Developing Deeper Learning and Engagement

EDUCAUSE on Campus

What is EDUCAUSE on Campus? Using EDUCAUSE resources—video, readings, and discussion guides—you can create programs and completely design local professional development events. Combined with the EDUCAUSE Event Planning Kit, containing resources to plan your meeting and facilitate discussions, you can bring innovative ideas and thought leadership from across higher ed IT to your faculty and staff in an easy, cost-effective fashion. This document will take you through the basic steps to prepare and customize the content for your program.

Step One: Decide Purpose and Length of Event

The first question to ask yourself or your event team is, What is the purpose of this program? Is it to get a diverse group together to build a team while learning more about a specific topic? Do you plan to develop a more intense, assignment-driven experience on a highly focused topic for your attendees? Or do you want a fun, full-of-activity escape from daily work where you can learn more about a broad topic? Knowing the demographic of the people you are working with will be crucial here. That will influence your determination of what you intend to accomplish with your program. Once you have that question answered, you can move on to the next step.

Step Two: Develop Your Curriculum on Your Program’s Topic or Theme

The next step is to consider your theme and curriculum. What is the main thrust of this experience? What is the primary goal you want all your participants to meet? How would you define success, in terms of what your people walk away with? Once you figure out the main theme and these learning objectives, you can use the content on the following pages to create a highly customized curriculum for your program.

As you assemble your program using the suggested content on the following pages, be sure to search for more current content on the EDUCAUSE website as resources, articles, podcasts, webcasts, and other valuable content is added every day.

Step Three: Plan the Logistics and Host Your Program

Using the two-part EDUCAUSE Event Planning Kit, plan the logistical details for your site and prepare to facilitate the group learning experience on the day of your program. The kit provides easy-to-use promotional tools to help you create awareness and encourage participation. You will also find tips and strategies to continue the conversation about the event’s topic or theme.

So, take a look at the content and activities we have assembled on the following pages. With a little bit of planning you will be able to leverage the best thinking in higher ed IT to put together a great professional development activity right on your campus.
Developing Deeper Learning and Engagement Through the Use of Interactive Technology

Program Overview

Students tell us that their most engaging learning experiences are those that challenge them to consider content in new ways or dive beneath the surface to build their own understanding. As educators, we know that deeper learner experiences—those that engage students in collaborative, constructive tasks—can help deepen understanding, prolong knowledge retention, and, in many cases, keep students engaged longer in the learning process. Yet instructors often struggle with the concept of deeper learning the classroom. How can we create truly collaborative—and not merely cooperative—learning experiences? Are there ways to bring in outside voices and expertise? How do we know that our students are learning?

Using this program, IT staff and faculty will learn more about the ways that immersive and engaging technologies can help support deeper learning experiences in the classroom. Resources are intended to explore existing models while challenging participants to consider key questions related to their own implementation and integration on campus. This EDUCAUSE on Campus kit is targeted at institutions and individuals interested in learning more about the initial challenge areas for Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC).

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1. Pre-Event Activities

1.1. Pre-Event Homework

To provide attendees with background in the topic, consider suggesting the following resources as pre-event homework:


1.2. Pre-Event Conversation Starters

To help participants begin connecting around key ideas before the session begins, consider posing the following questions for discussion. Discussion might occur on a discussion board, across e-mail, or in a face-to-face meeting during the program.

- Briefly, how would you describe deeper learning and engagement?
- How do we know that deeper learning has or is occurring?
- What are some strategies for promoting deeper learning in the classroom?
- When considering potential technologies that might structure deeper learning activities, what characteristics must they have?

2. Opening Session

Michael Wesch, “From Knowledgeable to Knowledge-Able: Experiments in New Media Literacy”
ELI 2009 Annual Meeting Generation Session
Duration: 50 minutes

It took tens of thousands of years for writing to emerge after speech, thousands more before the printing press was invented, and a few hundred more for the telegraph to arrive. Today, new ways of relating are constantly created and a new communication medium emerges every time someone creates a web application—a Flickr here, a Twitter there. How can we use new media to foster the kinds of communication and community we desire in education? This presentation discusses both successful and unsuccessful attempts to integrate emerging technologies into the classroom to create a rich virtual learning environment.

