

# Global Challenges and Perspectives in Blended and Distance Learning

J. Willems  
*Monash University, Australia*

B. Tynan  
*University of Southern Queensland, Australia*

R. James  
*University of New England, Australia*

Information Science  
**REFERENCE**

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## Foreword

Reviewing this first volume reminded me of my initial contact with educational technology in the late 1970s. It was the time of mainframes (including international, synchronous communications), and subscription dial-up services at 30cps, the telephone handset fitting snugly into rubber modules. It was also a time without mobile phones, without the Internet, and without personal computers, and it was a time when distance education meant receiving and transmitting quantities of paper through the postal system.

How much has changed in those 30-plus years! Yet the more things change, the more they remain the same. This volume focuses on the global issues facing distance education, and my first experience with being global was in 1979, sitting in a motel in the outskirts of Melbourne, a PLATO terminal plugged into a phone line, and conversing in real-time with colleagues in Minneapolis—even sharing screens on the touch-sensitive terminal.

Despite my personal adventures with global education beginning over 30 years ago, education (whether it be online, distance, blended, or face-to-face) continues to shift so much that addressing global issues in our field is incredibly timely. In essence, the technology many of us now take for granted has broken down many (but not all) of the barriers of distance, creating new communities founded on intellectual commonality rather than geographic co-location. While this shift is by no means new, the critical issue is that it is changing the face of education.

Professionally, and because of global digital communications, I have clients and students in both Australasia and the United States. While I have the good fortune to live in a beautiful part of Australia, my workday is a constant exchange of communications and Skype discussions with people from all parts of the globe. As I noted, this form of interaction was what introduced me to the field many years ago, and so it is not “new”; however, it is real enough that we no longer need to be tied to one place to practice distance education.

Interestingly, the word distance is somewhat confusing because there are people who I interact with who are geographically distant but educationally close, and those who are co-located whom I rarely see or talk to! The choices of where, when, and how we teach and learn are numerous and evolving daily. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us as practitioners in the field of distance education to understand the new pedagogical dynamics that are emerging as more and more people, institutions, and communities link to the global networks of social, formal, and informal knowledge.

Encapsulated in this volume are chapters that engage with the issues faced by our community—borderless education, equity, cross-cultural communication, partnerships, and part-time work. Together these narratives weave a pattern of 21<sup>st</sup> century distance education, where we must continually ask, distant from what or where or who?

*Roderick Sims*

*Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA), Australia  
& University of Southern Queensland, Australia*

*Roderick Sims is the Immediate Past President of the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA) and an Online Learning Design Specialist with the University of Southern Queensland. Dr. Sims has a background of over 30 years in the computer and education sectors, specialising in the creation of engaging and meaningful teaching and learning experiences. Prior to his current appointment, Dr. Sims managed a consultancy business providing online learning design expertise and professional development to the higher-educational institutions in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Dr. Sims has published extensively in the fields of computers, teaching, and learning, and is a regular presenter at Australian and international conferences that specialise in interactive online technologies for education and training. His current research activity is focused on design models, emergent learning, transformational learning experiences, and the pedagogical implications of multi-user learning environments.*

## Preface

### INTRODUCTION

It is early in the second decade of the twenty-first millennium. A higher education student in Africa is using his mobile phone to access podcasts of his lectures. A 12-year-old girl on a remote cattle station in outback Australia is completing her final year of primary school via the "School of the Air." A secondary student is writing his extended answers on a printed document and will be posting these to his teacher. A medical student in regional Victoria is using her iPad to enter and upload critical reflections of her practical placements as part of her assessment. A skilled tradesman who has been teaching night courses at the local community centre is completing coursework online for a teaching certificate as part of a pathway to entry into a teaching degree at university. Defence force personnel are undertaking further computer-based training being delivered by educators in another global time zone. A university administrator is analysing course analytics to help lecturers refine their offerings. At the same time, a young computer programmer from Delhi has taken the Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) at Stanford University and wants to know how he can get credit into a degree program. What do all these scenarios have in common? They are all aspects of distance education in a technical world.

