Welcome to the first edition of Learning and Teaching @ Hope. A newsletter designed to keep you up to date with all the learning and teaching activity across the institution.

Throughout the year we will use this space to not only share good practice and keep you informed of all the CoP activity but to co-ordinate University-wide evaluations of a range of learning and teaching strategies. Development in learning and teaching is driven by dialogue, so we want this to be just one part of a larger conversation occurring in classrooms, departments and communities across the university. The more you contribute, the more we will gain and there will be opportunities in each edition to get involved in a range of activities that will help us develop as an institution but will also be of benefit to the development of your own practice. In this edition you will have the opportunity to get involved in some upcoming communities of practice; to inform us your own enhancement activity and also to get involved in a coordinated evaluation of 'Flipping the Classroom'.

Community of Practice Update

The first Learning & Teaching day for the 2014/2015 academic year was held on Thursday 30th October. All the University academics came together for a day of intensive and rewarding discussions focused on Learning & Teaching across the University.

The sessions focused on; curriculum, learning outside the classroom, classroom practice, assessments, the student experience and Educational Technology.

Over the following three weeks there will be meetings of several communities of practice and you are all invited. As we go forward, these will function as spaces to talk about the important emerging issues across the institution where you will share good practice and get up to speed on new developments and key theories in learning and teaching.

Virtual Learning Environments (VLE’s) when used properly can extend the learning environment by bridging the lectures and seminars with virtual learning events. In this way we can use it to stretch our students, keeping them engaged with the learning process both in and outside the university. We will use this space to
Learning CoP
uncover some of the ways that we already do this and explore existing resources that can help us do this better.

The next meeting of this CoP will take place on Tuesday 25th November in Eden 013 - time tbc.

The vast majority of the University uses the lecture, seminar and tutorial delivery pattern for its courses. If done effectively, the content from the lectures can drive the seminars and tutorials creating a seamless curriculum element that provides a wealth of opportunities for achieving both conceptual depth and critical engagement with course content. Creating this seamless unit is of course a difficult task and we use this CoP to unpack the challenges and opportunities that this provides delivery pattern provides. We will also use this space to continue the discussion about peer observation and our resident national teaching fellow Prof Ruth Pilkington will present her work on peer observation from other institutions.

The next meeting of this CoP will take place on Wednesday 26th November at 12noon in Eden 203.

The Improving the Lecture and Small Group Teaching CoP

The Mobile Learning CoP
In this CoP we will continue our discussions from the Educational Technology CoP to discuss the educational implications of embedding mobile and tablet technology into classroom. iPad’s in particular are part of everyday life in the School of Teacher Education and in some instances a full class set are used in every lesson. We will learn from the practitioners who make that happen and as will be a common feature of this CoP, you will be presented with some apps that an academic just can't live without.

The next meeting of this CoP will take place on Thursday 27th November at 1pm in Eden 013

The New and Emerging Technology CoP
Come and have a play with the most exciting new technology out there: Oculus Rift. This is virtual reality technology for the 21st Century and there are already vibrant discussions taking place all over the world on just how this technology will impact upon education. You will also be introduced to touchcast, the next revolution in streaming video technology and we will also debate, when exactly we should ‘buy in’ to new technology.

The next meeting of this CoP will take place on Tuesday 2nd December in FML 415 time tbc

The New and Emerging Technology CoP

The Assessment CoP
The theme of this CoP will be ‘The Examination’. The most divisive of the assessment modes, the formal examination can be a valid and reliable tool for assessing critical understanding in a subject or a high-stress, high-stakes memory test. We will discuss good practice in examination designed and try to get a handle on all the strengths and weaknesses of using the exam as tool for assessing and supporting student learning.

The next meeting of this CoP will take place on Wednesday 3rd December
The very best Teaching at Higher Education is infused with the knowledge, skills and critical insight that comes from being an active researcher. In this CoP we discuss some of the ways that we can build that into our practice. Examples from the Faculty of Education, where students learn research methods by researching with a tutor for a whole year and from the wider institution will be shared.

The next meeting of this CoP will take place on Thursday 4th December in Eden 203 time tbc.

Learning and Teaching Day Schedule

2014 -2015 Learning and Teaching week Schedule

For information the following dates have been agreed as the upcoming Learning & Teaching days for the University. Please be aware that the format and topics of discussion on these days may alter over time and staff members will be informed accordingly. Please remember that academics are expected to attend all the Learning & Teaching days, any issues surrounding attendance should be discussed with the Dean of your Faculty.

Friday 9th January 2015- University Learning & Teaching day
Friday 23rd January 2015- University Learning & Teaching day
Wednesday 18th February 2015- Faculty Learning & Teaching day
Wednesday 22nd April 2015- Departmental Learning & Teaching day

All teaching will be centrally removed from University timetables any questions or queries relating to this should be emailed to learningandteaching@hope.ac.uk

Share Your Practice!

One of our major institutional goals this year is to bring the interesting learning and teaching that is happening at the departmental level out to the rest of the university.

We will share a lot of this through our community of practice network, but the first step is finding out what we are already doing. If you have done something or are planning to do something interesting in learning and teaching let us know!

This might be something you have already developed or something that is just an idea at this point, either way we are interested in finding out what people are doing.

Use the simple form at the following LINK to tell us what you are up to. There is no obligation beyond filling this out at this point. We are just interested in what’s out there.
The Learning and Teaching Prize

During the welcome at the Learning & Teaching day, it was announced that a competition would be held to encourage the dissemination of good practice by sharing innovations with the wider University.

The ‘Liverpool Hope University prize for Excellent in Learning and Teaching’ is open to all Liverpool Hope university departments. The judging panel will welcome entries in any format – the more creative the better! The only rules are that all entries focus on Principle 2 which states: All students at Liverpool Hope University will experience: A coherent curriculum supported by well-designed assessments and appropriate feedback.

Entries must also showcase the Departments originality, demonstrate significant impact on the student experience and have potential for widespread use within or across disciplines. All entrants will be judged by an impartial committee and winners will be recommending to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Pillay. The winning Department(s) will be announced during the Foundation Day service and will receive a £1000 donation to their Departmental book budget.

For more details please email learningandteaching@hope.ac.uk

Evaluate This!

One of the biggest problems with deciding which Learning and Teaching strategies we should promote around the university, is discovering which strategies genuinely support student learning. Periodically we will be using this newsletter to suggest a learning and teaching strategy that we can all try out across the university and use the same evaluation tools to compare our findings.

This month: Flipping the Classroom.

Flipping the Classroom is a pedagogical approach, whereby students are asked to engage with the content of the course outside the classroom rather than in the lecture or seminar. This enables the practitioner to use the space where they are all in the room together to actually talk about the content rather than passively listening to the tutor.

Originating from the first wave of blended learning approaches in the 1990’s and more recently popularised by Salman Kahn (owner of the hugely popular Kahn Academy) the flipped classroom is gaining serious traction as a pedagogical tool. Our goal is to get as many practitioners as possible to have a go at flipping the classroom (you may already be doing it) and evaluate it together.

If you sign up, we will support you in finding some appropriate content (perhaps a YouTube video) to present to your students prior to an appropriate lecture, seminar or tutorial and then use your classroom to actively engage with the content. We will send you all the appropriate evaluative materials to see if you and your students think it was effective and then we will share all the data through here. Leave your name HERE if you are interested.