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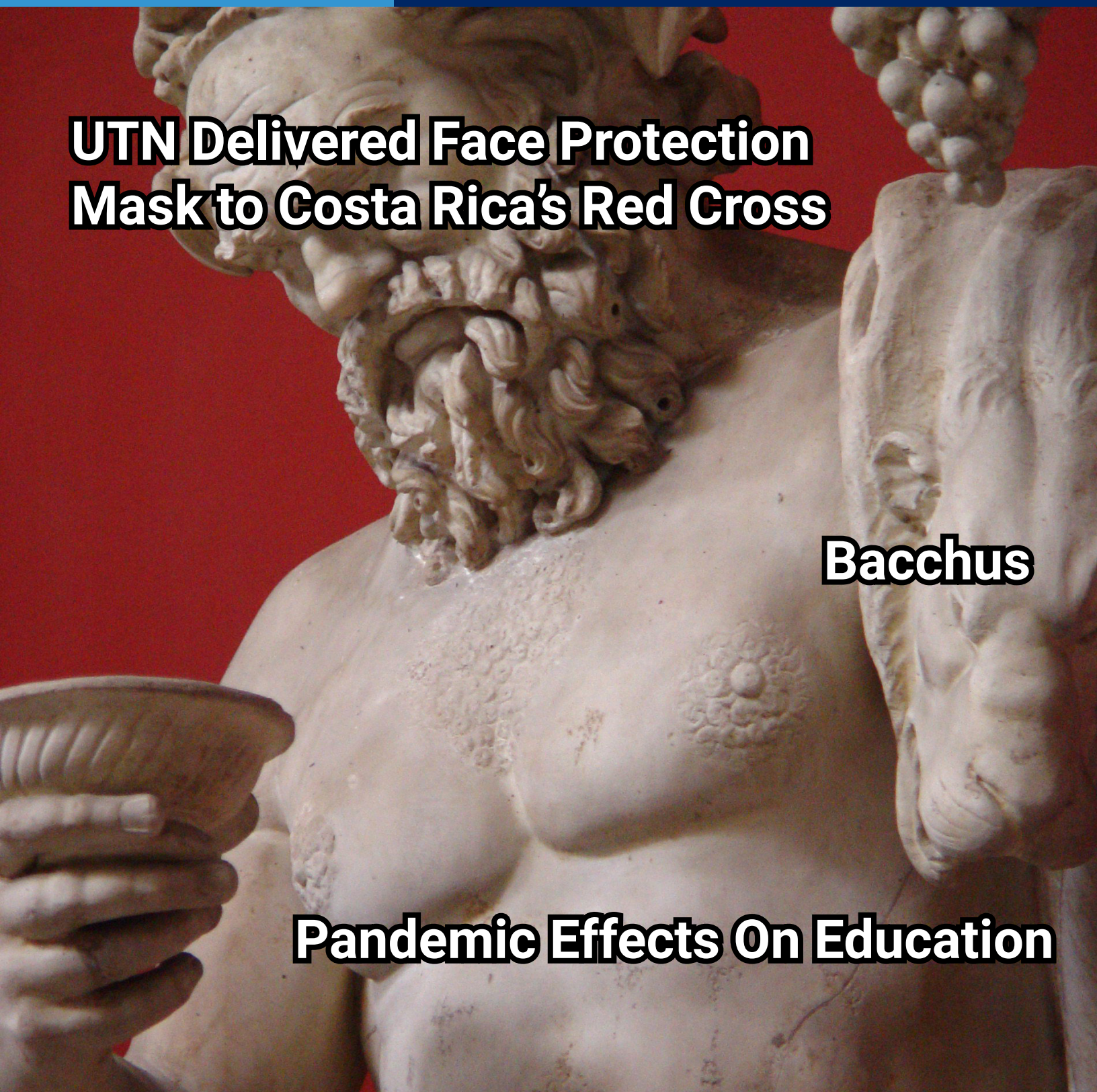

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COVER PAGE

This year we dedicate our cover pages to different legends and ancient myths. In this issue, we are going to learn about Baccus the god of wine, intoxication, and relaxation who is also attributed with creating madness. If you have an awesome picture you think could be on the cover of one of The ILE Post editions, send it to eherrera@utn.ac.cr. So far several readers have sent amazing pictures that we will be sharing with you soon. If you want to know what is happening in ILE, follow us on FACEBOOK.

Photo Credit: https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archivo:Bacchus-2.jpg

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EDITORIAL

Common Sense And The Coronavirus

by Eric Herrera (ILE Professor)

Covidiot: A person who acts like an irresponsible idiot during the Covid-19 pandemic, ignoring common sense, decency, science, and professional advice leading to the further spread of the virus and needless deaths of thousands.

-Urban Dictionary

This situation with the Coronavirus has not only made people suffer with social distancing, quarantine, and isolation, but has also proved how fake news and unfortunate and objectionable comments have led to public panic. Here are some examples of how people who, in theory, are sufficiently prepared to lead a country, state, or a community show why sometimes we do not understand how the world goes around:

"An injection inside the human body with a disinfectant like bleach or isopropyl alcohol could help combat the virus."
- President Donald Trump

"Grandparents would be willing to die to save the US economy for their grandchildren."
- Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick

"Infected with coronavirus are invited into church for 'faith healing' treatment."
-Some pastors in different parts of the world

What is worse is that panic makes people do stupid things that we have seen since the first days of this pandemic such as:

- grocery stores are wiped out of toilet paper. What on earth does that have to do with coronavirus?
- some people were pictured shopping at a supermarkets with a snorkel, mesh bee keeper type helmet, plastic bags, and storage boxes on their heads as face covers.
- a New Jersey college student stirred up a lot of controversy with her "coronavirus challenge" on TikTok that showed her lick ing an airplane toilet seat.
- thousands of people rallied in a protest against confinement measures aimed at combatting the coronavirus.

For God's sake, what are these people thinking? The Coronavirus is here to stay. It will not be eradicated; this pathogen will likely return in waves just like the flu. We need to learn how to co-exist with it, and acting and saying things like the previously mentioned will only lead us to more panic. Even though lockdowns will be lifted, probably sooner than later, we will have to continue facing social distance, using facial covers in most public places, being in line ups for a long time to get into supermarkets, stores, cinemas, etc., establishing stricter vehicle and health measure restrictions, for at least two years.

In brief, changing human behavior is the best defense in tackling the virus. How we behave and support each other as a global community will tell if all individual efforts could make a difference for a better, healthier and more understanding world.

UTN Delivered Face Protection Mask to Costa Rica's Red Cross

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)

On Wednesday, April 15th, the Universidad Técnica Nacional, by signing a cooperation agreement, made the symbolic delivery of a face protection mask prototype to be used by Costa Rica's Red Cross personnel for protection against the Coronavirus.

The masks have an ergonomic design that provides security and confidence to its wearer since it completely protects the face, stops sweat on the forehead, it resists shocks, provides flexiability for neck movement, easy to disinfect, and reusable.

This prototype was developed by Carlos Arce, from Project Management, and Marvin Segura, Director of the Electromechanical Engineering Degree.

