CCA EDUCAUSE - 2011

Griffith University's re-structuring of academic blended learning support and student literacy support:
A narrative account

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Overview

- *What is it all about?*

- *What did we do? And why?*

- *What is a hybrid approach?*

- *Where are we going with it? And what have we achieved so far?*

- *What has it given us? And would we do it again?*

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...What is it all about?

- *GU's re-organisation of a range of services aimed at better supporting academics in using ICTs in a blended approach*

- *More 'in-curriculum' focussed approach to the delivery of academic, information and IT literacy support to students*

- *Griffith University context*
  - » *centralized and enterprise-wide approach to academic and student support*
  - » *provision of academic and student enabling services*

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What did we do? And, why?

- Challenged to increase ICT capability and capacity within the academic community

- Consistent with GU's 2008 'Blended Learning Strategy''
  - » To use ICTs to enhance learning and teaching activity at Griffith'

- Initial discussion about the role and value of a central unit and considered relocating it within the academic community

- Externally facilitated consultation undertaken with,
  - » the learning and teaching executive
  - » academics utilising the service
  - » professional staff working within the element

- Decision to seek an alternative approach,
  - » better embed capability within the academic community
  - » build capacity
  - » maintain the advantages of having a centralised entity as per GU's centralised service model

- Challenge to embed educational technology design and support within Academic Groups, but, retain the advantages inherent in maintaining a centralised unit

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What is a hybrid approach?

- Appointment of embedded BLAs (...not new or unique to Griffith)

- At GU:
    - » Deliberately adopted strategy
    - » Moved beyond the 'central vs. devolved or embedded' support model argument
    - » Able to set an expectation of obtaining the best of each approach
    - » Opportunity to tailor services to meet the actual local need
    - » Lessons learned could be quickly taken and applied elsewhere
    - » Uncertainty as to the role and services of the centralised entity reduced as the lines between the central and the devolved began to blur those boundaries

- Acknowledged that 'one size does not fit all'

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Where are we going with it? And, what have we achieved so far?

- In addition to establishment of the BLAs:

    - » INS re-shaped to bring staff responsible for the delivery of academic literacy, information literacy and IT literacy within 'Learning and Teaching' portfolio Information Services
    - » 4 x Teams, each vertically aligned to one Academic Group created
    - » Each Managers to ensure better integration within the Academic Group that they support
    - » Ensure that the services provided out of the central area are coordinated with the activity of the BLA and consistent with the stated requirements of the Academic Groups themselves

- These four teams employ
    - » Educational Designers/multimedia professionals/learning advisors and information literacy librarians, as well student IT trainers

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What has it given us? And, would we do it again?

- Opportunity of dedicating a trained and competent individual to provide the necessary training and preparation of supporting materials

- Started to play a role in addressing many of the culture change matters that need to be overcome

- One Academic Group has been able to significantly speed up its adoption of the use of lecture capture technology

- ...unwise to overstate the outcomes' and must'...recognise the limited impact of one person'

- Pattern emerging of BLAs increasingly understanding the expressed, and sometimes not expressed, needs of their academic colleagues and seeking to champion those needs and demands back to the centralised entity

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What has it given us? And, would we do it again?

- Better realise the synergies inherent when the professional learning and teaching staff are co-located but in communication with the central entity

- Better focus this activity more closely to the point of student need, that is, in the curriculum

- In conclusion:
    » Job not yet done
    » Established a better organisational structures to build a better service provision
    » GU can continue to benefit from having one central entity through which it can seek to implement strategic change and fund the establishment of four similar entities operating independently of one another
    » Appointment of Curriculum Consultants

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The end...

- *That's all folks!*

  » Bugs Bunny, Warner Bros Cartoons, 1945