National University of Ireland, Galway
Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh

From Teaching to Learning

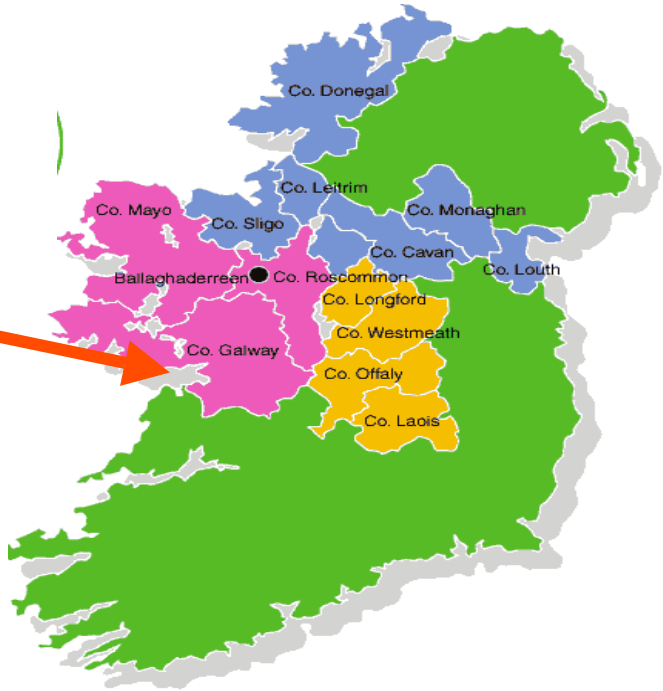
Implications for eCompetence development of academic staff

Dr. Iain Mac Labhrainn
Director
CELT

National University of Ireland, Galway
Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh

Irish Higher Education

- 7 universities in the Republic (2 in the North)
- 14 Institutes of Technology
- NUI Galway
  - Founded in 1842
  - 14,500 students
  - 7 Faculties



- New government investment
  - Special initiatives in HE
  - new NDP (2007-2011) *1 Billion Euro*

NDP
PLEAN FORBARTHA NÁISIÚNTA

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Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT)

Responsibilities:

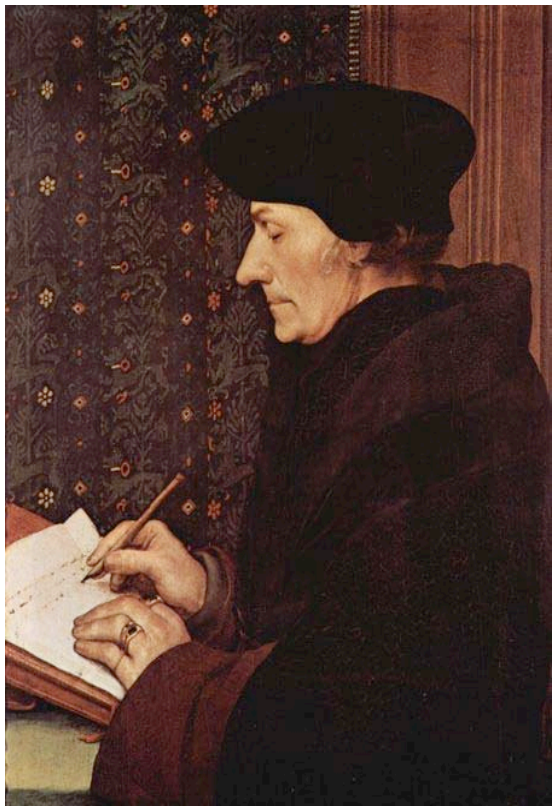
- Academic Staff Development
- Learning Technologies (& AV support)
- Learning & Teaching Policy & Strategy
- Civic Engagement
- Student Learning Support
- Research

Funding:

- University central budget
- HEA (Irish Government)
- EC
- Philanthropic Trusts
- Other….

Scholarship & Academic practice

- Language, culture & attitudes
  - "Academic Tribes & Territories" (Becher & Trowler)
- Must we choose between teaching & research?
  - Boyer (1990) "Scholarship Reconsidered"
- Intellectual, scholar or teacher?
- Professional / amateur
- Is there scope for a civil/societal role?



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What do we know about student learning?

- Student approaches to learning (SAL)
  - Sweden and UK
  - Martin, Saljo, Entwistle, Tait, Hounsell, etc
  - **"surface," "deep", "strategic"**
  - intention to *reproduce* or *understand*
- Surface approaches prevalent
  - linked to poorer learning outcomes (Ramsden 2003)
  - *not* necessarily linked to poorer grades/assessment (Richardson, 2000, Haggis, 2003)
- "learning environment" shapes the approach
  - Conceptions of learning;
  - prior experience;
  - teaching and learning context;
  - *perception* of the context/task to hand

What about the role of the teacher?

- Prosser & Trigwell (1994, 1996,1997,1999)
  - approaches to teaching
  - teacher-focused/information transmission
  - student-focused/conceptual change
  - link with teachers' conceptions of *learning*
- Biggs (2003), Ramsden (2003): 3 levels/theories
  - teaching as telling, or transmission
  - teaching as organising student activity
  - teaching as making learning possible
- Perception of control, workload, status of teaching, class size and student ability – all impact on approach taken.

Can we effect change in the teacher's conceptions that lead to change in the students' approaches?

