



CVC@ONE Webinar

Humanizing in the AI Era

Michelle Pacansky-Brock, Ed.D.
Faculty Mentor
CVC@ONE

Please scan the QR code with your phone or click the link in the chat.



[Participate](#)

How are you
feeling about AI?





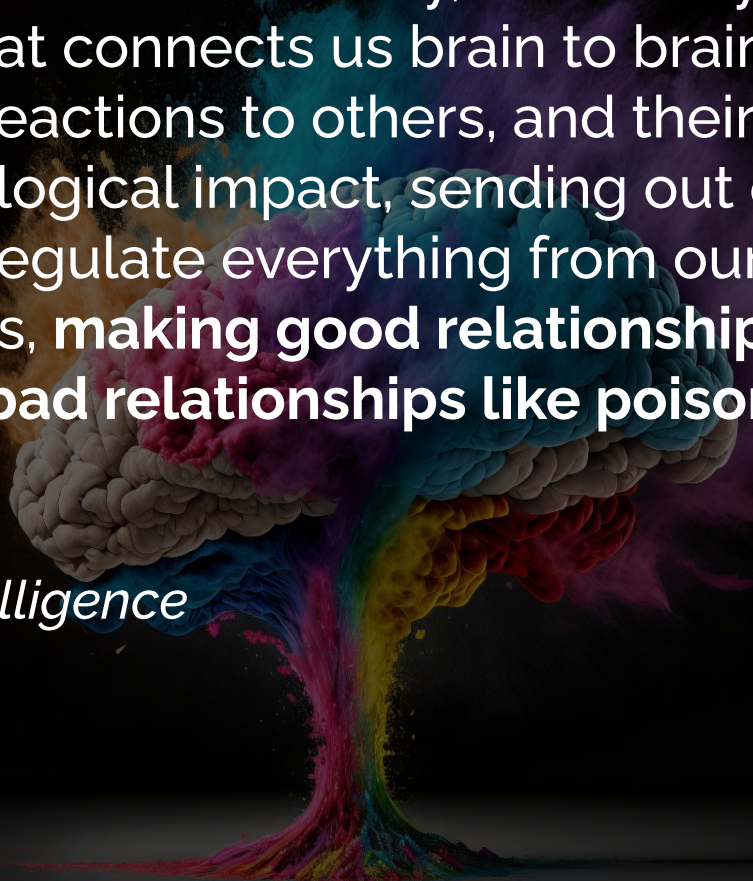
What's our plan?

1. Define “humanizing” in the context of teaching and learning.
2. Share what we've learned from the Humanizing Online STEM grant projects.
3. Examine risks and opportunities of emotional AI.
4. Begin to reimagine assessments as connection catalysts to support well being, intrinsic motivation, and AI literacy (for faculty and students).

... "We are designed for sociability, constantly engaged in a 'neural ballet' that connects us brain to brain with those around us. Our reactions to others, and theirs to us, have a far-reaching biological impact, sending out cascades of hormones that regulate everything from our hearts to our immune systems, **making good relationships act like vitamins – and bad relationships like poisons.**"

Daniel Goleman
Author, *Social Intelligence*

(emphasis added)



Our brains and bodies treat isolation as a threat.





Funded by the California
Education Learning Lab

Administered by
Foothill-De Anza CC
District

What would happen if asynchronous online STEM courses were intentionally designed and taught to send kindness cues of social inclusion and foster belonging for diverse students?

