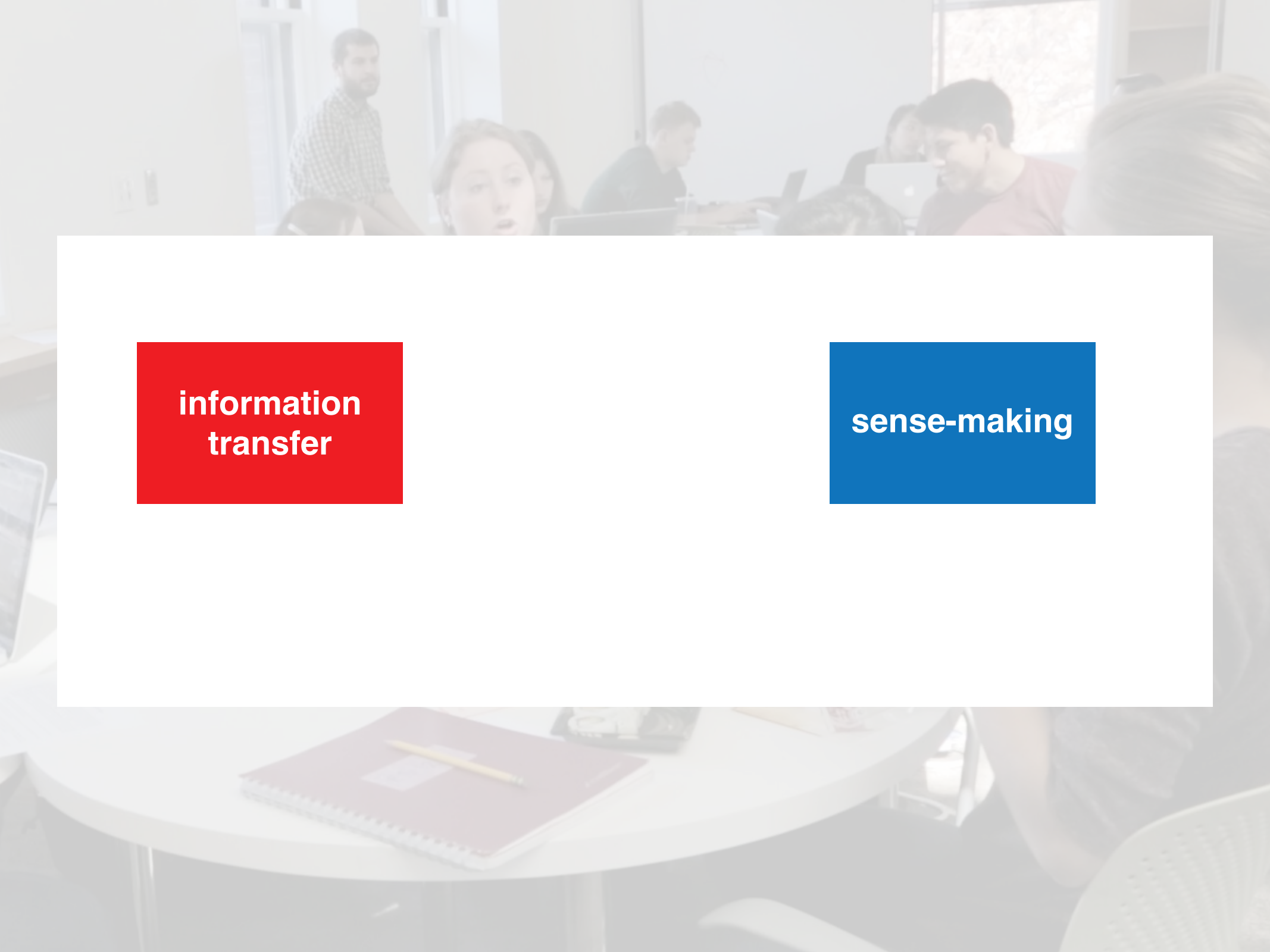
Transform your teaching with Perusall

Vanderbilt University
Webinar
March 12, 2021

Transform your teaching with Perusall

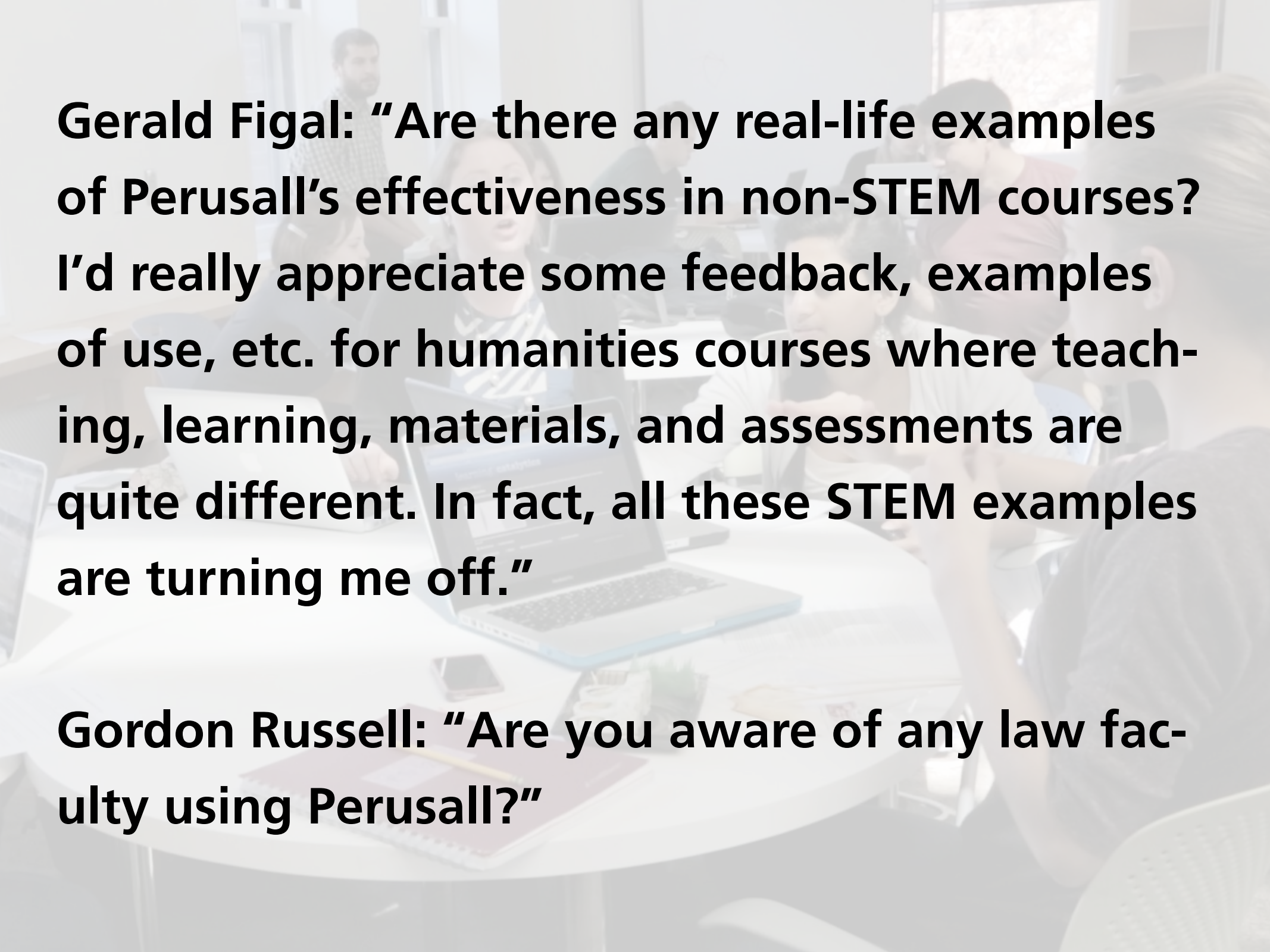
Goal of this session

demonstrate how to integrate Perusall in your teaching approach


information transfer
