



Report of the Massive Open Online Course on
**Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses
(DCoIMOOC2)**



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING



Athabasca
University

MOOC



**Designing for
Communities of Inquiry
in Online Courses**

8 October to 11 November 2023

Second offering: 8 October - 11 November 2023

Athabasca University
Commonwealth of Learning

Credits

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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 second offering held 8 October through 11 November 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 second offering of DCoI MOOC was well received with 574 registrants from 58 countries attending, of whom 387 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 276 Certificates of Participation awarded for a total certification rate of 48.1% based on the 574 student registrations, or 71.3% based on the number of participants who logged in at least once, and a completion rate of 89.0% based on fully active participants (defined as participants who attempted the first week quiz). Of the 276 certificate recipients, 247 participants were also awarded the more challenging Certificate of Completion based on successful completion and submission of the CoI Implementation Plan.

It is noteworthy that 43.7% of the participants in this second offering were from Greece. These university undergraduate students were provided partial credit in a formal teacher education course when they earned the Certificate of Completion. As a result, there were two significant demographical differences in comparison to our first DCoI offering: 1) almost half (48%) of learners were under 30 years of age (compared to 12% in the first offering of DCoI MOOC) and 2) 43% of learners were undergraduate students (compared to less than 2% in the first offering). The participants attending specifically to earn a certificate of completion to receive partial credit in their formal university course likely provided external motivation for active participation. This resulted in 80% of fully active participants receiving a Certificate of Completion (compared to 53% in the first offering).

This DCoI MOOC offering *points to new potential* for using AU-COL MOOCs in another impactful manner, by becoming an activity in a formal university or college course of study. This serves to connect MOOC achievement with academic credit applied to a traditional academic degree, which can be understood as *moocification* or *mesocredentiailling*:

Moocification of a formal university course is perhaps one way in which higher education students and universities can engage with communities that are interested in the same topics for learning. (Ostashewski et al., 2017, p195)¹

Mesocredentiailling, an emerging and transformative approach to integrating massive open online courses (MOOCs) within the higher education system. (Moore, 2022)²

This report on the second 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

¹ Ostashewski, N., Howell, J., & Dron, J. (2017). MOOCifying courses: Delivery of a MOOC to enhance university course activities. *Journal of Learning for Development*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.56059/jl4d.v4i2.217>

² Moore, R. L. (2022). Introducing mesocredentials: Connecting MOOC achievement with academic credit. *Distance Education*, 43(2), 271-289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2022.2064823>

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 (CoI) 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 and Course Co-Designer

Dr Nathaniel Ostashewski, Course Co-Designer, Instructor, and Instructional Designer

Daniel Wilton, Technical and Participant Support

Carmen Jensen-Tebb, Project Manager

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,
- equal content emphasis on theoretical foundations of the CoI framework, design, and teaching practice, and
- emphasis on practical, context-sensitive, and authentic application through a series of reflective exercises leading to the design of a CoI 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, export, 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 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 574 registrants for the second offering of DCoI MOOC. Of these, 387 (67.4%) logged into the course at least once, averaging 4.4 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, 8 participants logged in for over 25 hours.

Demographic data

The following demographic information is based on registrants' responses compiled from the preregistration demographics survey and the course welcome survey. A significant number registered from Greece (43.7%) as compared to the previous offering of DCoI. Thirty-eight (6.6%) registrants did not provide demographic information.

Distribution by country. Registrants attended from 58 countries, with Greece (43.7%) as the largest representative, followed by Mauritius (7.1%), India (5.4%), Kenya (4.0%), and South Africa (3.5%). 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 ($n=574$)

Country	Number	%
Greece	251	43.7%
Mauritius	41	7.1%
India	31	5.4%
Kenya	23	4.0%
South Africa	20	3.5%
Sri Lanka	17	3.0%
Papua New Guinea	14	2.4%
Botswana	11	1.9%
Bangladesh	10	1.7%
Australia	8	1.4%
Maldives	8	1.4%

Distribution by gender. Of the 574 registrants, 59.8% were male and 32.9% were female, a reversal of trends from the first offering. The distribution by gender is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of registrants by gender ($n=574$)

Gender	Number	%
Male	343	59.8%
Female	189	32.9%
Other or non-binary	2	0.3%
Prefer not to disclose	2	0.3%
No response	38	6.6%

