[00:00:00] **Catherine Ross:** Hello, and welcome to Dead Ideas in Teaching and Learning a higher education podcast from the Center for Teaching and Learning at Columbia. I'm Catherine Ross, the center's executive director. Let's get started.

[00:00:23] I'm speaking today with John Warner, the author of the Just Visiting blog in Inside Higher Education. As a quick reminder for our listeners in this podcast series, we are exploring Dead Ideas in teaching and learning. In other words, ideas that are widely believed though not true and that drive many systems and behaviors in connection to teaching exercising what Diane Pike called the tyranny of dead ideas. John Warner is a writer, editor, speaker, researcher, consultant, and author of eight books, including "Why They Can't Write: Killing the Five Paragraph Essay and other Necessities" and "The Writer's Practice: Building Confidence in Your Nonfiction Writing," which is widely used in writing classrooms from middle school through college. With 20 years of college teaching experience and 10 years as a contributor to Inside Higher Ed via his Just Visiting blog John has become a national voice on issues of faculty labor, institutional values, and writing pedagogy. He is also affiliate faculty at the College of Charleston and his most recent book, "Sustainable, Resilient, and Free: The Future of Public Higher Education" is now available. Welcome to our dead ideas podcast, John. It's such a delight to have you as our guest on this episode.

[00:01:55] **John Warner:** It's a pleasure to be here. I'm a listener and a fan.

[00:01:58] **Catherine Ross:** Thank you. Thank you for that. So as I always do, I will set the stage a little bit to explain how we came to be here today. I invited John to chat with us after I read his May 18th Inside Higher Ed blog post, the post was titled "You Can't Ignore That a Pandemic Happened." While this post was a response to an op-ed in the New York Times by Jonathan Malesic, our guests tackled some broadly important issues that we are all grappling with ideas that will come forcefully into play this semester as we navigate what many instructors and some administrators are calling a return to normal, but our

struggles in defining what normal means and deciding whether or not that's even the goal that we really want has engendered many conversations that ultimately have split into two broadly constituted sets of arguments. It is this debate right about how we should return to teaching in classrooms and what happens to the practices that we engage to help students when the pandemic pushed us to remote teaching that I really want to unpack with John today. So my first question is about the title of your blog, "You Can't Ignore That a Pandemic Happened," which I think belies your views about what kind of teaching should be happening as we return to in-person teaching. But I'd love for our listeners to hear more about what that title represents in terms of your thinking and particularly about what you described as the third option that you outlined as a way to bridge divide between the two arguments, right? The return to pre-pandemic normal versus keep the pandemic, what people are calling accommodations, let's [00:04:00] maybe expand that to pedagogy, those two sides of the debate. So turn it over to you.

[00:04:06] **John Warner:** So one of my chief areas of focus in my work, and this has sort of happened by accident more than anything, is figuring out how to bring a pedagogical lens to what I perceive as the structural problems and barriers to effective teaching. And a lot of this is born out of my own experience as a non-tenure track instructor and lecturer at four different institutions over the course of my career, where it became apparent to me that most of the things that were hindering my work as an instructor had little to do with my pedagogical approaches and much more to do with the conditions under which I was working—essentially too many students, not enough time, not enough pay to dedicate all of my available hours to the work of teaching. And over the years of doing that work, I just became highly sensitive to the reality of the conditions on the ground and the impact that has on ultimately the delivery of our pedagogy. So when I say we can't ignore that a pandemic happened, we have a new structure that has been created by our two plus years of a pandemic.

