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# Pedagogy for a Plugged-in Age, Independent Study 2017

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ANDREW HLADKYJ SUMMER 2017 SFIN6898 INDEPENDENT STUDY

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# PEDAGOGY

## FOR A PLUGGED-IN AGE

EMPLOYABILITY  
COMMUNITY BUILDING  
ACTIVE LEARNING  
CUSTOMIZED LEARNING  
PEOPLE-FIRST  
CODE OF CONDUCT  
OPTIMAL USE  
ACCESSIBILITY  
CURRENCY  
VIABILITY  
CONDUCTIVE SPACES  
ADAPTIVE SPACES  
NO BOUNDS  
TWO WAY STREET  
GRASSROOTS  
CLEAR LEADERSHIP  
LIFELONG MISSION  
HUMANISTIC  
FLUIDITY  
CHOICE

# CONTENTS

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FOREWORD	2
METHOD	3
Social	4
Technological	8
Economic	12
Environmental	16
Political	20
Values	24
EPILOGUE	28
SOURCES	29
CREDITS	31
APPENDICES	32

# FOREWORD

Lay of the Land Technology and Pedagogy Foundation for MRP

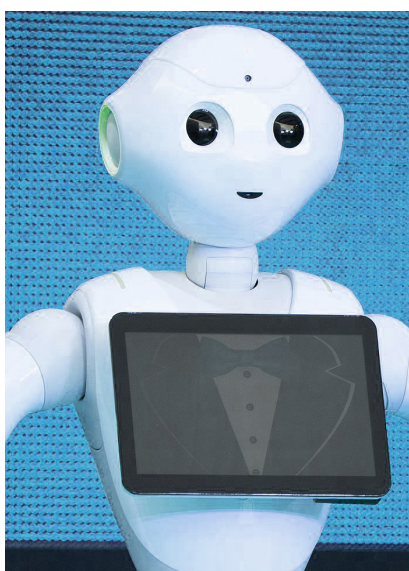
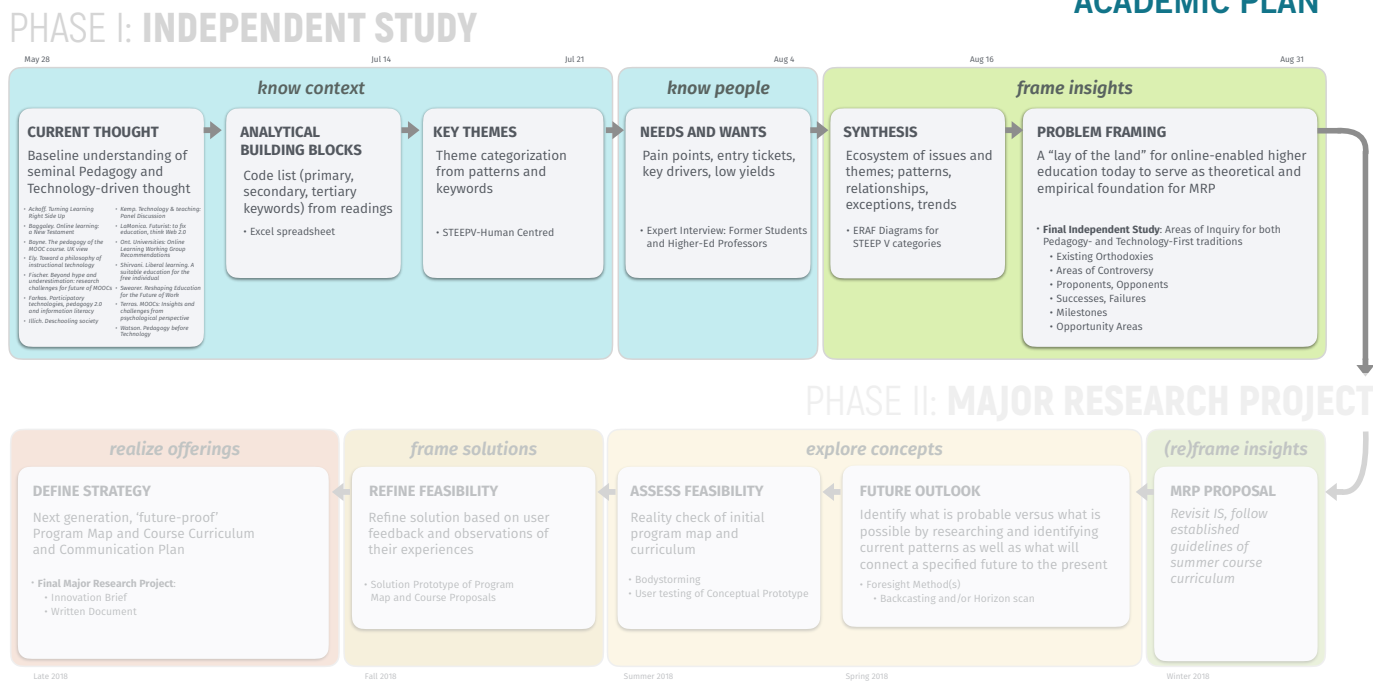


Figure 1: Robots like Softbank's Pepper are now in an Ontario classroom near you, but "not everyone thinks humanoid helpers are as practical as they are cute." (Boutsalis, 2017)

Studying the future of higher education is particularly important to me as I embark on my journey to lead and reshape Sheridan College's Web Design Graduate Certificate Program, where I have been recently appointed Coordinator. Without doubt, technology will figure heavily in the future of higher education and, more immediately, in the curriculum that I have been asked to redesign and teach. Indeed, our students must effectively harness technical tools to create engaging interfaces and experiences. New media and platforms continue to emerge. Institutions increasingly push for digital course delivery, testing its bounds in both scope and scale. Despite the hype surrounding technology and its large-scale disruption of education, many tech-led attempts to revolutionize learning fail to gain trac-

tion. Schools and pedagogy, technological trappings aside, are as recognizable today as ever. Are we being distracted, then, by the wrong (albeit shiny) question when we ask "Is Pepper the future of education?" Should we be pondering a more essential one, to wit: "What is Pepper?" At his/her/its core, Pepper is an expression of a bigger ideal whose realization eludes the educational system and merits focus: the synergistic union of humanistic values and technological power to advance student learning. In pursuit of this ideal, this Independent Study was designed to fit within a larger academic plan (see below) and aims to lay the theoretical and empirical groundwork for my Major Research Project (MRP): Designing and prototyping a human-centred, future-proof curriculum and framework for online-enabled higher education.

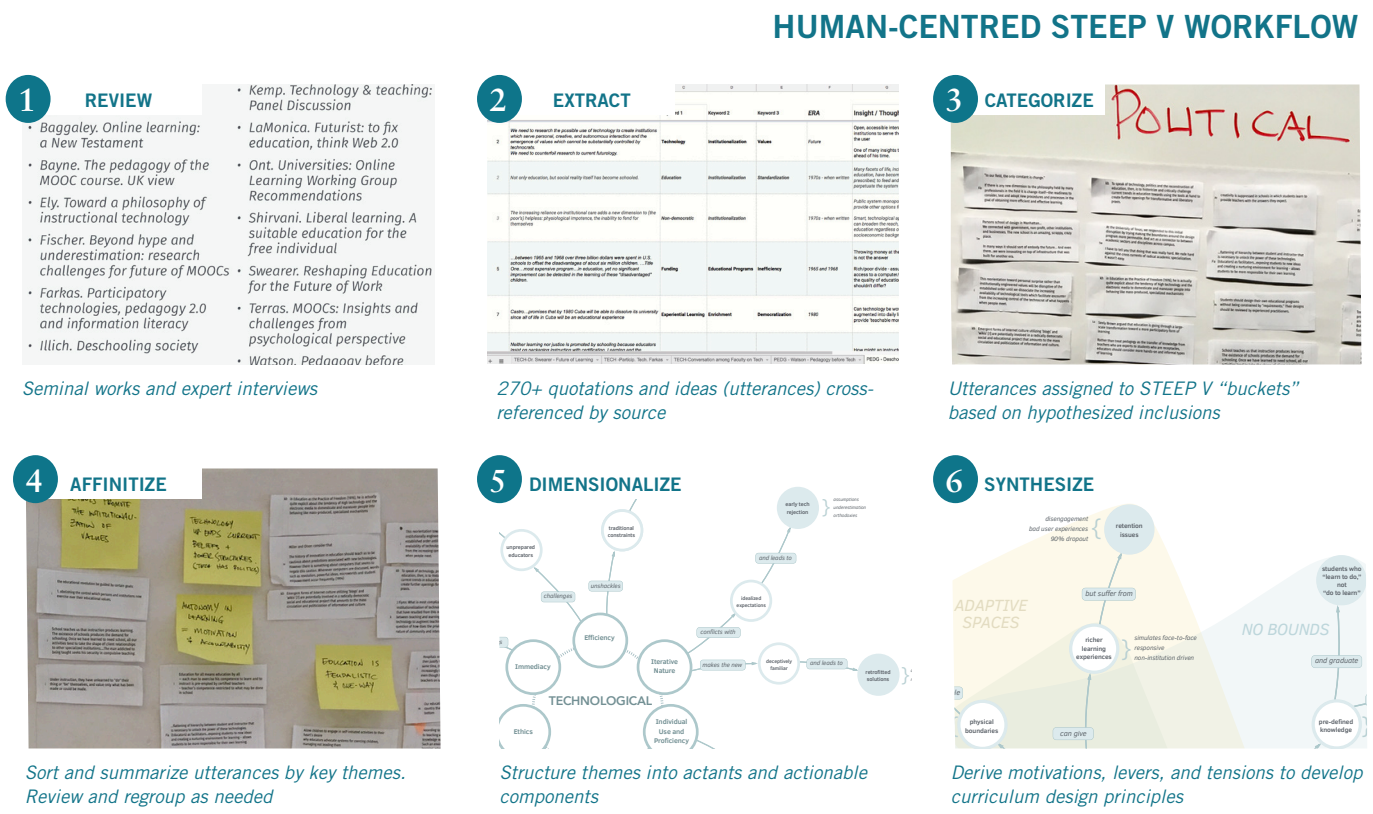
## ACADEMIC PLAN



## HUMAN-CENTRED STEEP V

# METHOD

Social Technological Economic Environmental Political Values



Primary and secondary sources were tapped to build a knowledge base for this phase of the research. In an effort to achieve balance, breadth, and depth of opinion, secondary sources comprising seminal works, academic papers, and canonical texts (including those from online journals, blogs, and technology keynotes) were split between thought leaders in the fields of education, technology, or both. This literature review was then validated by primary sources, composed of four 30-minute, semi-structured expert interviews with college-level design educators, administrators, and students (both current and former). For respondent profiles and discussion guides, please see Appendix I and J.

## Human-Centred STEEP V

Given this study's goal of establishing a "lay of the land" to examine technology and pedagogy in the context of higher education, an environment scan using the STEEP V framework (Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political, Values) seemed like a natural fit in the beginning. Upon reviewing existing studies, however, this would have resulted in heavy overlap with past SFI submissions and presented too macro a view of education for my goal of developing a technology curriculum anchored on humanistic values. To this end, I adapted this method to be more human-centred while keeping its thoroughness, re-focusing on experiences, relationships, and even perceptions

between actants in the higher-ed space to yield deeper insights. As such, a political scan that would have given rise to observations about government bodies and regulations, for instance, now speaks to organizational hierarchies, power relationships, and technology as a political artifact seen through the lens of students, instructors, and administrators. The output of this Human-Centred STEEP V is actionable and threefold: (1) High-level motivations / truths on which to base curriculum design principles, (2) Levers and tensions that designers must capitalize on in curriculum development, and (3) Initial "design dilemmas" or points of view that can spark reframing of digital pedagogy for the MRP. The exhibit above outlines the Human-Centred STEEP V process followed.

# SOCIAL

Inclusion criteria:	Collaboration	Teamwork	Networks	Peers	Skill Sharing
	Relationships	Community	Participation	Mentoring	Accessibility

“Students can demonstrate their learning in an open way that allows for collaborative assessment, rather than simply receiving feedback from the instructor.” Meredith Farkas

People are more than demographics. They are emotional beings who engage others and have their own desires, preferences, and personalities.

This research uncovered five key social dimensions (Collaboration, Self-Selection, Public Opinion, Isolation, and Interactions) that drove the insights below.

Online learning carries a social stigma

Negative educational user experiences and low retention rates (Terras & Ramsay, 2015) plague online schools and cast doubt on the quality of their instruction and credentials.