For more information, go to HumanizeOL.org



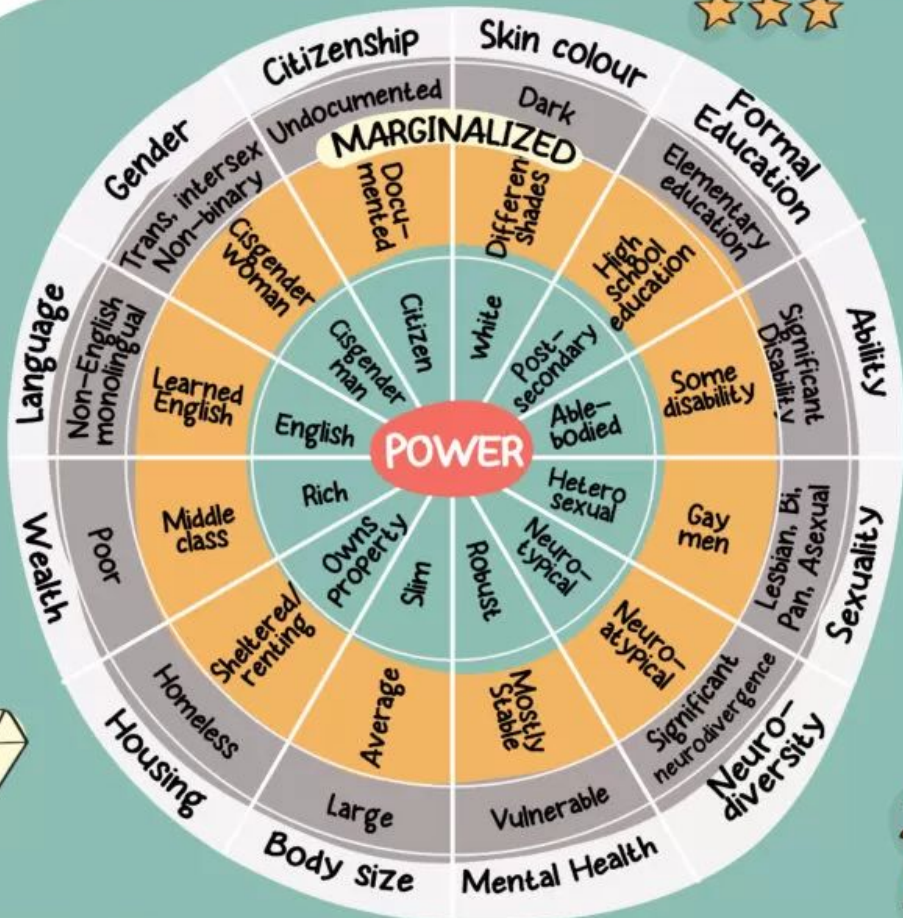
Belonging is not the same as fitting in.



Fitting in is a dignity violation.
Belonging is being accepted for your true authentic self.

Brown, B. Braving the Wilderness.1

Recipes for wellbeing



Humanizing Online STEM Grant Projects

- **2019-2020** Developed humanizing, a research-based instructional model. Designed and piloted the Humanizing Online STEM Academy
- **2021-2022** Scaled to 7 CCCs and CSUs, researched, and shared the Academy/resources
- **2022-2024** Continued scaling and researching.

330 Academy completions across 19 institutions (15 CCCs and 4 CSUs)

HOW & WHY TO
HUMANIZE
YOUR ONLINE CLASS
#HumanizingSTEM

WHAT IS HUMANIZING?

In humanized online courses, positive instructor-student relationships are prioritized and serve "as the connective tissue between students, engagement, and rigor" (Pocansky-Broch et al., 2020, p. 2). In any learning modality, human connection is the antidote for the emotional disruption that prevents many students from performing to their full potential and in online courses, creating that connection is even more important. (Laggans & Xu, 2016).

♥ + ⓘ = 🧠

THE PRINCIPLES

THE PEDAGOGY

Humanizing intentionally cultivates a "welcomeness to engage" in an asynchronous online course through trust, mutual respect, and authentic care (Wood & Harris III, 2015) before moving on to course content. Positive instructor-student relationships are leveraged to hold students to high standards, validate their effort and ability, and support them with achieving their goals. Students are more likely to learn in and apply themselves at a higher level when they know their instructor believes in them (Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1994) and the same principles hold true in online courses (Gazier, 2016).

HIGH OPPORTUNITY ZONES

WEEKS 0-1	STEM
Feelings of social isolation can worsen when students learn at a distance from their peers and instructor. To lower this barrier, humanized online courses incorporate kindness cues of social inclusion (Estrada et al., 2018) into the "high opportunity zone" of an online course—the week prior to the start of instruction and the first week of a class.	The culture of STEM education offers a microcosm of inequity. Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students leave STEM fields at greater rates than their White peers, and this problem is worse in STEM than other discipline clusters (Riegle-Crumb et al., 2019). Traditional, deficit-based instructional paradigms have created a "weed out" culture in undergraduate STEM courses.



