



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Going Fully Online

An Institutional Approach to Supporting Online Students

Dr Dianne Chambers
Assistant Dean (Learning Technologies)
Faculty of Education
The University of Melbourne, Australia

Dianne Chambers
d.chambers@unimelb.edu.au



Proportion of Content Delivered Online	Type of Course	Typical Description
0%	Traditional	Course with no online technology used — content is delivered in writing or orally.
1 to 29%	Web Facilitated	Course which uses web-based technology to facilitate what is essentially a face-to-face course. Uses a course management system (CMS) or web pages to post the syllabus and assignments, for example.
30 to 79%	Blended/ Hybrid	Course that blends online and face-to-face delivery. Substantial proportion of the content is delivered online, typically uses online discussions, and typically has some face-to-face meetings.
80+%	Online	A course where most or all of the content is delivered online. Typically have no face-to-face meetings.

- From Allen & Seaman 2005

Defining Online Education



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Totally Online Mode
 - ‘Totally online mode relies on networking as the primary teaching medium for an entire course or program’
 - Harasim (2000)
- Level 9 of Bonk, Cummings, Hara, Fischler & Lee’s (2000) ten level ‘continuum of web integration in college courses’
 - ‘Entire course on the Web for students located anywhere’



The Move to Online T&L

(US figures)

- In 2004 81% institutions of higher education offered at least one fully online or blended course
- In 2004 34% of the institutions surveyed offered complete online degree programs
- number of online students in US grew to over 2.35 million in 2004 (from 1.98m in 2003)
 - Where ‘online’ was defined as at least 80% of course content delivered online and typically having no face-to-face meetings
 - Allen & Seaman 2003, 2004, 2005

The Move to Online T&L

US figures 2005



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- 65% of schools offering graduate face-to face courses also offer graduate courses online
- 63% of schools offering undergraduate face-to face courses also offer undergraduate courses online
 - Allen & Seaman 2005



Seeing the online experience from the student's perspective...

- Meeting the needs of the student in an holistic way, not just within subjects
- A sense of being part of a community
- A connection with the people and the university
- A university-wide approach
 - Online education needs to be more than just fabulous online subjects!



University Policies & Online Students (and online staff!)

- What services are available to distant student and distant staff?
 - Student counseling?
 - Learning and language support?
 - Extracurricular opportunities?
- How will these services be provided?

