



Professional Development with BSPH CTL

The Motivated Learner: Providing Assessment Choice to Activate Student Motivation



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Learning Objectives: By the end of this session, you will be able to...



- Understand how choice inspires student motivation through educational theory
- Examine different strategies on how to implement choice **in/of** assessments
- Create or revise an assessment that incorporates student choice



Opening Reflection

Option 1

Think of a time in college or graduate school when you were most engaged in an assignment. What made it meaningful for you?

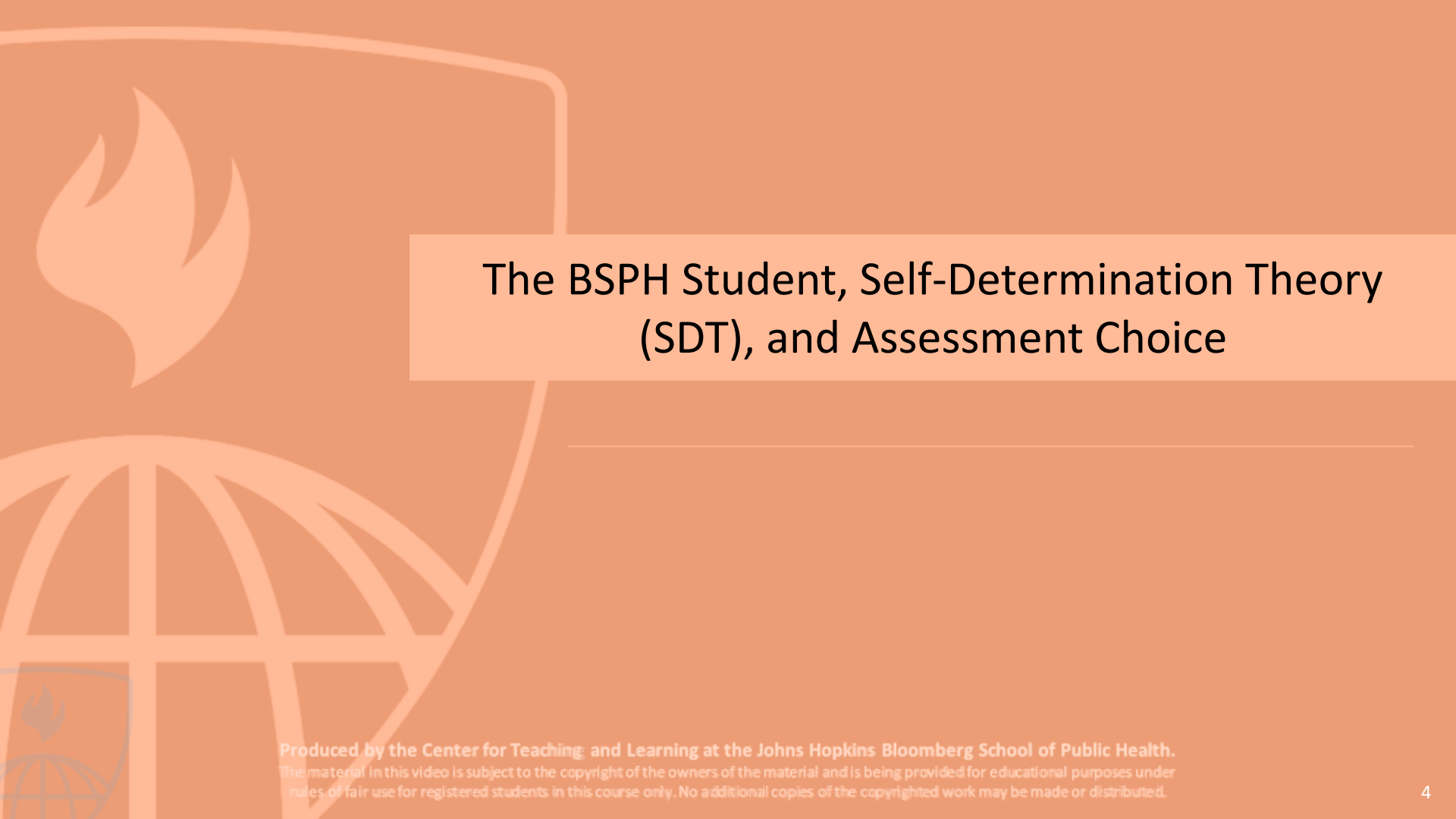
Option 2

How have your own interests or background shaped your approach to learning or teaching?

