



APT 2021

19th Academic Practice and Technology Conference (APT2021)
Co-hosted online by the London School of Economics & Political Science,
Imperial College London and University College London.
Friday 2nd July 2021

Session Start Time	14:20
Breakout Room	4
Title of Abstract:	Developing an online community for a distance learning course in law
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Sara Thornes Rebecca Oglethorpe
Institution	Leeds Beckett University
Format	Case study
Abstract	<p>In this case study we discuss the development of an online course community for a postgraduate distance learning course in Law. The course has a diverse student body - in terms of age, geographic location, personal and professional circumstances, prior experience of the subject and length of time out of formal education. These differences, combined with multiple intakes and varied study pathways led to students feeling isolated. They found it hard to connect with others and became reliant on interactions with module instructors to feel 'seen'.</p> <p>In 2018/19, student feedback expressed dissatisfaction and anxiety at the lack of opportunity for interaction with others. One student commented: "I would request that you don't forget us distance learners ... you are without a window into our efforts and activities."</p> <p>There was a clear need to address these concerns and as a result in September 2019 we introduced a new course community using the Microsoft Teams platform.</p> <p>We will discuss the highlights and challenges of developing the community; share feedback received from students and staff through both formal and informal channels; and describe the importance to us of providing a safe space to establish both student and instructor social presence.</p>

Session Description

Introduction

The Postgraduate Diploma in Law distance learning course launched in September 2017. The issues we faced in the early years of this course and have worked hard to overcome, demonstrate clear ties to the conference themes of both Staff and student experience and Building new communities and developing new identities.

The course can be studied full or part-time, as a PG diploma or a masters, starting in either September or January. In the first year, the course grew from seven to over one hundred students around the world. The sudden growth in student numbers created increased pressure for tutors. The Course Director was inundated with administrative tasks and beyond operational activities, there was little time for community building.

We found ourselves facing issues common to distance learning courses - limited student engagement, low (perceived and actual) participation from instructors and student feelings of isolation and detachment - all of which negatively impact student satisfaction and retention (Brown, 2001; Paquette, 2016; Richardson & Lowenthal, 2017).

We implemented several strategies to improve this situation for the 2019/20 academic year, the most significant being the introduction of a course community.

Rationale

A successful online community can help to reduce the impact of the issues described above by providing a safe space for students to establish themselves as real people, where they can connect with and support each other. From this, an inclusive and understanding environment is established, promoting discourse between students, and their instructors (Aragon, 2003; Paquette, 2016; Shea et al., 2005). Of course, it is not enough to simply build a space and say, "let them come." The role of the instructor in leading by example; demonstrating positive behaviours such as regular posts, showing appreciation of contributions, and providing support and encouragement is key in forming the community (Brown, 2001; Shea et al., 2005). Coupled with this is the fact that students must want to be part of the community, otherwise they simply will not participate (Brown, 2001).

In the Community of Inquiry model, Garrison, Anderson & Archer (2000) discuss the importance of Social Presence, Teacher Presence and Cognitive presence. Providing the opportunity for students and instructors to establish their social presence was the missing link for our course. The community allowed not only students to introduce themselves, but through tutors sharing their interests and experiences (instructor social presence) students were able to get to know them prior to starting the taught modules (Aragon, 2003; Paquette, 2016; Richardson & Lowenthal, 2017).

Overview

In September 2019 we began a pilot of Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) as a platform for collaboration and discussion that would run concurrent

with, and support the content delivered via the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment). This included the development of a course community site and a pilot with a substantive module (Public Law) where activities moved from the traditional VLE discussion board to MS Teams. In our presentation, we will share our experience of developing the course community and how this fed into improved engagement and results for the substantive module.

We will begin with why we believed there was a need for the course community (evidenced by student feedback in 2018/19), before moving on to planning, building, and communicating the purpose of the community to staff and students.

We will discuss the impact of presence and the substantial role played by the Course Director in creating an open and inclusive space, ensuring regular formal and informal communications, and encouraging students to participate (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000; Paquette, 2016; Richardson & Lowenthal, 2017; Shea et al., 2005). We will provide examples of the interactions and the impact they had in terms of community building.

We will describe what we consider one of our major successes - the welcome activity. Here we saw connections form across a range of personal and professional themes, along with a clear sense of camaraderie. Tutors also introduced themselves, sharing their interests, research areas and industry experience. The students appreciated this openness, which led to many conversations on a range of topics such as home countries, family life, or interest in a particular field. Importantly, these posts allowed instructors to see the students as real people and gain a better understanding of who they are as individuals, and vice versa (Aragon, 2003; Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000; Paquette, 2016; Richardson & Lowenthal, 2017).

