Workshop

Architectures for effective online learning and performance

Elena Kays, Rod Sims
Capella University

Length   Full day

Objectives   The workshop is designed as an interactive and participative session where the presenters will pose key challenges in the creation of emergent, engaging, interactive and motivational online learning environments. Using multi-disciplinary perspectives, participants will engage in discussions and activities designed to contextualise these challenges and develop environmentally-specific design and development solutions for their individual online learning programs. On completing the workshop, participants will also have a set of tools to support the construction of their own "online architectures".

The expertise of Dr Kays and Dr Sims in the international higher education sectors, in instructional design, learning design and contemporary online learning environments will ensure that participants will develop their knowledge and skills to maximise the success of their own online teaching and learning practice.

At the end of this one-day workshop, participants will have:
- reviewed and critically reflected on the key components for effective online learning;
- analysed the major issues that confront and prevent designers from achieving the full potential of online learning;
- synthesised the key elements required to construct Architectures for Online Learning, including emergent design, proactive evaluation and interaction metrics;
- participated in a case study of their own workplace environment to implement contextual and functional Online Learning Architecture;
- access to a full set of resources and tools to develop and implement more complex online learning architectures within their workplace.

Intended audience   The intended audience for this workshop are educational designers responsible for supporting online learning pedagogy, academics implementing online environments and instructional, educational and curriculum designers from the training and education sectors. The workshop will also benefit those who are keen to better understand strategies to realise the full potential of online learning environments.

To maximise the outcomes of the workshop, participants should be familiar with current online learning development and delivery environments, and be active in the implementation of online environments within their own organisations.

Facilitators   **Dr. Elena Kays** has worked in the field of higher education for the last fifteen years. For almost a decade, she has focused exclusively on designing, developing, and implementing innovative online learning environments. She has published numerous papers relating to the advancement of design process and methodology, dynamic and emergent instructional design models, and building collaboration and rapport in the online environment. Dr. Kays is currently an adjunct professor in the Graduate School of Education at Capella University and in addition to doctoral supervision, teaches various courses from ethics to interface design. Dr. Kays is also the president of the EJK Consulting Company.

Dr Rod Sims has worked in the technology and education field for over 25 years. During that period he has seen significant change both in the technology we use and the ways in which we design educational environments to effectively use that technology. Rod has worked as both a consultant in educational technology as well as designing and implementing undergraduate and postgraduate programs at the University of Technology Sydney and Southern Cross University. Over the last three years Rod has been working as an Adjunct Professor with the US-based Capella University, with responsibilities for online teaching, course development and PhD supervision in the field of Instructional Design for Online Learning. Rod has presented widely in Australia and internationally and is well known for his work on the design of interactive and engaging learning environments.

Details of activities

Workshop format and activities

The workshop is divided into morning and afternoon sessions. The morning session will focus on the underpinning principles and practices that enable Online Learning Architectures to cater for different learning and performance environments. The concept of 'architecture' as a framework for online learning will be presented and analysed. Examples from different disciplines will be used to highlight the ways in which online learning can benefit from emergent thinking. This will include the integration of:

- Emergent modelling strategies: the importance of applying a multi-disciplinary approach to the creation and implementation of contemporary online learning environments that cater for the dynamics of social networking;
- Principles of online pedagogy: presentation and analysis of the key factors that contribute to the development of contextual and individual online learning applications; and
- Metrics for interaction: presentation of heuristics and metrics that identify and underpin the critical elements of interaction that facilitate engagement and construction of meaning.

The afternoon session will involve a case-study where Online Learning Architectures will be applied to settings associated with different learning outcomes and contexts.

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will have a complete set of tools to create e-learning environments or 'architectures' that are interactive, engaging, economic and outcome oriented.

References

Previous presentations:

This workshop was successfully presented at AusWeb 2006 (http://ausweb.scu.edu.au/aw06/conf/workshops.html)

Recent references that will support the delivery of the workshop include:

Irlbeck, S., Kays, E., Jones, D. & Sims, R. (in press). The phoenix rising: Emergent models of instructional design. *Distance Education, 27*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/01587910600789514

Kays, E. (2003a). Architecture and Instructional Design: A model for e-learning. *E-Learn 2003: World Conference in E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, & Higher Education, Phoenix, AZ*, 257-264.

Kays, E. (2003b). Creating emergent discourse: A critical ingredient in e-learning. Proceedings of *E-Learn 2003: World Conference in E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, & Higher Education*, Phoenix, AZ, 252-256.

Kays, E. (2003c). The four pillars of rapport: A critical ingredient in e-learning. *Proceedings of the Interior Design Educators Council International Conference, San Diego, CA*, 46-48.

Sims, R. & Hedberg, J. (in press). Encounter theory: A model to enhancing online communication, interaction and engagement, in C. Jawah (Ed.) *Interactions in Online Education: Implications for Theory and Practice*. London, UK: Routledge Education.

Sims, R. (2006). Beyond instructional design: Making learning design a reality. *Journal of Learning Design, 1*(2), 1-8. (Keynote Paper) Available online: http://www.jld.qut.edu.au/ (16th May 2006).