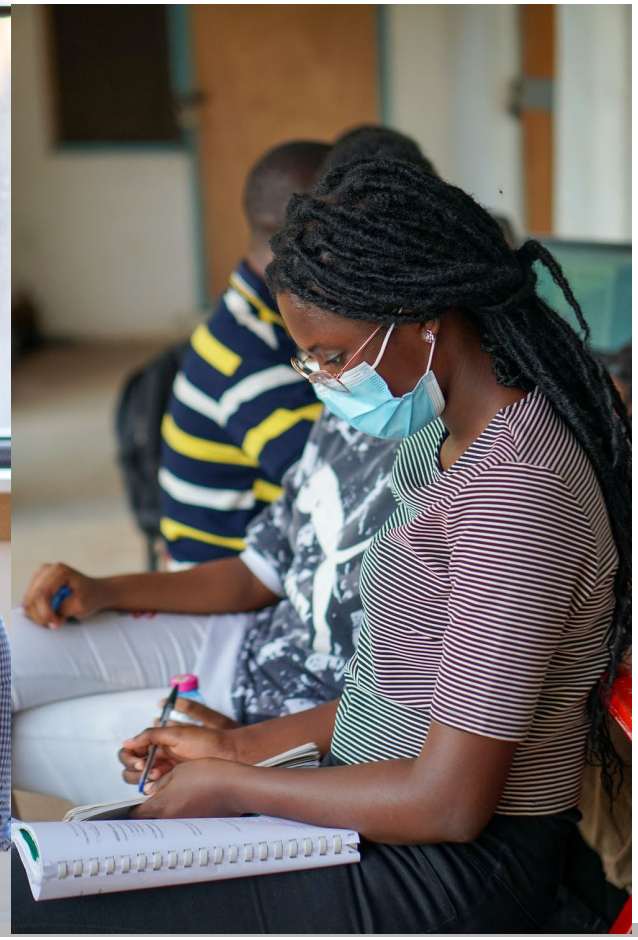

Planning your courses:
Blended learning activities and assessments

May 2023

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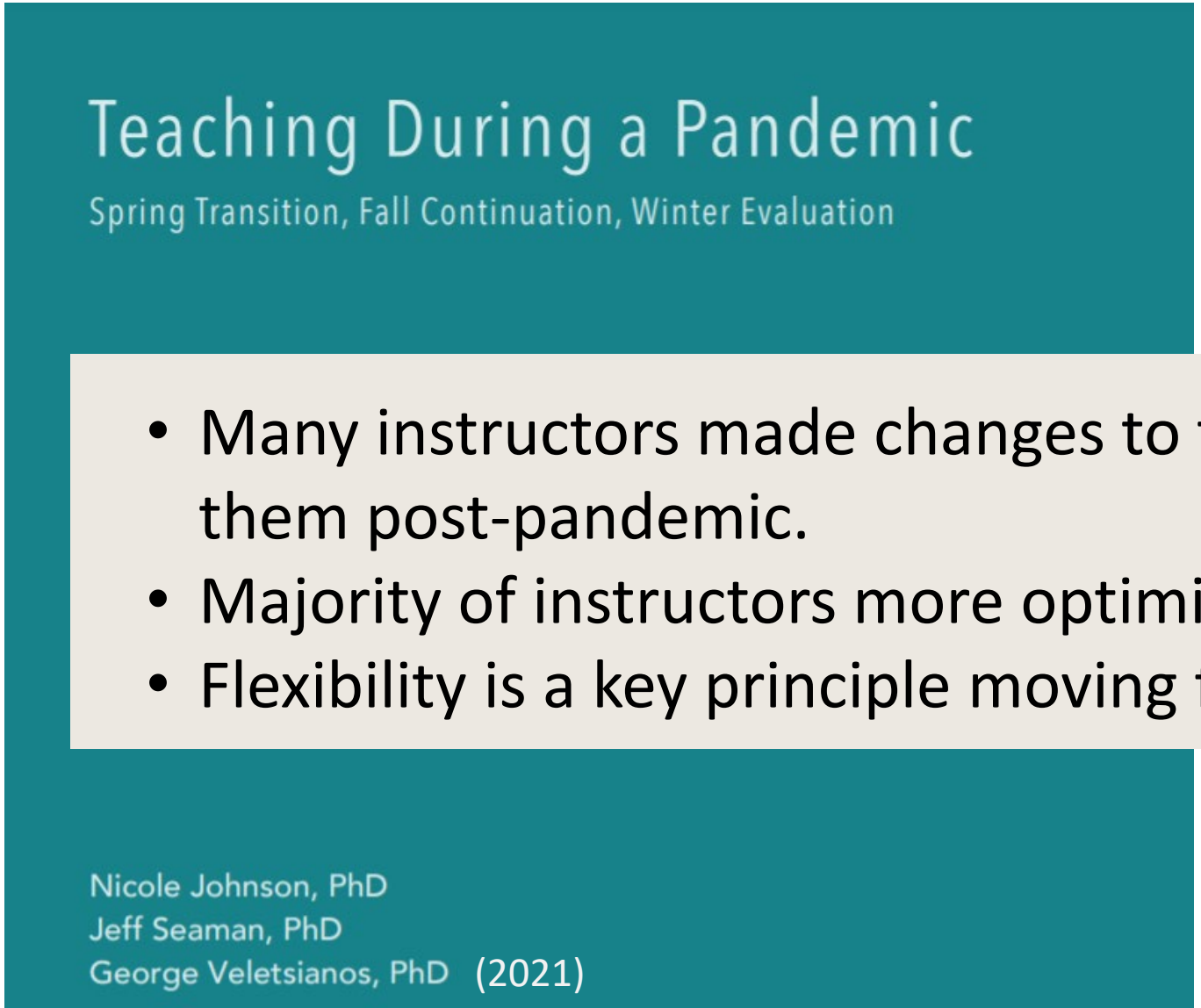
McGill | Teaching and Learning Services

Land acknowledgment

Even meeting in a virtual environment, we would like to acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we may be separately on today. We do this to reaffirm our commitment to and responsibility for improving relationships among nations, and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples—the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinabeg—and cultures.

