Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice

Volume 19
Issue 4 *Pedagogies of belonging in an anxious world*

Article 18

2022

We were all learning and doing our best: Investigating how Enabling educators promoted student belonging in a time of significant complexity and unpredictability

Trixie James
Central Queensland University, Austrslia, t.james@cqu.edu.au

Kerry Bond
Central Queensland University, Australia, k.bond@cqu.edu.au

Brijesh Kumar
Central Queensland University, Australia, b.kumar@cqu.edu.au

Melissa Tomlins
Central Queensland University, Australia, m.drake@cqu.edu.au

Gabriela Toth
Central Queensland University, Australia, g.toth@cqu.edu.au

Follow this and additional works at: https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp

Recommended Citation

James, T., Bond, K., Kumar, B., Tomlins, M., & Toth, G. (2022). We were all learning and doing our best: Investigating how Enabling educators promoted student belonging in a time of significant complexity and unpredictability. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 19*(4). https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol19/iss4/18

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au

We were all learning and doing our best: Investigating how Enabling educators promoted student belonging in a time of significant complexity and unpredictability

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted education provision worldwide. In Australia, the government took a proactive stance to reduce the impact of the pandemic, temporarily banning higher education students from attending university campuses. With a lockdown in place, educational institutions required a rapid shift in approaches to teaching and learning by both educators and students. Educators throughout Australia were asked to work from home and quickly transition their face-to-face (synchronous) classes into bichronous, fully online offerings. This paper reports on the experiences of 25 educators in an enabling course in a regional Australian university who were required to make this shift. These educators not only had to navigate this complex time personally, but they also had to work in their professional role with the additional responsibility of ensuring a particularly vulnerable cohort of non-traditional students felt a sense of belonging within this new educational space. Results showed that while the educators encountered a number of challenges in their transition, they also found ways to promote student belonging in the new teaching and learning environment. With a Pedagogy of Care being central to the educators' practice, they developed strategies to create a sense of emotional engagement among students to help them feel genuinely cared for. Additionally, they were able to construct a 'we mentality' discourse to establish a sense of shared understanding with students around the situation they were in. This study shows that enabling educators are capable of responding creatively to a complex and unpredictable environment, finding ways to replicate their proven pedagogies of care in unfamiliar contexts and thus foster a crucial sense of belonging among enabling students. The implications of a discussion about 'care' and 'belonging' within the field of enabling education are critical at the intra-pandemic and post-pandemic times, when traditional teaching methodologies are in flux.

Practitioner Notes

1. Educators faced a range of personal and professional challenges during the COVID-19 lockdown with the shift to bichronous online education. Despite the differences between face-to-face and online classroom methods of socialisation, educators found ways to promote belonging in the online classroom.
2. Using the Pedagogy of Care framework, the notion of a caring pedagogy was evident in the educator's praxis and is instrumental in cultivating a sense of belonging within the higher education space.
3. Care as recognition – Student's need to be 'seen' as individuals with unique characteristics. Through educators sharing vicarious experiences (which may require educator vulnerability), it helps the students to identify with the lecturer and build trust in them. In an online environment, it is important to use their name and ask how they are going so they feel recognised amidst the sea of faces as it cultivates social identity.
4. Care as dialogic relationality – Through collegial conversations and allowing students to freely converse, educators build relationships between themselves and their students. This cultivates a 'we' mentality which implies acceptance and underpins a sense of safety, trust, and further emotional risk-taking.
5. Care as affective and embodied praxis – This is cultivated through emotional engagement

by way of empathy, warmth, respect and fairness which promotes trust and cohesiveness within the classroom environment. Through promoting a sense of emotional safety, the classroom is a supportive space where students feel at ease to take risks with revealing aspects of self.

Keywords

COVID-19, pandemic, enabling education, higher education, adult learners, disruption, education, online learning, educators, belonging, pedagogy of care

This article is available in Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice: https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol19/iss4/18

"We were all learning and doing our best." Investigating how enabling educators promoted student belonging in a time of significant complexity and unpredictability.

Trixie James, Kerry Bond, Brijesh Kumar, Melissa Tomlins, Gabriela Toth

School of Access Education

CQUniversity

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, enabling education, higher education, adult learners, disruption, education, online learning, educators, belonging, pedagogy of care.

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted education provision worldwide. In Australia, the government took a proactive stance to reduce the impact of the pandemic, temporarily banning higher education students from attending university campuses. With a lockdown in place, educational institutions required a rapid shift in approaches to teaching and learning by both educators and students. Educators throughout Australia were asked to work from home and quickly transition their face-to-face (synchronous) classes into bichronous, fully online offerings. This paper reports on the experiences of 25 educators in an enabling course in a regional Australian university who were required to make this shift. These educators not only had to navigate this complex time personally, but they also had to work in their professional role with the additional responsibility of ensuring a particularly vulnerable cohort of non-traditional students felt a sense of belonging within this new educational space. Results showed that while the educators encountered a number of challenges in their transition, they also found ways to promote student belonging in the new teaching and learning environment. With a Pedagogy of Care being central to the educators' practice, they developed strategies to create a sense of emotional engagement among students to help them feel genuinely cared for. Additionally, they were able to construct a 'we mentality' discourse to establish a sense of shared understanding with students around the situation they were in. This study shows that enabling educators are capable of responding creatively to a complex and unpredictable environment, finding ways to replicate their proven pedagogies of care in unfamiliar contexts and thus foster a crucial sense of belonging among enabling students. The implications of a discussion about 'care' and 'belonging' within the field of enabling education are critical at the intra-pandemic and post-pandemic times, when traditional teaching methodologies are in flux.

Introduction

In response to Australia's widening participation agenda (see Bradley et al., 2008; Hodges et al., 2013), enabling courses are fundamental in promoting student belonging within the higher education (HE) sector. Students who enter university via an enabling pathway often present with lower levels of academic capital and may require not only guidance in becoming proficient with their academic skills, but also support and encouragement as they develop their self-efficacy (James, 2016). Within the disorienting context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the

transition to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), enabling students experienced a heightened state of uncertainty (James et al., 2021). Lecturers in the enabling sector were on the front lines, not only teaching curriculum and helping their students feel a sense of belonging in the new educational space, but also navigating this complex time personally. This qualitative project examines the experiences of lecturers in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) course at a regional Australian university to understand their experience of this transition and the practices they used to promote student belonging within this vulnerable cohort. In the context of HE, literature refers to both educator and/or lecturer; therefore, these terms are used interchangeably in this paper.