The agreement will allow the UTN to make the masks for a year and the Red Cross will provide the supplies for their preparation.

Emmanuel González Alvarado, Dean of Alajuela´s Campus, mentioned that: "the effort was made in alliance with the private and academic sectors and it proves that in a record time you can contribute and join efforts to provide solutions for protecting and allowing these actions to set an example for the world. The UTN has delivered a face shield that meets the internationally required security levels."

Álvaro Montero, Deputy Operations Manager of Costa Rica´s Red Cross indicated that "for the Costa Rica´s Red Cross it is vital to have adequate equipment for ambulance service personnel. These protective masks have very appropriate characteristics for our role in pre-hospital care. The polycarbonate visor allows a resistance increase; therefore, they can

be used not only for the prevention of transmission of respiratory diseases, but even in rescue operations.

The design allows the placement of a headlamp to work in low-light environments, they have a small Red Cross emblem on one side for better control and inventory, and they can also be used on top of protective helmets or directly on the head".

This is the first of three stages that the UTN has to combat COVID-19, as two more prototypes are currently being worked on, which will join the list of personal protective equipment: a body cover and a mechanical ventilator for Coronavirus´ positive patients, which meet the respective medical criteria.

To read original news in Spanish, go to: https://www.utn.ac.cr/content/utn-realizó-entrega-simbólica-de-prototipo-de-caretas-de-protección-facial-para-el-uso-del

UTN Donated A Hydroponic Crop Harvest

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)

The Atenas Campus of the Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN) made a significant donation of food to the Nursing Home, the school al Balsa, and the Center for Child Care and Development, all from the canton (**Si existe en inglés**) of Atenas, thanks to the harvests obtained by the Hydroponics Course, at the Employability of Young People with Disabilities´ Project of the Youth´s Council in the Ministry of Culture and Youth.

"The reason for the donation by the Alajuela´s Campus is to collaborate with the hydroponic vegetables produced in the greenhouses, planted and cared for by the students of the project," said Mr. Diego Arguello, Coordinator of Extension and Action of the Campus of Atenas.

Hydroponics has developed faster in recent decades and is now widely used in intensive agriculture, so the greenhouses at the Campus in Atenas allow students to develop tools and knowledge to optimize water, nutrients and space and at the same time it helps them to learn to increase the production of the crop, which this time was used to benefit a vulnerable sector of the community during the national emergency of COVID-19.

Some of the products delivered were the following:

- 6 bunches of cilantro
- 145 lettuces
- 10 cucumbers
- 6 bunches of coriander
- 22 bunches of spinach
- 50 bunches of chive
- 40 chard leaves
- 5 good grass plants
- 5 bundles ofcelery
- 21 basil plants
- 5 bunches of parsley

To read original news in Spanish, go to: https://www.utn.ac.cr/content/utn-realizó-donación-de-cosecha-de-cultivo-hidropónico

UTN Lent Computer Equipment To Some Of Their Students

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)

The UTN has officially lent 33 computers to students lacking this tool to access the virtual learning processes that have been implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all through the joint effort of several internal areas who have been working very hard since March 6th to make the best of the current situation.

According to Marisol Rojas Salas, Vice-Chancellor for Student Life, the students who were assigned the computer equipment were selected after they filled out the UTN Connection form, in which they indicated that they did not have access to computers for their virtual lessons.

The students' place of residence, socioeconomic status and whether or not they had a scholarship were identified in the database held by the Office of the Vice President for Student Life.

The laptops were provided by the Alajuela Capus and assigned to mobile labs. Also the delivery of the computer equipment was carried out personally, by UTN officials, at the homes of each of the students, in the following places: Sarapiquí, Cóbano, Alajuela (central canton), Cañas, Abangares, Liberia, Atenas, La Cruz, Tilarán, Esparza and Miramar.

The Office of the Vice Rectory for Student Life, its Area Coordinations and the Coordinations for Student Life have been carrying out various actions and strategies to alleviate or reduce the negative impact that COVID-19 has caused in the dynamics of students' lives, among these actions include:

1. An analysis of the new conditions has been carried out to determine the possible solutions with their advantages, disadvantages and implications; in order to determine the most viable measures to support the most vulnerable populations due to socioeconomic conditions, disabilities, indigenous populations and those residing in remote regions.

2. Additionally, non-scholarship students whose socioeconomic situation has deteriorated, who do not have computer equipment, an Internet connection or who have difficulties accessing remote learning have been considered in this analysis.

3. Several proposals have been made to the Financial Management Division to study its budgetary viability; for example: extension of payment extensions or in tracts, specific aid for scholars and non-scholars, among others that must continue to be analyzed to verify its feasibility.

4. The Area of Scholarships and Student Benefits has prepared proposals for the modification of the Regulations of the System of Scholarships and Student Benefits such as the one presented to the University Council for the flexibility of procedures for the request for extensions and any other regulations that may cause affectation in these circumstances.

5. Officials from the Permanence and Retention Area, the Alumni Program, the Employment Intermediation System and the Student Ombudsman have launched the UTN CONEXIÓN strategy which allows identifying and mapping of a the student population with problems in accessing remote learning due to the lack of equipment, Internet connection and other kinds.

6. Close coordination and communication has been maintained with students to analyze their needs and requirements so that the University can provide guidance, support and concrete solutions to the problems that afflict them.

RADIO REVISTA Somos UTN SELLO DE GARANTÍA COLEGIO DE PERIODISTAS DE COSTA RICA CRC 89.1 radio

To read original news in Spanish, go to: https://www.utn.ac.cr/content/utn-realizó-préstamo-de-equipo-de-cómputo-población-estudiantil-que-no-dispone-de

Trump Threatens New Tariffs On China In Retaliation For Coronavirus

By Editorial Bureau / May 1st, 2020

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday, Spril 3rd his hard-fought trade deal with China was now of secondary importance to the coronavirus pandemic and he threatened new tariffs on Beijing, as his administration crafted retaliatory measures over the outbreak.

Trump's sharpened rhetoric against China reflected his growing frustration with Beijing over the pandemic, which has cost tens of thousands of lives in the United States alone, sparked an economic contraction and threatened his chances of re-election in November.

Two U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a range of options against China were under discussion, but cautioned that efforts were in the early stages. Recommendations have not yet reached the level of Trump's top national security team or the president, one official told Reuters.

"There is a discussion as to how hard to hit China and how to calibrate it properly," one of the sources said as Washington walks a tightrope in its ties with Beijing while it imports personal protection equipment (PPE) from there and is wary of harming a sensitive trade deal.

Trump made clear, however, that his concerns about China's role in the origin and spread of the coronavirus were taking priority for now over his efforts to build on an initial trade agreement with Beijing that long dominated his dealings with the world's second-largest economy.

"We signed a trade deal where they're supposed to buy, and they've been buying a lot, actually. But that now becomes secondary to what took place with the virus," Trump told reporters. "The virus situation is just not acceptable."