Post-Viewing Discussion Questions:

- How are we and our students learning and exchanging information in our personal and professional lives? What lessons can we extract for how we teach and share information in the classroom?
- How can we sift through “what’s popular” to determine what’s truly transformative for teaching and learning?

2.1. Additional Session Suggestions

To continue exploring the topic, consider these sessions for your campus event. For each, a theme has been identified to help you select sessions for your group’s interest and expertise. You might also consider offering “track” sessions by playing videos in separate rooms.
• **Bryan Alexander, “Deeper Learning and Engagement”**  
Next Generation Learning Challenges Back to Campus Webcast, September 2010  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Theme: A review of current and emerging Web 2.0 tools for engagement*

• **Marsha Lovett, “Metacognition and Monitoring: Understanding and Improving Students’ Skills for Learning”**  
ELI Web Seminar, May 2008  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Theme: Student learning strategies, metacognition*

• **Thomas Reeves, “Implementing Authentic Tasks in Web-Based Environments”**  
ELI Web Seminar, November 2008  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Theme: Authentic learning strategies*

• **Val Shute, “The Future of Assessment and Learning”**  
Next Generation Learning Challenges Back to Campus Webcast, September 2010  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Theme: A look at potential assessment strategies within immersive environments like games*

### 3. Synthesize for Action/Session Activities

After participating in the sessions, enhance the discussion with additional information and activities that will prepare attendees to take action. Keep in mind the learning objectives and goals that were set while defining your program.

**3.1. Identifying Opportunities**

After introducing your participants to the topic of student engagement, consider reviewing the ways that faculty are already leveraging interactive technologies to foster deeper learning. In small groups, encourage participants to explore an existing classroom implementation. As they explore, ask participants to collect their responses to the following questions for each example:

- What deeper learning strategies are addressed by the implementation?
- What other tools might be used to a similar effect?
- What types of resources or support are available for users?
- What are the benefits to this model? Potential challenges?

After the activity, gather the teams together for a report out. Ask them to briefly share the details from their case study. Then, as a collective group, assemble lists for the following topics:

- Example technologies for learning
- Support models
- Potential challenges
- Potential benefits
3.2. Case Studies

- **Gardner Campbell**, "**Twitter Symbiosis: A Librarian, a Hashtag, and a First-Year Seminar**"  
  ELI 2010 Annual Meeting Track Session  
  *Duration: 50 minutes*

- **Douglas Duncan**, “**Clicks and Peer Instruction: A Powerful Way to Improve Student Engagement But Only if You Do It Right!**”  
  ELI Web Seminar, October 2009  
  *Duration: 1 hour*

- **Jude Higdon and Karen Howell**, ”**Student-Generated Content for Wikis, Blogs, and Podcasts**"  
  ELI Web Seminar, April 2009  
  *Duration: 1 hour*

- **Michelle Pacansky-Brock**, “**Teaching Without Walls: Life Beyond the Lecture**”  
  ELI Web Seminar, September 2009  
  *Duration: 1 hour*

- **Michael Stephens**, “**Creative Collaboration and Immersive Engagement: The Hyperlinked Campus**”  
  ELI 2010 Annual Meeting Featured Session  
  *Duration: 50 minutes*

- **Paul Wallace**, “**Some of My Students Are Not Human! Interaction and Collaboration in Virtual Worlds**”  
  ELI 2010 Annual Meeting Featured Session  
  *Duration: 50 minutes*

3.3. Working with Faculty

New technologies for fostering engagement rise and fall on an almost daily basis in the marketplace, making it increasingly difficult to keep faculty on the “cutting edge” of the very tools that stand to deepen student engagement and accelerate content mastery in the classroom. Even more challenges can be maintaining the critical balance between early adopters on campus and those that may need the extra nudge to consider new tools.

How do we encourage faculty to experiment with new technologies in the classroom? How do we shift the conversation from merely discussing emerging tools to identifying and assessing those tools that will have the greatest impact on learning and student success? How do we balance support for early adopters with time to reach out to more hesitant instructors?

- "**Encouraging Faculty Adoption and Innovation in Teaching and Learning with Technology**" Solutions in Action Webcast  
  In this lightning round presentation, IT staff share their campus solutions for engaging and training faculty.

