Strategies for securing participant motivation and engagement in a 19 week online course

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Abstract:

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Session description
In this session, we will present the results and experiences from the Teaching for Tomorrow course, a 19 week online course for lecturers designed and delivered by 7 HE institutions in southern Denmark and northern Germany.

The course is based on the following 3 learning perspectives:
- group activities that allow participants to learn from each other and create a learning environment that facilitates both informal and formal learning.
- activities that encourage participants to reflect on their own learning experiences enabling them to set and pursue personal learning goals relevant to their specific situation.
- practical work that lets the participants explore online and blended learning and gain first-hand knowledge of the potentials and challenges.

The course comprises the following 6 modules which each consists of a number of e-tivities.

1. The virtual learning environment and e-learning tools
2. Introduction to online learning
3. Educational design and design of course materials and activities
4. Delivery of online courses/The online lecturer
5. Web 2.0 and social media
6. E -assessment

Each module ends with a badge assignment that participants must submit in order to complete the module.

Teaching and learning activities are both asynchronous and synchronous. Furthermore, the course started with a face-2-face kickoff event. The main hub of the course is a course site on CourseSites/Blackboard Learn, where discussion forums, blogs and wikis are intensively used. Twitter and Google+ are also used for asynchronous activities. Synchronous activities are carried out via Adobe Connect.

The course ends on 28 February. A questionnaire survey will be conducted in early March to evaluate participants' experiences. This session will report on the results of the survey. Of particular interest is the degree to which participants have been motivated and engaged through the strategies employed in the course design and delivery:

- E-tivities with clear instructions concerning resources to study, individual contributions, interaction and deadlines.
- Peer feedback and collaboration
- Practical skills training.
- Opportunity to integrate work and learning, participants designing own courses or course elements as part of the course work.
- Mix of asynchronous and synchronous teaching and learning activities
- Module badges

Learning Outcomes

For conference delegates to
- gain knowledge and reflect on strategies for securing participant motivation and engagement in online courses
- study and learn from the experiences made at the Teaching for Tomorrow course