

**Transcript for FLO EdTech Sandbox – WordPress/Podcasting (Oct. 11, 2023)**  
**BCcampus event hosted October 11, 2023**

**Host: Britt Dzioba**

**Facilitator: Brenna Clarke Gray**

BRITT DZIOBA:

Good morning everyone and thank you for joining us today for our second EdTech Sandbox Series, Listen and Learn: Podcasting for Content in Hybrid and Online Classes, hosted today by Brenna Clarke Gray. My name is Britt Dzioba. I'm a teaching advisor here at BCcampus. But before we get started, I wanted to situate ourselves. BCcampus staff are situated on the unceded territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish Musqueam, Saanich, and the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations of the Lekwungen Peoples, as both individuals and as an organization. We continue to learn and build relationships as we actively respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Today, we are very excited to have Dr. Brenna Clarke Gray here today to lead our session on podcasting. Brenna is going to introduce herself, so I'm just going to stop sharing and allow Brenna to share her slides, and we are going to get started.

BRENNA CLARKE GRAY:

Awesome. Thank you. I want to apologize for my croaky voice, everyone. I'm just coming out of a round of COVID. I apologize for that. Hopefully it will warm up, but I haven't talked a lot in the last few days. Hopefully, it'll work itself out. I'm here to talk about podcasting with you all, and I'm very excited about it. I do a lot of podcasting. I really enjoy it. I like it as an alternative to video. I think that during the pandemic, I think this was what was in my patch to BCcampus. During the pandemic, we all just made so many videos of varying quality. One of the things that I think is great about audio is that it's got a way lower barrier to entry than video. It's a lot easier to edit audio than it is to edit video, I think. The files are nice and small; they're super lightweight and super portable. I was really hopeful when we closed everything down that we would all embrace audio. Some folks certainly did. But obviously video won that battle. And I'm going to make an argument to you for audio today. We're going to talk about content delivery in audio format. I'm thinking about podcasting in the form of audio lectures, but we're also going to talk a little bit about using audio as feedback for assignments. Using audio assignments in class. So things like go make a podcast and that kind of stuff. Mostly today we're going to focus on just the nitty gritty of how do you record decent audio? How do you edit audio? We're just going to try to make that whole concept a little bit less scary. That's the goal for today. Anyway, maybe I won't... Yes I will. I will share that. I am a visitor on Tk'emlups te Secwepemc territory within the unceded, traditional lands of Secwepemcul'ecw, where it has been glorious this week. We had the most remarkable rainbows. If you know anybody in Kamloops on Instagram, you probably saw 400 rainbow photos yesterday. Because we have been just, I don't know what peak rainbow weather is, but that's what we're in right now. If you are interested in doing so, I welcome you to share where you're joining us from in the chat today. I'm always curious to know whereabouts in the province or beyond where you might be joining from. Please do feel free to share that in the chat if you feel comfortable doing so.

I want to. I'm going to stop bumping ahead of my slides. There we go. I want to talk a little bit today, just as we start out, about what brings you to our session. We are recording the session. You saw that when you came in, so if you don't feel comfortable being on your mic, totally fine to use the chat instead, whatever you're most comfortable with. But I'd love it if you would share with me what brought you to the session today. What your favourite podcasts are to listen to. And maybe when you listen to podcasts if you do. Some of you may be brand new to the notion of podcasting. I'm curious about what ways you think you might use podcasting, just so we can make sure we touch on everyone's expectations today. If you want to share that in the chat or you want to hop on your mic, you're more than welcome. They can unmute themselves, right, Britt? You're more than welcome to do that and I'm going to have a drink. I'll be doing that a lot.

BRITT:

Yes. Participants should be able to unmute. So feel free to just jump on the mic or pop it in the chat.

JOAN YATES:

Hi, Brenna, Joan Yates in Victoria. Thank you so much, and this is a beautiful fall. My interest in this session is something new. I found the content that you provided about it being incredibly portable to be quite exciting. I have a lot of international students who are not in Canada yet and I'm trying to find things to make life easier for them. So this is of interest to me, and I think listening is a phenomenal element of learning, and I think it's a great concept to pursue. So I'm really excited to hear what you have to say. Thank you.

BRENNA:

Oh fantastic. I love this. So the portability of audio files is my favourite part. You know, here at TRU where I work, we serve populations in all kinds of remote communities. And it was one of the reasons why I was really encouraging people to dabble in audio instead of just video for sharing their content out when students return to very remote communities. Audio file is much quicker to upload and download, much easier to share than video. We'll talk a bunch about the flexibility of the form today for sure. Thank you. Anybody want to share their favourite podcasts? Things they like to listen to? I'm going to tell you all of mine and they're super embarrassing in like 2 seconds. So you won't out yourself.

PARTICIPANT:

My favourite podcast to listen to are personal development ones like Brendon Burchard. I listen to this other one, woman's one, and different leadership podcasts. I actually am joining today. I am a new faculty member teaching online in a nursing program. I would love to find more innovative ways to teach so my students can learn because they're all busy professionals. It's a bridging program from RPN to RN, and we do a weekly class seminar. But I'd like to make this seminar more interactive and have different methods of providing the content, I guess. I want

to do a bunch of different things. I'm pretty passionate right now about online learning, so that's why I'm here.

BRENNA:

I love this, and I love audio for busy folks. One of the things when I first started to use audio as content delivery, I heard from students about all the wild and wacky places that they listened to their content that I didn't expect. I expected like, oh yeah, I walk the dog and I listen. Oh yeah, I do housework and listen. But when I was at Douglas College, which is where I first started making podcast lectures effectively in the English department when I worked there, it was amazing because I ended up with students in my fully online class who were truckers. And so they could put the lecture on in their cab and listen. They would listen to the lecture multiple times because they weren't able to sit and take notes in a more traditional way. I was totally floored by that and delighted. The idea, like my sex and gender lecture, as somebody is trucking down the highway. I find it absolutely delightful to imagine. Great, yes. Thinking about ways to reach students in different kinds of ways. Feel free to keep sharing in the chat. I'm seeing lots of titles of podcasts. I'm going to have to save the chat for later because I love finding new podcasts.

About me a little bit. I was English faculty for nine years before transitioning to my faculty support role at TRU, where I'm coordinator of educational technologies. I have a great job because I get to help people use podcasting and other technologies. But my joy is podcasting, to tell their teaching and research stories. I think for a little university, I think we punch above our weight in the resources we provide for podcasting, and I'm going to share some of those with you today. I'm also just like a podcasting fanatic. I listen to podcasts far more than I consume, really any other medium. I will listen to about 40 podcasts a week. I was trying to tally it up on my phone yesterday to get a sense. The last five podcasts I listened to were *Red Flags Pod*, which is a Formula 1 racing news podcast. *Commotion* with Elamin Abdelmahmoud, which is a pop culture news show produced by the CBC. *Scamfluencers*, which is white collar true crime deep dives. If you want to know about people who scam people using Instagram, that is your go-to show. *Citations Needed* and *Canadaland*, which are both media criticism shows. So hugely rangey. And I think that's what I like about podcasts. I can dip in and out of tons of different subjects. There's no one discipline or area that dominates the world of podcasting. And I listen to it all the time, listen while I do housework, while I answer emails or any, what I call low cognitive investment tasks. At work I'll always have a podcast on. Listen to podcasts while I exercise, while I fall asleep. It's just constant. And we're going to talk a little bit today about the intimacy of podcasting. The ways in which podcasting tends to find us in our most domestic quiet moments. Why I think that that can be something really useful to leverage for learning. We'll talk about all of that today, I hope.

