Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study, and thank you for signing the participant consent form and completing your demographical information. This interview will be recorded and then transcribed. Your identity will be anonymised in the transcription of this interview, as well as any other information that may identify any other person or institution. You are welcome to switch off your camera or keep it on. You may at any point withdraw from this study.

Okay, perfect.

As you know, this research study is about blended learning. Do you use Blended learning?

[Unclear]. What is blended learning again?

Okay. So blended learning is when you use more than two techniques when you teach. So at your institution, you go to campus for face-to-face classes, which means that you use techniques and approaches that you can in the classroom, and on the other side, you use online classes, which means that you use other sort of technological things in those classes.

[Unclear]. Yes, then I do use it.

Okay, in your face to face classes, so when you're on campus, what sort of things do? So what sort of activities, what are your favourites?

My face-to-face classes are mainly contact sessions about the project. So the majority of the class would be, you know, one-on-one consultation with the students about their project. You know, they will describe what they were doing. I'll give them feedback on the progress and it's where usually most of my in-person classes is. That, but, I usually, at the beginning of the class I will have sort of a little bit of a learning session about one of the learning units. We are [unclear], you know, talk about what is expected for what we were shown. Today, or you know, feedback on the last class. I do prefer doing it more, the in person just talking. This includes showing videos because they prefer me talking and me showing in videos. It is a little bit of a weird thing that that's how they preferred.

Okay. So when you stay in learning session, what’s that? What does that mean?

So in my module, I have, you know, like the learning outcomes and learning units, a learning unit has learning outcomes, and in that there are themes. So the themes are a break down of sections and it's spread over the academic year, all semesters. So, every time I see them in a class, I need to go through something. And sometimes connecting all together once once get to it, through the use of projects because the learning units usually link to outcomes, usually tied directly into the project. And so, you know, like we are doing now, the project I'm doing, this example is about. So what I would do at the beginning of the classes, we will look at a few good portfolios and extent of, you know, weaker portfolios or, you know, like, I'll have academic writing articles saying what industry is looking for in the portfolio and I would like say that they, this is what is expected from a portfolio. Why do you write it? The academical side of the practical is, what I do is learning units. So when you give these learning sessions and you give examples and you show portfolios and you know, things like that.

What resources do you use in your class?

So that would be, it's usually a presentation. I can fit it into class and I can give a real world example. So if we're talking about showing examples of work, I prefer usually to go into [beyond.com](http://beyond.com/) as a source. Because what I like about it is, it's a very professional platform and it's a very professional way of presenting work. You do, you usually get the description of stuff. So, it's it's much nicer. It's just a cluster of stuff. That sort of curated content and I will go through it and say to them like, you know, like you basically just could scroll through the web page of old stock where one explains that it's like, you can see in the hierarchy of the design principles, aren't used here very well. So, I like I show you real world examples like that and then when it's more of a theoretical thing. I what I do is I prefer to have a full article, like I copy one article or articles all together into one word document. And what I do is, I highlight the most important sections out of it and I give them like, footnotes or tips. The reason why I do that is I preferred that it stays in content or context of the article. I feel like a lot of times presentations tend to take out too much content and if a student wants to revisits, you know, they're just getting a headline but not actually explaining very well. So I highlight in the whole article what's important and I will usually give descriptions of that. I feel is a help for my students I find this is what's working better for them - to just have a visually good presentation.

So, if I understand correctly, in the learning session, you tend to use three things, actually, four things. You talk in your session, you talk a lot. So it might be that it's more educator-led. When you do a learning session, do you agree?

Yes.

And then you might have a presentation but you feel that presentations tend to just be a sort of a summary and you lose a lot of the content. So that's why you either look at a website, where you go through it to see, this is how the real world things work or you might make a Word document with you have pasted various is articles that are relevant in order for the students to still see the context of the work.

Yes

So you you mentioned at the beginning that you also do consultations one-on-one. What do you do in the consultation like that?