sense-making

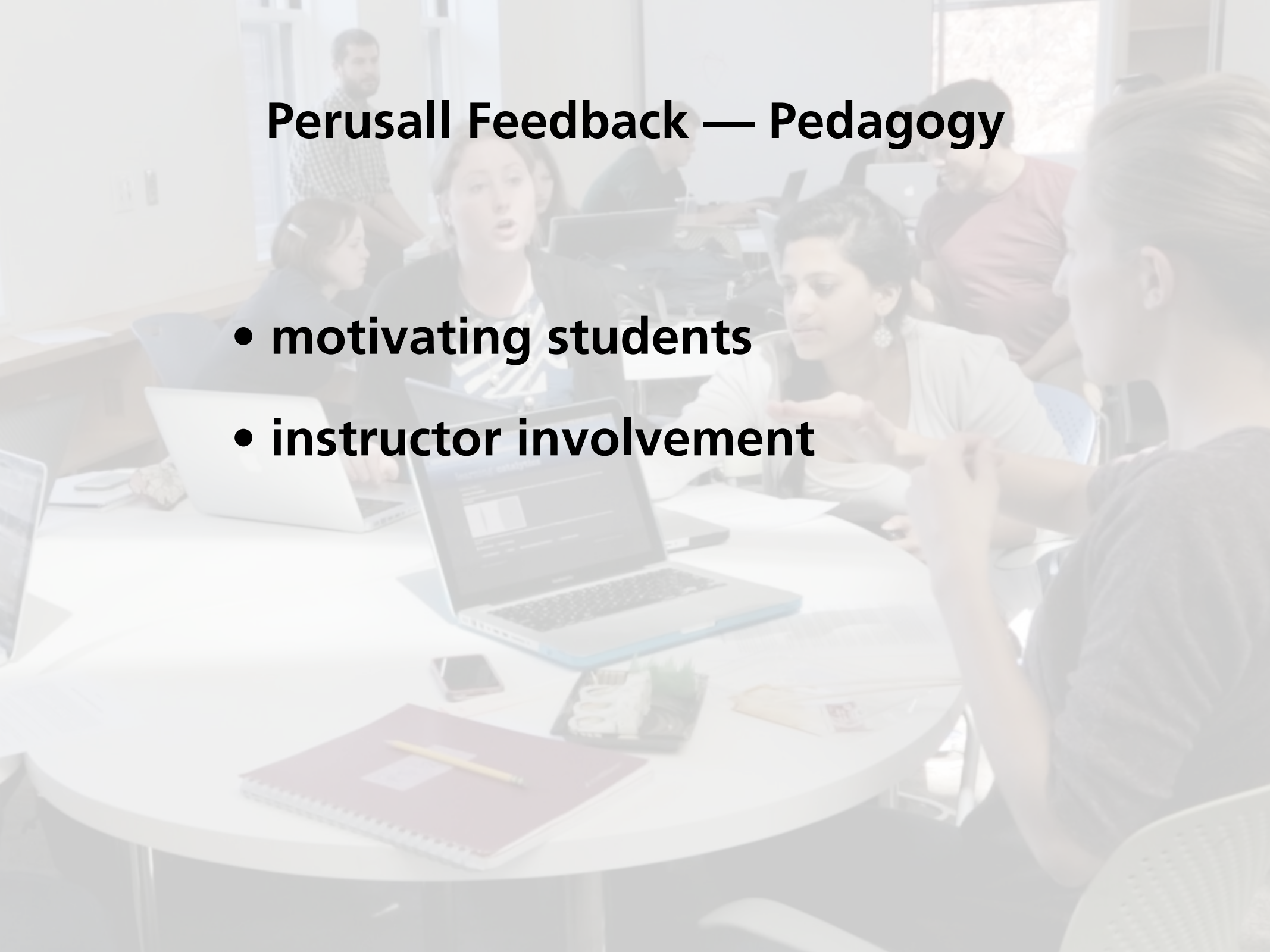
Julaine Fowlin: “Great idea to model and also allow us to use the time together more meaningfully.”

Elyse Petit: “I didn’t know that you can see who is annotating at the same time. This is so cool! It gives a real sense of collaborative/social reading.”