Contextualisation

Challenges to online education during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted education provision in Australia when the Australian Government sought to reduce the spread of the virus by temporarily banning higher education students from attending university campuses. With a lockdown in place, educational institutions required a rapid shift in approaches to teaching and learning by both educators and students (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). HE students who expected to study on-campus in a face-to-face (FTF) or blended mode (FTF and online) were suddenly required to ensure space and resources were adequate for study at home (James et al., 2021). The unexpected experience of isolation from peers and the unknown quotient of studying from home tested resilience and mental health, with evidence reflecting that any existing feelings of isolation and loneliness were exacerbated by pandemic lockdowns (Rippé et al., 2021; Studente, 2021). Similarly, lecturers in all HE settings in Australia were asked to work from home and quickly transition their FTF classes (synchronous) into synchronous/asynchronous fully online delivery, referred to more succinctly by Martin, Polly, and Ritzhaupt (2020) as "bichronous" online learning (para. 5). This forced transition to online education came at a cost for HE institutes and their educators as they did not feel prepared (see Hechinger & Lorin, 2020; McMurtrie, 2020); however, some educators felt slightly more optimistic towards this 'forced readiness' to online education as they held a "sense of hope that their efforts would result in good online teaching" (Cutri et al., 2020, p. 539). Hodges et al. (2020) differentiate ERT from non-emergency online teaching by its temporary nature and describe it as "an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances" (p. 1). In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, ERT placed significant pressure on educators, and research suggests that an educator's predisposition towards digital tools can influence the use and the perceived value of digital platforms as a pedagogical tool (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Another factor that affected most educators in the Australian HE sector was their transition to working from home and contending with family members also being in isolation within the same home environment. Many educators not only had to continue with their educational roles but had to support their family and their students within the context of their homes.

Enabling Context

Enabling courses are provided by many universities in Australia as a pre-university pathway to a higher education degree. The Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (2012) defines an enabling course as "a course of instruction provided to a person for the purpose of enabling the person to undertake a course leading to a higher education award" (p. 26). Enabling courses, also known as access, preparatory, pre-tertiary and bridging courses, prepare students to gain entry to an undergraduate course by equipping them with general academic skills such as academic writing and study skills, as well as discipline-based

knowledge, including mathematics and sciences. The STEPS enabling course is offered at an Australian regional university and it was designed to offer an opportunity for students from non-traditional backgrounds to gain the required academic skills to transition into HE (Doyle, 2006; Hodges et al., 2013) and to foster a sense of belonging among learners who may find the university environment alien (Doyle, 2006; Willans, 2019). Upon completion of the course, students are able to gain direct entry into their undergraduate degree of choice. The role of STEPS in creating a foundation for motivation and developing autonomous study habits is critical, as it may determine the students' willingness to commit to engaging more fully in undergraduate study.

Literature Review

Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT)

The STEPS course traditionally offers students a choice of either fully online (asynchronous), FTF (synchronous) education or a combination of both. However, with the shift to ERT, those students who had chosen FTF education were moved into a fully online mode, with a series of adjustments made to approximate some aspects of FTF learning. The pandemic-induced transition to ERT resulted in dramatic shifts in communication and pedagogical styles for FTF educators, causing them to quickly re-develop their synchronous, FTF resources to better suit a bichronous online environment (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). However, many students and educators experienced challenges, which included: technological issues, such as unreliability of internet access; pedagogical barriers, such as inadequate digital skills of educators and students; and social challenges, such as a lack of human interaction (Ferri et al., 2020). Although synchronous activities were found by Peterson et al. (2018) to positively contribute to a student's sense of belonging, educators had no choice but to develop resources and present on a bichronous online platform. Roseth et al. (2011) suggest that although synchrony may not influence students' motivation or academic completion rates, it does develop positive affect and enhanced cognitive processes as well as constructively impact a student's sense of cooperation, connectedness with peers, and academic achievement. Cormier (2008) presents the rhizomatic model as a way of knowledge being negotiated and "the learning experience as a social as well as a personal knowledge creation process with mutable goals and constantly negotiated premises" (p. 1). In a rhizomatic model of learning, a community of educators and learners can co-construct knowledge as a collaborative effort. Through ERT, educators not only had to develop resources to engage their students' learning but use the digital platforms to construct and negotiate learning with those engaged in the learning process. Having a rhizomatic approach to learning allows shaping and constructing of knowledge and responds to changing environmental conditions (Cormier, 2008). Ultimately, educators were responsible for ensuring that the students under their tutelage felt a sense of connectedness within the new bichronous online environment and felt comfortable with the co-construction of knowledge through an online platform.

Belonging

Enabling students often begin their studies feeling a sense of not belonging at university. They often present with lower self-confidence in their ability with limited academic and cultural capital, as well as a sense of low self-efficacy. This impacts on their sense of belonging within this unfamiliar space of education (James, 2016). However, many enabling students who have been away from the educational sector for years, or had past negative learning experiences, may feel a sense of fraud or "imposter syndrome" (Dalla-Camina, 2018) as they enter this new environment. Pedler et al., (2022) recognise that belonging is a fundamental psychological need which not only refers to building and maintaining relationships, but it also assists with academic motivation. For enabling

students, their cultural capital and habitus creates a barrier to them being able to 'play the game' of HE further reinforcing the notion that university may not be for them (Webb et al., 2002). Enabling courses recognise this and teach the students the rules of the game so they can better identify with this educational context. Many enabling students are victims of a society that empowers those who have the cultural capacity to enter university from traditional academic backgrounds. Thomas (2015) points out that the diversity inherent in enabling student cohorts acts as a barrier of sorts to creating a sense of belonging. Additionally, societal norms become a gatekeeper that determines who can or cannot enter this domain (Thomas, 2015). Research (see Gillen-O'Neel, 2021; Pedler et al., 2022) suggests that educators play an essential role in ensuring students feel a sense of belonging at university, particularly in enabling courses where students often require emotional support to build the confidence, capacity and capital to be able to navigate their way through the new norms of the HE sector. Enabling educators consequently play a pivotal role in developing their students' sense of belonging as they recognise that fitting in and belonging is important to a person's psychosocial health (Seary & Willans, 2020). Educators, especially in enabling courses, are the conduit to help students to feel this sense of belonging. However, educators have a structurally determined relationship of power that is born from institutionalised cultural capital (Thomas, 2002). Even within enabling courses, educators can be perceived as holding a power differential to that of the student. However, as Motta and Bennett (2018) suggest, enabling educators often present with a heightened sense of ideals and values to support those who are underrepresented within society. Therefore, the driver for this research paper was an exploration into the ways educators utilise pedagogies to help students develop a sense of belonging to their new academic environment.

Pedagogy of Care

Couched within the model of support provided by enabling educators, Motta and Bennett's (2018) Pedagogy of Care underpins this study as the theoretical framework. A Pedagogy of Care relates to the ethos of care that underlies the philosophies, procedures, and pedagogical practices of many enabling courses (Seary & Willans, 2020), and it is an emergent framework which assists in examining belonging within the enabling sector. Pedagogy of Care is proposed by Motta and Bennett (2018) to starkly contrast with what they describe as careless, stoic, and dissociative, masculinised pedagogy often experienced in higher education. They argue that the more dominant 'care-less' pedagogies create an atmosphere of shame and competition for students; whereas, in enabling education, an approach that encourages co-creation of knowledge and an atmosphere where students feel a sense of openness improves the student's capacity to learn (Motta & Bennett, 2018). Therefore, this study considers the three key themes presented in this pedagogical framework of care: care as recognition, care as dialogic relationality, and care as affective and embodied praxis in order to examine how the STEPS lecturers created a sense of belonging during the early stages of ERT in response to the educational changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Care as Recognition

Fostering care as recognition embraces pedagogical practices that acknowledge the whole, unique student considering the complexity of individual creativity and life experiences (Motta & Bennett, 2018). It is a form of pedagogy, typical of enabling education, which also acknowledges the diverse range of learners' strengths and possibilities (Seary & Willans, 2020; Willans, 2019). In contrast to deficit discourses, which have typically been internalised by enabling students, pedagogical care as recognition nurtures transformation in students through the

educator (Motta & Bennett, 2018). It supports a shift in the personal narrative of the individual, from stories of disbelief in ability and/or lack of confidence in capacity to undertake study, to a belief in personal agency, the right to have a voice, and in personal potential (Motta & Bennett, 2018; Willans, 2019). This re-narrativisation process allows students to self-reflect and challenge existing conceptions of roles, relationships and responsibilities, providing insights into unimagined possibilities (Motta & Bennett, 2018) and thus, transformation (Willans, 2019). Therefore, this embedded care approach to education demystifies teaching and learning as previously experienced by many enabling students, leading to a power shift as students recognise their own worth, value and capabilities (Assmann, 2013, as cited in Motta & Bennett, 2018).

