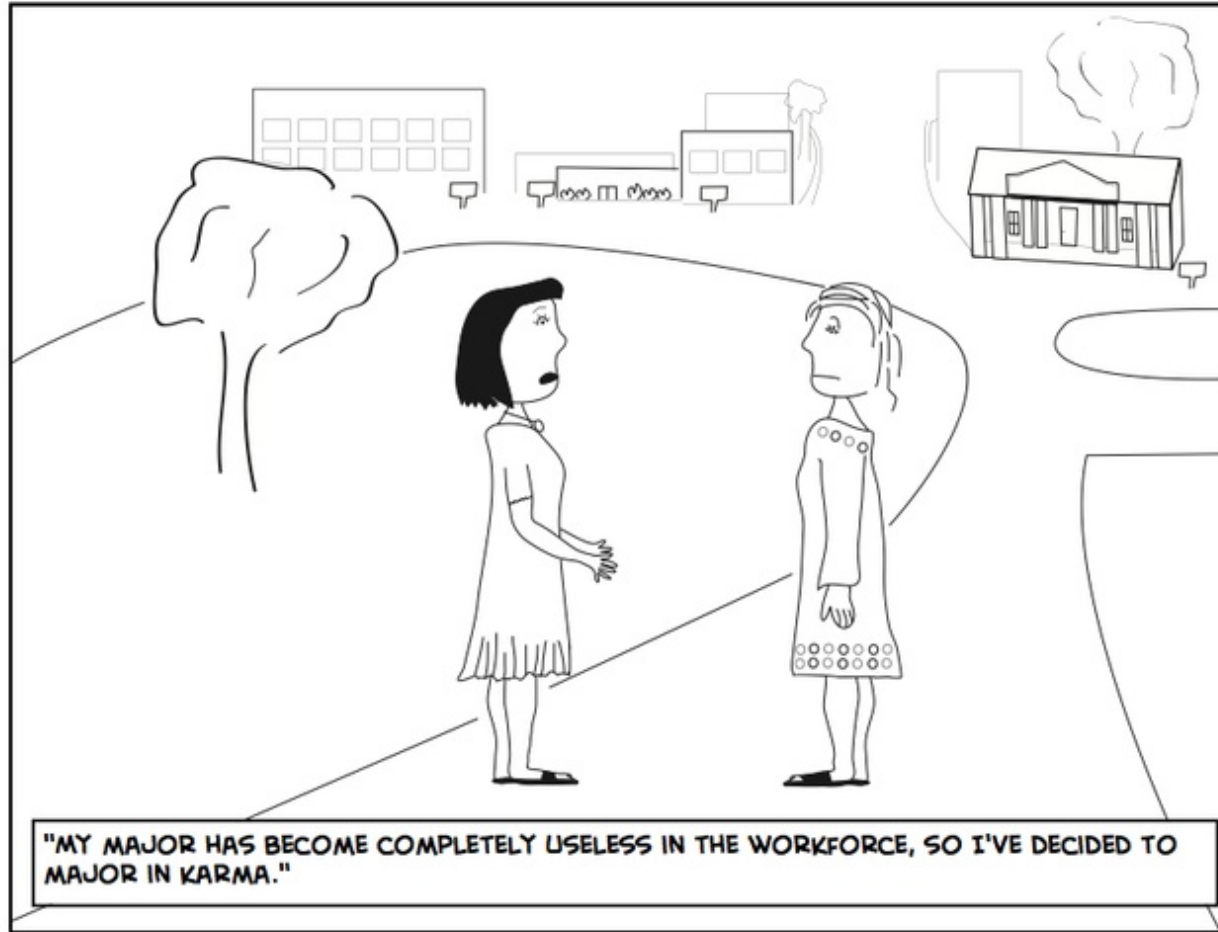


# Creating Online Learning Communities



Paul Shrivastava

Director, David O'Brien Centre for Sustainable Enterprise  
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# Today's Goals

