

# Motivating Minds Across Cultures

Inspiring lifelong learners

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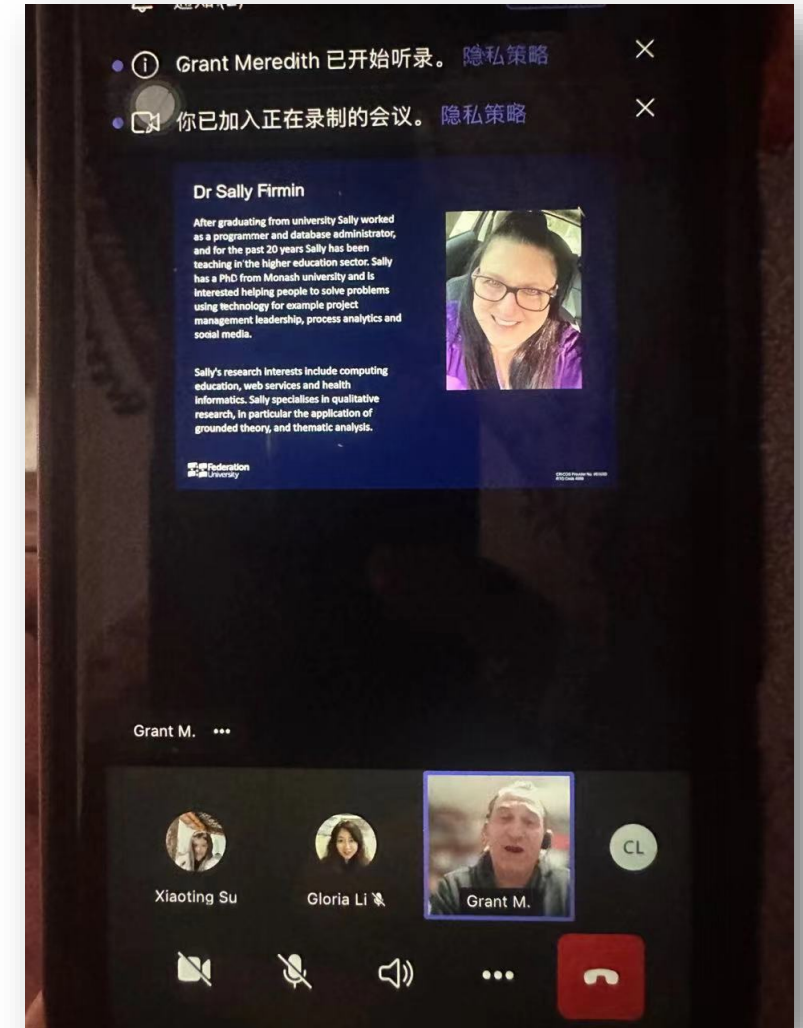
# Today's presentation

- The importance of student motivation
- The results of a 1<sup>st</sup> contact study
- An interesting teaching philosophy