Care as 'Dialogic Relationality'

Dialogic practices have long been embraced as a fundamental educational skillset with the capacity to help people emerge from difficult pasts (Gill & Niens, 2014) due to the instrumental role of dialogue in learning and knowing, as opposed to dialogue as conversation (Freire & Macedo, 1995). Embracing dialogic practices has been known to underpin social cohesion (Tawil & Harley, 2004), promote active citizenship (Quaynor, 2012), offer peacebuilding and stability (Filipov, 2006), and challenge inequalities (Akar, 2016). Enabling teaching practices typically revolve around "relating and relationality" (Motta & Bennett, 2018, p. 639). The encompassing nature of enabling education underpins the complex notion of combining care, building relationships and teaching academic skills. Teacher-initiated intimacy (Motta & Bennett, 2018) and vulnerability (Mehrotra, 2021) are central to establishing a dialogic community of care, where all participants co-create meaning in a socially cohesive community. Within the enabling context, an educator's approach to knowledge construction, and their willingness to share intellectual control through co-creation of knowledge can influence dialogic pedagogies, engagement, and transformation (Akar, 2016; Quaynor, 2012). Habermas (1998) professes that the attainment of understanding is reflected by "reciprocal comprehension, shared knowledge, mutual trust and accord" (p.23), leading to social order and integrity, resulting from discourse and communicative action.

Care as Affective and Embodied Praxis

Positive relationships and interaction with others in an educational institution engender a sense of belonging in students and facilitate connectedness with the education sector (Booker, 2004; Pedler, et al., 2022; van Gijn-Grosvenor et al. 2020). MacGill (2016) argues that care is essential to the reciprocity between educators and their students, in-turn promoting trust; whilst Willans (2010) highlights the complexity of support and its importance to the development of students' sense of belonging. However, MacGill (2016) cautions that in a diverse cultural and social context, the well-meaning but non-inclusive outpouring of care may instigate resistance rather than reciprocity towards the educator. Willans (2010) emphasises the importance of learning spaces where empathetic teachers go above and beyond to create a sense of welcome and inclusion for students, with a focus on cultivating a sense that students are supposed to be there and that they belong. As highlighted by James (2021), this combats fears held by many enabling students that they are imposters and unlikely to succeed in such a foreign, academic world. Ulmanen et al., (2016) suggest that emotional engagement is a constituent of care as an affective approach which promotes trust in the educational system and instils a sense of belonging for the students.

Methodology

Utilising the theoretical framework of Pedagogy of Care to analyse the experiences of enabling educators during the early stages of the pandemic, this study offers a unique perspective on the tools and approaches used by

enabling educators to help non-traditional students develop a sense of belonging in the context of ERT. This study maps the self-reported experiences of enabling educators against Motta and Bennett's (2018) three characteristics of the Pedagogy of Care – care as recognition, care as dialogic relationality, and care as affective and embodied praxis – to assess the degree to which this pedagogical approach was inadvertently used by the study participants, and the effectiveness of promoting belonging within the enabling context.

Methods

This study employs the voice of the educator to investigate the experience of transitioning from synchronous FTF teaching to emergency bichronous online education. Through a qualitative online survey, STEPS educators were asked to share their experiences, both positive and negative, about their personal experience transitioning to online teaching and how they endeavoured to help their students feel supported and engaged in this new learning context. The survey was sent at the end of Term 1, 2020, to all lecturers who had taught or supported students during the term. The survey consisted of open-ended questions about the adjustments to working from home; the aspects of online teaching that challenged them or had positive repercussions; the ways they coped personally through this time; and the strategies they employed to engage their students. In addition, quantitative enrolment data was also collated to investigate whether COVID-19 impacted student attrition. Data was collected from enrolment records from Term 1, 2018; Term 1, 2019; and Term 1, 2020 in order to compare similar time periods from each year. To replicate conditions of attrition as closely as possible, failure rates were investigated across the three terms. This secondary data was presented in this paper in order to investigate if there were differences in attrition due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to present a baseline for the educator's support role.

Participants

Lecturing staff, who were teaching in Term 1, 2020, were invited to participate in this study and complete an online survey via Qualtrics. The lecturers taught across a range of different units of study including math, study skills, academic writing and science. Out of 32 staff emailed, 25 completed the survey, and of those, 5 were male, whilst 20 were female. The age demographics of the respondents show that fifteen were between 41 and 55 years, seven were 56 years or older while three were between the ages of 26 and 40. Nineteen of the respondents had lecturer roles whilst six were undertaking unit coordination roles. Before the lockdown, the staff were scheduled to teach across both online (asynchronous) and on-campus (synchronous) modes in Term 1. For those undertaking the asynchronous role, their teaching included online communication and some online workshops. Staff who were in synchronous roles had to transition to a bichronous online class which included student communication, facilitating lectures and tutorials and, for most, the addition of marking. Only six respondents had been scheduled to have no online commitment over the term.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used on the qualitative responses from the survey to identify repeated patterns or themes within the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analytic framework allowed for the establishment of initial codes, then the identification of themes evident with the data. Three key themes emerged, and each contained sub-themes. The first theme established the challenges the lecturers faced during transition with the sub-themes relating to the adaptation to online technology, and the challenges of recreating the dynamics of an internal, FTF classroom environment in a bichronous online context. The next theme considered the positive aspects of the transition, and

the sub-themes identified value in student connectedness, and the convenience of teaching from home. The final key theme focussed on effective strategies for engagement. Within this theme, the sub-themes identified the effective use of online features, proactive communication, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Each of these themes is expanded on in the findings and the discussion establishes links between the findings and the pedagogy of care framework.

Limitations

Whilst the initial focus of this study was on the personal experiences of both students and lecturers during the transition to online education, it was recognised by the research team that there was more complexity to the lecturer's experience. The lecturers not only had to care for their own well-being and that of their families through the early stages of COVID-19, but they had the responsibility of supporting their enabling students through this transition as well. Initially the study was going to combine the responses of the surveys from both the students and lecturers. However, the authors found that there was scope to present the findings separately with the possibility of following up with an impact analysis. The student focused paper was published in 2021 (see James et al., 2021) and the data from the lecturers' surveys is presented in this paper.

The scope of this study means that the findings cannot be generalised to other HE cohorts. The survey was targeted at lecturers in an enabling program, where the needs and expectations of students may be different from those in, for example, undergraduate or postgraduate courses. Further, data generated through a qualitative survey of 25 respondents is not representative of opinions and experiences of other lecturers at the same institution. Despite these limitations, lecturers teaching enabling courses with similar characteristics to the one in this study may find value in the findings.