This volume focuses on comparative global issues and perspectives in distance and flexible education. In a fast-paced society where technological advances are driving the current and future generations of learners across the globe, there is much upon which to reflect. At the same time, global acceptance of distance and online learning is also changing. Where in many parts of the world it has had poor acceptance, in others it is now been viewed as the path to delivering education where bricks and mortar capacity for burgeoning populations is lacking.

### RESEARCH AREAS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

In a Delphi study of experts in the field of distance education (Zawacki-Richter, 2009) consensus was reached that research and practice in the field of distance education could be delineated across three general levels. The first level, the macro level in the structure of distance education, examines distance education systems and theories. This encompasses the five aspects of access, equity, and ethics; globalisation of education and cross-cultural aspects; distance teaching systems and institutions; theories and models; and research methods in distance education and knowledge transfer.

At the meso level, according to the suggested framework, a further six themes are gathered under the banner of management, organisation, and technology in distance education. These themes are the manage-

ment and organisation of distance education; costs and benefits; educational technology; innovation and change; professional development and faculty support; learner support services; and quality assurance. DEHub (2010) has added a seventh item to this level: Open Education Resources (OER). Both these macro- and meso-level areas in distance education are reflected in the first three sections of this volume.

According to Zawacki-Richter, Bäcker, and Vogt's (2009) evaluation of 695 publications from the five main distance education journals from around the globe, the major research gaps in distance education are to be found at both the macro and meso level, with the most neglected areas including the globalization of education and the various cross-cultural challenges; innovation, diffusion, and change; and costs and benefits of distance education. A number of chapters in this volume address this deficit; yet they continue to require future research attention.

Research themes located at the micro level in distance education are concerned with three aspects of teaching and learning in flexible and distance education: instructional design, interaction and communication in learning communities, and learner characteristics. These three micro-level aspects are the predominant focus of the three sections in the accompanying second volume.

## **EXPLORING DISTANCE EDUCATION AT THE MACRO LEVEL OF RESEARCH**

The OECD has published a number of useful research papers on the globalization of higher education (see for example Vincent-Lancrin, 2004; Marginson & van der Wende, 2007). Reference to distance education in these works is brief, serving only to indicate the lack of research. Short syntheses have also been written on the internationalization of distance education (for example Evans & Nation, 2003; Mason, 2007). A number of journal articles summarize relevant research on particular issues: Rumble (2000) examines issues related to management, costs, and planning; Bates (2001) considers cultural and ethical issues associated with international distance education; Hovenga (2004) focuses at the globalisation of medical education; Sherritt and Carbajal (2006) looks at online virtual education; Kawachi (2008) reviews current research on the potential of distance education for world-wide education; Skinner (2008) reviews issues of quality and accreditation in relation to online distance learning; Ziguras (2008) examines the evaluation of transnational distance education programs; and Zondiros (2008) concentrates on issues of educational access, equity, and exclusion. However, further research needs to be undertaken in this arena.

The scope of borderless education is altering the pedagogy for cross-border education, and the use of technology is a key driver for connecting people in ways not known or imagined before. Different models are emerging and unique collaborations are appearing. Web 2.0 is a huge force for many, and social media, along with newfound mobility, are forcing new reconsiderations. As personal, transactional, and social lives mix with more formal modes of learning and teaching, the possibilities are far reaching. The challenges facing higher education are numerous.

Continued and increasing regulation of higher education contexts are presenting their own compounding challenges as quality becomes an issue for deciding how funding is to be allocated and for benchmarking across sectors and borders. Where acceptance has been achieved in many contexts of distance and flexible education, the debate about what constitutes quality and what standards should be measured remains alive in many countries.