I want to tell you my podcasting story a little bit. Because when I traced it all on a timeline, I was like, oh my god, I've been doing this for a really long time. I made my very first ever show in 2007. It was for an English graduate conference that I organized at the University of New Brunswick when I was a grad student there. It had the most grad student conferencing name

ever. It was called "Question the Answers," and we had a podcast about it. It was designed to get people ready for the conference. I had never really played with editing audio before or recording content. I'm not really sure why we landed on a podcast at the time. I was probably listening to a lot of the Ricky Gervais show at the time. It just seemed like a way to reach our participants, who were coming from far away to a small town in New Brunswick. We really wanted them to understand what to expect when they came. That was the first time I ever made a podcast. Then in 2010, I went to work at Douglas College and I joined Graphixia, which is a scholarly blogging and podcasting collective about comic scholarship. With my colleagues at that institution, David Bright and Peter Wilkins, we made infrequent episodes of our podcast, often with colleagues in comic studies at other universities. And that was the first time I really saw the capacity of podcasting to develop community. I was relatively isolated, one of only three comic scholars at a small college. But when we made a podcast that invited other people on to chat, suddenly my network grew and grew and grew, and I could tap into conversations about comics, particularly happening in the UK at that time. Comic scholarship was really exploding in the UK before it exploded here. It was really fantastic to bridge those gaps and make those connections and really feel a lot less isolated in my scholarly experience. 2013 is when I started teaching my first fully online course, and that's when I first started to use podcasting for online lecture delivery. Primarily, my students got a weekly podcast about the book that we were reading. I just fell in love with it. I already told you the story about my trucker student, which was so exciting, and ever after, every time I offered that course, there were students who worked at that trucking company in the course. So it clearly tapped into something that worked for those particular learners. But I really loved the ways in which the podcast could reach students. In that course in particular, we talked about sex and race and gender and identity and difficult concepts. I really liked knowing that the students could make the learning and listening experience as intimate and one-on-one as they wanted. It could just be them and a set of headphones and my voice as we talked. Rather than making a video lecture, and maybe it's on the family computer and everybody sitting around watching it, and maybe that changes the student's reaction to the text and their ability to process and work through that material. That was really the attraction of audio for me was the intimacy of the closeness of it that we have when it's just us and a set of headphones. In 2018, I started making my first ever regular show. It's a weekly podcast that I make with my pal Joe who's in Toronto. It's called *Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr*. We've made hundreds of episodes. It's just a young adult literature adaptation show. It's my hobby, but it takes up a ton of time. But I've also learned so many skills that transfer to my work with faculty now. In 2019, I feel like my podcasting life got really serious. I developed a podcast for peer review with the SCHRC-funded Amplified Podcast Network. I'm going to share a link to their resources in the chat. Amplify is working to establish a peer reviewed podcast network across Canada for scholarly podcasting. Building out all the infrastructure, the equivalent of like an OJS, but for podcasts, for all their metadata and the peer review infrastructure and transcriptions, and all the pieces that need to be in place to make podcasts as accessible as scholarly form as possible. That's the work that they're doing. I'm excited to say that you can't really see it, but I have this to-do list here, but the podcast has just come out of peer review and will hopefully be something you can actually listen to in the winter semester this year. Throughout 2019, I started co-developing with my

colleague John Fulton At TRU, we started building out the podcasting resources that we use for faculty support at TRU. I'm going to link those in the chat too in case you find them useful. That culminated in 2020 with actually starting our in-house podcast, *You Got This*, which is currently on a brief hiatus while I finish the podcast for Amplify, but I'll share that link in the chat as well. *You Got This* started as a way to continue the community that we have established at the beginning of the pandemic closure period, as people went back to school in the classroom and remotely depending in fall of 2020. It was a way to keep connecting with the faculty who had been so active in workshops and support sessions through the summer. People get really, really busy as soon as the semester starts. As everyone on this call is very aware. I was really worried about losing the sense of community that we had established over the summer. We called it summer camp, all our workshops that we held that first pandemic summer, it was really super fun. We had like really dorky badges in Moodle, and the whole nine yards. I didn't want to lose that spirit, and so we created. *You Got This* as a way to continue that community environment, and that has really, I think, expanded the use of podcasting at TRU. Just because it made it really obvious that we had the resources in place to support podcasting. Then that led to one more resource that I'll share in the chat, which is our TRU Podcasting Masterclass. If you like the content that we cover, can't paste into the chat for some reason all of a sudden. That's annoying. If you like the resources that we talk about today, you can definitely pick up the Podcasting Masterclass. It's self-directed, self-guided, asynchronous. We often offer a guided version of it once a year, but all the materials are up there. Every little lesson we do today, you can do an expanded version of on the Podcasting Masterclass site. Please feel free to share that back at your own institutions if you think that it might be useful. All right, that's enough about me. That's way too much about me.

Let's talk about podcasting. Today's agenda. I want to move into the nuts and bolts of podcasting. Some of you are regular podcast listeners, probably really feel comfortable with the form. Others may be brand new. I want to talk about maybe some of the expectations that we have of podcasting and some of the things that I think make it a really useful resource for teaching and learning. We're going to talk about how to collect audio, how to record audio. Then I'm going to send you away just for about 10 minutes on your own to actually go and record some audio. And then when you come back, we're going to mess around with audio editing. Now, I know that sometimes we sign up for workshops because we're really ready to dig in. And sometimes we sign up for workshops with the intention of turning off our cameras and just absorbing. Both are fine here. However much or little you want to take on the challenges of today, my hope really, both with the recording time and the editing time, is just to maybe make both recording and editing audio feel a little bit less overwhelming or a little bit less scary. That's all the goal is today, is just to have some time to play. As long as we get to the end of today and you feel like all of this is just a little bit more accessible than you did at 10:00 this morning. I'll feel really pleased. I want to show you how you can use the Open EdTech Collective, the OpenETC. I'm just picturing chickens now, but I'm going to show you how to use the OpenETC for podcast distribution. I know those of you who attended Ian's session last time around would have used the OpenETC's Mattermost. We're going to take a look at the WordPress options on the OpenETC and show you how you can use a really basic WordPress

site that you build from the offerings at the OpenETC. As an educator in B.C., you have access to that wonderful resource. I'm going to show you what plugins to turn on to turn it into a podcast distribution hub. We're going to talk a little bit about classroom practice with audio and then we'll have time for questions. And, you know, when I was planning this, this all seemed really reasonable. And now that I can't shut up about podcasts, it feels like we're going to be tight. We will do our best to build in the time for play and to limit the time that I spend rambling.

Okay, let's jump into What is a podcast? The most basic form of podcast is an audio file. Typically podcasts come with supplements. Those supplements, I think, can be really great teaching and learning resources. Typically, we expect a podcast to have show notes. Depending on the show, we might expect it to have a transcript to maximize accessibility. We'll talk a little bit about what resources you probably already have at your institution to undertake that transcription process. At its core, that's really all it is. The thing that makes it a cast, like a broadcast is the distribution piece. We're going to talk a little bit about how you go about doing that. But typically, you offer a podcast as a series to which people can subscribe. Now, this may have more or less application in your classroom context. When I teach with podcasts, I do always create an RSS feed that students can use to subscribe to the podcast. I may or may not distribute it though through something like iTunes or Spotify, depending on the application. But generally speaking, that ability to just have the podcast show up on your phone, like that magic technology that makes them so easy to listen to, can be really helpful in teaching and learning contexts as well. That said, if all you want to do is post your audio files to a learning management system, everything we talk about today will still be relevant. Then finally, podcasts can be fixed length or ongoing. I really encourage folks, if you don't have the parameters of a class, if you're thinking about podcasting about your research or your teaching practice, I really encourage you to think about the length because it can be overwhelming. Let me just tell you to create a weekly podcast. It can be really overwhelming to decide to create like three all at once. I don't recommend that, but the time commitment to creating a podcast will vary depending on your facility with the technology and all those kinds of things. In response to the question of like, well, how long does it take to make a podcast? We did make what we call *The Day in the Life of a Podcast*, where we try to break down the time commitment to each piece of well, scheduling, recording, editing, distributing, transcribing. I just included the link to that in the chat as well, But if you're doing a class, you've got a schedule in built there, right? But if you're thinking about a different kind of project, maybe you want to podcast about your research, maybe you want to make a podcast about teaching in your specific discipline. It's really useful, I think, to think about the life of that podcast and whether you want to commit to doing it forever or whether it's the thing that maybe you have 12 episodes planned, and have a clear sense. Podcasting is extremely flexible in that whatever you decide is doable. We always recommend that you just have a regular distribution schedule and everybody will accommodate that. I listen to a really great podcast called *Crackdown*, which is about the drug war, particularly centred around the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, made by drug user activists and journalists that comes out once a month. And that's fine, right? It's like the last Thursday of every month or something like that, and I know to expect it around

that time. Yeah. *Crackdown* is amazing. Yeah. Thinking about what your distribution schedule is going to be, it's totally up to you. You just need to know what it is.

