Where to start from
Established Practice vs. Absolute Zero?

Gottfried S. Csanyi
E-Learning Centre, Vienna University of Technology
Learning objectives

After having read (or listened to) this presentation you should be convinced that:

- If you have a perfect face-to-face course … it will make sense to start re-design on the bases of the established practice – start evolution.

- If you are not satisfied with the established practice of your face-to-face course you’d better start thinking from the scratch – make revolution.
Overview

Introduction

1. Why do we teach?
2. A short digression concerning tools
3. What e-learning is for
4. Change strategies
5. If your old course is (theoretically) satisfying
6. If your old course is NOT satisfying / successful
7. Conclusions

Summary
Questions to be discussed and answered (see workshop agenda)

- **Where from and how to start development of an e-learning course from classical course**
  - New role of teacher in an e-learning course
  - New activities and extended communication
  - Assessment in e-learning course
  - How to motivate students and help them in time management
  - Organizational aspects of an e-learning course
  - Quality assurance in e-learning course
Introduction

Questions **NOT** to be discussed and **answered** with this presentation:

- **HOW** to design an e-learning course

  (For this topic see e.g. Jan Thomas‘, Victor Manso‘s, and Jasna Tingle‘s presentations Thursday afternoon)
Topic 1

Why do we teach?
Why do YOU teach?

Please, think about your personal answers before you continue reading.
Why do we teach?

Possible Answers

• show students we are experts
• tell students how the world is going round
• entertain students
• help students to reach learning goals better
• help students to reach learning goals faster
• earn money
• etc.
Why do we teach?

Central reasons from didactical view

• help students to reach learning goals better
• help students to reach learning goals faster
• and maybe: entertain students
Why do we teach?

Learning
= an autonomous active process owned by learners

Teaching
• does not replace or produce learning
• helps to improve learning in terms of outcomes and speed
Topic 2

Short digression concerning tools
Short digression concerning tools

If you hear „tool“ – what are you thinking of?

The first and most common tool is …. 

… the hammer.
Short digression concerning tools

There are different types of hammers.

A single hammer can serve different purposes:
You can use a hammer to build – or to destroy.
Short digression concerning tools

„For him who has a hammer the world looks like a nail.“

One danger with e-learning:
L‘art pour l‘art: demptation to apply as much as possible
Short digression concerning tools

**E-learning is** the tool (respectively a collection of tools) and **not the purpose**.

Different types (of tools) can serve different purposes.

You will have to find out:
For which purposes do you **NEED** e-learning?
Topic 3

What e-learning is for
What e-learning is for

Question

• Why is it called e-learning – and not e-teaching?

Answer

• Development started with completely virtual experiments; no teacher was involved in the learning process.
  (But that did not prove really successful.)
What e-learning is for

• Course design and delivery means **e-teaching** – as a matter of fact.

• Studying in technology enhanced (or completely virtual) courses = **e-learning**.
What e-learning is for

A first simple definition:

- e-learning/teaching means the application of electronic information and communication tools for purposes of learning and teaching
What e-learning is for

Functions of e-learning/teaching

Please, think about your personal answers before you continue reading
What e-learning is for

Functions of e-learning/teaching (a sample)
• provide learning materials / content (e-publishing; pdf cemetery)
• information of students (e-organisation)
• Students and course administration (e-administration)
• communication between students / and teacher(s)
• collaboration in teams and groups
• searching for information (e-library)
• submission of learning products
• (self) testing and assessment (plus automatic feedback)
• visualisation, simulations, games
• Automatically personalized and corrected assignments (see e.g. Heikki Hallanties presentation)
What e-learning is for

Didactic core functions of e-learning/teaching

• communication between students / and teacher(s)
• collaboration in teams and groups
• searching for information (e-library)
• submission of learning products
• (self) testing and assesment (optional with automatic feedback)
• visualisation, simulations, games, roleplays
• and to some extent: publishing learning content
What e-learning is for

Another simple definition

+ e-learning/teaching is the application of a collection of tools with the purpose to solve certain problems in the context of learning

- The application itself is not the purpose.
What e-learning is for

Resulting Question

• Which are the problems I want to solve by changing from traditional teaching to e-learning/teaching?

