



Classroom Management in the Digital Era (Part 2): Varying Your Approach for Better Management

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About Profweb

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[The Featured Reports](#) published by Profweb allow us to share reflections on a particular theme or expertise developed within college teaching and learning, usually with an aspect that involves integrating technology. The reports aim to provide teachers with some potential options that will permit them to more easily integrate the use of technology into their practice, consequently contributing to their own professional development within this area.

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What should teachers do with smartphones, tablets and computers in their class? Is it more sensible to ban them, manage their use or integrate them into learning activities?

For many teachers, the omnipresence of mobile devices raises questions about how to react when faced with potential distractions. Regardless of your level of experience in teaching, it can be interesting to explore different strategies.

This featured report on **Classroom Management in the Digital Era** is divided into **3 parts**. Each one corresponds to a step in the support process that Jean-Luc has developed as a pedagogical counsellor. Upon reading the different parts, you will be able to:

- [Set limits for the use of mobile devices by students, while respecting your values and maintaining the desired atmosphere in the classroom \(Part 1\).](#)
- Determine your approach to classroom management and identify corresponding tools and teaching strategies (Part 2)
- Discover strategies for engaging student learning (Part 3: Translation slated for Winter 2018 semester - [see French version](#))

This **2nd part** of the featured report will allow you to explore **different classroom management approaches** with regards to the use of mobile devices. These approaches can be **customized** according to the teaching context. Strategies to facilitate their implementation are proposed along with a selection of resources created by the college network and useful digital tools.

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Objectives

By the end of this 2nd part, you should be able to:

- Explore the classroom management approaches that are best adapted to your teaching context
- Identify the strategies to put in place in your classroom and the digital tools that are most likely to support your approach

Overview

Classroom management can be viewed as a homogenous concept where you have to operate according to rules that are established, applied, sanctioned or standardized within internal policies or regulations. You will also come into contact with students who have diverse needs, who use different learning strategies, and who may need to use digital tools. What are the choices available to you to manage a college-level class within this context?

The good news is that you have a variety of valid options. You are undoubtedly already using many classroom management approaches. The choice of these options can be influenced by different factors, such as:

- Your **value system**
- Your **ideas on teaching and learning**
- Your **stance on pedagogy**
- Your **personality**

Classroom Management: A Matter of “Profile” ?

In 2001, Roch Chouinard, a professor from the Faculty of education at the Université de Montréal published an article in which he presented a typology of [different classroom management profiles](#) [in French] that built on the work of Weber (1986). This typology helps teachers to define their educational practice and adopt a stance that is coherent with their pedagogical objectives.

Despite its relevance for reflecting on classroom management practices, Chouinard’s article has 2 limitations with regards to the approach that is proposed in this featured report:

- It was published prior to the arrival of mobile devices in our classrooms.
- It is geared towards readers that teach in elementary and secondary schools.

We wanted to align this model to the current digital and pedagogical context, while adapting it to the reality of the colleges. Rather than speaking of profiles, we propose that we explore different **classroom management approaches** with regards to the use of technology by the students. The objective is not to determine which is the best approach, but to present different possibilities in order to encourage the adoption of **diversified practices**. These approaches are inspired by the models of Weber and Chouinard, but they are contextualized and concretely supported by **digital resources** and **strategies** within the “In Educational Practice” section below.