Why podcasting? I've talked about some of this already. Podcasting is a knowledge mobilization opportunity. Not to use extremely tricouncil language, but it is knowledge mobilization and translation. And they do love that thing, but it's totally controlled by you. One of the things I love most about podcasting, as we'll talk about today, is that it's got a real DIY ethos. It's all about what you can do yourself with the tools and the technology. That means you totally control it. Which means that if something changes in your research or practice and you don't want a particular piece of audio out in the world anymore, depending on choices that you make around distribution, you can be totally in control and take it down if that becomes appropriate. As I've already talked about, for me podcasting is a huge way to connect with people beyond my discipline or institution. It's very intimate, an involved mode of storytelling. If you listen to podcasts, you know how engrossing they can be. I think a lot of that, as I've talked about already, comes from that private experience. It's just you and your headphones often in your most private intimate spaces or times. It really creates a little world. Towards the end of our session today, we're going to talk about something that podcasting theorists talk about now a lot, which is the idea of parasocial relationships. Which sounds bad, right? But it's really just the idea that when you listen to a podcast all the time, you start to feel like you know the people who host it for better or for worse, right? And the number of times I've started a sentence to my husband with Oh, you know. I'll use their first name. I'll use the first name of a podcast host and I'll be like, oh, you know, Matt was saying on this podcast... As if we're buds because they're in my ears like once a week and I do feel connected. Obviously, there can be problems with feeling a sense of intimacy to somebody you don't actually know, right? Nobody go out and do anything, kookoo banana pants. But when we think about it from a teaching and learning perspective, you know that notion of being present with the learner, even when you can't be present with the learner, particularly in a distance education setting. And being present with the learner when you aren't in control of the context, right? As opposed to having a scheduled video lecture where you all sit down together, which has its applications for sure. But there's something very intimate and connected about the fact that you do in podcast form, go on a walk with your student when they're taking the dog out at night. Those kinds of spaces can change that teaching and learning relationship. I think in really positive ways to expand your presence with them, particularly for distance learners. They're very accessible; they can be very engaging. It's a low barrier to entry. By that, we're going to talk about basically all the technology you need to do podcasting. I would say that you can create professional quality sound with a microphone in the one to \$200 range. And the rest of the tools we're going to talk about are free to use. I think... Oh Britt, did they really? I love stuff, you should know. I didn't see that one download. Okay, that's awesome. I listen to that because those are two men I have a parasocial relationship with. I've been listening to that podcast since 2005. I think I've moved across the country twice, listening to them in the car. Yeah, I totally feel like I have a relationship with those two people who I was going to say I've never met them. I met them once when they did a live show in Vancouver, but that's not a real meaning. That's cool, I will listen to that. Yeah, the cost to getting a podcast up and running is minimal. And I think that's

really important to keep in mind. Especially because as podcasts get more popular as a knowledge mobilization opportunity, there's lots of crooked people now getting into the podcast game. I get emails all the time from sketchy companies who are like, just send me 2,000 pounds, UK currency. We will create a podcast of your most recent publication, stuff like that. There's a of... There should be a *Scamfluencers* episode about that. There's a lot of that happening in the academic space right now. As much as anything. I just want to empower you today to understand that you can do it all at your desk for a minimal outlay of cost and no ongoing costs. Yeah, I want to talk about that today. But like anything, easy to do, hard to do well, I am definitely someone who has learned a lot about how little I know about audio editing over the last however many years I've been doing this. Audio editing is one of those tasks that can just absorb a lot of time. The goal to get it perfect, you'll never get there. You can do it and then you can invest time in mastering it. Like any skill really. We'll talk about that a bit today as well.

Some of the cultural conventions of podcasting. I've already talked about this a little bit, but this is a slide that I always put up when I'm talking to faculty about whether they want a podcast. Because I like people to know ahead of time whether it's something you're actually interested in doing. Part of what creates these parasocial relationships that we're talking about is the intimacy of podcasting. And what creates the intimacy of podcasting is just the fact that you meet people in their like most private spaces. Right? Like I listen to podcasts as I'm falling asleep. I listen to podcasts when I'm playing with my kiddo. Podcasts are always around me in these very private, intimate spaces that often create a sense of responsibility to the listener. And the listener can often feel a sense of responsibility or ownership over the podcast. And that's why I note that podcasting, at its best, is a really collaborative medium. If you don't want feedback, you don't want to podcast because people will write to you with ideas, thoughts, criticisms, critiques. The podcast that I make for fun with my friend Joe, we don't have a huge number of listeners. I think we have about 500 listeners to every weekly episode. It's a small community, but if I say something wrong on the air, if I misuse a term, people will write in and tell me about it. For me, it's been a tremendous opportunity for growth. I'm a big believer in screwing up in public. I think that we learn a lot from our experiences and we can get into all the reasons why my subject positioning makes that a lot easier for me, than it might make it for somebody else, and I don't discount that at all. But for me, a really classic example is that I've been working hard for years now to try to carve ableist language out of my language. It's probably the most insidious form of discrimination that enters into my speech. I don't always get it right when I talk for 45 minutes to an hour, every week off the cuff, unscripted with my pal Joe. And sometimes I say things that I think are totally fine and somebody writes into the show and points out why that's problematic. That's been really hugely valuable learning for me that then transfers into me being better at speaking to students and faculty from all different walks of life because I have that awareness that I gained from that experience. But you have to be comfortable with people, you know what they think anytime you put your ideas out in public. And I think podcasting in particular, because of that intimacy, there is this sense of ownership from listeners. They feel like they want to make the product better. I think that's ultimately where it comes from. That's not the right application for everyone, right? Especially



depending on your research area. It might be a totally inappropriate thing to have people like weighing in their perspective. So just keep that in mind that podcasting really isn't just a one way street. You will often hear from people. The thing that I love most about podcasting, although we're losing it as it's going to become more and more corporate interests and podcasting gets more and more polished. But I do still think there is like this DIY punk aesthetic to the notion of podcasting that I really appreciate learning to produce your own audio and maintaining control over your finished product is super empowering for the ways in which you share knowledge. To me, it's one of the only technology experiences that gets at the way I feel to freely walk into a classroom and tackle the material the way I think best. That sense of, well, it's academic freedom, right? But it's also what makes the classroom, for me, an exciting, engaging laboratory space. Podcasting is the only technology for me that touches that level of creativity and freedom and empowerment. And that's, I think partly why I am so evangelical about it. I am. But I don't know if that is coming across.

Okay. What do you need to get started with podcasting? Really you just need a microphone, and I'm going to reach ahead here and grab Old Blue. This is my microphone. It costs \$150 I think. It's just from Best Buy. It's not anything exciting. This is a pop filter, which is just a fancy way of saying when you speak into the mic, if you tend to have very pronounced plosives, those sounds, it can be really drawing on the microphone. A pop filter like this helps. A pop filter is about 20 bucks on evil Amazon, I'm sorry to say. As I say, I got the Blue at Best Buy, and I love this microphone. It's extremely sturdy, robust. When people ask me for my recommendation, this is the one I always give. The reason is that my first microphone that I bought back in, gosh, I don't know, 2011, I guess was a blue Yeti, just like this one, it was silver. And I had it for a decade and I treated it so badly. Routinely. I had this one cat who routinely would push the microphone off my desk and it would hit the floor. When I used to teach at Douglas, I would just throw it in my backpack. Like I wouldn't even do anything with it. I just throw it whole into my backpack. It got moved from apartment to apartment when I lived in the Lower Mainland by just being thrown in the bottom of box. It only died when it had an unfortunate run-in with a power surge. I think they're extremely robust, as I say, about 150 bucks. The only other piece of kit that is really important is this. I can't really see it, but it's a windscreen. It's useful for catching your breath. I have a very breathy voice when I record. This is necessary for editing, but that's it. This is the only piece of fancy equipment that I have. In addition to a good microphone, you do need good headphones. Ones that plug in. Ideally I'm looking and, of course, I don't have them to hand, but ones that plug in. You don't want to use your Bluetooth headphones for audio work. There is an imperceptible delay with Bluetooth as it's transferring the audio through the air. That's my highly technical explanation. It is maddening to try to edit audio with that tiny bit of a delay. You want decent headphones that plug in over the ear are best for isolating sound, but they don't have to be noise cancelling and they don't have to be fancy. I use a pair of Sony plug in headphones that maybe ran me about 30 bucks. They were not expensive. Anything that plugs in will be better than something that doesn't. You need a recording platform, so your computer. This microphone is USB. Most of them are. That's what you want. You don't want wireless. I use my laptop and I use a virtual recording studio. I use one called Zencastr. There are many out there now. Some people just Zoom audio to record

