Curriculum
Design Pattern

Global Learning by Design

As well as providing a mechanism for capturing solutions to common education problems, curriculum design patterns can also serve as a way to share, document and publish academic work that can be informally peer reviewed and expanded upon. Below is an outline of the fields that will be used to capture and share the Curriculum Design Patterns that are produced as part of the Global Learning by Design project at RMIT.

Name of Pattern	**How we Live in the World: Fine Art online collaborations and exhibitions between Hong Kong and Melbourne**
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Abstract

This project investigates how Online Collaborative Learning (OCL) can be used in different locations to initiate communication and generate ongoing discussion. The guiding principal is to adapt and utilise a user-friendly online platform for students to engage in interactive and interdependent activities, which may develop into meaningful and shared discussions in the context of their learning. The main challenge will be to create an environment that encourages students to use online opportunities collaboratively in their fine art education. It is our aim that the project will foster a closer relationship between the everyday experience of learning and the more formal and familiar approaches to learning, and to establish new ways to consider learning across a range of cultural, geographical and social contexts.

Rationale

The aim of this project is to initiate and facilitate communication and collaboration between staff and students in diverse locations particularly in the context of contemporary fine art practice and art education. It should encourage students to use online collaboration and communication as a way to establish enquiry that leads to deeper research activities and outcomes.

Learners

The learners we are engaging for the project are second-year Expanded Studio Practice students from the Bachelor of Arts (BA) Program in the School of Art in Melbourne and Hong Kong. The profile of the students is diverse in terms of age. There is bias in gender toward females, which seems to reflect the nature of the intake of students in the program. Culturally, the students in Melbourne are primarily Anglo-Saxon and in Hong Kong, Chinese. However, race, gender and age are not contributing factors to the success or failure of the project.

This pattern has been designed to accommodate a small sample of students. It will function well for up to 40 students. The number of students would correlate to the number of students normally in a face-to-face staff/student ratio (approximately 1:22).

It should not be assumed that the pattern could automatically accommodate larger numbers of students. Larger cohorts will require more analysis of learning needs for students and staff.

Related Patterns

At this stage, existing patterns in fine art education are unknown. Other related patterns are as follows:

— www.academia.edu/342537/Technology-Enhanced_ Learning_-_Design_patterns_and_pattern_languages

— www.irma-international.org/viewtitle/20879/.

Category

Online Collaboration Learning (OCL)

Outcome/impact

The outcome and impact for the learner in terms of what they will be 'able to do and know' from this pattern includes:

— Using online resources in a meaningful way in the context of their learning and ongoing fine art practice

— Developing networks globally that will facilitate and offer opportunities for their career or further education in fine art practice

— Providing strategies, which will enable them to self-initiate future projects using online collaborative platforms.

Using this pattern may alter students' experiences and staff activities by:

— Encouraging staff to use blended delivery models and learning activities that use face-to-face and online technologies for collaborative learning

— Encouraging staff to use both formal and informal approaches in learning activities

— Providing a broader framework for the student to consider and negotiate similarities and differences, allowing them to feel as if they are a part of a community of global learners

— Allowing students to have a broader understanding and experience of how and what mobility may mean in the context of their education and fine art practice

— Working within global contexts, therefore, allowing students to experience a deeper sense of connectedness through peer-to-peer collaboration

— Developing an understanding of a core issue in contemporary art practice, which involves using diverse models of collaboration across diverse platforms

— Developing an approach to learning that encourages teamwork and team-based activities and strategies.

Alignment

We want to ensure that the project aligns holistically with what we value and prioritise in fine art education, and that it enhances and supports what we do in face-to-face teaching.

We want to create a model that facilitates opportunities for sharing and communication so that distance and location are not seen as obstacles to collaboration.

In face-to-face teaching we value the conversation and feedback between staff and peers about artwork and ideas. The individual tutorial and group tutorial are two key delivery models we employ in studio teaching. This project should facilitate and expand on what we achieve in tutorials.

In studio-based learning, we often use divergent and tangential ways to discuss issues with students. Studio methods, for example, are not prescribed or linear. Often relationships between ideas, visual research, experimentation and resolved outcomes are circulatory and interdependent. We have modelled the tasks in the project as a way to support this circulatory structure as it rotates through formal/informal/formal patterns.

We did not align the project with an assessment task as we want students to want to engage with peers in a different location or from a different culture.

Challenges

Willingly engaging students

The principle challenge will be to willingly engage students in online activities. Versions of this project have been trialled previously by academics, but have not been fully successful. Clearer step-by-step project planning will hopefully overcome this challenge.

Maintaining students' interest and maintaining momentum

Choosing to not align the project with an assessment task is a challenge. At each stage of the project, we hope the student recognises the value they are gaining, so they may build momentum to continue participation.

Incentives for students' buy in to the project

An exhibition is somewhat central to studio-based fine art practices. Therefore, the exhibition component of the project is a way to gain students' interest. It is not known whether students would have opted into the project without this incentive.

Appropriate time allocation for work planning

The development of the project and pattern has been very labour intensive. Little or no time allowance has been put aside for this project. We would encourage staff to ensure time management and appropriate resource allocation is made at the early planning stages.

Clarity for the student in terms of online functionality and project process

Ensuring there is clear communication between the academic team and the online production team in the development of the online platform. Ensuring the student project plan and user guides are clear.

Instructions/process

Documents were developed to support the project's instruction and process, including the following in chronological order:

— An initial scoping document to determine the parameters, timeframes, key persons, logistics, resources and budgets for the project

— A project plan for the key stakeholders

— A detailed timeline for the development and implementation of the online and exhibition components of the project

— A project outline and brief for the students which sets the tasks for their online collaboration

— A project document for the online components of the project for the staff.

