Concept Mapping with *Inspiration*^TM: Theory and Practice

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DURATION   3 HOURS

ABSTRACT

"Concept Mapping" is a useful technique for teaching and learning, as well as a range of other non-educational processes. A concept map is a graphical arrangement of key concepts to show meaningful relationships among the selected concepts. Teachers have found concept mapping a useful technique for not only selecting the subject matter they teach but organizing and representing their selected subject matter content. Students have similarly, found concept mapping a very powerful strategy for taking notes from lectures and other reading material, summarizing and synthesizing what they are reading, and in planning to write assignments. Concept mapping can also be very usefully utilized in brainstorming, project planning, report writing and several other similar processes.

This workshop session will briefly explore the foundations of concept mapping, and its uses as a tool for supporting teaching and learning. The major part of the workshop will comprise a hands-on component when participants will be able to explore the potentials of *Inspiration*, a software tool for concept mapping. *Inspiration* is a very easy to use and flexible tool that requires no particular level of competency in the use of computers other than basic typewriting skills and some familiarity with the Windows interface.

Learning outcomes and statement of the objectives

This workshop will enable participants to achieve the following:

1. Examine the foundations of concept mapping.
2. Learn how to develop concept maps with the help of *Inspiration*.
3. Develop competency in the use of concept mapping for representing subject matter content in order to show meaningful relationships among the selection of concepts.
4. Develop competency in the use of concept mapping as a generative learning strategy for taking notes from lectures and other reading material, summarizing and synthesizing what students are reading, and in planning to write assignments.

Target Audience

- Academics and trainers involved in learning & teaching
- Instructional designers, course developers, and media producers etc.

No prior knowledge of "concept mapping" or "Inspiration" is required.

Note about Technical Requirements

As this is a hands-on workshop, we will require access to a computer lab with windows machines in them. Copies of the *Inspiration* software (available from the suppliers free for a 30-day trial) can be loaded onto these machines.

The number of available machines in the lab need not limit the number of participants in the workshop, as we can have two to three people working on one machine.

We have run this workshop in several venues already (such as at *EDUCAUSE 2003* in Adelaide) and have received very favorable reports on its usefulness.

WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

A/Professor Som Naidu, PhD

Som Naidu is Head of Research and Evaluation in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Research Support at the University of Melbourne. Dr. Naidu's formal qualifications are in educational technology and his work experience includes design, development and evaluation of computer and non-computer based learning materials for a wide range of contexts. He has taught courses on learning and instructional design at graduate levels in Canada, Australia and in the USA.

[http://www.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/telars/staff/naidu.html]

Patrick Blanchard

Patrick Blanchard is Head of Flexible Learning Delivery Services, a section of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Research Support at the University of Melbourne. His background is in adult education and information technology. His particular interest is the use of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning.

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