“There are many examples of “bad” online courses which are basically correspondence courses that use email. Students have been conditioning to blow through the online course, paying attention only to activities that are mandatory and assessed, and ignoring the rest. While this can feel like a direct insult to a course developer who has spent countless hours fine-tuning the online environment, I really don’t think it’s meant to be personal.” – Patch 19,

This particular patch was written in 2017, in the “before-times.” In March of 2020 I had to adapt all of my courses to online delivery in about 3 days. These courses included programming, and sound design. The challenges with those specific courses is outside the purview of this task, so I will not spend time on that.

This patch has 3 major points: people are rude in an online environment, people tend to think online courses are “bird” courses, and online students tend to cheat more (allegedly.) I have chosen to focus on the 2nd point.

In the fall 2021 semester, we were delivering our entire program online, and I noticed that after about Week 2, there were several students that would log onto Zoom, keep their cameras off and not respond to any prompts. I am almost certain they were logging on and going back to bed.

I did not want to make it mandatory for people to have their cameras turned on, so I ignored this and continued on, teaching to the ones I *knew* were engaged. The solution ended up being two-fold: more group discussions in breakout rooms, and asking people at random to answer questions.

Both solutions took some time to adjust to, and there were plenty of moments of silence after prompts, but eventually the students figured out that they could be called upon at any time. The ones who were engaged from the start remained engaged, and those that were logging in and going back to bed were much more alert. I still use these principles today, as to keep engagement up whether in person or online!