

## Follow-up Meeting 1 with Participant 2

CH: So [Janet], um, the focus of this first follow-up is on the lecture that you, you did on the 20th of October.

P2: Yes.

CH: Um, and, and I am not going to be referring to any, to any other lecture, but to this one. So, I am basing it off this. But I have also given you a set of questions, um,

P2: Yes.

CH: ...and you possibly don't have it with you, and that is absolutely fine. But I am not going to go through all the questions today. Um,

P2: Okay.

CH: I will leave some for the second follow-up. And it is really just to get a sense of, you know, how you go about designing your online learning experiences for your students. So that really is the focus of, of this particular follow-up. So, I am going to start with the first question. Um, and that really is looking at your role as an online lecturer. So not when you are in the class face-to-face, but where you are working with them in a synchronous session. Um, what do you consider your primary responsibility?

P2: Well, I would say my primary responsibility, um, is still that of a facilitator. However, the facilitation role, um, has now transitioned into, you know, more of an online facilitation role and trying to encourage and, and motivate these students to, to remain engaged because I know sometimes within the online realm, um, students can lose that active engagement. So, my role as a facilitator is to encourage and to motivate these students, um, so that they are able to successfully master the, the relevant outcomes that I will be lecturing within that online class. Um, so I would say that is my primary responsibility.

CH: Okay. Um, and, and I saw evidence of that. Um, if I look at your particular session, it was filled with a variety of activities and students had to engage almost at every point. Um,

P2: Yes.

CH: ...so I am going to now ask you then, how do you achieve this engagement and how do you achieve, um, a climate of one where you are motivating and encouraging your students?

P2: So, um, how I achieve this is through the, the actual activities themselves. Um, so the activities, uh, well, one of the activities that I had was, um, it is called a think-box-activity where students are, you know, asked sort of like prompting questions, um, to get them thinking about the content, but also to get them talking. Um, because sometimes they feel that they are like passive learners that are just sitting there, and I really don't want that to be the case. Um, so the activities themselves, I would say helps you facilitate this. Um,

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also at the start of my lecture, I like to include like a meme or, you know, something funny or interesting, um, just to make the students feel more comfortable because sometimes they feel online classes can be a bit daunting. Um, so just trying to create that, you know, teacher presence, trying to create that, um, environment that is, you know, is, is calming, um, you know, like a calming learning environment. Um, but also one that is engaging for the students.

CH: Okay. And I think the meme was about a Friday or something?

P2: Yes.

CH: I made a note of it. Uh, ya. "The moment you realize it's not Friday", that's right.

P2: <laugh>,

CH: ..."the moment you realize it's not Friday." So, to me, it, it is more than just a calming um, environment. It is more that you have almost like tried to create a connection with your students through that meme, um, and to make it a less threatening environment through a little bit of humor.

P2: Yes, absolutely.

CH: Was that the intention? Okay.

P2: Yes, that's correct, Chantal and because as I said, sometimes students feel that they are, they are at that distance from me, um, especially when it's online. So, to try and maintain that connection, that relationship with them, um, humor is always a good way to, to do that. So that is one of the things that I like to do with them.

CH: Okay. Do you often use humor in your, your online sessions?

P2: Yes.

CH: Okay.

P2: Yes.

CH: And do you, do you, just a question, uh, just out of curiosity, do you use that same humor in your face-to-face or is that just a technique that you keep for your online?

P2: No, I also use it in my, in my face-to-face as well. So, I will, I will tell students to, um, go and look up like, you know, the current news events, but then also look up like, you know, pop culture news, um, what's funny, what's entertaining, um, just to, to to set the, the mood for, for that class. So I also like to facilitate, um, that in my face-to-face lectures too.

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CH: Okay. And do you think that is quite an important environment? Um, let's rephrase that. Do you think that is quite an important aspect to build in an online space, to relax students, um, who are feeling daunted? Would you consider that a design element that you bring to your online spaces?

P2: Absolutely, a hundred percent. Um, I feel it, it really does help students because they actually have commented before, you know, when I see them face-to-face. Some of my students have commented previously that they, they actually enjoy attending my lectures because they feel that it is a, like, a safe environment for them and that I am not just, you know, lecturing to all of them this complicated information. You know, it's more, you know, let's just take it one step at a time and just, you know, create that safe environment for them.

CH: Okay. Okay. And then just moving now to skill-sets, because obviously we are trying to prepare our students for the 21st century workplace. Which skills do you consider important for students to develop?

P2: Okay. So, I, I personally like to call it the three Cs and problem-solving. So, the three Cs that I like to, to try and, and develop is communication, uh, creativity and critical thinking. And then the, the p is for problem-solving. So those are the main skills that I like to develop.

CH: Okay. And why do you prioritize these particular ones? Why are they so important to you?

P2: Well, I feel that we are now living it in a world that has so, so, so much unpredictability and there's so many, you know, un unprecedented challenges and changes that, that are occurring. And so, I feel that students need to be equipped with these skills in order to deal with these unprecedented, uh, changes and challenges, especially when they go into the workplace environment. Um, you know, it is a very fast-paced industry. Um, well, the students in, in my field in particular, they, they, they are going to, once they graduate, go into a very fast-paced industry. So, they need to be able to have these skills in order to survive <laugh>, but also in order for them to be effective members of the workforce. So that is why I prioritize these types of skills.

CH: And what industry are your students tending to go in?