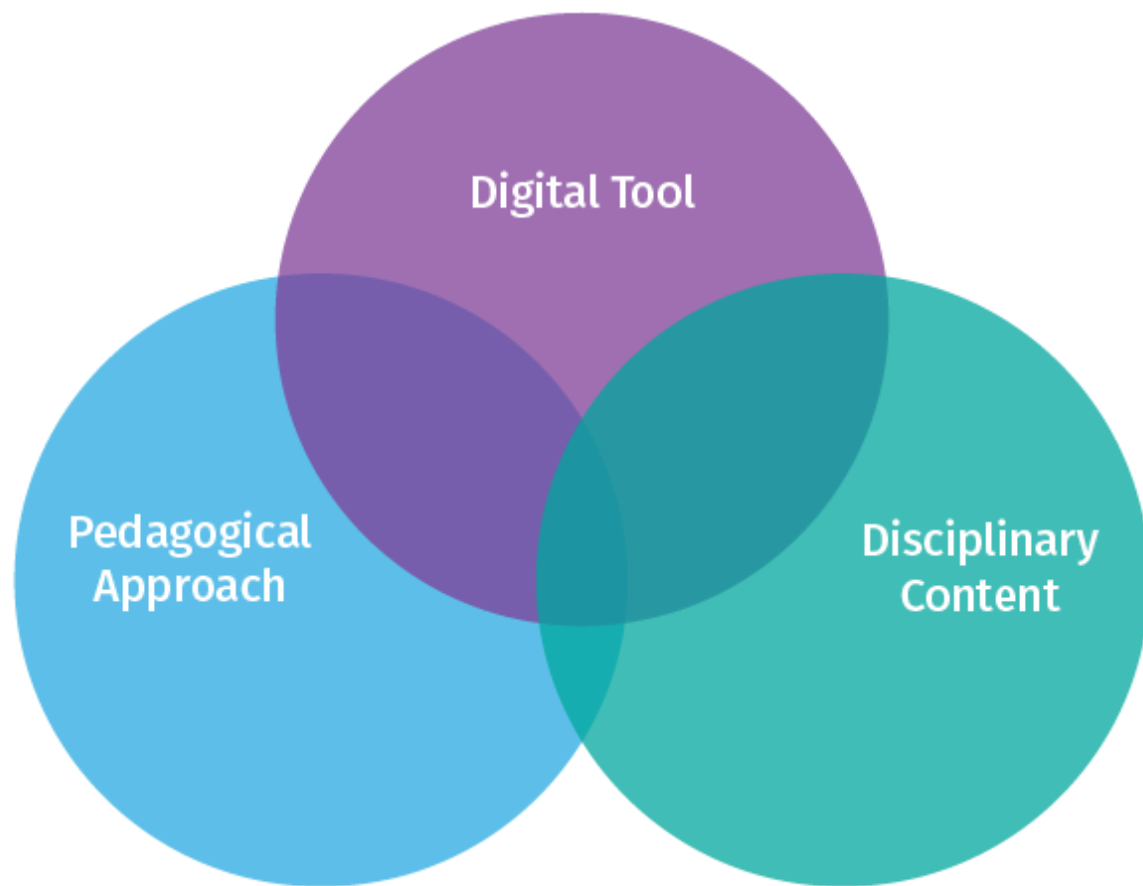
Integrating Digital Tools into Your Classroom: The TPACK Model

Among the recent digital tool classroom integration models, Mishra and Koehler’s [TPACK model](#) (2006) is an inspiring reference framework.

“ The acronym [TPACK](#) stands for *Technological Pedagogical And Content Knowledge* and designates the ability to integrate technology [Digital tools] into teaching and learning activities [Pedagogical approach] related to a teacher's discipline [DisciplinaryContent]. [...] According to Koehler, equilibrium for the professional teacher is at the intersection of the three primary TPACK skills.

— [Claude Martel \(2013\)](#)