A further challenge is the inherent conservatism of university teaching staff. Kirkup and Kirkwood observe that "teaching staff appropriate those technologies which they can incorporate into their teaching activity mostly easily, that offer affordances for what they already do, rather than those which radically

change teaching and learning practices" (2005, p. 188). In this context, it is worth considering Jamieson's assertion that part of the reason for this conservatism is the extent to which teaching modes in higher education are shaped by convention. University teachers have "traditionally progressed from the experience of learning in the classroom to teaching in the classroom" (2004, p. 22). Indeed, little has altered in the decade that has passed since Collis observed that:

*We are supposed to be educating our own students to become professionals in the new type of educational environments that we do not even know how to demonstrate ourselves (1998, p. 1329).*

Under such circumstances, it is hardly surprising that a significant number of staff have been slow to take up new distance and flexible learning approaches.

Although research exists and has been useful in identifying the problem, it has not gone far towards a solution. In this context, it is worth considering the advice of Kirkup and Kirkwood, who warn that:

*For any innovation, it is a mistake to extrapolate from the actions and enthusiasm of early adopters in order to predict the use and impact on the larger scale. However, in much of the recent literature this appears to have been done for ICT in education. What is needed are studies of ICT use in HE teaching over a longer period, so that the behaviour of late adopters, even of resisters, is examined (2005, p. 187).*

## **EXPLORING DISTANCE EDUCATION AT THE MESO LEVEL OF RESEARCH**

Change, leadership, innovation, and adoption are key themes across distance and flexible education. Increasingly, it is clear that the solution to the uneven take-up of new approaches in distance and flexible education will not come simply from studying the experiences of "the early adopters." These individuals can do with our help. The presentations provided in the case studies contained within this volume are instructive. Indeed, there is much that we can learn from these "war stories," and this contributes to the call for more of these studies over a longer period of time. Of note is the chapter in this volume of the extensive literature review by Cherry Stewart, Stefan Horarik, and Keith Wolodko on "Maximising Technology Usage in Research Synthesis of Higher Education Professional Development Research," which is certainly illuminating on many levels. Further examples in this volume also demonstrate that many have already stepped across the digital divide. However, there is a growing necessity to actively engage with the "late majority." If this is not done, the frustrations of the present will continue into the future. This is a disturbing prospect at a time when many institutions face an on-coming "perfect storm."

In the context of the media-rich, technologically enabled lives that we live, we still hear people discussing distance education as an alternative to "mainstream" or face-to-face education in somewhat apologetic overtones. Today, the "rapid migration of technology across geographic and socioeconomic boundaries is a fundamental constituent of the times in which we live" (Masten & Plowman, 2003, p. 75) and serves to help level the playing field in access to education. Perhaps we collectively as authors and readers share a different perception on distance and flexible education, as an enabler, not an alternative.

Historically speaking, distance education—or correspondence study as it was initially termed in the late 1800s—grew out of the need to make education accessible to those who wanted a formal education or to obtain key industry-related training and qualifications, but who could not gain these through the traditional on-campus, post-secondary pathways (Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2004). Early correspondence

style modes were text and mail-based, evolving to answer the call for widening participation in education. Over time a range of technologies have been introduced, and many of us have travelled through the use of video, radio broadcasts, television broadcasts, and a range of other media such as audio cassette tapes and the CDROM. More recently, the introduction of pod and vodcasts alongside Learning Management Systems (LMS) are considered essential.

However, there is a blurring of lines, and what was considered the purview of distance education is no longer. In our modern digital era, even with on-campus education, there is often less of a distinction between which modality and technology is integrated into the student's learning experience (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickhur, 2010). In the chapters contained within this volume, there is evidence that flexible learning is fast becoming an expectation of students "to learn when they want (frequency, timing, duration), how they want (modes of learning), and what they want (that is learners can define what constitutes learning to them)" (van den Brande, 1993, p. 2): the when-ever, where-ever, and what-ever of flexible education (Willems, 2005a). To this, the concept of learning on their own terms (Brown & Groff, 2011; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Van der Werf & Sabatier, 2009; Traxler, 2010), the "however" of flexible education, has recently been added.