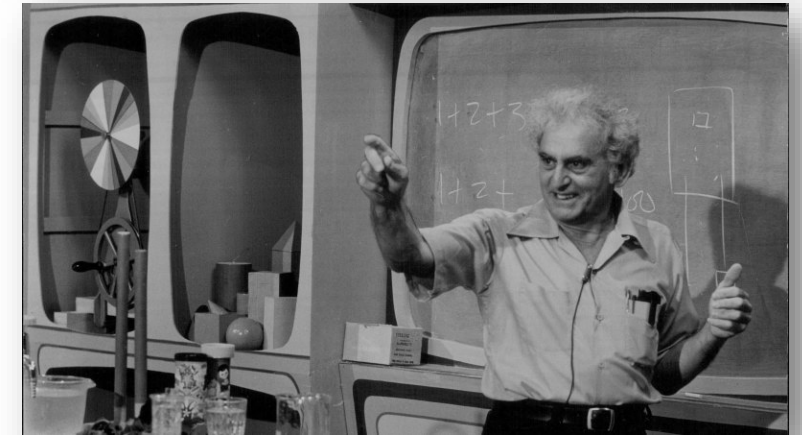
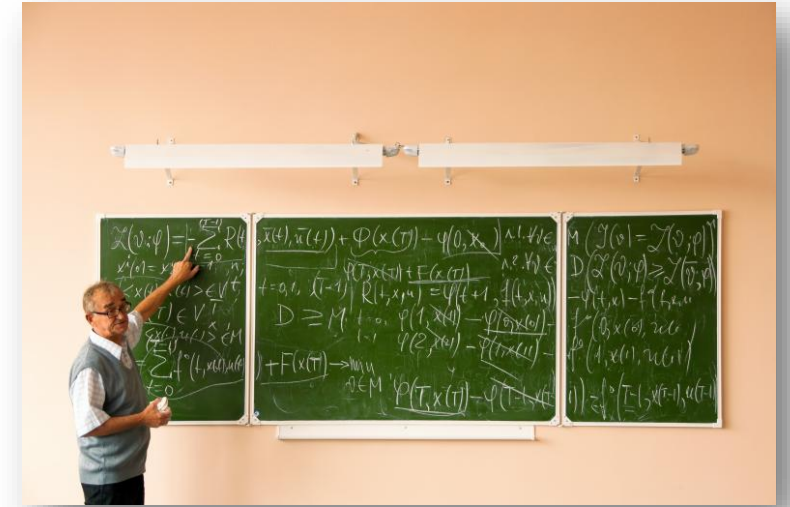
# Offshore students

- In IT we have two offshore Chinese partners
  - Shaoguan University (SGU)
  - Hebei University of Science and Technology (HUST)
    - Joint Institute: HeBUST FedUni Information Engineering Institute
- We need to constantly explore teaching techniques and engagement methods
- COVID has forced almost 3 years of online learning offshore



# The responsibility of a lecturer?

- The general idea:
  - Focused on a course
  - Lecturing/teaching
  - Assessment and feedback
- The reality (responsibility)
  - A guide and mentor
  - Explores knowledge connections between courses
  - Encourage lifelong learning
  - Help produce good human beings





# Considerations for offshore



# Sage on stage

- Broadly - students are used to “Sage on stage” teaching style
  - Common “pedagogy” in China
- Students listen and take notes
- Students hesitant to ask or answer questions out loud
- Students are used to reciting the words of the sage
  - Can blur academic misconduct





# Get to know your students

- Do not be shy of socialising
- Integrate into campus life
- Students will value the interaction
  - Chance to speak English
  - Cultural hospitality
  - Learn about different culture
- Respect lines are not blurred
- Tell them about Australia & your life
  - Encourage articulation!



# Power distance/gap

- Western teaching style often has a closer power gap than Eastern
  - FedUni is known for close student interactions & support
- Students will need to adjust to our style of teaching
  - More conversational style teaching
    - And use of humour (ease it in)
  - We encourage and value questioning
  - We often mix more with students outside class times
  - Varied forms of teaching per lecturer
  - Use internationalised examples





# Language

- Mixed levels of English competencies
  - Conversational, written, comprehension etc
- Can be mentally taxing on a student and staff
  - Encourage short breaks and mixed teaching modes
- Many students transcribe notes
  - Before, during and after classes
  - May explain why they can be tired in the mornings
  - In class often using web-based translation tools





# Language cont.

- Avoid slang and colloquialisms
  - At times though, teach them and share
- When marking, focus on spelling & grammar, but look beyond for meaning and understanding



# Competing student factors

- Other University classes & requirements
  - Compulsory classes outside of our degrees
  - Sporting commitments
  - Festivals
  - Local culture
    - Often the afternoon nap is highly valued
- Avoiding the canteen rush