Distribution by age. Registrants were, on average, significantly younger in this MOOC than in the first offering, with a mean age of 31.3 years, 10 years younger than in DCoI MOOC 1. 29.1% of registrants were 40 years of age or older, compared to 50.5% of registrants in the first offering. Distribution by age is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of registrants by age (n=574)

Age	Number	%
Under 20	216	37.6%
20 to 29	62	10.8%
30 to 39	91	15.9%
40 to 49	97	16.9%
50 to 59	54	9.4%
60 to 69	12	2.1%
70 and over	4	0.7%
No response	38	6.6%

Distribution by education level. In addition to their younger average age, registrants were in general at an earlier stage in their academic career, with 42.7% currently in an undergraduate program. 42.1% indicated holding or currently pursuing a graduate degree or higher, compared to 79.6% in the first offering. Distribution by education level is provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by education level (n=574)

Education level	Number	%
High school diploma	15	2.6%
Vocational school certificate or diploma	-	-
Currently in an undergraduate program	245	42.7%
College diploma or bachelor's degree	34	5.9%
Currently in a graduate program	9	1.6%
Post-graduate diploma or graduate degree	108	18.8 %
Currently in a doctoral program	49	8.5%
Doctoral degree	76	13.2%
No response	38	6.6%

Table 5. Distribution of respondents by professional affiliation and level (n=574)

Professional affiliation	Number	%
Post-secondary education	287	50.0%
Government	102	17.8%
Individual	71	12.4%
K-12 education	34	5.9%
Non-profit organization	24	4.2%
Community organization	5	0.9%
For-profit organization	4	0.7%
No response	47	8.2%

Distribution by professional affiliation. Registrants were asked to identify their professional affiliation and level. As noted above, a significant number were currently in an undergraduate program, and half (50.0%) of the registrants identified their affiliation as being with post-secondary education, a further 12.4% as individuals, and 17.8% indicated an affiliation with government. 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. Discussion in each module was 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.

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 1,547 discussion posts: 1,517 in pre-established course activity and administrative forums, and 30 in special topic forums. 1,282 messages (82.9%) were posted by participants, and 265 (17.1%) 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 (n=1,547)

Forum type	Posts	%
Support forums	13	0.8%
Welcome forum	225	14.5%
Ideas forums	577	37.3%
Design forums	341	22.0%
Teaching forums	313	20.2%
Live session forums	23	1.5%
Special topic forums	30	1.9%
Farewell and ongoing connections forum	25	1.6%

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 (Ostashewski & Cleveland-Innes, 2022³) 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 this 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?	310	54.0%	94%	1.01
Quiz 2:	The Community of Inquiry Presences	290	50.5%	95%	0.83
Quiz 3:	Roles in the CoI	285	49.7%	95%	0.80
Quiz 4:	Designing and sustaining online CoI	281	49.0%	96%	0.64
Quiz 5:	Designing for Communities of Inquiry in online courses	278	48.4%	95%	0.78

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 251 plans were submitted, of which 249 (99.2%) 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 276 Certificates of Participation awarded, for a total certification rate of 48.1%, based on the 574 participant registrations, or 71.3% based on the number of participants who logged in, and a completion rate of 89.0% based on fully active participants (defined as participants who attempted the first week quiz). Of these, 247 participants (43.0% 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.

³ Ostashewski, 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 276 awarded	Completion 247 awarded
Registrants	574	48.1%	43.0%
Active learners	387	71.3%	63.8%
Fully active learners	310	89.0%	79.7%

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 ($n=274$) and end-of-course survey ($n=78$). 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 266 responses indicating a primary language, 78 (29.3%) reported English as a primary language, significantly fewer than in DCoI MOOC 1, while 152 indicated Greek as their primary language. The most frequent primary languages indicated by respondents are provided in Table 9.

Table 9. Most frequently indicated primary languages ($n=266$)

Primary language	Number	%
Greek	152	57.1%
English	78	29.3%
Creole/French	8	3.0%
Hindi	6	2.3%
Arabic	2	0.8%
Dhivehi	2	0.8%
Dutch	2	0.8%
Sindhi	2	0.8%
Sinhala	2	0.8%
Spanish	2	0.8%

MOOC participants attending as part of their formal university course were required by their home institution to achieve a Certificate of Completion to earn partial course credit. This motivation is reflected in survey respondents' stated reasons for taking the course: for 94 respondents (39.5%), obtaining a certificate was their primary motivation. Other respondents indicated a general interest in new pedagogies (79, 33.2%) or the CoI framework (24, 10.1%), while 37 (15.6%) indicated they were taking the course for professional development. The respondents' primary reasons for registering in DCoI MOOC are provided in Table 10.

