years when COVID-19 completely disrupted life in New York City and around the world.

III. Remote Teaching

Spring 2020

In March 2020, the number of COVID-19 infections exploded in New York City. On March 1, 2020, New York City only had one documented case of COVID-19 and on

⁵ Amy Wallace, A Law-Themed Charter High School Born at New York Law School Remains Indelibly Linked, 4(1) Int'l J. of Pub. Legal Educ. (2020).

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March 20, 2020, there were almost 3000 documented cases.⁶ New York Law School closed its campus on March 4, 2020 due to possible exposure to the virus by a law student. Clinical and Experiential faculty struggled to safely reconstruct practical legal programs that involved direct contact with clients. Street Law students were understandably concerned by the exposure to the virus in the crowded hallways and classrooms at CHSLSJ. In addition, teaching in the Bronx involves a long commute on public transit for most of the law students. They left for spring break anxious but expecting to return to in-person teaching at the end of the holiday. On Sunday March 15, 2020 the New York City Board of Education moved all city schools to remote learning.⁷ The NYLS law students were scheduled to teach on that Friday March 20, 2020. As administrators at the high school scrambled to prepare remote lessons and materials to cover all courses, we tried to recreate our Street Law program in a virtual setting. The law students and I agreed that regardless of the circumstances, we could not stop teaching because the program is so important for the skill building and civic engagement of our high school students.

At the outset the duration of the quarantine was unclear. We ignorantly thought that if the city shut down completely for two weeks that we might be able to return to

⁶New York COVID Map and Case Count, New York Times (Oct. 1, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/new-york-coronavirus-cases.html>.

⁷ Eliza Shapiro, New York City Public Schools to Close to Slow Spread of Coronavirus, New York Times (Mar. 15, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/15/nyregion/nyc-schools-closed.html>.

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normal. It quickly became clear that we would all be working and learning remotely for an extended period.

Because the Street Law program is founded on interactive, student-centered, skill building lessons, we were initially adamant that our virtual lessons be synchronous. We believed that the high school students needed to be able to work in groups and interact with their law students and each other. After discussions with CHSLSJ, it became clear that due to inequities in access to technology and internet service, that synchronous lessons were impossible.

We had to readjust our thinking to what was possible. It was decided that Street Law in some form would be beneficial to the high school students and law students. We had just started teaching the final moot court unit. The law students had to teach the substantive law of the right against unlawful searches and seizures, how to write case comparisons, and how to formulate arguments for a moot court, all without any live instruction. Prior to the shutdown, the law students were team-teaching four separate classes at CHSLSJ. Although the law students all teach the same topic each week, teams create their own lesson plans and use different teaching methods to facilitate each class. In quarantine, the school asked us to produce one asynchronous lesson per week, which was assigned to all four Street Law classes.

Because we wanted the high school students to continue to see and hear their instructors, we decided to record short videos to accompany worksheets which were uploaded to Google Classroom. The law students did an incredible job putting together short informative videos which included the content the high school students

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needed to complete the virtual assignments, and also conveyed warmth and support that the students needed at such a confusing and stressful time.⁸

Training the law students presented new challenges as well. Typically, we discuss each topic at the beginning of the week and then the law students prepare their own lessons. Suddenly, ten law students had to produce one asynchronous lesson. I decided to leave the law students in their original pairings. Each pair prepared a proposal detailing how they would teach the subject that week. They each circulated their proposal and were also required to comment on the other proposals for our weekly seminar. In class we discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal and as a group chose one pair's plan to develop into the official lesson for the week. That pair then completed the lesson and recorded the video.

The teamwork displayed was remarkable. Without my direction, the law students seamlessly chose a different pair's proposal each week so that everyone felt included in the asynchronous process. Initially, I worried that the law students would be frustrated preparing a lesson proposal that was ultimately not chosen. I emphasized that Street Law is intended to benefit both the high school students and the law students and that researching and preparing lessons continued to be valuable practice for them regardless of whether the group ultimately opted for their proposal. Using this model, the law students continued to learn substantive legal topics and practiced

⁸ Stories of Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy in the Digital Environment, New York Law School News (Apr. 6, 2020), <https://news.nyls.edu/stories-of-teaching-learning-and-advocacy-in-the-digital-environment/>.