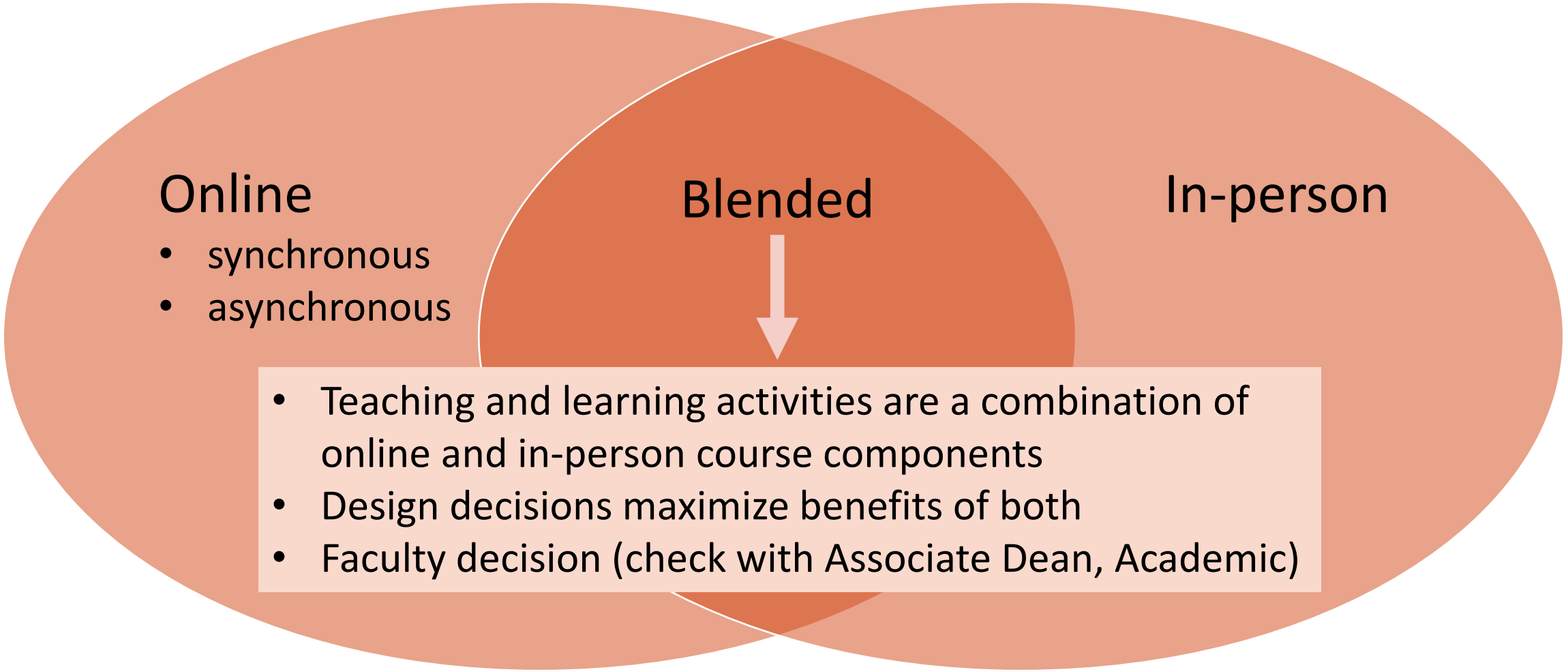
(Inspired by A guide to acknowledging First Peoples and traditional land.)

Expectations have changed



- Many instructors made changes to their teaching and will keep them post-pandemic.
- Majority of instructors more optimistic about online learning.
- Flexibility is a key principle moving forward.

