Speaker 1:

I think essentially we've just tried to continue to envision the center. Obviously, it being remote. So, if we take, for example, the tutoring services, so that includes tutoring by appointment. We still have drop in tutoring, so they'll get the link to come into this zoom tutoring room and then they're greeted right away. So that's been a good way that a student will be able to still kind of get the needed help, and also be greeted by our staff as well too.

Christina Barsi:

Hi, I'm Christina Barsi.

Sun Ezzell:

And I'm Sun Ezzell, and you're listening to The Magic Mountie Podcast.

Christina Barsi:

Our mission is to find ways to keep your ear to the ground, so to speak, by bringing to you the activities and events, you may not have time to attend, the resources on campus that you might want to know more about, the interesting things your colleagues are creating, and the many ways we can continue to better help and guide our students.

Sun Ezzell:

We bring to you the voices of Mt.SAC; from the classroom to completion

Speaker 4:

I know I'm going to achieve my goals, and I know people here are going to help me to do it.

Speaker 5:

She is a sociology major and she's transferring to CalPoly Pomona! Psychology major, English major.

Speaker 6:

From transforming part-time into full time.

Speaker 7:

I really liked the time that we spent with Julie about how to write a CV and cover letter.

Christina Barsi:

Or just finding time to soak in the campus.

Speaker 4:

To think of the natural environment around us as a library.

Christina Barsi:

We want to keep you informed and connected to all things Mt. SAC, but most importantly, we want to keep you connected with each other. I'm Christina Barsi, Mt.SAC alumni and producer of this podcast.

Sun Ezzell:

And I'm Sun Ezzell, learning assistance faculty and professional learning academy coordinator.

Christina Barsi:

And this is the Magic Mountie Podcast.

Christina Barsi:

Host Sun Ezzell talks with Kristina Alvarado Grassmann, director of ASAC and Gizelle Ponzillo, supplemental instruction coordinator about the changes in operations after moving all resources and functions online, and the importance of maintaining the culture of the center while operating virtually with serving students at the core of the academic support and achievement center, Kristina, Gizelle and their colleagues have taken great care in creating a seamless a transition as possible. Listen in on how they did that.

Sun Ezzell:

I want to thank you, Kristina and Gizelle for joining the Magic Mountie Podcast virtually. We're all working from home. I thank you so much for talking with the podcast. Both of you work at the Academic Support and Achievement Center, the ASAC. Let's start out just with some quick introductions. Maybe you can tell us your name and what you do at the ASAC.

Kristina Alvarado:

Okay. Thank you for the opportunity for us to be here. It's just exciting and just love to be able to connect with our colleagues remotely now. My name is Kristina Alvarado Grassmann, I'm the director of the Academic Support and Achievement Center at Mt.SAC. And so my role is to oversee the operations of the center, kind of the daily operational pieces, personnel, and it's really just to, also to kind of promote all of our goal planning, making sure that we are on target with our assessments and such; really trying to be an integral piece of all the different areas of our center that includes tutoring, the learning lab, workshops and such.

Kristina Alvarado:

It's an exciting time to be part of Mount SAC. I'm actually pretty new to campus, so I just started on March 2nd. So, I'm just thankful to kind of be part of this team.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

Hello, thank you for having us here today. My name is Gizelle Ponzillo, and I'm the supplemental instruction coordinator at the ASAC, which used to be called the LAC. I'm very happy to be working at the ASAC. It's also a new position for me. Last year, I worked in another center; running the tutors in the classroom program and I'm running the SI program and I'm just happy to be of service to the college.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you so much. I was wondering if you could both talk a little bit about the work that's gone into helping the campus transition to online remote instruction due to the Coronavirus; a little bit about what that process has been like for you?

Kristina Alvarado:

Sure. I can start in, and I know Gizelle has a lot of great things to share as well, and just the supplemental instruction team has been so phenomenal in getting the supplemental instruction going really quickly since after the campus went online. So, essentially, I think that one of the biggest things is we all just had to acknowledge kind of the abrupt nature of the shift because it was, again, I think as a society, we're all just kind of experiencing as one day to the next just different changes and different things that were going on. And so that was actually kind of happening within our own department of what was the campus going to do? How do we feel about what was going on and being on campus and what does being remote look like for how long?