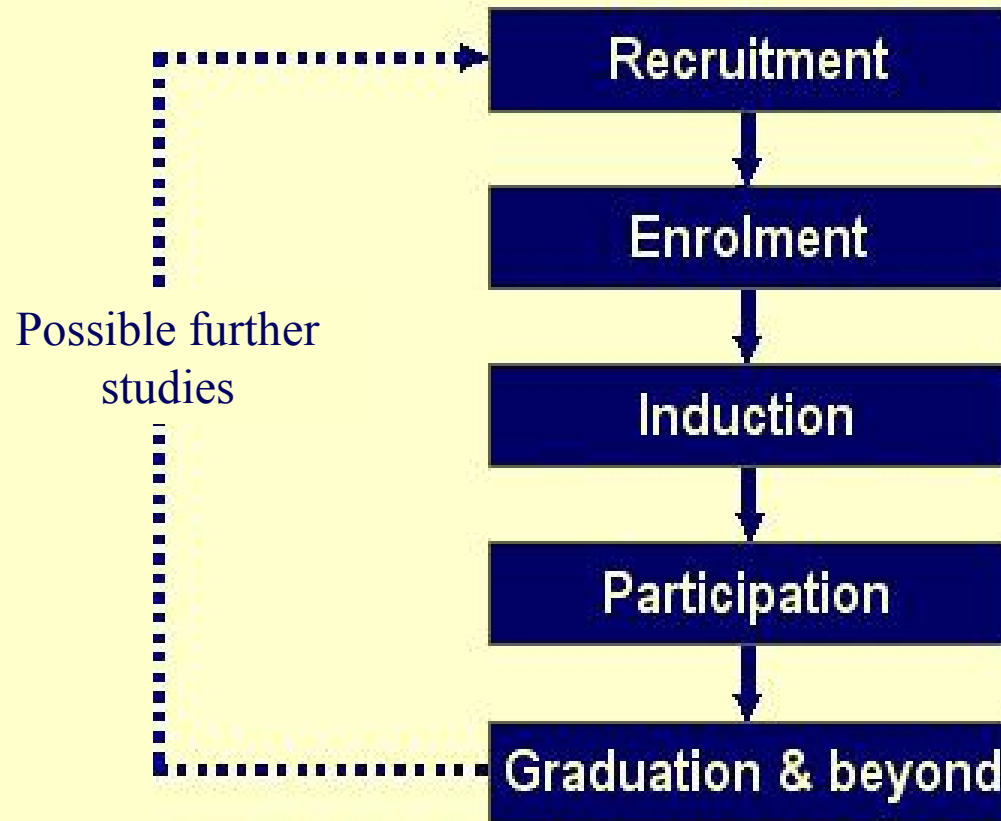


Sources that inform proposed model of supporting online students

- Interviews with academics who teach online
- Interviews with administrative staff involved in recruitment and enrollment processes and who answer student queries
- Interviews with staff who support online students in non-academics aspects of online studies
- Survey of online students
- The literature



Stages of the online experience



- *From*, Chambers, D.P. (2004) From Recruitment to Graduation: A Whole-of-Institution Approach to Supporting Online Students. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 7(4).
 - <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/winter74/chambers74.htm>



Who is involved in online education?

Who does the student interact with?

Role	Recruitment	Enrolment	Induction	Participation	Graduation & beyond
Admin Staff					
• Local (Div ⁿ or Faculty)	√	√	√	√	
• Institutional	√	√	√	√	√
• Alumni Office	√	√	√	√	√
Course Advisors	√	√	√	√	
Non-Academic support staff				√	
Library Staff			√	√	
Academic Staff				√	

Recruitment



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Prospective student considers studies and seeks information about options for studying online
- Prospective student applies to study online with the institution

Recruitment



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Prospective student considers studies and seeks information about options for studying online
- Prospective student applies to study online with the institution
- Desired Outcomes
 - Prospective student finds it easy to access accurate information about online offerings
 - Application forms and all required information are available online
 - Enquiries are responded to promptly, accurately, and in a friendly manner, as this sets the student's first impressions of the institution

Enrolment



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Student has successfully applied to study with the institution and enrolls

Enrolment



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Student has successfully applied to study with the institution and enrolls
- Desired Outcome
 - All steps of the enrolment procedure to be done online must be clearly described and simple

Induction



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Student has enrolled and should be welcomed so that they begin to establish their sense of belonging with the institution's community
- Further information should be provided and a course advisor allocated and introduced to each student

