



Report of the Massive Open Online Course on
Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses

A promotional banner for a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC). The banner has a blue background. On the left, a vertical red ribbon contains the word 'MOOC' in white, bold, capital letters. To the right of the ribbon, the logos for the Commonwealth of Learning and Athabasca University are displayed. Below the logos, the title 'Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses' is written in a large, dark, sans-serif font. Underneath the title, the dates '12 March – 15 April 2023' are shown in a smaller, blue font. The background of the banner features a blurred image of a laptop screen displaying a video lecture and an open notebook with a pen resting on it.

First offering: 12 March - 15 April 2023

Athabasca University
Commonwealth of Learning

Credits

The following DCoI MOOC design and delivery team members from Athabasca University, Canada, have contributed to this report:

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This report has been submitted to the Commonwealth of Learning as part of the agreement between the COL and Athabasca University.

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Executive Summary

Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses (DCoI) is a massive open online course (MOOC) developed by Athabasca University in partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning. This report summarizes its delivery and outcomes from the first offering held 12 March - 15 April 2023.

DCoI MOOC explores the why and how of using the Community of Inquiry (CoI) as the basis for developing and teaching high quality online and blended courses. The content and delivery of this course highlights, and is a model for, practical ways of helping students learn through active participation and shared sense-making. Current CoI application issues related to shared metacognition, learning analytics, and artificial intelligence are also explored in this highly engaging inquiry-based MOOC.

The first offering of DCoI MOOC was well received with 724 registrants from 68 countries attending, of which 385 logged into the Canvas learning management system at least once. Participants who completed the minimum requirements based on quiz scores and completion were awarded Certificates of Participation. Participants who went on to complete the final assignment, the Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan, were also awarded an additional Certificate of Completion. There were 170 Certificates of Participation awarded for a total certification rate of 23.5% based on the 724 student registrations, or 44.2% based on the number of participants who logged in at least once, and a completion rate of 79.1% based on fully active participants (defined as participants who attempted the first week quiz). Of the 170 certificate recipients, 113 participants were also awarded the more challenging Certificate of Completion based on successful completion and submission of the CoI Implementation Plan.

From the design team's perspective, DCoI MOOC was well designed and delivered as an example of a version of the CoI. As it was the course's initial offering, the instructional team, including the facilitators, observed closely participant responses to the various design elements, and adjustments were made where it was considered necessary. The introduction of a custom-developed web-based application for the CoI Implementation Plan assignment proved successful, suggesting opportunities to expand the assignment into a broader authentic learning activity. See the Outcomes and Recommendation section of this report for more information.

The participant population demonstrated an eclectic audience representing a global learning community from a variety of backgrounds, occupations, and education completion levels from multiple sectors. Based on the end-of-course survey responses, participants indicated their appreciation for the content material and the active engagement and interaction of the Instructor, Inspirer, facilitators, and fellow participants, emphasizing the impact they expected the course to have on their practice, their educational settings, and their learners.

This report on the first offering of DCoI MOOC is prepared by Athabasca University and submitted to the Commonwealth of Learning as part of the agreement between AU and COL.

Section 1. Background of DCoI MOOC

The DCoI MOOC initiative is well-aligned with the mandates of both the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), based out of British Columbia, Canada, and Athabasca University (AU), located in Alberta, Canada. Both organizations strive to remove barriers to education and promote high-quality lifelong learning worldwide.

Need and purpose

The purpose of DCoI MOOC is to explore the why and how of using the Community of Inquiry theoretical framework as the basis for developing and teaching high quality online and blended courses. This course highlights practical ways of helping students learn through active participation and shared sense-making. Current CoI application issues related to shared metacognition, learning analytics, and artificial intelligence are also explored in this highly engaging inquiry-based MOOC. The CoI provides a meaningful 21st century framework for digital education pedagogy.

Team members

From Athabasca University:

Dr Martha Cleveland-Innes, Content Expert, Course Co-Designer, and Professor

Dr Nathaniel Ostashewski, Course Co-Designer, Instructor and Inspirer, and Associate Professor

Daniel Wilton, Technical and Participant Support

Carmen Jensen-Tebb, Project Administrator

From the Commonwealth of Learning:

Dr Sanjaya Mishra, Director: Education

Design and development

DCoI MOOC design is based on concepts and outcomes identified in the Memorandum of Agreement and additional requirements identified through discussion between AU and COL. The design process is a collaborative engagement initiated by sharing perspectives and documenting ideas. This MOOC design structure and process is based on a scaled version of the Community of Inquiry theoretical framework.

Technology

DCoI MOOC is offered by the AU-COL partnership through the Instructure Canvas platform, an open-source learning management system for small- to medium-sized MOOCs. Key design parameters are:

- synchronous and asynchronous interaction through discussion forums and live sessions
- an equal content emphasis on theoretical foundations of the CoI framework, design, and teaching practice and
- an emphasis on practical, context-sensitive, and authentic application through a series of reflective exercises leading to the design of a Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan, for the course and beyond, as the final assignment.

For this MOOC, a custom web-based application, outside of the Canvas platform, was developed by Athabasca University for the Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan assignment, allowing participants to complete, submit, and print PDF outputs of their plans entirely online through a structured template.

Marketing

Target learners are teachers, designers, and administrators in developing countries. COL carried out most marketing efforts as the organization has an established network of connections in the education sector throughout the developing world. The website is promoted through COL's network and the promotional brochure is distributed through COL's Focal Points in the Commonwealth countries. Content of the information and registration website is shown in Appendix A. The marketing brochure is shown in Appendix D.

Section 2. Delivery of the DCoI MOOC

There were 724 registrants for the first offering of DCoI MOOC. Of these, 385 (53.2%) logged into the course at least once, averaging 4.8 hours each within the learning management system, not including any additional, unlogged time spent on readings and the final activity. Within the learning management system, 10 participants logged in for at least 25 hours.

Demographic data

The following demographic information is based on registrants' responses compiled from the preregistration demographics survey and the course welcome survey; 51 (7.0%) registrants did not provide demographics information.

Distribution by country. Registrants attended from 68 countries, with India as the largest representative with 22.7%, followed by Turkey (11.0%), Trinidad and Tobago (10.4%), and Canada (7.9%). Table 1 lists the most frequently indicated countries by survey; the full list of country demographic data is included as Appendix F.

Table 1. Distribution of residents by country ($n=724$)

Country	Number	%
India	164	22.7%
Turkey	80	11.0%
Trinidad and Tobago	75	10.4%
Canada	57	7.9%
Sri Lanka	31	4.3%
Kenya	23	3.2%
Jamaica	19	2.6%
United States	19	2.6%
Ghana	13	1.8%
Nigeria	12	1.7%

Distribution by gender. Of the 724 registrants, 55.2% were female and 36.6% were male, with 8 registrants (1.1%) preferring not to disclose, and 51 (7.0%) with no response. The distribution by gender is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of registrants by gender ($n=724$)

Gender	Number	%
Female	400	55.2%
Male	265	36.6%
Prefer not to disclose	8	1.1%
No response	51	7.0%

Distribution by age. The ages of registrants were broadly distributed, with a mean age of 41.3 years. 50.5% of registrants were 40 years old or older. The distribution by age is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of registrants by age (n=724)

Age	Number	%
Under 20	1	0.1%
20 to 29	89	12.3%
30 to 39	217	30.0%
40 to 49	200	27.6%
50 to 59	135	18.6%
60 to 69	29	4.0%
70 and over	2	0.3%
No response	51	7.0%

Distribution by education level. Registrants were in general highly educated, with 576 (79.6%) holding or currently pursuing a graduate degree or higher. The distribution by education level is provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by education level (n=724)

Education level	Number	%
High school diploma	12	1.7%
Vocational school certificate or diploma	-	-
Currently in an undergraduate program	11	1.5%
College diploma or bachelors degree	74	10.2%
Currently in a graduate program	39	5.4%
Post-graduate diploma or graduate degree	265	36.6%
Currently in a doctoral program	101	14.0%
Doctoral degree	171	23.6%
No response	51	7.0%

Distribution by professional affiliation. Registrants were asked to identify their professional affiliation and level, with the largest number indicating an affiliation with government (31.8%), followed by affiliation with post-secondary education (26.2%). The distribution by professional affiliation is provided in Table 5.

Discussion participation

Discussion is an important component of DCoI MOOC. Introduced early in the course as critical to building a community of inquiry, discussion participation in terms of original posts and responses to the posts of others is frequently encouraged by the course Inspirer and facilitators. Most of the discussion took place within the pre-established module forums, with the discussion in each module divided into two to four separate forums around three main themes:

- *Ideas* forums, intended for sharing initial impressions of the module materials and contextualizing key module topics within their own individual experience and practice.
- *Design* forums, with a focus on the considerations that go into designing effective and meaningful online learning.
- *Teaching* forums, intended primarily for those participants whose work includes direct interaction with learners.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents by professional affiliation and level (n=724)

Professional affiliation	Number	%
Government	230	31.8%
Post-secondary education	190	26.2%
Individual	108	14.9%
K-12 education	54	7.5%
Non-profit organization	44	6.1%
For-profit organization	21	2.9%
Community organization	8	1.1%
No response	69	9.5%

Participants were encouraged to participate in the Ideas forums and then were allowed to select from the Design or Teaching forums. Several additional *administrative* forums were created, including support forums, welcome forums, and forums dedicated to discussion around the synchronous sessions; as well as *special topic* forums, some of which were pre-established and others generated by the participants; and a final *farewell* forum.

