

All You Need is Love:

Compassionate Design for Better Teaching and Learning

Walter Milner,
LEC, Office of Academic Affairs



Session Objectives

- Identify the difference between empathetic design and compassionate design
- Ability formulate strategies for how to get to know your students, and recognize how this connects to compassionate design
- Ability to coordinate activities, techniques, and design strategies that are reflective of compassionate design
- Identify how interactions can be designed to be compassionate

“Like many things in life, your compassion is a skill that can be exercised.” – Simeon Lindstrom



HOW ARE COLLEGE STUDENTS DOING?

- **40%** of undergrads drop out of school
- **41%** graduate in four years
- **3 in 10** drop out in the first year
(ThinkImpact, 2022)

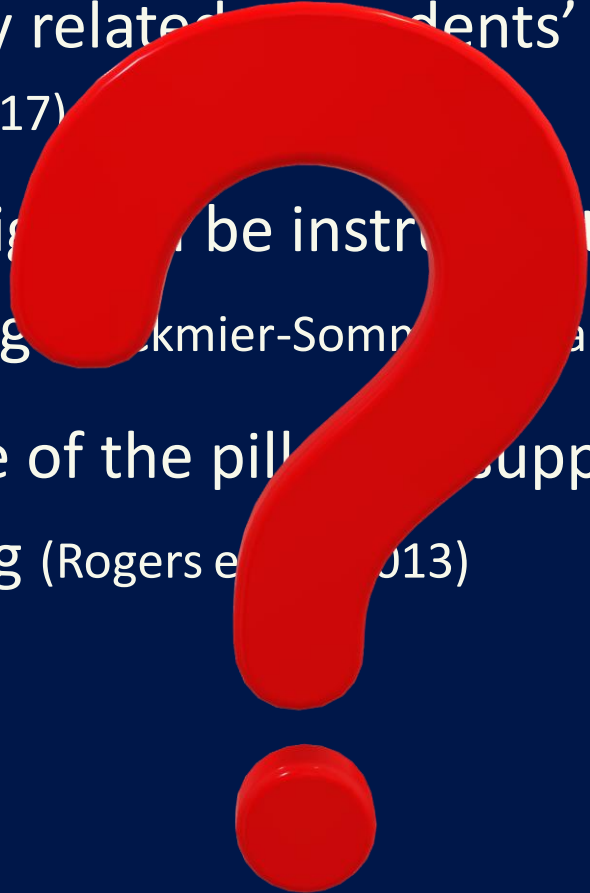
- **1/3** of graduate students report symptoms of moderate levels of anxiety or depression
- **2/3** of graduate students report low well-being
(Ogilvie et al., 2020)

- **Half** of university students considered dropping out because of mental health and academic stress
(Ranstad, 2020)

- Academic **stress** may be the single most dominant factor that affects the mental well-being of college students
(Barbayannis et al., 2022)

EMPATHY AND LEARNING

- Empathy is significantly related to students' skill and performance (Bockmier-Sommers et al., 2017)
- Empathy in course design can be instrumental for student motivation and learning (Bockmier-Sommers et al., 2017)
- Emotional safety is one of the pillars of support needed to move to a deeper level of learning (Rogers et al., 2013)

