

# Use of Convergent Media in Agricultural Policy Extension Programming: An Application in 2018 Farm Bill Programming

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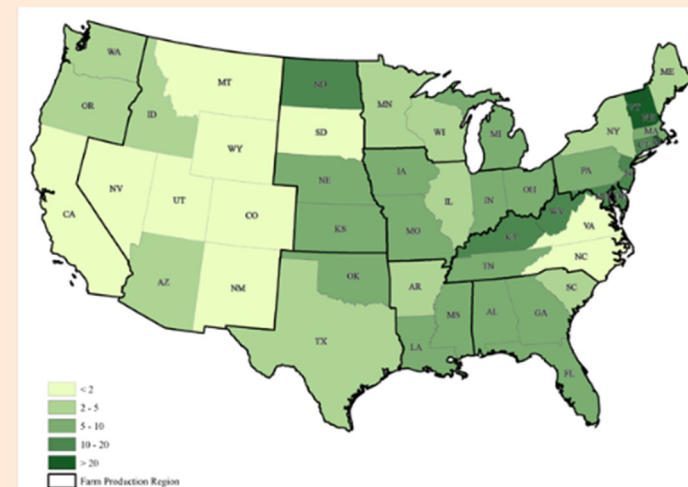
## The Challenge of Farm Bill Extension Education

- The number of FTEs associated with Extension are shrinking, and few focus primarily on Ag Policy
- Programming on Ag Policies and how they affect producers remains in demand
- If Extension doesn't provide that information for our states, where will it come from?

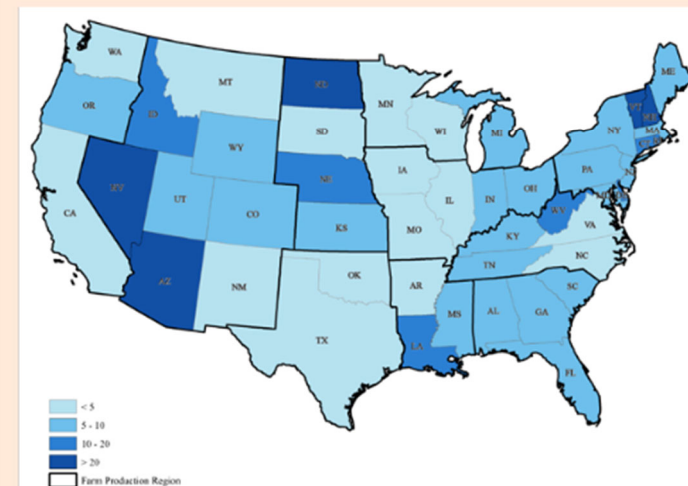


Figure 4: Extension Capacity Varies Across States and Regions

Panel A: Extension FTEs per Thousand Square Land Miles (2010)



Panel B: Extension FTEs per Thousand Farms (2010)