Finally, there are also evident crossovers and overlaps between distance education and other modes of learning such as e-learning, virtual learning, online learning, and m-learning. So what makes distance learning unique? An exploration of the nature of distance learning with this in mind warrants attention.

## **STRUCTURE OF THIS VOLUME**

The volume provides a set of emerging perspectives from diverse corners of the world across 20 chapters (excluding the Preface and Epilogue). These chapters are thematically divided across three sections. In Section 1, key issues are discussed from several global perspectives. Section 2 is grouped as case studies of collaboration and capacity development. Section 3 draws upon issues associated with building capacity for teachers, institutions, and researchers. Section 1, Section 2, and Section 3 pertain to research in and around the macro and meso levels of distance education research.

### **Section 1: Global Issues and Perspectives in Distance and Flexible Education**

The five chapters in Section 1 of this volume examine global perspectives in distance education. In the first of these chapters, "Maximising Technology Usage in Research Synthesis of Higher Education Professional Development Research" by Cherry Stewart, Stefan Horarik, and Brenda Wolodko, the authors cut across the literature associated with professional development of staff. Through a thorough research synthesis and systematic accumulation, analysis, and reflection on a full body of relevant empirical evidence related to a particular research question, Leximancer, lexical analysis, and concept-mapping software, this process has provided a method for reducing vast pools of research literature down to highly desirable research literature portions. The authors' intention here is not to provide an analysis of the documents retrieved for the research synthesis, but rather to articulate a method of content analysis that incorporates technology to assist in the initial steps of a research synthesis. This chapter promotes the use of technology tools to enhance the critical review of evidence-based publications, and make the identification of relevant chapter more efficient and effective.

In the chapter, "Equity in Distance Education," Julie Willems examines the structure of research areas in distance education and argues that an understanding of the impact of social justice issues is crucial

for informing research, practice, funding, and policy in the field of distance education. Equity, and the related concerns of access, social inclusion, and ethics, impact all levels of distance education, from the macro level (research and development, including the globalization of distance education) through the meso level (community and open learning, including choices in educational technology), down to the micro level (teaching and learning, including choices in curriculum design). As a consequence, the author argues that a modification to the macro-meso-micro framework of distance education is called for, one that situates equity at a meta level. This meta level encompasses all aspects in the field of distance education and acts as a guide for policy-makers, academics, and administrators on planning, decision-making, and practice within the discipline.

Don Olcott, in the chapter, "Beyond the Boundaries: The Future for Borderless Higher Education," discusses the real benefits to be gained from institutional mobility (Borderless Higher Education). He points out that establishing a campus in another part of the world provides access to a new talent pool, creates interesting staff and student mobility opportunities, enables new and different research initiatives, and enhances global reputation. The story is not all rosy, however, as institutional mobility presents real challenges, both strategic and operational; there is much rhetoric around the benefits of overseas ventures in relation to diversifying income streams, but the reality is that projects are expensive and depend upon genuine cross-institutional support and a willingness to commit significant resource, both financial and human. Operationally, success depends upon the ability to mobilize organizational systems, processes, policies, and people to operate in a different and unfamiliar environment. Strategically, the challenge is to ensure what is being offered—in terms of both teaching and research.

The next chapter builds on this with a focus on quality assurance. Colin Latchem and Yoni Ryan's "Transnational Distance Education: Cultural and Quality Considerations" on the extent to which courses, provision, and pedagogy have truly reflected differences in cultural characteristics and learning preferences. Little attention has been paid to these matters in quality assurance frameworks. This chapter discusses these issues, and drawing upon Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions framework and studies into Asian pedagogy and uses of educational technology, it proposes a benchmark and performance indicators for assuring cultural, contextual, educational, and technological appropriateness in the provision of transnational distance education in Asia by Australian universities.