In total, there were 1,813 discussion posts: 1,753 in pre-established course activity and administrative forums, and 60 in special topic forums. 1,429 messages (78.8%) were posted by participants, and 384 (21.2%) by the facilitators and instructional team. The distribution of posts by forum type is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Discussion posts by forum type

Forum type	Posts	%
Support forums	78	4.3%
Welcome forums	347	19.1%
Ideas forums	586	32.3%
Design forums	328	18.1%
Teaching forums	278	15.3%
Live session forums	69	3.8%
Special topic forums	60	3.3%
Farewell and ongoing connections forum	67	3.7%

Synchronous sessions

While most of the course is delivered through static web content and asynchronous discussions, a series of five optional synchronous sessions were presented to explore key issues related to the course, as well as offer participants an opportunity to speak directly with the instructional team and each other. The session titles, abstracts, and recording links are listed in Appendix C.

Microsoft Teams is used for the synchronous sessions. This web conferencing tool allows for verbal communication, text chat, PowerPoint presentations and screen sharing, all of which add interactivity and active engagement to web-based meetings. Athabasca University provided access to Microsoft Teams; the application is external to the Canvas platform.

Prior to each session, an announcement is sent to all participants inviting them to the live session, with a link to the presentation room posted in the course shortly before the session itself. The sessions included both presentations and an interactive question-and-answer period.

The sessions were recorded for those unable to join the sessions live and to support further discussion. Links to these recordings in both Microsoft Teams and YouTube, along with the session slides, were posted to the course home page and in a forum dedicated to ongoing discussion around the session. Recordings were especially useful in the case of DCoI MOOC, where participants were dispersed throughout the world and across a wide range of time zones.

Section 3. Participant Performance

A detailed completion rate metric based on the number of learners who can be described as either active or fully active in the course is provided below. We (Ostaszewski & Cleveland-Innes, 2022¹) define *active learners* as those who have signed into the course space at least one time. *Fully active learners* are defined as those learners who log into the course and complete the first week of activities. In the case of DCoI MOOC, fully active learners are those who completed the first week of activities as evidenced by a completed Week 1 quiz.

Weekly quizzes

Each of the five weeks included a multiple-choice quiz. A minimum score of 70% is required on each quiz to qualify for a certificate. Participants who did not achieve this level were allowed multiple attempts, a key consideration for achieving a mastery orientation within an open professional development course. The number of participants who attempted each quiz and the average scores are provided in Table 7.

Table 7. Number of participants who attempted each quiz and average quiz scores

Quiz	Attempts	% of registrants	Mean score	Standard deviation
Quiz 1: What are the foundations of online teaching and learning?	215	29.7%	87%	1.47
Quiz 2: The Community of Inquiry Presences	188	26.0%	89%	1.23
Quiz 3: Roles in the CoI	176	24.3%	92%	0.96
Quiz 4: Designing and sustaining online CoI	173	23.9%	93%	0.92
Quiz 5: Designing for Communities of Inquiry in online courses	172	23.8%	92%	1.15

Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan

Creation of a Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan is the final assignment and a requirement for the Certificate of Completion. A total of 131 plans were submitted, of which 113 (86.3%) were successful. As with the quizzes, participants who did not meet the requirements for the assignment were allowed a second attempt. The instructions for the CoI Implementation Plan are included as Appendix E.

Certificates

Participants who achieved the minimum requirements based on quiz scores were awarded Certificates of Participation. Those who went on to complete the CoI Implementation Plan were also awarded Certificates of Completion.

There were 170 Certificates of Participation awarded, for a total certification rate of 23.5%, based on the 724 participant registrations, or 44.2% based on the number of participants who logged in, and a completion rate of 79.1% based on fully active participants (defined as participants who attempted the first week quiz). Of these, 113 participants (15.6% of total registrants) were also awarded a Certificate of Completion. The certification rates for registered, active, and fully active learners are shown in Table 8.

¹ Ostaszewski, N., & Cleveland-Innes, M. (2022) *Participant Experience in an Inquiry-Based Massive Open Online Course*. Commonwealth of Learning, p. 56-58. <https://doi.org/10.56059/11599/4132>

Table 8. Certification rate for active and fully active learners

	n	Participation 170 awarded	Completion 113 awarded
Registrants	724	23.5%	15.6%
Active learners	385	44.2%	29.4%
Fully active learners	215	79.1%	52.6%

Certificates are made available through a separate certificate system developed by Athabasca University. Under this system, participants can download their PDF certificates on demand, with verification links back to the original certificate database for additional security. The PDF format allows participants to download, print, and share their certificates with minimal technical knowledge, while the links embedded in the certificates allow for employer or institutional verification and potential detection of spoofing.

Certificates of Completion include a note indicating that they represent 25 hours of professional learning engagement, which can also be verified, by name, through the certificates' verification links.

Section 4. Survey Findings

Basic demographics and professional roles of respondents to the preregistration and welcome surveys have been discussed in Section 2. Here, additional results from the two course surveys will be presented: the results from those who consented to the welcome survey ($n=264$) and end-of-course survey ($n=73$). The two surveys used the same consent letter; see Appendix H. A copy of the welcome survey and the end-of-course survey are included as Appendix I and J, respectively.

Summary of welcome survey results

Of the 262 responses indicating a primary language, 179 (68.3%) reported English as a primary language. The most frequent primary languages indicated by respondents are provided in Table 9.

Table 9. Most frequently indicated primary languages ($n=262$)

Primary language	Number	%
English	179	68.3%
Turkish	21	8.0%
Hindi	12	4.6%
Sinhala	6	2.3%
Arabic	3	1.1%
Bangla/Bengali	3	1.1%
Malayalam	3	1.1%
Portuguese	3	1.1%
Punjabi	3	1.1%
Tamil	3	1.1%
Urdu	3	1.1%

Survey respondents indicated a stronger general interest in new pedagogies with educational technology applications than in the Community of Inquiry framework specifically or MOOCs more broadly, with professional development also a key motivation in registering. The respondents' primary reasons for registering in DCoI MOOC are provided in Table 10.

Table 10. Distribution of primary reasons for taking the course ($n=255$)

Primary reason for taking the course	Number	%
General interest, primarily in new pedagogies (teaching and learning) with education technology applications	122	47.8%
Professional development (contributing to your CV, for example)	62	24.3%
General interest, primarily in the Community of Inquiry theoretical framework	45	17.6%
General interest, primarily in MOOCs	18	7.1%
Obtaining a certificate	6	2.4%
Research	2	0.8%

Out of 255 responses, 169 (66.3%) indicated at least some previous awareness of the Community of Inquiry framework, with 78 respondents (30.6%) indicating they had heard of it, 53 (20.8%) knew it well but had not used it, and 38 (14.9%) use it in their instructional design or teaching practice. When asked which actions they are considering supporting changes in their education responsibilities (allowing multiple selections), 189 (74.1%) indicated their own teaching practice, 151 (59.2%) indicated teacher/faculty development courses, and 150 (58.8%) indicated programme curriculum and delivery. The full set of responses to this question are provided in Table 11.

Table 11. Distribution of actions to support changes in education responsibilities (n=255)

Primary reason for taking the course	Number	%
My own teaching practice	189	74.1%
Teacher/faculty development courses	151	59.2%
Program curriculum and delivery	150	58.8%
Education leadership development	117	45.9%
Policy changes requiring specified teaching/instructional practices	84	32.9%
The teaching practice of staff under my supervision	77	30.2%
Education governance	57	22.4%

A significant number of survey respondents (110, 41.7%) indicated they had previously registered in a MOOC that has been offered through the AU-COL partnership: Blended Learning Practice (83, 31.4%), Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning (49, 18.6%), Leading Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World (28, 10.6%), or Learning to Learn Online (also offered by Athabasca University alone; 20, 7.8%). 12 respondents (4.5%) had previously registered in all four.