P2: So, communications, media, public relations. Um, so they really are like the face of an organization. So, they, they are the ones who are going to be managing crises, managing an organization's reputation. Um, so therefore, you know, the ability to have critical thinking and problem-solving in particular, um, become vital skills for them in order to function effectively in such environment.

CH: Okay, cool. Um, and whose responsibility is it to develop these skill-sets?

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P2: That is actually a very interesting question because my first thought when I, when I saw this question, my first thought was no, it is absolutely the student's responsibility. But I thought about it and it is actually both, it is both the lecturer's responsibility and the student's responsibility. You know, the lecturer is also meant to be a role model, um, and meant to be encouraging and motivating students to learn and to master a skill. And through that, you know, through that modeling behavior of such skill, um, a student is able to, to master it effectively. It is like when someone is learning any other skill, like piano, for example, they need to have that facilitator, but then they also need to take it into their own hands, you know, as the student and, and learn as well. So, I think it is a, it is a two-way street, um, for, for both lecturer and the student.

CH: Okay. So, so my next question then would be, if you had to consider your first years to your third years, um, if you, would you say that that, um, relationship, if you look at, um, if you had to put a percentage to the dual role that a lecturer- student has in first year to a percentage to the dual role that a lecturer-student has in the third year, would you say that they were equally proportioned or would there have been a shift?

P2: I definitely believe that there would have been a shift, because I noticed with the, the first-year students, they need a lot more support. You know that they just come from high school. A lot of the, the skill-sets are there, but they are not, you know, fully developed as yet. So, I feel it in, in, you know, the first-year level, it, the, the, the weighting is more towards the lecturer and, you know, his or her responsibility, um, in terms of trying to encourage and develop these skills. But when I, what I found, you know, teaching final year students is that kind of is like the inverse. It is now the student has a lot more responsibility and they are the ones who are mastering the skill more so than the lecturer who is modeling such behavior and trying to develop those skill-sets.

CH: So, is there, in a, a sense, you can see a progression of the development of skills from first year to third year...?

P2: Yes. Absolutely.

CH: ...if, if the weighting is shifting there? Okay.

P2: Yes.

CH: Cool. And then what is your understanding of graduate attributes?

P2: So, I thought in, in terms of this term, um, I didn't, you know, go online or search it or anything, I just wanted to think for myself what I believe it to be. So, I feel that it's, it's necessary skills, qualities, and characteristics, um, that students will gain and learn through, you know, learning and practical experience. Um, so in essence, that is what I believe, um, the graduate attributes refer to.

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CH: Okay. And, um, are there certain graduate attributes that you prioritize more than others or are there certain graduate attributes that you, um, consider really important to develop?

P2: So, um, once again, this ties back into the industry that my students will most likely go into. Um, so for me it would be communication number one, but also critical thinking and problem-solving. So, my students, you know, studying a degree in communications means that they have to be effective interpersonal communicators. So that really is a skill that not only do I teach in terms of the, the theoretical component behind communication, but also getting students familiar with, you know, presenting in front of others, which, which students feel so, you know, daunting and absolutely dislike, you know, doing presentations. But that is one of the skills that I like to promote. Um, critical thinking and problem-solving because they are going to be in that workplace environment. Um, they are going to be dealing with organization's crises, reputation, image, um, they need to be able to, to solve, you know, real world scenarios and situations in a very critical and creative manner. Um, so those are the ones that I tend to prioritize.

CH: Okay. And so, so then the question becomes how do you support the development of these particular graduate, um, attributes or skill-sets within your students?

P2: Okay, so I will start with the communication, because I, I'll, I will break them down into the separate skills. So, for communication, what I like students to do is actually making them present. So not only in a face-to-face setting, but also online. So, I will give students a topic, um, whether it be a theory or a model that they have to research and look at its practical application, and based on a scenario, um, within groups, um, they will then have to present it online. And although they, some of them are a bit apprehensive about this, they realize afterwards that they, they actually see the benefit behind it. Um, so that is what I usually do. So, presentations, whether it be face-to-face or in an online setting. Um, and then what I like to do for the creative thinking as well as, um... Well, well, let me, let me go into critical thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving. Um, I like to, to present case studies to students. So, whether it be in, you know, through a discussion board, I will post a case study and students have to answer questions in a discussion manner. Um, or what I also like to do is to show them like a YouTube video of a, like a crisis or scenario, and then ask them to, to brainstorm how would you solve this? What type of solutions can you generate to solve this particular problem? Um, so that can, can be done in an online manner as well. Um, and then in terms of creative thinking, so my students, because a lot of them are visual learners, what I found helps them is to do mind maps. Um, so I use software called MindMeister, um, for mind map development, um, as well as Padlets, which allows them to create their own boards, um, and they can use, you know, memes and pictures and videos. So, it makes it very interesting and stimulating, um, for them. So that is how I usually do it.

CH: Okay. So just to go back to the use of case studies and discussion boards, um,

P2: Yes.

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CH: ...when you are using the discussion board, because what I haven't done in your module is I haven't gone and had a look to see what type of activities students have completed, um, on the [institution's online platform] platform, nor have I had a look to see how you have structured your resources as of yet. Um, because I wanted to do, do this discussion first before I go and look. So even though I have enrolled, it was purely from an administrative point of view as I was enrolling on others. I purposely have not looked at your module.

P2: Okay.

CH: So, the discussion boards, I assume is on your [institution's online] platform, or am I wrong there?