[00:05:17] And to even wish for a snap back to normal, I think is a little bit fool hearty because the world is an altered place and we cannot wish that away. The other part of this is many of the normal pre-pandemic wasn't all that great. My experience as an instructor was there's a good reason why I don't teach writing full-time anymore. It's because it was not a sustainable career for me to do economically, spiritually, physically, all of that stuff. It's just ultimately for $30,000 a year. I cannot work as a full-time instructor. I have to go out and, and earn more and not burn myself out and that kind of stuff. So we have [00:06:00] the, the pre pandemic status quo which I think was not great to begin with, layer on a pandemic where a lot of our lives have been permanently altered, and I think this requires some fresh thinking around the pedagogies that recognize not just the effects of the pandemic, but what we have learned about our

institutions, our courses, our students, our staff, our faculty in the course of the pandemic. We know a lot more about these things than we used to. And I think we should make use of those things as we think about teaching, you know, as the pandemic shifts. I wouldn't say it's over, but as we come into whatever the next phase has for us.

[00:06:42] **Catherine Ross:** Yeah. And I think that's what really drew me to that particular blog post that you wrote. Although I've read almost all of them, but that one I thought was really powerful because it's the pedagogy that is often absent in these conversations, like Malesic, the editorial that he wrote, where there's no mention of pedagogy. And so I really appreciated your focus on that aspect of this debate about how we return. I love the point that you make about the distinction between in person teaching and human centered teaching and calling out the fact that in-person teaching does not automatically mean that the teaching is better than in a, you know, really well designed online or hybrid or high flex course.

So again, the point of all this being pedagogy matters. So what should instructors be asking themselves if they were disappointed last spring when they returned to in-person teaching. We have all these reports of students who are unwilling to come to class, and if they did come, they were disengaged. You know, what kinds of questions could we share with instructors to think about as they approach another semester coming up?

[00:08:06] **John Warner:** The biggest thing I think if, if we expected it to return to something like what it was before, I think that was probably wishful thinking and that we should take heed with that finding and the experiences of many. And I understand that wish after two years of what we've been through to want get back to something that feels more familiar, and more grounded and centered. But we do have to remember that in-person and human-centered are not the same thing.

So I'm 52 years-old. I went to college in the late eighties, early nineties, before online education. All of my college education was in-person. There was no such thing as not in-person. And I went to the University of Illinois, a large state university, and there was nothing human-centered about the vast majority of my particularly my general education courses. I would go to, uh, Foellinger Hall, which is a beautiful neo-classical building in the quad at the University of Illinois. I'd sit there with 1500 of my closest friends and my Econ 101 professor would stroll out with his transparencies that in the day were on like an actual scroll.

[00:09:15] **Catherine Ross:** Oh my God what a flashback.

[00:09:17] **John Warner:** That's not a, that's not entirely true. He would not stroll out with the transparencies. One of his TAs would stroll out with the transparencies, load it into the machine, crank it to wherever he had left off on the last lecture. The professor would stroll out at the at the strike of the hour. He would lecture for the entire 50 or 75 minutes, however long the course was. And then at a time would be over and then he would stroll away. I learned very quickly as an undergraduate student for those sorts of courses, and you know, of the four or five Gen Eds I took my freshman year, at least three of them were of that style. Why would I go, why would I bother going to that class? There's a textbook written by that guy who's droning on, in a monotone in front of me. And if I read the textbook and study a little bit, I can get my B and nobody's gonna bother me and we're going to call it good. And nobody worried about that in 1988. Not that it was good. Not that it was good teaching. Not that I learned a lot, and frankly I probably didn't. But the idea that if we can do that, we are somehow meeting the needs of students. We know is not true. We've learned better, and we recognize better. I think the vast majority of faculty hoped to do more for their students than the model that was, you know, prevalent when I went to college in 1988. But if we want to do that, we have to recognize that this idea of if we are in person, we're taking care of things. That's not true.

When I say human centered, it really is this recognition that we all are people. We've all been through something. Education is a fundamentally human exchange. This is, is where I felt bad writing this post disagreeing with Malesic's op-ed because at heart I'm in sync with him, right? That [00:11:00] education is a, is a human enterprise. And we do better with it when we are interacting with others and collaborating and working in this fashion. But in-person is not a shorthand for that. We must be mindful of the reality of what we are after. If somebody says I really want get back to in-person, I would recommend the instructor ask well what is underneath that desire for in-person? What are the values, the pedagogical values you bring to in-person education? And the article had a number there. There were professors that would talk about how they were entertaining or engaging, and they were able to present the material better, or they could recruit students for lab work, that kind a stuff.

