



A banner for a MOOC. On the left, there is a graphic of a laptop screen displaying a document titled 'AuthenticAssessment for Online Learning' with a blue checkmark icon. A vertical red bar with the word 'MOOC' in white capital letters is positioned to the right of the laptop. To the right of the red bar, the title 'Authentic Assessment for Online Learning' is written in large, bold, black font. Below the title, the C.O.L. logo and the text 'COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING' are displayed in a smaller font.

MOOC

**Authentic Assessment for
Online Learning: Course
Material**

Authentic Assessment for Online Learning

First Offering

May 9-June 3, 2022

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) was established in 1987 by Commonwealth Heads of Government “... to create and widen access to opportunities for learning, making use of the potential offered by distance education and by the application of communication technologies to education.” (Memorandum of Understanding on the Commonwealth of Learning).

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About the Course

Course Description

This course provides an overview of learning design to help you to conceptualize authentic assessments. You will acquire knowledge of the competencies and skills needed in the contemporary workplace, focusing on assessment strategies that engage and motivate learners in the e-learning environment that promote both academic integrity and deep learning.

This course will cover the fundamentals of creating learner-centered digital assessment through 21st century examples via visual layouts, discussions, and practical exercises. Upon completion of this course, you will have relevant knowledge and practical strategies to design learner-centered digital assessment focusing on academic integrity, engagement, authenticity, and deep learning in the e-learning environment.

Learning Outcome

Upon successful completion of this course, you are expected to be able to:

- Apply the 9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning in the context of Authentic Assessment.
- Explain the importance of constructive alignment and assessment in learning design.
- Identify examples of authentic and alternative assessments (e.g., reflections, problem-based assessments, open-book examinations, cooperative exams, presentations, debates, student-led discussions).
- Articulate personal teaching values relating to assessment.
- Recognize the importance of learner engagement and motivation in establishing academic integrity.
- Identify design principles and features that encourage academic integrity (engagement, motivation, flexibility, collaboration, authenticity, etc.).
- Explain how authentic online assessments can respect cultural and human diversity.
- Describe practical, institutional, and technical challenges pertaining to online assessment and academic integrity (e.g., online proctoring, algorithms, surveillance, trust/anxiety, academic concerns).
- Explain the effect of the COVID-19 “pivot” to emergency remote teaching on teaching, learning, and concerns about assessment.

Target Audience

This course is designed primarily for online instructors in a postsecondary setting who seek to create more authentic and engaging assessments. It may also be useful for educational administrators and digital learning enthusiasts who are interested in building knowledge, competencies and skills that can support teachers in moving towards alternative assessment strategies.

Additional Information

Duration/length of course:	4 weeks
Number of units:	4 units
Workload:	4 to 6 hours per week.
Cost:	Free
Level:	Introductory
Pre- Requisites:	None
Language:	English
Course Modality:	Asynchronous with some optional synchronous sessions
Institution:	Commonwealth of Learning

Certification

Upon completion, you will receive recognition for your participation through a verified, easily shareable Certificate.

A **Certificate of Completion** will be awarded to participants who complete the following:

- A minimum of 60% on all four (4) unit quizzes.
- Completion of the Learning Journal assignment according to required specifications.
- Meaningful participation in a minimum of four (4) activities/forum discussions.

A **Certificate of Participation** will be awarded to participants who complete the following:

- A minimum grade of 60% on all four (4) quizzes.
- Meaningful participation in at least three (3) activities/ forum discussions.

Video 1: Welcome to Authentic Assessment for Online Learning by Jason Openo (04:30)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbSdNBEwLIU&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=1>

Unit 1: Learning-Centered Design for Authentic Assessment

Overview

Welcome to Unit 1 of the course. In this first unit, we begin with some basic concepts that will be further discussed as you move through the course. Try not to skip material as you move through the unit; you will need to have mastered these concepts as you move forward.

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated calls to make the higher education sector more learning-centered. In the pivot to deploy rapid online learning solutions, instructors have mastered many new online learning approaches and many traditional courses have moved online. Less attention, however, has focused on assessment which we advocate here as the basis for learning-centered design. This unit will highlight and explain the learning-centred approach to authentic assessment design. Emphasis will be on learning design to conceptualize authentic assessments that demonstrate competencies and build skills needed in the contemporary workplace. Learning activities will offer you the opportunity to engage in discussion with peers and facilitators to discuss opportunities and challenges of creating authentic assessments for learning-centered learning.

Objectives

You will explore learning-centered design for authentic assessment through a critical overview of:

- Learning-centered approaches to authentic assessment design that demonstrates competencies and skills needed in the contemporary workplace.
- Examples of authentic and alternative assessments
- The importance of assessment in learning design

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of assessment in learning design.
- Identify examples of authentic and alternative assessments (e.g., reflections, problem-based assessments, open-book examinations, cooperative exams, presentations,

debates, student-led discussions) and explain why these assessment types are more learner centred.

Video 2 - Learner-centered design for Authentic Assessment (05:29)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v04VGWwXFSY&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=2>

Video 3 - Covid Pandemic: Assessment Challenges and Opportunities (09:44)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9PHoYol88g&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=3>

Video 4 - Authentic Assessment: Definition and Practice (12:56)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tR6_HyWE7A8&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=4

Discussion

Discussion Forum 1: Introduce yourself share your learning goals. Why are you taking this course and what are you hoping to take away from it?

Discussion Forum 2: From the materials presented, what do you think are some of the major challenges for instructors when transitioning to more authentic forms of assessment?

Discussion Forum 3: What has confused you so far?

The readings and videos for Unit 1 raise a lot of issues around assessment, such as changing practices, the use of technology in education, and the ways that technology helps and hinders teaching and learning. Think back to this unit's contents. What is one area that you are unclear about? In the discussion board appropriately labelled, post your question and in 50-100 words explain what makes this a muddy area for you.

Learning Journal - Part 1

Reflecting on your current assessment strategies, either:

1. Answer the questions below in 300 - 500 words, or post a 3–5-minute video reflection in the weekly forum (using a link to YouTube):

- How learner-centred are your assessments? Explain.
- What kinds of assessments most value and respect the learner? Why?
- What is one wish you have for your assessment practice?
- How do you plan to make your course's assessments more authentic?

OR

2. Consider one of the assessments in one of your courses. Complete the 5-dimension framework for authentic assessment worksheet and hand it in.

OR

3. What assessment change would you like to see at your institution? How can you start to generate momentum for a change to more authentic assessments as a chair, dean, academic leader? **File(s)** [CoL - Five-dimension of authentic assessment - planning worksheet.docx](#)

Readings

Conrad, D., & Openo, J. (2018). The big picture: A framework for assessment in online learning. *Assessment strategies for online learning: Engagement and authenticity* (pp. 3-20). https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120279_99Z_Conrad_Openo_2018-Assessment_Strategies_for_Online_Learning.pdf

Conrad, D., & Openo, J. (2018). What do you believe? The importance of beliefs about teaching and learning in online assessment. *Assessment strategies for online learning: Engagement and authenticity* (pp. 37-54). https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120279_99Z_Conrad_Openo_2018-Assessment_Strategies_for_Online_Learning.pdf

Unit 2: Fostering Academic Integrity in Authentic Assessment

Overview

Educators often worry about students not practicing academic integrity and therefore not benefitting from the learning opportunities presented to them. This unit will outline how course and assessment design can promote academic integrity. By focusing on strategies that engage and motivate learners, instructors can create an environment that promotes both academic integrity and deeper learning.

Objectives

In unit 2, you will develop a critical overview of:

- How course and assessment design can promote academic integrity
- The importance of learner engagement and motivation in establishing academic integrity
- Design principles and features that support academic integrity.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Recognize the importance of learner engagement and motivation in establishing academic integrity.
- Identify design principles and features that support academic integrity (engagement, motivation, flexibility, collaboration, authenticity, etc.).

