Community building in an online learning MSc MSc Clinical Education

Tim Fawns and Janette Jamieson, with thanks to Gill Aitken, Derek Jones and Debbie Spence
The numbers

First years

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Dissertations

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Total students

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Rabbits-taking-a-nap.jpg, author unknown, CC-BY-SA-3.0
Aspirations

• Hospitality!
• Collegiality!
• Advocacy!
Hospitality

• Flexibility and adaptability
• Making space for unexpected guests
• Shaping our environment
• Remembering that we don’t own the house
Collegiality

- Learning from students
- Power and status
- Common purposes ("we’re all in this together")
"It was wonderful... to exchange experience and I found that there is no barrier between us. We all share the same profession, the same problems, the same obstacles... whatever the culture backgrounds or the country."

"... we got into discussions and debates and started to get the skills in actually presenting your point of view... Trying to structure that in a way that was not offensive, but actually challenging and generally working with people outside of your sphere and outside of your educational background to answer the same question."
Advocacy

• Recognition of tensions of structure and agency
• “You knew what you were signing up for”
• Equity/equality and non-level playing fields
1. **Pre-admission**
   - Supporting students before admission
   - Promoting the programme
   - Advice on requirements (e.g., English)
   - Advice on systems (e.g., EUCLID)

2. **Admissions process**
   - Induction
   - Weekly video tutorials
   - Discussion boards
   - Webinars

3. **1st year**
   - Graduation reception
   - Transition meetings
   - Student-staff meetings
   - Personal tutoring
   - Group tasks
   - Formative feedback

4. **2nd year**
   - Supervision roundup
   - Emails

5. **3rd year**
   - Alumni
   - Publishing dissertations
   - Teaching
   - Steering group
   - Connecting future and past students
   - Tailored interactions
   - Research / teaching collaborations
   - Promoting the programme

6. **Alumni**
   - Alumni activities
   - Tailored interactions
   - Support for finding funding information
Channels of engagement

• Allowances for different models of engagement
• Discussion board, workbooks and asynchronicity
• Adobe Connect and hierarchies
“Where did you hear about our programme?”

Online search engine 36%

Recommended 29%
(average MVM PGT = 16%)
Shared philosophy

• Thinking, talking, researching about our practice
• Shared philosophy behind growth and decisions
• Expanding networks and collaborations
Questions?

- Or email tfawns@ed.ac.uk or Janette.Jamieson@ed.ac.uk or Gill, Derek or Debbie
- Or find us at @edclined