I think all that is valid. I think maybe I have some different ideas around the specifics of that. But if those are your values, if in-person means I want be engaging in the moment with my students, that's what you're after not in-person. And for the eventualities where we cannot go in-person or where students are absent [00:12:00] or any number of things happen that don't allow for us to be face to face if you have that value if you have that core you can figure out how

to live that core in a different medium, or a different situation, or a different context. It may not be as good. There may be compromises around it, but at least you have a target that is rooted in something meaningful in-person is not meaningful all by itself in-person.

If it embodies a set of values, that can become meaningful. But if we don't talk about the values, and this was what sort of irked me most about that op-ed, if we don't talk about the values, what are we even supposed to do about it other than, you know, sort of command a certain set of behaviors from students. And for me, that's sort of giving up on the struggle before we begin if we're gonna start going down that kind road.

[00:12:47] **Catherine Ross:** Right. And I've heard many faculty reflecting on how powerfully they realized the relational nature of teaching and learning in the pandemic. It really brought it to the [00:13:00] fore. I've interviewed students who said they realized they needed that relationship with the professor, and when grades went to pass fail, for example, what motivated them was their relationship with the professor and not wanting to disappoint their professor.

[00:13:17] **John Warner:** That was in place before the pandemic too. That's and that's the kind of exact kind of thing that has been surfaced and revealed that was there and maybe understated.

[00:13:26] **Catherine Ross:** Right. It became much more explicit and visible. I think in the pandemic and students also said they recognized how much they needed each other, their community, their learning community. So I think those are the things, the values that you're talking about that we don't want to lose this in a rush to go back to something. That leads right into the next question where I really, I really appreciated how you pushed back on the idea that we have to choose between structure, which I would also say maybe we could [00:14:00] call rigor, right? This whole debate about rigor and the rigor wars that we're somehow being forced to choose between structure and being rigorous or flexibility, which people have been calling accommodations. I don't like that term for it. And I'm hearing this all around. So I think for many instructors, there's just these deep-seated legacy beliefs about the ways in which rigor in a course is signaled and enacted. And it leads to these sort of false assumptions about how flexibility is somehow a kind of coddling. And it allows students to get away with, you know, bad behaviors that are annoying to the instructors. And what totally delighted me was your clear statement that forced compliance is not an aid to learning. Please say more.

[00:14:53] **John Warner:** You know, a lot of this is very rooted in my specific teaching and pedagogical background, which is [00:15:00] writing, both learning to write and continuing to learn to write over the course of my life and career and teaching writing. Recognizing that in my own work, as a writer, I work hardest and best when I met my most free—when I have the freedom and flexibility to pursue subjects of great interest and passion, when I have the necessary time to do the reading and the contemplation, and the study, and the reaching out to other people to see what they think, all of those things. When those conditions are met, I am doing my best work. And that induces me to work harder because I have this drive and notion of what I'm trying to get on the page that is independent of, obviously at this point, nobody's grading me anymore, but it's an independent of sort of audience or reception or feedback or anything. It's really like there's something in my head. There's some idea that I want to capture, or there's some story I want to tell. And there's [00:16:00] the best I can do to put it on the page. And I want to achieve that. For me, that is a much higher standard of rigor than, you know, me reading students like I'm sort of a cattle driver getting across the plane with this sort of compulsion.

It's like, I've been watching the NBA finals, the basketball finals. And anytime they talk about like the greatest players ever, nobody ever says oh they became great because the coach made them, commanded they run wind sprints until they dropped. No, it was Michael Jordan came to the gym every morning at 6:00 AM to shoot a thousand free throws on his own.

