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How ethnic studies faculty use streaming video: Instructional needs, applications, and challenges

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ABSTRACT

While there have been studies on faculty use of streaming video resources in academic libraries, none have focused on the specific needs of ethnic studies faculty. Using a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with 13 ethnic studies faculty from two public university campuses, this study found that faculty engagement with video is based upon a pedagogical strategy that responds to the specific demands and goals of ethnic studies curricula, while centering on student needs by using free resources whenever possible. Within this paradigm, faculty choose from three categories of content: key primary and secondary sources; flexible supporting sources; and current topics of interest. Understanding what motivates ethnic study faculty could be helpful as librarians work with vendors and advocate for the content that best meets instructional needs. Librarians can also help improve faculty's instructional outcomes by communicating about licensing options and streaming media availability through the library.

Introduction

A 2020 Ithaka S+R study found that academic libraries spend about 5 % of their budgets on streaming media and expect that amount to rise to 8 % over the next five years (Frederick & Wolff-Eisenberg, 2020). As a result of this study, a second study was conducted in 2021–2022 to explore the streaming media strategies libraries use to meet these rising costs (Cooper, Ruediger, & Skinner, 2022). Twenty-four academic libraries took part in this study, including California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) and San Jose State University (SJSU), two of the largest campuses in the California State University (CSU) system with enrollments of over 40,000 and 33,000 students, respectively. Semi-structured faculty interviews formed the basis of the Ithaka S+R study, and each campus was required to choose one or more academic areas on which to focus.

State legislation entered into the campuses' decision-making. In 2020, the California State Legislature passed Assembly Bill 1460 (A.B. 1460, 2020), which requires all CSU students to take one 3-unit ethnic studies course as part of their graduation requirements. To meet the CSU's ethnic studies criteria, course content must focus on four historically defined racialized groups: Native Americans, African Americans,

Latina/o Americans, and/or Asian Americans. The intent of the General Education requirement was for students to “acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them comprehend the diversity and social justice history of the United States” (Cal. Education Code §89032, 2020). While both CSUF and SJSU already offered courses that met the new requirement, both campuses saw this as an area of continued growth.

When the Ithaka S+R study prompted participating libraries to interview 10–15 campus faculty about their use of streaming media, both CSUF and SJSU independently and logically chose ethnic studies as a discipline of interest.

SJSU and CSUF pride themselves on being transformative universities, constantly striving to boost graduation rates and reduce inequity in education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2021a, 2021b), at SJSU, 39 % of the freshman class receive Federal Pell Grants. At CSUF, the number is even higher at 51 % of freshmen. Both campuses also have high rates of first-generation college students: 42 % at SJSU (San José State University, 2022, p. 3) and 31.6 % at CSUF in the 2020–2021 academic year (California State University, 2021). With their student bodies and the mission of the California State University system to “provide opportunities for individuals to develop intellectually, personally, and professionally” (California State

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University System, n.d.), ethnic studies was a natural choice to use as the focus of SJSU's and CSUF's studies.

An additional driver behind the choice of ethnic studies as an area of interest was the streaming video usage on both campuses. Kanopy, an on-demand streaming video platform to which both campuses subscribe, indicated a significant number of plays among the subjects that support ethnic studies: Race & Class Studies, Ethnicity & Identity, North American Studies, Asian Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Human Rights. In the last two academic years, four of the five most played films for CSUF on the Kanopy platform contained a subject relating to ethnicity; at SJSU, three of the five most played films were related to race and ethnicity. For the last three academic years, the most played title for both CSUF and SJSU was *Race—The Power of Illusion*, a documentary series produced by California Newsreel.

With this evidence of usage, the authors felt that interviews of ethnic studies faculty could yield valuable insights on the challenges that they encounter when using libraries' streaming media resources. This study explores ways in which streaming media serves the pedagogical goals of ethnic studies faculty, their information seeking behaviors as they search for and identify streaming media to meet curricular needs, and the extent to which existing library resources are meeting their needs and values.

Literature review

The origins of ethnic studies

The first ethnic studies department at a United States college or university was the Black studies department at San Francisco State University, another campus in the CSU system. Founded in 1968 in response to five months of student protest and activism known as the Third World Strike, that department was quickly joined by ethnic studies departments at a large number of other campuses across the country, often following episodes of student protest (Rojas, 2010). This founding narrative underscores the close connection between movements for social justice and civil rights and the development of ethnic studies as an academic discipline, a theme that is elaborated upon in histories of ethnic studies in higher education. In examining the distinction between ethnic studies fields such as Black studies and area studies fields like African studies, Hu-DeHart (1993) cites the origin of ethnic studies in "student and community grassroots movements" as opposed to area studies' roots in "American imperialism in the Third World" (p. 51). Adams (2010) discusses ethnic studies as a distinct tradition within the broader category of social justice education practices while discussing the roots of those practices in social movements.

A major theme in the literature on ethnic studies departments and programs in higher education is the contrast or tension between the activist roots of the disciplines and the demands of institutionalization, or the incorporation of the field into the organizational environment of the university. This tension has been with the field since its founding. Almost immediately after the emergence of the field, the Ford Foundation became a major supporter of Black studies programs in the United States, giving over \$2 million to Black studies programs in the years 1969–1971.

Rojas (2010, p. 131) argues that the involvement of the Ford Foundation brought a new emphasis on the benefits of ethnic studies to the institution, rather than to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students and their communities. Hill Zaganelli (2016) studied the institutionalization of Chicana/o studies programs and found that the presence of student protest was a predictor for both curricular expansion and community engagement for the programs, but that structural expansion of the programs—defined as the attainment of additional organizational resources—was most closely correlated with institutional wealth. Cabán (2003) proposes that Latino/a studies departments can be grouped into three categories to reflect their level of support from and integration into the institution, contrasting the success

of Latino/a studies as an academic discipline with the challenges faced by ethnic studies departments as academic units.

This theme is particularly relevant to the study because both library collection budgets and the time and attention of librarians are among the types of organizational resources and support that ethnic studies programs might need in order to thrive, but to which they may also struggle to gain access.

