



University of the  
Sunshine Coast  
Queensland, Australia

CRICOS Provider Number: 01595D

# BUddi

## Business drop in

Investigating the impact of a three  
-way collaborative support model  
on the student experience.

By Johanna Einfalt & Janet Turley





# University of the Sunshine Coast Queensland, Australia

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# The Context



- Opened in 1996
- More than 140 undergraduate and postgraduate study programs
- 700 staff members

2012 – over 8000 students

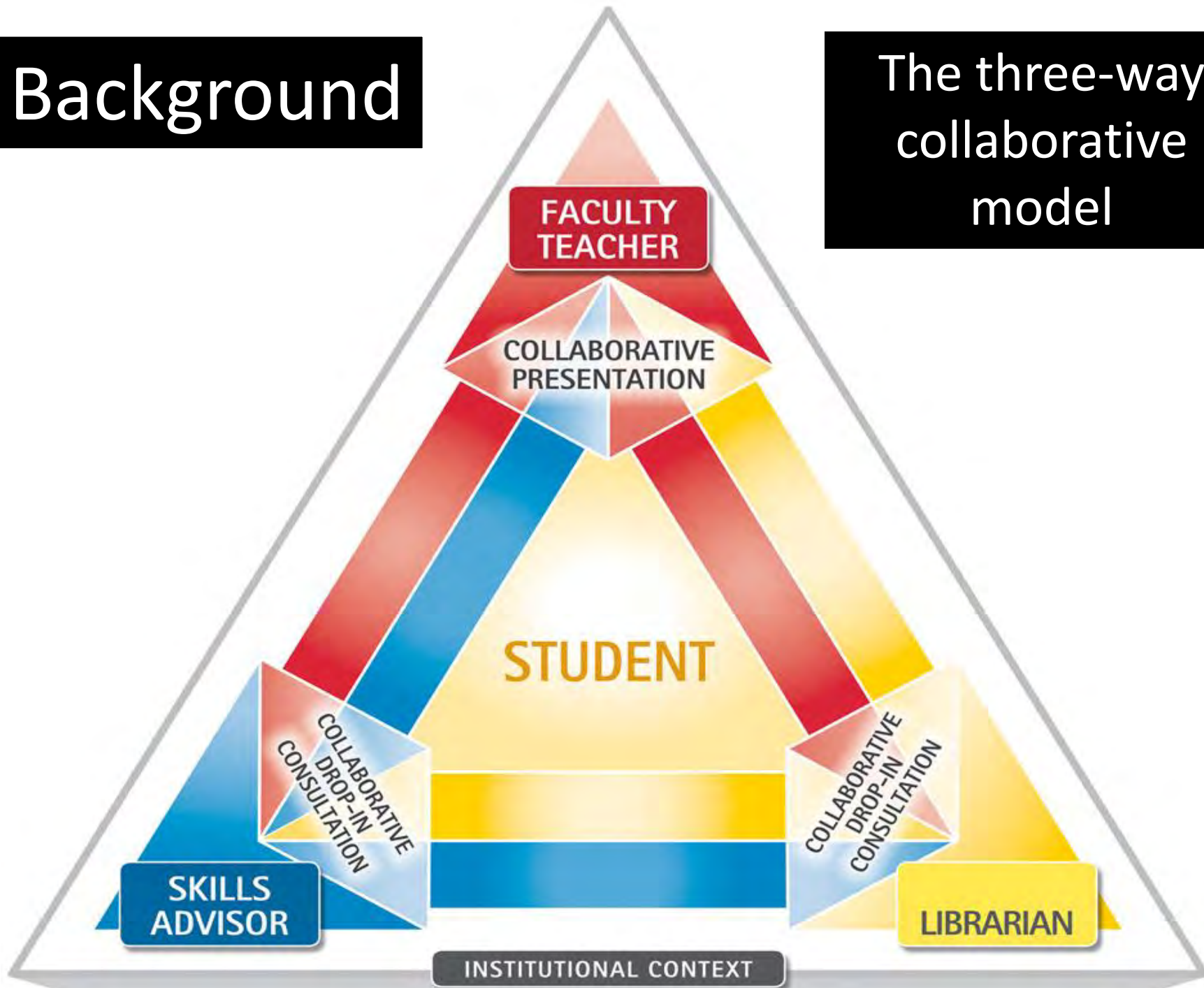
- Permanent residents of the Sunshine Coast - 49%
- First in family to attend university - 49%
- International students (61 countries represented) - 10%