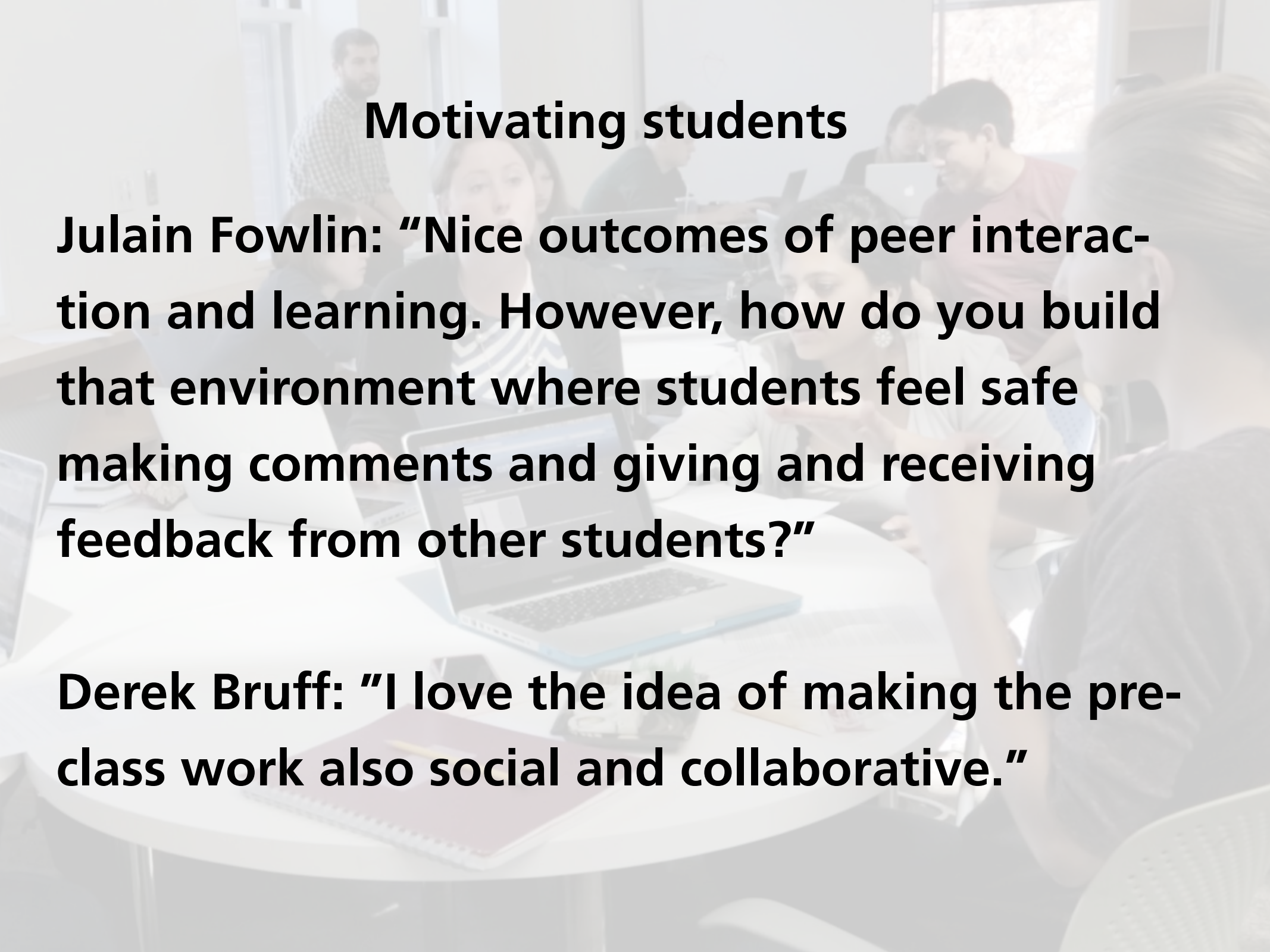
Gerald Figal: “Are there any real-life examples of Perusall’s effectiveness in non-STEM courses? I’d really appreciate some feedback, examples of use, etc. for humanities courses where teaching, learning, materials, and assessments are quite different. In fact, all these STEM examples are turning me off.”

Gordon Russell: “Are you aware of any law faculty using Perusall?”



Perusall Feedback — Pedagogy

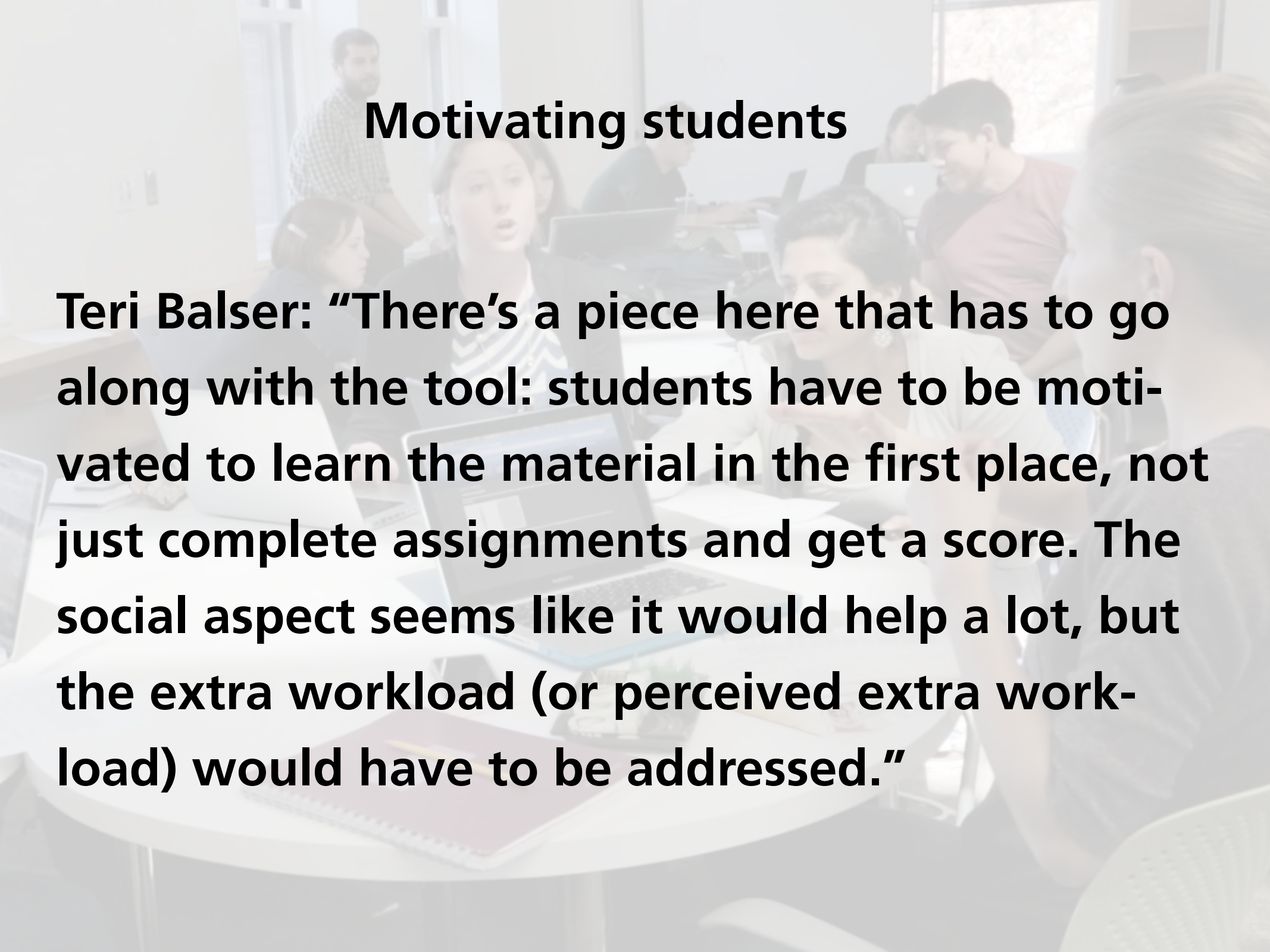
- motivating students
- instructor involvement



Motivating students

Julain Fowlin: “Nice outcomes of peer interaction and learning. However, how do you build that environment where students feel safe making comments and giving and receiving feedback from other students?”