CONTEXT



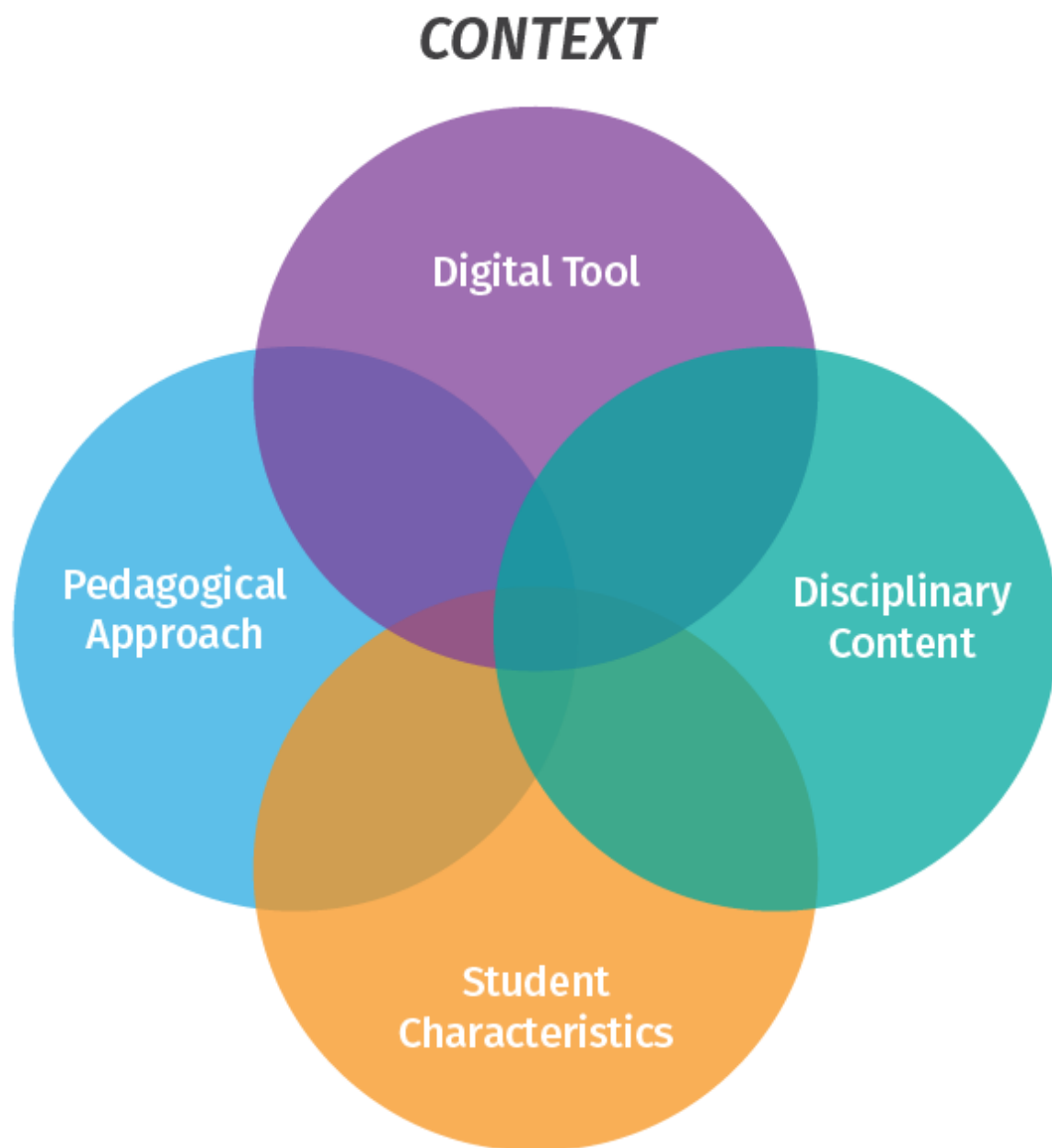
The 3 basic components of the TPACK model.

To be effective, the classroom management practices need to be attuned with the components of the model, to which Jean-Luc would add a 4th element: **student characteristics**.

These characteristics can correspond to:

- Their level of mastery of the content
- The learning strategies employed

- The learning difficulties encountered
- Their interests and the source of their motivation



A 4th component can be added to the TPACK model to define your classroom management approach with regards to the use of technology by the students.

This component also allows you to take into account the diversity of needs according to the composition of the class.

In Educational Practice: 6 Classroom Management Approaches

The presentation of **classroom management approaches** and the examples that are associated with these are intended to provide a concrete portrait that makes sense to teachers. Each of the 6 approaches has certain benefits and limitations. It's by varying your strategies and adapting them to the context of your classroom that you will achieve an optimal balance that results in a desirable **learning atmosphere** while attaining your **pedagogical aims**.

1. The exploratory approach

Consists of:

- *Emulating the practices of colleagues or the practices presented in the literature on the topic.*
- *Proceeding by trial and error*

The exploratory approach “refers to classroom management practices built on a range of approaches, gleaned from professional publications or from conversations with colleagues.”[Translation of Chouinard, 2001, p.25]

This approach presumes that you look to outside expertise when confronted with issues in the classroom. Your objective is to identify tried-and-true situational management strategies that can easily be transferred into your classroom.

Examples:

- You gather some ideas from a situational management strategy theory to govern the appropriate use of mobile devices in class.
- You ask a colleague how he managed to enlist the cooperation of his students to minimize the distractions caused by cell phones.

Benefits and limitations

This approach provides multiple potential solutions. It is particularly interesting if you easily adapt to unforeseen situations or if you would like to make a change to your pedagogical practices, without basing your actions on a particular theory of learning.

Its main disadvantage is that it does not ensure that your approach will be successful or sustainable in the long term. A large number of variables influence the outcome of an approach and they will never be identical to those encountered by your colleagues. Although borrowing someone else's method can be effective, ensure that it corresponds to your objectives and the reality of your class.

Situations where the exploratory approach is recommended

- *You want to base your actions on a tried-and-true approach to integrating students' mobile devices into your learning activities.*
- *You are looking for potential solutions to address the lack of motivation and involvement of certain students.*

Principal strategies

Draw inspiration from colleagues

The [Real Life Stories published on Profweb](#) present projects from college teachers who have integrated technology into their teaching practice in an inspiring way. These stories can be an interesting reference for the use of mobile devices in a pedagogical context.