Table 10. Distribution of primary reasons for taking the course ($n=238$)

Primary reason for taking the course	Number	%
Obtaining a certificate	94	39.5%
General interest, primarily in new pedagogies (teaching and learning) with education technology applications	79	33.2%
Professional development (contributing to your CV, for example)	37	15.6%
General interest, primarily in the CoI theoretical framework	24	10.1%
General interest, primarily in MOOCs	4	1.7%

Out of 238 responses, more than half of survey respondents (132, 55.5%) had no previous awareness of the CoI theoretical framework, while 53 (26.5%) had heard of it, 26 (10.9%) indicated they knew it well but had not used it, and 17 (7.1%) had used it in their practice. When asked which actions they are considering to support changes

in their education responsibilities (allowing multiple selections, total respondents $n=217$), 172 (79.3%) indicated their own teaching practice, while 90 (41.5%) indicated teacher/faculty development courses, and 88 (40.6%) indicated program 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 ($n=217$)

Primary reason for taking the course	Number	%
My own teaching practice	172	79.3%
Teacher/faculty development courses	90	41.5%
Program curriculum and delivery	88	40.6%
Education leadership development	84	38.7%
The teaching practice of staff under my supervision	72	33.2%
Policy changes requiring specified teaching/instructional practices	62	28.6%
Education governance	42	19.4%

A notable number of survey respondents (64, 24.1%) indicated they had previously registered in a MOOC offered through the AU-COL partnership: Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning (46, 17.3%), Blended Learning Practice (23, 8.6%), Learning to Learn Online (also offered by Athabasca University alone; 16, 6.0%), or Leading Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World (13, 4.9%). 6 respondents (2.3%) had previously registered in all four.

One-third of survey respondents (79, 33.3%, $n=237$) became aware of the course through colleagues or their workplace, indicating, as in previous MOOC offerings, that word of mouth remains a strong source of information dissemination. A significant number of survey respondents (78, 32.9%) were told of the course offering by their professor or the university reflecting the participation of students taking the MOOC for partial formal credit in a university undergraduate course. The Commonwealth of Learning website continues to be an important source of registrations (24, 10.1%), followed by social media (22, 9.3%), and notifications by email (13, 5.5%). The distribution of responses to the question, "How did you learn about this course?" are provided in Table 12.

Table 12. Distribution of responses to "How did you learn about this course?" ($n=237$)

How did you learn about this course?	Number	%
Colleagues/workplace	79	33.3%
University advisor/professor or course requirement	78	32.9%
Commonwealth of Learning website	24	10.1%
Social media	22	9.3%
Email notification	13	5.5%
Athabasca University	5	2.1%
Commonwealth of Learning newsletter	4	1.7%
Course brochure	4	1.7%
Community of Inquiry website	3	1.3%
Web search	2	0.8%
Notification in a previous MOOC	1	0.4%
Other	2	0.8%

Summary of end-of-course survey results

The end-of-course survey was completed by 78 participants. Survey responses to questions regarding general satisfaction with DCoI MOOC indicate that respondents found a high level of satisfaction, judging the course material to be of high quality. Respondents indicated the value of the assignments in helping to acquire knowledge and skills. Respondents showed some concern, however, with the expectations in terms of time, workload, and pacing, and concern with the user-friendliness of the course website. 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.	67	64	95.5%
DCoI MOOC met the learning objectives.	67	62	92.5%
The DCoI MOOC experience will assist me in the use of educational technology for teaching and learning.	68	59	86.8%
The amount of time I spent on the course met my expectations.	68	55	80.9%
The workload was manageable.	67	53	79.1%
The pace of the course was comfortable for my learning.	67	57	85.1%
The course activities reinforced the course material.	68	58	85.3%
The course activities did a good job of triggering my thinking.	67	59	88.1%
The course activities did a good job of holding my interest.	68	51	75.0%
The course material was of good quality.	67	65	97.0%
Assignments were helpful to acquire knowledge and skills.	67	64	95.5%
The quizzes helped to test my knowledge.	68	58	85.3%
The course website was user-friendly.	66	54	81.8%

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 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 ($n=63$) were asked how much instructor involvement they would like to have had; 33 (52.4%) indicated they would have liked to have had about the same level of involvement, 25 (39.7%) indicated they would have liked to have had somewhat or much more involvement, with 5 (7.9%) indicating they felt no need for instructor or facilitator involvement. Overall, this suggests a broad appreciation for the continuing importance of the instructor's role in large-enrollment courses.