podcasts. I don't like the sound quality that Zoom produces so much, but lots of people find it very functional. There's another virtual recording studio called Kast. All these tools do is they basically create like a virtual third space. This is useful if you're doing interviews. I don't record my interviews in person, partly because I started interviewing people in 2020. We just weren't doing a lot of sitting close and breathing on each other in 2020. But since then I found I have my best processes through a virtual recording studio where people are comfortable and in their own space. And it just tends to sound best for me, but you can do it in the space as long as everybody has their own microphone, that's really all you need. Then you need a piece of editing software. Audacity is free, it's open source. GarageBand, if you're a Mac user, comes with your Mac, you can use that. I use a tool now called Hindenburg, which is an audio editor that's designed for spoken word. Hindenburg is specifically designed for podcasting and for audiobook recording, but you don't need it. It's something that I started using on a particular project and liked, but both Audacity and GarageBand as free to use options are great. We're actually going to look today when we do our editing together at a tool called Wavacity, which is just an audacity port to a browser. And it works beautifully. There's lots of options out there. You need a quiet place to record. The quiet place is important. I do almost all my recording here in this room in my house because I have all the levels set now. I can cancel noise really easily in this space because I know the sound of this space really well. I often end up recording at my office at TRU. I don't like it because my office is immediately over top of the bus loop. The loop is very, very loud and it's really hard to edit out of my audio. This is good to know about Zencastr recorded video. Julian, I have not played with the video part of podcasting at all, really. Partly because I'm so obsessed with audio. But I find when I turn the video on for my interviewees, they stop describing things as well because they can see me and they can do hand motions and stuff. I keep the video turned off for that reason, but that is really good to know. You need a plan, and I'm going to include a resource that I think is wonderful. The Amplified Podcast Network, The two colleagues, Stacey Copeland and Hannah McGregor, they made this *Guide to Academic Podcasting*. It works, I think, really well for any podcasting project, but it has all kinds of appendices for making podcasting schedules and budgets. If you need a place to start just thinking through a project, the resources in the *Guide to Academic Podcasting* are really useful. We use the downloadable handouts from that book in our workshops at TRU all the time. Those of you who are here as learning techs, who are supporting other people's podcasting projects, I highly recommend that resource. It's wonderful. And I don't just say that as somebody who's a big Stacey Copeland/ Hannah McGregor fan, although I am. All right. Yeah.

Setting up your space. This is literally where I record. You can hear my creaky chair. I'm really good at not moving when I'm actually recording. A couple of things to remember when you are setting up to do some audio recording and I'm going to send you off to do some now, shortly, is that if you're using an external mic, you're not just using a one in your laptop, which you can totally do for today it's fine. Make sure you select the microphone in your recording app. That is the number one issue that folks have. They'll write to me and they'll be like I recorded an hour and it sounds. It sounds super far away, I can't hear anything properly. It's because they did not select their microphone in their recording app. If you don't want to use your built in computer microphone, make sure you select it. We always talk about keeping your microphone close, but

not too close, which is not like wildly helpful or descriptive. I find it useful to think about a hand span from my chin to the mic itself, not wing guard. I want it to be about a hand span of space. This is far enough away that you won't capture your brain, but close enough that the sound quality will be as high fidelity as possible. That's what I use. It's the same thing if I'm just, sometimes I'll just record voice memos to use within a podcasting project. It's the same thing when I'm just using my silly iPhone mic. I just make sure I'm about a hand span away. For the same reason you want to limit the amount of breath noise without cutting down the quality of your audio. You'll notice that if you use earbuds, it's about the distance to your air pods or your earbuds if you're using something like that or if you've got old plug in style, that's about where your mic's going to sit. It's a useful measurement. You want to listen to the space. My colleague John at TRU, talks about listening to the space near and far. Your brain is ignoring so much sound right now that you are absolutely not aware of until you put on a set of headphones and you listen to the space. For example, if I just sit here really quietly, I can hear, my little townhouse is just down the street from a 7-Eleven, and I can hear a truck backing up at the 7-Eleven. It's really quiet, but I can hear this very faintly. Beep, beep, beep. I can hear the fan on my furnace, which we're running 20/7 because we had COVID in the house. I can hear birds. Those are all the far away and close up sounds that might get picked up on my mic. You are never going to get rid of all of them. I can't go down to the Seven-11 and get them to stop backing their truck up; they're not going to for me. I have not made any ground up asking the magpies to shut up when I'm recording. But knowing about them ahead of time can help you play for your editing later. It's just nice to not be surprised by a background noise that you then have to work around later. Then I always recommend you listen to a test recording, even if you're just recording your voice on your phone like you might be today as we record a little bit of audio, just to play around. Record a little bit and listen back. That will catch things like if you are using a mic like this, not having your mic plugged in, which I know from experience. It will also catch other background noises that you might have missed when you were listening to the space. Lots of people work in really great environments. Maybe your campus has a maker space with an audio booth that you can go and use. Those are wonderful resources to have access to. Julian, we'll talk a little bit about how you can get rid of that, that air conditioner noise. Those spaces are wonderful and if you have access to one on your campus, I highly recommend you use it. Because the more you can block out sound initially, the less you have to edit it. It's always better to capture high quality sound than to try to turn low quality sound into high quality sound. But I can tell you, I do all my recording in this truly imperfect space. I'm surprised that my very bad cat hasn't made an appearance yet. It's okay. You can work around the limitations of most spaces. You don't need to get in your closet and put a blanket over your head. You can, but you don't need to. We'll talk about how to fix a lot of that ambient noise stuff, especially air conditioners, when we come to our editing.

Okay, We are going to take 10 minutes now to collect some audio. You have a few options here, and honestly, as I already said, you can participate as much or as little as you like here. I'm going to hit that mic and knock it if I don't move it. You can record your voice onto your phone's voice memo app. If you want to do some spoken word stuff, grab a piece of text off your computer and just start reading it. You can read it right into your voice memo app on your

phone. If you have an app on your computer, if you have Audacity, you can totally use that to record. There's lots of browser apps. One that... I don't like the Rev Company and we can talk all about that another time. But I do like that they have a very good online voice recorder where they don't collect any of your audio. I'll put that in the chat. If you just need a quick place to record a little bit of audio, you can download it as an MP3 when you're finished. So go ahead and record some voice somewhere on your computer, on your phone. Whatever you have access to. If you want to, we're going to have 10 minutes, so if you want to leave your desk because you've been at your desk since 8:00 this morning and you need a break, feel free to take your phone and record some sound in your environment. Record some background noise of people talking. Whatever you like or if you don't feel like recording yourself right now, which hearing my almost post-COVID voice, I'm feeling a little bit of that right now hearing myself. You can also go exploring for some openly licensed audio files. I like to use Freesound.org for sound effects. They are really great for things like right now, the random sound of the day when I've opened this is somebody walking through leaves. You can find any strange random captured sound that way. There's also Free Music Archive for music. Both of these do require you to set up accounts. If you're not interested in doing that, then you could also go and explore the Wikimedia Commons. Go into Wikipedia and just start looking for audio files there. I can give you a link to that. Oh, yeah. Audacity, you can just go and download it off their website actually instead of the App Store. Let me grab that for you, because I had a participant, the version from the App Store wanted them to pay for it, and you shouldn't have had to do that. This is where you download Audacity. If you want to use that, it's a great one to get started with. Then this is like all the audio files on Wikipedia. This is an overwhelming list. But you've got 10 minutes, go play around. What I'd like you to do in the next 10 minutes is to just come back at the end with some sounds downloaded to your computer. Two or three, doesn't need to be much more than that. It can be your voice and some music. And we're going to do a little bit of just playing around with editing. Our goal today is not to create anything like a finished product. I just want you to see how straightforward and not overwhelming collecting and recording, and then editing some audio can be. This is entirely in the spirit of play. It's actually, the timing is perfect because it's 10:50. So I'm going to set you loose. You can walk away from your desk or open another app on your phone, on your computer. It's fine. We'll come back at 11:00 and we'll start playing around with the sound files that you've either found or recorded. Anybody have any questions? I feel like I just gave you 900 options. If you don't know where else to start, just click open that rev.com link and just record your voice a little bit. It's easy and a perfect place to start for this exercise. Okay, I'm going to turn off my camera and play around with some audio myself. And we'll meet back here in 10 minutes. Okay, I'll see you at 11.