Ethnic studies pedagogy and the use of media

As a group of academic disciplines, ethnic studies has developed distinctive pedagogical strategies, theories, and practices. This is most evident in the extensive literature on pedagogical practices for ethnic studies at the K-12 level, with practices like culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1992) and critical pedagogy of race (de los Ríos et al., 2015) representing only the tip of a very large iceberg that is beyond the scope of this study. However, literature on the pedagogy of ethnic studies at the post-secondary level is more limited. Vasquez (2005) studied the learning experiences of Latino and non-Latino students in a California Chicano literature classroom, finding that while the two groups of students reported dramatically different relationships to the class and the literature in the curriculum, both groups described the experience as profoundly revelatory. The study emphasizes the significance of "[learning] about the Chicano culture in an educational space that did not uphold white, middle-class American values as the pinnacle of achievement" (Vasquez, 2005, p. 919). Both Masta (2021) and Nuñez (2011) describe the potential for the ethnic studies classroom to create a counterspace where values and norms that depart from the prevailing campus climate can be cultivated (Solorzano et al., 2000), to the benefit of BIPOC students. In a qualitative study of a graduate classroom, Masta (2021) notes the utility of vulnerability, including an openness to honesty and anger in the classroom, as a pedagogical method that supports the creation of counterspaces, while pointing out the potential contradictions in attempts to create counterspace within the institutionally sanctioned environment of the classroom.

At times the distinctive pedagogical goals and practices of ethnic studies may come into tension with the institutionalization of the discipline. Murrah-Mandril (2021) describes pedagogical goals like "empathy, ethnic pride, [and] self-awareness" as "undocumented learning outcomes . . . that do not fit neatly into assessment-based models of learning" (p. 273–4) and discusses the use of video, including instructor-created content, to enact the pedagogical goals of ethnic studies in an online learning environment. However, in some institutional contexts, these distinctive goals may also be incorporated into institutional priorities. A CSU report that preceded the passage of A.B. 1460 contains strong echoes of the ways ethnic studies educators describe their pedagogy, but shifts the focus from the individual student or classroom to the broader community. The report argues that "ethnic studies pedagogy is strategically based on the belief that our students should be able to offer their community support and leadership in order to promote economic development, education, health and wellness, and political empowerment" (California State University, 2021, p.30), connecting ethnic studies pedagogy to the goals of university administration and state government.

The relevance of video to the distinctive pedagogical goals and methods of ethnic studies is a long-established theme in the literature. Stevens and Scotchmer (1993) writes that "video extends our experience with human diversity with an immediacy and imagery that a written text cannot achieve" (p. v). In addition to ethnic studies, video and film have been used in a broad range of academic disciplines—including history, the social sciences, literary studies and film studies—to communicate concepts related to diversity and identity (Gerster & Zlogar, 2006). Yao (2018) offers a case study of the use of video and other digital media to implement an anti-racist pedagogy in a digital humanities context. Hawthorne (2021) connects the impact of video in the classroom to the role that video, especially video depicting the murder of Black children,

has played in the Black Lives Matter movement. In a case study of a class titled “Death of a Black Child,” she elaborates on how the use of video, among other innovative approaches, serves both the particular needs of her Black students and the pedagogical goal of creating “communities of solidarity and *in solidarity* in the classroom” (Hawthorne, 2021, p.357, emphasis in original).

It is important for librarians serving and collaborating with ethnic studies instructors to understand the discipline’s distinctive pedagogical goals and practices, in particular because of the way the distinctive pedagogy of ethnic studies has been misrepresented as the discipline has become a target for political attack. It is beyond the scope of this article to review the vast literature covering political attacks on ethnic studies, but we feel two sources are particularly helpful in understanding the relationship between political attacks and pedagogical practice.

Cacho (2010) engages with right-wing critiques of the role of emotion in ethnic studies pedagogy, defending the legitimacy of the discipline and pedagogical practices that engage with the “affectivity of injustice” (p. 35). Nicol (2013) offers a critical assessment of attacks on ethnic studies as a coordinated effort by conservative organizations, highlighting the use of media in attacks on ethnic studies and providing a helpful overview of the relevant public controversies.

Faculty surveys of streaming media usage

There have been several notable library studies of faculty use of streaming media. At Rutgers University, Otto (2014) conducted the first academic library study concerning faculty’s use of moving pictures in the context of teaching and learning. Applying a discussion forum, a survey, and individual interviews to gather data on how different formats of moving images were discovered and used, her findings showed that use of video varied widely between disciplines and that video clips were as significant to teaching as full-length features. The library was not seen as the most useful provider for this content, however, citing discoverability as a particular challenge.

At the University of Maryland, Horbal (2018) used applied thematic analysis to study instructor interviews on their use of educational streaming video content. He conducted 18 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with instructors on their discovery, use, and level of satisfaction and found that educational streaming video resources were primarily used for teaching purposes and assigned to students for viewing outside of class. Despite some technical barriers and challenges, there was an overall high level of satisfaction with streaming resources among the instructors, with library resources comparing favorably to both commercial and non-streaming alternatives.

Lohmann and Frederiksen (2018) conducted an online survey of the faculty’s awareness of the library’s streaming video services at Washington State University. They found that despite a strong preference for streaming video content, faculty were turning to the streaming alternatives on the Internet rather than the library. Reliance on word-of-mouth recommendations and web search engines combined with low use of the library’s integrated library system for discovery undermined the library’s efforts to increase use of its streaming offerings. The results highlighted the need for marketing and outreach to faculty rather than simply focusing on streaming video acquisitions.

At the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Hill and Ingram-Monteiro (2021) conducted a series of faculty focus groups to better understand faculty perspectives and to improve their outreach efforts around the library’s streaming media offerings. They found that despite their favorable opinion of using streaming resources for instruction, faculty were generally unaware of the library’s streaming media LibGuide and unable to identify appropriate collections for their discipline in the catalog. Challenged by inconsistencies between platforms, faculty were turning instead to YouTube when library offerings created too many barriers for students. As a result of the focus groups, the streaming media LibGuide was revised and improvements to discovery, outreach, and liaison relationships were recommended.

These studies highlight faculty perspectives and encounters with streaming video as they seek to integrate the medium in the classroom. In all of the studies, faculty overwhelmingly found streaming video beneficial, utilizing streaming resources from both external platforms and the library’s online resources. Too often, however, faculty struggled with library streaming resources largely due to a lack of communication between the library and faculty about how to find and use the library’s streaming offerings. While these studies surveyed faculty from a number of disciplines, none were focused on the unique needs of ethnic studies faculty with their mission of engaging students in the promotion of social justice. This project attempts to address this current gap in the literature.