Video 5: Authentic Assessment and Academic Integrity: Part 1 (09:08)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ue90iLAbcLY&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=5>

Video 6 – Authentic Assessment and Academic Integrity: Part 2 (05:23)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opVFykNih3c&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=6>

Discussion

What are some of the theoretical reasons students commit academic integrity violations? How can well-designed authentic assessments reduce this inclination? Express some of the different ways you can communicate the importance of academic integrity to your students.

Learning Journal - Part 2

Reflecting on the assessment strategies you use or have experienced, answer 2-3 of the questions below in 300-500 words or post a 3-5 minute video reflection (using a YouTube link):

- Which of your assessments are your students most likely to cheat on? Why?
- What methods do you already use in your assessment practice to discourage academic integrity violations?
- How can creating more authentic assessments in your courses reduce the likelihood that students will want (and be able) to commit academic integrity violations?
- What would YOU emphasize to learners when discussing academic integrity? Or, what has been emphasized to YOU in the past that impacted you (or not?)

OR

- How can you strengthen a culture of integrity at your institution, using authentic assessments as one of the main strategies?

Readings

Beukes-Amis, M., Brown, T. H., Moore, S., Makoe, M., Skidmore, J., & Veletsianos, G. (2022). Making digital assessment count: Designing for engagement, integrity, and authenticity, Commonwealth of Learning. [Making Digital Assessment Count: Designing for Engagement, Integrity and Authenticity \(col.org\)](#)

Openo, J. (2019). The international dimension of academic integrity: An integrative literature review. *Canadian Perspectives on Academic Integrity*, 2(2), 25-44. [[view at original source](#)]

Anwar, R., Kalra, J., Ross, M., Smith, D., & Vogel, V. (n.d.). Encouraging academic integrity through a preventative framework. <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/encourageacademicintegrity/chapter/principles-of-academic-integrity/>

Unit 3: Authentic Assessment and Human Diversity

Overview

Units 1 and 2 of this course focused on foundational concepts underlying designing authentic assessment for online learning. Unit 3 now addresses an increasingly important topic in our “global village” world: attention to cultural diversity in design and assessment in online learning. This unit also considers the connection between Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and authentic assessment, and how more authentic assessments can support inclusive design for learning.

Objective

In unit 3, you will explore:

- The importance of recognising cultural diversity and inclusion in higher education design for online learning assessment
- The connection between Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and authentic assessment

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of recognizing cultural diversity and inclusion in higher education design for online learning assessment.
- Express the connection between Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and authentic assessment and describe how authentic assessment can support the principles of UDL.

Video 7 – Importance of Educational Values to Authentic Assessment (09:47).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ObRBjIMiWbo&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=7>

Video 8 – Authentic Assessment and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (08:34).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG-IAiM6GQs&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=8>

Discussion

Access the Internet to locate relevant resources on the topic of cultural diversity in online design. Your “finds” can be in any media. Write at least two examples of how these resources can be used in your teaching and learning context. Post in the Forum location.

Learning Journal

1. Pulling from your understanding of cultural and other forms of human diversity, explain how authentic assessments can better support diverse learners. Provide this explanation in 300-500 words or a 3-5 minute video (post a YouTube link in the discussion forum).

OR

2. Complete the reflection and planning worksheet.

OR

3. How could you better embed Universal Design Learning principles in assessment practices in your academic program or at your institution?

File(s) [AAOL-Unit3Assessment Worksheet-CoL.docx](#)

Readings

[openo-2019.pdf](#)

Gunawardena, C. N. (2014). Chapter 2 of O. Zawacki-Richter and T. Anderson (Eds.), *Globalization, culture, and online distance learning*. Online distance education: Towards a research agenda (pp. 75-108). <https://www.aupress.ca/books/120233-online-distance-education/>

Zhang, J., Takacs, S., Truong L., Smulders, D., Lee, H. (2021). *Assessment design: Perspectives and examples informed by Universal Design for Learning*. Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation. Justice Institute of British Columbia. <https://ctli.jibc.ca/wp->

Unit 4: Issues in Authentic Assessment Design

Overview

Units 1, 2, and 3 of this course have focused on the concepts underlying designing authentic assessment for online learning, including being sensitive to cultural and human diversity. The design of courses within a higher education institution, however, is not an isolated activity; design is integrated with institutional strategy, vision and, of course, resources. The logistics of design and its attendant issues will vary from institution to institution, but the themes are usually the same. Unit 4 presents, through readings and videos, some of those issues and their implications for learners, policymakers, administrators, and instructors. Unit 4 also provides an opportunity to pull all the learnings together into an action plan for how to create and support the development of authentic assessments.

Objective

In unit 4, you will demonstrate:

- Practical, institutional, and technical challenges pertaining to online authentic assessments
- An implementable action plan to create and implement a move towards more authentic online assessments

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe practical, institutional, and technical challenges pertaining to online authentic assessments (e.g., the time and work involved, the degree of subjectivity, and instructional experience).
- Develop an implementable action plan to create and implement a move towards more authentic online assessment strategies in your courses or at your institution .

Video 9 – Issues in Authentic Assessment (09:47)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZHLF_ooLCU&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=9

Video 10 – Authentic Assessment Continuum Examples (09:34)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wooXlxF-smg&list=PLXN-JCVb8z8CCj3M1Z0pUvirIlaNRKVAU&index=10>

Discussions

Moving towards authentic assessments can be difficult because authentic assessments are cognitively complex tasks that may require more time and subjectivity. What are some of the major obstacles to transitioning to authentic assessments? What creative solutions are available to overcome these barriers?

Learning Journal

In this somewhat capstone activity, imagine you are either an academic leader or an instructor. Using your discussions, previous assignments, and worksheets from throughout this course, outline a plan of action:

a. How are you going to transition towards more authentic assessments in your course - aligning your instructional values, promoting academic integrity, UDL, and the 5-dimension framework for authentic assessment? What are some of the impacts this will have on your teaching practice, your students, and your organization? How can you plan to support the impacts of this transition?

OR

b. How are you going to emphasize authentic assessments as an academic priority in your program, school, or institution? What are some of the impacts this will have on you, your students, and your organization? How can you plan to support the impacts of this transition?

Reading

Conrad, D., & Openo, J. (2018). The big picture: A framework for assessment in online learning. *Assessment strategies for online learning: Engagement and authenticity* (pp. 3-20). https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120279_99Z_Conrad_Openo_2018-Assessment_Strategies_for_Online_Learning.pdf

- Chapter 5: Assessment using e-portfolios, journals, projects, and group work (pp. 73-90)
- Chapter 7: Planning an assessment and evaluation strategy - authentically (pp. 107-130)

Appendices

Transcript for Video 2 – Learner Centered Design

Hello everyone and welcome to unit 1. In each unit, we are going to model what we recommend as best practice. Build clear objectives. Think about how best to deliver content. Engage students in learning and use authentic assessments. In each unit, you will watch a short video lecture, read some excellent readings, discuss the major themes with other learners, and then do some work. In this video we are going to explain the essence of what we mean when we say, “learner-centred.” The objectives for this unit are to explain the importance of assessment in learning design and then identify why examples of authentic and alternative assessments are learner centred. We use the word learner-centred quite a bit, but what does it actually mean to be learner-centred?

I have traced learner-centred back to this 1995 article, where Barr and Tagg talked about a shift from the “instruction paradigm” to the “learning paradigm.” The shift from a teaching-centred or instruction paradigm to the learning paradigm places the learning experience at the center of instructional processes and goals. The role of faculty changes from a lecturer who delivers content to a designer of powerful learning experiences. As Barr and Tagg wrote in 1995, “The fairly passive lecture where faculty talk and most students listen, is contrary to almost every principle of optimal settings for student learning.” This isn’t to bad mouth the lecture. But it is to shine a light on the other things a faculty member needs to do to create an environment conducive for learning. Lecturing becomes one of many possible methods, all of which are evaluated on the basis of their ability to promote appropriate learning.