Finally, we will share the results of our evaluation of the community, incorporating data from a staff and student survey, feedback from module surveys and anecdotal evidence. We will provide examples of the positive impact on student satisfaction, motivation, and engagement – consistent with effects identified by others (Aragon, 2003; Richardson & Lowenthal, 2017) and highlight areas for improvement that were identified.

Conclusion

The development of the course community has been hugely successful and has given students a place to connect. What we have witnessed is an impact far beyond mere friendly interaction in a community space, but also the enhancement of academic engagement and achievement. In the Public Law module that piloted MS Teams for activities, we saw students acknowledging (through comments and emojis) the contributions of others, showing peer support and engaging in discussion. They also interacted with the tutor by showing appreciation for feedback or asking follow-up questions. On the same module in the

previous year, there was no student-student interaction in discussions and no responses to tutor feedback.

We believe that this change was underpinned by the course community providing the space for social presence to be established. In the community, tutors and students could get to know one another. This enabled students to enter the teaching space confident that they were in a safe, supportive environment with people they knew and trusted. In delivering this session we hope to help others find the value in establishing space for social presence, whether through development of a community, or by implementing elements of the community on a smaller scale, such as introducing a welcome activity into their module.



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Session Start Time	14:20
Breakout Room	4
Title of Abstract:	Therapists on Twitter: A case study of facilitating #TraineeTalk, an innovative international social media learning community for student counsellors and psychotherapists.
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Dr Peter Blundell Caz Binstead
Institution	Liverpool John Moores University & #TherapistsConnect
Format	Case study
Abstract	<p>In this case study, we will discuss a social media project for student counsellors and psychotherapists on Twitter, called #TraineeTalk. We are a group of qualified and experienced UK counsellors and psychotherapists and educators; our project aim was to build connections between students of counselling and psychotherapy, in any part of the world, and at all educational levels. In addition, for the last twelve months we have facilitated a weekly Twitter discussion group, which is open to any counselling and psychotherapy student in the world. This case study will describe our experiences as well as the students who took part in this project, including a critical examination of both the challenges and benefits to students. We argue that social media can be used to develop innovative and international professional learning communities, which can foster student engagement whilst also deepening students' sense of professional identity and belonging.</p>
Session Description	<p>Learning communities are an important part of counselling and psychotherapy students' educational experience. They can influence how students develop their own therapeutic approach. Counselling and psychotherapy have traditionally been delivered 'in-person' rather than in an online or virtual format (Anthony, 2015). Therefore, these learning communities have been located within the teaching institutions that deliver each specific course or training. There have been limited</p>

attempts to develop or foster learning communities for students of counselling and psychotherapy outside of these spaces, including transnationally.

There are professional learning communities (PLC) outside of the field of counselling and psychotherapy that use social media platforms, such as Instagram and Twitter, for educational purposes. These communities have been found to offer good opportunities for informal learning, representations of good practice and opportunities to develop new practices (e.g., Gómez-Martínez and Romero-Rodríguez, 2021; Goodyear, Parker, and Casey, 2019). However, despite calls for greater understanding and use of social media networks for therapists (Blundell, 2021); the available research into therapists' use of social media either professionally or personally is nascent. Research has found therapists can often feel isolated and alone in their work (Winning, 2010); therefore, they may use social media to combat that loneliness (Blundell, 2021). However, research into counsellors' and psychotherapists' use and engagement with open social media networks or virtual learning communities for educational purposes is non-existent.

This session is a case study describing and critically reflecting on a social media learning community called #TraineeTalk for counselling and psychotherapy students. The facilitators of this Twitter community, who are experienced therapists and educators within the UK, reflect on their experiences. This community fosters inter-institutional networking as students from different training providers discuss and debate their learning process and develop their knowledge. The project is transnational and whilst most attendees are UK based, we have students from a wide variety of countries, including Malaysia and USA. This learning community uses a weekly Twitter discussion group, using the hashtags #TraineeTalk and #TherapistsConnect, to explore pertinent topics for counselling and psychotherapy students. The facilitators choose a topic and open the discussion with starter questions and reflections. Students are asked to answer these questions and add any of their own thoughts. The discussion is facilitated for an hour but can continue for much longer (sometimes over days). The open community enables a broad discussion which encourages critical thinking in an open forum.