• In other words: I have a problem – how can I solve it?
What e-learning is for

Wrong Question

• If I have a tool (e-learning, virtual communication, wiki, or whatever) – how can I use it?
Topic 4

Change strategies
Change strategies

What do you want to change?

maybe from

• feeding concept to challenging concept
• content based to task based
• answers to questions & problems
• teaching to supported learning
e-learning/teaching is best for

• challenging concepts
• task based learning
• solving questions & problems
• supported active learning
Change strategies

BUT! e-learning/teaching can also be applied to enhance

• traditional feeding concepts
• content based learning/teaching
• giving answers (to never posed questions)
• traditional teaching
Change strategies

Remember

e-learning is just a collection of tools
(for details concerning tools see e.g. the presentation of Goran Bubas Thursday afternoon)
Change strategies

If e-learning/teaching is just a collection of tools …

What is your global goal for changing from a traditional course to e-learning/teaching?
Change strategies

Possible goals

• Better

• Faster

• Cheaper
Change strategies

Possible goals – and open questions

• Better
  Which quality criteria?

• Faster = time saving
  For whom – students and/or teachers?

• Cheaper
  For whom – university, students, teachers?
So once again: What is your goal? What do YOU want to achieve?

Please, think about your personal answers before you continue reading.
Change strategies

What do YOU want to achieve?

Possible Answers

• More students reach planned learning goals
• Less work for me
• Less time investment for students
• More active involvement of students
• Better preparation of students for lessons
  (see e.g. presentation of Jan Thomas yesterday afternoon)
• Reach new target groups (e.g. distant learners)
Change strategies

How **you** could reach these goals in the best way –
depends on the **individual** status quo of your course.
Topic 5

If your old course is (theoretically) satisfying / successful …
Old course is satisfying

Your course …

• follows defined learning objectives – matched with the curriculum
• is designed according up to date knowledge of learning psychology
• allows for or even fosters active learning
• is based on continuous mutual communication
• does provide continuous feedback for students
• AND/OR: the number of students reaching planned learning goals / competencies is high.
Old course is satisfying

In this case the first question is:

• Why do you want to change anything at all?

The next questions might be:

• What do you want to improve?
• Which are those (marginal) problems you want to solve?
Old course is satisfying

Having identified the potentials for improvement you should

• *design* specific didactic innovations
• *decide* if you need e-learning tools for their realization
• *find* (the) appropriate tool(s)
• AND *evaluate* the supposed input-output relation in terms of workload and learning outcomes.
Topic 6

If your old course is NOT satisfying / successful …
Old course is not satisfying

Your course …
• does *not* follow defined learning objectives (that are matched with the curriculum)
• is *not* designed according up to date knowledge of learning psychology
• does *not* allow or foster active learning
• is *not* based on mutual communication
• does *not* give continuous feedback to students
• AND/OR: The number of students reaching the planned learning goals / competencies is *too low.*
Old course is not satisfying

In this case the first question is:
• What’s going wrong?

The next steps might be:
• Reflection and maybe re-formulation of learning objectives
• (Re-) analyses of target group
• Evaluation of course concept
• Decision for revolutionary (start from zero) or evolutionary change strategy
Old course is not satisfying

Adding e-learning features to an ill designed course will not make it more successful.
Topic 7

Conclusions
Conclusions

On the one hand introduction of e-learning is a good opportunity to critically reflect course concepts.

On the other hand changing to e-learning must not be the objective of revised course concepts.

The goal of course re-design always has to be improvement of the learning process and learning outcomes of students.

There should always be the option to teach without technological enhancement – even after re-design
Summary
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If you have a perfect face-to-face course … it will make sense to start re-design on the bases of the established practice – **start evolution**.

If you are not satisfied with the established practice of your face-to-face course … you‘d better start thinking from the scratch – **make revolution**.

„More of the same“ would just re-inforce the status quo.
Thank you for your attention

Dr. Gottfried Csanyi

gottfried.csanyi@elearning.tuwien.ac.at

employee of …
Vienna University of Technology
(18.000 Students, 2.700 staff)

http://elearning.tuwien.ac.at
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