Parallel lightning talks | hosted by UNSW Medicine & Health

Thursday 27 November | 9.30 – 10.30am

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Scaffolding Authentic Learning in Health Professional Programs Using VR & AI

Presenters: A/Prof. Michael Lee, Dr Serena Hong, Dr Wei-Ju Chang

Abstract

Technologies such Virtual Reality (VR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be incorporated as educational tools to facilitate authentic learning. Scaffolding of authentic learning is also important as it provides a temporary, graduated support system that allows learners to undertake and complete complex, real-world tasks that are relevant for their respective discipline.

A/Prof. Michael Lee

Associate Professor in the Faculty of Medicine & Health and the Physiotherapy Program Lead & Program Authority in School of Health Sciences.

Dr Serena Hong

Lecturer for the Physiotherapy program within the School of Health Sciences/Faculty of Medicine and Health at UNSW.

Dr Wei-Ju Chang

Senior Lecturer in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy at UNSW Sydney, Conjoint Postdoctorate Research Fellow at Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA), and an Australia Physiotherapy Association Titled Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist.

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Escape Room Pedagogy: Vision Science and Societal Impact

Presenters: Dr Ingrid Jiminez Barbosa, Dr Revathy Mani, Dr Lucy Jo

Abstract

This project introduces an innovative escape room pedagogy designed to teach vision science, ageing, biohacking, and sustainability through a transdisciplinary perspective. Students engage in a 2-hour immersive experience that blends interactive puzzles, ethical debates, and video-based narratives inspired by The Curious Case of Benjamin Button and Bryan Johnson's biohacking practices. The activity challenges learners to explore age-related vision changes, experimental treatments, and their societal implications, fostering critical thinking and ethical reasoning.

Grounded in constructivist and experiential learning theories, the escape room promotes collaboration across disciplines and aligns with UNSW's Societal Impact Framework. It encourages students to connect scientific knowledge with real-world challenges, including sustainable healthcare and ethical innovation.

Preliminary feedback from 107 students shows high engagement and increased appreciation for interdisciplinary learning. This model demonstrates how gamified, inquiry-based learning can build societal impact capabilities, making it a scalable and adaptable tool for curriculum transformation. By embedding ethical, sustainable, and health-focused themes, the project contributes meaningfully to the development of future-ready graduates.

Dr Ingrid Jiminez Barbosa

Dr Ingrid Jimenez Barbosa is an Optometrist and Academic at the School of Optometry and Vision Science (SOVS), UNSW, where she earned her PhD. Her research is focused on occupational health and vision, specifically assessing work-related risks to the eye and visual system. Her work explores the impact of chemical and biological hazards, with goals including the development of eye-visual battery tests for early detection of neurotoxicity and the promotion of preventive interventions. A passionate educator, Dr Jimenez Barbosa integrates innovative pedagogical methods like game-based learning, podcasts, and movie case analysis to enhance student engagement.

Dr Revathy Mani

Revathy Mani is a Lecturer and Education-focused Academic at the School of Optometry and Vision Science, with 20 years of experience in clinical practice, research, and teaching. She specializes in diagnosing and treating non-strabismic binocular vision anomalies and amblyopia. Awarded a Ph.D. from UNSW, Sydney, in 2021, Dr. Mani focuses on studying eye movement deficits in traumatic brain injury. She is the first Indian Fellow of NORA and instrumental in establishing a Neuro-optometry clinic in India. Her research explores how brain injuries affect eye movements and aims to develop visual neurorehabilitation techniques using eye-tracking technology.

Dr Lucy Jo

Dr Lucy Jo is a motivated, experienced educator who excels and is passionate about teaching. Knowledgeable in 'blended learning' and innovative in developing effective methods to deliver an excellent learning experience to students. High teamwork achievements with an intimate personality and excellent communication skills to elevate the quality of the education to the next level.

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Immersive Learning with VR and Generative AI: Overcoming Equipment Costs

Presenters: Dr Ali Darejeh, Dr Sara Mashayekh

Abstract

This presentation explores how immersive Virtual Reality (VR) environments, enhanced by Generative AI, can transform education by addressing three persistent challenges: the prohibitive cost of equipment, the limited resources available in low-budget institutes and under-resourced cities, and the shortage of expert tutors in these contexts.

Using a filmmaking education project as a case study, we demonstrate a VR-based cinematography training platform developed in Unreal Engine. The system allows students to practice camera work, lighting setups, and scene composition in fully simulated studios, without relying on expensive cameras, lighting rigs, or physical sets. Generative AI plays the role of a tutor by evaluating setups in real time against professional standards and providing narrative feedback on framing, lighting, and composition.

A study with 21 novice filmmaking students revealed significant gains in knowledge and confidence, with learners valuing the ability to experiment freely without financial, logistical, or expertise-related barriers.

The project highlights how immersive technologies combined with AI feedback can advance economic and social prosperity by lowering barriers to high-quality training, foster inclusion by democratizing access to creative education, and re-design curricula to better reflect transdisciplinary learning. Delegates will gain insights into embedding similar approaches in their own disciplines, particularly in low-resource contexts where cost-effective solutions are urgently needed.

Dr Ali Darejeh

Dr Ali Darejeh is an associate lecturer at UNSW specialising in AR and VR, brain-computer interfaces, serious games and educational technology. His research integrates emerging technologies with psychological and educational theories such as cognitive load, self-determination and constructivism to improve motivation and learning. He designs software for learners with diverse needs and develops innovative e-learning platforms. He also brings many years of industry experience as a UX researcher and gamification designer across several sectors.

Dr Sara Mashayekh

Dr Sara Mashayekh specialises in inclusive education, culturally responsive teaching, and preparing teachers to work effectively with diverse and marginalised communities. Her research focuses on how power and inequality shape educational experiences, and how ethical research practices can drive positive change. She also explores how educational technologies, including adaptive learning systems, artificial intelligence (AI), and immersive technologies, can help create more equitable, engaging, and personalized learning environments.