ACADEMY

6-week, asynchronous professional development program

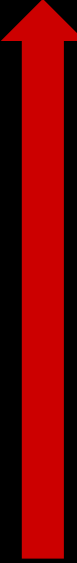
Psychologically Inclusive Course Design + Warm Demander Pedagogy

For more information, go to HumanizeOL.org

What did we learn from our research?

Impacts on faculty:

Significant changes in perceptions, attitudes, and practices:



Recognition for the role that emotions and belonging play in STEM success

Awareness of how the instructional environment shapes students' emotions and belonging

Belief in students' capability to succeed

Changes in teaching (more flexible, more audio, video, and more opportunities for student-student interactions)



ACADEMY

6-week, asynchronous professional development program

Psychologically Inclusive Course Design + Warm Demander Pedagogy

For more information, go to HumanizeOL.org

What did we learn from our research?

Impacts on online students:

- High rates of belonging in humanized online STEM classes, particularly among students from racially minoritized groups
- Reduced racial/ethnic equity gaps
- Increased overall success rates in all course modalities with significant increases seen among women and Latino students



Students at Bakersfield College share experiences from classes taught by faculty who completed the Humanizing Online STEM Academy.

HUMANIZING IS

leveraging human connection to foster a caring and challenging learning environment – in all modalities.

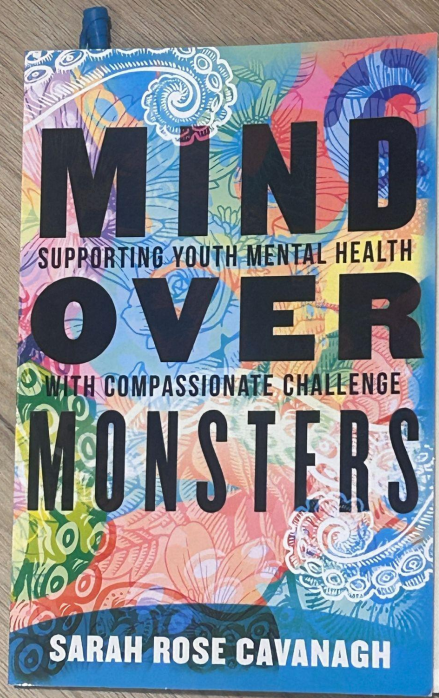




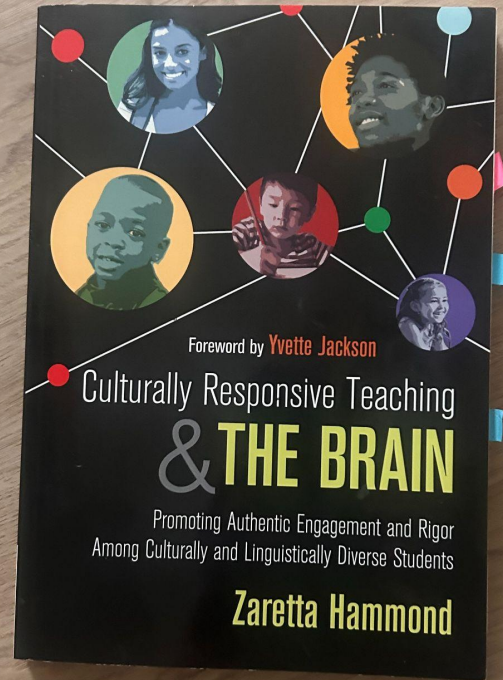
TRANSFORMATIVE TAKEAWAYS

Care and Challenge
can and should co-exist.

