

UniServity cLc vs. Traditional Methods of Delivering Professional Development

Traditional methods of delivering professional development	Professional Learning in UniServity Connected Learning Communities
Remote and disconnected	Learner centered
Not in practitioner's own class environment so does not take account of the real classroom experience, where children do not behave as expected and there are more variables to control and thus is seen as artificial.	Teachers engage in learning that is immediately relevant to their individual needs and circumstances and which demands engagement in practice, with the application of ideas in their own classroom environments with their own sets of students with the capacity to try things out being central to the learning process. The capacity to use the cLc to create, manage and connect additional communities within a school or across a district means that their developing expertise in using and applying those same tools and applications can then be tested with students in the classroom before being integrated into pedagogy and practice. Teachers will apply what they experience.
Based upon scarcity of information. Transmission of expertise as truths	Teachers engage in communities of practice where they are required to share experiences and expertise. Dealing with unknowns, generating inquiry and experimentation.
Largely dependent upon formal learning which is the source of just 10 – 20% of what we learn at work	Learning is social and the result of participation. It should be seen as "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout a teacher's career from pre-service teacher education to retirement" M. Fullan Teachers can share issues that need resolving and gain support and advice from experienced colleagues and other professionals via forums, blogs, wikis.
Not related directly to his/her diverse group of students and their associated needs	Students are a core part of the learning and research process. The cLc uniquely allows teachers to share the outcomes of their research and learning with peers, mentors and critical friend, including parents and students. Learning is practice based with the teacher operating as researcher and knowledge constructor. Learning is built directly onto the prior knowledge and relationships the teacher has with
Rarely based upon personal narrative, inquiry or action research	Everybody is a teacher and everybody is a learner as the cLc promotes the sharing of experiences. The capacity to group teachers in communities of practice and allow them see what each other are doing promotes the development of shared hypotheses to be tested using action research which can then be mapped into their own practice before exhibiting their outcomes online; prompting additional reflection and inquiry. Dealing with innovation frequently means dealing with unknowns requiring new research rather than the 'transmission of truths'. Legacy culture values the contribution of the individual.
Generalized rather than specific to each teacher's	Teachers can be members of multiple professional communities associated with their multiple roles within a school. In each

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<p>unique and individual needs or circumstances. One Size fits all.</p>	<p>community learning can be teacher designed or initiated. The cLc allows mentors and trainers to individualize instruction with the capacity to direct resources and inputs to one or many. Professional learning all tracks back to individual classrooms. Learning is available on demand at times to suit the individual teacher through a combination of push and pull and synchronous and asynchronous opportunities. Teachers seek the support they need to meet real and immediate challenges. The learning is authentic and immediately relevant. All of the learning that takes place within these communities can be evidenced within each teacher's individual ongoing professional ePortfolio.</p>
<p>Valuable interactions end when the workshop or training event ends</p>	<p>Professional learning opportunities are not restricted by time. In touch with tutors/ mentors. Even in the event of supporting traditional PD, SETDA 2008 recognizes that <i>"Unless a workshop is followed by ongoing support for educators, implementation in the classroom is unlikely"</i> Interaction and collaboration is the key to learning and participation is essential to growth. Access to materials, resources and other virtual attendees within the community of practice is a given. What they then do with the materials in terms of ongoing discussion, adaptation or testing in 'laboratory classrooms' over time is what will produce change. <i>"Workshops on a single topic without coaching and mentoring are not effective"</i> Collaboration leads to reflective teachers with critical thinking skills that are transferable beyond the remit of the training</p>
<p>Delivered using resources and equipment that may differ from that in school. Particularly with regard to technology</p>	<p>The cLc provides the safe and secure environment for learning; providing teachers with access to online collaborative learning communities, tools, resources and training opportunities along with a suite of C21 learning and teaching tools which they can incorporate into their class based lessons and online assignments along with favourite or recommended open source Web 2.0 applications.</p>
<p>Learning is difficult to measure</p>	<p>Learning can be evidenced in each teacher's individual ePortfolio. Inputs delivered to teacher portfolios in the form of resources, plans and opportunities can be distributed to individual classes, tested and reviewed in blogs before making the outcomes visible to the wider community.</p>
<p>Time spent away from class takes the teacher away from their students and means extra work preparing for a substitute teacher and then trying to pick up on the return to</p>	<p>Professional learning requires teachers to work <i>with</i> rather than apart from their students. When training or development is required off site, teachers can set work, challenges and assignments using the tools within the cLc, maintaining continuity and progression.</p>

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school.	
<p>Focused on individuals rather than district wide change</p>	<p>The cLc connects teachers with their peers within and beyond the school allowing district wide distribution and sharing of resources, learning opportunities, communication and collaboration within defined communities of practice. Inputs made at district level can be observed as they transfer from district leader to teachers before being shared as student learning outcomes for review, evaluation and moderation across the district.</p> <p>Teachers can enter the classrooms of thousands of colleagues anytime and from anywhere once given access to their groups. Cross pollination and the virtual proximity means that good practice quickly becomes the norm.</p>
Constrained by timing	Anytime, Anywhere: removing barriers to learning
<p>Training has a limited life. Not supported by time to prepare and time to reflect. Traditional training has proven ineffective in translating into changes in practice.</p>	<p>Professional development opportunities are supported by pre course and post course tasks, discussions and readings. Mentoring, peer support and critical thinking combine to develop reflective practitioners. Traditional training is replaced teacher development and is proven to be effective in changing practice. The learning community has a life beyond the INSET model. It develops lasting partnerships and a high trust innovative culture. Embeds development into practice</p>
<p>Attendees may be learning something new that they will not be able to put into practice for many weeks or months. Professional development is based on supply rather than demand and is generally infrequent</p>	<p>Professional learning is ongoing and directly related to daily practice. It is concerned with finding solutions to authentic existing and immediate problems. A balance of push and pull technologies allow teachers to largely manage their own professional learning pathways based on their individual needs and the needs of their students.</p>
<p>At times to suit the trainer rather than the individual teacher</p>	<p>Needs based and continuous ongoing professional development. Developing learners rather than relying on teachers.</p>
Cost ineffective	Economies of scale
<p>To train 1000 teachers using traditional out of school INSET is time consuming and costly. Especially when the cost of substitute teachers is factored into the equation.</p>	<p>A keynote presentation or workshop can be shared across a district and accessed by all teachers. A learning experience or challenge can be directed to every grade 4 math' teacher for discussion, adaptation and use in their classrooms, with the benefit of peer and expert mentoring and support. Expertise shared across a district. One school's staff meeting materials can be distributed to all in a district wide knowledge exchange. Much of the expertise will come from within the district with specialist or advanced skills teachers supporting their peers. Curriculum advisers have wider reach and can directly influence learning across a district with increased effectiveness.</p>

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