Student co-presenters: Lilla Irwin, Jennifer Liana, Viina Kalyani, Holly Smith

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Integrating Indigenous Knowledge for Societal Impact
Presenters: Dr Linh Nguyen, Dr DongJu Lee, Dr Misol Kim, Dr Tran Nguyen, Carlos Brennan, Peter Cooley

Abstract

The Social Entrepreneurship Practicum for undergraduate students is a project-based Work Integrated Learning course delivered in partnership with IndigiGrow, a 100% Aboriginal-owned social enterprise founded by Peter Cooley, the first Indigenous alumnus of UNSW's Centre for Social Impact (CSI). IndigiGrow, based in La Perouse, Sydney, is dedicated to sustaining the environment and Aboriginal heritage through the propagation of native plants and bush foods, with a special focus on the critically endangered Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub.

This practicum exemplifies curricular transformation by embedding Indigenous knowledge and societal impact at the heart of student learning. Through the collaboration with IndigiGrow, students develop social impact reports, capturing outcomes across five pillars: restoration of native biodiversity, Indigenous employment, youth skills development, native plant retail, and Indigenous cultural education. The reports provide IndigiGrow with evidence-based narratives to engage funders, community members and stakeholders, while students gain authentic experience in impact measurement and community engagement.

Additional course components include a video dialogue with Peter Cooley and an immersive "Discovering Native Plants and Bush Foods" tour at La Perouse Nursery, deepening students' understanding of cultural connections to Country. Additionally, a case study co-developed by CSI educators and researchers with IndigiGrow founder and an UNSW Indigenous student aims to be published by SAGE, extending the impact to broader educational contexts.

This initiative demonstrates how experiential learning and meaningful community-led partnership, grounded in Indigenous knowledge, can foster transformative student learning outcomes and contribute to UNSW's societal impact goals through curriculum innovation.

Dr Linh Nguyen
Dr Linh Nguyen is a Lecturer at the UNSW Business School - Centre for Social Impact (CSI). Linh's research and teaching focus on social entrepreneurship and social impact measurement. At UNSW, Linh teaches Social Entrepreneurship Practicum for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Dr DongJu Lee
Dr DongJu Lee is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) at the UNSW Business School. She has a PhD in Sociology from Harvard University and researches inequalities and social changes, with focus on gender equity & ethnic diversity, inclusive economy, innovation and diffusion, and policy development and evaluation.

Dr Misol Kim
Dr Misol Kim is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) at the UNSW Business School. She teaches courses on social and environmental sustainability and conducts research that integrates educational psychology and environmental psychology to empower individuals and drive positive social and environmental change.

Dr Tran Nguyen
Dr Tran Nguyen is a Research Officer at the Centre for Social Impact (CSI). She holds a PhD in Sociology from Macquarie University. Tran's research focuses on social policy, development studies, inclusive economy and cultural diversity. She has also undertaken social impact evaluation for different projects and delivered evaluation capacity building for external stakeholders.

Carlos Brennan
Carlos Brennan is a proud Kunja man and final-year Bachelor of Commerce in Finance and Business Economics student at UNSW. He works as a Research Assistant at the CSI and as an Undergraduate Economist at Deloitte Access Economics, where he contributes to projects on program evaluation, policy analysis, and Indigenous economic participation.

Peter Cooley
Peter Cooley is a proud Bidjigal man, social entrepreneur and CEO and co-founder of First Hand Solutions Aboriginal Corporation (FHS) and the creator of IndigiGrow, a 100% Aboriginal-owned and run social enterprise based in Sydney, Australia.

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# The 3Ds of Impact: Dream, Define, Do ~ Co-Creating Learning Journeys

Presenters: Tahmina Akhter

Abstract

This presentation introduces "Dream, Define, Do", a reflective and student-centred goal-setting strategy developed to enhance student engagement, wellbeing, and transferable skill development in large-scale courses. Used in the COMM1180 Student Partner Welcome Meeting, the strategy invites students to dream about their ideal learning environment, define what that looks like in practice, and do~ co-create activities and experiences with the convenor throughout the term. This approach fosters a sense of belonging, purpose, and agency, while embedding leadership, collaboration, communication, and inclusivity into the learning journey.

Aligned with the UNSW Societal Impact Framework, this strategy supports three key impact areas: advancing economic and social prosperity, enabling healthy lives, and strengthening societal resilience and cohesion. It also reflects the cross-cutting themes of inclusion, social justice, and integrity.

Evidence of impact includes increased student engagement, stronger peer collaboration, and meaningful feedback from student partners. One student shared, "You were the BEST listener and mentor… you consistently went above and beyond to ensure we had the best possible experience." Students reported feeling valued, confident, and better prepared for future roles. Delegate takeaways include tools for embedding societal impact into curriculum, fostering inclusive learning, and designing programmatic approaches that support lifelong learning.
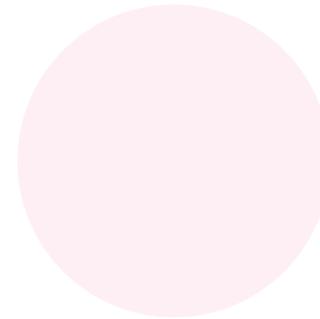
Tahmina Akhter

Faculty of Business

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Societal Impact in Undergraduate Curricula: A Transformative Learning Approach

Presenters: A/Prof. Priya Khanna Pathak, Dr Benjamin Phipps

Abstract

In an era defined by polycrisis, i.e overlapping social, economic, and environmental challenges, compounded by scepticism toward AI's displacement of human capabilities, higher education faces an urgent mandate to produce graduates who are not only technically proficient but also socially conscientious and ethically driven. The central challenge is to embed societal impact as a core pillar of undergraduate programs, moving beyond superficial integration to make it intrinsic to disciplinary expertise. Traditional pedagogical frameworks like connectivism (emphasising networked knowledge) and social constructivism (focusing on collaborative meaning-making) provide robust foundations for disciplinary learning but fall short in addressing the complex, value-driven goal of fostering societal impact. Using case studies and examples from several programs across the UNSW, we propose a pedagogical framework with three synergistic dimensions: Systems Thinking Framework: Integrates societal narratives into disciplinary modules, encouraging students to view their expertise within broader ecological and human contexts. Case studies (e.g., climate justice in engineering) foster holistic problem-solving, aligning technical skills with societal needs. Mezirow's Transformative Learning Framework: Promotes critical reflection on beliefs and values, driving worldview shifts and behavioural change. Reflective practices, like student-led outreach services, ethical debates on AI bias in computer science, cultivate self-awareness and ethical decision-making for responsible professionalism.
Programmatic Approach: Aligns assessment, learning outcomes, and curricular activities into a portfolio-based holistic systems to identify overall contribution of embedded societal impact into the curriculum. Together, these dimensions reframe education as a transformative process, equipping students to address polycrisis and AI disruptions with agency.