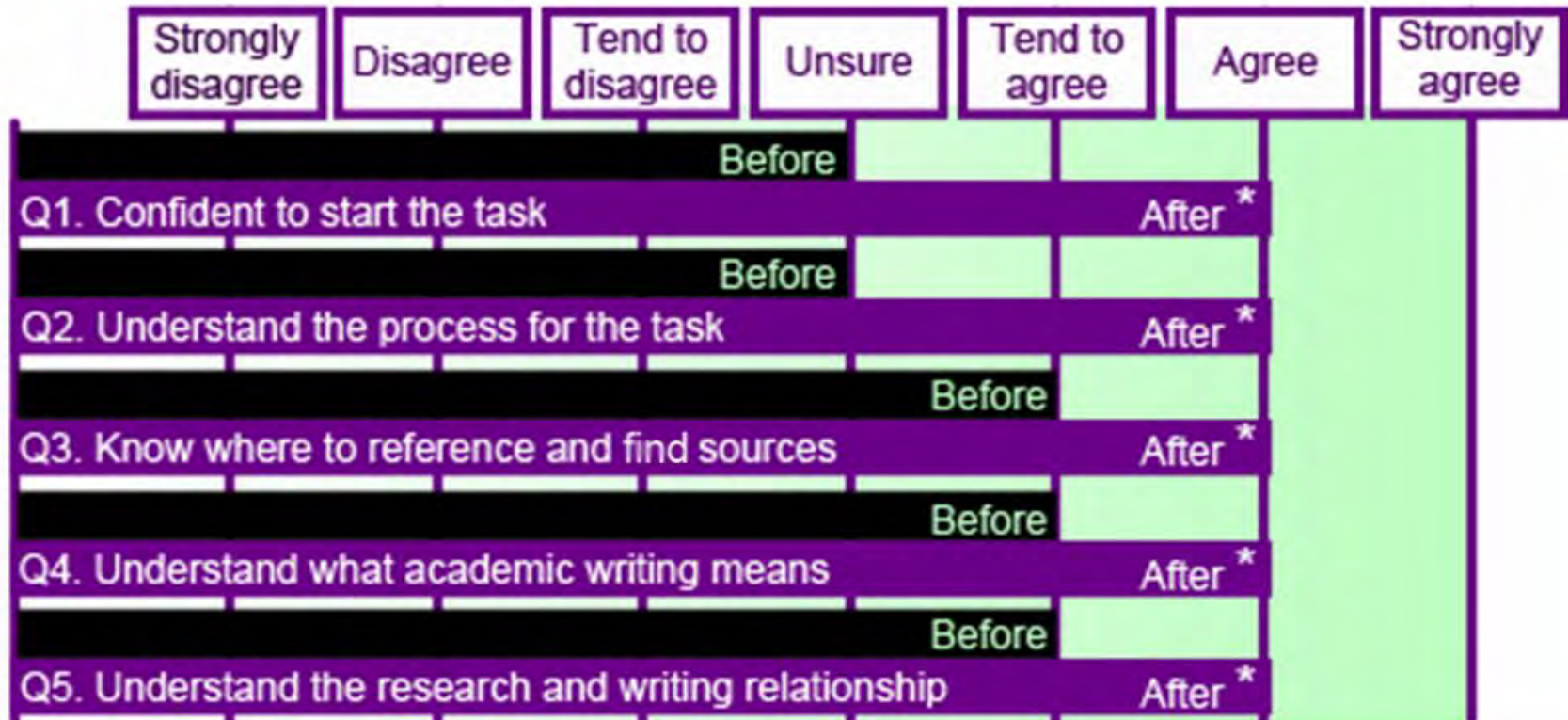
Campus

# Background

# The three-way collaborative model



# From model to action: an intervention project (2009)



## Survey Findings

Student respondents (n = 651) reported significant improvement in all questions \* Using the  $p < 0.001$  Wilcoxon Test for statistical significance.