P2: Yes. No, you are, you are correct in saying that.

CH: When you are engaging your students on case studies in the discussion board, um, or in the discussion thread, are you responding to the students? Are the students responding to each other? Just take me through your expectation of the students and how they should be working through that discussion board.

P2: Okay. So, what I, I will take you through the whole, um, process. So, what I usually do is I'll, I will post a link to, to the case study. Um, so whether it be to like an online article or whether it be to an actual document that I have created myself, and I will post the questions at, you know, the start of the thread that the students have to answer. Um, I will then, you know, this is all done through, you know, within the actual online lecture. I will, you know, instruct the students within the, within the online, uh, [webinar] that they have 10 to 15 minutes to engage in this discussion board. And what I would like to do in, in discussions is instead of me commenting on every single response that students are posting, because sometimes my classes can be quite big, um, I allow students to comment on each other's posts, and I feel, you know, peer-to-peer learning is very, um, important. And students learn, you know, new creative insights from their peers. Um, so I, I also tell them, "Okay, once you have posted your response, go and comment on one or two other students' posts too. You know, go and voice your viewpoint and perspective." And then, um, once the activity is, you know, the time is up, then I will give overall feedback, um, to the class. "You know, this is what you guys did well in. Did you guys, you know, you should have considered these types of solutions." You know, just some overall, um, feedback. So that is usually how I facilitate, um, such discussion.

CH: Okay. And I'm just curious in the type of comments that the students are making. So, they, so they are commenting on each other's, um, posts. Do you find that, um, and maybe there is a difference between first years to third years? Maybe there is no difference? I don't know, um, do you find that students comment in a superficial manner or, um, are they commenting where you can see there is reflection, there is constructive type of feedback coming from the students? How would you, how would you define the type of comments that they are posting on each other's responses?

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P2: So, for my first-year students, um, some of them think that it is a game <laugh>. And so, a lot of their responses are very, um, superficial. Some of them will respond, you know, with like one-word answers, that type of thing, and not take it seriously. Um, but then I also don't want to generalize because there's also some students within the first year, um, classes that I lecture that do actually, you know, provide constructive feedback and, you know, are, are reflective in nature. Um, but what I do, you know overall, about generalization overall, my, my third-year students as well as second year students, um, they will, they do take it more seriously, um, overall, and they will, you know, be commenting more constructive, uh, feedback. Um, you know, we will always get those students that comment on superficial things, but the majority, I would say, they provide more constructive feedback than that of the first-year students.

CH: Okay. Cool. Um, okay, so I was just referring back to that problem-solving and the discussion board. Um, and then with, with the type of activities that you do where you do say a YouTube where you are looking at a particular crisis and getting them to, to see how they would have, um, responded. When they brainstorm, do you do in... When you, when you brainstorm, is it an individual activity? Or do you work together as groups, just out of curiosity? Or is it a mixture?

P2: So, I usually, because YouTube videos, um, you know, sometimes students get kicked out of our [webinar], so they don't actually, you know, they don't actually watch the full video. So that is like a technical issue that often happens. So initially I would make it an individual approach. But what I have found over time is that students were getting kicked out and so a lot of them, you know, when you, when I asked them, you know, "What, what do you think about this? You know, what solutions do you have?" They would say, "Well, I didn't even watch the video." So to, to counteract that, um, issue, I found that using the break-out groups in [the webinar], was very beneficial because students will be in a group of, you know, five or six individuals, and if one or two didn't watch, the other ones could always, you know, catch them up to speed and just, you know, summarize what happened in such video. Um, so I like to do it within groups. I also think that in a group setting, um, students can, can learn from each other, they can bounce off ideas. Um, so brainstorming becomes more effective. The, the brainstorming, um, skill itself becomes more effective when it is done within a group and where, where participants are, you know, engaging. And what I like to do as well within, within the groups is I like to jump from group to group, um, which [the webinar], you know, allows us to do, um, and just also facilitate and see, you know, are all the students engaging? Because sometimes they just sit there, and they don't actually do anything. So, I like to just sit and observe and see the students and encourage them, you know. And see whether they are having technical issues or not. Um, but also to try and facilitate so that they are, you know, remaining active online.

CH: Okay. And so, engagement obviously is important to you, but you have spoken about developing communication primarily through presentations.

P2: Yes.

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CH: But would you also then say that communication is also the ability to communicate with each other through peer-to-peer learning in, in completing various activities?

P2: Absolutely. Um, and what I like to do, not only in face-to-face, but also online, is to make them do a lot of group activities. Because I also feel that when they are working in, in the real world, when they are in the industry, they are going to be within a team. They are going to be within a group. And you know, some students dislike it, others like working in a group. But for those who dislike it, I always remind them, or, you know, "When you are in industry one day, you're going to have to be able to work in a team. You are going to have to be able to do teamwork, to have that group synergy." Um, so I try to encourage that now so that it is not such a, you know, unfamiliar thing to them when they are in industry one day.

CH: Okay. And [Janet], just by the nature of your modules, um, is your focus just primarily on the verbal ability, or are you also focused on the written ability?

P2: So, for me, I think, you know, communication is twofold. So that verbal ability is vital, but also that the written components is important as well. So how I like to facilitate that, um, is through allowing students to write blog posts or, or journals on, within [the institution's online platform]. Um, because, you know, it is one thing knowing how to, to talk effectively as a communicator, but it is another thing knowing how to, to write down one's ideas and to form an argument and to be able to substantiate your viewpoint and perspective. Um, so I often like to encourage students to also, you know, partake in blog activities as well as journals on [the institution's online platform].