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deconstructing the material for non-lawyers. Our asynchronous lessons were not an equal substitute for the engaging in-person lessons the law students had been facilitating pre-COVID, but the activities continued to foster the critical thinking and advocacy skills that the high-schoolers had been working on all semester.

It was difficult to assess the efficacy of our remote lessons. We delivered the lessons each week and the school uploaded them for the students, but, consistent with our pre-COVID arrangement, the cooperating classroom teacher graded the students' work. She reassured us that the students were completing their assignments, but it was not until the high school students submitted their final moot court arguments that we confirmed that our lessons had been successful. Amazingly the students produced thoughtful, well-constructed arguments. The law students had managed to teach the entire unit with videos and virtual assignments. I am extremely proud of the hard work and resilience of both the law students⁹ and the high school students.

Summer 2020

When we started planning for the 2020 Summer Law Program, the school decided that they wanted to offer the program synchronously. Typically, the program runs from nine to twelve each morning, four days a week, for three weeks. Three straight hours on Zoom for thirteen and fourteen-year olds was an untenable idea. I suggested we divide the time into manageable chunks for the ninth graders. The students would

⁹ Huge thank you to my dedicated and unflappable Spring 2020 NYLS law students: Hayden Boudreaux, Edward Colligan, Andrew Frenkel, Lara Giray, Victor Hernandez, Logan Matura, Michael Moore, Reshma Ramrup, Zaine Shetayh, and Lauren Stolz.

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start the day with a thirty-minute Zoom. They would then have a thirty-minute break where they would be responsible for an independent assignment uploaded to their Google Classroom. They would return for a final thirty-minute Zoom.

All of the lessons and materials that had been used during the four previous summer programs had to be rewritten for remote learning. I reviewed each of the lessons and reconceptualized them for a virtual learning environment. To address the global turmoil impacting our high school students, I wrote two new lessons to be included in the summer curriculum. The first lesson revamps the classic “No Vehicles in the Park” lesson¹⁰. The lesson traditionally asks students to examine scenarios to determine whether they violate a town’s vague vehicular traffic law. The purpose of the lesson is to highlight and contrast the concepts of “letter of the law” and “legislative intent.” The revised lesson includes photos of COVID-19 social distancing laws mandating “No Vehicles at the Beach.” The second new lesson addresses First Amendment protections for freedom of speech and the nationwide Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality. We hoped the new lessons would help to engage the students in a virtual environment where external factors often make it challenging for students to focus.

¹⁰ This classic United States law school lesson asks students to review a number of scenarios to determine whether they have violated a town’s “No Vehicles in the Park” law. The scenarios can include “vehicles” like: a stroller, a wheelchair, an ambulance, a motorized bicycle, or a stationary tank monument. The purpose of the lesson is to introduce the concept of legislative intent and the importance of drafting precise legislation.

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The two NYLS law student instructors hired to teach the Summer Law Program accepted positions in February when the extent and duration of the lockdown were unimaginable. When told they would be teaching remotely, they were incredibly adaptable and easily made the transition. The three-day instructor training was conducted entirely online and included the usual review of the legal topics and lessons. The training also included hours of Zoom practice. Despite having spent half a semester attending classes on Zoom, the instructors quickly learned that teaching on Zoom was much more difficult. Fortunately, we were able to secure additional law student volunteers to help support the main instructors.

Summer Law Program classes began in mid-July. During the first couple of days, the high school students were very reluctant to participate. Attendance in both sections was low.¹¹ The charter school requires the students to have cameras on, in part to confirm each student's identity. The cameras on requirement did affect the strength of some students' Zoom connections at times. One of the first lessons that really engaged the students was the COVID activity. We were unsure whether the students would be fatigued with thinking about the pandemic and discussing how the shutdown was affecting everyone's lives. We were happy to discover they wanted to explore these issues. Because the social distancing legislative intent behind the "No Vehicles at the Beach" law was omnipresent for the students, they did an exceptional job differentiating that intent from the plain language of the regulation.