Okay, we're back. It's 11. I'm hoping you've got a little bit of audio in your pocket now and that you had fun. I always, you know, I just did a workshop with our visual arts students here. at TRU. It was fun. We did three weeks of sound. The first week they went off with their recorders and they came back and they were like, everything sounds so different when you just focus on the sound. And I mean they're art students, they're brilliant, million times more creative and clever than I am. And the things they were coming up with, they were recording bees on the flowers outside. They were recording sounds of water dripping, anyway crunching sticks that

sounded exactly like breaking bones. It was deeply disturbing. But when you slow down and focus, whether you're focusing on just your own voice or you're collecting ambient sound around you or you're looking for that perfect sound. There's something, I think anyway, very Zen and meditative about that process. I'm always excited to get a chance to play with audio with folks. Thank you for indulging me in that little experiment. Whatever audio you have, I'm going to ask you to keep handy because we're going to start playing with the idea of doing some audio editing. If you have Audacity, or GarageBand already on your computer, especially if you're already comfortable or familiar with them, feel free to start there today. I didn't want to make everybody download because also I don't know what computer you're accessing from and all that stuff. So I have a great browser- based solution for playing with audio editing. And it's called Wavacity. I'm going to put the link in the chat and I'm going to switch over to it in a second. Oh, I have a slide about it.

I do. Okay, We're going to look at way Wavacity. Here's a caution with Wavacity. This is a tool for play. It's a remarkably fully featured tool, so I don't want to undersell it. It's quite amazing what all it has access to, but you can't really save your project. It's going to last as long as your browser session. If your computer shuts down, you will lose your work. If you're doing something really important, don't do it in Wavacity, but it's a great tool for play. Open access doesn't save any of your data. A great option if you just want to do some audio editing with your students in class, you want to work on a little project together, it's a great option. Oftentimes we use this if we have to go into the computer labs and we don't put a request in soon enough to get Audacity put onto the computer labs. This is perfect solution. I'm going to switch my screen over here now. Maybe. I always struggle with this part. Okay, I want you to have my whole Google Chrome. I'm hoping that this will show you all my tabs. Let's try. Okay, it looks promising.

If I switch between the tabs, can you guys see me swapping to a new tab? You see that? Beautiful. Thank you. Thank you for the feedback. I appreciate that. Okay, when you open up Wavacity, it should look like this. They've got a little audio file in there. If you already started playing with it, you can go ahead and just hit that X to get rid of it because we don't need it. We'll get it gone. Instead, what we're going to do is, we're going to import whatever audio files you have been playing around with. Wavacity seems to be pretty agnostic about file types. It's been happy with me to bring in all sorts, so hopefully you won't have any issues with this, but it's got a little... So you don't want to use your actual Chrome or your browser. File, like File Edit. You want to use the ones inside the browser window here. If that was coherent. I'm going to go ahead and click File. I'm going to click Import Audio. I made some files for the workshop today. I've got a little intro audio that I'm going to bring in first. This is called a waveform. The more time you spend editing audio, the more fluent you will become in waveforms. This may look like Greek to you. Well, maybe you speak Greek. This may look like a language you don't speak to you right now. But eventually you will come to recognize what the waveform is showing you. In really simple terms, tall waveforms are allowed, short waveforms are quiet. In this case, we're looking at a bit of stereo audio. So we have our left and our right. Usually left is on top. Usually they're the same. I don't have to just import one piece of audio at a time

though. In fact, I probably don't want to. I'm going to use this Minimize button to give myself more scope. I'm also going to import a little bit of audio. I used that Rev tool last night to record so that I would have it. There it is. I also have a little sound effect I found, a bit of static. Something about being a dorky audio nerd. I love just introducing static into recordings. You're supposed to be trying to get it out. I'm always trying to include it. So there, I've got my little bit of static. Lastly, I'm going to import my closing sound. Hopefully you can pull a few files into your own project here, whatever you have handy to you.

Now, an audio recording is... you're looking at a timeline. So this is second 0 and this is second 20. And everything in between it is happening chronologically. If you look at this, you might notice right away that what we're going to have primarily is a cacophony. I'm not sure if Zoom is going to bring the audio across. You guys can tell me what you hear. I don't know. But right now it's playing everything all at once, and that's not great because it's a timeline. What we can do is we can think in those terms... What we can do is think in those terms of timeline in order to line up our audio... I figured it was what, You didn't want to hear that anyway, I'll turn my system sound up. Hopefully we'll be able to hear it a bit louder. When we think about it in terms of timeline we know that we want things to start and stop probably in sequence. I'm going to shrink down using the minus thing, The minus magnifying glass to zoom out so that I can see more of my audio timeline. What I want to do to start out with is I just want to move things into the sequence that I would like them to play in. I do that by highlighting a chunk like I just did. Then you've got this little left/right arrow guy in your tabs and then you can move pieces along. You'll notice here that what I'm actually doing is I'm not starting and stopping them on the same line. Although it'll make it really obvious for you; it'll give you a guide for that. What I actually want to do is back it up so that the audio doesn't quite overlap. But where my audio starts and stops, it overlaps a little so that I don't have a big gap. Anytime I have a blank line, I've got dead air. Generally speaking, we want to minimize the amount of dead air that we have. Some silence is useful, but too much is... Everybody has had that experience, right? You're listening to the radio or something and it just cuts out. It's eerie. It's always a little bit eerie. You can do that with all of your pieces. And you do need to switch between the cursor and the movement arrows, which can be a little bit clunky when you're still new. I'm going to put my static underneath. I'm going to play with that as a little bit of bed in a bit. Then finally I'm going to take my outro music and I'm going to do the same thing. I'm going to move it. Now it gets hard on your screen because you can't always see all the pieces that you're trying to work with. I'm going to pop it right there. I think that's right. Okay. Another thing that you can do with individual tracks while you're working. Each one of these is a separate track. You can mute any one of them. I'm going to mute one of mine. I'm going to mute my static track. When it turns gray like that, it means it's not going to play when I'm editing, I can also hit the solo button, and the solo button makes it so that only that track is going to play, Not going to use that right now but it gives you some control over what you're listening to, so that you can focus on the pieces that really need your editing. Okay, now that I've organized everything into a timeline, it's going to sound a lot more [plays music]. So I get music first... Now my voice should come in. This is a test intro audio recording. [VOICE] "If I make a mamama, mamama mistake, I can cut it out, and I can remove long gaps too..." [Inaudible]. Everything has been happening

chronologically across my waveforms. If you can just remember that really basic fact that you're working on a timeline, Sound is playing chronologically across your timeline, and you generally want things to happen in sequence. Everything makes a lot more sense when you think about it that way.