Derek Bruff: ”I love the idea of making the pre-class work also social and collaborative.”



Motivating students

Teri Balser: “There’s a piece here that has to go along with the tool: students have to be motivated to learn the material in the first place, not just complete assignments and get a score. The social aspect seems like it would help a lot, but the extra workload (or perceived extra workload) would have to be addressed.”

Announcements
Syllabus
Modules
Assignments
Slack
Grades
People
Manage Course
Library Reserves
Academic Integrity Policy
Support Resources
Panopto
Collaborations
Outcomes
Rubrics
Files
Pages
Discussions
Quizzes
Settings

Reading Assignment Overview

Because there are no lectures in AP50, you will be using *Perusall* to familiarize yourself interactively with the basic content of the course. You will do so by reading one chapter per week from a textbook that evolved from a set of lecture notes for an introductory physics course. The textbook, *Principles and Practice of Physics* (Eric Mazur, Pearson 2015) is available at no cost in Perusall. If you want a printed copy, you can purchase the book via one of the many online textbook vendors, but this is neither required nor necessary.

The *Perusall* platform permits you to interact asynchronously with other students in the class and help each other build a deeper understanding by annotating and discussing the material within the context of the text you are reading.

If you haven't yet done so, watch this **short introductory video** about *Perusall* before proceeding.

Purpose of the reading assignments

The goal of the reading is to gain sufficient knowledge to be able to participate in subsequent activities in a meaningful way — just as a lecture would (but now you can do it at your own convenience and pace, and you can interact with others). The goal is not to master every little detail — the other activities are designed to reinforce your understanding of the important principles before you begin to apply them in the projects. There is no need to memorize any of the information in the text, as you will always have access to it. Therefore you can focus on understanding, rather than memorizing.

Fostering a community of learners in *Perusall*

Perusall is **your space** and provides a good opportunity to create happenstance encounters and build an online community of learners. The teaching team will **not** participate in the discussions in Perusall, although to help facilitate and bootstrap both the conversation and your critical thinking about the material, we will pre-annotate the chapters in Perusall with a number of questions that students in previous years have asked. The Perusall Curators Program, however, permits some of the most burning lingering questions or points of confusion to be transferred to the #persuall-loose-ends channel on Slack, where everyone, including members of the teaching team, can join in on a conversation.

With this space on Perusall for interacting with others also comes the responsibility of maintaining **professionalism**. It is important to always behave respectfully, even with conflicting view points. While there is no moderation of the annotations on Perusall, **you can anonymously report an annotation** if you deem it to be inappropriate or plagiarized. Click the small 'hazard' triangle underneath the annotation and the annotation will be removed until it is reviewed by the teaching team.

Maximizing your benefit from these assignments

Research on the use of Perusall shows that students who do the following perform better in the course overall:

canvas.harvard.edu

Reading Assignment Overview: APPHY 50B: Physics as a Foundation for Science and Engineering, Part II

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http://bit.ly/perusall_instructions

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Instructor involvement

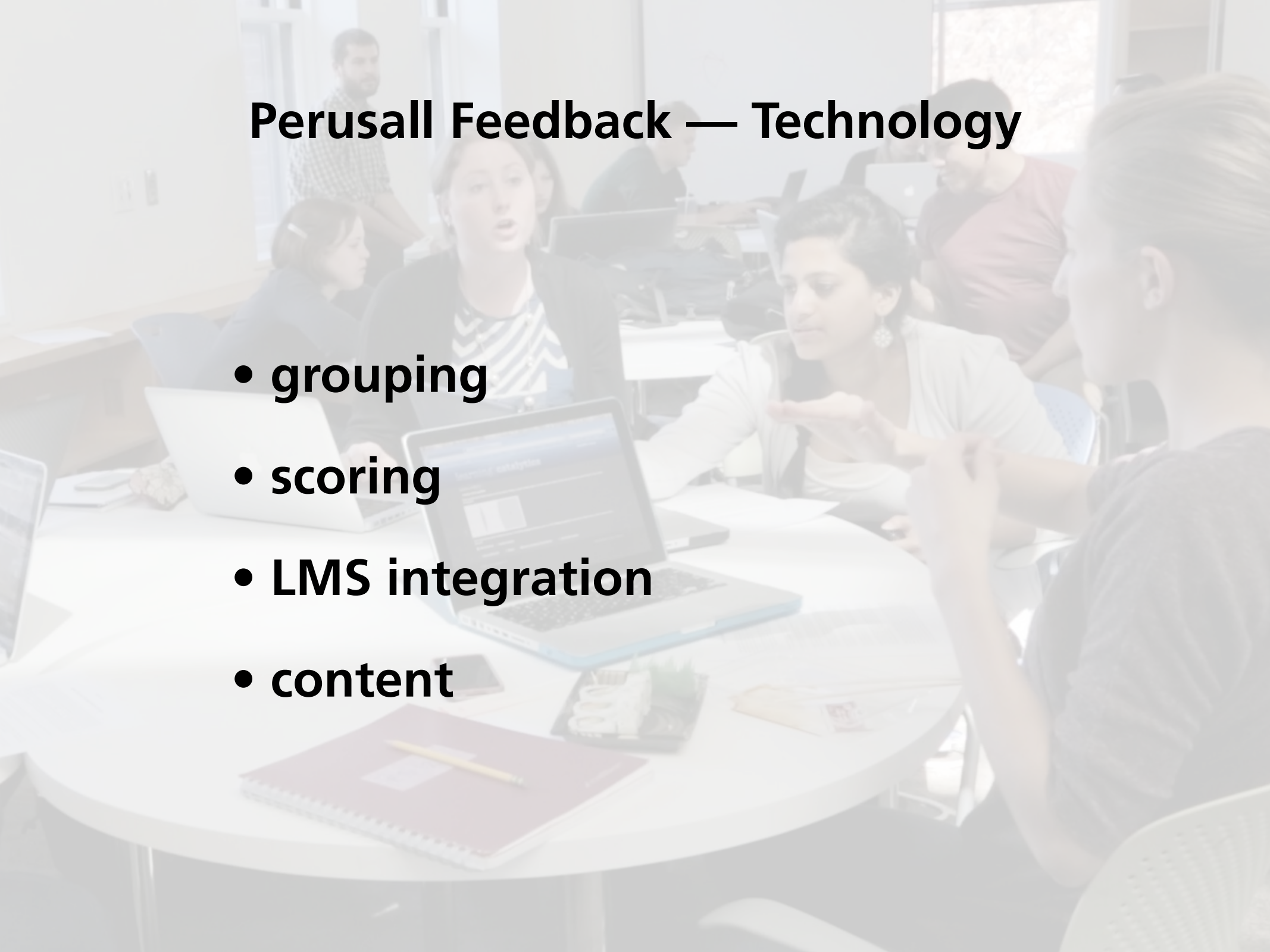
Andrew Finch: “What are strategies for review-ing these comments? 7 comments per reading X 50+ students can take awhile to review [...].”