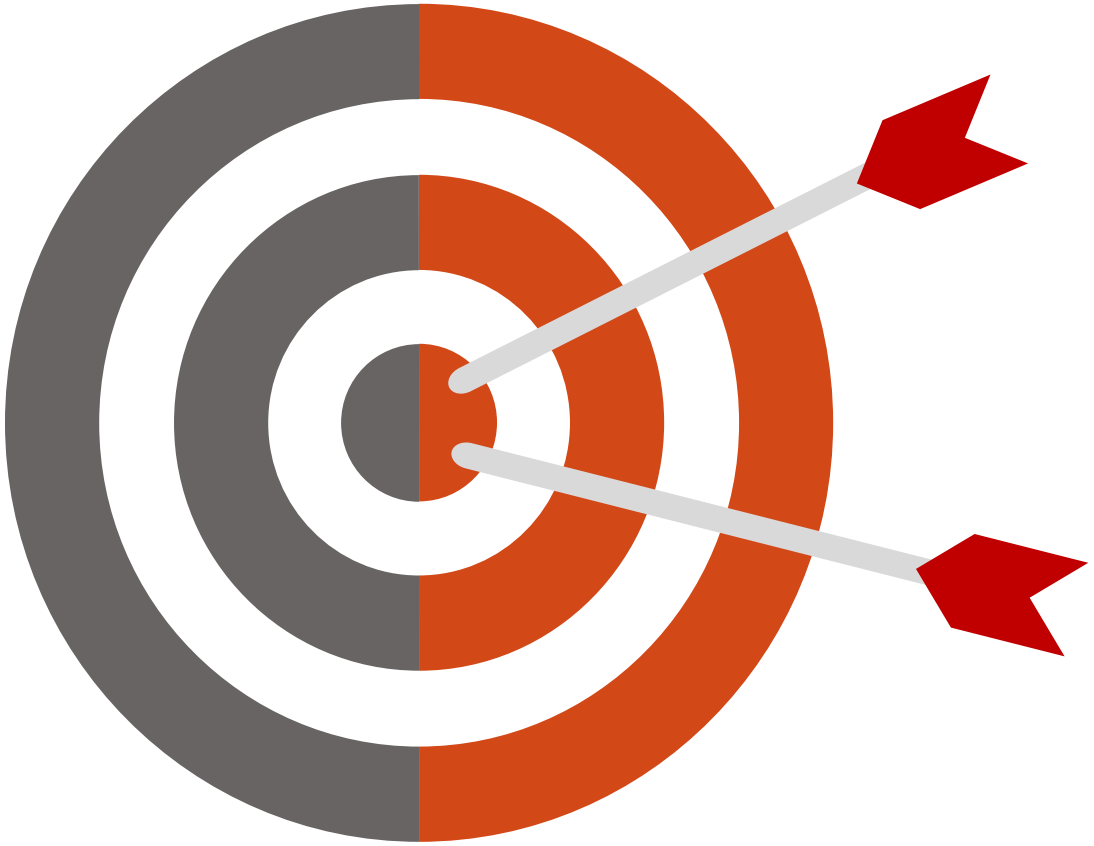
Teaching and learning context



Watch for a poll on your screen

Have you ever taught a course with a blend of online and in-person learning activities?

Session outcomes



Determine which components of your course should be in person and which should be online

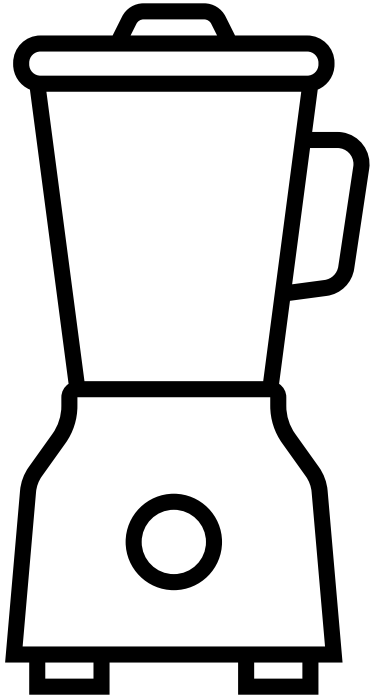
Identify the assessment sweet spot in your course

Blending activities

In person

Online synchronous

Online asynchronous



Example of blended: Prehistoric Archaeology (ANTH-201)

Objective	Activity	Activity Setting	Tools used	Assessment	Assessment Setting
Critically evaluate sources of archaeological information in popular media	Read assigned articles, watch pre-recorded lectures with feedback	Online asynchronous	myCourses Content and Quiz	1. Popular Archaeology critique midterm 2. Popular Archaeology Peer Review	1. Essay submitted via myCourses Assignments 2. Peer review submitted via peer assessment tool
	Attend a guest lecture about contemporary archaeology	Online synchronous	Zoom		
	Identify examples of archaeology in media that capture concepts from the lecture	In person	Small group discussion / whiteboards		
	Share your critique online for peer review	Online asynchronous	Peer assessment tool		

(K. Kotar, 2021)

Example of blended

Objective	Activity	Activity Setting	Tools used	Assessment	Assessment Setting
Given Pythagorean theory, learners will design a skateboard ramp for a specific area	Read chapter, watch skateboard videos	Online asynchronous	myCourses Content	1. Develop proposal 2. Complete design	1. Presented in person 2. Submitted via myCourses Assignments
	Solve word problems				
	Share ramp designs with peer	Online synchronous	Zoom with peer		
	Provide peer feedback on design	Online asynchronous	Peer assessment tool		
	Share final designs for feedback	In person	Classroom projector		

(Adapted from McGee & Reis, 2012, p. 12)

Questions to guide decision-making

Sound pedagogy

1. What course content is likely to generate a lot of questions and require extensive explanation?

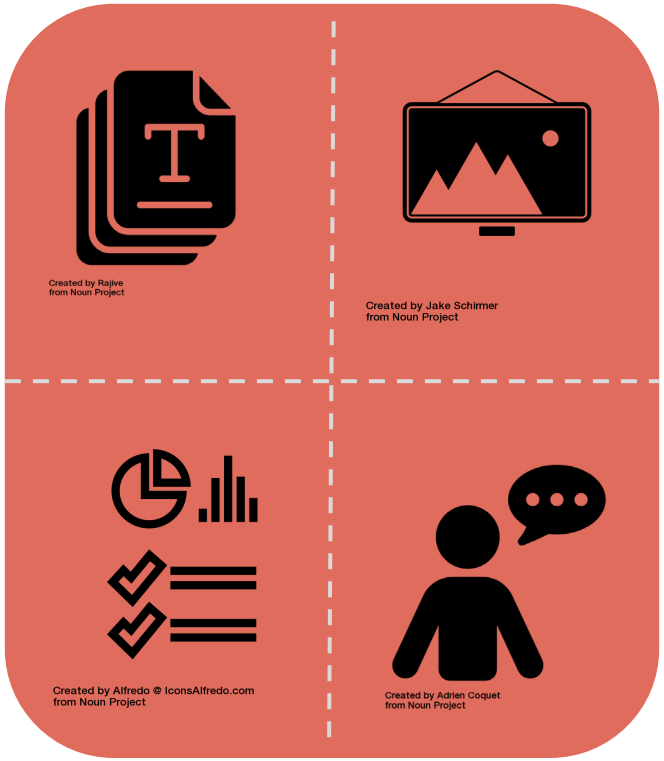
2. Which learning activities benefit from interaction with me? With peers?