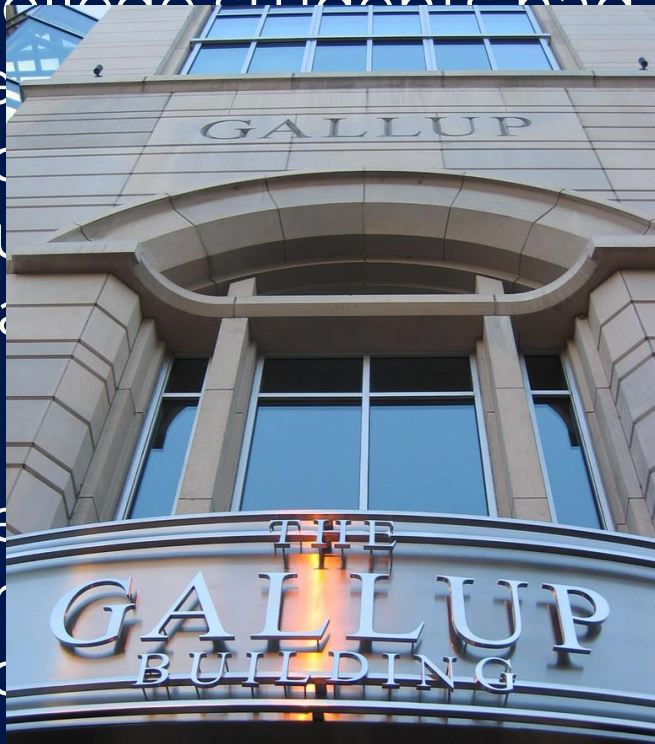


YET...

- 60% of university-level students studied say they felt no empathy from their professors (Tausch & Huls, 2013)
- It is not uncommon for college students to complain that faculty are unapproachable (while faculty complain that students are not engaged) (Harnish & Bridges, 2011)

GALLUP-PURDUE 2014 STUDY

- If college students had just **ONE** professor who cared about them, they would be more excited about learning, and more likely to pursue their dreams, more than double the number of students being engaged at work and of thriving in their lives.
- The students who had attended (large/small/public/private) colleges were more likely to be engaged to the support and experiences they had at college.



(Gallup, 2014)

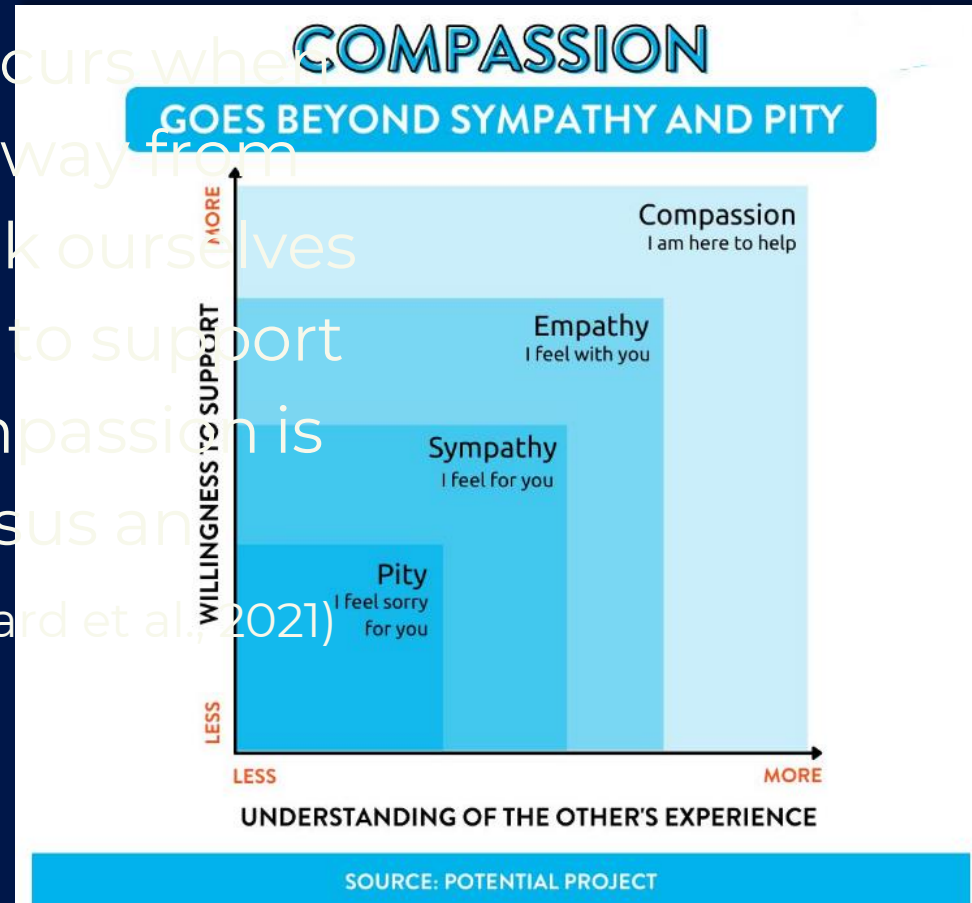


WHAT INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS SAY

- Empathy is an essential part of the design process (Vann, 2015)
- Essential to know your audience (Vann, 2015)
- It is critical to see the design through the learner's eyes (Parrish, 2006)

