

A Call for Agency

Helping to Make Learners Life-Ready

Dr. Lisa Marie Blaschke, 19.11.2020
Program Director

Why is learner agency important?

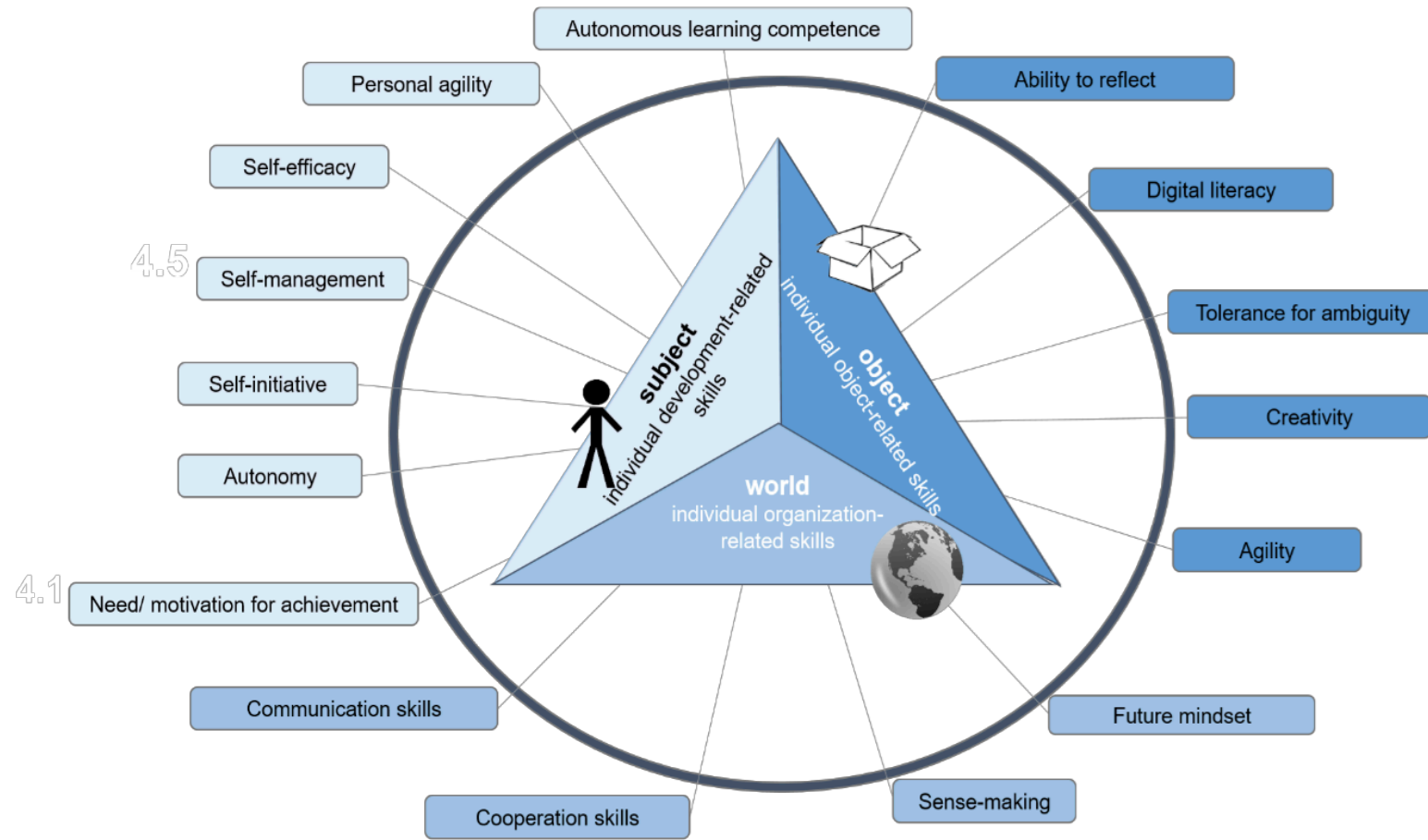


Students need jobs.