CH: Okay. Cool. And then, okay, so we, we've looked at how you support, so how you have supported the development of these graduate attributes. So, from a design element... So, when you are creating your online learning experiences, what do you consider an important element to bring into this creation in order to develop the 21st century graduate attributes?

P2: So, for me, one of the most important things for, you know, a learning design itself, um, is one that fosters independent thinking. So, I don't just want students to, you know, regurgitate what's being said, you know, in the PowerPoint presentation or within their textbook. But one that fosters, you know, independent thinking. For them to think outside of the box, for them to think more critically about topics. So, um, so, so that independent thinking for me is very important. Um, also the use of of ICT. So, my learning design now that, that I create, um, is obviously twofold due to the fact that there's face-to-face classes. But I always consider that ICT element that that is incorporated within my, my, my learning design through the creation of activities that are more suited for, you know, online learning than how they would be in a face-to-face setting. Um, the, the reason why the incorporation of ICT is so important is because when students are in industry one day, um, some students are going to work remotely. That is also a very popular thing now, especially since the pandemic. So, they, they need to be able to work on, you know, effectively on online platforms and programs and software, and to be aware and familiar on how to use that. And what I found with some of my students is that skill often lacks,



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that, that technical skill. So, like for example, they don't, some students don't know how to scan a QR code that takes them to the activity. When the student is on Padlet, for example, they are not sure how to actually use that tool. Um, so it, it, it just makes me a little bit worried when I see that sometimes because when they are in industry, they, they are going to have to learn quickly. And they are going to have to, yes there is on the job training and learning, but they are going to have to learn very quickly to function within that climate. Um, so for me, that incorporation of, of ICT within the learning design becomes very important. The aspect of collaboration, which I have already mentioned previously, um, also is important. So, the, the, the ability for students to effectively work together with each other and to learn from each other. Um, and then also I have mentioned this, activities that, that, um, that focus on out-of-the-box thinking, but also real-world scenarios. So, what is going on in the world around them? Because sometimes students will read the textbook and then they just stop there. They don't consider, okay, but this theory actually applies to what is going on, especially in the media and within, you know, our, you know, current news, stories and topics today. So, for me, that is very important and I like to always foster such topics within the learning design as well. Um, so I would say those are the major elements that I like to, to focus on.

CH: Okay. So, if I look at the design elements, so you are taking in quite a few things. You are looking at how do you bring in, or how do you foster independent thinking? You are looking at how do you incorporate ICT to suit the activity design or to suit the activity and the outcome of that activity. Um, the third aspect is to build in collaboration or collaborative opportunities for students. And then the real-world application, which kind of ties in the relevance of, of the theoretical underpinnings.

P2: Yes.

CH: Okay. So, so those would be the four. When you are looking at fostering independent thinking, do you intentionally then build in exercises that require individual work? Or, um, when you're fostering independent thinking, is it through just the various activities that you are scaffolding in a particular lecture? So maybe just unpack that a little bit more for me, just so I can understand the thinking of how you foster that independent thinking.

P2: No problem. So, um, for students, in terms of independent thinking, um, the activity that I like to, to always use for this particular skill is debates. So, I will present a debate in a class, and then, um, students are required to voice their own viewpoint and perspective. Because what I found is a lot of students, um, when I, when I did do debates in groups, a lot of students kind of just, you know, went with the ideas of their friends. And they didn't actually think about it for themselves. Um, so when I do create like a debate type of exercise, um, I will ensure that that student's... Each one of the students is given the opportunity to voice his or her own perspective. Because such can be seen in the workplace environment as well when they are required to, you know, present on their own, or they are required to present their facts or their research that they have conducted personally on a variety of different topics. So independent thinking, I would say mainly I do it through debates. Um, it can be scaffolded into other type of activities where students are required to, you know, complete an activity, like a case study on their own. Um, but it

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usually is, um, within, you know, debate type of activities where they can present their own viewpoint and perspective.

CH: Okay. Um, and then just as part of your design, because you've already mentioned how you like to, to make connect, well, not necessarily make connections, but you, you like to bring in some lightheartedness, um, right at the outset of your lectures with a meme and that. Is it important setting a climate, a climate at the start of all your lectures? Or do you find that that is not necessarily a design element that you bring into to your online space? If that makes sense?

P2: It's interesting that you mentioned that Chantal Yes, it does. Um, because that is, that is actually part of my design element because I, I, I'm thinking now I do it in every single one of my online classes that I have, you know, done for this year, this year and, and years previously. Um, so yes, that is a necessary design element to create that, that relationship and that connection with the students from the get-go as they are joining. Um, also sometimes when, when, you know, a few students have joined early, because I always join like 15 minutes before the time to set everything up. And so, some students like to join a bit early and I'll, I will chat to them, you know. "How are you doing?" You know, "how is your day going? How is your week? Have you started working on the assignment?" You know, type of small talk with them, um, just so that they can feel comfortable and that, that there is also that relationship that is being maintained as well.

CH: And just out of curiosity, do you put your, your video on so that they can see you or do you keep it off?

