CO-CREATED COURSES THROUGH OPEN SOURCE INITIATIVES

NEWSLETTER
September 2018

CO-CREATION

Co-creation has become a hot topic in higher education, especially because of its potential to solve a number of challenges in the current higher education setting. In a society characterised by globalisation, digitalisation, and constant change, educational institutions – higher education institutions (HEI) as well as adult education institutions – must think beyond today and provide students with the skills to shape tomorrow's society. 21st century skills such as digital literacy, sustainability, entrepreneurship, global citizenship and research must be achieved by introducing New Generation curriculum design and – importantly – the self-directed curriculum. These are catalysts for a more student-centered learning approach, smarter use of ICT, and tighter links between educational institutions and employers as well as social enterprises. It therefore comes as no surprise that co-creation of course content by a broad range of stakeholders has gained much attention.

WITH STUDENTS

In the case of co-creation with students, the contributing students naturally bring their individual learning needs and qualities to the table, allowing for increased course diversification and student engagement, leading to better learning outcomes. In other words, deep-level-learning.

In contrast, current course material typically starts from the educator, and fails to engage the diverse capabilities of its students, many of which have prior work and learning experiences. Unlocking their potential through co-created course content – also in a blended and distance learning context – greatly contributes to the quality and richness of the course, and to the development of critical thinkers.

WITH COLLEAGUES AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTS

Co-creation can also involve colleagues from related disciplines or experts from the professional field. Incorporating their input will not only aid the educator in providing the most up-to-date course material in a rapidly changing environment, it also assures that students pick up on interdisciplinary knowledge and skills indispensable for their future careers.

THE CHALLENGE

Unfortunately, learning platforms often fail to strike a balance between free input by students

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and experts from related professional fields on the one hand and sufficient control and feedback facilities for the educator on the other hand. Furthermore, educators, especially those lacking in digital literacy, often get bogged down by administration and coordination,

leaving insufficient room for creativity, inspiration and research. The time bottleneck is especially present in higher/adult education where educators are faced with a wide variety of roles and large numbers of students.

CoCOS

CoCOS is a European Erasmus+ KA2 funded project that has as a main objective to apply the mindset, methods and tools gleaned for open source development to the co-creation of course content. In a number of diverse pilot courses we will test out and evaluate our experiences with open educational resources (OERs), open source platforms and freely available web tools explicitly designed to reduce course management during co-creation. Using version control technology – typically used in software development – these co-creation tools keep track of what content was created by whom at what point in time. Furthermore, it provides a hierarchical control structure, allowing the educator to keep editorial control over the final course.

THE CONSORTIUM

The consortium consists of six European partners:
- Artevelde University College (project lead), Belgium
- Ljudska Univerza Velenje, Slovenia
- National Training Centre, Bulgaria
- Jaitek Technology and Training, Spain
- Foundation Knowledge Centre Pro Work, The Netherlands
- Ghent University, Belgium

For more information   regarding
the CoCOS activities, stay up to date and
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