Additional questions asked respondents to indicate the value they found in various course elements and activities, including the live sessions and final assignment.

One live session was attended by 18 respondents (23.1%); of these, 16 (88.9%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the session as a learning experience, and 4 (22.2%) had attended all five sessions. 54 respondents (69.2%) indicated they had watched at least one session recording; of these, 38 (70.4%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the recorded session as a learning experience, and 28 (51.9%) had watched all five recordings. When given the choice between more content delivery or more interaction, 36 (58.1%, $n=62$) would have preferred more content delivery and 26 (41.9%) more interaction.

Sixty-two respondents (79.5%) indicated they had attempted the CoI Implementation Plan assignment; of these, 41 (66.1%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the assignment as an opportunity to apply what they had learned in DCoI MOOC; while this is lower than in the previous offering, it may reflect the requirement of some participants to complete the assignment for partial course credit rather than out of a more intrinsic interest.

More broadly, respondents ($n=69$) were asked to select which course elements supported their feeling of being part of a community of inquiry, allowing for multiple selections. These selections are summarized in Table 16.

Table 14. Evaluation of instruction and the learning community

	Responses	Agree/Strongly agree	
		Number	%
I experienced direct instruction during DCoI MOOC.	68	42	61.8%
My learning was supported through facilitation by the Inspirer.	68	43	63.2%
My learning was supported through facilitation by the roving instructors.	68	45	66.2%
My learning about CoI was supported through my discussions with other students.	68	45	66.2%
My learning about CoI was supported by reading other student posts.	68	56	82.4%
DCoI MOOC discussions provided me with information about resources that I will be able to use in my own teaching.	67	57	85.1%
I felt like I was part of a community in the DCoI MOOC.	66	53	80.3%
It was okay to express emotions in DCoI MOOC forums.	67	49	73.1%

Table 15. Which live sessions, if any, did you attend and/or watch as a recording

	Responses	Attended Live		Watched Recording	
		Number	%	Number	%
Session 1: October 12	54	8	14.8%	47	87.0%
Session 2: October 19	52	8	15.4%	45	86.5%
Session 3: October 26	49	9	18.4%	40	81.6%
Session 4: November 2	49	7	14.3%	43	87.8%
Session 5: November 9	45	12	26.7%	34	75.6%

Table 16. Elements supporting the feeling of being part of a community of inquiry ($n=69$)

Course element	Number	%
Discussion forums	49	71.1%
Inspirer "Welcome to the Week" videos	38	55.1%
Topic activities structure	33	47.8%
Live sessions	24	34.8%
Course announcements/emails	23	33.3%
Facilitator posts	22	31.9%
Padlets and/or polls	13	18.8%

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.

When asked specifically about the live sessions, several respondents noted the challenge of scheduling sessions across multiple time zones, some suggesting rotating the times to maximize the number able to attend at least once. While participants had the opportunity to post questions or comments for each session in a forum, some respondents seemed to be calling for the opportunity to ask such questions through recorded video, a proposal that may be more logistically complex but could contribute to the sense of presence for those unable to attend live. Several participants also asked for more opportunities for interaction with the presenters and with their fellow participants.

The live sessions are great - however I was unable to attend due to scheduling, and watched the recordings when I could. I noticed that this may have been a challenge for others as well, because there was not as large a live attendance as I would have thought. There is value in these however, I enjoyed the content discussions (the expansion on the materials) and the dialogue amongst the facilitators. Thank you for these.

Schedule live sessions at different times to accommodate participants in various time zones. Rotate the timing of sessions to give everyone the opportunity to attend at a reasonable hour.

If comments or questions can be sent in relation to the live sessions.

They could be video calls with some students and the teachers where the students would listen to the session but also ask questions.

I think there was too much information in the last session, which limited interaction. Assessment was one of the points that I think was left out.

I would like that the live sessions have a little bit more of activities where the participants interact more between them and with the instructors.

Live sessions: provide more learning activities (group/pair) where learners (participants) can apply (discuss) and practice what they have learned from their readings, blog posts and other 'online' activities.

In terms of design and use of technology, several respondents suggested that the presentation of the course material could be enhanced through greater use of visuals and interactive elements, while one respondent asked for more recent readings to reflect current issues affecting education such as COVID. Reflecting the range of expectations associated with online learning and professional development among the respondents, some suggested a more formal question-and-answer format, while others highlighted the experiential nature of the course and suggested ways to develop it further.

