

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Hello and welcome to You Got This! A podcast about teaching and learning and pivoting to digital for the whole TRU community. I'm your host Brenna Clarke Gray, coordinator of educational technologies, and this podcast is a project of your friends over at Learning Technology and Innovation. We're housed within Open Learning, but we support the whole campus community. I record this podcast in Tk'emlups te Secwepemc within the unceded traditional lands of Secwepemcú'ecw, where I hope to learn and grow in community with all of you. And today I'm thinking about something, that's maybe a little controversial. I'm thinking about entitlement. I don't mean the entitlement of our students, and I don't think I maybe mean it in the way that you might think. I mean it -- you know what? I'll wait till after the break. Let's get into it.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

So friends, I have had the honour, privilege and terror of being asked to keynote the Cascadia Open Education Conference at the end of this month. Against my better judgment, I'll include a link in the show notes so that you can register, if you want to join us. I recorded my talk -- it's a prerecorded talk with a live question and answer period. I recorded my talk earlier this week. And so I'd been thinking a lot about what I wanted to talk about and probably unsurprisingly, I'm going to talk about care. I'm going to talk about surveillance. I'm going to talk about the ways surveillance masquerades as care. But I'm also going to talk a little bit about entitlement and that's the piece I want to riff on with you today.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

We're at the end of the semester. Many of you are marking. Many of you are planning for spring and summer. Many of you are planning for spring and summer to be some time away from your desk, from your computer from Moodle. Totally understand all of that, but I am like many of you I'm sure, on the cusp of conference season, which means as much as I would like to be planning for some quiet time -- I'm also as usually wildly overextended as is my custom.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

And so my brain has been chugging a lot lately, which is not normally good for anyone. But what I've been thinking about primarily is this notion of the kinds of information that we have access to all of a sudden about our students in a way that we never really had before. Like, because of the way the logs work in Moodle, you can look and you can see what time your students submit their essays. And you can see how many times they've clicked on your lecture content. And you can see how many times they've visited your Moodle shell. We never used to really know that much about how often students were accessing resources, right? Like the textbook doesn't alert you when the student opens it. Although VitalSource did promise that -- that's one of the reasons why I hated it. Outside of the TRU context, these tools have a lot of power, you know, e-proctoring tools where you can watch students take their exams or tools like Microsoft habits built into some iterations of Microsoft Teams that lets you track student behaviour, or Zoom. The way Zoom allows you to track attention, know who's quote unquote paying attention. Although anybody who's been in a video conference knows you do not have to be not looking at the screen to not pay attention to a video conference.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

All of these things are things we've decided we need to know. And by we here, I mean the education sector at large. We need to know when students are working on assignments, we need to know how often they log into learning management system. We need to know where they're looking during class

and some of us push it even further, right? We've seen reports online of classes where professors have banned eating during lectures, even though students are in their own houses, forcing cameras to be on, to monitor those kinds of behaviours. It's a strange idea that we've come to this year that we're entitled to information about and control over each other's home spaces.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

There's been a fair amount of backlash about this too. Of course, I'm sure you've all seen the viral posts where someone suggests how you can be more professional during a video conference. And they say, you know, make sure children aren't allowed in the room. Well, for those of us who are, as I like to say, working from my home daycare, that's not usually possible. And in many ways as a society, I think we've become more in touch with the needs of each other through this pandemic in the best possible ways. But I think something about not having our students in front of us has for some of us led to a bit of a crisis, a desire to maintain control. And for some reason, my brain keeps coming back to this idea of entitlement. As a sector, we love to talk about how entitled we perceive students to be. But I think it's a pretty outrageous sense of entitlement that makes us believe that we have the right to, for example, scan the room where our students are taking the exam and decide whether it's an appropriate space or not like, why do we need to know that? And why do we get to have control over that? I find it outrageous that something like Microsoft Habits messages instructors, and lets them know, Hey, this student always submits their papers late, and this student opens up Word late at night. Maybe you should intervene there. Maybe it's none of your damn business.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