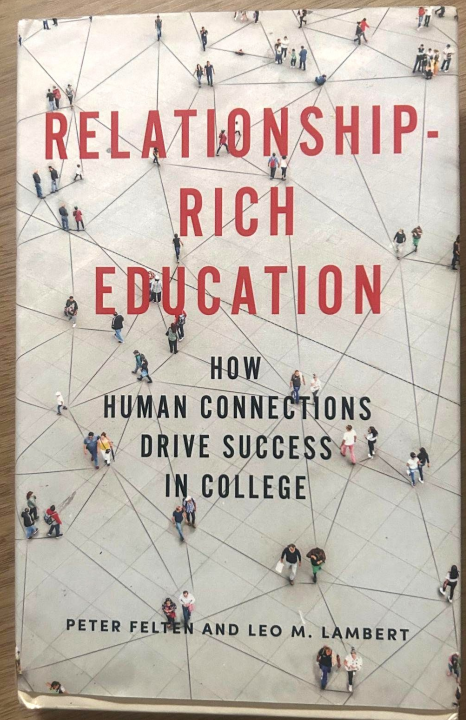
Human Connection
is fuel for equitable learning



Mind Over Monsters
by Sarah Rose Cavanagh



Culturally Responsive Teaching & the
Brain by Zaretta Hammond



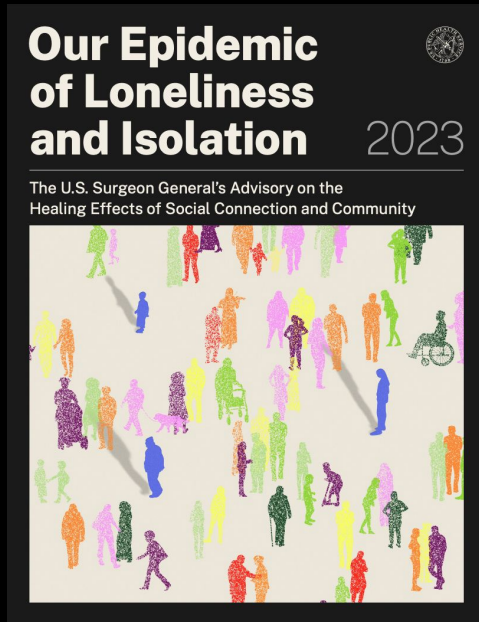
Relationship Rich Education
by Peter Felton and Leo M Lambert

Loneliness

One in two U.S. adults are lonely

Disproportionately impacted groups:

- Transgender & gender diverse
- Hispanic
- Black
- Low-income
- Young adults, 18-24 (79% compared to 41%. 66 and older)



Sources:

- US General Surgeon. (2023). Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation.
- Hajek, A., König, H. H., Blessmann, M., & Grupp, K. (2023). Loneliness and Social Isolation among Transgender and Gender Diverse People. Healthcare (Basel, Switzerland), 11(10), 1517. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11101517>



Loneliness

- Increases job dissatisfaction
- Decreases productivity at work
- Increases the odds of dying early by 45%
 - The equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day



Human Connection

is an essential antidote.

“Each of us can start now, in our own lives, by strengthening our connections and relationships. Our individual relationships are an untapped resource—a source of healing hiding in plain sight.

They can help us live healthier, more productive, and more fulfilled lives. Answer that phone call from a friend. Make time to share a meal. Listen without the distraction of your phone. Perform an act of service. Express yourself authentically. The keys to human connection are simple, but extraordinarily powerful.”

U.S Surgeon General

Emotional AI

A central graphic of a brain-like structure formed from vibrant, multi-colored smoke or ink splatters. The colors include shades of blue, purple, pink, red, yellow, and green, all set against a dark, almost black background. The structure is dense and textured, resembling a human brain.

uses machines to guess and respond to how humans are feeling based on verbal and/or non-verbal cues