# Experts on hand?

- Lecturers often ask me who to ask at University for assistance for international teaching?
- My answer:
  - Look in a mirror!
  - You are the expert!
- Look towards those who have taught before
- Form Communities of Practice
  - Share, discuss, trial and be brave



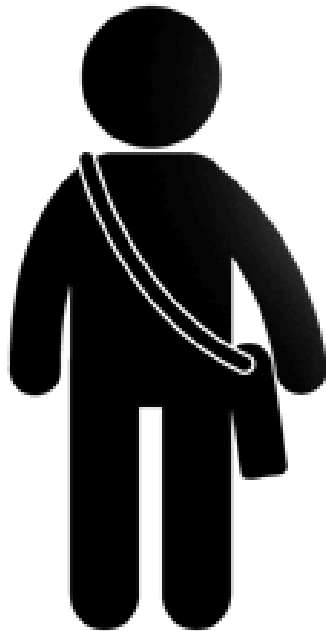


# A little study



# Demographics

- A survey of SGU students (after results processing)
- All of whom I was the first FedUni lecturer contact
- In some cases their first Westerner contact



**n=24**

**22 males and 2 females responded**

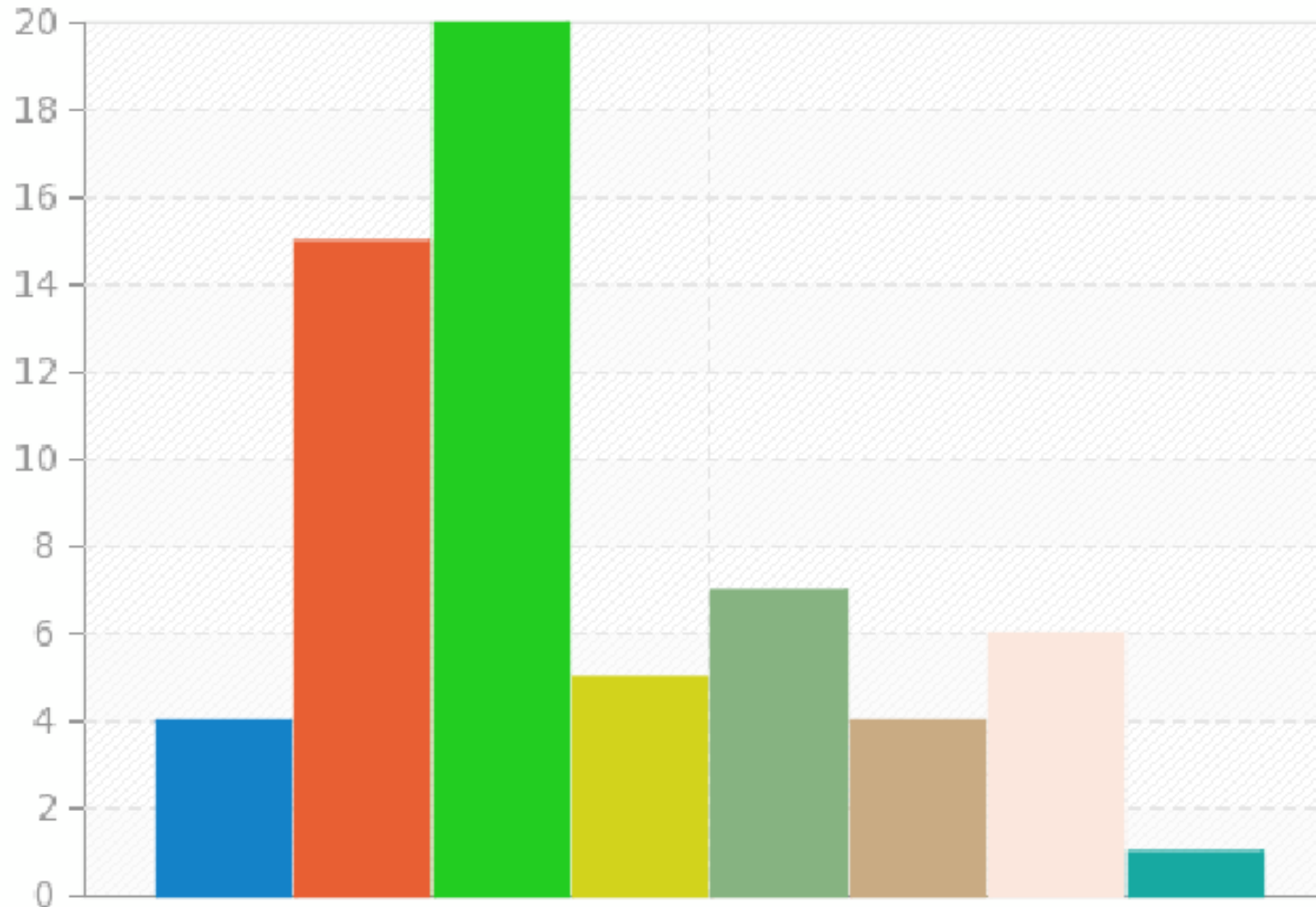
**3 students were working part-time & studying full-time**