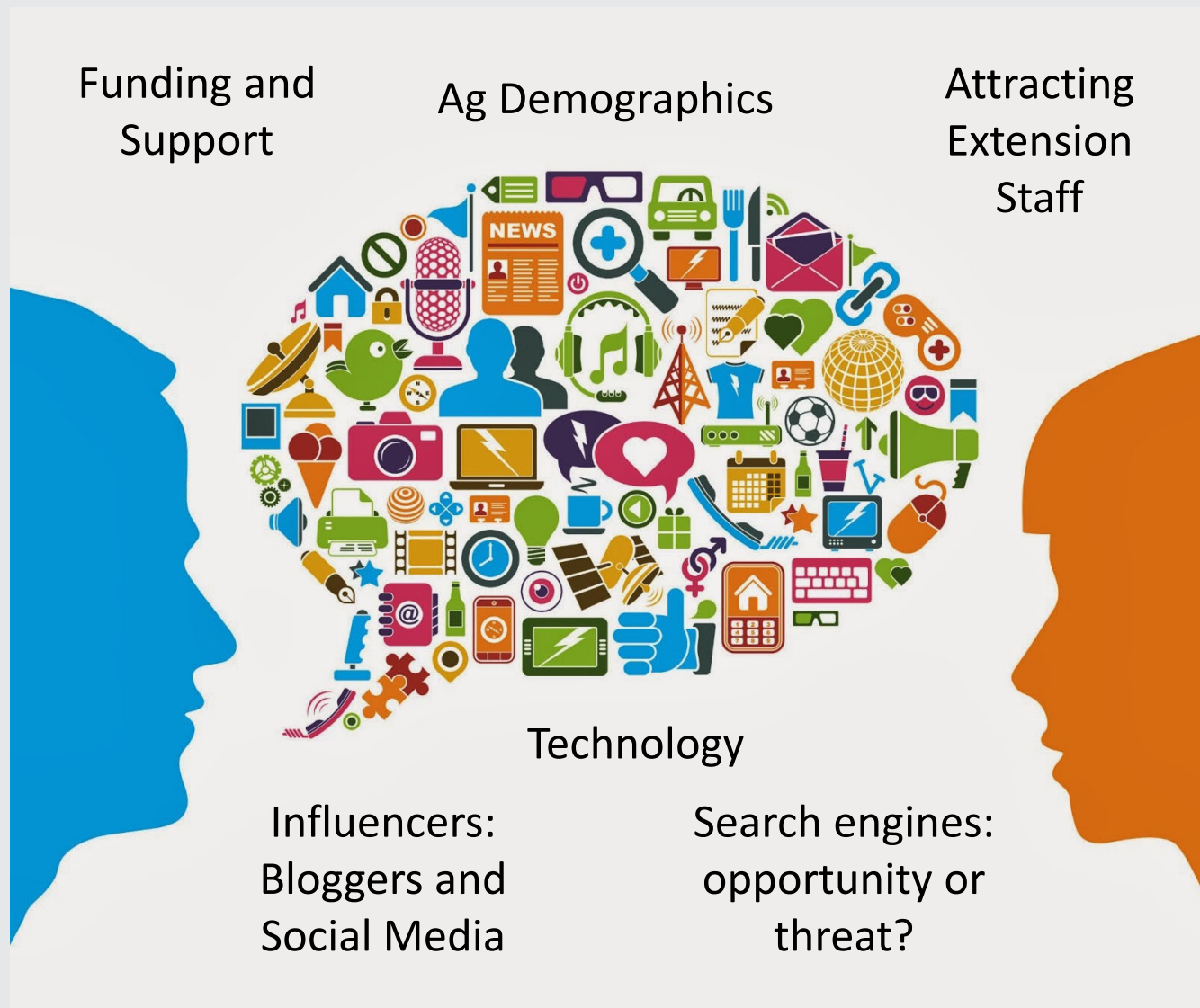


Graphic Source: Wang, S.L. 2014. "Cooperative Extension System: Trends and Economic Impacts on US Agriculture." *Choices* 29(1).

## The Case for Farm Bill Programming

- OSU Extension is currently:
  - In the midst of a budget related restructure
  - Reimagining the website interface
  - Assessing how Extension information is being accessed and by whom
- OSU Ag Policy
  - A demand for face-to-face Farm Bill education still exists...BUT it isn't the main event in a program right now
  - Virtual outlets are a good way to start in-depth conversations
  - Youth are passionate Ag advocates, and they need unbiased, science-based information





# What is convergent media?

- The tendency of media – computing, communication, content and consumption – to become more similar with time.



# The case for convergent media in Extension

- Extension clients need to access timely and factual information, but they are overwhelmed with content.
- Extension programming needs to cut through noise to efficiently meet audiences' needs and hold their interest.

