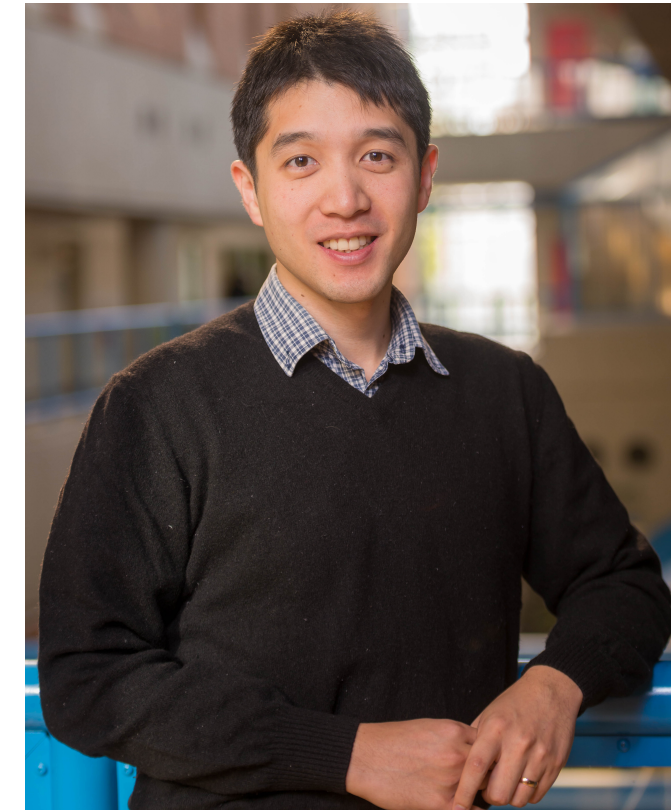


PSYC 217- Belonging & Wellbeing in Undergraduate Psychology Courses

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Faculty lead – Ben Cheung

Through innovative projects, Ben strives to provide his students with opportunities to get involved, make connections, and build community with one another during their time here at UBC.