A/Prof. Priya Khanna Pathak

Associate Professor in the School of Clinical Medicine

Dr Benjamin Phipps

Division of Education & Student Experience

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From Classroom to Community: Using Visual Literacy to Improve Access and Equity

Presenters: Brenda Tronson, Myriam Boisseau, Ruchira Abeyratna

Abstract

Dual coding (the use of both visuals and words in communication) is an effective educational tool, enhancing knowledge retention, engagement, scaffolding of complex concepts, and inclusivity (1). It is also vital for professionals across a range of fields. Even in law, where words still take precedence, lawyers are increasingly using visuals to improve their communication, although legal education lags in this regard (1, 2). Other areas are more advanced in both practice and education.

In law, the societal impact of improving dual coding is twofold. First, greater inclusivity for a diverse range of students. More broadly, law students can learn skills to increase the accessibility of their own communications. This allows them to better serve their clients (in providing advice and in advocating on their behalf) and the community more broadly (eg in producing public resources).

In this short presentation, we will introduce some dual coding strategies that may be useful across disciplines and in practice.

References:
(1)   Natalie Brown, 'Incorporating Visual Learning Aids in Teaching Law' (2024) 2 Western Australian Law Teachers' Review 67
(2)   Tania Leiman, 'Where are the graphics? Communicating legal ideas effectively using images and symbols' (2016) 26(1) Legal Education Review 47

Brenda Tronson

Brenda is an education-focused Senior Lecturer at UNSW Law & Justice and a 2025 Nexus Fellow. She is also a barrister at Level 22 Chambers, Sydney. Across her teaching and legal practice, Brenda specialises in ethics, administrative law, civil procedure and advocacy. She is leading pedagogical research on supporting international students and into class participation.

Myriam Boisseau

Myriam is an Educational Developer, Nexus, in the Faculty of Law and Justice. She brings to her role a diverse background in translation, academic English instruction, academic skills support and learning design. She holds postgraduate qualifications in Translation, Education, and Learning Design. Her research interests include student engagement and motivation, as well as inclusive pedagogy.

Ruchira Abeyratna

Ruchira is a Juris Doctor candidate at UNSW, consistently recognised on the Dean's List for his academic excellence. He is passionate about the power of education to inspire and equip emerging leaders to combat our world's most pressing challenges. He loves experimenting with different pedagogical techniques to maximise his impact. Ruchira also holds a First Class Bachelor of Arts from The University of Melbourne, and champions a multidisciplinary approach in his research and advocacy.

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From Industry to Curriculum to Classroom and Back Again: Closing the Loop on AI

Presenters: A/Prof. Diana Perche, Dr Sharon Aris

Abstract

Social Sciences graduates must not only understand AI technologies but also to critically advise on its responsible adoption, anticipate unintended consequences, and administer programs that balance efficiency with societal impact. AI offers efficiencies and innovative solutions, however it also raises profound questions around democratic values, regulatory oversight, data sovereignty, and public trust, key elements of societal resilience and cohesion.

Adopting a programmatic approach to AI in the Bachelor of Social Sciences curriculum, we have:

- Identified industry current and future needs for Social Sciences graduates, through workshops, conference presentations, and consultation, and used these to develop a graduate AI capability statement
- Mapped our core courses to understand what our students are doing in their learning activities and assessment
- Designed a program curriculum to strengthen the feedback loop between these, building in innovation and currency
- Developed a suite of tailored School-based workshops and resources to build AI capacity amongst Social Sciences educators and nurture innovative practice.

This repositioning of AI as a critical capability woven through the program (rather than only an integrity issue to prohibit) means Social Sciences graduates are prepared to make socially impactful change in Australia's digital future.

A/Prof. Diana Perche

Diana is Associate Professor in Social Research and Policy and Deputy Head of School (Education) in the School of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture. Diana's disciplinary background is in public policy and public administration, in the discipline of Politics, with a particular focus on contemporary First Nations politics and policy in Australia.

Dr Sharon Aris

Sharon is the Nexus Fellow for the School of Social Sciences. With experience across public and private universities and vocational colleges, she holds a PhD in sociology and specialises in the sociologies of education and knowledge. Her current work focuses on developing industry-responsive curricula and innovative learning design. A Senior Fellow with AdvanceHE (SFHEA), Sharon's background in media, community work, advocacy, and policy informs her interdisciplinary approach to teaching, curriculum development, and higher education research.

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The Sustainable Citizen: Curriculum-to-Credential Pathway

Presenters: Dr George Joukhadar, Maria George, Emma Mills, Dr Chris Maloney, Dr Benjamin Phipps

Abstract

This presentation proposes a UNSW-wide initiative to embed sustainability into education across entire the student journey, ensuring every graduate is recognised as a sustainable citizen. Aligned with the UNSW Societal Impact Framework and the Progress for All strategy, the initiative drives curricular transformation by reimagining how sustainability is integrated, assessed, and rewarded across disciplines.