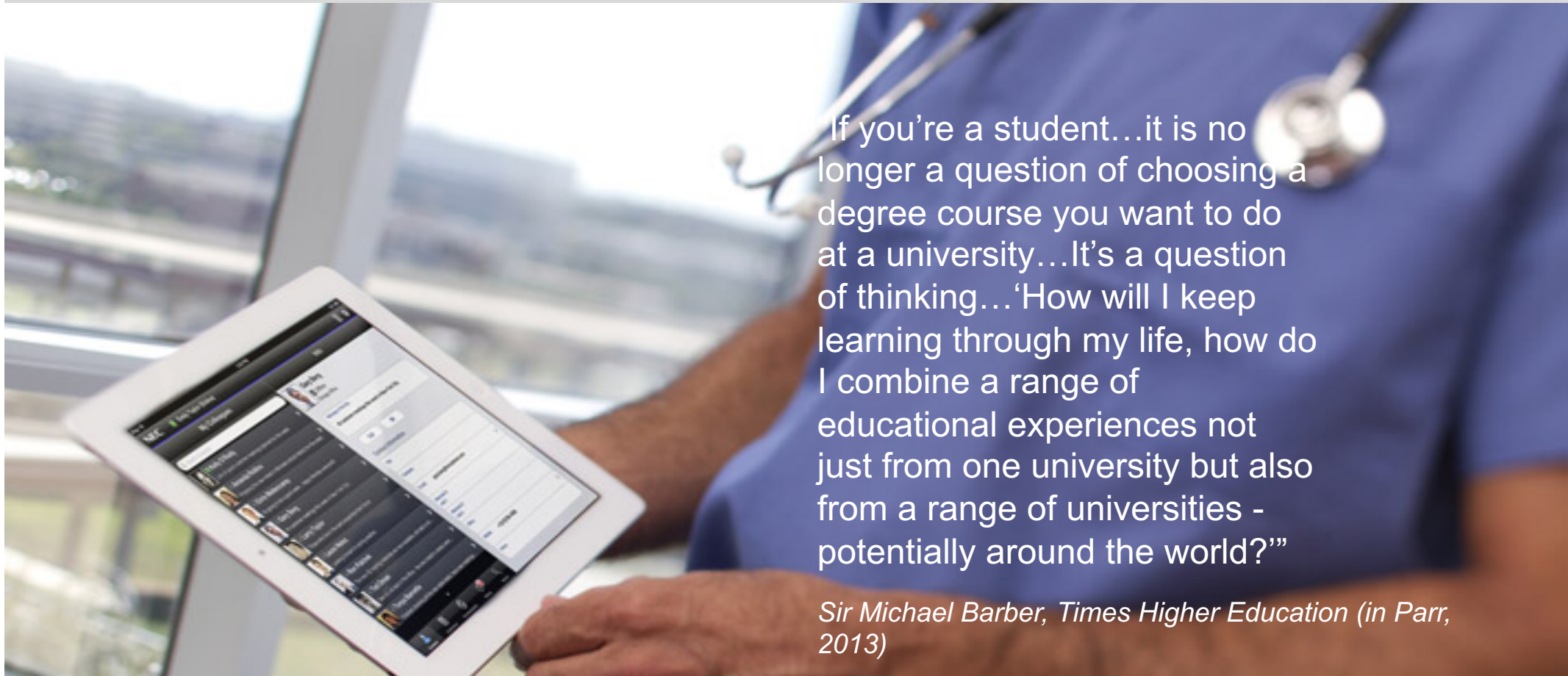


Photo: <https://pixabay.com/de/stellenangebote-arbeitslosigkeit-1446885/>

Employers need employees to hit the ground running.



Learning is for life.



“If you’re a student...it is no longer a question of choosing a degree course you want to do at a university...It’s a question of thinking...‘How will I keep learning through my life, how do I combine a range of educational experiences not just from one university but also from a range of universities - potentially around the world?’”

