Using Video Editing Software to Enhance Online Learning

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The Need

In 2020, my local community horticulture program had a minimum of thirty live community education classes planned for the year, all of which were cancelled in light of the coronavirus pandemic. At the same time, the interest in backyard gardening was skyrocketing, leaving the question of how to continue to deliver high quality community education remotely. With stay at home restrictions in our state, we had to find new ways to continue to keep our community engaged. The quick pivot to remote types of learning meant a much greater need for high quality videos as a tool to engage the community and volunteers alike. Simultaneously, a series of new online courses were being planned covering a variety of advanced skill topics for Master Gardener volunteers with a release date for early 2021. I developed one of these courses on using a new web-based tool, called ECCO, primarily using video lectures. In an effort to make all videos in my program area more lively and engaging, I learned how to use new video editing software called Camtasia and a screen capture tool called Snagit.

Methods and Delivery

I purchased and watched several tutorial videos on how to use Camtasia and Snagit , in early 2020. The majority of my experience in using this software was done during the creation of an online-course for Master Gardener volunteers. I created ten tutorial videos on how to use ECCO. Video topics were broken into short succinct videos including topics such as creating a login, to putting in a question, to searching for a client. Video lectures were anywhere from two to six minutes in length so the material was easily digestible. I enhanced this video series using uplifting music, motion graphics, annotations, transitions, blur and highlight features, edited voice
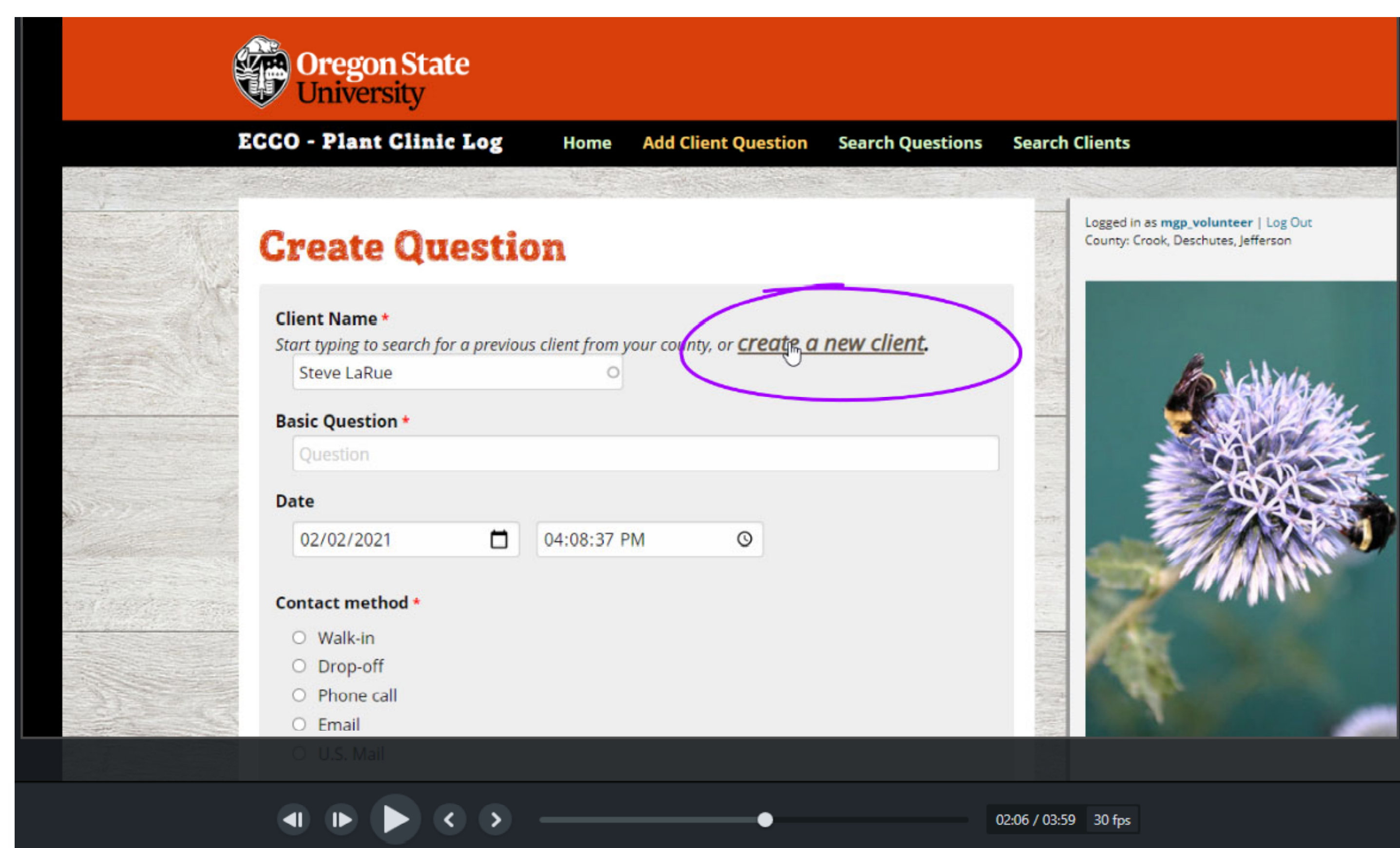
"Being a visual learner, the videos were very helpful in retaining course material."