At the heart of the program is a curriculum-to-credential pathway. Students engage with sustainability through coursework, research, and co-curricular activities mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each engagement is rewarded with digital badges, points, and credits, building towards a personalised sustainability portfolio (e.g. PebblePad). This portfolio can be integrated into a student's UNSW profile and shared on professional platforms such as LinkedIn, offering employers verified evidence of sustainability literacy. Research shows that embedding SDG-related learning enhances graduate employability and institutional visibility (Adams et al., 2023; Gregori-Giralt et al., 2025). Early UNSW activities linked to the SDGs already demonstrate strong student engagement and demand for visible recognition of sustainability skills.

Central to the program is curricular transformation through 1) Mapping courses to SDGs; 2) Embedding transdisciplinary projects; and 3) Developing assessment models to capture societal impact capability.

The purpose of this proposal is for UNSW to strengthen graduate employability, enhance its visibility in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, and position itself as a global leader in educating for a sustainable society and planet.

Dr George Joukhadar

George Joukhadar is a Senior Lecturer at UNSW's School of Information Systems and Technology Management. He integrates sustainability into teaching and research aligned with the UNSW Societal Impact Framework. As co-lead of the Education for Sustainable Development Community of Practice, he fosters curriculum innovation that empowers students to address global challenges.

Maria George

Maria George is an Educator and Teaching Fellow with a multidisciplinary academic background. With a PhD in Information Systems and Technology Management, she explores how technology and organisations navigate ethical challenges.

Emma Mills

Emma Mills is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Art & Design at UNSW, bringing over twenty-five years of design industry experience to her teaching. Her work connects design education with sustainable development, preparing students for meaningful, socially responsible practice.

Dr Chris Maloney

Chris Maloney is a Senior Lecturer and Education Focused academic at UNSW. He leads Student Support in the School of Health Sciences. With over 20 years in teaching and research, Chris focuses on student belonging, wellbeing, and academic success.

Dr Benjamin Phipps

Benjamin Phipps is a Nexus Fellow (Academic Development) in UNSW's Pro Vice-Chancellor Education portfolio. His background is in ethnomusicology and music education, with a PhD from UNSW, and he is a Senior Fellow of Advance HE. His academic development work focuses on assessment, feedback and student engagement across the Nexus Program.

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Seeing, Touching, Thinking: UNSW Library Experiential Learning Program

Presenters: Dr Megan Fizell, Brook Morgan

Abstract

The Library's Experiential Learning Program is a hands-on, object-based learning initiative designed to develop critical literacy, analytical, and interpretive skills. Materials become tangible starting points for inquiry, discussion, and reflection through direct engagement with scholarly, creative, and cultural objects from the Library's Exhibitions Program and Special Collections. By engaging with objects from diverse fields—such as history, science, and art—object-based learning naturally bridges academic divides. We work collaboratively with academics to create workshops that directly link exhibition content to course learning outcomes, enabling students to construct new forms of understanding from their experiences and offering academics new ways to assess critical thinking and knowledge application.

Through case study examples of current program offerings, including interactive exhibition tours, workshops, and creative art-making sessions, we demonstrate how these multisensory offerings provide various ways for students to engage. These learning experiences encourage deep interaction with materials through an approach that incorporates tactile and sensory opportunities, group discussions, and personal reflection. The Experiential Learning Program contributes to UNSW's Societal Impact goals by creating accessible and engaging educational environments for all learners through an inclusive and multisensory approach.

Dr Megan Fizell

Dr Megan Fizell is the Curator, Special Collections & Exhibitions at UNSW Library. Megan has worked in the GLAMR sector in London and Sydney as a curator, writer, and art historian. She centres her current curatorial practice on reconceptualising interdisciplinary research, using inclusive and collaborative methods to create engaging, multisensory exhibitions and experiences.

Brook Morgan

Brook Morgan is the Special Collections & Experiential Learning Coordinator at UNSW Library. She is an artist and educator and has worked in the GLAMR sector for more than a decade. Brook designs and delivers inclusive, object-based workshops that emphasise multisensory and accessible experiences through creative art-making and tactical engagement.

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Crossing Disciplines: Medical and psychology students learning together for better patient care
Presenters: A/Prof. Anita McGregor, Dr Kalli Spencer

Abstract

Interprofessional learning (IPL) is central to preparing graduates for collaborative, patient-centred care. We piloted a novel activity where medical students conducted a simulated patient history while psychology students observed and provided structured feedback. This approach harnessed psychology students' expertise in communication and interpersonal skills, while enabling medical students to refine their interviewing skills in a safe, supportive environment. Both groups of learners (n=25) had robust feedback about the interprofessional learning activity through a survey conducted subsequent to the activity. We will share some of the results of the survey, and our key takeaways from the process.

Key takeaway messages:
• IPL can be implemented at low cost and high value by leveraging existing student expertise.
• Structured peer feedback enhances both communication skills and interprofessional respect.
• Embedding such activities strengthens UNSW's societal impact by preparing graduates for integrated, holistic healthcare.

A/Prof. Anita McGregor

Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology

Dr Kalli Spencer

Convenor of Clinical and Communication skills course (Phase 1 Medicine) and member of the Faculty Interprofessional Education Committee.

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Medical Education Enhancement Training Using AI Virtual Patient

Presenters: A/Prof. Betty Chan

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence Virtual Patient (AIVP) was developed using the ICON platform to deliver high-fidelity simulated nine OSCE scenarios with structured feedback for final-year medical students. Pre- and post-AIVP OSCE was performed to assess students' performance. The volunteer cohort (n=43) demonstrated modest improvement, while the targeted Medical Education Enhancement Training (MEET) group (n=8) achieved significant improvements in overall OSCE performance (median +13.3, p=0.03). Feedback collected through Qualtrics questionnaires and focus group discussions indicated that approximately 80% of students (N=51) reported increased confidence in history taking, as well as in developing clinical and management reasoning. Thematic analysis highlighted that students valued both the high-fidelity OSCE scenarios and the feedback provided on their performance. Limitations included lag time during interactions and occasional AI hallucinations.

