

Beyond Crystal Balls: Designing Education's Plural Futures

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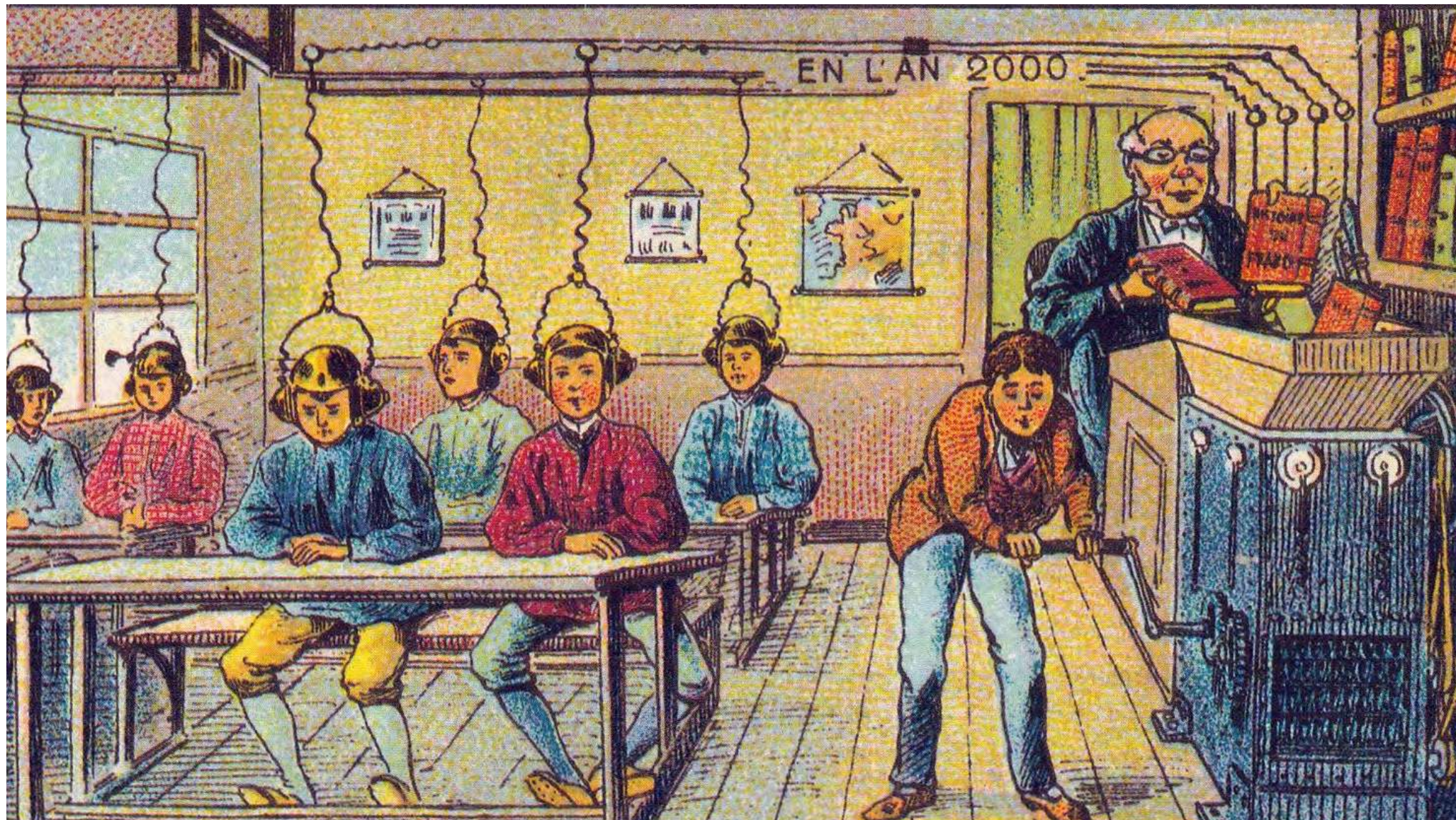