**Today's multiplatform media environment often rewards innovative delivery above all else.**

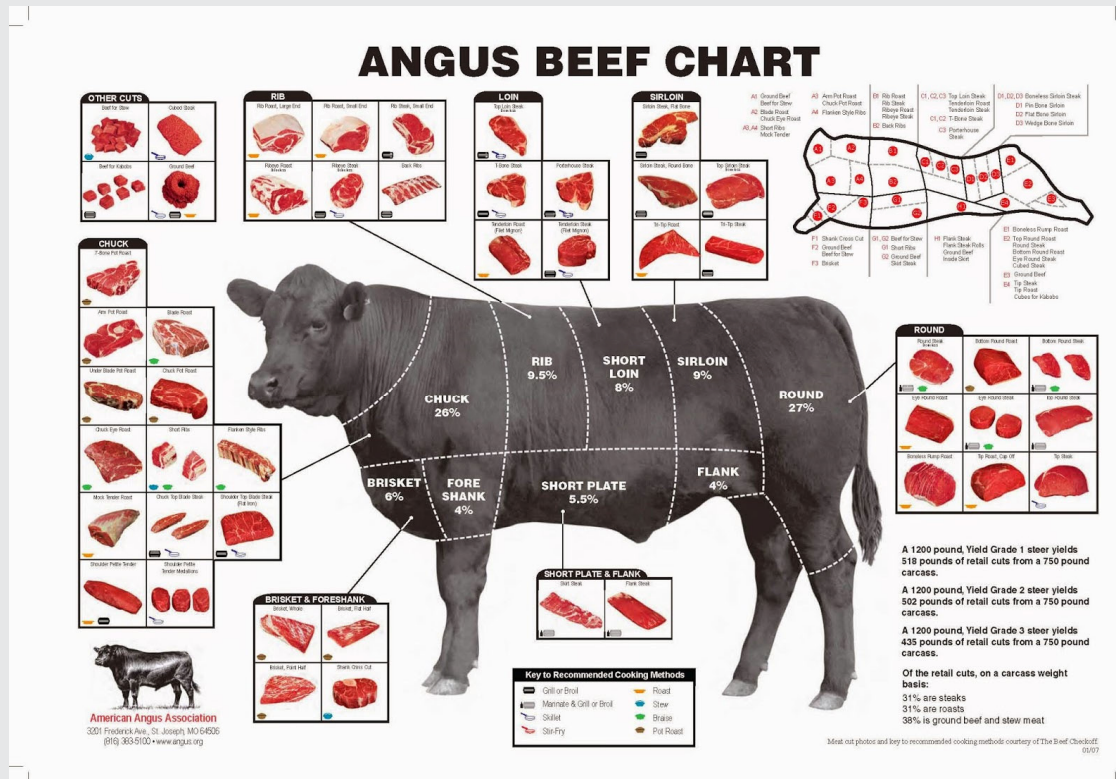


**CONVERGENT MEDIA STRATEGIES AND TACTICS  
CAN HELP EXTENSION BETTER FIT THIS MOLD**





## Value Added Media?



Economists are comfortable talking about profit maximization, differential products, and value added.

Can we apply these concepts to communications?

# Our approach

- A team of agricultural communications students (as part of a capstone integrated marketing class in agricultural communications) worked under our supervision to develop a convergent media plan for Ag Policy Extension at OSU.





# Their process

Tasked with strategic communication planning for OSU Ag Policy Extension, including:

- Background and Situational Analysis
- Goal and Objectives
- Key publics and Messages
- Strategies and Tactics



# The a-ha moment

**Initial idea was to plan marketing tactics that use convergent media more effectively to get ag policy information to more people**

**But it became apparent that there was a demand gap, and we had a unique opportunity to fill that gap in a way that utilizes innovative delivery**



# What the plan will do

## Goal

Develop ag policy education resources for youth to increase policy competency.

## Objectives

1. Develop and engage interactive agricultural policy education with 50 agricultural youth.
2. Implement Oklahoma Ag Policy Extension curriculum within 25 4-H programs.
3. Implement the use of Ag Policy Extension curriculum at 30 events and in classrooms.



# Who the plan targets

1. Youth ages 14-18 enrolled in 4-H or Agricultural Education.
2. Oklahoma Extension Educators.
3. Extension volunteers and Oklahoma agricultural education instructors.



# Tactics for Youth

- Develop ag policy curriculum specific to youth
  - Workshops/class sessions AND course units
- Create interactive educational materials using convergent media
  - Lessons and units for both face-to-face and online instruction



# Tactics for Extension Educators

- Provide materials as a *complete* plug-and-play curriculum packet
  - Based on ongoing research about educator preferences for curriculum delivery to educators

*Marketing plan to encourage Extension Educators to adopt the curriculum are forthcoming (focusing on developing materials first).*