**All students were aged 20 years or older**

**All 24 students lived in university residences**

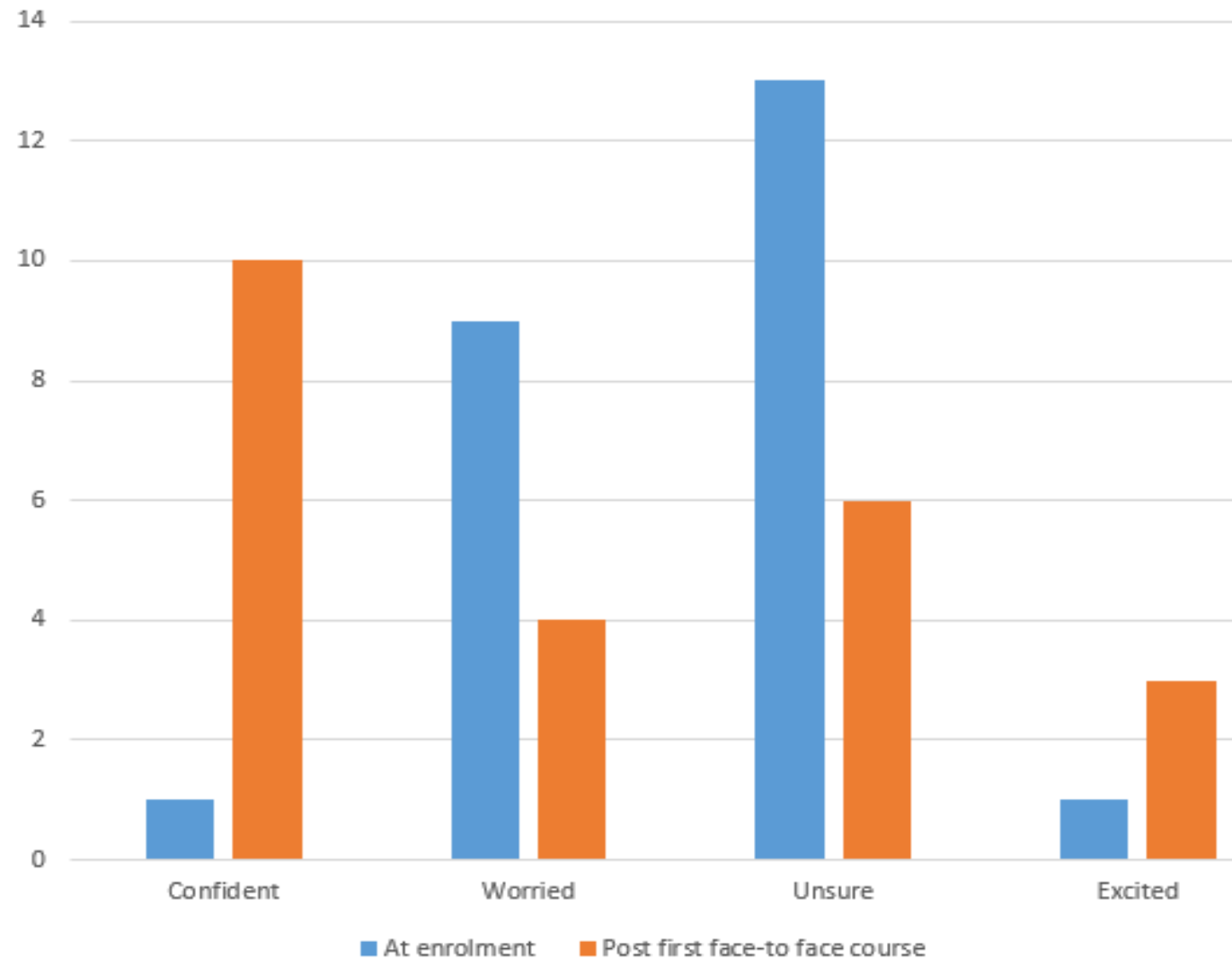


# Reasons for studying IT?



- I enjoy working with computers (4)
- I want to be an IT professional (15)
- Parents and/or friends feel it is a good idea (20)
- Advice from Careers teacher/Other (5)
- Eventually I want to study in Ballarat (7)
- Eventually I want to study abroad (not in Ballarat) (4)
- I like the Federation University Australia's reputation (6)
- Other (please specify) (1)

# Feelings of progress



# How were they taught differently?

## Differences:

- More approachable, personal and friendlier than their usual teachers
- Liked my use of humour
- Found my teaching materials less confined to a single text
- Like that I used real life examples and experiences to assist with understanding of taught concepts



# Challenging factors

## My accent and speaking pace

- Many watch American media

## Having to learn and engage purely in English

- Conversational English skills were mixed
- Lack of frequent practise opportunities.

## Pace of block mode learning



# English skills

- English skills improved in a short time
  - Encouraging more study focus with other courses
  - Possibly influenced neglect of other courses

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. Before taking a FedUni course my overall English skills were poor	8	15	1		
13. After taking a FedUni course my overall English skills greatly improved	9	12	3		
18. My English conversation skills did not improve after being taught by a foreign teacher				17	7