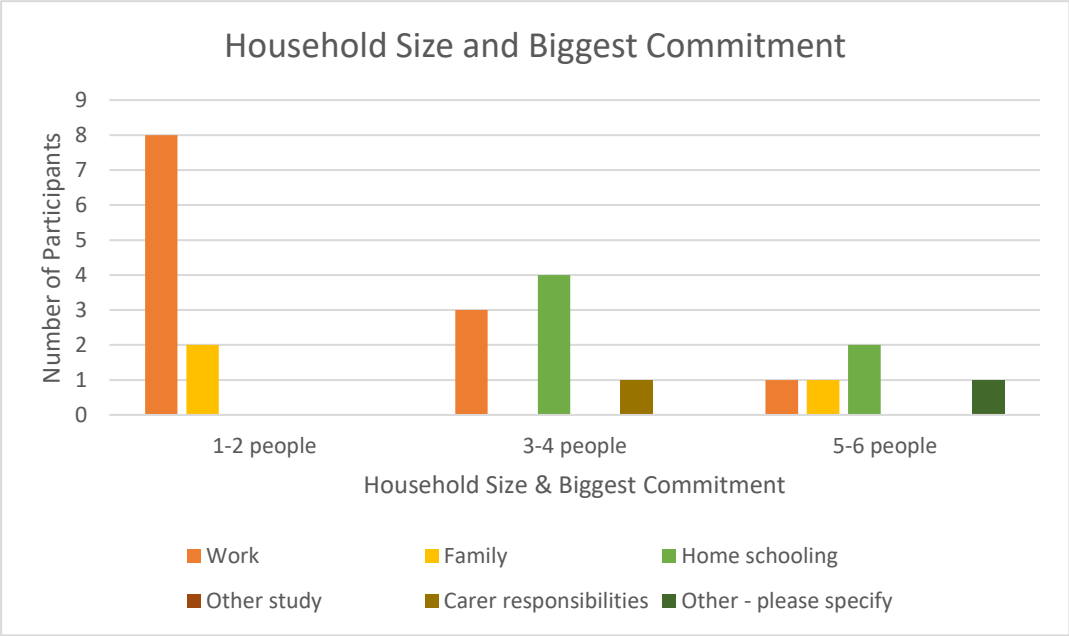
Findings

Lecturer's commitments

In the survey, lecturers were asked what their main commitments were during the transition from work to teaching from home. They reported family, work, home schooling, carer responsibility and their own studies as commitments requiring their attention during this period. When comparing the number of people in the lecturer's households to the commitments they had, the households that had 1 or 2 people listed cited work as their main commitment. In households of 3 to 4 people, the biggest commitments were home-schooling, work and carer responsibilities. Similarly, in households of 5 to 6 people, the main commitments appeared to be home schooling, work and family (see Figure 1). Cross tabulation of lecturer's commitments against gender revealed that work was the main commitment for male staff, whilst females were juggling work, home schooling and family (see Figure 2).

Figure 1

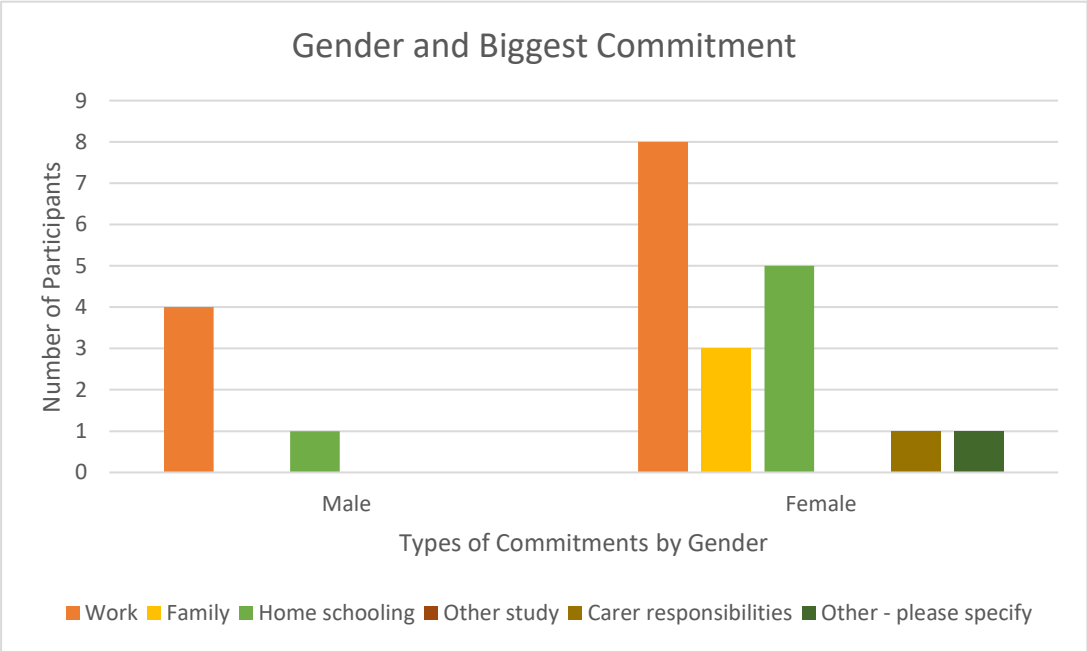
Relationship between household size and biggest commitments



Note. N=23 responses to question on household size.

Figure 2

Gender and commitments



Note. Twenty-five surveys were completed, with n=5 males and n=20 females. No individuals chose an alternative gender identity.

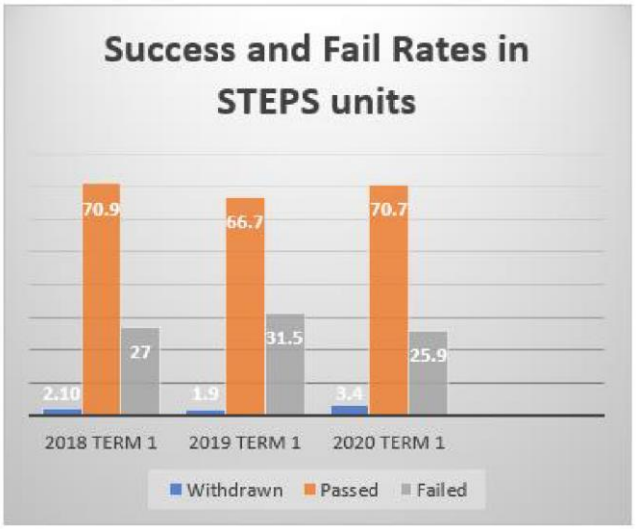
Student Completion

There was an expectation that COVID-19 may have contributed to higher attrition due to the challenges faced by students and the abrupt shift to ERT. However, data collected from the enrolment records indicate that attrition rates were lower in 2020 compared to both 2018 and 2019 data (see Figure 3). The attrition rates include students who withdrew post census, those who did not fully complete the units (also known as 'Absent Fail'), and those

who failed to meet the required learning outcomes. The only variable is in the withdrawn status in Figure 3 which increased in Term 1, 2020. This was due to a higher number of 'Withdrawal without academic penalty' (WWAP) cases which could be attributed to the university being more lenient on students who withdrew due to the increased stress around the pandemic. With over 1500 students enrolled in Term 1, 2020, success rates continued to be consistent across the terms and one suggested explanation is that STEPS already had a robust asynchronous online education system. Potentially, the capacity of lecturers to engage and support, even through a disruptive time such as COVID-19, may also have contributed to student retention.

