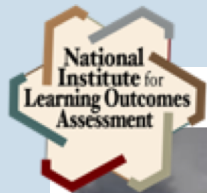# Outcomes, Alignment and Mapping, Oh My!: Curriculum Mapping as Educational Design

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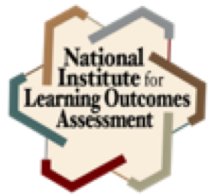
WELCOME

What's the series about?

How will our time together today flow?

In case you are wondering:
- Slides will be shared
- This is being recorded and will be shared
- You can keep the convo going on twitter with #NILOAwebinar
- Google doc of updated resource on the NILOA website and all prior webinars as well: https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/

Community Check-in Recap

This is not a test of online education. Remember: It's not about learning online; it's about learning in a global pandemic crisis.

Compassion not compliance should drive decisions at this time.

Listen to students and be flexible. Please don't over survey, but if you survey, partner with student affairs.

Do not require a higher-level of proof in an online class then you would in face-to-face.

To: Member colleges and universities

From: American Association of Community Colleges; American Association of State Colleges and Universities; American Council on Education; Association of American Universities; Association of Public and Land-grant Universities; and National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

April 16, 2020

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES ON ACCEPTANCE OF CREDIT

These are unprecedented times. Across the nation our institutions have responded with decisiveness, speed, creativity, and compassion to the spread of coronavirus. These responses testify to higher education's commitment to protect our students, staff, and communities and to serve the public good. From each of us, thank you. For our part, we are committed to do all we can to support your efforts and to advocate for resources and flexibility for you to continue to demonstrate the kind of innovative leadership our nation needs.

Institutions have taken bold and innovative steps so far, and can't stop now. You have moved instruction online; you have provided for displaced students; you have provided resources for students to travel home to their families, and you are making changes in campus life to succeed at telework and to protect staff whose responsibilities keep them on campus. Institutions are attempting to ensure that all students have access to technology or Wi-Fi, are purchasing laptops, and launching hot spots to deliver online access to students. Many are working with state authorities to expand access to mental health professionals for students. Some of you are making residence halls and other facilities available to state and local agencies for public health purposes and of course, our labs and hospitals continue to provide both long term research advances and front line service.
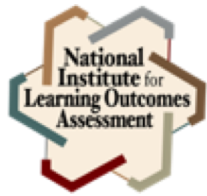
More Community Check-in Recap

Don't start from a point of negativity in perceptions of students to create policy. A policy should not be about blocking cheating but enabling learning.

Modify end of course/faculty evaluations and use them as a formative planning tool.

Assessment of student learning is ongoing this semester, the reporting of those efforts is a lower priority that can be postponed or altered.

Virtual Assignment Design

Assignment Charrettes in a Time of COVID-19

Assignment charrettes, or structured peer review of assignment design, provide an opportunity for faculty members to come together and discuss, through a structured peer review process, the design of their assignments in relation to learning outcomes, evaluative criteria, and the means by which students are prepared to complete the assignment (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Elements of an Assignment Design Conversation

In the current global pandemic of coronavirus, faculty have taken courses online for the remainder of the Spring semester or term, and are planning now to continue online for the summer and possibly fall. Thus, conversations on modifying assignments are now timelier than ever. Assignment discussions provide a means to:

1. Focus attention on the key learning outcomes of interest within a course and the assignments that allow students to practice or demonstrate their learning – what is it that we really want students to do;
2. Bring faculty together remotely to help with physical distance, but also to problem solve collectively ideas on how to focus and refine assignments for the near term; and
3. Provide professional development and support through community in a time of crisis.

While the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) conducted a virtual assignment design charrette for several institutions of higher education within Virginia, and made their materials available for others to learn from, such an approach may not work given current faculty and staff constraints including home schooling, access to internet and time, and other situations related to the coronavirus circumstances. As such, we offer a few considerations for modifying an assignment design conversation for the near term.
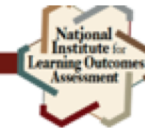
Assignment: _____

Comments From: _____

1. What learning outcomes will students demonstrate with this assignment? How does it need to be modified to better align with the learning outcomes of interest?

2. How does the assignment align with the evaluative criteria? Are there mixed signals sent to students?

3. Thinking about the assignment from the point of view of students, what questions or suggestions do you have regarding clarity in instructions, prompt, or purpose?

4. How does this assignment allow for flexible options, alternative demonstrations, and/or culturally responsive demonstrations of learning?

5. How does this assignment need to be modified or adjusted to reflect current faculty and student circumstances and situations in light of COVID-19?