Option 3

If someone asked your students what assignment or project best represents your course, what would they say—and why?



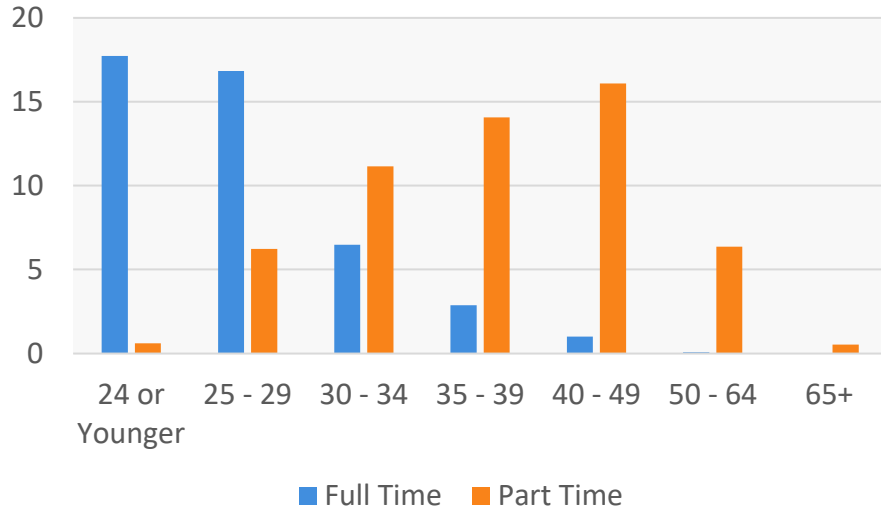


The BSPH Student, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and Assessment Choice

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Relevant Student Data

Percentage of BSPH Students by Age and Status



- Our students vary in age from 24 and younger to 65 and older.
 - Varying interests, goals, and backgrounds.
 - Different places within their career
- Over half of our students are part-time students.
 - Competing priorities: work, family, and other classes

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)