COMPASSION VS. EMPATHY

- “Compassion occurs when we take a step away from empathy and ask ourselves what we can do to support the person. Compassion is an *intention* versus an *emotion*.” (Hougaard et al., 2021)



WHY BE COMPASSIONATE? (AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN ANYWAYS?)

“Compassion and tolerance are not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength.” – Dalai Lama

Compassion is not about solving problems for people. It is about growing and developing people so they are empowered to solve their own problems. Avoid taking life-learning opportunities away from people by solving their issues. Instead, mentor them and show them a pathway to finding their own answers (Hougaard et al., 2021).

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF COMPASSIONATE DESIGN

- The desire to increase the participation of learners
- “Care and compassion are not just individual practices, but collective responsibilities towards building a higher education system in which we can all flourish.”
(Pallitt et al., 2022)
- A recognition of the importance of *affect* and how that impacts learning
- An understanding of power and history and how they influence our pedagogies
- A commitment to act, take responsibility, and move towards more socially and just learning design

KNOW YOUR STUDENTS

- It is
com
(Van
- It is
stud
2006




ast

rish,

POLL EVERYWHERE SURVEY

 Respond at Pollev.com/wmilnerlec

 Text **WMILNERLEC** to **22333** once to join, then text your message

- Answers are completely anonymous...
So please **be honest**.
- Tip: Multiple-word answers need an_underscore to stay together...
- Make sure to hit “**Submit**” after you answer.

What is your favorite thing about teaching?

Powered by  **Poll Everywhere**

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

What is your least favorite part about teaching?

Powered by  **Poll Everywhere**

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

What is one of your favorite foods?

Powered by  **Poll Everywhere**

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

What is one of your biggest fears?

Powered by  **Poll Everywhere**

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

What is something you don't like about yourself?

Powered by  **Poll Everywhere**

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

HOW TO “KNOW” YOUR STUDENTS

Polls and Surveys

- Personal Questions
- Academic-related Questions
- Course and Syllabus-related Questions

SOME SAMPLE POLL/SURVEY QUESTIONS

Which of the following describes you (check all that apply)

- This is my first semester of college.
- I am the first in my family to attend college
- I work more than 15 hours per week
- This is my first time taking an online class
- I am a caretaker for at least one person.

(Pacansky-Brock et al., 2019)

(Pacansky-Brock, n.d.)

LET THEM KNOW YOU TOO...

- Share things about yourself
- Participate in polls, surveys, and discussions
- You are a person beyond “professor for this course”