In the literature

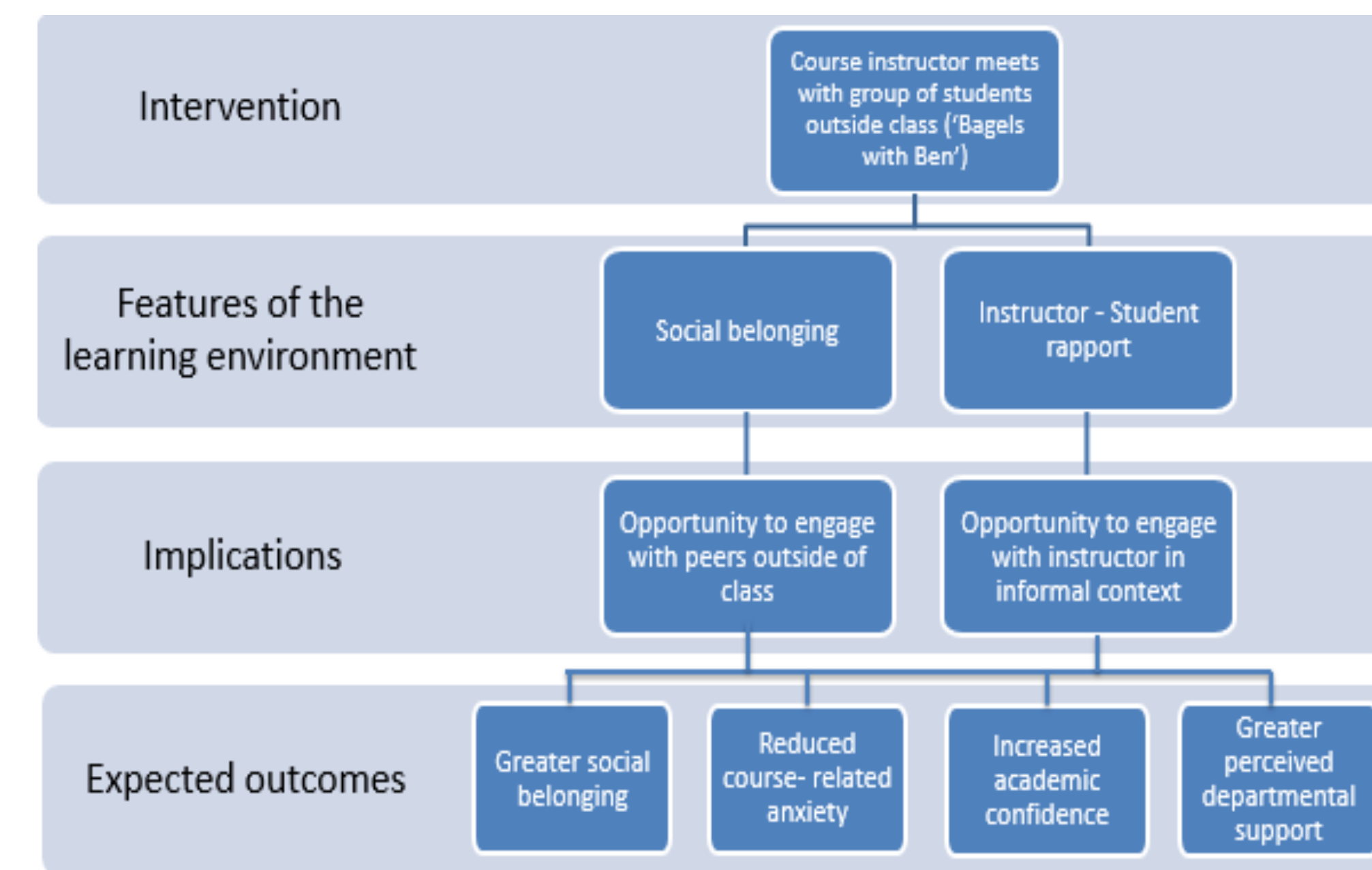
- Among post-secondary populations, a sense of belonging has been positively associated with higher levels of drive, motivation, engagement and academic self-efficacy (Freeman, Anderman & Jensen, 2007)
- Instructor encouragement of student participation and interaction, as well as students' perceptions of their instructor's warmth and organization, are positively linked to students' motivation and achievement (Freeman, Anderman & Jensen, 2007; Patrick et al., 2001)
- Instructor rapport has also positively associated with decreased student anxiety (Allen & Kern, 2017; Creasy, Jarvis & Knapcik, 2009)



Our research question

This study was guided by the following research question: **How do interactions with instructors outside of class affect students' perceptions of (1) belonging, (2) academic confidence, (3) departmental support, and (4) academic anxiety?**