Support Autonomy



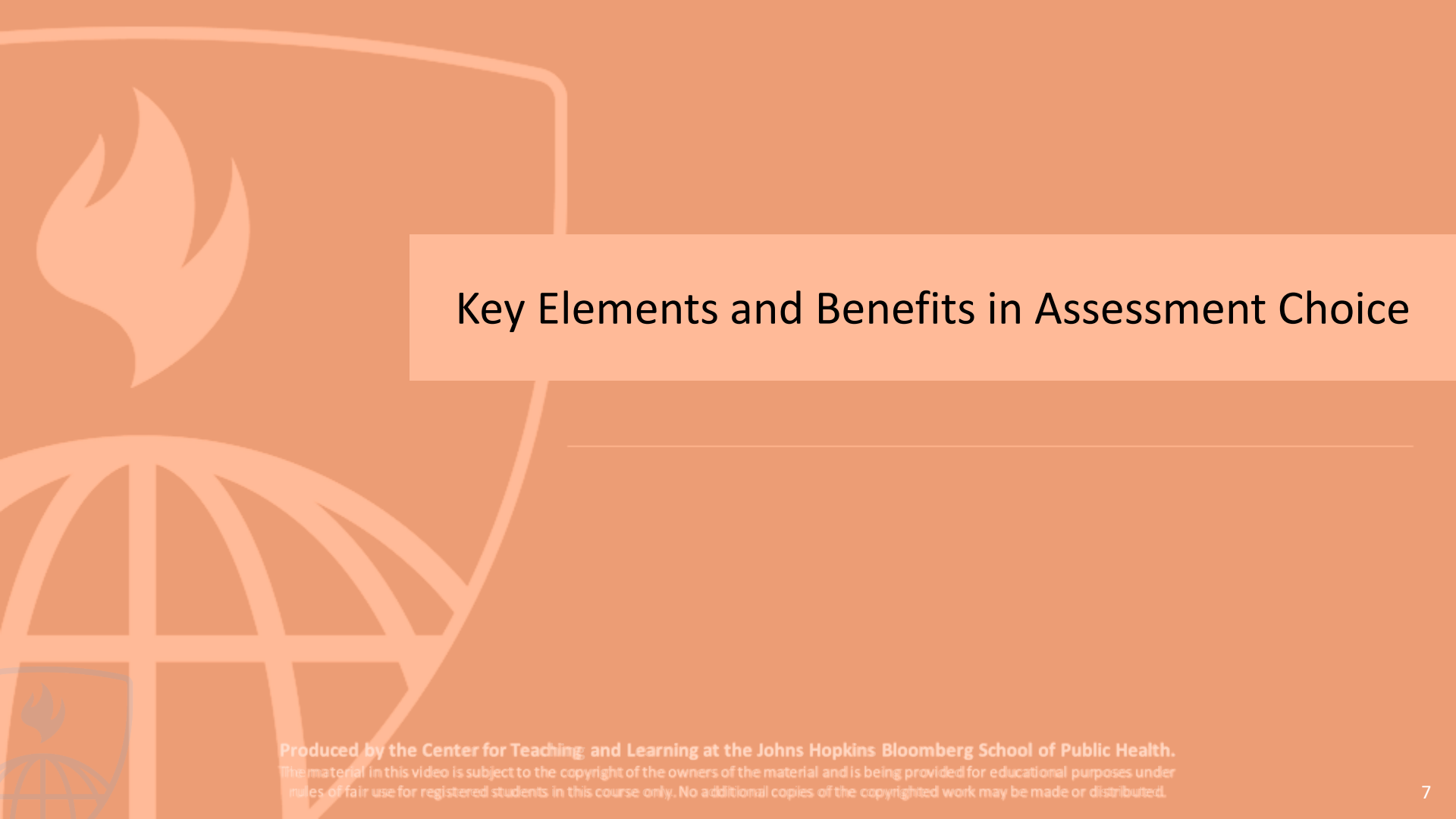
Encourage Relatedness



Cultivate Competence

Classrooms that incorporate principle of SDT can improve motivation and academic success.





Key Elements and Benefits in Assessment Choice

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Key Elements in Assessment Choice

Consistent Elements

- ▶ Alignment with Course Objectives
- ▶ Level of Effort
- ▶ Assessment Criteria

Elements That Can Vary

- ▶ Timing and Deadlines
- ▶ Weighting Options
- ▶ Assessment Format
- ▶ Collaboration Levels
- ▶ Topic or Content Flexibility
- ▶ Feedback Methods