Being learner-centred suggests that the lecture isn’t the only or the best form of knowledge transfer. What we promote in its place is whatever teaching approaches serve best to prompt learning of particular knowledge by particular students by engaging students in knowledge construction. That word engagement is critical to understanding what it means to be learner-centred? The learning cycle is comprised of content, learning outcomes, teaching and learning strategies, and assessment. Whenever one of these is missing, the learning cycle is in jeopardy. Content is essential, but content cannot crowd out the other aspects of the learning cycle, without negatively impacting learning. What teaching and learning activities will best support the learning outcomes? What teaching and learning strategies can elicit student discovery and the construction of knowledge?

One of those teaching and learning strategies might be assessment if we assess students in authentic and engaging ways. Accounting for all the elements of the learning cycle takes thoughtful and intentional design. And it might be helpful to revisit Michael Moore’s three types of interaction as we think about what it means to be learner centred. Being learner centred means creating powerful learning experiences where students construct knowledge, often collaboratively.

- The first form of interaction is learner-content interaction. Learner content interaction takes place in this course in the form of lectures and readings. Moore says “this is a defining characteristic of education. Without it, there cannot be education since education is a process of intellectually interacting with content that results in changes in the learner’s understanding, the learner’s perspective, and the cognitive structures of the learner’s mind. Instructional content is closely associated with learner activity, since there has to be some interaction between learner and content for information to be learned. Therefore, there is always some activity associated with a resource: reading, watching, revising, creating, etc.
- The second type of highly desirable interaction is interaction between the learner and the instructor, the expert. Instructors don’t just provide content; they provide counsel, support, and encouragement. But they also design the learning environment. Engaging learners with content-oriented activities, assessment of learning, and the interesting and relevant exchange of ideas is all part of learner-teacher interaction. In this course, we have an outstanding team of TAs to respond to your discussions and your evaluate your learning journals to make sure you are applying the learning correctly, and to answer any questions.
- The third type of interaction is learner-learner. Peer assessment or peer instruction can increase student interactions with content, with the instructor, and with other learners. Online discussions are also key activities that encourage learner-learner interactions. To be learner-centred is to focus is on creating powerful learning environments, and a significant part of this shift is rethinking assessment from something that happens at the end of the course in a high-stakes final exam to something that happens throughout the course, in a public way. This is our focus for this course

Transcript for Video 3– Covid Pandemic: Assessment Challenges and Opportunities

The COVID-19 pandemic changed almost everything about our daily routines. Campuses were locked and teaching remotely and physical distancing changed the way we worked, learned, and attended conferences, The Covid-19 pandemic also accelerated calls to make higher education more learning-centered. In the pivot to deploy rapid online learning solutions, instructors have mastered many new online learning approaches and many traditional courses moved online. Less attention, however, has focused on assessment which we advocate here as the basis for learning-centered design. In the previous video, we covered the essence of the shift to learner-centred design and the importance of creating powerful learning experiences, especially assessments. In this video, we are going to explain the importance of assessment in learning design and look at some assessment examples and identify why these assessment types are more learner-centered.

During the pandemic, final exams, one of the many rhythms of academic life were disrupted, and there is now an emerging split between those who offer online proctored exams and those who will not. Online proctored exams are one of the fastest-growing segments within the educational technology marketplace, but there are reasons to have serious concerns about

online proctoring and for shifting away from online proctored final exams whenever possible. Online proctored exams create a number of problems. Students need to have reliable access to a computer and internet at a necessary time. Limited bandwidth can cause submission issues, and if a student's computer or internet should fail, it will increase anxiety for both students and faculty. Webcams are not as hard to get as they were at the start of the pandemic, and many models are not prohibitively expensive, but it is still a cost that students have to bear. Finally, the best argument is simply that surveillance is not good pedagogy. Many students and faculty find it creepy and uncomfortable to have their home spaces recorded by third parties. This has led a number of institutions to dedicate time and resources to developing alternatives to exams.

We will look first at the process and then at different assessment forms. Rethinking final exams brings learning outcomes and course design back into focus. What are the learning goals or outcomes of the final exam? And this question also brings us back to the fundamental concept of constructive alignment. What should students be able to do at the end of this course? What are the outcomes? What teaching and learning activities will best support the achievement of those outcomes – those are the teaching and learning experiences. And then finally: What's the best evidence students can produce to demonstrate acquisition of the learning outcomes? Constructive alignment in a nutshell is: Assessment that requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the teaching and learning experiences that lead to those outcomes. Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. Following outcomes, we need to understand what kind of student effort and experience will lead to particular outcomes. Learning gain is hard to see, but the assessment can provide the best evidence, especially if the assessment matches the level of learning gain required.

The importance of constructive alignment cannot be overstated. Constructive alignment is grounded in the nine principles of good practice of assessment of student learning. Assessment requires attention to outcomes, but also to the experience that leads to those outcomes, and the kind of student effort that leads to mastery of these particular outcomes. The kind of student effort required brings us to something you are probably familiar with or have heard of – Bloom's taxonomy. We won't spend a lot of time talking about Bloom's taxonomy, but it is a useful model for pinpointing what are the learning outcomes for our assessment strategies. Exams, especially, tend to concentrate at the lower level of the taxonomy, where students need to remember new knowledge, new terms, and demonstrate understanding of concepts and models. If, in this course, we were to build an exam on Bloom's taxonomy, I would ask you to recall the six layers of Bloom's Taxonomy.

As we move upwards towards application, I would ask you to – as we are doing in this course – to apply Bloom's taxonomy to your courses – Apply Bloom's by identifying the learning outcomes and goals of your courses. Finally, if we moved all the way up to the evaluation and synthesis levels, I would ask you to critique Bloom's taxonomy and describe the limitations of this model. In the first case, the outcome is recall, and the teaching and learning activity is reading and preparing for the exam. In the second case, I would be looking for a breakdown of your learning goals and meaningful application to your practice environment. In the third case,

I would be looking for a well-reasoned argument. This is the basis of constructive alignment. Again, Bloom's is a good tool to describe the kind of student effort required to achieve learning outcomes. And so, the learning activity for this module is to review the learning outcomes for one of your courses. What are your learning goals, and what are the learning goals and outcomes of the final exam. Then look at each outcome – What's the best evidence that students can generate to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome.

This reconsideration of our outcomes will often cause a reconsideration of our assessment strategies, and reconsiderations might be minor adjustments or major adjustments, and the next section provides examples for moving towards more learner centred assessments, remembering that learner-centred is about creating experiences that invite students to construct knowledge. Minor modifications to exams that became popular during the pandemic included explaining why a particular answer on a multiple-choice exam was chosen. Students needed to explain or justify their reasoning. Or, in another example, instructors provided students with a list of key terms asking students to use the discipline-based language appropriately in a short paragraph. These are more learner-centred insofar as they are asking students to construct knowledge, not just recall it.

Perhaps my favorite modification to the traditional exam is the 2-stage exam from the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative. In this twist on the exam, students take the exam as individuals and then take the exam again in groups to stress the value of collaborative learning. My favorite quote about pedagogy is this – what's the best form of teaching? Well, the best answer is it depends. It depends on the discipline, the students and their maturity, the content. But the next best answer is students teaching students. And the 2-stage exam turns the exam into a peer instruction opportunity. But there are far more assessment alternatives, including reflections, problem-based assessments, presentations using the podcast format, debates and student-led discussions. Again, these are all more learner-centric because they create the conditions for students to produce learning, often in a public and collaborative fashion. Of the many creative assessment strategies listed, I will mention only how concept maps can be a more learner-centred form of assessment.

