

ON THE ROAD TO OCCA

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This paper covers a five year journey from print based material to the development of online materials. At a superficial level an analysis of Monash's B.Bus\Com accounting subjects would indicate the apparent success rate of incorporating educational technology into those units. However surveys conducted to reflect upon the online development of a first year accounting subject, reveal that many of the goals relating to a student-centered approach to learning have not been met, particularly where there are goals relating to higher order outcomes. These goals include open-ended case studies, varied forms of assessment, group work and interaction amongst others.

The initiation of the GOLD project for first year accounting provided the vehicle to research the extent of online activity in other universities. Research identified that the majority of first year accounting units were using WebCT / Blackboard software for the delivery of materials online. Interaction online was limited to multiple choice / short answer tests and bulletin board discussion postings. The research also identified three programs that incorporated a student-centered approach to learning in disciplines other than accounting. These programs are Marlina, Inter-learn & Online Courseware Component Architecture (OCCA).

The following then represents a work-in-progress report of our search to employ educational technology to achieve those higher order educational goals. It demonstrates how the successful introduction of educational technology is an iterative and incremental process that requires a team approach incorporating a wide range of skills, ongoing evaluation and personal commitment.

This work-in-progress report is based on the authors' development of a Melbourne\Monash grant for collaboration in educational technologies. This grant was given to establish reusable templates based on the OCCA educational software. It will indicate why the authors have decided on this software to advance their search for a more student-centered approach to learning. It will demonstrate some of the potential the author's perceived that OCCA had in furthering the student-centered approach and show the current planning to take advantage of some of that potential.

Keywords

*Educational technology, Student centered approach to learning,
Online Courseware Component Architecture (OCCA), Online assessment*

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