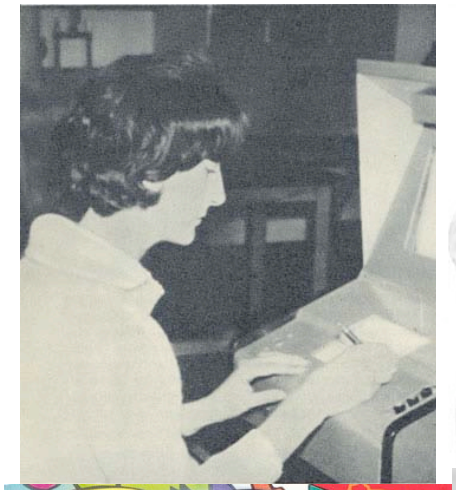
Contemporary issues

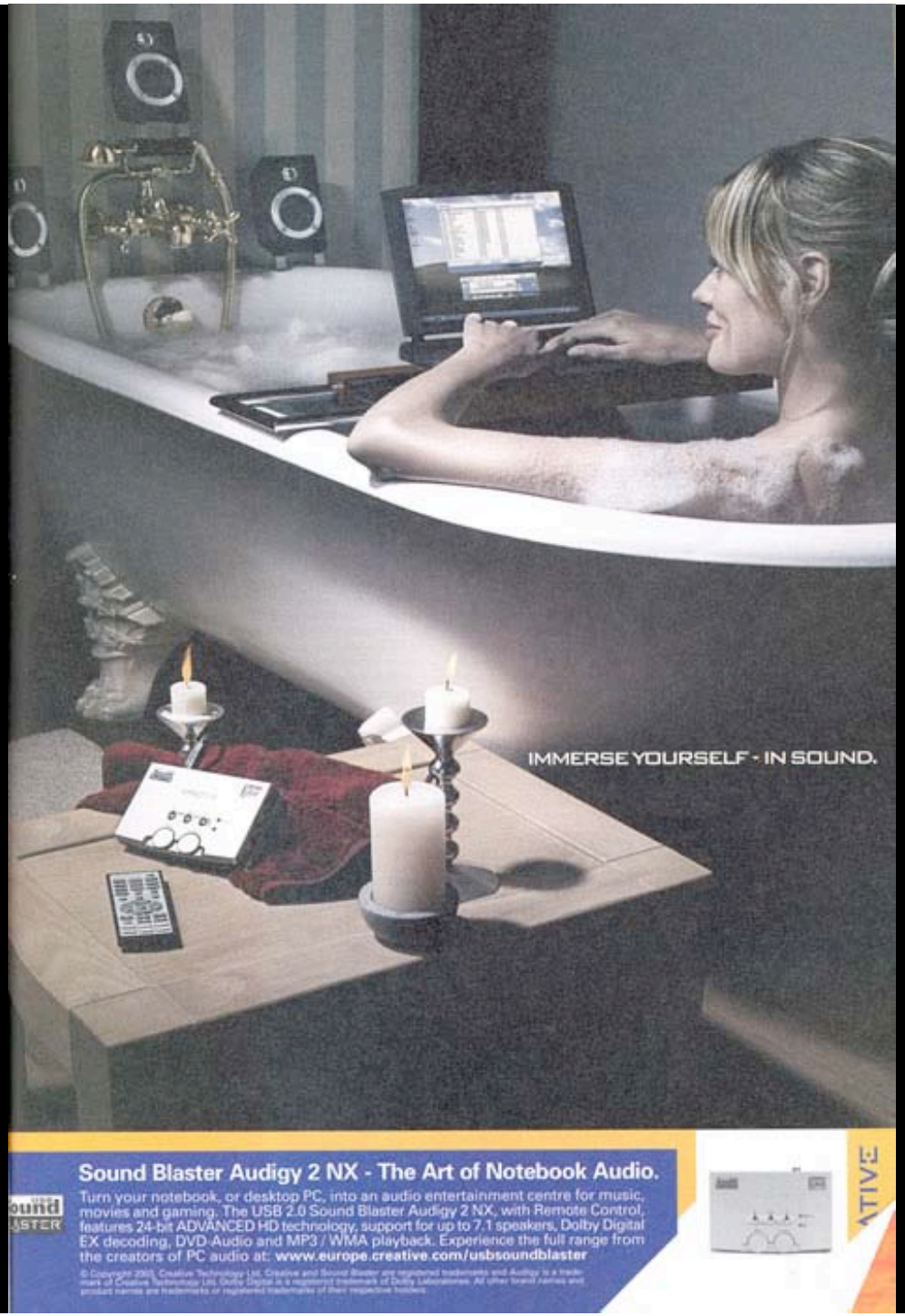
- Impact of political, economic, demographic factors
- Science & technology research
  - Professional researchers/amateur teachers
  - Resentful teachers?
- Increasing technology in everyday life
  - Students' media literacy
  - Staff cynicism?

Technology's impact on teaching & learning ?

"...will fundamentally transform education."

- Teaching Machines
- TV
- Videoconferencing
- Computer Aided Learning & Multimedia
- Intelligent Tutoring Systems
- The Web

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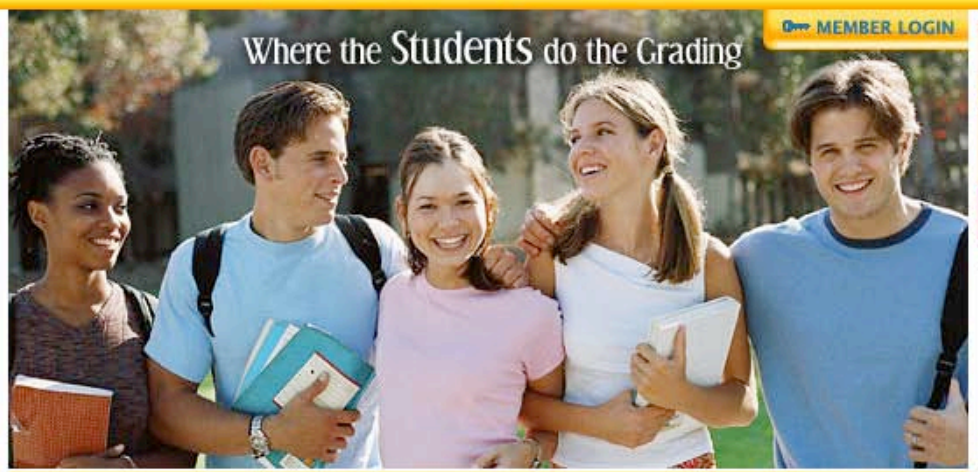

