Transcript for FLO Panel: Accessibility in Post-Secondary Education – A B.C. Perspective
BCcampus event hosted on June 4, 2024
Moderator: Dr. Seanna Takacs
Panelists: Latham Antonnissen Maxwell, Katelyn Watson, Kyle Baillie, and Lisa DeWinter
Host: Helena Prins

HELENA PRINS:
Good morning, everyone. My name is Helena Prins, and I'm an advisor on the learning and teaching team here at BCcampus. And I just couldn't be more excited that so many of you have chosen to spend your time with us this morning about this very important topic of accessibility legislature in our B.C. post-secondary education system. I'm joining you today from the unceded territories of the Lekwungen-speaking People, which includes the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. For the past 15 years, I've been calling Vancouver Island my home, and I'm deeply grateful for the hospitality of the Lekwungen-speaking people. I'm also thankful to be doing my learning with the support of my team here at BCcampus. Today, I'm joined by one of my team members, Kelsey Kilbey, who is providing tech support for the session. Thank you, Kelsey. We are recording the session and the recording as well as slides and the transcript will be shared publicly afterwards. Today's panel will take the form of a conversation and we really invite you to use the chat for any questions or comments you have. Feel free to turn your cameras on or off. It's really up to you. We have enabled closed captioning. Now, our moderator for the panel conversation is the fabulous Dr. Seanna Takacs. Seanna is a faculty member in Accessibility Services at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. She has worked on initiatives on universal design for learning and accessible and inclusive pedagogy at institutions all around British Columbia also with us here at BCcampus. She's the co-chair of the Accessibility and Inclusion COP for Caucus and a member of the leadership team of the B.C. Community of Practice in Accessibility. So Seanna, it is a great appreciation and big excitement that I hand this session over to you now. Thank you.

SEANNA TAKACS:
Great. Thank you, Helena. Always lovely to be here. Thank you, BCcampus for having us. I'm hoping that we're going to have, as Helena said, a great conversation today. I think around the legislation in British Columbia, what we really need are lots and lots of conversations. So I'm just going to allow the panelists to introduce themselves. So they'll introduce themselves, and then I'm going to give a little word about why them. I got to hand pick people, so that was a real treat. If we can just go around, have everyone introduce themselves, and then I'll give a little word about why I chose who I chose. Maybe we can start with Lisa.

LISA DeWINTER:
Good morning. Oh, it's morning. Yes. Good morning, everybody. My name is Lisa DeWinter. I'm coming to you from Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, where I get to live, work, and play on the unceded territory of the Nlaka'pamux and Sylix Peoples. Specifically, we have our five nations, our five bands that are directly connected to NVIT that's going to be the Coldwater Shackan, Nooaitch, Lower Nicola, and the Upper Nicola First Nations communities. And I am

beyond excited to be here today and also beyond nervous. So thank you so much for the wonderful introduction. Good to be here. And Lisa and I recently. I thought of Lisa for this panel because in our online community or our listserv. She always asked really good questions. And then we had the opportunity to meet at the Disability Resource Network of BC meeting in person. And we had this really neat conversation about how we need to have an entrepreneurial lens when we're talking about accessibility, where we need to have a vision, we need to figure out how to sort of pull folks together and work towards that vision and how that takes a special skill set. So I'm really excited for Lisa to be here. So thank you so much for joining us. It's really a pleasure. Kyle, maybe you can go next.

KYLE BAILLIE:
Thank Seanna. I'm Kyle Baillie. I'm currently the executive director of Student Affairs at University of the Fraser Valley. Joining you today from the traditional lands of the Semiahmoo People but our campus is located on Stó:lō land. So thanks very much for hosting this session. This is a really exciting opportunity to chat with some really smart people about really important topics. So thanks, Seanna. Thanks, Kyle. And during my tenure at UFV, I got to work with Kyle who has a really wonderful multi-faceted approach to accessibility, and when we talk about wrap-around models, when we talk about really changing our perspectives on accessibility, Kyle is certainly someone who always pops to mind around that. So again, really pleased that you could be here. Thank you. Katelyn, would you like to go next, please?

KATELYN WATSON:
Yes, for sure. Hi, everyone. My name is Katelyn Watson. I am currently, I was going to say second year, but I'm finishing up my second year of psychology at KPU. To give a little bit of context about me. I have been dealing with multiple complex chronic illnesses as well as chronic pain since the age of 10. So I am well aware of the impacts of inaccessibility at really all levels of education thus far. Other than that, I have also been able to get involved with some accessibility stuff. I've done some work as a research assistant, looking at the accessibility of admissions policies at B.C. post-secondary institutions, and I am also one of the student reps on KPUs Accessibility Committee. And I have worked with Katelyn for a number of years. I guess since you started at KU, so we know each other quite well. And Katelyn always has really practical ideas around accessibility. But I think my favourite is that we have these discussions about, you know, what it means to have a disability, what it means to have a sense of belonging or a sense of not belonging. And you know, how that's woven into pedagogy and woven into these built environment pieces that we talk about. So I'm so thrilled that you're here, Katelyn, because I think you're bringing so much and also that, real lived experience piece. So thank you. So pleased you're here. And Latham, would you like to go next?

LATHAM MAXWELL:
Yes, Hi. My name is Latham Maxwell. I'm from Tsawwassen, British Columbia. I'm a student at KPU. I actually work with Seanna, which is always just a big privilege, and I feel super privileged and honoured to be part of this today. I just finished my first year at KPU at Wilson School of Design. I'll be going into my first year in the interior design program. As an ADHD individual,

that's a big lens that I see my world through, especially in the context of design, that is definitely one of the primary lenses I see design through, so I'm really grateful and looking forward to the conversation today.

SEANNA:
Thanks, Latham. And so I decided to invite Latham to this panel as well, because he has such a strong approach to design. And again, we've worked together for a few years now. We're building this group on ADHD support that's going to look at design ideas, rather than looking at it as a deficit model, it's you know, how can we really find power and experimentation for students. We'll be kicking off that round table at KPU this summer, which is really exciting. Yeah, really glad to have your design mind with us today. Thank you so much. Yeah, really lovely. If we can go back and go through the slides, if we could change that. And then maybe advance to the next slide.

So for those of you who don't know, the Accessible B.C. Act was passed in June of 2021, so we're our third anniversary. And in the same way as any accessible act across provinces in Canada being passed, the goal is to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities. We're trying to develop accessibility standards, which is really overwhelming once you start to have those discussions. And we are trying to establish a framework of mechanisms for compliance and enforcement. Accessibility committees have been struck across post-secondary institutions in B.C. And what we're moving on to now is we're moving on to how are we going to know what we're doing is working? We're trying to establish feedback mechanisms. And that next stage, again, is being met with I think some trepidation and bordering on outright fear for some people. What we want to do today, the inspiration for today was really to say that when we talk about accessibility legislation, it can be tempting to think that it's the domain of experts. And what we really want to move towards is that this is the domain of everybody. Disability touches everybody. Accessibility touches everybody. So we really want to have these kinds of discussions. We want to think about experimentation. We want to think about design. We want to think about those feedback mechanisms because, ultimately, we're trying to create accessible post-secondary institutions, and we can't do that unless we hear everyone's voices. So hence the panel today. Okay. Can we go to the next slide, please?