Induction

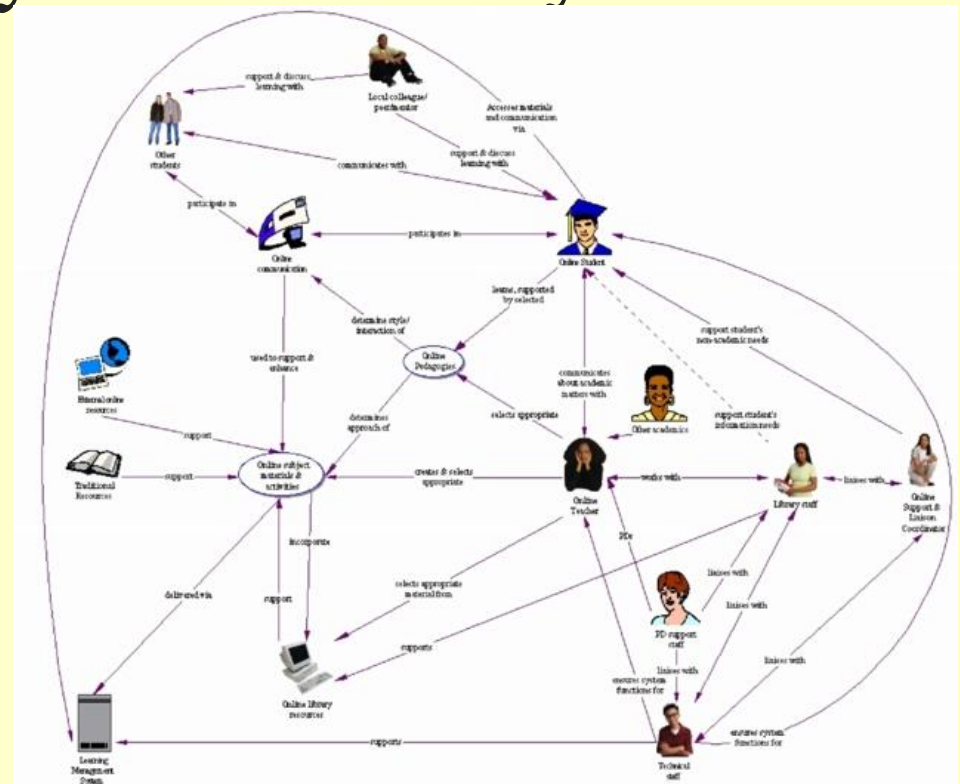


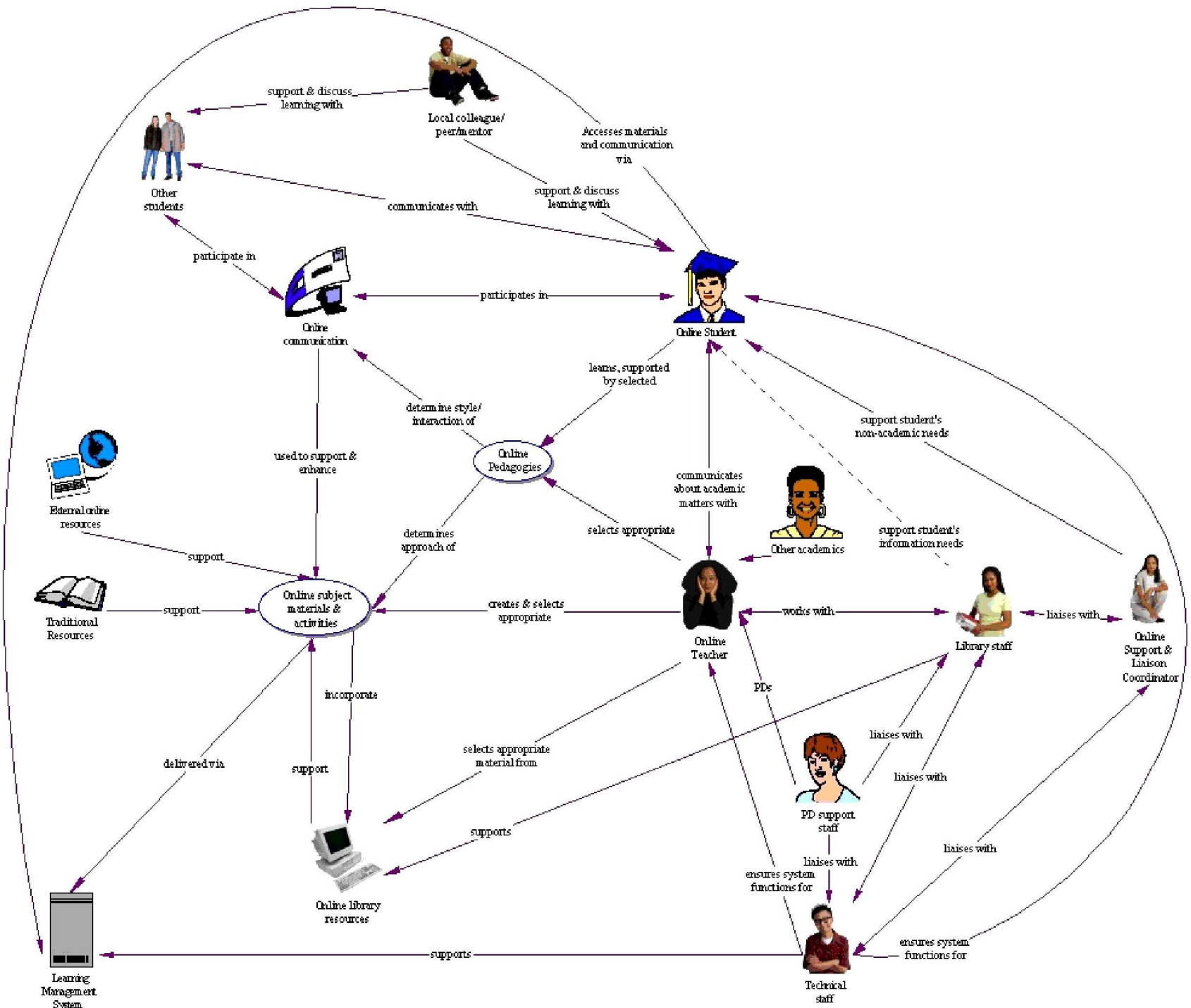
THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Student has enrolled and should be welcomed so that they begin to establish their sense of belonging with the institution's community
- Further information should be provided and a course advisor allocated and introduced to each student
- Desired Outcomes
 - Student feels welcomed by the institution
 - Relevant information is sent to students in a timely manner
 - The student should be introduced to their course advisor and given contact details

