

Trades Summit Series: Strengthening Teaching and Learning for the Future
Unpacking Our Practice
BCcampus: November 24, 2022, Day 1
Speakers: Mabyn Grinde and Michelle Beal
Host: Tim Carson

MABYN GRINDE:

So hello and welcome to the B.C. Trades Summit Series. We're super excited to be kicking off this morning with you and we're really sorry that we can't be there live and in person. And just in case you think you're in the wrong session, you're not. We had originally called this session Teaching on the Fly. But as we started to build our session after we'd sent in our proposal, of course, we decided that it was much more a conversation about unpacking our practice and getting down to the nitty-gritty of what we're teaching the program. So you are in the right session and welcome. We're glad you're here. Before we get started, we'd just like to acknowledge that the land we gather on is the traditional homeland, hunting and ceremonial gathering places for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people. The Plains Cree, Woodland Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux People have practised their culture and languages on Treaty 6 and Métis Region Number 2 Territories for generations and were the original caretakers of this land. Many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people call this land home today and have done so for millennia. We acknowledge the history we have created together on this land and are thankful for the opportunity to walk together side-by-side in friendship, learning from our past and promoting positive relationships in the present and in the future. So my name is Mabyn Grinde.

MICHELLE BEAL:

My name is Michelle Beal. And we're really excited to be here with you this morning.

MABYN:

And because Michelle is a hairstyling instructor, we have mullets for our profile pictures.

MICHELLE:

I did those. So I have been a hairstylist for 20-plus years. I say 20-plus because I don't like to reveal my real age. And I have been a hairstyling instructor for six years now.

MABYN:

And my name is Mabyn Grinde and I'm the faculty development coordinator here at Lakeland College. And I actually, I have the blessing of working on both campuses. So I serve as the programs on our Vermilion campus and also here on the Lloydminster campus. And I've been at Lakeland College for three years. So here's a little bit of context. Our Lloydminster campus is actually on what we call the border city. A city that shares Alberta and Saskatchewan. So we're technically on the Alberta side. And Michelle, you want to share a little bit about the Health and Wellness Program.

MICHELLE:

So the health and wellness program began in about 2007 and it includes the hairstyling, barbering, esthetician, medical esthetician, and health care aids. The campus here in Lloydminster has a student-run salon and a student-run spa. And our hairstyling and barbering program currently has 22 students and five instructors.

MABYN:

So the year that I was hired at Lakewood College was the year that COVID hit and I was hired just a few months before COVID. So Michelle and I actually didn't know each other a few years ago. And I was just starting to get to know programs and getting to know the faculty and who I was supporting and how I can best support them when COVID happened. I think it was fair to say in those first couple of weeks that I was meeting your team and working with your program areas. This is kind of what the program looks like. They were heavily based out of this textbook, which is kind of the, the text, the standard, I guess, in textbooks for hairstyle and programs. And they had a lot of great hands-on components because of the student-led salon that Michelle was mentioning before. Our students in this program get a lot of real-life experience and get to lead the learning here as far as students. So this is what the program looked like. And then March 13, 2020 happened, and this is what the program looked like overnight. Michelle, do you want to share a little bit about?

MICHELLE:

I think it was within three or four days. We have had to come together as a team. There was five of us very quickly, and the students had three months of schooling left. And we made the decision that we were going to do this all online. And we had a lot of ideas. We had a lot of things that we wanted them to still do, but just didn't know how to get them out there. So a lot of calls to Maby. She had an app for everything. We were able to execute most of these ones that you see here pretty successfully. But yeah, that was, that was our change. We had to go from hands-on learning to 2D in three days. So the challenge, the challenge is real. It's real.