I'm just going to give a little bit of a summary. So when this legislation was passed, there were these "who's going to?" questions that came out. And I was in a session with Kyle I think a year or two ago now, and I came up with the Spider Man sort of idea because it's like, well, who's going to? Is it going to be the Ministry leading this? Is it going to be departments in post-secondary institutions? Is Facilities going to spearhead this? Is HR going to have something to say about this? You know, what voice will Student Affairs have? Should they have a voice? Why? Why not? Is this just the domain of students? No. It's the domain of everybody. And of course, then there's the question about how to strike the accessibility committees and what their responsibilities were going to be. Okay. Next slide, please.

Now, we're on to the next stage. How are we going to? Do we have accessibility? We have the legislation. We have the accessibility committees. We have certain key people in different institutions, and that really varies institution by institution. So now we have to figure out, well, what are going to be the starting points? What are budgets going to look like? I think that's top of everyone's mind is what is the budget going to look like? Where is the money coming from? How much money will we need? Can we get started without a budget? Are there measures that we can take that don't cost anything? The answer is yes, which we'll hear about today. Where is expertise going to come from? How can we build capacity? How can we scale upwards? If we start with a more limited accessibility initiative, how can it be scaled upwards? How can it be scaled outwards? We'll see that. If we have an initiative, say in a faculty or in Student Affairs or in housing? What can we learn to build that up and out? And now with this concern about feedback mechanisms, how are we going to know that we're being effective? Okay. Next slide, please.

The guiding principles of the legislation. I find that some of these are getting a little bit lost. So I really wanted to bring them forward today. So first and foremost, we are here to listen to the voices of people with disabilities. We're here to examine barriers rather than people, right? We're going to look at what are all of those accessibility barriers that come from technology, that come from processes and procedures, that come from the built environment. Barriers come from all over the place. Those institutional barriers. We want to really look at the barriers rather than the people. I think the Ministry has said over and over, work together. Please work together, work together, join forces. Don't work in silos. Don't be silent. Don't keep information from each other. And fourthly, gather information on what's already working well. That's really, really, really key. And finally, focus on flexibility and focus on scalability. So we're going to talk about all of these sorts of guiding principles when we go through the questions and hear from our panelists. Next slide, please.

For our panel, we're going to really explore in the next hour or so, what does accessibility look like in post-secondary institutions? How can we reduce stigma and where does good accessibility design start? Next slide.

Let's get started. We're going to get started with Mentimeter, if we can queue that up for our audience. I know we've already had tons and tons of good questions.

Okay. So if you chime in with the QR code, we are interested in what you think. What stands between us and an accessible post-secondary institution? A feedback mechanism, if you will. So I'll give some time for the answer to come in. Great. Lots on ableism. "Budgets." Yeah. Okay, great. I think if we can keep a record of all of these responses, again, this is great feedback. These are great guiding terms. "Culture and red tape." "Consultation." Yes, "lack of understanding, short-sighted thinking." So a lot of this is around policy, communication, and budget. Great, "colonial ideas of post-secondary should look like." Wonderful. "Band aid solutions." Yes. And we'll have the chance at the end to talk through some of these ideas. "Egos." Okay. And there's a design piece. "Faculty unable to design for inclusion." Okay.

Wonderful. Okay, so if I could. Let's hang onto some of those sorts of pieces. That's super good feedback to kick off the panel. Yes, thank you, everyone for those responses. My first question, Kyle, I'll get you to chime in first if you don't mind. The first question is very broad. What is an accessible post-secondary institution?

KYLE:
I'm glad we're staying to, you know, really narrowly defined concepts here. At some point, I have to give the disclaimer that this is all personal opinion, even though I'm an institutional officer at UFV. You know, I struggle with this question. When I saw this pop up in the prep I was like, Oh, no. Because I'm not so sure I'm the person we should be asking, and I'm not so sure that a bunch of the people here are the people who should be asking. I feel really strongly that we should be asking our students because at the moment, we're not. We're applying research, we're applying best or promising practice. We are applying literature, and I feel like a lot of times the last people we ask are our students. What would make it accessible for them? We talk about all of the things, and we all know about all of the things that we do. We have systems, we have case management systems, we have committees, we have task forces. But, you know, I think about the emotional labour that our students with disabilities have to engage in just to get their accommodations. I think about, you know, the conversations that they have to have with faculty in the classroom in really uncomfortable ways to get what they need just to be there. So what does it mean to have an accessible post-secondary institution? I think in the bluntest of terms, I would love to see us not need accommodation plans because every learner would have an accommodation plan that supported them for what they needed. That would be, in my mind, the truest sense of an accessible institution.

SEANNA: Great. Okay. Katelyn, do you want to chime in next?

KATELYN:
Yeah, for sure. I mean, I definitely agree that there are approximately a million answers any of us could give to this question. But based on my experiences, I think the biggest thing would be institutions offering flexibility and choice in how students work through both individual courses or their programs as a whole. Obviously, this is something that also applies to employees and flexible working situations. But as a student, I will stick to that perspective. But, obviously, we all know that not all people work the same and function the same. When courses and programs are presented in such a rigid way where it's like, this is the only way we do things. There are so many people that are just flat out denied the opportunity to even try. I think a prime example of this and I know Seanna, we've had many discussions about this because it's something that I've run into both before starting university and while working through my degree. But I found that there are so many programs that especially if they're even the slightest bit competitive, they're only offered full time. There's you know, it may not be intended this way, but there's this sense of Oh, if you can't handle taking full-time classes, you're just not cut out for it, which is ridiculous. But yeah, as Kyle was saying with the emotional labour piece, I know, for me, as a disabled student, there are so many extra things that I've had to take into consideration when looking at programs. You know, thinking about what am I currently able to do? What kind of

jobs will I be able to work? What happens if my disability gets worse? You know, and how do these different programs tie into all of that? Yeah, there's just all these extra things. So I found that when you find a program that seems like a good fit and it checks all of these boxes only to find out that it's only offered full time. It's devastating. And yeah, I wish it was a rare occurrence, but I can't even count the number of times I have cried about this because it does seem to be really common. So yeah, as I was saying, I think one of the biggest things for me when I think about what it means to have an accessible post-secondary institution is that there is that flexibility and choice. You know, there's multiple pathways into programs, there's multiple pathways through programs. So yeah, full time, but also part time, online, in person. I'm a big advocate for true hybrid classes where people can attend both in person and virtually at the same time, which side note would also mean that missing class due to disability doesn't mean that you're losing access to course material, but I digress. Anyway, so just offering options to different options to get through programs, but also at a smaller level for individual classes by offering options for types of assessments and how things are learned. These are all things that are going to help people not only access, but be successful in their education because they're able to do things in the way that works best for them.