One of the major differences between an expert and a novice is their knowledge organization scheme. The concept map asks students to produce visual organization and representation of how different concepts or ideas are intertwined and connected. In a concept map, students are making their knowledge visible to the instructor, who can then appraise or diagnose errors in understanding. How students organize knowledge influences how they learn and apply what they know. A concept maps asks students to consciously organize their knowledge about a complex concept. Experts have rich, meaningful knowledge structures that support learning and performance. The more complex and highly connected knowledge structures allow experts to access and use their knowledge more efficiently and effectively. Thank you – in this video, we explained the importance of assessment in learner-centred design, and identified assessment examples that are more learner-centred. In our next video, we will define authentic assessment and begin discussing how to build them.

Transcript for Video 4 – Authentic Assessment: Definition and Practice

Earlier in the course we defined what it means to be learner-centered, and then we discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated a shift towards alternative, learner-centred assessments where students produce knowledge. These forms of assessment are complex and challenging, but they also avoid some of the worst challenges presented by online proctoring. Now, in this video, let's define what authentic assessments are. And we will start the process of definition by looking at the 9 principles of good practice for assessing student learning. In this opening principle, the first, the authors state the assessment is most effective when it is a multi-dimensional activity revealed in performance over time. There is a focus on what students can do, especially in those assessment methods that call for actual performance. When we look at the definition for authentic assessments and authentic tasks, we will see a lot of commonalities between this principle and the definition of authentic assessment.

In *Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Practitioner's Handbook*, Goff et al., give a very good definition of authentic assessment: Authentic assessment tasks require students to use skills, knowledge, values and attitudes they have learned in situations that simulate the performance context of the intended discipline or profession as closely as possible. In aligning assessment with outcomes, the degree to which assessment tasks simulate 'real-world' problems and situations associated with their disciplines or professions measures its authenticity. Authentic assessments ask students to complete tasks based in real-world relevance. This real world relevance capitalizes on a key component of Malcolm Knowles's *Adult Learning Principles* - namely that adult learners want to be able to immediately apply new knowledge to real-life situations and problems.

I want to focus first on that phrase – as closely as possible to real-world activities. Authentic, in authentic assessment, means creating a task that simulates the performance context of the discipline or profession as closely as possible. The key operative words are degree, simulation, and as possible. Authenticity must be seen as an ideal that is often practically impossible to reach in many practice settings. There is a difference between the relatively safe, scaffolded educational environment and the 'real world.' But what "as closely as possible" also means is that even if it is impossible to create a perfectly authentic assessment that matches real world conditions, there may still be room to move to make an assessment more authentic and move more closely to real world activities. The authentic task is, at its simplest, what are we asking students to do? Assessment shapes the quality of learning and the quality of teaching because students do what is rewarded. For this reason, one must be sure to reward activities that encourage deep and meaningful approaches to learning.

The other aspects of authentic assessment are more interesting and can be more problematic. Authentic assessment tasks are ill-defined and open-ended, meaning that they can be solved through multiple approaches and allow for a diversity of outcome, mirroring what students will encounter later in life. One of my favourite authentic assessments is a business case. Students

need to present a strategic rationale for a new product or a new service. To develop the business case, students need to develop a budget, a marketing plan, and a project implementation plan, etc. All of these sub tasks are part of the assignment, and while there are guides and templates available, there is no right way or one way to complete the assignment, and students are invited to be creative. This can be a bit frustrating for students, so we also need to be able to give clear instructions without giving an answer. Showing student exemplars can be very effective here if current students don't try to copy what previous students have done.

Authentic assessment tasks take place over a sustained period of time. And many instructional designers recommend chunking assignments, giving feedback, and allowing students to resubmit based on peer and/or instructor feedback. This is definitely recommended as a highly effective teaching practice. Authentic tasks provide the opportunity to reflect. John Dewey suggested we possess certain habits of mind, and occasionally, we need to interrupt these habits of mind, we have to reflect on our thought processes to see how they are valuable. This is one of the more challenging elements of authentic assessments because not all students are naturally reflective or know how to reflect. One successful approach I have used is a process observer report in some of my team-based assignments. The process observer is one student whose role is to document how a final product came to be, recognizing that the process is often just as important as the product. Reflection might require some direct instruction on how to reflect, and another approach might be to ask students to submit a short appendix on what they believe they did well, how they would like to improve their assignment, or explain what they might have done differently, and why.

The opportunity to collaborate is a big piece of authentic assessments because how often do we work alone in the real-world? The current workplace is geographically-distant, team-based, and technologically mediated, and in many of these situations, collaboration is integral to the task rather than achievable by an individual learner. This social, interactive nature of meaning and knowledge construction is a suitable teaching approach for many areas, but especially for the growing focus on essential employability skills such as communication, decision-making, gathering and managing information, interpersonal skills of (team work, conflict resolution), and personal skills (managing the use of time and taking responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences). The authentic task must also create a polished product that has value in its own right and allow for competing solutions. Authentic assessments serve the interests of students by encouraging learners to play a more active role in the assessment of their own learning.

Authentic assessments are especially important for distance educators because “most distance learners live and learn in the world of work”. These learners benefit most from assessments that as closely as possible replicate the task or process being assessed. Authentic assessment is “connected to adults’ life circumstances, frames of reference, and values,” and they encourage participants to bring their authentic selves to the learning environment. If we were to take all of the characteristics of authentic tasks from and boil them down into 5 essential planning elements, we would get the Five-dimensional framework for authentic assessment, by

Guilikers, Bastiens, and Kirshner. The task we have already talked about - what ill-defined and open-ended task do students need to accomplish? The physical context – where would they engage in this situation? Not all situations can be replicated online. But recognizing the limits of authentic assessment must be a starting point for creativity, not a discussion-ender. What digital spaces/tools will they be working in, like Google docs, Microsoft Teams, Slack, etc. Social context – what kind of relationships would they be involved in? What kinds of relationships are involved? Assessment result or form – this is the polished product that we have already talked about. This could take any number of forms, a poster presentation or a house design.

Finally, the criteria and standards. How will we judge quality? What are the elements that will go into our rubric? I'd now like to provide an example I was part of that I hope will illuminate the definition of authentic assessment, the authentic task, and the five-dimensional framework from Medicine Hat College's Built Environment Engineering Technology Program. In 2019, Medicine Hat College won a solar grant to build a solar classroom. Pictured here are the students on the way to a community consultation to display their ideas. The task - we asked them to fulfill the request in the grant – to design a solar classroom or a solar garden that was built harmoniously into the environment. A little context - at the time, the largest solar field had just been installed outside Medicine Hat College, and there was some pushback from community members who thought it was ugly. Others, both skeptics and proponents, were curious. How much energy does this field generate? Students worked in groups to create a polished product that had a diversity of outcome. The polished product was a set of design boards and a verbal presentation of their designs. Their designs were then shown off at a community consultation with local residents. Some student groups went in the way of the solar garden and some went in the way of the solar classroom – demonstrating both the polished product and the diversity of outcome. Students explained their ideas to industry and council representatives, they received feedback, and they were asked to refine their designs. This product exhibited almost all of the characteristics of an authentic task. It had real world relevance, was ill-defined, requiring students to define tasks and sub-tasks – the board presentation, the verbal presentation, etc. They worked in teams most of the semester, and they had to reflect on the experience as the final part of the assignment – reflecting in this case concerned what they heard from the community about their designs. It was a polished product that had competing solutions.

To conclude this story, this is the structure that ended up getting built. It's not as cool or as fancy as what the students designed, but students created something of real value to our campus and again, we come as close as we can to real-world conditions. There are plans to use this as an outdoor classroom and a bandstand for a summer concert series, and we strengthened our community connections by creating a learner-centred process where students created their designs and then were assessed publicly. This is a worked example of the five-dimensions of authentic assessment that can be used for planning purposes. What is the complex, ill-defined task students need to complete? In this task, students worked in a collaborative digital environment to manage the project. The social context was a project-based team. The products

included designs and a community consultation, and the right-hand column outlines the major criterion and standards upon which they were judged by their faculty and the community. Now that we have defined authentic assessments, looked at the characteristics of authentic tasks, and looked at the five-dimensions of authentic assessments using an example, it is time for you to participate in the discussion forums and reflect on how you can apply this in your courses by building a five-dimensional framework for your assessments. Now that you know what the course entails, you can start the course.