¹¹ Attendance is a perpetual problem for the Summer Law Program, so it is unclear whether the move to distance learning affected attendance in this case.

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Because attendance in each of the two sections was low, about four days into the program, I suggested we combine the classes. I thought that more students together would mean more opinions and viewpoints to consider. My suggestion had the exact opposite effect and at the request of the instructors, we split them back into their original classes the next day. The high school students were more engaged and participatory in smaller, more intimate groups.

During the break between Zooms each day, the law students suggested but did not require that the high school students remain logged into the Zoom. They were told to turn off their cameras and mute themselves while they completed the independent assignment and took a break. At the time, the intention was to ensure the students returned for the second half of class, but the downtime in the middle of the day instead became a moment of community building. Students would reach out to the law students for individual assistance with assignments and also just to talk about college, law school, and careers. Before the start of the summer program, we had managed our expectations about the development of community at a remote Summer Law Program. Collegiality is typically a huge part of the summer program since the high school students come to CHSLSJ from many different middle schools around New York City. It is the first opportunity they have to interact with each other and the first time they are introduced to the law curriculum and the law students. That community building happened this summer is miraculous and the result of phenomenal NYLS

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law student instructors and volunteer assistants¹². We would have preferred stronger attendance, and class participation constantly required patience and perseverance from the law students, but nonetheless, the summer was a success. The high school students had engaging discussions and thoughtfully addressed current events. The charter school even decided to implement our thirty-minutes-on, thirty-minutes -off, thirty-minutes-on model for all of their subjects for the fall semester.

IV. Best Practices

The camaraderie of the legal profession was apparent during the switch to remote teaching. Faculty throughout our law school and around the country were sharing ideas and offering assistance. New York Law School provided countless professional development opportunities including access to a seven-session, ten-hour course on remote legal instruction.¹³

Between collaboration, professional instruction, and our experiences teaching both asynchronous and synchronous Street Law classes, I have assembled our best practices. They can be divided into two broad categories: class structure; and class content.

Class Structure

¹² Thank you to the amazing NYLS Summer Law Program law students: Natasha “Delali” Madison (instructor), Filomena Stabile (instructor), Taylor Barje (volunteer assistant), Caitlyn Kelly (volunteer assistant), and Mariella Rutigliano (volunteer assistant).

¹³ Preparing for the Future of Legal Instruction – Online Teaching Tips & Techniques, The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction, (June 9-30, 2020), www.cali.org.

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The decision about whether to teach synchronously or asynchronously will likely be made entirely by or at least in collaboration with the teaching site. Initially we could not imagine a productive, student-centered, asynchronous Street Law program. Our experience in the spring semester taught us that even using videos and worksheets, worthwhile skill-building Street Law work can happen asynchronously. Remote learning will be, in most circumstances, a temporary measure. Although synchronous classes do provide greater opportunity for interactivity both between the students themselves and the students and the instructors, asynchronous instruction is better than stopping Street Law classes completely.

We also learned to consider adding asynchronous components to a synchronous class. As will be discussed later, interactive activities on Zoom are very time-consuming therefore including an asynchronous pre-recorded video, which covers any brief lecture portion of the lesson, frees up the synchronous time to devote entirely to interactive elements. Another advantage is students can watch the video at a time when they are most able to learn. When we taught synchronously over the summer, students would unmute themselves to participate and there was often a remarkable amount of background noise in their home. Enabling those students to watch the video at a quiet time in their home, or when there aren't competing demands on their internet and technology might be beneficial for many communities. Students can also watch a video multiple times if they are struggling with a concept. Instructors are typically meeting with their classes less frequently with the new remote schedules. Asynchronous elements such as videos or even discussion board type activities can

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bridge longer periods between meetings. Posting interesting articles or political cartoons on a platform like Google Classroom and asking students to comment is a way to keep them involved and thinking about Street Law. It also enables them to interact more with their peers, which is something many students are missing in this remote environment.