ANOTHER WAY

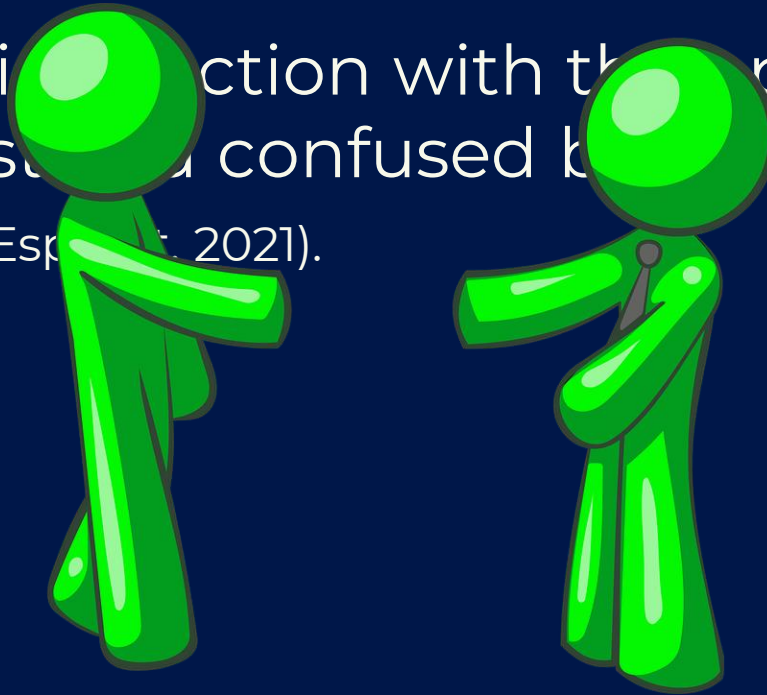
Observation

- What engages them?
- What motivates them?
- Body language

INTERACTIONS ARE PART OF THE DESIGN

Social presence should be initiated in the actual design of an online course (Aragon, 2003).

The absence of interaction with the professors makes students feel lost and confused because they need more guidance (Karkar Espinoza, 2021).



SMALL GESTURES

“The little things you do can be very significant to others.” – Wayne Gerard Trotman

- Use students' names
- Engage in small talk
- Ask questions
- Open Zoom early
- One-on-one meetings
- Reach out

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- The instructor-student relationship is a major determinant for student engagement and achievement (Quin, [2017](#), as cited in Karkar Esperat, 2021)
- Students are less likely to drop online classes if they feel a connection to or are close with the teacher (Aragon, 2003; Richardson et al., 2012)
- Forming a rapport with the student can instigate and accelerate learning (Demetriou et al., 2009)



COMPASSION MEANS TAKING ACTION

- Actively respond
- Be available
- Design with clarity
- Regular Communication



nova.mywconline.com
954-262-4644

HOW TO BE COMPASSIONATE THROUGH YOUR COURSEWORK

- Participants in a narrative assessment that their experience in online classes depended mostly on the manner in which the instructor taught the course and the quality of the feedback they gave and received.
- Consider flexibility

CONSIDER ALL LEARNERS

- Accessibility
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Open Educational Resources (OER)
- Inclusivity



Jonathasmel

mons

[Cigna_Kasinger for Disabled and Here](#)



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.

