



UNIVERSITY
of NICOSIA

Pedagogical Model for E-Learning

Edited by

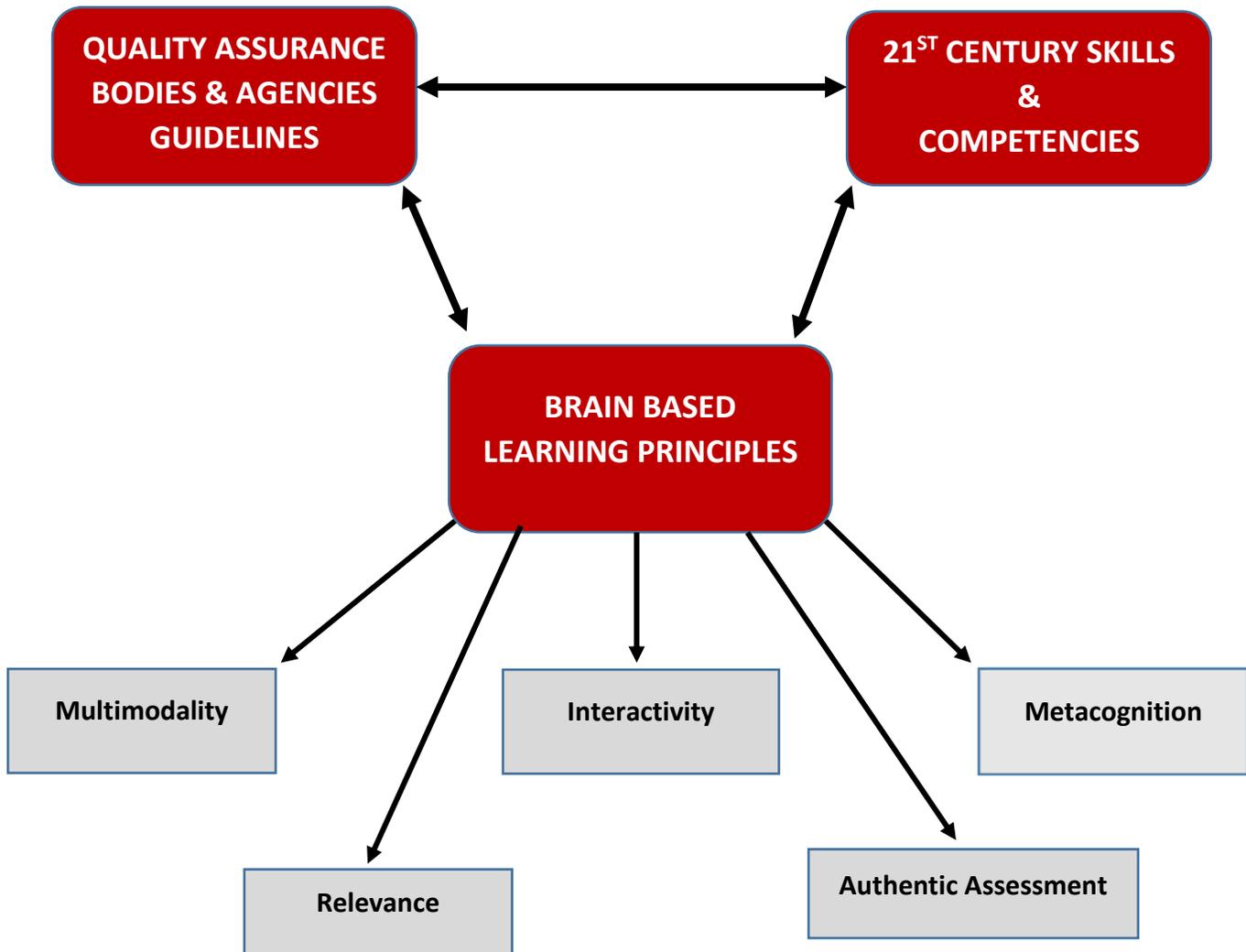
e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit (e-PSU)

November 2019

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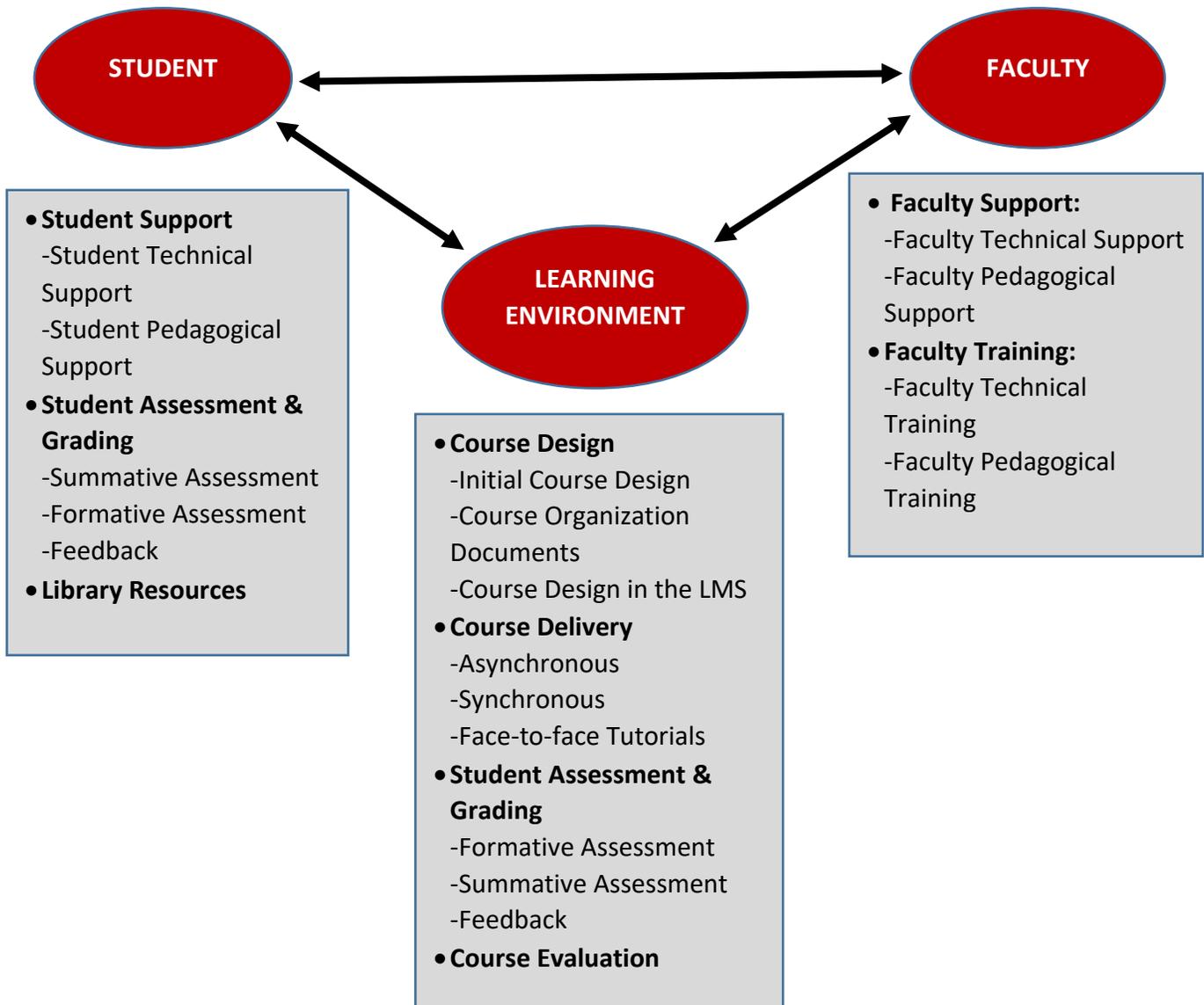
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Diagram of the Pedagogical Model for e-Learning



Note: In the diagram above all words and sentences (i.e. Brain Based Learning Principles, Multimodality etc.) in the red and grey areas are [hyperlinks](#) corresponding to the respective areas in the document. You can use the [hyperlinks](#) by placing your cursor on the top of any word and clicking the “control” key on your keyboard and the right click on your mouse simultaneously.