Methodology

In Spring 2022, librarians at SJSU and CSUF conducted semi-structured interviews of ethnic studies faculty on their campuses using an interview guide provided by Ithaka S+R (see Appendix A). In total, 13 faculty were interviewed on how they accessed and used streaming media in their instruction. Five faculty were from SJSU and eight from CSUF, and the 40–60 min interviews were conducted in person or on the Zoom video conferencing platform. The interview transcriptions formed the corpus for this thematic analysis (Prelitz et al., 2022), and the analysis was performed using the guidelines provided by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The authors conducted the faculty interviews and were consequently familiar with the content. As a group, the authors created a list of initial codes based on their reviews of the interviews. Using this initial list, one of the authors manually coded a single transcript. As a next step, all of the remaining authors reviewed the coding of this transcript and engaged in a discussion to identify additional codes and to develop shared definitions of the codes that each author had identified.

Braun and Clarke (n.d.) identify challenges in using thematic analysis with multiple coders. Because thematic analysis emphasizes the subjective nature of the coding process and the role of the coder in interpreting the data, they do not recommend using multiple coders in order to introduce greater objectivity or reliability into the coding process. However, it was important to the study that the coding process incorporated the subjective perspectives of each of the six authors. Designing a coding process that included each author’s perspective created a communal opportunity to discuss the issues and ideas reflected in the interviews, and to devise a set of codes that synthesized the individual viewpoints of the authors.

After this process, two people read and coded each of the transcripts. To conduct the coding, the transcripts were uploaded to Google Docs, and its Comments feature was used to highlight the text and enter the codes. During this process, additional codes were added to the preliminary list as needed. When the coding was complete, a Google Apps script (Szydłowski, 2022) was used to compile the codes into a single spreadsheet. Team members reviewed this spreadsheet and clustered the codes into themes and sub-themes. From this process, the authors identified three overarching themes: pedagogy, video seeking, and choosing videos.

Pedagogy

Overview

In every interview, ethnic studies faculty stressed the relevance of video content to their pedagogical goals. The majority of interviewees reported using video as a central component of their pedagogy, with representative descriptions including “All of my classes are built in one way or another around video content” (SJSU11), and “There’s just no way to do it ... well without incorporating [streaming media]” (CSUF5). While most of the interviews focused on video content, a number of participants mentioned using streaming audio in addition to video—three

mentioned using podcasts (CSUF7, CSUF2, CSUF3) and one reported substantial use of music in their classes (CSUF5). Instructors reported using video synchronously in-class and asynchronously as assigned viewing for students, and many specifically reported using video weekly or in every class session, as stated in this representative description: “Weekly in each class we’d watch at least one video or documentary usually and so it’s become a staple in my classroom” (SJSU7).

When interviewees discussed the ways in which video served their pedagogical goals, a number of themes emerged. Interviewees emphasized specific ways that video content serves the particular pedagogical goals of ethnic studies courses. They also focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and generational differences, both of which informed their use of video in the curriculum.

Pedagogical goals distinctive to ethnic studies

In discussing how video content supports their teaching, many interviewees referred to the distinctive pedagogical goals and strategies of ethnic studies, echoing themes found in the scholarly literature on ethnic studies pedagogy. Adams (2010) suggests that social justice pedagogies like ethnic studies “balance the emotional and cognitive components of the learning process” (p. 60). Even in conversations that focused on the operational aspects of instruction, faculty members stressed the unique ability of video to convey both emotional and factual information.

Instructors described using video along with texts in order to give a different kind of access to the relevant concepts and experiences, using terms like “textured” (CSUF3), “firsthand” (CSUF2), and “accessible” (SJSU7) to describe the particular value of video. Several interviewees related the practice of watching video synchronously to the pedagogical goals of ethnic studies. One instructor described the importance of the communal viewing experience: “We teach community in [ethnic studies]. It’s a communal experience to be able to see something. So that’s why I take time in class to do it” (CSUF3). Another concurred: “I think it’s important because it gives the students one shared experience of a very valid, comprehensive source to inform their understanding of the Native American people” (CSUF7).

Instructors had sophisticated and diverse ways of describing the distinctive pedagogical goals of ethnic studies and the ways that video served those goals. Some interviewees emphasized that video provides a mode for diverse groups of students to address identity:

So, because a lot of the films are either connected to the readings, a lot of the students for the most part do identify as students of color, in my [ethnic studies classes] for example. But there’s a few that might not necessarily connect with some of the readings or some of the things. So, I try to use different ways of having them make sense of lived experiences of let’s say for example Chicano and Chicana communities. (CSUF1).

Most of my classes are societal based or related classes where we look and critically analyze how race and gender and class and socioeconomic status and disability status and nationality and other areas of social identity impact the landscape of those peoples’ experiences, and so I utilize videos to help students create their own narratives around their own lived experiences. (SJSU11).

Other instructors highlighted video as an effective way to teach controversial topics or to provide perspectives that are not as well represented in the scholarly literature.

We hear about segregation in education, but has anybody ever heard about segregation in healthcare? No, I don’t think so. And when those kind of things are not taught in school... I think video does a nice job of really showing the effect of these policies that are – have been

horrendous for minorities. And without that, people don’t really understand, I think, what’s so bad. (CSUF6).

While their reasoning varied, nearly every interviewee mentioned scenarios and goals specific to ethnic studies that they felt were best addressed by including video. This was consistent with previous studies that noted the importance of video to ethnic studies pedagogy (Gerster & Zlogar, 2006).

COVID impacts

When posed with the question, “Has the pandemic changed your needs for incorporating video content into your courses in any way?”, content format was cited frequently. For two participants in the study, the move online meant a move away from the DVDs they relied on during their in-person class sessions. Some titles that were key to their curriculum were not available to stream, which meant a quick pivot to what was readily available online and through the library. As one faculty member remarked, “[T]he streaming content absolutely determines...a lot of my syllabus” (SJSU9).