Equally (if not more) damaging, perceived lack of community or sense of the social (Lv., personal communication, August 5, 2017) as well as a sit-and-listen culture marked by forced participation and disengagement (Ch., personal communication, August 5, 2017) portray electronic course delivery and students as operating in a world devoid of interaction and nuance (Kemp et al., 2014), ultimately unfit for the workplace. This characterization extends to online course creators, who are labeled “instructional technologists,” “engineers,” or “technicians” rather than respected “designers” or “architects” (Ely, 1999). Prophetically, Illich (1971) identified a “cultural bias of a society in which technological growth has been confused with tech-

nocratic control” (the latter associated with “bureaucracy and teaching” versus “independence and learning”).

The overall effect is a privileging of courses that are taught face to face, with the implied assumption that they are better, when this may not necessarily be the case (Kemp et al., 2014).

Collaboration promotes transferable skills and employment

Skills do not develop in isolation. “Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers” (Vygotsky, 1978).

This cooperative ideal is a common thread among various learning theories. Constructivism proposes that students actively build on their existing worldview and gain new knowledge by interacting with peers and instructors. Connectivism espouses the greater importance of the quest for knowledge and rapid sense-making from networks compared with what one isolated individual currently knows (Farkas, 2012).

In practice, participatory technologies such as forums, blogs, and other content co-creation tools facilitate network-building and have been shown to hone creativity, reasoning, focus,

critical thinking, and analysis (Terras & Ramsay, 2015), all sought-after skills in the workplace.

Lastly, the soft skills that arise from peer-to-peer learning are crucial to job seekers as employers increasingly demand teamwork and cultural fit from new hires. In part, this may explain why jobs elude even graduates of STEM programs where learning is not necessarily about creativity and play (Swearer, 2017).

Collaboration without planning/infrastructure yields sub-optimal results

Collaborative efforts can fail when the right conditions and expectations are not present. Some students could be distracted or disengaged (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017), while others may not buy into participatory tools (Ch., personal communication, August 5, 2017) and feel that their autonomy is curtailed by being forced to collaborate or use a technology meant only for their personal lives (Farkas, 2012). Traditional logistical or resource issues (e.g. classroom availability, scheduling) can also make collaboration more difficult.

Educators must first set the stage for collaboration to flourish by building a strong sense of community where students feel comfortable engaging and sharing knowledge online (Farkas, 2012) and modifying their practices such as

## SOCIAL CIRCLES

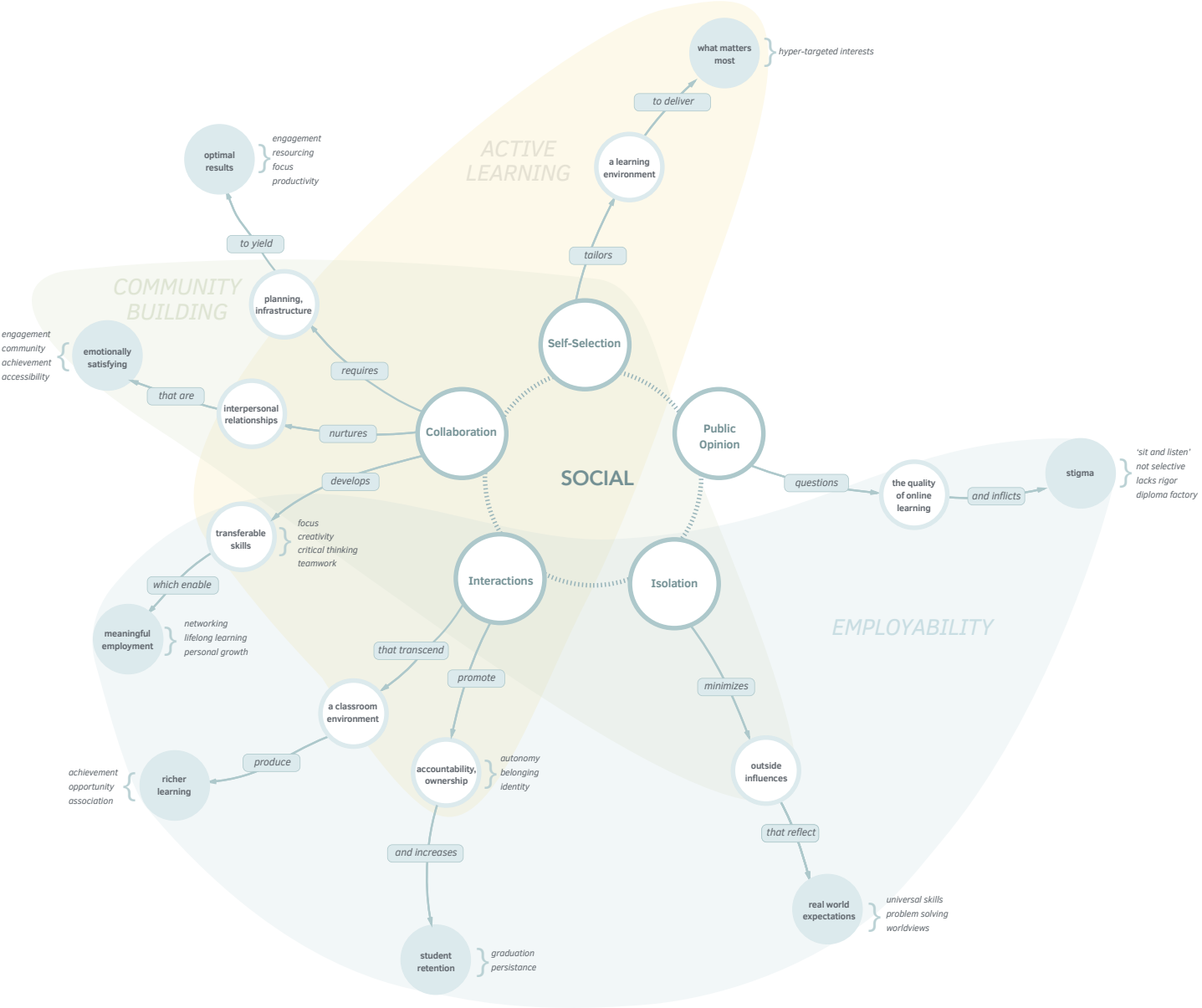


Figure 2: Social dimensions and motivations

how they evaluate students for collaboration (LaMonica, 2006) or communicate collaboration as a learning outcome (Farkas, 2012).

Social interactions promote accountability and ownership of studies

Whether on- or offline, students are more likely to commit to their studies when they have opportunities to interact with others. Participatory technologies like blogs support autonomy by providing

identifiable personal spaces from which students can contribute to a larger knowledge-building community (Farkas, 2012). By fostering a sense of belonging without sacrificing identity, online communities can boost learner persistence and achievement (Hughes, 2009) and promote sharing of one’s ideas in a space where conversation is king (Farkas, 2012).

Outside online spaces, direct relation-

ships enable individualized feedback that helps keep students engaged in their studies (Terras & Ramsay, 2015). Face-to-face contact and impromptu after-class discussions with peers remind students that they have a personal obligation to others to complete group projects as promised (Kemp et al., 2014). How might these same benefits accrue to online learning settings where disengagement and dropout rates are high?



“What is common to all true master-pupil relationships is the awareness both share that their relationship is literally priceless and in very different ways a privilege for both.” Ivan Illich

Social interactions outside traditional environments promote learning

The idea of learning outside the classroom is not a new one. For years, colleges have offered internships and co-ops to help students gain experience and life-long skills. A simple walk with students outside the classroom to practice their photography and receive immediate feedback can result in meaningful, teachable moments (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017).

Today, interactions are no longer tied to physical locations as Illich’s vision of learning driven solely by matched interests and peers becomes a reality. Online communities and tools facilitate virtual connections to crowdsource solutions to shared problems (Swearer, 2017), and the ubiquity of participatory media in all aspects of a person’s life has cemented the notion that “learning is no longer happening solely in the classroom, and the divisions between learning, work, and recreation are becoming increasingly blurred” (Farkas, 2012).

The source of learning is increasingly social (peers) and self-selected

Illich (1971) had formidable foresight in calling for “radical alternatives to school”

whereby a networked service facilitated matching “persons who at a given moment shared the same specific interests.” Today, hobbyist and social platforms like Pinterest and MeetUp, certainly radically different in tone and structure from traditional schools, are bringing together like-minded individuals and are learning platforms in their own right.

Within formal education, shared online platforms like wikis or blogs allows students to take part in online communities where they can learn from and be evaluated by not only their peers but also external experts and knowledge networks. Thus, students are armed with a diverse knowledge repository no longer limited to the instructor (Farkas, 2012).

Interpersonal relationships are emotionally satisfying

Much emphasis is placed on students’ intellectual growth and perhaps not enough on their emotional well being. Illich (1971) writes about the delight and surprise in unexpected questions and how “priceless” and “true” a partnership between master and pupil can be. If we accept that “students leave schools, they don’t leave communities” (Kemp et al.,

2014), then accountability and commitment also rest on the fulfilment of emotional needs such as personal interactions and a sense of belonging.

A technical tool such as blogging can reduce students’ feelings of isolation while building an identity in the classroom (Dickey, 2004). It also lends itself

well to more personal and informal writing, which leads to greater socialization (Farkas, 2012). The amount of access to educators, both online and in person, can promote a strong sense of community among students, which may improve retention and enrolments (Kemp et al., 2014).




Where do we go from here?

For future course design to be successful, it must incorporate social principles based on three motivations: Active Learning, Community Building, and Employability.

The following table unpacks the social motivations around which to craft

course design principles. The insights established in the previous section were dimensionalized visually in parallel structure in Figure 2 to highlight potential areas of intervention (levers) as well as problem reframing considerations (tensions, design dilemmas).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

MOTIVATIONS	KEY DIMENSIONS	LEVERS	TENSIONS	DESIGN DILEMMAS
 <b>ACTIVE LEARNING</b> The pursuit of highly personal learning outcomes through individual drive and co-creation of knowledge.	Self-Selection	Learning Environment	Choice / Need to Succeed	Why would students choose who can be part of their class?
	Interactions	Accountability, Ownership	Blame / Responsibility	Why do students from non-social environments struggle with accountability?
 <b>COMMUNITY BUILDING</b> An inclusive, well-organized circle that creates emotionally satisfying relationships.	Isolation	Outside Influences	Interaction / Isolation	Why does education need social interactions outside the classroom?
	Interactions	Classroom Environment	Skills / Workplace Culture	Why are employers looking for transferable skills fostered by collaboration?
	Collaboration	Interpersonal Relationships	Competition / Co-operation	Why are rules necessary when collaborating?
 <b>EMPLOYABILITY</b> A program that is highly respected and valued by employers, students, and the public.	Collaboration	Transferable Skills	Employment / Fulfilment	Why does emotional fulfilment matter in learning?
	Collaboration	Planning Infrastructure	Engagement / Productivity	Why are students from non-social environments less employable?
	Public Opinion	Quality of Online Learning	Accessibility / Recognition	Why do people look down upon online learning students?

# TECHNOLOGICAL

Inclusion criteria:    Software                      Network                      Media                      LMS                      Machine Learning  
                                  Equipment                      ICT                      Social Networks                      Devices                      IT Personnel

“Technology is certainly not a silver bullet. How the tools are utilized makes all the difference in the world.” **John Preston**

**D**o technologies have politics? This research uncovered seven key technological dimensions (Digital Media, Efficiency, Ethics, Function, Immediacy, and Individual Use and Proficiency) that drove the insights below.

## Technology lacks emotional nuance

Technology has yet to match the richness offered by face-to-face settings. (Fischer, 2014). Subtle nuances (e.g. sarcasm, humour, body language) may not always translate well digitally, resulting in a watered down experience where instructors cannot be themselves or students misinterpret intent (Kemp et al., 2014). Technological innovation (e.g. greater connectivity, access to resources) aside, “human factor”-driven differentiators that can compete with the ease of smaller in-person classes and the relationships that develop within remain high on the MOOC agenda (Fischer, 2014).

## Technology is an extension of the person, not a replacement

From blogs to wikis, innovative tools facilitate content creation and sharing more efficiently than ever (LaMonica, 2006). Technology has also expanded the reach of educators, allowing them to stay in contact with their students and work around logistical constraints (Kemp et al., 2014). On the cutting edge of this trend, artificial intelligence (AI) is being tested in more basic or screening roles such as an intelligent tutor (Fischer, 2014) or

chatbot responding to questions that are frequently asked by students. This frees up the educator to participate in deeper and richer conversations that draw on their personal experiences and expertise (Swearer, 2017).

While the exact role of technology in education (e.g. standalone tutors, expressive tools of communication) has yet to be defined (Fischer, 2014), it seems that technology is, at best, the new TA for now.

