DARREN BRITTEN: Thank you, everybody. Welcome to our 4th session of the UDL Symposium in the online program. Closed captions are available for this session and can be enabled by selecting the cc button in Zoom.

If you have any questions throughout this presentation, we ask you to put those into the chat and we will pose them to our two presenters here today. For this session, Enacting UDL, Enabling Universal Asynchronous Approaches to Reach More Learners presented by Elizabeth Hitches and Stuart Woodcock from Griffith University. We have about 18 minutes or so they're hoping maybe a little bit shorter for presentation, leaving us with 3 to 5 minutes hopefully for questions at the end. So without further ado, over to you, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH HITCHES: Thank you so much. Thanks to those of you who are joining us live or who might be watching this recording back. I am Elizabeth Hitches, my pronouns are she/her. On this rather cold day I am wearing a black and beige striped jumper, and I have shoulder length brown hair. I'd like to introduce my co presenter, Associate Professor Stuart Woodcock.

STUART WOODCOCK: Hey, everybody. My name is Stuart Woodcock. I'm an average height, short hair with bluish eyes, and I am currently in Brisbane, Queensland where I was just saying that it feels a bit cold but it is probably warmer than many other parts of Australia.

ELIZABETH: We'd like to acknowledge our country that we are joining from. So we'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the various lands upon which we all are joining from today and recognise their valuable contributions for Australian and global society. We'd like to pay our respects to theirs Elders, ancestors and their descendants who continue cultural and spiritual connections to country, and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in this event. And we'd like to recognise that we are joining from the lands of the Jagera and Turrbal Peoples. That's where Griffith University is situated.

A little bit of housekeeping. This session is being recorded, so please hide your camera if you don't wish to be recorded on screen. The session is also being captioned, as Darren mentioned, and there should be a link in the chat to some live captioning.

We are going to have time for discussion at the end, so please put your questions in the chat. And of course, if there is time at the end you could also raise your hand, and as much as possible ensure the surrounding environment is quiet. I know Stuart and I are going to be doing our best today with various noises around us and turn off mics when not speaking. On to the fun stuff. Stuart, UDL at tertiary level.

STUART: Thanks, Elizabeth. So what we are talking about is a course that we run here at Griffith University for pre-service teachers who are training to become primary or secondary school teachers. The course subject is called Inclusive Classroom. So we prepare the pre-service teachers in teaching inclusive education which we incorporate differentiation and universal design for learning within that.

We have approximately 400 students, which goes across a number of university campuses. So Griffith has a campus in Mt Gravatt near Brisbane, we also have Logan, and then down at the Gold Coast too, as well as online classes. We have approximately something in the region of 16, 17 classes with our 400 students.

So the overview of the course is that we've gradually, over the years, developed varied approaches to covering the courses. So we have the more traditional weekly face to face classes through the semester. We also have weekly online classes through the semester, and which we've now started to incorporate evening classes as well as day classes. We also have intensive days. So rather than a couple of hours every single week with classes, we combine the classes within two full days. So we have one full day at the beginning of the semester and one full day at the end of the semester and, again, across various campuses too.

Then with the online classes, we record those classes so that students who are unable to attend can then access the recorded classes and that's what we'll be focusing on in today's presentation. So we've kind of been developing this through the student voices. So we've really brought to the forefront of the planning and development those student voices to try and accommodate for them in as many accessible ways as possible. And so the observed benefits, the learning options for them, so again seeing what are the best approaches for their learning in regard to perception, action and expression and engagement.

But as well as their personal circumstances, so enabling that equitable learning for a diversity of experience. Whether it is to do with their health, their finances or time with employment. So sort of a lot of this being, of course, around inclusive classrooms, a lot of the focus is about the inclusiveness, the principles of students making sure they feel welcomed, valued and considered, have equitable access to participation in the learning, and to be actively engaged, so the motivation, the persistence and the autonomy within the learning process through the semester.

So currently across the majority of universities we have those typical recorded classes. And so the kind of perception of those are that it is often seen as a backup but not a pedagogical tool for learning. So those live time classes are the pedagogical preference. Often universities will make attendance to those live classes compulsory. So they may add 10 per cent, 20 per cent assessment to the attendance. If you don't turn up, you don't get the marks. Or it is just compulsory and they have to turn up to 80 per cent of the classes. So it is seen just as a backup, as an emergency kind of thing if they can't attend one particular week, or it is used as revision for assessment and exams, and so on.

So the misconceptions about the recorded classes, that they shouldn't be relied upon, that they are not engaging, they don't allow students to demonstrate understanding, and then they are only a quick fix approach, pretty much a backup. So the result in what we have been saying is not really a very inclusive approach in accommodating for those particular students. The recording is clearly centred on the students in live classes, and often a lot of those classes are just they don't even consider that their students are recorded. They press record and then just run the tutorial sessions as if it is a live time class.