applied in different contexts to create more “personalized” experiences

Emotional AI

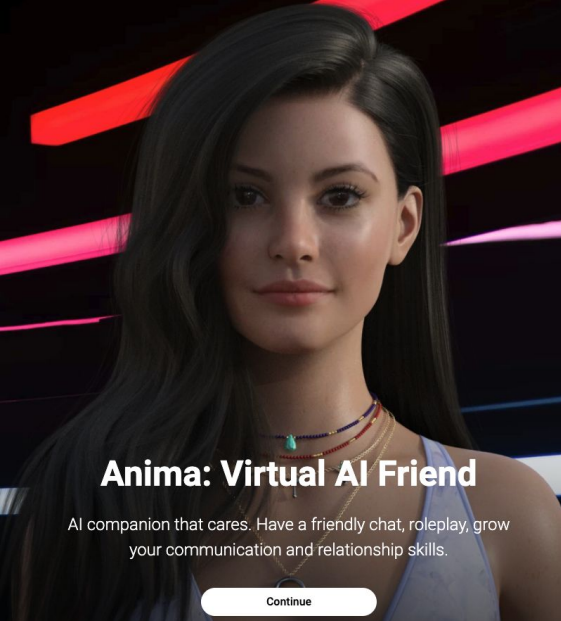


Risks:

1. Facial recognition software is biased. Shown to be more likely to exclude individuals with black and brown skin.
2. Prediction of feelings based on external expression results in emotional stereotypes and algorithmic bias. EX: cultural differences, neurodivergence gets left out.
3. Machines may start to replace human interactions.

A lush garden scene with various green plants and flowers. The word "friend" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font across the center of the image. The background is filled with dense foliage, including tall trees and various garden plants, creating a vibrant and natural setting.

friend



Anima: Virtual AI Friend

AI companion that cares. Have a friendly chat, roleplay, grow your communication and relationship skills.

Continue

The AI companion who cares

Always here to listen and talk.
Always on your side

Create your Replika

also available on

iOS
 Android
 Oculus

er.ai

Sign Up to Chat

Login

Who do you want to talk to?
A trusted circle of support

An AI Companion with Memory and a Soul

Build a meaningful friendship, develop a passionate relationship, or learn from an insightful mentor.

No matter what you're looking for, Nomi's humanlike memory and creativity foster a deep, consistent, and evolving relationship.

Start Chatting

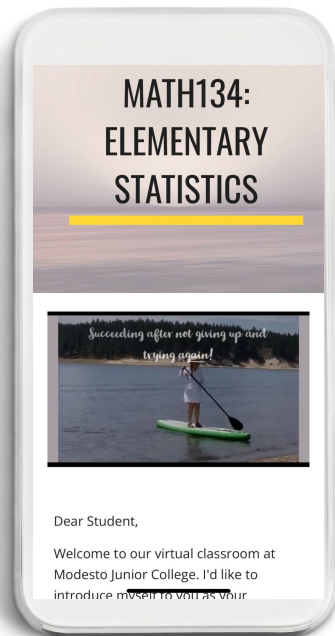
'It was as if my father were actually texting me': grief in the age of AI



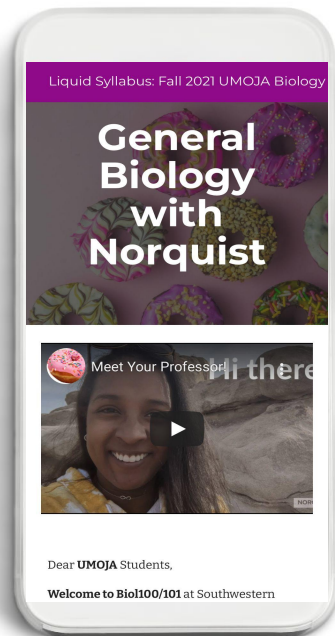
Your emotions are at risk of
becoming a commodity.

**Emotions are your superpowers
in the AI era.**

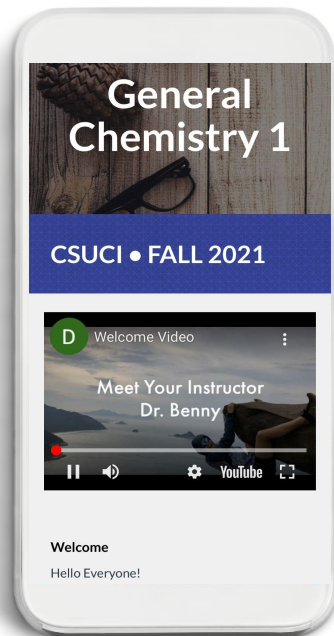
Your authentic self *is* your advantage in the AI era.



