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## College of Liberal Arts and Sciences\_MT 101 & WGS 101\_COVID-19 Response

Kevin Roberge

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Robin Delcourt <umprovost@maine.edu>

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## Pandemic

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Kevin Roberge <kevin.roberge@maine.edu>  
To: UMaine Provost <umprovost@maine.edu>

Thu, Apr 23, 2020 at 12:46 PM

Dear Dr. Gilbert,

There are two courses I teach that I have been addressing the current pandemic. MAT101 (two sections) and WGS101 (one section). WGS101 has included readings and discussions (both on Blackboard and over Zoom) about the health disparities which has been reinforcing many of the themes and questions of the course. These disparities highlight tensions between the biological and socially constructed along with pressing students to critically evaluate why certain communities are experiencing higher rates of infection and death.

MAT101 satisfies three credits of quantitative literacy. I switched all the content of this course to cover the pandemic. Each week I address the prominent quantitative issues that are in the news and address any corrections to predictions made the previous week. We have been using real-time data to discuss exponential growth, growth factors,  $R_0$ , case fatality rate, herd immunity threshold, epidemiological models and so much more. All of this is done in basic mathematics. The intent is for their education to support their understanding of what is happening around them. I embed a discussion board in each Top Hat lesson for students to (optionally) put comments and ask questions. There has been a general appreciation that MAT101 is addressing current events and helping them make sense of it all.

Thank you for the emails you have been sending out during this ordeal. I have appreciated them.

Cheers,

Kevin Roberge,  
Adjunct Mathematics Faculty  
[Affiliate Faculty for the Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies](#)  
UMaine, Orono, ME  
Pronouns: he, him, his  
[Rising Tide Advocate](#)



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