



OUT OF HOURS

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Funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council

Symposium Structure

Part 1

Examining workload for
online teaching

Part 2

Researching workload for
online teaching

Part 3

Findings and conclusions
regarding workload for
online teaching

Part 4

Case studies of workload
for online teaching

Part 1

Examining workload for online teaching

~~Belinda Tynan~~

Yoni Ryan

Overview

- A review of the literature revealed a lack of reporting and a paucity of rigorous documentation of the impact on workload when teaching online or in blended modes
- Data from 88 interviews across the four universities revealed that these institutions had poorly defined or understood policy frameworks for underpinning workload allocations related to teaching online or in blended modes
- New technologies have the potential to enhance the learning experience of students; however, immediate consideration needs to be given to workloads related to teaching online or in blended modes

Key outcomes

Analysis of international & Aust. literature re costs and benefits of online teaching, particularly workload implications

Generation of workload implications data for use when developing workload models

Development of four case studies demonstrating staff perceptions of workload associated when teaching online

Recommendations for stakeholders when considering workload associated with teaching online



Part 2

Researching workload for online teaching

Literature

Yoni Ryan

What does the literature say?



The academic role in transition

What's driving eteaching?

– student demand/expectations?

– staff commitment to elearning?

Does technology reduce cost?

Workload Allocation Models (WAMS)

Eteaching tasks

Part 3

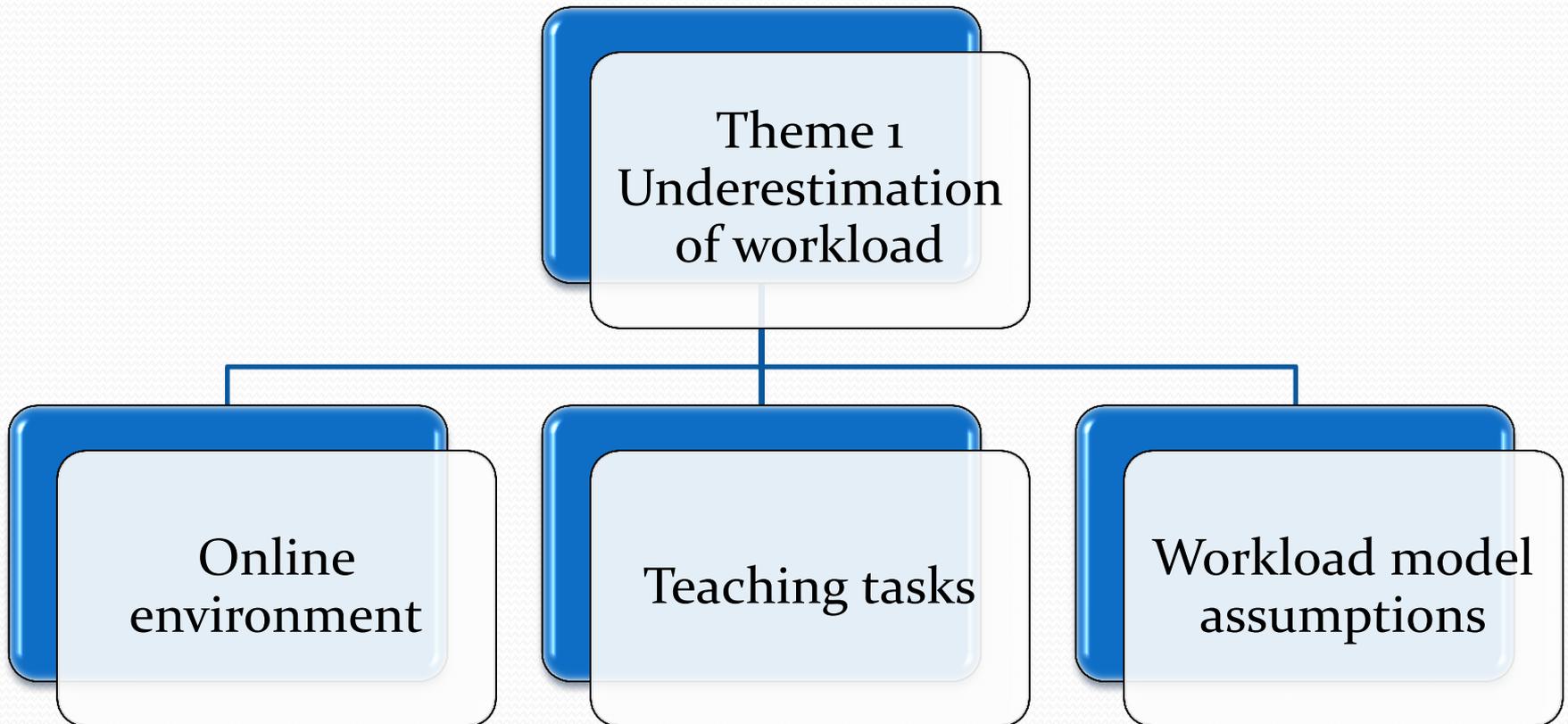
Findings and conclusions of workload for online
teaching

Andrea Lamont-Mills

Methodology

- Design: qualitative guided by Grounded Theory
- Data collection: semi-structured interviews
- Analysis: Inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
- Rigor of analysis:
 - Open codes: Grounded theory method of constant comparison
 - Themes: internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity as per Patton's (1990) criteria for judging categories/themes
- Data management: QSR NVivo 8

Why do you think your workload allocation does not reflect what you do?



Example

- Online environment - “Operating in the online environment I think it actually increases workload. I think teaching online and learning online is meant to be – you know, less contact hours. I’ve found it hugely increases the number of contact hours.”
- Teaching tasks- “So I find that I – some of the Discussion groups – well, one of the Discussion groups that I moderate – a fair bit of it happens on the weekend. So, yeah, my weekend I spend two hours at home moderating a discussion group.”