The length of the class is also something that will likely be determined by the school. The NYLS law students are teaching in 110-minute blocks this fall. The experts at the workshops I attended stated that forty-five minutes is the longest we should expect our students to be able to focus on a Zoom or synchronous class. In addition, lessons where students are active participants rather than passive listeners contribute to greater student attentiveness, engagement, and information retention.

The teaching site may also dictate class size. Generally, an ideal class size for an in-person Street Law class is eighteen to twenty-five students. After teaching our synchronous classes this summer, we determined that closer to fifteen may be ideal on Zoom. Whether it was a general lack of engagement or performance anxiety, which can be magnified on Zoom because a speaker can see everyone staring at them, the students were more reluctant to contribute in the remote classroom. This problem was amplified during the summer program when I combined the classes. The students contributed in their breakout rooms but were hesitant to share out in the main group. Together with class size is the question of the ideal number of instructors. In a regular semester the NYLS law students teach in pairs. In fact, having more than two facilitators can sometimes be distracting in an in-person classroom. This was not

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true over the summer. We had at least three facilitators in each class and in the fall we will have teams of four or five for each class. Having a facilitator for each breakout room is crucial for remote learning. In a classroom, the instructor can look around the room and see a group that is confused or off-task. In a virtual classroom, that isn't possible so having facilitators in each breakout room to guide and answer questions is very important. Upon entering breakout rooms at the start of the Summer Law Program, we often found the high school students sitting in silence with everyone muted. Sometimes they were confused about the breakout assignment but were unsure how to return to the main Zoom to ask for assistance. Once facilitators were present in each room, the students were very productive and engaged.

There is a great deal of technology available to assist with virtual learning. The most important lesson we learned was to keep the technology as simple as possible. Many of the high school students were joining the class Zoom on their phone or did not have access to reliable internet. Most Street Law programs are directed at underserved communities where these technological inequities can be the most severe. The students struggle to run multiple programs at the same time. A platform that enables the instructors to teach synchronously (if possible) and a web-based learning platform like Google Classroom are the basic requirements. For the summer program we used Zoom and Google Classroom. The charter school had been using Google Classroom throughout the spring semester, so the students were familiar with the technology. Whatever platforms and technology are chosen should be used consistently. Students should not be trying to learn about a variety of new programs in addition to learning

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the legal topics. The charter school has several class sets of the Street Law textbook so they are planning to arrange for parent pick up of the textbooks to ease the technological burden. We will then design lessons that rely on the textbook as much as possible. The New York City Department of Education distributed hundreds of thousands of iPads¹⁴ and many internet service providers in the United States offered free internet service for students. In addition, CHSLSJ provided mobile hot spots and Ipads to students. The unequal access to technology is a huge issue for distance learning. We are fortunate that this issue was taken seriously by the New York City Department of Education and CHSLSJ.

Class Content

Assessing student comprehension can be more challenging in a remote teaching environment. During in-person teaching, instructors can scan the room and notice students who aren't completing the assignment or participating in their group discussion. In addition, when students are together, they can ask their neighbor if they missed an instruction or zoned out temporarily. None of this can happen in a virtual space. We concluded that checking for understanding needed to be a central component of all virtual lessons. Asking "does anyone have any questions" was never an effective tool to measure the comprehension of teenagers and it works even less well remotely. It is more effort and can be intimidating for students to unmute

¹⁴ Luis, Diaz, NYC Working with Apple to Supply 300,000 iPads to our Students for Distance Learning, New Yorkeled Magazine (Mar. 16, 2020), <https://www.newyorkled.com/nyc-working-with-apple-to-supply-300000-ipads-to-our-students-for-distance-learning/>.

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themselves and ask a question in front of the whole class compared to privately asking a circulating instructor in an in-person classroom. We have emphasized asking the high school students to restate the instructions in their own words each time we give them a task. It may seem cumbersome, but it frequently highlights that many of the students are not clear on their assignment. The law students have also added more scaffolding questions to their lessons. For example, asking students what they think is the most interesting part of an article they are reading aloud, or the most challenging part of a scenario they are analyzing in groups. The law students need to ask questions where the feedback will tell them whether the high school students are prepared for the next assignment.

