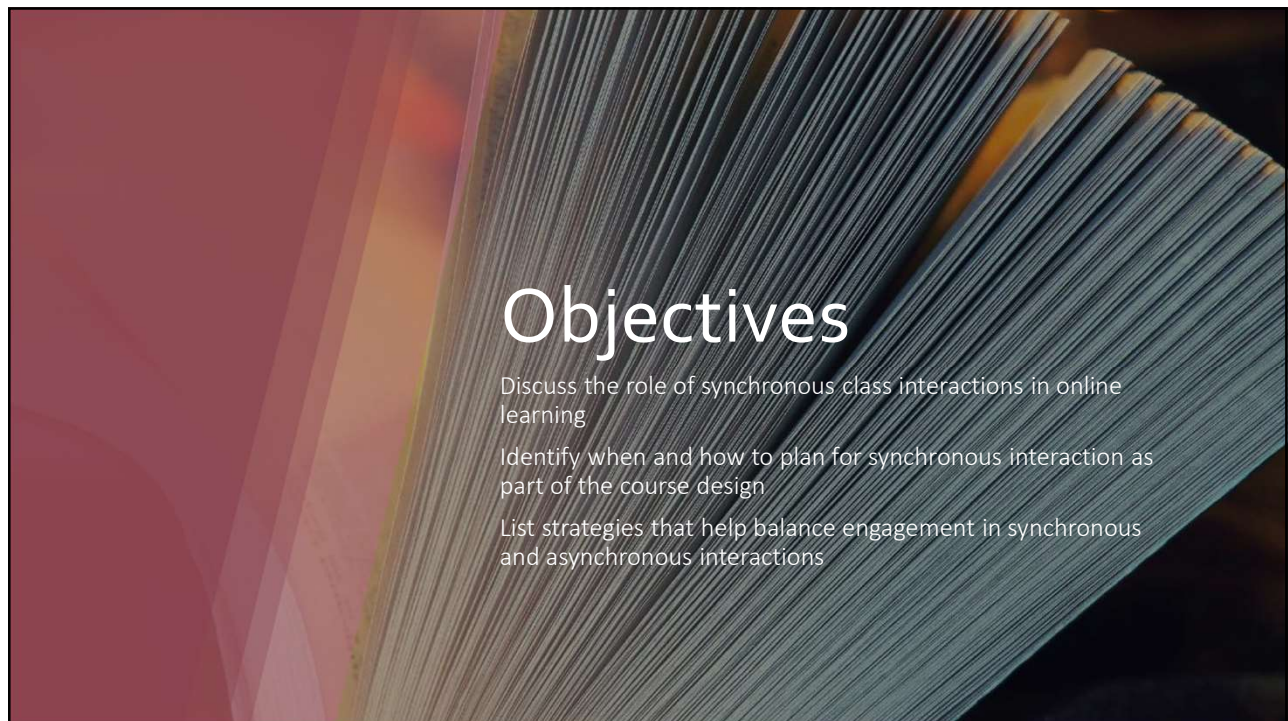




1



2

## AGENDA



1. The change in context and its effect on the role of synchronous in online education
2. What is considered an online synchronous class meeting?
3. What does the literature say?
4. The change in context and its effects
5. Design recommendations for the new era
6. Planning for synchronous meetings