Julain Fowlin: “What are the ways faculty can meaningful direct/moderate the discourse where necessary without getting overwhelmed if this is used for a large class?”

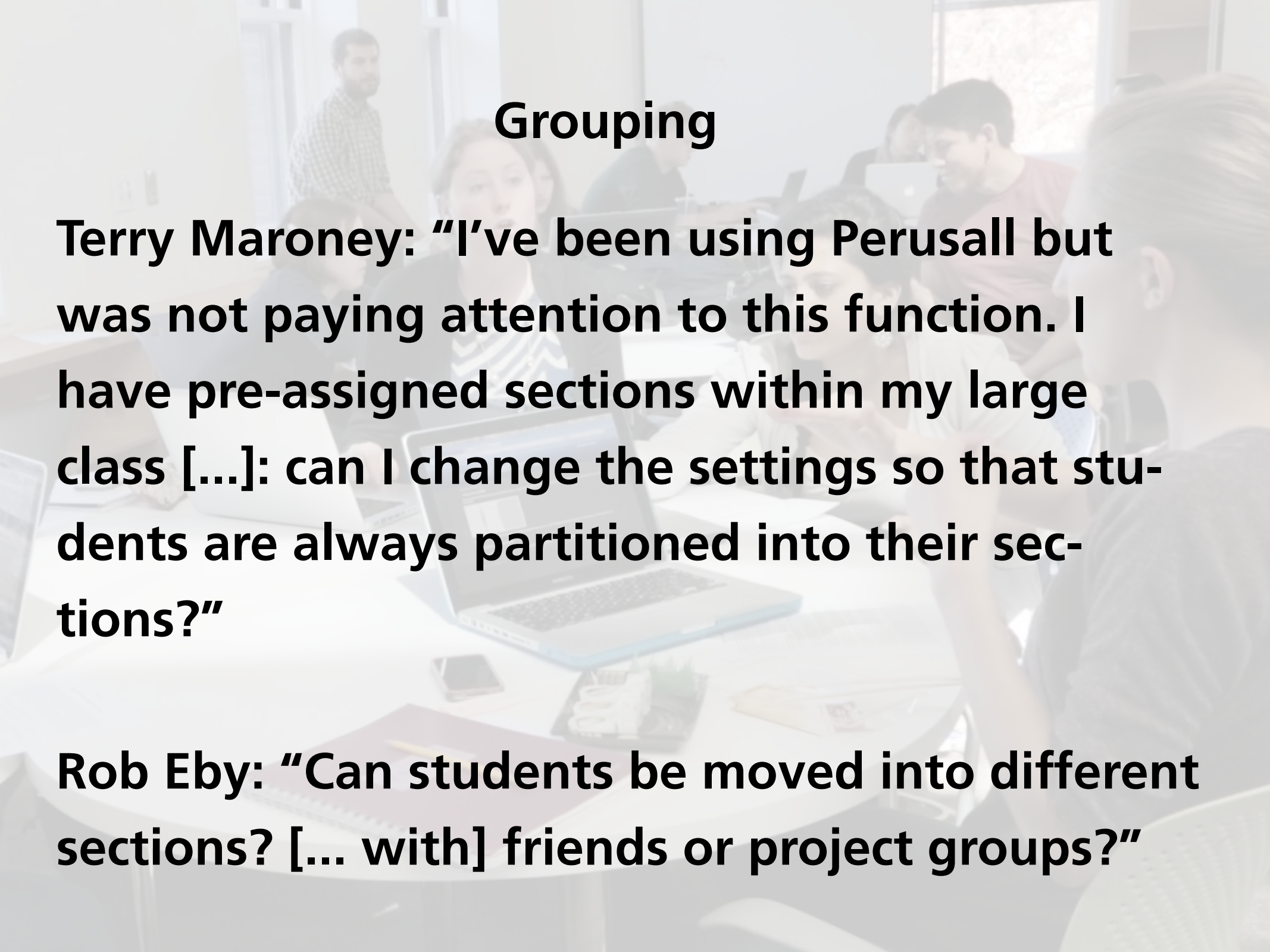
Instructor involvement

How I prepared myself

Perusall Feedback — Technology



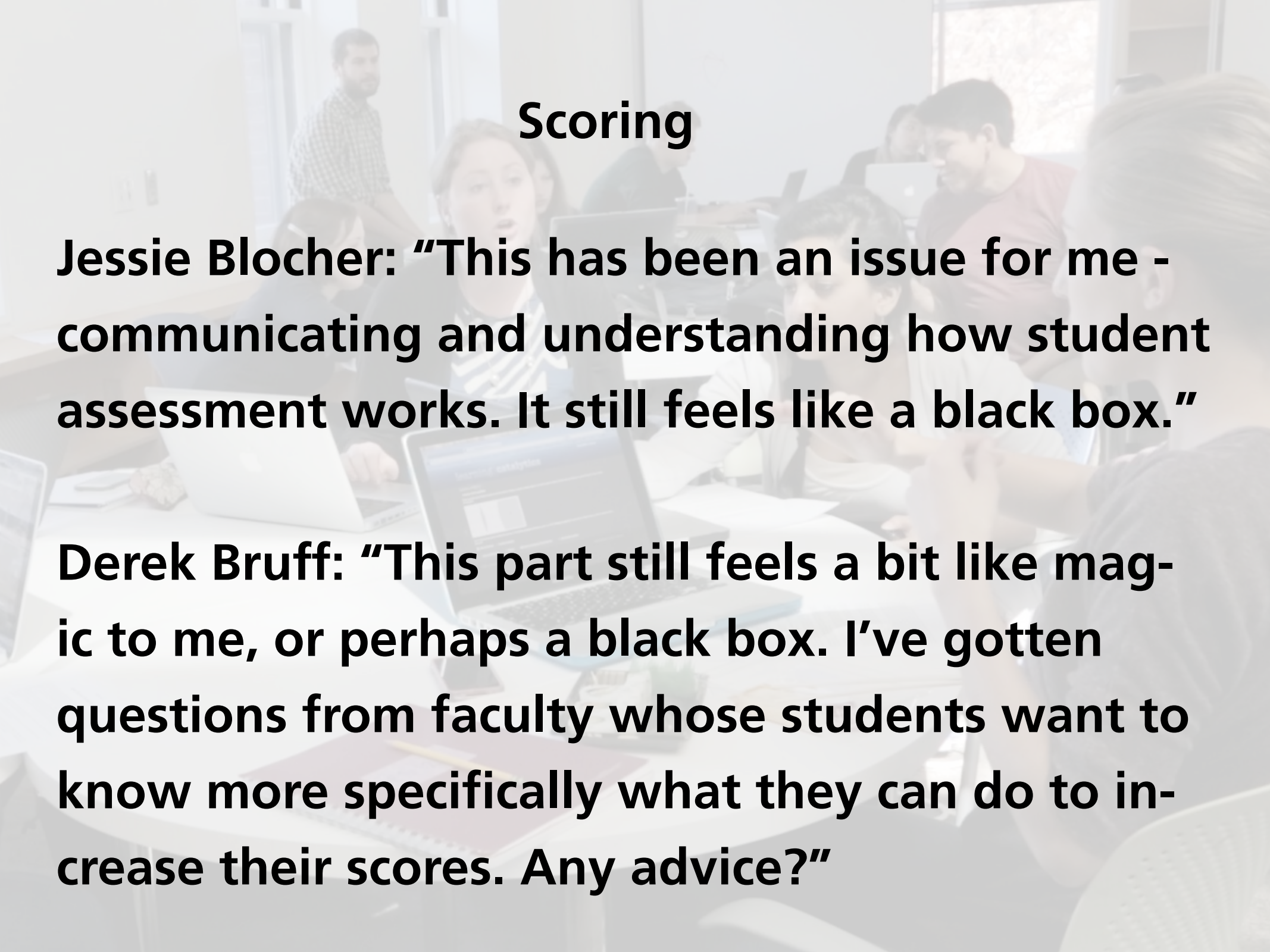
- grouping
- scoring
- LMS integration
- content



Grouping

Terry Maroney: “I’ve been using Perusall but was not paying attention to this function. I have pre-assigned sections within my large class [...]: can I change the settings so that students are always partitioned into their sections?”

Rob Eby: “Can students be moved into different sections? [... with] friends or project groups?”