Participation Stage

- Where the learning happens!
- Academics are central, but need to be well supported by the university







THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Participation

- Student engages in online learning in a series of subjects
- Academic and non-academic issues arise that need addressing



Participation

- Student engages in online learning in a series of subjects
- Academic and non-academic issues arise that need addressing
- Desired Outcomes
 - Student feels a part of the institution and its community
 - Academic and non-academic matters are solved in a friendly and timely manner
 - EdFac has an ‘Online Support Coordinator’ who is the single point of contact for non-academic issues (*e.g.*, technical or enrolment)
 - The student feels well supported and has satisfying & successful learning experiences

Graduation & Beyond...



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Student completes course of study, graduates, and moves on
- Further studies may be considered at a later date

Graduation & Beyond...

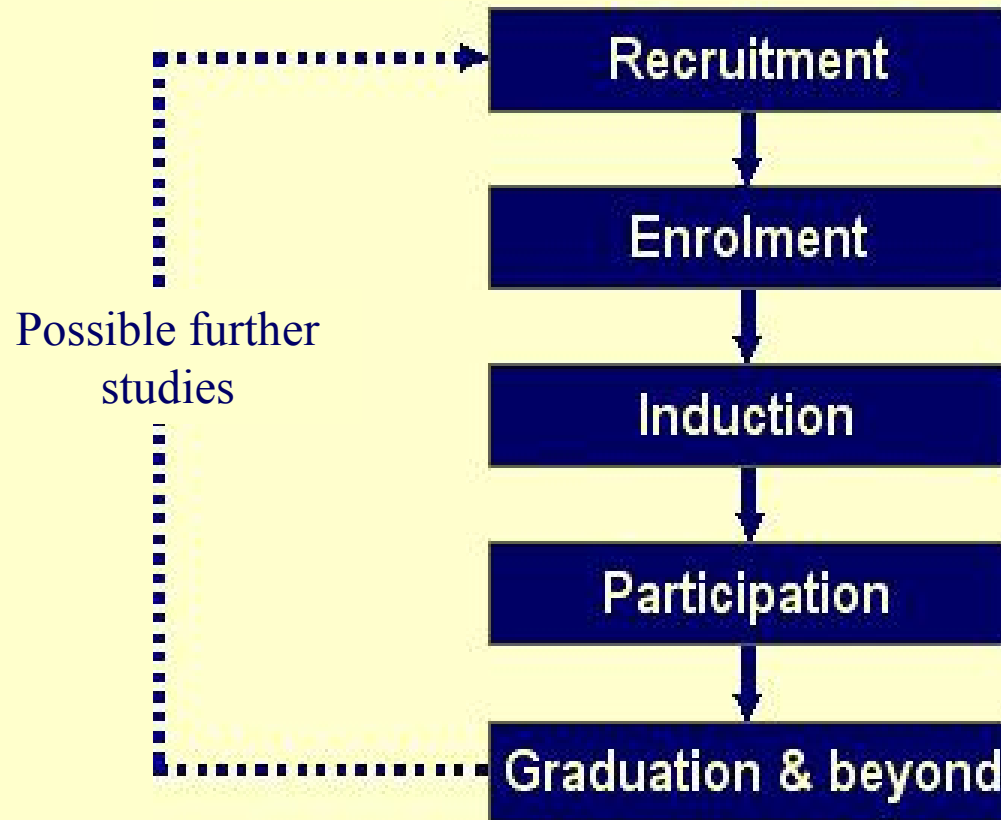


THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- Student completes course of study, graduates, and moves on
- Further studies may be considered at a later date
- Desired Outcomes
 - Graduates should be introduced to the alumni network and feel a part of the institution's alumni community
 - Students value their relationship with the institution
 - The institution should be the first place they consider when graduates contemplate further studies



Stages of the online experience



- *From*, Chambers, D.P. (2004) From Recruitment to Graduation: A Whole-of-Institution Approach to Supporting Online Students. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 7(4).
 - <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/winter74/chambers74.htm>

Conclusions



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

- An holistic approach is needed that empathises with students and their needs
- Faculty-wide & University-wide processes need to be in place to support online students
 - Need to develop a sense of community & belonging
 - What services can online students expect from Student Services (*e.g.*, Student Counseling, Student Health) and Student Clubs?
- You need to consider much more than what is happening *within* online subjects if you are to teach online



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Thank you

Dianne Chambers
d.chambers@unimelb.edu.au