# Tactics for Extension Volunteers and Agricultural Educators

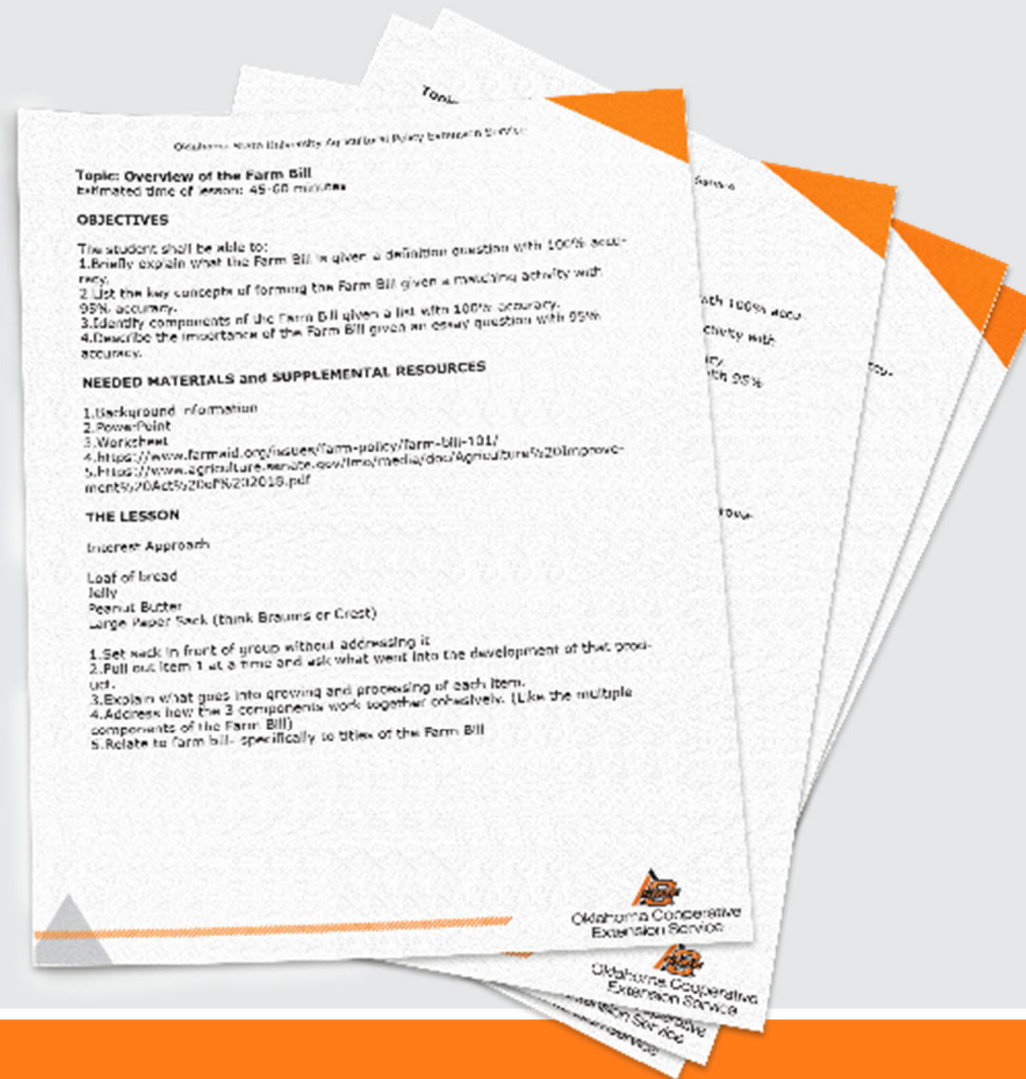
- Pilot the curriculum with the Fall 2019 ag ed student teaching cohort (n=14); Test with Spring 2020 (n=31)
  - *We have separate evaluation plan to help improve the curriculum*
- Provide materials as a *complete* plug-and-play curriculum packet

*Marketing plan to encourage Extension Volunteers and Agricultural Educators to adopt the curriculum are forthcoming (focusing on developing materials first).*



# What they developed in Spring 2019

- Lesson plan



# What they developed in Spring 2019

- Instructional PowerPoint

AG POLICY EXTENSION

## OVERVIEW OF THE FARM BILL

### Objectives

What is the Farm Bill?  
How is the Farm Bill formed?  
What are the titles of the Farm Bill?  
Why is this important to me?

### What is the Farm Bill?

The Farm Bill is an omnibus, multi-year law that governs an array of agricultural and food programs.

**VOCAB:** omnibus "for all" an omnibus bill contains several different laws and amendments within it

### Formation of the Farm Bill

WHERE DID IT START? WHERE IS IT GOING?

**1993: THE FIRST FARM BILL IS DRAFTED**  
In the wake of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, to address the needs of America's farmers at a time when hunger and poverty were widespread in the country.

**ROUGHLY EVERY FIVE YEARS**  
the federal government reviews the food and farm landscape and renews an enormous omnibus bill, which we call the Farm Bill.

## THE ROAD TO A NEW FARM BILL

**STEP 1**  
Both House and Senate Agricultural Committees work on their versions of the bill.

**STEP 2**  
These bills must then be "scored" by the Congressional Budget Office with a cost estimate before they can reach the floor for a vote.