Base your actions on research

The [CDC](#) (*Centre de documentation collégiale*) provides access to documentation produced by the college network. Among the publications that will undoubtedly inspire you, we recommend the [Pédagogie collégiale](#) journal, the [PAREA](#) research project reports, the proceedings of the [AQPC Symposium](#) (*Association québécoise de pédagogie collégiale*) and [PERFORMA](#) thesis essays.

Exchanging on the subject

Some departments hold level meetings to discuss student cases. These meetings are an opportunity to exchange on classroom management practices and allow the department to organize tailored support. [APOP](#) also offers training or webinars that will allow you to exchange with other colleagues from the college network.

2. The permissive approach

Consists of:

- *Promoting the autonomy of, and free expression by students*
- *Intervening as little as possible in the classroom management process*

The permissive approach generally stems from the teacher's desire to leave students the freedom to choose how they manage their learning. It aims to "promote the development of autonomy and free expression" [Translation of Chouinard, 2001, p.26].

This approach supposes that you view the students as autonomous adults. As such, they are ultimately responsible for their learning. You are counting on their capacity to regulate their own behaviour by limiting your mediation.

Examples:

- You do not regulate the use of cell phones in your classes. The possibility for distraction exists, but it is no different in the workplace.
- One of your students seems frequently distracted by his phone, but performs well on assignments and exams. While this behaviour bothers you, you feel that it is pointless to intervene.

Benefits and limitations

This approach is consistent with the objective of developing autonomy for college-level studies. By giving students full responsibility for their learning, you opt for an approach that allows you to devote all of your time to the course content rather than supervising individual behaviours.

However, this approach doesn't guarantee that the students are truly apt for learning. It can also bring about an inequitable situation: If you tolerate distractions for your strongest students, what does this mean for weaker students or those with special needs? Will they benefit from the same conditions and have an environment that is conducive to learning? Without treating your students like children, it can still be worthwhile to [set certain limits](#) in order to ensure that their experience (and yours) is more satisfying.

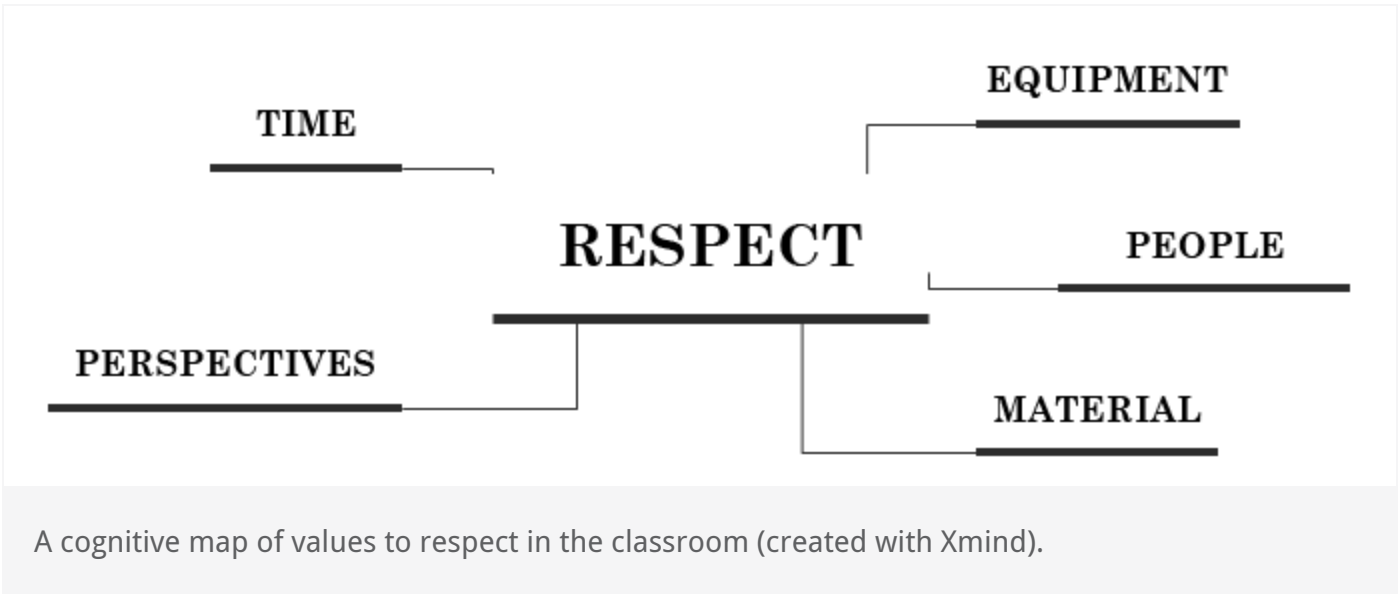
Situation where the permissive approach is recommended

- *An activity that requires the use of a digital tool does not work according to plan. The students are free to use their time as they choose while the teacher resolves the problem.*

Principal strategies

Chart your expectations

To minimize the level of support for students, you can illustrate your expectations of them. A chart detailing a core value for the course that needs to be respected can be created. You can create this using concept mapping software such as [Freemind](#), [Xmind](#) or [Lucidchart](#).