SEANNA:
And I know Latham, I know we've talked a lot about flexibility, flexibility from instructors and flexibility. A little bit, we've talked about flexibility in programs. What do you imagine for an accessible post-secondary institution? Maybe in terms of flexibility or I know you have other ideas as well on that.

LATHAM:
Yeah, I mean, I first want to start by saying that, you know, as an ADHD individual, I've been very, very privileged in my life. I have very supportive parents that provided me tutors throughout school and I also went to private school, which really has helped me. But recognizing that privilege. I know that for myself, even though I've had that, going into post-secondary, I've felt like a lot of shame around my disability. And I know that a lot of other people feel a sense of shame or, you know, impostor syndrome when it comes to reaching out and advocating for yourself for, you know, accommodations or flexibility. And I think you know, as I've been on my own journey of breaking down that shame, I've had to find compassion for myself on that. And I think compassion, you know, driven by the people that are instructing us and, you know, our coordinators, which, you know, obviously, Seanna, you're my coordinator, and I felt very supported by you. I think that is a really important thing for people, especially for people that, you know, haven't seen the privilege and haven't experienced the privilege that I do. I can only imagine, you know, I have a friend who has not been able to be assessed and, you know, fighting the barriers to get assessed and also being understood by, you know, multiple layers of people, whether it be doctors or for her own school, I've seen her really fight for herself to get to the point she's at. I think really what sticks out to me as an accessible post-secondary is a lens of compassion for people that are interacting, whether it be any facet of the school that are interacting with students. I think compassion is just an incredibly important

thing for students to experience, especially depending on all the different backgrounds people come from.

SEANNA:
And I know that Lisa for you, you know, sort of in the name of compassion, but also in sort of getting people through and, you know, helping them to sort of realize their gifts and their talents and abilities, you know, you have lots of thoughts on how that could work. I wonder if you could share some of those. What accessible post-secondary looks like for you.

LISA:
Well, thank you for everyone's input on this. They all touch me in such unique ways. From our perspective, and I say our and I mean both personally and professionally. Having, you know, lots of different, you know, barriers, whether that be disability, learning, you know, in all the different languages that we want to use. Our personal approach to that is they're gifted. Culturally, that's the way the lens we look through. This is a unique individual and they have the right to education as anybody does, and that it is our responsibility to find out what works for them. It is our responsibility to be person-centred, right? Not, you know, documents and assessments. Really having those conversations about, you know, and how those barriers are impacting them. And I really can appreciate the comments already made around just feeling shame, right? That even myself, I guarantee there's something going on internally that would make me learn differently from everybody else. I know it. I went through my bachelor's, went through my masters, and I know. But what prevents me from getting assessed? What prevents me from finding these different areas that maybe can aid me? It's because of the shame attached to them. It is because I feel that I'd have to be asked to explain everything all the time. It's because the emotional component that's going to exist and walk with me. It's not just something I had. It is a part of me. It is who I am. We don't get to separate ourselves from that. When I have folks coming in and they're talking about their barriers. You know, that's what we're talking about. What prevents you from being able to learn best? Katelyn brought up a really good point about that full time and part time. We've actually made a shift and to even our BSW, not a two-year track anymore. It's a three-year track, right? So we've done it with our Indigenous human services. So taking a look at, it's not just about whether you have a barrier. Maybe the barrier is family, maybe it's work. It doesn't have to be a disability. There's lots of different things that come to mind as each of you keep bringing up these little pieces and I'm like, Oh, my God, that's it. I want to talk about that one too. You'll have to forgive me. I'm emotionally connected to all of the responses. But you know at the end of the day, it's adapting spaces, our processes, our mindsets that are unique to each individual and really getting out of this head space of what was and having the compassion and creating a safe space and time to be able to have those conversations.

SEANNA:
Wow. What a great start. So let's talk a little bit next. We've already started to talk about this a bit. But what are some specific spaces or situations where you would see that this kind of accessibility legislation would be a really good idea. If we could have guidelines. If we could

have really solid feedback mechanisms, you know, if we could have places where that sort of, you know, digging into lived experience, digging into questions. I'm finding myself recently asking, you know, just in the course of, you know, intake meetings or, you know, things aren't going well meetings, sort of saying, how would it if it was limitless? How would it be if you could decide for yourself? You know, I had a student who he's like, I just need two more weeks. I just need one more week, just two more weeks. And I just sort of said, well, how much if there was no limit, what would it look like? And he said it would only be about six weeks, actually. And so there's that sort of piece that I really want to talk about, you know, those kinds of sites where again, where this accessibility legislation would really like for you yourselves, where do you think it would really take hold the best? Where would you like to see? Where would you like to see the action? Lisa, maybe you could follow up with that first. Just because you've already talked about some of those kinds of situations.

LISA: Limitless, the magic wand. Oh, my goodness.

SEANNA:
I mean, just as an example.

LISA:
The first thing that came to mind when you said that was like, I'd be out of a job. That for me is the ultimate is put me out of a job, and it just happened so organically and very naturally, and we put at the forefront the inclusion, right? Oh my goodness. I'm trying to think of tangible things. Maybe go to someone else. I'm going to actually defer because I feel like instantly I want to gravitate to the students and hear what they have to say about that. Then if you want to circle back to me, that would be great. I would love that.

SEANNA:
Sure. I'm actually just noticing in the chat, Helena just gave me a tap on the shoulder that the chat is not going to show up. I forgot. I'm just going to read pursuant to that. Leslie has just said, "As Latham lived experience demonstrates, all the research shows success for disabled students is tied to instructors' attitudes towards accessibility." Christie has said, "I think accessibility has to be balanced with the regulatory bodies and their expectations for students graduating into their respective fields. The post-secondary institutions can do what they can. However, if regulatory bodies are not willing to adapt, then how can we set them up for success? So those are some of those. I don't know who wants to jump in on that. Latham, maybe you want to since you were mentioned by name, maybe you want to jump in on that or Katelyn, you know, looking at those kinds of barriers around ableism and expectations and maybe how that ties to or we can keep that as a separate point later. But let's have a look at that idea about ableism.