MABYN:

Yeah. Michelle is being very humble. So I'm not trained as an ed. technologist. This was not my area of expertise either. In fact our IT department had this Teams pilot happening before COVID hit and I told them that I didn't have time to learn about Teams. And then overnight I was all of a sudden the team lead for teaching faculty about Teams. So Michelle, I mean, the relationship that we built over COVID, I think is a friendship now. But it was hours. We spend hours learning these tools that you see on the screen, right? Because I didn't know that either. So we were, we were each other's kind of like endpoints. I'd be the teacher and create something and she'd be the student would see how it goes, because they were literally turning it over using those in class and online teaching the next day. So we don't really want to spend a ton of time talking about all of these. I'm sure you recognize some of these ed tech tools that are on here. And if you have questions or want to reach out to us about how we used these tools are what we did with them. Or there's a new one on here that you're curious about. We'll share our contact information at the end with you and please feel free to reach out to us.

But what we really want to talk about in our time with you today is how we took these conversations and what was happening when we had to move online and how it actually started to challenge some of the paradigms that, I think, were really present in your program and the hairstyling program, but I think were present in lots of our other trades programs that we offer here at Lakeland as well. The cohorts, the hairstyling program here on this campus runs in a cohort model, which means that these 20ish students are together for eight hours a day for 10 months with the same group of teachers. We don't have multiple cohorts so that they're cross pollinating. So it's the same group of students all the time. So I think one of the really strengths I went into that made them so successful in the transition was those relationships. The instructors really spend a lot of time developing and maintaining relationships with students. They care a lot about psychologically safe classrooms and work really hard to maintain that. And so that was a leverage point for us, was that those relationships always existed. But there were some real paradigm shifts that needed to happen around face-to-face is better. We have to show them. We have to be able to demonstrate and show them what we're doing to be able to teach them. And there was this other kind of belief that hairstylists are quite creative beings. And that it was okay to do everything differently. Like you teach how you teach and I'll teach how I teach and that's okay. So with this move online, we really had to challenge some of those things. We had to start breaking pieces down and saying, Okay, if this is the haircut, what are the component parts? What are those foundational pieces to get to that end haircut? What do students need to know and be able to do to be successful by the end of our program? And then how do we actually share that vision of those component parts with students? So that's the work that we're going to share with you today.

Because we can't be there, live with you in Vancouver or even live virtually with you today. We really want this to feel like a bit of a conversation. So I'm gonna pose some questions to Michelle. And she's just going to talk a little bit about her experience as a hairstyling instructor as we started to shift the focus of this program. So to start with Michelle, how did the move online change the way you thought about teaching?

MICHELLE:

Well, I definitely had to take a deeper look at how and why we taught the way we did. We have a big team, like I said. And it took a lot of conversations with you, with Daphne. We spent hours on the phone discussing how we could, we could break this down and how we could help the students get a better understanding of their knowledge and how, what that looks like going from 3D to 2D. An example of that is elevation. We would always show them, we would show them to pull the hair, I would call it out from where it lives. Pull it out from where it lives, straight out from where it lives. And I would show them and then they would show me and then we would move on. But we started to look deeper into that, look deeper into elevation and degrees and what it does when we pull it up more than 90 degrees and less than 90 degrees and just getting really, really down to those basics. Instead of just showing them, we had to, just realized we really started needing to unpack and creating a stronger structure of knowing for the students.

MABYN:

And that really transitioned to the work that I do with Michelle's team here at the college, but with all of the teams that I work with at the college. So on the top right-hand corner of your screen, you can see an example of this structure of knowledge that Michelle just referenced. So we have novice learners in any discipline, they pick up pieces of what we're teaching them and they might connect pieces, but they have a lot of individual pieces of content knowledge that float around. So part of the work that I support instructors at Lakeland in doing is thinking about what's that roadmap or what does that expert structure of knowledge. So if we think about that example, that pyramid, and we think about the blunt haircut, which is one of the four core haircuts that they teach in hairstyling. If we think about the blunt haircut being not like top of that pyramid. Michelle, because she's been in the industry for 20 years and she's a professional and she's an expert in this field. She can just go in and do a blunt haircut. So but it's about how do we break that down to the nitty-gritty so students can see all of the base at the bottom of that pyramid. All of the basic skills and knowledge that they need to be able to do and understand how they connect to get to a good blunt haircut. So we started by talking about the big ideas of hairstyle. And so part of this work is that common language and that common understanding. So Michelle and I have a lot of these conversations together. Michelle and I developed a different relationship because she was the leader and an early adopter with all those ed tech tools. Michelle, I don't have the same relationship with the rest of her team or at least I didn't two years ago. So it was really Michelle working with me and then Michelle was going back and she was really leading and pushing these conversations with her team and making this work move forward about what is the common language? How do we break down a blunt haircut? Do we all agree on what breaking down a blunt haircut looks like? So lots and lots of conversations. But I think the common thread through all of these conversations and this is work that we're still doing. These are actually slides from a session that we just did a couple of weeks ago, but we keep practising. We keep iterating through examples. We keep saying the question that we always put in the middle is, how are we going to leverage this work to better impact student learning? Or to improve student learning? So that's really the focus of why we're doing this.