Educational strategy



Evaluation

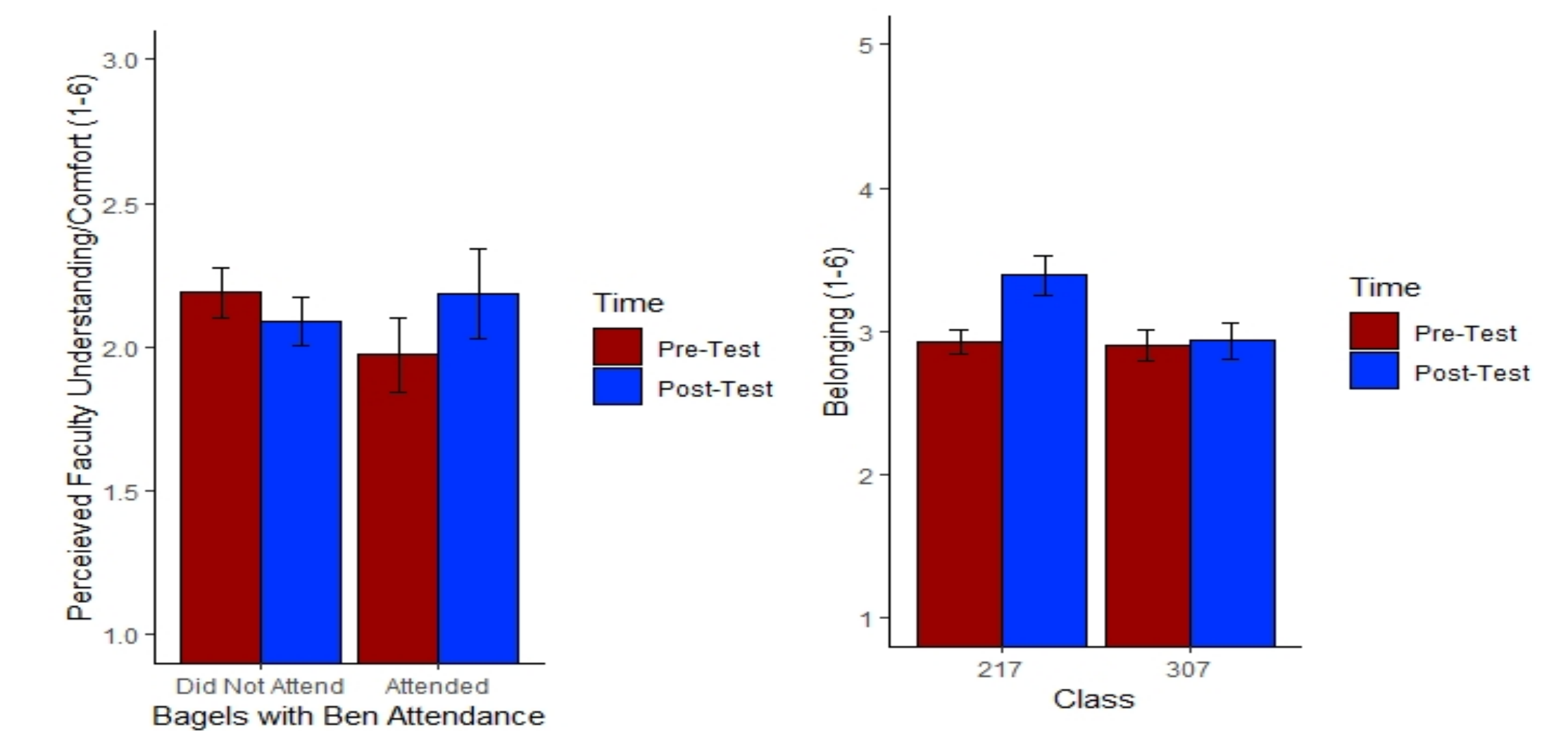
All students were invited to complete surveys at the start and end of the term that focused on sense of belonging, anxiety, academic confidence, and departmental support.

The surveys included items from:

- The Undergraduate Experience Survey (UBC, 2018)
- The Sense of Belonging Scale (Tovar & Simon, 2010)
- Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990)
- Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2009)

For each session, the instructor kept attendance and included a description of the nature of the conversations with students that was then coded thematically.

Preliminary findings



- Students who attended Bagels with Ben rated UBC faculty as being more understanding and comforting at the end of the term than at the beginning, while students who did not attend gave lower ratings at the end.
- Students in a section in which the instructor guided the conversation towards academic topics (PSYC 217) showed improved ratings of belonging at the end of the term, while students who participated in non-guided discussion (PSYC 307) did not.

Next steps

- Create discussion guides that could be shared with faculty across the university seeking to implement a similar educational intervention. Discussion guide topics could include: making connections (e.g., connecting real world observations or experiences with class content), group work (e.g., establish expectations for meeting, responding to emails, action plans, anticipating conflict), mental health.



Acknowledgement

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