Collaborative Learning Design: An Answer to the Crisis in Art Education?
Report from ALTO UK open education project workshops

Crisis What Crisis?

- **11 Course Leaders 20 Questions** Q Arts London:
London Student and Graduate Artist Forum http://www.q-artlondon.com/

- Poor student satisfaction ratings,

- Steep drops in undergraduate applications

- End of government funding for teaching

- 'Making' courses closing/disappearing (e.g. ceramics and textiles

- Redundancies (knowledge loss)

- Teaching cultures (or a culture of mystification?)

- Slow adoption of Technology

- Inflexible study opportunities

- Learning Design = Teaching Design

- Idea = Sharable representations of teaching and learning activities, resources and pedagogic intentions

- Came to be used in the UK and elsewhere after the development of the IMS Learning Design specification (associated with Learning Objects – the choreography of actors, resources, environments)

Collaboration & Context

- Context – Convert courses into large Open Educational Resources (OERs) (a la MIT)

- Collaboration – teachers from 3 HEIs working together

- Challenge - 'designing learning for strangers' or 'teaching in public'

- Benefit - Abstracting and sharing practice

- Open Ed: a lightening conductor for issues related to:
  – Power
  – Control
  – Ownership
  – Identity
  – Pedagogy
  – Tech Infrastructure
  – Cultures…
  – Policy
  – Digital Professional (aka Digital Literacy)

Image by Christopher Hollis
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Lightning_strike_in_Tampa_Florida_(modified).jpg

Problems of Open Education for Arts 1

- Art courses often short of traditional text-heavy didactic materials (cf MIT OCW)
- The 'invisibles':
  - Emphasis on studio/workshop practice
  - Mentoring, apprenticeship, situated learning
  - Community of learners / peers
  - The 'crit' and dialogue
  - More about process than content
  - Pedagogy deeply contextualized, individual, hard to abstract and share (in the bricks and mortar!)

- Rich media to capture and share tacit knowledge and practice:
  - The Processes (screen printing, bronze casting, weaving)
  - The 'Invisibles' (Students accounts of learning) link

- Social media (esp. YouTube/Vimeo/WP) as easy publishing platforms

- In-house platform Process.Arts (Drupal) to act as an 'open working studio'

- Traditional repository Filestore for publishing 'finished' content and linking to from elsewhere

- We now have 'chunks' of learning resources as social media and files, great they can stand-alone, but:

- How do we relate these 'chunks' to a course?

- Should we? (why not? It works elsewhere…)

- Staff time/skills

- Need something simple and sustainable

Emerging Solutions 2 – Open CourseBooks

- Look elsewhere (frugal innovation, avoid tech/ed dogma)
  - Open Textbooks (Easily understood metaphor)
  - MIT OCW (simple, consistent, easy navigation)
- Ideas:
  - Represent a course as an Open Textbook using MIT OCW style structure
  - Use a Word template to author
  - Distribute as a PDF (multiplatform) and as Word (editable)
  - Provide a link to a zip file (a la MIT OCW) to download all associated resources

Open CourseBooks Examples

ALTO UK Open CourseBook Template at: http://alto.arts.ac.uk/930/

Examples:

- **Foundation Ceramics Open CourseBook** http://alto.arts.ac.uk/975/
- **Introduction to Woven Textiles Open CourseBook** http://alto.arts.ac.uk/974/
- **Fashion Communication-Photography Open CourseBook** http://alto.arts.ac.uk/977/
- **Basic Ceramics Skills Open CourseBook** http://alto.arts.ac.uk/976/

Similar approaches are being used elsewhere – e.g. the JISC ORBIT project

Open CourseBooks Benefits

- A good 'first step' format to start sharing resources (especially from deeply contextualised practice)

- Uses easily available info / resources (handbooks minus guff!)

- Promotes reflection

- Timeline produces a narrative

- Visualisation tool (for moving to teamwork)

- Starting point for course redesign (Kirklees & Heriot Watt)

- Simple to make (Word!!!) –

- Adaptable/Editable

Next Steps

- Evaluations
- Need a better authoring Tool (than Word!!!)
- Need to author 'once play on all' (desktop, tablet, smartphone)
- HTML5 is ideal for authoring and delivery
- HTML5 authoring 'app' (supports co-design)
- Customisable templates, easy (drag and drop plus user prompts etc.)
- Attractive outputs, incl. rich media
- Prints nice
- Downloads for offline viewing and adaptation
- Accessible and semantically structured (screen readers and Google…)
- Excellent for archival and format conversion

References Useful Links

- **Pirate Radical Philosophy** Gary Hall, RP 173 (May/Jun 2012) Changing nature of authoring in a connected society.
http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/pirate-radical-philosophy-2

- **11 Course Leaders 20 Questions** Q Arts London: London Student and Graduate Artist Forum http://www.q-artlondon.com/

- **Process.Arts** http://process.arts.ac.uk/

- **ALTO Project** http://alto.arts.ac.uk/

- **The UAL Filestore** (OER Repository) http://alto.arts.ac.uk/filestore/

- **Open Spaces for Arts Education - The ALTO Ecosystem Model**
http://alto.arts.ac.uk/945

- **Disciplinary and Institutional Perspectives on Open Educational Practice in Art, Design and Media Studies: Opportunities and Challenges**
http://alto.arts.ac.uk/947/

- **UNESCO Paris OER 2012 Declaration link**

Contact: John Casey
j.casey@arts.ac.uk