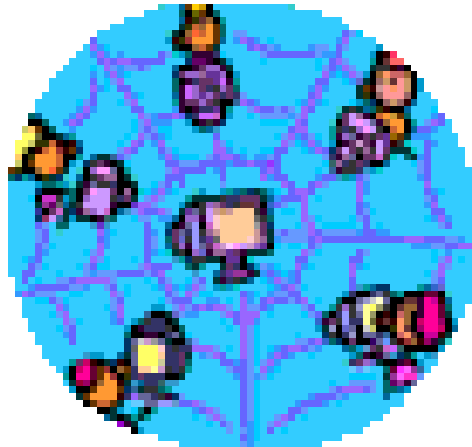


# Small Cascades



Welcome!

Nick Noakes  
Hong Kong University of  
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# Opening doors

"The most important lesson for instructors new to Networked Learning is to find the time to discover and play with Networked Learning tools. In this way instructors will experience the problems, frustrations and excitement that learners experience."

(Haughey and Anderson, 1998, p. 105)





# Outline

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- Course Description
- Design Rationale
- Participant Evaluation
- Lessons Learned



# FLO: Course Description

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- Voluntary, in-service course for FL teachers
  - During a 14-week semester but no teaching reduction
  - Website + Web-based conference
  - Structured content with some choice
    - Unit 1: online student's role
    - Unit 2: online facilitator's role
    - Unit 3: promoting communication and collaboration
    - Unit 4: curriculum conversion for the online environment
    - Unit 5: integration
-



# Design Rationale: Learning-community Centred

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- Social interaction as a critical learning process
  - Safe/supportive environment
  - Learners with diverse backgrounds learning from each other
  - Integration of learners past experiences with new content
  - Linking Practice & Theory
-



# Design Structure for Learning-community Centred

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- Create multiple spaces for work, interaction and socialising
  - Include multiple types of interactions (with content, with peers, with facilitator)
  - Include collaborative, team-based learning
-

# Role of the Facilitator-Learner



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- Setting overall goals and objectives
  - Stating expectations
  - Negotiating participation requirements up front and ongoing review
  - Being accessible but not dominating
  - Carefully modelling the processes and ideologies
  - Learning with and from the class participants
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# Expected Roles of the Learner-Facilitators



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- To be present online avoiding passive observing
  - To create, share and hold knowledge and experiences
  - To be self-directed
  - To manage their time effectively
  - To teach each other and facilitate their learning experience
  - To be leaders
  - To 'listen' to others
  - To observe and reflect on the process
-





# Tasks

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- Before the official start
    - Complete an online orientation
  - For all four units over each 3-week period
    - Read an online 'lecture'
    - Choose and respond to one discussion question
    - Critique set, online readings
    - Summarise personal key learning points in a reflective journal
-



# Tasks

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- For units 1 & 2 (optional for 3 & 4)
  - Critique a self-chosen online reading
- For unit 3
  - Critique an online course
- For unit 4
  - Adapt part of an existing curriculum for online



# Constraints & Concerns

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- Fear of technology
  - Different levels of PC literacy
  - Keyboarding skills
  - Access at home
  - Language of the course
  - Time
  - Participant numbers
-



# Changes during the course

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- Workload
  
- Time frame

# Summative Evaluation: What Helped?



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- Supportive team members and facilitator
  - The learning community
  - Peers' comments
  - Well planned curriculum
  - Website
  - Readings/articles
  - Self-motivation
-

# Summative Evaluation: What P's Gained?



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- Do OLL with clear justifications, not because a trend
  - Added a new dimension to existing courses
  - Awareness of the advantages and limitations of an OL course
  - Understanding of basic notions and implementation issues
  - Increased knowledge (technical, subject, of peers) and confidence in handling OLL
  - Experience of engaging in an OL course and a learning community
-

# Summative Evaluation: What To Retain?



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- Resources
- Project and collaborative team work
- Course structure and all the tasks
- Everything

# Summative Evaluation: What Hindered?



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- Time (needs 3-4 hrs per week)
  - Tight schedule
  - High expectations of self
  - Other commitments/own hectic schedule
  - Poor self-discipline
-



# Summative Evaluation: What P's Didn't Get?



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- Lots of things as not ready for them yet
- Sufficient interaction with peers as numbers dropped from 15 to 7
- How instructor made decisions for the course – balancing intervention with freedom

# Summative Evaluation: What To Change?



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- Discussion questions sometimes overlapped
- More opportunity earlier for short formative opinion exchange
- Less assignments
- Stretch the course a little longer (x3)

# Online Learning – Lessons Learned



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- Ongoing flexibility
  - Participant numbers – the minimum
  - Participant's time commitment – the minimum
  - Communication is key
  - Plan for the affective element
  - Richness and reach
-

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# Thank You!

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# Q & A