Application of the Pedagogical Model for e-Learning at the University of Nicosia



Note: In the diagram above all words and sentences (i.e. Learning Environment, Course design, Initial Course Design etc.) in the red and grey areas are [hyperlinks](#) corresponding to the respective areas in the document. You can use the [hyperlinks](#) by placing your cursor on the top of any word and clicking the “control” key on your keyboard and the right click on your mouse simultaneously.

1. Foundations of the Pedagogical Model For e-Learning

Definition of e-Learning

At the University of Nicosia, we define e-Learning as: Learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology (ICT). E-Learning includes the use of ICT for:

- the design and delivery of courses
- communication and interaction in a course (student to student, student to lecturer and student with the material)
- assessment
- other learning activities involving ICT and the internet.

Definition of Pedagogical Models

Pedagogical models are cognitive models or theoretical constructs derived from learning theory that enable the implementation of specific instructional and learning strategies. A pedagogical model provides an overview of the learning cycle and breaks it down into domains or phases of instruction. There are really no models of e-learning per se, rather e-enhancements of pedagogical models or learning models. Therefore, an e-learning model is a pedagogical model that uses technology to achieve better learning outcomes, and/or a more effective assessment of these outcomes, and/or a more cost-efficient way of bringing the learning environment to the students. Further, such model should demonstrate on what pedagogic principles the added value of the 'e' is operating.

1.1. Guidelines from Quality Assurance bodies/agencies

The design of our pedagogical model for e-learning is in-line with the University of Nicosia DL Faculty Handbook and the University of Nicosia 2018 Self-Reflection document, produced for our 2018 re-accreditation by EADTU (European Association of Distance Teaching Universities).

Further for the design of our pedagogical model of e-learning we consulted the standards and guidelines of the following publications by quality assurance bodies and agencies:

- CYQAA's (The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education) publications and official announcements as issued in the agency's website (www.dipae.ac.cy)
- ENQA's (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) 2018 publication on "[Considerations for Quality Assurance of e-Learning provision](#)"
- ESG 2015 publication on "[Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher education](#)"
- EADTU (European Association of Distance Teaching Universities) 2016 manual on Quality Assurance "[Quality Assessment for E-learning : a Benchmarking Approach](#)"

1.2. 21st Century Skills & Competencies

Our model employs the 21st century skills framework, emphasizing the high-level operational knowledge, competencies and personality qualities. Skills and competencies necessary to the 21st century citizen to survive and thrive. Such skills are: scientific and technological literacy, problem solving, critical thinking, metacognition, ability to work collaboratively, think creatively, synthesize information (Fadel et. al., 2015).

1.3. Brain Based Learning

The theoretical foundations of our pedagogical model for e-learning combine Brain Based approaches to learning with elements from the Multimodal Distributed Learning Model (Dabbagh, 2005) and Laurillard's (2002) Conversational Learning Model.

1.3.1. Distributed Learning Model

Distributed learning is described as learning or education delivered anytime, anywhere, to multiple locations, using one or more technologies or none at all (Jones Knowledge, 2000;

Dabbagh, 2005). When telecommunications media is utilized, distributed learning refers to off-site learning environments where students complete courses and programmes at home or work by communicating with faculty and other students through e-mail, electronic forums, videoconferences, and other forms of computer-mediated communication and Internet and Web-based technologies (Dabbagh, 2005).

According to The California State University Center for Distributed Learning (2003), distributed learning supports a “pull” model of education in which students engage in learning activities at their own pace and at a self-selected time, in contrast to the traditional “push” model of education where students have to synchronize their needs and schedules to the delivery model of the institution. From a pedagogical standpoint, distributed learning environments “result in a diffuse sense of cognition – where what is known lies in the interaction between individuals and artifacts, such as computers and other technological devices” (Pea, 1990; Perkins, 1990; Salomon, 1990, cited in Bronack & Riedl, 1998, p. 3).

1.3.2. Multimodality

Through multimodal environments our students actively participate in the creation of their own learning guided by the lecturers. Our course design leads students in various virtual places where they complete activities or interact with material or people (other students or the lecturers) based on a specific pre-designed model of communication. For example through the digitized video lessons, the student uses a linear learning mode which is linked to a classical teaching mode, but thanks to the modular structure of the contents, the student can exploit the hypertextual modes to study and consult books related to the topics discussed in the video lesson or presentation. Utilizing forums, wikis and chat in Learning Management System (LMS) Moodle and in our video conferencing tools, the student can carry out collaborative learning tasks sharing thoughts, comments and material with other students registered in the course.

Some examples of these multimodal experiences offered to our students in our courses are:

- Paper Text based material (i.e. books)
- Digital Text based material (i.e. websites, digital research articles)

- Online Presentations
- Collaborative environments (i.e. discussion forums, Wikis)
- Videos
- Webinar style, video conferencing
- Interactive presentations
- Interactive videos
- Interactive quizzes

1.3.3. Interactivity

Laurillard's (2002) Conversational Framework is a more sophisticated tool for describing and understanding interactivity elements in a course and as a result is used as a design template and an analytic tool. Laurillard describes the stages involved in the dialogic interaction between a lecturer and a student, demonstrating the way in which concepts are internalized and adapted by each in the process.

Laurillard's (2002) Model, based on earlier theories by Vygotsky, describes dialogue and interaction between the lecturer and the student as central to learning process. Laurillard stresses that, for higher level learning, dialogue must take place at both a theoretical and practical level. This not only enables students to link theory with practice (which is sometimes difficult to achieve in many subjects), but also allows the lecturer to evaluate whether he or she has set appropriate tasks for the student.

One of the major characteristics of this model is the way in which the lecturer and the student interact. In face-to-face teaching, many of these interactions are so spontaneous and intuitive that they can be overlooked. Since in online learning and technology enhanced course design these interactions may not be spontaneous, due to the transactional distance between lecturer and student, Laurillard made these interactions explicit. According to her Conversational Model technology can support these interactions in the four ways. It can be:

- **Narrative:** this involves the telling or imparting of knowledge to the student

- **Communicative/discursive:** the lecturer supports processes where students discuss and reflect upon their learning.
- **Interactive:** this is based on the outcome of the learning. The lecturer provides feedback to students based on the outcomes of tasks students undertake in order to help consolidate learning and improve performance.
- **Adaptive:** the lecturer uses this information to revise what learning has occurred and, if necessary, change the focus of dialogue

1.3.4. Metacognition

Metacognition is another component of our teaching and learning model. It is a critically important, yet often overlooked component of learning. Effective learning involves planning and goal-setting, monitoring one's progress, and adapting as needed. All of these activities are metacognitive in nature. By teaching students these skills - all of which can be learned - we can improve student learning. There are three critical steps to teaching metacognition:

- Teaching students that their ability to learn is mutable
- Teaching planning and goal-setting
- Giving students ample opportunities to practice monitoring their learning and adapting as necessary

1.3.5. Relevance

In our model, the term relevance refers to learning experiences that are either directly applicable to the personal aspirations, interests, or cultural experiences of students (*personal relevance*) or that are connected in some way to real-world issues, problems, and contexts (*life relevance*). Our academic and teaching staff are guided to create learning environments that enhances relevance.