So the second question I want to ask you, Michelle, is we've had lots of really good conversations about how getting down to the nitty-gritty and thinking about how all these component parts help students know and see what, see where they're going. It creates a roadmap for them of understanding all of this information that we fire them in theory class every day, where to hang it, how it fits together. So that's my logic behind the work that we're doing. So what are you seeing as an instructor in the classroom with your students. Is this impacting their learning?

MICHELLE:

So having that common knowledge and all, having all the instructors on the same page with that, with the same, the same verbiage, the same is really important. Because if I say something one way and then another teacher, instructor says something the same way but differently, they can understand it. So we've seen more, the students are more prepared. They are more confidence. They started cutting hair within the first week of being here. It's good. I had a goal and we got there. We really also embedded the theory and the practical together. So they

would learn something and then they would do it, and then they would learn something and do it. And both of these, all of this stuff has just created more competent students. We had a practical assessment in October this year, and usually in the past we have done it in December and, but they were at the point where they were ready and able and successful with this much earlier this year. So like two months, almost earlier in the semester.

MABYN:

That's great. I'm going to toot Michelle's horn a little bit here. I think sometimes there's a bit of a perception with trades students that trades students come into the trades because they're interested in that hands-on component. And sometimes, not all, but sometimes some trades students struggle or find a theory components of a trades program more difficult than the hands-on components. So what was your class average on your last theory exam, Michelle?

MICHELLE:

So the students did really well. I was very proud. 90% was their average, which was awesome. We haven't, I haven't seen that success in a group.

MABYN:

What was different this year? Why do you think they could achieve at that level on their theory?

MICHELLE:

I think a big piece was the way that we had taught and linked everything together. Everything had a place and a purpose and it all linked together. It was less, less of the scattered knowledge and more of everything having its place and everything fitting together. And I use mind mapping a lot. I could always show them what we're learning and where that fit in. And it was all very useful knowledge, but it started with the small stuff. And they learned how it all linked together to get to that big blunt haircut.

MABYN:

Do you feel that your students have a better foundational knowledge? Do they understand the why and the how better this year instead of just kind of mimicking or copycatting? I've heard you say that was like your old practices. Like I'd show them and they'd do it and they'd copy me. But they didn't really understand why 90 degrees or 45 degrees made a difference. So do they understand that now?

MICHELLE:

I would say they have a much better understanding. And moving on to a little bit of both that flare piece, if we have time to talk about it. With them having the basics and the foundation. It's much easier to teach that flare because they're learning to train their eye as opposed to just doing what someone has showed them.

MABYN:

The flare. This is an interesting conversation, actually, they came up the last time that we met as a large team. Because the conversation, it's a fair question I think to ask was, well, hairstyling is a creative art form, right? And so how, if we just focus on this foundational piece, when do we get to the creative part? So how did you answer that when that question came up for you?

MICHELLE:

So I don't know if I answered it. I think we answered it. But it was, I'll talk about why it was challenging is because I'm a finisher and I like to finish, do the finishing part of it, the haircuts and when they learn their foundations, which we spent the first eight weeks this year just learning the foundations and not any of the finishing. We, as instructors, held each other accountable for this. I always said Daphne was over my shoulder saying no, don't finish it, don't finish it. But just teaching them to do the foundation, which I would describe as the house and then the flare is the finishing on the house that making it look pretty so. Once they learned how to build the house, then they can add the extras to it. And just even separating these two has made them much more successful because it makes sense why they build the house. And then they put on, put on this layer.