Faculty also expressed an increased concern with accessibility and closed captioning. Compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires electronic and information technology accessibility to people with disabilities and the general public, is mandated by California state law (Gov’t Code, 1977). However, one faculty member commented, “[In] the past, I haven’t had students really request that” (CSUF1). With the pandemic, the demand for captioning went beyond accessibility as many students struggled to focus on their work. Captioning allowed faculty to accommodate their decreased attention span by offering class content in text as well as video. The popularity of captioning motivated faculty to ensure that the videos they offered were not only captioned but that the captioning was of high quality.

With the move to online learning, five faculty expressed amazement that students were not suffering from video fatigue. “[I] was surprised to hear that the students don’t feel too tired of looking at videos, because I certainly do feel too tired,” commented one interviewee (CSUF5).

Only one faculty member expressed the opposite opinion. As they moved back to teaching in-person, this instructor felt students were eager for person-to-person interaction and had even incorporated podcasts into their teaching as an alternative to video. They reported that one of the students told them that with podcasts, “I feel like somebody’s reading me a book” (CSUF7).

Faculty expressed concern for their students’ wellbeing during COVID and its subsequent impact on their education. The students’ ability to concentrate and complete coursework suffered as the pandemic wore on. “I do have to extend some grace to students, and also give them credit when they actually do the work,” remarked one interviewee (SJSU9). While most faculty interviewees embraced flipped instruction and had students watch films outside of class, other faculty found that showing the films in class and then devoting a follow-up class to discussion prevented students from “floating through what they think they just saw” (CSUF5).

As in other aspects of life, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated a trend that already existed. Faculty formerly reliant on DVDs embraced the use of streaming video and discovered resources that were new to them. Several became more aware of the need for accessibility and its benefits to all students. Faculty also experienced an increased awareness of the stresses in their students’ lives, the impact those stresses had on their learning, and how pedagogy could be adjusted to mitigate the impact.

Generational impacts

Perceptions of generational differences and their impacts on learning informed the pedagogical choices of almost all the faculty interviewed.

The importance of currency in video content came up frequently. One faculty remarked on a film they attempted to use in class, “[I]t was done in 1985, 1986...You turn it on and [the students] have checked out within the first two or three minutes” (SJSU7). When interviewees did use older films, they would critique those videos that lacked diverse representation in their content.

A lot of the older educational videos in psychology, for example, are all white folks... So I might say “This video is still pertinent in terms of content, but also notice that all the human examples don't represent the diversity which we now would see.” So that's the drawback of the video. It's the boring white man speaking to the screen, which is very different than me as their professor. So, students appreciate those kinds of critiques or feedback, and I certainly try to be very intentional about bringing in the voices that aren't usually centered and stories that aren't usually centered (SJSU11).

The challenge of connecting history to the present day had several faculty wishing that more current films were incorporated in the streaming services. To fill the gap, some faculty relied on YouTube, and two wished for more student-created content, such as on TikTok.

Interviewees also noted the importance of teaching in different modalities as a way to reach all of their students. One faculty noted that, “[T]his next generation of folks...They kind of have to have different ways of learning. It can't just be me talking” (SJSU7). The essential need for active learning—to break up lectures with student interactions, videos, or podcasts—surfaced frequently in the interviews. Another difference faculty noted was that this generation is very sight- and sound-oriented. “[T]hey've been consuming streaming media basically their entire lives,” remarked one interviewee (CSUF5). This preference as well as the ability of film to immerse students in another culture led faculty to make streaming video their pedagogical tool of choice.

Another factor in this choice was the students' pandemic-induced struggle to concentrate. The majority of faculty were looking for short video clips of about five to ten minutes to support their instruction. Laughed one interviewee, “[E]ven that seems too long for everyone's attention spans, including my own sometimes” (CSUF5). Some interviewees felt that students today simply learn in a different manner than students ten or even five years ago. Yet, despite students' preference for visual content over text, faculty were impressed with how their students thought and wrote about what they saw.

Another strong theme throughout the interviews was the prevalence of students' use of mobile technology. Students often elected to watch assigned videos on their phones even when laptops were available. A few faculty expressed dismay over this preference. “[S]o many students missed out on details [of the film],” bemoaned one interviewee (SJSU9). However the convenience of anywhere-access to course content and the appeal of that convenience to students meant that faculty expected the role of mobile technology in learning to continue.

Students were not the only group to display generational differences. Faculty also remarked on the different levels of technical proficiency within their ranks. “[I]m of a generation that is very comfortable on the computer...[A] lot of older faculty, who have been around for 30 years or more, they had the hardest time [transitioning online]” (SJSU9). Comfort with technology also affected how faculty chose resources for their classes. While some streaming platforms offer the ability to make the shorter video clips that appeal to instructors, the mechanics of the process and its perceived difficulty led some to avoid this option despite their awareness of the feature.

Video seeking

Cost

Ethnic studies faculty's search for video content was largely driven by a desire to minimize or eliminate student costs. As one interviewee

remarked, “[T]he cost of textbooks [is] already a huge imposition on students” (SJSU6). This empathetic yet pragmatic approach to course material discovery was echoed across the interviews. One faculty member stated, “It really comes down to: is it [freely] available or not?” (SJSU9), while another asserted that it was within their ability to ensure affordability: “I'm just going to offer a free alternative for you, the student, because that's what I would rather do and I can do” (CSUF8). Said another faculty member, “If it's not something that I can provide for free for students, then I'm just not using it” (SJSU6).

Class syllabi were usually flexible enough to accommodate the faculty preference for free content, but sometimes concessions had to be made:

I also tend to try to find things that can be streamed for free. There was one film I really wanted to show to my Asian American psychology course, but it's – there's a price tag to it. And I think I probably just don't know how to get money to do it. But it was a film on an Asian American man who had a psychiatric diagnosis and his journey for his recovery. And that was a film I really wanted to show in my class, but unfortunately, there was a price involved that kind of prevented me from showing that. So, I showed the trailer, and I hoped that students would watch the film or purchase the film (CSUF6).

Desired content extended beyond free and available options. An interviewee remarked that they did not want to “assume that people can afford all these things, especially with the last couple years” (CSUF8). However, while some mentioned streaming video titles on for-profit platforms (e.g., Netflix or HBO Max) to students only as recommendations or extra credit, there were exceptions. Two interviewees stated that they assigned titles on Netflix because “most people already have it, so there's no extra cost” (CSUF4). Some compared streaming video subscriptions to textbook costs, especially in courses that used a lot of film. However, as one faculty member pointed out, unlike textbooks which can be resold, with video, “Once you watch it, you watch it...how could you refund that back?” (CSUF8).