Kristina Alvarado:

So we really had a lot of, like everybody, had a lot of questions and I think that was very transparent in our communications, I think early on when that first, probably two weeks when we were off campus. So I think that we had to take some time to just kind of acknowledge the new space that we were in to ascertain do we all have what we need to work remotely and just trying to be supportive and patient with one another as we knew we needed to move forward. We didn't necessarily have a lot of answers to a lot of questions, but we were anxious to move forward and to kind of see, okay, how can we still provide support to our students?

Kristina Alvarado:

That academic support and what that would look like, so. So we've spent quite a bit of time, since then really working as a whole team in developing the systems and the structure of how to do tutoring, how to do supplement instruction online. The platform, all of this, we're being engaged in long meetings that we would demo how a student would be kind of welcomed in this virtual kind of reception area, and then where would they go from there and how did they actually find the tutoring services online and how does it work? How do you prepare?

Kristina Alvarado:

So it's actually twofold how you prepare the staff, ourselves. How do you prepare our large number of students to have and how do you prepare students so that they are informed and don't get too lost? Because we knew that they were going through such and still are going through such a transition. So, we really spent several weeks trying to prepare ourselves as best we could so we can explain it to others. And then therefore we could be able to deliver in aservice to our students. So, again, I've done many meetings, many demos, really testing out the system, we agree to do a kind of a short like abbreviated schedule for a couple of weeks.

Kristina Alvarado:

So, we do look at a soft rollout of our hours in order for us just to kind of see, okay, this is working well. Okay, here are some other areas that we need to really kind of work out some bugs and maybe things that we didn't anticipate. And now we are operating the same hours that we had when we were on campus. So, just really, really proud of the team and I mean just such an amazing group of, and such a skilled team, who's been able to really architect everything about just the zoom platform, how it works, how to do all the different breakout rooms and such, and how to manage that. You spend a lot of staff who've invested a lot of their lot of their hours early on to try to figure out how it worked. So that's what we've been doing it, but right now we are just happy that it is launched. We're getting the students are utilizing the tutorial services and kind of going from there.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So, prior to the campus closure, due to the COVID-19, I asked the SI leaders, the embedded tutors and also the study group leaders to work with the instructors and to learn with them and from them, how to use the different platforms that they were learning to use to teach remotely, because we knew that the classes were going to be switched to being online mid semester. So, our tutors, they had a great attitude and they were ready to learn. They were ready to support their professors and their students, and they moved online really quickly. They were ready to move online quickly.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

And then as Christina said, we began working from home and then we had to take certain steps, and then we had to train the entire staff, the entire team and go from there. But our team was just ready to do it, and they had a great attitude, and they were ready to help the students. Some people had some personal issues because they are also students and they had problem with technology as well and things at home also that kept them from working. But overall the team was just ready to work from home and ready to support their students in any way possible.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you so much. When I think about the ASAC and I think about the work we do on campus, so much of what I'm thinking about is the physical space where we spend time together. And I was wondering, could you both just share a little bit more about what's being offered online right now through the ASAC?

Kristina Alvarado:

Yeah, it's such a good question. I know from my personal experience, I've always worked in a center. And so for me, just thinking, we went remote thinking, "Well, what do I do?" I've always worked in the center, what happened to the center? And what happened to all the people and just kind of that comradery and you see students just come in everyday and such. I mean, I think essentially we've just tried to continue to envision still the center, but obviously it being remote. So, if we take, for example, the tutoring services, so that includes tutoring by appointment. We still have drop in tutoring. So, students can come into when they get their... They register for their CRN for tutoring, and then they'll come into, they'll find us and come into our space.

Kristina Alvarado:

So they'll get the link to come into this zoom tutoring room. And then they're greeted right away by one of our hosts that will acknowledge them and say, "Okay, you're ready to come in. What can we help you with today?" And so then a student would say, I'm here for chemistry, tutoring or math tutoring; want to see what's available. And then our hosts and our colleagues will help that student out. I get them matched up with kind of appropriate resource at that time. So in that way, it is still functioning as a virtual type of connection. And at the very beginning, when the student first comes into this space, then they can continue to meet with a tutor that maybe they've already been meeting with previously in the semester, they'll get to reconnect; maybe it's a new time for them to utilize a service.