Wellness

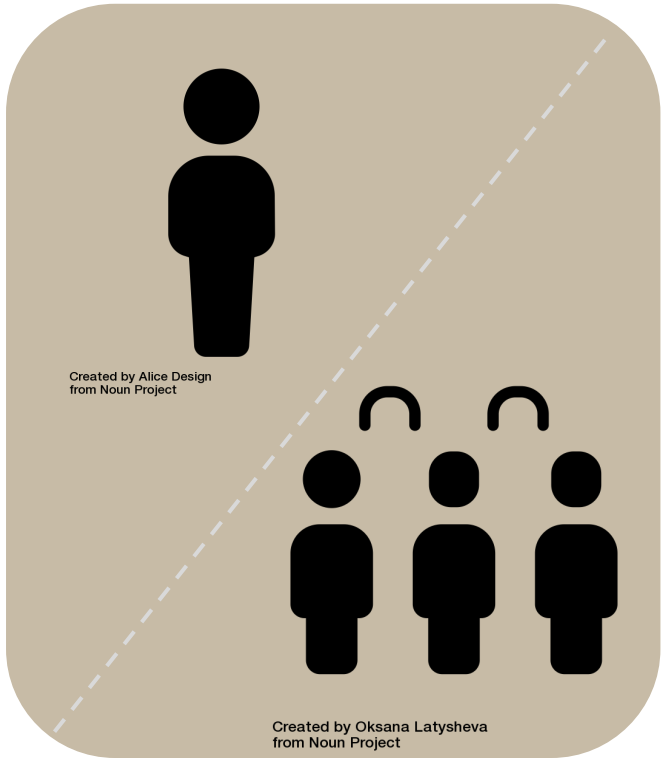
1. How much time do I have available to plan my course(s)?

2. How can I design a course that has a manageable workload for both my students and me?

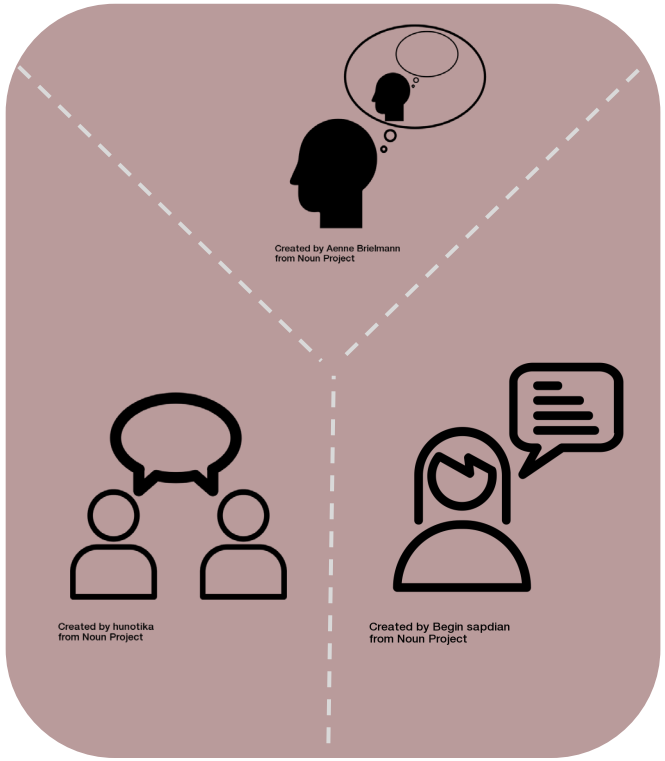
Demonstrate learning in a variety of ways



Artifact



Interaction



Feedback (Assessment)

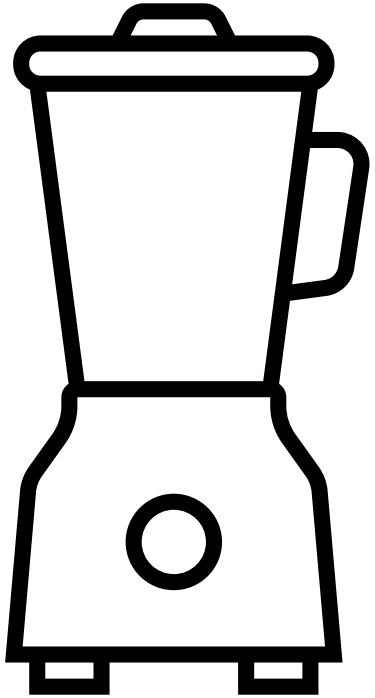
(Fenwick & Parsons, 2000; Suskie, 2018)