The Washington Post, citing two people with knowledge of internal discussions, reported on Thursday that some officials had discussed the idea of canceling some of the massive U.S. debt held by China as a way to strike at Beijing for perceived shortfalls in its candidness on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trump's top economic adviser denied the report. "The full faith and credit of U.S. debt obligations is sacrosanct. Period. Full stop," White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow told Reuters.

Asked whether he would consider having the United States stop payment of its debt obligations as a way to punish Beijing, Trump said: "Well, I can do it differently. I can do the same thing, but even for more money, just by putting on tariffs. So, I don't have to do that."

Seeking to quell a damaging trade war, Trump signed a first phase of a multibillion-dollar trade deal with China in January that cut some U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods in exchange for Chinese pledges to purchase more American farm, energy and manufactured goods and address some U.S. complaints about intellectual property practices.

Tariffs of up to 25% remain on some $370 billion worth of Chinese goods imports annually.

Trump has touted his tough stance on China trade as a key differentiator from Democratic challengers in the presidential race. Keeping tariffs in place on Chinese goods allows him to say he is maintaining leverage over China for a Phase 2 trade deal.

Speaking to reporters, Trump declined to say whether he held Chinese President Xi Jinping responsible for what he feels is misinformation from China when the virus emerged from Wuhan, China, and quickly spread around the world.

A senior Trump administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Wednesday that an informal "truce" in the war of words that Trump and Xi essentially agreed to in a phone call in late March appeared to be over. Washington and Beijing have traded increasingly bitter recriminations over the origin of the virus and the response to it.

Trump and his top aides, while stepping up their anti-China rhetoric, have stopped short of directly criticizing Xi, whom the U.S. president has repeatedly called his "friend."

Some of Trump's domestic critics say that although China performed poorly at the start of the outbreak, he now appears to be trying to use Beijing to help deflect from the shortcomings of his own response.

While saying China should ultimately be held to account, Daniel Russel, who served as the State Department's top Asia adviser until early in Trump's term, said in a tweet: "You would be hard pressed to find a political leader in Asia or Europe who does not believe this anti-China push by the Trump administration is an entirely a political move."

Among the other ideas under consideration for retaliation against China are sanctions, new non-tariff trade restrictions and a possible effort to lift China's sovereign immunity, two sources familiar with the matter said.

Lifting sovereign immunity could allow the U.S. government and American citizens to file lawsuits seeking damages from Beijing in U.S. courts.

The options are being discussed, informally for now, across government agencies including the State Department, White House National Security Council, Treasury Department and Pentagon, two of the sources said.

The strongest pressure for action is coming from the National Security Council, including deputy national security adviser Matthew Pottinger, while Treasury officials are advising caution, the sources said.

Conversations are at a very preliminary stage and significant action is not considered imminent, the sources said. When asked, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has repeatedly said Washington's priority at the moment is to fight the virus but that the time to hold China accountable would come.

Information taken from: https://www.britishherald.com/trump-threatens-new-tariffs-on-china-in-retaliation-for-coronavirus/
Image taken from: www.pixabay.com

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UN Chief And German Chancellor Call For Rebuilding 'Our World For the Better'

By Ramesh Jaura - April 30th, 2020

German chancellor Angela Merkel and UN Secretary-General António Guterres have accentuated that any coronavirus recovery programme should have a clear focus on climate targets and rebuilding "our world for the better". They were addressing a two-day video conference in Berlin co-organised by Germany and Britain, the latter as the presidency of UN Climate Conference (COP 26).

Scheduled for November, COP26 will take place in 2021 because of COVID-19. In response to the coronavirus crisis, Germany and Britain put the focus of the conference – officially known as the 'Petersberg Climate Dialogue' – on "sustainable recovery".

Accordingly, Chancellor Merkel strongly pleaded for raising the European Union's 2030 climate target to between 50 and 55 per cent. She said the European Commission had mapped the path to greenhouse gas neutrality by 2050 with the Green Deal. "We know it is going to be a long road and that is why I welcome the interim target proposal for the European Union to reduce emissions by 50 to 55 per cent by 2030 over 1990 levels."

Merkel emphasised the need for a comprehensive package of measures, including investments in climate-friendly infrastructures and appropriate CO2 pricing. She welcomed "the planned expansion of the EU emissions trade [EU ETS] to additional sectors". She appealed to as many countries around the world as possible to invest in CO2 pricing. Broad participation "is the best way to prevent distortion of competition".

"As we plan our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, we have a profound opportunity to steer our world on a more sustainable and inclusive path – a path that tackles climate change, protects the environment, reverses biodiversity loss and ensures the long-term health and security of humankind," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Guterres encouraged the EU to "continue showing global leadership by presenting, by the end of the year, a Nationally Determined Contribution [NDC] in line with its commitment to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050". Besides, Guterres called on all G20 member states to commit to carbon neutrality by 2050 as they are responsible for 80 per cent of global emissions.

Both Merkel and Guterres were referring to the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's announcement in 2019 of the framework of an ambitious and comprehensive economic plan to make the continent climate neutral by 2050. This target has sparked hopes that the EU and Germany would avail of their pivotal roles to drive global climate ambition this year.

This year's Petersberg Climate Dialogue, 11th in the series, organised by the German government and in Berlin's city centre, is seen as a critical milestone in preparation for the next UN climate conference. Though COP26 in Glasgow will take place in 2021, the high-level ministerial talks on April 27-28 provided an opportunity to mobilise political support for more ambitious climate action.

Ministers of 30 states met online to debate how countries can proceed in this regard despite the postponement of the Glasgow climate conference. Under the Paris Climate Agreement, many countries are supposed to raise their NDCs by the end of 2020, and the coronavirus crisis has intensified worries that some governments could show a lack of ambition.

Among the countries whose ministers contributed to discussions in the video conference were: Bhutan, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Finland, France, Gabon, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Marshall Islands, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Rwanda, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Arab Emirates.

Among the intergovernmental organisations joining the exchange of views were: the UN Climate Change (UNFCCC), OECD, Renewable Energy Agency, UNDP, and IMF. Non-state actors were from the Greenpeace International, ICLEI, and the World Resources Institute.

Germany's Environment Minister Svenja Schulze explained to participants that despite the current crisis, the German government had decided to host the climate dialogue digitally because "climate change continues to exist, even if it is receiving less attention right now".

Schulze said the conference showed that many countries are already preparing measures to boost the economy after the crisis and are keeping climate action and the protection of ecosystems in mind when doing so. The world needed a "new start" of the economy, said Schulze. "Our vision is not the old world, but a better world that is more crisis-proof and climate-friendly."

The crisis will lead to a "difficult discussion about distribution", Chancellor Merkel said, cautioning that governments needed to make clear that they would not hold back on climate action in their paths out of the crisis. "If we look at the economic damages that the coronavirus crisis has caused in our respective budgets, the more important it will be to keep a firm eye on climate action when we introduce economic stimulus programmes."

She called for investments in future-oriented technologies and following through on international commitments rather than countries focussing on themselves.

Guterres also called for a green recovery and said there was now a "rare and short window of opportunity to rebuild our world for the better".