1.3.6. Authentic assessment

In our pedagogical model we define authentic assessment as an approach to measure student performance in a direct, relevant way to see if the learning objectives were met. Our academic and teaching staff might use projects such as reports, journals, speeches, videos and interviews with the students to measure their understanding of the subject material. The goal of authentic

assessment is to enhance the learning process and help students gain knowledge while completing tasks that are beneficial to their “real-world” experiences. Unlike taking an exam, students work on the authentic assessment over a period of time and they are not limited to filling in bubbles on scannable test papers to demonstrate what they know. Authentic assessments let students show what they are really capable of without the pressure of having to perform well on a traditional test, so they are great options for students who suffer from test anxiety.

Authentic assessments help students analyze what they’ve learned and apply it their own experience. They don’t have to memorize facts for a test, so they can use their creativity to show what they’ve learned. For older students who can use a combination of writing and speaking, authentic assessment helps them refine their writing and oral presentation skills. Authentic assessment works great for groups, so we encourage team project works.

2. Course Design

Course duration: All DL courses run on a semester basis. Each semester consists of twelve (12) learning weeks and therefore, each course is designed in Moodle accordingly in order to be delivered over 12 weeks.

Class size: Our DL courses have a maximum of 30 students and are taught by one lecturer. Depending on the number of students we create two or more sections so that in each section the number of students does not exceed 30. Each instructor can teach up to two such sections or up to two different courses each semester.

2.1. Initial course design

The initial course design and coordination of a course is undertaken by the Course Leader, who is a faculty member specialized in a relevant to the course area. The Course Leader meets and coordinates with the Programme Coordinator and any other programme faculty and decide on the textbooks, materials, assessments, and communications that will be used in the course, and articulate the learning objectives and outcomes of the course. The team also ensures that the

learning objectives of all courses are clear and measurable, that each course fits within the context of the programme of study and that the material is reflected on a week-to-week basis. Then they communicate their initial course design to the e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit (ePSU) for feedback and guidance on the pedagogical and technology aspects of the course. Next they produce the final course organization documents shown below.

2.2. Course Organization Documents

Each DL course includes the following organization documents:

- **Course Outline:** which includes guidelines and details regarding their course.
- **Course Assessment Guide:** which provides students with clear and adequate assessment expectations.
- **Course Study Guide:** which provides a structured and permanent communication, explicit guidelines and supportive tools on a weekly basis.

2.3. Interactivity

Interactivity in DL courses improves student learning outcomes and the student overall experience. Due to the fact that DL students are not physically present in the classroom we utilize different approaches to enhance interactivity between (a) students and faculty, (b) students and course materials and (c) students and their classmates in the online setting.

(a) **Student interaction with faculty** can be established through the use of synchronous and asynchronous communication tools. Faculty should be explicit, from the beginning of the semester, in how they expect students to communicate with them, and they should state how they will be communicating with students.

(b) **Student interaction with course materials** is also important. At the beginning of the semester, faculty should provide (through video and/or WebEx) students with a clear explanation of the course page structure and explain to them how they expect them to interact with the course material.

(c) **Student-to-student interaction** is critical in DL courses. This can be achieved through chats, forum discussions, WebEx sessions and formative and summative assessments.

3. Course Delivery

All our courses are structured in such a way so as to ensure *interactivity* between (a) *students and faculty*, (b) *students and course materials*, and (c) *students and their classmates*, in order to encourage students' active participation in the learning process. To achieve the above forms of interaction we employ a number of different activities, assessments and synchronous and asynchronous communication tools that are described below.

For the delivery of our DL courses we use both synchronous and asynchronous methods of communication and teaching by utilizing the appropriate technologies to optimize students learning outcomes and student learning experience.

3.1. Asynchronous communication and teaching

All our DL courses are assigned their own website in our Learning Management System (LMS). Only registered to the course students and the lecturer have access to the course LMS website. The learning management system we are currently using is Moodle (www.moodle.org). Moodle offers a variety of tools that facilitate the delivery, presentation, assessment and interaction.

Our LMS is the central point of all asynchronous communications which include:

- course general course information and requirements,
- course material depository (i.e. video, audio, text files) for student access and student-material interaction,
- communication and interaction between each student and the lecturer (student-teacher interaction), and between students (student-student interaction)

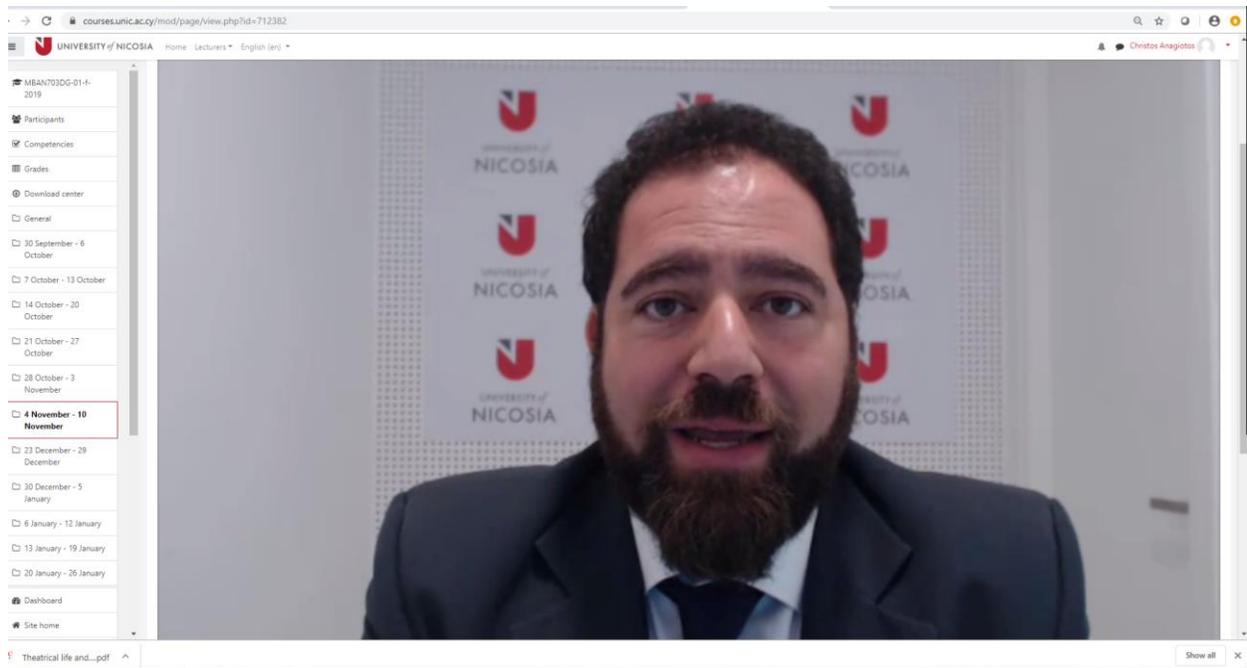


Illustration 1: Video recording in the LMS (Moodle)