Define your value system

You can distinguish between students' [rights](#) and [privileges](#) in your classroom in order to include them in your value system. To ensure the coherence of your actions, refer to your college's policies and regulations.

Example:

- Students have the right to access knowledge that is available on the Internet. However, using their mobile device during class to access this knowledge can be defined as a *privilege*.

Granting a privilege is usually easier than revoking one. It is better to restrict (minimally, at least) the use of this technology.

3. The authoritative approach

Consists of:

- *Defining strict rules to regulate student behaviour*
- *Foreseeing sanctions to punish any departure from the rules*

The authoritative approach aims to regulate student behaviour “using a system of rules and procedures [that the teachers] have defined themselves” [Translation of Chouinard, 2001, p. 25].

As with the permissive approach, you consider that your students are responsible adults. When they arrive in the classroom, you expect that they will arrive ready to learn and that their behaviour will not distract from the course or the group's learning environment. One possible solution can be to regulate the use of technological devices.

Example:

- You ask students to put away their phones during your class to avoid distractions.

Benefits and limitations

The main advantage of this approach is that it does not require a great deal of consensus. It allows you to announce your expectations to the students and to make them responsible for their actions, since the students who come to class accept (explicitly or implicitly) the contract that was presented during the first class or defined in the course outline.

A disadvantage of this approach is that it doesn't necessarily incite students to develop their autonomy. It can become difficult to ensure the coherence of all of the established rules, since certain students need to use assistive technologies to support their learning. Some sanctions that are meant to be funny (asking students to sing a song or to read personal message in front of the class) can be perceived as humiliating by certain students. It is important to ensure that your rules and regulations are coherent with those of your educational establishment in order to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning (in line with your objectives).

Situations where the authoritative approach is recommended

- *To limit the risk of plagiarism during an evaluation or to avoid distraction at times when the students need to be particularly focused (a review of a security procedure, a presentation by a classmate, etc.).*
- *A small group is sending each other text messages during your class and their behaviour is disrupting other students.*