Kristina Alvarado:

So that's been a good way that a student will be able to still kind of get the needed help, and also be greeted by our staff as well too. It's been actually really fun to have some of the students come in and say hi. Hi so and so... It's how you're doing. It's great to either see you on zoom or it's great to hear you, or it's great to just kind of see your image up there. That's been really good. I think there has been really good connection for hopefully for our students, definitely for our staff as well too. And then the learning assistants in terms of Dianne Rowley's area is still providing workshops for students. And they actually, the instructors there have actually kind of tweaked their workshops to really reflect some of the needs that students might have.

Kristina Alvarado:

So that would include kind of navigating canvas, just working with zoom. I'm just trying to other topics related, just kind of transitional issues. As you know that it's also something where it takes a lot more kind of self-regulatory skills to manage your own deadlines, kind of get yourself to say, "Okay, I'm going to get this assignment done, and so forth." Many times when... A lot of students would come into the ASAC and they're used to being together, studying together at the table or just kind of there's a comradery there that everybody's working maybe on their own individual subjects, but they're working on the goal there is; is their academics.

Kristina Alvarado:

So that's going on there, and so I'll just talk a lot more about supplemental instruction and embedded tutoring. And we're also available in terms of our learning lab. We're really trying to support the ambassadors in their work. And so our learning lab staff is just getting kind of up to speed with knowing canvas really well. And some of the other platforms that students are using for their different courses, so that we can also help students in just kind of navigating the different kind of technological things that they may have to, they have had to learn pretty quickly in a given amount of time.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

Like Christina said, we envision the center to be the center, but now remotely. So, besides dropping tutoring and tutoring by appointment, we still offer in-class support with the SIs, the ETs and the SGs. What does all that mean, right? So, the SIs, supplemental instructor, supplemental instruction leaders, ETS, embedded tutoring and SGs, study group leaders. And they're all offering group sessions via zoom. They are either using the professors, zoom in canvas or their own zoom account, and you're sharing the link with the students in their classes and they're making themselves available to those students. So, they're offering group sessions, they're doing one on one appointments and they're not just helping the students, but they're also helping the professors as needed because some students are going straight to SI or the ET and asking for help. And they feel more comfortable because the assigned ET is usually appear.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So, they're getting that help that way, and this is making them feel more comfortable, like there is a sense of normalcy to this whole situation because they can get the help that way. Thankfully, they met those SIs and ETs. The students met the SIs and ETs prior to the campus closure. So that relationship had already been established. So now, online, it's easier for them to just continue working together and to continue getting that help and feeling like, "Okay, this is my group session. I remember it happening in the ASAC in that little room, but now it's happening right here in my bedroom via this computer screen, but at least I see a familiar face with my SI and ET, and this is good." So, I can hang in there and I can finish my class. It's a little bit more normal this way, so.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you so much. I was wondering, what are you hearing from students since the transition online? How are students doing?

Gizelle Ponzillo:

Some students are struggling with all different aspects of being a student and also of having a life. They're struggling with having the right technology to study and to work from home. So, some people didn't really have a device that they could work from besides their smartphone, so they had to get those devices, or in some households, they are several siblings and parents and all they have is one computer and they all have to share that, or perhaps they don't have a strong enough wifi connection at home. And then there is also the family dynamics at home. So, people are struggling, but they're trying to do what they can to finish their classes because they still have their goal. They still want to transfer. And some of them, this is their last semester and they want to transfer. So, there are struggles, but thankfully, student support services is there to help them and to help them as needed.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

But people are trying. They're doing the best that they can and they're being positive, they're being optimistic and they can see a light at the end of the tunnel. They know that this is going to pass. This is going to end, and eventually we're going to go back to our new normal, whatever that means.