Transcript for Video 5 – Authentic Assessment and Academic Integrity: Part 1

Welcome to Unit 2: We have made it through the introductory materials, and now the course starts to get more exciting. In this unit we discuss the relationship between authentic assessments and academic integrity. Educators often worry about students not practicing academic integrity and therefore not benefitting from the learning opportunities presented to them. This unit will outline how course and assessment design can promote academic integrity. By focusing on strategies that engage and motivate learners, instructors can create an environment that promotes both academic integrity and deeper learning.

In Unit 2, we will cover the following learning outcomes – recognize the importance of learner engagement and motivation in establishing academic integrity, and identify design principles and features that support academic integrity. Academic integrity is the moral code of academia and can be defined as the use, generation, and communication of information in an ethical, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity violations (including cheating, fabrication of information, facilitating academic misconduct, and plagiarism) have reached an alarming level that threatens to undermine the value of postsecondary credentials. While academic integrity has reached a new height of concern, the situation is far from new. Whitley reviewed the prevalence of cheating in 107 studies from 1970-1996, and the prevalence of total cheating in these studies ranged from 9% to 95% of students, with a mean of 70.4% students admitting to committing some form of academic integrity violation.

More recent research from the International Centre of Academic Integrity concluded 40% of students admitted to committing academic integrity violations. 40 percent is consistent with Whitley's finding that the 43.1% of students cheated on exams, 40.9% of students cheated on homework, and 47% of students engaged in plagiarism. This table highlights that academic integrity is a world-wide phenomenon, and it should be noted that most of these studies used self-reporting methodologies to determine the rate of cheating. Self-reporting studies may under-report, so it is conceivable the percentage of students who actually cheated is higher than documented in some of these studies, though you can't go much higher than 80% or 94%. Whatever the real prevalence of academic integrity violations is in your context, it is likely higher than faculty, administrators and the public would be comfortable with. It's important to note that students engage in academic integrity violations for very different reasons. Students,

especially international students, are under increasing pressure to be successful, and there are important rewards to be gained – for all students, a job, a salary, and a career at stake.

As students feel this pressure, there are opportunities to be dishonest, and the truth is, they'll probably get away with it. Cheating has been normalized, and some people do it just because it feels good. Other students don't cheat because it violates their ethical codes and the codes of their institutions. They worry about the risk and consequences, but they couldn't do it because it would undermine their sense of integrity and their learning goals. But whatever good or bad reason that leads students to commit academic integrity violations, it's important to take academic integrity seriously because it has symbolic and real costs. In a non-controversial title that is unlikely to raise the hackles of anyone listening to this talk, Bryan Caplan argues that postsecondary credentials are mostly signals, or symbols, and the economic impact of degrees has long been referred to as the "sheepskin effect." Why discourage cheating? Caplan asks. Because detecting and punishing cheaters preserves the signaling value of your school's diploma. When more of your students cheat their way to graduation, firms that hire your students are less likely to get the smart, hardworking team players they're paying for. Every time your school expels a cheater, you protect the good names of your graduates – past, present and future. But the damage of academic integrity is not just symbolic.

There are real world consequences to academic integrity violations; studies suggest a relationship exists between students who cheat in an academic setting and the level of unethical conduct displayed in the workplace and this "extended incompetence could seriously jeopardize human safety." This would be especially true for health care fields or fields working with physical materials, such as engineering or trades. And yet, despite its prevalence and seriousness, by all accounts, the reporting of academic integrity seems to be a relatively rare event. Even though estimates suggest that at least 40% of undergraduate students commit some form of academic misconduct during their studies, including those engaged in contract cheating, faculty overwhelmingly choose not to report violations. It is likely that less than 1% of academic integrity violations are reported. The chances of students getting caught and reported is, according to Bertram Gallant and Stephens, vanishingly small. Faculty are best situated to identify, report, and address academic integrity violations, but there appears to be "a lack of concerted action" on the part of faculty to address academic integrity violations. In their comprehensive literature review, Thomas and De Bruin (2012) catalogue why faculty might be reluctant to report violations. Disincentives include:

- A denial of the problem and/or a denial of the harmful consequences of academic integrity; The significant effort involved in enforcement;
- A lack of buy-in to formal policies and procedures;
- Procedures are too cumbersome and may take away time from research or publications;
- Inconsistent enforcement of academic misconduct policies by other faculty and programs;
- The application of inappropriate penalties. (Thomas & De Bruin, 2012) Reporting also adds a dose of self-induced misery to the faculty's life.

It creates animosity with students and disturbs relationships. In addition to the lack of concerted effort on faculty to catch and report students, and the likelihood that students will get away with cheating, students are more likely to cheat in learning environments that are less personalized, less involving, less satisfying, less task-oriented, and less individualized. And this is precisely where authentic assessments come in because they have the chance to create more personalized, more involving, more task-oriented learning experiences. Now, more than any other time may finally be the era of authentic assessments. Even before the pandemic, the current work environment was increasingly technologically mediated, geographically distant, international, and team based. All these trends have intensified since the pandemic began. Authentic tasks are ill-defined and complex; perfect for a rapidly changing COVID-19 world. Working on ill-defined tasks in ill-defined circumstances provides the opportunity to collaborate, confronting the dual challenges of interactivity and authenticity. Designing authentic assessments is challenging but can be fun and creative work, and well-designed assessments provide opportunities for reflection while creating polished products valuable in their own right. Authentic assessments, by connecting to students's learning goals in relevant ways, contain the power to activate their ethical beliefs and decide that cheating isn't worth the risk because engaging in the learning experience is more important and rewarding than cheating. In the next video, we will talk more about how authentic assessments can influence student behaviour so that they engage in the assessment task, rather than hire someone to do it for them.

Transcript for Video 6 : Authentic Assessment and Academic Integrity: Part 2

Welcome to the second mini-lecture in Unit 2. In the first talk, I discussed how academic integrity is a major problem that undermines postsecondary credentials and can put people at risk. I noted that students violate academic integrity rules for lots of different reasons, and I suggested that authentic assessments can help by connecting to students learning goals and their ethical beliefs. This video expands upon this thought. The important work of the late Australian Tracey Bretag shows that many faculty in Australia were certainly moving towards authentic assessments prior to the pandemic. I'd like to highlight a few things on this chart.

First and most importantly, is that many faculty are still using heavily weighted tasks with short turnaround times. These are the kinds of tasks that students who are likely to cheat will most likely be tempted to cheat on. Secondly, we see (by the green line) that faculty are regularly implementing sequenced tasks. Sequenced tasks are a highly recommended pedagogical practice because they provide students feedback and give them the opportunity to work with and respond to feedback – this grows their learning, but it also makes the learning path visible to the instructor, who can feel more confident that this is truly the students' work. This is both formative and summative assessment, and it decreases the likelihood that students will engage in contract cheating. Third, what it also shows is that the assessment types that are the least likely to be outsourced are the least frequently used, with the notable exception of reflection. But there's also a few rays of hope here - faculty are working to use sequenced tasks and

reflection to reduce the temptation to cheat, but there's room to improve in terms of personalized tasks and vivas, or in-person oral assessments where students need to think on their feet and respond to questions to demonstrate their knowledge of course content.

As the authors of *Making Digital Assessment Count* put it: Academic integrity is not something added to a course; it is woven into the course. When we approach our assessment design, we are not striving primarily to prevent cheating. Designing for academic integrity can be regarded as a strategy for finding ways to support learners in the production of their best possible work without resorting to unnecessary — or unacceptable — tools and resources. Academic integrity becomes part of the course fabric. It is possible to promote academic integrity and reduce reliance on deficit-driven solutions by:

- using backward design
- building flexibility, regular formative assessment, collaborative activities and applied learning into the course
- attending to localisation Backward design we have already discussed under the topic of constructive alignment – starting with the learning outcomes.

