SARAH HUMPHREYS: Welcome everybody to our next session for today. It's my pleasure again to introduce yet another colleague from the University of Sydney, Dr Ella Collins-White. And Ella's going to take us on a 55 minute workshop, Leveraging Narratives for Systemic Change. Ella, I'm going to hand over to you.

ELLA COLLINS-WHITE: Thank you. Hi, everybody. So you may notice, just before I introduce myself, I will say I did have the Google slides up here before, so if anybody would like to follow along at their own pace on the slides, I've just uploaded that. So it should all work. There isn't too many links, or anything like that, but there are some slides that have a lot of text, which is also why I've got the printouts on the table of the two slides that have the Google slides, whichever one you would like. Okay, I'll go back to the previous slide if everybody is ready.

Now I have another Menti, sorry. I just wanted to get started by saying thank you for everybody being here today. I do acknowledge that maybe we're all feeling at different levels of energy today, coming with different experiences to this workshop. If you would like to let us know how you're feeling, it just gives us a sense of what's going on in the room, how everybody's energy levels are, whether you're really enthusiastic, or maybe it's the second session you've been to and you're feeling a bit tired waiting for that second coffee to hit. Yeah, it's just a way of connecting everybody in the room. So how do you feel today? Let us know. Looking at how everybody's feeling today. We've got lots of things happening, so while people are filling that in, I'll just introduce myself.

As Sarah said, I'm Ella. I'm from the University of Sydney and I work in educational innovation. I'm here with a few of my colleagues here today. We just heard from Kria. Sarah, who introduced me. Sam over here. And Kimberley as well. So we've all come down from Sydney just for the day. I'm a relatively tall person, I think, with brown hair and a pale freckly complexion. I'm wearing a black dress with some florals on it, and a skivvy, because it's a bit cold today. Coming from Sydney, I'm always afraid of the Melbourne weather. We're just checking in with how everybody is feeling today. I can see lots of people are excited. Feeling inspired. Curious, energised, still waking up, interested, cosy. Yeah, it is quite warm in here. I'm kind of regretting this choice of my extra skivvy now. Waiting for that coffee to hit. Happy, caffeinated, motivated, bloated, cold, tired. So we've really got the range of emotions happening here today in the classroom.

I did want to acknowledge and pay respects to the First Nation People, both of this country that we're on today, and of the people that are the traditional owners of the country on which Sydney University stands, which are the Gadigal People of the Eora nation.

I think it's really important to always keep in the forefront of our minds, as we're sharing own knowledge teaching, learning and research practices within this space, may we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the custodianship of country.

I like to keep both of these countries in mind because we're obviously here sharing this space, but we're also thinking about work that's been done in our own campus at Sydney University, so that's why I wanted to acknowledge the Gadigal as well.

So what are we looking for today? So these are the key steps that I'm thinking through in this 55 minute workshop. So beginning with why think about creating a case study, because this talk is about how can we leverage narratives for systemic change? How do we actually create a case study? So why, how, and then some time to think about your experiences and what might be fit for a good case study for your context.

Then some time to work with the participants on your table. So if you're sitting by yourself you might like to join a table, or maybe you'd like to work individually. That's totally okay as well.

Then the last option here, I'm hoping to leave some time for any very brave participants who would like to come and pitch their case study that they're thinking about writing to the room for feedback. So that is totally optional, but if we have anybody who is really, like, "yeah, I'm ready, let's do it", we'd love to hear from you and we'd love to hear what stories you have going on in your context as well.

So any questions before I move on to the next slide?

Okay. So beginning with why create a case study? So there's a few different things going on in this slide. This is the lovely picture from our strategy. You can see how much diversity we have at Sydney University. So I didn't just take some pictures of people, it's from our strategy. So to begin with, thinking about barriers to UDL implementation. In our context are often discussed as a lack of context competence in UDL, a misunderstanding of impact of UDL and time constraints and perceived complexity of implementing UDL.

So those are the things that we hear from colleagues. It might be the things that you hear from colleagues if you are a UDL champion in your space. And the kind of key this is a key piece of feedback from this particular reading, Hills, Overend & Hildebrandt, and this is something we hear echoed in our context, and you might also hear echoed in yours. I think that when people feel busy they are reluctant to change because change takes thought and effort with more understanding of some of the techniques that can be used in UDL and even relatively small changes that can have a big effect or impact.