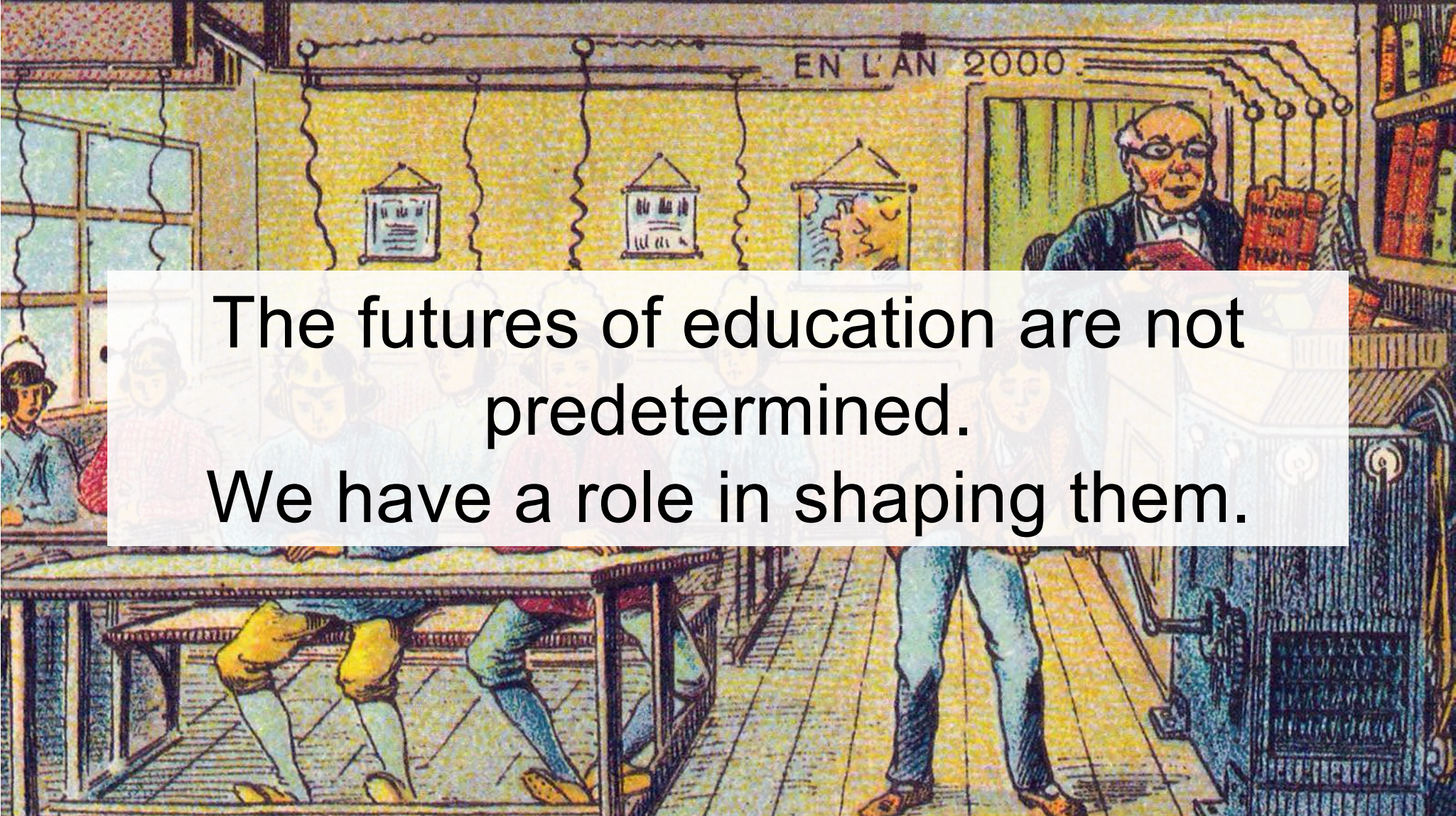
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9 October 2025 | ContactNorth Webinar