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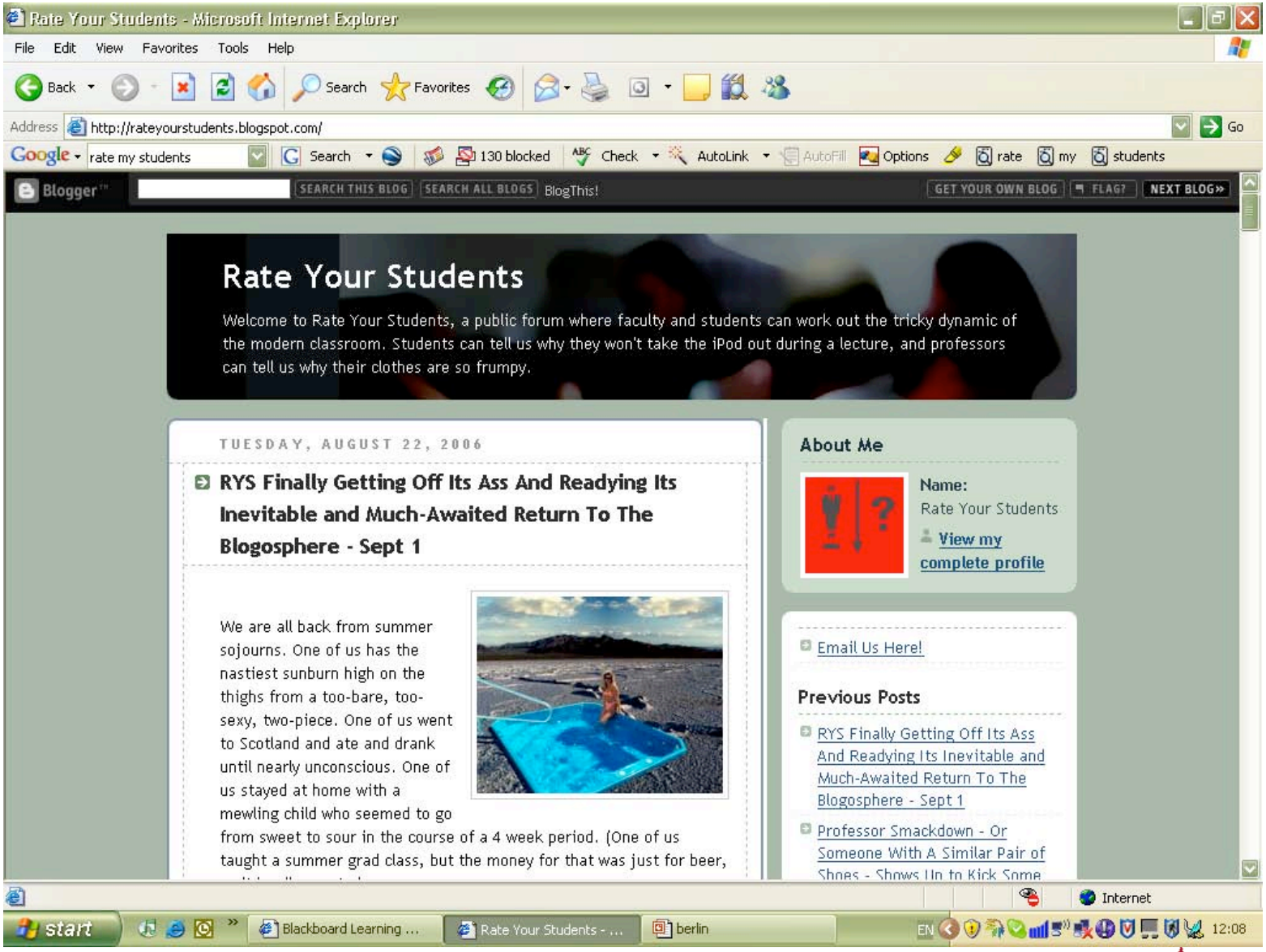

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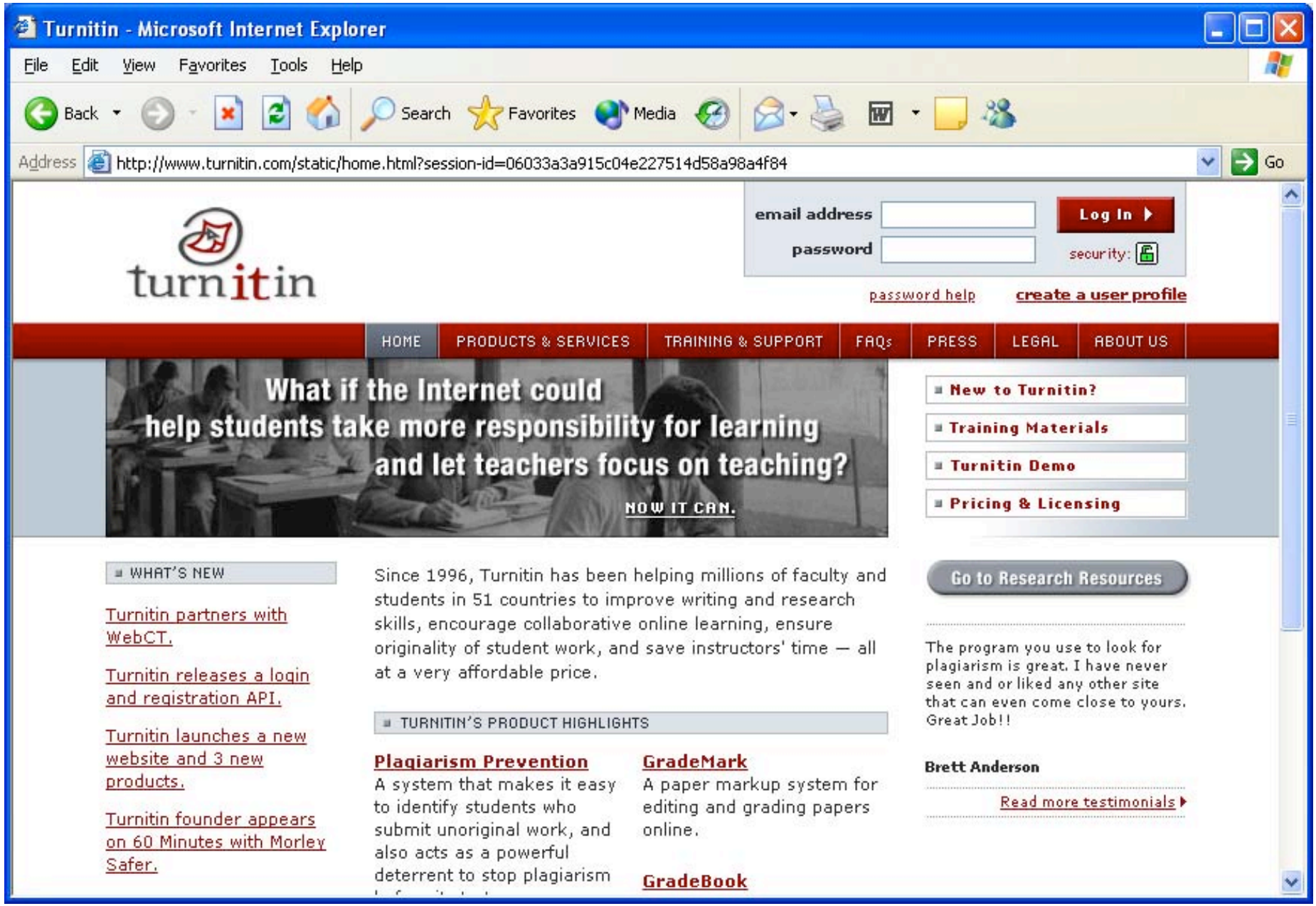
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Brett Anderson
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What is the problem?

