



semester 2 2021/2022

GOING THE DISTANCE

The School of Distance Education eNewsletter

JANUARY 2022

ISSUE NO. 2

Following

**THE
SAME**

STAR

**INTO THE NEW
YEAR**

2022

THANK YOU FACULTY & STAFF

THE SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION THANKS THE FACULTY AND STAFF

FOR THEIR DEDICATED SERVICE IN 2021!

THE PHOTOS BELOW ARE NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE USC FACULTY AND STAFF.
IT IS A SNAPSHOT OF OUR USC FAMILY.



**DR. GENEVIEVE
BOUCAUD**
Dean, SDE



**RODNEY
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Director, IET



**NORDIAN SWABY
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Inside This Issue

Continuing excellence in 2022



RESOURCES FOR INDEPENDENT PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

BY RODNEY RAJKUMAR



YOUR HEALTH IN THE NEW YEAR

DIET AND SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE

BY DR. CLAUDETTE MITCHELL

EXTENSION CAMPUS

UPDATES AND PROJECTIONS

SHINE

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN,
SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION



LET'S TALK

PLANNING FOR EXCELLENCE

BY NORDIAN SWABY ROBINSON

Following the Same Star

IN THE NEW YEAR



In years gone by, some speculated and daydreamed about what 2022 would look like. There were going to be self-flying cars and robots that would keep house and bathe the dog. The past two years presented obstacles beyond our conjectures of yesteryear that rivalled a Hollywood script. We have come as far as electric cars and smart-houses, but COVID-19 and multiple bereavements were *not* in the frame of our projections.

Like the Magi, more commonly known as the three wise men, we face unexpected challenges, but we find strength in God to persevere and focus on the same star. As the Magi journeyed in search of Jesus, they met with obstacles contrived to derail them. King Herod, under the guise of friendship, aimed to use them as his personal GPS to locate and destroy baby Jesus. It took the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit to alert the Magi to Herod's deception and keep them focused on their common goal.

Although they were all from the east, they were from different countries and would likely have differed in personality and culture, yet their focus on the same star led them to the same God. They also *chose* to follow the Spirit's leading, hence the reason they successfully avoided potential obstacles and found the Christ Child.

At USC, our shared objective is what motivates us and keeps us focused. We seek to shape the USC man and woman with God's guidance. This is our star. We have endured thus far, and continue to rise above obstacles as we work toward our common goal. We are not all the same, but our differences weave a tapestry that builds endurance, the strongest thread being God Himself and our commitment to serve Him by serving others.

The New Year's journey has begun. Let us remain focused on the same star, knowing that with God we cannot fail.

SHINE



DR. GENEVIEVE BOUCAUD

**DEAN, SCHOOL OF DISTANCE
EDUCATION**

Stars. They are some of the best 'shiners' in the universe. What can we learn from them as we seek to let our own lights shine in this year?

Zuckerman (2019) provides three fascinating facts about stars: (1) it is not possible to determine how many stars exist; (2) stars shine brightly and emit massive amounts of energy when they are in a stable state of nuclear fusion; (3) light pollution, through unnatural light, such as city lights, can make it impossible to see stars. Let us look at these facts in relation to the challenges that exist as we seek to shine.

Sometimes the darkness of the world closes in and we can feel like Elijah. Remember, it is impossible to know how many stars are out there. There are many knees that have not bowed to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). Further, Elijah stood against 450 prophets of Baal and he was the majority because God was his surety. Shine.

At other times, we can feel drained by the stresses of life. The events of Covid-19 and the demands they have placed on us is an immediate example. Remember that stars emit massive amounts of energy when they are in a stable state. Find stability in God's word.

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine [God's], and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock" (Matthew 7:22). Claim the promises of God and rest on the Rock. Shine.

Perhaps we have had times when we gave ourselves in service and felt that it was not effecting real change. We live in a world with an incredible amount of 'unnatural light' that can make it difficult for the light of Christ to pierce through. For this reason, we are often placed in dark places because it is there that we can have the greatest effect. Shine.

Dear colleagues, in 2021 you rose to the challenge. You mastered new technologies, supported students, encouraged peers, and kept USC running. You shone. Thank you.