Let's get into this where I talked about needing to make some edits to my audio. I'm going to zoom in and I'm going to... I'm going to look at my speech waveform and does my voice sound terrible. Not beautiful audio. Okay, so as we talked about before, the height of the waveform indicates the level of the sound. You can choose to increase that. In this case, you can see the peaks of the music are way, way taller than the peaks of the spoken. I might want to turn that up with my gain, not to 23. Gain is adding decibels to the recorded audio. I'm bringing it up a little bit, I'm adding 10... 10 is probably too much. I'm going to add about 5 decibels to my spoken word just to try to bring it up to match the music. Anytime you're bringing together two pieces of audio, you want to watch for a big drop in volume. Because from a listener's perspective, so if I'm a student and I'm out walking my dog and I'm listening to your lecture, and I set the volume for your opening music And then maybe it's a film class, maybe you include clips from the trailer for the film, and then you discuss it. If I set my volume as I head out walking to your sound clip, and then your voice comes in and it drops way down. I got to fish the phone out of my pocket, I got to turn the volume up. And then maybe you play another clip and it goes up again and now you're deafening me, right? So you really want to try to make it so that the experience for the listener is like all happening within a particular band of audio, which you do just by listening back. Now I want to cut out some of my... So I don't need all this extraneous part at the beginning. So I'm just going to highlight it. I'm just going to hit my delete key that moves it back. I'm going to have to move it again now. That's okay. And a lot of audio editing is just fiddling. It really is. It's a lot of fiddling to try to get the sound the way you want it. Well, let's try to fix that mistake I made earlier. Let's see here. [VOICE:] "If I make a mamama mistake..." Okay, I know that this part is where I was blabbering. If I highlight it and I hit delete, Oops, sorry. Yeah, it goes away. [VOICE:] "If I make a mistake." Really not hugely complicated functioning. Now we have a lot of additional things we can play with, but the basics of audio: cutting things out, getting the volume relatively in sync, is really straightforward.

I'm going to show you one or two other things that I'm going to invite you to play around as I talk. I don't feel like you have to wait and watch if that's not of huge interest to you. But I want to show you a couple of cool functions. Julian mentioned the air conditioner. We talked about fans, background noise, that kind of thing. There is this under your Effect options, there are a whole bunch of choices. One of them... Loudness normalization, by the way, we'll do that. It will take all the audio, different pieces of audio you've brought in and it'll normalize the loudness. That's a cool one. Just if you want to just quickly bring everything into a relatively similar level, that's a great one to try. Noise Reduction is so cool. When you click on Noise reduction, it'll give you these little instructions. You're going to highlight an area where it looks like there's no sound because there's not really any sound there. Except that there is. If there is a fan going on in my background, if there is birds outside at a distance. You just hear quietly, not a lot, anything like that will be below what's called the gate. The gate is where sound starts to

manifest in the recording, effectively. When that gate appears, when the sound starts to appear, you can set a level so that anything below that gets deleted. Now you have to be careful because if, say I selected this and said that this, that's all got to go, well, that's my voice. Now it's going to go through, it's going to find anywhere where my voice exists and axe it, which you might want, but I don't in this exact moment. You want to make sure you're always picking an area of silence. You can highlight a section, you can go to Noise Reduction, you can say get Noise Profile, that's my Noise Profile. Then go on to make sure I have this track highlighted because that's where I want the noise reduction to happen. You can do Noise Reduction. Oh I haven't highlighted it, sorry. Effect. Noise Reduction. Get the Noise Profile. Now I choose Noise Reduction again. It's choosing this based on the example that I gave it. I want to reduce my noise and I'm going to say, okay. Then what it should do is take that anything in those decibel ranges out of my audio, which should leave us with a clean... [VOICE:] "This is a test intro audio recording. If I make a mistake I can cut it out and I can..." Without headphones, you can only sort of get it. But with headphones on, you'd really hear that any sort of my fan noise, all those things have been omitted.

Julian has got a great question in the chat, which is, Is there a recommended decibel level for spoken word podcasts? That is a great question. When you export your audio, and let me show it that way. Export. Do I not have settings here? Oh, I froze it. So funny. This happened to Brian the other day in our workshop and I was like, Would never be me. I've frozen. It's thinking. That's a good question, Julian. Yes. Generally speaking, at the opportunity to export your audio, you should be given a whole bunch of choices in terms of normalized export levels. It's actually not a decibel level that we recommend for spoken word, it's something called a "lufs" which was new to me. Luff's L-U-F-S. And lufs is not just the volume, but it's how you perceive the volume. It has to do with frequencies and an intersection of like frequencies and decibel levels, which is called lufs. Generally speaking, for anything spoken word, you want to mix that to a –16 Lufs. I'm going to put that in the chat, so you can just cut and paste it. –16 lufs. You can always, how do I set lufs, but it should be an export option on your audio. What that does is it normalizes everything to that level. Generally speaking, when you, if your wavelengths are like hitting the top of your audio bars, you want to bring them down. But normalizing to that –16 lufs at the end product should make everything mostly functional. –16 is CBC, spoken word audio typically mixes that level. Yeah, that was new to me. I learned that in an audio workshop about two years ago and it really changed my outputs. Okay. This is yeah, totally new to me. This is frozen. That's as good a reason as any to move on and talk about something else I think.

Okay, I switch back to my screen share. Anyway, that's okay, that the goal here was just to play. Let's exit this page. The goal was to play and to give you an opportunity to just see some of the basics of audio editing. I'm going to switch back. Now that's just a scary looking screen. I'm going to... share. That's the one I want, what was about to say. Oh, yeah. Okay.

When I first started editing audio, I just found the world of audio editing very overwhelming. Like I looked at a waveform and it just felt like I had no idea what I was supposed to take from it. My recommendation is really, if this is something of interest to you, is to really just spend



some time playing. Because it will reward you for spending time with it, which is a nice thing. Most technologies will.

Okay, what about distribution? Well, as I say, distribution is not going to be an issue for everybody. If you're planning to just share audio files in the learning management system, then don't worry about distribution. But oftentimes it can be useful to at least have an RSS feed where students can put the RSS feed into their podcatcher of choice. And it will download the episodes automatically. That can be really useful, especially for distance learners. It's like a nice like, oh yeah, your course exists still, right? You don't have to necessarily log into the learning management system to get that reminder, can be really useful. I just want to show you how you can explore distributing for free, using the OpenETC.

If you're not familiar with opened.ca, it's a great resource for everyone in the province. It's shared, WordPress, it's other things too, but we're going to talk about it in terms of WordPress. You can go to the OpenETC. You can click on Get Started. As long as you're a student or an educator in B.C., you can sign up for a website on the OpenETC. What I'm going to show you is the back end of a really simple podcasting sample site. Really simple site, doesn't look like anything particularly fancy, but what it's going to do is give me a place to share my podcasts. It's not a WordPress session per se, but I want to show you what you turn on, basically, in order to make a podcast using WordPress. We have a really great plug in available to everyone on the OpenETC, and it is called Seriously Simple Podcasting. If I go to my plug ins menu at the back end here, and I just take Seriously Simple Podcasting, it should come up, and I have it activated right now. You would need to click that activate button. And then Seriously Simple Podcasting basically gives you the option to create podcasts at the back end, at the back end of your website. It really creates a new kind of page. If you're familiar with WordPress, you know you can have posts and pages. You'll see it's added podcasting, which are really just posts with additional meta data. But that's how you do it. You turn it on. Then you can go in and I'll show you what a podcasting post looks like. It looks a lot like making a regular post in WordPress. Anything I type in this space will appear in the show notes of my selected podcatcher. This is a great place to say like, okay, here's my guest, here's the readings we're talking about. This is the topic for today. Hey, your assignments are due next week. Whatever you're using a podcast for, show notes are a great way to communicate with an audience. If you're not familiar with podcasts, you'll see that show notes appear like when you click on the individual episode in a podcatcher. Even without listening, you can communicate some key information. I used to always use this due dates and deadlines, those things. You then really simply upload your audio file. Oh, Robin. No, the theme doesn't matter. I don't have this site particularly nicely set up because I just wanted to show you the back end. But any theme will show a podcast. They have some recommended themes. I have not run into a theme that doesn't show the podcasts at all. It's nice because it creates this little player which will show your cover image, whatever you want that to be, and your test feed. And then anything that will show below, you can have the people download the file directly this way. You can generate an RSS feed from the back end. That's a great question, Robin. But no, that said, if you run into a theme that doesn't seem to be working, please let me know because I always like to fill my toolbox with more information. I'm