In many ways, I think we're used to having such domain in our classrooms that this year has left many instructors feeling at sea. You'll hear in the chat today that I have with David Carter that there's another way to take the lessons of this year, not a clamping down, but a relaxing, a loosening up. And it's a perspective that I think is good for a lot of us to take on board in a lot of different ways. You know what, actually, instead of me continuing to monologue about this issue of entitlement, I think I'll just jump into my chat with David because I think you're going to get a lot out of it. And if you do want to hear me ramble on more about entitlement, well, there's always Cascadia. Here's our chat.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Okay. So today I am here with David Carter from tourism to do some reflecting on teaching and learning in this very strange year. Dave, would you introduce yourself to people, your name, your title, where you used to hang out on campus before we stopped doing that? You know, anything you like?

David Carter:

Sure. Hi Brenna. So I'm David Carter. I am in tourism management. I am an assistant teaching professor and I used to hang out prior to the pandemic in the house of learning. And then in the pandemic I was moved to Faculty Annex N. So that is where my empty office is at the moment. So that's where you can find me in the future.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I was also moved during the pandemic. It's a weird feeling, hey? It's like, I know all my stuff is in boxes somewhere, but it's not really my office office anymore.

David Carter:

Yeah. And I had to go in a couple of times and like unpack certain things to find that one book or that one folder you were missing. And it's, it's, it's kind of funny

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Currently avoiding that process because we're looking at a book to do for book club in the summer semester. And like I have the actual book in my office, but I'm like, I could just buy the ebook to not have to go to campus.

David Carter:

That's a bridge too far, maybe Brenna, but --

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Shows where my headspace is at.

David Carter:

Fair enough. Fair enough.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

So Dave, the semester is done at least as far as teaching is concerned. I'm not sure if you've still got exams outstanding for your classes. But I thought it would be a good week to invite someone who has been in the classroom all semester, quite a lot, as I know you have been to reflect on the good and the bad of this past year and maybe if we can start to kind of think towards what the fall might look like. But I thought I'd start by just asking you to kind of, I don't know, riff a little bit on what this year has been like for you when it comes to teaching.

David Carter:

Oh, wow. That is a question, Brenna.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

No, just a little easy one to start off,

David Carter:

See that -- this year has been a kind of, it's been an exercise in understanding yourself and what's happening and what other people are going through and all these other kind of tangential things. And then while doing that, also realizing that your perception is not always clear and not always straight forward in a way. And as a riff, I just sort of mean like at first, when I started this online stuff, I didn't know if I was doing a good job. And then sometimes it feels like you're doing a terrible job. And then people tell you, the students tell you you're doing a great job. And then you just, you'd never really had a sense of consistency or permanency of really anything. Like it always just sort of felt like you were slipping on, on quicksand or something like that in a way. So it felt like a real kind of, sort of just kind of a continuous struggle in a way. And that struggle seems to have worked. At least that's the sort of feedback that I've gotten, but it, it was very difficult to kind of reconcile what was going on at certain times throughout the year. I felt like. So --

Brenna Clarke Gray:

That's really interesting. I was saying to someone the other day that it's going to be hard to make sense of this year, like in the larger narrative of our careers, because on the one hand there's been like a ton of learning and like a ton of accomplishment and, you know, yeah. Like as you say, if you've moved your students through this material and they don't hate you at the end of the year, like great job. But at the same time, it's not going to be like an emotional world we want to revisit. And so it's, it's such a strange thing to think about reflecting on this past year and moving forward, past it into like, I don't really know what yet, you know.

David Carter:

Yeah, yeah. We're sort of still kind of in that ether, miasma, kind of like what, what is still happening to us, but you, you sort of said something interesting there. I thought, you know, like if you got through all this and your students didn't hate you, like that's a really great accomplishment, but that feels like such a low bar to like have as your standard. So, so as you know, as teachers who are always kind of, we never think we've done enough, even when we're literally like, you know, throwing ourselves at the job way too much and, and all of those other kinds of things. It, I think that that's been part of the struggle really has been like, well, that's not good enough. That's not, you know, I don't have any of those. Like, hey, these are the 15 to 20 new student relationships that I've formed over the years. These are the moments that I can concretely remember seeing somebody's light bulb turn on. And like you just, you lack for, for all of that. And then there's, there's this sort of socio-cultural component of the milestones that you would normally hit, not only like within the students, but simply like last week. When I was saying goodbye to one of my classes, you're just sort of like, well, that's it, that's it just sort of ends like that. And there's none of the kind of like, we all clap even, or like, like none of that other stuff. So it's just kind of a strange place to be in, in regards to teaching.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I like that thing you said about the feeling like there's this low bar, right. And, and the struggle to even clear the low bar some days, like I used to be the kind of person who's, you know, my email inbox was cleared out at the end of every day. You know, I followed up with folks, I made sure that everybody had what they needed. I was like very proactive and it's been a year for me of being extremely reactive all the time. Right. And not really feeling like I could manage to get out in front of the freight train, like just running behind it. And yet somehow feeling like I was hit by the freight train. So I totally get what you're saying that sense of a low bar. How do you feel the students have done this year? And you can take that in any direction you want, but as someone who's had like tons of student contact, whereas I have felt totally absent from that world and difficult to get a read on the student experience, how has it been?

David Carter:

Yeah, I think, I think that's a question that has many answers. I think that I, in the end became so impressed with the students and their ability to keep doing this. And, you know, I went to a few quote, unquote conferences or sessions of my own, even our own -- what's the learning conference called, Brenna, why am I --

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Oh, the TPC.

David Carter:

TPC. Exactly. Yeah. So even that, I was like, I went through the whole day of that and I was like, I can't believe students are doing this every day, that they're just sitting there listening to us, try our best, but also they're not getting any of that interaction that we're craving as well. Like that, that train goes both ways. And so in a way I think that they've they've done a really admirable and incredible job to have been able to get through this and to, to work on this. And then I think there's a whole bunch of unknowns that I don't really know about because I feel like the students who were consistently coming to class and engaging, they got plenty out of this. It wasn't ideal, but they got -- at minimum they got the content and then they got the additional portions of, they were able to ask questions and have conversations or things like that. But I, because we were doing it in that sort of asynchronous and synchronous way there's a whole bunch of students who I have trouble measuring how well they, they interacted with this course or apart from just simply like log entries and things like that, which don't tell me much at all. So I feel like that's kind of, I have that kind of, I don't have a clear answer for you, but I do, I personally have felt that the students have really they've gone through something as well and even more so in a way that, you know, university is supposed to be a formative experience for them in their identities and in their, their lives and all those extracurricular and social things that they have been kind of deprived or even, you know, missing the milestones of graduation. So I really kind of am admiring the strength of the students in, in the way that they've managed to continue on and take this in stride, so to speak.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I love that. And I hear you. I, I was thinking the other day, every time I've tried to do anything, like, remotely intellectually rigorous in the last little while it's been like, like I get it done eventually, but holy gosh, it's hard. Right. And I think we're all kind of on this verge of burnout. And I include students in that. And yeah, when I have to sit through a day of say, you know, meetings where I'm, where I'm not like running the show where I'm just like, I just have to attend to it. And I'm so exhausted by the end of those days, when I think about students in like, you know, maybe they've got three synchronous classes in one day, I just, that's a wild amount of time to attend to something without maybe feeling like you're involved in it, you know?

David Carter:

Oh, completely. And the other side of that I think is not only are we all kind of fighting burnout and [inaudible], but there's this like the amount of distractability or I don't know the distractions in general of like, you know, like you're in one of those meetings, you're like, well, I should check that email that just came in or I should look at this or I should look at that. Like, I, I can only imagine the strength that it took for them to actually like pay attention to these classes that were important to them and were important to their learning. So I think that that's, that is very real for all of us on both sides of the desk.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

It's interesting. Right. Because there's been this debate all year about like, should you require people to have cameras on, et cetera. And I was in a meeting the other day and like no one had their cameras on. And I was thinking like, it's really interesting. The things that we debate in relation to the student experience, we don't even think about for ourselves often. It's like, Oh, there's no way I'm keeping my camera on in this, in this like Senate steering committee meeting or whatever. And I've just been thinking so much about how many of the experiences that have been difficult for faculty and staff this year. They actually kind of echo like student experiences that go beyond just this year. Right. And so I'm wondering what, I guess I'm wondering what lessons we're taking forward. I'm, I'm feeling this

temptation to have like this last year, like we just never talk about the year 2020 - 2021. Like, it's just, it didn't happen. We just, we don't do APARs this year. We just walk away from the whole thing.