# What is Budi?

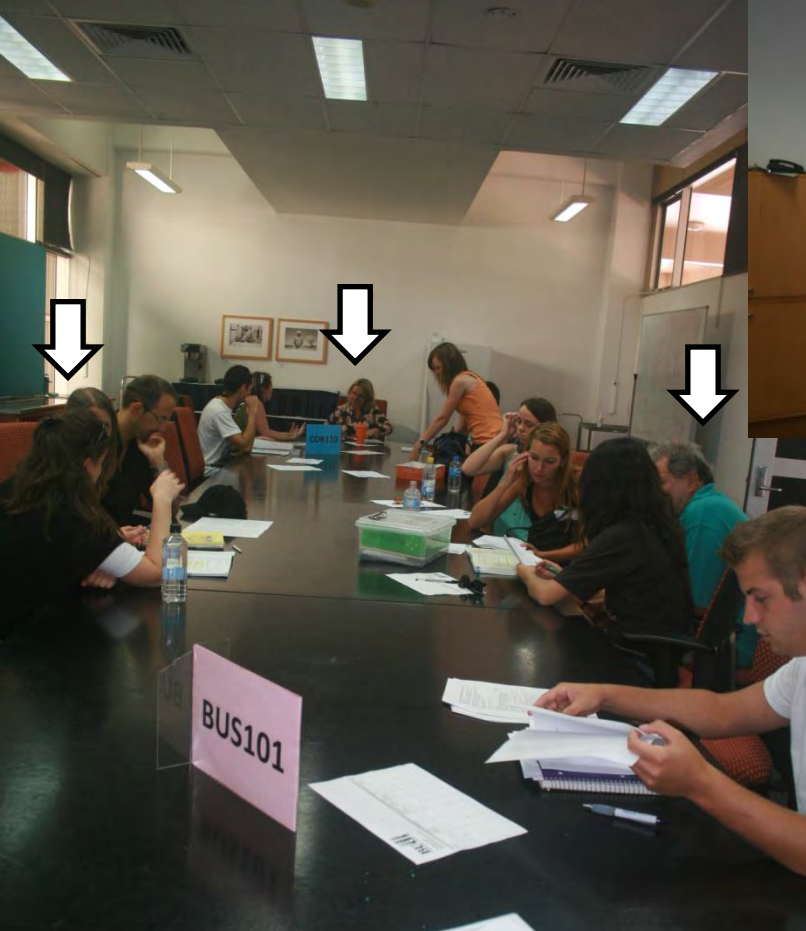
## **It is an informal 'safe' space where students can:**

- Gain assessment advice from skills experts – Course Coordinators or/and tutors, a Librarian, an Academic Skills Advisor, a Counsellor etc.
- Compare and contrast with each other and give guidance – student 'mentor'.
- Look at assessment samples and ask questions about these.
- Generate ideas and determine if they are on the right track.
- Connect with peers at different stages of the assessment process.
- Plan their future – Faculty Administration , Careers etc.

## **It is an informal space where staff can:**

- Enhance their professional development through the transfer of information and discussion.
- Offer group and individual consultation times and mini lectures.
- Detect at-risk students.







# Promoting the drop-ins

at lectures /tutorials, on Blackboard and the website.

<http://www.usc.edu.au/study/support-and-services/academic-support/welcome-to-HEIdi-health-education-information-drop-in.htm>

2012 Semester 1, COR109, Communication and Thought Announcements

**COR109 Communication and Thought**

**Help with:**  
Assignment writing  
Finding resources  
Finding journal articles  
Referencing  
Writing style  
Assignment structure  
Study/Life balance

**Wedsdays 2-4pm at the Uni Club**

**Growth in numbers**  
2008 = 28 attendees  
2011 = 614 attendees

Posted by: Gregory Nast  
Posted to: 2012 Semester 1, COR109, Communication and Thought

# Evaluating BUdi

- Comments from a focus group and online surveys (n = 98) 2010 & 2011
- Assessment results for the core course COR 110 (56% of users) 2009-11

## Findings & Themes

- 25% had not used any other form of support or teacher consultation
- 40% male attendance (36:66 at USC)
- Raising student awareness about the research and writing process
- Promotes peer-to-peer learning and activity
- Builds confidence and self-management – a safe, non-threatening space
- Attracts a diverse range of students.

# Student Comments

'BUdi is solely responsible for instilling in me the belief that I could succeed at University. For someone with my disorder staff ensured that I found a mode that suited me best. BUdi was my favourite. I would just sit in Budi and listen to other students get help and learn. That gave my overloaded brain clarity. On numerous occasions I spoke to the two ladies who offered invaluable advice on how to research the databases and reference my work. This advice helped in every course. The confidence instilled in me was the driving force in generating my self belief that I could work and study.'

***Student with ADHD who gained 6 Distinctions & 2 Credits in his first year, 2010.***

'I completed my Bachelor in Commerce in 2011, and was successful in gaining a Faculty of Business Medal for my Academic achievement. As a mature age student, who had never been exposed to university before, I was concerned about my ability to optimise search methods for sources, structure assignments and write an Academic assessment. Through their lectures and the BUdi service, Janet and Johanna addressed my concerns...their advice and support were critical factors in the development of my confidence in my own ability, which then allowed me to move on to become successful at university and gain employment.'