A/Prof. Betty Chan
Associate Professor in the School of Clinical Medicine

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Learning Through Engaging with Cultural, Architectural and Linguistic Diversity

Presenters: Dr Dijana Alic, Dr Ayshe Eli

Abstract

The presentation showcases the outcomes of a collaborative, interdisciplinary site visit to the Auburn Gallipoli Mosque, undertaken by students from the Built Environment ARCH7216 (Designing Diversity: Architecture and Urbanism in a Multicultural Context) and Humanities and Languages ARTS2469 (Islam in Asia and the Pacific). Building on a longstanding tradition of BE students engaging with the mosque, this initiative expands the experience into a cross-school dialogue.

The presentation highlights two key findings:
• Value of student collaboration and dialogue across disciplines
• Insights emerging through interdisciplinary discussions during the on-site visit
By engaging with the mosque through interdisciplinary methods, students document, interpret and respond to its cultural, linguistic, historical and architectural dimensions. These interactions are captured through diverse and authentic assessment tasks, including student-let seminar recording (visual and audio), reflective journals, site mapping and analytical research outputs. In doing so, the project contributes a framework for interdisciplinary teaching grounded in real-life experiences, fostering cross-school collaboration, and modelling best practice for authentic assessment in the age of AI.

Dr Dijana Alic
Associate Professor in the School of Built Environment

Dr Ayshe Eli
Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities & Languages

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Enhancing Education Governance Processes in Partnership with Blakcademy

Presenters: Catherine Yang, A/Prof. Melody Muscat, A/Prof. Anita Heywood

Abstract

This presentation showcases our bold transformation in academic governance—placing First Peoples' leadership at the heart of curriculum decision-making. In partnership with Blakcademy and aligned with the First Peoples' Cultural Capabilities Health Curriculum (FPCCHC), the initiative redefines how Medicine and Health embeds Indigenous knowledge systems into our evolving health education. Delegates will walk away with:

• A development-to-endorsement pathway that connects academic authors, Directors of Teaching, Faculty Executives, and Blakcademy — supported by the Faculty Academic Quality team to ensure consistency and clarity.

• A collaborative workflow that outlines when and how to engage Blakcademy Academic Leads, the Blakcademy Committee, and the First Peoples Council—ensuring proposals are culturally safe, community-informed, and aligned with the FPCCHC.

• An advocacy strategy to build faculty-wide engagement, including how to initiate meaningful conversations with academic teams about the value of First Peoples consultation, understanding of FPCCHC and how to embed this into local governance practices.

This governance update is more than a process change—it's a cultural shift. It reflects UNSW's Societal Impact Framework by promoting inclusive, accountable institutions and advancing health equity. It empowers academics, strengthens cross-disciplinary collaboration, and ensures curriculum development is community-informed and culturally safe. This initiative aims to foster stronger partnerships and build momentum across the faculty. It's a powerful example of UNSW's commitment to "Progress for All"—with real impact for students, staff, and the communities we serve.

Catherine Yang

Catherine Yang is the Academic Programs & WIL Manager at UNSW Medicine & Health. She leads two teams focused on academic quality and clinical education, drawing on her nursing background and extensive tertiary education experience. Catherine oversees strategic WIL delivery, fosters collaboration across academic and professional teams, and drives continuous improvement to ensure programs are innovative, compliant, and responsive to the evolving needs of students, communities, and the healthcare workforce.
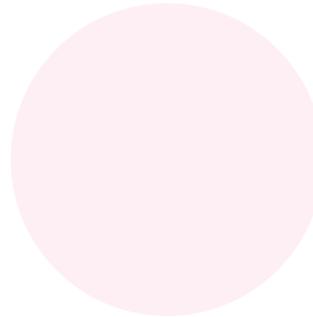
A/Prof. Melody Muscat

Associate Professor Melody Muscat joined the UNSW Faculty of Medicine & Health in August 2024 as the inaugural Associate Dean First Peoples Education and Student Success and Director of the Blakcademy. She has held senior academic roles at JCU, UniSC, Melbourne University, and UQ, where she co-led the First Nations Student GROWTH Strategy Governance Committee. Melody is a member of the Australian Medical Council's Indigenous Review Team, advancing national standards in Indigenous health education and cultural safety.

A/Prof. Anita Heywood

Anita Heywood is the Associate Dean Education (Quality) in UNSW Medicine & Health, and an infectious diseases epidemiologist and public health educator in the School of Population Health (SPH). She has 15 years' experience in designing and delivering online and blended postgraduate courses to public health audiences. Through her leadership roles she has led the development and implementation of key strategies that support quality teaching outcomes and excellence in student experience, including new programs.

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Co-Designing AI-Driven Virtual Patients to Support Culturally Safe Communication in First Peoples Health Education

Presenters: A/Prof. Silas Taylor

Abstract

This presentation explores an interdisciplinary initiative within Faculty of Medicine & Health to co-design and evaluate AI-generated virtual patient (VP) simulations aimed at improving students' culturally safe communication, with a particular focus on First Peoples health. Leveraging AI-enabled oral interaction and feedback platforms, the project aims to provide authentic, scalable learning opportunities with personalised feedback, embedded in interprofessional curricula.

This project, framed by the Societal Impact Framework, applies a Social Accountability model and co-design with First Peoples communities—positioning communities as experts in care, critical reviewers of the health system, partners in sustainable collaboration, and drivers of interventions. It contributes to the impact areas Enabling Healthy Lives and Strengthening Societal Resilience, while centring Indigenous Knowledges as a cross-cutting theme. Aligned with UNSW's commitment to transdisciplinary innovation and partnerships, it brings together multiple schools in FMH and embeds sustained community input through the emerging First Peoples Council and monthly community yarning circles.

We aim to outline a practical model for adapting and scaling AI-enabled learning experiences, lessons learned in cross-faculty and community collaboration, and early evidence on engagement, impact and student feedback. This project highlights the pedagogical potential of AI to build cultural capability across the health workforce in ways that are intentional, ethical, and grounded in community-led design.