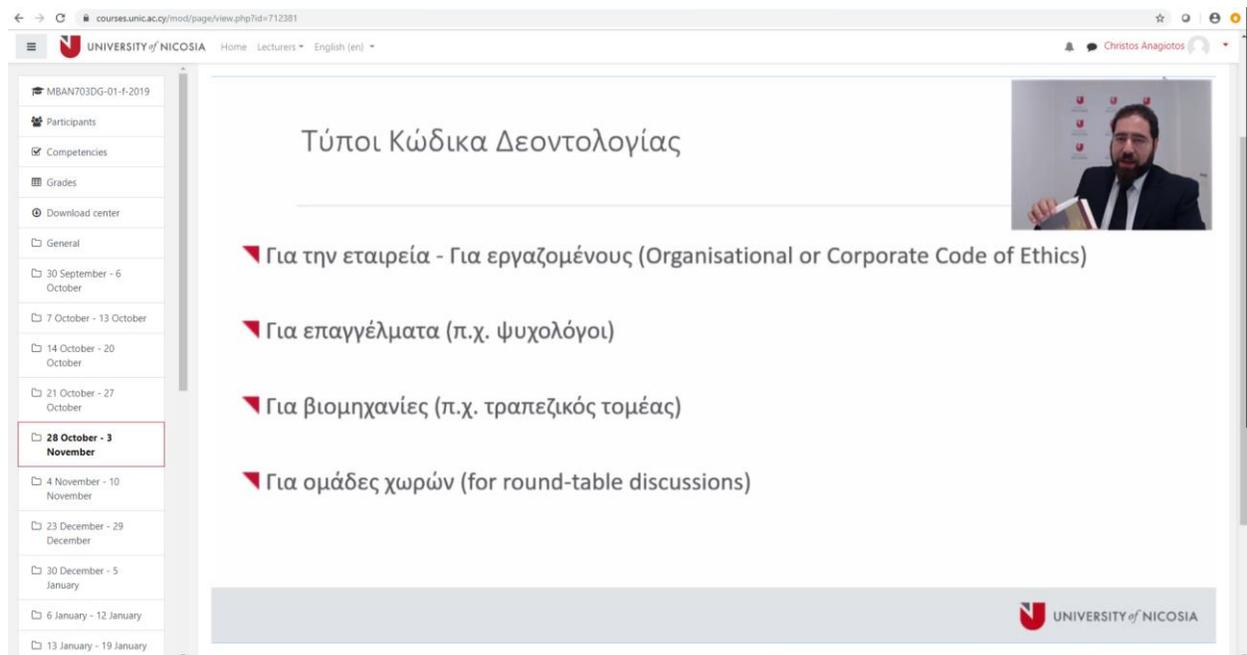


Illustration 2: Presentation with Video recording in the LMS (Moodle)

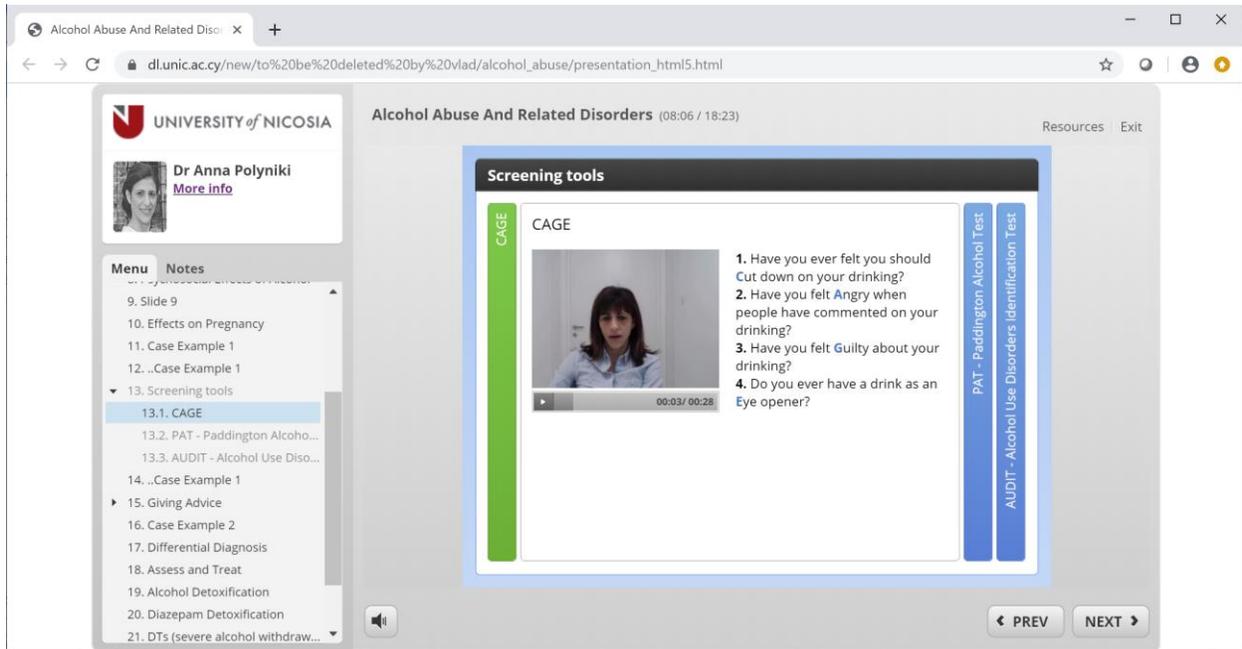


Illustration 3: Interactive video in the LMS (Moodle)

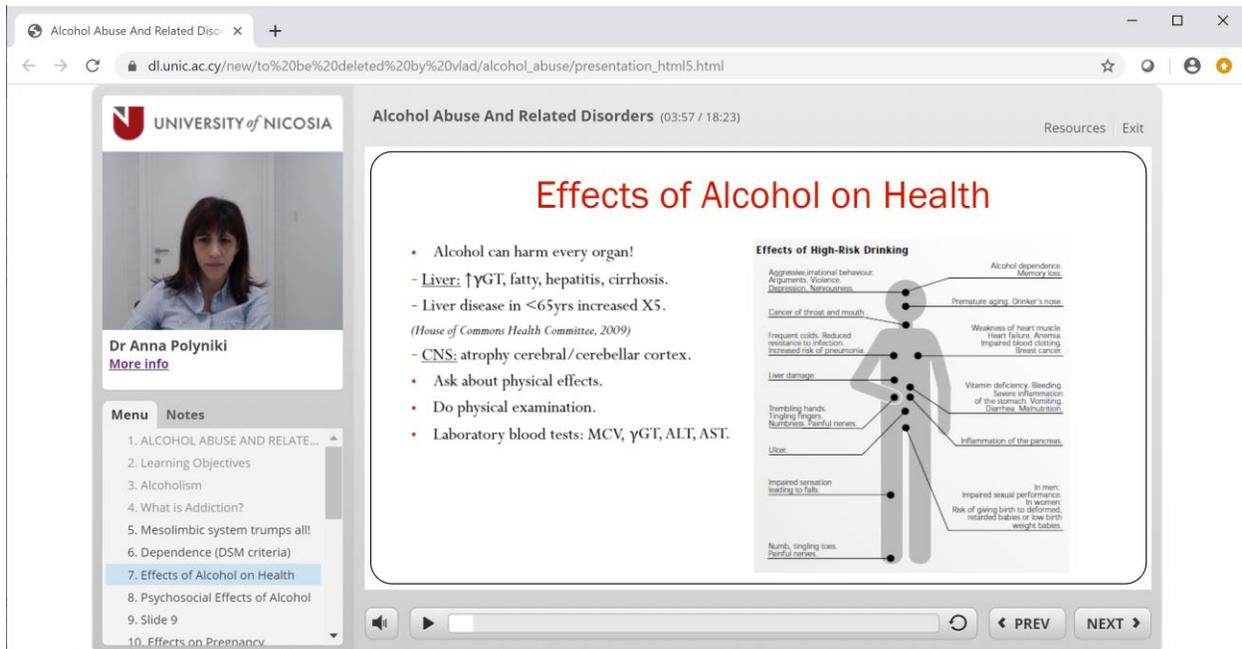


Illustration 4: Interactive video in the LMS (Moodle)

The screenshot shows a Moodle course page for 'FMED 533 Managing Multi-morbidity in Primary Care (BD)'. The course is currently in 'Week 2 (03 December - 07 December 2018)'. The main content area displays an interactive module titled 'Eye conditions in primary care KH'. On the left, a 'MENU' sidebar lists learning objectives (1.1 to 1.14). The main content area features a video player with a clinical case: '25 year - old man with, slightly painful swelling involving base eyelash'. Below the video are four blue buttons labeled 'Diagnosis?', 'Cause?', 'Treatment?', and 'Refer?'. A red callout box points to the video with the text: 'Stye (also called external hordeolum) NB An infected Meibomium gland is called an internal stye or internal hordeolum - unlike a chalazion, they are painful'. The video shows a close-up of a human eye with a small, red, swollen bump on the eyelid.