Table 12. Distribution of responses to “How did you learn about this course?” (n=256)

How did you learn about this course	Number	%
Social media	67	26.2%
Colleagues/workplace	63	24.6%
Commonwealth of Learning website	46	18.0%
Email notification	20	7.8%
Notification in a previous MOOC	19	7.4%
Athabasca University	10	3.9%
Commonwealth of Learning newsletter	7	2.7%
Family/friends	5	2.0%
Course brochure	4	1.6%
Web search	4	1.6%
Community of Inquiry website	2	0.8%
University advisor or course requirement	2	0.8%
OpenUpEd	1	0.4%
PCF conference	1	0.4%
Other	5	2.0%

Across all survey respondents ($n=256$), social media (67, 26.2%), word-of-mouth through colleagues and the workplace (63, 24.6%), and the Commonwealth of Learning website (46, 18.0%) were the most important sources for registrations, followed by notifications by email (20, 7.8%) and through a previous MOOC (19, 7.4%). The distribution of responses to the question, "How did you learn about this course?" are provided in Table 12.

Summary of end-of-course survey results

The end-of-course survey was completed by 73 participants. Survey responses to questions regarding general satisfaction with DCoI MOOC indicate that respondents found a high level of satisfaction and confidence that the course would assist them in designing for communities of inquiry as well as supporting the use of educational technology for teaching and learning. Respondents showed some concern, however, with the expectations in terms of time, workload, and pacing. The survey results regarding participant's satisfaction with the course and content are outlined in Table 13.

Table 13. Course satisfaction and content evaluation

	Responses	Agree/Strongly agree	
		Number	%
Overall, I was satisfied with DCoI MOOC.	69	65	94.2%
DCoI MOOC met the learning objectives.	69	66	95.7%
The DCoI MOOC experience will assist me in the use of educational technology for teaching and learning.	69	65	94.2%
The amount of time I spent on the course met my expectations.	69	59	85.5%
The workload was manageable.	69	61	88.4%
The pace of the course was comfortable for my learning.	68	60	88.2%
The course activities reinforced the course material.	69	66	95.7%
The course activities did a good job of triggering my thinking.	69	66	95.7%
The course activities did a good job of holding my interest.	69	65	94.2%
The course material was of good quality.	68	63	92.6%
Assignments were helpful to acquire knowledge and skills.	69	64	92.8%
The quizzes helped to test my knowledge.	69	65	94.2%
The course website was user-friendly.	69	66	95.7%

Survey responses about the instruction and community aspects of the course were more mixed, as shown in Table 14. While most respondents felt their learning was supported by the instructional team and, to a lesser degree, through discussions with their fellow participants, a larger number responded positively about the practical benefits of the discussions as resources, seeing them as providing information and additional reading material. In a separate question, respondents ($n=65$) were asked how much instructor involvement they would like to have had; 36 (55.4%) indicated they would have liked to have had about the same level of involvement, 26 (40.0%) indicated they would have liked to have had somewhat or much more involvement, with 3 (4.6%) preferring less involvement, suggesting a broad appreciation for the continuing importance of the instructor's role in large-enrollment courses.

Table 14. Evaluation of instruction and the learning community

	Responses	Agree/Strongly agree	
		Number	%
I experienced direct instruction during DCoI MOOC.	67	54	80.6%
My learning was supported through facilitation by the Inspirer.	69	55	79.7%
My learning was supported through facilitation by the roving instructors.	69	50	72.5%
My learning about CoI was supported through my discussions with other students.	69	41	59.4%
My learning about CoI was supported by reading other student posts.	69	57	82.6%
DCoI MOOC discussions provided me with information about resources that I will be able to use in my own teaching.	69	63	91.3%
I felt like I was part of a community in the DCoI MOOC.	67	58	86.6%
It was okay to express emotions in DCoI MOOC forums.	69	54	78.3%

Additional questions asked respondents to indicate the value they found in various course elements and activities, including the live sessions and final assignment. 40 respondents (54.8%) indicated they had attended at least one live session; of these, 37 (92.5%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the session as a learning experience, and 6 (15.0%) had attended all five sessions. 57 respondents (78.1%) indicated they had watched at least one session recording; of these, 50 (87.7%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the recorded session as a learning experience, and 28 (49.1%) had watched all five recordings. 62 respondents (84.9%) indicated they had attempted the CoI Implementation Plan assignment; of these, 55 (88.7%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the assignment as an opportunity to apply concretely what they had learned in DCoI MOOC.

More broadly, respondents ($n=69$) were asked to select which course elements supported their feeling of being part of a community of inquiry; their selections are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15. Elements supporting the feeling of being part of a community of inquiry ($n=69$)

Course element	Number	%
Discussion forums	61	88.4%
Facilitator posts	49	71.0%
Course announcements/emails	48	69.6%
Inspirer "Welcome to the Week" videos	48	69.6%
Live sessions	48	69.6%
Topic activities structure	43	62.3%
Padlets and/or polls	29	42.0%

The end-of-course survey also allowed for open-ended suggestions (to enhance learning, its use of technologies, or otherwise) and general feedback. Respondents used the open-ended questions both to make recommendations to develop and expand upon the course design and to describe the value of the course both to themselves and to other potential participants.

In terms of design, several respondents offered suggestions to enhance the level of interactivity, either with the course materials or between participants. Another respondent, however, noted that not all participants are familiar with the current technologies, and that both instructor and peer support would be required.

More use of in-resource learning activities and interaction with content above passive reading/viewing. For example, in-video quizzes and self-checks. More peer-to-peer learning activities situated within learning resources. maybe look into 'quick connect' technologies to further social interaction opportunities (e.g., MSTeams 'meet now' feature alongside 'who is available' indicators or GatherTown rooms).

Perhaps breakout room discussions for just a part of the live sessions, especially in the first two weeks to facilitate greater social presence. Understand that this would probably take more time though.

More interactive opportunities and active participation during live session especially between or among the learners.

I kept my Self-Assessment table hoping to upload them for evaluation only to realize there was no provision for that. Maybe next time there should be a provision for sharing so as to learn from one another.

A forum for the late joiners to add meaningful contributions.

Some technological tools are unfamiliar to some people especially me. If they could be explained in advance so that during Live Sessions one finds himself/herself out of phase and missing essential community cohesion activities. Fast learners and those familiar with technology should be encouraged to exhibit more peer presence in explaining when the instructors are overwhelmed in giving support to us who need more time to understand the technologies new to us.

Others focused more on the course content, often indicating an interest in a greater use of examples or practical applications.

Communication for participants was all text based. I wonder if there might be an opportunity for learners to engage with audio/video responses.

They should bring more examples when elaborating on points.

Some practical lessons can be organised on the use of technologies to enhance learning.

The course provided a lot of material to read. This is good, but it needs time to understand. This seems to be theory-based. It is preferable to be more practical. What I liked about the loaded material, however, is that I saved everything so that I can return back to it when I need to.

Building on the idea of practical application of their learning in the course, two respondents made interesting suggestions for extended support beyond the end of the MOOC.

Extended support to implement in real world learning environment.

To have a forum at least 6 months later to see the progress of using the knowledge gained from the course.

The team is excellent. we hope that you will add more seminars and refreshers workshop for educators.

Several respondents used the opportunity to make design suggestions instead to note specific design features they had found most effective or to express their appreciation for the attention to course design overall, in some cases despite a concern over the workload.

No particular suggestions. I think there was a fair balance of activities, instruction, facilitation, all types of presences. My personal presence goes for lots of activities and quizzes, but others might prefer the discussions.

I appreciated that video transcripts were available, it was very helpful to me, as English is not my primary language.

The Facilitator was great! I learned a lot and was able to identify some of the mistakes that I made especially with videos. I used to make long videos that cover a lot of content without thinking about the concentration span. But now I know that the shorter and precise the more effective it becomes.

I have a great experience with this course and other courses offered by the Commonwealth of Learning. Although, my time was very limited to allow me a full participation in the course, but the way the website was designed made easy for me to survey and grasp the key knowledge about this course. I deeply appreciate the courses provided here and the efforts put by the instructors and the facilitators to support learners throughout the course.

In general, I liked the course as it offered different options as live sessions, recordings, discussion forums, videos, quizzes and the reading materials. There should be clarity between the "required" readings and the "optional". The required should be limited and focused whereas the optional can be more and set aside as further readings to use later with time good enough. Overall, the videos are good because they are short. Quizzes are also focused and encouraging. Interactions and discussions also provided good opportunities as an important aspect of COI.... I am looking forward to participating in other online opportunities. Best regards!

Oh my goodness, everything was done to perfection. I cannot even think of something to suggest at this point. If I have to say something though, it would be that for persons involved who have administrative, teaching and supervision duties it was a bit challenging in terms of time management, but I really don't think it's an issue for the team it more for the individual participant.

I was not able to actively participate. As the course was one of the best MOOCs I had the opportunity to participate, I am going to do it again, for sure. I learnt a lot only by reading (revised some of my ideas on lurkers), still I am sure that I could have learnt even more by participating actively in all the purposed activities. Thank you so much for the opportunity. This is my sincere feeling about this course: grateful for the opportunity.

This appreciation for the course and the support of the instructional team was expressed by several respondents.