Our presentation will include the following:

- A rationale for the project
- Our experiences of designing and facilitating this project.
- Students' experiences of the community; including student reports of a deepening sense of belonging and professional identity.
- A critical examination of this learning community as a teaching tool.

We also argue for more research into open social media learning communities, including those for counsellors and psychotherapists.



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Session Start Time	14:20
Breakout Room	3
Title of Abstract:	Conclusions from the HWOnline-PGTOonline project: When good practices in online education prepare you for “emergency learning”
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Mari-Cruz Garcia Vallejo
Institution	Heriot-Watt University
Format	Case study
Abstract	<p>The HWOnline/PGTOonline project was aimed at enhancing the delivery of the portfolio of online postgraduate programmes at the School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS) of Heriot-Watt University. The project introduced the pedagogical model of learning communities as well as the use of multimedia materials (audio and video) to avoid the feeling of isolation and to keep students motivated. The analysis of the results of the EGIS student survey for the 13 academic courses that were redeveloped during the project, from the academic year 2017-2018 to the academic year 2019-2020, shows that students preferred the pedagogical approach of learning communities, instead of the previous self-study model, to keep them motivated. Although the low response rate for the student survey (less than 23% for distance learning students) does not allow to draw significant conclusions yet, , the 13 courses redeveloped as part of the HW Online project gathered higher positive feedback for both the qualitative and quantitative questions included in the survey. Live webinars, interactions with other peer students as well as with the tutor through discussion boards and group activities, and the use of multimedia content, were the most valued enhancements from student feedback.</p>
Session Description	This case study describes how the pedagogical enhancements introduced by the HWOnline/PGTOonline project addressed the

feedback and expectations about online education from the distance learning students enrolled in the online postgraduate programmes delivered by EGIS

The HWOnline/PGTOnline project was launched in April 2018 and the first phase ended in March 2020. The two main pedagogical enhancements introduced by the project were:

- Replacing the previous self-study model by the theoretical model of the learning communities. This model fosters online interactions between all the members that comprise an online learning community since the feeling of belonging help students to keep focused and motivated. (Wenger-Trayner 2015)
- Use of multimedia (audio and video) to help students understand complex concepts (Krause et al 2017).

The case study summarises the analysis of the EGIS end-of-semester survey, which runs for S1 (September) and S2 (January), for distance learning students and for the successive academic years of

- 2017-2018 (courses before introducing the pedagogical enhancements),
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020.

The case study analyses survey results for the 13 academic courses (15 credits) that were redeveloped in the first phase of the project. The analysis compares student feedback for the original courses, before introducing the pedagogical enhancements (152 students' responses) versus student feedback for the 13 redeveloped courses, after introducing the pedagogical enhancements (74 students' responses)/ Although the low responses in the survey (less than 23% responses for distance learning students) does not allow to draw significant conclusions yet, the redeveloped courses gathered a much positive feedback than the previous versions of the course (for both quantitative and qualitative questions). From the student feedback online interactions (discussion boards, webinars) and multimedia content were the most valued elements of the re-developed courses.

The case study concludes with a final reflection about the lessons learnt from the HWOnline/PGTOnline project and how the pedagogical model of the learning communities helped students and course leaders in HWOnline programmes to successfully cope with the "emergency learning" situation that took place during March 2020, when the UK went into lockdown as a result of the covid-19 pandemic. Feedback from the course leaders who were running HWOnline courses at that time shows that the disruption to their teaching was minimal as the pedagogical enhancements brought by the project allowed academics to keep in touch and looked after their students well-being.

The case study fits into the conference sub-theme "Staff and student experience" as it presents a pedagogical model for online education based on the foundation of learning communities of practice, in opposition to the individual study model that some education

providers adopt for the delivery of their online courses. The analysis of the student survey for three consecutive academic years (and comparing student feedback before and after introducing the new HWOnline pedagogical model) suggests that distance learning students prefer an online study model in which they can feel that they are part of a community, a model that encourages synchronous and asynchronous online interactions.