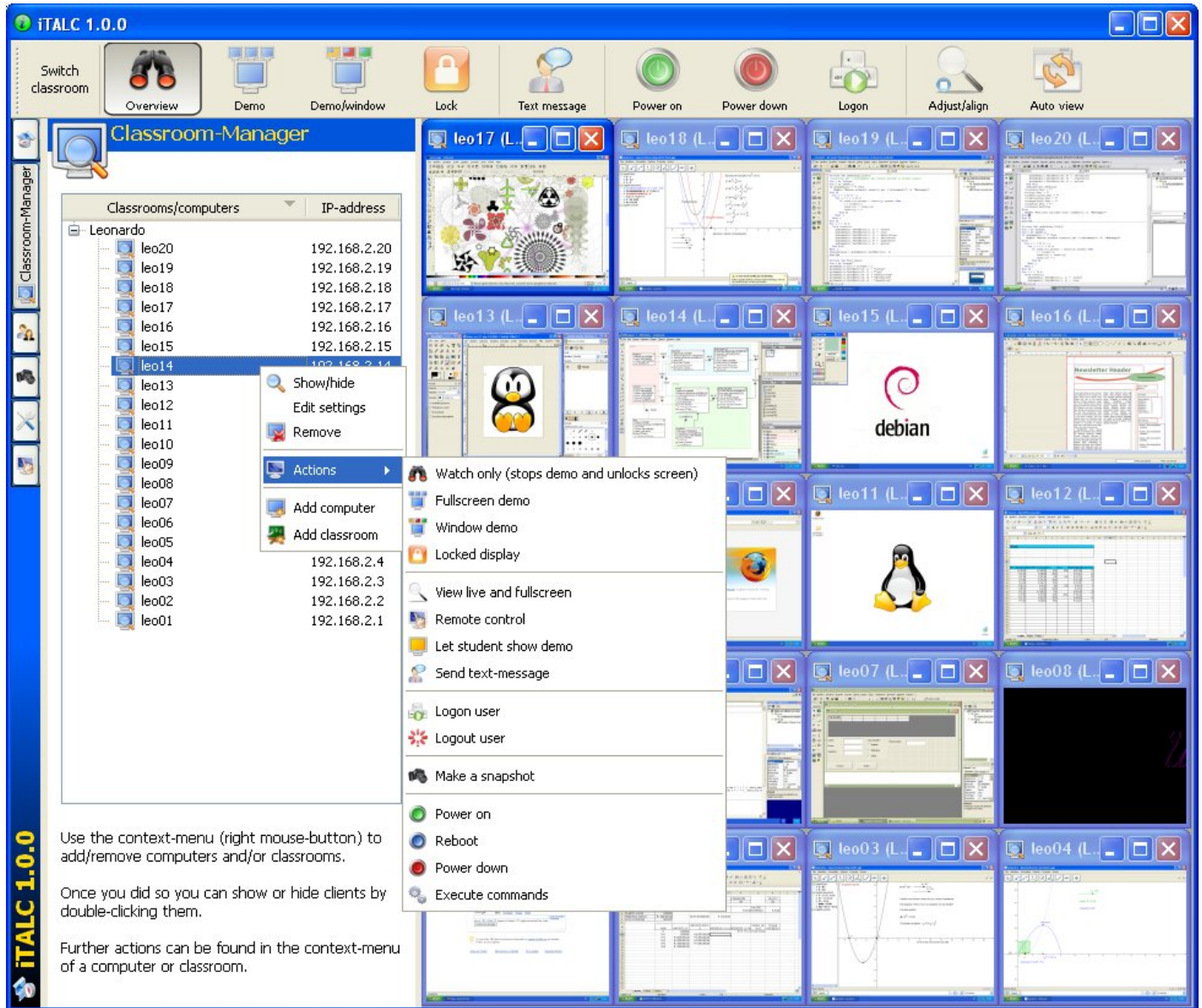
Principal strategies

Establish class rules

These rules can either be posted in class, within the course outline or made available on-line within the teacher's [Web space](#) or Moodle platform. These rules define the boundaries for the student's "[playing field](#)" and need to be consistent with the policies and practices in place at your educational establishment.

Control the technological environment

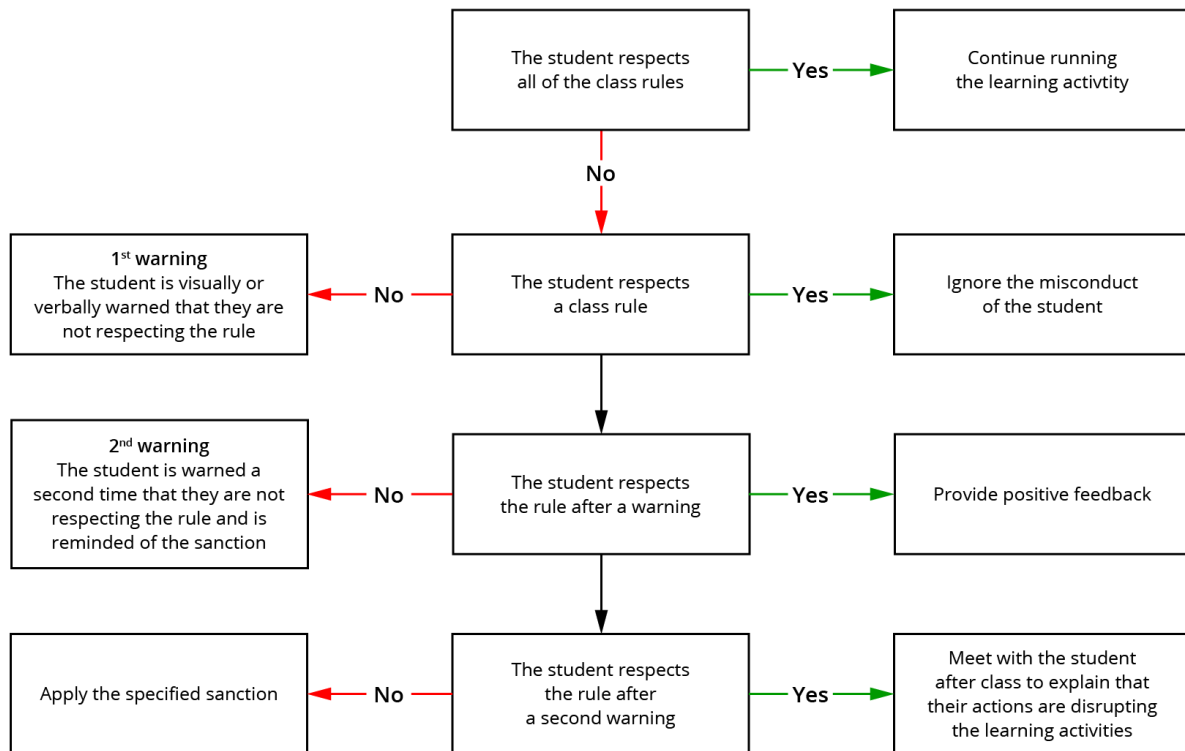
Management tools like the free and open source [Veyon](#) (formerly known as iTALC), [Lanschool](#) and [NetSupport School](#) (both proprietary solutions) allow you to view a student's computer desktop and to control it from a distance (activating or deactivating their Internet access, distributing documents, etc.).