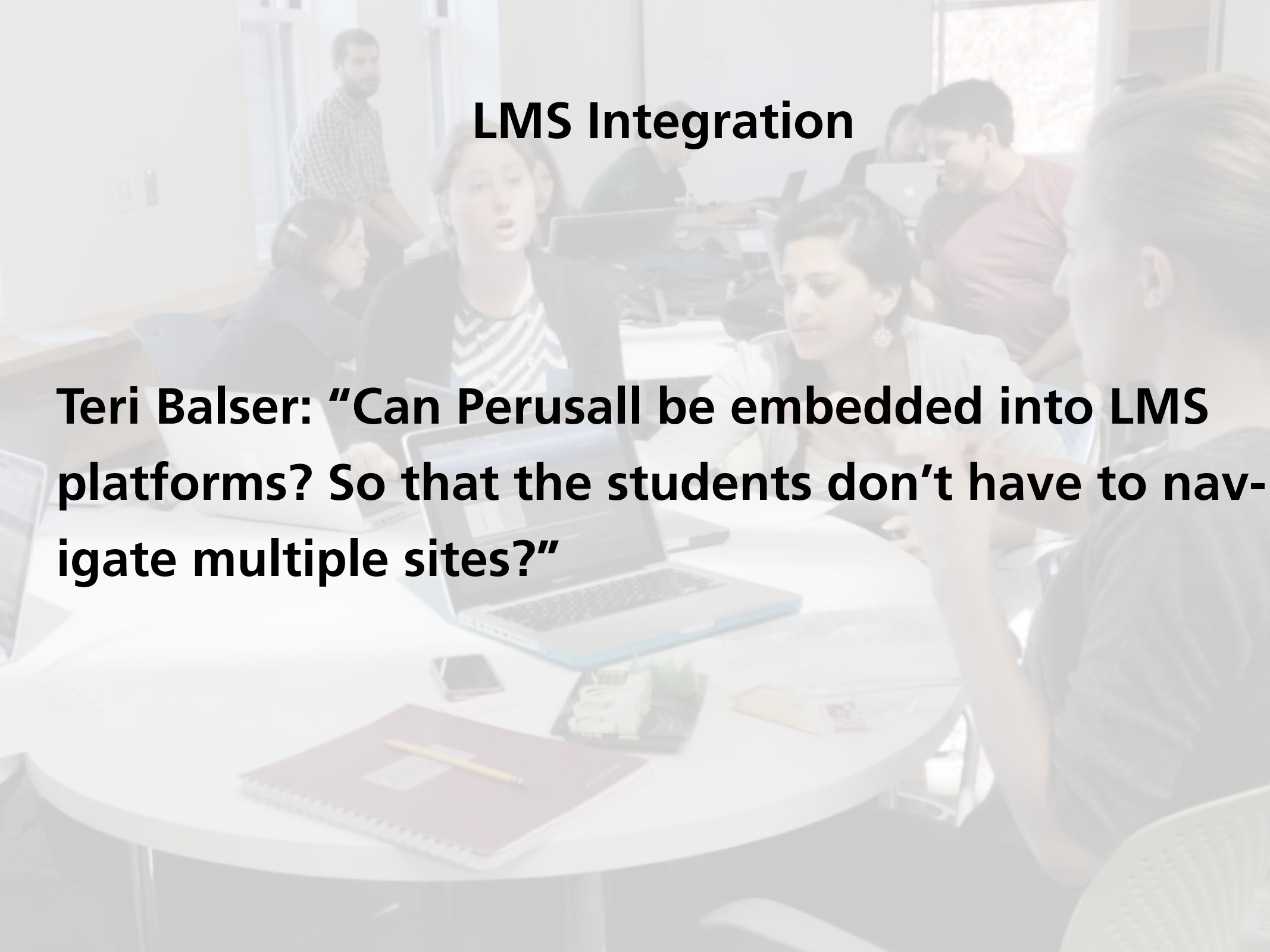


Scoring

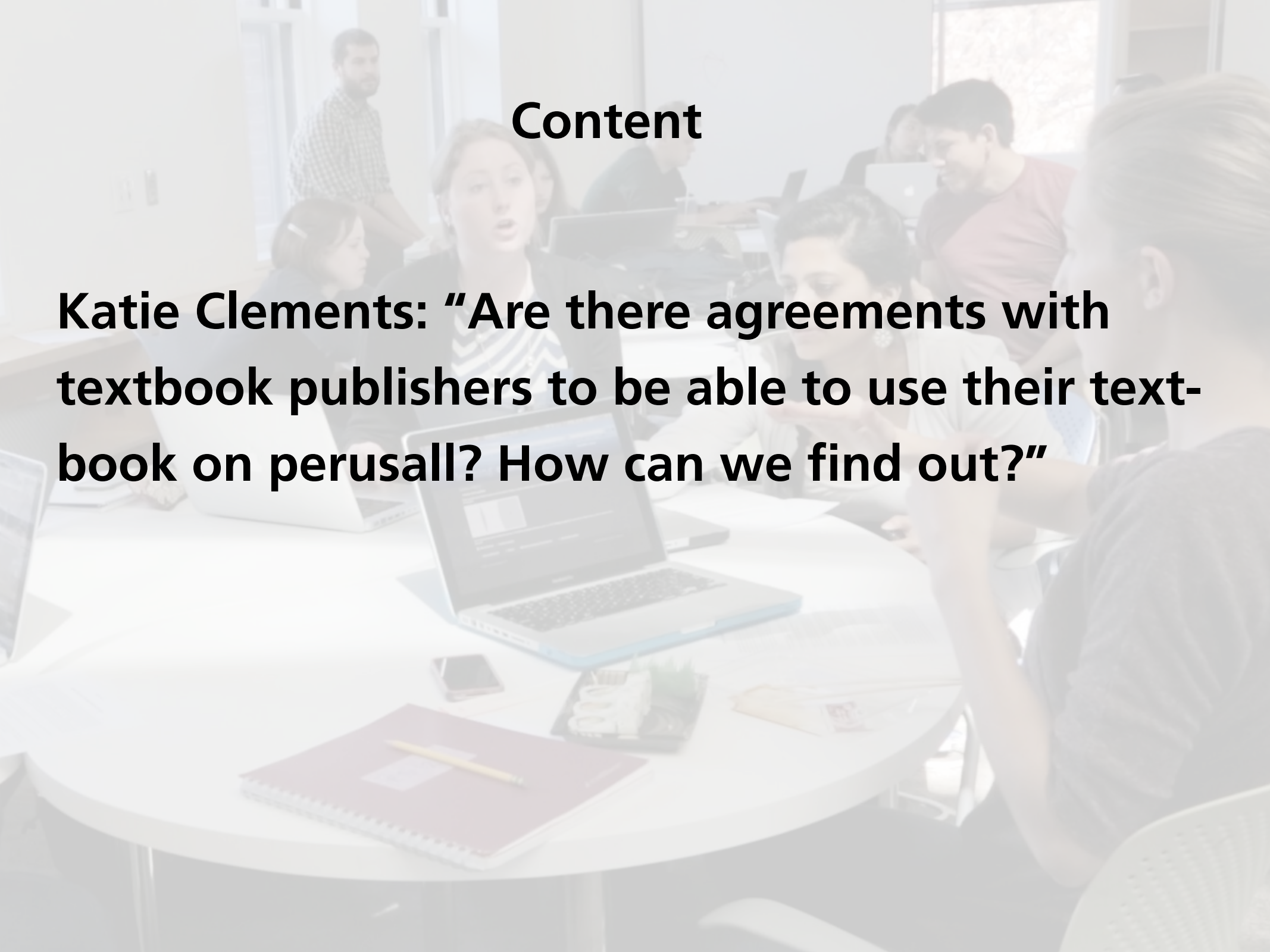
Jessie Blocher: “This has been an issue for me - communicating and understanding how student assessment works. It still feels like a black box.”

Derek Bruff: “This part still feels a bit like magic to me, or perhaps a black box. I’ve gotten questions from faculty whose students want to know more specifically what they can do to increase their scores. Any advice?”

LMS Integration



Teri Balser: “Can Perusall be embedded into LMS platforms? So that the students don’t have to navigate multiple sites?”



Content

Katie Clements: “Are there agreements with textbook publishers to be able to use their text-book on perusall? How can we find out?”

Documents you can use with Perusall

- PDF, Word, html, or ePub files (free)
- video—YouTube, Vimeo, Google Drive, Dropbox (free)
- open access material (free)
- source code with syntax highlighting (free)
- books (purchased by students or institution)