Sir Michael Barber, Times Higher Education (in Parr, 2013)

Students not thinking for themselves? The post-truth era.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions. The header features the program's name in a cursive font and a search bar. The navigation menu includes links for Home, About, Events, Photo Gallery, Fellowships, Course Offerings, and Make a Gift. The main content area displays a blog post titled "Some Thoughts and Advice for Our Students and All Students" dated August 29, 2017. The text of the post discusses the challenges of thinking for oneself in a post-truth era.

James Madison Program
in American Ideals and Institutions

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Some Thoughts and Advice for Our Students and All Students

August 29, 2017

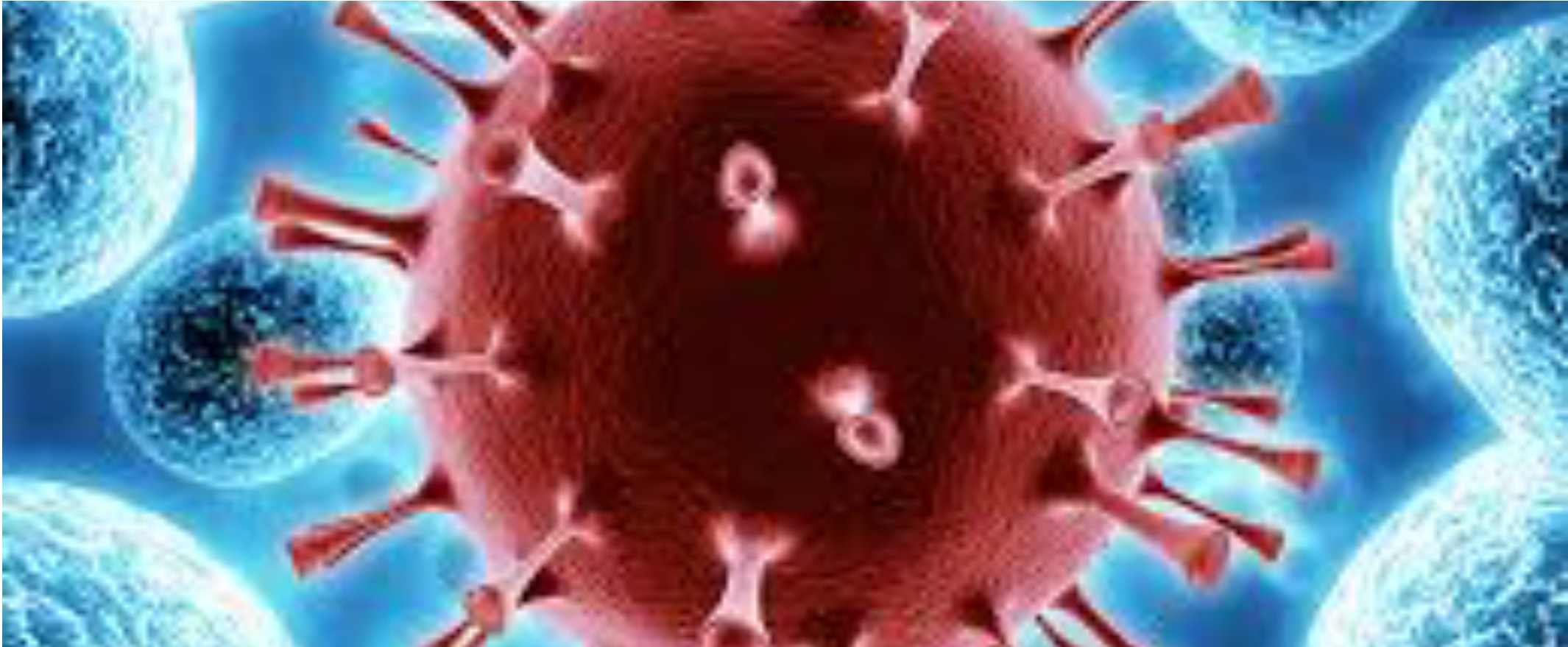
We are scholars and teachers at Princeton, Harvard, and Yale who have some thoughts to share and advice to offer students who are headed off to colleges around the country. Our advice can be distilled to three words:

Think for yourself.