And I think that's the real core message that we try to get through in our case studies, is thinking about what are real people in our context already doing; what are real people trying to change or implement in their context; and how can we share this with other colleagues across campus because we know colleague to colleague, peer to peer hearing from each other is what really changes people's minds and gets people to think more creatively about how they can impact and change their context.

So that's my why create a case study. I'm sure you've probably already thought about all of these but I think that's really important to keep that in the forefront of your mind. Why are we doing this; what's the point of it.

All right. So in creating a case study, how do we do this. These are the kind of core steps that we think through in our context, and I have embedded this in our framework of designing for diversity because that's at the core of what a lot of our practices at Sydney University and at Educational Innovation. I've broken down this framework into different sections, so if you'd like to look at it in its entirety that is what the printout is on the table. I also have more printouts here if you would like that. But I'm just going to break it down and go through it, and then you will see it altogether.

Okay. So to begin thinking about a case study, the first thing is to think about establishing the background or context. Who are our learners? What are their challenges, goals and barriers? So these are the first three steps of designing for diversity. Thinking through these allows us to kind of frame that, think about who we are actually trying to speak to, and the learners can kind of change as well. It can be the students in the classroom or it might also be the academic colleagues that we might be talking to. So that's sort of where we begin with those three steps.

And next, thinking about the process. So what's the process behind the case study or behind the story that we're exploring and trying to share amongst our campus. So how did we explore these barriers; how did we unpack them; what data, knowledge or experience did we draw on; what changes and solutions did we use in this context? So thinking about what is the change that we're kind of exploring here. And that's the second point also on the sheet if you would like to have a look at that.

Then the last phase of it in mapping out a case study, thinking about how we can unpack those different things is describe the outcome and impact. So what impact did these changes have; how did it support, challenge or innovate our learning environment in ways that support our learners; what are our contexts, the next steps; and how can we elevate and iterate. So those are the kind of core things that we are looking for as the outcome or the end product from our case study.

So this is the kind of scaffold that I use to map out a case study. The different creative ways that you might tell this story can obviously change depending on context, depending on whether you're pitching this at, you know, higher ups or colleagues or students or, you know, other people outside the University. But these are the kind of core elements that I think about when I think about how to create a case study, what are the key things that we want to be telling.

So to make this a little bit clearer, I do have a brief example of how I am going about creating a case study currently. And then I'll hand it over to you to have a go. But before I continue, does anyone have any questions? Sorry, I know it's all pretty basic, but, please, if I'm not being clear or have kind of skipped over something, please let me know. Right. And that's just the whole framework which is what you have printed on the table. So it's what we've already gone through. It's just putting it altogether there for you so you can see it as a complete piece.

So the case study I want to talk about today is one that Sarah and I have been working on with a few of our academic colleagues. Basically, this has been an innovation in teaching where we rethought about how we taught and exercise science subject to incorporate student tutors in the classroom and to also have only one tutor per tutorial, which is quite rare when you have a really big subject. Normally people are teaching 3 or 4 tutorials. And the goal here was to make first year students feel like they were seen, like they belonged in the classroom, and were connected to their cohort. So we hypothesised that by having one tutor connected to one group of students, that would make students feel like they were seen and supported in a way that they might not in the larger cohort on context. And also by having a student tutor, that that would support them to have a peer-to-peer learning experience in that first semester. So we think about breaking that down. What is the background and context? Learners, first year students in exercise science; what are the goals to foster belonging and connection to their course, the University and to their peers, teachers and community; and the barriers being new to University, unsure what to expect or how to succeed. So those are the core things that we were looking at.

And then the process. So I've just written out my ideas for it. So drawing on the expertise of unit coordinators who had taught the unit before, we challenged our assumptions about what students needed by partnering with past students to reshape the teaching material for the course. Together the students and teachers worked on identifying pain points throughout the semester, reimagining how their challenges might be met.

So I thought that was a pretty good first draft. But then revisiting my own goal for this project, I actually thought maybe I was shifting away from some of the things that I had identified as the goal and the barrier, which were belonging. In the context here I began to talk about succeeding in terms of academic material.

So I decided to scrap this and reconsidered what is my goal for this case study and which story am I trying to tell. That can be really difficult because I think when you're working on something you're really excited about and you see a really big impact, there are so many different intersecting things that maybe have contributed to that positive impact, and when you're writing a case study you can get sidelined, because there might be three case studies you can write out of this fun story.

So thinking about what is the purpose of the case study, who am I trying to reach and what am I trying to say. Our key goal here was to show that students felt like they belonged in the classroom because it's a transition unit with first year students and we wanted them to feel connected.