So in the consultation is usually with my module there’s four weeks to complete a project from, you know, the first time we brief until hand-in. We break it up. Every time I have a class, I will say, like this is where you you need to be with this project. So obviously at the beginning of your research phase, you have to show me your research and your inspiration, your ideas, and I will look at that and say, okay, cool, you know, you are you're addressing the problem. So for example, like the previous project they had to identify a community affected by Covid. In, you know, in the proximity of where they live. So, you know, like if a student came to me and say oh, you know, like a community in Cape Town is just having an issue with drought, I can say to them. Like, okay. No, firstly, it's not a close community because you live in Pretoria. Okay. Cape Town is a little bit too far and The Cape experiencing a drought is not a direct effect of Covid. But it could also there, you know, like what the end of the project when you start going into the visuals of the project like the design elements, you know, they would present to me their social media campaign elements with posters or layouts. I'll give them feedback to say, you're, you know, you're not using the higher-ups design principles is not being applied nicely. I'm not able to read your text. A lot of it is usually [unclear], you know, like it your call-to-action is not actually making sense. You know, like if it's a social media if it's a post or social media post, you know, like cool you have a you have a cool catchphrase, or you have a cool by-line, but it's not doing anything. It's not getting the customer to move to the next step, you know, so it's the, and I'm like think of the this, think of that. So the next time I see you, I want to see you actually implemented a call-to-action into your work. So that's where the consultation comes in. So, it's me giving them guidance, doing a project and not them just getting a brief and handing-in four weeks without having a back and forth with me to guide them.

So, when you say consultations one-on-one, do you mean that you go to each student personally, or is it one on one, in terms of you are in the front of the class and you talk to them as a group?

It’s both of them. So, usually at the beginning of the class, I will give you sort of general feedback of what I'm expecting of it and what I'm like looking for. What's important. And then I go to every student individually and we will sit and look at that. So it's just me and that student, so the other students can work on their work in class or that I give them usually in class activity or, you know, I'm not too concerned of what they're currently doing. If they want to work on some some other module, it's also fine with me. But then it's me and one student as like five or ten minutes and it's only me and that student, talking only about their work and their specific problems because with my students, the top, the briefs are usually open-ended. So, you know, every student's solution is different from the other ones, so I can't generalize it in the broad sense, you know, like if you can have a student like this covid scenario is, you know, like I have things of like elderly people versus, you know, students, was the community. So a community of students’ solution is different to community elderly people. You can’t make social media campaigns and Tick-Tock videos for an elderly person. So I can't give general comment, but usually after I've seen all the students, I will give like a summary. If I picked up most of the students have the same problem, like say not having a call-to-action on the campaign or you know, not having a clear insight, I'll give a general feedback.

So from what I understand, you do the consultations to track progress to give guidance and to get interaction for you to give input into personal projects.

Yes

… and then you tend to start your consultation sessions with a group, I almost want to say a group talk. Then you do one on one and then you might do feedback afterwards again, for the group.

Yes.

Okay, you mentioned that whilst you are doing one-on-one consultations, you sometimes give class activities as well. Tell me about that. Why would you give a class activity? What sort of class activities are they? What's the aim?

So the class activities is is a way of getting the students to do something in line with the brief or focus on the specific part of the brief. So like it's it doesn't count, it only counts at the end for marks. What they do specifically in that isn't important, it’s actually participating. So, one of the examples I can give is while we were talking. Like, when I do one-on-one consultations with students, is what I gave them an activity is for this specific project that they had to give me six examples and give me a motivation of why this is a good example, you know, what is, what is the strengths and the weaknesses of all these different examples? So, what I say to them is for this activity, you have to find 20, in class, and they had to upload it because it was web articles, so they could upload it into a form. And I could give every student's 20 points and afterwards, I had a discussion with them to say, look guys from anything from the 7th to the 20th one, you looked at, how many of those are you actually going to use? The majority of students say the majority of what they actually going to use in the final project comes out of 7 to 20. So I'm like, okay cool, so you can see don't just do the minimum of work. I know the brief only asks for six, don't just find 6, find 20 and choose out of that 20, the best. So that's like one of the examples I do, or I give them sometimes, after project, I would ask them to, you know, write a little write-up about what they've learned out of this brief, you know to you know, sort of like a self-reflection. Nothing of this is like super formal; It has to be academic writing. It's more of a casual, I just want to see they learned something out of it. Another one I like to do in a middle of a project as well, is, there’s two of them, is depending on the group size is I split them - usually, into say, a group of six or seven students, and they have to present their idea to that group. And those other students need to give feedback. And what I like about that is it gives that one specific student, not just my opinion as a lecturer on the project but that student’s, you know, group or class can give feedback. Usually, in 99% of the time, it's like students, like, oh, you know, like so, so told me this idea, can I use it? Yes, you are allowed to. And I'm like, did you think of it? And their like no I haven’t. And I'm like, I've also didn't think of this as a solution. So I like to do that because it creates that sort of co-design effect. They, you know, they it's not just them in a bubble, doing the design work. They’re getting feedback out of the class. And, another thing I do is, at the end of the project, I ask them to mark themselves/ I give them the rubric and say, based on where you are at in this project, mark yourself. And then it's like okay, cool. So you failed. Where did you fail? And it's like I failed with this section. Okay, but what do you need more in the section to get better marks? And I also find, so all of these class activities is sort of to keep them occupied. But the point of them is to give them some of the insight in what the rubric is or do extra work. Well, you know, there's always some sort of a learning experience in it for them.