## Technology is a means, not an end. Educational content and intent matter more

Simply having access to the Internet or training educators to use computers is less important than educators’ effective pedagogic use of ICT to benefit learners (Watson, 2001; Ofsted, 2001).

Striking the right balance (and knowing the difference) between learning about technology and learning how to benefit from it (Fischer, 2014; Watson, 2001) has challenged educators since the turn of the millennium when U.S. and Canadian schools had widespread Internet access (NCES, 2002, p. 3; OECD, 2001, p. 256).

As growing evidence suggests, the use of instructional design process, not specific hardware and software, results in better learning outcomes (Ely, 1999). In education, technology is not the silver bullet (Kemp et al., 2014).

## Tech’s experimental, iterative nature causes people to underestimate its potential to effect meaningful change

New technologies have a long history of being treated like Trojan horses. Socrates dismissed the written word, fearing it would force students to follow an argument rather than participate in it. He did not foresee “new pathways for the intellect” as his student Plato did (Shirvani, 2015). Similarly, early Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) were poorly received as many assumed that their initial, primitive feature sets and the platform itself would not evolve over time. As today’s hyper-connected economy sees innovation cycles shorten and steepen (McGowan & Araya, 2016), new technological uses and contexts soon arise that demonstrate the true value of iterations, be they games used ex-curriculum to identify unusual talent in children otherwise labeled antisocial by school psychologists (Illich, 1971) or Facebook’s pivotal role in the Arab Spring (Kemp et al., 2014). While it may be too early to expect MOOCs to be the answer to education for everyone, it may also be too soon to completely abandon them (Kemp et al., 2014).

## Little is known about students’ personal learning styles, how they actually use technology to learn

Having a fine-grained understanding of how and why students interact with technology to learn is a prerequisite to addressing the practical and psychological barriers in e-learning (Terras & Ramsay, 2015). Notwithstanding, educators grapple with obtaining this knowledge for a variety of reasons.

## TECHNOLOGY TROPES

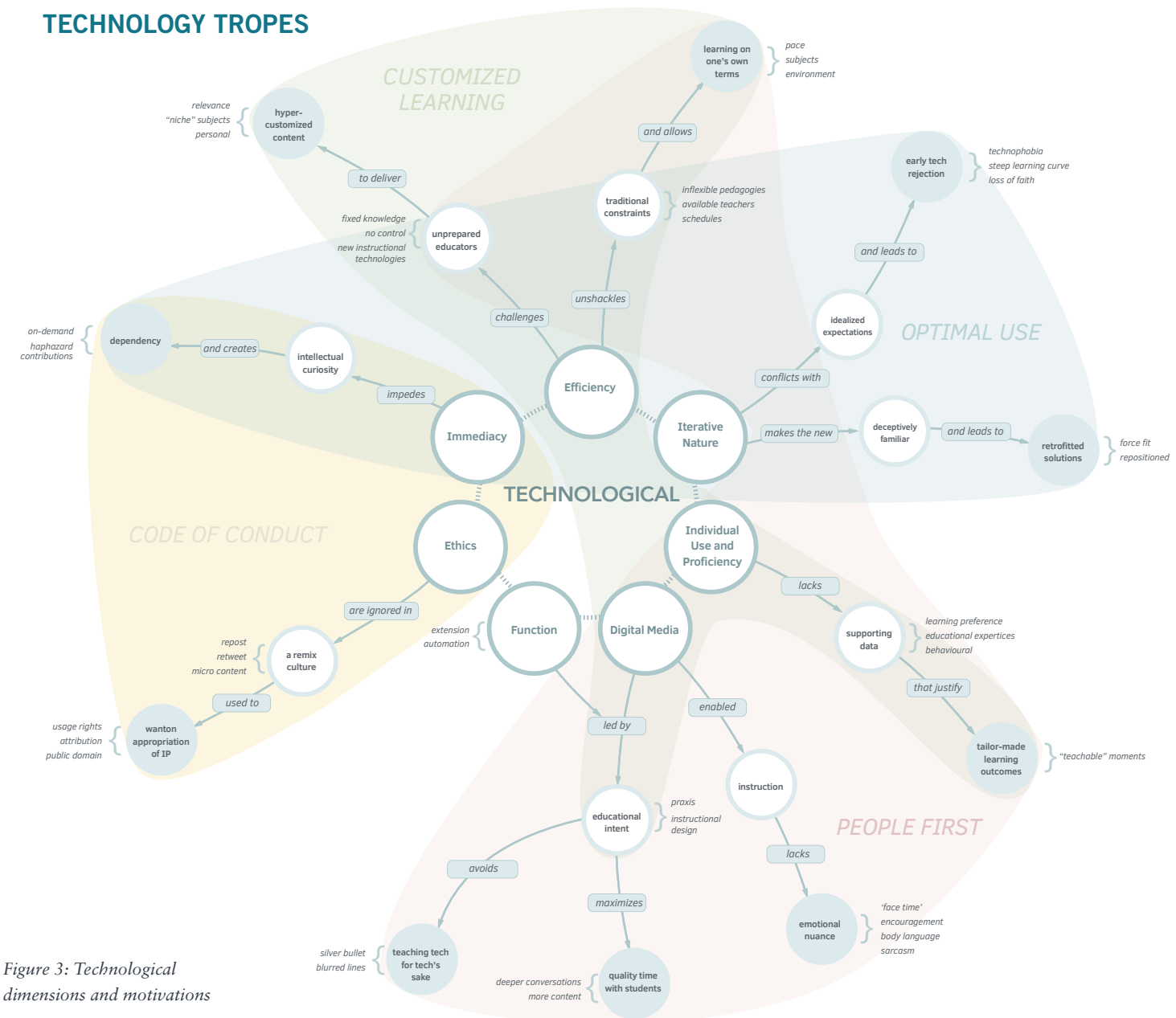


Figure 3: Technological dimensions and motivations

They may not be asking the right question when focusing on “What should someone learn?” instead of “What kinds of things and people might learners want to be in contact with in order to learn?” (Illich, 1971). For example, learning curves for some technologies can be so steep that they take time away from actual learning (Ruth and Houghton, 2009), yet educators may not always be aware of this as they deliver content. The sheer size of MOOCs also challenges the feasibility of understanding individual students and creating a learning path in advance that factors in a diverse (and likely unknown) range of competencies

and technological literacies (Farkas, 2014).

While the use of big data and simple surveys of students’ learning preferences and experiences have been suggested as means of shaping instructional strategy (Kemp et al., 2014; Terras & Ramsay, 2015), students’ emotional and cultural relationships with technology and each other may prove harder to uncover. When collaborative wiki sites were first used in schools, for instance, students felt uncomfortable with the idea of editing each other’s work, and only after a strong sense of community and friendships in the classroom developed did

collaborative writing emerge as intended (Farkas, 2012).

## Educators are unprepared for the autonomous, customized learning that technology affords

When technology futurist John Seeley Brown argued that educators must change their teaching practices to make each new piece of technology work (LaMonica, 2006), one wonders if they were tempted to change professions given the already-high demands of teaching with existing technology and online course instructors’ complaints of having “little to no control over the scope and

“I like to use sarcasm and humor when I teach. I find myself having to tone back the sarcasm and humor because I realize they cannot see my facial expressions or hear the inflection in my voice so this leads me to feel as though I cannot be myself.” Steven Page

sequence of the syllabus, texts chosen, assessments created, and pacing of the material” (Kemp et al., 2014). With pre-defined roles and areas of expertise, educators struggle to establish their relevance amidst MOOCs’ obvious targets: self-motivated students who feel responsible for their own learning and have Netflix-esque micro-genres of interest (Fischer, 2014; Swearer, 2017; Ely, 1999).

Technology makes it easier to appropriate intellectual property unethically

With culture commentators like Kirby Ferguson (2012) proclaiming that “everything is a remix,” it is easy to see how students might assume that online content is fair game for them to reuse and repurpose. What do usage rights mean to a generation where a viral internet meme justifies wanton image appropriation? Desensitized to piracy and accustomed to reposted micro-content (e.g. blogs, tweets), students lack the information literacy skills required for ethical knowledge co-creation (Ravenscroft, 2011). Meanwhile, educators who are expected to guide students through this foggy terrain may themselves be baffled by the complex web of licensing and intellectual property (Farkas, 2012).

What is new is old again

Relatability is a powerful tool in getting consumers to adopt new technologies. The original Macintosh leaned on skeuomorphism to provide users with a mental model of how to accomplish a familiar task within its new GUI. The opposite is true in the case of MOOCs. Teaching and learning are made

more difficult as tried-and-true bricks and mortar curriculum models are force fit into a new medium (Ely, 1999). Educators may lack training on how to transition a traditional classroom to an online one (Kemp et al., 2014) and assume that face-to-face practices (e.g. focus on faculty content delivery, assess only at course end) (Terras & Ramsay, 2015) will be acceptable in a MOOC setting where participation, autonomy, and constant feedback are more critical to keep students engaged from a distance and stem dropout (Baggaley, 2013; Farkas, 2012).

Tech enables students to learn on their own terms (How, what, when, where).

Advancements in technology dovetail nicely with new educational frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL recognizes that learners differ in how they perceive and comprehend information, the ways they navigate a learning environment, and how they can be engaged or motivated to learn (CAST, 2011).

Technology supports this framework by empowering diverse learners through accessibility tools, for those with sensory or learning disabilities; remote access to resources to learn at a desired pace; content that is available in a variety of media and retrievable from an environment that best suits the learner; support group work with participatory tools and for those who prefer to work independently, hardware and software that best engage the learner. Technology also extends the learning environment so it is less dependent on spatial temporal, and human resource constraints, thereby expanding the number of skills one can acquire in a lifetime (Illich, 1971; Terras & Ramsay, 2015).

Technology fosters dependency, leads people to value immediacy over depth

When calculators first become affordable, schools scrambled to develop policies around their use for fear that students would depend on them to forgo analytical skills afforded by mathematics. Fast forward to the Internet age, and dependency concerns run much deeper. Some

argue that over-reliance on technology threatens the development of critical and evaluative skills needed for e-learning (Apple, 2003; Terras & Ramsay, 2015). Educators pressured by expectations of accessibility and infotainment may be enabling learners who rely on fast, bite-sized, 24-7 support from their instructors rather than “simmer” and figure out high-quality solutions on their own.





(Farkas, 2012; Kemp et al., 2014; Lv., personal communication, August 5, 2017).

Where do we go from here?

For future course design to be successful, it must incorporate technological principles based on four motivations: Code of Conduct, Customized Learning, Optimal Use, and People First.

The following table unpacks the technological motivations around which to craft course design principles. The insights established in the previous section were dimensionalized visually in parallel structure in Figure 3 to highlight potential areas of intervention (levers) as well as problem reframing considerations (tensions, design dilemmas).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

♥ MOTIVATIONS	📦 KEY DIMENSIONS	🔧 LEVERS	⚠ TENSIONS	🔍 DESIGN DILEMMAS
 <b>CODE OF CONDUCT</b> Clear policies on the acceptable use of technology in interactions with people and intellectual property	Ethics	A Remix Culture	Attribution / Appropriation	Why does technology enable unethical appropriation of intellectual property?
	Immediacy	Intellectual Curiosity	Dependency / Autonomy	Why is it easy for technology to foster dependency and superficiality?
 <b>CUSTOMIZED LEARNING</b> Efficient tools that let students create and pursue learning pathways as unique as they are	Individual Use and Proficiency	Supporting Data	Variability / Scale	Why do schools confuse having or teaching technology with applying it?
	Efficiency	Unprepared Educators	Relevance / Engagement	Why are educators unprepared for customized learning?
	Digital Media	Educational Intent	Availability / Effectiveness	Why don't schools know how their students use technology to learn?
 <b>OPTIMAL USE</b> A culture of learning that embraces iteration and experimentation in the use of technology	Iterative Nature	Deceptively Familiar	Comfort / Innovation	Why is it so common to force fit new technology into existing constructs?
	Iterative Nature	Idealized Expectations	Extension / Limitation	Why is technology's role limited to extending (not replacing) human capabilities?
 <b>PEOPLE FIRST</b> A program that puts technology in the service of students and teachers, not the other way around	Digital Media	Instruction	Encouragement / Indifference	Why does technology need to be humanized?
	Efficiency	Traditional Constraints	Personalization / Constraints	Why would students look to technology for personalized learning?



# ECONOMIC

Inclusion criteria:	Supply & Demand	Profit & Loss	Funding & Budgets	Market Forces & Realities
	Profitability	Financial Picture	Value Webs	

“Teachers, like employees in any system, try to ensure their job security by requiring students to be taught subjects they, the teachers, know.” **Ivan Illich**

People have individual, not just collective, worth and fuel the economy with their personal skills and experience. Who determines their currency and how is it measured?