Kristina Alvarado:

Right. So just as Gizelle mentioned, we've also interacted with our student staff who we've been just mindful of the fact that we needed them to work, but as mindful of the fact that they're also students as well. And so, in order to work, we initially really kind of just survey them and say, how many of you feel like you're comfortable in online, kind of doing this work online, do you have what you need? So, we were able to get the many of the tutors laptops.

Kristina Alvarado:

If they didn't have any, that particular equipment at home and that was from campus. So, I think there's a lot of layers that kind of went into just trying to assess. And many times some of our students have said, and actually not too many, but some did say, I think right now work just seems like a lot more than I can handle. And then kind of concentrate on, this new reality that I have right now in terms of trying to get through my classes, trying to be able to access my courses and so forth, and so we completely understood that. And so it's, we also just been hearing students just trying to manage their coursework remotely.

Kristina Alvarado:

I'm definitely missing the personal component of being with other people, missing campus; just the routines that many of us have have had for awhile. And so, yeah, so I think it's just been trying to pay attention to be mindful of every everyone's individual's experience with the whole situation and just be compassionate where we can be, be affirming where we can, but understanding that, yeah, it's just a really, a whole, very abrupt and can be confusing and scary kind of situation. But we are trying so hard to put things in place that seem comfortable, familiar as a staff, just trying to be as optimistic and as positive as we can.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you both so much. I was wondering if you would be willing to share a little bit about your own journey with making this transition For example, did you have to get comfortable with new technology or different ways of building rapport with students or different ways of collaborating with colleagues, and how you think that's impacting the work that you're doing with students?

Kristina Alvarado:

That's such a great question. So, for myself, and like I said, a little bit at the beginning, I'm a new employee at Mount SAC. I started on March 2nd and there was about, maybe about a week and a half of things seeming somewhat normal. And then about that second week, there just more reports on the news and then a couple of topics here and there and in meetings about COVID-19, but things were still kind of going on. And then by that third week, we were on campus, so that's obviously the week of March 16th and such. Then that whole week was just really devoted to what we were doing as a campus, what kind of was our timeframe? It was going to be inevitable. We were going to be remote. And so what did that look like and such?

Kristina Alvarado:

And so I really think that for ourselves and for myself, obviously I didn't and nobody anticipated, but I didn't anticipate. I'm starting a new job and then there's a pandemic right away. And then thinking, "Oh my gosh, I am just getting to know this wonderful group of staff and just to getting to meet students, and now where did everybody go?" So, I think for myself, it has been hectic. It's been hectic, I think for all of us had so many questions initially as to, is everybody going to get, going to have their jobs, or we have work assignments, [inaudible 00:21:28] secure pay? And so for them, rightly so, that we really needed to kind of put our efforts into ascertaining that everybody was going to be fine and retained, and then the next step is, "Okay, now, what does the work look like, and how do we do it?"

Kristina Alvarado:

And so kind of going through that phase, I think now it is, at least on my end, it is also, which one thing I had not anticipated at all was now, how do you plan for several different scenarios moving forward? So, we'll spend the Summer; early part of the Summer, really planning for, how do we sustain our work remotely, as long as we need and what do we need to do that. And then what does it look like to return to campus while adhering to social distancing guidelines as well as improved hygiene guidelines? So, obviously, that is something that I don't think anybody anticipated. For myself, even as a manager, I didn't anticipate that, because that kind of shifts a little bit in terms of priorities that you were going to be kind of focused on other projects.

Kristina Alvarado:

But now this is something significant, and this is also something that together as a team we can do. So, we're all going to be very active in planning these steps and figuring out how do we do this? What are we going to need? What are some recommendations that we can come up with in order to give a vision to say, "This is what in order to do all of this, while practicing social distancing, while making sure that things are sanitized and clean, while making sure that we don't have too many people in a room and such, this is our recommendation for how we do it." So, yeah, so that's kind of the nature of the shift in the work. That's kind of where our very early weeks of Summer will be really devoted to doing these plans where... I mean, we're not going to wait till Summer, but we're going to get started on this right away.