Make better use of images and colour. Some topics really needed but overall, both teams did excellent.

Offer content in multiple formats, including text, videos, infographics, and interactive simulations, to accommodate different learning preferences.

Improved use of Learning Design methods including providing summaries of key readings - chunking of content. Application of learning technologies such as H5P and others to improve the online platform course design (feel). In addition, consider and/or improve the application of UDL (Universal Design for Learning) guidelines as part of the DCOI.

In this particular instance, I find it challenging to provide any suggestions for enhancement, as the instructor and course design team have created an exemplary learning environment. Everything has been thoughtfully planned and executed, offering a seamless integration of technology and pedagogy. Learner

needs and engagement have been meticulously addressed, resulting in a well-rounded educational experience. The course's design and content align perfectly with its objectives. It's a testament to the exceptional efforts of the instructor and the course design team.

Many of the assigned articles and chapters were very dated. In some cases, that made sense. In others, it didn't - for example, an article discussing tools or approaches for online teaching should account for recent experiences and technologies. (I was delighted when one referenced COVID-19 because I knew it was current.) I would have appreciated more current literature.

There should be some application where the students ask questions and the teachers answer.

I believe that by encouraging students to use new technological means and assigning roles to groups of students in the context of a good plan, new ideas and creativity will emerge.

I enjoyed the learning in this course, its design was such that it was experiential, and I appreciated that. The use of technology was appropriate, and I appreciated being able to access the course both on my laptop and phone, allowing me to use spare moments throughout the day to catch up on course reading, posts etc. There is nothing that I would change.

I was trying hard to keep up with time allocation in this course. I tried very hard to read all course materials, even the optional one to get more knowledge on the course. This was real empowerment. I feel more confident about online learning now than before starting the course. What I gained here will be useful for the department when planning the use of tablets given to learners for blended learning. The models and frameworks will come in handy when planning online lessons as soon as 2024. I am going to suggest training of educators on Online Design Instructions in order to keep up with changes in education. To the course designers and facilitators, thank you so much. I am now a better teacher.

Finally, many respondents used the open-ended questions as an opportunity to express their appreciation for the course and the work of the design and instructional team, describing the impact they believe the course will have on their practice, their beliefs about teaching, and their motivation to continue learning.

This course has been of great utility, I thank you immensely.

Thank you for this learning opportunity. I found it inspiring and I will be attending future MOOC offerings as they are available. The facilitation, the content, and the tech were all top notch. Keep up the great work!

I appreciate the comprehensive and engaging nature of the DCOI MOOC. The well-structured content, interactive sessions, and thoughtful assignments have significantly enriched my understanding of the Community of Inquiry framework. I look forward to continuing the learning journey and appreciate the efforts of the course design team in creating a valuable and inclusive educational experience.

My experience during the courses was very constructive. I gained new knowledge and it led me to correct conclusions that I had not thought of before. As I mentioned in the CoI IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, the specific courses contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and it also contributes to making the same process of learning more enjoyable for everyone, a fact that I think is very important.

Not really, only to thank the course organisers for an opportunity to explore the possibility of engaging learners online. The idea of segmenting the cognitive teaching, social, and emotional presence appeals to me as a student and practitioner of distance and adult teaching/learning in this era of technology enabled education.

Overall it was a very useful experience for my future plans about teaching, which also changed my current view of learning and teaching.

It was my first time to experience an online learning like this. I enjoyed it a lot and I am going to copy some of the strategies used in designing this course. Please keep up the good work. I am also going to tell my colleagues to enroll in these courses in 2024.

I was surprised that I grew more motivated to participate as the course moved along. I didn't expect to. I saw the value in the content, but I experienced the value in the process and community. I believe my learning was deeper and more meaningful as a result, and it gave me more than I anticipated when I signed up. Thank you!

Section 5. Outcomes and Recommendations

The second 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 offering saw participants attend from 58 countries with 43.7% attending from Greece. As is typical with MOOCs, only a subset of registrants entered the course (67.4%) 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 CoI 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 confirm the value of this approach. Many indicated a desire for more opportunities to connect and interact in the course. 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.

The asynchronous discussion forums remain central to this interactive approach. During the MOOC, 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. The discussion forums were active in this MOOC as participants posted 1,282 (82.9%) of the total 1,547 discussion posts, compared to 78.8% in the first offering. The Farewell and Ongoing Connections forum was again included to give opportunity for participants to share their information to remain connected beyond the end of the course.