David Carter:

The 13 floor of a building or whatever

Brenna Clarke Gray:

That -- that's exactly the metaphor my husband uses! This year is the 13th floor in a building, which is, we all know it's technically there. We just accept that. We're not going to talk about it. But I guess my question for you is something we've been doing on the show a lot is trying to talk about sort of reflective practice. Are there things about this year that you are going to carry forward into your teaching, whatever the fall looks like, or is this very much been a year of like, I wish it never happened and I, I want to pretend it didn't.

David Carter:

So, I mean, I think reflexively, you want to say that it didn't happen, but I, I actually, I don't, I don't think that's true because I think that that's kind of the wrong way to process trauma from what I've been told, as well as I think there have been lots of things that we can learn from this and that that can be in so many different ways, because I think in some ways, you know, we've probably all learned a bit about ourselves. We've probably learned a bit about our resiliency. We've probably learned a lot about technology. We've, we've got all these things that we've kind of learned, but I think that, that I don't quite know exactly what those lessons are. Like, I don't have any like great soundbite for you on that one. I don't think, but I, I do think there's a few things that I've kind of felt like I'm, I think I might've been able to let go of some things that I might've been holding onto as well.

David Carter:

You know, like in some ways when you've had classes that you've taught for a number of years, and you've always sort of done it that way, there's kind of a tendency to hang onto some of that stuff. And then when you're just not able to do those things anymore, you have to find new ways. So we've kind of been forced into finding new patterns or new, new ways of doing and, and teaching and learning that we, we can take that forward with us. But I also think, you know, I used to be really a stickler for attendance. Right. And I don't, I'm now having to re-examine that cause I have, I just abandoned it this year. I was like, I don't, I, it doesn't matter. Cause if you're, if you're there doing it asynchronously, like then you won't be in attendance at the sessions and that doesn't matter at all. Right. That we're setting things up for you to, to learn that way. So in a way I think like I wasn't always doing attendance as something that would be like punitive or anything like that, but it was also a way for me to like learn people's names and sort of create a sense of accountability and those things. But I'm, I'm now prone to think that I might just let that go and be more kind of open to the idea of allowing the students to decide how they want to engage with this stuff. And I don't, I don't know if that's the right or the wrong answer yet. I don't, I haven't really fully reconciled with that myself, but that's one of the things that I'm thinking about. And I remember it from the, the TPC as well. I will try not to cuss, but no cop stuff was one of the thematic components that that's really stuck out to me.

David Carter:

And I was like, Oh yeah, I can, I can take that as a sort of learning for myself to be like, I don't want to be like that. And I find that that might be, I won't say it's like a behaviour, but it's a practice that I might be

able to eliminate or, or something like that. But I do think that there's an element of once we're able to maybe process some of this last year, a bit more with some distance and then we can take some of those learnings from it. I think because I was just speaking to a colleague earlier today and we were talking about how we'd been in a program review for quite some time where we were kind of having a, it was a somewhat contentious program review where we're sort of not clear on the vision going forward. And in some ways the pandemic might've allowed us to save ourselves from ourselves that the mistakes we were preparing to make in terms of bad compromises and things like that might, we might be able to just leave those in the past and move forward with, with better thinking. So

Brenna Clarke Gray:

It's interesting you say that when my -- so on the days my kid goes to daycare, I try to take a walk in the mornings. I don't get to do it otherwise and clear my head. And I was listening to a podcast this morning from CBC and it was like, people's pandemic breaking points. So I didn't listen to the whole episode because about halfway through, I was like, Oh, this is the opposite of the reason I take these walks. Like I need to not listen to this anymore. But one of the little, it was like a bunch of people's little stories of, of this experience. And one guy was talking about how he moved in with his partner two weeks before everything shut down into like a tiny two bedroom apartment. And he was saying like, it, it, it was hard, but it also, there was a whole bunch of stuff that would be like flash points in a different year that they had to just let go. Like, are you super mad about the clothes being left on the floor in the bedroom? Or is this a global pandemic?