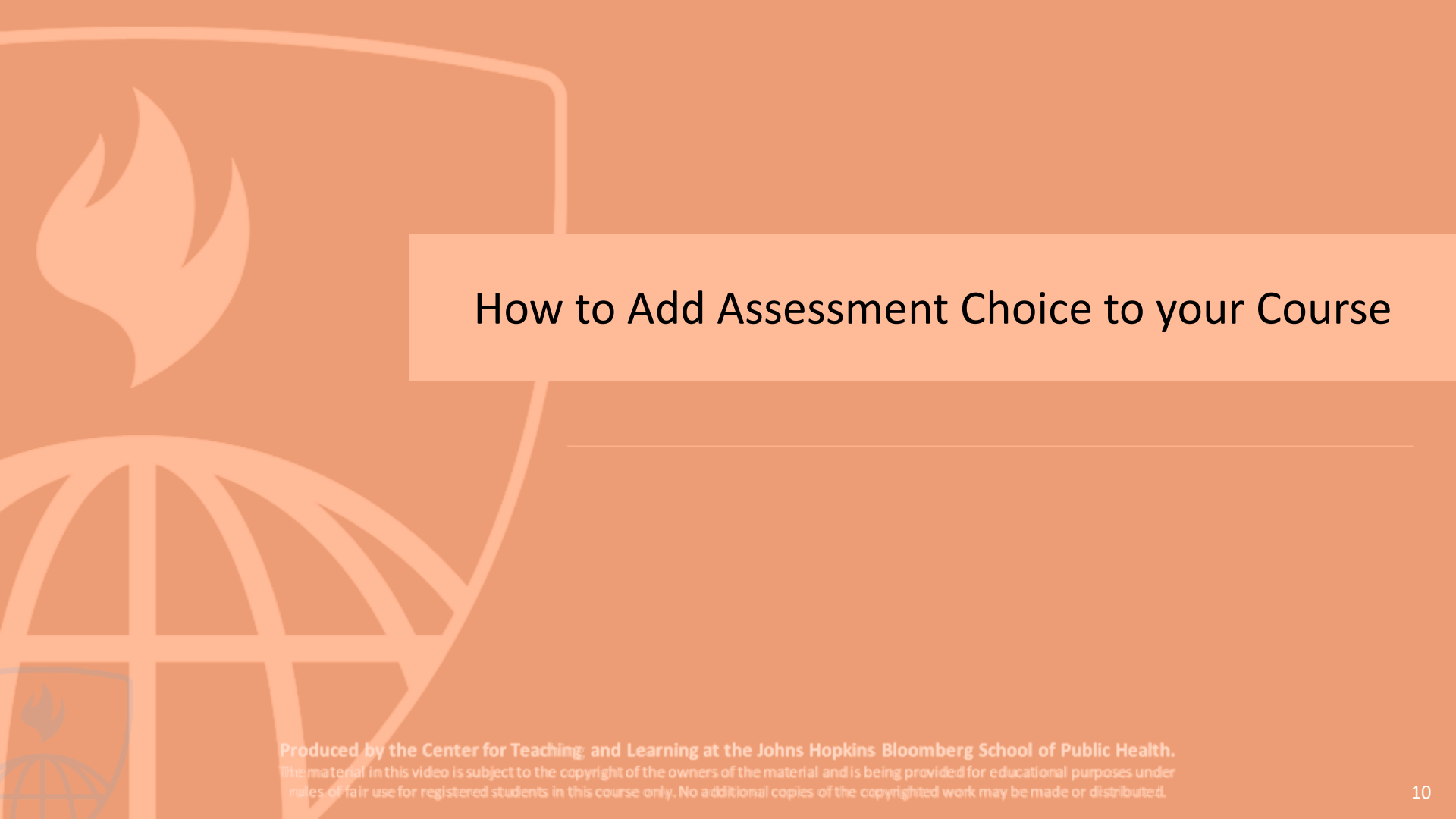
Benefits of Assessment Choice



- Increased Autonomy
- Personal Relevance
- Real-World Connections
- Enhanced Intrinsic Motivation
- More Time Invested in Learning

(Cullen & Oppenheimer, 2024)





How to Add Assessment Choice to your Course

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Providing Choice WITHIN Assessments

Assessments

- Quizzes
- Group Projects
- Essays
- Discussion Forums
- Presentations

Strategies

- Topic Selection
- Question Options
- Flexible Due Dates
- Weighting Options
- Collaborative vs. Individual Work
- Choice of Resources
- Multiple Opportunities



Scenario Discussion

How could you provide choice in the following formative assessment?

Reflective Discussion Posts

Description: Students respond to a prompt related to course content in a discussion forum and then reply to a few peers.

Example Prompt:

"In your own words, explain one concept from this week's module that you found challenging. How would you apply it in a real-world context?"



Providing Choice OF Assessment

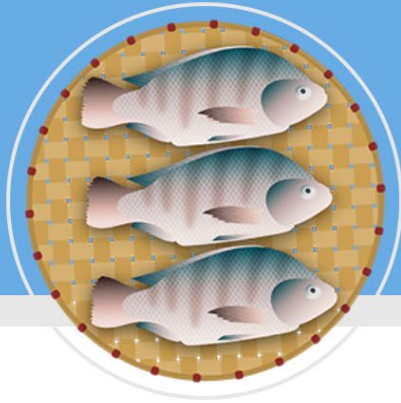
Providing choice OF assessment....

- Raises engagement and ownership
- Allows students to showcase strengths
- Allows students to grow in skills

Strategies:

- Choice of Assignment Format
- Choice in Assessment Type
- Choice in Skill Emphasis
- Student-Designed Assessments

Dave Love, Research Professor, EHE, Center for a Livable Future



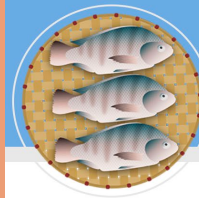
Seafood and Public Health: Global Trade, Nutrition and the Environment

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

- ▶ 3 credit online course, 3rd term, attracts environmental science and international health students
- ▶ Students were asking for more flexibility in the types and number of assignments
- ▶ Instructor concerns about students using AI for assignments and looking for creative alternatives