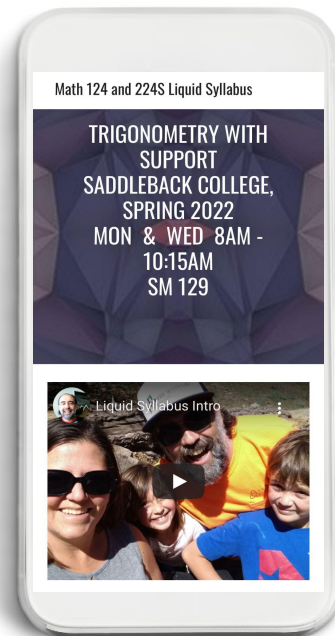
[Angelica Cortes](#),
Math, Modesto
Junior College



[Trishana Norquist](#),
Biology,
Southwestern
College



[Benny Ng](#),
Chemistry, CSU
Channel Islands
and Los Angeles
Pierce College



[Frank Gonzalez](#),
Math, Saddleback
College

Hello Professor,

I just had to reach out and tell you that reading through your syllabus and watching your welcome video literally brought tears to my eyes. I cannot tell you how many times I've attempted to take this English course and not completed because I have been too overwhelmed.

I am a mom to two young children and between raising them, working full time, trying to balance my marriage, and chase after my longtime dream of becoming a nurse, college has not been easy journey for me. I have been dreading this semester because I have several rigorous courses and chose your English course this semester purely based off zero cost material. You normalized not having a perfectly straight path . . .

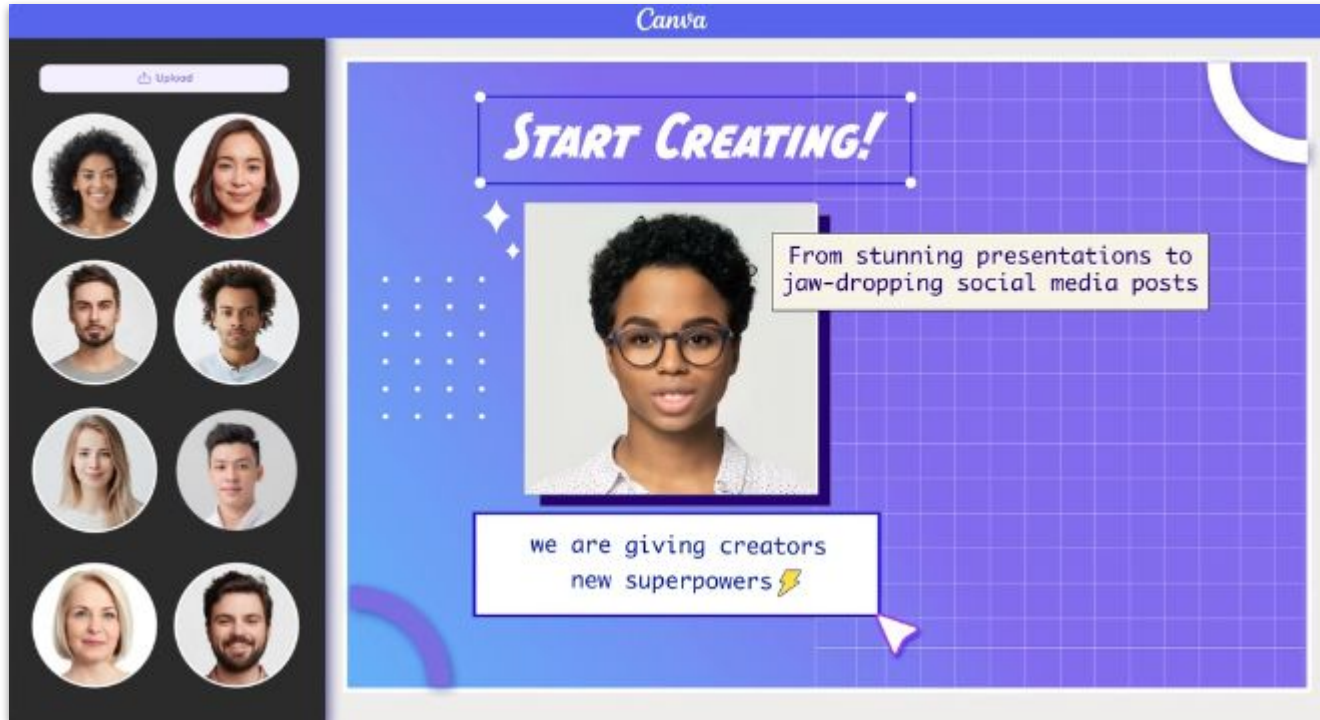
You have given me so much hope for this course and for others I am taking and it's been a wonderful reminder to keep my goals and dreams in sight and keep pushing through when you just don't think you can do anymore. Thank you, I really look forward to learning from you this semester!