LATHAM:
Well, I think I mean, one thing I'm. A very personal connection I have to that is I have a friend, as I've mentioned, who has been trying to access health care and support. She was diagnosed

earlier on in life and unfortunately, didn't have a supportive parent that kept that information, and it's really, really hard for me to see being in a position where I, as I mentioned, have this privilege, seeing her go through what she's gone through. So in some experiences that she's had that I think are relevant to this conversation. She's a student at UVic, and she was going and had an appointment with an accessibility coordinator, and she wanted to talk to them to get some support and some guidance. And I remember she came to me after and was just completely just distraught because the person that she had talked to was dismissive and not understanding of where she was coming from and basically ended the conversation with, you know, well, I guess if you have a disability or you have ADHD I guess you can you can reach back out. And I don't know if the guy was having a bad day, which doesn't excuse it, but, you know, I think especially in institutions, I think as a really important thing for people to look at, especially with prospective students that they can support who might not have, you know, an assessment done is helping and guiding students. You know, and understanding that students don't like haven't necessarily had that support throughout their life to understand themselves, to, you know, seek the guidance and support to understand themselves. So I think you know, it's equally as important to support your own students that you are already serving as a coordinator, but also to support those students that are coming to you that are saying, Hey, you know, I think, you know, I might be struggling with this. Can you help me with this? I think that's a really important thing that comes to mind. Katelyn, did you want to chime in on that? Have you talked about ableism or ableist structures or this kind of discrimination or this assumption of lack of effort is really common. Have you talked about that on the accessibility committee at all?

KATELYN: Can you repeat the question?

SEANNA:
Yeah. So just along the lines, you know, what Latham is describing, this kind of idea, this difficulty in getting documentation of disability, for example, you know, it can come along with a lot of stigma and the stigma can look like being dismissed or being undermined or come back later or it can just it's got that kind of don't bother me sort of sort of piece to it, not being taken seriously, which is really, you know, part of those are some of the roots of ableism. So I'm just wondering if you've talked about that at all on the accessibility committee?

KATELYN:
We definitely have. They're only putting me on the spot here. But yeah, we've definitely talked about, I mean, one thing is how when it comes to the stigma and these attitudes. First of all, it's very complex because they can vary so much depending on whether someone has an invisible or dynamic disability where there's more of an issue related to being believed. The good old, "Well, you don't look sick," or even just, "You didn't need these supports last week, why do you need them now?" Whereas, I think with more visible disabilities, there tends to be more of the underestimation, and, you know, people just assume that you can't do certain things. And, you know, I kind of want to tie into, I think it was Kristie's question or point about regulatory bodies and their expectations. You know, kind of returning back once again to our issue about

competitive programs that are only offered full time and kind of convey this message that if you can't handle full-time classes, then you're just not cut out for it. I think a lot of the times the programs that are kind of the worst about that are the ones that are often related to fields that have been historically inaccessible. I mean, the main one that comes to mind for me is health care, but also things like engineering, trades, like the list goes on. As a result, the attitudinal barriers that we see in those fields, sorry, in those types of programs generally reflect the inaccessibility of those fields. But I just think those fields aren't going to become more accessible and inclusive if the education for them isn't inclusive. And the education won't become more accessible and inclusive if we don't let disabled people try.

SEANNA:
So it sounds like, it sounds like that would be a really effective target is looking at those programs that are traditionally, you know, full time in the name of rigor, you know, typically have those kinds of typically have those kinds of barriers. It sounds like that would be a good target. Kyle, maybe you could chime in on that as well. I know you have some thoughts on that programming, and Lisa as well, I know that you work with those issues a lot as well.

KYLE:
You know, it's a great point. Everyone who's brought it up clearly has experienced it to some degree. You know, I think we have certain programs as the. Unfortunately, it gets back to the philosophical question of what is university or post-secondary here to do? Is it here to grow knowledge and skill sets, or is it here to prepare workers? And unfortunately, I think in some of the programs that I think Katelyn is kind of talking about, we have gatekeepers to the professions, and these tend to be folks who have come from profession, and now are looking at our students and saying, Well, I don't think you have what it takes to make it, and they're making some presuppositions there that really are based on some pretty stereotypical opinions and attitudes. But the reality is that it's not their decision to decide whether our students have what it takes to make it in the profession. All of these programs have defined learning outcomes, and that is what our students need to be measured on is the learning outcomes, not whether or not somebody thinks that they're going to be a good nurse, right? And that's kind of what we're running into. To make two other comments, though, you know, Seanna, your original question about what could we do? Two things that I think immediately, our institutions and our government need to do is make more funding available for diagnosis, because right now, not only more funding, but more accessibility, more access to professionals who can provide diagnosis. The wait list to get a diagnosis right now is negligent. It is ridiculous. The amount of people who that creates a barrier for is just unacceptable. The other thing, though, that institutions can do to help with that is stop requiring recency on documentation. Right? This is a practice that I have seen happening all over the place. I'm sorry, but if you were diagnosed at 12 with a chronic health or a chronic disability, it hasn't miraculously resolved itself when you became a first year at a university. Why are we asking students to go and replicate documentation that we know hasn't changed tremendously? Why can't we provide some manner of interim measures or some manner of interim accessible plan while the student

pursues that? Like I don't know. It fully is a bureaucratic approach to a social problem that we can reject, out of hand. We can reject.. I'll stop there. LISA: Oh, goodness.

SEANNA:
I feel you want to jump in.

LISA:
Oh, I just feel like we just keep doing the same things because it's always been done that way, right? We're living in that time and space. And while we do have some amazing allies and amazing advocates out there, this by far has been one of the most difficult ones. You know, what we need is really clear, strong language, folks. Not only for, I want to be a bit of a devil's advocate for the instructors. I can really understand the dilemma that comes with, you know, trying to figure something out when you only have bits and pieces of the information. I can get how difficult that would be. I get how difficult it is when, you know, you're just not having all the information when the entire field of education is about getting as much information as you can to make the best decision possible. You know, we just kind of keep hitting that spot. But I mean, and we want to move closer to that space of relationship building, Build the relationship with the students, have an understanding. That will come with time. I mean, if we put in the effort from the faculty level to have the conversations and work at the pace of where that student might be, we may have a better outcome of whether that be disclosure or maybe just even understanding. Not why do you need that? But what if you've gone through in order for us to better understand how to support you? You know, just shifting a little bit of that language to feel that that space can now be approached in a safer way for students, it makes a huge difference. But, you know, we need some support somewhere. We need some of that language to help us, you know, work in both sides of that. So one, what do you need? How do we move that duty to accommodate? Where do we move that understanding of what does that mean? So that way, we can start infusing the stories that the students are experiencing. So that way that language won't be needed because we're driven by something different. An example would be in our committee. I asked that the two students, our committee members to sit and speak on their experience because their time is transitioning out now because we have our one-year time for the students. I asked if they would be willing to share their story and when they share their story. One has a very invisible disability and the other one is very obvious but comes with tons of different assumptions with it. One in health care, one in social work. Two are probably the most difficult areas to really get your hands in and let go of some of these attitudinal things that are going on. But, it was at the end that shocked me. I heard their story. I walked with them and we figured out all those. It was at the very end when they said, does anyone have any questions or thoughts? And it was the silence. That's what bothered me. That's what made me really think, Oh, something's missing. Because it was the silence and I don't know if it was the impact of the story. Or that they were reflecting in those moments. But it really made me think about, right at that level, someone's uncomfortable. What do we need to also be looking at when we're talking about how do we make change and what do we need to do we need from the government in order to help guide and shape these? It's more than just the dollars and cents, in my opinion. It's the conversations and it's being uncomfortable in

those spaces when we're the ones who are the barriers. We think we're not the ones as the barriers, and I'm 100% going to own that. I am absolutely a person who has probably been a barrier for students without even knowing. So I want to, long-winded as it was, I really apologize for that. It really just comes down to more than just what do we need from them because there's just an element in there that's missing as well. That a government can't force upon people like the language or the dollars. But it's like, how do we get to the stories and how do we move into those spaces in a good way?