***Thank you letter received from Grahame Miller, a graduand that gained employment this year on the Sunshine Coast.***

'BUdi has been a beacon of light for me after returning to formal tertiary education. It is convenient, no booking, and the support writing, referencing and tutor/lecturer expertise - is all in one convenient and accessible location. I would recommend BUdi to any student, new or old to academic learning, the friendly and warm atmosphere is delightful too.

***Email from Lisa who is in a wheelchair and uses a touch tablet to communicate. She has attended BUdi in 2011 & 2012 for support on several subjects.***

# Assessment task performance for COR 110 students over 3 years ANOVA dataset 2009-2011

Mean scores for assessment were consistently higher in students who had attended BUdi compared to those who had not attended:

- Attend BUdi mean 76 (DN)
- Didn't attend BUdi mean 65 (CR)

ANOVA (one-way) results:

**2009** S1:  $F(443,1) = 4.34, p = 0.04^*$ ;

**2010** S1:  $F(450,1) = 19.05, p = 0.000^{**}$ ; S2:  $F(402,1) = 16.00, p = 0.000^{**}$

**2011** S1:  $F(547,1) = 19.85, p = 0.000^{**}$ ; S2:  $F(425,1) = 16.04, p = 0.000^{**}$

**\* Results significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* Results significant at  $p < 0.00$ .**

# Discussion points

- **What is the potential and value of this model in terms of management and improving the student experience?**
- **Compare this model to other known practices and comment on any potential adaptations.**

Einfalt, J., & Turley, J. (2009). Engaging first year students in skill development: A three-way collaborative model in action. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, 3(2), 106–116.

15TH INTERNATIONAL  
**FYHE**  
CONFERENCE 2012



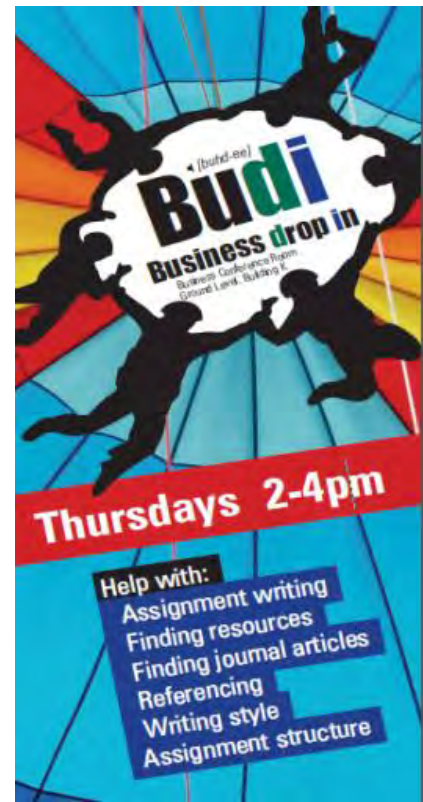
e-JBEST



Einfalt, J., & Turley, J. (2009). Developing a three-way collaborative model to promote first year engagement and skill support. *E-Journal of Business Education & Scholarship of Teaching*, 3(2), 41–48.

# Other observations

- Staff professional development and relationships are promoted.
- The initiative has been replicated in other faculty programs.
- Support elements are being extended to incorporate other aspects, such as mentors, counsellors and careers advice.
- Further research is planned to look at the impact on student well-being and socialisation.



## Limitations

- Securing an appropriate space.
- Managing waiting times – developing the 'BUdi' culture.
- Providing an adequate number of subject specialists.
- Offering BUdi only once a week.
- No on-line equivalent.
- Size of the University?
- Ensuring staff buy-in - EDdi, SCINdi, PSYdi.

## Next Steps

- PASSdi, HEIdi, CREdi, TPP, EMBA drop-in etc.
- Faculty/Uni support – promotional materials, payment of tutors, greeter, donations to mentors etc.
- On-line BUdi via Blackboard.
- Research/grant into how and why the BUdi programme benefits staff and students.





**BUDI** is an informal  
Business Information drop in  
space where students can:



- Gain advice from skills experts
- Compare and contrast with others and give guidance
- Look at assessment samples and ask questions about these
- Generate ideas and determine if they are on the right track
- Connect with peers at throughout the assessment writing process.