This research uncovered five key social dimensions (Incentives, Investment, Market Forces, Pockets of Wealth, and Worth) that drove the insights below.

**Schools contribute to skills shortage by keeping students too long / out of the workplace**

Higher education keeps young people out of the workforce and adult society in general with lengthy degree programs that artificially suppress labour supply (Ackoff, 2008; Illich, 1971). In the 1950s, a two-year Associates Degree in Nursing (ADN) was the de facto requirement to become a Registered Nurse in the US. However, in 1982, the National League in Nursing declared the four-year bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) as the new minimum level for the field. The impact of that declaration was dramatic. Almost a decade later, The Department of Health and Human Services had to create a commission to address the unprecedented national nursing shortage (Illich, 1971; The Sentinel Watch, 2016), thereby putting a damper on the BSN requirement. In 2010, the Institute for Medicine sparked fears of another nursing shortage with a report calling for 80% of all nurses to hold a BSN degree by 2020.

**Experiences and skills = credentials and currency**

Educational value chains do not need to involve money.

Swearer (2017) proposes an intriguing smart credentialing system that takes into account all of one’s formal and informal life experiences. A machine agent-cum-guidance counselor would get to know a learner’s goals, acknowledge what they have done, analyze government data and hiring trends, then return highly relevant employment opportunities or specialized skills training still needed to obtain them.

Another concept, put forth by Illich (1971), takes the form of a virtual skills exchange bank that equates experience with currency. People are given basic credits with which to acquire fundamental skills, after which those who contribute their time by teaching are rewarded with more credits and access to advanced teachers.

**Third parties have to subsidize enrichment programs to supplement traditional learning**

Schools cannot keep up with industry. Various governmental and bureaucratic hurdles make it necessary for educators to tap third parties to support supplemental programs that round out and update what students learn inside the classroom. Seeing the value of real-life experience to the youth, Illich (1971) suggested larger skill credit to the underprivileged as well as tax incentives for willing

industry partners who take on students in what are now modern-day internships.

In the U.S., parental spending on enrichment activities outside the school system has almost tripled since the 1970s, underlining the need that people see to augment STEM-based learning with in-demand creative and team-based skills even if they have to pay for it themselves. Likewise, independent organizations like Project Lead the Way are also sharing the responsibility of building creative STEM-based programs into schools to help keep them free or at least affordable (Swearer, 2017).

**Let market forces and personal mission guide skill acquisition and development**

Higher education has long controlled the goal-setting aspect of learning. This has resulted in an unbalanced and narrow market for learners that presents industry with graduates who lack diversity and the relevant skill sets for agile workplaces. In contrast, efficient learning markets would allow anyone to start their lifelong journey at birth and acquire the most in-demand skills inexpensively, at any given time and place, and from any person willing to share their skill or knowledge (Illich, 1971).

Today, independents like Lynda.com and Code Academy are filling this void, while Credly and Degreed offer flexible credentialing frameworks that support a self-directed quest to learn something

## ECONOMICS OF EDUCATION

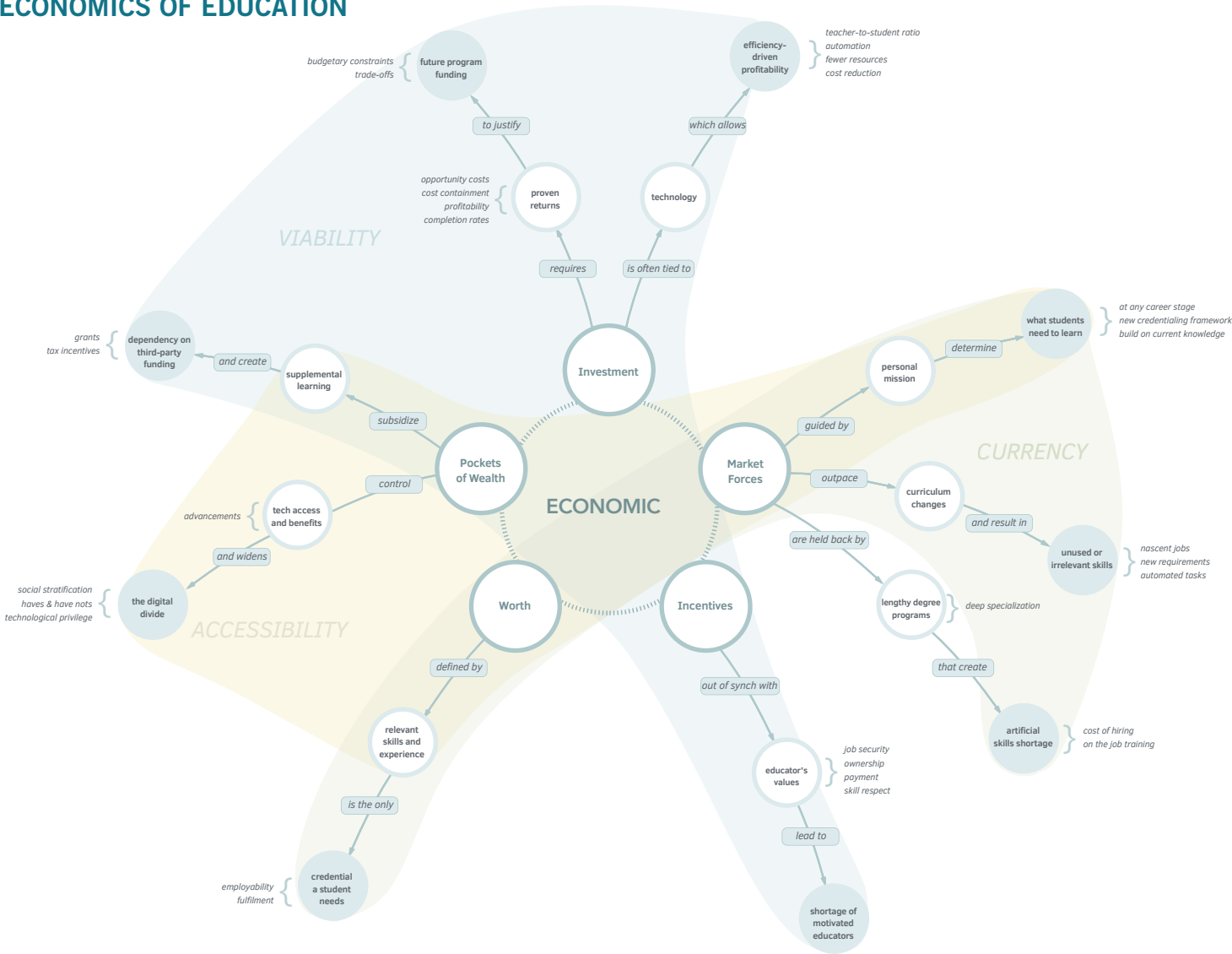


Figure 4: Economic dimensions and motivations

personally meaningful without the rigid, linear system inherent in legacy institutions (Swearer, 2017).

**Tech availability and benefits favour the rich**

Do students from certain districts perform better because they have technology, or do these districts have other influences to begin with that also encourage learning (Kemp et al., 2014)? Do MOOCs work well only for students who are already fairly well educated (Fischer, 2014)? What one does with technology matters more than just having it, but affluence certainly makes availability a non-issue.

On the flip side, schools in lower socio-economic areas must deal with pre-packaged curricula without all the necessary resources to support them (Apple, 2003). Given these limitations, and with curricula developed without educator consultation, there can also be a loss of professional dispositions associated with good teaching, further demarcating the various strata that make up the digital divide (Kemp et al., 2014).

**Financial security, incentives elude educators**

Higher-education professors appear to be well compensated but, in reality, are “overwhelmingly badly paid and frustrated by the tight control of the school

system” (Illich, 1971).

University administrators underestimate the amount of time educators devote to a course outside the classroom, particularly in rapidly changing fields like technology where content requires constant updating to stay relevant. Including office hours, marking, and professional development, the average professor works about 60 hours a week (Kroll, 2013).

How are educators financially rewarded for teaching MOOCs, where 95% of students do not attend that university (Fischer, 2014), and administrators assign fewer credits for teaching such courses? The financial picture gets murkier for adjunct professors, who generally have few benefits and little job secu-

“No question that these are big business, they are big education businesses. They are not colleges that are run like businesses, and they are not businesses that are run like colleges. They are big education businesses.” Interview

rity (Kroll, 2013; OPSEU, 2017). This precarity will likely worsen as technology enables deschooling (Illich, 1971) and teachers can no longer “ensure their jobs by requiring students to be taught subjects they, the teachers, know” (Ackoff, 2008).

ROI / Overhead matter to education, too

Education is like any other business concerned with its P&L. With domestic enrolment down, Ontario colleges are increasingly relying on international students to fill their revenue gap (Chiose, 2017), in some cases catering their courses to students from abroad strictly as a revenue stream (Ch., personal communication, August 5, 2017). On the cost containment side, the allure of MOOCs is easy to see. Moving courses online would reduce administrative and operating expenses while greatly expanding the student (revenue) base (Contact North, 2013; Fischer, 2014; Illich, 1971; Baggaley, 2013). The Council of Ontario Universities (2011) disagrees, countering that online delivery costs are not necessarily lower. However, this may simply imply that the management of new technologies by traditional institutions is still a work in progress. Regardless, the

savings from eliminating major capital expenditures like classroom construction are hard to ignore and will likely keep MOOCs on many schools’ financial agenda.

Digital technology can improve education delivery, employability (efficiency)

The use of digital technology for curriculum delivery has tremendous potential to raise the standards of teaching and learning (Watson, 2001). Students benefit from greater flexibility in the number of courses and schedules available (Council of Ontario Universities, 2011; Fischer, 2014), making it easier for them to enrol. Despite MOOCs’ notoriously low completion rates, sheer capacity allows them to graduate more students per instructor than traditional programs in a shorter period of time (Fischer, 2014), thereby broadening the selection of candidates from which employers can choose.

That said, technological throughput comes with opportunity costs, not the least of which are significant (and still largely unrealized) betterments of teaching ability and sustained student engagement as learning experiences get dehumanized with volume (Kemp et al., 2014).

Required workplace skills change faster than curricula, no longer guarantee relevant jobs

Created over a century ago, our educational system prepared people with deep specialization to work in hierarchical organizations and solve relatively simple problems. We live in a much different era of dynamic, collaborative workplaces that deal with wicked problems (Swearer, 2017) and, therefore, require new skills. This leaves educators scrambling to update

curricula and create new courses. The impact is already being felt as many students graduate already partially obsolete, leaving them indebted, anxious, and unable to practice in their field of study (Ackoff, 2008; Ely, 1999; McGowan & Araya, 2016). Projections paint a dire picture for students if education maintains its current pace. 65% of children in grade school today will end up in jobs that have yet to be invented. By 2025, one-third of all

jobs will be automated. By 2027, 75% of the S&P 500 index will comprise companies that have yet to be created (McGowan & Araya, 2016). This unprecedented change could necessitate perpetual teacher training and professional development, if not radical reform of educational systems (Ely, 1999). **Where do we go from here?** For future course design to be successful, it must incorporate economic principles

based on three motivations: Accessibility, Currency, and Viability. The following table unpacks the economic motivations around which to craft course design principles. The insights established in the previous section were dimensionalized visually in parallel structure in Figure 4 to highlight potential areas of intervention (levers) as well as problem reframing considerations (tensions, design dilemmas).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

♥ MOTIVATIONS	📦 KEY DIMENSIONS	🔧 LEVERS	⚠️ TENSIONS	🔗 DESIGN DILEMMAS
👉 <b>ACCESSIBILITY</b> Equal opportunity to have and to use technology to fuel one’s personal learning mission	Worth	Tech Access and Benefits	Tech Costs / Admin. Budgets	Why is the digital divide still widening despite tech availability?
	Pockets of Wealth	Supplemental Learning	Public Demand / Static Curricula	Why is supplemental learning dependent on third-party funding?
	Market Forces	Personal Mission	Market Demand / Personal Interests	Why don’t market forces determine what students need to learn?
👉 <b>VIABILITY</b> A financially efficient business model that does not sacrifice student and faculty engagement	Investment	Proven Returns	Metrics / Funding	Why is future funding based on proven returns?
	Incentives	Educator’s Values	Compensation / Expectations	Why are incentives for educators lacking?
	Investment	Technology	Tech Costs / Profitability	Why is investment often tied to technology?
👉 <b>CURRENCY</b> Skills and experiences that are in tune with personal goals and ahead of industry demands	Market Forces	Curriculum Changes	Market Pace / Static Curricula	Why is curricula out of pace with industry?
	Worth	Relevant Skills and Experience	Employability / Certification	Why are skills and experience defined by certification?
	Market Forces	Lengthy Degree Programs	Market Demand / Tuition Income	Why are degree programs so lengthy?