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Session Start Time	14:20
Breakout Room	1
Title of Abstract:	Learning to Walk Again: An Educator's Journey Teaching in Virtual Reality
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Melanie Garson
Institution	UCL (Department of Political Science)
Format	Case study
Abstract	<p>As Covid-19 propelled a new reimagining of teaching space that allure of virtual reality platforms is compelling. A new world, where you can change a room layout and your clothes at the click of the button. For interactive simulation-based courses it can offer the advantage of freedom of movement at will rather than the awkward fumbling with breakout rooms. However, whilst the novelty of being able to break out a dance move at the touch of a button might offer an attractive alternative for students after endless Zoom seminars, how does it measure up as a learning experience?</p> <p>In this presentation I share the preliminary results of a pilot project, 29 TaVIRstock Square, a virtual department space hosted on the VirBELA platform used as part of teaching for a simulation-based negotiation course and student social networking activities. Participants on the negotiation course had the option of participating in surveys evaluating the use of the platform both as a learning and social tool whilst on the platform, and the effect of the experience on their subsequent skills development. I also share some best practices and challenges for lecturers designing and delivering teaching in the virtual world.</p>
Session Description	The 29TaVIRstock Square was initially conceived in order to seek an alternative structure to teaching a simulation -based international negotiation course solely on Zoom to try to better replicate the

freedom of the classroom experience. The project, funded by a Dean's Grant from the Faculty of Social & Historical Science at UCL that trialled the use of a Virtual world mini-campus for the Department of Political Science using the Virbela open campus platform for a series of experiential activities for current students and alumni.

The project aimed to

1. Provide alternative fun and engaging interactive learning and social activities platform for our current postgraduate students who may never set foot in our campus in London and who are suffering chronic zoom fatigue.
2. Create exciting alternatives for social interaction, networking between students, alumni and staff that allow for better emotional connections.
3. Develop students' key skills and familiarity of operating in alternative environments that are now being used in recruitment such as for PWC.
4. Understand the advantages and challenges to teaching or presenting in new virtual environments.
5. Extend research from negotiation course on the nature of negotiation in virtual reality.

The project was built around three main strands of inquiry.

1. Understanding the student experience in virtual platforms.
 - a. Advantages & disadvantages of learning on a virtual platform rather than Zoom?
 - b. Synthesis of information on virtual platform
 - c. Does the virtual platform provide better social interactions than Zoom?
 - d. Ease of use
2. Optimising pedagogical activities for virtual platforms and hybrid teaching
 - a. Which activities lend themselves to teaching on virtual platforms?
 - b. How do pedagogical activities/methods need to be adjusted for virtual platforms?
 - c. What additional preparation time needs to be factored for virtual platforms?
 - d. Finding the balance for hybrid/blended learning with virtual platforms
3. Understanding negotiation and risk-taking behaviour in virtual platforms

Extending the research initiated on my International Negotiation course into the differences in negotiating as an avatar, over zoom, and in person. This includes examining how negotiators navigate risk, confidence and emotions on virtual platforms.

The participants of the module on International Negotiation were given the opportunity to participate in a film screening, a lecture, a bilateral negotiation simulation, and a multilateral simulation on the platform.

Participants were invited to complete surveys prior to participating in VR activities, after the lecture and bilateral negotiation, and after the following week's Zoom simulation. The platform was also used for a series of student -alumni networking events during Department of Political Science Virtual Careers Week.

In this session, I will present a case study outlining the process of working with the virtual platform, adapting teaching to teaching as an avatar, as well as the preliminary results of the participant surveys as to their experience learning and interacting socially as an avatar.

I will also present initial findings on the value of virtual reality as a pedagogical tool in negotiation. This contributes to a growing literature on the impact of computer mediation on negotiation, in particular the impact of loss of non-verbal cues (Baten & Hoque, 2021; Ebner 2017), its role in skills building (Broekens et al 2012) as well as the impact and possibilities for networking and building friendships (Chesney et al. 2014).

Participants in the session will be invited to participate in part of the session on the virtual reality platform to experience it for themselves.



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Session Start Time	14:20
Breakout Room	2
Title of Abstract:	Teaching the teachers to teach online: The experiences of clinical educators delivering a 'Micro-teach' via Zoom
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Dr Lucy Spowart Dr Tristan Price Mohammed Ibrar Perwaiz
Institution	The University of Plymouth
Format	Case study
Abstract	<p>Drawing on data collected via semi-structured online interviews (n=10) with clinical educators (doctors, nurses, dentists, psychiatrists etc.) enrolled on the Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Education we explore the importance of interactive teaching in the online environment. We specifically focus on students' experiences of delivering a 'microteach'. A 'micro-teach' is a mini teaching episode (15 minutes), designed to assess the learners' practical teaching skills and understanding of underpinning pedagogical principles. It is a core component of the course, and one that has traditionally been delivered in the classroom. Great emphasis is placed upon the students' ability to engage a small group of learners that is appropriately pitched and inclusive.</p> <p>Planning for the assessed microteach was well underway in 2020 when lockdown was announced. This impacted the cohort in a number of ways, not least the disruption to their work schedules as key workers. Here we discuss the opportunities and barriers experienced by both students and staff in the move to online delivery.</p>
Session Description	<p>Context:</p> <p>It is common practice on postgraduate teaching courses for students to be encouraged to engage in interactive teaching practices 'oriented to and focused on students and their learning' (Devlin & Samarawickrema,</p>