The weekly live sessions create opportunities for synchronous interaction (and further asynchronous interaction through their recordings and supporting forums). These sessions were held Thursday mornings at 9:00 a.m. MT, a time chosen by the design team to maximize potential attendance across key time zones across North America, Africa, and southeast Asia. As the attendees of these sessions were typically among the most active participants (and therefore most likely to complete the end survey), the survey responses presented in Section 4 regarding the live sessions are a close approximation of the attendance numbers, which tends to fluctuate within the sessions themselves, dependent on the attendees' network connectivity. While the attendance numbers remain limited, they provide a strong sense of connection to the course team and fellow participants for those able to attend and a virtual sense of connection for the larger number of participants watching the recordings or reading the chat transcriptions, and are therefore a critical component of the MOOC design as a community of learning.

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. DCoI MOOC, as with our other AU-COL MOOC offerings, offers multi-modal learning activities to support achievement of learning outcomes. These expected learning activities, summarized in Table 17, are outlined and described to participants in the course orientation.

Table 17. 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 9:00 a.m. 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.

In this second offering of DCoI MOOC a significant factor, the *moocification* or *mesocredentiailling* of a formal course of study, has highlighted elements for consideration in future offerings. Moocification is defined as the use of a MOOC as part of a formal course of study (Ostashewski et al., 2017)⁴. Mesocredentiailling is defined as an emerging and transformative approach to integrating MOOCs within the higher education system (Moore, 2022)⁵. Both terms, by definition, can be applied to this offering and directs us to the future potential opportunity to market the course as a component of other formal university courses with Athabasca University and the Commonwealth of Learning partner institutions – particularly ones offering teacher preparation degrees. This may be another way to increase institutional awareness of AU-COL activities while at the same time serving an urgent need to provide new educators with knowledge about high quality education, blended or online. Perhaps active

⁴ Ostashewski, N., Howell, J., & Dron, J. (2017). MOOCifying courses: Delivery of a MOOC to enhance university course activities. *Journal of Learning for Development*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.56059/jl4d.v4i2.217>

⁵ Moore, R. L. (2022). Introducing mesocredentials: Connecting MOOC achievement with academic credit. *Distance Education*, 43(2), 271-289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2022.2064823>

engagement with professor colleagues in international institutions is worth pursuing, particularly for teacher preparation, and in countries where there has already been uptake of other AU and COL MOOC offerings.

The final assignment, a Community of Inquiry Implementation Plan, again utilized the online form tool to capture, present, and export the plan by participants for use in this course and beyond. One enhancement implemented in DCoI MOOC 2 was the staged release of the Plan beginning in Week 2 of the course. The staged release of the assignment appears successful and allowed more learners to complete the plan, as confirmed by the 89.0% completion rate of fully active learners. As indicated previously, using the MOOC for partial credit in a formal university course may also have impacted the motivations for learner completion rates, and therefore, a true measure of the impact of the Plan's staged release cannot yet be determined. It is recommended that the staged release of the Plan continue into future offerings of DCoI MOOC.

Data from several AU-COL MOOC deliveries suggests that participants are interested in connecting individually with the course instructors to discuss their own understandings or how to implement the course materials for their individual practice. For this delivery, participants who earned a Certificate of Completion were offered the opportunity to be entered into a draw to win a one-on-one session with Drs Ostashewski and Cleveland-Innes. The online Activity Plan tool included a radio button which allowed participants to choose if they wanted their name included in the draw. Upon completion of the MOOC two names were randomly drawn and Drs Ostashewski and Cleveland-Innes arranged to meet with the winners and provide one hour of individualized, personal support.

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 continues to be current and timely and well-received by participants.

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>	8 October – 11 November 2023 (5 weeks)
<i>Intended audience</i>	Higher education, K-12, and vocational education teachers, administrators, 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 Educational interactions and learning engagement
Week 2	<i>Elements of the Community of Inquiry framework</i>	Cognitive presence Teaching presence Social presence Emotional, learner, and other presences
Week 3	<i>Roles, strategies, and tactics implementing the CoI</i>	Roles of the instructor Roles of the learner Tactics and strategies 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 in Alberta, Canada. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the bilingual Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology and author of The Guide to Blended Learning. Martha is instructor, co-designer, and researcher for the open online course Blended Learning Practice and Leading Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World. The second 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>



Dr Nathaniel Ostashewski 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>



Daniel Wilton 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 your technical and participant support for DCoI, he will be working closely with the instructional team to help monitor course activity, address any general questions or concerns, as well as being your direct contact for registration and your status within the course.