Almost all interviewees expressed that libraries, not students, faculty or departments, should be paying for streaming access, and that they “expect that the library would make available any content that a faculty member has indicated...is needed for a course” (SJSU3). In regard to libraries funding all their streaming needs, several expressed that the library should have an unlimited budget to do so, although they recognized that this was not often the case. While many interviewees seemed aware of the high costs associated with streaming media and even considered the importance or length of a video in relation to its price, several were unaware of the impact on library budgets and felt patrons should be informed. Alternatively, some expressed that they simply did not consider costs to the library because they “just want to get this for [their] students” or they felt that the student fees already covered library resources (SJSU11).

Platform preferences and dependency

After cost, the search criterion most important to faculty was platform, and they demonstrated decided preferences in their choices of internal (library-provided) and external (commercial and individual subscription-based) platforms.

Internal Platforms. Student access was a critical factor to faculty and made library resources their first stop. “I start with Kanopy. I start with things that the student [has] access to,” commented one interviewee (CSUF7). This preference for Kanopy was consistent across the interviews, followed very distantly by Alexander Street's Academic Video Online. “I look at the library database. Sometimes I go straight to Kanopy or straight to Alexander [Street]” was a representative comment (SJSU9). Faculty appreciated that Kanopy could be embedded in the Canvas learning management system and offered high-quality closed

captioning. A few faculty mentioned the importance of using library resources like Kanopy due to the analytical data it provided, which helped guide libraries in their purchasing decisions.

However, many instructors were frustrated by Kanopy's broad approach to categorization. Complained one faculty member, "This is a Kanopy thing: categorize better on the actual film description. So maybe having some subtitles, like Latin American films or Asian American films, or whatever. They do a little bit of that, but just not enough" (SJSU7). Many were also seeking shorter films rather than the full-length documentaries offered by the platform.

However, faculty recognized how beholden their curricula were to these platform catalogs. Said one faculty member, "When I was conceiving this class, I wanted to just use whatever was available at the library, so again, students wouldn't have to do any streaming, any paid streaming service. But...Kanopy and Alexander Street...may cover one half or two thirds of what I want to teach" (CSUF4). When their items were not on their preferred platforms, faculty were forced to find suitable alternatives to augment content available from the library.

External Platforms. Frustration over not finding what they needed in subscription databases sent many faculty to external resources. Of the external platforms brought up in the interviews, YouTube received the most attention. Some faculty mentioned a tendency to go to YouTube first before they visited the library's streaming options. What attracted faculty was the availability of short video clips, the currency of the content, and the ease of embedding videos in Canvas. One faculty member also remarked, "YouTube is one of the few sites that can be embedded in PowerPoint, that's oftentimes what I default to, especially for short clips" (CSUF7). Another important attraction, some interviewees mentioned, was that many ethnic communities post videos on YouTube that speak to current or topical issues, content that might not be available on other platforms. A faculty member concurred: "The thing is, in terms of Asian American Studies, because so many of the major content creators on YouTube are Asian, there is more... I'm more apt to go to a place like YouTube than, say, Kanopy" (SJSU9). Therefore YouTube provides an important alternative platform for underrepresented communities where they can have greater control over their representation than how they are depicted by mainstream media.

At the same time, instructors were wary about the credibility of the content creators on YouTube. Verifying copyright issues on YouTube required effort, time, and vigilance. Faculty often downloaded the videos if they could, but they were not sure of the copyright legalities and relied on the library for clarification. They also criticized the captioning offered by YouTube videos. Remarked one interviewee, "I definitely am intentional about checking for captioning, which has significantly hindered what I can use on something like YouTube" (SJSU11). Higher-quality accessibility features and legitimate licensing for educational purposes were two aspects where internal library-provided streaming platforms had a clear advantage when faculty sought content.

Additional Factors. Other variables emerged when faculty considered where to look for content.

Knowledge through community: Ethnic studies faculty turned to colleagues to discuss and find film recommendations. Unfortunately, new lecturers did not necessarily have access to colleagues and would scan social media or reach out to other experts outside the department.

Or again, like, I'll ask around. I know a lot of different professors. I'll ask what they use. For example, in this class, like I said, it is my first time teaching it so I've never taught Asian American studies. That's why I reached out to one of the professors that I know in Asian American studies, like, you got any suggestions for me? And that's where he gave me that. "Here watch this five-part series and pick and choose." So again, just doing research on our own, but also reaching out to other professors and just people we know" (SJSU7).

Time: The amount of class time used for watching films was an

important consideration for faculty. Said one interviewee, "My online classes are...asynchronous or...hybrid courses...[Y]ou can't show a whole documentary in an hour and a 15-minute class and then have a discussion from it. There isn't enough time in the time span that we have in our classes" (SJSU7). Faculty did, at times, limit assignments to films that did not run over an hour or sought short clips that could be shown in class like those on YouTube or TED talks. Said a faculty member, "So I rely heavily on YouTube for those... 2- to sometimes 10-minute clips" (CSUF2).

Financial, Social, and Political Implications: Faculty also expressed a high degree of awareness of how their streaming video choices could impact the marketplace. Said one faculty member, "I try to make a conscious effort to support Asian American and Pacific Islander filmmakers, and using library streaming services...It gives the powers-that-be that analytical data...[so] that they see that they should invest in this content, keep this content" (SJSU9). While Asian American film festivals offer an alternative space for the community's cinematic expression, mainstream Hollywood or media channels tend not to pick up these films that ethnic studies faculty need for their course content (Chong, 2017).

Faculty were aware that their streaming video choices could communicate value to institutional powers like libraries and third-party streaming video vendors. Platform analytics makes information about the distributors, the topics featured, and the titles themselves available, and this usage data has the potential to sway vendors' and libraries' decisions when license renewals come up.