Illustration 5: Interactive material in the LMS (Moodle)

3.2. Synchronous communication and teaching

Each of our DL courses offer a minimum of nine (9) hours of synchronous video conferencing in the form of webinars. These nine (9) hours are divided in smaller webinar sessions scheduled and delivered throughout the twelve (12) weeks of the semester. The scheduling of the video conference sessions is decided by the lecturer in coordination with the Course Leader and/or Programme Coordinator with the purpose of facilitating students' learning outcomes. The lecturer utilizes video (using a web-camera) and audio (using a microphone) and s/he can also share her/his screen for illustrations or presentations. Students can also use audio and video to interact with the lecturer or with other students. In addition during the session students can type questions or comments in a "chat box" at the corner of their screen, next to the video. The form of the session depends on the lecturer and it can include (but not limited to) a presentation and/or discussion and/or lecture.

All sessions are video recorded and become available at the Moodle course page (see illustrations 6 & 7). Students are encouraged to participate but are not required to attend the synchronous

live sessions. They can view the sessions at a later point as many times as they wish, through a video link in the course Moodle website (see illustration 8-point C). For the video conferencing sessions we are currently using Cisco's WebEx (<https://www.webex.com>)

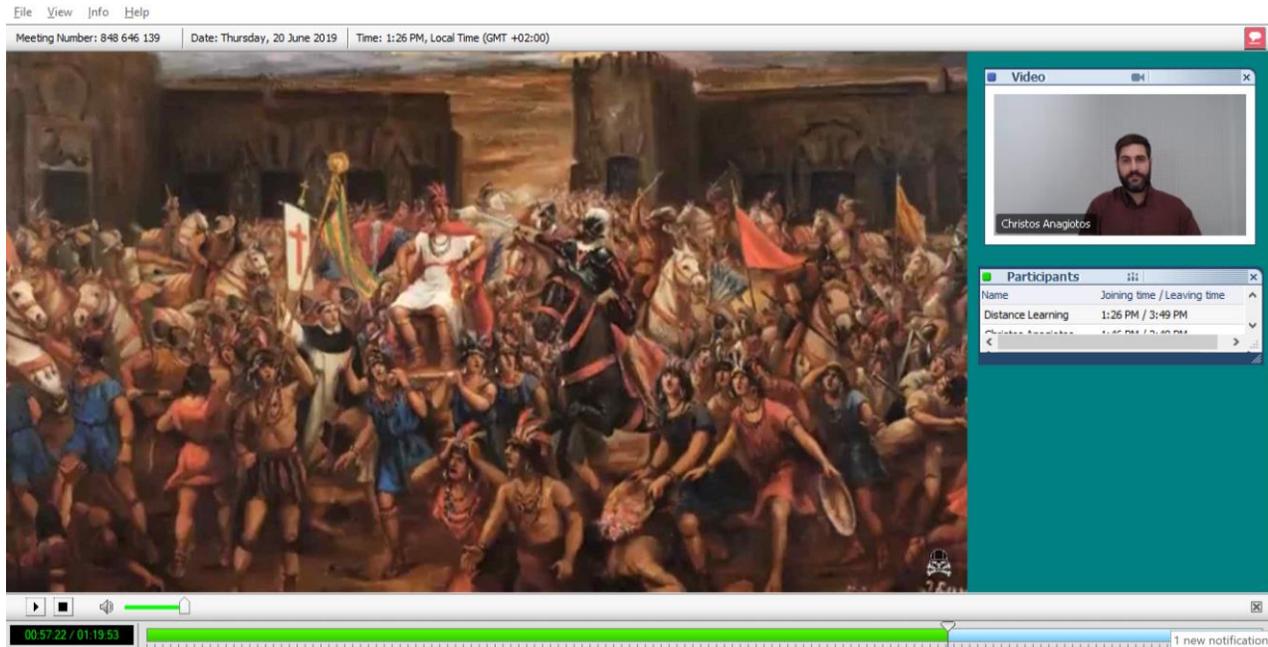


Illustration 6: Video conference session using WebEx

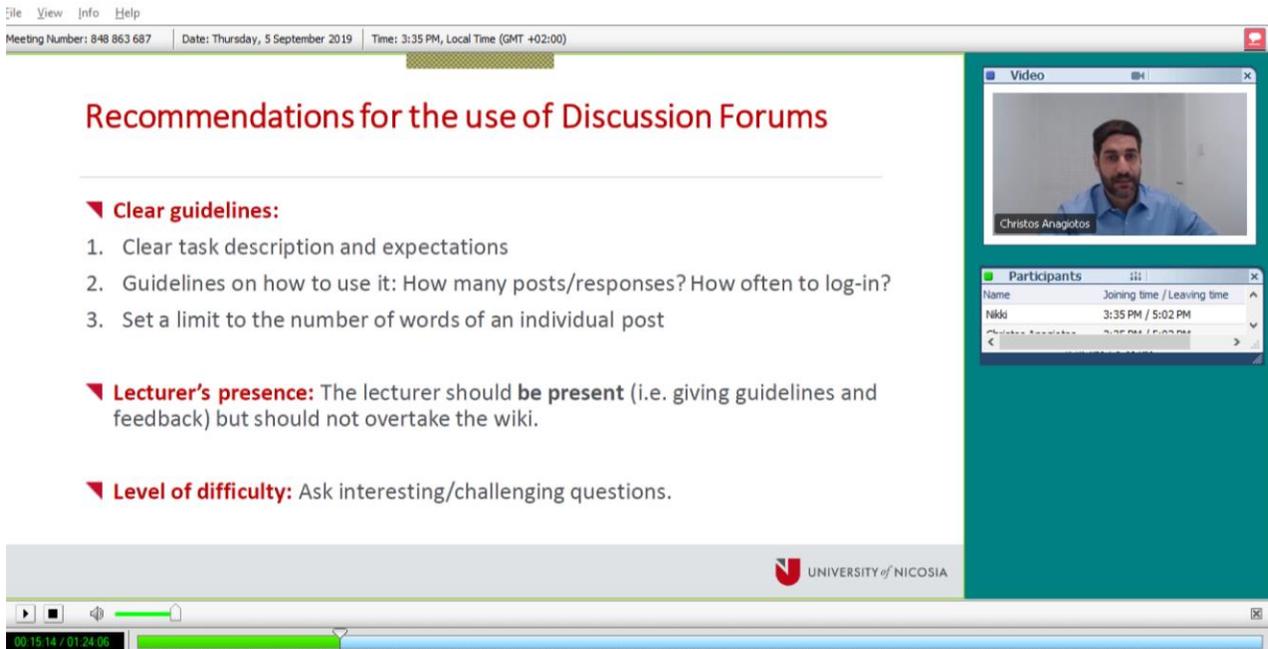


Illustration 7: Video conference session using WebEx

3.3. Face-to-face tutorials

Students are also encouraged to be engaged in face-to-face tutorials that are being conducted every semester at various centers in Greece and Cyprus. This allows students to receive the advantages of a “face-to-face” contact with their lecturer and benefit from their lecturer’s elucidations and more in-depth information on subjects of their courses. All face-to-face tutorials are being recorded and broadcasted live and upon completion are being uploaded on Moodle Platform for the students to easily access them throughout the semester.