Now, that might sound easy. But you will find—as you may have discovered already in high school—that thinking for yourself can be a challenge. It always demands self-discipline and these days can require courage.

In today's climate, it's all-too-easy to allow your views and outlook to be shaped by dominant opinion on your campus or in the broader academic culture. The danger any student—or faculty member—faces today is falling into the vice of conformism, yielding to groupthink.

COVID-19.



Traditional Approach:

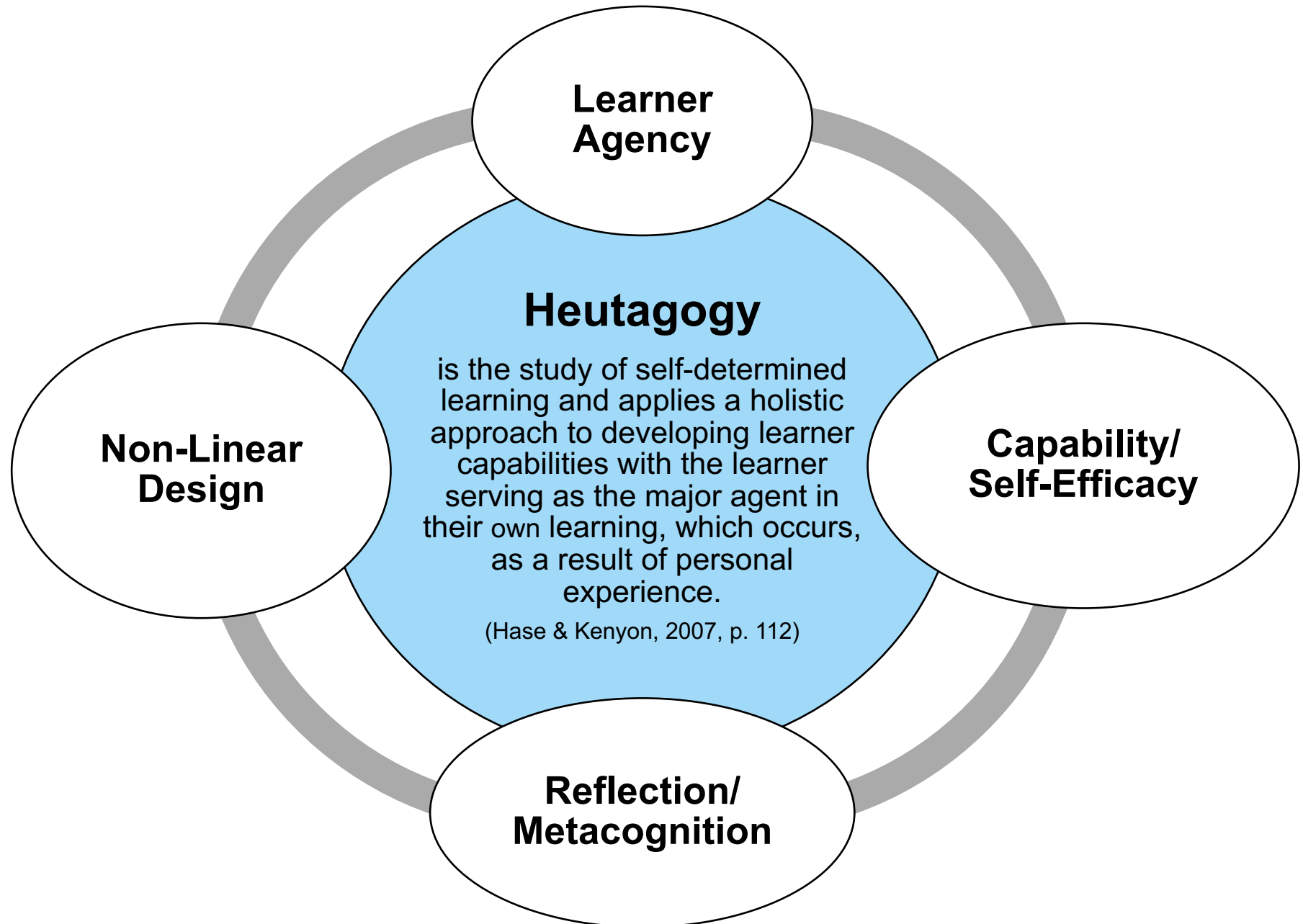
- Controlling the classroom
- Asynchronous lectures
- Proctoring exams
- Plagiarism tools