Several faculty also expressed close relationships with content creators and their desire to justly treat content creators:

I work in the industry. Of course, I know. I should know. I'm aware of it...I just understand the other side of it. A lot of these filmmakers, especially documentarians who are independent, they're making their money through educational licenses. That's how they make their money back from years of doing a movie for free more or less or out of their own pocket. I understand that part, so it's like, yeah, if the school has the proper license, then I feel a little bit more comfortable using the material. (CSUF8)

Stated another faculty, "I've always been a bit worried that the people who...created the work are not getting compensated" (CSUF3). Inherent in these interviews was a recognition that content creators often represented the communities that they were depicting, and thus choices in streaming video content could provide financial, social, and political legitimacy that could further inform market and institutional practices as mainstream media is driven by financial gains over social justice. Finally, faculty members understood that their selections for course materials impacted other instructors who were teaching ethnic studies. Said one faculty member:

I was invited to teach a class in kind of like ethnic studies for Asian American cultural expressions, and that class I think will have some very specific content that I would want to include because it has been incorporated into the syllabus. So that I would want to keep consistency with other instructors teaching the course and also kind of keep with historical – whatever you want to call it – historical methods of teaching the class (CSUF6).

Course materials adoption could be seen as a badge of authenticity given their selection by other knowledgeable ethnic studies instructors. This, in line with earlier ethnic studies faculty sentiments on seeking content suggestions through the community, has broader implications on what gets adopted and used in contemporary ethnic studies courses.

Choosing videos

Dynamic choice

Ethnic studies faculty engaged in sophisticated decision making around streaming video content to explain and illustrate major ideological concepts. Leveraging the thematic approach in this analysis made it possible to see the complexity of choice that faculty employed when they selected materials for their class and how complex those choices were. The data around themes of choice revealed that faculty choose from among three categories of content: *key primary & secondary sources*, *flexible supporting sources*, and *current topics of interest*, and they sifted these categories against a number of factors before settling on course content.

Key primary & secondary sources of content are works that cannot be substituted for another work because they have unique value as canonical or landmark films with historical significance. In these cases, the instructor knows exactly what they desire to show and as these are foundational materials directly relating to a central theme of the class, they will have to find and show these works to meet the pedagogical goals of the course. Typically, these films cover historical topics from a variety of sources, ranging from Hollywood features to independent documentaries. There may even be multiple sources of content around the same event but from different perspectives. Documentary films may also have unique value due to the importance of individuals portrayed or interviewed in the films. Being able to hear the actual voices in the Civil Rights struggle from these sources make them an invaluable part of the course. Said one faculty member, “[S]o I’m teaching 2B... and 2B picks up right after Reconstruction and goes up through the current contemporary moment, ... so I knew when we got to the Civil Rights Movement that I wanted to play the ‘Eyes on the Prize’ series” (SJSU3).

Flexible, supporting sources are works selected along thematic lines but are interchangeable with other sources. These may support spontaneous conversations around the topics, be it a response to student inquiries, or support the demographics of the population of students in the course. “I’m choosing videos based on whether or not it’s a primary source for a particular time period. Also, I’ll choose videos if it does a good job explaining a major concept, or a person, or something like that, as a compendium or in addition to what I’m also talking about” (SJSU6).

Current topics of interest are works that reflect recent events in the news or trending on Twitter that are related to and amplify the major concepts of the course. Faculty may use these to show how current events are a continuation of historical trends around ethnicity. “So, for example, ‘The Daily Show.’ I might play a ‘Daily Show’ clip, and so ‘The Daily Show’ will have put it on Twitter. It comes across my feed and I’ll flag it. I’m like, ‘Oh, this is a good use of content for class’ (SJSU3).

Faculty make dynamic choices balancing relevant content across all three categories to meet the pedagogical requirements of the course.

It’s a good mix. There’s certain pieces that I feel like just should be taught all the time because they’re quote “classics” or they’re sort of landmark movies that – or documentaries or TV shows that had a lasting impact on the Asian American community. Maybe the piece had a legacy you didn’t expect years later, and it’s worth sharing that. So, I do that. And then I also mix it up with contemporary stuff as much as possible just to keep the material also current ... and students can see things that maybe they’re already talking about (CSUF8).

With an understanding of what they would like students to view, ethnic studies faculty are logistically constrained by what is available in the streaming marketplace. While face-to-face classes can still rely on DVDs and other physical formats, particularly for older films that are often not available from streaming sources, the pandemic necessitated the use of streaming content when classes moved to a fully online

modality.

While ethnic studies faculty make every effort to plan carefully by reviewing content for potential inclusion in their courses, a major expressed challenge was that content was not consistently available. As a result, faculty are forced to have a backup plan due to unstable availability between platforms. “Which I’ve learned, through Kanopy, that it’s not always gonna be there. So, that’s one of my things, where I feel like, well, you have to have a backup plan” (CSUF1). Some faculty noted that sustainability was an essential consideration in course design because they wanted to show films that are consistently available semester after semester. “[I]s this something that I can get access to every semester, or is it gonna be something that is gonna be temporarily available for students? Because then that changes my whole assignment for that one” (CSUF1).

Technical factors

Instructors navigated a number of issues when they asked students to view streaming content in the context of their coursework. Some students did not have access to the films for a variety of reasons and were not always communicating when or why they lacked access.

Students may have had internet connectivity issues at home or on campus or lacked access to home Internet or that of sufficient speed for streaming. “Everyone’s wi-fi is not strong. Videos take up a lot of bandwidth,” commented one interviewee (SJSU11). Other students may have only had access to older devices, which may have prevented the necessary browser or operating system updates. Others may have been unaware of access to devices on campus or the ability to borrow laptops from the university during campus closure. Said another faculty member, “That’s kind of a downside with using video or using streaming as opposed to a DVD. It really is like, everyone’s technical stuff needs to be on par” (SJSU6).

Students may not have put in the effort to create a Kanopy profile, had problems creating profiles, or forgot passwords. A faculty member commented, “They can’t stand to sign in once let alone the million times it requires” (SJSU9). Faculty also reported unforeseen technical issues, necessitating the need for a backup plan when things did not work. Some faculty had gone so far as to play their students a movie on their television and share it via a webcam on their computer.