That's rigor, that's dedication. That's the kind of ultimate behavior that I want to induce some students that I want them to learn as part of the process of learning to write. Part of my work is then to inculcate attitude, that attitude within them. And part of that then requires me to be comfortable with them falling short of that sort of standard. Which may, you know, if we're if we're using traditional grading, it may result in a lesser grade. But if there's a meeting of the minds on the effort and the outcome, and the student sees the connection between maybe a grade they didn't like, and the effort they put in or the dedication they put into it, or their interest in the subject. That's my focus. So this idea of flexibility is somehow slack or coddling, I think is totally wrong.

One of the great skills I've had to consistently practice in my life as a writer is not to meet deadlines but manage deadlines. Every week, I publish between three and five original pieces of writing in various places. And nobody says you have to have it in on say 8:00 AM on a Tuesday, but everybody knows it's got to come in within a certain window. And it's up to me to figure that out. So if I can sort of give students the flexibility within the context of their busy lives, with schooling and jobs and families and all that stuff and say, okay, it's not due in

class, but it has to be in here in this window. That doesn't reduce the rigor with which they brought to it. That gives them a window within which to work and requires them to practice what I think it is really one of the most important things for students to learn anybody to learn that I am still learning is—agency, that sense of kind of self-efficacy that sense of control over their own lives and the outcome of their effort and work. And why wouldn't I do everything I can to foster and reward that as opposed to policing behavior as opposed to commanding behavior, as opposed to, you know, sort of playing some kind of combo of spy and cop in the classroom. And this was all stuff that I did before the pandemic.

I dropped to my attendance policy 10, 12 years ago when I read, uh, Ken Bains, "What the Best College Teachers Do." One of the common findings was that they don't take attendance. They don't even bother. They took attendance to learn their student's names not to see if they're here. I started experimenting with that and making class worth coming too. And not only did that require students to practice that agency. It required me to be more accountable to myself and my students and all of that.

Again, just kind of gets it that it's underlying root that I always emphasize, which is values. What do you value? Do you value the student being present? We've all had those students. I'm sure you've had the students where it's like, they think they have to be there, or you have an attendance policy, and they are they're their body, but not in mind or spirit. I mean they're literally checked out. They could be sick. They could be exhausted. They could be doing their homework for another class. That student doesn't need to be present if they decide they have somewhere else to be at that time. I'm okay with that. Students weren't there for me to perform being a teacher. They're there to learn, and my job is to set up the conditions and the consequences for them to learn as much as possible. And sometimes that learning looks like lack of achievement in a transcript, but that could be the most important lesson they've had. I got a lot of so-so grades in college that were actually very instructive in my future life and development.

[00:20:03] **Catherine Ross:** So a couple questions popped into my mind. Do you have to convince students? How do you get them motivated? Because most of them come in not thinking about writing as something they're passionate about. It's been drummed out of them by the ways they've been taught writing prior to coming to college for the most part. I'm guessing. So how do you do that? And do you meet resistance ever? You know, it actually requires more work from students, the ways in which you're talking about teaching and they don't always welcome that.

[00:20:36] **John Warner:** For sure. My method, cracking up at the word method, I mean it's as though it's fixed or something like that. It's a process. And it's highly informed by all my years of teaching primarily first year writing. And what I do from the very beginning is I just dive in head on. I acknowledge in a typical first year writing course, every single student is a conscript. Nobody is a volunteer. Every single one of them would've chosen some other course other than the I'm in front of them to help them learn within. And so we just own it. They say, how many of you would choose another course rather than this one? I'm like it's okay. I won't be offended. And they all raise their hands. I'm like why do you feel this way? They tell me these things about how writing has been not particularly fun or certainly not writing for school has been fun. And the horrible grammar teacher they had that would crack their knuckles when their sentence diagraming was wrong. And we just kind of air all that. And then I lay down my values, the values that I associate with learning to write, which are some of the things I've been talking about. And we at least start on a place of shared understanding.