Blending assessments

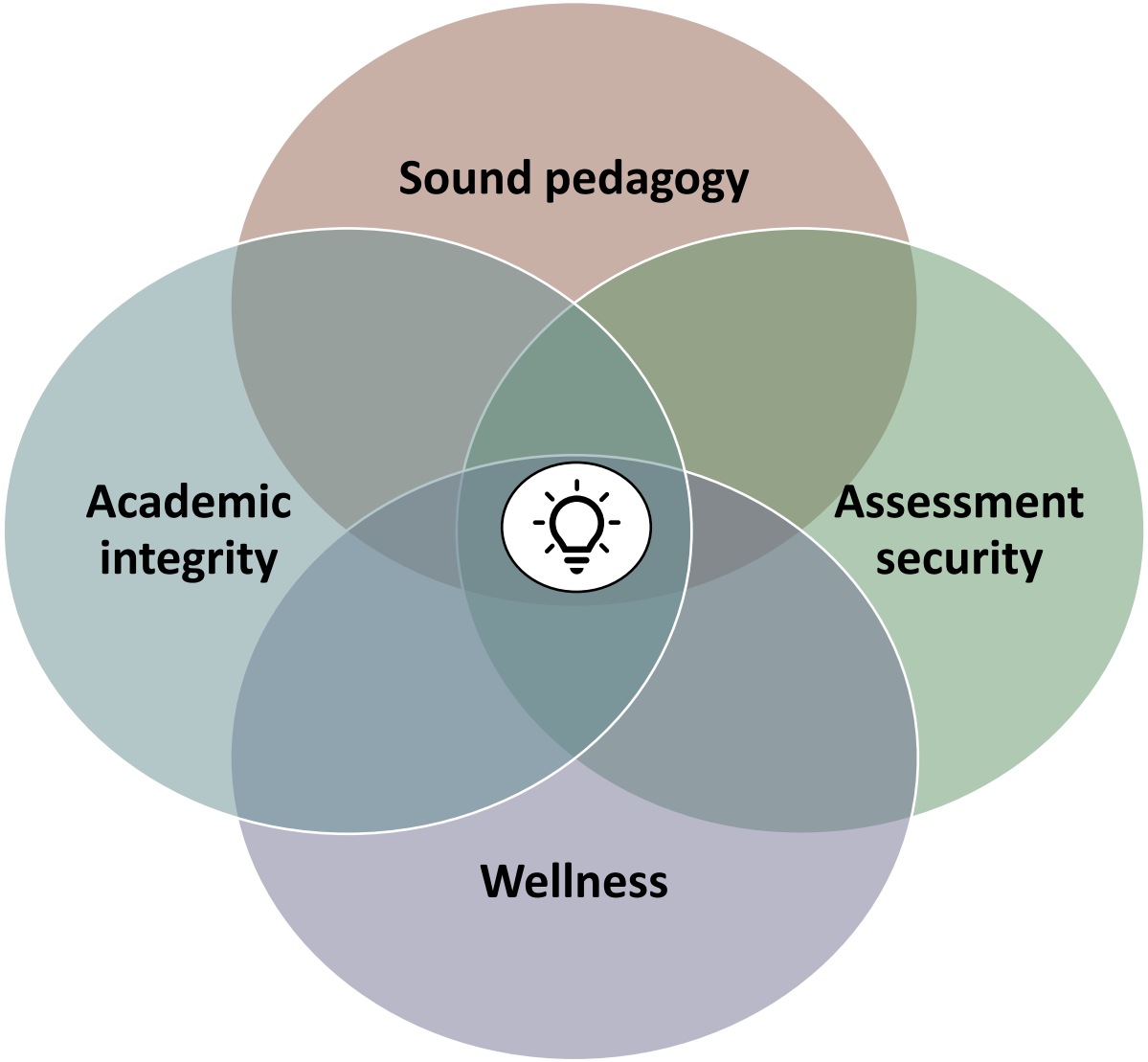
In person

Online synchronous

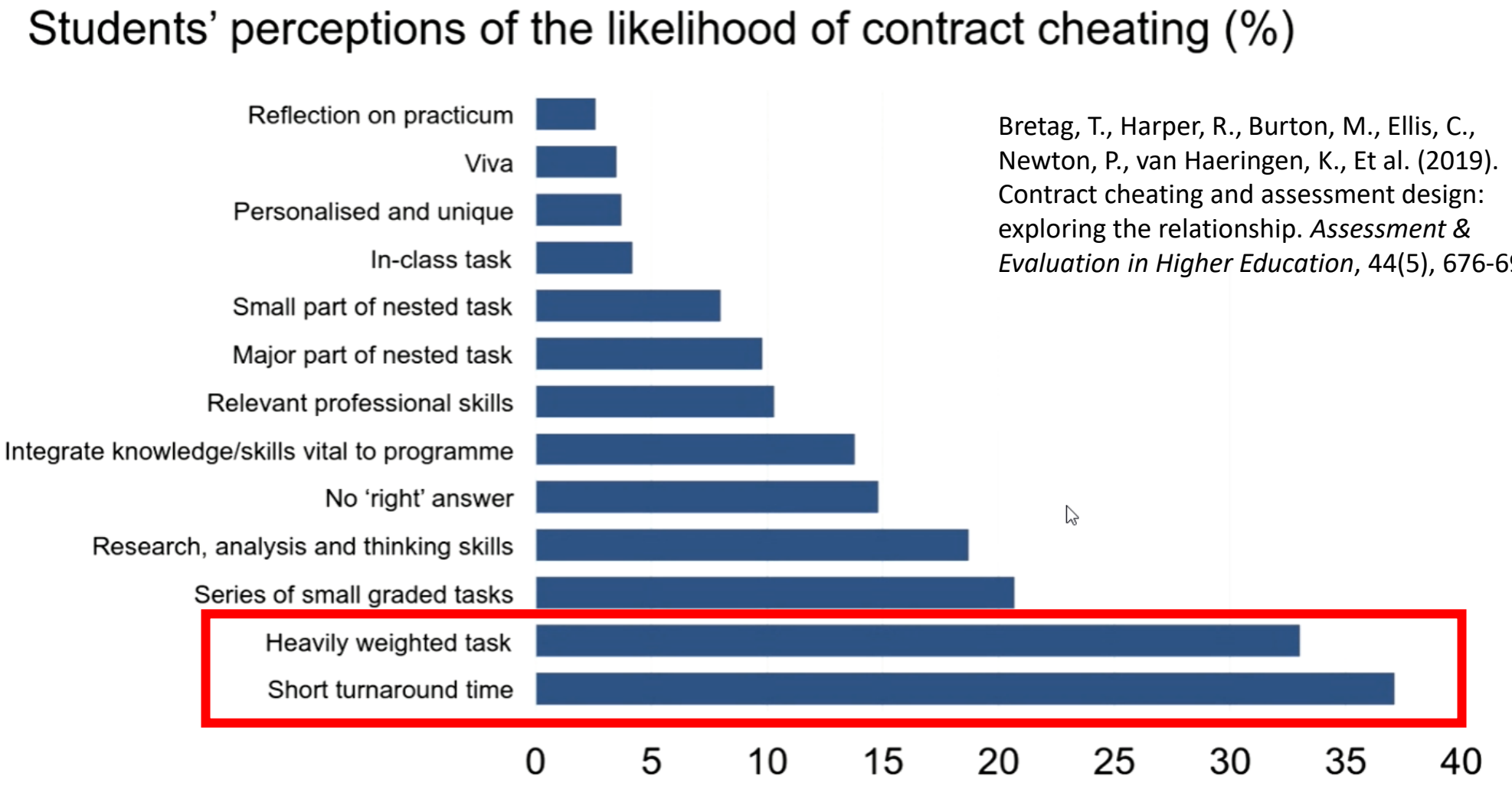
Online asynchronous



Designing assessments: Look for the sweet spot

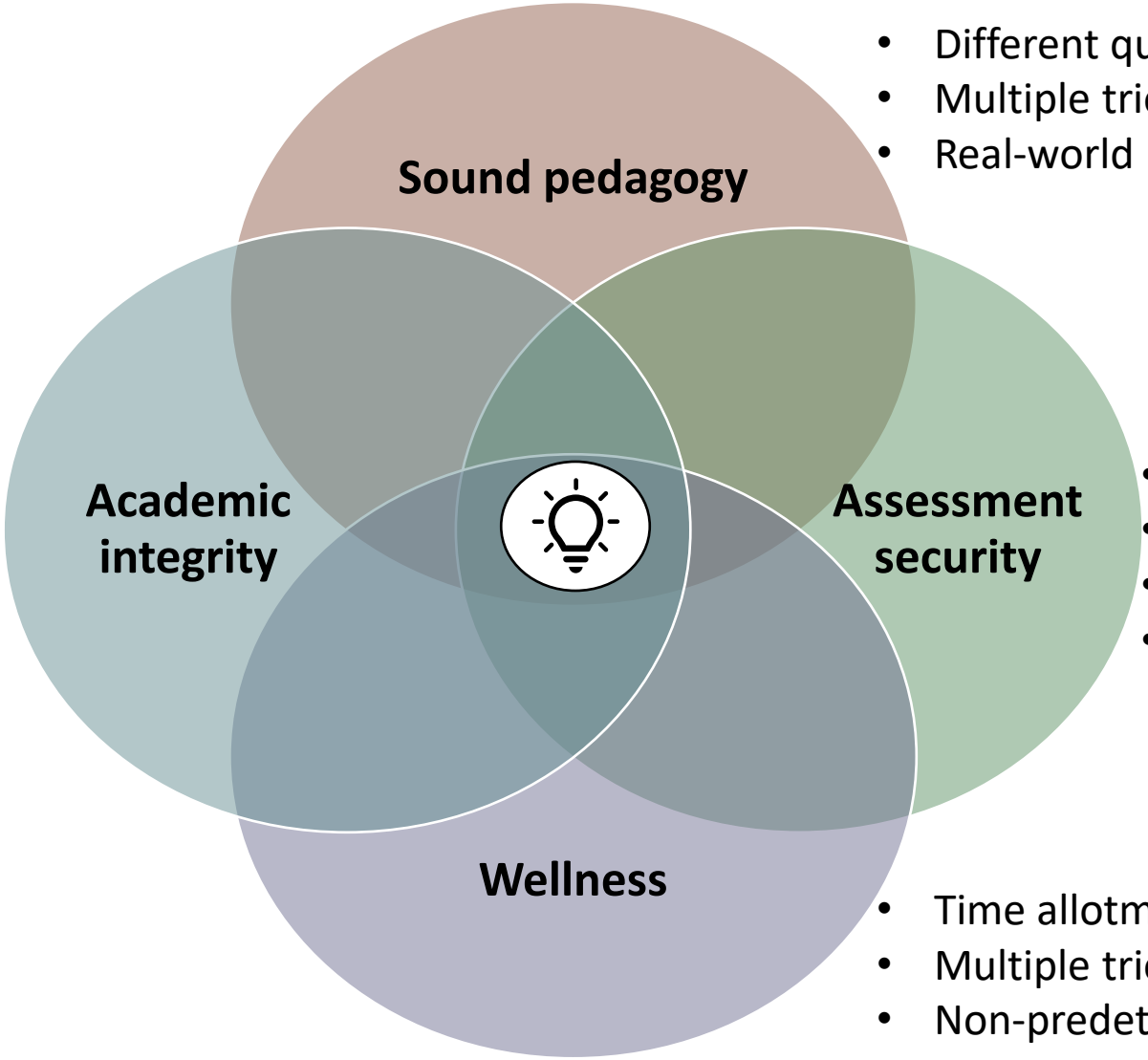


Supporting academic integrity: Considerations



Bretag, T., Harper, R., Burton, M., Ellis, C., Newton, P., van Haeringen, K., Et al. (2019). Contract cheating and assessment design: exploring the relationship. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 44(5), 676-691.