2010:112). Plymouth University's postgraduate certificate in Clinical Education is no exception. Fifty percent of the assessment for the 'Contemporary Issues' module is dedicated to students' planning, facilitating and critically reflecting on their 'micro-teach' with the goal of developing teacher expertise (King, 2019). A 'micro-teach' is a mini teaching episode (15 minutes), designed to assess the learners' practical teaching skills and understanding of underpinning pedagogical principles. The module is accredited by Advance HE at Descriptor 2 and aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework. Great emphasis is placed upon the students' ability to engage a small group of learners in a classroom teaching session that is appropriately pitched and inclusive. Whilst recent research has explored the experiences of pre-service teachers moving their learning to an online environment (e.g. Moorhouse, 2020; Ogbonnaya, Awoniyi & Matabane, 2020; Quezada, Talbot & Quezada-Parker, 2020), these do not explicitly focus on experiential learning via the practical delivery of teaching episodes.

The Case Study:

In this session we employ a case study approach, with the aim of capturing the lived experiences of frontline workers (doctors, nurses, dentists, psychiatrists etc.) enrolled on the programme during 2019/20. Planning for the assessed micro-teach was well underway when lockdown was announced. This impacted the cohort in a number of ways, not least the disruption to their work schedules as key workers. In consultation with students, it was decided that rather than replace the micro-teach with an alternative assessment, it would instead be delivered online.

Methods:

We draw on data collected via semi-structured online interviews, email correspondence with students and academic staff, and an anonymous online module evaluation. Ethical approval was obtained via the Education Faculty's Research Ethics Committee. We will also show a video example of a part of a student micro-teach session.

Findings:

Students generally performed very well, with the move to online assessment appearing to enhance their critical approach, stimulate innovation and encourage risk taking. By capturing their experiences we outline the factors that contributed to a successful approach, the barriers encountered, and how the online practical assessment can be constructed to optimise students' learning in the future.

4 Key themes were identified throughout the transcripts:

1) Student reactions to migrating online – Reactions were 'mixed' and related to students' previous experiences with technology. Participants tended to make direct comparisons with classroom based teaching, which they saw as the 'norm', rather than considering the potential possibilities derived from online teaching. Many held a narrow view of online teaching which they regarded as being far more teacher-

directed. That said, only 4 participants stated that they would rather have conducted the assessment in the classroom.

2) The environment and socio-emotional engagement – The environment featured heavily in participants' dialogue. Those fortunate enough to have quiet space, good broadband connection and two display monitors found that conducting the micro-teach online reduced the stress of the assessment, when compared to the classroom assessment. Others felt isolated and lacked the emotional support from peer socialisation that the classroom provided them with.

3) Interactivity and the development of learner-centred teaching – The challenge of delivering an engaging and interactive teaching session in the online environment was a theme in all of the interviews. This was frequently based on a limited understanding of the capabilities of the technologies. Students reverted to more didactic approaches which they felt more 'control' over. The importance of being able to read visual cues such as body language also featured heavily. Some participants felt that they could not assess whether their learners understood or were engaged in the task.

4) A catalyst for change and innovation – Many participants noted the future potential for online teaching in the context of a busy healthcare environment.

Further Discussion:

Shifting the micro-teach assessment online created an opportunity for our healthcare educators to consider their own assumptions about how interactivity can be achieved in the online environment. Engaging and supporting student teachers in an online space requires us to also interrogate our practices as teacher-educators to ensure that we maintain emotional connections between students and develop positive student-teacher relationships. Moving forwards, in order to maintain a supportive educational environment, ensuring that student-teachers are given the tools to develop and progress in the face of adversity and exceptional challenge, there are two key learning points for us and our online micro-teach assessment. Firstly, we feel we need to normalise the delivery of online teaching from the start of the course, encouraging students to apply their understanding of pedagogy to the planning of BOTH online and face-to-face teaching activities. We would be interested in the perspectives of others on this.