**STEP 3**  
Each chamber of Congress votes on their version

Overview of the Farm Bill

## THE LONG ROAD CONTINUES

**STEP 4**  
House and Senate collaborate to finalize one consolidated bill to send to the President.

**STEP 5**  
once passed, the U.S. Department of Agriculture enters the implementation phase where it begins interpreting the law and putting it into action.

Overview of the Farm Bill

## Titles of the Farm Bill

The latest Farm Bill is the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018.

Overview of the Farm Bill

## TITLES OF THE FARM BILL

|                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ <b>TITLE 1</b><br>Commodities  | ■ <b>TITLE 4</b><br>Nutrition         |
| ■ <b>TITLE 2</b><br>Conservation | ■ <b>TITLE 5</b><br>Credit            |
| ■ <b>TITLE 3</b><br>Trade        | ■ <b>TITLE 6</b><br>Rural Development |



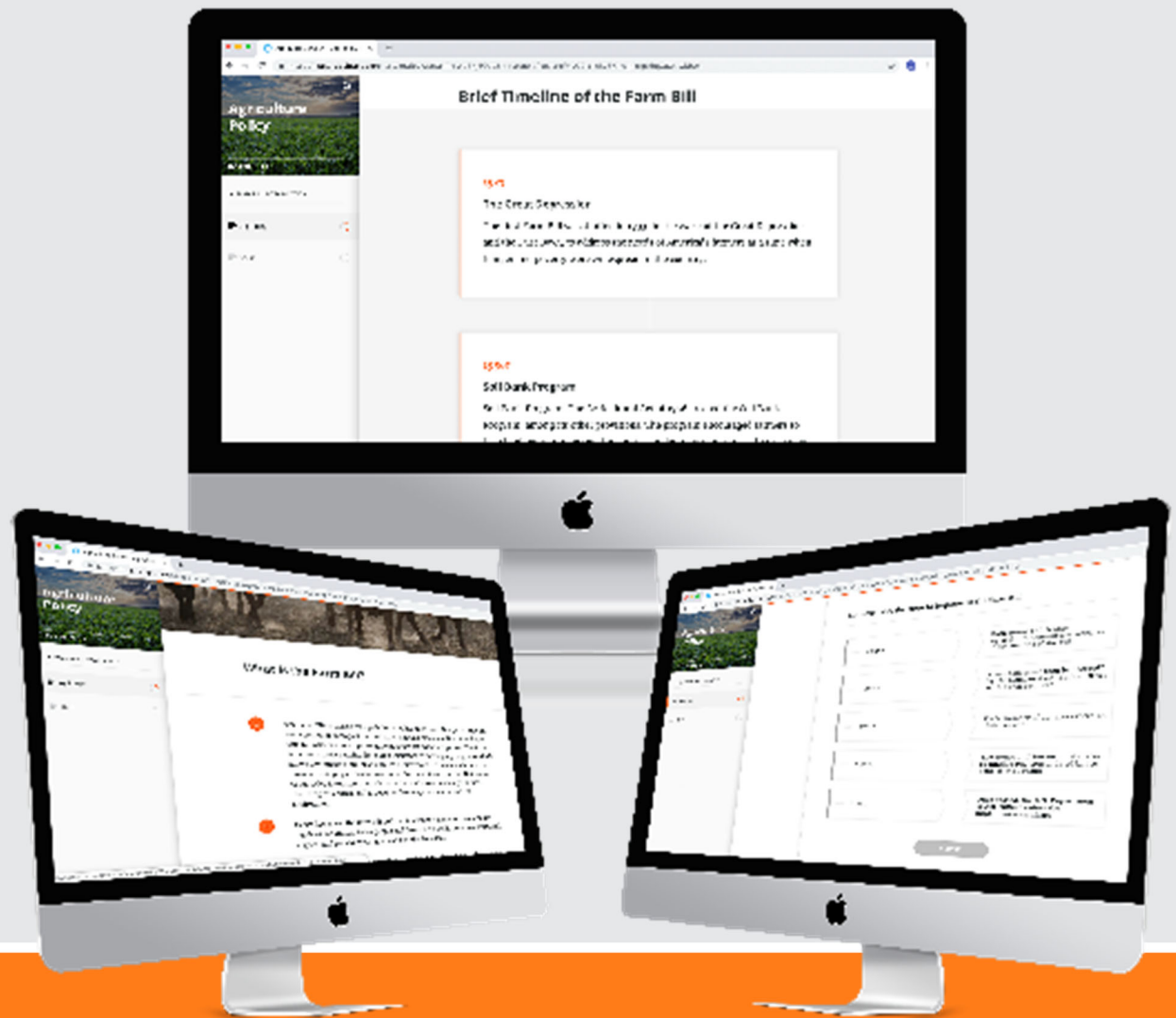
# What they developed in Spring 2019

- Worksheets



# What they developed in Spring 2019

- Online lesson



# Lessons Learned

- Remain flexible. This is a learning process.
- Convergent media portion of this isn't as robust at this point as planned.
- Don't be afraid to think outside the box.