SEANNA:
I've recently started. That's so wonderfully said. I've recently started in my UDL workshops. Really started. I've really changed my approach since I started doing this work in 2018. You know, to really look at what access-level language and behaviour sounds like. So people can kind of pinpoint, you know, when you're met when you're met with silence or you're met with promises like yeah, I'll get it done. I'll get it done, and then no one follows up. You know, that's usually an access-level problem, right? Or if people are really sort of, you know, if there is that silence you know, that's often mistaken for reluctance or unwillingness, it's really that people don't know where to start, right? And they're overwhelmed and I'm really interested in how we can ease that. I find a lot of instructors are really surprised that oh, that's what that means? That's what the silence means or that's what the promises mean or that's what a lack of follow up means? And when you start framing it in terms of access, it becomes really, really interesting, I think. And you know, in my opinion, I think that's what we need to take kind of a sociolinguistic look at access-level difficulties. We need to look at what access looks like and what it feels like for people. Apart from just the bad feelings that people have and the effects of the stigma, we have to look at how that's conveyed. That's what I'd like to see with these sorts of discussions more and more. I'm just going into the chat to see that you know, there are comments as well about, you know, tagging onto what Kyle was saying, you know, whenever you have other institutions connected, you know, like let's say student ABC, for example, requiring the five-year documentation, that can give us a real sense of, well, you know, throw your hands up, I can't do anything about this or, Well, how can I change that? Well, we have to follow the rules. And I fall into that, I like to try and find strategies around it, but at the end of the day, it's like those are the rules. You have to follow along. And that I think is another important takeaway about a site for accessibility change is how can you work with other institutions and other policies and really at the end of the day, I think, institutions do have to work together and dovetail in ways. I think that's a piece that is really important. And I see there's another piece in the chat. Everyone wants to know about accessible documents. And I think there can be. I think BCcampus has actually done some work on accessible documents, but I'm hearing more and more of a call for accessible document work as well. So I wanted to move on to another question. Specifically about design, and Latham, I'm going to ask you to jump in here because of your budding and blooming design background. So in accessibility, we sort of talk about the importance of designing learning experiences proactively. And I'm wondering if you'd be interested in chiming in on what good design looks like? What does good accessibility design look like? Latham, I'll get you as the design guru, I'll get you to jump in on this and then if anyone wants to chime in in the chat as well.

LATHAM:
Yeah, I mean, I must say I am just entering my first year of interior design, but yeah, not to discredit myself, of course, I've always seen the world through the lens of design. I've been interested in design since a very young age. And, you know, I have a lot of ideas and I want to try to, you know, keep it organized. But in terms of physical design, I think one thing, you know, that personally really strikes me as something beneficial is the idea of something is a concept which some people might know. It's called biophilic design. And biophilic design is the idea of incorporating natural elements in the interiors of buildings and as well as allowing the exterior to come within in different ways. In terms of accessibility and disability and in general, this form of design has been seen to increase cognitive function, both with working memory and other facets of our brains, not just in disabled individuals. So I think I'll go over what this covers. I have notes here because ADHD, and I have to have notes. So different ways that this could be incorporated into the design of buildings is using natural colours, using natural materials. In my own school at Wilson School of Design, we have a lot of neutral colours within, a lot of natural wood, which just being a learner in that school, I've actually found to influence how I feel when I'm in the classroom. Lighting is also another big thing that I think is a relatively inexpensive thing that schools could look at, which not only affects individuals like myself with AHD, but also people with autism spectrum disorder. Different types of lighting, especially fluorescent lighting, which we've largely seen used in schools, actually has been shown to create a level of anxiety within those individuals, as well as individuals outside of that. So I think lighting and kind of a solution towards that is using indirect lighting. So within my school, we have rather than lights shining right down, we have indirect sources of that. So I think. Yeah, to summarize that, I think using natural elements, ensuring there's natural light coming in, you know, organic forms and shapes and materials. I think that can definitely influence the overall mood, the cognitive function of our students, and just the well-being of all students within the building.

SEANNA:
And that sort of design approach doesn't necessarily, you know, as we're, you know, just going through refurbishment and just, you know, the kind of day-to-day upgrading of our campuses and our classrooms, you know, that's really that's an important design piece to keep in mind. I see Katelyn, you chimed in in the chat, the fluorescents are the enemy. I also find fluorescence the enemy. I find it really, really difficult. They replaced these fluorescents in my office, which are just incredibly blinding and distracting. Any other thoughts on design, how we can design proactively? That's designing physical spaces. Do you see, Kyle?

KYLE:
So I'm going to chime in with a fairly controversial one here. Everybody's been floating along, fairly agreeing on things. Let's talk about organizational design, and let's talk about motivations to change or not. If we go to Freud's pain pleasure principle, people don't change because they like change. People change because it either solves a problem for them or it becomes inconvenient to not move along with the change. I'm curious, how many of our hiring practices for our faculty involve a demonstration towards accessibility? What about their evaluation

processes, right? How many of us have tenure track processes? And is there a demonstration of accessibility as part of a tenure application package? Those would be really interesting questions to ask at every institution because right now, I know that there isn't at a number of them. You know, at what point does it become either advantageous or disadvantageous to not move along in this direction and create accessible opportunities for our students?

SEANNA:
So like proactive accessible design for the hiring process?

KYLE:
Hiring process, curriculum design, pardon me, assessment design in pedagogy, you know, all of the above. What if we had a criteria for every class, right, that a faculty member must provide a written set of notes alongside course materials? I know we're touching the third rail here. This is academic freedom. People are going to start getting a little itchy about this. But at what point do we start talking about it? At what point do we take it out of the realm of protected status like this rarefied air? No. If we're going to talk about accessible education, there are some things that I think we all would agree on that create accessibility. At my own institution, we have one of our academic areas Who has removed a couple of, pardon me, assessment measures that we have known for years were inaccessible, and there's no way to make them accessible. And we went to them and said, "Hey, tell us how this is actually contributing to a bonafide academic outcome for your students." And they said, "Well, it's not. It's just what we've always done." What would it look like if we removed that? And we saw our requests for accommodation in that program area drop precipitously. These are the conversations that we need to have. Why are we doing what we're doing? And what's it accomplishing? And could we do it differently and come to a different outcome? I think these are important conversations that we need to start to have.

