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- + • **EXPLORING HOW THE PERCEPTION OF ONLINE LEARNING HAS CHANGED AMONGST JOURNALISM STUDENTS SINCE THE SHIFT TO ONLINE LEARNING**
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By Kevin Caswell

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# Puzzle

A shutdown of schools and non-essential businesses during the first lockdown precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 forced post-secondary institutions such as Carleton University to cancel face to face classes and shift to an online delivery method. After two years of online learning, my research explores whether the perception of online learning has changed since the first lockdown in March 2020.



# Research Question

My research question reads:

**How has the perception of online learning amongst journalism students changed since the shift to online learning?**

# SIGNIFICANCE



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# Significance

- On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Ontario Premier Doug Ford Declared a state of emergency for Ontario due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.
  - This resulted in the closure of all recreational programs, libraries, private schools, daycares, churches, and other faith settings as well as bars and restaurants.



# Significance

- An email sent out by Carleton University President and Vice Chancellor, Benoit-Antoine Bacon in March 2020, titled *Navigating Through Uncharted Waters*, thoroughly explained that the remainder of the Winter 2020 semester would be completed online.
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# Significance

- Two years later, Carleton University students continue to navigate through uncharted water as they continue to adapt to all the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 virus.



# Significance

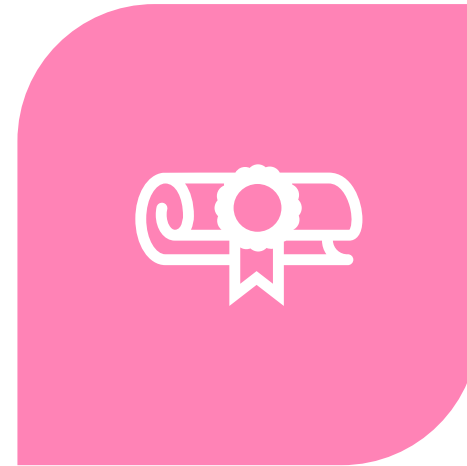
- While there is some research on the usage of online learning as a delivery method in post secondary institutions
    - There is limited research exploring whether the perception of online learning has changed as post-secondary institutions shifted to online delivery methods
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# Research Design



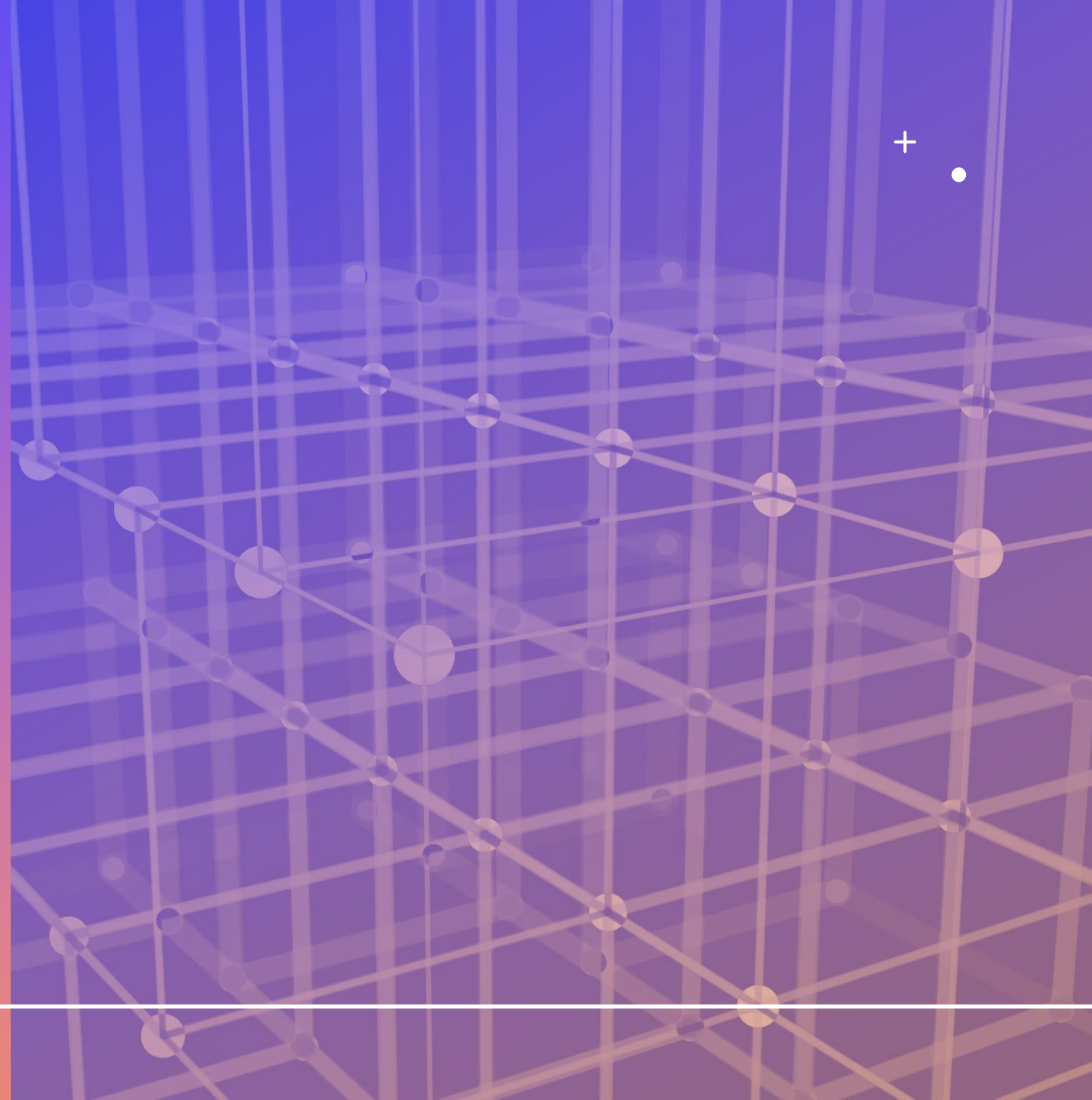
HEAVILY GROUNDED IN SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY, SELF REGULATED LEARNING THEORY, ENGAGEMENT THEORY AND TRANSACTIONAL DISTANCE THEORY