4. Student Assessment and Grading

Student assessment is performed in various ways in our DL courses and it depends on the areas covered in each of our courses as well as each field’s traditions on assessment. In general, the assessments in our courses fall in one of two categories and we encourage lecturers to use both in each of their courses:

- **Formative assessment:** Assessment that usually occurs during the learning process
- **Summative assessment:** Assessment that occurs at the end of a course or a unit (i.e. Final exam)

4.1. Summative assessment

The major form of summative assessment is the Final Exam that takes place at the end of each semester. According to the regulations by the regional quality assurance agency in Cyprus (The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education) all students are required to be *physically present* at approved exam centers around the world for the final exam of all DL courses. The result of the final exam amounts for 60% of the final grade for each course.

The rest 40% of the final grade can be allocated to other forms of summative assessment, such as quizzes, mid-term exams, assignments, participation and contribution to Forum Discussions and/or Wikis, projects, research papers etc.

4.2. Formative assessment

In the Learning Management System (Moodle), there is a number of different activities that can be used for Formative assessment purposes. We encourage faculty to avoid use formative assessment activities to form students' final grades. Some examples of formative assessment activities that can be built in our LMS are:

- Self-assessment quizzes (for example at the end of each week)
- Short quizzed embedded in a video session (see illustration below)
- Discussion forums

Our LMS (Moodle) offers a Gradebook (Moodle Gradebook) where faculty communicate the individual assignment grades and the final grade for each student individually, so that each student is able to review his/her performance at each assignment at any point during the semester.

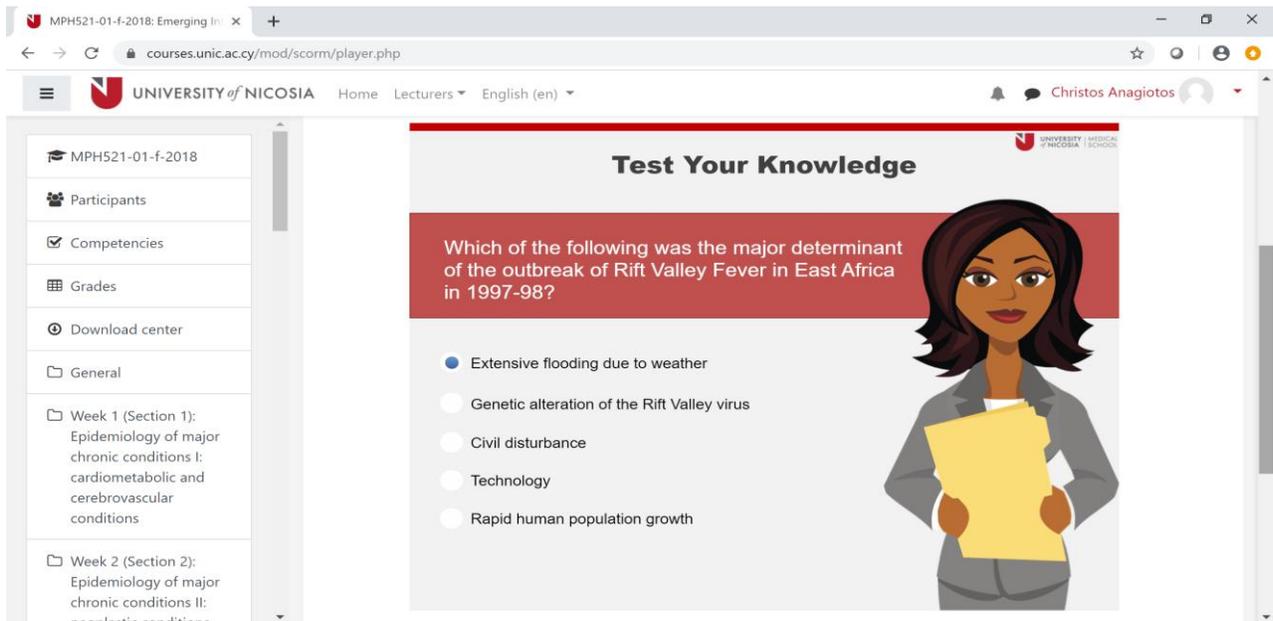
The image is a screenshot of a Moodle course page. The browser address bar shows the URL 'courses.unic.ac.cy/mod/scorm/player.php'. The page header includes the University of Nicosia logo and navigation links. A sidebar on the left contains a course menu with items like 'MPH521-01-f-2018', 'Participants', 'Competencies', 'Grades', 'Download center', and 'General'. The main content area features a 'Test Your Knowledge' quiz. The quiz question is: 'Which of the following was the major determinant of the outbreak of Rift Valley Fever in East Africa in 1997-98?'. There are five radio button options: 'Extensive flooding due to weather' (selected), 'Genetic alteration of the Rift Valley virus', 'Civil disturbance', 'Technology', and 'Rapid human population growth'. An illustration of a woman in a grey suit holding a yellow folder is positioned to the right of the quiz options.

Illustration 8: Formative Assessment - Short quiz embedded in a video session

4.3. Feedback

One of the challenges associated with teaching and learning online is that the students lose the physical cues that ensure the correct understanding of concepts and materials related to the course. For that reason, it is very important to provide students with continuous feedback on their assessments and their performance in general. So our lecturers:

- Track student progress regularly to identify and assist at-risk students promptly.
- Provide clear feedback to each student periodically. Create review quizzes in Moodle that are automatically graded so that students receive immediate feedback.
- Use the Gradebook in Moodle to record student progress. Encourage students to refer to the Gradebook to track their own progress.
- Respond to students' emails and postings within 48 hours. Acknowledging students' posts demonstrates teaching presence and encourages.
- Provide online office hours and be available to meet/talk to students via telephone, WebEx, Skype or in person.

5. Course Evaluation

Receiving feedback from students is one of the major sources of information for course design and course delivery improvement. We collect such feedback in few ways using features embedded in our LMS (Moodle) and through end of the semester student surveys. Specifically:

- We use the Feedback feature in Moodle to conduct anonymous informal student surveys so that any corrective action can take place early during the semester.
- All DL students, at the end of the semester and before they receive their final grade, are asked to fill-out an online anonymous survey for each of their courses, offered through an external survey tool (Lime Survey) (www.limesurvey.org), outside Moodle and the University. Students are asked to evaluate the following through an evaluation questionnaire: (a) Course and Material, (b) Faculty, (c) Technology and Platform, (d) Library and (e) Distance Learning Unit. Taking into account students' feedback, the Distance Learning Unit meets with all relevant people/departments to discuss possible areas for improvement and set action plans.

6. Learning Analytics

We define Learning Analytics as “the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about students and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimizing learning and the environments in which it occurs” (Siemens, 2011). We collect such data from the activity in our LMS (Moodle) and we aim to understand student behavior through their activity (or lack of activity) in the LMS. By combining these data with other student information we try to:

- Identify at-risk and under-performing students, provide early-warning indicators and facilitate timely interventions, reflections or recommendations
- Understand engagement of students and lecturers over time in a course
- Recognize the activities and topics that produce higher and lower levels of engagement
- Assist students monitor their own progress
- Improve student success in all learning contexts

7. Library Resources

In order to train students how to do proper research, faculty should be well aware of the available resources as well as the ways of accessing the Library remotely. Students that face technical or other issues accessing Library resources should be referred to the Library Helpdesk. Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document. The Library also offers faculty and students personalised and online training on the available resources and tools, upon request. Unic Library provides full text access to a number of eBooks. Furthermore, Librarians can assist faculty in choosing the appropriate resources for a course, as well as help students develop and enhance their research skills, through the use of relevant manuals and videos and one-to-one meetings with the students.