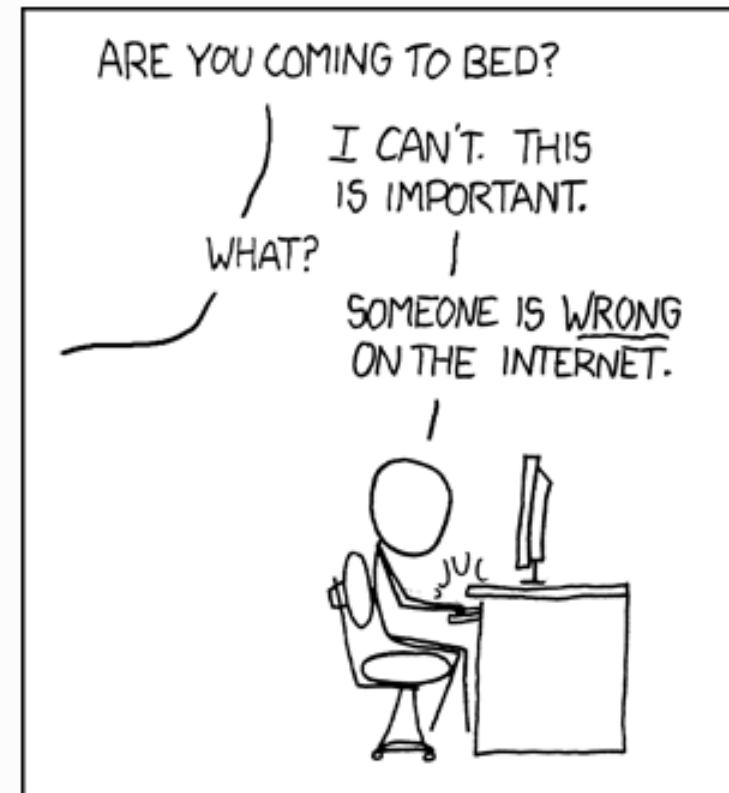


- a) understand what are "online learning communities", how they differ from classroom community
- b) understand Technological, Institutional/Social and Pedagogical challenges
- c) open up some questions for discussion at CU

eLearning if developed well can help make education more sustainable, widely deployed – so I am a big supporter, but a cautious one

# Experience Base

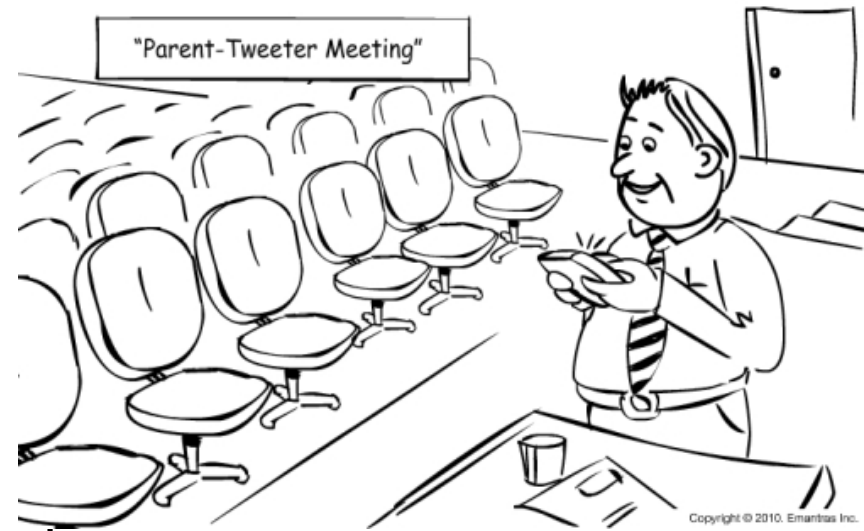
- eSocrates experience -2000-2004
  - Design & Development of LMS
  - Online teaching materials
  - OLCs at colleges, govt agencies
- Blackboard @ BU – 2005-08
- eConcordia experience 2009-nov
- SIPC Moodle – 2011- now