SEANNA:
And Latham and Katelyn, I mean, how would that feel for you if you know, as students, if you knew. Because I know both of you have had the good fortune of having some instructors who they're just kind of accessibility minded, right, as you know that's just kind of their special interest. But how do you think that would feel and anyone else who wants to chime in in the chat. I see that there are a couple comments already. How would that feel if you came to class knowing that every instructor had gone through accessibility training or was hired, let's say, on the basis of or partially the basis of having knowledge of accessible teaching practices? What would that mean to you? I mean, imagine.

KATELYN:
I can start. This is actually something that we've talked about quite a bit with the accessibility committee and the sense of like, Well, we can't force faculty to do anything. And there have been things that have been put into place like certain courses and training opportunities or new hires. But all the existing people, it's just they can do it if they want. So yeah, that is. I mean, I actually, several years ago, did a faculty training video as a student perspectives thing talking

about my experiences with instructors that were either accessible or not. Which was a really cool opportunity, and I know that it's something that all new hires have to watch. But, obviously, there are so many instructors that have no desire to do so. So I think knowing. Actually, hang on. Can I pass on to someone else and think about the rest of my thoughts?

SEANNA:
Yeah, yeah. Latham, do you want to chime in on this?

LATHAM:
Yeah. I mean, as you mentioned, I've been very lucky to have in my first year of university instructors that really, for the most part, all were very understanding of this. And I feel like that also might be something that kind of corresponds with the fact that I am in design, which often sees a lot of people with neurodivergence. At least, from my own personal experience, I've seen that. But yeah, I think for other students, you know, I have a friend who's actually in psychology, and we were talking about this panel and different ideas. And she's in psychology at KPU. And she was talking about one thing about how, you know, her classes, often her teachers when they're giving lectures, they will just get up and talk for 90 minutes with no visual references, no stopping in between. And I feel like, you know, as you're talking about, you know, instructors having education, whatever format that comes in about different disabilities, I feel like that would help to inform, you know, their decisions on how they lay out their course material. You know, I feel like I could only imagine, you know, the difficulty I would have if an instructor was teaching with absolutely no reference, whether it be even bullet points of the points that they're covering. Those little things really help at least me and my experience to have something to reference to and to keep myself on track when I have those moments of distraction. So I think it's incredibly important that instructors are educating themselves and look through that lens and have the understanding for all of their students. I think that's just really crucial.

SEANNA:
I just want to go over to the chat. I'm just seeing that Sarah saying, tagging onto that. "It's important that statements of support for accessibility doesn't just become another check box that doesn't get actioned in meaningful ways." And I think that word "meaningful" is really key. Support to make it easier for instructors to make steps in the right direction would be key, technological pedagogy, curricular and programmatic design, and I see that that's getting a lot of support in the chat. I think that when we talk about those changes, that is often the pushback. It's first of all, how are we going to get instructors to do that? But second of all, if they make these choices or if they make these kinds of accessibility changes, will it be a checkbox, like something that they've decided that they'll do or HR has decided that they'll do? I think we really want to be careful about that, or is it meaningful? Is it again, part of that design process where we're trying things, getting feedback, attuning to need, that sort of thing. I think that's one of the ... But I don't think, this is just my own piece, I really don't think that that should be a reason for us to stop to say, well, what if, yeah but, yeah but. I think we really need to experiment with these pieces. Experiment again, that's why this piece moving the legislation

forward, onto feedback mechanisms is so key because we're not just getting feedback for the sake of figuring out what's bad or wrong. We're trying to get feedback to get a sense of what's meaningful so that we can move forward and we can make these kinds of changes. It's easier to make an argument for change based on meaningfulness than it is on some so-called accessibility measure that someone somewhere has said would be a good idea. It's the risk of relying too much on best practices. It does have its place. But I believe at the end of the day, good pedagogy is always going to have that piece around meaningful feedback. Lisa, any thoughts on that, that meaningful feedback piece?

LISA:
Well, a couple of things have come to mind. And just to put it into context for folks, NVIT is a really small institution, like in comparison to a lot of you folks here today. So I don't want to, you know, talk about, you know, oh, just make this change and oh, make that change because it doesn't come, it doesn't come easily when you're talking about these really large institutions. So, you know, it might be my neighbour upstairs that I'm going to go have a conversation with. But, you know, we do have our satellite campus over in Burnaby. So we have that distance, which some folks do have. But we also have all of our in-community folks. And I mean, for folks who might not be familiar with that, when you're looking at our Indigenous communities, we've got internet issues out the Ying yang. Let's be honest. I mean, that might be everywhere. But access is huge, so we really have to be creative. But I think while COVID totally floored us all, it also wowed us all. Look what we can do. Okay? Like, and for me, I remember sitting back thinking, okay, this is really uncomfortable, didn't really enjoy it, but I was like, man, I was socially off the hook for things. I was like, this is great. You know, hybrid came into light, and, you know, we all had to do that switch, and it was hard. And I don't think anyone would say oh that was a breeze. No problem. We did that. No problem. So is shifting to accessibility and being accessible for education purposes. But it's doable, right? It was hard. It was uncomfortable and we strategized and we worked together, and we were able to move through some really good things. So now I'm looking at, hybrid is an option. My goodness. I would have loved that when I was going to school. And then I think about our. So I teach twice a year, say twice a year because that's just really all I'm allowed because you know, I'm full time here already. But I do it for one, very good reason, and that is to keep my foot in the door of what it's like to be a student in that classroom and what it's like to be an instructor. And I'm telling you, I struggle when I think about how do I meet everybody's needs in this moment. Whether that be just our location, whether that might be varying abilities. Whether that's the family dynamics, I know that what we're asking of faculty is not an easy ask, but I also know that it can be done. I really truly believe there is room for this. And I absolutely agree with Kyle when he said when he talked about change and why we do it and why we don't want to do it and all those things. It's going to be uncomfortable. And I think that we just need to keep moving forward and we need to keep having those conversations. Because having accessible teaching practices is going to be paramount to us moving forward. The hiring practices. We partnership with Steps Forward, inclusive education. We put it in our interview questions. You are going to have students who come from an initiative called Steps Forward. These are students who may have developmental disabilities. How do you envision working with these students? What will

inclusion look like for you in your classroom? So we're really taking something that we never thought would have so much influence and it has influenced us to have different conversations in those hiring committees. That way as we're doing that onboarding, we're thinking about those varying dynamics in a classroom in particular. Now, we also have our Indigenous lens. And none of that comes from a place of me me me, it's about community. It's about relationships. I feel like we have a bit of an advantage over here because we're already in that mindset. I also have the Elders down the way from me who will not take a second thought at coming over here and saying, What are you doing over here, girl? And then having a conversation with me about what that looks like for them and how that's made them feel and how that may have impacted a student in a classroom or even a faculty member. We do have to think broader than just the students because we have lots of faculty who have lots of different barriers themselves, and I think sometimes our faculty forget that they might be within this category as well. What are we doing? We're talking about aiding them as well. Sorry, I digress.

