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NEW ZEALAND

# Online Teaching Archetypes in a Postgraduate, Research-intensive University Context



# Agenda

- Why this study
- Method
- Participants
- The Archetypes
- Next steps



# Why this study

- Director, Learning and Teaching Unit FMHS
- Research-intensive university (RIU)
- Teaching is resourced and viewed differently
- I like this
- It can be maddening
- Online learning's ascendancy is shaking things up in RIUs

# Method



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- Exploratory qualitative pilot study
- Inclusion criteria: Academics who have taught at least one course entirely online at a RIU
- Exclusion criteria: only having taught F2F or blended courses (with residential or workshop component, mandatory or optional)
- One hour semi-structured interview
- Naturalistically coded using Atlas.ti (2019) software

# Research questions



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What are the experiences of affiliated staff with online postgraduate university teaching?

To what extent are their online teaching experiences qualitatively different to face-to-face teaching?



# Participants (n=5)

- All had five or more years of university teaching
- Roles:
  - Lecturer/Assistant Professor
  - Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer
  - Academic Head/Director
  - Professor
- Three men, two women

# The Archetypes



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- Evangelist: views online learning as the future of best teaching practice, citing both innovation and access as main drivers
- Pragmatist: sees access opportunities from online learning as important, but finds some trade-offs in terms of teaching presence troubling
- Sceptic: sees online learning only appropriate for a small segment of university students for whom physical attendance is an impossibility: otherwise teaching should be delivered face-to-face.

# Evangelist



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I was responsible to create a course on research methodology which I think was very interesting to do it on the web. And in my mind, I think there is a lot of qualities in web-based curriculum or process which I think makes it better than face-to-face teachings.

The good things with it is that people have to write and when they write – and I have written about this – I think if you think about sort of understanding something, it is a question of interpretation of something and it is a dialectic between if you have a lecture and someone says something and someone interpreted it through their own pre-understanding



# Pragmatist



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It is different I guess ... if we have a tech space in [our programme] and if you have a telephone meeting or a video meeting I guess it would be different, but I haven't worked with that at all.

And in the tech space I would say...you can correct yourself or you can discover something, you don't rush into it.

And then I would also say don't post things too quickly, but to maybe write them somewhere else and then think a little about them and then you can post them

# Sceptic



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But despite my scepticism, of course I think – let's say about this Masters programme.

We couldn't have this programme unless it was online and by having it online we can get something we couldn't get otherwise.

We couldn't have the interaction between students from all over the world which is something valuable in itself for the students because you have to communicate in a second language for many of them, but with people from different locations.

# Implications



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- All academic staff who are keen to teach well regardless of archetype
- All participants described teaching practice that makes a distinct and important contribution to their university's programmes
- Archetypes do not seem to impact commitment to teaching well online: commitment to quality is overriding principle

# Questions?



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[j.egan@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.egan@auckland.ac.nz)