8. Student Support

8.1. Student Technical support

The DL Learning Management System (LMS) team of the DL Unit has a central role of technically supporting DL at the University. The team provides the following support services to students using the Learning Management System (Moodle):

- assist students to submit assignments,
- provide confirmation that assignments have been submitted,

Our students are also provided with a number of online training material, through which we ensure that students can effectively use our online teaching and learning systems throughout their studies. In addition to the above, DL students are granted with access to the Digital Library course in Moodle platform. The Digital Library course provides students with useful information regarding access the library, find relevant material, etc. Furthermore, the DL helpdesk tries to guide students via phone and email in order to provide them solutions to any issues they face.

8.2. Student Pedagogical Support

For the University of Nicosia and the DL Unit, student support consists an integral part of its pedagogical model. We provide students with support before and during their distance learning studies.

As mentioned above, course specification documents (Course Outline, Course Assessment Guide and Course Study Guide) are included in all courses and are available to students throughout the semester. Specifically, Course Outlines and Assessment Guides provide students with relevant information about the presentation and delivery of each course. Study Guides offer to students comprehensive descriptions for each lecture on a weekly basis (summary, scope, learning objectives, outcomes, keywords, glossary, bibliography, further readings, additional material, formative/summative assessments, communication tools, and course load recommendation).

Throughout their studies, students are supported in multiple ways at the University of Nicosia. Further to the helpdesk and support services already described, the DLA Unit provides students

with services including the advising and approval of pre-registration, assistance with financial difficulties, advising about students' grades and CPA, handling of petition requests and explanation of students' tuition fees, balance and installments. Furthermore, students are asked to inform the University of any particular requirements, so that those needed are addressed accordingly (e.g. sign language translation to deaf students). In case needed, for the students with special needs (facing either physical and/or learning difficulties) special arrangements are being made during their studies or during the DL Final Exams (e.g. extension to the submission of assignments). Lecturers that have students with special needs enrolled in their sections are being provided by the University with relevant guidance and support in order to be properly informed and proceed with relevant adjustments (whether this is applicable).

Furthermore the students can use the Moodle tours to help them navigate and familiarise themselves with the Moodle Platform. Moodle Tours take students and other users of Moodle platform through the platform interface, course template and commonly used Moodle features. User tours start automatically when a user accesses a page/activity for the first time, and they can be easily reactivated from the end of the current page.

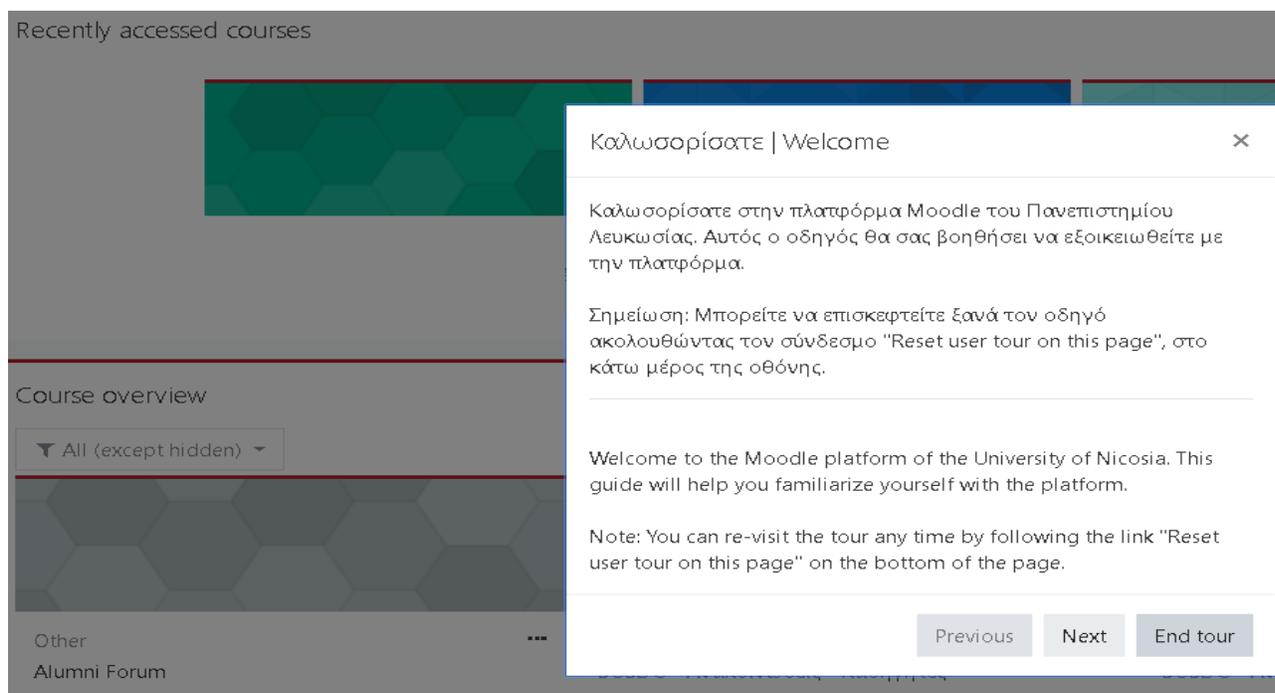


Illustration 9: Moodle tours for students' navigation in Moodle

9. Faculty Support

9.1. Faculty Pedagogical Support

The University of Nicosia have established the structure and processes to support Faculty Members and Distance Learning academic programmes in the pedagogical aspects of the teaching. This structure and the processes are built around the e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit (ePSU), a unit dedicated to the pedagogical support of faculty and DL programmes. The ePSU utilizes, coordinates and consults with a number of relevant units and people in the University, aiming to offer pedagogically sound education to all DL students and contributing to their academic success and stellar distance learning experience.

9.1.1 *The e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit (ePSU)*

The e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit (ePSU) is led by its director Dr. Christos Anagiotos and directly reports to the Rector. The unit is responsible for developing the University's Pedagogical and e-Learning Strategy and translating that into concrete applicable activities, by developing innovative, advanced online teaching-and-learning pedagogical methodologies and introducing these methodologies to Faculty Members for application in their courses. To achieve the above the ePSU utilizes, coordinates and consults with a number of relevant units and people in the University to ensure the best possible learning outcomes and educational experience for both DL students and faculty. The unit also seeks advice and feedback from experts outside the University of Nicosia through an Advisory Board. The ePSU offers two methods of direct support to faculty,

1. Professional development workshops for all faculty on e-learning and adult education,
2. Tailored e-learning support for Faculty Members and DL programmes.

ePSU Professional development workshops on pedagogy for faculty members

The University of Nicosia faculty members are offered a series of professional development workshops relevant to education, pedagogy, online learning and e-learning, ran by the ePSU (e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit) and the PSU (Pedagogical Support Unit). The workshop series

are hands-on and faculty members are encouraged to work on their course material and teaching methods during relevant workshop activities. For more information see Part II of this document.