Figure 3

Success and Fail Rates in STEPS Units for Term 1 of 2018, 2019, and 2020.



Challenges During Transition

The survey asked lecturers what they found to be the hardest aspects of transitioning from a FTF to a bichronous online class. The two main themes that emerged were (a) adapting to online technology, and (b) maintaining the dynamics of an internal class environment.

Initially, the adaptation to an asynchronous online platform raised concerns for many lecturers as they had to rely on their home internet connection to teach their classes using the learning management systems available through the university. The greatest concern raised was "obtaining technical support when needed". This included using Zoom video-conferencing, setting up monitors at home, WiFi issues and using Cisco Jabber telecommunications software. In addition, lecturers identified that with "the increase in Zoom use in the first week, this often resulted in Zoom crashing or students being unable to join the class. However, this did improve as the term progressed." Some lecturers found that "the Zoom rooms and linking in Moodle was [*sic*] very chaotic to start with as we learnt what worked best." The lecturers who were transitioning their FTF classes to the online platform found that they needed to dedicate additional time to redeveloping their synchronous internal resources to suit a bichronous online platform. As one lecturer recounted, "the hardest part of the transition was having to redesign the teaching resources to run the face-to-face tutorials online. I had to look at ways to best keep them [students] engaged the whole time." Some lecturers who had limited experience with teaching online raised concerns about having to transition with very little educational or technological support. These lecturers highlighted the need for more

professional development to better utilise the online platforms. As one acknowledged, "learning how to Zoom and teach without any instruction and practice was daunting." Some found the transition arduous because "the social aspect of work diminished. With Zoom dominating interactions, adjusting to this way of teaching was exhausting. Everyone wanted to create social spaces in Zoom and it was overwhelming." In addition, lecturers missed the social connections that they had whilst working on the campus.

> "I noticed that our team only connected if we needed to talk about work. Our schedules were so non-aligned that for most of Term 1, we didn't get together. I miss the conversations in passing where you can quickly catch up with someone or check in. The little collaborations and side projects, the creative problem solving and project dreaming just doesn't happen."

Another challenge that lecturers mentioned was the distraction that occurred with ERT due to family members being isolated at home as well. Several lecturers found it challenging that family members were studying whilst they were working. One revealed that she had to juggle both home schooling and a heavy workload and she found that "the days were very long!" Other lecturers supported this notion and reported that "it was very hard trying to work from home with family all trying to study. They needed my attention and that caused me to feel very stressed during the term." Lecturers were in the same situation as the students they were teaching, as they were all in home isolation, but the lecturers had to maintain a professional demeanour and present highly engaging lessons.

The next theme highlighted the challenge lecturers had with keeping the students engaged through the online platforms. One observed that "keeping students engaged and interested during the tutorials was hard in itself." Firstly, some lecturers revealed that a portion of the class would turn their video off which they found quite disconcerting as they taught to black screens. "I tried to encourage them to use their videos, but some had bandwidth issues and could not." Another lecturer shared, "The days were very long! The internal 'Zoom' classes took a while to get used to, particularly coaxing some students to turn on their cameras and dealing with occasional internet lapses."

In addition, student interactivity was reduced whilst they were getting used to this new style of learning. However, as one educator pointed out, "while there were issues with students not talking and turning their screens off and leaving the Zoom, this was alleviated somewhat with the games I created as they had to engage when they answered the questions, or it would be obvious that they had left the Zoom". This strategy highlights the importance of strong pedagogical approaches to support online teaching. Some lecturers noted that they found it hard to see how far the students had progressed with the work that was set. For instance, a mathematics (maths) lecturer disclosed, "[not] being able to see their work in person was especially hard. In maths, I usually walk around and look at their work - which they are reluctant to show me at the best of times, and definitely would not share with me or the class online." Additionally, "technology would have made it difficult for them to share, as the maths work is done in a notebook, not a computer document." One lecturer noted that "the fact that students expected or signed up for on-campus classes was another factor to consider, so meeting their expectations of direct teaching and support was a worry."

Positive Aspects of Transition

Lecturers were asked if they experienced any positive aspects to the online experience and two themes emerged from the data: student connectedness, and the convenience of teaching from home. Even though lecturers had concerns about their ability to engage students in a bichronous online setting, they found it satisfying to see the

students thrive in this new environment. As one lecturer shared, "[the positive aspect] was interacting with students and hearing their success stories plus seeing students who were worried about Zoom actually thriving." Another lecturer enjoyed watching the students embrace this new way of learning. "I enjoyed experimenting with the different features in Zoom. I also enjoyed the way my students embraced the technology and would always jump in and have a go." From a more personal perspective, one lecturer felt a sense of professional satisfaction in the way he/she rose to the challenge. "I was proud of myself for confidently using Zoom to the best of my ability. From my students' perspective, I was proud of those who stuck it out each week and encouraged each other."

Once lecturers got through that initial phase of transitioning to their home environment, they found it very convenient. Some lecturers enjoyed "the comfort of working from home", with one saying, "I was far more comfortable in my home office due to the extremely cold air-conditioning in campus classrooms and office spaces." Another appreciated the more casual nature and work/life balance that it afforded them: "I love working from home. While my dress code has become more casual, I am still motivated and engaged and enjoy going to work. I have better work/life balance."

Flexibility was mentioned several times, with lecturers reflecting, "it was good working from home with a little more flexibility over my time", whilst another felt that "the flexibility and being able to work from home was probably the best bit." Even though lecturers still had distractions in their home environment, one emphasised, "I have a strong commitment to the work and the students, and so it was fairly easy to keep to task", whilst another found it easier to stay focused due to "not having to negotiate around noise in an open plan office; not being interrupted and far fewer distractions." Travel time was another factor raised as lecturers could spend more time at home prior to logging on to work; as one lecturer noted, "It was great to work at home and not have about an hour's worth of travel time per day."

Effective Strategies for Engagement

In order to provide an engaging learning experience for the students, lecturers not only had to adapt their teaching resources but also apply strategies to ensure students would feel supported through this time. Lecturers were asked to share what they found to be the most beneficial strategies they utilised. The key themes that emerged included (a) Effective use of online features, (b) Proactive communication, and (c) Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Once lecturers began to gain confidence with the online platforms, they found that using the various features on offer through Zoom and other platforms such as Moodle, allowed them to better engage the students in class. Zoom was the main video conferencing tool used and lecturers appreciated how the functions helped them to better support their student cohort. One lecturer considered that "the chat function in Zoom was one of the best strategies. I also had students do group activities using the breakout rooms and I found this very effective…" Another shared "The chat was good as students could ask me questions directly without the class knowing. I tried to keep it friendly, and always had my video on to encourage them to do so." Another participant appreciated the value of polls, as they were able to "engage the students and deepen their knowledge through a better appreciation of the content being taught."