As previously touched upon, in the CSU system, captioning is a requirement for video content and one of the major reasons ethnic studies faculty appreciated Kanopy and other library options. “I would probably say 98% of what I’ve come across at the library has been appropriately captioned,” remarked one interviewee (SJSU11). Another faculty member said, “The streaming platforms that the library subscribes to...more often than not ... [have] captions” (SJSU6). However, another faculty member commented: “So teaching in the African American Studies Department, there are videos that [incorrectly caption] ...because they’re not picking up on African American dialects” (SJSU11). Captioning inconsistency appeared in online platforms as well. “I’m glad that YouTube increasingly has closed captioning just being built into it. It’s something I try to make sure I put on in my classes,” one faculty member commented (CSUF5). Another commented, however, that the captioning on YouTube videos was “not always available, let alone reliable” (SJSU6).

Limitations

As two participants of the 24-institution Ithaka S+R study, both CSUF and SJSU had chosen to target ethnic studies faculty to understand their use of streaming video. However, it became clear in hindsight that a major limitation to this study was the use of an interview guide designed to be equally relevant to instructors from a variety of disciplines. The Ithaka S+R-provided interview guide had to accommodate a wide variety of institutional and disciplinary contexts. As a result, interviewees were not directly asked about several topics of interest, for

example, the relationship between the disciplinary context of ethnic studies and their use of video. Despite this limitation, interviewees shared significant information about the pedagogical goals of ethnic studies and how those goals influenced their use of streaming media. In the discussion that follows, the findings from the interviews are synthesized with existing studies of ethnic studies pedagogy. However, these conclusions could be strengthened by further study of the perspectives and approaches of ethnic studies faculty.

Additionally, the results of this study were likely influenced by the institutional environments of SJSU and CSUF as well as by local, operational decisions which affected the discoverability of streaming media content. As large universities with robust library infrastructure and systems, CSUF and SJSU routinely host videos and acquire licenses from a myriad of vendors. Ensuring password-protected streaming video access for content creators who cannot host and distribute their own materials may be more difficult for smaller libraries to accomplish with fewer staff and less developed infrastructure.

Moreover, SJSU's and CSUF's respective budgets and staffing situations influence the manner in which they implement streaming services. For example, SJSU and CSUF license streaming video titles on Kanopy. With both libraries facing budget limitations, a customized set of titles offered via patron-driven acquisition (PDA) is a popular option with Kanopy. SJSU Library had made available a smaller set of the full catalog list in its Kanopy instance but enabled PDA with minimal staff mediation, while CSUF had opted for staff-mediated PDA of the entire catalog of available titles. In neither case was it budgetarily feasible for the library to provide unmediated access to the entire Kanopy catalog. While these implementation decisions may have affected faculty perceptions of library services, this study did not attempt to account for these differences or determine their impact. This demonstrates the importance of the library understanding the needs of faculty, particularly ethnic studies, so that the most useful collections are included in the PDA pool.

Further complicating these realities are higher education trends, including institutions' growing reliance on adjunct faculty. Among the 13 ethnic studies faculty who were interviewed, nine or 69 % were contingent faculty. Several mentioned working at multiple institutions and having to navigate the particularities of each institution's learning management system and libraries' streaming video catalogs, platforms, and implementations. With these technological and logistical burdens, many adjunct faculty expressed regret for not having made substantive connections with their librarians to fully capitalize upon available resources, including recommending titles for acquisitions, and features, like video clipping. When assessing whether library offerings meet the needs of faculty, it is important to keep in mind whether contingent faculty are given the time and resources they need to investigate and engage with the library.

Discussion

Film and video have long played an important role in the pedagogy of ethnic studies, explaining why ethnic studies faculty are major users of library streaming video collections. Due to the historical and institutional context in which ethnic studies programs have been established and continue to operate, these programs may struggle to gain access to institutional resources, including library resources. It is important for libraries to identify ethnic studies faculty as key users of streaming video services, to engage directly with those faculty members in order to ensure that the library's collections meet their pedagogical needs, and to advocate with vendors for content that meets those needs. As ethnic studies programs come under political attack, libraries may be called upon to advocate for collections that reflect and serve the values and approaches of these programs.

Ethnic studies programs are distinctive in their commitment to serving both BIPOC students and broader BIPOC communities. In this study, this commitment manifested itself in several ways. Ethnic studies instructors described taking an empathetic and student-centered

approach to choosing and providing streaming media in their pedagogy. They insisted on streaming models that imposed zero additional cost on students, and expressed concern for students' financial situations and the impact of COVID on their ability to learn. In addition, ethnic studies faculty expressed a commitment to ensuring that BIPOC content creators were appropriately recognized and compensated for their work. They recognized that their course-related, streaming video selections had social and political implications on library decision making on content and delivery platform options.

The role of empathy in the instructors' choices around streaming media, and in their pedagogy in general, was a central theme in the interviews. While demographic information on the interviewees was not collected, it is clear from the interviews that many of the faculty members interviewed, as well as many of their students, represent BIPOC communities. The interviews communicated a shared sense of affiliation and identity between students, faculty, and the authors and filmmakers whose work they studied. As one of interviewee put it "we teach community" (CSUF3). This empathy is directly related to shared identity between faculty and students, but it is also a deliberate outcome of ethnic studies pedagogy, which includes strategies to create spaces within academic institutions where a sense of community can flourish. Many of the interviewed faculty members perceived elements of their experiences reflected in their students, and they work in areas where that type of identification is both part of the disciplinary culture and an important pedagogical method.

In thinking about how libraries can best serve ethnic studies faculty, it may be helpful to return to the questions raised in the literature about the integration of ethnic studies programs into the broader culture of institutions of higher education. In order to maintain their deep commitments to specific BIPOC communities, faculty in ethnic studies programs may feel the need to resist institutionalization. Academic libraries, on the other hand, are most often deeply embedded in the cultures of their institutions. Similarly, the streaming media market, especially when compared to earlier markets for video on DVD or videocassette, is highly consolidated and institutionalized, making it a challenge for libraries to support small distributors, license content directly from BIPOC creators, and/or host licensed content. It will be increasingly important to consider how libraries can reflect upon their acquisition, licensing, technological, and training practices to mitigate hurdles for less-established content creators. Libraries' institutional practices on technical concerns, including IP authentication, proxy access, and ability to host streaming video, may pose undue burdens for a lone filmmaker. Likewise, content creators may not be aware of or conversant in libraries' priorities when acquiring and delivering streaming video content at large scale with accessibility features (e.g., captioning, transcripts availability) and teaching and learning options (e.g., creating clips, embedding that content elsewhere, generating style-compliant citations). Having greater flexibility in the technical and feature domains could help libraries embrace and support the student and community-centered values of ethnic studies pedagogy in this highly regimented environment.