# ENVIRONMENT

Inclusion criteria:	Infrastructure	Operations	Silos	Educational Systems
	Processes	Physical Space	Departments	Organizational Rituals

“Although technology can bring people together, it is not until people have come together in a physical community that ideas and positions coalesce and change happens.” Joseph Flynn

Much like our natural environment, the educational climate is rapidly changing. Well-worn practices and beliefs can endanger the learning ecology if left unchecked.

This research uncovered four key environmental dimensions (Online Platforms, Curricular Structure, Campuses, and Legacy Organizations) that drove the insights below.

Despite tech’s potential to enrich learning, MOOCs are losing students

Technological advancements should enhance the learner experience beyond the traditional face-to-face model (Kemp et al., 2014). However, with dropout rates as high as 90% (Terras & Ramsay, 2015), MOOCs could not be farther from their potential.

Poor incentives to complete the course, issues understanding the content, and a general lack of support or feedback to address these issues have all been offered as possible explanations. While not inherent in or unique to MOOCs, these weaknesses are starting to define the medium and colour expectations. Others question why or how the traditional, and mostly passive, classroom model has come to stifle a highly interactive delivery method (Terras & Ramsay, 2015). More fundamentally, however, educators themselves do not understand learner experiences, goals, technical literacy, and preferences well enough to keep MOOC students engaged (Kemp et al., 2014; Terras & Ramsay, 2015).

Physical spaces are necessary for tech-facilitated ideas to come to fruition

A compelling tweet can instantly garner thousands of likes but not necessarily action.

While online platforms can reach large audiences efficiently and enable quick information exchange, nothing brings people together, allows new ideas to flourish, and galvanizes change more than a shared physical space. (Kemp et al., 2014; Lopes, 2014). Taking a page from recent Egyptian history, “it was not until people were in solidarity, in the streets and voting booths, that the technology made a difference” (Kemp et al., 2014).

Self-directed learning is much more common online

The 2.0 classroom is a “choose your own adventure” learning experience. Popular in the 1980s and 1990s, the innovative book series allows readers to make choices that determine the plot’s outcome. Similarly, students of tech-enabled courses can chart their own learning paths without familiar constraints like curricula, majors, and degrees (Illich, 1971; Farkas, 2012).

With instructor guidance on learning outcomes, self-motivated students select the technologies that best suit their needs, choose only subject matter that is meaningful to them, and give feedback that shapes course material (Farkas, 2012).

In contrast to the “closed classroom” model’s focus on unilateral knowledge transfer (whether through textbooks or

lecturers), 2.0’s learner-centric approach recognizes that successful online course delivery hinges on whether students can learn what, when, how, and why they want (Fischer, 2014).

Assessment standards are centrally prescribed, slow to change

Traditionally, performance evaluations have been quantitative and cognitive, where test scores set the standard for all students. A learner-centric environment knows when to switch to more qualitative, behavioural assessment, which gauges what students can do and how well they can do it (Ackoff, 2008; Ely, 1999).

While adaptable criteria can be especially useful for online, skill-based courses with diverse learner profiles and uncharted motivations (Terras & Ramsay, 2015), schools are not quick to embrace them. Tellingly, new blockchain approaches to micro-credentialing extracurricular work are direct nods to industry’s demand for continuous, informal learning (Farkas, 2012), yet these initiatives are relegated to university side experiments that entrepreneurs can only hope make it through the system (Swearer, 2017).

Schools program learning to stop after graduation

Schools are set up to package instruction, not learning, with certification based on a curriculum of conditions (Illich, 1971). This practice of downloading and time-stamping knowledge is at odds with today’s world, which values lifelong inquisitiveness over absorbed ideology

## ECOLOGY OF EDUCATION

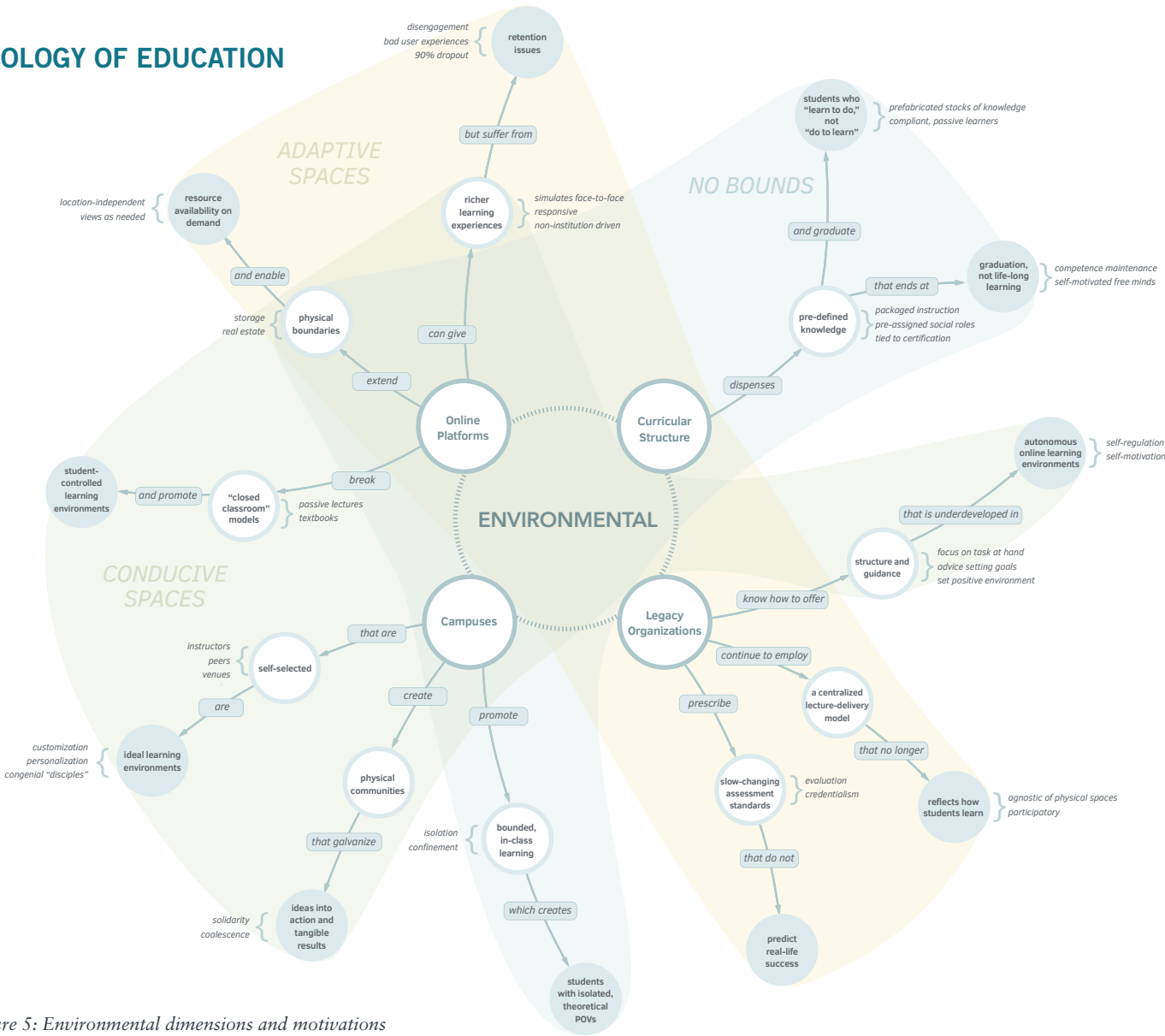


Figure 5: Environmental dimensions and motivations

and self-motivated learning journeys over finite linear programming (Swearer, 2017; Shirvani, 2015).

To this end, there are calls for universities to extend the learning experience and come up with “competence maintenance programs” that keep students and alumni abreast of key developments in their industry (Ackoff, 2008).

Online platforms expand community resources, “time on task” beyond the campus

Online platforms extend valuable resources, both tangible and intangible. They allow instructors to use communication mechanisms (e.g. Facebook Messenger, portals) to increase contact with students, circulate course materials, or

send mass reminders outside designated class hours (Kemp et al., 2014). At their convenience, students can access and review as many times as needed lectures and readings they missed or wouldn’t have had access to (Fischer, 2014).

Reach and resource management aside, it remains to be seen how these platforms impact the quality of that extra time between students, peers, and educators. Some say that the teacher-student bond strengthens as time is devoted to those who could not connect with their teacher in class (Kemp, 2014), but the question of dependency on quick hits and whether online interactions have the same “magical or meaningful” quality as in-person ones are up for discussion (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017).

Learner-centric environments still need structure, guidance

Even the staunchest critics of traditional schooling believe that educators should set boundaries and assert their authority no matter how motivated or autonomous the student.

Specifically, the role of “wise counselor” is appropriate when students: require expertise in navigating rough or new terrain (Illich, 1971); are faced with roadblocks or alternative methods (Illich, 1971); or respond better to praxis and feedback than theory (Ad., personal communication, August 3, 2017).

Apart from their subject matter expertise, educators have a responsibility to control the learning environment and set students up for success through: active

“Galileo could only gape and mutter touring NASA’s Johnson Space Center. Columbus would quake with terror in a nuclear sub. But a 15th century teacher from the University of Paris would feel right at home in a Berkeley classroom.” Larry Spence

problem prevention and purposeful “laissez faire” when independent exploration is beneficial (Farkas, 2012); and establishment of common ground and understanding of local issues and ways of thinking before students dive in, especially when MOOCs cross into unfamiliar international territory (Fischer, 2014).

**Schools are isolating places detached from the real world**

The words “confinement”, “magic womb” (Illich, 1971), and “bubble” (Lv., personal communication, August 5, 2017) have all been used to describe the school environment.

Schools shelter learners from reality and stunts their creativity and critical thinking by teaching them how to learn about (vs. be) themselves in their own world, all the while using a pre-packaged process (Illich, 1971; Fischer, 2014). Further, skills are taught without real-world context or application (Fischer, 2014), resulting in an “unbridgeable gulf” between how people learn and how they are expected to function in the workplace (Watson, 2001, Lv., personal communication, August 5, 2017). Lastly, schools tackle issues in artificial silos that correspond to

academic majors, thereby robbing students of a multidisciplinary approach to problem solving (Ackoff, 2008).

**Schools are frozen in time**

Former University of California president Clark Kerr observed that starting from the year 1520, only 75 Western institutions still exist today in recognizable form: churches, parliaments, and 70 universities (Shirvani, 2015), all legacy institutions steeped in ritual, hierarchy, and tradition. Indeed, the stoic lecture hall has withstood the test of time, with tenured professors seemingly oblivious of the agile and innovative workplaces awaiting unsuspecting graduates. Is the classroom model broken? (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017; Lv., personal communication, August 5, 2017).

**A self-selected environment (peers, topics, modes) is an ideal environment**

The higher education experience is predetermined and offers little choice. Students follow a prescribed program map of prerequisites and co-requisites and are assigned professors and classmates. With such a system so entrenched, it is hard to imagine an alternative model.

Illich (1971) proposes an arrangement where learners are empowered to choose a topic of interest independent of any pre-programming, find matches in motivated mentors and peers with like interests, share information, and co-construct new knowledge by exploring and debating each other’s point of view (Farkas, 2012). The result is an engaging, congenial atmosphere that recognizes the importance of the individual, not the institution, in charting their path and achieving their social role in life.

Schools are set up to dispense knowledge in pre-defined blocks

Universities have long been compartmentalizing education around well-worn genres, focusing on the accumulation of specialized intellectual capital (Fischer, 2014) and teaching students to deploy these stocks of knowledge within their field of study rather than cross pollinate with other disciplines to solve broader issues (Watson, 2001).

Meanwhile, the world has moved on from Industrial Revolution-inspired

“learning to do” approaches to more “doing to learn” models of knowledge discovery, which acknowledge that today’s complex problems will be better served not by 30 or 40 classic academic majors but by branching pathways of micro-genres of interest that may not even have names today (Ackoff, 2008; Swearer, 2017; Watson, 2001).


**Where do we go from here?**

For future course design to be successful, it must incorporate environmental

principles based on three motivations: Adaptive Spaces, Conducive Spaces, and No Bounds.