Key dates for project implementation:

— **18–20 June:** Curriculum Design Pattern presentations

— **2 July:** Shared Media Project Lab (SMPL) online discussion platform rollout for staff

— **4–14 July:** Implement project in Hong Kong

— **29 July:** First task uploaded on SMPL

— **28 July–16 Sept:** On line collaborations between Hong Kong and Melbourne

— **2 Sept:** Exhibitions go live in Melbourne and Hong Kong.

The two components of the project are:

— An exhibition of selected student artworks, which will occur in Hong Kong and Melbourne simultaneously. The exhibitions will include both digital documentation as well as artworks in a range of forms including photography, digital prints, video, painting and drawing. The exhibitions.

— Online collaboration between students occurs in the form of tasks, communication, sharing and feedback on experiences from how each individual student 'lives in the world'. The online platform therefore becomes a shared archived space which includes, postings of visual research (images, photographs, artworks, text, feedback,) all relating to the thematic. This repository of information becomes a platform for students to opt in and out of as a way to extend, test, reflect and deliberate over the fluid relationships between the ideas, visual research and artworks. The online collaboration maintains a flexible relationship between form, processes and content in the creative process of making art. Therefore students can use the online platform as an open, shared space, which combines visual images and text to trigger ideas and conversations about ideas, which can inform their own art practice. This platform then has the potential to bring together without demarcation, what each student's personal visual research and group tutorials usually achieve independently.

The Online Collaboration – 3 Stages / 7 Tasks

Stage 1 / Task 1

— Each student will make a short 1 minute "selfie" video introducing themselves and their first responses to "How I live in the world". This "selfie" should be a snapshot of the student:

  — introducing themselves,

  — first response to how they live in the world.

The students do this themselves in their own space and time. If possible we would prefer that the 'selfie' is done in their studio space so that they can include their art work. All selfies uploaded on to SMPL (by 29 July).

Stage 2 / Task 2

— Students look through all "selfies" and reflect on how their own views may be informed or enhanced by other student's ideas (by 5 August).

Stage 2 / Task 3

— Students decide to opt in to one of the floating home base satellites. There are 6 spaces available in each "home base satellite". It will be on a first come first in basis (by 5 August).

First Collaboration Stage 2 / Task 4

— Students post examples of their artwork so all the participants get a sense of their art practice. Minimum of 4 artworks. This can include resolved works or visual research and in not confined to specific mediums (by 9 August).

AND

— Document photographically (use your phone camera) the journey which follows a routine, eg from your home to work or school OR from your home to public transport stop OR from work to the place you eat. Upload 6 images that visually describe that journey (by 9 August).

AND

— Each student will write a short statement that creates links between their artwork and the photographs of the routine. There is no right or wrong way to do this. It is entirely YOUR view of how these two parts might link (9 August).

THEN

— Each student reads through and looks at the all the postings in their satellite group. The student then selects 2 other students and asks them a minimum 2 questions (no question can be a wrong question) each about their artwork and/or their photographs of the journey. This is a period of time where not only can you ask the two questions, but also have open conversations with your peers in your satellite group in relation to your artwork and ideas. (10–16 August) Staff monitor online discussions and prompt 'flash' questions and mini tasks as required.

THEN

— The student responds to the questions and any further comment they may wish to make (by 19 August).

Stage 2 / Task 5

Creating an Archive for your home based satellite.

— This task involves adding to the archive for your group in which you place/post anything you consider relevant from text, images, artworks from the exhibition, questions and answers. It can be comments, writings, artworks, references, other artist's works, music, photos of anything relevant. These will all be put in a general area within your satellite and will be available for anyone to use. Think of this as visual research or working in your visual diary. It can be playful, tangential, and relaxed. Each student should contribute a minimum of 10 posts. (These posts should be uploaded at regular intervals from the 9–30 August).

Stage 2 / Task 6

Take the home based satellite back to the world.

— Each student is to look across all the information from each satellite and to reflect on the initial artwork they made and posted and how the experience of working on this collaborative project has informed, supported, shifted and provoked changes to the way you engage with your own art practice. Post minimum of 2 new works into the world frame (by 30 August).

Stage 3 / Task 7

Final reflective selfie

This can include a statement and artworks but must reflectively engage, how the online collaborations have informed your art practice.

Conditions

Critical success indicators include the following:

— Feedback from students. We are thinking of an online informal focus group, rather than a questionnaire

— Level of activity on the online platform

— Any self-initiated student collaborations occurring after the project is complete.

Factors that will influence its use include the following:

— Functionality of the online platform

— Flexible communication, driven by students.

Clear communication between all stakeholders will assist in overcoming potential problems, as will expertise in the following:

— Exhibition design

— Studio teaching skills

— IT and online assistance

— Production design.

Resources

See supporting documents such as: timeline, project work plan and the student project brief.

Reflection

The pattern's effectiveness will be measured by the following:

— Feedback from students. This may be determined by a feedback focus group, rather than statistical information

— Level of activity on the online platform

— Quality of artworks developed

— Impact on the students' development.

The following has been central to the development, design and implementation of the project:

— Developing trust and teamwork among academics and DSC GLbD team members

— Building collegial spirit where everyone has buy in and is on the same platform

— Sharing knowledge, skills and experience in regular weekly meetings

— Developing clear communication paths

— Establishing initial scoping documents

— Establishing timelines and a detailed project plan with roles and target milestones.

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