



Faculty of Humanities Strategic Professional Development Plan for Blended Learning

Purpose

This document describes activities to be undertaken as part of the 3C Project to increase the use of blended learning approaches in the Faculty of Humanities. It focuses on the aims and objectives for the Faculty and sets out a plan of action to achieve identified goals.

Key Staff

The following staff were involved in the development of this Strategic Professional Development Plan for Blended Learning for the Faculty of Humanities:

Professor Chu-Ren Huang, Dean	Faculty of Humanities
Mr Andrew Morrall, eLearning Advocate 3C Project	English Language Centre
Dr Xiaoheng Zhang, eLearning Advocate 3C Project	Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies
Mr Peter Duffy, 3C Project Leader	3C Project, Educational Development Centre
Dr Christine Armatas, Senior Project Fellow	3C Project, Educational Development Centre

Background

The 3C project is a 2 year institutional initiative at PolyU funded by VP(AD) in support of PolyU's strategic plan. The broad aim of the 3C Project is to enhance the eLearning / Blended Learning culture at PolyU. The approach used to address this is through the use of the 3 concurrent foci (3C) of collaboration, community and context. For more information please refer to www.3c.edc.polyu.edu.hk.

The activities described in this plan have been developed after consultation with the two eLearning Advocates for the Faculty of Humanities – Dr Xiaoheng Zhang and Mr Andrew Morrall.

Key Drivers

The Faculty is faced with a number of key challenges over the next few years, including the introduction of the 3+3+4 education model, outcomes-based education, Freshmen seminars and Capstone projects. The increased use of blended learning will assist in managing these key challenges by providing staff with skills and experience to help them to teach more effectively and efficiently, using new approaches that incorporate eLearning technologies. It is envisaged that staff will be able to use technology to enhance the teaching and learning experience both in and outside of class, and to help students become independent learners.



Aim of the strategy

The aim of the strategy is to provide a framework for the provision of support and training for staff in the adoption of blended learning approaches in subjects taught in the Faculty. This strategy is aligned with the Hong Kong PolyTechnic University Strategic Plan 2008/09-2011/12.

Professional Development Goals

The action plan detailed in this document is designed to:

1. increase staff awareness of the range of eLearning tools available and their application in educational contexts;
2. inform staff about what blended learning is and to help them to explore possibilities for its application in their teaching;
3. help staff to acquire the skills needed to adopt appropriate blended learning approaches in their teaching;
4. provide staff with resources to assist them adopting blended learning in their teaching;
5. promote best-practice in the use of blended learning to enhance teaching and learning at PolyU.

Activities for the Strategic Professional Development Plan for Blended Learning

Investigating ways of providing students with notebooks for use at PolyU

The 3C Project Team will investigate possible mechanisms for providing students with a notebook PC for use at PolyU. Several options will be explored including how the current laptop program run by one of the vendors could be adapted to increase uptake. Alternate models such as the provision of classroom laptops which are owned by the University will also be explored.

Interviews with Faculty Staff

As part of the needs analysis for the 3C Project, interviews will be conducted with Faculty staff to solicit their views on eLearning and Blended learning, which can also be used to inform other activities for the Strategic Professional Development Plan for Blended Learning such as the workshop series. The interviews will be conducted by student helpers using a semi-structured interview schedule developed by the 3C Project Team. The intention is to gain a representative sample from the Faculty, but this will depend on the availability and co-operation of staff. The Dean will be asked to send an email to staff advising them that someone from the 3C Project will be contacting them about an interview and requesting their participation. The findings from these interviews will be reported to the Dean, the eLearning Advocates and the Faculty and Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees.

Including an item on the SFQ relating to eLearning / Blended learning

It is possible to customise items on the SFQ, so the 3C Project Team will investigate the process for approval of new items and, in consultation with the eLearning Advocates, provide suggestions as to the wording of any items.

Using Blended Learning in the General Education courses

A working party chaired by Dr Gillian Humphreys has just submitted their report on the General Education courses for the 2012 double intake. The 3C Project Team members will liaise with Dr Humphreys and Dr John Babson, Acting Director of General Education Centre to explore how the 3C Project can assist with preparation for 2012.



Developing resources for mobile devices

The development and deployment of learning resources to mobile devices such as iPhones, iPods and PDAs will be explored, together with the provision of training and technical support for staff wishing to make use of mobile technologies in their teaching. This activity will link into work currently underway in eLDSS such as the Mobile Learning Interest Group and workshops on mobile technologies such as Twitter and PodCasting.