-February 2021
Online Learner, Volunteer
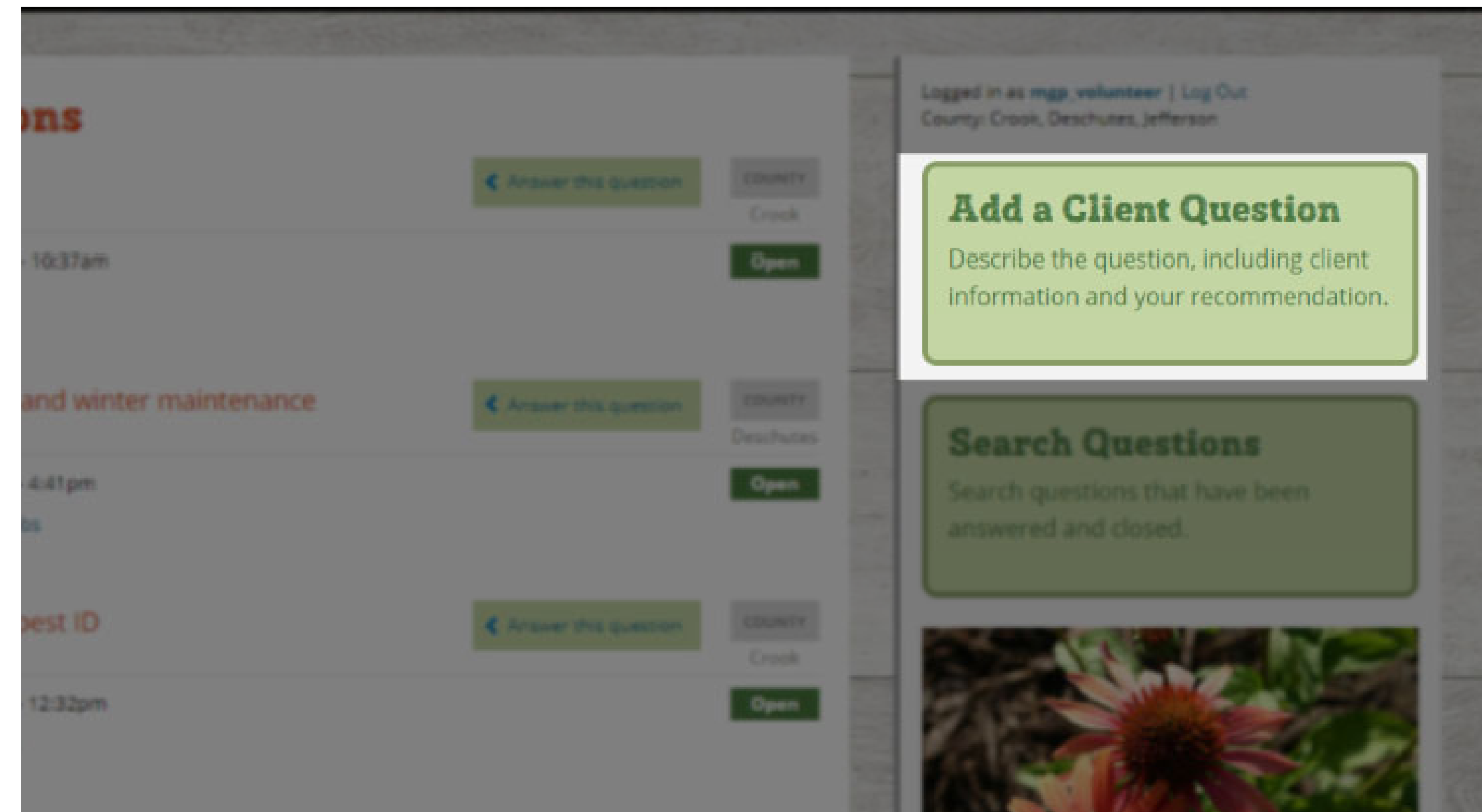
An example of the blurring tool used in Camtasia that helps to draw the learner's eye to the instructional focus.

An example of an annotation feature such as the purple sketch motion circle used to enhance this video lecture.

"Excellent learning tool for ECCO. Very detailed, descriptive and easy to work through the learning examples."
-February 2021
Online Learner, Volunteer

An example of a Camtasia canvas including text and audio and video tracks. A collection of video clips were stitched together to form one video which was added to Facebook and YouTube.

Methods and Delivery cont.

narration, and changed clip speed. The videos were used in a learning platform called Thinkific. For another project volunteers each filmed a favorite plant in the garden, in lieu of holding an on-site garden tour, and sent in a video clip. The video editing software allowed me to crop individual videos, highlight features of the plants, add music and feature text. All individual videos were stitched together seamlessly to create a 15 minute video entitled *Garden Picks with OSU Master Gardeners*. Additionally, Camtasia was used for editing gardening "how to" videos posted on YouTube and Facebook in 2020.

Results and Impact

Using Camtasia allowed me to develop more polished, consistent videos for all of my projects. In the video lectures for the ECCO course, using consistent features allowed the learner to know what to focus on when using the new tool. I was able to remove errors in the audio, and tie all of the learning together with thematic music and motion graphics. A survey of learners taking the online course showed that 98% of respondents (n=45) reported an increase in confidence level in successfully using the online tool ECCO after taking the course. The *Garden Picks with OSU Master Gardeners* video has had 320 views to date. After viewing several of my video projects enhanced by Camtasia, an OSU colleague has since purchased this software to use and enhance her own work.

Conclusions

The response to high quality and engaging videos for remote learning has been positive and should not be underestimated in its usefulness in serving and teaching online learners. It suggests a strong need to continue using video editing software for program delivery going forward. Future trainings will include teaching staff and volunteers to use this software.