3

3



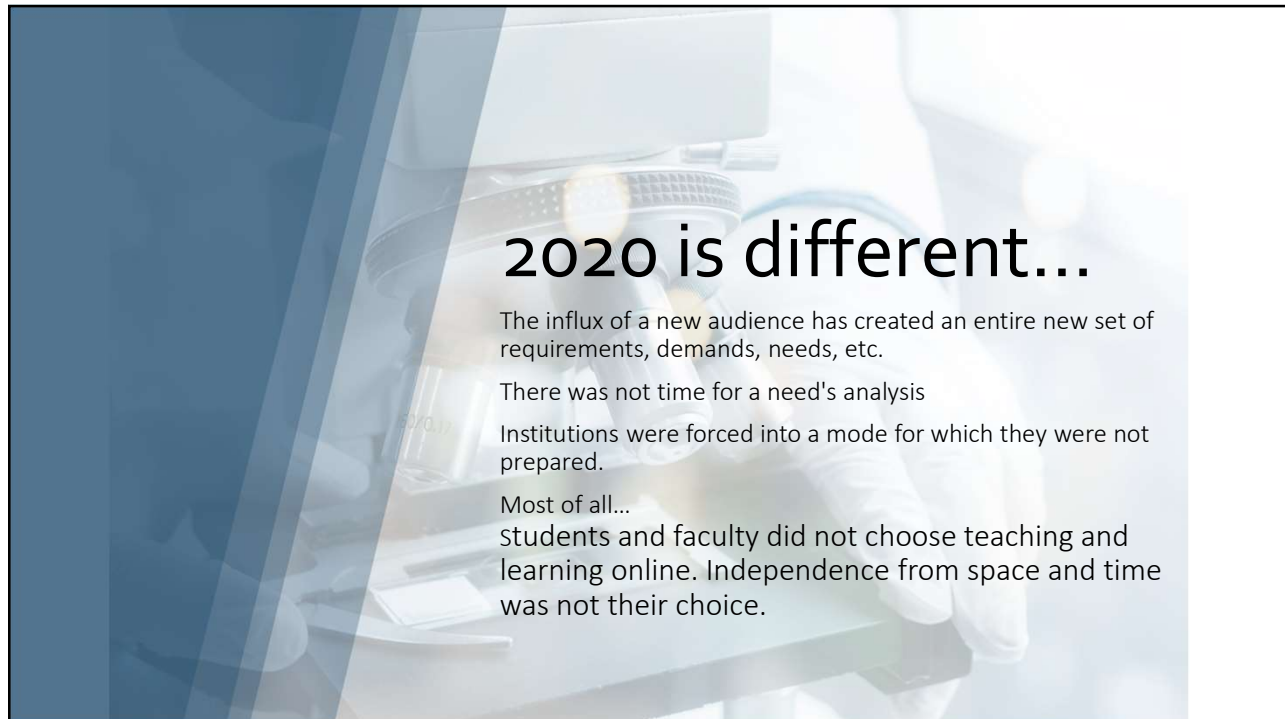
The history of  
online education  
is asynchronous.

There are many reasons  
for that: technology and  
audience.



The best practices we rely on today were  
built based on this history and this  
experience.

4



## 2020 is different...

The influx of a new audience has created an entire new set of requirements, demands, needs, etc.

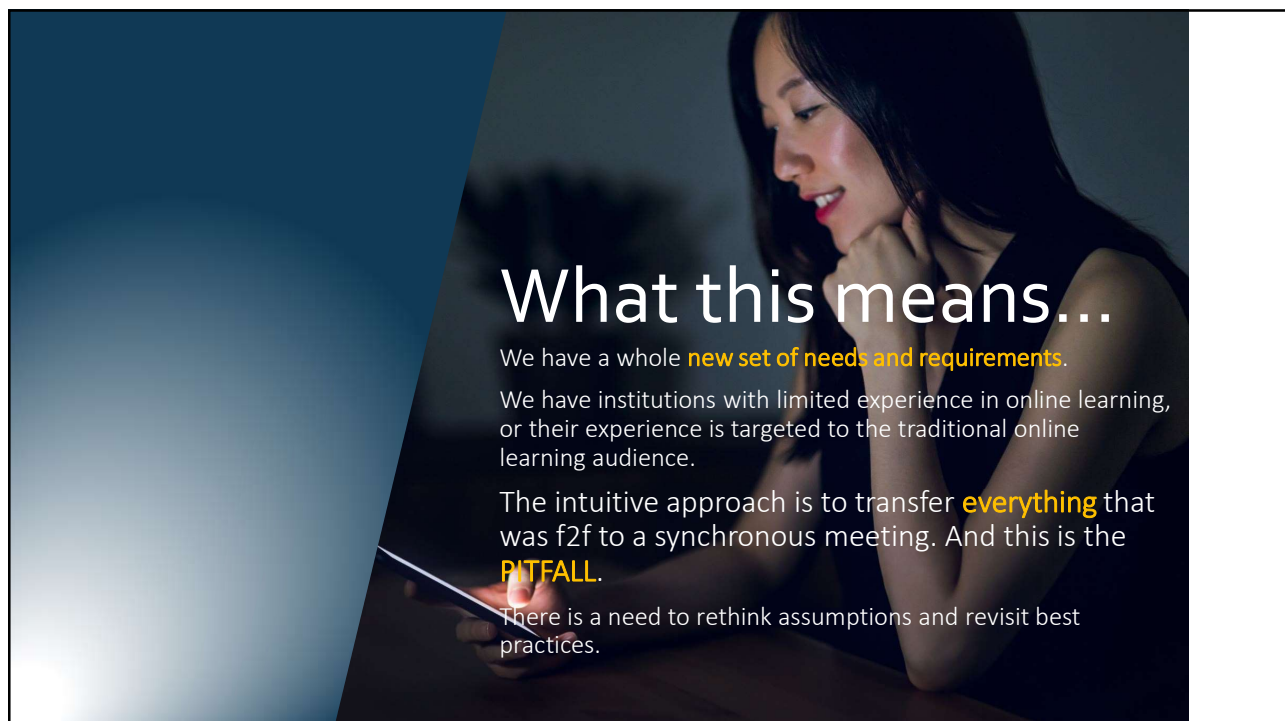
There was not time for a need's analysis

Institutions were forced into a mode for which they were not prepared.