Okay, so this is what I understand from what you just said. So with your in-class activities, uhm, you use these in-class activities, mostly when you're doing one-on-one consultations. And in a sense, you are forcing the students to participate. Though, it is aligned to what they are supposed to do anyway. This seems to be so that they can prepare for what formal expectations there are and in a sense, you do this to motivate them to work on their projects. And with the group presentation or actually presenting to the group, the idea is that they get feedback from others, which might help them with their own creativity. Would you agree with that?

Yes.

Okay. And the last thing you said is you sometimes have activities where they mark themselves and this is aimed at self-reflection, but also for them to develop self-analysis techniques and also to gain insight on what they are doing and what they are expected to do. So, in a sense, you teaching them how to do a gap analysis?

Yes.

That's very interesting. Tell me, so this was quite a few activities that you do in class, or, in a face-to-face class. If we switch that around to your online sessions, what three things do you tend to do in an online teaching, environment?

Okay, so my online teaching environment time, I only have an hour with them and it's usually a lot of content to get through and they know it's an academical orientated thing. So, they know I'm going to sit and talk to them and teach them something. So the amount of gamification is less, but they are aware that this is the focus of the specific class. So I would, before class, prepare my document like I said, the whole thing. And I would basically go through it and I go up and down through it. And I, you know, if I get to the second article, I'll jump back into like, and say, remember we are repeating ourselves and I like I'm a broken record again. I'm saying the damn same thing. So it's not just me reading a document. It's going back and forth and I make it so that I can see the chat box. So while I'm presenting all the students can speak. Because I'm sharing my screen, all the students can see the chat box and see my screen. And I usually constantly ask questions to make sure they engage, everyone understands, because I don't get a lot of sort of engagement, in that, you know. They don't fit on the screen, they don’t put on their mikes, they don’t really, you know, the interaction is quite limited on the online platform. So you need to kind of force it but I've also realized over doing it just irritates them, so I limit it to, you know, if we finished the section of I finish something. I'm like, Okay, cool. So what do you think about this? Do you agree with me? Do you disagree with me? Do you like this? I ask this sort of you know, yes or no question. And what I do out of that is if I'm going to ask like, so do you find this interesting? What I just mentioned and based on how many yesses as I get? I get a lot of yesses; I know it was interesting. If I say, does this make sense and I get a lot of yesses, I know like, okay cool. Like I still have them engaged and I get. So it's sort of a informal way of gauging what they do. So I constantly asked him a very simple question in the chat box. Say you just respond to me and out of that is you know, like you understand if I say does this make sense, and I get only two yesses, and I have 28 students, I can say I might need to go back, or I might need to give another example before I move on. But, if I ask that question and get a bunch of yesses, I’m like, cool, I can move one. So it's sort of an indirect way of gauging their interaction with it. And usually at the end, I ask do you have questions or, you know, my class actually tend to ask questions, they would chat in the chatbox with me while I'm giving class. So, you know, the moment they have a question, I'm like, you know, type the question and post it. The moment I’m done with my sentence, I'll read your question. I'll answer it and we’ll go on. So, because I only have an hour, I don’t put a lot of interaction or gamification or that sort of stuff in.

It sounds to me like you're face-to-face classes are very participatory very engaging for the students. Whereas your online classes are much more content-heavy and almost in a lecture style.

Yes. It split like that. So my in-class classes or in-person classes is, you know, I have three hours with them. But it's also for the point of actually having this consultation time and one-on-one, and in the online class is there for the theory. So it's, it's very specific and the students know that if they're going to attend the online class, they can just sit and take notes or listen to me explaining something. And I know that in class is we actually are practical working. So and I don't necessarily mix the two because the engagement I get from a student talking to them about their work, or about work online is very, you know, like, I find the screen as a wall. As and I can't see them, I can’t hear them and I can't see their face. So I don't know how they feel about it, but in class when I talk to them and I give an example, I can very easily pick up if the students are finding this interesting as an example they want to use or not. So it's I it is sort of split between the two.