ukhomeoffice.github.io/accessibility-posters/posters/accessibility-posters.pdf

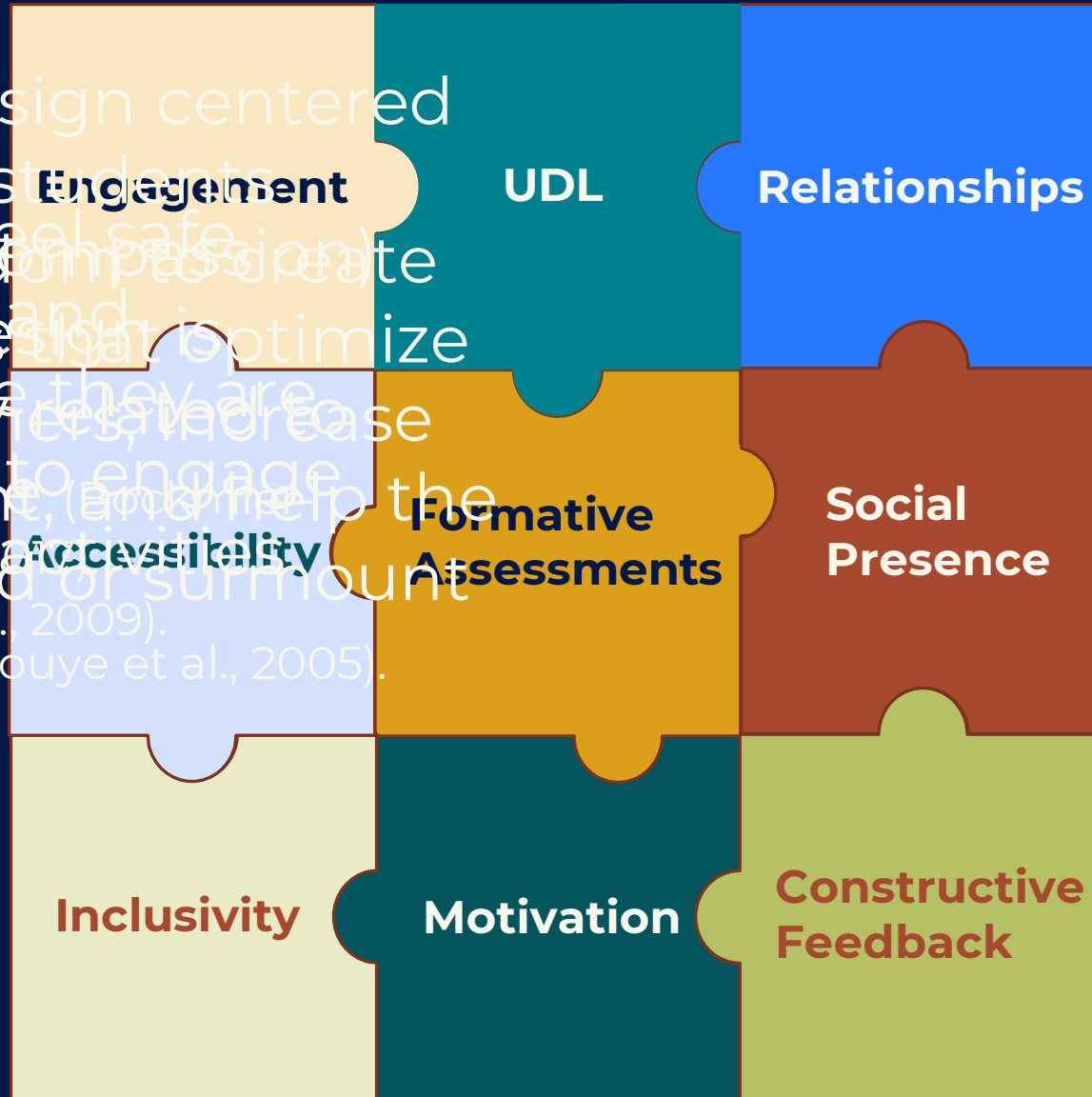
licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/)

MAKE IT ENJOYABLE

- Fun
- Engaged
- Collaborative



A course design centered on helping students if learners feel safe, are welcomed, and comfortable they are more likely to engage in learning, the learner avoid or surmount obstacles (Demetriou et al., 2009). (Inouye et al., 2005).



TRANSFER TO SOCIETY

These learning experiences that occur in our classrooms become invaluable in careers, relationships, and throughout students' lives. (Bliss, 2007).



ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

Education is fundamentally an act of love. Love is an act of bravery, humility, respect, courage, and patience (Freire, 1970; Freire, 1973, as cited in Karkar Esperat, 2021).



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

REFERENCES

- Aragon, S. R. (2003). Creating social presence in online environments. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2003(100), 57–68. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.119>
- Barbayannis, G., Bandari, M., Zheng, X., Baquerizo, H., Pecor, K. W., & Ming, X. (2022). Academic Stress and Mental Well-Being in College Students: Correlations, Affected Groups, and COVID-19. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.886344>
- Bliss, C. (2007). *The CEA Forum Winter/Spring 2007: 36.1 Micro-communications: Building and developing respect and empathy in today's multicultural society*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1097356.pdf>
- Bockmier-Sommers, D., Chen, C.-C. "Brian, & Martsch, M. (2017). Student perception of teacher empathy, high regard and genuineness and the impact on student engagement. *E-Mentor*, 2017(70(3)), 66–72. <https://doi.org/10.15219/em70.1310>
- Briggs, S. (2014, November 1). *How empathy affects learning, and how to cultivate it in your students*. InformED. <https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/empathy-and-learning/>
- Demetriou, H., Wilson, E., & Winterbottom, M. (2009). The role of emotion in teaching: Are there differences between male and female newly qualified teachers' approaches to teaching? *Educational Studies*, 35(4), 449–473. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055690902876552>
- Gallup. (2014). *The 2014 Gallup-Purdue index report*. Gallup.com. <https://www.gallup.com/services/176768/2014-gallup-purdue-index-report.aspx>
- Gutierrez, K. (2021). *Empathy As Your Starting Point for Great eLearning Design*. www.shiftelearning.com. <https://www.shiftelearning.com/blog/empathy-as-your-starting-point-for-great-elearning-design>
- Harnish, R. J., & Bridges, K. R. (2011). Effect of syllabus tone: Students' perceptions of instructor and course. *Social Psychology of Education*, 14(3), 319–330. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-011-9152-4>