Policing students

Learner Agency Approach:

- Give students control of learning
- Asynchronous for engagement
- Authentic assessment
- Nurturing environments of trust

Enabling students for SDL



Heutagogy and Lifelong Learning Skills

Principle

Lifelong Learning Skills

Learner Agency

Active learning and learning strategies; self-direction; self-regulation; autonomy; leadership; creativity; self-initiative (intrinsic motivation); self-management; personal agility; need/innovation for achievement; future mindset; flexibility; learning management; originality and initiative; social influence

Self-efficacy and capability

Tolerance for ambiguity; self-efficacy; creativity; well-being; growth mindset; resilience; stress tolerance

Reflection and meta-cognition

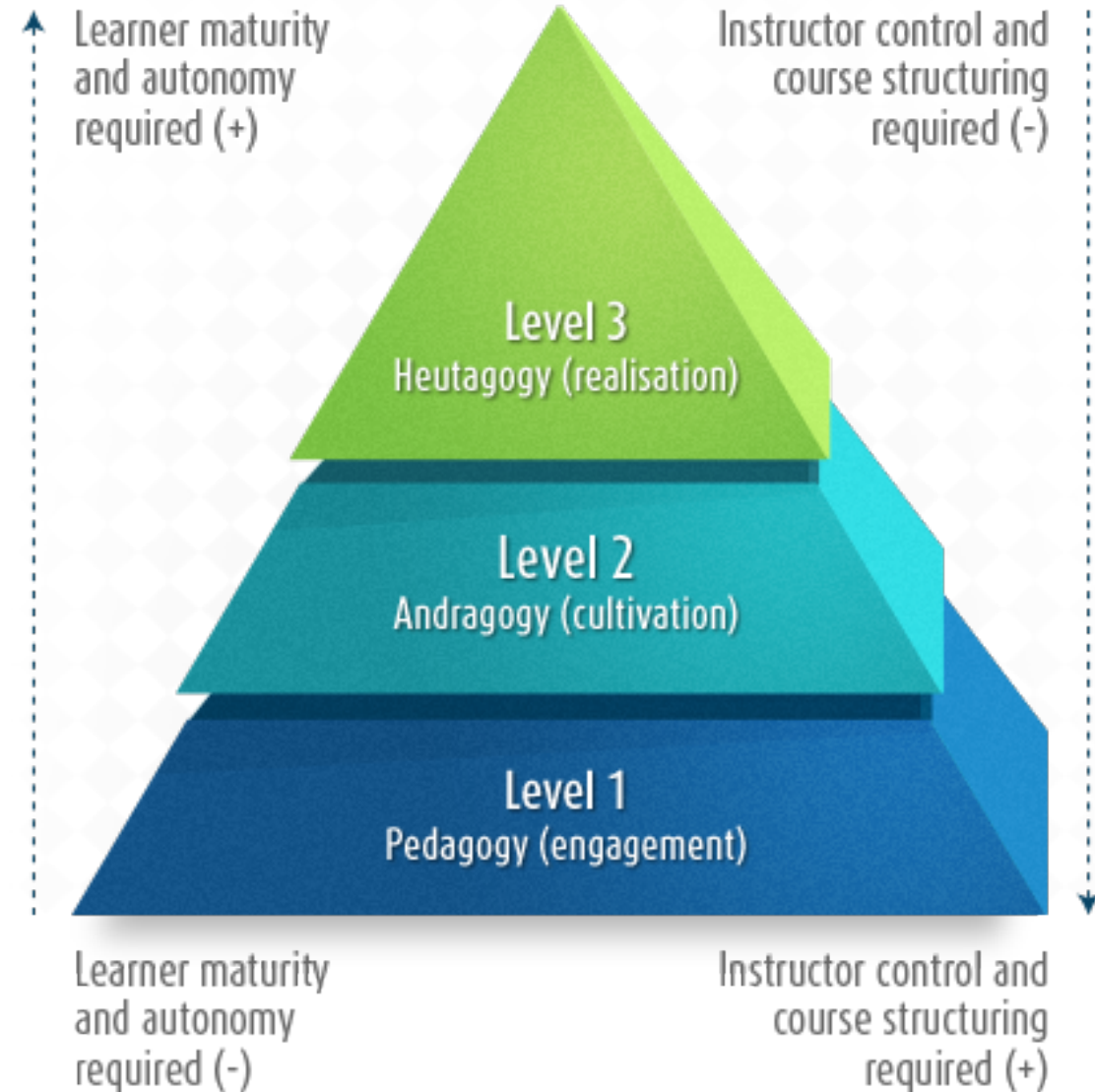
Ability to reflect; sense-making; self-regulation; well-being; critical thinking and analysis; complex problem-solving; analytical thinking and innovation; reasoning; ideation