Teaching students to input Chinese characters

A working group consisting of a member of the 3C Project Team, Dr Xiaoheng Zhang and a technical staff member from EDC will be established to look at ways to teach students how to input Chinese characters quickly and efficiently. If possible, a pilot will be conducted and recommendations made as to how this could be made available to all staff and students at the University.

Workshops on eLearning and Blended Learning

Workshops customised to the needs of the Faculty will be offered as part of the 3C Project. To determine what workshops are most relevant to staff, an informal departmental meeting will be organised with staff discuss eLearning and blended learning in their teaching.

Development of templates and re-use of existing resources for blended learning

As part of a larger project being completed under the 3C umbrella, mechanisms for re-using existing resources are being explored, together with the development of templates to assist staff to teaching using a blended learning approach using a learning management system. Since Moodle is widely used in some areas of the Faculty of Humanities, the 3C Project will liaise with Mr Andrew Morrall on the development of templates for Moodle, as well as exploring possibilities for other staff using Moodle in their teaching. This activity will also link in to the proposed Departmental Learning Hub proposed for Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies (CBS). To facilitate this, the 3C Project Team will liaise with Mr Stephen Ho, Senior Technical officer in CBS.

Creating a database of copyright-free pictures and graphics

The assistance of the eLearning Advocates from the Library and ITS will be requested to develop a database of pictures and graphics that staff can use for their teaching. This could be part of a larger online resource where staff can access a range of teaching resources and materials to download and could also include information about PolyU branding, style sheets for web development etc.

Evaluation

Each activity undertaken for this Strategic Professional Development Plan for Blended Learning will be evaluated using a protocol developed by the staff involved in organising the activity. The evaluation could be completed using methods such as:

- questionnaires
- uptake and usage statistics
- focus group feedback

The result of these evaluations will be reported as per the Communications Plan.



Communications Plan

Progress on the implementation of the Strategic Professional Development Plan for Blended Learning will be communicated in the following ways:

- through reports to the Faculty and School / Department Learning and Teaching Committees;
- via the monthly 3C eNewsletter and on the 3C project website;
- at events or activities conducted as part of the 3C Project or as part of the Strategic Professional Development Plan;
- through emails and other means as required.



3C - What's in IT for me?

Action Plan

The table below indicates the activities planned as part of this Strategic Professional Development Plan for the Faculty of Humanities, together with the participants and indicative timelines. Which activities address the goals for the Plan is also indicated in the table.

Activity	Participants	Indicative Dates	Goals Addressed
Investigating ways of providing students with notebooks for use at PolyU	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team* Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	July 2009 - January 2010	5
Interviews with Faculty Staff	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team	July - August, 2009	1 and 2
Including an item on the SFQ relating to eLearning / Blended learning	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate Faculty and Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees	Semester 2, 2009	5
Using Blended Learning in the General Education courses	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team* Dr Gillian Humphreys, Department of English Dr John Babson, General Education Centre	June 2009 – May 2010	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
Developing resources for mobile devices	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team* Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	June 2009 – May 2010	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

* The 3C Project Team will involve staff from Educational Development Centre as required for each of these activities.



3C - What's in IT for me?

Activity	Participants	Indicative Dates	Goals Addressed
Teaching students to input Chinese characters	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team* Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	July 2009 – June 2010	3, 4, and 5
Workshops on eLearning and Blended Learning	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team* Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	January 2010 for ELC Early Semester 2, 2009 for other departments	1 and 2
Development of templates and re-use of existing resources for blended learning	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team	Semester 2, 2009	3, 4, and 5
Creating a database of copyright-free pictures and graphics	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team Mr David Chiu, eLA from ITS Ms Winnie Chim, eLA from Library	June 2009 – May 2010	3, 4, and 5



3C - What's in IT for me?

Additional activities to be held as part of the 3C Project which the Faculty can have involvement with are:

Activity	Organisers	Participants	Indicative Dates
eLearning Showcase	3C Project Team	Open to all PolyU staff	16 th October 2009
Teaching Innovation Award	3C Project Team	Open to all PolyU staff	12 th – 16 th October 2009 4 th June 2010
Faculty events with invited eLearning consultants	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	Invited staff from Faculty of Humanities	12 th – 16 th October 2009 4 th June 2010
Teaching and Learning Symposium	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	Open to all PolyU staff	4 th June 2010
Technology to address teaching challenges – Workshops	Mr Peter Duffy & Dr Christine Armatas, 3C Project Team Mr Andrew Morrall, Faculty eLearning Advocate Dr Xiaohang Zheng, Faculty eLearning Advocate	Open to all PolyU staff	Early Semester 2, 2009