Most of all...

Students and faculty did not choose teaching and learning online. Independence from space and time was not their choice.

5



## What this means...

We have a whole **new set of needs and requirements**.

We have institutions with limited experience in online learning, or their experience is targeted to the traditional online learning audience.

The intuitive approach is to transfer **everything** that was f2f to a synchronous meeting. And this is the **PITFALL**.

There is a need to rethink assumptions and revisit best practices.

6

## 1 step back... WHAT IS AN ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS CLASS MEETING?



The meeting is held within an online **SESSION**.

Participation happens at a **given TIME** and participants are **separated in SPACE**.

Those who are not able to be part of this **SESSION**, might see a recording, **BUT** are not able to **interact in real-time** as part of the session.

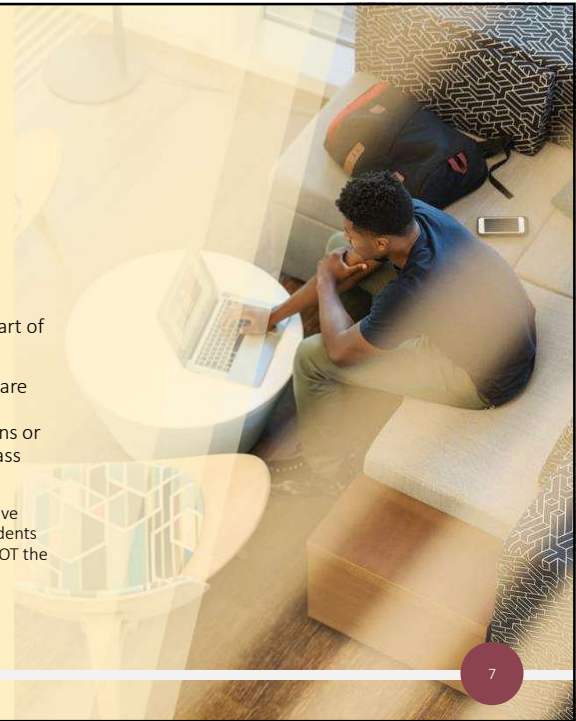
Technologies used are those that allow for a session. (Texting at the same time is **NOT** synchronous.)



Courses vary in how many synchronous meetings are part of the planning.

Synchronous online courses are those in which synchronous meetings are the single means or the central component of class interaction.

It is worth noting that collaborative work frequently might entail students meeting synchronously. This is **NOT** the focus of our conversation today.



7

7

## What does the literature say up to now about use of synchronous?

The literature findings are useful and serve as an important base for current best practices

8

## LITERATURE FINDINGS



Mostly focused on Col framework: social, cognitive and teaching presences.

Synchronous meetings enhance the sense of belonging, which affects confidence. Reduces isolation and frustration.

It thus helps teaching and social presence, which boost cognitive presence.



There is a need for good planning for active learning and integration with the rest of the course.

- Online tutoring
- Active learning
- Extra support for managing other functions.
- Less complex issues.
- Getting acquainted and planning tasks.



There are some challenges.

- Limits conversations.
- Scheduling can be difficult.
- Requires a good set-up.
- Requires specific teacher training.
- Could be intimidating for some.

9

9

## Lessons learned from 2020...

Not yet in the literature

- Connectivity matters
- Support systems matter
- Self-directedness matters

10

## CONTEXT: CONNECTIVITY & SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- Synchronous might represent a huge demand on connectivity
- Mostly offline models might be required.
- Going back to early distance education models might be at play.

- Students might not have appropriate environments at home.
- Depending on age, families are a huge part of the discussion.

**The rest of the discussion assumes the basics are in place.**

11

11

## Grow's Staged Self-Directed Learning model applied to this context

Online learning, especially asynchronous, assumes some level of self-directedness

In this new context we can assume:

Many students might be in first stages of self-directedness based on their exclusive f2f experience

Many traditional f2f environments place students in Stage 1 in terms of the deployed strategies

Thus, the transition to online should take that into consideration



12

12

## Synchronous might mitigate lack of self-directedness

**The SSDL model**

Stage	Student	Teacher	Examples
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator, Guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitator	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group projects
Stage 4	Self-Directed	Consultant, Delegator	Internship, dissertation, individual work or self-directed study-group.