The conference concluded with a commitment to a green recovery built on solidarity.

information and images taken from: https://www.pressenza.com/2020/04/un-chief-and-german-chancellor-call-for-rebuilding-our-world-for-the-better/
Image taken from: https://pixabay.com

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Strategies For Taking Tests

Written By Aaron Torres (ILE Professor)

Tests are part of almost every class you take in school. Sometimes tests are given at the beginning of a course to help the teacher discover what you know and don't know. Other types of tests, such as quizzes, weekly tests, and midterm tests, are given during the course to measure your progress. A final examination is often given at the end of the course. Another category of the test is generally a proficiency test, like the TOEFL, TOEIC, and colleague examinations.

How good of a tester are you? Do you prepare well for tests? Do you take enough time to review the material? Do you stay confident that you will do well on a test? Or are you often anxious and lacking in self-confidence? If so, how does your anxiety affect your test score? If you are a good test taker, then you may only need a few strategies in this article. If you are not a good test taker, you can help yourself by following some strategies here.

Before the classroom test, preparation for tests is necessary to perform well. Here are some suggestions to help you prepare for a test.

1. Discover everything you can about the test you are going to take. Try to find out from the teacher the following questions. Exactly what will the test cover? (Grammar, spelling, speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, other?) which topics will be the most important? What kind of items will be on the test? (Multiple choice, fill in the blanks, essay?) how long will it be?

2. Create a plan of action for review. If this is not the first test you have taken in this class, you should look at previous tests to find out what kind of tests the teacher likes to give. Organize your time before the test. Plan to spend enough time on review. Make sure those hours are not at one time and that you start reviewing several days before a test.

3. Review the material. Review the material. Always skim through the textbook and any other materials that the teacher has given you and look at your own written material and class notes. You can outline the major points and topics that are going to be covered on the test. You should also write down examples of the major points (for a grammatical point such as the present perfect tense, you might write both the rule for it and several examples – the writing practice will help to practice a point). For a quick reminder just before the test, write the main points and topics on an index card.

4. Take practice tests or do exercises. Near the end of the reviewing time, it is important for you to do some self-practice. If your textbook has exercises in it that are similar to items that will be on the test, do some on your own as practice.

5. Form a study group. Many students benefit from studying for tests with other people. You might want to go through the reviewing process in strategy three with the help of other people. For part of your review with your group, quiz each other.

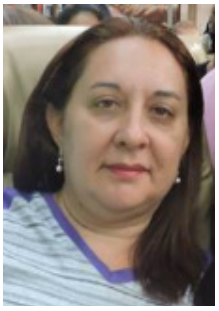
6. Once you are ready, relax! Good preparation is almost always the key to confidence. Confidence will lower your anxiety. High anxiety can prevent clear thinking during the test, so you want to make sure your anxiety is low. When you have done everything you can to prepare, relax and tell yourself, "I have now done my best to prepare. I believe in myself. I will perform well!

A good way to relax is to make sure you get a good night's sleep before a test. Make sure you keep your normal eating schedule before a test. You should also avoid medications that might slow down your thinking.

In a further article, I will share some more strategies for success during the classroom test as well as successful strategies after the classroom test.

Pandemic Effects On Education

Written by Eugenia González (ILE Professor)



When coronavirus started in Wuhan, China, last December, nobody imagined how our lifestyles would be affected. Definitely, many aspects of our daily routine have been changing and will continue changing in the future. The freedom of interacting with other people moved to an isolated state where person to person contact is not recommended to avoid the contagion. Meetings with relatives, friends, and coworkers are seen now as something inaccessible. Besides those situations, in the educational field there have been some significant changes worldwide, and Costa Rica is not an exemption. If we also analyze the education setting, online courses have become very popular since classroom courses have been postponed in places where the pandemic is present. Never before have teachers had to cope with a situation where suddenly face to face classes had to be transformed into virtual classes. Many rules and strategies have been applied to keep students learning. As a matter of fact, several aspects have been affecting the educational field in our country, and we need to consider those elements to continue working properly in spite of the pandemic.

To begin with, teachers in many cases had to adjust the curriculum design used for classroom classes to online ones with no previous preparation or training. Each professor according to his reality managed to adapt the materials and course objectives to the students' needs. This is obviously something difficult, if we consider that many institutions were not using any online resource when the emergency started. Nevertheless, the innate creativity of many professors has made this situation a possibility of exploding abilities that we did not know we had. Some professors have learned how to use different tools to keep students working in a synchronous and asynchronous class such as Moodle, Google Classroom, Zoom, Hangouts and Goggle Meet among others to interact with their students. As a matter of fact, it is relevant to mention that online classes require much more time to guide and evaluate students in the process. For instance, giving instructions in the class may require a few minutes while online instructions might require much more time to organize ideas to establish clear tasks for students. Teachers in the same way, have to be available any time to answer questions and give extra explanations to students.

Another factor we need to consider is the teachers and students' accessibility to technology. This is one challenge in our educational system, especially for students. The ones from rural areas may lack the necessary devices and internet connection to access different platforms or online tools. Moreover, teachers have to be able to identify specific cases of students who are facing difficulties, and adjust those online methodologies to provide the same opportunities to all the pupils. Moreover, if we consider the students' level, it is relevant to mention that in cases where they are pretty young, they need the supervision of adults. However, many primary school students in our country are raised by parents or grandparents who are not literate, do not have access to technology or don't manage it well. In those scenarios, the Ministry of Education has a big challenge: to find different ways to support students, especially the ones that are left -behind.

Finally, it is obvious that the emotional health of participants in the educational field is also affected. The actors in the process are like anybody else, vulnerable to suffer different problems. Everybody, teachers, administrators, students, families are facing the consequences of the pandemic. Thus, being in quarantine and having an uncertain future in terms of health, work, finance etc. may provoke several reactions in people. For instance, some individuals can undergo feelings of anxiety, frustration and stress while being at home. Undoubtedly, those emotions could affect the intellectual development of individuals in the process. As a consequence, they won't be able to fulfill the proposed objectives in the same way they did in the past before the pandemic.

After overcoming this outbreak, educational authorities and institutions should prioritize the implementation of specific platforms and applications that may help participants in the learning process. This is essential not only to accompany the classroom lessons but also to handle emergencies like the one we are facing now. In that way, giving students the necessary tools to access learning anywhere and anytime must be a priority for our institutions. Teachers must receive specific training to handle online classrooms and guide the students through the process properly. Finally, educational authorities must promote courses directed to improve people's emotional health. Since those problems have increased lately due to the quarantine and the pandemic effects, health therapies can help people on how to deal with uncertain situations that can't be controlled easily, and in that way avoid anxiety and fear cases. Definitely, many aspects have been changing fast in our lives lately due to the pandemic. Some experts say our lifestyles will never be the same after this situation, so I really expect that based on this unprecedented experience, a lot of things in the educational field will be improved in the future for the best.