Dave Love: Content Delivery



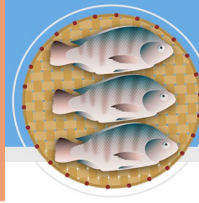
- Asynchronous content
 - Recorded lectures from course faculty and outside experts
 - Interviews with experts (6)
 - Documentary (2)
 - Short videos (many)

- Asynchronous Interactions
 - Discussion Forum posts as reflections on LiveTalks and Journal Clubs

- Synchronous content
 - Biweekly LiveTalks with course faculty and outside experts
 - Bi-weekly Journal Club



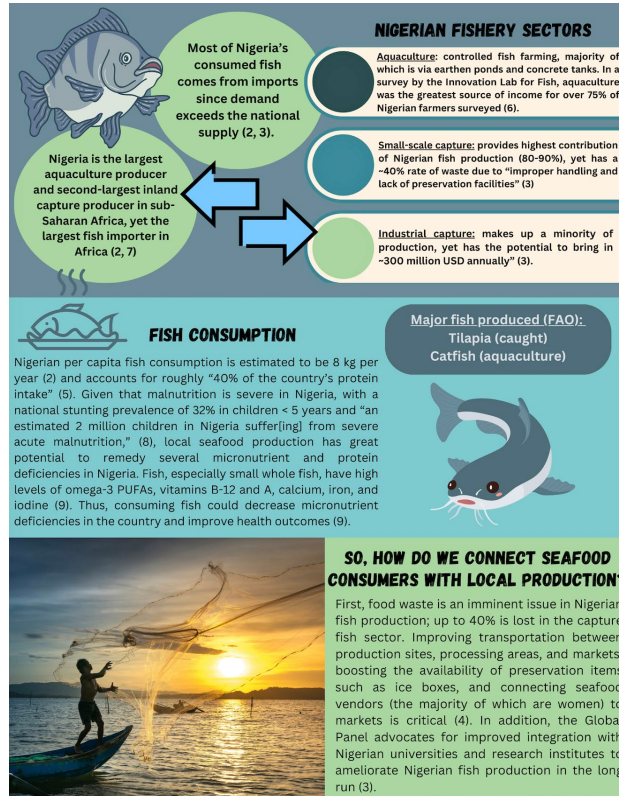
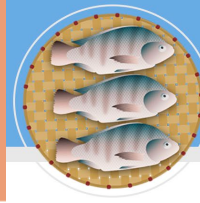
Dave Love: Written Assignment



- ▶ Assignment: pick a country from a list provided and write 4 bi-weekly essays about the country as it relates to the course material
- ▶ We changed the assignment in two important ways this year:
 - 1) Allowed students flexibility in the # of assignments (Students pick one assignment to drop)
 - 2) Allowed students flexibility in the assignment type:
 - Policy memo + 2 Tweets
 - Resilience action plan
 - Persuasive argument
 - Infographic with annotation
 - Powerpoint presentation with annotation
 - Menu with annotation
 - 20 question survey with annotation



Dave Love: Example Assignments



Nutritional Status and Seafood Consumption in Bangladesh

Malnutrition remains a challenge, with 28% of children under five stunted and 22% underweight (World Bank, 2022). Micronutrient deficiencies in iron, zinc, vitamin A, and omega-3 fatty acids contribute to anemia (40% of children) and vitamin A deficiency (20%). Fish plays a vital role in nutrition, offering high-quality protein and essential micronutrients (Pauly, 2019). Small indigenous fish species (SIS), such as Mola and Puti, provide critical vitamins and minerals for child growth and cognitive development.

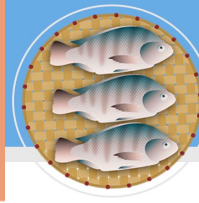
Proposed School Menu Incorporating Aquatic Foods: A nutrition-sensitive school meal plan is developed to ensure adequate micronutrient intake, leveraging locally available fish species.

Monday:

Breakfast: Boiled eggs, chapati, and mashed Hilsa (Ilish Bharta)

- **Description:** A traditional meal combining protein-packed boiled eggs, whole grain chapati, and mashed Hilsa fish.
- **Nutritional Benefits:** Hilsa fish is rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, Vitamin D, and protein, which are crucial for brain function and growth. Eggs provide additional high-quality protein.
- **Source:** Hilsa sourced from the coastal regions of Bangladesh, eggs locally produced.