going to show you a new one, just so you can see what this looks like from new. I'm going to put my episode title, then I'm going to have some information about my podcast. Then I'm going to ask it to upload a file. The files will all just live in the media library. If you need to upload one from your computer, you can do that on the OpenETC. The maximum upload for an individual file is 250 megabytes. That's more than big enough. I'm using a sample episode of the *You Got This* podcast here, which was a minisode, 14 minutes long and it's 20 megabytes. Just to come back, by the way, to the beauty and portability of audio files, 14 minutes of very high quality audio, that's an MP3 at the highest quality setting. 20 megabytes. Like I can email that even on my institutional email where everything is locked way down. This is what I'm talking about when I talk about the level of portability, access, and simplicity with an audio file. It's beautiful. Just a beautiful thing. It doesn't take super long to upload. And then it'll live in my media file and I can just select it here. You can upload individual episode images or you can have a cover for the whole episode. The only thing you need to know is that all podcatchers require that the image be square, at least 300 by 300. I'm quite partial to this image. You'll want to put some alt text in here, which I've done on the other episode because some podcatchers are now savvy with accessibility. And so they can describe the episode. You can describe the episode image in text, and a listener will have access to that. Consider including your alt text there as well. Then you've got options. It will calculate your duration and file size automatically. You can put your date recorded if you want to. This can be really useful for class material. Your recording date is every Tuesday because that's the class date in the calendar, for example, that can be useful. Otherwise it will just take your date of upload as your date of recording. You can leave that blank if you want to. You'll see there's an option to mark an episode as explicit. This is only important if you're using a podcatcher like iTunes, like Spotify. They have strict requirements about disclosing if there is a lot of foul language, a lot of mature subject matter. That's... if we do a conversation about distribution another day, we can talk about all the incidents of that. You'll see that you can leave an episode off your RSS feed if you want to, but by default that RSS feed is built in. If I go ahead and publish it, it's just the same episode of each, but that's okay. When we go to view it, like any WordPress site, it's got a stable URL, so you can send students directly to the podcast individual episode page, however you want to handle that. Then if you look at the back end of the settings for Seriously Simple Podcasting. Sorry, under podcasting, I'm going to go to my settings here. You'll see that there are a lot of details that you can play with including enabling the iTunes field if you do want to distribute it. This is specific metadata that only goes out to iTunes. You can use that. This is the important thing though, it's your feed details. And when you click on View feed, you would see all your episodes here. Your students could then use any podcatcher and just pop the RSS feed into the podcatcher, that's the address here in the URL bar. Then their episodes for your class will automatically download to their phones, computers, tablets, whatever they're using. I always recommend that for a weekly classroom lecture, set up an RSS feed and put the files in the learning management system, and then your students can choose. One of the things I really like about using WordPress as your distribution rather than paying some private podcasting distribution company is, first of all, don't pay a private podcast distribution company. But second of all, your students will always have the option to just download the episode. For those who need the files in a more concrete format, it's super easy, super straightforward for them to

get that, otherwise they can just stream it from their preferred device equally as easy. I'm a big fan of using WordPress for this purpose. WordPress is already great at RSS feeds and stable URLs, which are the two things that you want in order to make your podcast as usable for learners as possible.

Now in those settings, there's lots more things you can do around publishing. You can have separate feeds for your podcasts. You can have all kinds of different details, and under the Options you can set up. I could have a podcast. These are all, by the way, podcatchers now. There's so many of them. Most of these I've never heard of or used, the obvious ones are all present. Please feel free to use the ones that are of most relevance to you, but in terms of a classroom practice, you don't have to use any of them at all. The RSS feed and the posting to learning management system is probably plenty. Some LMSs can handle an RSS feed too. That's something to talk to your learning management support at your institution about. And then it would be pretty seamless. Yeah, I think that's everything I want to show you about, the OpenETC. Seriously Simple Podcasting. I'm thrilled to see what Julian said about developing some documentation on the process. Because Julian, all I do is this, like I just ramble. I would also love a copy of your documentation. When you get a chance, that would be absolutely delightful. Okay, I'm going to switch back to my slides.

Okay, a couple other things. I want to talk about some different kinds of classroom practices that I think are a great place to embrace audio. Obviously, we've already talked about the notion of the podcast lecture. Podcasting your course content for flipped classroom design is, I think, ideal. Even if you're not a distance educator, you're not reaching students away, a flipped classroom design can often take the form of doing a lot of readings ahead of time or watching videos. I submit to you that audio is a nice middle ground, right? Nice place to do some discussion of the high points of the readings before your students come to class. Then they come to class ready to discuss. I'm a big fan. I love podcast assignments for group projects because they can take so many different forms. If you have learning support, if your learning support will support this work, by all means, reach out to them for support in your classroom. But you can also show them a little bit of Wavacity in class, play a little bit together as a group, and use it as a learning experience for everyone. I love all of the different kinds of options you can do, but just a few thoughts. Creative, my students used to do the best podcasts where they would interview the characters from the novel and loved it. It's such a great way to show an understanding of character development and motivation, but you could also do that with historical figures. I have a colleague in a history department whose students did a podcast where they interviewed Karl Marx. Hilarious. I just love the concept, it's great. But also it doesn't have to be a creative option. It could be more like a community resource. Maybe interviewing people working in a particular field or discipline. Maybe your students create a documentary about a social issue. I think these work as great group projects. Unless you have learners who are... unless your learners are already working in audio for some other reason, it's a lot to ask as an individual project because if you do it as a group project, you can have people doing the recording, people doing the editing. Like they can work together on those different components of the work. But just some thoughts. I also really love giving students the option to

have audio files for feedback. I will tell you that the first time I ever experienced this was when I was a grad student at Carleton University in 2006. Christine Adam, who is now the vice president of students here at TRU, was my professor. It was a course in post-secondary teaching. She read our essays like on tape. It was actually, I'm pretty sure it was a tape. We would, she would read our essays back to us and comment as she read them aloud. And it was a really formative experience for me in understanding how my writing was experienced by a reader. There's no experience that I've had on written comments that have come close to both the cringe factor when I realized that I had like totally phoned in a paragraph. But also just the sense of relationality between myself as a writer and the teacher as the evaluator. It was a critically formative experience in my learning how to be a writer. Ever since then, I've thought a lot about how we can use audio to communicate feedback to students. I think it's the thing that is best offered as a choice. It's something that I used to like to do as much to break up my marking load as anything. I would let students select written feedback or audio feedback. Then I could just work through my two piles. Just different parts of my brain, it was always really helpful. One thing I love about most learning management systems is that there's an audio feedback functionality built right in. For example, in Moodle, in your toolbar, if you've never touched it, there's a little microphone. You can just click that microphone and record 2 minutes audio that just seamlessly, you don't have to open any other files or upload or download anything, and your student can just play it back directly in the LMS. Again, it's not going to work for every learner, but for those who it does work for, it can have a really strong sense of intimacy and connection just like podcasting does. Because, particularly as we've moved from handwritten comments to typed comments, the personal connection in evaluation can sometimes be lost. It's just something to consider as an option, another way of tapping into that, I think profound humanity that audio offers us to use in our feedback to students as well. And as somebody who used to mark hundreds of English essays a week, it was really nice to sometimes take a break and just talk my feedback, it helped me out too.

This was a question that came up in the registration question. Somebody said, "I would like to hear about the role of the facilitator in using different technologies. How do we foster social presence with each new tool?" I love this because this has Community of Inquiry written all over it, which has Ian Linkletter written all over it, which it's always a delight to hear echoes from other sessions when you're preparing your own. I feel like I made the argument that audio has the capacity to be both human scale and humanizing. And I think it does directly impact that experience of an instructor presence. Now, social presence is a different piece, but I think that allowing students to use audio in their own communications would be an option there too. Accessibility could potentially become a concern depending on what tools you have available to you. But making audio an option for some learners, it's built right into the forum. Usually the option to record audio or video. Just something to think about. I love the way audio meets learners in very different spaces, places than the classroom. The idea of like I haven't actually logged into the LMS in seven days, but my phone just barked at me that there's a new episode of my class podcast. To me, I think that has a lot of value. Then we talked about this audio is intimate. Audio is creating these parasocial relationships. I don't think parasocial has to be a bad thing. I think that a parasocial relationship in the context of teaching and learning can

actually have a lot of value for that social presence piece. Just some thoughts. I'm sure you can all take that in more and more interesting directions. But just some thoughts.