One lecturer delved deeply into the features of Zoom and found that it "afforded the students the opportunity to be social through the use of break-out rooms, polls, show of hands and answers in the chat." They also found that

"mini projects where each person had a role" worked well and "changing group composition" enabled them to interact more broadly with other classmates. Another lecturer "used students to facilitate discussions and used them to monitor the chat rooms to watch for questions, greet newcomers, and message late joiners". Maths had the potential to be quite difficult to teach in an online environment, but a lecturer reported, "Using PDF Annotator was essential. There is no way to teach maths other than handwriting it. Also sharing documents [and resources], such as videos, helped in the teaching."

Effective communication with the students allowed for more personal interactions and afforded a deeper level of connectedness between lecturer and student. Lecturers expressed how they aimed to "engage on a personal level. Always checking in at the start of each lesson and asking each of them how they were going and feeling on that day." Some used "focused strategies to personalise the experience and maintain student engagement by checking in with the students about what is useful, engaging and otherwise: "I changed the lessons or teaching approach on the basis of their feedback." Many lecturers commented that they made "sure to connect with all the students, ask about them and how there were going with the unit." This individualised support was evident in many comments such as "making a point of using each student's name during the class and checking in on them all on an individual basis, whether out loud or via the chat." Another shared that "I also think it was important to be honest with the students, so they understood that we were all learning and doing our best. This meant that my students were very understanding and were always happy to try something new in Zoom."

A further aspect that emerged was that lecturers needed to empower themselves in order to be a conduit to motivate the students they were engaging with. As one lecturer reflected, "I had to continually remind myself that I was there for the students, to guide and support them during this difficult time", which entailed "staying positive and focused on my task." Another described the value of interacting with colleagues through this time. "I think working closely with my colleagues to determine what worked online and what didn't helped me be effective as an educator. I don't think Term 1 would have been as successful without everyone sharing their experiences." Another also valued the support of the broader university: "I think the uni supported us very well and never made us feel guilty about working from home. I think it has built trust between the leadership and the lecturers. They now know that lecturers can work from home and still accomplish as much (or more) than being in their offices."

Discussion

Seary and Willans' (2020) research suggests that lecturers in the enabling space may use the characteristics of the Pedagogy of Care as shared by Motta and Bennett (2018) through using "care as recognition", "care as dialogic relationality" and "care as affective and embodied praxis". They suggest that many enabling lecturers enact such caring in their classroom environments through the way they engage with their student cohort. Our research further supports this, but we contend there was an even deeper functioning of care within each of these spheres which was due to the combined impact of COVID-19 and the transition to ERT. Initial concerns for lecturers were around the practicalities of teaching from home as they had to comprehend what it meant for them in both their personal and professional roles. However, this concern faded when the focus returned to their students and the best ways to engage them throughout this time. Our analysis showed that the three dimensions of the Pedagogy of Care were woven into the very essence of the way educators ensured students felt a sense of belonging and engagement within the online environment.

Care as Recognition

Belonging and Recognition

The notion of belonging within social identity is a crucial element to consider for enabling students. As Amaral da Fontoura (2012) states, "belonging is a very powerful tool as it deals with our inner self, to be part of something bigger than ourselves, to be accepted and loved, with our strengths and weaknesses" (p. 53). For the lecturers in this study, they felt it was imperative that they instilled a sense of belonging for students in their online spaces and this was done through empathetic recognition of the value and worth of each student in their class. This was evidenced in the way the lecturers adjusted their approach and used focused strategies to personalise the experience. Educators in enabling education recognise that the students entrusted to their care often enter with lower levels of self-confidence and diminished efficacy in their capacity to undertake study (Seary & Willans, 2020).

Thus, this discussion emphasises a focal point on the centrality of the nature of caring and recognises that lecturers, regardless of their gender, were engaged in the role of 'care' within the STEPS enabling context. Care, within this discussion, focusses on the social and emotional connection, foregrounding pedagogical practice and development of affective relationships. As Amaral da Fontoura (2012) found, a student's sense of belonging is fostered in settings characterised by effective instruction, combined with meaningful content, and presented with warmth and respectful interactions between educators and students. For students, this caring attitude demonstrates the lecturer's awareness of the students' backgrounds and recognises that each student has the capacity to be successful with the right support.

Safety + Belonging + Mattering = Trust

At the emotional core, humans need to feel safe, and unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic created an influx of fear. As social beings, the enforced social isolation created a sense of loss and uncertainty that was compounded with students embarking on a new term of study. Comaford (2013) states that safety, belonging and mattering are essential characteristics required for brains to function optimally. She found that the greater the feeling of safety, the greater a feeling of connection will occur, in turn instilling a sense of belonging in the online environment. Comaford (2013) shares a simple equation: Safety + belonging + mattering = trust. The lecturers in this study were able to establish a sense of safety and trust for the students in their care through an emotional quotient. As Burke & Larmar (2021) found, "pedagogical caring is modelled to students through a personable learning environment, founded on genuine, warm interactions…where students can gain a sense of the educator's personality" (p. 6). The lecturers utilised the Zoom online platform to create a safe space by keeping their videos on and allowing the students the choice as to whether to be seen or to hide behind the screen. Another form of recognition was through lecturers checking in on a personal level by using students' names and personalising the session. Students were able to share concerns or highlight aspects going well, which allowed other students to feel that they were not alone in this journey.

Care as Dialogic Relationality

Emotional Engagement

Busteed's (2015) findings emphasise the importance of emotional support during a student's term of study. He found that "in all of the education research I've been involved with, transcendent outcomes are derived from an emotional engagement in learning" (para 5). Emotional support is essential to the notion of care within the online

environment. Noddings' (2003)seminal works identified ethics of care as central to the practice of teaching and she characterises the practice of care in terms of engrossment which involves "an open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for," and a willingness to "really hear, see, or feel what the other tries to convey" (Rose & Adams, 2014, p. 6). Lecturers in this study used the chat function on Zoom as a medium for this kind of open, nonselective receptivity to student voices.

Additionally, the lecturers sought to foster emotional engagement between students by using break-out rooms in their teaching and designing activities to enable students to build relationships. This allowed for broader interaction and built a sense of social connectedness. Research (see Mason, 2001; Heslop, 2005) maintains that there is a positive relationship between recognition and motivation. Recent research by James et al. (2021) considered the pandemic-induced transition from FTF to online learning from the student perspective. This study found that the students valued the connections made with the lecturers and their peers: "I felt very engaged with my lecturers because as strange as it may sound, it felt very personal being connected [online] with everyone" (p. 9).

Building Relationships

Dialogical interaction acknowledges that an interactive community of care is based on relationships. Wentzel (1997) claims that students are more motivated to learn in an environment that they perceive is catering to their needs and is underpinned by a state of respect and care. Burke and Larmar (2021) suggest that the exercise of care in online environments poses a greater challenge than in the more traditional FTF contexts. Having lost the FTF connection that would normally instil a more personalised connection between educator and student, lecturers in this study sought to develop the student/teacher relationship through personalised strategies by using the online resources to precipitate mutual cohesiveness. This supports Walker and Greaves' (2016) position that "caring teaching is underpinned by a relational approach to pedagogy that subsumes the privileging of trust, acceptance, diligence and individual attentiveness" (p. 65).

Care manifested itself within the collegial relationships that the educators established through collaborative strategies that demonstrated respect to the individual students. That sense of recognition that the student was important in this learning process was fundamental in developing emotional engagement between lecturer and student. James et al. (2021) found that students valued their lecturer's availability, support, and ways to engage them. The students used words such as "supportive", "humour", "helpfulness" and "kindness", reflecting their perceptions of lecturers' strategies to demonstrate care (p. 9).

