

E-Learning for Community Engagement and Mentoring

An Outreach project supported by

Australian *Flexible Learning* **Framework**

supporting e-learning opportunities

The Outreach model

- Works with Marginalised Learners
 - Learners with a poor history of engagement in education
 - Reluctant learners, literacy challenges
 - Learning difficulties , mental health problems often undiagnosed or untreated
 - Learners Returning to work or study after a long break
 - Issues of homelessness, drug and alcohol, mental illness are common rather than the exception

Models of Practice

- Flexible Learning takes place in the Community or on campus
- Student centred learning includes introduction to computers for life skills as 'new' literacy
- Students connected to support within TAFE infrastructure- Counselling, Disability support
- Students invited to return if they do not complete
- Students encouraged to pursue pathways to ongoing education &/or community engagement.

Community Engagement and Mentoring courses

- These students are most often those who have experienced these challenges in their own lives
- Learning , and Vocational education is something they can and wish to achieve. This is often expressed as 'wanting to give something back'.
- Many move into mainstream courses in Community Services- D & A, Welfare and volunteer within their own Communities

E-Learning project potted history

- We began by considering Toolboxes from the Community Services area.
- We also planned to use Moodle to reformat the Community Engagement learning materials
- The significant feature of this project is that CE & M students , past & present would evaluate and prepare the online learning tools

Plans Change!

- Following a very useful workshop with the Toolbox champion we decided that modifying existing toolboxes would not serve our purpose.
- Moodles also seem too clunky, would not help e-learners engage easily with the ideas and learning material
- Wikis were discussed but new plans were emerging.....

PlaceSpace website

Placespace.org.au

- Website based on the Partners in Learning and Community Enterprise project
- Includes class space, student space, blogs, forums and digital stories
- Open source software enables students with limited resources to access internet capacity: JOOMLA! And UDUTU
- Students can upload links for learning objects they are developing on [UDUTU](#) a free , online course authoring website
- So a new course is developed:

Using Digital Technologies for Community Engagement

- Involving graduates from
 - Community Engagement and Mentoring Classes
 - Students from Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care
 - Kids with Ability,
 - Transforming them from Community classes into on Campus e-learning class
 - Outreach teachers bringing a mix of skills and learning goals to develop more online teaching skills

Learning Together

- Students and Teachers working together on UDUTU and Placespace building learning materials and objects
- By encouraging student- centred, and negotiated learning we have enhanced creativity, engagement and ownership