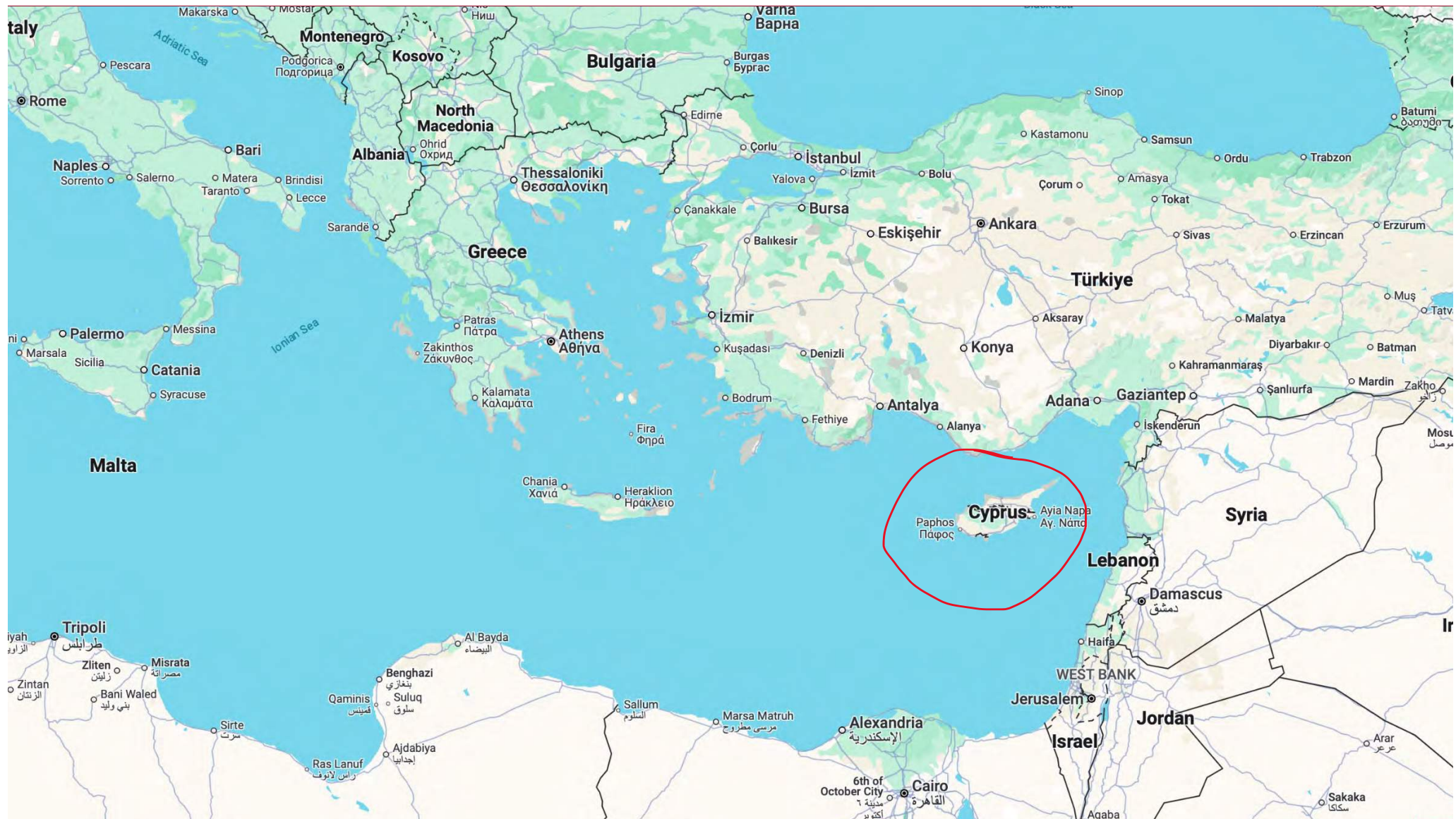
The futures of education are not
predetermined.
We have a role in shaping them.