On a small scale, librarians can extend the same empathy to ethnic studies faculty that interviewees described extending to their students. It was clear from the interviews that faculty were not confident in their understanding of the licensing environment for streaming video content and there was uncertainty that their desired content would be reliably available. The burden was highest on contingent faculty who had to learn to navigate the streaming environment at more than one institution. One faculty member suggested that the library perform more outreach to the departments and seek faculty input on the titles that need to be available for the academic term. This would give faculty assurances that their preferred items' licenses were acquired in a timely manner. Many expressed that they would like the library or their department to supply a list at the start of each semester with the details of everything available to them via streaming that is specific to their subject area, preferably broken down by course. Some expressed that

they would also like the ability to see license expiration dates. Underlying all of these suggestions is an opportunity to provide training and support that considers the challenges faced by all faculty, but especially contingent faculty in navigating a complex, vendor-mediated environment. Faculty noted ways in which streaming platforms fell short of meeting their educational needs, including controlled vocabularies that were too broad and poorly suited to a post-secondary environment, and a lack of search tools to identify videos by length or to highlight high-quality or peer-reviewed content. Libraries can advocate that streaming vendors provide these features, but it may be equally important to extend both empathy and enhanced assistance to instructors as they attempt to navigate a challenging and emergent streaming media landscape.

On a larger scale, engaging more deeply with the pedagogical methods and approaches developed in ethnic studies is an opportunity for libraries and librarians to consider their own relationships with students as well as with the institutions of which they are a part. Libraries would benefit from further study of the ways ethnic studies faculty use and perceive the library, and from engaging with the intellectual foundations of ethnic studies pedagogy. Academic libraries are rarely, if ever, counterspaces. They are far more often spaces that reflect and even amplify institutional priorities and biases. Ethnic studies provides an example of a pedagogy that prioritizes educational benefits to BIPOC students and which has the potential to preserve a space for oppositional values within the institutional context. As many libraries strive to improve services to BIPOC communities, gaining a deeper understanding of the pedagogical traditions developed by ethnic studies faculty may help academic librarians imagine new ways of fulfilling their own roles as educators and of making space for a diversity of values and intellectual traditions even within the most demanding of institutional contexts.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Keri Prelitz: Conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, investigation, resources, writing - original, writing - review & editing, project administration.

Nick Szydowski: Conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, investigation, resources, data curation, writing - original, writing - review & editing, project administration.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A

This semi-structured interview guide from the Ithaka S+R "Streaming media licensing and purchasing practices at academic libraries" project is shared with the kind permission of ITHAKA.

Semi-structured interview guide

Introduction

The ways that instructors can work with video content is evolving rapidly with the ascendancy of streaming platforms, including those the library licenses or are made freely available, over older formats like VHS and DVD. Within this context, the library is conducting a study to understand the possibilities for fostering instructional use of video content at our university. I'd like to ask you questions about your current use, preferences, and future plans for incorporating video content in your teaching, and perspectives on the role that the library can play towards that.

Before we begin, I'd also like to acknowledge that the landscape of available video content for educational use can be incredibly complicated, especially in terms of copyright terms and pricing models. Those complexities are not the focus of our conversation, but of course they cannot be divorced from how we can use video content in our teaching. As we go please feel free to request we pause at any point if you'd like further explanation or clarification about video content in the context of the broader educational media landscape or any other aspect of our discussion.

Current practices

I'd like to begin by exploring how you teach with video content, including VHS, DVD, and the content provided through streaming platforms.

1. Do you currently use any video content in your classes?
 - *If yes*, Briefly walk me through what kinds of content you are using, and in what format/platform and length?
 - o For which classes do you use this content in?
 - o How does the content contribute to the pedagogical goals of the class?
 - *If no*, why is that? [and if they have never used video content in their classes, skip to question 3]
2. How do you determine which video content you use in your classes?
 - At what point in developing a course do you identify opportunities to include this content? Do you typically have very specific titles in mind?
 - Where do you typically look for content?
 - To what extent do delivery affordances determine whether you incorporate a specific video offering into your course? (e.g., delivery platform, accessibility options)
 - Do you consult with any other people to identify opportunities to incorporate video content into your class offerings?
3. To what extent are your current needs for incorporating video content into your courses being adequately met?
 - Has the pandemic changed your needs for incorporating video content into your courses in any way?
 - Are there any recent examples where you encountered barriers to incorporating specific content into your class? [e.g., unavailability of specific titles, copyright complexities]
 - *If yes*, What were the barriers, and how did you work around them?
 - o Did you work with any others to mitigate those barriers?
 - o Is there anything else that could have been done to alleviate these challenges?

Evolving expectations

Next, I'd like to learn more about how your expectations are evolving around how video content can be incorporated in your classes.

4. Has the availability of streaming content changed how you integrate video content into your teaching?
 - What do you see as the greatest affordances of streaming content for your teaching?
 - Are there any downsides to incorporating streaming content into your teaching?
 - Is there anything that could be improved about streaming content offerings and/or functionalities to maximize the opportunities to incorporate it into your teaching?
5. Has the availability of streaming content changed your expectations about how the costs of the video content should be covered?
 - Are there any instances where it is acceptable to require students to pay directly to access video content for educational purposes?
 - How do your expectations with video relate to your expectations for how other forms of course content are paid for? E.g., textbooks, journal articles.
 - What are the top factors that you think are important for determining the extent to which the university covers the costs of video content? Which part(s) of the university should cover those costs?
6. What kinds of resources or other supports would help you identify and assess opportunities for including video content into your classes?
 - Would additional information about pricing structures, available titles, or format types affect your decision-making about what content to assign?
 - Ideally, how would you like to get this information and from whom?

Wrapping up

I'd like to finish up with a few questions that put your perspectives into the broader context of your field and look towards future developments and needs.

7. How does your use of video content in your teaching compare to the practices of your peers?
 - Are there any kinds of video content or functionality that you would like to see more of?
 - Are there any developments in the areas that you teach that may affect how you or your peers would like to teach with video content in the next five years?
8. Is there anything else that is important for me to know about how you or your peers incorporate video content into teaching?

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