Online Proctoring: How The Corona Crisis Makes Some Students More Equal Than Others

Published on March 23rd, 2020 | by Linnet Taylor

We are seeing a lot of policy-based evidence emerge from the coronavirus emergency, something that's normal when people work in a state of profound uncertainty, with very thin knowledge of the accuracy of the data available. Should everyone be wearing face masks to prevent infection? If you're from an Asian country, you will most likely believe that scientific evidence shows you should. If you're from a European country, you will have been hearing a lot about how the evidence points the other way. This doesn't mean both are true – instead, there is an underlying scientific reality that is being pulled in different directions by our countries' degree of access to, and hence policy position on, surgical masks. Is a full lockdown necessary? Again, your view of the supporting evidence will differ according to whether you are Swedish or Spanish, from New York or Hong Kong.

There is a feverish debate over who is right, in the absence of the nuance and understanding that can help us distinguish correlation from causation. That debate is emotional and pressured - understandably, because it is a debate about life and death. Louise Amoore has written on how we can live with 'post-Cartesian doubt' in a time where algorithms are becoming a primary mode of evidence evaluation. She quotes the physicist Richard Feynman: 'Permit us to question, to doubt, to not be sure… **it is possible to live and not to know**' (Amoore, 2019). Is this something we can do when our lives, or those of many people we care about, are at stake?

Online Exams and Proctoring

Universities are supposed to be the place where doubt can be weighed and knowledge learned, but they are suffering just as much uncertainty as the rest of us. Tilburg University has been under fire for adopting online proctoring software, though it is not the only university to do so (TU Eindhoven has also decided to use it). Most Dutch universities have not, so far, taken this route. The problem, at least, is clear: students must be able to progress and graduate; they cannot be asked to come to campus to take exams in the conventional way; teaching staff are also stuck at home with many experiencing reduced working hours due to homeschooling, which provides limited resources with which to make new forms of examination available. The solution: **existing exams can be provided online, with online proctoring as a check on behaviour**.

Many students, however, are unhappy. Their response: it's invasive, the software needs to take a scan of your workspace and will follow your eye movements and any sounds in the room. Moreover you need a webcam and good broadband internet, which not everyone can afford at home. Students will have to use a Google browser, which many may object to for reasons of privacy and data protection.

Many students, however, are unhappy. Their response: it's invasive, **the software needs to take a scan of your workspace and will follow your eye movements and any sounds in the room**. Moreover you need a webcam and good broadband internet, which not everyone can afford at home. Students will have to use a Google browser, which many may object to for reasons of privacy and data protection.

The university has made its case for using proctoring software for courses with larger student numbers. Rector Klaas Sijtsma has outlined the problem:

> 'as a teacher you want to know that Jan de Vries is on the other side, so there will have to be some form of identification. You also want to know that nobody is helping Jan de Vries and that he will not check books during exams, if that is not the intention. And that Jan de Vries is not secretly on the internet or on google or emailing with a fellow student. This is necessary to establish that the student actually possesses the knowledge and skills for a diploma. Society must be able to rely on that and we are also legally obliged to do so.'

All this is entirely reasonable. Degrees should be awarded on a basis of equal effort, equal reward. Anyone who cheats devalues everyone else's diploma. This is unfair, and the university has to be able to stand behind the degrees it awards. A degree given in 2020 should be of the same value as one from 2019. Furthermore, it is optimal if students can undergo the testing that was originally planned for their course. Otherwise teachers have to scramble to create new tests which may not be as thorough, and alternative ways of testing may create untenable workloads for staff and cause delays in reporting grades and thus in graduation. These are all serious concerns that have to be addressed.

Who is 'Our Student'?

On the other hand, as teachers we can question whether Jan is the student we should be looking to serve. Jan is the 'Gewoone Nederlander' – the Dutch norm. A local student, who grew up in a neighbouring town and has gone home to his parents' house to weather the lockdown. His parents are middle-class with a spare bedroom in which he can work, and broadband internet access. He was able to retrieve his books before the lockdown and has been able to continue with his coursework and receive answers to his questions. If he can't graduate on time he may – even if the crisis eases – have to wait months before he can get a job, which he finds unacceptable, given that the world is plunging into recession and the chances of employment are dwindling. Jan is highly motivated to take his final exams.

Also in Jan's course is Farhana. She is from a lower-income country in the global South. She travelled home to be with her family when the emergency began, before her country restricted incoming travel. Her mother is ill and is self-isolating, so Farhana is looking after her siblings and grandparents. She has no desk and could not bring all the books she needs with her on the plane due to luggage restrictions. She has internet on her smartphone, which she is using for her studies in the evenings, but she cannot access Canvas or library materials due to account authentication problems. Her neighbourhood is noisy and there is no private room in the house where she can work undisturbed. Her laptop is old and needs to be replaced: she was hoping to do that when she got a job in the Netherlands after graduating. If she cannot take her exams she will have a half-year delay and will have to pay her flight back to the Netherlands, her rent for those six months, and her living costs out of a budget that will not stretch that far. The recession is going to hit her country much harder than the Netherlands – people are already hungry and are rioting for the end of lockdown. Farhana is highly motivated to take her final exams.

What is equality of opportunity in this situation? Not all students are in Jan's position, but neither are they all in Farhana's. Most are somewhere in-between. While Farhana will score high on the risk index, and Jan low, there will be a huge variance in people's circumstances, and the level of doubt for authorities about who to check, and for what, will be high.

Is proctoring software really the answer?

What does this mean for the university's decisionmakers? There are multiple testing options that would work for both types of student, but these different types of student would not both be able to take the already-prepared test online, using proctoring software. Demanding that they do so prioritises people in the Netherlands over those abroad, but creating other options that are fairer on students risks being unfair on teachers, who are also in a situation of reduced capacity. There are approaches that make allowances for everyone, some of which have already been proposed by students: they include giving students a final grade based on the work they have already completed or giving a timed, open-book exam; both of these options are being adopted by high-profile universities around the world in the interest of fairness to all concerned.

What is needed here is an acceptance of doubt of the sort that Amoore discusses: if we wish to be fair, we must accept that this situation is full of doubt. Instead of jamming it into a technical solution that will artificially reduce doubt by establishing a standard and penalising anyone whose situation deviates, it might be better to behave flexibly and use the resources we have to reduce doubt. Jan de Vries is no longer the only norm, but the systems we are offered are still built in his image. For that to change, universities have to adopt less technical, more human approaches that allow us to at least claim that we are offering students equal opportunities to succeed.

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Information taken from: https://www.diggitmagazine.com/column/proctoring-exams-inequality

The UTN community includes professors, administrative staff and students. Each individual has something to say about everything. In this section, we give the university community the opportunity to express what they feel about different school, country and world issues that in one or another way affect or impact our lives, feelings and opinions. This month we asked students:

What have you learned during this confinement?

FIrst of all, how much I love to kiss and hug my mom, how much I enjoy having lunch and coffee with my family. I have always known my family is my treasure, but I strongly believe that more than ever. I am grateful for my job MORE than ever and I am so happy with my small backyard, the trees around it and the birds that visit it and sing for me. It has become my meditation place, so any time I am stressed I go there to get my peace back.

Melissa González

During this confinement I have learned to be more thankful for everything I have; especially my family, friends, co-workers and students. Never before, have I missed them so much.

Eugenia González

In this period of confinement, I have come to understand that time is an illusion; money is not as important as freedom; our families should never be neglected. Likewise, this experience has taught me that friendship makes life more fun and that taking care of our minds and bodies is a never ending process.