I understand their hesitancy. They understand the source of my enthusiasm. And then over the course of the semester, uh, I try to bring them as close to my set of values and beliefs as I can. Is that a hundred percent? That would be foolish to believe so, but because of the focus on that and the curriculum that I've developed over the years, that is sort of contained in the writer's practice book, I can generally switch a lot of writers into what I say is the on position. They're in the off position, and now they're in the on position. And they're engaging in what I call the elements of the writer's practice with the skills, attitudes, knowledge, and habits of mind of writers. So we are thinking about all of those things in every context. And if at the end of the semester. Maybe on the page, their proficiency as writers is not all that different or marginally different or still not where we would like it. But if at the end of the semester they are thinking like writers if they are inhabiting the skills, attitudes, knowledge, and habits of mind to writers, I know that when they're past my class and they have a new writing related problem, which is how I refer to the assignments, they have a way to go about trying to solve it. And even though they may not come to love writing. It becomes at least not something that causes them great angst or paralysis.

The big problem of students entering first year writing is they have a, many of them have a single tool and solving that writing related problem, which is the five paragraph essay, and they get to college and realize this is not actually a tool that I can use. I have a hammer and I need a screwdriver, or I need a table saw that kind of stuff. So if I can give them that method, it's this form of agency and empowerment and rigor and all those things are wrapped up into it. Again, the success or failures not always evident in their writing. And, you know, I

have people who will criticize my approach because like, how do you know they're getting better if they're, if it's not just self-evident in the writing. I say, because I talk to them. I ask if you were given the sort of writing related problem how would you go about solving it? And they will articulate a process for doing so. And so I know they're going get better the same way that I'm going to get better.

That Just Visiting blog that you mentioned in the bio, I've been doing it for over 10 years now. When I first started doing it, it would take me four or five days to write a single blog post. I wrote this week's blog post, which will go up the next day after we record this in about 45 minutes yesterday based on thinking about it and all that kind of stuff. But once I sat down to write 45 minutes to get it down. That's the process I want for students. And I think we can get them there. We just have to recognize the challenges and difficulties and the human parts of those challenges and difficulties.

[00:24:17] **Catherine Ross:** Right? Yeah. I used to do similar things when I was teaching either English to speakers of other languages or Russian to unpack their previous experiences with language learning. And, you know, help them think through about why they felt like they were successful or why they didn't feel like they were successful. And it really helps to have those conversations.

[00:24:40] **John Warner:** Students, they want to learn.

[00:24:41] **Catherine Ross:** Yeah.

[00:24:41] **John Warner:** You know, the notion that students are resistant to quote unquote "learning" could not be more false. I do think in my experience, many students have become a little bit suspicious of school and schooling. And it does take some time to orient them around learning sometimes because they, they may have that transactional relationship to school, getting a grade, moving on, et cetera, et cetera. But you can set up an atmosphere where learning is going to happen. They're pretty enthusiastic about it.

[00:25:10] **Catherine Ross:** Yeah, they are. And that's the piece that's always missing in these commentaries. So as we embark on another semester, a new semester, what advice or you know maybe just a couple suggestions, would you give instructors about engaging students and also helping them engage with their own learning?

[00:25:34] **John Warner:** And this sort of gets it to, to what I was talking about with my approach...

[00:25:37] **Catherine Ross:** Right.

[00:25:38] **John Warner:** ...teaching first year writing where it's, where it's like transparency, right? Like just be, be open. I mean transparency is one of my core values. Like if you're reading my philosophy of teaching statement, you'd see transparency at or near the top. Now that doesn't mean like overburdening or oversharing with students. It doesn't mean we turn class [00:26:00] into therapy. I'm actually, I'm a believer in pedagogy that takes into mind student's needs around mental health, but I, I am highly resistant to the notion of class as therapy. I think that's a mistake. I think, think we're not qualified to do it.