A/Prof. Silas Taylor

A/Prof. Silas Taylor is a UNSW Faculty of Medicine and Health Nexus Fellow, SFHEA, Fellow of the Scientia Education Academy, and a recipient of a VCATE. His expertise is in teaching, experiential learning, assessment and curriculum design related to Clinical Skills in health professions programs and, more widely, the implementation of a variety of technology-enhanced approaches to teaching and assessment, including ePortfolios, oral assessment and innovative uses of AI

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Multidisciplinary student rural health clinics: Enabling health lives

Presenters: Dr Shannon Pike, Josh Currie

Abstract

This presentation will present key findings from a mixed method research study design that incorporated online surveys and semi-structured interviews to evaluate the multidisciplinary student visiting clinic experiences and outcomes across four key stakeholder groups: students (medicine, physiotherapy, exercise physiology, pharmacy, dietetics), clinicians, general practitioners, patients. Stakeholder evaluation yielded positive results. All students (n=15) reported improved understanding and value of interprofessional learning and chronic disease management, roundtable sessions offered valuable insights into multidisciplinary patient management. Clinicians agreed clinics provided unique opportunity for interprofessional (n=7,100%) and individual student learning (n=6,86%). All general practitioners (n=3) reported efficient referral processes and expected patient outcomes met. Among patients (n=22), all but 1 (5%) reported an improved understanding of the role of medical and allied health professionals in managing their health, all can now manage their health problems differently. Normalised limited healthcare access, immediate education and referral benefits, and interest to help student learning were amongst emerging themes. Identified areas for improvement included increased clinic time and rural exposure, greater orientation and additional resources.

This study reveals the positive and wide-ranging academic and community benefits of visiting rural health clinics. Findings are actively shaping future clinic improvements and informing plans for large-scale implementation.

Dr Shannon Pike

Dr Shannon Pike is the Rural Independent Learning Project Coordinator at the Wagga Wagga Rural Clinical Campus and a senior Occupational Therapist with the Murrumbidgee Local Health District. As an education focused senior lecturer passionate about rural health equity, Shannon develops rural research opportunities and supports medical students' learning during the process of undertaking research. Shannon partners with local clinicians to increase their capability and capacity to undertake projects and supervise students.

Josie Currie

Josie is a second-year medical student at the UNSW Rural Medical School in Wagga Wagga. Having spent her entire life in the Riverina, she is passionate about rural health issues, healthcare inequities and diversity in healthcare.

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Co-designing programmatic approaches to curriculum for health, wellbeing, and societal impact
Presenters: Diana Turnip, Dr Daniela Castro de Jong

Abstract

This presentation invites participants to explore how academics and third space professionals co-design programmatic approaches to curriculum that embed societal impact within curriculum transformation. The approach is informed by an Indigenous epistemic and ontological perspectives that emphasise relationality, interconnectedness, reciprocity, and shared ownership (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003; Romm, 2024). These principles align with UNSW's institutional focus on progress for all in education.

Building on the UNSW Medicine & Health Nexus initiative, the presentation draws on faculty-based work that has been inspired by institutional initiatives such as the Blakcademy, which models inclusive and relational approaches to curriculum design. Within this context, programmatic assessment is conceptualised not as a fixed model but as an evolving, relational and iterative practice that enriches both student learning and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Bishopp-Martin & Johnson, 2025).

Examples from health education illustrate how collaborative mapping, reflection, and case-based inquiry can foster coherence across learning, assessment, and societal impact. Participants will gain practical insights for embedding societal impact into teaching and assessment while engaging with participatory design approaches. The presentation demonstrates how programmatic assessment can serve as a vehicle for curriculum transformation and capability-building in higher education (van der Vleuten et al., 2014).

Diana Turnip

Diana Turnip is a Nexus Educational Developer at Faculty Medicine and Health, UNSW Sydney, leading program-level curriculum and assessment reform across academic and professional domains. She co-authored UNSW's institutional framework for programmatic assessment and supports institutional transformation through transdisciplinary collaboration and scholarly academic development. Her work advances inclusive and evidence-informed approaches to curriculum design. Diana contributes to national and international SoTL dialogues and co-leads the HERDSA Assessment Quality Special Interest Group.

Dr Daniela Castro de Jong

Daniela is the Nexus Fellow at the School of Health Sciences, in the Faculty of Medicine and Health. With a professional background in occupational therapy, she has both clinical and academic experiences on co-designed initiatives. She is a co-lead of the Evaluation of Teaching & ePortfolios Community of Practice, and a co-lead of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Network within the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee in her Faculty.

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Reflecting, Connecting, and Growing Together - Cultivating Inclusive Spaces for Leadership Development

Presenters: Amanda Miura-Carlon, Bronte Tartak

Abstract

This presentation explores the integration of reflective practice and inclusive pedagogy within Leadership Foundations (LF). LF is a co-curricular, cross-disciplinary program designed for students at all stages of study delivered by UNSW Employability team. The program serves as starting point for developing socially aware, inclusive, and sustainably high-performing leaders who create positive impact within their communities and across broader society. Through the key competencies of Growth Mindset, Grit, Collaboration, Curiosity, and Leadership Identity, students engage in blended learning experience. LF employs a discovery-based learning model, guiding students to reflect on their values, skills, experiences, and purpose; connect authentically across diverse perspectives; and grow collectively through shared, experiential learning.

Pedagogical Focus:

- Reflective Practice: Encourages leadership identity formation by helping students examine their values, strengths, biases, and growth areas.

- Inclusive Learning Environments: Foster psychological safety, promote equity through active listening, collaborative dialogue and mutual respect.

These tools are practical and adaptable, easily applied in any classroom, team, or workplace to foster trust, inclusion, innovation and growth.

We invite the audience to consider:

• How will you use reflection to grow as a leader?

• How can you create environments where others feel safe to share, grow, and lead?

Evidence of Impact

• 99% satisfaction from 663 students; NPS: 55

• Student reflections showcased through writing, posters, speeches and even a song, demonstrate transformation on both personal and societal levels.