Overview

- Explore multiple potential futures
 - What might limit our ability, agency, and power to imagine education differently?
 - Apply structured scenario planning techniques for education futures
- 

Poll 1: When you think about higher education in 2035, which statement BEST describes your gut feeling??













Speculative methods and approaches



Ways to imagine the future.

- critical—questioning assumptions we take for granted
- produce stories, scenarios, objects to think with—not predictions
- descriptive and interactive, not prescriptive
- Open up possibilities rather than closing them down



Imagination

“ability to imagine the world, life and social institutions not as they are but as they might otherwise be”

Khasnabish, A., & Haiven, M. (2014). *The radical imagination: Social movement research in the age of austerity*. London: Bloomsbury.

Beyond the binary



WHAT LIMITS OUR IMAGINATIONS?

**Discursive
closures
(Markham, 2021)**

Markham, A. (2021). Challenges to intervening in future speculations of memory, data, and algorithms. *New Media & Society*, 23(2), 382–405.

**Elite futurism
(Ramos et al, 2019)**

Ramos, J., Sweeney, J. A., Peach, K., & Smith, L. (2019). *Our futures: By the people, for the people. How mass involvement in shaping the future can solve complex problems*. Nesta.



Poll 2: Which of these factors MOST limits your ability to imagine different educational futures at your institution?



Scenario planning

- Scenario planning as a strategic foresight tool
- JISC's "Imagined Futures" methodology
- Futures and uncertainty

Scenario planning activity (5 minutes)

- Visit <https://z.umn.edu/2035scenarios> or use the QR code
- Click the button to define your own 2035, characterized by 3 scenarios
- Consider the 3 “what ifs” together. Take 5 minutes to reflect on a future in which those 3 what ifs became a reality
- Consider
 - What are the risks and opportunities presented by each one?
 - How could an institution react to the challenge to mitigate risks and maximize opportunities?
 - How could educators prepare for or react to the challenge(s)?



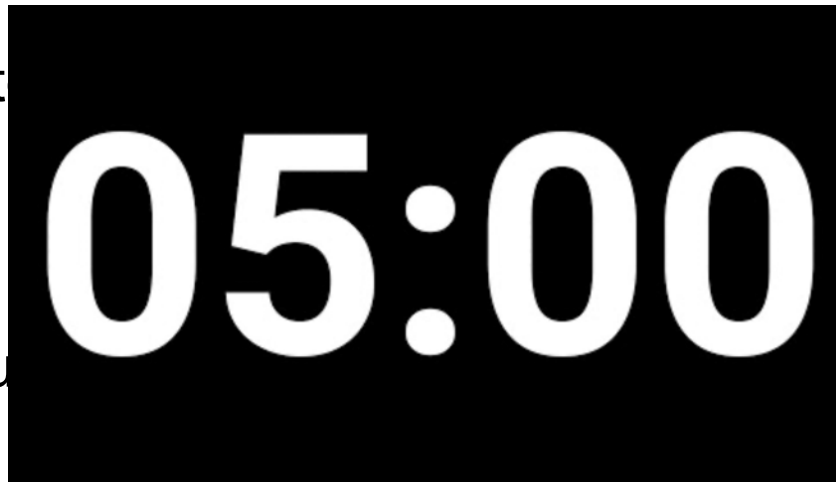
Scenario planning activity (5 minutes)

- Visit <https://z.umn.edu/2035scenarios> or use the QR code

- Click the button to select a scenario characterized by 3 scenarios

- Consider the scenario for 5 minutes to reflect on a future that has become a reality

- Consider
 - What are the risks and opportunities presented by each one?
 - How could an institution react to the challenge to mitigate risks and maximize opportunities?
 - How could educators prepare for or react to the challenge(s)?



Poll 3: Based on the scenarios you've seen so far, which category feels MOST urgent for your institution to prepare for RIGHT NOW?



