 

FutureLearn Academic Network, University of Leeds

11th September 2019, 10am-4pm

Twitter: #LeedsFLAN

Remote access <https://zoom.us/j/533351479>

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| 10:00 | Registration and refreshments  ***Liberty building, LT LG06 (until 11.30)*** |
| 10:15 | Welcome from Sir Alan Langlands, Vice–Chancellor, University of Leeds |
| 10:30-11:30 | Keynote: Professor Neil Morris, Dean of Digital Education, Chair of Educational Technology  *Exploring the changing nature of higher education: impacts on learners and learning* |
| 11:30 | Refreshments  ***Charles Thackrah G05 (until close)*** |
| 11:45-12:45 | James Pickering and Bronwen Swinnerton  *Medical Student Engagement with Technology-Enhanced Learning Resources*  Michael Kilmister  *Proposing an expansion of FutureLearn metrics for the prediction of student engagement* |
| 12:45-1:30 | Lunch |
| 1:30-2:20 | At table/online collaborative discussion |
| 2:20-2:50 | Fereshte Goshtasbpour  *Do watercooler conversations with instructors in FutureLearn MOOCs help learning?* |
| 2:50-3:00 | Refreshments |
| 3:00-3:30 | Janesh Sanzgiri  *FutureLearn and Indian MOOC platforms - Differences in Monetisation, Accreditation and Learner Experiences* |
| 3:30-4:00 | Jonathan Pitches  *Research Impact and MOOCs – what contribution can digital education make to the REF impact agenda?* |
| 4:00 | Close |

Abstracts

James Pickering and Bronwen Swinnerton (University of Leeds)

*Medical Student Engagement with Technology-Enhanced Learning Resources*

This presentation will report the findings from two related studies and introduce a third study. Students in the first year of their MBChB (Medical degree) at the University of Leeds, as part of the compulsory 13-week Body Systems module; are provided with three types of TEL resource: Screencasts via YouTube, an EBook and the Anatomy MOOC on the FutureLearn platform. We will report usage of these resources, how usage relates to engagement, and performance. Finally we will describe our current study which is exploring why students use these TEL resources. In all three studies we explore the use of the MOOC compared to the other two types of resource.

Michael Kilmister, Paul McDonald, Andrew Yardy, Dr Clare Lloyd (University of Newcastle, Australia)

*Proposing an expansion of FutureLearn metrics for the prediction of student engagement*

Currently, FutureLearn metrics are restricted to summary statistics which provide, typically in the form of overall percentages, some insight into student engagement with content. Whilst this type of data allows for the recognition of descriptive trends, it lacks suitability for meaningful comparison and prediction via statistical analysis. The authors discuss challenges associated with their recent investigation into the viewing habits of undergraduate students at the University of Newcastle, proposing a need for individualised metrics. The capacity to account for individual variables, such as age and gender, in the prediction of engagement would increase substantially the capacity to understand and improve the student experience.

Authors: Dr Michael Kilmister, Paul McDonald, Andrew Yardy, Dr Clare Lloyd

Fereshte Goshtasbpour (University of Leeds)

*Do watercooler conversations with instructors in FutureLearn MOOCs help learning?*

This presentation will present the findings of a doctoral study on instructors’ contributions to the discussions of FutureLearn MOOCs. It will specifically discuss the reasons that inhibit instructors’ contributions to foster deep learning. Drawing on the Community of Inquiry framework, it will explain why instructors’ social, pedagogical and cognitive contributions only encourage surface learning and what modifications to instructor activities are required to support deep learning in MOOCs.

Janesh Sanzgiri

*FutureLearn and Indian MOOC platforms - Differences in Monetisation, Accreditation and Learner Experiences*

This talk outlines the funding, monetisation and accreditation strategies used by the major MOOC platforms in India (SWAYAM and NPTEL), and compares the same with those of FutureLearn. This talk highlights the key findings of my PhD research on Indian learners in FutureLearn and NPTEL, and sheds light on how these themes influence the demographics, motivations and experiences of the learners that choose to study on these platforms. Lastly, this talk ends with a discussion on what this means for the various stakeholders within FutureLearn that may wish to reach out to more learners from India.

Jonathan Pitches (University of Leeds)

*Research Impact and MOOCs – what contribution can digital education make to the REF impact agenda?*

Online courses are particularly well positioned to be used as case studies for research impact. This presentation by Lead Educator Prof Jonathan Pitches draws on two variants of a theatre-based FutureLearn course, *Meyerhold’s Biomechanics* (2015-present), to outline some of the opportunities and challenges associated with narrating the relationship of online learning to the impact agenda.  It will outline the structure of the course, debate the identification of beneficiaries, and present some of the potential testimony being drawn on to illustrate change. It will conclude with a more general discussion on what might constitute good practice when colleagues are developing online learning courses with an eye on their potential research impact.