Example: Online exam (quiz)



- Different question types
- Multiple tries or submissions
- Real-world problems

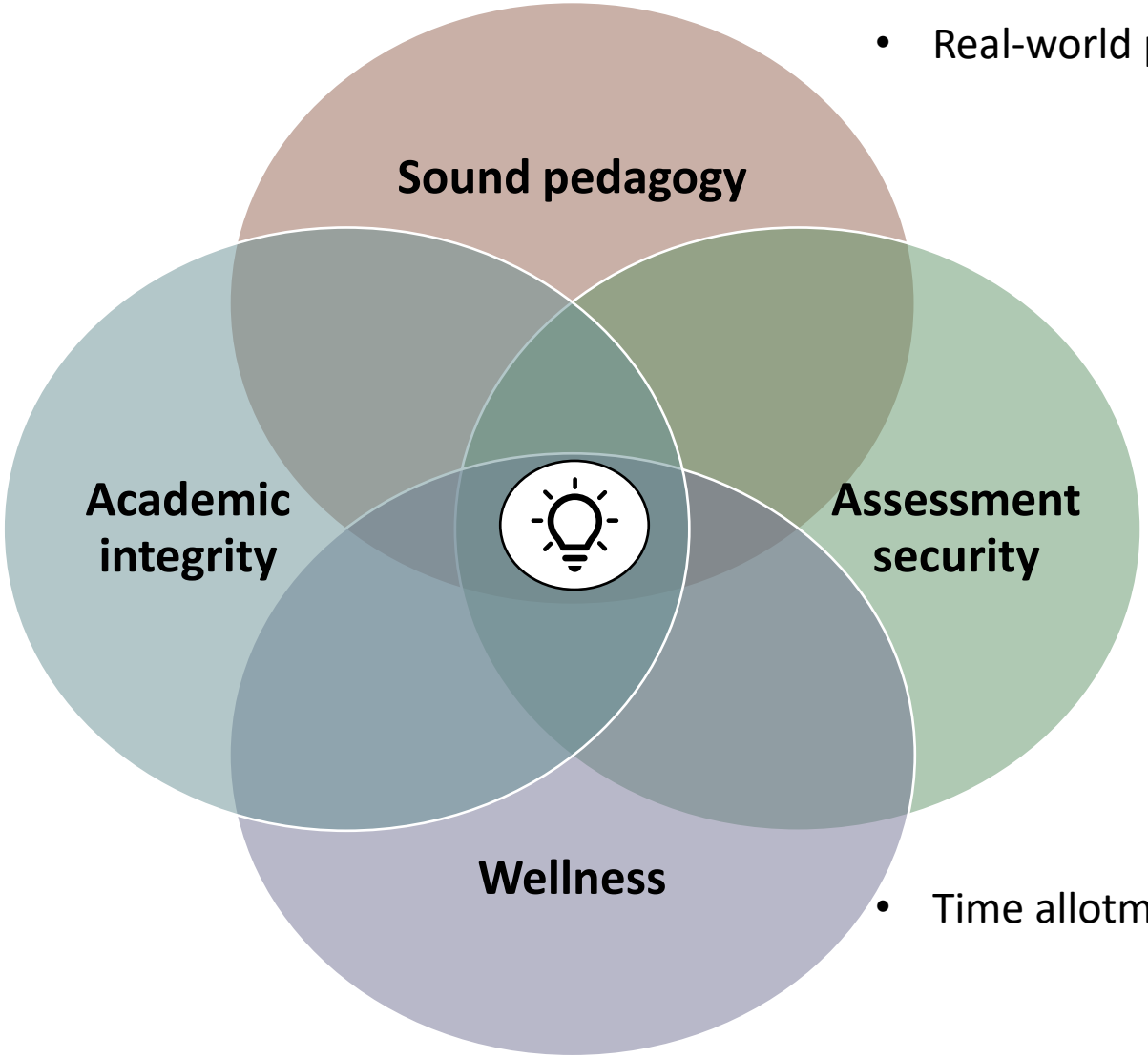
- Honor code acknowledgement
- Personal experience
- Authentic assessment

- Question/answer randomization
- Time allotment/constraint
- Question bank
- Lock-down browser

- Time allotment/constraint
- Multiple tries or submissions
- Non-predetermined results

Example: Essay

- Real-world problems



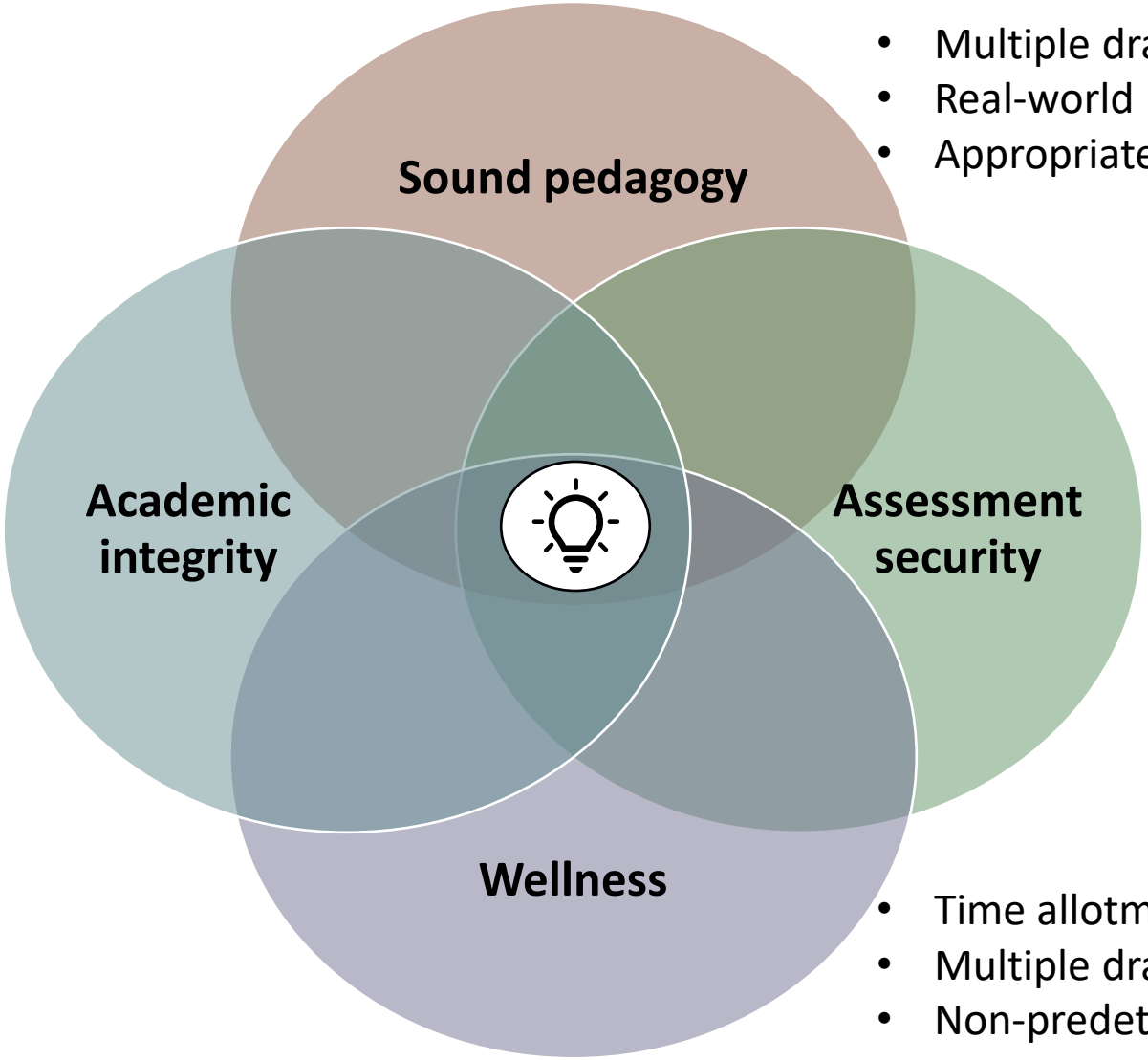
- Honor code acknowledgement
- Personal experience