“I know so much that I don't know where to begin.”

What is the problem?

- Dominance of the *Transmission Model*
  - Each new technology driven into its service
  - Book, lecture, word-processing, TV & video, videoconference, multimedia, the web

Laurillard's Conversational Framework

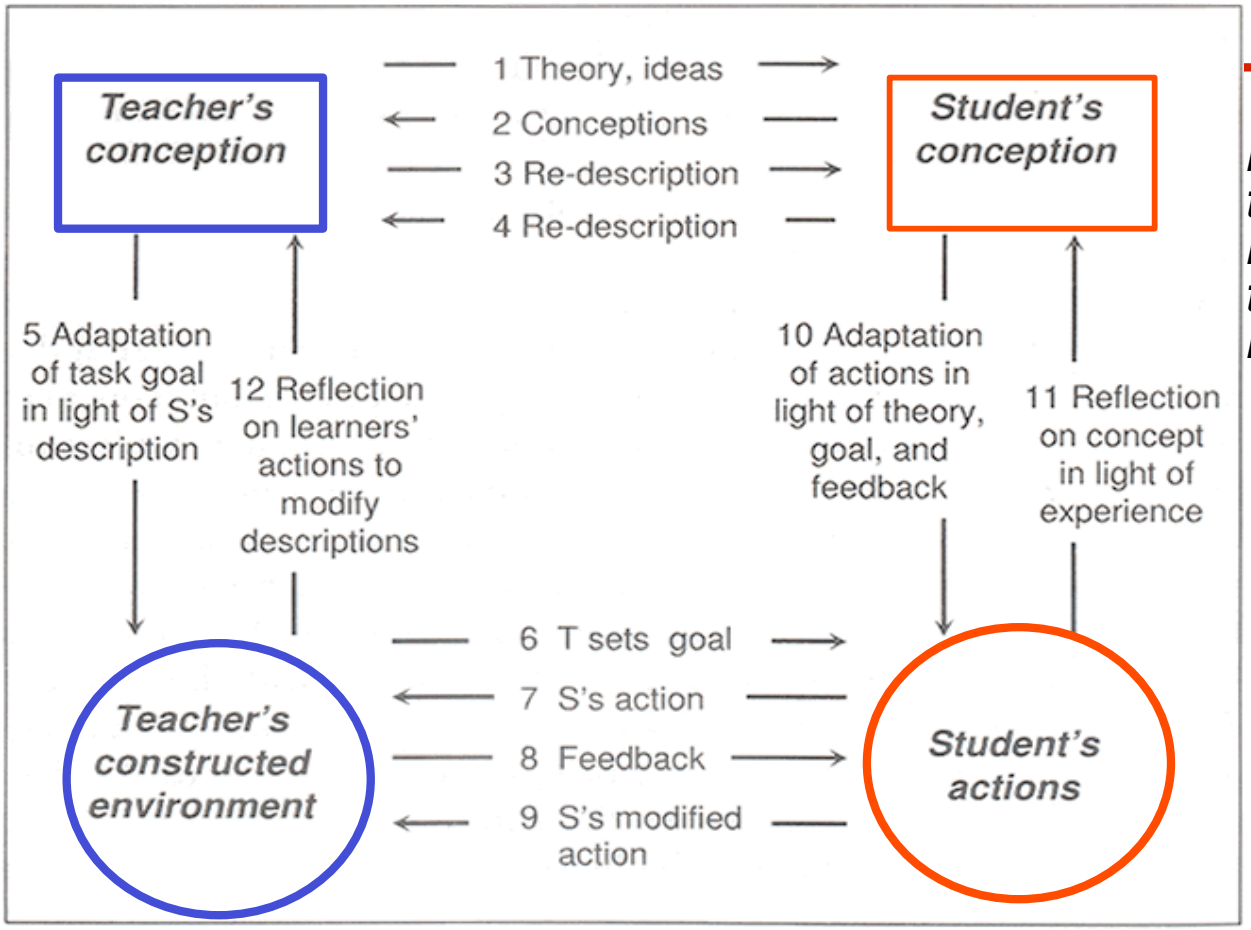

Figure 7.1a *The basic structure of the Conversational Framework*

The difference between a curriculum that teaches what is known and one that teaches how to come to know

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What kinds of eCompetencies are necessary?

- Comfort & confidence in using technology
- Awareness of popular & emerging technologies
- Focus on ***pedagogy*** over technology
- Technologies which support real learning
  - Communication, interaction, exploration, projects, new representations, etc