Who chose that you will do theory online and you will do practical work in class. I mean, on campus?

That came from the campus.

Would you have chosen the same thing?

Yes, after after doing it, like this, so I would, I would personally prefer actually everything on campus. But, I get the value of the online classes, and I think that actually students enjoying the online classes. So coming from my experience when I was, you know, student it was 100% in-person classes. So my perception is that, but I get the value of online classes. Specifically for my module that is split into theory and practical, it makes the online class for an hour, you know, it's short and sweet. We know it's an hour. And that's it. You know, it's not a three hour session. There's a break in between whatever and I usually try to get it done before an hour. So I usually, I don't steamroller through it, but I don't hammer too long about stuff. So, yes, I would keep it like this. I think it works for the students to do it like that.

Why do you think the students lack such participation on the online platform. So you said that they do write questions in the chat box and they do they would answer yes or no questions in the chat box. But why do you think it's such a difference to how they would act in a face-to-face class? Because you are the same person. They are the same people, yet the interaction is so different.

I am wondering that question myself, so I don't have an exact answer for you, but I can find or what I feel is my opinion is … Firstly, you know, they do it in their bedroom or in their house or you know, wherever and there are cats and dogs and family running around and there’s noise and a mess. And obviously the person talking would prefer everyone else being muted. So, you know, they just became used to the fact that they stay muted and they can turn off their screens, hides their house. They don't have to, because obviously, coming to class this sort of a showcase. We dress up, do their hair, get on their fanciest stuff because they’re going into public. But at their house, they don’t do that. I think it's also a way of keeping something personal. It's you know, like you don't want to show like I live in this fancy mansion versus I'm just living in a little flat. I feel it's that, you know, this my Sacred Space and I don't want to share my my house with you. So I feel that's why they don't put on their screens or the cameras. And for the muting, I think it's just because they don't want. I don't I don't really have an answer. I myself was very curious to know why you don't get this super engagement.

I actually think your your answer just now was very insightful that when they come to campus, it's a show. And when they're home it's a private space that they don't want to share with the world. Very interesting.

That’s how I get it. I would be like if you can find an answer I would be fascinated to know why we don't get a lot of engagement because in my head, I would expect more engagement online. Yes, you would. And we know that this generation types very very quickly, so the fact that they take forever to just write yes or no, or give a thumbs up of down, what does that show us? I also don’t know. Tell me, is there anything that we didn't talk about that you think is actually one of the things that you use, either on campus or online that you feel is an interesting technique or activity, that you do that we didn't talk about?

I think I think like so one thing we didn't talk about is, I send a lot of communication to my students constantly. In a week, I send about two to three emails for the group out and everything we do in class, we have a portal online, for, you know, the module and like I upload literally everything there and even more content. So I do this like week and like daily inspiration to every time we in class. I'll upload an interesting article there. It's just more for fun than academical, and usually, or it's aligned with the brief or it's just because it's interesting for that day. And so, that's one thing is, I feel like there's a lot of from my side, I inform the students constantly of what what is expected in the next class. What are we going to do in the next class. And I feel like they’re more of aware like, you know, like if you're going to teach the following thing or when you have a guest lecture because I had in this 12 weeks 5 guest lecturers come in.

Was it a guest lecturer on campus?

No, all of them was online? So I couldn't I couldn't it was just because some of them were actually overseas.

So that would actually be another online activity that you use and you utilize that very well.

Yeah, the thing is that the people asked for was it was usually aligned with the brief. So one of the first people are asked is [name deleted] from [company deleted] that's from Brighton. So she works a lot with communities and you know, community upliftment projects. So I got her to talk about some of her experience of doing actually community work because it aligns with the brief with our Covid community. I recently had [name deleted] felt from [company deleted] talk about sort of South African brand identity, you know, the importance of actually, you know, being a South African brand, being proud of it, and flaunting the fact that [product name deleted] is made in South Africa, by local people, and you know, how [product name deleted] is this very community oriented. Actually today my guest lecturer was [name deleted] from [company name deleted] that talked about the type of work he does because he started a lot of community-based as well. Like my module is very focused on community engagement and designing for community. So I got him to talk about some of the projects he worked on. And it lined up, you know, what he wants to hire someone with, he wants to see in a portfolio, what he wants to see in the brief or the CV. I feel like it gives like whatever I'm saying class sort of that like someone out there is really it's not just the lecturer telling you this, it's a real person out there saying it's important to, you know, be as the, be a local brand, embracing it. That we know that, you know, the stuff I've been saying in class about the CV, someone in industry actually said. I feel the students take a lot of value out of that.

