Organizational management of e-learning in universities

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Organizational management of e-learning in universities

Techno-centric view
- Produce another tool
- Get a publication
- If it doesn’t work with students
- “That’s not my problem its research”

Socio-technic view
- Produce another tool
- Get a publication
- If it doesn’t work with students
- Try to figure out why..

Some people “don’t really care for this sort of research”

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Approach: Two Phases

Phase 1
Single Institution
3 surveys over 10 years
• Questionnaire
• Quantitative
• Qualitative
• Staff attitudes to computers in teaching
  - Experience
  - Use & Beliefs

There was technological advance but it was limited by organizational constraints

Phase 2
Six Institutions
Qualitative: Follow on - in depth enquiry
• Chain Sampling
• Understanding of why e-learning succeeded/floundered
• Actors throughout the process
• Senior managers-> learning technologists
Adapted from
McNay Collegial Academy to Corporate Enterprise: the changing culture of universities

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Early Adopters
• like radical change
• visionary
• project oriented
• risk takers
• experimenters
• self sufficient
• relate horizontally

Early majority
• like gradual change
• pragmatic
• process oriented
• risk averse
• need support
• self sufficient
• relate vertically

Research Question:
Do different preferences predominate in different institution types?

Geoghegan
Taking technology into the mainstream

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# Question Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University type</th>
<th>Allegiance, self image, income, aspirations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational type</td>
<td>Collegial, enterprise, bureaucratic, corporate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies and Policies</td>
<td>E-learning platforms, student management tools, technology infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implemented Technologies</td>
<td>Cross institutional management, roles and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutions: broad types, values and behaviours

Managers’ perceived context and stated approaches compared

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Typical institutional tensions

Teaching
- Accountability: finance and efficiency, managing up and negotiating objectives

Funding
- Social Outcome

Research
- Diversity: planning investment and innovation, effectiveness collaboration and participation

Quality

Income Generation

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Is this why projects fail?

Ad hoc solutions

Enterprise, research and development

Financial autonomy

Prioritises and values

Collegial culture

Outward facing
(encourages horizontal linkages)

Weak central control
(loosely coupled)

University Organisation

Teaching and vocational training

Humanocratic culture

Prioritises and values

Financial accountability

Inward focusing
(encourages vertical linkages)

Strong central control
(tightly coupled)

Corporate culture

Prioritises and values

Financial management

Responsiveness and independence

Income generation

Prioritises and values

Enterprise culture

Early adopters

Geoghegan
Whatever happened to Instructional Technology
Instructional technology and the Mainstream: The Risks of Success

McNay
From Collegial Academy to the Corporate Enterprise: The Changing Cultures of Universities
Some conclusions

- Small projects and research will demonstrate behaviours of early adopters
- Institution wide projects will need to address needs of early majority
- Research intensive institutions we have a predominant culture of the early adopters
- **Understanding differences can help us make management decisions**
  - Institution-wide e-learning projects requires a different approach to small scale research experiments
  - Different sorts of projects can be expected to succeed and fail in different ways
  - Understanding institution types can direct us towards selecting appropriate interventions
Bailey, P., Technology Supported Learning: Attitudes to Technology in Teaching, Learning and Assessment University of Plymouth, Plymouth, UK (1996)


