Title: Encouraging creativity and reflection in the curriculum

Presenters: Catherine O'Donnell, Alan Masson and Jill Harrison
University of Ulster

Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will have:

- o Explored innovation in curriculum design within institutional processes.
- o Engaged in one aspect of the Viewpoints toolkit.
- o Understood how sharing curriculum plans across a student learning timeline at course, module and activity level can help academics prepare for effective practice.
- o Discussed, shared and evaluated how the Viewpoints approach may be applicable to their own Institution and/or teaching practice.

Session Outline

It can be challenging for academic teams to identify and agree high-level educational objectives to inform curriculum planning. Helping academics capture, illustrate and share how a curriculum is planned across a student learning timeline at course, module and activity level can help them prepare for effective practice.

This session introduces Viewpoints[1], a JISC Curriculum Design project[2] with a remit to pioneer user-friendly reflective tools in both workshop and online format to promote and enhance good curriculum design, by focusing planning around different perspectives to ensure an engaging student experience.

This session demonstrates how teams can be assisted to incorporate pedagogic best practice research into teaching and learning plans, and be encouraged to be more creative and innovative in their designs. It shares experiences from past workshops, e.g. photos, videos, quotations and case studies and demonstrates how these can stimulate constructive dialogue and foster collaboration, helping teams build ideas towards a student-centred curriculum design model.

The project is helping the University of Ulster[3] address strategic goals to "enhance the quality of the student learning experience" and "promote and foster creativity and innovation in the curriculum" (Teaching and learning Strategy[4]). The tools help teams consider areas such as, assessment and feedback, information skills, learner engagement and creativity and innovation while always putting the learner at the heart of planning. They are underpinned by pedagogical approaches, such as the REAP Assessment Principles[5,] SCONUL Model for Information Literacy[6], and the Hybrid Learning Model[7]. They align to the University's

[Creativity and Innovation working group](http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/creativity_curriculum.html)[8] and to a new Information skills strategy being developed within the University.

Attendees will be invited to participate in activities using one aspect of the Viewpoints toolkit. There will be frequent opportunities to share experiences, compare outputs and to discuss how the approach may be applicable to their own teaching practice.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

1. Welcome and introduction to the work of the Viewpoints Project (5 minutes).

2. Sharing of experiences and research regarding the capturing, illustrating and sharing of how a curriculum is planned across a student learning timeline at course, module and activity level at the University of Ulster. Discussions about how this may help academics prepare for planning effective student-centred practice (15 minutes).

3. Taster: Hands-on Viewpoints activity (45 minutes total).
   o   Group work task 1: Consider given scenario (5 minutes).
   o   Group work task 2: Select principles (5 minutes).
   o   Group work task 3: Map principles to a student learning timeline (10 minutes).
   o   Group work task 4: Select implementation ideas and tailor a solution (15 minutes).
   o   Group work task 5: Share outputs and feedback (10 minutes).

4. Brief discussion and brainstorming activity about how the Viewpoints approach may be applicable to other institutions and/or teaching practice (15 minutes).

5. Some evaluation findings, questions and close (10 minutes).

References

[1] Viewpoints Project, University of Ulster <http://viewpointsproject.blogspot.com/> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[2] JISC <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/curriculumdesign.aspx> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[3] University of Ulster <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[4] Teaching and Learning Strategy, 2008/09-2012/13, University of Ulster <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/tls/> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[5] Re-Engineering Assessment Practices in Scottish Higher Education, University of Strathclyde <http://www.reap.ac.uk/> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[6] Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/sp/model.html> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[7] Hybrid Learning Model, developed by CETL(NI), University of Ulster <http://cetl.ulster.ac.uk/elearning/hlm.php> [Accessed 28 October 2010]

[8] Creativity in the Curriculum Working Group, University of Ulster <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/creativity_curriculum.html> [Accessed 28 October 2010]