Dave Love: Oral Exam



- ▶ Previously the final was a 5 min PowerPoint presentation summarizing their written assignments
 - Not enough time for students to present in a class period
 - Not satisfying for the instructors
 - Many students "phoned it in"

- ▶ We replaced these final presentation with a 15-minute Oral exam
 - 3 questions, 2 graders
 - AI proof
 - We added 5 min to the end to get course feedback
 - Students liked the 1:1 time with instructors
 - Required a final exam webpage with detailed instructions, a grading matrix, and a TA led study session the week before the exam



Student Feedback: Quantitative Data

Overall, the course was:

Course Ratings by Student, %



The assessments of your learning (e.g., exams, assignments) were:

Assessment Ratings by Student, %



Student Feedback: Qualitative Data

“The creative assignments that require students to apply what is learned in the lectures.. [was a strength of the course]”

“The ability to select assignments... [was a strength of the course]”

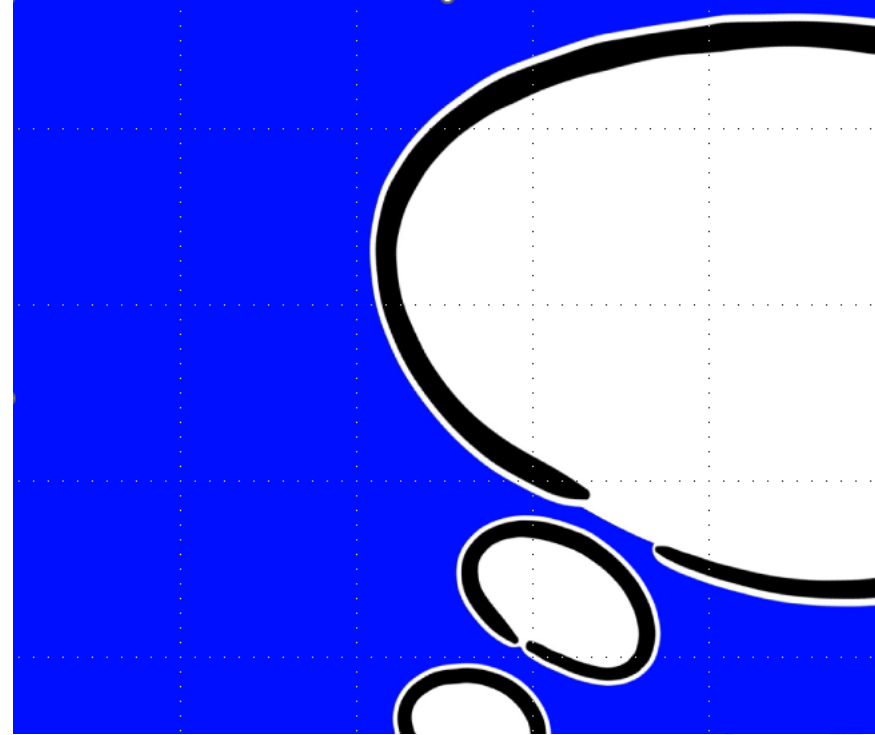
“Loved the lectures, readings, and structure of assignments.”

“In addition, the written assignments provided an exercise that helped teach a deeper understanding of the seafoods systems in a particular country (can chose from one of 4 countries) and this was a valuable experience.”



How can YOU incorporate choice in your assessments?

- Select an assessment from one of your courses.
- Using some of the strategies that we have discussed, identify 1-2 ways that you could add either choice **of** assessment or choice **within** an assessment for your course.
- Share your ideas in the chat or out loud with the group!



Key Takeaways

- ▶ Choice in assessments increases **autonomy, relatedness, and competence**.

- ▶ Assessment choice maintains the **same** learning objectives and assessment criteria, while allowing **variation in how** students demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

- ▶ You can provide choice **WITHIN** assessments and choice **OF** assessments.

- ▶ Students will value any areas of your course where you add choice!



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Anonymous, 2- Minute Workshop Evaluation

2025 Workshop Evaluation Form: <https://forms.office.com/r/YmXFUqRCAd>



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