The following table unpacks the environmental motivations around which to craft course design principles. The insights established in the previous section were dimensionalized visually in parallel structure in Figure 5 to highlight potential areas of intervention (levers) as well as problem reframing considerations (tensions, design dilemmas).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

MOTIVATIONS	KEY DIMENSIONS	LEVERS	TENSIONS	DESIGN DILEMMAS
 <b>ADAPTIVE SPACES</b> Fluid environments that mold physically, procedurally, and technologically to student feedback and the outside world	Legacy Organizations	Slow-Changing Assessment Standards	Outdated Assessments / Industry Expectations	Why are organizations slow to update assessment standards?
	Legacy Organizations	A Centralized Lecture-Delivery Model	Student Engagement / Legacy Culture	Why are centralized lecture-delivery models still used by organizations?
	Online Platforms	Physical Boundaries	Demand / Availability	Why does on-demand resource availability matter?
	Online Platforms	Richer Learning Experiences	Richer Experiences / Retention Issues	Why do online platforms suffer from retention issues?
 <b>CONDUCTIVE SPACES</b> Student-defined learning environments supported by expert guidance and venues to implement ideas	Campuses	Physical Communities	Ideas / Activism	Why are physical communities needed to galvanize ideas into action?
	Campuses	Self-Selected	Personalized Environment / Legacy Culture	Why are self-selected campuses ideal learning environments?
	Online Platforms	“Closed Classroom” Models	Student-Controlled / Legacy Culture	Why is self-directed learning harder to achieve in a bricks and mortar classroom?
	Legacy Organizations	Structure and Guidance	Guidance / Autonomy	Why are structure and guidance underdeveloped in autonomous learning environments?
 <b>NO BOUNDS</b> An eye-opening learning landscape that is not walled in by time, space, or orthodoxy	Campuses	Bounded, In-Class Learning	Confinement / External Influences	Why does in-class learning create students with isolated, theoretical points of view?
	Curricular Structure	Pre-Defined Knowledge	Learn To Do / Do To Learn	Why can't a curricular structure dispense knowledge on-demand?



# POLITICAL

Inclusion criteria:	Hierarchies Balance of Power	Governance Policy	Power Relationships Agendas	Extent of Impact or Influence
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“Our educational system is the only major institution in our country that officially recognizes autocracy”  
Russell Ackoff

After centuries of unchallenged rule, higher education’s leaders and administrators are facing resistance from disgruntled students and outsiders who see a better way. This research uncovered six key political dimensions (Administrators, Autonomous Learning, Educational Feudalism, Entrepreneurial Sub-ecosystems, Policy, and Technologies) that drove the insights below.

The road to fully entrepreneurial ecosystems is riddled with obstacles (administrative)

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are difficult to introduce, let alone incorporate cohesively, into legacy environments. Attitudinally, academics can be skeptical of new technologies and reluctant to adopt changes to established procedures (Watson, 2001; Farkas, 2012). Structurally, there are complications as well. Faculties are housed separately on campus and set up to function in isolation rather than collaborate with other academic sectors and disciplines (Swearer, 2017). Students themselves have been trained to accept hierarchical teaching and administration and may not do well in a flat, fluid, and free learning environment (Farkas, 2012; Swearer, 2017). Finally, privacy concerns stand in

the way of open sharing of information both internally and to outside parties. Schools are discriminatory to students, teachers Higher education is not open to all. Universities require a secondary level of education, which effectively shuts out younger teens who want to learn. While mature students would qualify, the culture is decidedly youth-oriented and can leave older adults feeling out of place. Under the cloak of standards and fairness, students are mandated to receive pre-determined content in set ways regardless of their individual interests and learning preferences. Instruction is still mostly tied to the classroom and built around the goals and expertise of teachers who, in turn, are subject to specific guidelines of when and where they can teach. As such, instructors are restricted in their ability to share their skills and knowledge even if there is a market for them (Illich, 1971).

Flawed policy, leadership undermine success and change

Standards for good online education is a case of the “blind attempting to lead the sighted” (Baggaley, 2013). Rather than seek the guidance of interaction designers, online educators, and of course, tech-savvy students, administra-

tors, engineers, and “bricks and mortar heavyweights” stumble as they try to understand and develop a usable online learning platform (Baggaley, 2013). Schools also grapple with dichotomous rationales for teaching technology. While there is a clear focus on the mastery of ICT skills used in the workplace, there is no clearly stated mandate to use this mastery to further the rest of the curriculum, thus creating a silo within a silo. This confusion of purpose reflects the difficulty of implementing flawed policies in schools (Watson, 2001).

Participate and co-create, don’t simulate

When Illich (1971) met with a high school resistance movement demanding more education, he was struck by their clever slogan “Participation not Simulation,” which was, unfortunately, misunderstood to be a demand for less. The spirit of that motto lives today in instructional technology built on an “architecture of participation” (Farkas, 2012). Undoubtedly, participatory technologies have disrupted educational dynamics. Learners are now simultaneously consumers and co-constructors of knowledge with their peers (Farkas, 2012; Fischer, 2014), resulting in greater comfort with uncertainty and less reli-

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

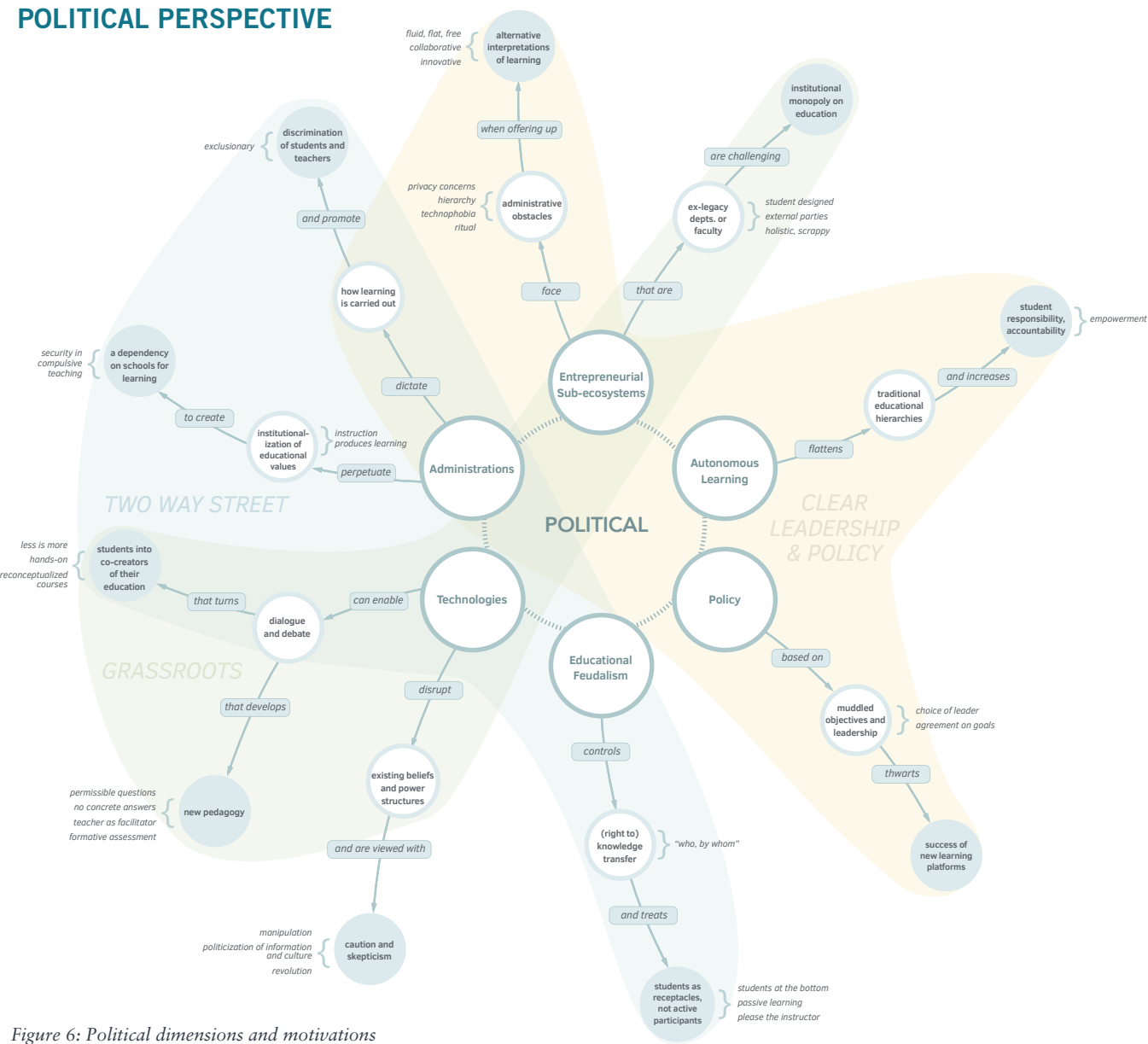


Figure 6: Political dimensions and motivations

ance on instructors. With more hands-on, informal types of learning, the days of passive knowledge transfer may be numbered (LaMonica, 2006).

Technology up-ends current beliefs, power structures (Tech has politics)

Outside the classroom, Internet technologies have been accused of large-scale circulation and politicization of information, even maneuvering people into “behaving like mass-produced, specialized mechanisms” (Khan, 2007). As technology is institutionalized in education, the fine line between “teaching and learning online” and “the use of

technology to augment teaching and learning” (Kemp et al., 2014) becomes political when interpreted as a win-lose choice between having a pedagogical complement or a competitor.

For students, this privileging of technology is already repositioning them as empowered knowledge co-producers (Farkas, 2012; Fischer, 2014). Whether students use technology (or technology uses them) to spark counterculture movements that question institutionally engineered values (Illich, 1971; Watson, 2001) or mobilize around larger issues (Khan, 2007) remains to be seen.

Autonomy in learning = motivation + accountability

Flattening the traditional classroom hierarchy shifts the educator’s role to facilitator, presenting new ideas and concepts in a nurturing environment while students take over their own learning (Farkas, 2012) and explore the applications of new knowledge and technologies to their personal goals. This approach is closer to the “Education for all means education by all” ideal set out by Illich (1971), that is: drawing on peer experience and harnessing technology to create channels of personal and creative expression independent of any institution.

“Rather than treat pedagogy as the transfer of knowledge from teachers who are experts to students who are receptacles, educators should consider more hands-on and informal types of learning.” Martin LaMonica

Entrepreneurial sub-ecosystems are emerging within legacy environments

Supported by faculty and experienced practitioners, students should be designing their own learning experience without the constraints of onerous curricular requirements (Ackoff, 2008). Taking this entrepreneurial approach to the next level, special university teams are partnering with government, not-for-profits, businesses, and other entities to set up innovation and maker spaces within campuses (Swearer, 2017).

“Amazing, scrappy, and crazy” (Swearer, 2017), these new spaces could not be farther in culture, activity, and composition from traditional schools. Illich (1971) famously associated the liberation of critical and creative resources with taking control back from institutions, so it is easy to see how these entrepreneurs could be seen as threats. Wisely, teams creatively work around and on top of infrastructure built for another era and stay low by not being officially connected to any one department or faculty (Swearer, 2017).

Democratic dialogue in classrooms promotes learning

An environment that encourages open discussion yields greater learning than one that is solely lecture-based. When instructors initiate informal discussions with students before class, they can gauge student progress to date, gain insight on what students want to learn, and tailor their curriculum and pedagogy with this simple formative assessment (Farkas, 2012). A shift in emphasis from concrete answers and lectures to exploratory questions and debates develops students’ core skills and dispositions as they work with information in a safe environment (Farkas, 2012). Meanwhile, instructors can draw on their knowledge (or address their lack of it) by challenging students to ask controversial questions and actively participate in the dialogue and discourse themselves (Ackoff, 2008; Watson, 2001).

Education is feudalistic, one-way

Traditional pedagogy formed in an era when expert knowledge was scarce

(Farkas, 2012). The result is the familiar teaching (not learning)-centered scenario of a “sage on the stage” transmitting information to a captive audience waiting to receive it (LaMonica, 2006). Ackoff (2008) described schools as “the only major institution in our country that officially recognizes autocracy,” where students are at the bottom and feel that they must conform to instructor expectations to get a good mark (Farkas, 2012). Teachers themselves have to please the system, as

their legitimacy and livelihood largely depend on their association with an educational institution (Illich, 1971).

Schools promote the institutionalization of values

According to Illich (1971), the existence of schools produces a demand for schooling. As the notion that “instruction produces learning” takes hold, the self-taught are met with suspicion, the value of their education marginalized

due to an absence of certification. The true victims, however, may be the students who, “addicted to being taught,” now only value the result, having unlearned to “do their thing,” “be themselves,” and stay true to their lifelong mission (Swearer, 2017).