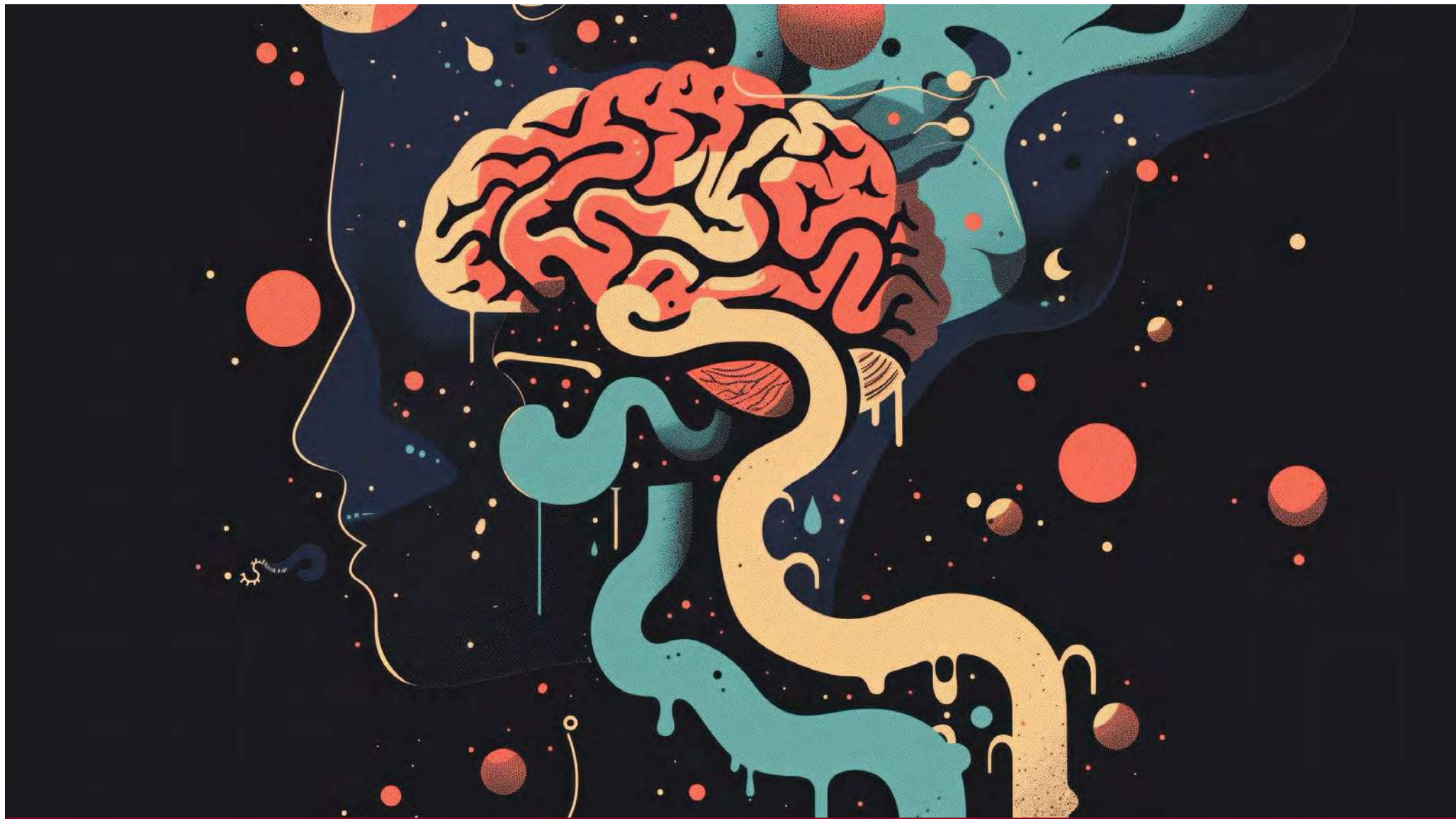


Pedagogical recalibration

- Core values
- Teaching approaches
- Assessment methods
- Institutional relationships
- Knowledge practice

Poll 4: "Complete this sentence: The ONE thing I'm going to do differently when I return to my institution is..."?







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