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I think about that sometimes in relation to some of the discussions that are happening on campus. Like I think in terms of teaching, a lot of people have really refocused what matters to them and what's important to them. And like, I think attendance, I don't think you're the only person having that experience right now. Right. Of like, does this actually matter to me? Or is this really the expression of what matters to me that I thought it was? Or is there another way to address this? Right. And I think that's really good because a lot of us go through this process in post-secondary where like we're not really trained for this job that we do, which is like totally weird. We're subject matter experts, we're not really trained to teach, many of us. And then, but we are never in a position where we have to like justify our pedagogy to anyone or explain it to anyone. We just kind of do what we do. Right. And so this year, because it has changed everything, I think it's forced a lot of rethinking for folks. And I think that some of that is going to end up being really good. Not all of it. I'm not going to say like, I'm so glad we had this pandemic, but like, I think some of it is going to end up being really good.

David Carter:

I think that's fair. I think it's at minimum, it's opened up our eyes and our hearts to other modalities and other ways of, of teaching and learning. I think that's at minimum, it's done that. And I mean, you're right. There's, there's great things to take from that. And there's maybe some that aren't so great. So we shall see how that kind of manifests going forward. Yeah. I liked how you said pandemic breaking points, like as if there was only one. Oh yeah. It wasn't just a series, an ongoing series.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah. It was, it was an interesting thing to listen to this sorta. Cause I was like halfway through my walk and I was on the verge of tears, listening to this one woman's story. And I was like, I need to not actually do this to myself right now. And I feel like that has been a lesson for the pandemic for me. Like I'm really

not great with boundaries, like not taking on other's people's emotional load. And that's been a hard part of this year because everybody has been so stressed and so anxious and, and needing such reassurance. And weirdly the person in the Moodle Support office hours is sometimes the person providing that.

David Carter:

Isn't -- isn't that strange because actually that's interesting. I just -- you just helped me with the Moodle issue before we did this, but I had joined the Moodle help session earlier today and, and somebody, I was waiting my turn in line and somebody's like, they just started by launching into their, like their situation. And it was like, Oh, okay. Like I get that. That's not what we're here for, but also like everybody's got that right now. And it's interesting. Cause I think I thought of this when we actually, you asked me about the students and I was thinking about how I had to, you know, I gave my introductory welcoming thing at the beginning of the semester and my, my bywords were patience and flexibility and that we need to have that with each other. And like I was promising that to them if they would give it to me kind of thing. And then so throughout the semester, as I was always giving that to the students, I would occasionally have to remind myself to give it to myself as well. And just be like, well, no, you can't get all that done today. Or maybe if you have no brain power today, you just let it go. Like that. There's a component of that, that, that had to pop back up quite frequently to remind myself of, you know, well, if you're, if you are reminding yourself to be kind patient and flexible with everybody else, try to be the same with yourself.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yes. That has been a hard lesson for me this year, but I'm actually, you know, I walk away from my to-do list now a lot more than I, I ever used to feel like I was able to do so, you know, there's growth, right? Like I kind of hate the word resilience. Like, I like hate it when like someone in a position of power is like, thanks for being so resilient. Cause my first answer is like, well, you screwed something up. That's why I had to be resilient. But I do think there has been a tremendous amount of growth for many of us this year, much of which as you pointed out, we're not going to process for probably quite some time. But I think that that, that notion of sort of centering for your students, patience and flexibility that to me is, has been a game changing conversation this year because I never used to be able to have those kinds of conversations widely with everyone on campus, you know, extend grace, be kind like the idea that that would kind of be the centerpiece of like a technology workshop prior to this year. It was kind of like not something that I had ever considered even possible, but now we have great conversations about what it means to extend grace, to teach with kindness. And I hope that that sticks around because I think God, I think the relationship with students is it's just better and easier when you do approach from that perspective.