What should students be able to do at the end of a course, and then determining what kinds of experiences will lead to those experiences, and what evidence can students produce. Flexibility we have also talked about. Authentic assessments allow for competing solutions and a diversity of outcome. We will talk more about this more in the next unit when we discuss Universal Design for Learning principles. We have also talked about formative assessment. Low-stakes quizzes, learning journals that invite student reflection, and multi-stage projects (the sequenced assessments we discussed in the previous slide). As we also discussed in the opening unit, collaborative activities foster engagement and they encourage students to act with integrity.

Applied learning is another form of engagement that minimizes cheating because it connects with learner's desire for relevant, real-world activities that connect with their learning goals and motivations. Localization is the final element to consider. Localisations trying to limit course content to a local environment or a local person. Reflection exercises and e-portfolios: James Skidmore from the University of Waterloo has some very good examples of localization. In one example, students take issue with an discussion forum and bring in additional resources from the course to defend their position. In another example, students connect course material articles in a local, reputable news source and analyze it using theories within the course. It's worth spending some time with this resource and thinking about ways to localize your course. Now that we have defined authentic assessments and talked about how authentic assessments can be used to design a learning environment that supports academic integrity, it's time to move to unit 3 where we discuss how authentic assessments can support varying forms of human diversity.

Transcript for Video 7: Importance of Educational Values to Authentic Assessment

Hello again everyone, and welcome to Unit 3. In unit1, we defined authentic assessments and how to design them. In unit 2, we discussed how authentic assessments can be used to create a positive environment where students are may be less tempted to engage in academic dishonestly. In this unit, we are going to discuss the importance of educational values and talk about another dimension of authenticity – that is, our authentic teaching selves. Grounding our assessment practice is an important part of respecting our personal and cultural values. The learning outcomes of Unit 3 are to examine your teaching values and begin surfacing your authentic teaching self. I am convinced that the best way to approach authentic assessments is by first approaching the concept of authenticity in teaching and by talking about our teaching values. Our values for equity, diversity, and creating inclusive learning environments invariably leads us to Universal Design for Learning, and the next video will cover how authentic assessments can support UDL principles.

The American Association of Higher Education developed 9 principles of good practice for student learning, and it is instructive that the 9 principles begin with educational values. I would argue that assessment both begins and ends with values. As the authors write, assessment's effective practice begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. I believe the most important part of this principle is that where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about. Authentic assessments, as we have seen, do not measure or assess what is easy, and this is a value stance. And right now, more than ever, with the way technology is transforming human work, we cannot afford to assess what is easy. My vision for the kinds of learning that provide most value for students are tasks that have real world relevance. This is derived from my instructional beliefs. So, before we talk about how authentic assessments supports cultural diversity, we need to ground our instructional activities in the teaching self. At the root of our authentic assessments is our authentic teaching self. One of my all-time favourite articles is Patricia Cranton and Ellen Carrusetta's five-faceted model of authenticity. They studied faculty from many different disciplines and they watched them teach for three years. After several rounds of interviews, they came to see five major facets of authenticity in teaching.

1. Having a strong self-awareness of who we are as teachers and as people. In our book, Dr. Conrad and I called these instructional beliefs. Instructional beliefs comprise our individual "personalities, preferences, values and ways of being in the world." Our instructional beliefs are our authentic teaching selves, where we "critically question what is right for us from the literature, develop our own personal style, and thereby communicate with students in a genuine way."

2. The second is being aware of the characteristics and preferences of learners and others, including how they are the same and different from our own. This is incredibly important in many learning contexts with the growth of what some are calling the Inclusive, International,

Indigenous interface and the focus on intercultural competence. It is also important to recognize that authentic assessments, as they have been conceived, is a Western pedagogy. There's nothing wrong with that, but we do need to be aware of that and how it can impact and operate with diverse learners.

3. The third element of authenticity is developing a relationship with learners that fosters our own and their ability to be genuine and open. By surfacing our authentic teaching selves and our values, we model for our students what it means to be authentic. And our authentic values will tell us the kind of relationship we want to have with students – as their mentor, friend, manager. All of those can be genuine and open relationships, but the type of relationship we have with our students flows from the carefully constructed boundaries we develop.

4. The fourth is being aware of the contexts and constraints of teaching and how these factors influence what we do and who we are. Again, in authentic assessments, we come as close as possible. There are constraints and limitations, and it is good to acknowledge their existence and role. Our institutional context, our state/provincial/national context, our disciplinary context, and our personal context may all place constraints upon us that influence what we are able to do, and living through the pandemic is sculpting who we are. But even within these constraints, we can find meaningful ways to be adult educators.

5. And finally, of course, engaging in critical reflection and critical self-reflection on our teaching practice works to deepen our awareness of the assumptions we hold and strengthen our values. This is why I say authentic assessment begins and ends with our values – we need to surface our values and then revisit them from time to time to see if they adjust.

In our book, we begin chapter 3 asking What do you believe? We ask these questions to suggest that your personal instructional beliefs are crucial to successful teaching. We encourage instructors to ask themselves important questions about learner control and clearly express what instructors believe about assessment. I could tell you what I think you should do, and I am in part telling you that I believe authentic assessments are a learner-centred assessment practice that better honours the learner, but you will (and should) critically question what is right for you from literature that suits your discipline and your style. Much has been written about differences in pedagogical styles, and this short lecture cannot do justice to it, but I will draw heavily on the works of Gunawardena to make a very important point. In short, Most Western learners and instructors believe that each learner

- (a) is a distinct individual,
- (b) controls his or her behaviour,
- (c) is responsible for outcomes of behaviour,
- (d) is oriented toward personal achievement, and
- (e) frequently believes group membership compromises goal achievement.

Many learners from Asian countries, on the other hand, believe success is a group goal as well as a national goal. Attaining group goals is tied to maintaining harmonious social relations. These different cultural orientations suggest, quite simply, that people from different cultures learn to learn differently. One of the biggest cultural divides surrounds intellectual property and copyright. A collectivist view of textual ownership sees information as owned by the whole society, and students from some cultures may copy another's words as a sign of respect. Western approaches to teaching and learning, including authentic assessments such as debates, collaboration, and discussion, may prove difficult for students from other cultures. The Western educational paradigm of the independent learner is not a value-free, neutral idea. Cultures also differ in help-seeking behaviours, and this requires assessment aspects to account for the socio-emotional needs of students. Hofstede's model of dimensionalizing cultures is intensely controversial, and I am not getting into the debate, but I am using this to simply suggest that our cultural background informs and impacts our teaching and learning practices in a variety of ways, and if we aren't clear about our values and instructional beliefs, and those of our students, our teaching and learning approaches, including our authentic assessments, are bound to get into trouble because they won't align with the unspoken assumptions that exist at the root of how culture operates. Thank you – in our next video, we will discuss how authentic assessments can support universal design for learning principles.

Transcript for Video 8: Authentic Assessment and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Hello, and welcome to the second video in unit 3. Unit 3 discusses how authentic assessments can support human diversity. In the first unit 3 mini-lecture, I talked about the importance of our personal and cultural values, and how these inform our assessment practice. In this lecture, I will discuss how authentic assessments can support Universal Design for Learning Principles. Again, the 9 principles for good practice is a good place to ground our conversation on UDL and authentic assessments. As noted in the principles, authentic assessment should employ a diverse array of methods. And this is the essence and purpose of Universal Design for learning. Universal Design for Learning, or its alternate phrase, Inclusive Design for Learning (IDL) are a set of principles originating in architecture and the built environment. It is a shift that recognizes that the environment can be proactively designed to meet the broadest range of anticipated human diversity.