The School of Distance Education thanks the administration for the support systems that were put in place to keep USC running in 2021. Thank you faculty and staff for your stellar service and commitment during these challenging times. Thank you students for adapting and staying the course. Thank you to our external supporters. Your contributions are all noted.



HOW TO PLAY

CLICK HERE AND YOU WILL BE TAKEN TO A 15-PIECE MYSTERY PUZZLE.

CLICK OK AND BUILD THE PUZZLE.

ON COMPLETION, WAIT FOR THE APPLAUSE TO FINISH AND A LINK WILL APPEAR.

CLICK THE LINK AND YOU WILL BE TAKEN TO A 5-QUESTION, MULTIPLE CHOICE QUIZ.

ANSWER THE QUIZ QUESTIONS, WHICH ARE BASED ON THIS SDE ENEWSLETTER.

NOTE FOR QUIZ:

YOU WILL NEED TO ENTER YOUR FULL NAME, SO WE CAN CONTACT YOU IF YOU WIN.

YOU WILL ALSO HAVE TO CHOOSE AN AVATAR BEFORE BEGINNING THE QUIZ.

YOUR AVATAR WILL RACE UP A MOUNTAIN. THE FASTER AND MORE CORRECTLY YOU ANSWER, THE FASTER AND FARTHER YOUR AVATAR WILL GO.

TOP THE PODIUM TO WIN.





HAPPY
NEW YEAR



RODNEY RAJKUMAR

DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL
TECHNOLOGY

Fortunately, in this information age, there is a plethora of sources where you can enhance your social, emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being.

At USC, the following are available for independent training:

- **Recordings of our past live training sessions.** These are housed in our Centre for Faculty Excellence and can be accessed via a link of the same name in the “welcome” area of each USC course.
- **Self-paced E-learning Fundamentals training.** This is a course which covers the basics of developing and teaching blended, online and remote courses in USC Elearn. You complete the course at your own pace and receive timely feedback from an instructor.
- **Self-Paced Teaching Online in Higher Education training** – This is a course which is offered by the Adventist Learning Network. It takes an in-depth look at teaching online and explores ways to make courses uniquely Adventist.
- **Turn-It-In and Zoom Training** – Users of these services can sign up for webinars and/or view training videos directly on the homepage of these sites.

Additionally, you can take advantage of certification and other personal development courses at the following sites:

- **Coursera** – Offers a wide range of courses, certificates and degrees from leading Universities and companies around the world
- **EdX** – Provides similar offerings to Coursera
- **Allison** – Offers single courses, certificates and diplomas with a European flavor
- **Commonwealth of Learning** – Aims to educate for sustainable development. Courses range from Agriculture to IT Security.

The best part of all I have mentioned thus far is that most of these courses are absolutely free! So... the next time you meet that person who is always “on the move”, rather than ponder on the “secret” to success, perhaps you can offer a word of advice. Perhaps you can point to the resources for independent personal development and training you found right here in our School of Distance education newsletter!

Resources

FOR INDEPENDENT
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
AND TRAINING

Have you ever wondered why some people always seem to get ahead? They never seem to be in the same position any time you meet them.

What’s the secret? The key is personal development. These persons have seen it as their primary responsibility to develop themselves. If training and professional development opportunities are not handed to them by an organization, they seek them out on their own





Claudette Mitchell

PH.D., RD, DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES,
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND ALLIED HEALTH

Your Health in the New Year

In the midst of a pandemic and daily being surrounded by sadness – loss of lives among community residents who succumbed to the coronavirus, or those tested positive and received treatment can be depressing. Perhaps some may consider: does it really matter to make resolutions for the new year? How can I share my thoughts with individuals who are grieving? Whatever the case, you should focus on being optimistic and moving forward during these difficult times.

Brief overview...

Taking care of your health using a holistic approach can be the best gift for the new year. This involves not only good nutrition (selecting healthy foods and beverages), but engaging regularly in physical activity, taking time to rest and relax, and most important stress management. Studies show that implementing these approaches along with the weight management, and maintaining blood pressure and blood glucose levels within acceptable parameters, as well as avoiding the harmful use of tobacco and alcohol can aid in preventing and/or lowering one's potential risk for the noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).



In Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Health (2017) reported that the non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – heart disease, diabetes mellitus, and cancer are the leading causes of death with a mortality distribution of 25 percent, 14 percent, and 13 percent, respectively, in 2015. The common modifiable risk factors included: overweight/obesity, unhealthy diet, elevated blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol levels, physical inactivity, tobacco consumption and alcohol abuse.

Moreover, the World Health Organization (2021) documented that annually 41 million people die from the NCDs – 71 percent of all deaths globally; this include cardiovascular disease being the leading cause of death among the NCDs accounting for 17.9 million, cancers (9.3 million), respiratory diseases (4.1 million), and diabetes mellitus (1.5 million). The most vulnerable target groups are those persons' age 30 to 69 years, as 15 million die annually due to an NCDs. Furthermore, 85 percent of these premature deaths, and more than three quarters of the global NCDs deaths occur mainly in low and middle income countries.

Helpful Hints...

Given these reports at the local and international levels, you should endeavour to implement and maintain healthy habits: get adequate sleep; planned balanced meals (choose nutritious foods – ground provision, green banana, plantain, whole grains, peas and beans, nuts and seeds, fish, egg, and dairy products, and a variety of fruits and vegetables); watch portion sizes; exercise regularly; balance work and activities at home – take a break at times; maintain your hydration – drink water (6 to 8 glasses/day); and limit consumption of concentrated sweets (cakes, cookies, candies, and ice cream).

References

1. Ministry of Health, Government of Trinidad and Tobago (2017). National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases: Trinidad and Tobago 2017-2021
2. World Health Organization. (April 2021). Noncommunicable diseases. Key facts, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

EXTENSION CAMPUS UPDATE

Creetings to all. It gives us at the St. Lucia campus great pleasure in contributing to this issue of the of the School of Distance Education's eNewsletter.

The St. Lucia Campus extends sincere thanks to all of our academic and professional staff members from the St. Lucia campus, the main campus, and all the other external campuses for keeping up with last semester's teaching and learning activities via Zoom and online. We are grateful and the students are grateful.

Although the students longed to return to the classroom for face-to-face learning, they were all very happy with last semester's classes.

As we begin the New Year and a new semester, we are pleased to highlight some of our student's achievements at the end of the previous semester.

- Congratulations to Ron Vidal who completed his studies last summer and had his degree conferred in the December conferral ceremony.
- Congratulations, also, to Barbara Monrose and Britney Gassie who completed their programs of study at the end of the previous semester.

Our students participated in, and led out in Chapel earlier last semester. They were very excited for the opportunity to lead out and they performed excellently.

The St. Lucia campus was also happy to partner with the Barbados campus in worship during the week of prayer hosted by the School of Distance Education.

In 2022 and beyond, we have great and exciting plans for our campus and for our students.

We take this opportunity to extend a very happy New Year to all.



CATHERINE INGLIS-LEON
COORDINATOR, USC ST. LUCIA

On October 30, 2021, students from the Barbados Campus' iProvide Ministries, travelled to four nursing homes across Barbados with a food and toiletry drive.

The team chose this project because they wanted to impact the lives of the elderly and that was the perfect opportunity to show appreciation to our seniors - those who have sacrificed so much for their families and who may feel underappreciated. It was a blessing to serve the community! That was the first project for the semester.

The members of the team are Adriel Hoyte, Sophia Price, Laurena Jacob, Marissa Waldron and Crystal Webb, led by Kahlan Roach.

The next project was a toy drive for the neighborhood children as well as some children's homes across the island. We partnered with children in our churches, giving them the opportunity to bring a smile to another child. The iPraise and iPray ministries were both involved in the project.

Congratulations to Kahlan Roach whose paper was accepted for the World Conference on Research in Teaching and Education to be held in the Czech Republic from March 18-20, 2022.

SHERNELLE FULLERTON
COORDINATOR, USC BARBADOS



LET'S TALK

PLANNING FOR EXCELLENCE



NORDIAN SWABY ROBINSON
COORDINATOR,
USC ONLINE



The school year 2021/2022 may have started off a little rough for some of us. For some, it may have begun as planned, while others may still be trying to figure out what happened, as semester 1 began a little too soon, then in the blink of an eye it was over.