I feel this course was very well done. It modelled the effective and successful implementation of developing a CoI and the activities were well designed and engaging. I'm not a huge fan of MOOCs in general, but I feel this one was very well done and enjoyed the active participation by the instructors, inspirers and facilitators. I think having active participation and feedback from those running the MOOC is integral to its success. I really appreciate the time the team took to design, implement and facilitate this learning experience. It was a very good experience for me. Thank you!

All good, really liked the makeup of the course. All casual, friendly and human which sets a good foundation for learning as an online community.

I have found the design of the learning to be great. I highly value the reading and resources provided. They have "answered" questions I had and also provide insight into areas I did not consider prior to the course. I HIGHLY VALUE the learning from this course. Thank you to the team.

My experience with the course, the sessions, the assignment, my general observation is that it has been good in all aspects.

This was a truly rewarding experience. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn new concepts, generate ideas and engage with others around the world.

Excellent course. I would like to convey my heartiest thanks and gratitude for offering this great opportunity to me to be a part of this enriching learning community in my own pace, place and time.

Another great learning experience in a well-designed and structured MOOC. Looking forward to others.

Finally, in addition to general appreciation, respondents also frequently noted the positive impact they expected the course to have on their future practice.

I found the course to be well structured, engaging and relevant. I can readily apply what was learnt in my practical context.

I appreciate the simplicity of teamwork exhibited by the team of facilitators that made the course exciting and gave me the confidence to persevere with the challenges of internet, power failure and daily psychosocial issues to cope with in Africa.

Very nice course. I am better equipped as I develop courses in TEL project, they will be better, appreciating the CoI concept.

It was a very good experience. It has allowed me to reflect on my own practices and how I may improve what I am doing or comfortable doing with my students.

This course has taught me so much. There are so many wonderful things that I can now introduce into my own teaching. The course also highlighted the importance of making the educational experience more student-centered. Throughout my tenure as a student, the teacher was at the forefront of education and the students were passive recipients. As such, that's the mode I adopted when I became an educator. For me, teacher as 'sage on the stage' is certainly now a thing of the past.

The DCoI MOOC was well-structured and engaging. I packed a number of new strategies and tips on how to apply the pedagogical aligned with the CoI application in online and Bl [blended] learning contexts. Thank you for this great opportunity, it was such a pleasure to be involved in this experience.

Generally, I have learned a lot and am already implementing some strategies and looking to improve with time. I am so thankful.

Section 5. Outcomes and Recommendations

The first offering of DCoI MOOC was designed to achieve both knowledge and behaviour outcomes among participants. The explicitly stated outcomes for this MOOC are identified in the course brochure and on the course website. By design, participants are expected to:

- Discuss the important foundational elements of online learning
- Describe the philosophical and theoretical foundations of the CoI Model
- Identify the three components of the CoI and their design elements
- Apply CoI standard and emerging design elements as tested in recent research
- Use the CoI survey to review courses and programmes and conduct action research on building CoI
- Design a CoI Implementation plan for an online course and beyond

This first offering saw participants attend from 68 countries with 22.7% attending from India. As is typical with MOOCs, only a subset of registrants entered the course (44.16%) and only a subset of these chose to complete the quizzes and assignment required for certification. The extent to which the outcomes were achieved by participants is therefore best assessed, at this preliminary stage of evaluation, by the level of interactions, discussion posts content, quiz results, exercise/assignment completions, and survey responses.

Following the Community of Inquiry framework for online course design, DCoI MOOC places considerable emphasis on interaction between the instructional team and participants, facilitators, and participants, and between participants, supported by online asynchronous discussion forums and synchronous, “live” sessions. While this focus on interaction demands a high level of commitment in time and energy from both the instructional team and the participants, the end-of-course survey responses indicate the value of this approach. Many indicated a desire for more opportunities to connect and interact in the course and beyond. This sense of being part of a learning community can also be heard in the respondents' increased confidence and commitment to carrying forward their new understanding of the community of inquiry in their own professional context, as well as their general appreciation for the work of the instructional and course design team. Beyond the direct provision of high-quality content, this focus on developing strong interactivity remains fundamental to the success of MOOCs developed under the AU-COL partnership.

During the course, discussion forum posts were seen to be rich in content and complexity. The facilitators, who are key members of the instructional team and directly involved daily in the discussion forums and weekly in the live session presentations, were asked to provide reflections on the course activity in general and the forums more specifically. One facilitator remarked:

There were three forums that seemed to draw comments of surprise from participants: reflecting on the use of technology in their previous learning, reflecting on a teacher who impacted them, and reflecting on this course's social presence. These questions led students into a rich description or represented a shared experience. These posts provided a clearer understanding of the cognitive presence of the participant and whether or not there was an “aha” moment occurring. That is, their thoughts could be verified through the rich description or that shared experience we all have of the course, and there was often a sense of surprise or delight in their response, perhaps indicating a deeper understanding through their reflection.

Like participant feedback received through the end of course survey, some participants suggested additional opportunities to apply the CoI in practical context. One facilitator noted:

The practical inquiry model was often highlighted as a significant model for the participants' teaching practice and a way to put cognitive presence into action. As well, there was significant traction noted on

the topics of social presence and emotional presence as the participants attempted to fit their current understandings or practices into these two newer concepts.

In addition to the prescribed course content, the forums and sessions allowed participants to explore additional topics of interest. The participants' forum posts reflected longer complex posts which appear to demonstrate deeper learning and understanding of the content and the CoI, as noted by the team. In Week 5, the Farewell and Ongoing Connections forum was added to give participants an opportunity to share their information to remain connected following the end of the course.

Weekly live sessions were held Thursday mornings at 8:00 a.m. MT. This time of day was chosen by the design team in an effort to encourage attendance across a wide range of time zones. The five live sessions saw approximately 40 (18.6% of fully active learners) learners in attendance, a higher attendance rate given the varied time zones of MOOC participants. Each session was recorded and made available to participants unable to attend the session live, along with transcripts of the chat discussion.

Previous evidence identifies that knowledge and behaviour outcomes can only be realized through participant engagement with the course material and learning activities, with the instructors and facilitators, and with fellow participants. Similar to our other AU-COL MOOC offerings, DCoI MOOC offers multi-modal learning activities to support achievement of learning outcomes. These expected learning activities, summarized in Table 16, are outlined and described to participants in the course orientation.

Table 16. Expected multi-modal learning activities

<i>Activity mode</i>	Description
<i>Watch</i>	Orientation video, at least 2 content videos per week
<i>Read</i>	REQUIRED readings for assessment OPTIONAL readings for reference
<i>Assess your learning</i>	The space set aside for participants to assess their learning require a personal response that considers content from video or readings in reference to their own competencies, goals, and/or education context. Participants provide consideration of positive and negative aspects of potential changes, underway or in the future, as they may affect them and their education situations.
<i>Respond</i>	There are two to four discussion forums each week, divided into three topic areas: Ideas forums for exploring module concepts and frameworks, Design forums, and Teaching forums.
<i>Exercise completion</i>	Exercise requirements will be announced at the beginning of each week.
<i>Live session attendance</i>	Each Thursday at 8 am Mountain time a live session will be held in Zoom. Announcements about topics and guest speakers will be announced early in the course.
<i>Quiz completion</i>	1 quiz per week, with 8 to 10 questions per quiz. Certification requires a 70% result each week but repeats are allowed.
<i>CoI implementation plan completion</i>	At the end of Week 5.

Recommendations for consideration for future DCoI MOOC design

The following insights, gained from participant feedback and design team experience, are offered.

Participants suggested more orientation to the available technology should be provided during Live Sessions, particularly in reference to more opportunity to engage with each other. Participants also requested more technology support during Live Sessions, feeling some were left behind while others, with greater access to technology and/or digital competence, were able to keep up. The design team may consider simplifying the technology use in an effort to offer technology that allows participants to connect with each other a priority.

Two other recommendations relate to the design of the live sessions. Live sessions are not meant to simply deliver content but rather to help participants engage synchronously in ways that enhance community. DCoI live sessions tested several formats for this MOOC, all to be true to the principles of an online community of inquiry while at the same time clarify and apply content. This may have created some confusion for some participants, as indicated by a few anecdotal comments. The development of a more consistent process for delivering the live sessions will be reviewed prior to the next DCoI MOOC delivery. This will include reference to a second suggestion from participants: the length of time for the live sessions. Some sessions continued beyond one hour, particularly where participants continued to talk to facilitators and each other.

The final assignment for the first offering of DCoI MOOC was a Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan. The Plan utilized a new online form tool to capture, present, and allow for exporting the plan by participants. The use of this new online form structure was efficient as it allowed participants both support and access to an online space to complete the final assessment. For future offerings, we will consider releasing the CoI Implementation Plan incrementally beginning in Week 2 rather than in its entirety in Week 4. Participants would then have more opportunity to populate the plan in segments and in relation to the content as the course progresses.