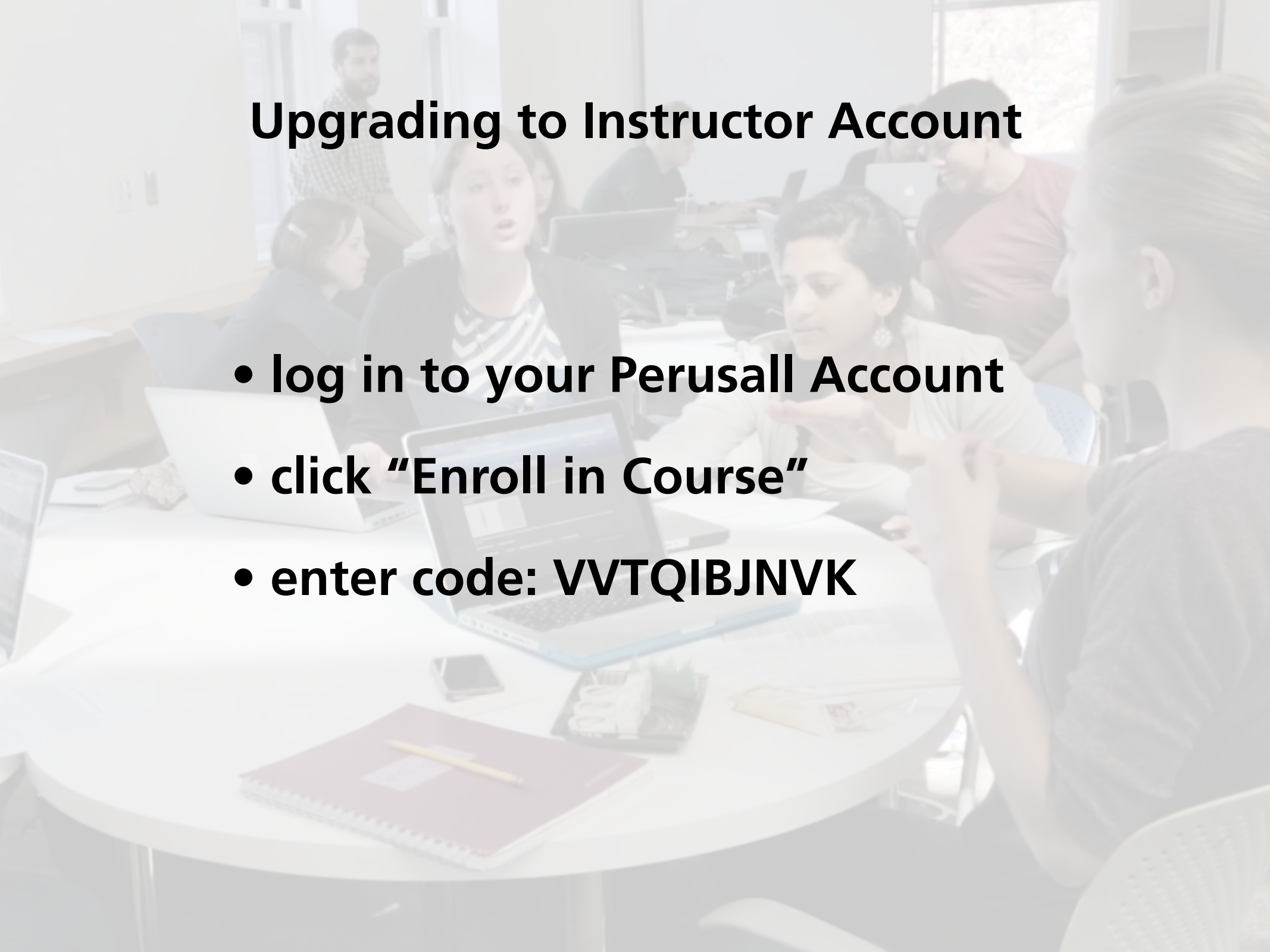
Terry Maroney: “I have found that the innovations required by the pandemic have made such “flipping” easier to implement. I wonder how we can ensure that we move that innovation forward once we go back into the classroom and traditional cultures of teaching and learning once again create expectations and path dependencies. The biggest question I have is the rate at which I should use Perusall. Every class? Every other? Once per module?”

Reflection

- asynchronous preparation
- synchronous time for discussion

Reflection

- asynchronous preparation