So I scrapped that and then I changed it to this. So rethinking a little bit I thought, drawing on the expertise of the unit coordinators who had taught the unit before, and data drawn from across our first year units, we recognised that belonging was a key challenge to success at university. Drawing on this research, we changed the model of learning in three significant ways. Now the technology has died. But basically, we changed it in three significant ways where tutors took only one class, tutors were given specific instructions to cultivate relationships with students, both in class and out of class time, and we had a peer tutor. So those are the three things I wanted to talk about this case study. And that's why it was important for me to slightly reconsider what model I was thinking about. I think my microphone sorry, I probably bumped something. That was probably me. So those were the key things that we were thinking about in our process. What is it that we're trying to draw out in our case study. Yes.

SPEAKER: In considering first year students, a lot of students with disability drop out. Was this a consideration in your research project?

ELLA: Absolutely. Part of cultivating a sense of belonging is actually cultivating frameworks and connections so students can ask for what they need. We actually found, Sarah and I, are looking at the impacts and have just begun the surveying process, and we have seen, from both tutors and students, reporting they felt comfortable to ask for what they needed, felt like they were more supported, felt like they could come to their tutors directly and ask them questions, which is we do have, like, more formalised pathways to get support but quite often they are slow. Quite often they don't actually give students what they might need in that day-to-day moment. So it's really important to foster those connections.

In the teaching team, as I said, we observed that fostering of space where students felt like they belonged, had significant impact on attendance, peer to peer interaction and connection with tutors, and students reported that these changes both supported them as individuals and as learners in their new context of University. And that was the outcome that we were looking for because, again, this is the focus of this case study was about. Does the new method of teaching better foster belonging?

So that's a very brief outline of how I might go about drafting the case study. Then I might go and film it. I might go and connect it. And I know Sarah is later in her talk going to show some of these case studies. So if you'd like to see the finished product, there's a few that Sarah might be showcasing.

But I wanted to hand it over to you all now to have a go at thinking about a case study in your context that might… you might like to leverage for systemic change. So the outcome of this for us, it's still in the works, has been very, very positive. There's been more money funnelled towards this kind of teaching strategy, and it has been a very positive experience for all of the colleagues that have worked in this very enriching and fulfilling, and they compared that to previous semesters of teaching the same subject. So it's sort of people that are saying, "This is a marked difference from how I felt last semester." As well as a really overwhelming student feedback as well. So it's like sustainable teaching, as well as supporting students.

So these are some of the quick quotes that I pulled out of the student survey. Sorry, I forgot this slide was here. Basically, you can see it's really positive. So the classes have been far more intimate with the ability for staff and students to learn each other's names and to help with exactly what I need; this relation style has made it easier to learn and enabled me to learn in ways that support my abilities; I have really enjoyed being in a smaller tutorial group with the same tutor, it has allowed me to form a good relationship and feel comfortable in my environment; a great teacher student relationship, made me feel comfortable and excited to go to uni. I think that's a really big win, "excited". And through these classes and the support staff, I have felt a better sense of belonging as they have been able to help me through the nuances of university life. So we can see here it's expanding beyond the classroom as well.

So this is your turn now. And I have this on the printout on the slide, as well as in the Google slide, so whichever way works best for you to see this. I know this is a lot of text to look at at once. Basically, I wanted to think for 5 minutes, discuss for 20 minutes, and pitch for 15 minutes. So we'll see how we go. If there are any people that are feeling really confident about pitching, let me know, and we can set you up for that in the last part of this workshop today. But in the thinking time, so I said five minutes here, but people think in different ways. Some people prefer a quiet time. Some people prefer to discuss. If you're someone that prefers to discuss, please go ahead and do that, if there are other people at your table similarly inclined. So take some time to individually think through and refine your ideas for a useful case study that applies to your specific context. Consider the following questions. What are the key challenges or opportunities in your context? How can a case study highlight these aspects and what information and examples will be most impactful. So that's the first part of this. Yes, Sam. I will give everybody 5 minutes now and when we come to discuss I will read that out as well.

SPEAKER: Can you speak more about leveraging a case study for systemic change, and why we would want to be creating this case study before we start doing the activity?