Godwin Utuka explores "Distance Education Quality Assurance in Ghana" and the challenges of enhancing the quality of distance there. The National Accreditation Board (NAB), the government agency that is responsible for regulating and monitoring standards of higher education sector, has introduced certain mechanisms or processes to ensure conformity with minimum standards and also to promote the quality of distance education in Ghana. Drawing on an empirical study, this chapter discusses the NAB's role in representing Ghana's government's efforts to extend quality assurance oversight to transnational educational activities in the country. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how the NAB works and comment on the effectiveness and challenges of ensuring the quality of distance education in Ghana.

## **Section 2: Case Studies of Global Responses to Distance and Flexible Education**

Section 2 is grouped as seven case studies of collaboration and capacity development in distance education. The first of these case studies appears from Michael Crock, Janet Baker, and Skye Turner-Walker in "Open Universities Australia: The Evolution of Open Access and Online Education Opportunities." In this case, the early foundations of Open Universities Australia (OUA) are detailed as being grounded

in traditional distance education. OUA's early beginnings were overlaid with a media-centred approach specifically through a developed series of television programs. Since these early inceptions, OUA has grown to be Australia's largest online higher education provider. Founded with the key support of the Australian government, OUA acts as a broker of higher education units for seven shareholder universities (Curtin University, Griffith University, Macquarie University, Monash University, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology, and University of South Australia), plus eleven other public and private education and training providers. Offering more than 1,200 units and 131 qualifications from these universities, OUA delivers an extensive range of study options in Arts and Humanities, Business, Law and Justice, Education, Science and Engineering, Health, and Information Technology at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The story of OUA outlined in this chapter demonstrates how OUA has achieved its success, as well as the factors influencing its evolution.

The case description by Jo Osborne in "Managing Project-Based Workplace Learning at a Distance: University-Health Service Partnership in a Master's Program" outlines the development of a Master's course in Clinical Leadership involving a partnership arrangement between the University of Tasmania and a NSW Area Health Service where partners are based in different states and course participants complete their studies predominantly in distance mode. Workplace learning through project implementation is core to the course. The university takes responsibility for the development and delivery of online units, while the health service partner has major responsibility for the coordination and assessment of workplace learning assignments, with the academic moderation of the university teaching team. The integration of theory-based units with project implementation has been well received by course participants. Distance factors provide significant challenges for course implementation. Early course evaluations have informed revisions to unit structures, but changes in the client base may force revisions to course delivery to maintain participant access to study materials and activities. Lecturers, health service instructors, course participants, and their workplace supervisors are all affected by changing dynamics.

Carina Bossu explores relationship building in South America in "Southern Skies Distance Education Academic Exchange Project: Building a Community of Practice." In this chapter, an academic exchange is detailed. In order to combine forces and experiences to overcome current challenges faced by distance education providers in South America, more specifically in Brazil and Argentina, and in Australia, leading distance education institutions from both worlds decided to develop the Southern Skies Distance Education Academic Exchange Project. Funded by the Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR), this project promoted academic exchange amongst four Australian universities collaborating as "DEHub" (Distance Education Hub) and four educational institutions in South America: two institutions in Argentina and two in Brazil. This chapter presents the two stages of this exchange project where visits to the participating institutions were undertaken. It also highlights some of the challenges faced by the project participants. Finally, it discusses some of the opportunities that have emerged for further exchange and collaboration amongst the institutions involved.

Louise Bertrand provides an interesting case on cooperation with a focus on the experience of merging a distance university (TÉLUQ) with an on-campus university (UQAM). The reasons behind the merger and the lessons learned from the experience are discussed in her chapter, "Cooperation between a Distance Teaching University and an On-Campus University: The Creation of a Dual-Mode University." There are more and more reasons for combining distance learning with classroom learning, not only because of the availability of new technologies, but also because of the changes they induce in the student's relationship to knowledge and in their way of life.