The Ontario College of Art and Design defines inclusive design as “design that considers the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference.” Just in Canada alone, there are approximately 200,000 postsecondary students with disabilities, the most prevalent of which is pain. Pain is invisible, but it can also be a mobility disability and can also, at times, be connected with mental health. Universal design for learning seeks, as much as possible, to design a learning environment that predicts and plans for learning differences. This not only provides greater access for students with disabilities, but it can help all students become more engaged in academics.” Universal Design for Learning principles strive to promote positive interactions and purposeful

collaborations that are equitable, meaning “identical when possible, equivalent when not”

When we are designing our learning environments, how do we consider the full range of human diversity in our assessment methods? Diversity is a good thing, but an increasingly diverse student population also means that post secondary instructors are facing more challenges. Students with diverse cultural backgrounds, skills, abilities, interests, experiences, and social-economic status require instructors to reflect on their teaching practices and adopt user-centered approaches for course design and delivery. This is where Universal Design for Learning can help. UDL seeks to include the maximum number of learners in instruction by offering multiple paths to get to the same learning outcomes, including:

- Multiple means of engagement: the why of learning. Engagement is critical to stimulating interest and motivation for learning. UDL endeavors to design learning experiences that are flexible in order to calibrate learning for each student. Authentic assessment does that by providing for competing solutions and a diversity of outcome.
- Multiple means of representation: the what of learning – Representation refers to the what of learning. UDL can provide multiple means of representation by taking a look at how students interact with content and presenting informational content in different ways – videos, readings, transcripts of the recordings. The use of creative media for assessments can help to create a “rich cognitive learning environment where varied options and interactivity create a more nuanced experience, enabling learners to explore the content from multiple points of view.” Again, lectures, readings, infographics are all different ways to present information.
- Multiple means of action and expression: the how of learning – what are varying ways students express what they know.

Providing multiple means of action and expression can be achieved by supporting the development of a learner’s ability to manage information. Some students who have a learning disability like dyslexia or a sensory impairment that requires media support. How does the product vary so students can represent learning in multiple ways? Can students present a paper or a podcast? In addition to the importance of learning outcomes that are constructively aligned to teaching and learning activities and assessment, a UDL approach to assessment asks that we reconsider the purpose and function of assessment. It asks us to return to our values, specifically those values related to equity and inclusion. UDL asks us to think ahead and proactively plan how the assessment is inclusive of multiple means of engagement, representation, and demonstration of learning. UDL also asks us to consider potential barriers in assessment. Barriers can take a number of forms, oriented around ability, skill set, timing, pacing, and medium. Can we offer assessments in different formats and challenge levels, and enable students to choose the format? Can a student choose to produce a paper, or a podcast, or a visual model? What trail of evidence can be used to focus on both the process and the outcome – if students are working on a collaborative assignment, asking them to take minutes of their discussions and their decisions, for example? Returning to the definition of authentic tasks discussed in Unit 1, authentic tasks allow students to create polished products, but there are competing solutions that allow for a diversity of outcome. Student Presentations are common in many classes and disciplines. They have the capacity to assess the way a learner’s thoughts are organized, to examine how readily a learner can synthesize feedback, connect with an

audience, and demonstrate oral and visual presentation abilities in a real-time sense. Student presentations can also be very authentic. For our college's 4th year education students, for example, we have them develop a poster presentation that is fairly authentic to what one would see delivered by teachers at a Teacher's Conference. Again, returning to our definition of authentic assessment – what is the real world relevance? Social context? Polished products? A key in designing presentations is that they are designed. What purpose will it serve? What ends will it meet? Is presentation the best method of demonstrating knowledge of particular concepts? Can you work with students to develop different types of presentations that are meaningful in the context of the course? In this great example by Zhang, et al., they show that students can choose to present in person, through a video, or lead students through a simulation exercise – demonstrating that each has to come up with a polished product, but there is a diversity of outcome. This excellent resource provides numerous other Universal Design for Learning informed assessment examples. For your learning journal this week, you are going to build on the work you have done so far.

In Unit 1, you were asked to identify an assessment that you could make more authentic using the 5-dimensional framework for authentic assessment. In unit 2, we discussed how authentic assessments can create the conditions for academic integrity by connecting students to their learning goals. In this unit, we strive to take account of human diversity, represented by differing cultural orientations and human ability. In this reflection exercise, we attempt to draw closer ties between constructive alignment – what are the learning outcomes, and your students – who are the learners and are there any barriers to your students? The unit 3 reflection is to review the UDL readings and examples, and think further about how your authentic assessments can be further refined with UDL in mind. Those of you, who are interested more in Universal Design for Learning, I recommend you to take the Course on the topic at COL's short course platform –, colcommons.org, it is free. In Unit 4, our final unit, we will look at some of the most frequently asked questions I have received regarding authentic assessments and look at some more examples of authentic assessments from various disciplines

Transcript for Video 9: Issues in Authentic Assessment

Welcome to our fourth and final unit. Units 1, 2, and 3 of this course have focused on the concepts underlying designing authentic assessment for online learning, including being sensitive to cultural and human diversity. We have discussed how authentic assessments can positively impact academic integrity, and in almost every way, authentic assessments have been portrayed as an unqualified good. In this unit, things get a little messy. Unit 4 presents, through readings and videos, some of those issues and their implications for learners, policymakers, administrators, and instructors. Unit 4 also provides an opportunity to pull all the learnings together into an action plan for how to create and support the development of authentic assessments. I have worked to begin every video by grounding it in the 9 principles of good practice in assessing student learning. We haven't and won't cover all of the principles but I think this one is of great importance because it talks about the essential political nature of

assessment. So far, I have argued for authentic assessments because they are good pedagogy, but there is a compelling public stake in education, and our assessment activities are essentially political acts. There is a personal and a public obligation to improve, but this improvement takes place within larger systems and structures, and in this short talk, I would like to share some of the questions I have received, and my best answers for them. The most frequently asked question I have received is this one: Are authentic assessments more work? I think the best answer to this question is that it depends. It depends primarily on what your present assessment plan is. If you are using exams and essays, redesigning your assessment plan will be more work.

Designing authentic assessments can be fun and creative work. And yes, authentic assessments can take much more time. Marking, grading, evaluation, whatever you call it – this is some of the hardest work of teaching. Some institutions who have required instructors to move to authentic assessments during the pandemic period have experienced faculty resistance because of the increase in work involved. One of the creative solutions I have seen in the United States is institutions taking the dollars they would have spent on an online proctoring solution to pay for assessment markers or assessment specialists or graduate teaching assistants, in recognition that yes, moving towards authentic assessment can increase faculty workload. But it doesn't have to. I teach a graduate course at the University of Alberta that regularly enrolls 40-60 students, and so I consider this a large online graduate course. The only way I can grade it is by using large, complex authentic assessments. Each project takes about an hour and half to review and mark, but with 60 students working in groups of 4-5, I have about 15 projects to grade, not 60. I would say that using authentic assessments, in my case, saves time, but time is something we need to be very sensitive to, especially for part-time instructors. The next question is, should authentic assessments be cognitively complex? I would like to start by returning to the idea of constructive alignment. The task should be as complex as the learning outcome demands. A variant of this question is how authentic can my assessments be in introductory courses that are heavy on recall and comprehension. These are hard challenges, no doubt, but I would also recommend revisiting the goals of the final exam and perhaps doing something fairly simple, such as introducing a two-stage exam where students need to explain and justify their answers. But the second way I would like to answer this question is by stating that the types of assessment that can be easily done are exactly the types of tasks that are likely to be replaced by automation in the future, so in general, it is better to tilt in the direction of complexity.