- synchronous time for discussion
- dig deeper post-session



Upgrading to Instructor Account

- log in to your Perusall Account
- click “Enroll in Course”
- enter code: VVTQIBJNVK

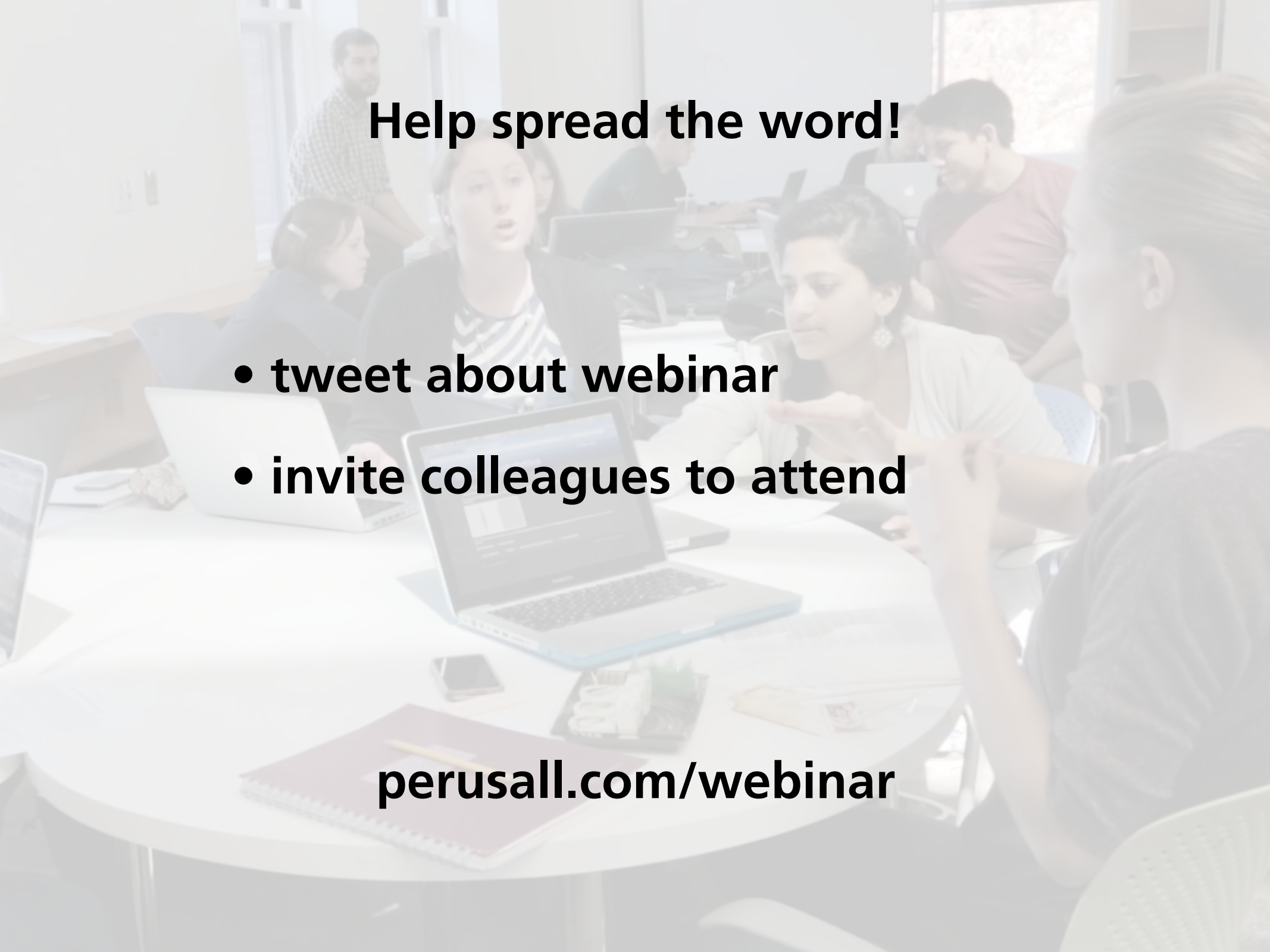
Perusall Exchange 2021

An event for innovators in teaching

May 17-28, 2021

May 17–28

perusall.com/exchange



Help spread the word!

- tweet about webinar
- invite colleagues to attend

perusall.com/webinar

for a copy of this presentation:

mazur.harvard.edu

additional resources in Perusall course

also see bit.ly/fliponline

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