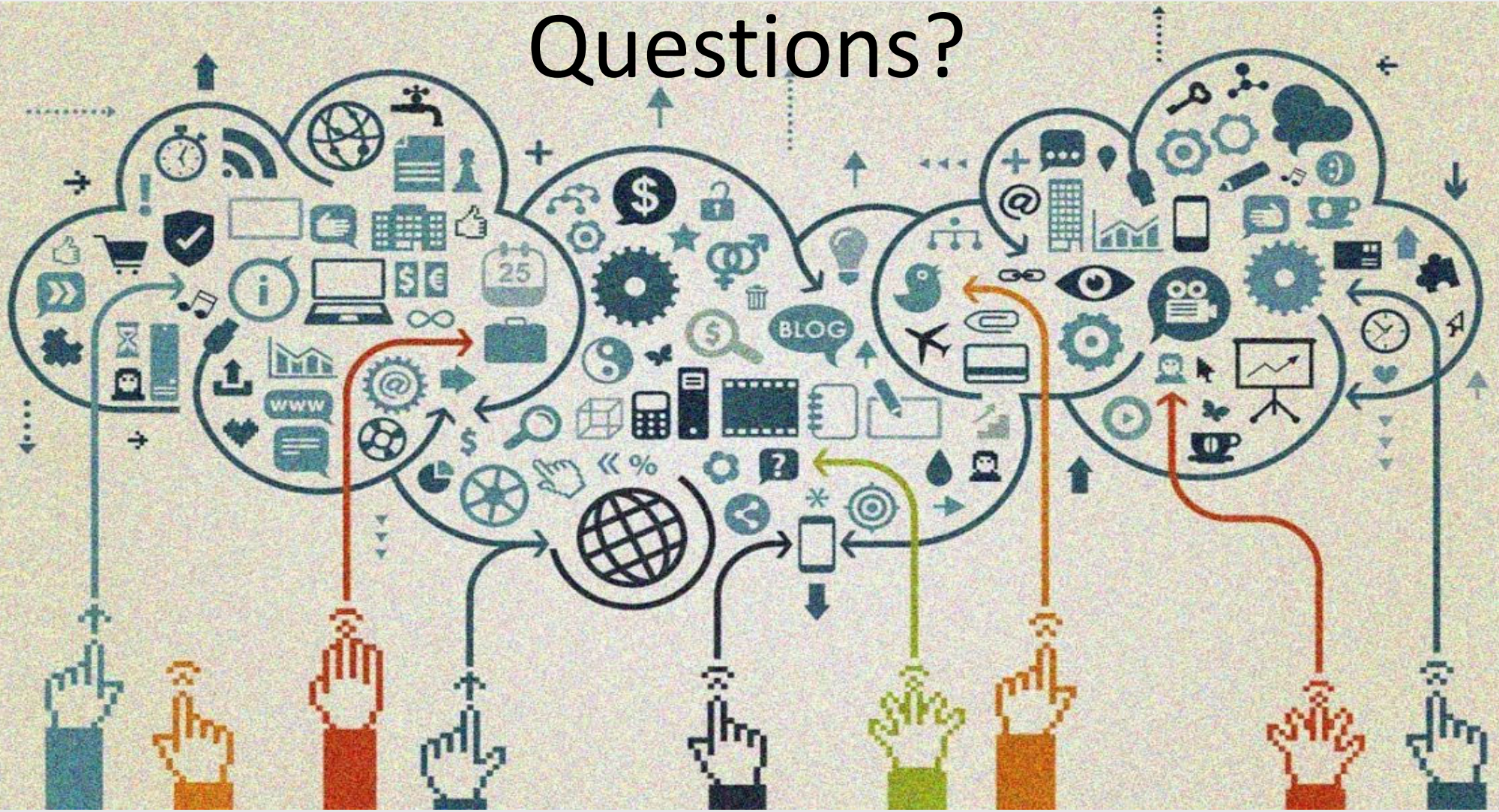
# Next steps

- We've hired two of the students to develop an entire class unit (8-10 lessons) to pilot in Fall 2019.





# Questions?



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