Secondly, one of the challenges we face is that for us, and no doubt many of you, this mode of teaching is still relatively new, and our own assumptions may also have been shaped by the way in which the online format was a response to the adversity created by the pandemic. We need to work collaboratively with our learners to develop the best strategies to maximise the potential of online teaching. We would be interested in how others are doing this.



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Breakout Room	2
Title of Abstract:	Evolving Perceptions of Content Capture
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Shaun Searle Dr Stephen Webb, Dr Harriet Dunbar-Morris
Institution	University of Portsmouth
Format	Case study
Abstract	<p>In the academic year prior to the pandemic, the University of Portsmouth undertook an institution-wide consultation exercise to gather staff and student perceptions on content capture. In broad terms, the consultation showed that students were in favour of capturing as much content as possible; academic staff expressed more ambivalent attitudes to the use of content capture technology. The institution's pandemic response, which directed a "blended and connected" approach to teaching and learning, called for the rapid procurement, implementation, and roll-out of a content capture system. In this case study we examine in qualitative terms how perceptions of this technology have evolved during a period of unprecedented disruption, and present quantitative data on the changing use of the technology. We also discuss the challenges involved on building on success and influencing future teaching practice at our institution.</p>
Session Description	<p>Organisational and historical context A clear message from the Digital Experience Survey (DES), an annual poll of students run since 2016, was that our learners demanded broader and more consistent use of content capture. In response, the University of Portsmouth (UoP) and the Students' Union embarked on a staff-student consultation via an online survey, structured town hall meetings, and feedback from a dedicated website. Our aim was to co-</p>

create a content capture policy rooted in pedagogy, and to identify ways of increasing the availability of captured materials. The consultation, unsurprisingly, found students to be more enthusiastic about the technology than staff. For example, when asked whether lectures should be captured, 98% of students responded positively against 56% of staff; when asked the same about seminars, 78% of students were in favour against 27% of staff. Students noted numerous benefits of content capture for learning, in line with published studies (e.g. [1–3]). Many staff, however, could not clearly articulate the benefits for teaching. In particular, staff felt uninformed about the legalities, ethics, and workload implications of the technology. A commonly expressed fear (about which the evidence is disputed [4, 5]) was that content capture would lead to a reduction in physical attendance. One third of staff who had not used content capture considered the technology inappropriate for their context. Some staff expressed disquiet at being recorded.

The university's subsequent content capture policy aimed to address staff concerns, and promoted a pedagogical approach based on the capture of focused taught content rather than wholesale recording of lectures. Operationally, however, UoP began 2020 with two systems at end-of-life.

Technical specifications of the project and its implementation
Outputs from the consultation fed into the requirements phase of a procurement exercise. Following demonstrations from six vendors UoP chose Panopto, a market leader in the HE sector. Our intention was to take 6–12 months to test the platform, create support materials, and roll out the software for use in a primarily campus-based environment. Then the UK government announced the first national lockdown. The changed circumstances demanded the rapid deployment of Panopto to a now geographically dispersed staff base. In 3 weeks, we moved from user acceptance testing to general distribution via a Moodle integration. A “how to” website provided technical support and guidance. More important was the emphasis placed on the pedagogical rationale behind the use of the technology.

Discussion of pedagogy

In the pre-pandemic environment, staff suspicion of content capture sat alongside a reluctance to standardise the use of Moodle. The urgent requirement to adopt an unfamiliar “blended and connected” method meant not only did lecturers embrace Panopto but they also welcomed a template-based approach to Moodle module creation. Enforced consistency, perhaps paradoxically, freed teachers to experiment with new teaching styles. We supported a “pedagogy first” approach through a website “Preparing for Teaching in a Blended Context” and the hosting of a virtual “Blended and Connected Learning” festival.