Was the most engagement from the students, with the guest lecturers or was it the same?

It's stayed … they do tend to ask more questions. And I think it's just the nature of what is being presented. You know, it's not so hard academically; it’s more of a showcase of work. Like, [name deleted] was basically going through his portfolio of his company. The students have a lot of questions of but how did you get this right? Or, you know, was this important or they'd actually had a lot of engagement with him. I was actually shocked about how engaged they were and like the questions that they were asking. They were actually asking very heavy questions …

Were the only writing it in the chat or were they unmuting?

One unmuted, but mostly it was in the chat. I think it works, it works, I think it's just because they got used to it and what's nice about it is the question stays there. You know, so you can if you if you want to like finish talking. So and it's kind of a record that the question was asked. Because my students like, I have a student who writes, for every guest lecturer he writes this 200 word paragraph and post that as a question. And like, it's weird because, you know, you have to awkwardly read through this paragraph, and then answer it. But I found my my guest lectures actually enjoy, you know, it's fine for them to just read. Sometimes they do unmute themselves to ask a question and then you know, it's more of this conversation between the person and the student.

Did the guest lecturers have their cameras on, or did they put theirs off as well?

So they had their cameras on at the beginning and then they had a presentation. Then, no, it obviously goes off. And after the presentation, when it was a Q&A they had their cameras on again.

I wonder if the camera has to do with if you feel like you are in Authority that you have to put it on. Whereas the students …

I do actually turn my camera on at the beginning of all my classes to, you know, to say like hi, I'm still alive, let's go. I feel it sort of brings that sort of person-connection. As to me, just sitting here with my mic muted, waiting for everyone to log in. When I feel like, okay. This is like, like there's no one coming in late and say, you know, I unmute myself and just talk as a black screen and then go into my presentation. I feel like they're just like the little wave or the little hi, you know, like, you know, I'm still alive. Just brings a little bit of personality to in it, rather than to just listen to some random radio voice recording. [Unrelated content deleted]

Okay, to sum up what I have noticed about your teaching style is, when you are teaching on campus face-to-face, the bulk of your work has to do with consultations and it seems to me that you need, you like that engagement with students one-on-one. So you are naturally drawn to teaching that way face-to-face. Whereas online, it seems to me like it's a convenient space to quickly go through a lot of theory that's not very interesting, and it seems like it's, it's almost as uninteresting to you… Maybe that's the wrong word. It's as theoretical or abstract to you as it would be to students. So perhaps what I'm getting at is I feel like if I were to sum you up as a lecturer, I would say that you much more drawn to practical engagement with students rather than engagement with content.

Yes, I definitely agree with you and I think one of the reasons is because full me myself online teaching a still… I'm more comfortable in class teaching, so, it's something I can do quicker. But like the online teaching is, you know, it's every time I figure out something new, I try it and see what happens. So I I'm still actually in the learning curve of actually figuring out how to do online classes. So it's not really my strong suite as yet.

So just just as a last question - blended learning in this situation, is face-to-face on campus and online, in some sort of a platform. Would you like to continue with blended learning in the future?

Yes. I would like it because I think based on, you know, what, students like, they definitely like the blended learning approach. I think it works easier for them. So it's something we definitely need to stick with. I think it's just, we as lectures need to figure out how to do it. Because we were in the same boat and covid happen in this became sort of a very compulsory thing is like a how do you actually do this online? And I think it's still a thing we are trying to figure out. It doesn't become repetitive - like I have to go to campus and I have to sit in this class. When I have to sit on this chair, I have to look at this presentation, you know, because I think keeping everything on one class, weeks on end, you’re not going to rock the boat and come up with something because there's a lot of times like an online class. I kind of throw a random joke or comment, just something, because it kind of works there but not in class.

Okay, no, great answer. Thank you so much. I learned a lot from you, especially with the practicals, very interesting. I’m going to stop the sharing now …