

Distributed Learning Spaces in Higher Education Learning and Teaching

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PhD, University of Calgary (1997); MEd University of Calgary (1989); BEd, University of Queensland (1985); BHMS (Ed), University of Queensland (1982). Professor Keppell has a long professional history in higher education in Australia, Canada and Hong Kong. Professor Mike Keppell is the Executive Director, Australian Digital Futures Institute (ADFI) at University of Southern Queensland. From 2007 to 2012 he was Professor of Higher Education and Director of the Flexible Learning Institute at Charles Sturt University, and prior to that was Head of the Centre for Learning, Teaching and Technology at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Professor Keppell has also held positions at the University of Melbourne, Central Queensland University and private providers in Canada.

Intended audience and degree of expertise/past experience required

The workshop will be of interest to all delegates attending ascilite. In particular academic developers, instructional designers, educational designers and staff involved in blended and flexible learning will have an interest in the workshop.

Statement of objectives for the workshop

To provide an overview of distributed learning spaces (physical (formal and informal); blended, virtual (formal and informal); mobile, personal, outdoor, academic and professional practice spaces) and discuss the 'action possibilities' or affordances of these distributed learning spaces. Taking account of these affordances will inform the design of learning and teaching in higher education and inform the choice of technology to assist learners and academics in life-long and life-wide learning.

Detailed description

Justification of the importance/currency/need for the proposed workshop

Distributed learning spaces and their learning affordances are at the core of learning in the 21st century. Too often the importance of distributed learning spaces has been dismissed as being unimportant compared to the formal physical learning spaces of the university institution. 21st Century learning is now typified by personal learning environments where the place of learning is varied and diverse. This workshop will assist participants to consider the personal learning spaces of students whom they teach. In addition the action possibilities of distributed learning spaces needs to be considered in the explicit design of learning and teaching for higher education.

Format of the session

- Introduction (5 mins)
- Overview of distributed learning spaces (15 mins)
- Discussion in groups of three – 'action possibilities' of distributive learning spaces (15 mins)
- Report back and full group discussion about 'action possibilities' (15 mins)
- Where to next? Implications for our practice (10 mins)

Presentation format

Facilitated workshop combining presentation of concepts, group work and discussion, reporting back to entire group.

Ways in which the audience is encouraged to participate

Facilitated workshop as opposed to a presentation. This will include: small group discussion, questioning, determining 'action possibilities' for distributed learning spaces. The audience will be encouraged to discuss the relevance of distributed learning spaces and their implications for the learner studying in the 21st century. The group discussions and activities will focus on:

- Sharing knowledge, experiences and expertise about distributed learning spaces.
- How a knowledge of the affordances of distributed learning spaces might be used within participants own institutions or discipline areas and how they might be employed and modified for use in other contexts.
- A further action theme will be discussion and reflection on distributed learning spaces and how these might inform and enhance practice in participants own institutions and discipline areas.

Outcome measures

- This workshop will develop a number of 'action possibilities'/affordances for a range of distributed learning spaces.
- Participants will develop a knowledge of these 'action possibilities' and their implications for the design of learning and teaching for open learning environments.
- It is hoped that participants will more fully consider the personal learning environment of the virtual student after considering the affordances of distributed learning spaces.
- Development of strategies and initiatives for distributed learning spaces within and/or across specific