Tailored e-Learning Support for Distance Learning Courses

The tailored e-learning support services are offered on a needs basis. The ePSU can help faculty in the pedagogical development of a new course or the improvement of an existing course, or academic programme. Such projects may involve but are not limited to interactive audio and video, multimedia and virtual reality course applications. For the completion of all such projects the ePSU unit employs the A.D.D.I.E. model that includes Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation phases (www.instructionaldesign.org/models/addie/) in order to ensure sound design and implementation of every project.

Depending on the nature of each project the ePSU director will utilize one or more of the following units and individuals in the University:

- Pedagogical Support Unit (PSU)
- Distance Learning (DL) Unit & Learning Management (LMS) Sub-Unit
- Technology Enhanced Learning Centre
- eLearning Expert Faculty from the School of Education
- Mediazone Centre

9.1.2 Pedagogical Support Unit (PSU)

The PSU unit led by its director Dr. Andri Vrioni is a unit dedicated to the support of all faculty members in educational and pedagogical aspects of teaching. The aim of the PSU is to promote and encourage innovation and excellence in teaching, learning and assessment to ensure quality and consistency in the ways students are engaged and equipped for life-long learning and employability in the 21st century. The unit is also responsible for developing tools for measuring effectiveness and other methodologies for certify student skills and learning. PSU delivers

Educational Conferences, produce and disseminates research activities that provide additional educational resources for faculty members teaching DL courses.

9.1.3. Technology Enhanced Learning Centre

Dr. Chris Alexander leads the Technology Enhanced Learning Centre. The Technology Enhanced Learning Centre, among other things, is responsible for the assessment of courses and programmes using advanced assessment tools, such as learning analytics. The Centre helps the ePSU and programme coordinators to determine the effectiveness of new and existing courses and whether any new methodologies or new technologies implemented through ePSU projects improved learning outcomes, student participation and student experience when navigating the course website. The Centre also help the ePSU in testing new technologies and methodologies before they are introduced to any DL courses.

9.1.4 e-Learning Expert Faculty from the School of Education

The e-Learning Expert Faculty from the School of Education are:

- Professor Charalambos Vrasidas, Associate Dean of Distance Learning Unit and
- Dr. Efi Nisiforou, Lecturer in Distance Education in the School of Education.

They consult with the ePSU in areas of their expertise and provide direction and feedback on relevant ePSU projects. Further, Dr. Nisiforou in collaboration with the ePSU, conducts research in areas of her research interest. This research, in addition to its academic contribution to the field of Distance Learning, helps the advancement of ePSU's projects and workshops.

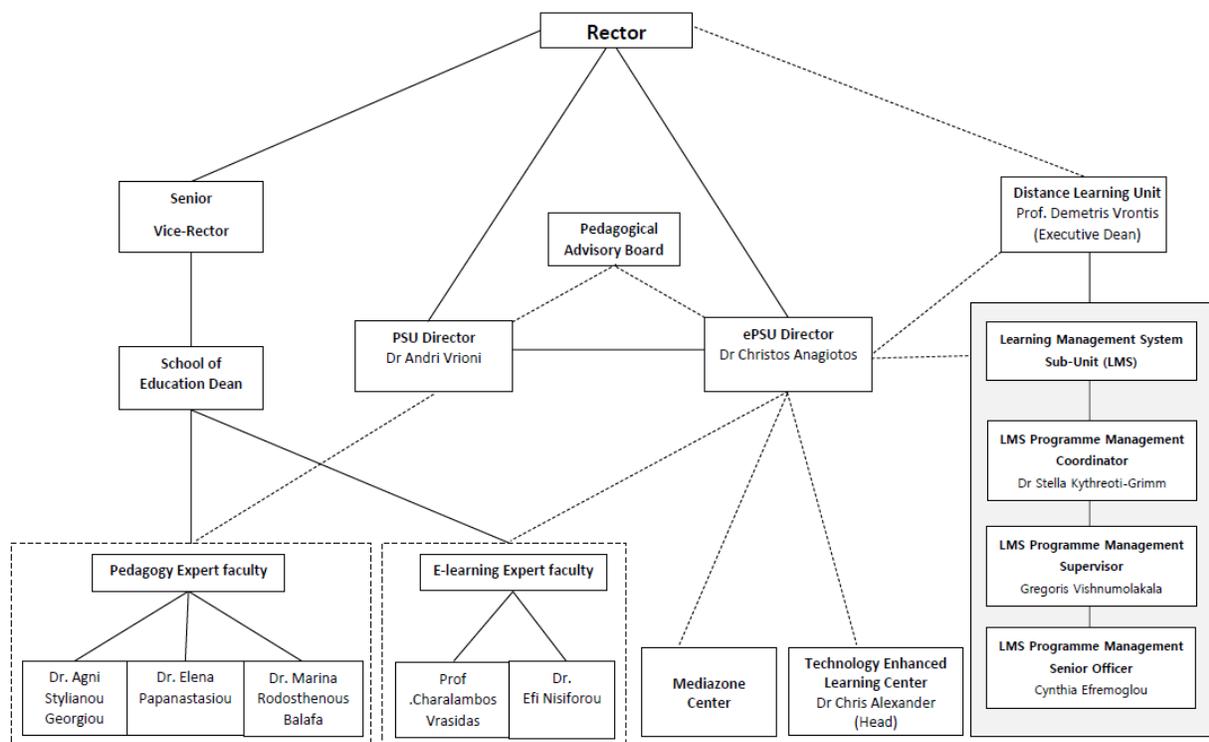
9.1.5 Mediazone Centre

Mediazone University of Nicosia is a service support centre that provides high quality media content for the University of Nicosia. Among its other functions, the team works with faculty and staff for the production of media that can be used in Distance Learning courses. In collaboration with the ePSU and the interested faculty members the Mediazone advises and produces media

such as video, audio, animation and other media that aim to increase interactivity in distance learning courses, trigger students’ interest and improve the overall learning experience.

9.1.6 Pedagogical Advisory Board

The Pedagogical Advisory Board consists of internal and external to the University of Nicosia pedagogy, media, educational technology and distance learning experts and provides non-binding strategic advice to the ePSU and PSU. The Board meets biannually, and provides strategic direction, monitors the unit’s performance, guides quality improvement and provides insights and ideas from a third party point-of-view.



Pedagogical Support Structure and Processes for Distance Learning Courses

9.2. Faculty Technical Support

The DL Learning Management System (LMS) team of the Distance Learning Unit has a central role of technically supporting Distance Learning at the University. The team provides the following support services to faculty:

- Support faculty in using the Learning Management System (Moodle):
 - liaise with proofreader to have course material checked
 - upload proofread course material,
 - arrange for course material to be recorded,
 - publish and upload recorded material;
- Support faculty in using the Teleconferencing Scheduling System:
 - account creation,
 - assignment of courses,
 - scheduling/cancelling sessions

10. Faculty Training

10.1. Faculty Pedagogical Training

In line with the recommendations and requirements set by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA), the e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit (ePSU) in collaboration with the Pedagogical Support Unit (PSU), the School of Education and the Technology Enhanced Learning Centre (TELC) offer a 36-hour professional development seminar, in the areas of contemporary teaching methods, new technologies in learning and online education. All faculty attend this semester long seminar offered every Fall and Spring semesters. The seminar is offered in the form of 12 weekly workshops and each workshop is 3 hours long and the successful completion of the seminar leads to the University of Nicosia **Faculty Professional Development Certificate in Teaching and Learning Theory and Practice.**

10.2. Faculty Technical Training

The DL Unit provides a series of technical trainings for faculty to learn how to use the available software and technology tools. The following training courses are offered to all faculty teaching on DL programmes. These are as follows:

- **Certificate 1: Distance Learning Essentials**
- **Certificate 2: Moodle Essentials**
- **Certificate 3: Creative Media Essentials**

11. References

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