David Carter:

Yeah. That's really interesting, Brenna. I think that that's, if we're going to take something from all of this pandemic, I, my number one draft choice would be that I think the kindness and the, that sort of recognition of each other's struggles would be the one number, one thing that I would want because it matters so much. And you're you're right. It's, it's, it's changed all of our conversations about just about everything where we can acknowledge people's humanness far more now than we ever did before I think, and we can simply acknowledge that that's a factor. Whereas, you know, there used to be a very kind of, I don't know if is the right word for it, but they're kind of like --

Brenna Clarke Gray:



I call it brains in jars. We're supposed to be brains in jars.

David Carter:

There's a clinical component to it, right. It's like, no, this is, we're only talking about this here, leave the rest of your person aside. And, and I don't know if we can continue on with that. And I don't, I think you're right that the students probably appreciated it more than ever. And it kind of also, it's interesting for me, Brenna, in the sense of like, I never really struggled to establish authority or, or things like that in the classroom. In fact, I normally like after my first couple of years teaching, I had to learn to do the opposite where like I realized that people were basically intimidated by me and, you know, that's, you know, for a variety of reasons, I'm a big guy with a big, deep voice and I talk really fast and, and all those kinds of things. But so kind of like trying to convince people that I was actually nice and, and not intimidating became a component of, of what I was doing in the classroom. And now I think having sort of just simply begun with that discussion, it really framed the sort of the relationship differently. And I don't, I don't know how that will work in person again, but it's something that I think I would like to hold on to.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Oh, I like that. Yeah. I think I told you on the very first day of employee orientation that you look exactly like my older brother, like exactly like to a weird degree. And there's a time when my dad was sick and we were in the hospital and my brother was just trying to ask like a question of the nursing staff, but it was an emotional situation and he sort of, he just stood up like literally all he did was he stood up from a seated position to ask his question and he was not being aggressive at all. But yeah, her first reaction was like, okay, like she thought he was being super aggressive. And it's really interesting because as someone who kind of lives in a fairly non-intimidating body space with an affect that one of my friends calls weaponized gentleness, it's just interesting to remember that we, that we all sort of have these subject positions and teaching online has changed that or at least complicated it for lots of people, I think.

David Carter:

Yeah, I think, yes, I think so. Cause, cause in a way like it, it sort of took part of that away from me, but it also forced me to also like, just learn to kind of ignore a lot more. Like there's kind of this, like once you turn the classroom on it's on now and like I can just ignore everything else. And like they're like, and not like I'm ignoring everything else or ignoring the chat or anything like that. I just mean like keep pushing forward, even though you have no feedback coming towards you, right. Like can't tell if they're getting it or not. And then I would obviously strategically stop at different points. And even like, it sort of became a running joke eventually, like how I would be like, are you guys still there? Like just cause there would be nothing in the chat and no indicators. And I'm just looking at a screen that has, you know, my slides are the website we're looking at and my face on the other side. And I'm like, well I know I'm still here, but is anybody else still here? And then of course you'd get this chorus of yeses and things like that, but it is, it's sort of, yeah, there's like a sort of increase in humanization and a decrease in human connection that it has been a result of all of this. So.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I'm getting to the end of the time I booked off with you, but I want to sort of ask you one more question, maybe offer you an opportunity to spit ball a little bit, but we don't know what September is going to look like. Right. We all eagerly await what the return to campus committee has to tell us. What does

September feel like to you? Like we're going to be back in the class, but there's obviously going to be folks who need accommodations, who won't be able to come to campus for all kinds of reasons. How are you feeling about fall? What are your plans? What does planning looking like? Do you just not want to think about it yet? Where's your head at?

David Carter:

Well, I think my head is in a place that is very actually reminiscent of one year ago to this time in the sense of there's going to keep being requests for new plans, new versions, whatever it is. And by the time you finish working on those they'll want another one. There'll be change. So I have kind of just reached this point of like I don't say that I'm comfortable with uncertainty because that is actually one of my like personal things that I'm not good at is uncertainty. But I just sort of, that's kind of been our state for a year plus now, like in fact, like going full online eventually was almost like a comfort where it was like, I don't have to think about it and it will be that way. And I can adapt to that. And so now to be back into kind of a limbo is it's concerning. You know, because also like a month ago it was not in a limbo, it was a hundred percent we're going to be on campus. So I think in some ways I'm, I'm just sort of processing it as uncertainty and that I will, I, I won't invest too much in going one way or the other yet. I think so I'm kind of in a, it creates a holding pattern is one of the things that I certainly think is happening there. And I mean I'm hopeful that we can be on campus again, but I've, you know, I think I expressed this in one of our ACTAC meetings about this idea of hybrid is a misnomer and you know, it's, I'm not interested in trying to run two versions of every section of every course that I'm doing. Like if you, if I thought this year was almost, you know, life destroying next year could be even worse than that sense.