ELLA: Yeah. So if at your institutions there are a lot of barriers that say, "We don't have time to do this, we don't have money to do this, and we don't think it will make a difference", which is the things we sort of hear it's too much time, too much money, won't make a significant impact having a case study like this which actually speaks to the meaningful, impactful and sustainable change that this made for both students and the teaching team incentivises the broader university hierarchy to get behind this kind of change and to say, actually, it is worth putting money behind it because it's going to raise our QS rankings by 2 points, yay, which is what a lot of branding goes behind celebrating. So it speaks to some of the pain points that we have in our university context which is that people are feeling like they're unseen and don't belong at university, and therefore are having a poor educational experience, regardless of their marks. So having a case study that speaks to directly changing, impacting and supporting the teaching and learning experience on both sides is a great opportunity to speak to people that maybe aren't in the classroom and are looking at teaching and learning environments from a different perspective as well.

So it has collegial impact, it has systemic impact if we're thinking upwards, and it also has fantastic trickle-down effects too. All right. Let's have that five minutes now for thinking.

[Group work]

ELLA: Hello everybody. Sorry to interrupt. I just realised it is well past five minutes. So I hope you're all into the discussive session where you're thinking about sharing your initial ideas, discussing the challenges and opportunities each of you have identified, providing feedback and suggestions and help for each other on improving your case study ideas, and working together to refine your concepts and develop a more detailed outline. So we'll spend maybe another 10 minutes on doing that and see how everybody is going. I'll check how we're going for time but hopefully we have another 10 minutes.

[Group work]

ELLA: All right, everybody. Sorry to interrupt your conversations. I was just looking to see if anyone would like to take me up on the option to pitch? So you don't have to come out the front if you don't want to. You might just like to share a few ideas or things you're thinking about, but if you would like to come out the front, that would also be welcome. I already have a hand up. Is this for ideas or you want to come up the front? Fantastic.

SPEAKER: All right. So we had the case study of educating plumbers to build their capacity as educators. And this is one that I've done before. So the challenges were they were assumptions about what they want to learn. They were fossilised. There was a culture of negativity in the whole department and a number of them had specific learning disorders, such as dyslexia.

So the opportunities was to rebrand, to talk to colleagues, to connect first and content second. And building relationships. I had lots of cups of teas. And building the capacity of the educators and to improve the student experience, the KPIs.

So what we did was to share classrooms, as opposed to classroom observation. Like that sounds so punitive. We actually used the Ron Richard letter of feedback because it's very insightful and its very respectful feedback. We had the legal requirements of inclusion, because you've got to do it. And we had the increased feeling of belonging that, again and Sam said less emails. You'll get less emails because they'll ask each other. And creating inclusive spaces. And we partnered with them. So it's sort of power with rather than power over, the educators, and we coached them.

And we had four sessions and then they invited them we invited them to come. So who was there was a good thing. And then they rolled it out because they spoke to other educators. So we said how to structure sessions. We talked about learning outcomes, assess criteria; you do, we do, I do, review, formative feedback, and we talked a lot about PowerPoints, what's a good PowerPoint. It's like the white is glaring. So we looked at grey and font 32, and picture, and extra time in assessments. Steve added that one in.

And I didn't say this to the group, we had student voice. So what did you enjoy? What did you find challenging? Any suggestions for me? And is there something you'd like to tell me. So that's it.

ELLA: Thank you so much, and thank you for jumping up so quickly. Great. Did anyone have any questions or feedback? Five minutes left. Any questions or feedback for Karen? Sorry, was it Karen?

SPEAKER: Yep.

ELLA: Okay. Well, I think that's fantastic. So many opportunities. It kind of almost speaks to what I was talking about too. The connection and belonging and understanding, and all those things really being emphasised. Does anyone else have anything they'd like to share in the last five minutes or so? We've got one.

SPEAKER: I think that idea of creating a community. Using the case study to contribute to creating a community, which kind of mirrors what we are using these case studies for too, just so that we can get some traction and extend that community wider and wider gradually. It sounds like that's exactly what you're doing too. That's it, yes.

ELLA: You've got to go slow to go fast is what Karen just mentioned. Any other thoughts? Yes, Kimberley.

SPEAKER: Not a thought, just a question for Karen. What was the context you were saying about the classroom sharing not the observation but the sharing. What was the tool you said was really respectful feedback?

SPEAKER: The Letter of Feedback by Harvard University. Ron Richard.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

ELLA: Anything else from anyone, either for Karen or anything they'd like to share because they think it would be really great for everybody to hear? All right. In that case, we'll finish up there a few minutes early so our next workshop can start setting up. Thank you, everybody. I hope this was useful.