We have had to manage our expectations in terms of what we will accomplish in our classes. One of the most important lessons we learned during the summer program was how much less we could accomplish teaching virtually. Everything we planned to do took almost twice as long as it would take in the classroom. During the first few days of the Summer Law Program we were so far behind schedule that we were taking the Zoom break when the students were supposed to be returning from break for the second Zoom. I started cutting things out of the lessons because we did not want the high school students to be on the Zooms for that long. Especially when using interactive techniques, all of the procedural elements take time that we never had to spend in the classroom. Sharing screens, putting students into breakout rooms, repeating instructions, and waiting for students to access the documents on their Google Classroom are all very time consuming. Add to those delays that student

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participation requires more prompts from the instructors than would typically be required to foster discussion in an in-person class. Street Law programs are about skill-building not coverage and I remind my students that we are not teaching a bar exam prep course. It is more important that the high school students have a thoughtful, analytical discussion of two scenarios than rushing them through a surface discussion of five. We decided to be incredibly thoughtful about the topics we chose to cover because we accepted we would teach less than previous semesters.

Carefully crafted lesson objectives are critical in this remote environment. The law students need to think about what they want their students to be able to do by the end of class, how the students are going to learn and practice those things, and how we are going to measure those objectives.

Interactivity is a hallmark of Street Law pedagogy. We know it is crucial that whenever possible we incorporate engaging elements into the lessons. We introduced photographs and images into our lessons for the summer program. The visuals definitely captivated the students and increased participation. Being on Zoom can be tiresome, even when discussing relevant topics and the use of photographs added an additional layer of interest. The students responded very well to the visuals included in the “No Vehicles at the Beach” lesson.



Figure 1 'Park Closed to Vehicles' sign



Figure 2 'Beach Closed to All Vehicles' sign

Polls can also be a useful addition to a lesson. There are many poll programs available that have a large variety of options. We use the basic poll feature contained within Zoom, so our high school students do not have to access another platform. Student participation in the polls used in our classes was almost one hundred percent. Students who refused to contribute to discussions would participate in a poll. Clicking on a poll response is a very small demand of a student. However, using a poll can have a disproportionately positive effect on class participation. The students unwittingly become invested in the topic. They vote in the poll and therefore commit to an answer. We noticed they are more willing to contribute verbally after they participate in a poll. Our First Amendment and Protest lesson starts with a series of images and a simultaneous poll, which asks students whether the image depicts “speech”. The students were very engaged during this lesson and carefully analyzed

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what types of speech should be protected by the constitution. We chose images of people of color exercising their rights to free speech to reflect the community where the law students teach. We want the high school students to easily visualize themselves speaking out against injustice and engaging in their community.



Figure 3 Young people holding protest signs which read #MeToo



Figure 4 Image of a protester with a t-shirt that reads 'I CAN'T BREATHE'

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It is very helpful to be able to write a poll in advance, using the template provided by Zoom, and upload it into the meeting set-up. It also alleviates some of the expected stress and nervousness at the start of the class.

The final best practice relates to the use of media in a virtual classroom. Richard Mayer is a renowned psychology professor and an expert on how people learn. He has focused his research on how media can be used most effectively in teaching. He suggests that images can be very helpful when used together with narration¹⁵. However, he contends that when unnecessary on-screen text is added to images, it is difficult for the brain to listen to the words being spoken, look at the image being displayed, and read the text on the screen. Using this rule, we include little or no words on any slides that we use except the words actually contained within the image. Mayer also argues that people learn better from narration and pictures than narration alone but only if the media is actually contributing to or clarifying what you want the students to be learning¹⁶. In the remote environment, many instructors are seeking out video clips and other media to make virtual lessons more interesting to the students. Our conclusion is to choose the media thoughtfully and think about whether it is actually contributing to what we want the students to learn.