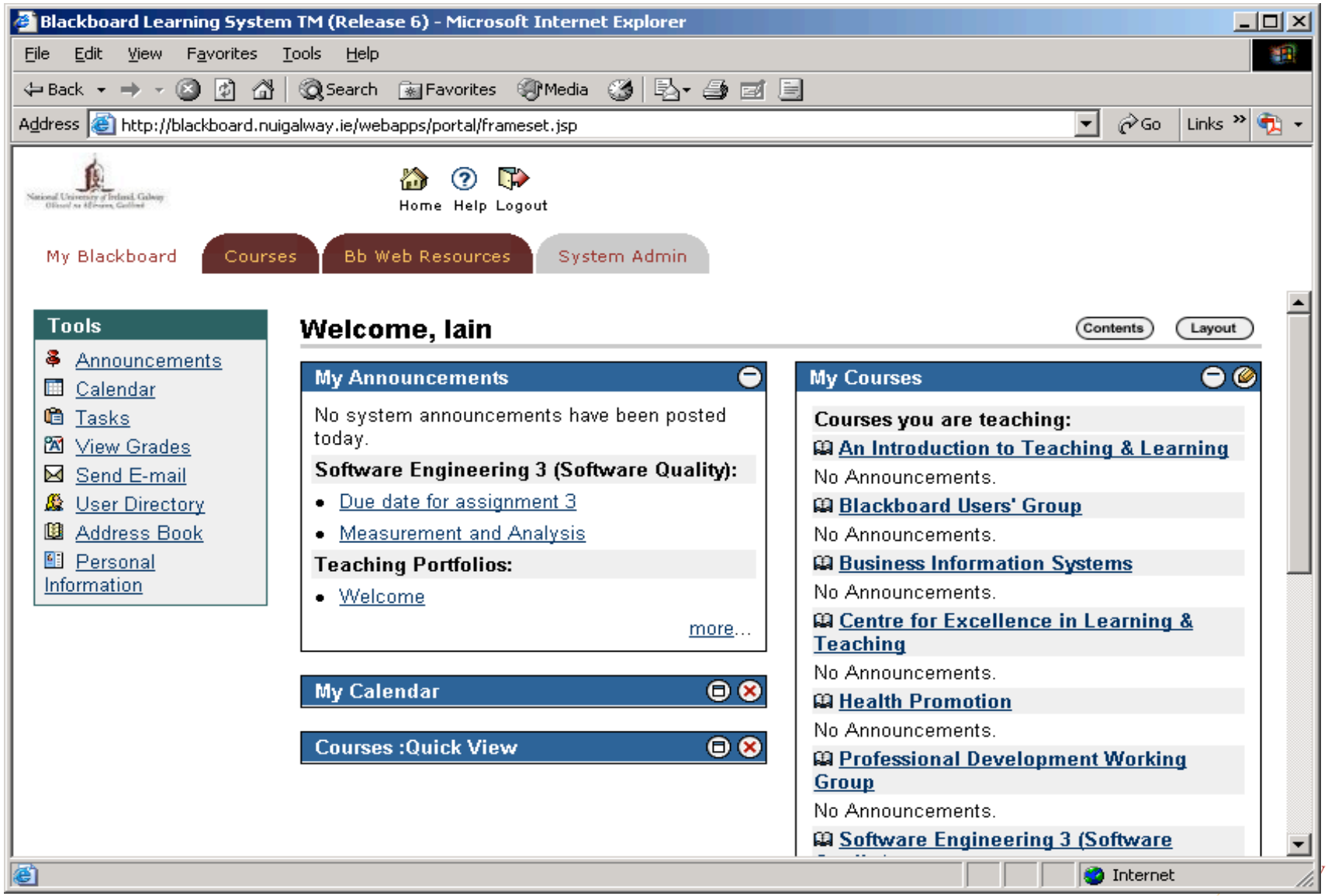
Challenges

- Cannot be separated from need to "professionalise" approaches to teaching
- Must be embedded in career progression
- Seek synergies between Teaching & Research roles
- Staff development must be a scholarly activity, research-led

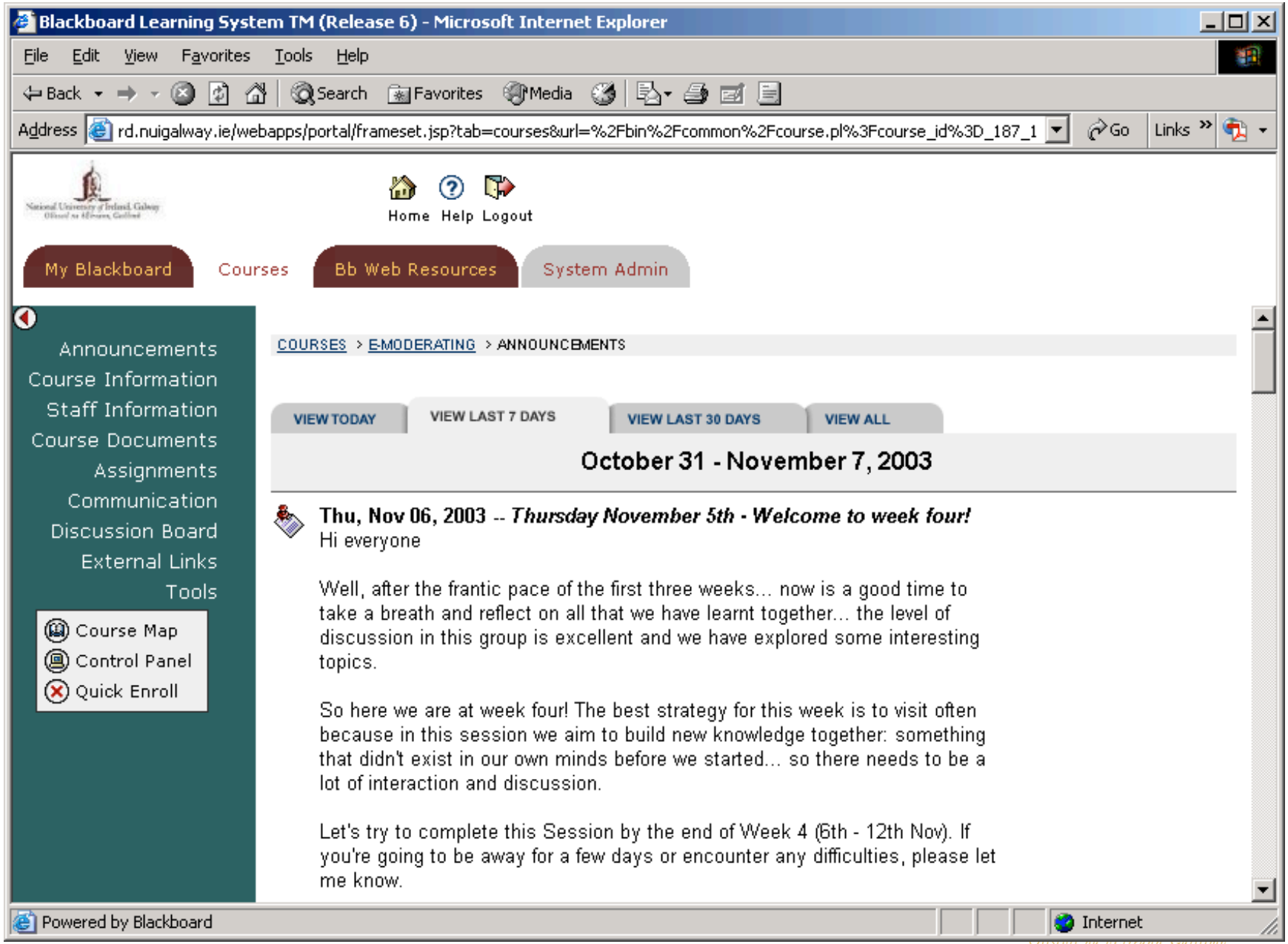
Some examples

"learning by doing"

Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)



