COVID-19 Leap – not only digital but also pedagogical

By Suvi Valsta & Tuija Marstio, Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Introduction

- Laurea University of Applied Sciences is a Finnish UAS with appr. 7800 students on six campuses in Helsinki-Uusimaa region, [https://www.laurea.fi/en/](https://www.laurea.fi/en/)
- Laurea specialises on Learning by Developing methodology (LbD) that combines studies with real working life and RDI projects
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HE teacher of today: multiple roles

Tasks of universities of applied sciences in Finland:

- Teaching
- Regional development
- Research & Development

- Teacher
- Facilitator
- Tutor
- Researcher
- Project partner
- Developer
- Substance matter expert
- Learning designer
- Instructor for work life traineeship
- Adviser for professional development
HE teacher of today: multiple skills

TPACK Model (Koehler & Mishra, 2008; 2009; Koehler et al., 2014)

Online learning design
Production of digital material
Selection and use of suitable digital platforms & tools
Online guidance, feedback and assessment
Collaboration & facilitation online
Application of pedagogical models online (e.g., LbD)
Online interaction
Learning design through Communities of Practice

Learning Design:

- A student-centred approach to plan learning tasks or activity
- Thinking about the whole time the student is learning, not just the moments when the student is with the teacher

Communities of Practice:

- A group of individuals who share a common passion, shared interest and a shared body of knowledge, experiences, and techniques
- A space between loose social networks and focused work groups.

(Communities of Practice, based on Jarche, H. 2016)
Digipedagogical support at Laurea

- **Responsibilities:**
  - dCELL specialists focus on technical and pedagogical training
  - digi-lecturers on pedagogical and peer support

- **Types of support include:**
  - frequent online events
  - in-depth thematic workshops
  - MS Teams support channels
  - informal collegial support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of support</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>What?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical training</td>
<td>dCELL specialists, Canvas agents (teacher volunteers)</td>
<td>Support clinics, thematic workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>dCELL specialists, digi-lecturers</td>
<td>Pedagogical workshops, thematic training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer support</td>
<td>Digi-lecturers, peers in Microsoft Teams support channels</td>
<td>Collegial support at the campuses, thematic Microsoft Teams channels for discussion and Q&amp;A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communities of Practice at Laurea

- At Laurea, Communities of Practice play an important role in promoting digitalisation and leveling up the quality of teaching and learning.
- In formal domain, dCELL is responsible for the digital pedagogy and digital learning environments & tools, IT provides infrastructure and hardware level support.
- Digi-lecturers are in the intersection of formal work teams and CoPs (spending 20-50% of their hours on digipedagogical support on top of their teaching work).

(CoPs at Laurea by Tuija Marstio, based on Jarche, 2016)
Trends & observations from feedback data

**What works?**
- low threshold support channels
- extensive help documentation
- frequent short training sessions

**Why:** Peer support network compliments the formal support functions and creates a sense of community + psychological safety

**What are the challenges?**
- teachers do not always know the right way to contact support → support channels should be designed with the user in mind, not the organisation!
- also support teachers' general skills, such as information seeking, tech skills

**Also, consider not renewing intranet portal during stressful times unless it has really good search functions! 😊**
Recommendations from us

- When designing teaching, it should be designed with “online” in mind, not just converting traditional lecture to online lectures
- Combination of support channels allows giving for personalised support to teachers
- Having cross-team roles helps building awareness on how different parts of your organisation perceive your services and what kind of help they seek and need
- Aim to facilitate your teachers to create that change
- Allocate enough resources for different support functions, be it formal teams or informal CoPs
Thank you!
References