Viewing the students' computer desktops. Screen capture from iTALC (now Veyon).

Specify your position

Decision trees or verification lists, [like those developed by the Université Laval](#) [Word, in French], can be used to demonstrate your approach.



Example of a decision tree built with Lucidchart.

4. The behaviourist approach

Consists of:

- *Encouraging students to adopt appropriate behaviours*
- *Preventing and resolving behaviour-related problems*

This approach is based on behaviourist theories and aims to “encourage the [students] to adopt appropriate behaviours [...] by using sophisticated techniques that are intended to bring about a modification of unsuitable behaviours” [Translation of Chouinard, 2001, p. 25].

This approach aims to govern the students by putting behaviour regulation systems in place, namely positive reinforcement. You can also utilize game mechanics to **increase student motivation and commitment**. If you are already using digital tools as part of your teaching strategies, this approach allows you to be proactive: rather than considering your students' mobile devices as a source of distraction, you leverage them as tools for learning.

Examples:

- You take advantage of certain features, like notifications from the mobile device or feedback on social media (giving *Likes*), to encourage and motivate your students.
- You use rapid surveys (Kahoot, Mentimeter) to [have fun reviewing material](#) before an exam.

Benefits and limitations

The friendly competition between students can have a positive effect on their motivation. If you use a tracking and reward system, this approach can help you to create a history of your interactions that will help you to round out the student's file and provide information on their class participation.

Certain students find this approach to be childish, however. In addition, the course preparation for the activities (equipment, game scenarios, question bank) and constantly following up with students requires a time investment from the teacher. Ensure that your efforts are addressing your pedagogical objectives.

Situations where the behaviourist approach is recommended

- *Extrinsic motivation sources have a significant impact on students.*
- *You would like to utilize strategies that promote learning by using the interests of the students.*

Principal strategies

Integrate gaming mechanics

This [article by Jean Desjardins](#), a Pedagogical Counsellor at Collège Sainte-Anne, proposes different resources to create fun learning activities. Profweb published several other [articles and stories related to games](#). Web applications like [ClassCraft](#) or [ClassDojo](#) can also be adapted for use by the colleges.

Use competency badges

The [Vitrine technologie-éducation](#) experimented with the integration of digital badges in Moodle. Inspired by the badges from Scouting, “These digital badges confirm formal and informal skills acquisition.” ([Reverd, 2014](#)).



Examples of Open Badges created by the Mozilla Foundation.

The [IT Representatives Network \(REPTIC\)](#) is also developing [badges](#) linked to the [ICT Profile for students](#). You can download [icon sets](#) for free to customize your badges (or create some, if you like) for use in your class.

Establish agreements with students

Many colleges use success contracts, road maps or [class contracts](#) to regulate their students. You can use on-line forms to create these and then upload them to Moodle or another cloud-based platform so that students can easily access the documentation.

5. The collaborative approach

Consists of:

- *Sharing authority with students*
- *Ensuring group cohesion and the quality of the pedagogical relationship*

This approach aims to “establish and maintain harmonious relations ” with the students [Translation of Chouinard, 2001, p. 25]. Responsibility for maintaining a positive atmosphere in class is shared by members of the group.

To ensure the cohesion of the group and cooperation amongst the students, you rely on a **democratic** approach in which students take an integral part in the decision-making process, notably concerning the appropriate use of technology.

Examples:

- You call on students to co-write the [class rules](#) related to the use of mobile devices.
- You attribute different roles to the students within a team. You rely on their sense of shared responsibility to regulate their behaviour (E.g.: not wasting their time on the Internet while other members of the team are working).

Benefits and limitations

This approach promotes student participation and solidarity within their group. Inspired by co-constructivism, it meshes well with active learning pedagogies. It also allows you to establish a partnership with your students.

That said, this approach requires you to properly define your expectations beforehand. The students can sometimes be more harsh amongst themselves. Ensure that their proposals are consistent with your approach and that they take into account the needs or particular constraints in an equitable manner. Maintain your right to veto!