**Session Activity:** While watching each presentation, ask participants to reflect on the following questions:

- Which of these ideas holds the most promise for faculty on your campus?
- What are the key takeways?
- Based on these presentations, what will you do differently on campus?
3.4. Considering Scale

Too often, when we hear of innovative uses of technology to engage students in the classroom, they exist within the silo of an individual institution or classroom. But how might we benefit from scaling and adopting “what works” across higher education?

Consider asking your attendees to review the following:

**Bror Saxberg, “Scaling Innovation in Learning”**
Next Generation Learning Challenges Back to Campus Webcast, October 2010
*Duration: 1 hour*

Questions to consider:

- How might broad scale adoption of learning innovations impact what we know about the ways that students learn and effective strategies?
- What would be required to scale a promising innovation on your campus? Who would be involved? What subsequent resources or processes would need to be created? What resources would you need?
- How can we better facilitate and encourage collaboration across institutions for the benefit of scale and adoption?

4. Customize Your Event with Additional Content and Activities

In addition to content provided by EDUCAUSE, we encourage each local institution to consider ways to bring local voices into the conversation, allowing for networking among participants and interaction within your local community.

Consider:

- **Problem-Solving Workshops:** Create scenarios for individual discussion teams related to cloud computing. Individual scenarios might focus on a specific type of service or a problem that participants have faced on campus. (You could solicit potential topics from participants in advance.) Organize the group around each scenario and challenge them to read the problem, discuss, and prepare a brief presentation based on their collective ideas for a response. Present each group’s findings in a report out at the end of the session.

- **Discussion Sessions:** At the start of the session or before, ask participants to share their concerns related to cloud computing, perhaps posing the question in a poll before the event or on a whiteboard or flipchart throughout the program. Leave time in your day for participants to break into smaller groups around the big issues for informal discussion. To aid the process, consider assigning discussion facilitators who are trained to get the conversation moving and to capture key ideas. Plan time for a report out from all the groups involved.

- **A Brainstorming Carousel:** Carousels are a high-energy activity designed to generate content and build collective ideas. Consider these three questions or create your own:
  1. What are the potential benefits to utilizing cloud computing services on campus?
  2. What are the potential risks to cloud computing?
  3. What areas are most logical for cloud computing services?

Create three distinct areas in the room, one for each question, and ask participants to migrate to an area. For five minutes, ask them to react to the questions on a flipchart. When their time is up, ask the group to migrate to the next station and to spend five minutes building on the previous group’s responses. After another rotation, each group should have responded to each question. At the end
of the session, ask each group to share big ideas from their last station, incorporating their comments with those of the group before.

4.1. Building a Campus Commitment

After exploring the topic, reviewing case studies, and brainstorming potential strategies for success, consider challenging participants to think about the ways that the development and deployment of open core courseware can foster next generation learning and engagement. Challenge your group to create a blueprint for moving forward with your own campus investigation or implementation.

Questions to begin the dialogue:

- How can we better design our campus learning environments to support deeper learning and engagement?
- How can we track, share, and build upon what works?
- How can we support faculty in their development and design of interactive learning activities?
- What are some campus-wide strategies for scaling promising learning innovations? What are the challenges to adoption across the campus or across institutions?

5. After the Event

This event should just be the start of conversations with your faculty and staff about the role of computer labs on your campus. Consider using your local event as a jump start to continued professional development. Post-session events might include:

- **Problem-Solving Lunches**: Build on the community formed during your event during a series of solution-seeking brown-bag lunches. Ask faculty and staff to bring their frustrations and concerns to the group during a series of “problem-solving lunches” where they seek feedback from colleagues. Or, pose a challenge to the group each week and ask them to collaborate on potential solutions or ideas moving forward.

- **New Ideas Lightning Round**: Consider using a lightning round to highlight new initiatives or projects started after the event ends. A lightning round is delivery of a series of short (~five minute) presentations on related topics in a single session. After the session, leave time for informal interaction between attendees and speakers.

- **Virtual Community**: Use the event—and the interest generated in the topic—to build a virtual community of practice around enterprise services. Learning management systems, social networking tools like Ning, and community wikis can provide the tools necessary for colleagues to share resources, plan events, and continue conversations.