Amanda Miura-Carlon

Amanda Miura-Carlon is part of the Coaching & Development team at UNSW Employability. She holds a BA in Anthropology, Sociology & Social Policy and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. With over a decade of experience, Amanda designs inclusive, engaging, and transformative learning experiences that empower students to grow, enhance their university journey, and step confidently into their future careers.

Bronte Tartak

Bronte is studying a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Bioinformatics at UNSW, and is a casual administrative assistant with the Employability team. Having first engaged with the Leadership Foundations program as a participant, she now uses her lived experience to assist with its delivery. She is passionate about creating supportive learning environments for meaningful student engagement and transforming data into valuable insights.

Workshop: The role of the Intellectual Property Tool in embedding Indigenous Knowledges in curricula

Thursday 27 November | 11.15 – 11.45am

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Workshop: The role of the Intellectual Property Tool in embedding Indigenous Knowledges in curricula

Presenters: A/Prof. Christine Evans, Quinton Vea Vea

Abstract

Indigenous Cultural & Intellectual Property could be considered as a pragmatic tool when trying to incorporate Indigenous Knowledges into curriculum. Furthermore, it would be a useful tool when trying to measure impact through projects related to Indigenous Knowledges. The UNSW is engaging in curriculum renewal as it prepares for flex-semesters. A significant component of this process will be supporting the embedding of Indigenous Knowledges. This masterclass will provide opportunities for participating staff to gain insights and skills to support this process.

A/Prof. Christine Evans

Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education

Quinton Vea Vea

Quinton is the Project Lead for the creation of UNSW's Indigenous Cultural & Intellectual Property Protocol which will be a guiding framework for all staff at UNSW when incorporating Indigenous Knowledges.

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Measuring SIF: short talks

Thursday 27 November | 11.45 – 12.15pm

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Impact Indicators and Education - What does that mean?

Presenter: A/Prof. Marina Nehme

Abstract

Universities play an important role in shaping societal outcomes through their educational missions. However, increasingly, institutions are being evaluated not only on academic excellence but also on their broader social impact. This presentation explores the literature on how social impact in the context of university education is defined, measured, and operationalised. It reflects on and critiques the use of impact indicators that assess contributions to social equity, community engagement, graduate outcomes, and the integration of social responsibility into teaching and learning. By examining these indicators, the presentation contributes to a growing discourse on how universities can be agents of social change through education.

A/Prof. Marina Nehme

Marina Nehme is an Associate Professor at UNSW Law. Her teaching philosophy is centred on the motivation of students as she has found that motivated learners have a greater capacity to pursue independent and inquisitive learning which promotes deeper level of understanding and helps develop critical thinking. Marina has received local and national teaching awards. Her dedication to legal education is also apparent by her various contributions to this area in scholarship and service.

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Where Are They Now? Mapping Alumni Impact through Linked Profiles

Presenters: Dr Sharon Aris, Alexis Monardo, Janice Lau

Abstract

Understanding the societal impact of alumni is central to assessing the value of university education, yet systematic approaches to tracking alumni pathways remain limited. This presentation introduces a method for mapping the careers and contributions of UNSW School of Social Sciences graduates using LinkedIn professional profiles. By analysing approximately 500 profiles of Social Science, International Studies, and Social Research and Policy alumni, the study identifies where graduates are located, the sectors and industries in which they work, and the types of roles they hold.

Findings reveal that UNSW alumni contribute across public, private, and civil society sectors, with significant representation in managerial, research, policy, consultancy, and advocacy roles. Early career pathways commonly include research, HR, and project officer positions, with progression into leadership and specialist roles over time. International mobility is particularly strong among International Studies graduates, with one-quarter working overseas.

This approach demonstrates how alumni data can provide a map of graduate societal impact, highlighting transferable skills such as research, critical thinking, leadership, and cross-cultural communication. By making alumni pathways visible and seeking alumni connection, universities can better evidence graduate outcomes and strengthen industry and community partnerships through fostering an active alumni community.

Dr Sharon Aris

Sharon is the Nexus Fellow for the School of Social Sciences. With experience across public and private universities and vocational colleges, she holds a PhD in sociology and specialises in the sociologies of education and knowledge. Her current work focuses on developing industry-responsive curricula and innovative learning design. A Senior Fellow with AdvanceHE (SFHEA), Sharon's background in media, community work, advocacy, and policy informs her interdisciplinary approach to teaching, curriculum development, and higher education research.

Alexis Monardo

Alexis Monardo is in the final year of the Bachelor of Social Science and was the President of the Social Science Student Society in 2024.

Janice Lau

UNSW student

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DAY 2

Climate Fresk: Embedding climate literacy into curriculum at UNSW

Thursday 27 November | 11.45am – 12.15pm

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Climate Fresk: Embedding climate literacy into curriculum at UNSW

Presenters: Dr Tania Leimbach, Prof. Bronwen Morgan

Abstract

Over the past year, a small team of committed UNSW staff have collaborated to integrate the Climate Fresk workshop into curriculum. Part of a broader strategy to foster a culture of climate awareness and engagement across campus, the Climate Fresk project is focused on building an evidence-based systemic understanding of climate change for UNSW educators, professional staff and students. In this Education Festival session, we share reflections on the process of embedding the Climate Fresk into classrooms across two faculties (Law and Justice / ADA), both with positive results.

Climate Fresk is an internationally acclaimed, science-based workshop that transforms complex climate science into a fun yet serious interactive game. Each workshop offers an empowering educational experience using 42 cards based on the latest IPCC reports. Working in teams, participants map the causes and consequences of climate change. Guided by the "head, heart, and hand" approach, the workshop fosters knowledge, emotional connection, and practical action.

Dr Tania Leimbach

Tania is a member of the Environment & Society Group (HAL/ADA) and convenes courses in the Master of Environmental Management, nurturing future change-makers. Her work focuses on youth-led climate solutions, educator capacity-building and innovative climate change pedagogy. With a PhD from UTS's Institute for Sustainable Futures, Tania's transdisciplinary research and teaching is informed by systems thinking and broadly spans renewable energy, circular economy and regenerative agriculture. She continues to bridge research, teaching, and public engagement to advance transformative climate and sustainability education.