The Staged Self-Directed Learning Model, G. Grow

- Keeping synchronous mimicking f2f meetings is intuitive and less threatening
  - Schedules are kept.
  - Might require less change in habits.
- As students and faculty adapt to the online environment...
  - transition to less synchronous communication
  - Adoption of the best practices established in the literature.
- This does not mean eliminating synchronous, but it could assume less prominence, and learning can be more effective.

13

13

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN STRATEGIES FOR SYNCHRONOUS CLASS MEETINGS



Transition from f2f to online might be done in iterations, where synchronous becomes less frequent as students become more independent.

When transitioning to asynchronous forms of communication, focus on:

- Critical thinking
- Analytical skills
- Cognitive presence
- Multiple threads of conversation



When designing from scratch, start all asynchronous, identify collaboration opportunities, and include synchronous class meetings at well suited moments:

- Working on complex problems
- Early social connections
- Wrap ups
- Student's presentations
- Housekeeping
- Debates

14

14



**ACTIVE LEARNING IN SYNCHRONOUS CLASS MEETINGS**

- Students are prepared prior to meeting.
- Shared screens with problems or white boards
- Polling
- Prompt questions
- Breakout rooms or working in pairs
- Minute paper
- Student presentations
- Promote the use of chat for immediate feedback and questions.
- Give students responsibilities and roles that support the class

15

15



**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE IN SYNCHRONOUS MEETINGS?**

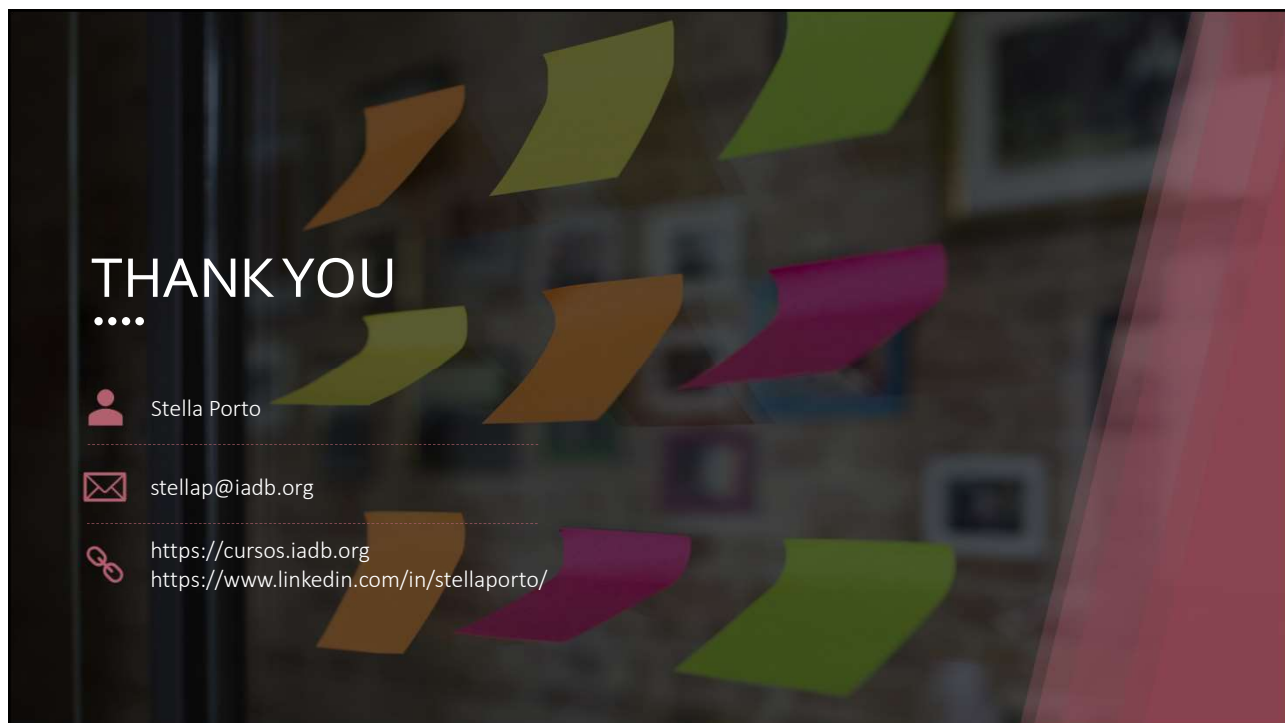
16

16





17



18