We cannot dismiss the suggestion that a shift of teaching environment, from timetabled lecture theatre to ad-hoc home office, drove changing pedagogies. Nevertheless, staff feedback suggests a heightened

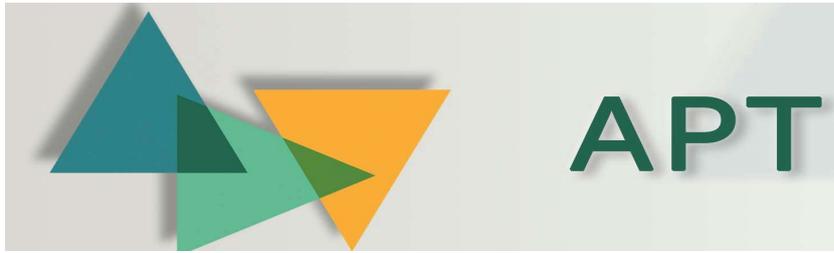
awareness of available technologies played a key role in developing new teaching approaches. An analysis of the volume and type of content produced on Panopto supports this contention. The reluctance to capture content has evaporated: 8 months after Panopto's institutional release, UoP staff had created 1.5 times as many videos as in the 8 previous years combined. An analysis of video length suggests a flexibility in teaching approach: short recordings form part of a mix of asynchronous content on Moodle, while use is still made of synchronous approaches. The distrust of recording physical lectures has been replaced by a desire to record online lectures (a process simplified by a Zoom–Panopto integration for sharing via Moodle). An analysis of hours delivered suggests students were correct in their understanding of use patterns: content is re-viewed rather than simply viewed.

Evaluation

Few staff now believe content capture is inappropriate for their context: during term time more than 2500 sessions, spread across all discipline areas, are being created every week. The concern that, even if staff found time to capture content, they lacked the technical skills to do so has proved unfounded: analysis of the tickets raised to the central support team show that most came at times of sector-wide Panopto outages, suggesting these were not local issues. The concern that content capture would negatively affect attendance is difficult to address, given that students have for the most part been remote; nevertheless, Moodle analytics suggest students are engaging well. The student voice rings clear from usage statistics: 1.74 million views/downloads in 8 months. Furthermore, student responses in our DES have changed tone. Initial analysis of the 2021 survey suggests students take the existence of Panopto for granted. The few negative comments relate to the learning context: either videos are not contextualised (a learning design issue) or are too long (in cases where lecturers failed to fully adopt UoP's "blended and connected" approach).

Next steps

The future of post-pandemic pedagogy is uncertain. Whilst there is a desire to retain positive elements of our blended and connected approach post campus return, we recognise that this poses questions. Will staff attitudes to content capture revert to pre-pandemic patterns? Will the nature of lectures, finally, change? Will physical teaching spaces and learning infrastructure need to evolve to support a blended and connected approach? Perhaps most importantly, how can we best induct students into blended and connected learning, so they can work effectively and reflectively in that space, when social media contains memes such as: "Netflix: £50; Disney+: £60; University degree: £9000".



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Breakout Room	1
Title of Abstract:	Supporting student progress and self regulation using personalised analytics
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Andy Smidt Danny Liu
Institution	The University of Sydney
Format	Case study
Abstract	One of the biggest challenges that instructors face, even before COVID but exacerbated by it, is being able to judge how students are tracking and helping them feel connected. In these disruptive times in higher education where online/hybrid teaching is the new normal, providing personal remote support for students and building engagement are troublesome. In this session, we describe an innovative practice that brings together relevant data from the VLE and students themselves to make remote learning more connected and personalised. From tailored feedback messages to building student capacity for goal-setting and self-regulation, this approach not only helps students manage their own expectations but helps teachers build personal connections to engage students. We present a case study of a freely-available learning analytics platform and, most importantly, the personalised pedagogies that integrate data with online/hybrid learning and teaching to improve the staff and student experience in an allied health course.
Session Description	Supporting students in a COVID world involves not only teaching online but also engaging and connecting to students. This is challenging via Zoom where often students turn off their camera. There are times when this feels more like teaching a computer screen than the people behind the screen. There are a variety of apps to facilitate engagement such as anonymous word clouds, quizzes/polls and shared google

documents but it can be challenging to judge how the students are tracking and the extent to which they feel connected and supported especially outside the now-familiar environment of the Zoom classroom.

In this session, we present a case study spanning the last 18 months where a learning analytics system, the Student Relationship Engagement System (SRES), has been used to encourage and build student engagement. A plethora of data passes from the VLE site into SRES allowing queries across a large database. Attendance can be monitored alongside time spent on Canvas, grades and activity to send highly-tailored messages according to each of these factors - at scale. For example, an email about attendance can differentially be sent so that an acknowledgement is sent to those attending regularly and support to those who are not attending. Individualised feedback can be provided according to which questions in quizzes the students are finding difficult and additional resources recommended according to the types of errors made. But how did students perceive this and was it enough, especially as their learning environments and behaviours changed during COVID?

