

Forum Insights

SPRING ACADEMY 2015



Each summer since June 2003, the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) has convened a week-long session to allow academic staff to explore and engage with educational technologies. This eLearning Summer School combines hands-on workshops, keynote speakers and reflective sessions in a manner that immerses participants in existing and emerging digital technologies and their practical educational applications. Speakers and facilitators come from right across the Irish higher-education sector, and the number of attendees is generally limited to 50. As an event it has gone from strength to strength, attracting much interest nationally and internationally, and since 2010 it has been run as a city-wide event across Dublin's higher education colleges (see <http://www.dit.ie/lttc/elearning/elearningsummerschool/>)

Feedback from participants each year is consistently positive, with almost all respondents indicating that the summer school met or exceeded their expectations and agreeing with the statement that they would recommend it to a colleague. A regular suggestion has been to run other, shorter more focused events throughout the year, with the idea of a winter or spring event being especially popular. From this, the notion of running a Spring Academy was conceived.

At the invitation of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, DIT applied for funding to explore the possibilities of running such an event in conjunction with other institutions across Ireland. From initial talks with the Irish Learning Technology Association, a partnership with NUI Galway and Waterford Institute of Technology emerged, and February 2014 was agreed as suitable for the event, which would be characterised by sessions run via online link-ups. The role of video and digital media in education was identified by the organising group as a theme which had already attracted keen

interest across the sector. Separate programmes were agreed and finalised within each of the three organisations, tailored to the local needs of each, and high-profile speakers were engaged to deliver online keynote sessions which were open not just to the organising colleges but to all higher-education institutions. It was agreed that this initial Spring Academy would be run as a pilot, and that feedback from the participants would determine any future iterations.



Friday participants at the Dublin Institute of Technology Spring Academy on video in education.

In Dublin, 18 staff from DIT, IT Tallaght, IT Blanchardstown, DCU and the National College of Ireland attended the three-day event which focused on video in education. In Waterford, 13 events were run with approximately 144 attendees from a range of disciplines: an additional focus on social media and its impact on education broadened the theme to focus on digital media (see <http://elearning.wit.ie/springacademy>)

while in Galway the Academy ran two local workshops with a total of 30 attendees. The opening keynote presentation on 'eModerating' featured international eLearning expert Professor Gilly Salmon who engaged with the group from her home in Perth, Australia – this session was advertised nationally and attracted over 70 attendees, with excellent feedback. In the afternoon, a link-up with was made with WIT during a session with Dr Eugene O'Loughlin on YouTube, Learning Analytics and Audience Retention, and Days 2 and 3 began with an online link-up across DIT, WIT and NUIG. Other workshops in Dublin focused on YouTube, flipped classrooms, presenting to camera, screencasting and a day-long hands-on session on video-making [see <http://quindpdp.blogspot.ie/2015/02/dit-spring-academy.html?>]. The Academy ended on Day 3 with a videoconference link for a presentation from Lord David Puttnam.

Feedback from the session has been very positive, with seven of ten Dublin respondents indicating that the Academy exceeded their expectations, the remainder indicating that the event met their expectations (no respondent indicated that it was average or disappointing). There was universal agreement with the statements "I would recommend the Spring Academy to a colleague", "I intend to implement some of the ideas learned during the event" and "Attending the Spring Academy was a good use of my time". In the free text responses area, in addition to suggestions for specific sessions, there were several suggestions regarding running the academy as an annual event. Given this level of encouragement, it is hoped that a similar event will be run next year with a wider grouping of colleges.

<http://www.dit.ie/lttc/elearning/springacademy/>

Kevin O'Rourke
May 2015

Copy of the Dublin Programme

Spring Academy: Video in Education
Wednesday 18th – Friday 20th February 2015

	Day 1 - eModerating and Screencasting	Day 2 - Screencasting and presenting	Day 3 - Video creation
9.30	Room 2069 Introductions Keynote on e-moderating (Gilly Salmon) , with link-up across DIT/NUIG/WIT and nationally	Ground floor Courtyard Link up with WIT/NUIG, followed by Voice Presenting	Ground floor Courtyard Introduction to video-making 1
11.00	Break	Break – Grumpy Mule	Break – Grumpy Mule
11.15	Room 4079 Orientation for week, flipped classrooms *Being recorded using Echo360 Lecture Capture	Ground floor Courtyard Presentation skills for video	Ground floor Courtyard Introduction to video-making 2
12 Noon	Library Training Room YouToo for YouTube! *Setting up YouTube channels and all associated settings (unlisted/private/public) *Webcourse - embedding YouTube mashup/webink		
1.00	Lunch – first floor restaurant	Lunch – first floor restaurant	Lunch – first floor restaurant
2.00	Library Training Room Screencasting and YouTube	Library Training Room Screencasting Part 2 Hands-on introduction, to include overview of apps/Screencastomatic / Powtoon / Moovly and more	Ground floor Courtyard Video-making and final presentations
4.00	Close	Close	3.30 Link up with WIT/NUIG (Closing Keynote with Lord David Puttnam), followed by Close