Semester 2 2022 may not be so different for most of us, as the Christmas holiday was just too short, being punctuated with grading papers and prepping for holiday celebrations.

May I have another week? This may be the question on most of our lips, but we dare not take it, as the semester commenced on January 10, 2022. This semester lends itself to a myriad of opportunities to teach and plan for the days ahead. Here are some tips on how to navigate the second semester - January 2022, and pre-plan for the next semester.

Ensure your course outlines are updated. One of the challenges that the e-developers and the Coordinator of USC Online face is inaccuracy of course outlines on the ELearn platform. Inaccuracies include incorrect dates, incorrect instructors names, and outdated information.

Note that the education landscape is always changing and as such, the curriculum should reflect relevant and current topics. Let's take this opportunity to check and update these critical areas. Additionally, please make note of new developments in topic areas that can be used in the future to ensure that they are relevant and current.

Revise & update your notes

Have you used the same course notes for the past few years? Think about it. How current is the course information? How are you relating the content to everyday life? Are you challenging your students to think critically? Yes, it is good to have a framework, but it is also good to incorporate topics that are being discussed both locally and internationally.

While teaching this semester, ask yourself these questions:

Are there any concepts that students are finding hard to grasp? How can I simplify the content? How can I make the topic more relevant? Have the students raised any relevant and valid points that I never considered or knew about that would be worth sharing in the future?

The answers to these questions may help to increase your wealth of knowledge as you plan for the upcoming semester.

Revise & update your assignments

Your students are proficient in data gathering! They are Google proficient, YouTube enthusiasts! They are experts when it comes to researching answers for assignments. Networking forms part of their data gathering agenda, so if you are using assignments from 2 to 3 years ago, or even as recent as last semester, students will find ways to get their hands on copies of such assignments. I know it is tiring to keep changing your test bank, but we want to challenge our students to work diligently, think critically and formulate their own responses, so that teachers can gauge whether active learning is taking place. Take some time to revise assignments, mid-term exams, and forum discussions.

Pace yourself

Slot in some personal time on your calendar. This is for your own mental health and well-being. Take an afternoon stroll. Get 30 minutes of exercise. Go to bed before 10 p.m. (at least a few days per week) and pamper yourself. If you build in some 'me time' you will feel refreshed to handle whatever the world throws at you.

I know it is easier said than done, but it is possible! Benjamin Franklin's popular quote states "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." Let's not fail in our planning for our students. If we expect the best from them, we ought to put our best foot forward for them.

Now, let's follow the plan week by week and finish this semester on a high note! Set a timeline for completing the semester, plan some alone time, and family time.

One thing 2021 taught us is that life is too short for you to be overwhelmed. Find joy in *minute* things. Be patient and continue to shine the light of God, so that students can see Jesus in you, while you aim to facilitate the Holy Spirit's transformation of your students into extraordinary servants of God!

Happy New Year! I wish you a smooth semester, and a blessed and productive 2022.



TROPICAL THIRST QUENCHER

Coconut water	4 cups
Mint leaves	3
Honey (optional)	1 tbsp
Large lemon	1
Cucumber slices	2
Ice cubes	

INSTRUCTIONS

Squeeze juice of large lemon into mason jar, sweeten with honey (optional). Add chilled coconut water and mix well. Garnish with cucumber slices. Enjoy!

SUNRISE KISS

Coconut water	4 cups
watermelon	1 cup
Large lemon	1
Ice cubes	2

INSTRUCTIONS

Squeeze juice of large lemon into mason jar, Add chilled coconut water and watermelon juice. Mix well. Enjoy!

Click the television screen below for

Healthy Viewpoint



Please note that the views expressed in this video are not those of the University of the Southern Caribbean. The video shown is credited to its creator/presenter, Gweneth Stuart, Owner of Astrenut Newspaper, Trinidad & Tobago, as published on YouTube.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The School of Distance Education thanks each of the contributors to the current issue of 'Going the Distance'.



NEXT ISSUE OF GOING THE DISTANCE

The School of Distance Education invites you to view the next issue of 'Going the Distance' in April 2022.

We invite you to give us feedback on this issue of the SDE's eNewsletter. We want to hear from you!





January

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semester 2 2021/2022 | Vol. 2

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