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

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Author John Casey,
11 Course Leaders 20 Questions Q Arts

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)
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!)
Emerging Solutions 1

- 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

- **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