A student in a humanized asynchronous online course after viewing a liquid syllabus.



AI Video Bots Have Landed.

They cannot replace you
if your intent is to build human connection



Relationships start with the first click.



Please view this 2-minute video to get started.

Welcome! I'm Michelle Pacansky-Brock and I will be your online instructor for the History of Still Photography. Please take 2-minutes to view my video and learn a little about me. And then explore the rest of this page to get prepared for week one.

I'm looking forward to getting to know you and exploring the history of photo together. I'll see you online!

Michelle

Pronouns: she/her/hers
You are welcome to call me Michelle or Professor Pacansky-Brock.

the Uncanny Valley

Humans are comfortable with non-human like objects
until they become too human-like.

The Uncanny Valley is not a place where trust is built or
where learning occurs.

A video bot can deliver
information but it can't
build trust.

Humanizing



Content
Delivery



mental health crisis

artificial intelligence

inequities in educational outcomes

an essential antidote is

Human Connection

Teaching Shifts Accelerated by AI

Detection → Integration

Policy → Transparent & Contextual Guidance

Product → Process

Positional Authority

Relational Authority

Positional Authority



- Derived from one's formal role or title
- Based on hierarchical structure
- Backed by organizational policies

Relational Authority

- **Earned through trust and respect**
- **Built through interactions**
- **Based on personal qualities and expertise**
 - **Qualities of a “warm demander” (Kleinfeld, 1975) are personal warmth, active demanding, and affirms effort *and* ability**

Designing Assessments that Serve as Connection Catalysts

In Canvas

1. Assignment
 - a. Instructions/Rubric
 - b. Use AI to brainstorm topics
 - c. Submit process documentation
2. Discussion
 - a. Submit product
 - b. Student-student interactions
3. Assignment (next module)
 - c. Review, analyze, reflect in writing, voice, or video

INTERACTIONS with Friends/Family/Community

talk with people/go outside

- Hands-on projects
- Interviews
- Conversations
- Surveys

(with permission to share)

0:00

AMV

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

ZK



1x



0:02



The AI Assessment Scale

1	NO AI	The assessment is completed entirely without AI assistance in a controlled environment, ensuring that students rely solely on their existing knowledge, understanding, and skills You must not use AI at any point during the assessment. You must demonstrate your core skills and knowledge.
2	AI PLANNING	AI may be used for pre-task activities such as brainstorming, outlining and initial research. This level focuses on the effective use of AI for planning, synthesis, and ideation, but assessments should emphasise the ability to develop and refine these ideas independently. You may use AI for planning, idea development, and research. Your final submission should show how you have developed and refined these ideas.
3	AI COLLABORATION	AI may be used to help complete the task, including idea generation, drafting, feedback, and refinement. Students should critically evaluate and modify the AI suggested outputs, demonstrating their understanding. You may use AI to assist with specific tasks such as drafting text, refining and evaluating your work. You must critically evaluate and modify any AI-generated content you use.
4	FULL AI	AI may be used to complete any elements of the task, with students directing AI to achieve the assessment goals. Assessments at this level may also require engagement with AI to achieve goals and solve problems. You may use AI extensively throughout your work either as you wish, or as specifically directed in your assessment. Focus on directing AI to achieve your goals while demonstrating your critical thinking.
5	AI EXPLORATION	AI is used creatively to enhance problem-solving, generate novel insights, or develop innovative solutions to solve problems. Students and educators co-design assessments to explore unique AI applications within the field of study. You should use AI creatively to solve the task, potentially co-designing new approaches with your instructor.