MABYN:

Yeah, I've just moved us back a slide because that is the argument from my field or my discipline. My area of expertise is that strong foundations equal better transfer, right? So this is, this is based on the work of Julie Stern and Lynn Erikson. If you're not familiar with this conceptual base framing of curriculum, but it's really about these factual knowledge. Students need to have that factual knowledge to be able to move up to that transfer. But our ultimate goal as educators is to have students that are able to transfer to new unique situations. And that's what hairdressing is. Every day you have somebody come in and say, I want this. So you have to be able to assess face shape and hair type and all of the complex pieces that are fluid in a haircut. But they need to have that strong foundation piece to be able to transfer to all of those unique situations that they're going to run into in industry and practice.

So we thought what we'd do now is we, we'd give you an example or take you in for a look at some of the resources and some of the work that we've been doing in hopes that it can scaffold some of your understanding about the process that we're working through as well. So this is some of the rest of the hairstyling team just a few weeks ago. And we had been doing a bunch of work on building schema and talking about what are those foundational pieces. And so I challenged the team with the question at the end of the program, what do students need to know and be able to do? So I put that question up on the board and then I gave them each a piece of paper and a couple of minutes, and they started mind mapping these things. So if hairstyling is our program, what are the big kind of conceptual pieces or component parts of the hairstyling program? So everybody did their own. And then we came and we sat in a group and we looked at each other's and talked about it. Do you want to just share a little bit about how those conversations went?

MICHELLE:

It was actually really quite interesting because we got into these groups. We did it all on our own at first and they looked a little bit different. So we had to get into some deeper conversations to decide where everything went. Some people had perms and some people had colours in separate bubbles. And then we collectively came together and put them all in chemical services. But it was a lot of discussion. Maybe not the easiest work, but it's rewarding. It's getting to a common goal.

MABYN:

And sometimes, so I facilitate this work for lots of our different program areas. And sometimes being a lay person at this level of the conversation is really helpful because I don't know. So all I do is I sit and I try to record and capture the debates that the team members are having. 516 So Michelle and her ally, Daphne, who's another instructor there, They're the two instructors though that teach haircuts. So this, this top bubble of haircutting. They're really who did the work this year or the last two years, I suppose, in breaking haircutting down. So when we look at haircutting, this is the document that got created as a result of that. So we've created one of these documents for each one of the four core haircuts that are taught in the hairstyling program. So you want to talk a little bit, Michelle, about how this came into being? Why we started talking about this?

MICHELLE:

Marking practical assessments has been a challenge for our department. There's five of us. And good looks different to everyone. And it's a lot. You have a, we have 22 in our class and so we each take a group of students, but you still are marking a lot at one time. There's a lot going on. And as we talked about earlier, there's a lot, a lot of things in the pyramid at the bottom that we wanted to make sure they were getting to, hitting those marks. But there was a lot of it. So we, it came to me with this. This is, this is what I need to do.

MABYN:

We call that a problem of practice.

MICHELLE:

I need this. Can we get there? And then we started this.

MABYN:

So Michelle already had, so the blunt haircut is the example we're sharing with you. So she already had the titles of these sections developed. So in her head she already knew that when, I said, you know, when you're watching a student do a blunt haircut, what are you looking for? And she could rattle that off really quickly to new all sections and subsections as part of it, and elevation and the cutting line is part of it. And ergonomics. So there's all of these component parts. And so I said, okay, and so, so we had those down and I said, Alright, well, what do you need like sections and subsections. I said, does that look the same for all four haircuts? And her answer was No, no, no, no. So I said, Okay, well then sections, subsections, and partings, what do you need to see in a blunt haircut for that? And again, she knew that. She is an expert. She's a professional, so she could rattle that off. So those became the sub-criteria points on this, on

this piece. The other piece that you'll notice on this marking guide is that it's like a 3,2,1. So I'm a huge assessments lover and I love building rubrics, but sometimes rubrics and creating all that language is too much. This 3,2,1 when you're doing a practical skill evaluation with multiple students all at the same time. This was really a way for the instructors to think about, okay. Number one is meaning they're getting part of it but they're not there. Two is that they're proficient where I expect them to be for this point in the semester. And three is like they knocked it out of the park. It's great. So that, what that 123 is, with some space to write a few notes, but it's 1,2,3 all based on that same criterion. What did we do wrong with this? So Michelle and I was so proud of ourselves like we hammered this out in the morning and she literally took this to the exam that afternoon and she's like, Oh, this is gonna be so great. And then we got some feedback from the rest of the team.