P2: Yes. So, I, I usually like to have my video on. It honestly depends on, you know, where I am, and, and you know, like for that particular day. Um, but in most of my classes, I, I won't have it on the whole time because I know students are using their, their data and things. Um, but I will have it on, even if it is just for five minutes just to chat to them. Um, and just to see how they are doing. And I often encourage them to unmute and, and to talk to me instead of just typing on the chat box. Because it allows me to, you know, to hear their voices and to maintain that relationship.

CH: And when you use your video, is there a specific reason why you put your video on?

P2: Yes. To, to maintain that, that relationship and also so that they can see me. Because sometimes students feel that once again, like I am at a distance from them and they are like, "Arg, we are bombarded with, you know, PowerPoint slides and worksheets, you know. Where is our lecturer? You know they like to, to, to see us. Um, so that is the main reason why I usually do that.

CH: So, so the technique that you are using then by getting students to unmute their mic is also to close a little bit of that distance?

P2: Yes, absolutely.

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CH: Because you are making use of the senses of hearing, seeing...

P2: Yes.

CH: ...um, and, and creating that connection or relationship with your students. Okay. Any other design elements? Because maybe while we were talking, something was like, "Oh, I also do this."

P2: Yeah... I'm, I'm looking because I, I also, like, I wrote down notes based on the questions. Um, so I'm just looking at, at what I have said. Um, but I think I have mentioned all of them... And I already, we already spoke about, you know, the incorporation of, of ICT. So, in just about every single activity that I design online, um, there is an ICT component embedded within it. Um, so it's not just like, "Okay, guys, go and complete a worksheet." And they have the worksheet printed, you know, I gave it to them previously and have it printed in front of them. It's always online. I, I, you know, I, I tried to do that in 2020 and it was a disaster <laugh>. So, from moving, you know, moving forward from that, the learning experience that, that I have, uh, witnessed is to try and embed the activities online. And there is so much out. There are so many tools out there to, to use at our disposal. Um, so I really, you know, incorporated a lot of those different tools into it. And it sometimes takes a lot of time to try and think about what, which tool would be the best tool, um, for that particular learning outcome. Um, so that often takes some time to, to think about. Um, but I usually like to incorporate an ICT tool or a technique, um, embedded in every single activity that I have designed for, for the online classes.

CH: Yes. I am going to jump, I am going to jump to number five then, because you are already talking to the ICTs. So, you have already given me how you select. So, so you select if, if I've, I have understood correctly, you select the technology based on it being the best tool to meet a specific learning outcome for that activity.

P2: Yes. Um, so I use Bloom's digital taxonomy. So, I downloaded the, the PDF from from [the institution's online platform]. And its, that resource is so valuable. You know, I'm, I am so grateful that such was made because it helped me so much in 2020 when everything was online. Um, so, you know, within Bloom's Digital taxonomy, it basically, it mentions, you know, the type of activities or the type of tools that you should be using to assess, you know, various different things. So for example, if I am going to assess a student's ability to, to understand concepts, then I will use Padlet or Canva, for example. If I want students to apply concepts, then I will use Flipgrid or you know, Mindmeister or Mentimeter. Um, if I want them to evaluate, then I will place them within groups on [ the webinar]. So, um, that, that Blooms Digital Taxonomy is kind of like my guideline that I really follow, um, when I get stuck. Because sometimes, you know, I have these amazing ideas in my head, <laugh>, but then trying to translate them into reality online is another story. Um, so Bloom's Digital Taxonomy kind of, you know, refocuses me and allows me to think, "Okay, this is what I can do." Um, as I said, it's a very valuable resource and that's, that is pretty much what I use. So, I'll, I will usually have like two documents open. So, I have Bloom's Digital Taxonomy and then I will have the students module outline for that particular module. And I will go through each of the learning outcomes that I plan to,

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to teach the students within that class. And I will look at Bloom's Digital Taxonomy simultaneously and decide, you know, what are the best type of activities, um, to create based on that so that the student can master that outcome. Because usually the outcome will be structured in such a way that says, "to assess" or "to evaluate". Um, so that usually is kind of like a, a a starting point for me to then decide on what activity to use.

CH: And just out of curiosity, do you sometimes give your students an opportunity to use a, so if they have to create something, um, because I would imagine that you probably give them, um, something that they have to create in response to something. Um, would, would you allow the students to choose their own medium? Or do you tell them the medium that they should be using?

P2: That's actually a very interesting, um, question because for the most part when I design my activities, I'm usually the one who chooses the medium. However, um, in some activities... So, for example, if students were to be creating a mindmap, um, I am aware that not all students are equipped to, you know, use Mindmeister, which can be quite tricky to use, you know, if you have never used it before. Um, so especially for my first-year students that are not so tech savvy, um, I like to, you know, open the floor for them to use any other software. So, if they want to go back, you know, old school and use Microsoft Word or PowerPoint, then they are more than welcome to use that software. You know, some of my students will actually hand draw their mindmap and take a picture of it, um, which I don't really like. I always try and encourage them to be using online or on their laptops or computers. Um, but I find that that is often the case. So when, when they are doing mindmaps or when they have to, you know, actually illustrate, you know, diagrams or models or theories, um, also when they are doing presentations. So, a lot of my students always, you know, always resort to PowerPoint. You know, PowerPoint is the most easiest presentation platform to use. However, um, I, my, myself and for my own lecturing, I have used Prezi before, and the students were amazed. They were like, "Wow, what is this? They have never seen such before." And so, I said, "You know, you guys must have a look at Prezi", you know, when they, when they have to give presentations. Some of my students will use Prezi as well, um, to, to... So that that option, that door is open for them to use it. So, it really depends on, on the nature of the activity. Um, if it is something like presentations or you know, a mindmap, or type of diagram that they have to illustrate, um, then I will usually open the floor for them to use any platform that they are more comfortable with using.