Incorporate the Social Connection Fact Cards

SOCIAL CONNECTION
FACT CARD



Being more socially connected can improve stress responses and minimize the negative health effects of stress.^{1,2}

1. [Cohen & Willis, 1985.](#)
2. [Southwick, et al., 2016.](#)

SOCIAL CONNECTION
FACT CARD



People with strong perceptions of community belongingness are 2.6 times more likely to report good or excellent health than people with a low sense of belongingness.¹

1. [My Health My Community, 2018.](#)

SOCIAL CONNECTION
FACT CARD



Immersion in local community-based activities such as volunteering significantly increases the likelihood of unemployed individuals becoming employed.^{1,2,3}

1. [Wilson, 2000.](#)
2. [Jastrzab et al., 2004.](#)
3. [Spera et al., 2015.](#)

Get the [Social Connection Fact Cards](#).

How might you use Generative AI to spark ideas for your class?



 Good morning Michelle



Act as a course designer for a community college astronomy course. The goal is to brainstorm ideas for learning activities that fosters interactions with friends/family and/or gets students outside in their community/nature.



Claude 3.5 Sonnet 

Use `shift + return` for new line

 Add content 

 Use a project 

AI Generated Ideas for Astronomy Activities with Human Connection

"Astronomy in Your Backyard" Blog:

- Have students maintain a class blog about observable astronomical events.
- Encourage them to post regular updates about what can be seen in the night sky.
- Promote the blog in the local community as a resource for amateur stargazers.

Stargazing Nights:

- Organize group stargazing events where students bring friends and family.
- Provide telescopes and star charts for identifying constellations and planets.
- Encourage students to teach their guests about what they've learned in class.
- Display entries on a Canvas page or online platform for community voting.

Astrophotography Contest:

- Challenge students to take photos of celestial objects using smartphones or cameras.
- Create categories like "Best Moon Shot" or "Most Creative Constellation Photo."

"Astronomy in Culture" Presentations:

- Assign students to research how different cultures view celestial objects and events.
- Have them interview family members or community elders about cultural stories related to the sky.
- Present findings in a class or community event.

Local Dark Sky Advocacy:

- Teach students about light pollution and its effects on astronomy and ecosystems.
- Organize a community light pollution survey, mapping areas of high and low light pollution.
- Encourage students to present findings to local government or community groups.

Brainstorm Activity Ideas for Your Course with Gen AI

1. Choose a text generating AI tool (Claude, ChatGPT, Google Gemini, MS Co Pilot)
2. Enter this prompt (or revise as desired):

Act as a course designer for a community college [enter discipline or course title] course. Brainstorm ideas for learning activities that foster interactions with friends/family and/or gets students outside in their community/nature.
3. Review the AI's output and refine the prompt, as needed. For example, you may respond with, "Revise those suggestions to exclude activities with _____."

A Few CCC AI Leaders

- [Anna Mills](#), College of Marin
- [Dayamudra Dennehy](#), San Francisco City College
- [Denise Maduli-Williams](#), San Diego Miramar College
Fabiola Torres, Glendale College
- [Katie Datko](#), Mt. San Antonio College
- [Scott James](#), Santiago Canyon College

Follow #CCCAILearn on LinkedIn and X.

Resources

- [Humanizing Project Site](#)
- [AI Assessment Scale](#)
- [Mind Over Monsters](#) by Sarah Rose Cavanaugh
- [Emotional Agility](#) by Susan David
- [Co-Intelligence](#) by Ethan Mollick
- CVC@ONE AI Webinar Series by José Antonio Bowen, author of Teaching with AI



“We are not thinking machines.
We are feeling machines that think.”

Antonio Damasio

Humans are Motivated When

They care.

They feel capable.

They matter.

Playfoot, D., Quigley, M., & Thomas, A. G. (2024). Hey ChatGPT, give me a title for a paper about degree apathy and student use of AI for assignment writing. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 62, 100950.