Currently, the CoI Self-Assessment Tool is included as part of the Week 2 activities in the course. The design team will consider more discussion and support about the Self-Assessment Tool. Once understood, completed, and scored, this assessment tool could be added to the beginning of the Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan. One benefit could be allowing participants to gain familiarity with the login and save functions of such online tools and would also provide current CoI presences evidence-in-practice according to the Assessment Tool calculations.

With an eye to the two overarching design principles - the Community of Inquiry framework and multi-modal learning - our overall assessment leads us to conclude that DCoI MOOC is current and timely and was almost unanimously well-received by participants. With the minor reshaping for the next offerings of DCoI MOOC, as outlined above, the content and opportunity for practical application will be strengthened, giving participants additional tools to support their implementation of the community of inquiry in their context.

Appendix A. DCoI MOOC Information Page

<https://www.dcoimooc.org>

A MOOC for Designing Communities of Inquiry

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) is a pedagogical model that supports digital teaching and learning. The introductory-level Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses (DCoI) massive open online course will explore the why and how of using the CoI as the basis for developing and teaching high quality online and blended courses. This free, 5-week MOOC provided by the Commonwealth of Learning in partnership with Athabasca University is open to administrators, teachers, and other educational professionals.

Be sure to download the brochure for further details and distribution through your personal and professional networks.

DCoI At a Glance

<i>Schedule</i>	12 March to 15 April 2023 (5 weeks)
<i>Intended audience</i>	Higher education, K-12, and vocational administrators, teachers, and other educational professionals from the Commonwealth and around the world
<i>Language</i>	English
<i>Expected workload</i>	5 hours per week (25 hours total)
<i>Challenge level</i>	Introductory
<i>Prerequisites</i>	None
<i>Certification</i>	Certificates of Participation and Completion available (at no charge)

Course outline

Week 1	<i>Foundations of online teaching and learning</i>	History of online teaching and learning Media in education Education interactions
Week 2	<i>Elements of the Community of Inquiry framework</i>	Cognitive presence Teaching presence Social presence Emotional and other presences
Week 3	<i>Roles, strategies and tactics implementing the CoI</i>	Roles of the instructor Roles of the learner Strategies and tactics for building CoI
Week 4	<i>Designing and sustaining online communities of inquiry</i>	Designing online courses Designing online CoI
Week 5	<i>Exploring and assessing elements of quality for CoI</i>	Examining the CoI Survey instruments Assessing for quality CoI elements

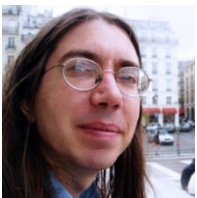
Course instructors and development and management team



Dr Martha Cleveland-Innes is Professor of Education Innovation at Athabasca University. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the bilingual Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology. Martha is also the author of The Guide to Blended Learning and instructor, co-designer, and researcher for the open online course Blended Learning Practice. The 2nd edition of Introduction to Distance Education: Teaching and Learning in a New Era, which she co-edited, was released by Taylor & Francis in 2021. She has held major research grants supporting research on the technology-enabled student experience. In 2019 Martha received an Honorary Doctorate from Mid-Sweden University and the Leadership Award from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education. Her research interest areas include 1) online and blended learning, 2) communities of inquiry, 3) higher education reform and lifelong learning, and 4) leadership in education. Martha is currently Visiting Professor of Pedagogy at Mid-Sweden University. For more information, see <https://www.athabascau.ca/humanities-and-social-sciences/our-people/martha-cleveland-innes.html>.



Dr Nathaniel Ostaszewski is an Associate Professor with the Athabasca University Distance Education Program where he teaches graduate courses in distance education, educational technology, and online learning. Working at universities in Australia and Canada, he has been developing and researching MOOC designs that incorporate Community of inquiry and Networked Learning approaches since 2009. His current research interests include technology-enabled learning and pedagogy, online & blended learning, social media in online education, OERs, and digital media (including iPads and 3D Printers) implementation in education. For more information, see <https://www.athabascau.ca/humanities-and-social-sciences/our-people/nathaniel-ostaszewski.html>.



Daniel Wilton has over twenty years' experience as an online instructor. He is an instructional designer and analytics specialist for MOOCs and other online initiatives in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Athabasca University, where he is also currently completing his doctoral studies into educational research collaboration. As Course Inspirer and lead facilitator for the DCoI, he will be working closely with the course facilitators to help monitor course activity, address any general questions or concerns, and provide guidance and suggestions based upon the feedback and progress of the MOOC participants.



Carmen Jensen-Tebb is a graduate student in distance education at Athabasca University, where she is also the Project Administrator in Open, Digital, and Distance Education in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences providing project administration for collaborations, special projects, and the education MOOC offerings of Blended Learning Practice, Technology-Enabled Learning, Learning to Learn Online and Learning to Learn Online Express, and DCoI. Carmen also serves as the Managing Editor for the bilingual Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology.



Dr Sanjaya Mishra is one of the leading scholars in open, distance, and online learning with extensive experience in teaching, staff development, research, policy development, innovation, and organisational development. With a multi-disciplinary background in education, information science, communication media, and learning and development, Dr Mishra has been promoting the use of educational multimedia, eLearning, open educational resources (OER), and open access to scientific information to increase access to quality education and lifelong learning for all. He has designed and developed award-winning online courses and platforms, such as the Understanding Open Educational Resources, Commonwealth Digital Education Leadership Training in Action, and COLCommons.

Course facilitators



Angelo Delli Santi graduated from the University of Alberta in 2007 as a secondary teacher and recently completed his Masters of Open, Digital and Distance Education (M.Ed.) at Athabasca University. Being an online teacher for the last five years in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada has created various barriers to overcome than a traditional teacher. Angelo gets the opportunity to share new technology tools with students regularly, which means he is always searching and learning new technology tools to help enhance learning. Additionally, he gets to experience how students interact with each other, all in an online setting.



Jenine Hawryluk is a doctoral student in distance education at Athabasca University. She has taught English for Academic Purposes in Canada and Lithuania, specifically focusing on academic writing, as well as English as a Second or Other Language and facilitated teacher training in several countries. Jenine is particularly interested in pedagogical approaches used in different intercultural contexts. She has two teen foster children, loves to create macrame wall hangings, and is looking forward to traveling again in the future. Jenine has facilitated in Learning to Learn Online, Blended Learning Practice, and Technology-Enhanced Learning and brings that experience to support you in BLP.

Appendix B: Delivery Design of DCoI MOOC

Video lectures and instructor presence

Videos with presentations by Dr Nathaniel Ostashewski are included directly in the course content, with framing commentary and metacognitive prompts. These videos introduced the direct instruction, as well as creating the first level of instructor presence. Instructor presence by Dr Ostashewski was further enhanced through weekly synchronous session during the course (Appendix C).

Inspirer's role and presence

The Inspirer's role included:

- presenting announcements to guide learners during the course (see Appendix G),
- providing a sense of direct teacher presence in the course forums,
- summarizing participant activity and upcoming content through video announcements,
- guiding the weekly facilitation team meetings to ensure cohesive messaging and support, and
- providing grading and feedback on the final Leadership Activity Plan assignment.

The Inspirer's announcements, presented as video within the course and as transcripts sent to participants by email, provided updates on course events such as synchronous sessions, as well as drawing from individual participants' activity in the discussion forums to summarize key themes and principles of leadership and digital teaching and learning.

Role and presence of the facilitation team

Two facilitators were hired to support DCoI MOOC to facilitate networking between participants and provide additional instructional support. The facilitators' role was to:

- review and respond to (or redirect) participant questions in the lesson activity and general forums,
- contribute to and present at weekly synchronous sessions,
- facilitate networking between participants by highlighting and including direct links to participants with similar interests or issues, and
- review and discuss in weekly facilitation team meetings the successes and challenges seen in participant activity.

The team discussed facilitation and engagement in the forums, including when to respond and when to wait for others to engage (high tech; high touch). One of the most meaningful responses is to connect the participants with each other, adding a small amount of content to help support the conversation as participants engage with each other. This creates a shift from facilitated responses to a feeling of supportive community being created – a community of inquiry. In the live sessions, there was good movement between the team members, information and interaction while sharing key messages and content.

Appendix C: Synchronous Sessions

16 Mar 2023 **Laying the foundations for a (global) learning community**

Instructional Team

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KUmf5akkHc>

Abstract: As you will see throughout this course, the *establishment of community* is at the heart of designing meaningful and effective learning. In this first session, we as a group will try to accomplish just that: using this opportunity to lay the foundations for our *global* learning community. Please join us for an interactive synchronous session - you will shape the discussion of this session as we *inquire* into:

- the wide range of possible and *evolving* forms that distance, online, and blended learning can take to best fit your teaching and learning context, culture, subject, and resources,
- the *wise* use of technology and media to support your learners,
- how we can enhance interaction in our own unique learning communities, as well as the learning community we are building *here*, and
- any other topic you'd like to discuss!