CONSISTED OF 45-TO-60-MINUTE INTERVIEWS OF 3<sup>RD</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> YEAR JOURNALISM STUDENTS CURRENTLY ATTENDING CARLETON UNIVERSITY

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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# Social Cognitive Theory

- The idea that an individual's knowledge acquisition can be directly related to observing others through social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences.



# Self-Regulated Learning Theory

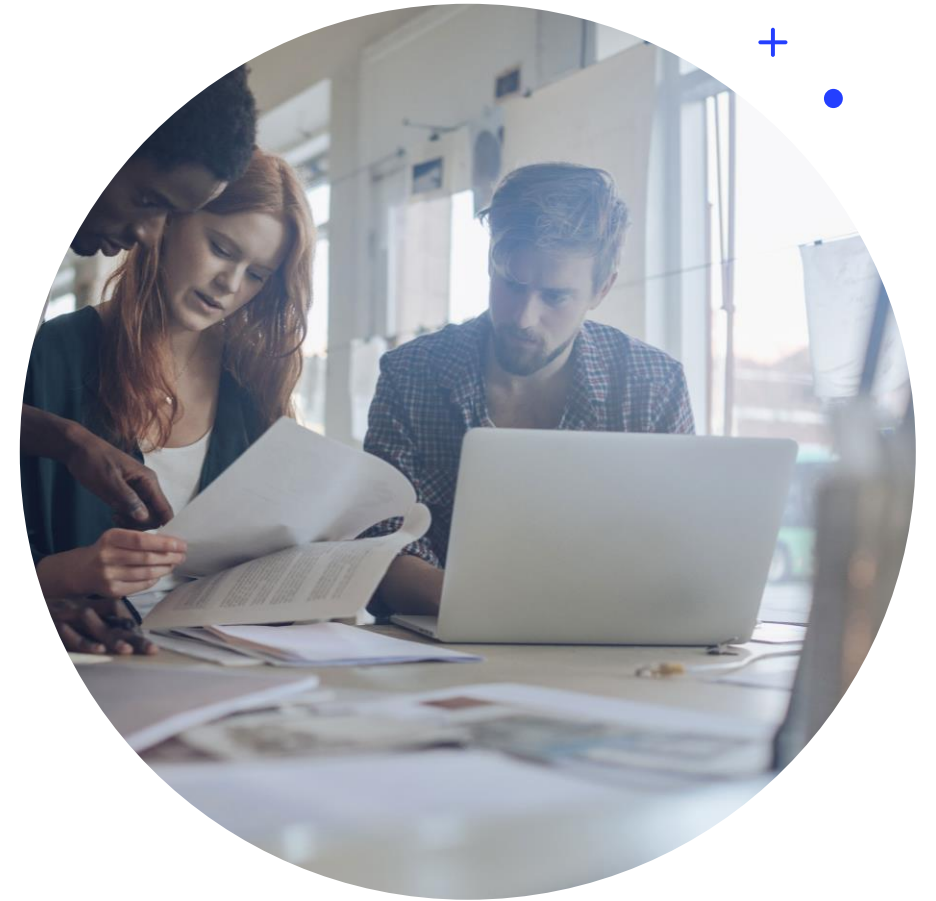


- The self-regulated learning theory shifts the focus away from students learning environment, to their personally initiated processes, and responses designed to improve their ability and environment for learning.

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# Engagement Theory

- The fundamental idea underlying engagement theory is that students must meaningfully engage in learning activities through interaction with others and worthwhile tasks.



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# Transactional Distance Theory

- Argues that teaching and learning in separate locations are better understood not as an aberration from the classroom but as a significantly different pedagogical domain.



# KEY FINDING

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# Flexibility



Enjoy freedom of being able to watch lectures on own time

Do not have to worry about taking time bussing to and from campus



# Time Management



Must adhere to a strict schedule and be able to be good in time management in order to be successful in online courses



More willing to take a morning class online as they do not have to bus to campus



Prefer asynchronous classes, over having to wake up early in the morning for class

# Engagement



Engagement between students hasn't really changed since the shift to online learning



Find it easier to connect with professors and teaching assistants since shift to online learning; no longer need to travel to campus for office hours

# LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH



# Limitations



Struggled with recruitment and due to time restrictions was only able to conduct two interviews



Lack of previous research on the effects of the pandemic on journalism students

# Future Directions for Research



Usage of groups chats as a means of communication during online learning



Zoom fatigue/burnout



How have international journalism students been affected by the shift to online learning?



# Resources

Rodrigues, G. (2020). *Ontario government declares state of emergency amid coronavirus pandemic*. Retrieved from Global News: <https://globalnews.ca/news/6688074/ontario-doug-ford-coronavirus-covid-19-march-17/>

Bacon, B.-A. (2020). *Message from the President: Navigating Uncharted Waters*. Retrieved from Carleton.ca: <https://carleton.ca/president/2020/navigating-uncharted-waters/>