Tricia Donovan and Janet Paterson-Weir describe another case of partnership in “eCampusAlberta: A Story of Strategic Partnership and Collaboration Success in Distance Education.” eCampusAlberta is one of the fastest growing online consortia in North America. It currently provides over sixty credentials fully online to learners in hundreds of communities across Alberta, Canada. Developed in 2002, eCampusAlberta is a consortium of fifteen publicly funded colleges, polytechnics, and universities in Western Canada. This strategic partnership was developed by senior executives across the institutions in an effort to increase access to online learning opportunities province-wide. The consortium leveraged existing networks of senior executive officers and informed leaders across the member institutions to build a framework to support the implementation of the consortium. Since its inception, eCampusAlberta has inspired collaboration across member institutes and has had a significant transformative effect on the post-secondary landscape in Alberta. To date, over 47,000 learners have participated in courses offered via the consortium.

Moving to New Zealand, Luke Strongman and Polly Kobeleva focus on the emerging market and associated risks for polytechnics in distance learning. Their chapter, “Distance Learning: The ‘Risk Mitigation’ Case for Independent Governmental Performance Measures in New Zealand,” discusses the key variables of global challenge (or threats and drivers) to ITPs, showing how these variables may be mitigated for organizational advantage. In addition, the focus of the argument is directed to an equity imbalance currently experienced in the distance learning ITP sector in New Zealand, namely that distance learning providers must compete under the same funding criteria as contact or face-to-face providers despite differences in learning delivery mode.

This section ends with Ken Stevens’ chapter “Pre-Service Teacher Education for the Management of Actual and Virtual Classes.” It discusses the development of Internet-based school networks in the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador where pre-service teachers are being prepared for networked school environments within which on-site and on-line teaching and learning are required. Teachers are provided with a structure within which to manage collaboration that includes learning circles and cybercells.

### **Section 3: Capacity Development**

Section 3 draws upon issues associated with building capacity for teachers, institutions, and researchers. It encompasses eight chapters, which explore capacity in a variety of lights. In the first of these chapters, Diana Laurillard takes an applied approach to supporting teachers in “Supporting Teachers in Optimising Technologies for Open Learning.” Teachers using open learning who wish to make good use of digital technologies in their teaching and learning designs have some difficult issues to confront. Whether they want to improve the technology they are already using or wish to migrate from conventional to blended or wholly online teaching, they have to learn about a very different approach to teaching and learning, continually develop new digital materials and online activities ahead of the start of the course, and keep up with the rapid advancements in technological capability. This is complex design and development work that has to be done on top of the delivery of their current teaching. Some institutions recognize this and allow staff significant time to develop their ideas, skills, and designs. Very few allow adequate time. However, managers’ and politicians’ expectations of teaching staff keep expanding. They should learn to be ahead of their “digital native” students, should build 21st century skills into the curriculum even though they have not been trained themselves, and should develop new ways of conducting teaching and learning. It is an impossible task, and it is time to recognize that teachers deserve far more help

with the development of open and blended learning. Teachers given the opportunity enjoy innovation. Every type of new digital opportunity has been recruited for use in education, even though almost none are actually developed for education. However, pilot projects and small-scale isolated innovations do not create the engine of progressive innovation we need if the sector is to optimize its use of technology. The project described in this chapter is the "Learning Design Support Environment for Teachers and Lecturers" (LDSE), a collection of tools to support learning design and the exchange of ideas on how best to use technology. Historically, tools have provided the major engine of human development, because they improve the efficiency of human effort (Wolpert, 2003), so perhaps a tool for teachers will make the critical difference to changing what they are able to do with their students.

Wendy Fasso in "Community of Practice or Networked Learning: A Matter of Design" examines the case of an online teacher professional development community. The community was designed to facilitate both networked learning and whole-group activities in cyclical form to support the eventual formation of a "community of practice" over time beyond the facilitated episode.

Next, Brenda Wolodko, Cherry Stewart, Nicole Green, Helen Edwards, Margaret Brooks, and Roz Littledyke in "Shifting Mindsets Within: Self-Study of Professional Learning" look into an educational environment focused on providing flexible learning options to diverse student groups—rural and remote, cross-cultural, mature-aged, and second-chance learners—and the need for there to be effective capacity building strategies for the professionals who provide these educational services. People do not resist change; they resist being changed.