This session will be *open microphone* - you will have the opportunity to speak via microphone if you wish and, of course, use the chat box to also to share thoughts, ideas, and concerns. We look forward to talking with you there!

23 Mar 2023 **New teaching and learning in a global education space**

Instructional Team

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63ZF17mSVow>

Abstract: In this session, we come together again as a community - your facilitators, the DCoI team, and most importantly, you - around the current global context of education and the need for new pedagogies like the Community of Inquiry. Long-standing assumptions about the relationship between time, place, pace, and physical presence in education have changed. According to UNESCO, these changes increased access to learning and offer new ways of being, in and with the world. In a new social contract for education, pedagogy should be rooted in cooperation and solidarity. Building the capacities of students and teachers allows us to work together in trusting relationships so we can transform the world. In reimagining the future together, they say, we must engage cognitively and emotionally to cultivate knowledge and translate knowledge into action. The CoI theoretical framework shows us how to do this. With your help, we will reflect as a group on what is most important in the CoI framework, how it comes together, what makes it work, and what the benefits and challenges may be. We ask that you think about, and then bring your reflections on:

- your current education practices and how they align with the CoI,
- how you respond to the call for new pedagogies for a new world, and
- how you think the CoI can help us get there.

You can begin building out some of these ideas or raise new questions around this topic in the forum below, before and after the session, and we look forward to seeing you there!

30 Mar 2023 **Finding design strategies for learning groups with meaning**

Instructional Team

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ohy_1SWMV44

Abstract: This session begins around a simple question: *What have teachers done to make you feel like part of the group?* This week is about *transforming roles*, and being part of a group involves taking on a role as a member of that group. What does that role look like, and why does

the Community of Inquiry framework put such an emphasis on it as foundational to learning, especially in our turbulent, rapidly-changing digital world? Some of the urgent issues that have come up in our earlier sessions include how we can expand our learning groups to include non-traditional learners, or learners who might be excluded through increasing socioeconomic and digital inequity. How is interaction in a learning group different from interaction in social media, and how can we, as educators, continue to impart critical values to our learners, so often seeming lost in a social media storm? With these issues in mind (and any others you bring to the session), you'll have a chance to draw on your own experiences as both learner and educator as we construct together *new strategies and practical tactics* for building effective, meaningful, and transformative learning groups that include all learners.

6 Apr 2023

Design Session A: Framing your learning community

Instructional Team

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsLFWukQ69s>

Abstract: This session will be a design session, an opportunity to meet and discuss where to begin as you consider building your own meaningful and effective learning communities—and how that might play out in your final assignment, the CoI Implementation Plan. As noted in the description of the CoI Implementation Plan assignment, working through the various aspects that play into a successful, meaningful learning community design can become very complex. Some aspects are contextual, including who your learners are and who they could become, a diversity of socio-economic and socio-technological factors, and the educational system and broader society within which you live, work, and learn. Others relate to the supports, resources, and infrastructures available to you. Finding or creating appropriate supports can make or break a plan and often involve leadership, formal and informal, at all levels. Together we will explore some of these aspects of design, both constraints and opportunities. Join us if you can, and bring your design challenges with you for discussion (or share them here).

13 Apr 2023

Design Session B: Making it meaningful and effective

Instructional Team

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcducp1RrXc>

Abstract: As with last week, this session will be a design session, an opportunity to work together as you take your plans for developing learning communities to the next level, where they become meaningful and effective (and how we can know that they are). Last week, our focus was on the early stages of designing for communities of inquiry: understanding the broader educational landscape within which we'll build, and identifying its constraints, supports, and real opportunities for transforming our teaching and learning practice. But at a certain point in any design process, we have to step back to assess whether we are in fact moving towards the goal we set for ourselves. This session will focus on how we know when our learning communities are working well or might be improved—and by extension, how we might determine whether our implementation plans are (or are not) likely to succeed. You'll explore some of the indicators and tools we can use, their purpose, and their potential for creating deliberate, well-considered, and evidence-based changes in practice. If you've run into any roadblocks or made any breakthroughs as you continue to work on your CoI Implementation Plan, bring them along for discussion, or post them here!

Appendix D. DCoI MOOC Brochure

Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses (exterior)



Meet the Instructors



Dr N. Ostaszewski is Associate Professor of Open, Digital, and Distance Education at Athabasca University in Alberta, Canada. He teaches graduate courses in distance education, research design, educational technology, and online and blended learning. He has been

incorporating digital technology in teaching since 1990, both at the K12 and graduate education level. Since 1995 Nathaniel has been training educators how to incorporate technology-enabled learning into "worth-it" classroom, blended, and online activities. Working at universities in Australia and Canada, he continues to develop and research high quality large enrollment courses and MOOC designs that incorporate Community of Inquiry and Networked Learning approaches. His extensive experience with digital media for education, online and blended instructional design/teaching strategies, and learner engagement tactics - which he is most willing to share with others - are evidenced in MOOCs he designs and teaches. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/mrbkdwzz>.

Dr M. Cleveland-Innes is Professor of Open, Digital, and Distance Education at Athabasca University. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the bilingual Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology and the author of *The Guide to Blended Learning*. Martha is instructor,

co-designer, and researcher for the open online courses *Blended Learning Practice (BLP)* *Leading and Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World (LCTL)*. The 2nd edition of *Introduction to Distance Education: Teaching and Learning in a New Era*, which she co-edited, was released by Taylor & Francis in 2021. She has held major research grants supporting research on the digital technology-enabled student experience. In 2019 Martha received an Honorary Doctorate



from Mid-Sweden University and the Leadership Award from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education. Her research interest areas include online and blended learning, communities of inquiry, higher education reform and lifelong learning, and leadership in digital education. Martha is currently a member of the Advisory Group for Digital Literacy with the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Visiting Professor of Pedagogy at Mid-Sweden University and Virtual Educator in Residence, National University of Singapore.

For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/243e2ksr>.



Certification

Two levels of certification are available, at no charge, based on your level of participation and completion of activities:

- **Certificate of Participation** requires 70% on each quiz and participation in at least 3 discussion forums.
- **Certificate of Completion** requires 70% on each quiz, participation in at least 3 discussion forums, and successful completion of a COI Implementation Plan.



Registration

For further information and registration, go to: <https://www.dcoimooc.org>

DcoI inquiries: info@dcoimooc.org

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COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

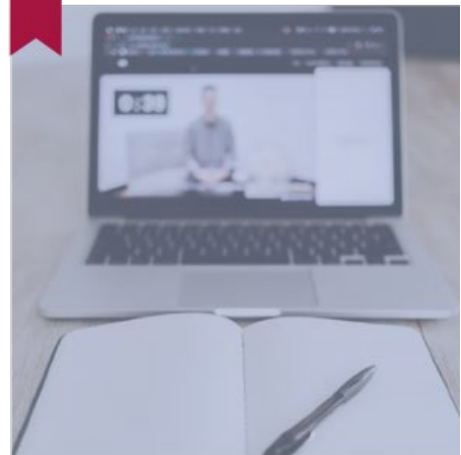


Athabasca University

MOOC

Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses

12 March – 15 April 2023



LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Designing Communities of Inquiry for Online Learning (interior)



Course Description

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) is a pedagogical model that supports digital teaching and learning: online, in-person, and blended. Education for contemporary, digital societies is a complex process that requires the design and delivery of a thoughtful interplay between the instructor, student interactions, and course resources. The CoI framework gets at the heart of establishing and sustaining multi-modal educational experiences through the development of interdependent elements: social, cognitive, and teaching presence.

The Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses (DCOI) massive open online course (MOOC) will explore the why and how of using the CoI as the basis for developing and teaching high quality online and blended courses. In this course, we highlight practical ways of helping students learn through active participation and shared sense-making. Current CoI application issues related to shared metacognition, learning analytics, and artificial intelligence will also be explored in this highly engaging inquiry-based MOOC.

The CoI provides a meaningful 21st century framework for digital education pedagogy. Educators, designers, and administrators will all benefit from taking this course to learn about the CoI and how it supports learning, now and into the future.

Learning Outcomes

You will be able to:

- Discuss the important foundational elements of online learning
- Describe the philosophical and theoretical foundations of the CoI Model
- Identify the three components of the CoI and their design elements
- Apply CoI standard and emerging design elements as tested in recent research
- Use the CoI survey to review courses and programmes and conduct action research on building CoI
- Design a CoI Implementation plan for an online course and beyond



Who Should Participate?

This free, 5-week course offered by the Commonwealth of Learning in collaboration with Athabasca University is open to anyone, anywhere, and is mobile-friendly. DCOI has been designed to assist professors, teachers, instructional designers, education developers, and education technology specialists to rethink pedagogical processes and develop appropriate action plans for techno-pedagogical change within their own context.



