Teaching Case Study: B. Stone

This handout references a postsecondary example of assessment redesign in an AI-enabled context. It illustrates the impact of pairing independent preparation with unavoidable synchronous performance.

Instructor: Dr. Brian Stone, Boise State University
Course Context: Undergraduate psychology (~100 students)

Assignment Redesign

Dr. Stone began to see a pattern that differed from prior years. As part of his cognitive psychology course, Dr. Brian Stone assigns students to read Daniel Kahneman's (2011) book, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*.

> *"I used to assign students a big paper after they read the book, but in 2023, I started getting inundated with AI summaries of the book."*
>
> Brian Stone, 2025

Dr. Stone changes the assignment, attempting to preserve the original learning objectives while reducing assessment vulnerability. Instead of writing a paper, students are required to take turns leading synchronous discussions with their peers.

- **Original task:** Analytical paper on a scholarly book
- **Revised task:** Synchronous book-club discussion with structured preparation and reflection

Curated Blog Excerpts

These are selective, lightly blended quotations taken from Dr. Stone's published teaching case on the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (a division of the American Psychological Association) and his personal teaching blog.

On the problem:

> As more recent LLMs gained the ability to scan the actual book PDF and not just regurgitate public internet reviews, it became very difficult to distinguish a student's ideas about the book from an LLM's (LLM = large language model).

On preparation and accountability:

> In both versions of the assignment, students must reference specific details from the book to make their points, draw connections to their own lives, and discuss their takeaways.
>
> They submit their prep work (notes on each chapter and more extensive preparation for the chapters they lead), along with a post-discussion reflection touching on what came up, and where and why they changed their mind.

On AI-resilience:

Crucially, it seems harder for students to do well if they haven't done the work (i.e., read the book and given it some thought) because the nature of live critical discussion requires students to respond in the moment to arguments and connections raised by their peers.

It was clear when someone had done the reading themselves and could pull examples or make connections on the fly, versus reading from a prepared, AI-sounding script.

On student feedback:

For the most part, students seemed to respond positively when their ability to use AI was taken away. Many students reported being frustrated with their own self-control and inability to avoid using AI when it's available.

Book Club Files

The instructor shared the assignment instructions and grading rubric directly with the presenter via email correspondence.[1]

According to his explanation, the rubric was adapted by replacing written communication outcomes with oral and group communication outcomes, while maintaining the same standards for content mastery, application, and critical thinking.

> *"This assignment is certainly not identical to writing a paper about a scholarly book, but for me it has served to retain many of the same learning objectives (around critical reading, communicating, making connections to course concepts)."*
>
> Brian Stone, 2025

Note: As a case study alternative to writing papers, this approach is not recommended when writing itself is the construct being assessed.

Links to Full Teaching Case

- https://thecognitivepsychologist.substack.com/i/167745137/my-book-club-assignment
- https://teachpsych.org/E-xcellence-in-Teaching-Blog/13504139
- https://www.brianwstone.com/2025/07/07/how-college-professors-are-adapting-to-rampant-ai-cheating/

[1] Materials shared with permission.