Katrina Higgins and Roberta (Bobby) Harreveld in the "The Casual Academics in University Distance Education: From Isolation to Integration – A Prescription for Change" explore the contextual changes in Australian universities such as the growth of the Internet, a new student population, and an emphasis on re-education and lifelong learning, all of which are manifest in a repositioning of distance education from the margins to the centre of concern. In addition, recent reform imperatives have future implications for distance education as it is considered integral to delivering on Australian Government policy in terms of increased socially inclusive engagements in university education. However, there is scant policy conversation about the experiences of academics who deliver distance education programs. In addition to this, the delivery of distance education is often undertaken by academics employed in a casual capacity. The experiences of the teaching workforce in distance education need to be explored and issues addressed if the future of distance education in higher education is to meet the needs of university education in the new millennium.

Jill Lawrence, Lorelle Burton, Jane Summers, Karen Noble, and Peter Gibbings explore another stakeholder view in "An Associate Dean's Community of Practice: Rising to the Leadership Challenges of Engaging Distance Students using Blended Models of Learning and Teaching." Associate deans (Learning and Teaching) face a number of challenges in successfully retaining and progressing students in their faculties. The first challenge involves identifying strategies to assist students to actively engage with their studies. This challenge escalates if the primary mode of delivery involves distance learning. The second challenge stems from the need for associate deans to empower their staff to design, develop, and deliver curricular that achieves student retention. This chapter conceptualizes blended learning and describes how an associate dean's community of practice facilitates an institutional approach to student engagement, both in terms of supporting students and supporting staff.

Begoña Gros's chapter explores the dimensions and complexity of change in "The Problem of Analysis of the Temporal Dimension in e-Learning Research." E-learning is a complex phenomenon that includes technological, pedagogical, social, and management dimensions. The importance of multiple variables

and temporal dimensions for evaluating changes and development are crucial elements that are not taken into account in the methods and orientation of most studies. Most well established methods of research are not able to analyse complex situations adequately. This chapter describes the problems that arise when standard methods are applied and explores the use of methods that support the analysis of multiple variables and temporal dimensions for evaluating changes and development.

Eugene Willems and Julie Willems, in "Applying STREAMS to the Management of Organizational Change in Distance Education" focus on a Strategic Resource for Educational and Management Success (STREAMS). They explain that STREAMS was developed during a series of developmental projects over a fifteen-year period and has grown out of the dual influences of commercial and education strategic planning practices. It was intended to make the complex task of strategic planning simpler so that non-professionals could use it as a guide to manage the process, involve stakeholders, follow its logically progressing path, and rely on it as a template for the completed and published product. In this chapter, STREAMS is suggested as an important tool for managing organizational change in distance education institutions.

The final chapter in this section is contributed by Julie Fleming, Robyn Donovan, Colin Beer, and Damien Clark, who focus on "A Whole of University Approach to Embedding Graduate Attributes: A Reflection." They reflect on the processes involved in managing a curriculum mapping exercise aimed at integrating graduate attributes across undergraduate programs offered over dispersed campus locations. As a consequence, a whole of university approach was needed to address quality and consistency of graduate outcomes through an audit conducted using an online mapping tool. While the whole of university approach served to provide cohesion within the project, there were some challenges regarding the perceived top-down approach. This chapter serves to inform senior management of the complexities of managing resistance to change within an academic community.

The final chapter in this volume is the "Epilogue: Directions for Future Research." It flags current gaps in research and practice in flexible and distance education. It points to research gaps in the current literature in distance education. In so doing, it also highlights potential future research areas that colleagues might wish to pursue as we progress into the 21st century.

*J. Willems*

*Monash University, Australia*

*B. Tynan*

*University of Southern Queensland, Australia*

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