Care as Affective and Embodied Praxis

Transparency and Vulnerability

Transparency was another way that lecturers were able to present a unified front in assisting students to adjust to an online environment. In this study, the lecturers spoke of sharing personal anecdotes in their Zoom sessions which helped students to see that they were in similar predicaments due to COVID-19. Lecturers shared that this transparency was vital in developing a connection with the students and in helping them to recognise that they were all in the same situation and all feeling insecure, uncertain and overwhelmed after such a quick transition to online learning. However, transparency requires vulnerability. When lecturers are open about their experiences transitioning to online, they are exposing a part of themselves and may feel a sense of vulnerability as the

structurally determined relationship of power that comes with being a lecturer is undermined (Webb et al., 2002). Wong (2019) suggests that vulnerability "could be the gateway to resilience, creativity, and personal transformation" (p. 1). The students who enter enabling contexts enter with a sense of vulnerability (Brown, 2007) due to the newness of entering higher education; in addition, many share that they feel like an imposter in this new environment (James, 2021). However, through vulnerability and transparency, lecturers sought to build a shared sense of understanding and appreciation for the situation that they all found themselves in (Mehrotra, 2021).

'We Mentality'

Belonging within this space enabled a 'we mentality', indicating that there is a togetherness forged in this unknown situation. A recent paper by James et al. (2021) found that students valued the support of the lecturers within an online community during the transition to ERT and felt a heightened sense of connectedness to them due to the shared experience of having to work/study from home. One student's comment highlighted this by saying "we were all in this together" and that sentiment was further supported through another student acknowledging how teacher support gave them more confidence to endure.

> The supportive, really, really, kind lecturers were a God-send – just all being "in it together" to get across the line during a challenging time probably gave my confidence a little boost by the end" (James et al., 2021, p. 92).

The students felt a bond and a sense of connectedness which this paper terms the 'we mentality'. Moreover, lecturers reported a sense of satisfaction watching students thrive in this online environment. They felt a sense of professional satisfaction sharing this journey with the students and watching them 'stick it out'. The concept of belonging is woven into the core of the 'we mentality' as it informs our sense of identity within the space of education and gives meaning to the interactions occurring between educator and student.

Digital online technologies

Digital online technologies and net based learning have improved educators' capacity to engage learners more interactively. Evidenced in the technology-based teaching platforms used during ERT, we suggest that rhizomatic learning practices were used effectively to engage students through the online platforms (Cormier, 2008). The key for success using rhizomatic learning is the cultivation of care and connection in all interactions. Care is embodied within the interactions online and in the respectful ways that peers and lecturers communicate and discuss the content being learnt. The lecturers' anecdotes demonstrated how they made a conscious effort to personalise the lessons and promote a safe place for students to share their thoughts. Rose and Adams (2014) found that to be technologically "available" means that lecturers are often inducing what Noddings (2003) calls the "ethical ideal" which evokes a strong desire to do what is necessary to sustain relationality. Carruthers Thomas (2018) states that:

> investing meaning in space which transforms it into 'place' requires commitment and anticipates a return; it is an affective process closely associated with belonging, the desire for more than what is…for some sort of attachment (p. 38).

Brah (1996) argues that interactions within the field of HE have the capacity to re-inscribe belonging in this context, with the potential for re-narrativisation of identity and diverse belonging practices embraced. Despite both students and lecturers in this study having prepared for a FTF environment, followed by a rapid switch to

bichronous online learning and quick adaptations to resources and practices, lecturers were still able to employ caring pedagogies adapted for the digital space.

Conclusion

The implications for this discussion about 'care' within the context of an enabling course in higher education are critical, as they present the learnings from a pre-pandemic and intra-pandemic time and can be used to inform post-pandemic education. The findings from this paper demonstrate that in a time of significant complexity and unpredictability, enabling lecturers were able to develop pedagogical practices of care that promoted student belonging. It was found that lecturers ensured students were comfortable in an environment that can often feel foreign to a non-traditional cohort and helped the students to feel 'seen' in a bichronous online environment [care as recognition]. They were empathetic to the needs and the concerns of the student cohort and built meaningful connections with the students that supported transformational learning [care as relational]. They also ensured students felt they were in a safe space and that the rhizomatic pedagogical approaches were engaging [care as affective]. Future study could investigate if the demonstration of care in online environments is as highly prioritised in online delivery as in the intra-pandemic and the importance of care for other, traditional cohorts of students. More in-depth investigation could also consider the explicit and implicit ways that this care is demonstrated from the educators' perspectives and how those initiatives are interpreted by students in online classes, as well as in other courses and cohorts. Care has been shown in this study to be an important component of enabling educators' practice during challenging times. What began as a snapshot of a critical time in Australia's history has highlighted the capacity of enabling educators to translate their complex pedagogy of care to an online context.

References

Akar, B. (2016). Dialogic pedagogies in educational settings for active citizenship, social cohesion and peacebuilding in Lebanon. *Educational Citizenship and Social Justice*, *11*(1), 44-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197915626081

Amaral da Fontoura, H. (2012). Building belonging and discussing inclusion in a process of teacher training. In N. Bagnall & E. Cassity, *Education and belonging: Education in a competitive and globalising world* (pp. 47–59). Nova Science Publishers.

Booker, K. C. (2004). Exploring school belonging and academic achievement in African American adolescents. *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, *6*(2), 131-143.

Bradley, D., Noonan, P., Nugent, H., & Scales, B. (2008). *Review of Australian higher education: Final report*. http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/Documents/TransformingAusHigherED.pdf

Brah, A. (1996). Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting identities. London: Routledge.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.cqu.edu.au/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Brown, B. (2007). *I thought it was just me (but it isn't): Making the journey from "What will people think?" to "I am enough"*. Avery.

Burke, K., & Larmar, S. (2021). Acknowledging another face in the virtual crowd: Reimagining the online experience in higher education through an online pedagogy of care. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *45*(5), 601–615. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2020.1804536

Busteed, B. (2015). The magical elements of college linked to long–term success in work and life. *About Campus: Enriching the Student Learning Experience*, *19*(6), 2–8. https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.21173

Carrillo, C., & Flores, M. A. (2020). COVID-19 and teacher education: A literature review of online teaching and learning practices. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(4), 466–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821184

Carruthers Thomas, K. (2018). *Rethinking student belonging in higher education: From Bourdieu to borderlands*. Taylor & Francis Group. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cqu/detail.action?docID=5611511

Comaford, C. (2013). The 3 things all humans crave—and how to motivate anyone, anytime, anywhere. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinecomaford/2013/03/13/the-3-things-all-humans-crave-and-how-to-motivate-anyone-anytime-anywhere/?sh=21aeeba81ad6

Cormier, D. (2008). Rhizomatic education: Community as curriculum. *Innovate: Journal of Online Education*, *4*(5). https://www.learntechlib.org/p/104239/

Cutri, R. M., Mena, J., & Whiting, E. F. (2020). Faculty readiness for online crisis teaching: Transitioning to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(4), 523–541. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1815702

Dalla-Camina, M. (2018). The reality of imposter syndrome: Feeling like an imposter? Know what it is and what to do about it. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/real-women/201809/the-reality-imposter-syndrome

Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education. (2012). *Other grant guidelines [Education]*. http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2012L00281/Html/Text%23_Toc314566242

Doyle, S. (2006). *Celebrating 20 years – 1986 – 2006*. Central Queensland University STEPS.