SEANNA:
Just imagining, we have an accessibility Elder who comes down the hall and like, what are you doing? Katelyn, did you want to chime in on that?

KATELYN:
I mean, there are so many different points that people have brought up that I'm just like. I keep grinning because I just I'm like, Yes, exactly. But going off of Lisa's point about, you know, seeing the pandemic revealing what is actually possible. That's kind of how I got started with accessibility stuff because there were all of these things that disabled students have been fighting for years, things like recorded lectures and being able to attend virtually and hybrid classes that yeah, we've always been told that they're just not possible or they're not fair to other students. And then the moment they were needed by non-disabled students, it was like, Oh, here you go. Obviously, that doesn't mean it was easy, but very clearly showed what was possible. I have a lot of gratitude for that. I will say it does also feel like some of those things are already being clawed back, which from an accessibility standpoint is devastating. But when it comes to faculty concerns about making all these changes, I think someone in the chat, Cheryl said, "You know, if accessible evaluations are faster and easier to grade, faculty might see time and workload savings." I think that's really the thing. There's so much concern about the energy and time that has to be put in upfront when it comes to, you know, creating accessible spaces, assignments, assessments, teaching approaches. And that overshadows the long-term benefits. So yeah, it's unfortunate that it takes things like a global pandemic to kind of force institutions and faculty to get the ball rolling with those things. But, I think it's really a positive that got those conversations started. And I will continue to be annoying until they continue and are maintained and improved upon.

SEANNA:
I just want to check in. We've only got a couple of minutes left of our panel discussion. So I just want to make sure. It did go by really quickly as we anticipated. So I just wanted to let everyone

in the audience know there are lots of links that have been put in the chat. So please access those, click on them so you have them available because the chat won't be available afterwards. And I saw that there's a request for us to submit any of our, any of our training modules, anything that would be helpful, training, readings, resources. I think that's too much to do on the spot right now with so little time. I'm voluntelling, everyone. If we can put forward a resource list. I know there are resources through the accessibility secretary, through BCcampus. There are other, I know Camosun has resources, KPU certainly has resources, JI. There are lots of resources around. I can compile a list. And forward that along to participants if we can arrange that, Helena. So just to make sure that yeah, again, in the spirit of, you know, having some concrete ways to move forward, you know, let's think about that. So I just wanted to wrap up for our panel. We'll start with us. And then maybe we could throw that out to everyone in the chat. I was just wondering, who is the one person you can have a good accessibility conversation with? I'll start for me, talk to your people in procurement. The folks who are responsible for buying software, buying furniture. The people who buy stuff. It's really good to have a talk with them. There are lots and lots of good people to have talks with. But for me, I think that having a chat with folks in procurement is a really good way of advancing some accessibility moves. Who wants to go next? Who is the one person you would talk with? It's not the only person you would talk with, but who is top of your list, from our panel?

LISA:
I just want to make sure everyone can hear me. I'm just kind of getting some weird little noises. Okay. So for myself, it would be, well, Sue Sterling was our VP of students. And she is currently doing her PhD specifically on Indigenous views of disabilities. And she's always been kind of that I don't want to say level-headed. But I feel like at the same time because we're often. I can be very emotionally driven in my role sometimes and I really have to whether that be frustration or just deeply saddened by some of the things. And when I have a conversation with her, she can help me put it in perspective. What do we need to do? How do we move from the emotion to the action piece of that? I mean, she's doing wonderful great things, but she's not here any more, and it's me. I feel like I'm, I may have to broaden my conversations with folks, but I know that. I know that I'm in a really unique position and I have all different views, kind of, you know, just an arm's length away. So I guess for me, it's just I'm careful about who it is that I have conversations about. You know, with accessibility, everybody has their own kind of invested piece to this. Maybe I'll lean on my panelists more about having those conversations. Really broadening out to all of my other accessibility friends and making sure that I'm not closing the door and receiving the information of where these struggles are, and then I can help bring those back to our campus and back to our committees. Then that way, we can start building that capacity within. Right now, I think it's just a little bit contentious because of all of this push of legislation, and I know there's so many different views about this right now and concerns and feelings and rightfully so, you know, from students right to faculty. So I think building the capacity up so we can feel safe to have the conversations and then, you know, and that includes our Accessibility Committee as well, right? So I tread carefully in this water, but I do know there's lots of different folks that we can lean on to help build up that. So let's go round to, we'll do Latham and Katelyn and finish up with Kyle. We want to make sure that we have

some time for some questions as well. So Latham, who's the. If you're going to have an accessibility conversation tomorrow, who would it be with?

LATHAM:
I would probably say one of my really close friends, Susie. She is in her I think she's going to be entering her third year of psychology, and she's just incredibly supportive and understanding. She has loads of people within her family and other friends that are also neurodivergent. So she's just a really great person to have, you know, these accessibility conversations and also seek support around my own disability. So yeah, she's a really great person to have these in-depth conversations about how systems can be improved and how our education. She, you know, was that person that I talked to about her teacher rambling for 90 minutes. And yeah, she's a really good person to talk to.

SEANNA:
And Katelyn, who's your person? Who is the person you'd talk to about accessibility tomorrow?

KATELYN:
I mean, I'm always down for a good chat with you, Seanna.

SEANNA:
That doesn't count!

KATELYN:
Because, because, you know, I get, I feel like I'm allowed to get fired up, and you appreciate that. But I will also say one person is Dr. Fiona Whittington-Walsh at KPU. She's the lead, well she's a sociology instructor, and then she's also the lead advisor on accessibility, disability, and inclusion. And yeah, I feel like there's a wide spectrum of conversations that can be had with her. Everything from personal struggles to things about accessibility research and advocacy and getting stuff done. Yeah.

SEANNA:
And I see in the chat, Sarah is recommending we talk to the faculty association. Tricia is saying, talk with your teaching and learning centre. Kyle, do you want to round us out and after that, I think we'll have time for a question or two, hopefully.