Where do we go from here?

For future course design to be successful, it must incorporate political principles based on three motivations: Clear

Leadership & Policy, Grassroots, and Two-Way Street

The following table unpacks the political motivations around which to craft course design principles. The insights established in the previous section were dimensionalized visually in parallel structure in Figure 6 to highlight potential areas of intervention (levers) as well as problem reframing considerations (tensions, design dilemmas).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

MOTIVATIONS	KEY DIMENSIONS	LEVERS	TENSIONS	DESIGN DILEMMAS
 <b>CLEAR LEADERSHIP &amp; POLICY</b> Holistic and widely understood direction built on institutional diversity and student success	Policy	Muddled Objectives and Leadership	Dubious Objectives / Quality of Learning	Why do new online platforms suffer from muddled objectives and leadership?
	Autonomous Learning	Traditional Educational Hierarchies	Autonomy / Accountability	Why don't more schools promote autonomous learning when it increases student responsibility and accountability?
	Entrepreneurial Sub-ecosystems	Administrative Obstacles	Change / Red Tape	Why are innovative learning initiatives facing administrative obstacles?
 <b>GRASSROOTS</b> A willingness to take a bottom-up approach to designing the future of the program	Technologies	Existing Beliefs and Power Structures	Empowerment / Threat	Why do existing power structures view technologies with caution and skepticism?
	Technologies	Dialogue and Debate	Openness / Teacher's Role	Why is dialogue and debate needed when developing new pedagogy?
	Entrepreneurial Sub-ecosystems	Ex-Legacy Depts. or Faculty	Entrepreneurial Spirit / Monopolies	Why are external parties challenging the institutional monopoly on education?
 <b>TWO WAY STREET</b> A democratic mindset that encourages dialogue and feedback for positive change	Educational Feudalism	(Right to) Knowledge Transfer	Active Learning / Passive Learning	Why are students treated like receptacles and not active participants in knowledge acquisition?
	Administrations	Institutionalization of Educational Values	Dependency / Autonomy	Why do administrators create a dependency on schools for learning?
	Administrations	How Learning is Carried Out	Prescribed Learning / Discrimination	Why is educational delivery dictated by school administrators?

# VALUES

Inclusion criteria:	Sacred Cows Orthodoxies	Basic Tenets Religion	Schools of Thought Principles	Deeply Held Truths Guiding Star	“Commandments” Bible
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“But what I couldn’t learn was how to think, how to form an opinion, how to argue that opinion. And to make friends. And that was really big.” Interview

Deeply-held truths are highly personal and serve as a compass that guides each individual in their unique journey of learning. Do schools know what makes each student tick? This research uncovered seven key political dimensions (Autonomy, Freedom, Good Pedagogy, Humanistic Values, Knowledge, True Learning, and Wisdom) that drove the insights below.

**“Students” should be able to choose their “teacher” (source of learning)**  
Illich (1971) envisioned a de-schooled society where learners are not pre-assigned any instructors. Instead, they choose their own learning partner based on skill matching and consultations with former students about their own experiences with a particular instructor. This transparent and objective peer rating system creates a level of educator accountability that would benefit higher education.

**Education’s output should be wisdom and life skills, not the mastery of transient tools**  
Too often, instructors fall into the trap of teaching students the latest tools to stay current, only to find these supplanted by “the next big thing” come graduation. Pedagogy should be grounded in transferable skills (e.g. collaboration, self-di-

rection, creativity, information literacy) that foster lifelong learning and critical inquiry (Farkas, 2012). Since students acquire so much content already from a myriad of sources, from online to peers (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017), a solid foundation that allows them to build wisdom from the consequences of their actions and learn from their mistakes (Ackoff, 2008) may be a more lasting educational legacy.

**Technology dehumanizes learning, education**  
Education has morphed from a humane exchange of ideas to a “technological leviathan that is slowly usurping the soul of the profession” (Kemp et al., 2014). As education becomes more dependent on technology, a greater concern for the return of humanistic values like identity, ethics, and understanding (Illich, 1971) will likely emerge as a countering force and support various aspects of instructional design (Ely, 1999). Of course, one can also look to the university campus for solace, a reliable and durable constant through centuries of change (Shirvani, 2015).

**A “super teacher” embraces and manages student diversity (skills, preferences, opinions)**  
Good pedagogy considers each student as an individual. While harder to administer

in MOOCs due to their size, the learner autonomy that this platform affords (e.g. choice of resources, pace) makes an educator’s thorough understanding of the skills and psychological capacities of students even more critical so they can support independent learning (Terras & Ramsay, 2015). Successful online educators also need to be able to moderate a large online community and allow divergent viewpoints to expose learners to a range of ideas and beliefs (Farkas, 2012); curate and position student-generated content, which can be seen as excessive and less valuable than teacher-provided materials (Fischer, 2014); and be on the lookout for emerging countercultures that need to be understood (Illich, 1971).

**Learning is a continuous, lifelong endeavour of (self) discovery**  
In today’s knowledge economy, what one needs to be considered informed is constantly changing. Knowledge is no longer defined as something learned once, but rather a lifelong endeavor (Farkas, 2012). “We need to get students to move from majors to missions. Passionate personal missions that they pursue throughout their lives” (Swearer, 2017). Higher education can help by creating an environment that focuses less on the delivery of knowledge and more on its discovery (Ackoff, 2008; Farkas, 2012).

## VENERATED VALUES

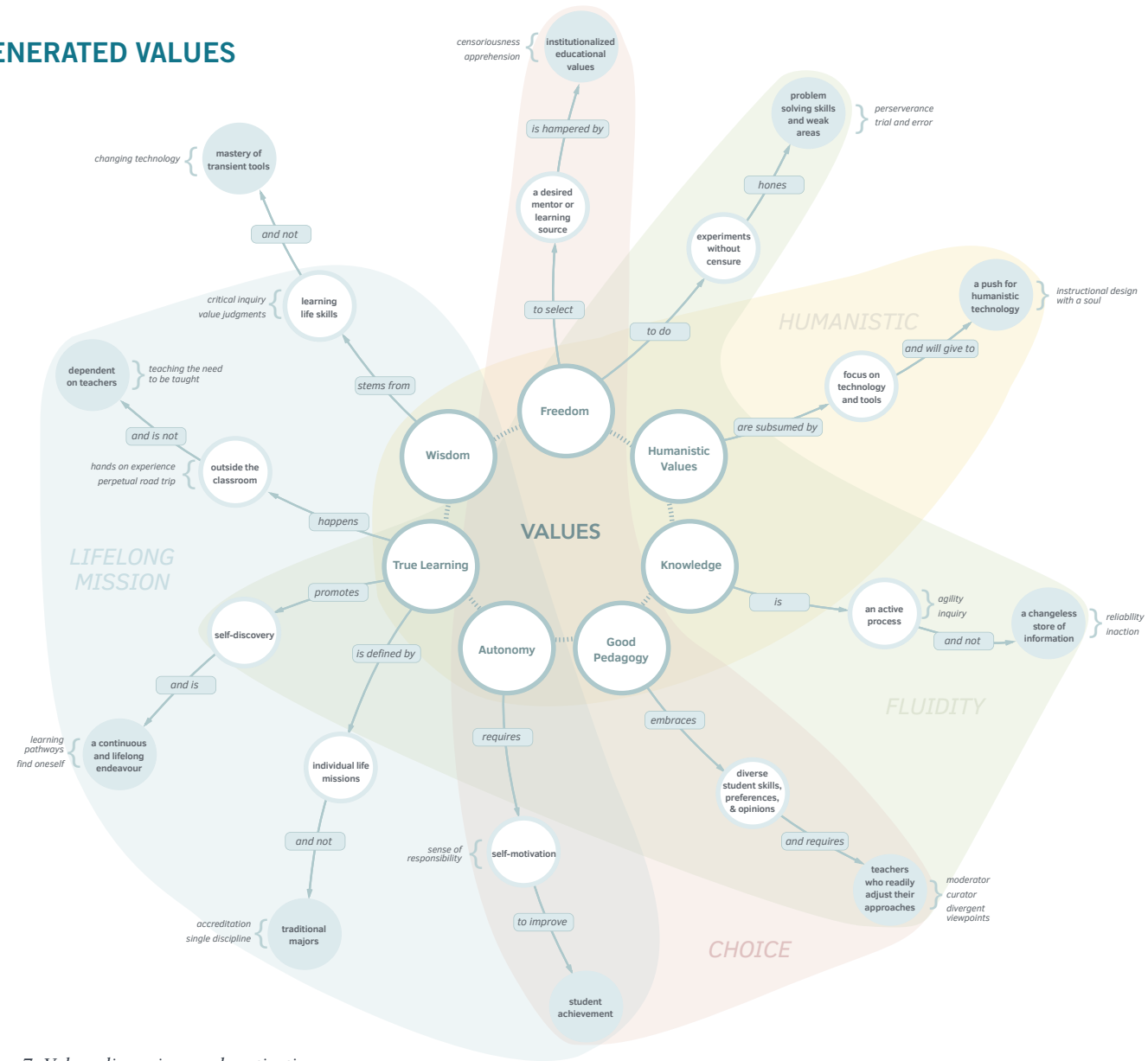


Figure 7: Values dimensions and motivations

**True learning happens outside the classroom**  
Schools have taught people the need to be taught. This lesson discourages independent growth and closes the door on life’s surprises and teachable moments that aren’t institutionally sanctioned (Illich, 1971). However, “the objective of education is learning, not teaching” (Ackoff, 2008) and a “commitment to developing the whole person” (Shirvani, 2015). Connecting students with others and external environments can be the “perpetual field trip” (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017) that students can build on to learn for life.

**Knowledge is not fixed. It is nimble, adaptive**  
The perception of knowledge must change from something reliable and changeless to something that is an inquiry and activity (Hovorka & Rees, 2009). To that end, educational institutions can adopt design learning that, in the spirit of design thinking, pushes formal education to “entrepreneurial dispositions and skills necessary to adapt to rapid social and technological change” (McGowan & Araya, 2016). Furthermore, universities can focus their efforts on building deep learning mindsets with machine intelligence that will help people “continually navigate

complexity over the course of their lives” (Swearer, 2017).  
**Learner autonomy + self-motivation = achievement**  
Teaching cannot produce learning without motivation (Ackoff, 2008). It is a driver that cannot be forced on students but comes from a genuine desire to learn, typically to ignite one’s career or satisfy a thirst for knowledge (Ad., personal communication, August 3, 2017). Adding learner autonomy to motivation can make for a powerful combination. Student achievement has been shown to improve with a greater sense of responsibility (Mcloughlin and Lee, 2008).



“We need to get students to move from majors to missions. Passionate personal missions that they pursue throughout their lives with and without co-created learning pathways.”

Randy Swearer

Define learning by missions, not majors

People are looking for educators who can translate today’s complexity into meaningful skills like critical thinking and how to be better self-learners (Ma., personal communication, August 4, 2017). Educating the whole person will serve as a foundation to help prepare young people for a world of multiple careers or careers that do not yet exist (Shirvani, 2015).

To that end, more flexibility can be built into the educational system by waiving undergraduate degree requirements and reserving exit requirements only for students who need certification (Ackoff, 2008).

Freedom to fail is key to success. Just do it

If the consequences of failing were minimized, students would often challenge themselves to work on their weaknesses (Ackoff, 2008).

Trial and error, a natural problem-solving skill developed at birth and honed by Montessori schools, may unlock the secret to success in life

(Ackoff, 2008; Swearer, 2017). It may not be a coincidence that so many Silicon Valley leaders attended Montessori and that the tech industry embraces the iterative and experimental “doing to learn” approach to design (Swearer, 2017).





In the end, it is important to act. To quote Harvard educator Tony Wagner, “It is not what you know, but what you can do with what you know”.

Where do we go from here?

For future course design to be successful, it must incorporate value principles based on four motivations: Humanistic, Fluidity, Lifelong Mission, and Choice.

The following table unpacks the value motivations around which to craft course design principles. The insights established in the previous section were dimensionalized visually in parallel structure in Figure 7 to highlight potential areas of intervention (levers) as well as problem reframing considerations (tensions, design dilemmas).