Andrés Bejarano

I've reinforced my opinion about the importance of family, friends and time. I've always said that inner and spiritual growth is the most important search. This is a wonderful opportunity to assess who we are, the type of company we are for others and for ourselves and the lifestyle we want from now on.

Ling Nieto

I have learned that being in confinement is a two way path through uncertainty-paved roads: One is the path of despair, frustration, anger and resentment towards God, the government, the institutions and those around us. The other one, yet steep and slippery is one of tolerance, patience, commitment, opportunity and fraternity.

Jose Soto

During this isolation period, I have learned more about myself,and I have had the opportunity to try new things and retake old hobbies such as drawing, reading, practicing my guitar, mediation, exercise classes via Zoom, etc. Also, I miss teaching and being with my students. But no matter how dark things get, there is always a glimmer of light that helps us see what we are truly grateful for!

Clare Goodman

I've learned how privileged I am, and how important it is to lend a helping hand to those who need it the most. It's given me perspective of how fragile we are. A virus can change your life from one day to another.

Carlos González Alvarado

I have learned significant professional and personal matters. One of those is being compassionate and empathetic with my learners. Sudden changes are not really easy to assimilate, so I, as a profesor, need to keep a balance to understand what it is going with my pupils' mind. Also, I have learned to be adaptable and flexible in my way of teaching. Now, I have to adopt and learn new technological strategies, and I have to include them in my teaching-learning process in order to achieve the outcomes of my courses. Finally, this confinement taught me that positivism and motivation are the most powerful tools that can be used to face difficulties.

Universidad Técnica Nacional

ILE Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

I Have A Dream

By Lilliana Rodriguez (ILE Student)

I have a dream that women will be respected.

Humanity exists because of the decision of a woman,
Angels have been the ones that give life to another person,
Violence even though has destroyed women's dreams,
Eternally they have cried without comprehension.

A new hope is the motor that moves a woman to continue.

Days of glory have been written in history,
Reminding new generations that changes are possible,
Effort and faith are key factors to be kept,
And teach others that women are not invisible.
Meanwhile the goal is achieved once again,
At the warm sunset of this day.

Butterfly

By Magda Cordero (ILE Student)

Here it is flying high,
But it is still feeling tired.
It always wants to reach the sky,
To steal a star during the night.
Shinning like golden lights,
Butterfly admires the stars.
At night butterfly falls asleep,
Thinking that tomorrow it will achieve its dream.
Hoping to kiss a star,
Butterfly is flying high.
Butterfly knows that it is just a dream,

But it learned that it can succeed.

The King And The Ugly Bird

By Leo Bado (ILE Student)

Once upon a time, there was a young king who possessed a great kingdom. Throughout the kingdom there were magnificent castles and beautiful landscapes, and the king was very rich because he had tons of gold and diamonds that he had accumulated. Kings from everywhere envied him because his wealth was famous beyond the oceans, but the king was not happy. Many years ago, a powerful wizard cursed him because he was greedy and superficial, so everything the king touched turned to gold.

One day the king was walking around his golden gardens completely alone; no one wanted to touch him or even be near him since they were afraid of him. Saddened because of his loneliness, he looked at the branches of a tree, but all the birds were golden statues, except a small ugly owl that he had never touched because he considered it repulsive. He approached the bird and asked what it was doing there. The bird answered that no one should look so sad, and added, "You remind me of my own loneliness; nobody wants to touch me because I'm ugly."

The king and the bird poured out their hearts in a long conversation, and the king said, "Now I see that you're a warm-hearted bird," and he unconsciously touched the little owl, who immediately turned into a young princess. Their wounds have been undone, and the curse was reversed. The king promised her never to be superficial again, and she found love in the king's eyes. From that day on, both lived happily ever after.

What Happened To The Man In The Flowers?

By Maricruz Ovares (ILE Student)

The man used to work in the forest which was full of aromatic flowers. There were flowers of different colors and shapes, so he worked collecting them to sell on his farm. All of a sudden, he heard thundering sounds, and the sky started to be as dark as it was night; however, it was just 3 pm. The air was damp, the silence close and deep. He took his flowers and started walking towards his home. While he was trying to cross a square and dirty river, he smelled a pungent smell. He decided to follow that smell because he was interested in it. When he arrived, he saw that it was a pink rose; the most beautiful rose that he had seen. He approached, and it started to rain.

The man was surprised because it was just raining where the pink rose was planted. However, he was not afraid and decided to pick it. As he picked it to add to his bundle, he saw an enormous root coming from the ground. The thick root took his left foot, and it lifted him throwing his flowers. He started shouting, but nobody was in that forest. The root had a big mouth and a prickly tongue. He was murdered by that root leaving no evidence. After a day, the pink and pungent rose was planted in the same place.

Video Game Narratives

Video games — including arcade games, console games (often with online multiplayer modes), mobile games for smartphones, online-only games including MMORPGs (massively multiplayer online role-playing games) and open environment games like Minecraft — all have narratives to follow and widely varying levels of production value. They rival films as the most immersive medium in mass communication, and they can be much more personal. Both films and video games have high production values and immersing narratives, but **video games allow consumers to play as an avatar and interact with the story to change the plot and the environment** (within limitations). Video games now make more than double what movies make globally at the box office. Children who grow up with popular games today might not have much reason to be nostalgic 10-20 years from now because many popular games (such as Minecraft) are platforms that might remain accessible as they evolve.

Besides social influences, video games make a cultural impact as well. One way that culture is influenced by video games is through the narratives they tell. **All sorts of video games create stories.** Whether you are playing as a plumber trying to save a princess, building a world out of blocks with little backstory, or going on an epic quest in a realm where distinctive characters have their own motivations, there are commonalities between good video games and the narratives of classic literature and film. In narrative storytelling, there are elements such as setting, characters, plot and themes that combine to make meaning for readers, viewers or users. Video games deserve credit for crafting narratives often as intricate, emotionally gripping and revealing as other forms of creative production.

Here are some questions to ask about a given video game narrative: How much control does the design of the game exert over the player and the gameplay? Are you a single character or part of a team? What is your mobility within the game, and is that a feature of gameplay?

Game design sets the stage. The narrative is the story. The two work together, and, depending on your interests, one may interest you more than the other. If you view a video game with a critical eye, you can appreciate worlds, characters and plot twists and the effort that goes into game design. If you view a game primarily as a player would, you might only see it at face value as boring, fun, immersive, and so forth. You can use almost all of the terms you use to describe great films and novels to describe contemporary video games.

Often, game design is where technological genius comes into play. **The way a game environment is built matters almost as much as what you do in a game**; however, we have all seen a special effects movie that was only a special effects movie. If the story falls flat, we will probably not recommend the film to our friends. Conversely, video games that start with compelling stories but have poorly executed design and functionality may be almost unplayable. The best works create compelling worlds and stories.

Information taken from: https://press.rebus.community/mscy/chapter/chapter-8-digital-gaming/
Photo credit: https://pixabay.com

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BILTMORE ESTATE, ASHEVILL, N.C.