Given the struggle that students have with staying motivated and engaged with online/hybrid learning during COVID (Daniels et al, 2021), in semester 1, 2021, SRES was used to assist students with their goal-setting and time management, especially while they are less visible to the teacher and each other. To do this, students were provided with interactive “to-do” lists in the VLE, delivered by SRES. There is evidence that undergraduate students in particular, value reminders to keep on top of their workload (O’Neil and Buckley, 2020) . In our own experience, we know that students appreciate being guided on what to do each week; this used to be in the form of a one-size-fits-all announcement to all students with lists of which readings, videos and so on they should watch. The new SRES to-do list allows students to self-track whether they have completed, started or not started each task. This allows them to self-monitor their progress, and also allows teachers to support, praise, and encourage progress in a data-informed way. Importantly, teaching can be better planned each week based on how many of the cohort have completed each task.

Learning analytics can be used to monitor student retention, grades and engagement. Campbell and Oblinger (2007) describe one conceptualisation of learning analytics, involving 5 steps; Capture, Report, Predict, Act and Refine. The challenge for teachers is how to do this easily so that the process is rapid enough to provide meaningful data early enough to support student learning. For us, SRES has automated the capturing and reporting phases so that the instructor can predict and act.

By helping students to take charge of their to-do list and supporting this through tailored messages based on a range of data, we critically reflect in this session on students’ responses to this learning analytics-

enhanced teaching practice. Additionally, we reflect on the impact this has had on teaching, in terms of optimising communication and engagement with students, the influence of relevant data on teaching design and, importantly, the relationships that can be fostered between teachers and students if the right data is used in the right way.



APT 2021

19th Academic Practice and Technology Conference (APT2021)
 Co-hosted online by the London School of Economics & Political Science,
 Imperial College London and University College London.
 Friday 2nd July 2021

Session Start Time	14:20
Breakout Room	3
Title of Abstract:	Reflecting on a student’s view of interactions and communications before, during and after lockdown
Presenters (lead & co-presenters)	Eileen Bracken Eileen Bracken
Institution	University of Limerick
Format	Case study
Abstract	An undergraduate student addresses her own particular context, in which core abilities were purposefully nurtured during students’ early engagements in problem-based learning, and which were subjected to changes in practice occasioned by Covid, She seeks to identify and present a reflective view of the features of such course provision that may usefully be carried forward from the lockdown experience, to the post-Covid period. This projection is based on her records and reflective reviews in the period influenced by the pandemic. It is further informed by reference to the publication in the year before Covid struck of summarised evidence-based student claims for development. The author critically identifies and explores the ways in which she and her classmates have been developing their practice and particularly their communications using technology. She explores the developments that she hopes will be sustained when the ‘new normal’ emerges.
Session Description	I will address the student experience sub-theme directly, drawing on the records of my experience-based learning and development that I kept during that time, and comparing them with a published account of the experiences of students in the year prior to the pandemic. Our course structure expected us to engage in reflective review informed by data that we had accumulated during our experience. I will draw on much of that for this presentation.

The major changes that confronted me and my peers, and on which I will concentrate, were the need to engage in group working online, to interact in these circumstances with peers who were initially strangers, and above all to engage with the demands of our student-directed, student-managed programme. This was a programme that was unobtrusively framed around the Kolb Cycle, engagement with Dewey's active experimentation and testing featured frequently, and in the online circumstances depended heavily on effective interactions between peers. I would hope in a presentation to have time to illustrate the various stages in our (perhaps unwitting) application of Kolb Cycle as demanded by the course structure, with examples of the challenges with which we were confronted during that opening semester - in each case picking out my and our dependence on effective use of appropriate technology.

I have assembled an account of my reflective review in a paper which I will submit now if the proforma allows. I hope that this may be available to conference participants, so that any presentation by me would take some such form as brief coverage of:

1. Experiential learning online - trigger tasks, group working, presentations, evidence-based reflective reviews, forward planning;
2. Peer interactions – formally in team working, and constructively in peer contributions to reviewing;
3. My thoughts on what I hope will continue after near normality returns, and what I will welcome as a return of previous practice.
4. Questions and responses.

Professor John Cowan, who facilitated my reviewing at the time, and who prompted me to assemble this submission, has already enrolled for the conference and will be around to support me if the discussion takes on pedagogical depth.

(Word count only 353, I am afraid; I have tried to address the demands succinctly and have nothing more to add, really. Character count 1870)

Nothing to add about session