David Carter:

But yeah, I guess, I don't know if that's a great answer, but I think like how I'm feeling about the fall is, is both I'm trying not to get on like a huge rant, pedestal or anything right now. In the sense of just being like, I feel like if there was some sort of like really fast paced progress that I was seeing all around me, I would feel more confident about it, but I, I don't necessarily see that -- both societally, governmentally and TRU-wise, so yeah. And I'm not blaming anybody for that. I think, you know, it's been a really hard thing to react to, but like I don't because nobody else has the answer. I don't have the answer kind of the ultimate result there. So I think I don't, yeah, I don't really think, I don't feel like I have a great soundbite for you on, on that one, either Brenna from not knowing. But I think that, that my general kind of feeling is that I'll just try and be patient and adapt once I know more.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Patients and flexibility.

David Carter:

There that's exactly right. So fell, it comes full circle on that one.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

That may be the title of this episode.

David Carter:

That's great. Well, there you go. That's right. Here we go.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Thanks for your time today, Dave, I really enjoy chatting with you and I just really wanted the chance to kind of, I don't know, reflect on the affective experience this year. So I'm, I'm glad you're willing to come and do it. It's not an easy thing to do. Come and talk to me on the radio about your feelings.

David Carter:

It was my pleasure, Brenna, and I, you know, I really enjoy the podcast when I get a chance to listen to it. And I really appreciate all of your work on campus and online and on radio, as you said, and sort of your commitment to the, as I think I told you in an email the other day, I think your commitment to, to education and open learning and all these other things is really inspiring. So, so thanks for having me on.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Thank you. I'll see you in my Moodle Support therapy sessions anytime.

David Carter:

Thank you Dr. Gray,

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Take care. Bye bye.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

So that is it for episode 25 of You Got This! As always if you want to write to us you can email me. I'm bgray@tru.ca. I'm also on Twitter @brennacgray. And in both cases that's Gray with an A. All of our show notes and transcripts are posted at yougotthis.trubox.ca. Of course, you can always comment on individual episodes there.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I'm going to leave you today with a Tiny Teaching Tip. And given that it's the end of term, I'm just going to remind you in my Tiny Teaching Tip, that feedback is not grade justification. You've probably heard me say that before, or maybe you've heard my colleague Carolyn Ives at CELT, say that before, but it's an important thing to remember, particularly for those of you who are marking essays right now: feedback is actionable. It's things that students can do to improve, and they may need that information right now. Maybe there's another class they're going to move on to, or maybe there are things they need to know to continue their academic journey, but you don't need to feel like the purpose of the feedback you're writing on an assignment is to justify the mark the student has earned. It's important to remember that because this is a time of year when we can really work ourselves into a kind of overworked frenzy. We can really bury ourselves in commentary and feedback. And it's worth remembering that your feedback at this stage has limited utility. And it's likely that our students aren't really even able to hear it and process it right now. Don't forget that it has been a hell of a year. So I'm going to give you a nudge to remember that distinction between grade justification and feedback, and to focus on getting through your marking pile, giving students feedback that is actually actionable and useful and shedding the rest. And remember, you can always invite students into a conversation. The mark isn't the end of a chat. It's the beginning of a discourse. And if students want to come back and talk to you about what they could have done differently or what they can do next time, that's an option as well. So maybe you have a way of doing things and you want me to shut up and I'm happy to do it, but if

that nudge helps you move through your marking pile with a little bit more grace and a little bit more sense of scope for yourself, then it will have been a useful piece of feedback. Not grade justification. That's it for me folks. We'll see you next week. Bye bye.