Prof. Bronwen Morgan

Bronwen joined UNSW Law School in October 2012, having taught at the University of Bristol, UK for seven years as Professor of Socio-legal Studies. Prior to Bristol, she taught at the University of Oxford for six years in association with the Centre for Socio-legal Studies, and both St Hilda's College (1999-2001) and Wadham College (2002-2005). A very long time ago, she taught at the University of Sydney Law School. Bronwen is currently Professor of Law at UNSW Law.

Mylene Turban

Mylène Turban has dedicated her career to environmental and social regeneration. She began as a chemical engineer in solar and groundwater remediation before moving into sustainability consulting, supporting organisations on net-zero strategies. Since 2024, she has been part of UNSW's Environmental Sustainability Team, leading initiatives that make sustainability visible, engaging and impactful. Passionate about translating complex science into practical action, she also facilitates educational workshops, including the Climate Fresk.

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Student panel: outcomes of societal impact learning

Thursday 27 November | 1.15pm – 2.15pm

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Student panel: outcomes of societal impact learning

Chaired by Prof. Sarah Maddison, student panel members: Alofainamailelagi (Ina) Nickel, Tess Gordon, Vincent Fitzgerald Trajano, Mondira Paul

Professor Sarah Maddison

Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Education & Student Experience

Ina Nickel

Engineering student

Tess Gordon

Arts, Design & Architecture alumna

Vincent Fitzgeral Trajano

Business student

Mondira Paul

Medicine & Health student

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DAY 2

Mini hackathon: Brainstorming models of Societal Impact Challenge Projects

Thursday 27 November | 2.15pm – 3.15pm

Brainstorming models of Societal Impact Challenge Projects

Presenters: Dr Atefeh Zamani, Dr Will Scates Frances, A/Prof. Scott Mooney, Dr Cherie Lucas, Dr Benjamin Phipps, Priya Khanna Pathak

Abstract

Over the past months the Nexus Societal Impact Challenge Projects Squad has been investigating faculty and school perspectives on SICPs and how they could be implemented from all coursework students at UNSW. In exploring existing practice, we have identified different views on what constitutes a SICP and how they might work for different disciplines and in transdisciplinary ways. Ultimately our goal is to best identify how group-based challenge projects which have a real-world challenge and learning partner can become part of the learning experience of each UNSW student as part of the Progress For All strategy.

We invite you to join the discussion on each table where we want to explore how group-based challenge projects are being implemented at UNSW and their relationship to existing pedagogical models that have been identified as helpful to building the foundations for SICPs future. You are invited to discuss your perspectives on the blue-sky vision for what SICPs might look like for students in 2034. For instance: How might tensions between different experiences such as WIL and SICPs be understood and reconciled as part of a wholistic program view while maintaining the integrity of both? How might we promote SICPs as transformational learning experiences with benefits for society beyond UNSWs walls. How can SICPs move from disciplinary perspectives to a more wholistic transdisciplinary orientation? What competencies do we want SICPs to evidence in students learning journey? How do we prepare students for SICPs?

The discussion at each table is grounded in familiar pedagogical models as a starting point to move on to discussion about how we take the existing expertise in these areas to create suitable SICPs that are group based, involve a learning partner and a live challenge connected to the Societal Impact Framework. The activity aims to socialise these ideas with the community and invite people to contribute their thoughts and brainstorm solutions to enable SICPs.

Dr Atefeh Zamani

Lecturer in the School of Mathematics & Statistics

Dr Will Scates Frances

PVCE Nexus Fellow

A/Prof. Scott Mooney

Associate Professor in the School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences

Dr Cherie Lucas

Medicine & Health Nexus Fellow

Dr Benjamin Phipps

PVCE Nexus Fellow (Academic Development)

A/Prof. Priya Khanna Pathak

Associate Professor in the School of Clinical Medicine

Workshop: Universal Design for Learning 3.0

Thursday 27 November | 2.15pm – 3.15pm

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Learning Without Limits: Design for All, Benefit Everyone

Presenters: Mariana Rodriguez, Lou Cardinale, Augustina Salas

Abstract

Step into *Learning Without Limits*, a dynamic EduFest workshop exploring Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and its power to create inclusive learning experiences for every student. This interactive session invites participants to reflect on how small shifts in design, like captions, consistent LMS layouts and flexible assessment formats, can dismantle barriers and enhance belonging across diverse cohorts.

Through games, persona-based reflection and practical "quick wins," we'll uncover how a single inclusive design decision can ripple outwards to benefit all learners. Grounded in UNSW's commitment to equity and accessibility, this workshop demonstrates that designing for one truly supports everyone.

Join us to play, reflect and redesign learning without limits.

Mariana Rodriguez

Mariana Rodriguez is a Nexus Educational Developer and UDL Guild lead at UNSW. With expertise in inclusive curriculum design, intercultural education and technology-enhanced learning, Mariana leads initiatives embedding Universal Design for Learning 3.0 across UNSW programs. Their work aligns UDL with Constructive Alignment and UNSW's Societal Impact Framework to promote equitable learning and evidence-based transformation across disciplines.

Lou Cardinale

Lou Cardinale is a Doctor of Education candidate and Academic Learning Facilitator at UNSW. Her current research focus is on Learning Management Systems for inclusive learning, with a particular focus on aligning online learning strategies to the neurodiverse cognitive architecture. In addition to a deep passion for literature, Louisa also has an interest in student wellbeing, neurodiversity, digital technologies and instructional design.

Augustina Salas

Agustina Salas is an Education Designer in the UNSW Business School, with over 20 years of teaching experience and 5 years in educational design. Her work focuses on inclusive curriculum and assessment design through the lens of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), accessibility, and evidence-based practice. Agustina is passionate about removing barriers to learning and enhancing student engagement through equitable, purposeful, and high-impact educational experiences that align with UNSW's commitment to academic excellence and societal impact.

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