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graph TD; A[Theme 2 No consideration of work] --- B[Impact of technology]; A --- C[Course aspects]; A --- D[Work aspects]; A --- E[Student Expectations]
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Theme 2 No consideration of work

Impact of technology

Course aspects

Work aspects

Student Expectations

Example

- Impact of technology - “The other reason it takes some time is partly when you’re relatively new to it is that there’s a lot to learn about the technology. And I found that rather frustrating at the beginning.”
- Student expectations - “Access via electronic communications has made us much more, well has increased the expectations of students about the availability of staff.”



Theme 3 Being innovative

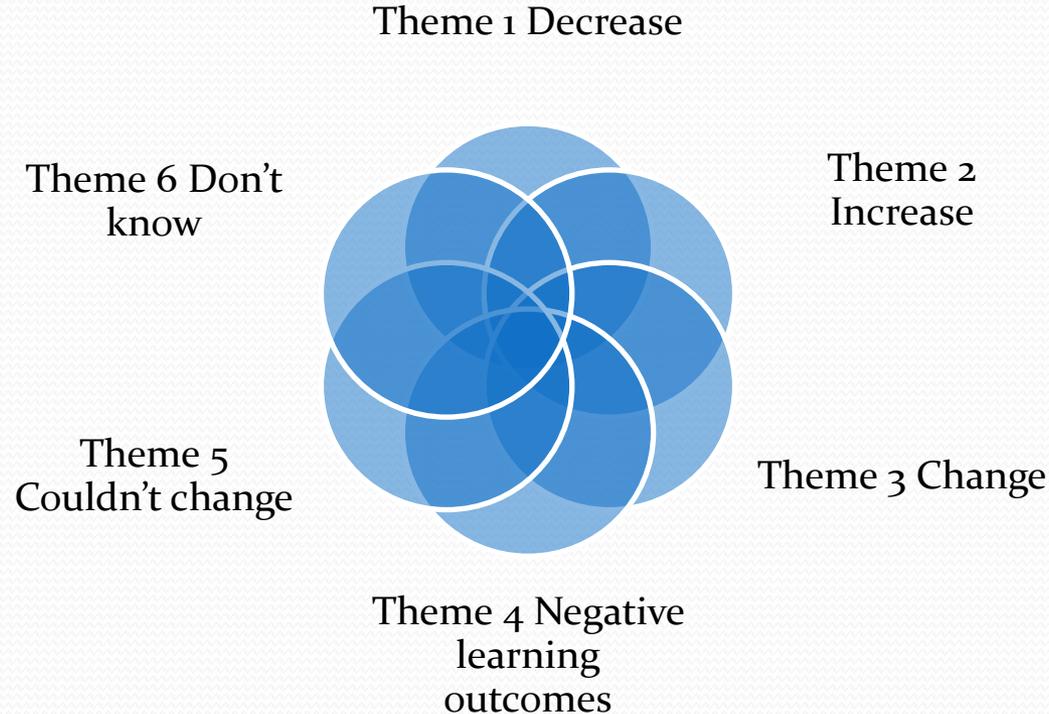
“And if you’re trying something new – like I was trying with the blogging that was a huge demand. Because – it was self-created demand – because you’ve got to keep on top of what you’re doing there. You’ve got to visit their sites, their comments and so on and so forth. I can’t blame the university for that. That’s my own kind of creativity and desire to produce something that works for the students driving that. But still it takes a lot of time.”

Observation

- Large number of participants believed that the root cause of discrepancy between work allocation and their actual workload was inadequate workload models



What would you need to change in your teaching to make the actual work match the workload allocation?



Theme 1 Decrease

- “Well, as I said on many occasions that I would have to change my teaching style to the traditional and draconian view of academics who see students as a nuisance factor and to be ignored as much as possible. I would really have to cut back on communications. I would have to ignore extensive emails and messages through the StudyDesk that ask what I would regard as typical dumb questions that have to be asked by new students every semester.”

Theme 2 Increase

“... some of the things I’ve changed have been the face to face stuff – like this year – say for example, I used to try and phone every student to check on various things – this year, I’m much more into sending text messages. I think because we’ve got free-text, so I’m sending text messages, to organise meetings or to check out bits of information. I find that a lot quicker. And I also send emails to students”

Theme 3 Change

“Some of the things I could do would be move to quizzes instead of assignments. That can be marked electronically. Other activities that would count toward assessment that could be somehow marked electronically. It seems to me, I think there are clever ways to use technology.”

Observation

- No clear pattern of how participants would 'solve' their increased workload
- A number of participants indicated that change to their own working practices would be required

Workload Policy

Questions

- What is your institution's policy on online teaching?
- Does your school have workload policy/guidelines to cover online teaching?
- Does the workload policy/guidelines, or lack of, reflect the amount of time you spend teaching and interacting with students?

Observation

- Differences between school/faculty and Institution policy were often confused
- Participants' confused policy resulting from institutional decisions and guidelines with policy and implementation decided on at a school or faculty level



Part 4

Case study of workload for online teaching

Leone Hinton

Activity

1. Ed developers – when working with grass root academics who teach online when is the issue of the academics workload raised?
2. Academics - when working ed developers when is the issue of your workload raised?
3. In your own institution, how could workload associated with online teaching be brought to the forefront rather than be kept in the background?

In the future - Survey

- Interested? Please talk to one of us afterwards
 - Liaison for your institution
 - Being a participant

Conclusion

Workload associated with online and blended teaching is ill-defined and poorly understood

As more new technologies impact on the sector it is critical to reconsider and audit practices to ensure future innovation and sustainability of work practices

For more information

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Thank you – now we are out of hours

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