CH: Okay. Um, and then you, you have answered 5.2 because it's when using these ICTs, what is your aim in the development of your activity? But I, from, from the way you described it was you are designing your activity, you are designing the activity to reach a particular outcome.

P2: Yes. To reach the, the learning outcome. But I also feel it goes beyond just, you know, mastering the theoretical outcome. You know, that is at the end of the day what students are going to be assessed on in terms of their, you know, assignment or exam. Um, but for me that development of, you know, the graduate attributes as you mentioned previously, but also like soft skills, um, becomes very important. So, so for example, one

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of the outcomes could be illustrate the communication model, um, and then I will create an activity that enables students to, you know, to design their own communication model because there are different variations of it. Um, yes, you know, they, they are mastering that outcome because they are able to list all the components of it and show the connections between the concepts which is required to, to complete that outcome. But also, they are now using their own creativity. You know, they are not just looking at the model that's in the textbook. Um, there's a lot of different types of communication models out there and students can use their own discretion. They can create something that is unique and something that they can actually learn from. Um, so that is just one example of, of yes, that it's important to...the aim of it is to obviously master that outcome, but also it is at the back of, of my mind, I'm like, okay, they are mastering the outcome, they know what to do when it comes up in the exam, but there is also that creative, that creativity element, for example, that has been practiced in such exercise.

CH: So, you might link some of the, so some of the attributes you want to see.

P2: Yes, <laugh>, it is a very sneaky way to do things, but I find it does, it does work for the students oftentimes.

CH: And what is their reaction? You know, do they enjoy making use of these technologies or do they moan a lot? Like what's their reaction? Or I suppose it it might just be the type of students you have in different classes may respond differently?

P2: Absolutely. Um, so it, it is, it's always a mixed <laugh> mixed responses that I get. You know, some students, um, are very interested in, you know, using new technology and new features. And then you get others who are, you know, couldn't care less and they are lazy. I don't like to say that word, but they, they can be very lazy, and they are very apprehensive to use such technology. And it's, what I find is not only the laziness, um, some of the students, come, well, our students in general, they come from different backgrounds. So, some students are very good with, you know, technology and they have a lot of experience in using it. And then we get students that are, you know, technology is very unfamiliar to them for the most part. So, they often feel apprehensive because they are, you know, they, they, the fear of the unknown or they are scared they're going to make mistakes. Um, they are not really familiar on how to use it. Um, so it's, it's, it's always that balancing act, you know, trying to use ICTs that are simple and easy to understand. Um, that are not too complicated because we have to consider the, the various different levels of, of, you know, technical skills that students have, um, got, especially first year students where they, they are so different from each other, and they are all all from different backgrounds. They don't really know each other well, as well, in the early days. Um, so it's, it's always that for me, it's that that balancing act on trying to create activities and trying to use tools that are familiar with all the students. So it is, it is generally a mixed response that I have. Um, I found, you know, as you know, you were speaking about progression earlier, so as my students progress in their, in their studies and when they reach third year level, because, you know, I'm looking at my students that I had from 2020 who are now, you know, just about finished, um, they, they have developed so much. You know, they were so apprehensive with using those technical

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tools, um, like Flipgrid, um, Padlet. They were, they were very apprehensive. It was very foreign to them. Now when they are at their third-year level, they are so comfortable with using it. They are so familiar because we, we have been using it so often throughout their studies. Um, they have become more familiar with it. So that's often what I have found. So, for my first-year students, I don't like to create activities that are too, um, you know, complicated or tools that are too complicated to use because I'm trying to gauge where their technical skills are at. But with my third-year students, and if I, especially because I, I often lecture consecutive modules over the years for that particular cohort, um, then I know, "Okay, these students, they know how to use Flipgrid", so then I will choose that type of tool for the activity. So, it really does depend. Um, there, there often is a lot of mixed responses though.

CH: So [Janet], I am going to go back to then preparing students for the 21st century workplace. And if I have, like listened carefully to, to what you are doing with, with the design element of building in and embedding through the activity technology... For me, you also are focused on equipping them with the technical skills. So it could be that you are looking for, um, possibly from some of your students a digital fluency and from other students it would be a digital literacy that they, they are still going to be working with the basic elements. So, to me that is possibly then a skill, um, that I, that I think you're actually trying to build into, to your online sessions. And then the second one that I thought of is a certain level of adaptability.