At a Glance

Schedule	12 March to 15 April 2023 (5 weeks)
Intended audience	K-12, higher education, and vocational education teachers, administrators, and other educational professionals from the Commonwealth and around the world
Language	English
Expected workload	5 hours per week (25 hours total)
Challenge level	Introductory
Prerequisites	None
Certification	Certificates of Participation and Completion available at no charge



Course Details

Week 1 Foundations of Online Teaching and Learning
Topic 1.1: History of Online Teaching & Learning
Topic 1.2: Media in Education
Topic 1.3: Education Interactions



Week 2 Elements of the Community of Inquiry Framework

- Topic 2.1: Cognitive Presence
- Topic 2.2: Teaching Presence
- Topic 2.3: Social Presence
- Topic 2.4: Emotional and Other Presences



Week 3 Roles, Strategies & Tactics Implementing the CoI

- Topic 3.1: Roles of the Instructor
- Topic 3.2: Roles of the Learner
- Topic 3.3: Strategies & Tactics for Building CoI



Week 4 Designing and Sustaining Online Communities of Inquiry

- Topic 4.1: Designing Online Courses
- Topic 4.2: Designing Online CoI



Week 5 Exploring and Assessing Elements of Quality for CoI

- Topic 5.1: Examining the CoI Survey Instruments
- Topic 5.2: Assessing for Quality CoI Elements

ONLINE TEACHING • STRATEGY • QUALITY CONTROL • BLENDED EDUCATION

Appendix E. Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan

Final Assignment: CoI Implementation Plan

The final activity for Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses will ask you to bring together all the concepts, principles, and practical strategies you have been exploring over the past few weeks into a single Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan.

Developing an implementation plan—one that effectively integrates all the presences into a meaningful learning experience while reflecting the diversity of your learners, your local learning context, and the realities of the pedagogical and technological supports available to you—can become a very complex endeavour. The implementation plan here breaks some of that complexity down into a series of key factors to consider, described below.

CoI Implementation Plan

The CoI Implementation Plan will be your final assignment for the course and is required for earning a Certificate of Completion. It will be due by the end of the final day of the course.

[If you decide not to complete the CoI Implementation Plan, you can still earn a Certificate of Participation by passing all the quizzes.]

How it works

These key factors include your own role, the roles of your learners, and your current teaching and learning setting, as well as how these might all be transformed to reflect better some of the CoI principles you've studied in this course. These factors make up Step 1: Thinking through your design parameters, and they will ask you to be detailed and precise about your current state, while also being creative in reimagining it as a rich, effective, and meaningful community of inquiry.

In Step 2: Design your course or programme's community of inquiry, you'll work through each of the presences: cognitive, teaching, social, and emotional. You'll specify learning activities and strategies for each of these presences, mapping out a lesson or learning objective that draws upon the strengths of all the presences together.

Step 3: Institutional supports and resources, is where you'll dig more deeply into the resources and supports that you have now or might need to implement your plan. You'll be drawing heavily on your work in Week 4 for this step.

And finally, in Step 4: Design rationale, you'll be able to explain more directly what you hope to accomplish with your design, and why your design will work particularly well for your learners in your learning setting. You'll

3-Step COI Implementation Plan

<https://www.thecommunityofinquiry.org/coi>

1 Design Parameters

Learners' role in current and future state?
Goal of adding a COI to your course?

2 COI framework

How would you apply COI to improve learners' learning outcomes?

- **Cognitive Presence:** Design rationale for each phase of the PIM?
- **Teaching Presence:** Strategies suitable for learners in your context?
- **Social Presence:** Strategies to enhance open communication?
- **Emotional Presence:** Strategies to ensure a productive and safe learning community?

3 Institution Support

What infrastructure, resources are available at your institution?

Referenced from DCOI MOOC's COI Implementation Plan template.

make your case as to why you believe your implementation plan will create an effective and meaningful community of inquiry for your learners.

For an illustration of this design process, check out Benedict Chia's infographic!

How it will be evaluated

Your CoI Implementation Plan will be evaluated as Complete, Incomplete, or Resubmission Required. If you are asked to resubmit, your plan will be re-opened, and you can continue to work on it.

This course created opportunities for you to:

- discuss the important foundational elements of online learning
- describe the philosophical and theoretical foundations of the CoI model
- identify the three components of the CoI, as well as emotional presence, and their design elements
- apply CoI standard and emerging design elements as tested in recent research

To successfully complete your CoI Implementation Plan, you will fill out the sections of its structured outline with information and evidence gained from course material and interactive discussions. This information should be integrated with your prior knowledge and experiences and applied to your current or projected education context. Construct this application of integrated new and old knowledge in ways that address the problems, projects, questions, or issues most relevant for you.

How to hand it in

You will complete your plan online, working individually. Click the blue button above to start your plan, or click [here](#). If any questions come up as you work through your plan (including questions about what specific sections of the plan might actually mean, post them in our dedicated forum for the CoI Implementation Plan.

Appendix F. Registrants by Country

Country	Number (<i>n</i> =724)	%
India	164	22.7%
Turkey	80	11.0%
Trinidad and Tobago	75	10.4%
Canada	57	7.9%
Sri Lanka	31	4.3%
Kenya	23	3.2%
Jamaica	19	2.6%
United States	19	2.6%
Ghana	13	1.8%
Nigeria	12	1.7%
Australia	10	1.4%
Eswatini	10	1.4%
Lesotho	10	1.4%
New Zealand	10	1.4%
South Africa	10	1.4%
Bangladesh	9	1.2%
Singapore	8	1.1%
Malaysia	7	1.0%
Papua New Guinea	7	1.0%
Botswana	6	0.8%
Mauritius	6	0.8%
United Kingdom	6	0.8%
Pakistan	5	0.7%
Tanzania	4	0.6%
Fiji	3	0.4%
Guyana	3	0.4%
Indonesia	3	0.4%
Rwanda	3	0.4%
Saint Lucia	3	0.4%
Uganda	3	0.4%
United Arab Emirates	3	0.4%
Zambia	3	0.4%
Belize	2	0.3%
Cameroon	2	0.3%
Egypt	2	0.3%
Germany	2	0.3%
Ireland	2	0.3%
Lebanon	2	0.3%
Morocco	2	0.3%
Netherlands	2	0.3%

Country	Number (<i>n</i> =724)	%
Portugal	2	0.3%
Switzerland	2	0.3%
Ukraine	2	0.3%
No response	52	7.2%

One respondent (representing 0.1%) was recorded from each of the following countries:

Azerbaijan	Czechia	Lithuania	Spain
Bahrain	Dominica	Mexico	Sweden
Barbados	Finland	Myanmar	Tunisia
Brazil	Gambia	Oman	Zimbabwe
Cambodia	Greece	Philippines	
China	Grenada	Qatar	
Cyprus	Iran	South Sudan	

Appendix G. Course Announcements

Thank you, as DCoI comes to a close

Hello, everyone! Designing for Communities of Inquiry

Posted: Apr 29, 2023

Final Submission date tomorrow!

Hello everyone and thanks to those of you who have been sharing ideas

Posted: Apr 28, 2023

Extension of Course Assessments and closing thoughts

Hello DCoI MOOC participants and we are appreciative of all your efforts

Posted: Apr 22, 2023

Reminder of the extension week, early certificates, end survey, and a farewell forum

At the end of the day, we will move into the extension week for DCoI

Posted: Apr 15, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 5

Join us today for our final live session for DCoI in Online Courses

Posted: Apr 13, 2023

Live Session tomorrow - and an interesting video analogy?

Hello everyone and we hope that you are finding lots of interesting "kernels" of

Posted: Apr 12, 2023

Module 5 is now open

Welcome to Week 5! Module 5, Exploring and assessing elements of quality for CoI

Posted: Apr 9, 2023

Week 4: Course Extension & new course items

Hello everyone and I hope your weekend is sunny - like it is here in Alberta! There

Posted: Apr 7, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 4

Join us today for our fourth live session for DCoI in Online Courses!

Posted: Apr 6, 2023

Week 4, Quizzes and the CoI Implementation Plan

Hello everyone and great to see that so many of you are engaged in the course

Posted: Apr 3, 2023

Module 4 is now open

Welcome to Week 4! Module 4, Designing and sustaining online CoI, is now open

Posted: Apr 2, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 3

Join us today for our third live session for DCoI in Online Courses!

Posted: Mar 30, 2023

Week 3 is about Roles!

Hello and it is great to watch the engagement many of you have had with the DCOI

Posted: Mar 27, 2023

Module 3 is now open

Welcome to Week 3! Module 3, Roles, strategies, and tactics implementing the CoI

Posted: Mar 26, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 2

Join us today for our second live session for DCoI in Online Courses!

Posted: Mar 23, 2023

Module 2 is now open

Welcome to Week 2! Module 2, Elements of the CoI framework, is now open

Posted: Mar 19, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 1

Join us today for our first live session for DCoI in Online Courses!

Posted: Mar 16, 2023

Week 1 Inspirer Announcement

Welcome to week 1 of the DCoI MOOC - a MOOC designed using a CoI-based

Posted: Mar 14, 2023

Welcome to DCoI MOOC!