¹⁵ Richard E. Mayer, *Multimedia Learning*, 3rd Ed. 186 (2021).

¹⁶ Richard E. Mayer, *Multimedia Learning*, 3rd Ed. 117 (2021).

V. Implementation

In August 2020, the fall semester of Street Law began. Nine students went through three weeks of training before teaching their virtual classes for the first time in mid-September. We have used all our best practices in the preparation for this fully remote semester of Street Law. The law students teach 110-minute blocks broken into a forty-minute Zoom, thirty-minute independent assignment, and a forty-minute Zoom. The law students design lessons that cover the same amount of material as they would previously teach in the average one hour in-person class. The lessons are highly interactive and student-centered. Although we typically teach criminal law in the fall semester, the school noticed the level of engagement with the First Amendment and freedom of speech lesson during the Summer Law Program and requested that we teach constitutional law instead. We have focused on contemporary issues including a lesson on school board censorship of library books to coincide with Banned Books Week.¹⁷ The students really respond to lessons that focus on issues that directly impact them.

The law students are divided into one team of four instructors and one team of five. In a typical semester, the classroom teacher meets with each of her classes three times per week. The new virtual schedule means she meets with each class only once per week and only two of her classes meet on Fridays when the law students are

¹⁷ Banned Books Week in the United States is a week devoted to the freedom to read. It began as a result of an increasing number of challenges to books in the 1980s. Today the week is a celebration of reading generally and particularly those books that faced the greatest number of challenges that year.

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scheduled to teach. The larger teams are working well because there is always a law student present in each breakout room to encourage discussion and keep students on task. It also allows the law students to manage the Zoom functions together. Each team prepares an extremely thorough lesson plan detailing which team member is responsible for which task at every stage of the lesson. This rigorous planning and organization, although time consuming, is critical to the success and flow of a remote lesson.

One of the unforeseen effects of teams in place of pairs is the law students have been reluctant to share their experiences in seminar each week. When divided into their team breakout rooms, they are ready to unpack the successes and struggles of each class but in the main group they are quiet. This is not an issue I have encountered before. Typically, the pairs readily share their weekly experiences with the whole group. I will be working on strategies to encourage more enthusiastic debriefing with the whole class.

The law students have taught for six weeks and the lessons have been very successful. The high school students are engaged in the lessons and they have wonderful insights to contribute to class discussions. The classroom teacher is present on each Zoom, which is very helpful. She attends to issues like insisting on cameras being on and students being attentive. While we have had students Zooming from their beds or otherwise laying down and not in an appropriate learning environment, generally the students have been focused and participatory. In the second week, a high school student asked to speak to the law students during the break and she asked very

thoughtful questions about college, law school, and how to avoid a legal career where she would be sitting at her desk all day. Community is already beginning to form¹⁸.

VI. Conclusions and Further Study

Interactive, student-centered Street Law lessons are possible in a virtual setting. The planning and problem-solving involved in creating engaging remote lessons is far greater than for an in-person classroom. There are more considerations and circumstances that must be factored into lesson preparation. Virtual lessons will never equal in-person interaction and community building, but they can be an effective temporary solution until we can all safely return to classrooms.

Few law schools in the United States continued to teach Street Law when schools closed in spring 2020. However, many law schools are planning to run virtual Street Law programs for fall 2020 and spring 2021. I intend to reach out to the professors and law students who attended the Street Law, Inc. webinar on teaching remotely¹⁹ as the second part of this paper. Part two will analyze the virtual programs implemented by these law schools including an examination of which best practices they incorporated and whether any of those suggestions contributed to the successful implementation of a remote Street Law program.

18 Thank you to my wonderful NYLS Fall 2020 law students: Thomas Blau, Benjamin Brookhim, Lauren Cannan, Noel Flugel, Amanda Schribman, Christie Soule, Christopher Suris, Tiffany Williams, and Madison Woods.

19 Amy Wallace, *Tips and Best Practices for Conducting a Street Law Program Online*, Street Law, Inc., Aug. 28, 2020.