P2: Yes, absolutely. And adaptability, you know, as I mentioned way like in the beginning, you know, the ability, especially to adapt to, you know, unprecedented and, and unpredictable changes. You know, everyone fears change and unpredictability, but change is inevitable. And students need to be able to adapt to, to new environments, you know. And a lot of them are very apprehensive when I introduce like a new tool. So, if I use Flipgrid for example, a lot of them are like, you know, "Wow, why do we have to do this?" You know? And I am like, "Well, you need to adapt to, to new things." You can't just be very, like close-minded. You need to be open-minded to change and to learning new things. And trying to promote that willingness to, to learn and to engage, um, is always a tricky one. But, you know, we can only do our best. Um, but as I said, you know, those who are apprehensive, I have often found, um, for the most part, once they have actually, you know, used the tool and played around with it a little bit, they are like, "Oh, well, you know, it actually is quite nice." It is always that like fear of the unknown, um, that they often have. And I always remind them, you know, they are, they are the generation that are digital natives. So, you know, they, they need to be aware. They all know how to use, you know, social media platforms on their, on their cell phones. But when it comes to using tools for learning and engagement... And I often tease them with this. I say, you know, you all know how to use social media, but when it comes to, to using tools for your own learning and for your studies, then all of a sudden you don't know. Um, so we often have those cases as well, where students, they, they know very well how to use a particular tool, but they are apprehensive. Because like they are, "Well, you know, it's for learning and," you know, you have to try- and, and all those misconceptions that students have- you have to try and break them down, um, and make them realize that learning is

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not only important, but it can also be done in a fun and stimulating manner. Um, so that is what I believe is quite important too.

CH: Would you say that an element of your design is to bring in something that is fun and stimulating?

P2: Absolutely. Um, so what, as I said previously, so what I like to do, um, is I'll, I will allow students this- I usually do this face-to-face, but it can also work, I have done it on an online platform as well- Um, so in the, in the first 10 minutes, um, I will ensure that my students, um, go online, like on onto, you know, the news part of Google, and they have to tell me five current news stories and what are their feelings towards it. Um, so it can be any news. It doesn't have to be like political or economic. It can be, you know, entertainments or pop culture, which a lot of them like. Um, but any type... Five, five news stories, they just have to list, five news stories that are, are of interest to them and what do they feel about this particular, um, news story. Um, and that not only helps, you know, stimulate their minds, but also, um, it, for, for my students who are going, who are going to be working in, you know, corporate communication and dealing with crisis reputation and management, they need to be aware of what is going on in the world around them. They cannot be living under a rock. Um, so I am also like-killing two birds with one stone- you know. It is trying to make it simulate and engaging for students and something that they can relate to. But then I am also looking at, okay, when they are in the industry one day, they will be able to, to navigate and to research what is going on in, in the real world and in, in their environment around them. Um, so that is usually what I like to do.

CH: Okay. And then let's, let's focus now on, um, techniques and strategies that you, you use in the online space. And remember that online doesn't just mean the synchronous, um, lecture that you have with them. It can also be where they are accessing [the institution's online platform] in their own time to complete activities. So, so that asynchronous space as well. So, what techniques or strategies do you use to encourage engagement from your students? So, I am already aware: mic, chat function. You definitely use those.

P2: Yes.

CH: Um, what else do you use?

P2: Oh, okay. So, for, for engagement, um, so I will use, yes, obviously the mic. Um, I also will break them in, into the break-out group. So that is also what I like to use. Um, Flipgrid is also nice because they're, they are able to make those like short videos or recordings of themselves. Um, so if they don't want to talk on Blackboard, they can at least, you know, create something else on, on Flipgrid where they can use filters and all these different, um, features available to them. Um, engagement also, um, so what I like to do, you know, as a lecturer myself, is to post a lot of announcements for my students to just keep them in the loop with what is going on. Because it is very easy for them to fall behind when we are not having that face-to-face meeting. Um, so I often post announcements. I also have a WhatsApp group, um, for each of my classes, um, where,

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you know, I will post announcements on, but it is also a group for them to chat among their peers as well. Um, so sometimes even within an online lecture, if they don't want to use the blackboard, um, break-out groups, then I will say, "Okay, you guys can talk to each other on your WhatsApp groups." Um, and they, you know, they love to use WhatsApp, so they like to do that. Um, usually. Other features that I like to use, so async, those are the synchronous ones that I like to use. The asynchronous ones are through those discussion boards, is through those blog posts. Um, uh, often have at, at the beginning of, of the semester for all of my classes, I will have like an opening discussion board where students are encouraged to answer two questions. So, one question will be like, for example, what is your spirit animal? And then like another question will be, um, what, what is your expectations for this module? Like, do you want to get an A, do you just want to pass? Like your, your overall expectations? So, I like to use asynchronous engagement in terms of, of those blogs. In terms of those discussion boards. Those are the main ones that I, that I use really. Um, and then the other synchronous ones that I use also outside of [the institution's online platform], which I have already mentioned previously, um, is Padlet. So Padlet is a good one. Um, Jamboard as well. So Jamboard works well. I find when I am lecturing commerce-type of students, um, because Jamboard is more analytical than Padlet. So, I find, um, commerce students are more analytical in nature and they, you know, while my communication students, they are very visual creative thinkers. Jamboard is more suitable for, um, my, my Commerce students because they are more analytical in nature, and they don't like all these pictures and things. They are just like posting little notes or, um, commenting on, on different topics. Um, so those, those are the major platforms that I like to use. As well as Mentimeter, which is the creation of those word clouds, um, which my students find when we are unpacking like a new concept. Like what is communication? And then they have to post like ideas that come to the mind when they hear that word "communications". And then in, in live time, in real time, it actually creates that word cloud. So, um, ya, so that is usually the tool. I hope I have remembered all of them <laugh>. But I use quite a lot. But those are the ones that I usually use.

CH: Well, I also think what was very evident in that particular lecture was how you are constantly trying to provide them with a scenario through a resource. I mean, there was the YouTube clip with, um, "Friends". Um, what was it? It was to do with, uh, relationships. What was it? Defensive, I can't remember; one was open and one was closed.

