CLC Reflective Dialogue Session

It was the best of times,
it was the worst of times,
it was the age of wisdom,
it was the age of foolishness,
it was the epoch of belief,
it was the epoch of incredulity,
it was the season of Light,
it was the season of Darkness,
it was the spring of hope,
it was the winter of despair …(Dickens 1859:1).

Ms Arthi Ramrung (FYE CLC Convener), Dr Danny Fontaine (FYE CLC Convener) and Dr Rosaline Govender (PD CLC Convener) facilitated the discussion on **Gains and Losses during Emergency Remote Teaching during COVID 19** at the **HELTASA 2020 Conference CLC's Reflective Dialogue session** entitled, **From the year that was, to the year to come** on 2 December 2020.

Delegates were asked to reflect on the Gains and Losses from a macro to a meso level. Please see the responses in the table below.

1. National level	
Gains	- More sharing of resources/practices/insights than before? - More sharing across institutions - Discovering our creativity and ways to improvise - Opportunities to attend conferences worldwide (online) and meet like-minded colleagues - Greater collaboration (worldwide) - A better (deeper) understanding of the reality at institutions other than our own. Where reality refers to the lived reality of students, the resource reality at institutions, the reality of COVID at other institutions, and the reality of the Teaching and Learning project at other institutions. - Acknowledging that everything we do does not have to be perfect as long as it benefits the students - New ways of working and truly using technology to work effectively. No chance to avoid technology! It was use it or be left out (Institutional and Personal), Learning to trust that people can work from anywhere not only under your noses) - Learnt more digital skills - So much has changed while still remaining the same. The gains however are numerous… For one, we have brought the inequities to the fore. Now we need to take action - National level, more awareness of what matters in education - connection care and collaboration. - Self - co-authoring with others across institutions - Opportunities of development, opportunities of teaching and developing students - Lecturers have been able to learn and do things that hitherto they couldn't - The closure of schools - Cross institutional collaboration through sharing of resources

Losses	• Bringing into even sharper relief the inequity among institutions, and the inequality among students (I'm not sure this is a loss, but I'm not sure it is a gain, either. It just is). • Funding - some institutions have been hit with funding losses as a result of changes/realities of COVID. • Human touch

2. Institutional level

Gains	• A realisation (and actioning) of things that folks thought could not be done - online or otherwise - having been done now (e.g., online/recording of lectures). • Quicker and more widespread rollout of technologies to assist the online offerings needed (e.g., HR, teaching, learning) at institutions. • More empathy and caring from lecturers. More awareness and real understanding of students' lived realities. • Lecturer support enhanced • Innovation into teaching and learning • Lots of support from our institutions (Rhodes University) • More working across the traditional faculty silos at UCT. • More collaborations between faculties • Training on online learning and asynchronous teaching • More innovative ways of discourse and teaching online were introduced, with self-learning • We noted the importance of student counseling or emotional support for students and even for staff • Higher productivity and happier staff because they worked from home • Challenge to status quo of policing staff • Better thinking/innovation around assessment practices • More collegial support gained
Losses	• Of students (very tangible) - many vulnerable students simply could not engage with online learning (for a variety of different reasons). • Time - for individuals as individuals and collectively - too many meetings, too much happening outside of "traditional" working hours. And, a loss of time, too, for things such as Orientation for incoming first year students (including postgraduate students) in 2021. • Holding onto the bigger picture/overall goals of something; the result is many smaller groups/committees of people working together on things (say for the incoming Class of 2021) that, at times, do not "talk to each other" (i.e., working past each other).

	- Plagiarism during take home examinations - Academic time: All programmes were delayed and now faced with extended academic year

3. Teaching experiences /Academic Development (your own practice)

Gains	- A re-thinking/re-invigorating of teaching practice and pedagogy. Trying new things. Being comfortable with both things that work well and things that don't (learning much from mistakes and failure). - Increased inter-institutional collaboration with colleagues - Developing skills - Reduced travel time to work (home office) - Re-skilling for the ERT/Online environment - Improved usage of Course Management Systems - Improved course material and lesson plans (CMS) - Being reminded that pedagogy and technology should go hand-in hand - Trying out new things, now I can use Camtasia :) - Better time management - Opportunity to fully utilise the online approaches I developed pre-COVID-19 - Using various social media technology for teaching - More courageous conversations with colleagues - Happier children as mum was in the vicinity. I could balance my time and my life. I was happier and more productive because of this. I can adapt! - Opportunity to explore various online teaching approaches; importance of being there for my students
Losses	- My sanity! :-) - Increased workload - Research activities - Sense of connection with colleagues and students - My self-censure mechanisms, I realised I have to step up and take control of the situation (also a gain) - Contact and collegiality with colleagues - Face-to-face interactions with students and being able to "read" students in classes (e.g., body language) - Identity crisis - supporting others took priority compared to self as academic initially - had to relearn to balance

	- Exhaustion / cognitive overload - Challenges with the use of social media - Assessment has been challenging and there were signs that students were colluding "Groundhog day experience" - though it got better with time - Drained out for working uncontrolled hours- but get adjusted with time. - Academic isolation