6. What unnecessary constraints, if any, may need to be removed to accommodate learning during a global pandemic crisis?

Webinar Series

The Evidence-Based Storytelling Toolkit:
Using Assessment Data to Write Your Learning Narrative
April 23 Register.

Beyond the Looking Glass:
Tenets of Meaningful Transparency
April 30 Register.

Mapping as Design

Last week we focused upon revising assignments, but how do those assignments fit into the larger trajectory of learning? How are we planning to advance learning and move towards attainment of learning outcomes for students in programs?

Maps help us see the intentional design of our learning experiences and the role of a course within a larger learning trajectory.

This only works if there is intentional design built into the curriculum and if the maps we have go into layers – down to the level of assignment for instance.

Mapping Learning

Learning Trajectory

Fall Semester   Spring Semester   What it feels like now   Fall Semester

The learning that we want to foster does not happen in a single course in a single semester. Students have to run into it on multiple occasions in different ways.

Applying Maps

We can make the case for mapping in a different way: Can use it as an opportunity to check the map and examine where faculty may need to spend more time on specific learning outcomes or do a refresher in an upcoming course.

We are talking about program planning via curriculum maps with a focus on learning outcomes and assessments. If you haven't gone to layer of assignment or even by content – now is a good time.

Learning Outcomes	Course A	Course B	Course c
LO 1	Reflective paper	Wiki project	Exam questions
LO 2	Case study	Paper	Book review
LO 3	Discussion prompt	Debate	Report

Questions to Ask

What from this term will students need to apply in the summer and fall and how are we setting them up for learning success in rethinking those courses and assignments?

Return to basics: what are the learning outcomes that students need from this course that they will apply elsewhere? Why does this course even exist?

What learning that has occurred prior can we build upon? (Think about the learning trajectory image)

How can we consider this a flipped semester or a flipped summer – where students learn about a concept over the summer and then apply and practice it when they return? (Labs for instance)

How can we think about learning from a program perspective? Where does this fit into overall curriculum?

Virtual mapping discussions

Synchronous or asynchronous? Which technology? Faculty time or commitment? How support adjunct faculty?

Considerations for bandwidth and circumstance:

◦ Can do this in break out rooms with faculty talking together at the same time, but that may be unrealistic

◦ Can discuss and share in a google doc or google excel sheet learning within courses, programs, etc.

◦ Survey faculty and students or modify course evaluations to capture what learning outcomes students think have been met

Note on Graduating Seniors and Degree Quality

There have been some questions raised about the quality of degree with the half of a semester turned upside down. It is incredibly unlikely that there was a crucial element of learning that was being held until the last half of the last semester of someone's degree, thus compromising the integrity of the entire degree based on learning.

If you hadn't gotten it by now as a graduating student, you weren't going to get it in the last bit of time. If our degrees are mapped and aligned, then something like this semester doesn't make or break the quality of the degree.

Student Pathways

CURRICULUM MAPPING AS A STUDENT LEARNING TOOL

Students and Maps

Student Affairs

➢ Use Curriculum Map as "Roadmap to Graduation"

Students

➢ Use Curriculum Map as "Pathway to Learning"
   ➢(linking outcomes to courses, assignments to course content…)

Through CM, students can see pathways and connections among:

- Classes
- Outcomes
- Assignments
- Full degrees

A time of [missed] expectations?

Using this time to explore student input/expectations

Reminder: now is not the time to assess efficacy of online learning (remote teaching)

It IS a time, though, to consider gathering student input on expectations of learning... and connections of assignments to outcomes

What did the student expect to learn? (What did the faculty intend students to learn)

Students in Program Planning (forward thinking)

Pivoting to rethink outcomes and assignments

Do some outcomes need more reinforcement?

What would your students recommend?
- Survey
- Discussions
- Final writing prompt

CURRICULUM MAPPING AND FACULTY

APPROACH THE WORK OF MAPPING WITHOUT FRAMING THIS ACADEMIC TERM AS A "DISRUPTION," "CRISIS," OR "EMERGENCY"

Our present work *may* continue in the fall

Recognize the "productive" qualities of our work this term

-Who isn't focused on the core goals we're trying to achieve in courses?

-What has this experience taught US about "nonstandard learning"?

Carol Geary Schneider on meaningful assessment

Standardized testing is antithetical to assessing adaptive and inventive competencies . . . . [S]tandardized tests often disguise rather than illuminate what students can actually do with nonstandard problems.

Yet **nonstandard problems** are the ultimate test of students' competence—at work, at life, and in the community.

Preparing students to tackle **nonstandard, unscripted problems and questions**. . .where "right answers" are not known and where the nature of the problem itself is likely uncertain at best, and often actively contested.