Kristina Alvarado:

And I'm sure other departments are going to be launching the same endeavors in doing that. I know for myself, the shift has been, it's been tricky. I think just, I have a 16 month old and I have an eight year old stepson. And so for me, this was my kind of journey back to work, especially after my 16 month old has been born. So, I was kind of gearing up for like, for just getting ready every morning and kind of getting my routines going and so forth. And so now it is been, I've rearranged so much furniture and just looking at stuff and saying, "Nope, we don't need that. Nope, that doesn't fit anymore." The couch is literally out in the backyard in order to make room for an extra desk, right. My eight year old stepson, he also has zoom meetings and trying to do his online learning.

Kristina Alvarado:

And my baby is following his timelines. He's trying to walk and he will go down for his naps when he wants to go down for his nap. So my husband's at home too, so it's tricky. There's not a lot of separation in the daily routine, but I'm really trying to be very mindful of the opportunities in this. So, the opportunities to see my husband more, I get to make my son lunch every day just to pop in knowing that okay, at 12, and then I pop out for a few minutes, get him a warm lunch and just to really be mindful of, okay, what are some opportunities that... It's just more about, I could think for myself, reframing some things in order for me to kind of get through just some of the tricky pieces about not being able to go really anywhere to take longer breaks or to have a lot of distractions and you still have to be as focused because you really want to do the work.

Kristina Alvarado:

So, yeah, I think it's taken a lot to kind of shift, at least for me, I feel. And in many ways, I think we probably are all are still in a certain phase is to shift from being so reactionary as things initially felt that way when campus went fully online to now trying to sort out their high priority items and such, but trying to shift to more of a settling in and trying to be more proactive and plan more, because I was feeling that the reactionary pieces was a lot and kind of wearing me out a bit to always kind of be thinking about what's going to happen today and what's coming next. And that's a lot of anticipation and that's a lot of ambiguity. And while that's still there, it is just kind of, again, for myself having to reframe, how do I think about this in a way that I can control? And that is going to feel positive for me to get the work done positive that I want to try to provide leadership or some collegiality for the team.

Kristina Alvarado:

But obviously, still acknowledge that we're kind of doing all this together and experiencing all these things and really just kind of taking things one day at a time.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So this transition to working online was very interesting, because as the new SI coordinator at the ASAC, I had just gotten used to the workflow, to the drive and to being there and working with my colleagues. I was getting comfortable with my office mate and with my new, very large team of SIs and ETS, and everything was good. And then all of a sudden, the month of March came along and all of a sudden we're working from home and it's like, okay, so I have just learned all of this.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

I now feel comfortable working with my team, working in the ASAC, running the SI program. And now I have to do it from home and I have to relearn it, or I have to develop new ways of doing it. So, it was interesting going from being on campus to working from home, but it was a challenge and it still is because my office now is actually my bedroom and my husband and I are sharing offices. And sometimes I'm in a zoom call or I'm doing a recording like this one and he has to leave. And other times he has a zoom call and then I have to take the laptop and go and sit on the porch.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So, we have to take turns, but the good part is that when I go and eat lunch or when I go and have a snack in the kitchen, I can actually see my children who are two and four and I can hug them and kiss them and feel like a mom for a moment, which I couldn't do before because I was at Mt. SAC all day long. So, there is a silver lining there. Now, as far as work goes, in the beginning for the first two weeks, it was a bit challenging with all the emails coming in all the time. And I'm sure a lot of people feel that way too; with tons of emails, it's like, okay, how am I going to keep up with all the emails and actually work as well.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

And then eventually as the team got used to who is doing what, and what other ways can we communicate instead of via emails. And Christina was great in looking into that and finding a solution for that. So thank you, Christina, for that. And also working with Peter and Vanessa, who are part of my team, we're now at a point where we know who is doing what and everything is well divided, but at the same time we're collaborating a lot more. Now that we're online, we have come even closer than we were because Peter is running the ET program and the study groups. I'm running the SI program, but now we're actually running all of those programs together. And he has some strengths in some areas.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