Then finally, an accessibility reminder. As much as I love podcasts, they have one clear limitation, which is that you really should be in the practice of transcribing audio, especially when it's course material, when it's required. It's the equivalent of a lecture for your course. I think it's important and valuable in the same way that I think providing lecture outlines is an accessibility practice. I think transcribed audio is an accessibility practice. Your brain might go directly to deaf and hard of hearing learners, but those with audio-processing difficulties, those for whom English is an acquired language, and some learners just have a learning preference for text, You can accommodate all of those learners by providing transcription for your audio. It doesn't have to be painful. You do have to plan for it in your workload when you're working with audio, and I'm not going to pretend otherwise. I know it's important to know those things ahead of time. If your institution is on the provincial installation of Kaltura, you can use the auto captioning function to generate transcripts ready to edit. I do that all the time. I upload my audio file into Kaltura, doesn't have to be a video file, Kaltura is more than happy to take your audio files as well. For us at TRU it seems to take about half an hour for that auto-captioning, half an hour after upload, that auto captioning usually appears and then it's a text that's there and ready to edit. It will require editing. And this is an equity issue for sure because non-North American accents definitely are less accurate through auto captioning. Speech impediments make audio less... auto captioning less accurate, any difference, speech or language difference. Recognizing that you also will get better and faster at transcribing, at editing the transcripts because you'll come to recognize common errors. The one I always point out is that Kaltura doesn't know its name is Kaltura. Whenever I have to transcribe audio in Kaltura, when I talk about Kaltura. It's actually find it comforting. That Kaltura is not like sentient or self-knowing, but I always do a find and replace for the word "culture," that's usually what it corrects it to, when I mean for it to say Kaltura; it's not without its problems, and it's a workflow you need to practice. If you're working on a larger-funded project, you can consider a professional transcription service. I really like Academic Audio Transcripts out of the UK. They provide jobs primarily to under waged and disabled academics in the UK. Their turnaround times are great; their accuracy is top notch, and it's a very ethical choice in terms of the labour conditions of the people who work for academic audio transcription. It's one that I can endorse. There are others out there in the world. But there will be a cost associated with that. I only recommend that to my colleagues when I know that they have funding for a project. For general classroom practice, you're probably going to be doing it yourself using a tool like Kaltura. If your institution doesn't have Kaltura, then please consider using something like YouTube, which has its own problems, but does have a very accurate transcription function. There are others out there that can give you a starting transcript.

I just noticed that I missed a question from Diana in the chat. Sorry, Diana. Outside of B.C., so assume cannot use OpenETC. If you email, Brian, they'll usually say yes if it's an educational project, but yes technically for educators in B.C. Do you have any ideas on distribution for those not in B.C.? Any WordPress installation will work as long as you can install the Seriously Simple

Podcasting plug in. If you have your own WordPress installation, that won't be free. You'll have hosting costs associated with that. But if that's something you're interested in pursuing for a personal website, you don't need to add anything extra on to be able to do the podcasting. Seriously. Simple Podcasting is a free plug in. Your institution may have a WordPress install, and they may be willing to put Seriously Simple Podcasting on it as a plug in any WordPress installation if you're doing it yourself. I really love the people at Reclaim Hosting. That's who I use for my own professional site. You can definitely DIY it that way. And Seriously Simple Podcasting is a really accessible plug in on most WordPress installations. Yeah, no problem. Okay, I think I'm done.

I am done. Okay. Thank you for your time today. I was hoping we would have 20 minutes for questions. We have 17, well a little bit less so that Britt can pop on and share some BCcampus information with you as well. I really do invite you to follow up with me by email, bgray@TRU.ca I'm more than happy to take any follow up questions. I'll be working on a blog about this session for BCcampus. It'll be available soon and it sounds like Julian's information will be circulated as well. So lots and lots of resources are available. But yeah. Does anybody have any questions or discussion they want to raise before we wrap up our session today? Oh, I'm glad, Joan. I'm really glad. I hope it wasn't too much. It's a lot, but I just wanted to give you tastes of recording, tastes of editing, tastes of distribution so that you can explore further on your own time. Thanks, Diane. I hope it was helpful. All right. Thanks, Julian. I'm very excited to see your documentation. It's something that I always say to myself, like we should have some documentation about this. We do have a short video on the podcasting site, but it's a pre-Gutenberg WordPress video. It's out of date. I'm thrilled to hear you've got some information, Julian, that we can then borrow/steal, which we'll definitely do. I'll put my email in the chat as well. Please do feel free to just cut and paste it if that's easier.

Based on your extensive knowledge of podcasting, are there specific types of content that work best, or particularly challenging, to present in this format? Oh, that's such a good question. I really love podcasting for... My gut reaction is to say humanities and social sciences. Anything discussion based where you might need to break down a really complicated reading or spend time with learners on maybe particularly fractious social issues, those kinds of topics. I think the intimacy and the privacy and the closeness of audio works really beautifully for that. The flip side would be anything that leans heavily on visuals like if you need to demonstrate equations like in chemistry, or you need to demonstrate math equations or something like that, audio is not going to translate super well. That's not to say, I have listened to some very interesting math podcasts. It's certainly not like a cut and dried rule, but I think anytime you're really leaning on the visual, audio is probably not your best bet. Anytime that you really want to get intimate and close with learners about a complex or difficult topic, I think audio really shines for that. That's a great question. Thank you. Britt, I don't see any other questions coming through. Do you want to switch screen shares so you can do your BCcampus stuff?

BRITT:

Yeah, that sounds great. Thank you so much, Brenna. This was a fantastic session. I know I learned. As an avid podcast listener, this is the first time I got a little bit of a sneak peek on behind the scenes of creating a podcast so that was really exciting. It definitely sparked my imagination of all the different ways you could use podcasting in the classroom. Got me thinking outside of the classroom as well. What are some other ways for fun for work that podcasting can come into play?

BRENNA:

I will say that making a podcast for fun is a really dangerous gateway drug. Because you learned so much about it, doing it for fun, that you're like, oh, I can apply this in a million different ways, and the next thing you know you're the podcast girl, which is also okay.

BRITT:

Yeah. I can totally see how this is a very immersive hobby and there's so many different moving parts, but lots of fun. I want to say again, thank you to Brenna so much for coming today, for sharing all your amazing knowledge on podcasting. This was such a thorough and fantastic session. As Brenna mentioned, she will be writing a blog post for us that will be distributed openly. Keep an eye out for that. And they'll be some of the things she talked about today put down on paper. Don't feel like you have to remember everything off the top of your head from today. And a nice way to share that knowledge with your colleagues as well. I'm just going to pop in a link into the chat right now. That's the survey link. If anyone in attendance could just complete the survey, it should only take a couple minutes here. That's just to help us inform future programming and gain some feedback from today's session. Then I'm just going to share my screen. I think I can override your screen. Okay, I just wanted to highlight that we have in just under a month, we have Studio23. That's going to be in person. We also have live streaming options available for this wonderful creative space to explore ways to enhance and elevate our teaching and learning and facilitation practices. That's going to be the first and second of November in Vancouver. Like I said, in person, but there are streaming available, streaming options available. If you'd like to register, I will pop the link in the chat for that as well. We would love to see some of you there. Kelsey already did that. Thank you so much, Kelsey. Just a reminder that we do have our next Sandbox Series in November with Lisa Gedak from KPU. And that will be on Padlet. So we'd love to see some of you there as well. Thank you, Kelsey. She popped a link into the chat for the next session. And there will be two more after that, going into the new year. Once again, thank you so much, Brenna, for today. Such a great session. I believe Brenna shared her email address if you had any follow up questions, but feel free to direct them to BCcampus and we can forward them to Brenna. And keep an eye out for Brenna's blog post coming out in the next couple of weeks. Awesome. Thank you so much, and thanks everybody for coming. It was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed talking to you all today. Thank you so much.