- Hougaard, R., Carter, J., & Afton, M. (2021, December 23). *Connect with empathy, but lead with compassion*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2021/12/connect-with-empathy-but-lead-with-compassion>
- Inouye, D. K., Merrill, P. F., & Swan, R. H. (2005). Help: toward a new ethics-centered paradigm for instructional design and technology. *IDT Record*, 1-27.
- Instructure Team. (2021). *5 tips for the empathetic classroom*. [Www.instructure.com](http://www.instructure.com).
<https://www.instructure.com/canvas/resources/articles/5-tips-for-the-empathetic-classroom>
- Karkar Esperat, T. M. (2021). Compassionate love: Improving international student online learning through new literacies. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 35(6), 1–25.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2021.1982056>
- Ogilvie, C., Brooks, T., Ellis, C., Gowen, G., Perez, R., Rodriguez, S., Smith, L., & Smith, R. (2020). *Graduate student experiences of support and stress during the COVID-19 Pandemic*.
https://www.montana.edu/covid19_rapid/updated%20NSF_RAPID_GraduateStudentExperiences_Covid19_White_Paper.pdf
- Pacansky-Brock, M. (n.d.). *Sample student info form*. MICHELLE PACANSKY-BROCK. Retrieved September 26, 2022, from <https://brocansky.com/humanizing/student-info>
- Pacansky-Brock, M., Smedshammer, M., & Vincent-Layton, K. (2019). Humanizing online teaching to equitize higher education. *HumanizingOnlineTeachingToEquitize-PrePrint*. pdf.
- Pallitt, N., Gachago, D., & Bali, M. (2022). Academic development as compassionate learning design: Cases from South Africa and Egypt (Version 2). University of Cape Town. <https://doi.org/10.25375/uct.20028431.v2> ([[]])

- Parrish, P. (2006). Design as storytelling. *TechTrends*, 50(4), 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-006-0072-7>
- Ranstad. (2020). *Student mental health report 2020 | Randstad UK*. [Www.randstad.co.uk](http://www.randstad.co.uk).
<https://www.randstad.co.uk/employers/areas-of-expertise/student-support/student-mental-health-report-2020/>
- Ray, J., & Kafka, S. (2014). *Life in college matters for life after college: New Gallup-Purdue study looks at links among college, work, and well-being*. http://k12accountability.org/resources/For-Parents/Life_in_College_Matters_for_Life_After_College.pdf
- Richardson, J. C., Arbaugh, J. B., Cleveland-Innes, M., Ice, P., Swan, K. P., & Garrison, D. R. (2012). Using the community of inquiry framework to inform effective instructional design. In *The next generation of distance education* (pp. 97-125). Springer, Boston, MA.
- Rogers, C. R., Lyon, H. C., & Tausch, R. (2013). *On becoming an effective teacher : Person-centered teaching, psychology, philosophy, and dialogues with Carl R. Rogers and Harold Lyon*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Tausch, R. and Huls, R. (2013). Students, patients, and employees cry out for empathy, In: Rogers, C. R., Lyon, H. C., & Tausch, R. (2013). *On becoming an effective teacher : person-centered teaching, psychology, philosophy, and dialogues with Carl R. Rogers and Harold Lyon*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- ThinkImpact. (2022). *College dropout rates [2021] - US statistics and data*. ThinkImpact. <https://www.thinkimpact.com/college-dropout-rates/>
- Vann, L. S. (2015). *Demonstrating empathy: A phenomenological study of instructional designers making instructional strategy decisions for adult learners* (Doctoral dissertation, Capella University).

Thank You!