As Kai-Fu Lee has suggested, the human jobs remaining in the future will be those where creativity, compassion, and strategy play a larger and more important role. Creativity, compassion, and strategy are complex human tasks. The next question is a very hard one – what is your opinion about the degree of subjectivity in authentic assessments? I'd like to approach this one by first returning to the 9 principles of good practice in assessing student learning - Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about. We don't want to measure what's easy, but measuring what's hard can

be difficult. In the Community of Inquiry's Triad approach to assessment, they suggest using a mixture of self, peer, and expert assessment. Self-assessment can be very valuable – how did I perform and what could I have done differently. Peer assessment has been proven to be very effective in several contexts, especially writing. And involving peer experts is a great way to reduce the impact of the subjective bias of the instructor. I would like to challenge this question by stating that assessment is always inter-subjective – it is never purely subjective or purely objective. Which of course leads into the next question – is it a must to have a properly developed rubric for authentic assessments? The short answer for this is yes. Returning to the Five-dimensional framework for authentic assessments, it is important to have criteria and standards. In the real-world, we are often given performance standards that we have to achieve. It is important for students to have a target they are shooting for. Providing them with a rubric, and a past exemplar, and having them engage in marking that exemplar with the rubric will tend to reduce confusion and improve the quality of the work so students understand the task and their expectations.

One of the best resources, if you are not already aware of it, is the 16 VALUE rubrics developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. VALUE stands for Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Environments, and the 16 rubrics cover communication, creative thinking, civic engagement, and many more rubrics that instructors can use when putting together rubrics for their authentic assessments. No rubric is perfect. I think there will always be some cracks and imperfections, but these rubrics can be improved over time. These are freely available and can be downloaded from the AAC&U website. Another question I have received is: are authentic assessments good for formative or summative types of assessments? The short answer is both. The longer answer is that authentic assessments can be designed to do both. If we understand formative assessment to be ungraded feedback primarily to check in and make sure students are getting the material for the purpose of improvement, then students could hand in low-stakes drafts of work for instructors to audit and provide feedback. Or ask students to complete a self-assessment or peer assessment on the work done to date. Then, of course, the final product would be graded and be judged on its absolute and relative merits against the rubric and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The last question I would like to answer is this one: How much does the effectiveness of the authentic assessment depend on the experience of instructors? I think the effectiveness of authentic assessments depends upon instructional experience quite a bit, and this is the rationale and focus for this course – to build competence and experience. My experience, so far, is that if instructors are familiar with authentic assessments and how to design them, they are not often opposed to authentic assessments philosophically; they are opposed to them practically and mechanically because of the belief that this is going to take more time and more work. And this is why, in our last video, we will look more specifically at more examples of authentic assessments and some strategies to make existing assessments more authentic, remembering very few assessments can be perfectly authentic.

Transcript for Video 10: Authentic Assessment Continuum Examples

Welcome to the last video in the series where we take a closer look at examples of authentic assessment. We are going to circle back to the concept of what it means to be learner-centred, talk about how these can support academic integrity, cultural diversity, and universal design for learning. I'd like to conclude this lecture and this course by telling my story of how I got interested in authentic assessments. I will never forget my first course at MacEwan University. It ended in a trough of disappointment. As I stared at the stack of final exams, I said to myself, "Never again." I was either going to quit teaching, or I was going to make this process of marking mean something to me. My interest in creating engaging and meaningful assessments did not start with students, it arose from my desire to stop the process of inviting repetitive and meaningless student work (that I had assigned!). I was ultimately responsible for doing this to them and to me. First, I incorporated online discussions. Online discussions, which I recommend even for inperson courses, are authentic insofar as they encourage students to bring their whole selves to the learning process and talk about their past experiences. It was an important addition because the occasionally large international student population in my courses felt more comfortable writing than speaking. Through discussion, I gained insights into my students' thought processes that I would have never gotten otherwise, and so did the whole community. Then I moved towards open book exams with application-based questions which were relevant to my discipline. I now teach in the graduate school of library and information science, where students develop sophisticated search skills using a variety of resources. Asking them to rely solely on their memory contradicted the discipline, and I was more interested in their personal synthesis than their memory. This too, had a beneficial impact. Asking students for their personal thoughts on core course content and giving them time to come up with application based answers reduced the inclination for cheating at the same time it made exams and papers more interesting to read. I then dabbled with two-stage exams in class to create engagement and peer instruction before moving away from exams entirely. As I have mentioned before, my favourite quote about teaching is this: What's the best kind of teaching – well it depends on the discipline, the level, the student, etc. But the next best answer is students teaching students. Poster presentations in our education department are very authentic.

This is something that practicing teachers will be expected to do at teachers' conferences, and it combines instruction with professionally communicating with colleagues in visual and oral ways. Connected to that is the use of peer instruction modules using a variety of tools, such as student-generated infographics and podcasts. These support digital media communications and peer instruction because, just like any other discipline, I face the tyranny of content. There are more content areas than I can possibly hope to cover, so I ask students to become experts and develop learning modules in these leadership and management topic areas so that they become experts on at least one of the many topics with real-world relevance. My favorite assignment is the traditional reflective essay. Because I teach leadership, I can make this essay personally meaningful to the students. The essay asks students to select a leadership theory they feel closely aligns with their personal conception of leadership, present and critique this leadership theory, and then explain what concrete actions they will take to self-develop as leaders. This

last part of the essay is authentic because every year, I need to complete and submit a learning and development plan detailing how I am going to grow as a professional over the coming year. I find this annual reflection on professional growth personally fulfilling, and I am asking them to engage in the same activity I have to engage in as a working professional. These essays usually turn out to be excellent, and I learn of students' crucibles, their experiences of prejudice, their triumphs, and how they plan to grow. They also develop concept maps answering the question – what are the essential competencies of leadership, and how does successful leadership function? This is a very complex assignment that causes them to wrangle with internal teams, advocacy, the external environment, and social trends. Finally, about four years ago I decided to make one of the assessments mirror my “real world” experience as much as possible. I think this statement is true for every industry – we are adapting to trends and inventing new programs and new services. We need to be more inventive, innovative and entrepreneurial than ever before.

These are some of the examples I have used. Recently, I just finished James Lang’s *Distracted – Why students can’t focus and what you can do about it*. He has a very simple recipe for an authentic assessment – have students identify an aspect of the course that interests them, define an audience that should care as much as they do about it, and then present that idea to them. In doing that assignment, they would have to pay attention to the ill-defined task (how are they going to bring it to their attention)? What social contexts need to be accounted for – speaking to students would be very different than speaking to a local community or a political representative. The product would have to emerge – would it be a report, or a podcast, or a TikTok video? Allowing for a diversity of outcome. What I like about this approach is its simplicity and its adaptability. This is something that could be implemented in several different disciplines. According to Grant Wiggins (1998), an assignment is authentic if it:

- is realistic.
- requires judgment and innovation.
- asks the student to “do” the subject.
- replicates or simulates the contexts in which adults are “tested” in the workplace or in civic or personal life.
- assesses the student’s ability to efficiently and effectively use a repertoire of knowledge and skills to negotiate a complex task.
- allows appropriate opportunities to rehearse, practice, consult resources, and get feedback on and refine performances and products.

Authentic assessments can be contrasted with conventional test questions, which are often indirect measures of a student’s ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained in a course. Conventional tests have an important place in college courses but cannot take the place of authentic assessments. There are several excellent examples of authentic assessments out there from every discipline. Here are some good examples that I am sure some of you have experimented with already. For Nursing, provide a case study of a patient and ask students to assess and create a plan of care. In Business, have students develop a strategic, business, marketing plan for real companies in your area. For computer science, have students

troubleshoot a problematic piece of code. For Service-learning courses, consider how a non-profit agency might be impacted by budget cuts. This would be great for non-profit management. Biology-Chemistry – returning to concept maps, have students map out a process and indicate what will happen if a change is introduced into the system. History – have students describe an alternative event and explain how this would have impacted the present world. Each of these have varying levels of authenticity – authenticity being the degree of real-world relevance that supports learner-centred assessment where students are the constructors of knowledge within a powerful learning environment. Thank you very much for participating in this Massive Open Online Course on Authentic Assessment for Online Learning. I look forward to reviewing your learning journals and discussions.