I think it's not necessary, but if you can be transparent with students, and invite them into your values. And that's mostly what I share with students who the first day, and in my syllabus and course policies here are the values that are driving, what we're working and ask them to be mindful of those in a kind of co-creator and co-pilot of those values, they will help you along the way. I've had a number of semesters where stuff has happened. Teaching at College of Charleston here in Charleston, South Carolina, we are highly prone to weather interruption. We had a few years ago we had four consecutive semesters where we missed at least a week if not two weeks of class because of either hurricane or bizarrely snow and ice. One year this threw everything into, you know, flux because the trains have to run on time. I realized after a couple semesters of this had me frantically redoing my syllabus and imposing on students. I just came in the third semester in a row this happened. I said, you know what, here's what happened. We don't have enough time to do all of this work. What should we do instead? And by the end of the class period, the students had sort of mapped out the rest of the semester, according to the things that we were sharing. That's a kind of flexibility that is consistent again with this notion of agency. Students are flexible, but they have ultimate control and responsibility...

[00:27:40] **Catherine Ross:** yeah.

[00:27:41] **John Warner:** ...over the classroom and what they're going to learn. I think the big mistake and the thing that, again, irked me about op-ed was this notion that it's the faculty's responsibility to get students behaving the way we think students should do. And that's the student's job. We create the atmosphere and the context that maximizes the chances for that happening. We help students where they need it. But sometimes it's not going to happen. And that's an okay outcome. I hate to confess this as a college instructor, but I have had end of semester conversations with students, particularly freshman students, first year students, many times where the end of the conversation was them deciding to leave school hopefully temporarily, hopefully to come back, but

under their own initiative and their own impulse to recognize that this is not where they should be. And if that's what's going on with many of these students who are like sitting on the beach and trying to attend class virtually or disrupting, or just simply not doing the work, I think that is a...that's not a bad outcome. I mean it bothers me because I think we're better off in school, but we have to allow people the chance to be human, to live their lives as they feel the need, you know, in the semester or the moment that we're existing in.

[00:28:57] **Catherine Ross:** Yeah. I remember coming across a [00:29:00] syllabus probably 15 years ago now that was for a general education history class, and the professor completely normalized students who just want to get a C in the class and respected that choice. Right?

[00:29:16] **John Warner:** There's nothing wrong with that. Everybody arrives with a different set of needs and values and desires and interests. If a C is a passing grade for you, and it doesn't bother you to just be like, hey, here's here's... I mean, this is what I figured out for myself in college. Now, B was mine because they kept my parents off my case, but I was a dedicated purveyor of the mini max theory doing a minimal amount of work for the maximum except well grade. And I turned out okay. Generations of people have turned out okay. This part of college is to figure this stuff out and to even to give students a little permission to make these decisions I think actually ultimately helps them do better.

This is a good story I like to tell. So I was teaching a technical writing course at Clemson. That was a uh required 300 level Gen Ed that was taken almost exclusively by seniors because they never had enough sections. Nobody wanted to take it. They ended up taking their last semester or last year at best. The core of the course was a 12-week long group project, which students could not believe couldn't have been more dismayed by that although often it went great. I use a method to arrange students in groups where they write a sort of statement, combination personal statement, resume of like skills and interests and what they're looking for along with their schedule so I could keep schedules. So we didn't get people together with incompatible schedules. And then for one class, they'd just go desk to desk reading each student's statement. And at the end of the class, they fill out an index card. I ask them, give me three people you'd like to work with and one person you definitely would not like to work with. And this method works great by the way. One semester I had this group of second semester seniors who all grouped together because they read each other's statements that said I just need to pass the class. I want to do the minimal amount of work and still pass the class. And they called themselves D stands for done. And they were perfectly transparent about it. They...

[00:31:21] **Catherine Ross:** They bonded over that. I mean, that's part of like specifications grading.

[00:31:26] **John Warner:** Yeah

[00:31:26] **Catherine Ross:** That's what it offers students.

[00:31:27] **John Warner:** And the, so the D stands for done. The project involves sort of picking a client and producing a technical writing document for them of whatever kind the client needs. These guys got a B plus. It was like really pretty good. Like it's kind of, it was a little bit sloppy and like not, not finished, but the core of it was great. And they actually learned a lot, and they got along great. It was a, they had a great sort of lesson in organizational group dynamics, and they ended up learning a lot by declaring this in the beginning. Students should have that kind of [00:32:00] freedom.