12. Succeeding in understanding a course fully taught in English encouraged me to study harder at my other SGU courses	5	16	3		
14. Having to study a course in English forced me to neglect my SGU courses		7	12	5	



# Teaching style

- Generally liked and were satisfied with how they were taught

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20. I liked the manner in which the foreign teacher taught me	13	11			
21. I was satisfied with the foreign teacher's teaching style	12	12		1	
24. The foreign teachers' style of teaching helped me to understand taught concepts	5	18	1		

# Study habits

- Study habits changed & perhaps improved
- Encouraged to attend classes and interact with a foreign teacher

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16. After taking a FedUni course my overall study skills were greatly improved	7	16	1		
17. Being taught by a foreign teacher encouraged me to not miss their classes	13	11			
19. Being able to talk to a foreign teacher encouraged me not to miss their classes	6	18			

# Culture

- Felt more appreciation for different cultures
- More encouraged to study abroad in the future

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I now appreciate different cultures more after starting a FedUni degree	10	13	1		
15. After taking a FedUni degree I feel encouraged to study abroad in the future	13	10		1	

# My pedagogy?

- Do I use a pedagogy?
  - Constructivism, behaviourism, meaning making etc, etc
  - Perhaps a flexible mixture of?
- No, I use a philosophy
  - An attitude
  - A guiding principle



# E's (Ease) Learning philosophy





# Thank you for listening