Not specialist in Instructional design, online teaching,

# What are OLCs

- Online learning communities refers to groups of self motivated learners engaged in technology mediated, interactive, multi-media, self-paced, self directed learning.
- E.g.
  - Support groups
    - Customers -Novel, MS, SAS, Oracle
    - Patients – Cancer, Diabetes,
  - Language – Laura K. Lawless French
  - International Development –
  - Blog & Wiki, communities
  -



# Differences from Classroom

- Technology mediation, immersion
- No or little face-time, no body language, contextual communication
- Very different motivations of learners
- Self-Pace, Self-Package, Learner-driven



*"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"*

# Challenges of building OLCs

- Technological
- Institutional and Social
- Pedagogical challenges



# Technology Challenges



*"You have 736 new messages!"*

- Increasing Rate of change – the new new thing
- Increasing Complexity – more parts, more interdependencies, more uncertainties
- Significant time to learn to become effective
- Uneven Support systems – external, internal
- Lack of forward and backward compatibility, and even enterprise-wide compatibility in software

# Institutional & Social

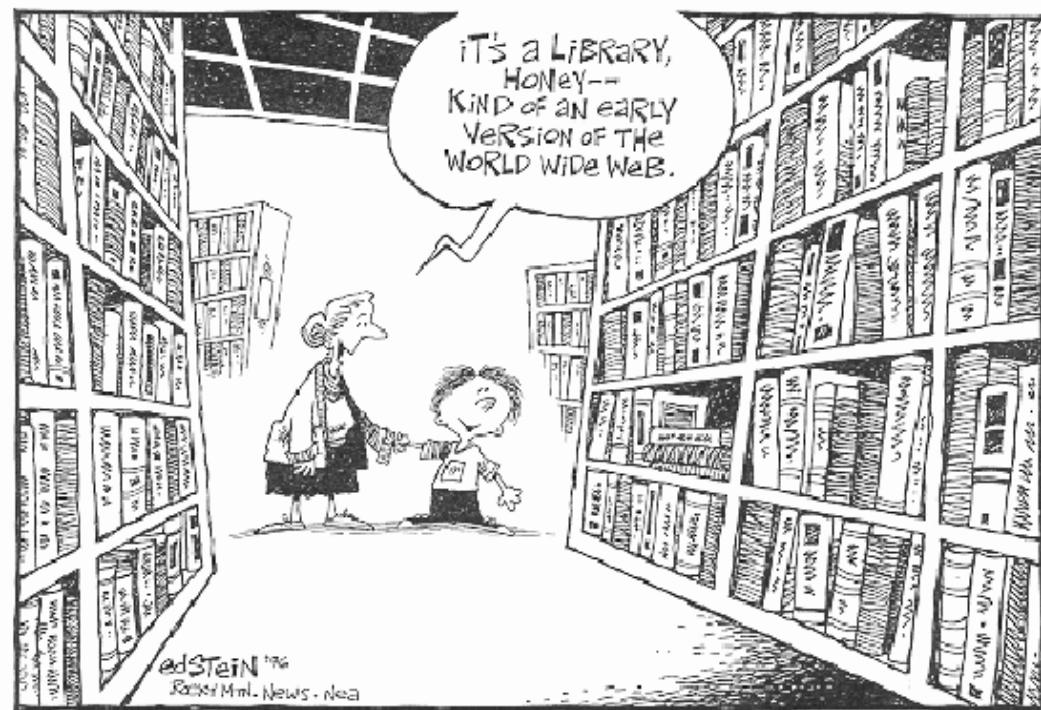
- Institutional structures and cultures support class-based – curriculum, testing, course credits, program requirements, financial
- Faculty suspicious of “learning automation”, consider eLearning inferior
- Labor unions concerns
- Time pressure on faculty precludes significant self re-education, redesign of courses
- Reward systems built around class-room teaching





# Pedagogical Challenges

- Students unprepared to take charge, lack self discipline, structure, to succeed
- Faculty unprepared to give up control
- Mistake of creating “the class” online
- Cost of developing and maintaining rich media, interactivity, games,



# Questions for us at CU

- How can we integrate technologies and make them user friendly
- How to support and reward faculty
- Who are our audience – current CU students v/s others,
- What types of OLCs do we want, need to create?