Ferri, F., Grifoni, P., & Guzzo, T. (2020). Online learning and emergency remote teaching: Opportunities and challenges in emergency situations. *Societies*, 10, 86. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc10040086

Filipov, F. (2006). *Post-conflict peacebuilding: Strategies and lessons from Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador and Sierra Leone: Some thoughts from the rights to education and health.* Santiago: Naciones Unidas, CEPAL, Social Development Division, Human Rights Unit.

Friere, P., & Macedo, D. P. (1995). A dialogue: Culture, language, and race. *Harvard Educational Review*, *65*(3), 377.

Gill, S., & Niens, U. (2014) Education as humanisation: A theoretical review on the role of dialogic pedagogy in peacebuilding education. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *44*(1), 10-31, https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2013.859879

Gillen-O'Neel, C. (2021). Sense of belonging and student engagement: A daily study of first- and continuing-generation college students. *Research in Higher Education*, *62*(1), 45–71. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-019-09570-y

Habermas, J. (1998). *On the pragmatics of communication* (M. Cooke, Trans. & Ed.). MIT Press.

Hechinger, J., & Lorin, J. (2020). Coronavirus forces $600 billion higher education industry online. *Bloomsberg Businessweek*. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-19/colleges-are-going-online-because-of-the-coronavirus

Heslop, P. (2005). Good practice in befriending services for people with learning difficulties. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *33*(1), 27–33. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-3156.2004.00310.x

Hodges, B., Bedford, T., Hartley, J., Klinger, C., Murray, N., O'Rourke, J., & Schofield, N. (2013). *Enabling retention: Processes and strategies for improving student retention in university-based enabling programs* [Final Report 2013]. Office for Learning and Teaching. www.enablingretention.org.au

Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020, March 27). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *EDUCAUSE Review*. https ://er.educa use.edu/artic les/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergencyremote-teachingand-online-learn ing.

James, T. (2016). The juxtaposition of STEPS to the undergraduate arena: The lived experience of transitioning into undergraduate study. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, *56*(2), 250–267.

James, T. (2021). "Will they see through me?" The exploration of disorienting dilemmas that contributed to the transformation of an enabling educator. *International Studies in Widening Participation*, *8*(1), 83–96.

James, T., Toth, G., Tomlins, M., Kumar, B., & Bond, K. (2021). Digital disruption in the COVID-19 era: The impact on learning and students' ability to cope with study in an unknown world. *Student Success Journal*, *12*(3), 84–95. https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.1784

MacGill, B. (2016). A paradigm shift in education: Pedagogy, standpoint and ethics of care. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, *11*(3), 238-247. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/22040552.2016.1272531

Martin, F., Polly, D., & Ritzhaupt, A. (2020). Bichronous online learning: Blending asynchronous and synchronous online learning. *Educause*. https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/9/bichronous-online-learning-blending-asynchronous-and-synchronous-online-learning

Mason, M. (2001). The ethics of integrity: Educational values beyond postmodern ethics. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *35*(1), 47–69. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.00209

McMurtrie, B. (2020). The coronavirus has pushed courses online. Professors are trying hard to keep up. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www-chronicle-com.erl.lib.byu.edu/article/The-Coronavirus-Has-Pushed/248299

Mehrotra, G. R. (2021). Centering a pedagogy of care in the pandemic. *Qualitative Social Work*, *20*(1-2), 537-543. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1473325020981079

Motta, S. C., & Bennett, A. (2018). Pedagogies of care, care-full epistemological practice and 'other' caring subjectivities in enabling education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *23*(5), 631–646. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2018.1465911

Noddings, N. (2003). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education.* University of California Press (Original work published in 1984).

Pedler, M. L., Willis, R., & Nieuwoudt, J. E. (2022). A sense of belonging at university: Student retention, motivation and enjoyment. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *46*(3), 397–408. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1955844

Peterson, A. T., Beymer, P. N., & Putnam, R. T. (2018). Synchronous and asynchronous discussions: Effects on cooperation, belonging, and affect. *Online Learning*, *22*(4), 7-25. https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v22i4.1517

Quaynor, L. J. (2012). Citizenship education in post-conflict contexts: A review of the literature. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *7*(1), 33-57. https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197911432593

Rippé, C. B., Weisfeld-Spolter, S., Yurova, Y., & Kemp, A. (2021). Pandemic pedagogy for the new normal: Fostering perceived control during COVID-19. *Journal of Marketing Education*, *43*(2), 260-276. https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475320987287

Rose, E., & Adams, C. (2014). "Will I ever connect with the students?": Online Teaching and the Pedagogy of Care. *Phenomenology & Practice*, *7*(2), 5–16.

Roseth, C. J., Saltarelli, A. J., & Glass, C. R. (2011). Effects of face-to-face and computer-mediated constructive controversy on social interdependence, motivation, and achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *103*(4), 804-820. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024213

Seary, K., & Willans, J. (2020). Pastoral care and the caring teacher – value adding to enabling education. *Student Success*, *11*(1), 12–21. https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v11i1.1456

Studente, S. (Ed.). (2021). *The impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in higher education*. Nova Science Publishers. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cqu/detail.action?docID=6682549.

Tawil, S. & Harley, A. (2004). Chapter 1: Education and identity-based conflict: Assessing curriculum policy for social and civic reconstruction. In S.Tawil & A. Harley, *Education, conflict and social cohesion*. Geneva: UNESCO international Bureau of Education.

Thomas, K. (2015). Rethinking belonging through Bourdieu, diaspora and the spatial. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, *17*(1), 37-49. http://dx.doi.org/10.5456/WPLL.17.1.37

Thomas, L. (2002). Student retention in higher education: The role of institutional habitus. *Journal of Education Policy*, *17*(4), 423–442. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930210140257

Ulmanen, S., Soini, T., Pietarinen, J., & Pyhältö, K. (2016). Students' experiences of the development of emotional engagement. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *79*, 86–96. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2016.06.003

van Gijn-Grosvenor, E. L., & Huisman, P. (2020). A sense of belonging among Australian university students. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *39*(2), 376-389. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2019.1666256

Walker, C., & Greaves, A. (2016). Constructing the caring higher education teacher: A theoretical framework. *Teaching and Teacher Education 54*, 65–76.

Webb, J., Schirato, T., & Danaher, G. (2002). *Understanding Bourdieu*. Allen & Unwin.

Wentzel, K. R. (1997). Student motivation in middle school: The role of perceived pedagogical caring. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(3), 411–419. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.89.3.411

Willans, J. (2010). *Navigating personal change: Transforming perceptions of self as learner* [Doctor of Education]. CQUniversity.

Willans, J. (2019). Transitioning to their future: Creating an environment of 'possibilities' for enabling students. In A. Jones, A. Olds & J. G. Lisciandro (Eds.), *Transitioning Students in Higher Education: Philosophy, Pedagogy and Practice*. Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge.

Wong, P. (2019). Let vulnerability be your strength. *Existential Psychology*. http://www.drpaulwong.com/let-your-vulnerability-be-your-strength/