I have strengths in other areas and we're just complementing each other. And then Vanessa is there with us the whole time too, so this has actually made for a really good team of the three of us working together and just there to support one another and then to support the SIs and ETs and SGs. I'm actually pretty happy with the way that things are going right now, however I do miss seeing the SIs and the ETs coming into my office, like they would to get a key or to get a book or just to stop by what's called Gizelle's cafe.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So, in my office, I actually have a Keurig machine, I have an espresso machine. Anybody in the ASAC can come in. Well, anybody working at the ASAC can come in and grab a cup of coffee. And I was joking with them that the pay would be to talk to me for a few seconds while the coffee was actually brewing. So, I miss that; I miss people coming in and getting a cup of coffee. I miss seeing their smiley faces; always a great attitude and big smile. And they were always working so hard and they were students themselves.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

And then they would share their struggles as students, and their struggles as SIs and also their victories. And I miss that. I miss that human contact and I miss seeing them. There are ways to replicate that online, but it's not the same thing. Face to face is different from being online. So, I do look forward to being back on campus and to see my team again, and giving hugs and getting hugs from them and all that stuff. I'm from Brazil, and we're warm and friendly and I miss that. Right now, if I'm talking to a screen and it's really weird because I can't see someone's smile or face, but there is something to learn from that as well.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you so much. I'm sure they miss Gizelle's café just as much as you miss them coming in. You talked a little bit about silver lining and that was actually my next question is, is there a silver lining to all this? I was wondering, are there any tools or collaborations or connections, maybe something that you've discovered because of all of this we've had to do in the transition that had turned out to be pretty great things that maybe came about because of the transition that we should maybe keep doing after we're not in the situation anymore.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

That's a really good question, and I tend to always look at the bright side and to be super positive and optimistic. And I know that not everybody is that way, but I think life is already hard enough as is, and I'm not going to focus on what's hard. I'm going to look at the bright side; at the silver lining always. So, what I say that's good that's coming from this is the fact that now everybody's teaching online and we're offering online tutoring. With teaching online, I'm also an adjunct at Irvine Valley College. And over the last couple of years, I've been asking around, "Hey, are we going to be able to teach ESL writing online sometime soon?" And I've been wanting to do it since I've gotten trained to teach online and I've gotten some certificates and all that.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So I've been wanting to teach online, but it just wasn't happening. And the same way in my position as coordinator, I've been wanting to offer Supplemental Instruction and tutoring online, but for a number of reasons and I do understand those reasons, we weren't able to offer those services online. And then, again, the month of March, 2020 came along and it's like, okay, all of a sudden, everybody has to be teaching online, everybody has to be working online.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So, the good thing is that now some people who opposed it and who were completely against online teaching, online tutoring have now gone through it, and they are seeing that it's actually possible. Yes, there is a lot more that we have to learn and that we have to do so that we're actually following online pedagogy for tutoring, for teaching and whatnot. But now we see that it's possible, that it's doable and that it does have its advantages.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

I don't think that online tutoring is going to replace face-to-face tutoring completely. Online teaching is not going to replace that either, but I think that those are options that we have to have in place that we have to offer our students. I remember when I was in college, I was working two jobs to support myself and I also was taking 18 units. And back then I wished that I could have access to online tutoring during the breaks that I have, during the down times that I had, but it just wasn't an option.

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So I think that for our busy students, or parents who have to be home with their kids, online tutoring, online classes are great options. And I think it's a great thing that we're doing that right now. I look forward to learning more, how to do this better. Again, like I mentioned, we need to know about pedagogy, best practices for online tutoring, for online teaching. And we need to always learn and improve and go from there.

Kristina Alvarado:

Right, and I just love Gizelle's optimism and kind of your can do attitude all the time. It just really resonates with amongst her staff. And I mean, I know other staff really just kind of feed off of that optimism, so. And just to echo what Gizelle said about, there's a lot of positives that will come from ASAC having developed an online platform that's in house service, and so we can really meet the needs for a lot of students who can't get to campus to meet with their tutor or to go to a workshop or to get some tech help or so forth. You know that based on if their work shift ends and they need to drive home and so forth. So we are just looking forward to the possibility of still having some things that can be online while we also provide some face-to-face service as well.