Situations where the behaviourist approach is recommended

- *You want to offer learning activities in a co-constructive, collaborative or active learning approach.*

Principal strategies

Poll the students

Using [clickers](#) or [on-line surveys](#) will allow you to quickly gauge student opinion and allow the students to vote more freely and discretely than asking them to raise their hands.

Organize study groups

This can be accomplished through [discussion groups on social media](#) or a discussion forum within a learning management system like Moodle. This strategy will allow you to follow the progression of student learning and to exchange with them on the atmosphere within the classroom.

Co-author shared documents

Invite students to participate in the process of defining the rules and procedures to follow. These can take the form of a group contract, a code of ethics or a list of rules. The [Google collaboration tools](#) or the [Office 365 suite](#) allow many users to modify a document simultaneously.

6. The anticipatory approach

Consist of:

- *Proposing learning activities that correspond with the prior knowledge of students, as well as their interests and needs*
- *Making the choice and sequencing of the learning activities a priority*

This approach is based on the idea that “good lesson planning is the foundation of efficient classroom management” [Translation of Chouinard, 2001, p. 25].

This approach advocates the use of **scripting** for your course. The choice of learning and evaluation activities, their sequencing and the instructions are planned in such a way that the students don’t have the opportunity to disengage. This approach also involves planning your classroom management mechanisms, including what to do when the unexpected happens.

Example:

- You plan your approach (permissive, authoritative, etc.) regarding the use of personal devices if the event a technical problem should arise, obliging you to go to Plan B.

Benefits and limitations

By opting for detailed planning of your course, you limit the risk of forgetting material or possible confusion related to student instructions while ensuring a smooth transition between activities. This approach allows you to reflect on the cohesiveness between the activities, the pedagogical aims and the characteristics of your students.

Its primary disadvantage is that it requires time to put into place, since you have to revise your course plan before anything else. Take notes after an activity has finished up to document any corrective measures to implement in the next semester, as required. You can also have a colleague review and verify your student instructions. Finally, planning should not become a constraint, as you can't anticipate every possibility! Stay flexible, especially on the duration of certain activities.

Situations where the behaviourist approach is recommended

- *Your time is limited for presenting certain content or for running a learning activity.*
- *You have to deal with a pedagogical objective that requires a heightened level of taxonomic complexity.*

Principal strategies

Plan or refer to scripts

The [*Outil d'aide à la scénarisation*](#) is a website that was developed by the [CCDMD](#) (Collegial Centre for Educational Materials Development). It helps teachers develop active learning scenarios that integrate the use of technology. The OAS is free and you can also have a look at scenarios that were published by other teachers. [Editor's note: At the time of writing, this tool was only available in French].

Develop your timeline

Take some inspiration from a template, like this [document](#), to program a timeline for your activities, while building in some “time buffers.”

Conclusion

This second part of the featured report on classroom management has offered you 6 approaches to explore with regards to your students’ use of technology. Throughout these strategies, you have likely noticed that there are multiple opportunities that are available to you and that **combining different approaches** can contribute to the **enrichment of your teaching practices** and help to establish an atmosphere in the classroom that is conducive to learning.

The compatibility of your practice with the [4 components of the adapted TPACK model](#) may dictate the impact of the strategies used. The key to succeeding is to be flexible when effectively adapting your classroom management strategies to these components. The approach seeks more than the adoption of practices to control the behaviour of students. It is intended to ensure the coherence of your practices and to engage students in their learning. We will look at this in the 3rd and final part of this featured report, scheduled for translation later in the Winter 2018 semester.

Until then, please feel free to comment on any complementary approaches you may be using below, or check out the [Featured Report in French](#).

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About the Author

Jean-Luc Trussart A secondary school teacher, then pedagogical counsellor at the Cégep régional de Lanaudière à L'Assomption, for more than 10 years, he has accompanied teachers and learning establishments in the:

- *Adoption of diversified pedagogical practices;*
- *Rollout of programs that promote student success; and*
- *Coordinated integration of digital tools*

Throughout his professional path, Jean-Luc has utilized his creativity to propose coherent, efficient and effective pedagogical solutions, while simultaneously mobilizing key players within the organization.

Andréanne Turgeon *She has been working as an Editor for Profweb since 2014. She holds a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in History and has worked on the design and supervision of a distance education course within this domain. Her work as an editor and participation in different college network events allows her to continuously update and enrich her technopedagogical knowledge. She enjoys lending her writing talents to teachers to help them share their innovative practices. She is particularly interested in pedagogical approaches and resources that support student success and inclusiveness.*