College must prepare learners to deal with **the complex and uncertain, not just with the rote and routine**.

Carol Geary Schneider, "Afterword," in Peter T. Ewell, *Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP): Implications for Assessment* (Champaign, IL: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, 2013), 25.
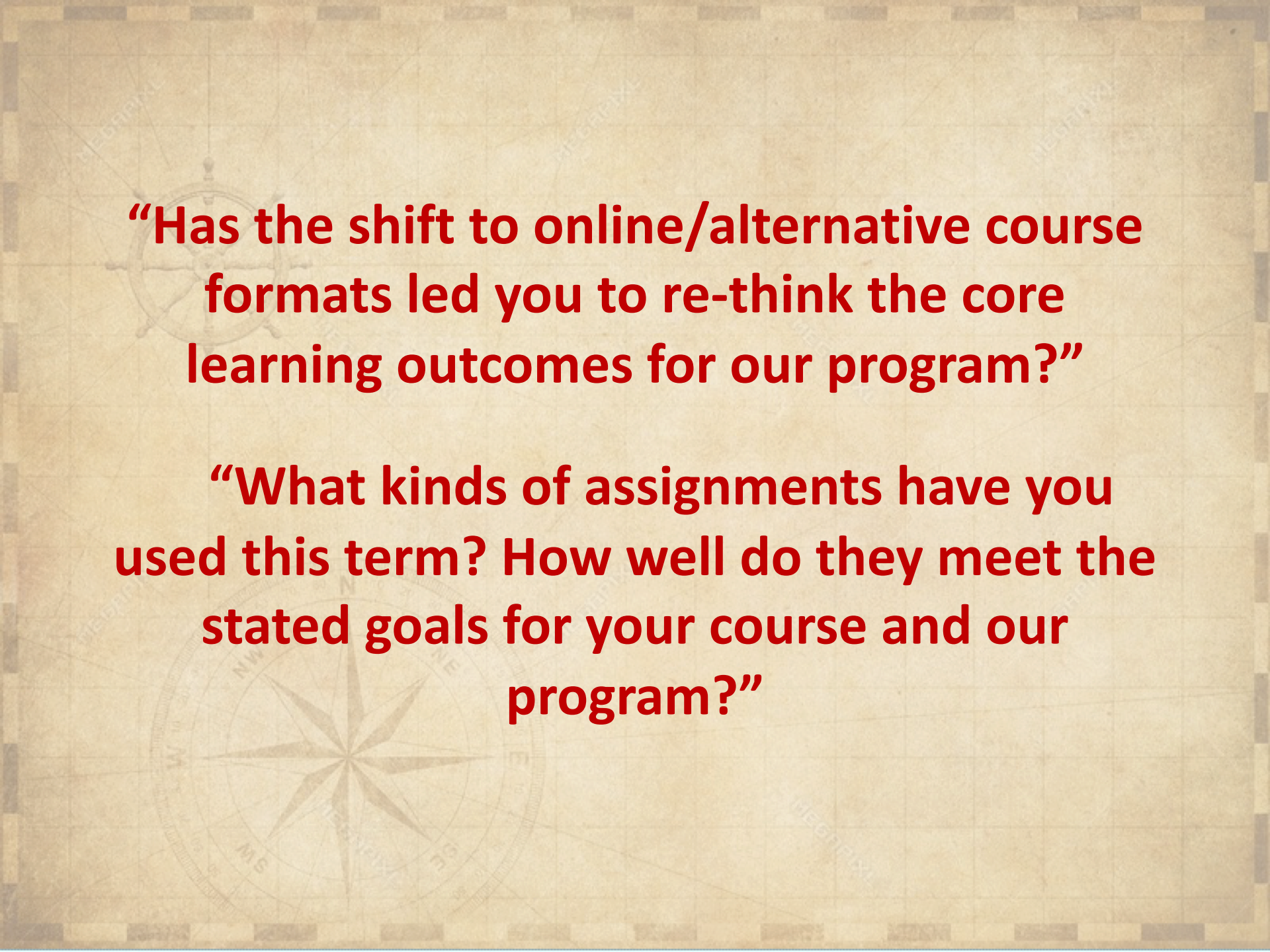
WHAT *ARE* WE LEARNING NOW ABOUT OUR CORE GOALS AND CURRICULA?

