Learning and Teaching Week Wrap-Up

The verdict is in! Learning and Teaching Week was very well received, with over 220 participants across four campuses. During the event, we asked people to identify three things that they learned; the highlight of the week for them; and what they would like to see in the future.

Participants identified learning opportunities in three main areas: the University’s procedures and how they relate to outside agencies; the application of new ideas to teaching practice; and various technologies available to support and structure Learning and Teaching.

In terms of highlights of the week, most people identified the opportunity to share practice; learn from others; and to network with other people from outside of their area. The sessions on Learnline Templates, Developing the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching, Apple iBooks and the walk around sessions were identified as favourites.

In terms of future events, people just seem to want more! More opportunity to share ideas; to focus on Learning and Teaching; and to explore opportunities for improvement.

As part of our promotion for the week everyone who completed an evaluation form for any session went into the draw to win an iPad. Congratulations to Neil Croker from the VET Business Team who won the iPad!

Check out the OLT webpage at http://www.cdu.edu.au/olt/ltweek.html to get access to the presentation materials and some photos from the week. We captured each session if we had permission to do so and/or it was feasible (some we were not able to due to the presenter’s preference and others, it didn’t make sense to do so). Finally I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who contributed to making the week such a big success!

VET Quality Management System
(Learning and Teaching)

The VET Quality Management System (Learning and Teaching) was launched on 3 September 2012 during Learning and Teaching Week with over 100 staff attending the sessions. The document that explains this new system and the associated forms can be found on the staff intranet under Faculty of VET > VETQMS (Learning & Teaching) > VET Resources and Forms. If you have any further enquiries or wish to arrange a presentation for your team, please contact Louise King on x6405.

CDU Mobile

Phase 2 of CDU Mobile is underway with Blackboard and ideally will include the following modules: News, Events, Videos and Courses. This phase will take a few months to assemble and we are hoping for a rollout by the end of the year. More information can be found on the CDU Mobile website at http://mobile.cdu.edu.au, or by contacting Helen Rysavy on x7779.
TEACHING SPACES UPDATE

As indicated in an email sent out by Associate Professor Martin Carroll, the physical changes to teaching spaces, particularly in Red 6, Yellow 1 and Blue 1, will begin shortly. The upgrades will introduce state of the art audio-visual technologies such as integrated smart projectors and centrally-supported videoconferencing facilities. Several rooms will be specifically designed to support the use of Collaborate with internal and external students participating synchronously. Other improvements will include more telephones, providing access to security and support, and a refresh of colours, paints and carpets.

This work will take place from 2 November 2012 – 10 February 2013, in time for students to enjoy the benefits, from Semester One next year.

During the upgrade period, rooms will be inaccessible to students and staff to enable essential building and cabling work to be carried out. CDU Timetabling is finalising alternative arrangements for existing bookings for the impacted rooms/venues. Teaching staff will be contacted shortly to confirm the alternative arrangements.

Thank you for your patience.

PD OPPORTUNITIES

We are continuing to add to our online professional development program. New units include:

Marking and Moderation

Marking and moderation are two activities that all teaching staff will be involved in. This is also relevant to staff who are employed solely to do marking though aren't directly involved in the teaching of the unit. The aim of this unit is to describe a range of sensible methods to make marking and moderation as gratifying as possible for you, whilst being fair and equitable for your students and in line with CDU requirements.

Creating and Moderating Online Discussions

Running online discussions using the Discussion Board tool is one of the most common teaching methods used in online courses. It is probably natural to see these as a direct online counterpart to on-campus tutorial discussions, and therefore lecturers will often choose to create a series of weekly tutorial and online discussions using the same topics. This rarely works very well. The aim of this unit is to explain why, and to describe the quite different considerations needed to create and manage effective online discussions.

As a reminder, new staff must undertake an induction to Learning and Teaching at CDU that includes a basic introduction to Learnline where appropriate. Other PD units include:

- Introduction to Learnline: Assisting Students
- Introduction to Learnline: Creating Units
- Online Teaching with Learnline
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Building Groupwork Skills

Each unit is available online and can be started at any time and worked through at your own pace. Further information and registration is available at:


PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Active Learning

The second of the key online Learning and Teaching principles that we are exploring in detail is Active Learning. This mode of instruction focuses the responsibility of learning on the learner, with the lecturer structuring, guiding and facilitating the learning through the organisation of a range of activities.

Examples of activities that facilitate active learning include:

- Class discussions where the topic for discussion requires the learners to think critically, use logic and knowledge to support their position and evaluate others opinions. Discussions are beneficial as a follow-up activity to help reinforce lesson content.
- Think-Pair-Share activities require learners to individually consider an issue, then share their thoughts with a partner and finally share the information with the class. This structure is supportive of learners as they get to clarify their thoughts with each other before sharing with their peers.
- A one-minute paper involves learners brainstorming everything they can think of in regards to the topic covered. They then spend some time putting their thoughts in order so they can share their knowledge with either another or with the class. Although the activity is called a one-minute paper, the students will require much longer than this to do this activity properly.
- Guided reciprocal peer questioning requires the lecturer to give the learners a set of generic question stems such as:
  - What is the main idea of …….?
  - What if ……..?
  - How does X affect Y?
  - Explain why ……..?
  - How does this relate to what I have learned before?
  - How are X and Y similar?
Students work individually to write their own questions based on the above question stems. Students are then grouped into teams with each student offering a question for discussion based on the question stem.
- Graphic organisers, such as flowcharts, branch diagrams, mind maps or tables can be used to assist students with structuring their learning. Graphic organisers can also be given to students with some information missing. Students are required to complete the missing parts of the graphic organiser and compare their answers with a partner. The lecturer can then get input from the students to complete the graphic organiser with the whole class.

Each of these active learning activities can take place in a face-to-face classroom, in an online classroom or in a blended classroom as they all require students to interact with each other and so they assist in building collaborative learning communities.