Carmen Jensen-Tebb is a graduate student in distance education at Athabasca University in Alberta, Canada, where she is also the Contract Project Administrator in Open, Digital, and Distance Education in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences providing project administration for the AU-COL education MOOC offerings - Designing for Communities of Inquiry, Leading Change for Teaching and Learning in a Digital World, Blended Learning Practice, Learning to Learn Online, and Technology-Enhanced Learning. 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. He has been an online teacher for six years in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada, experiencing and overcoming many of the various barriers online teaching and learning can create. Angelo experiences how students interact with each other, all in an online setting, and takes the opportunity to share new technology tools with students regularly, searching for and learning new technology tools to help enhance learning. Angelo has facilitated in Learning to Learn Online Express, Learning to Learn Online, Blended Learning Practice, and Technology-Enhanced Learning.



Jenine Hawryluk is a doctoral student in distance education at Athabasca University and is particularly interested in the pedagogical approaches used in different intercultural contexts. She has taught English for Academic Purposes in Canada and Lithuania, specifically focusing on academic writing, as well as English Language and facilitated teacher training in several countries. Jenine has facilitated in Designing for Communities of Inquiry, Leading Change for Teaching and Learning in a Digital World, Teaching Chemistry with Technology, Learning to Learn Online, Blended Learning Practice, and Technology-Enhanced Learning.

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

12 Oct 2023 **Laying the foundations for a (global) learning community**

Instructional Team Lead by Dr Ostashewski

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTvnof2G6A0>

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!

19 Oct 2023 **The Community of Inquiry: New teaching and learning in a global education space**

Instructional Team Lead by Dr Ostashewski

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

Abstract: Our previously scheduled guest presenter will not be able to join us. Instead, this session will be led by your instructional team, with a focus on sharing your understanding and potential applications of the presences within the CoI framework. Several of the topics previously listed, including emotional presence and the overlaps between the presences, will be addressed and discussed as a group.

26 Oct 2023 **Artificial intelligence and the Community of Inquiry**

Instructional Team Lead by Dr Cleveland-Innes

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

Abstract: Artificial intelligence (AI) has transformational implications for pedagogical practice in many subject areas. Interest in AI has grown since the emergence of ChatGPT, a generative AI tool that can ostensibly be trained to disseminate and create content. In areas such as medicine, the benefits of a conversational information tool that can access vast amounts, create a coherent representation, and develop a prognosis may be of benefit, under certain conditions. However, for education, the implications are not so clear. A core question many educators are asking relates to the educative process beyond content: ***What impact will AI, and tools such as ChatGPT, have on deep and meaningful learning and specifically educational communities?*** Join us for a discussion as we share ideas and opportunities around this core question for all educators working (and learning) in today's digital world.

2 Nov 2023

Design Session: Framing your learning community

Instructional Team Lead by Dr Ostashewski

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bPR2SorMBk>

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).

9 Nov 2023

Design Session: Piecing it all together

Instructional Team Lead by Dr Ostashewski

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIKw4IVpcak>

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!

All sessions will begin at **9am Mountain time (North America)** - check your time zone. Links to an external site. A link will be posted here about an hour before the session begins. If you aren't able to join us live, a recording will be posted at the top of this page a few hours after the session.

Appendix D. DCoI MOOC Brochure

Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses (exterior)



Meet the Instructors



Dr Nathaniel Ostashewski is Associate Professor of Open, Digital, and Distance Education at Athabasca University in Alberta, Canada. Dr Ostashewski 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 (CoI) 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 the MOOCs he designs and teaches. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/mrbkdwzz>.



Dr Martha Cleveland-Innes is Professor of Open, Digital, and Distance Education at Athabasca University.

Dr Cleveland-Innes 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* and *Leading Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World*. In 2019 Martha received an Honorary Doctorate from Mid-Sweden

University and served as a member of the Advisory Group for Digital Literacy with the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education in 2021–2022. She was Virtual Educator in Residence at the National University of Singapore in Fall, 2022 and is currently Visiting Professor of Pedagogy at Mid-Sweden University.

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



Registration

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

DCoI inquiries: info@dcoimoc.org

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COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING



Athabasca University

MOOC

Designing for Communities of Inquiry in Online Courses

8 October - 11 November 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 to 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	8 October to 11 November 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 are available at no charge



Course Details

Week 1 Foundations of Online Teaching and Learning

- Topic 1.1: History of Online Teaching and Learning
- Topic 1.2: Media in Education
- Topic 1.3: Educational Interactions and Learning Engagement



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, Learner 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: Tactics and Strategies 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 released in stages from Week 3 to Week 5, and is 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

STEP 1: Thinking through your design parameters

Opens 22 October.