Biltmore Estate is a historic house museum and tourist attraction in Asheville, North Carolina. Biltmore House, the main residence, is a Châteauesque-style mansion built for George Washington Vanderbilt II between 1889 and 1895 and is the largest privately owned house in the United States, at 16,622.8 m2 of floor space. Still owned by George Vanderbilt's descendants, it remains one of the most prominent examples of Gilded Age mansions.

Vanderbilt bought almost 700 parcels of land, including over 50 farms and at least five cemeteries; a portion of the estate was once the community of Shiloh. A spokesperson for the estate said in 2017 that archives show much of the land "was in very poor condition, and many of the farmers and other landowners were glad to sell."

Construction of the house began in 1889. In order to facilitate such a large project, a woodworking factory and brick kiln, which produced 32,000 bricks a day, were built on-site, and a three-mile railroad spur was constructed to bring materials to the building site. Construction on the main house required the labor of about 1,000 workers and 60 stonemasons. Vanderbilt went on extensive trips overseas to purchase decor as construction on the house was in progress. He returned to North Carolina with thousands of furnishings for his newly built home including tapestries, hundreds of carpets, prints, linens, and decorative objects, all dating between the 15th century and the late 19th century. Among the few American-made items were the more practical oak drop-front desk, rocking chairs, a walnut grand piano, bronze candlesticks and a wicker wastebasket.

Vanderbilt envisioned a park-like setting for his home and employed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted to design the grounds. Olmsted was not impressed with the condition of the 195 m^2 (510 km2) and advised for a park surrounding the house, establishing farms along the river and replanting the rest as a commercial timber forest, a plan to which Vanderbilt agreed. Gifford Pinchot and later Carl A. Schenck were hired to manage the forests, with Schenck establishing the first forestry education program in the U.S., the Biltmore Forest School, on the estate grounds in 1898.

Another important aspect of the landscaping was the intentionally rustic 5 km Approach track that began at the brick quoined and pebbledash stucco Lodge Gate at the edge of Biltmore Village, and ended at the sphinx-topped stone pillars at the Esplanade. In between, the lane was densely filled with natural and uncultivated looking foliage and shrubbery to provide a relaxing journey for guests. Olmsted made sure to incorporate 30 ha of formal gardens that had been requested by Vanderbilt for the grounds directly surrounding the house. He constructed a Roman formal garden, a formal garden, a bush and tulip garden, water fountains, and a conservatory with individual rooms for palms and roses. There was also a bowling green, an outdoor tea room, and a terrace to incorporate the European statuary that Vanderbilt had brought back from his travels.

Water was an important aspect of Victorian landscaping and Olmsted incorporated two for the estate: the Bass Pond created from an old creek-fed millpond and the Lagoon. Each was used for guest recreation like fishing and rowing. To supply water for the estate, Olmsted engineered two reservoirs. One was a spring-fed man-made lake on nearby Busbee Mountain. The other was a man-made, brick-lined reservoir, located behind the statue of Diana in the Vista, at an elevation of approximately 81 m above the Esplanade.

The estate today covers approximately 32 km^2 and is split in half by the French Broad River. The estate is overseen by The Biltmore Company, a trust set up by the family.

Information taken from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biltmore_Estate Photo credit: https://pixabay.com

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Using Educational Video For Students In The Classroom

Posted on 10th March 2020 by Nell Jarret

A picture is worth a thousand words. If the image is also dynamic, how many words would it equal? That would be the equation that we would have to solve in the 21st century. We have to be aware that in certain processes, the effect of learning multiplies thanks to the visualization of a video exponentially. The use of video as a teaching resource facilitates the construction of significant knowledge since the communicative potential of images, sounds and words are used to convey a series of experiences that stimulate the senses and different learning styles in students.

Several Types of Educational Videos

Video lesson: It is used without the presence of the teacher and is widely used in distance education. It consists of practically the different components of a class. It allows students to appropriate knowledge, observe the execution of techniques and demonstrations, promote the creation of skills, and systematize their technical-professional preparation.

Support video: The teacher uses it as a means of teaching when developing a lecture, theoretical-practical class, practical class, or laboratory practice. It facilitates the execution of teaching tasks, reproduces phenomena, demonstrations,

techniques, etc. It is mainly used in the teaching activities of the undergraduate.

Interactive video: A teacher-facilitator is employed, from a new perspective, with an active and participatory methodology in the teaching process. It enables the development of symmetric and reciprocal communication of the roles mentioned above.

Didactic package: It consists of multiple learning media (texts, methodological guides, videos, films, cassettes, or educational software) and is ideal for self-preparation, directed, and distance studies.

How to create education videos

To create an educational video, it is necessary to do a previous investigation and a scheme about what we intend to communicate and how we want to do it. We must consider whether the video will have ambient sound or background music. Besides, finally, we must control the technical aspects: recording camera, video resolution, editing with appropriate software and uploading the video to a website so that it is accessible with a connection Internet.

FlexClip is a fantastic tool that allows you to create your own educational videos from your photos and your music (as they tell me it also allows you to convert, trim our videos). The final result is a very professional and spectacular video that we can have hosted on FlexClip or download for class use.

FlexClip, in its normal free version, allows us to create our own videos of up to 5 minutes with selected photographs from our computer and with multiple arrangements such as adding texts and music, all this in three simple steps. There is also the payment option that allows many more stock video and the removal of the watermark that appears in the lower right of the videos in the version free.

Video learning is not a recent trend, but it is still in trend. If technological evolution is observed with an impartial sense, it can be noticed that the face-to-face part is losing strength in terms of media development if all the materials are transferred to the computer, and this, in turn, is an inevitable process at this time. The network is indeed a great help in class, but as a technological resource, it is more oriented to individual learning, achieving excellent results at the level of knowledge.

Information taken from: https://edtech4beginners.com/2020/03/20/using-educational-video-for-students-in-the-classroom/
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Dionysus/Bacchus

The Birth of Dionysus

Dionysus was the son of Zeus and the mortal woman Semele, who was the daughter of Cadmus, King of Thebes. When Hera learned that Semele was pregnant with her husband's child, she disguised herself as Semele's nurse and convinced the girl she should demand that Zeus show himself to her as he did to his wife, but first she should make him swear to meet any demand she might make. Semele did so and Zeus was forced to comply. Unfortunately, it seems that Zeus showed himself to Hera in the form of a lightning bolt. So, Semele was struck by Zeus' lightning and died in a blaze. Hermes rescued the unborn baby from Semele's womb and the child was sewn into Zeus' thigh where he stayed for the rest of the pregnancy. When he was ready to be born, Dionysus was delivered from his father's thigh, which explains Dionysus' epithet, Twice-Born. Hermes spirited the boy away to live with his aunt, Ino (one of his mother's sisters). Ino and her husband, Athamas, raised Dionysus as a girl to try to hide him from Hera's wrath, but Hera was not fooled and caused Ino to go mad. After several mishaps, Ino jumped into the sea, where she became the goddess, Leucothea.