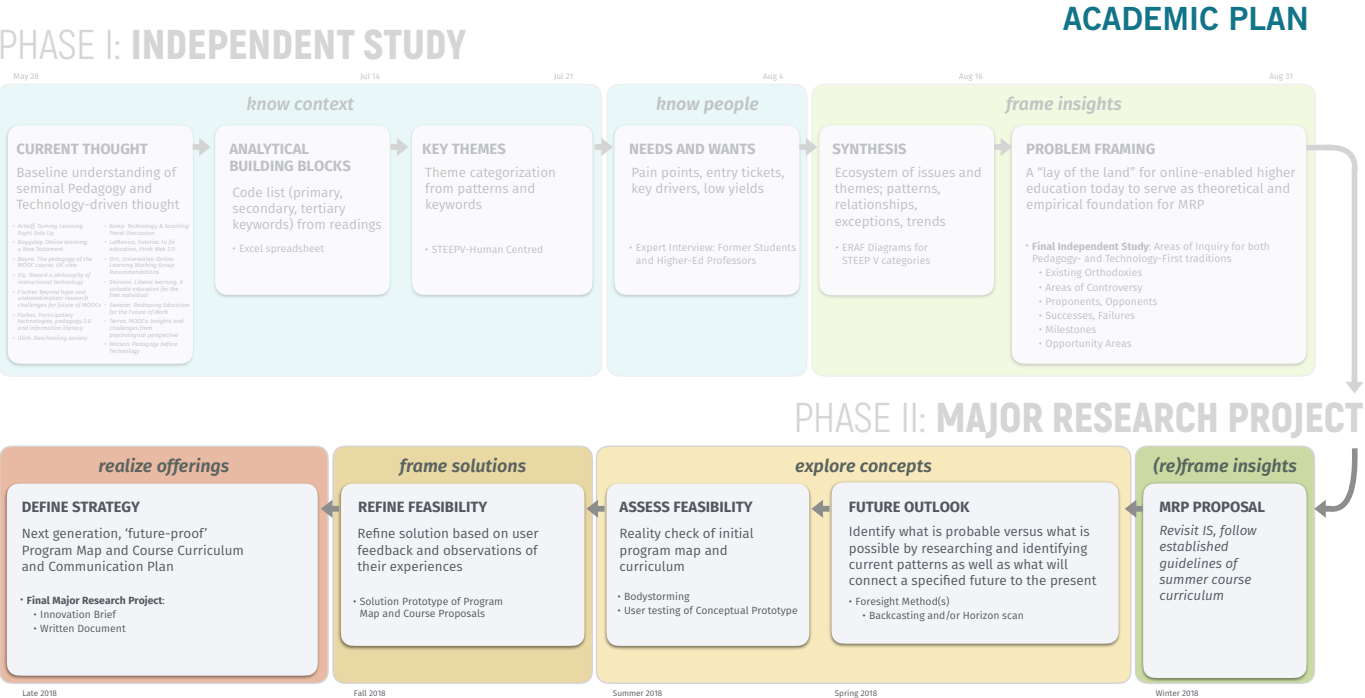
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

♥ MOTIVATIONS	📦 KEY DIMENSIONS	🔧 LEVERS	⚠ TENSIONS	🔍 DESIGN DILEMMAS
 <b>HUMANISTIC</b> A celebration of each student as a unique, whole being who wants to achieve	Humanistic Values	Focus on Technology and Tools	Human-Centred / Tool-Centred	Why are humanistic values subsumed by a focus on technology and tools?
	Knowledge	An Active Process	Inquiry / Inaction	Why is knowledge not automatically an active process?
	Freedom	Experiment Without Censure	Trial and Error / Failure	Why does experimenting without censure hone problem-solving skills?
 <b>FLUIDITY</b> A readiness to embrace the unknown and quickly change course in the name of progress	Good Pedagogy	Diverse Student Skills, Preferences, and Opinion	Diverse Learner / Flexible Educator	Why don't teachers adjust their approaches to achieve good pedagogy?
	Wisdom	Learning Life Skills	Learning / Mastery	Why are transient tools being taught when they don't lead to wisdom?
	True Learning	Outside the Classroom	Dependency / Discovery	Why doesn't true learning happen inside the classroom?
 <b>LIFELONG MISSION</b> A tireless quest of self-discovery that doesn't stop at graduation	True Learning	Self-Discovery	Discovery / Commitment	Why is true learning a lifelong endeavour?
	True Learning	Individual Life Missions	Single Discipline / Multiple-Disciplines	Why don't traditional majors reflect life missions?
	Freedom	A Desired Mentor or Learning Source	Choice / Barriers	Why do students allow institutions to restrict their choice for learning?
 <b>CHOICE</b> The confidence to put students in the driver's seat of their education	Autonomy	Self-Motivation	Autonomy / Motivation	Why does autonomy require self-motivation?



# EPILOGUE

Road to Major Research Project      Reflection



As this independent study comes to a close, I could not help but notice the similarities between what I wrote about in the preceding pages and my own experiences as a student conducting this research. Going in, I had mentally placed Technology and Pedagogy in separate (presumably opposing) silos that I could compare and contrast cleanly with parallel questions. Surely, thought leaders would fall squarely in one camp or the other. As in life, I soon realized that the truth lay somewhere in between and that the relevant

question was not for vs. against, pros vs. cons, or even watershed moments, but rather how to make the two function effectively as one. As such, this study evolved into a search for universal, human-centered, and unifying "truths" (subjective as they may be) that would form the ideological basis for how technology and pedagogy would be designed in the course I am spearheading at Sheridan College. The design dilemmas posed at the end of each section will be the starting point for Phase II of my academic plan (see above). These questions have

been phrased to elicit uncomfortable responses, some of which are already percolating as of this writing. Could the relationship between technology and students be parental in nature? Or is it more a cloak that lets one express identity without real world consequences? The answers will provide rich underpinnings for the curriculum design principles that will inform the reframing, concept exploration, and prototyping stages of my MRP. This independent study has been truly eye-opening for me. The journey continues.

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# CREDITS

Icons Images Transcripts

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**The Noun Project**  
<https://thenounproject.com>  
For icons used on pages 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27  
Levers icon: Nick Abrams, US  
Key Dimensions icon: Ryan Spiering, US  
Tensions icon: parkjisun  
Design Dilemmas icon: Rohith M S

## Image

**Wikimedia**  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pepper\\_at\\_Opening\\_Ceremony\\_of\\_the\\_28th\\_Tokyo\\_International\\_Film\\_Festival\\_\(22401702656\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pepper_at_Opening_Ceremony_of_the_28th_Tokyo_International_Film_Festival_(22401702656).jpg)  
For image used on page 2

# APPENDICES

Utterances    Sorting Exercises    Concept Map    Discussion Guide

A: SORTING UTTERANCES–LEGEND	33
B: SORTING UTTERANCES–SOCIAL	34
C: SORTING UTTERANCES–TECHNOLOGICAL	35
D: SORTING UTTERANCES–ECONOMIC	36
E: SORTING UTTERANCES–ENVIRONMENTAL	37
F: SORTING UTTERANCES–POLITICAL	38
G: SORTING UTTERANCES–VALUES	39
H: CONCEPT MAP	40
I: DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR EXPERT INTERVIEWS - EDUCATORS	42
J: DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR EXPERT INTERVIEWS - STUDENTS	43

## APPENDIX A: SORTING UTTERANCES–LEGEND

Sorting Utterances    Concept Map    Discussion Guide

Ac	Ackoff, R. (2008). Turning Learning Right Side Up: Putting Education Back on Track.
Ad	Expert Interview 1. Personal communication, August 3, 2017.
Bg	Baggaley, J. (2014). Online Learning: a New Testament. <i>Distance Education</i> , 35, 1, 133-140.
Ch	Expert Interview 3. Personal communication, August 5, 2017.
Ely	Ely, D. (1999). Toward a philosophy of instructional technology: Thirty years on. <i>British Journal of Educational Technology</i> , 30(4), 305–310.
Fa	Farkas, M. (2012). Participatory technologies, pedagogy 2.0 and information literacy. <i>Library Hi Tech</i> , 30(1), 82-94.
Fi	Fischer, G. (2014). Beyond hype and underestimation: identifying research challenges for the future of MOOCs. <i>Distance Education</i> , 35, 2, 1–10.
i	Illich, I. (1971). Deschooling society. [1st ed.] New York: Harper & Row.
k	Kemp, A. T., Preston, J., Page, C. S., Harper, R., Dillard, B., Flynn, J., & Yamaguchi, M. (2014). Technology and teaching: A conversation among faculty regarding the pros and cons of technology. <i>The Qualitative Report</i> , 19(3), 1-23.
kh	Khan, R., Kellner, D. (2007). Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich: technology, politics and the reconstruction of education. <i>Policy Futures in Education</i> , 5(4), 431-448.
La	LaMonica, M. (2006). “Futurist: to fix education, think Web 2.0”, <i>CNET</i>
Lv	Expert Interview 4. Personal communication, August 5, 2017
Ma	Expert Interview 3. Personal communication, August 4, 2017
Mc	McGowan, H., Araya, D. (2016). - Education and accelerated change: The imperative for design learning. <i>Brown Centre Chalkboard</i> .
Sh	Shirvani, H. (2015). Liberal learning: A suitable education for the free individual. <i>The Hechinger Report</i> .
Sw	Swearer, R. <i>Reshaping Education for the Future of Work at MaRS Discovery District</i> (keynote lecture, May 30, 2017).
Tr	Terras, M., Ramsay, J. (2015). Massive open online courses (MOOCs): Insights and challenges from a psychological perspective. <i>British Journal of Educational Technology</i> , 46(3), 472-487.
w	Watson, D.M. (2001). Pedagogy before Technology: Re-thinking the Relationship between ICT and Teaching. <i>Education and Information Technologies</i> . 6: 251.

Legend for Sorting Utterances Appendix B to G

[Sorting Utterances](#)   [Concept Map](#)   [Discussion Guide](#)

[Sorting Utterances](#)   [Concept Map](#)   [Discussion Guide](#)



[Sorting Utterances](#)   [Concept Map](#)   [Discussion Guide](#)

[Sorting Utterances](#)   [Concept Map](#)   [Discussion Guide](#)





[Sorting Utterances](#)
[Concept Map](#)
[Discussion Guide](#)



[Sorting Utterances](#)
[Concept Map](#)
[Discussion Guide](#)



## APPENDIX F: SORTING UTTERANCES- POLITICAL

### Sorting Utterances Concept Map Discussion Guide



## APPENDIX G: SORTING UTTERANCES- VALUES

### Sorting Utterances Concept Map Discussion Guide



[Sorting Utterances](#)
[Concept Map](#)
[Discussion Guide](#)



Sorting Utterances      **Concept Map**      Discussion Guide

INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDES: EDUCATORS

Professor (Code: Ch)

Technology plays a big role in teaching. What do you consider technology?  
*Follow up depending on the answer (day to day life or in education)*

How has College bureaucracy been a barrier to something that you tried to implement in the program or curriculum?  
What are the tensions?

Is there an example where they supported you?

Do you consider the College a big business?  
Acting too much like one or not enough?

Can you recall an inspiring figure or teacher that made a lasting impact?  
Please describe an example

What if one of the Web Design non-studio courses was taught online? Which one would you pick — and why?

If you could turn back time, what is the one thing you would change in your role as an educator  
(or program coordinator)?

Professor (Code: Ma)

Technology plays a big role in teaching. What do you consider technology?  
*Follow up depending on the answer (day to day life or in education)*

Students come in with varying levels of technical proficiency, especially in first year. How do you manage with this?

What do you think the biggest challenges that students face based on your experiences with them?

Can you speak to an example of successful collaboration in the classroom?  
Any examples where collaboration led to sub-optimal results and why?

What if one of your studio courses was taught online, any comments?

If you could create the ideal teaching environment, what would that be like for you?  
Please describe an example

INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDES: STUDENTS

Graduate, Sheridan College Web Design Graduate Certificate Program (Code: Ad)

What counts as technology to you?  
*Follow up depending on the answer (day to day life or in education)*

Why did you choose the program(s) that you did? What were you trying to accomplish?

What do you think of the idea that one of your old studio courses would be taught online?  
*Probe: What would work? What wouldn't work for you? Why / not?*

Thinking of your experiences at Sheridan, which aspects do you think prepared you the most for your current job?  
What were you not ready for? Probes: technology, life skills, team

What do you think were the biggest challenges your instructors faced during your time?

What do you think the future holds for the technology in the classroom?

If you could change one and only one thing about your higher-ed experience, what would that be and why?

Graduate Student OCAD University (Code: Lv)

What counts as technology to you?  
*Follow up depending on the answer (day to day life or in education)*

What are schools still doing that is way past the best-before date?

Would you describe your undergrad experience as collaborative? Why? Why not?  
*Probe: What role did technology play in that collaboration?*

Do you feel your experience with educators has been a one-way relationship?

Do you feel your education has prepared you for the future?  
*Probe: Role technology could have played in preparing you (helped you/hindered you)?*

If you could change one and only one thing about your higher-ed experience, what would that be and why?