Non-linear learning

Active learning and learning strategies; empathy; collaboration; cooperation and communication competence; digital literacy, technology use; flexibility; social influence

PAH Continuum

We need to move learners from passive to active learning, from consumption to inquiry – within a context that will make them want to learn more.



Graphic <http://evanfaidley.weebly.com/le-blog>

Design



Apply backward design



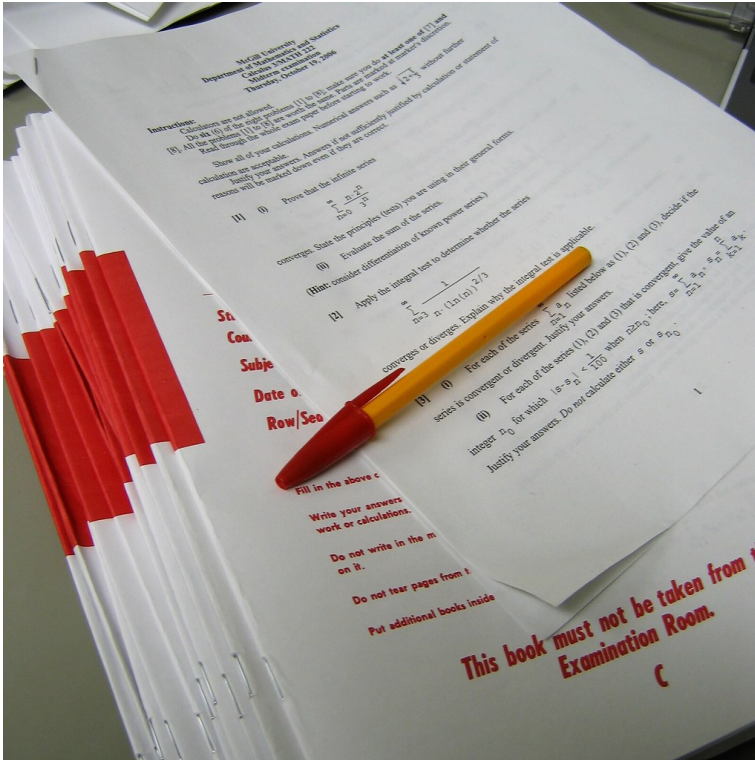
Engage in dialogue



Develop students' self-directed learning skills

Tip: Give students opportunities to explore, collaborate, connect, share and reflect