Dionysus and the Tyrrhenian Pirates

When Dionysus was still a young boy, he found himself in need of passage to the island of Naxos. He asked some Tyrrhenian (Etruscan) pirates for a ride and the pirates agreed, but they actually planned to kidnap him, believing that he was the son of a wealthy family who would pay a hefty ransom for their child. While at sea, the crew tried to tie him up, but the bonds fell away of their own accord. At this point the helmsman recognized that this was no ordinary boy and tried to prevent any harm coming to Dionysus, but the captain ignored the helmsman's warning and told the sailors to hold on to the boy. Suddenly, wine began to flow all over the ship; vines began to grow from the sails and ivy began to twine around the mast. Then Dionysus turned into a lion and a bear appeared on the deck. The lion seized the captain and began to tear him apart, and the sailors jumped into the sea, turning into dolphins. Dionysus, now back in human form, prevented the helmsman from following his comrades into the sea and told him that his aid would be rewarded and no harm would come to him.

Dionysus and Phrygia

Hera still hated Dionysus and she drove him mad, causing him to run away and wander around the world until he came to Phrygia (in what is now central Turkey). Here he met Cybele, a Phrygian mother goddess whose worship had been accepted by the Greeks. Cybele cured him of his madness and Dionysus established his cult and rites of worship. Dionysus' rites were similar to those of Cybele, and they involved drinking, wild dancing, playing the tambourine, and a feeling of ecstasy, or divine possession. ("Ecstasy" is from a Greek word, meaning "to stand outside oneself.") Dionysus also gained a group of female followers, called maenads (or bacchae or bacchants), who followed him around, singing, dancing, drinking, and playing the tambourine. Maenads (their name means "mad women") are usually shown in a state of ecstasy. Dionysus is also usually accompanied by satyrs. Satyrs are men with goat's legs, horse's tails, and a vigorous appetite for wine and sex. They are often shown with huge erections. Dionysus then set his sights on establishing his worship in his homeland, so he traveled back to Greece.

God or Mortal?

Dionysus' status as a god was always an issue. There is an informal rule that, if you have one divine parent and one human parent, then you are a human (usually a hero) and not a god. Examples include Achilles, Theseus, Helen of Troy, Sarpedon, Aeneas, and many others. But there were two exceptions to this rule. Heracles (Hercules), who became a god and was taken up to Mt. Olympus upon his death, and Dionysus. Dionysus insisted that he was always a god (maybe because he was born from Zeus' thigh), and stories like the Tyrrhenian Pirates (told above) seem to confirm this. But no one believed him because his mother was a mortal. So, when Dionysus traveled back to Greece to establish his rites, he had trouble convincing people that he really was a god.

Resistance Myths

There are several Resistance Myths connected with Dionysus. Resistance Myths are stories about men or women who try to resist the worship of a particular god or goddess. In these Resistance Myths, the attempt of the mortal to resist the god's worship always ends badly: the god or goddess destroys the resisting human and succeeds in establishing his or her worship. There are a number of Resistance Myths attached to Dionysus, more than for any other god or goddess. Mortals resisted Dionysus' worship partly because they did not believe he was a god, and partly because his worship involved drinking, drunkenness, open sexual expression, and the loss of one's reason or self-control.

The most famous Resistance Myth connected with Dionysus occurred in his city of origin, Thebes, with his cousin Pentheus. After Semele died, her sisters, most notably Agave, spread the rumor that Semele had lied about the paternity of her child and Zeus had punished her for it with his thunderbolt. As a result, no one in Thebes believed that Dionysus was divine. The years passed and, because Cadmus, the king of Thebes, had only daughters, when he decided to retire, he gave the throne to Agave's son, Pentheus. He was a very young man, perhaps only about twenty or twenty-one when he became King of Thebes. Dionysus came to Thebes to introduce his worship to his homeland, but Pentheus forbade any of the Theban women to worship him. Pentheus probably did this because he did not believe Dionysus was a god, but he also seems to have been a straight and narrow kind of guy, who was disgusted by Dionysus' rituals. A third reason may have been that Pentheus felt that this was a good opportunity to establish his authority. At any rate, Pentheus did not allow the women of Thebes to worship Dionysus. Dionysus, however, caused all the women of Thebes to go mad and run away from home. They all left their fathers and husbands and ran away to Mount Cithaeron, where they became maenads, singing, dancing, drinking wine, and worshipping Dionysus. Pentheus was upset at this behavior and tried to imprison Dionysus, who had disguised himself as a priest of Dionysus. The god easily escaped from prison, of course, and he took a terrible revenge upon Pentheus, which is depicted in Euripides' play, The Bacchae.

Information taken from: https://press.rebus.community/mythologyunbound/chapter/dionysusbacchus/
Photo Credit: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museo_Archeologico_Venezia_Bacchus_and_tigers_01.jpg

"English For You CR" Presents, Is Accent Important?

Do you remember Arnold Schwarzenegger in Terminator speaking English with a heavy German accent? Did you have problem understanding what he said? As you can see, having an accent is inevitable if English is not your native tongue (the same applies if it were your own native language). However, what matters is that your accent is not too heavy so you can be easily understood.

Thus, there are ways in which you can reduce your accent as a Spanish speaker: working on sounds that are difficult to articulate for you, having clear pronunciation of words, not talking too fast or too slowly, and others. Ask a teacher or a friend to listen to you speaking (as naturally as possible) to see if what you said is difficult to understand based on your accent.

This can be tricky as finding your own problem areas is difficult and requires somebody else's help. Besides, softening your accent can be a long process. It is always worth it if you use English on a regular basis, and if you're interested in projecting yourself with a professional image, specially in some business contexts.

Remember: having an accent is not bad, as long as it doesn't interfere with your communication. Find help from a qualified teacher if you want to correct it. Good luck!

personalia

noun-verb [pur-suh-ney-lee-uh, -neyl-yuh]

-biographical data, personal reminiscences, or the like:

EXAMPLE:

-He could never keep the personalia out of his essays.

www.dictionary.com

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Snow Leopard

The population of snow leopards in Russia has remained stable for the past three years, according to a recent WWF survey. This may not seem groundbreaking, but it is, in fact, excellent news.

The 2019 survey found 65 snow leopards in Russia's Altai-Sayan Ecoregion, where snow-capped mountains dominate a landscape relatively unchanged since the last Ice Age. These numbers represent a slight increase from the previous year, despite threats from poaching and climate change.

Snow leopards are notoriously elusive animals, and experts must sometimes trek hundreds of miles into remote and unforgiving terrain to find any signs of them. In 2015, WWF-Russia partnered with experts from State University of New York to develop a new method to more accurately monitor and count these "ghosts of the mountain" across the largest area ever surveyed. The method, known as the Snow Leopard Grid, combines computer modeling with the data that researchers in the field collect from camera traps, paw prints, and genetic analysis.

Having used the Snow Leopard Grid to conduct the latest survey, WWF is now working to expand the method to other snow leopard range countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. Those monitoring efforts will help shape WWF's strategy to protect snow leopards and the unique ecosystems that sustain them.

Information taken from: www.worldwildlife.org/magazine/issues/winter-2019/articles/emerging-technology-helps-wwf-monitor-snow-leopards
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