Welcome to Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses! Your

Posted: Mar 12, 2023

Appendix H. Survey Letter of Consent



12 March 2023

Dear Participant:

We are researchers at Athabasca University and the Commonwealth of Learning. We invite you to participate in a research study entitled "Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses". The purpose of this study is to create a detailed picture of the participant experience in this MOOC.

Your participation will involve completing two short surveys: one at the beginning of the course and one after the course has finished. Each survey will take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete. Some participants may also be contacted for a more detailed interview. This interview takes between 15 and 20 minutes in total.

Data about your general course participation, such as the assignments you submit and the time spent on different course activities, is also of interest to us. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to stop or withdraw from the study, the information/data collected from or about you up to the point of your withdrawal will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed.

In either case, all information collected in this study will remain confidential. No individually-identifiable information about you, or provided by you during the research, will be shared outside the research/instructional team without your written permission. All research data will be kept on a secure drive for which only the principal researchers and instructional assistants will have access. Identifying information of participants will be removed from any reports that are seen by anyone other than the principal researchers and instructional assistants. The results of the research study may be published but your name or any identifying information will not be used. The published results will be in summary form only.

The findings from this project may provide information on how to improve the quality of learning experiences in other online courses. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research. If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Dr. Martha Cleveland-Innes via email at martic@athabascau.ca. This study has been reviewed by the Athabasca University Research Ethics Board. Comments or concerns regarding your treatment as a research participant should be directed to the Office of Research Ethics at 1-800-788-9041, ext. 6718 or via email at rebsec@athabascau.ca.

Use the buttons below the survey instructions to indicate whether you agree to participate in the research project described above. To correlate the surveys with your general course participation, we will also require the email address you used to register in DCOI MOOC. If you choose to consent to a follow-up interview, we may use this email address to contact you; your email address will not be used for any other purpose or shared with anyone outside the research team.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Martha Cleveland-Innes PhD, Professor of Education Innovation, Athabasca University

Appendix I. Pre-Course Survey

Do you consent to participate in the research study described above?

- Yes, I have read and understood the letter and consent
- No, I do not consent

If you consent to this survey, please enter the email address you used to register for DCoI MOOC.

Where do you live?

- Europe/UK
- North America
- Caribbean/Central America
- South America
- South Asia/Indian subcontinent
- Asia
- Oceania
- Middle East
- Africa

Please specify your country.

What is your primary spoken language?

- English
- Other (please specify)

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other or non-binary
- Prefer not to answer

What is your age group?

- Under 20
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 or over

What is your highest educational qualification?

- Secondary/high school diploma
- College certificate or diploma
- Vocational school certificate or diploma
- Bachelor degree or equivalent
- Master degree or equivalent
- Ph.D. or equivalent

What does your job involve? (select all that apply)

- Face-to-face teaching

- Distance or online teaching or facilitating
- Blended/hybrid teaching (face-to-face and distance or online)
- Work-based training
- Research
- Leadership/management/administration
- Government service
- Education support services
- Other (please specify)

If your job involves teaching, at which levels do you teach? (select area of greatest experience and interest)

- Early education/elementary/primary school
- Secondary/high school
- College
- Vocational school
- University
- Workplace/military/community
- Other (please specify)

What is your teaching experience?

- Currently a student
- Less than 5 years
- 6-15 years
- 16-25 years
- More than 25 years

How would you rate your abilities when performing the following tasks? (none, basic, proficient, or advanced)

- Acting as a leader in formal or informal situations
- Using digital tools for teaching
- Using digital tools for learning
- Supporting new technology and pedagogy for teaching and learning
- Designing, supporting, or facilitating online learning communities

Before registering in this course, were you aware of the Community of Inquiry framework for online and blended learning?

- No
- I had heard of it
- I knew it well but had not used it
- I use it in my instructional/learning design and/or teaching practice

This course focuses on new pedagogical teaching and learning structures and processes for all sectors of education. What actions are you considering to support changes in your education responsibilities? (select all that apply)

- My own teaching practice
- The teaching practice of staff under my supervision
- Teacher/faculty development courses
- Programme curriculum and delivery
- Policy changes requiring specified teaching/instructional practices
- Education leadership development
- Education governance

Have you taken any of the following MOOCs? (select all that apply)

- Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL MOOC)
- Blended Learning Practice (BLP MOOC)
- Learning to Learn Online (LTLO MOOC)
- Leading Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World (LCTL MOOC)

How did you find out about this course?

- Commonwealth of Learning website
- Commonwealth of Learning newsletter
- Course brochure
- Athabasca University
- Notification in a previous MOOC
- Email notification
- Social media
- Colleagues/workplace
- OpenUpEd
- PCF conference
- Other (please specify)

What is your primary reason for taking this course?

- General interest, primarily in new pedagogies (teaching and learning) with education technology applications
- General interest, primarily in the Community of Inquiry theoretical framework
- General interest, primarily in MOOCs
- Professional development (contributing to your CV, for example)
- Obtaining a certificate
- Other (please specify)

If you earn a certificate for this course, will you be applying it as professional development hours to further your career or meet professional development requirements?

- Yes
- No
- Does not apply

Which of the following best describes your intention to complete this MOOC?

- To browse the course contents, but not planning to complete the course
- Planning to complete some course activities, but not planning to earn a Certificate of Completion
- Planning to complete all activities to earn a Certificate of Completion
- Have not decided whether I will complete any course activities

Do you consent to be contacted to participate in a follow-up interview as indicated in the consent form?

- Yes, I consent to be contacted
- No, I do not consent to be contacted

Appendix J. End-of-Course Survey

Do you consent to participate in the research study described above?

- Yes, I have read and understood the letter and consent
- No, I do not consent

If you consent to this survey, please enter the email address you used to register for DCoI MOOC.

Which weekly activities did you complete or do you expect to complete? (Please select all that apply.)

- Less than one week
- Week One activities, discussions, and quiz
- Week Two activities, discussions, and quiz
- Week Three activities, discussions, and quiz
- Week Four activities, discussions, and quiz
- Week Five activities, discussions, and quiz
- A CoI Implementation Plan

Which course elements supported your feeling of being part of a “community of inquiry”? (Select all that apply.)

- Course announcements/emails
- Inspirer “Welcome to the Week” videos
- Topic activities structure
- Discussion forums
- Facilitator posts
- Live sessions
- Padlets and/or polls

Please provide us with your feedback by indicating your level of agreement to the following statements.

- DCoI MOOC met the learning objectives
- The amount of time I spent on the course met my expectations
- The workload was manageable
- The pace of the course was comfortable for my learning
- The course activities reinforced the course material
- The course activities did a good job of triggering my thinking
- The course activities did a good job of holding my interest
- The course material was of good quality
- Assignments were helpful to acquire knowledge and skills
- The quizzes helped to test my knowledge
- I experienced direct instruction during DCoI MOOC
- My learning was supported through facilitation by the Inspirer
- My learning was supported through facilitation by the roving instructors
- My learning about DCoI was supported through my discussions with other students
- My learning about DCoI was supported by reading other student posts
- DCoI MOOC discussions provided me with information about resources that I will be able to use in my own teaching
- I felt like I was part of a community in DCoI MOOC
- It was okay to express emotion in DCoI MOOC forums
- The course website was user-friendly
- The Welcome Module helped me navigate the course and understand course expectations
- The DCoI MOOC experience will assist me in the use of educational technology for teaching and learning

- Overall, I was satisfied with DCoI MOOC

Which live sessions, if any, did you attend and/or watch as a recording?

- Session 1: Laying foundations (16 March)
- Session 2: Global education space (23 March)
- Session 3: Finding design strategies (30 March)
- Session 4: Design Session A (6 April)
- Session 5: Design Session B (13 April)

If you attended at least one live session and/or watched its recording, how satisfied were you with it as a learning experience? (if you have any comments, include them in the General Feedback question on the next page.) (Does not apply, Very unsatisfied, Unsatisfied, Neutral, Satisfied, Very Satisfied)

- Attending the session live
- Watching the recording

If you attempted the CoI Implementation Plan, how satisfied were you with it as an opportunity to apply concretely what you learned in DCoI? (if you have any comments, include them in the General Feedback question on the next page.) (Does not apply, Very unsatisfied, Unsatisfied, Neutral, Satisfied, Very Satisfied)

- The CoI Implementation Plan

Please indicate the level of instructor and facilitator involvement you would have liked to have had in DCoI MOOC.

- Much more instructor and facilitator involvement
- Somewhat more instructor and facilitator involvement
- About the same level of instructor and facilitator involvement
- Less instructor and facilitator involvement
- I felt no need for instructor or facilitator involvement

What suggestions (to enhance learning, its use of technologies, or otherwise) do you have for the instructor and/or course design team?

If you would like to provide general feedback on DCoI MOOC (including your experience of the course, sessions, assignment, or any other aspect), please enter it here.