Some and what Elizabeth is going to talk about in a moment have started to factor and consider those students who are using the recorded sessions. By only using and focusing on the live time, the students miss out on those learning activities, and sort of being able to engage in the content throughout the sessions, throughout the weeks.

ELIZABETH: When we think about who might then actually depend on these recordings, so if we are going into a tutorial, they are watching the recording back, they are only seeing what's happening in that live time class, perhaps students are in breakout rooms and all they are seeing is that that blank screen and that noiseless space, while other students who are in the live classes are engaging in activities, who is this non inclusive recording actually going to impact?

Now, what I am going to show you is some examples from our classes, and these are classes that just happened in the last year. So just from our class alone, students have been telling us that they have been using these recordings when they have been having to work all the time. So they've had shifts scheduled that they can't get out of, they need to have a roof over their head and pay bills, but they don't want to miss out on learning, that recording has really caught them and let them still engage in their learning.

We also have students who engage in professional experience placements which are part of their educational degree but that can also mean students can miss out on live classes.

Then we have students who might have chronic health conditions or other medical conditions. So we had a student who was pregnant and had lots of appointments, and the recordings were their way to engage in class when they weren't able to make it on time to those classes. Or even students who travel a lot. So perhaps being on campus is not always practical, but they can access the online version.

We also saw some really interesting things come about where we had students saying they could actually take information at their own pace. So the recording became a preference because they could actually pause it, they could rewatch something that they weren't too clear on. So this became a learning tool for them. Not just a backup, but definitely something they were using proactively to support their learning.

We saw some really interesting things with students saying when life threw a curve ball, they had an unexpected vet trip, or their car broke down, they weren't going to miss out on learning. There was an option for them and an inclusive option.

So the very first iteration to make this more inclusive, we were thinking how can we actually make sure that all students have a way to access and engage in that recording? How can we also show them that they are considered and valued? They are not just onlookers to that experience, they are really and truly considered in that experience?

And it can be something as simple as what we did at the beginning of this presentation. We welcomed those joining live and welcomed those watching the recording. Straight away you know that whichever mode you are engaging with, you've been considered.

We also make sure that when students in our live classes go into breakout rooms, we don't just have that blank space on the recording. This is our time to actually turn to those students and say, "Okay, so for those of you watching this recording, this is how you can engage." And we make sure there is a way that students can engage in that learning activity independently if they can't engage in that group work activity live.

So this first iteration was really looking at how do we create that environment that minimises threats? We've got this accepting and supportive environment that actually optimises relevance for students.

The other thing we were looking at is how can we provide access to that co constructed knowledge that develops within the class, and also foster a sense of belonging in the learning community? When students go into breakout rooms, some fantastic discussions and learning happen that don't get captured on the recording. So what can we do? Well, any shared working documents those breakout groups were using, the links were available on the slides and also in the recorded chat so students could access that written work and see what developed in that breakout room.

But also what many teachers already do is after those breakout groups finish, you have that discussion in class that summarises the learning across those groups, and that is also captured on the recording. So thinking about that UDL lens we have that auditory means of accessing the co constructed knowledge, we also have the written and visual evidence of that so two different ways that you can engage with that learning and also creating that feeling of being part of that collaborative learning community.

But the work was not done because, first of all, with the benefits of student voices we knew students were saying they could access it at a time and place that suits their needs, knowing there was a backup is reducing their stress, which I think is a fantastic thing to do, particularly nowadays. We know that students are taking it at their own pace, having that processing time, having the ability to pause and rewind, and being able to actually revise that content at a later date as well and develop their understanding.

So all of these wonderful things are happening, but we still also have some work to do. That is how can we actually make sure our students engaging with that online recording also can be part of co constructing that knowledge? So not just having access to it and engaging with it, how can they actually be part of that co construction? How can we also build in opportunities for formative feedback? Typically in a live class we'd be able to guide students' understanding, students would be providing explanations, we'd be able to guide that in particular ways that it might need to go. That can't happen with a recording, so how can we build in these opportunities for formative feedback? How can students give us feedback? You can usually sense when something's working really well for students in a live class. How can we get that feedback from students watching the recording?

Thinking about, again, how do we strengthen that fostering and collaboration of community, and how do we really increase that mastery oriented feedback?

STUART: What we did at the end of last year after that first iteration was we took students' feedback and we heard their voices for the second iteration that will occur in this coming semester. So looking at tweaking it to incorporate and strengthen from the students' feedback, what we are going to do is during those live time classes when students go into the breakout groups, where previously we've kind of just spoken to those students during that time and then wait for the others to come back in, what we are going to do is use additional slides.