KYLE:
Thanks. Yeah. Normally, it would be you that I call. As an administrator, I look at this slightly differently, and I reject your framework of one person, and I'm going to use two. The two who I'm having some really interesting and really, I think, formative conversations with right now are Teaching and Learning because of their relationship with faculty. So I think that's a really important conversation and relationship to build. The other is with University General Counsel. As we are moving into effectively a legislated context with regards to accessibility, understanding General Counsel's views on this legislation, our requirements, our compliance,

how we demonstrate that, how we document it, I think it is going to be really critical. So Teaching and Learning and University General Counsel.

SEANNA:
Excellent. All right. Well, that's fantastic. So those are some good starting points, some good conversations to have. And I'd really in the spirit of, you know, working together, improving communication, you know, really pulling together around accessibility. I think this is one of, this is going to be one of the takeaways. So feel free to comment in the chat. And then I think we have some time for questions, do we Helena?

HELENA:
Yes, we do. And I sent you one there in the chat. If you open that, maybe you'll see that. And then I also think that could be the first question, the one that I sent you. Do you want me to read it?

SEANNA: Could you? Otherwise, I'll be scrolling for days,

HELENA:
Yeah, it's hard to manage a chat here. So, the first question is from someone in the audience who is wondering what the panel's thoughts are around student-centred approaches and cultural perspectives. "For example, I have experienced and learned in my research on person centred counselling that specific cultures do not respond well, especially initially to processes where they are asked to take the lead. They expect clearer guidance from the practitioner. I'm wondering if we are doing anything to address intersectionality cases such as these, or if we are allowing these students to fall through the cracks? With the added notion that some students do not have any guiding figures to lean on due to cultural stigma or not having a support network in Canada." Big question.

SEANNA:
Big question. Good question. Yeah. I think the intersectional question is really, really key. Does anyone want to jump in on this? Kyle?

KYLE:
I don't know that I can answer or respond to the full question, but at UFV we've been using something called the Student Ready Campus Framework. "Student Ready" is a brilliant, tiny little book that you can blow through in a good afternoon from Tia McNair et al. I think it's 2016. It's just called "Student-Ready Campus." Okay. And what I think I really appreciate about the "Student-Ready Campus" is that it posits a four pillar framework around developmental, developmental and supportive. Around inclusive, around usable and user-friendly, and around student voice. And when I think about those four pillars, I think those four pillars really create a nice framework to respond to students with any combination of identities, intersectional or not. And it creates an ability and a permission for people within the organization to create

responsive structures to support students. It doesn't, I think we too often say that, oh, students aren't ready when they get to us. But instead, it flips the paradigm and says, if we're admitting these students, we have an obligation to get ready for them and what that would look like.

HELENA:
Wonderful. There's one more question, Seanna, I think we can squeeze in 6 minutes, and that's from Emily Simpson. She's asking if there's any information on inclusive collaborative online platforms to engage with, for example, ratings of Padlet versus Zoom. I'm wondering if we could ask Katelyn and Latham. In your experience as students, are there some apps or platforms that instructors continue using that's not very accessible? Or are there a few that really worked well for you? Again, I recognize it's very individual, but it would be nice to hear from the two of you. I invite the whole audience to add to the chat there if you have some information around apps that's accessible and platforms. Latham?

LATHAM:
I would just say, in my personal experience, at KPU, we use something called BigBlueButton, which just on the basis of that, the platform, it's just not user-centric focused at all. It's very difficult to use in general, I have had teachers that have used Zoom. I don't know if it's through their other accounts that they have with other schools. But in terms of accessibility, I feel that Zoom, there's the ability for captions, so in terms of that, I think that is a really accessible feature. And also just Zoom in general is a much more user-centric focused platform. So yeah. I think at least at KPU from my own experience because I don't know if BigBlueButton has the ability for captions. Maybe Katelyn can speak to that.

KATELYN:
Yeah. I was going to say pretty much the exact same thing. BigBlueButton is not great. And yeah, I really don't know if it has the option of turning on captions. And even if it does, instructors don't seem to know that either. So therefore, they're not making students aware that that's an option.

SEANNA:
That can be a special KPU project for us to follow up on the BigBlueButton drama.

KATELYN:
I think that's really the only app that I've used, but I definitely agree that Zoom definitely has better accessibility. But also KPU generally doesn't use Zoom as a default. It's more often Microsoft Teams, which is okay too.

SEANNA:
This is exactly my reason for saying we should look at procurement before we take on any other apps, any other anything is really and have and I think that can be real capacity building within the institution is to ask those really hard accessibility questions. I've done that a couple of times and people just get really upset. But, you know, it's like, yeah, if you're going to caption things,

if you're going to call it accessible, don't use an overlay. You know, don't have, you know, captioning that really isn't that effective or, you know, just kind of peters out after a while, or, you know, where there's yeah, there's all sorts of, all sorts of pieces. And I think a lot of folks really look at screen readers, you know, like, does it work with a screen reader, and there are a whole raft of ways that these platforms can be inaccessible, a raft of ways of things. I find Padlet to be quite good for myself and with an accessibility eye and other folks have reported that it's very easy to use and intuitive and accessible. Again, another piece to follow up on for sure.

LATHAM:
Can I also add, I saw in the comments section, Emily was just asking, she was being more particular to the collaboration on the platform. I will say at least with BigBlueButton, the collaboration on that with the whiteboard is chaos. It has a million dots of every student that's just flying around. It is just over-stimulating and so distracting. I've worked on the whiteboard on Zoom and I particularly like that. So, I just wanted to get that into answer that question there.

SEANNA: Accessibility standards. Yeah.

HELENA:
Well, we have come to the end of our 90 minutes. Fastest 90 minutes this month, really. I don't know how that happens, Seanna, but thank you for leading everyone in this wonderful conversation. Thank you to each of the panelists for your valuable contribution. I really want to encourage our audience to take this conversation further. Take it into the hallways of the post-secondary institution that you're at. Please talk to your Teaching and Learning Centre. Recently we had the BCTLC AGM. These leaders really, they care about students, they care about you as faculty members to support you. Really take this conversation today. I consider it just a starting point. Take it out into the hallways, and feel free to reach back to me afterwards. If you have follow up questions, if you have ideas for further talks about this specific topic, please reach out. My email is hprins@bccampus. I'll put it in a chat as well. But we are out of time. Please keep your eyes open for the recording that's captured next week. We'll add the resources that were shared today. And also we have an Accessibility Bytes 2.0 series coming out, so we'll put the registration link in the recording when we send it to hope to see you there. Thank you, everyone. Seanna, a final word?

SEANNA:
I just want to say thank you so much to the panelists. Thank you, everyone, for putting this together with me, thinking through questions. Thank you for your wonderful, wonderful conversations over the years. I appreciate you so much. You've pushed my thinking on accessibility forward. It's an absolute privilege to have this panel today. Thank you Helena and BCcampus for sponsoring this and supporting me in supporting this. It's just been, yeah, this is the stuff. This is what we want. These are the conversations we want. Go forth and converse and create and make wonderful accessibility magic.