[00:32:00] **Catherine Ross:** Yeah.

[00:32:00] **John Warner:** I'm very sort of pro-freedom with that. And that requires us to be not slack on rigor and not to care about how they do or their grades, but just to be mindful...

[00:32:10] **Catherine Ross:** right.

[00:32:10] **John Warner:** ...of the varieties of people and of human experience.

[00:32:13] **Catherine Ross:** Exactly. So I have to ask because you've been doing this a long time as have I. What is it that keeps you inspired and motivates you to believe in the possibility of changing higher education teaching?

[00:32:30] **John Warner:** You know, I actually do think about this a lot. And at times, I'm sure this is true for you too, at times I struggle. You do despair. Um, particularly with something like teaching writing. When I wrote, "Why They Can't Write" I, you know, I have a whole section of all of the research and writing from the fifties that basically explains all of the things we should be doing today or should have been doing all along. Something like a sentence diagraming, which was sort of debunked as a way to learn how to write proficiently in the fifties. And yet, when I was in eighth grade, in the eighties, Mrs. Thompson was helping us diagram sentences on the board. You do run into this kind of these moments of like, man is anything ever gonna change? But for me, I just love the problem. I love thinking about the problem. And in that

way, it's a lot about writing where writing has always been an extended exercise and falling short of your own hopes and expectations. Like in my, in my head, I have like the greatest novel or the greatest short story or the greatest book ever, you know, mountains will crumble at the site of my great book. Um, something happens between what's trapped in my head and what gets on the page. What gets on the page still might be pretty good, might be worth other people reading, and that falling short informs me being able to do it again.

Teaching is very much that way too. I mean, anybody who gets invested and involved in teaching you get to the end of the semester and you think, man if I had done X, Y, and Z. The great thing about teaching is that hindsight bias gets to be translated into foresight practice, and we get to do it again. Now that I don't teach full-time anymore, I miss that tremendously. The teaching I do now tends to be sort of short course or one off or that kind of stuff.

One of the things I really enjoy about some of the work I'm doing now, speaking and consulting and working with school districts and departments, and that kind of stuff is meeting with other people who clearly also have this orientation who are like that love of the problem solving. And then you can get 10 or 15 or 20 of you in a room. It's just exciting. That this energy is still there, and it can't be killed. That's the thing like right? The pandemic did not kill it. In fact, I take the very existence of Jonathan's op-ed in the New York Times as a positive that we are going to think these things are important enough to have an op-ed in the New York times.

It's not the op-ed I would write. It's not how I view things. I think it portrays certain either class or orientations that I think are counterproductive ultimately to thinking about pedagogically. But I know that Jonathan Malesic is a serious person who cares about this stuff and who also wants to do his best by his students. And how can we not be encouraged by that? These become ultimately productive conversations where progress seems possible. And that is possible. You know, you get in a classroom and you do it, and you're like man students learned this semester. What more proof do we need?

[00:35:33] **Catherine Ross:** Right. I think in general, I would say that pandemic has provided a huge opening for change which I am trying to seize through...

[00:35:43] **John Warner:** I hope. I hope.

[00:35:43] **Catherine Ross:** ...this podcast. And it's the conversations I get to have with folks like you that keep me going and keep me inspired. So thank you very much for taking time to chat with me today and, um, helping to push, you

know, higher ed to a new place in terms of the teaching and for being part of our fall 2022 podcast season.

[00:36:06] **John Warner:** Absolutely my pleasure. I'm happy to do it anytime.

[00:36:09] **Catherine Ross:** Great, thank you.

[00:36:15] If you've enjoyed this podcast, please visit our website where you can find any resources mentioned in the episode, ctl.columbia.edu/podcast. Please like us, rate us, and review us on Apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcast. Dead Ideas in Teaching and Learning is a product of Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning and is produced by Stephanie Ogden, Laura Nicholas and Jon Hanford.

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