Assessment



Design authentic assignments



Encourage reflective practice

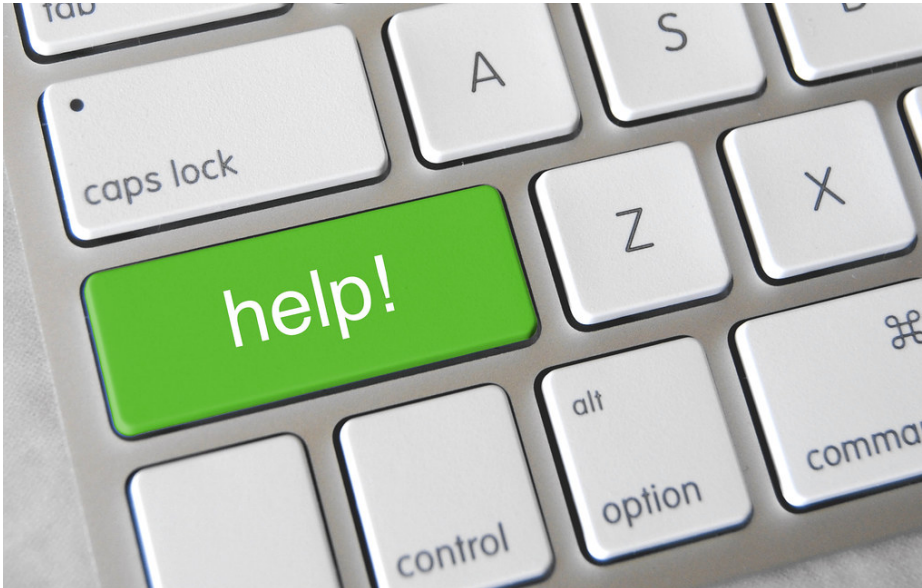


Utilize e-portfolios

**Tip: Trust your students not to cheat
and design so that they can't**

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Support and care



Graphic "Help Key" by Got Credit is licensed under CC BY 2.0



Demonstrate empathy when giving student support



Nurture trust



Be a model of self-determined learning

Tip: Practice self-care so that you can care for and support others

General guidance

- Don't have all the answers
- Let learners fail
- Encourage every step toward independence
- Scaffold the process (individualized/personalized)
- Give learners the freedom to choose
- Maximize use of tools on the social web
- Trust your students



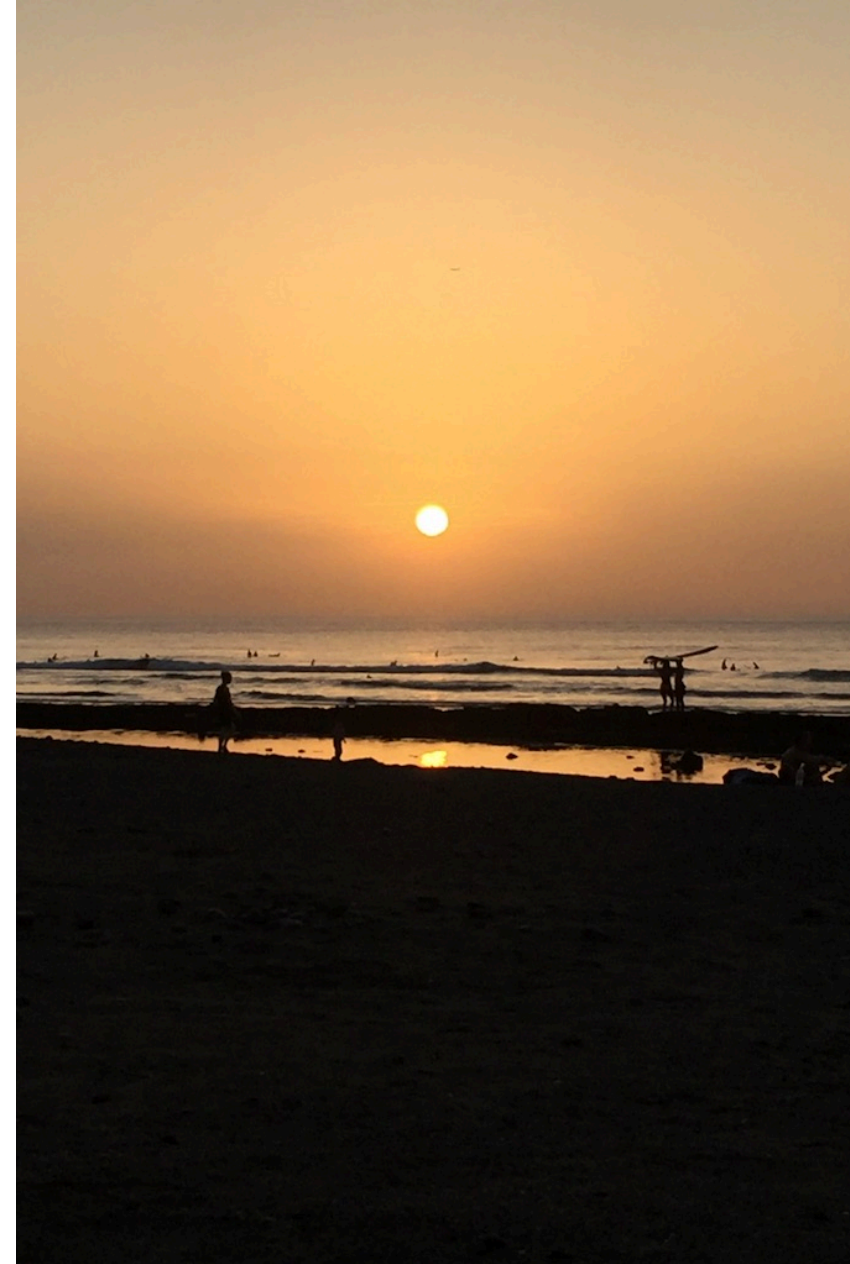
Resource:

<https://uol.de/coer/announcements/free-oer-now-available-experiences-in-self-determined-learning/>

“We have an opportunity to plan for the future we want, rather than one we are given.”

Neil Fassina

President of Athabasca University and ICDE
(EDEN Webinar, June 2, 2020)



Questions?

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Resources (1)

OER

- Barrett, H.C. (2011). Balancing the two faces of e-portfolios. *Innovations in Education*, 2nd Ed. British Columbia Ministry of Education: Canada. Available from: <https://electronicportfolios.org/balance/>
- Bates, A.W. (2015). *Teaching in a digital age: Guidelines for designing teaching and learning*. Contact North: Canada. Available from: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/teaching-in-a-digital-age-guidelines-for-designing-teaching-and-learning-for-a-digital-age>
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- <https://www.routledge.com/International-Handbook-of-E-Learning-Volume-2-Implementation-and-Case/Ally-Khan/p/book/9781315760902>

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- Veletsianos, G. (2010). *Emerging technologies in distance education*. Athabasca University Press: Athabasca, Canada. Available from: <https://www.aupress.ca/books/120177-emerging-technologies-in-distance-education/>

Resources (4)

Links:

Dublin City University's Resources: <https://www.dcu.ie/nidl/resources/Swiftly-Moving-Online-Coronavirus.shtml>

Merlot's Teaching and Learning Online Resources: <https://www.merlot.org/merlot/viewSite.htm?id=9160704>

ICDE's webinars, tips, and news and resources: <https://www.icde.org/corona>

Journal of Interactive Media in Education (JIME): <https://jime.open.ac.uk/27/volume/2002/issue/2/>

Jesse Stommel blog/website: <https://www.jessestommel.com>

Dave Cormier: Online Learning in a Hurry. YouTube videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9QKBudTh48>

Brian Lamb's blog: <https://abject.ca/thought-leaders/>

Steve Wheeler: Three free online courses: learner support, digital literacies, and PLEs.

<https://twitter.com/stevewheeler/status/1247925498656718850>

Contact North ask an expert about teaching online: <https://teachonline.ca/ask-an-expert>

EDEN Webinar Series: Education in a Time of Pandemic: <http://www.eden-online.org/covid-webinar-series/>

Phil Hill on Ed Tech: <https://philonedtech.com>

Backward design: <https://educationaltechnology.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/backward-design.pdf> EDEN

Webinar on Practical Tips for Learning and Instructional Design: http://www.eden-online.org/eden_conference/practical-tips-for-learning-and-instructional-design/

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Books/Articles:

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- Wiggins, G.P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: Alexandria, VA.