Kristina Alvarado:

So, it's almost kind of like taking a kind of a long, this goal, this kind of project that's been kind of mold around and what if, and can we do it or so forth. And then all of a sudden, it was pushed up to the very forefront of, "Okay, it's here, we got to do this now. I see that. It'll be sustained. And hopefully that it will reach by having more services online and continue to sustain them and do them well online that it can really be a value added to students.

Kristina Alvarado:

And I also see some of the silver linings is sometimes the challenge initially for some individuals about the technology pieces, so I think individuals are really kind of just taking opportunity to learn the technology, to allow themselves to kind of experience that, kind of feeling a little bit of angst. But we've heard a lot of positive stories of some staff and [inaudible 00:37:18]. I was a little worried about it, but I've been doing, I've been on Zoom or I've been online, I've been asked or seen certain things and more tools, and it'd become more comfortable.

Kristina Alvarado:

And I think that is really powerful because it can resonate for so many other individuals that may be a little leery of that technology, and that kind of has been a barrier as such. But just I hope we can all really share some of the stories of how, again, kind of like you said, Sun, what our own journeys have been and what we needed to overcome what we're still working on, because obviously I feel like we're still working on so many things, but then just to kind of share the confidence, because that'll really, I hope will, I'm sure especially when faculty as well kind of share their stories with students that'll really resonate and kind of be affirming to them that people have very similar feelings and we just kind of need to share their stories collectively, so that it is a bit of, if we can provide a bit of an encouragement with some of the stories about overcoming some of the fears and kind of walking through it and be patient with it. I hope that that is a big positive that comes from all of this.

Sun Ezzell:

I have just one more question. I was wondering, could you share some examples of ways that faculty are integrating the resources that ASAC offers into their courses or their assignments or their activities?

Gizelle Ponzillo:

So some ways that faculty is integrating support services like the SIs and the ETS to their classes is by adding their SIs and ETs to their canvas course so that those tutors can actually post announcements on canvas so that they can host their zoom group sessions from that canvas shell. They're also offering extra credit for students who attend group sessions, for students who meet with the SIs and Ets one on one and some professors even let the SI or the ET go over the quiz in their group session to encourage students to attend those group sessions. There are other professors who have offered different forms of extra credit for students who are working with the tutors and so on.

Kristina Alvarado:

So, I think the faculty have been helpful in trying to promote the connection to online tutoring. We did try to get announcements out just a couple weeks ago, when we actually launched everything online, I've been very responsive in trying to get the word to their students as well as to support the learning assistance workshops and direct students to the thrive online page or where I know the whole campus is trying to funnel a lot of the resources there.

Kristina Alvarado:

So. students can be able to just go to one main site and then to identify what particular resource they need. We're going to continue to think of ways that we can work with faculty, especially kind of over Summer, as we think about Fall. How do we work with faculty to make sure that they know kind of how our platforms are working, what we can help students with and just kind of keep them abreast of our services.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you both so much. So, I just wanted to open it up in case there was anything you wanted to share that I didn't think to ask you about.

Kristina Alvarado:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and just to kind of talk about ASAC and our services. And I think, collectively we're continuing to keep all of the students in mind, all of our large staff in mind, and that we're working hard to try to deliver a service that seems easy to navigate for our students and just what seems timely and what seems useful. So, I think we're doing that on our end, but also, I'm sure we want everyone to know that we're missing the students, we're missing just the campus community, and that culture and the normal kind of activities around this time of year. And so, yeah, I think just kind of keeping that in mind and just hoping for the best and knowing that this will pass and we'll do our due diligence to ensure that we're all back on campus soon.

Sun Ezzell:

Thank you both so much. I just want to thank you, a huge heartfelt thank you for the tremendous work to transitioning the ASAC resources online for meeting the needs of students during this time of stress and upheaval and for all of your hard work in contributing to a thriving, interesting, positive learning environment at Mt. SAC. Thank you so much for joining me today.

Christina Barsi:

Thank you for listening to the Magic Mountie Podcast. Remember to subscribe on Apple podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you like to get your podcasts so you can listen in the car, in your office, or however you like to listen. Once you subscribe, we'd love to hear what you think by leaving us a review, and don't forget to share your favorite episodes.