MICHELLE:

Well, it was awesome. I took it and I was loving every minute of it. It just, it was very, it was very easy. I would just check, check, check. Make a few comments where in the past it would be lots of writing and comments and stress that I was going to miss something when it's like this and it's Check, check, check. I was able to just be more efficient. Yes, be more efficient. But what I was thinking and what we made, when I gave it to the other instructor. She's like, Oh, what do you need to tell me about this? Because it was I created it and I knew exactly what it meant. But I needed that universal language to be. So I would say just doing it as a team and having a sounding board like MabyN to help you break it down because you know, you're the expert. You can say, Well, they just do this, this and this, but to have someone there to prod a little. Yes. Wow, that's all I say.

MABYN:

That's all I do in my job. Why, why, why? Yeah, it works. So yeah. So I think that's something that we learned and I mean, part of that is the reality of full-time teaching workloads is that people don't, we don't have the luxury of having hours to sit down and co-develop these. So Michelle and I co-developed this because she needed it for her lab today. But moving forward, that is something that I think we need to be more conscious of, is at least developing a draft. I mean, we always say our things that are in draft because they never finished, I don't think but this is a draft. So our next work at the next team meeting is to take this and sit down as the whole group and say, okay, what do we agree and disagree on? Is their language of needs changed here? So yeah, Just one last question about this piece, Michelle, is, how did you, how did students find this? Like, what was the, what was the reception of students for this kind of tool?

MICHELLE:

So the students, I did give it to you before, so it must have been the day before that we did it. It must have been the day before, 24 hours. But they did have it and I made sure to make sure they had a good look, kind of go through everything with them. So they were more confident going in because they knew exactly what I was looking for or we were looking for. But also when we handed them back, and we had it all marked out and said if questions, comments, concerns, let us know. There wasn't very many because it was so it was so straightforward. Like

they didn't get their radial parting or they were, their hand position was wrong. It's not wrong, but maybe not quite advanced yet. So it was very user-friendly, I would say, once we were all speaking the same language, everyone knew what the expectation was, what we were doing. Yeah, yeah.

MABYN:

And students could score in different places on different ones. So they might be a 1 in sub sectioning, but they might be a 3, or advanced, in ergonomics, for example, right. So it helps the students break down and see where they need to work and where they are already there, already achieving what they need to do. Michelle and I were having a conversation earlier about how this is a really great feedback tool when it's at this depth of criteria for the teachers too. Because then the instructors can see it and say, oh, like nobody, nobody got above a 1 in this section. So that's, that's a good reflective conversation and for us as instructors to have about, Okay, we maybe need to go back and reteach that are revisit some of that content. Yeah. but we're just curious. We really wish we could have a conversation with you about what's sticking, about how you in your trades programs, at different institutions across Western Canada, how you're digging into this work about how do we know what our students know and how are they showing us and are we being subjective or objective? So we'd love for you to reach out. Our email addresses are here, our Twitter handles are here. And we really encourage you to just reach out with some stories or questions. Anything to add?

MICHELLE:

Well, just as a trades person, I know what it's like to be an expert and have to stop and take a whole bunch of steps back and just kind of dive deeper. And if anyone would like to reach out to me and talk about anything, I welcome that. I would love to hear from you as well. It's been a journey that's going to just continue and I'm happy I'm on it with you, Mabyn.

MABYN:

Thanks, Michelle. Okay. So that's it for us. Thank you so much for joining us and we hope to maybe run into you at another session during the Trade Summit over the next two days. So enjoy your time learning and we look forward to being in touch. Bye.

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