P2: Supportive, uh, relationships.

CH: Yes. Yes. That is it.

P2: A model of supportive. And a model of a defensive. And engaging their opinions on stuff. Ya.

CH: Yes. You were constantly engaging with them, so they had to respond to everything. The whole design of that particular observation was getting them to respond at every point. Um...



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P2: Yes,

CH: ...through, and, and in this particular case, it was the chat functions. I think there was break-out rooms as well. But whatever technology you are using is a form of interaction. Do you feel that because you are using quite a few ones where you can see what is happening, like Jamboard, you can show the students what is happening, they can see it visually how people are manipulating the Jamboard. Likewise, with Padlet, you can see the posts come up. I mean, you can, you can share that screen with them live. Do you feel that that real-time feedback is an important component for enhancing engagement among students? Or, or isn't there really that, that, um, it is that that is not a necessarily advantage that comes from these technologies? I don't know. What is your view on that real-time feedback? Do you think it supports or enhances engagement or not?

P2: Absolutely. Um, so what, what I usually find is when I am doing, you know, like break-out groups or when they are using the chat, um, the chat, it is very hard to gauge, you know, are they actually responding? Because it doesn't tell you when a student is typing, for example. So, we don't know are they actively engaged with that or not? And the students themselves are in a position like, "Okay, but no one else is answering. So should I actually be answering?" So, they, they don't want to be the first one to answer. Um, whereas Padlet, and when I share my screen with them, they see, you know, their other peers commenting and posting and, and that encourages them. They are like, "Oh, okay. Wow. You know, that's a really cool meme that so-and-so has posted. Let me also post my viewpoints." So, I find when I am using Padlet and Jamboard, when I am sharing my screen, um, with the students, they (and also Mentimeter too) then, they are more encouraged and more inclined to do it, um, than just on the chat feature where it is quite distant. The chat features, I see its potential, but it can be very distant for a lot of students because they, they don't know who should they answer? Shouldn't they? You know, no one else is answering. Um, so it is often in like an awkward situation. And then us, as lecturers, we are sitting there, we are waiting now for responses and it is like crickets in the background, <laugh> because we are waiting for, for their, their feedback. Um, so, you know, for for both the lecturer and students, it, it is better to use more of more, um, you know, live, real-time sharing of screen and allow them to see that engagement.

CH: Okay. And, and I mean, I have actually heard in quite a few online sessions is, "Well, I am not too sure if anyone is responding." So, there is definitely a disjointed type of engagement, um, if they are writing long responses. Obviously if they are short responses, you can get that quick engagement. But where you are actually waiting for a substantial response,

P2: Yes.

CH: It is disconcerting for both, for students and for lecturers because you, you need to see the little dots going, <laugh>

P2: Ya. I wish we had that; you know. [The webinar tool] really needs to look into that because, um, it really breaks the flow as well. You know, because also on like a time

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management perspective, um, where, you know, there is so much work to actually teach these students in terms of content, um, that we cannot be waiting, you know, 10 minutes for students to type a response. Um, and then that some, sometimes, that is something I just tell them, "Guys, just, just talk to me," you know, "just unmute and just," you know, "you can say everything that you are typing in, in like a minute, you know, you don't have to type everything out." But of course, some of them are shy. Um, so they still like to, to use that chat box. But I feel it has potential, but it, it can, you know, it kind of breaks down the flow of the actual, uh, class itself.

CH: And then just the last question that is linked to, to...because you mentioned break-out rooms as well, um, and the silence there. Do you tend to find that the students, um, need quite a bit of probing and prompting, prompting in the breakout rooms? Or when you move into the rooms, are they naturally engaging, whether it's in the chat function or a mic, using the mic?

P2: So that is like a tricky one to, to, to gauge because it really depends on, on the students themselves. So, some students are quite, you know, academically inclined and they are very committed. And so, they will, you know, be engaging. And when I go into those type of groups, they will be engaging. And also, I randomly assign them so that they are not only just with their friends, they are with other people who are of different levels in terms of, you know, academics and, um, skill-sets. But, um, what what I have noticed is that when I do join the group, students see that I have joined the group and then all of a sudden then they start talking. Same goes in face-to-face when they see us walking towards them, then all of a sudden, they start talking and engaging. Um, so that is what I have noticed. But, but what I feel with break-out groups and online learning in general is that students, um, they don't often have like a stable internet connection. So, it is not that they don't want to participate, it is that they physically can't, um, because of that technical restraint. So, they are like kicked out of the actual, uh, meeting or, um, you know, they, they can't hear their, their peers. So, there's, there is other like, technical factors that can influence that engagement. Um, you know, not just the fact that they are lazy, or they just don't want to work today. Um, other features, uh, other factors beyond, um, can influence that.

CH: Hmm. Okay. So [Janet], I am going to stop you there because I do know that you are... Time is of huge value, um, and I want to thank you so much. We will definitely pick up on the technical elements, um, in the next session. Do you want to set up a follow-up, um, one now or would you rather do that when you are back in KZN?

P2: Um, so I can, I would rather do when I am back in KZN. The reason being because I don't have my diary in front of me right now.

CH: Okay, perfect.

P2: Um, as soon as, as soon as I've, I have returned home. Um, so by next week Monday I will be able to just confirm, um, you know, a time and day for it. But thank you so much for providing me with this opportunity, Chantal. I really do appreciate it.

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CH: No, absolutely. I am going to stop the recording.