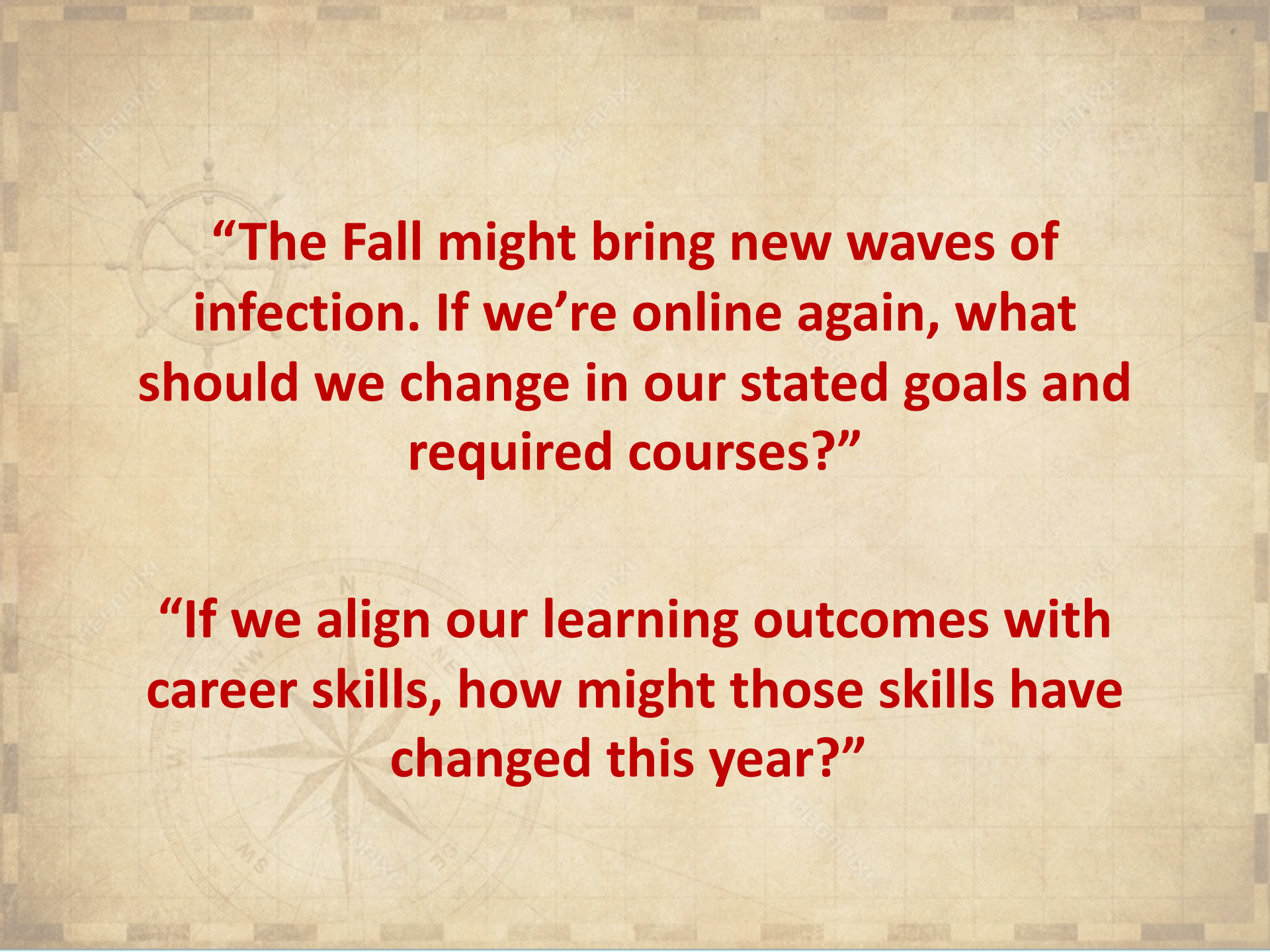**TRY TO CAPTURE THESE THOUGHTS FROM COLLEAGUES**

IN INVITING, NONINTIMIDATING WAYS

-end-of-year department meeting?

-end-of-year interviews with faculty?

-Virtual happy hour?

"Has the shift to online/alternative course formats led you to re-think the core learning outcomes for our program?"

"What kinds of assignments have you used this term? How well do they meet the stated goals for your course and our program?"

"The Fall might bring new waves of infection. If we're online again, what should we change in our stated goals and required courses?"

"If we align our learning outcomes with career skills, how might those skills have changed this year?"
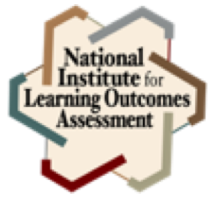
QUESTIONS FOR YOU:

Is it a difficult time to engage faculty in conversations about curriculum mapping?

Are there effective ways to build a discussion about our core outcomes and curriculum design?

How can we best learn from the changes we've had to make this term?

Keep Discussing

#NILOAwebinar

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