VLEs *Narrative/ presentational, communicative*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October 31 - November 7, 2003
Thu, Nov 06, 2003 -- Thursday November 5th - Welcome to week four!
Hi everyone
Well, after the frantic pace of the first three weeks... now is a good time to take a breath and reflect on all that we have learnt together... the level of discussion in this group is excellent and we have explored some interesting topics.
So here we are at week four! The best strategy for this week is to visit often because in this session we aim to build new knowledge together: something that didn't exist in our own minds before we started... so there needs to be a lot of interaction and discussion.
Let's try to complete this Session by the end of Week 4 (6th - 12th Nov). If you're going to be away for a few days or encounter any difficulties, please let me know.
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E-moderating

For all staff teaching in online programes

Appreciation of student perspective

Appreciation of strengths & limitations of tools

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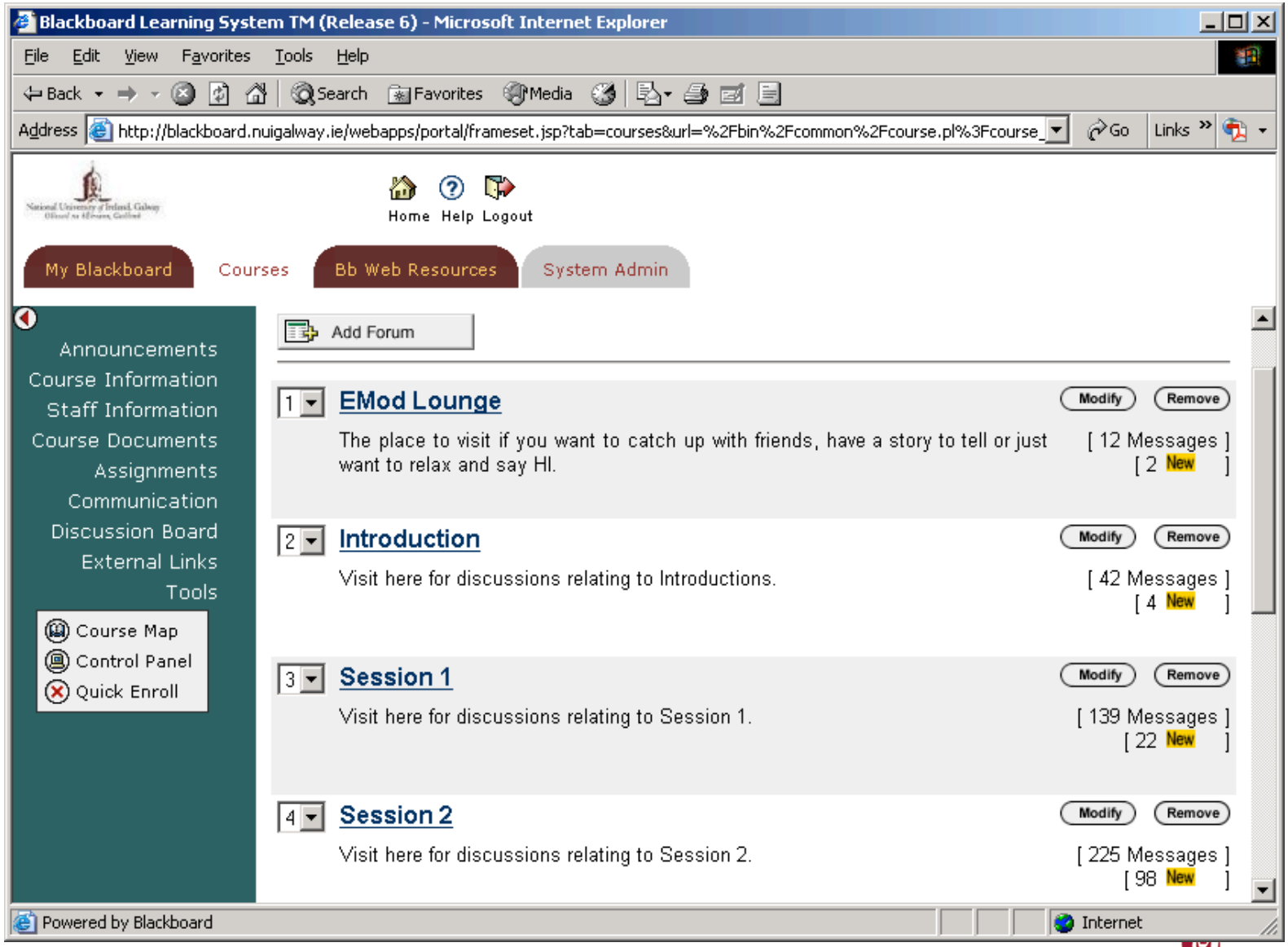
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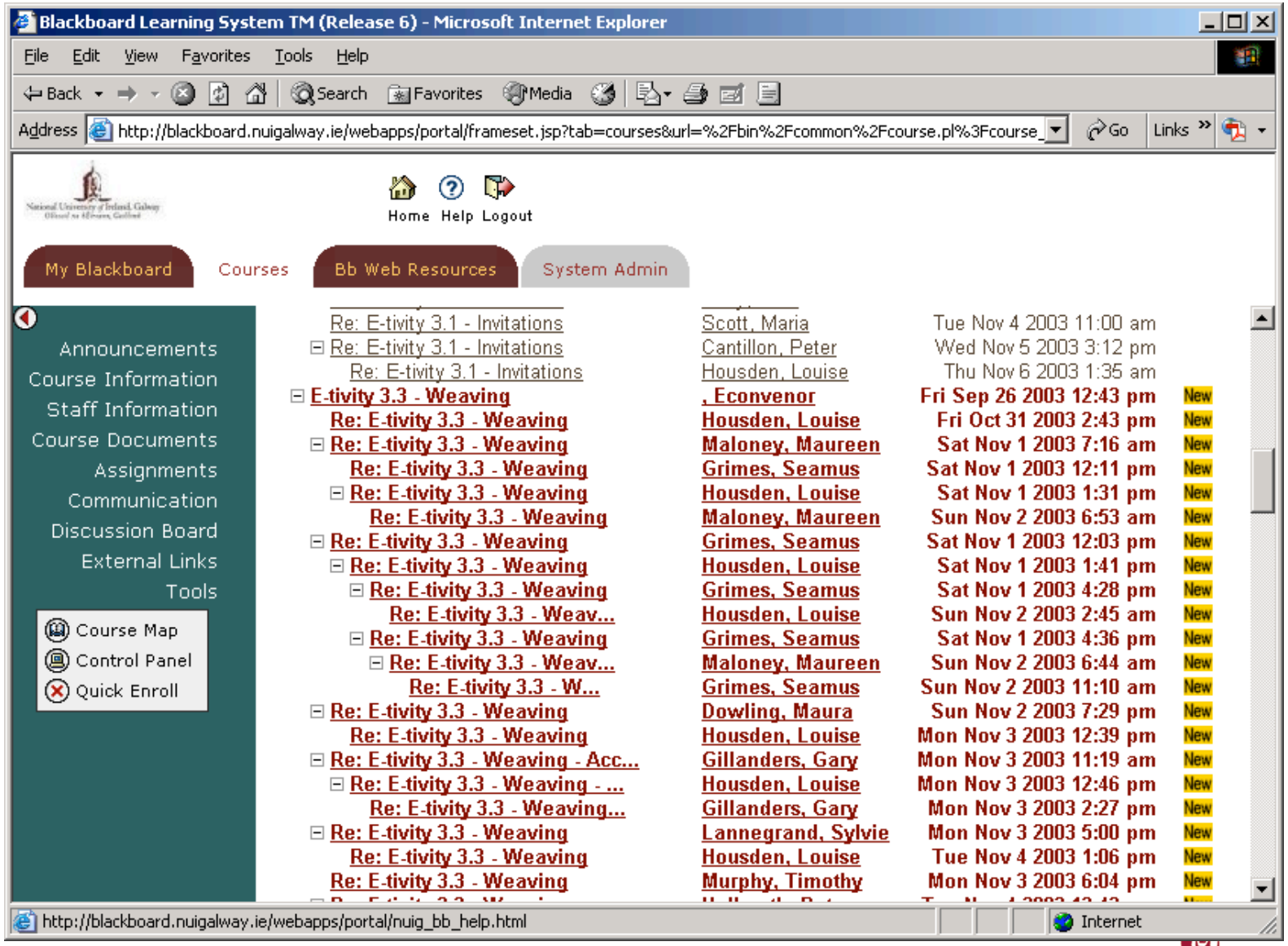
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Re: E-tivity 3.1 - Invitations Housden, Louise Thu Nov 6 2003 1:35 am
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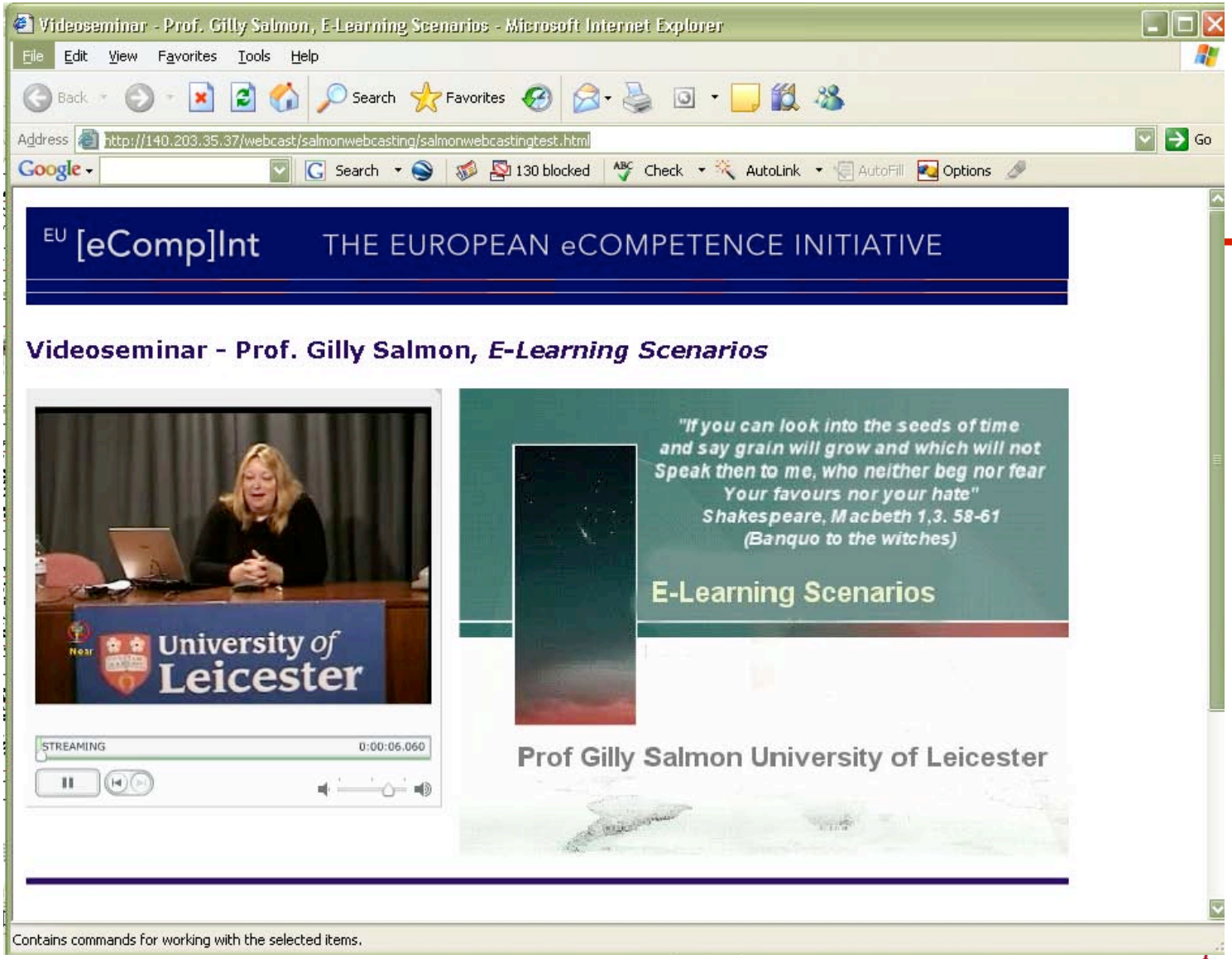
Communication - *community*

- Model cultural attributes of research community

- Conferences / Seminars / guest speakers

- Facilitated through technology
  - Remember dangers of just "broadcasting"!
  - Embed in discussion context
- Examples:



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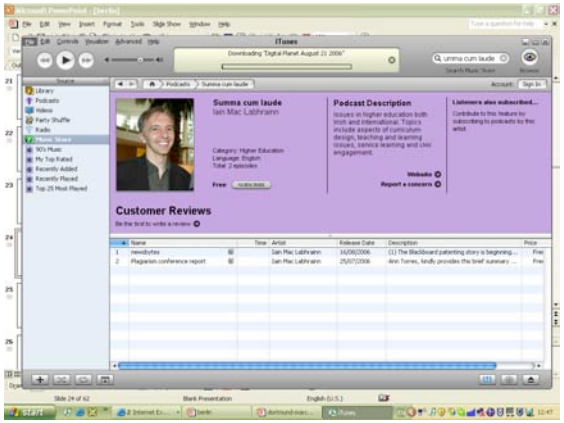
Videostreaming/ Webcasting

- Copyright/IPR agreements reached with
  - Harvard University
  - University of Maastricht
  - Strathclyde University
- Negotiations with other providers
- Conferences and events
- Locally produced materials
  - Service Learning
  - Problem & Enquiry Based Learning
  - Approaches to Teaching

Podcasts

Weekly programme during academic year

- Teaching & Learning
- Interviews & discussions
- Use Skype & audacity
- Also video webcasts



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summa cum laude

Thoughts, opinions and reflections on teaching and learning in higher education in Ireland and internationally.

Wednesday, March 01, 2006

"The humanities have destroyed themselves..."

"The humanities have destroyed themselves over the past 30 years…Through an obsession with European jargon and a shallow politicization of discourse, the humanities have imploded…There's hardly a campus you can name where the most exciting things that are happening on campus are coming from the humanities departments…I think the entire profession is in withdrawal at the moment. This is a national problem. It's not just a Harvard problem."

So says Camille Paglia in an interview (1) with Open Source radio last night, following on from the recent Harvard discussion. She has for some considerable time been a strong critic of the influence of Derrida and Foucault on American academe.

Links/references:
(1)
http://stream.publicbroadcasting.net/ros/camille_paglia_022706.mp3
posted by Iain @ 8:23 PM 0 comments

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Podcast on Larry Summers and US universities

As a quick follow up to the earlier news item (below), Open Source Radio just had a broadcast (and podcast) on the theme.

About Me

Name: Iain MacLaren
Location: Galway, Ireland

View my complete profile

Some personal reflections by the Director of the Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT) at NUI, Galway. Main opinion pieces are published weekly, other short notes added frequently.

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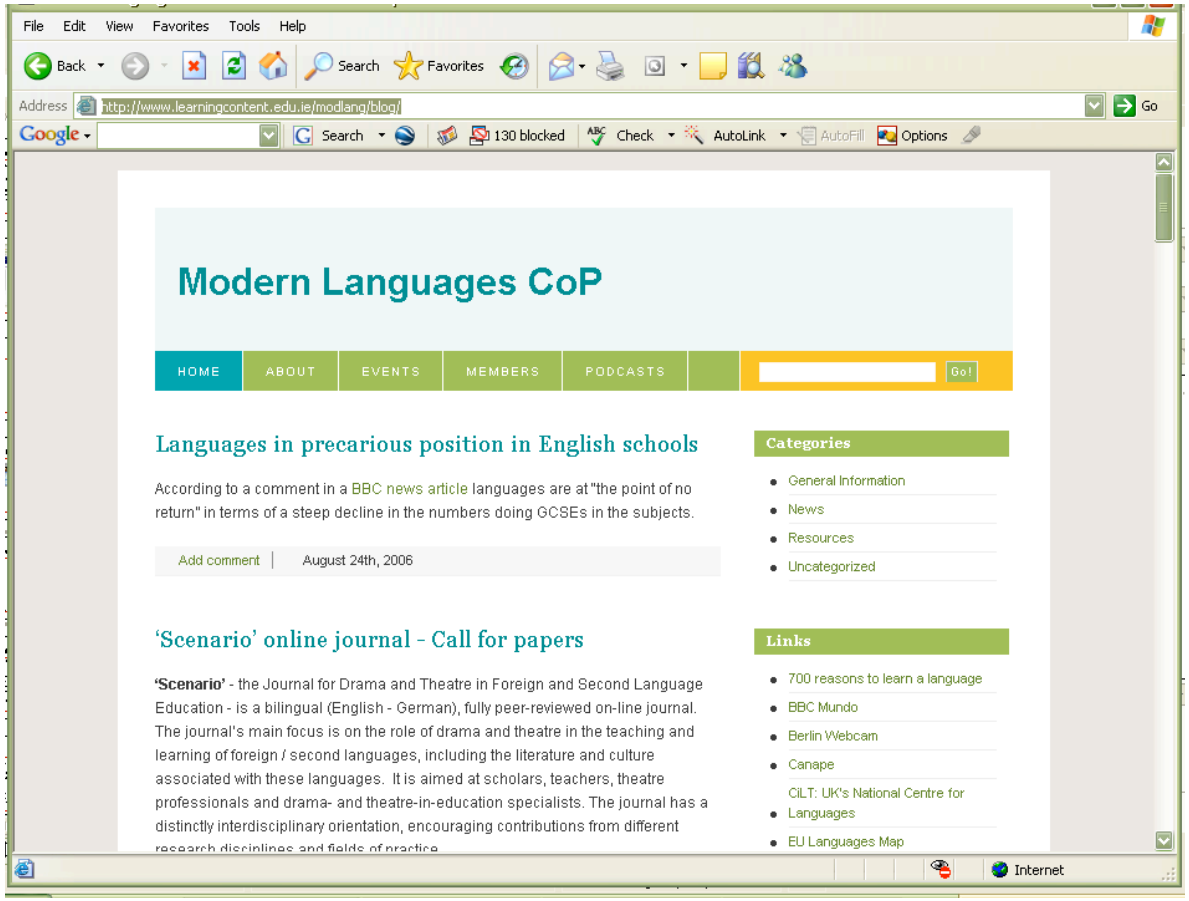
Blogs…communities of practice



http://www.learningcontent.edu.ie/modlang/blog/

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CPD – *continuing professional development*

- Formal accreditation of programmes?
- Teaching Portfolios
- PgCert/PgDip/MA
- National & international
  - European programme in Academic Practice/Higher Education ?

Conclusions/Discussion

- 3 simultaneous tasks:
  - Greater recognition of teaching role (*cf* research)
  - Increase levels of eCompetence
  - Critical awareness of pedagogy
- Will we succeed?
  - Flexibility, evaluation, self-critical, peer-review
  - Fundamentally scholarly approach
  - *Mixed with pragmatism and diplomacy!*

Go raibh míle maith agaibh!

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