- Multiple stages

- Time allotment/constraint

Example: Essay

- Multiple drafts or submissions
- Real-world problems
- Appropriate content/task



- Honor code acknowledgement
- Personal experience
- Multiple stages

- Topic/question rotation
- Multiple stages

- Time allotment/constraint
- Multiple drafts or submissions
- Non-predetermined results

Questions to guide decision-making

Sound pedagogy

1. What course content is likely to generate a lot of questions and require extensive explanation?
2. Which learning activities benefit from interaction with me? With peers?

Wellness

1. How much time do I have available to plan my course(s)?
2. How can I design a course that has a manageable workload for both my students and me?

Academic integrity

1. How well do students understand what academic integrity is in my discipline and why it matters?
2. How able are students at implementing appropriate citation practices in my discipline?

Assessment security

1. Which technology strategies (e.g., randomizing quiz/exam questions) should I consider implementing for securing assessments?
2. How can I implement a multi-stage assessment where students demonstrate knowledge/skills development over time?

See more questions in the Blended Learning Activities and Assessments Planner

Blended learning activities and assessments planner

EXAMPLE

Objective	Activity	Activity Setting	Tools	Assessment	Assessment Setting
Critically evaluate sources of archaeological information in popular media	Read assigned articles, watch pre-recorded lectures with feedback	Online asynchronous	myCourses Content and Quiz	1. Popular Archaeology critique midterm 2. Popular Archaeology Peer Review	1. Essay submitted via myCourses Assignments 2. Peer review submitted via peer assessment tool
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	Identify examples of archaeology in media that capture concepts from the lecture	In person	Small group discussion / whiteboards		
	Share your critique online for peer review	Online asynchronous	Peer assessment tool		

(K. Kotar, 2021)

START FILLING IN YOUR PLANNER HERE:

Course name and code:

Objective	Activity	Activity Setting	Tools used	Assessment	Assessment Setting

Higher ed approaches to generative AI tools

Instructional

Create assessments to incorporate AI tools or make reliance on AI tools alone impossible

- How can AI writing tools be used to support learning?
- How can assessments be designed so that AI tools are not useful?
- How should citation practices change to adapt to AI tools?

Disciplinary

Stay ahead of the technology to ask questions AI tools have a hard time answering

- How can we outwit the AI generated tools?
- Can we implement tools that can detect content that is AI generated?

Resources:

- Learning with AI: Exploring the Potential of Generative Tech Tutorial https://www.eduflow.com/academy/learning-with-ai-exploring-the-potential-of-generative-tech
- Watkins, R. (2022, December 18). Update your course syllabus for chatGPT. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@rwatkins_7167/updating-your-course-syllabus-for-chatgpt-965f4b57b003

Type responses in the chat

What is one thing from today's webinar that you plan to act on when preparing your courses?

Next steps

Register for upcoming sessions
www.mcgill.ca/tls/events

Access resources
www.mcgill.ca/teachingkb
www.mcgill.ca/tls
teachingblog.mcgill.ca

Connect with colleagues

Book a consultation with TLS
http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/contact/consultations

References

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International Centre for Academic Integrity. (2021). *The fundamental values of academic integrity*, (3rd ed.). https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf

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Resources

Concordia University, Centre for Teaching and Learning. (2021). *When to use asynchronous/synchronous learning*. https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/ctl/docs/resourcces/synch-asynch-info.pdf

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Linder, K. E. (2016). *The blended course design workbook: A practical guide*. Stylus Publishing, LLC. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/963662095

Rutgers University, see *Special advice for open-book assessment in quantitative courses* https://sasoue.rutgers.edu/teaching-learning/remote-exams-assessment#special-advice-for-open-book-assessment-in-quantitative-courses

Stein, J., & Graham, C. R. (2020). *Essentials for blended learning: A standards-based guide* (2nd ed.). Essentials of online learning series. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1128890815