So that time when the live students are in those breakout groups and having discussions and working on particular tasks, we can use some of that time to add additional slides in just for those who are accessing the recorded version of those live classes.

So what we would do is, during that time, we would set up particular tasks and activities for those who are accessing the class in an asynchronous manner. So throughout the whole semester, we would have a shared document for those students. So while the others are in their breakout groups engaging in discussions and everything around the particular piece of the content, we would then engage the asynchronous students who are watching the recording and give them particular tasks as well that are slightly adapted from the live classes and we would give them a shared document.

Basically, there would be two ways in which we would incorporate this and foster and engage those students. Part 1, students will be engaged with those weeks' activities. So we would create specific tasks for those students to complete in the shared document. So the shared document will be set up with those particular tasks for students to add into those discussions.

The second part of this would be where the instructors go in at a particular time, say at the end of that week, and engage with the students' comments, discussions and work that they have done throughout those particular tasks, and add feedback and comments to add to that discussion. And so as well as sort of engaging with those tasks and activities where after the instructors have engaged with that, the students can then come back and add further into their responses, discussions, those things.

But as well as that, like with the live time class where we say, "Has anyone got any questions for us?", to have that discussion just to clarify their understanding, there will also be that opportunity for those asynchronous students in that through that shared document, where through the engagement of the activities and the weekly session, they can also ask questions in which we would come in and respond and give them another example, or give them feedback on their current understanding and those sorts of things. But it is actually having that Q&A engagement with those asynchronous students.

So sort of concluding remarks from this, looking at the current goal how can we provide the equitable and inclusive learning for those who are currently missing out, and hearing those student voices, how can we draw on their perspectives that can cater for their needs and strengthen that whole inclusion and quality kind of learning throughout? The future goal would be how can this be provided as another valid learning option? So how can we actually promote those recorded sessions as a pedagogical tool for students, not as a backup and emergency and think about those misconceptions.

As a reminder, students are illustrating the benefits of those various options for their learning modes. So hearing from them the benefits, whether it is the personal circumstances or their best learning approaches, is taking that on board as everything is moving forward, and actually adapting and changing and making things more accessible and adding that quality teaching and learning for those students.

ELIZABETH: Thank you so much. And we'd love to hear from you, so please feel free to reach out to Stuart or I. Stuart's email is: s.woodcock@griffith.edu.au, and mine, Elizabeth, e.hitches@griffith.edu.au. Hopefully we've left enough time for questions.

DARREN: Just a few minutes. We might get through a couple of things. Thank you very much for that presentation, Elizabeth and Stuart. Rachel asks, academics can often be resistant to providing recordings because they believe this reduces students' motivation to attend face to face classes. How can we respond to this resistance to provide recordings for all students?

ELIZABETH: I think I would point different academics to some of our legal requirements. We have legal requirements not to discriminate. We also have requirements to make sure that we have equitable and accessible learning experiences for all. So if we have a class that may be running purely in a live format, and yet we have a student who has to attend a hospital appointment and we have the option to provide a recording, then it is really hard to justify not making a learning experience more inclusive.

I think as well in terms of engagement, we want to make sure our students are engaged. What better way than to turn something that could just be a student looking in on a class to something that they can really actively participate in and have that sense of being part of that learning community. So we've got the legal requirements, but we've also got wanting our students to really engage deeply.

DARREN: I think you are right, shifting that passive approach is key. Melanie has commented that they are curious if the asynchronous students feel any kind of barrier by disclosing to others that they were not able to join "live", and that in a nation context we do not have students who do not want to lose face by not joining in the real class, and even if there is recorded options for them they will not engage.

ELIZABETH: I am happy to take this one unless you want to jump in Stuart.

STUART: Feel free, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH: I think for me, when I am running the online classes, I make sure that we are really setting up that idea that this is an inclusive culture from the outset. So it is very clear that sometimes your car might just break down, and we want to make sure that every single student has access to learning.

Students don't have to tell me the specific reason why something might happen. They tend to because we create a very inclusive culture, and we are in this Australian context, but it starts by building that expectation, that whatever is going on in your personal life, we are going to make sure that learning is accessible for you and we are going to make sure that you have a really quality learning experience.

DARREN: We are out of time. I think that's key. What you've just finished on is a great note to leave on. It is setting those expectations at the start; having that welcoming environment and letting everybody participate in that learning in letting them know what that will be. Thank you very much for your presentation today and it is a question, as you have noted, everyone ponders with and how we can do this, so we've got some good ammunition there. Thank you very much. And thank you, everybody, for joining us. We'll see you in the next session.

STUART: Thank you.

ELIZABETH: Thank you so much.