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.

STEP 2: Design your course or programme's community of inquiry

Opens 29 October.

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

Opens 5 November.

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.

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.

STEP 4: Design rationale

Opens 5 November.

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 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. 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.

Earn a Certificate of Completion and win a one-on-one!

At the end of the course, you will have the opportunity to win a one-on-one personal consultation or conversation with one of your instructors, Dr Nathaniel Ostashewski or Dr Marti Cleveland-Innes.

The names of everyone who completes the final assignment and earns a Certificate of Completion will be put in a virtual hat. Two names will be drawn, and the winners will be able to schedule an hour-long online conversation with Dr Ostashewski or Dr Cleveland-Innes.

Discuss your design ideas, implementation challenges, opportunities for educational change, or any other topic you'd like to explore. See the Meet your Course Team page coming up later in this Welcome module to learn more about your instructors, their background, and the expertise you might have the opportunity to draw upon in a one-on-one.

Make sure the checkbox at the top of your plan is checked to be entered in the draw!

Appendix F. Registrants by Country

Country	Number (n=724)	%
Greece	251	43.7%
Mauritius	41	7.1%
India	31	5.4%
Kenya	23	4.0%
South Africa	20	3.5%
Sri Lanka	17	3.0%
Papua New Guinea	14	2.4%
Botswana	11	1.9%
Bangladesh	10	1.7%
Australia	8	1.4%
Maldives	8	1.4%
Nigeria	7	1.2%
United States	7	1.2%
Namibia	6	1.0%
Canada	5	0.9%
Ghana	5	0.9%
Malaysia	5	0.9%
United Kingdom	4	0.7%
Antigua and Barbuda	3	0.5%
Belize	3	0.5%
Eswatini	3	0.5%
Pakistan	3	0.5%
Rwanda	3	0.5%
Seychelles	3	0.5%
Trinidad and Tobago	3	0.5%
Burkina Faso	2	0.3%
Cambodia	2	0.3%
Curaçao	2	0.3%
Cyprus	2	0.3%
Egypt	2	0.3%
Jamaica	2	0.3%
Mexico	2	0.3%
Uganda	2	0.3%
Zambia	2	0.3%
No response	38	6.6%

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

Austria	Guyana	Liberia	Saint Lucia
Bahamas	Indonesia	Malawi	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Barbados	Italy	Myanmar	Suriname
Democratic Republic of Congo	Jordan	Peru	Sweden
Fiji	Lebanon	Philippines	Tunisia
Gambia	Lesotho	Portugal	Turkey

Appendix G. Course Announcements

Thank you, as DCoI comes to a close

Hello, everyone! In a few hours, Designing for Communities of Inquiry...

Posted: Nov 18, 2023

Extension week, early certificates, end survey, further learning, and a farewell forum

Welcome to an extension week for Designing for Communities of Inquiry...

Posted: Nov 12, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 5

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

Posted: Nov 9, 2023

Module 5 is now open

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

Posted: Nov 5, 2023

Week 4 Details & Information

Hello from Snowy Canada! As we continue week 4 I hope this...

Posted: Oct 31, 2023

Module 4 is now open

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

Posted: Oct 29, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 3

Join us today for our fourth live session for Designing for Communities...

Posted: Oct 26, 2023

Week 3: Roles & Live Session #3

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

Posted: Oct 25, 2023

Module 3 is now open

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

Posted: Oct 22, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 2

Join us today for our second live session for DCoI in Online Courses! Today's...

Posted: Oct 19, 2023

Module 2 is now open

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

Posted: Oct 15, 2023

Reminder: Join us today for Live session 1

Join us today for our first live session Designing for Communities...

Posted: Oct 12, 2023

Week 1 Inspirer Message & Course Updates

Welcome to week 1 of the DCoI MOOC 2 - a MOOC designed using a Community...

Posted: Oct 11, 2023

Welcome to DCoI MOOC!

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

Posted: Oct 8, 2023

Appendix H. Survey Letter of Consent



8 October 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

An optional, one-hour webinar or “live session” will be held each week during the course; see this link for the typical date and time. These live sessions will be recorded and can be watched later. Do you plan to attend these sessions?

- Yes, I hope to join at least one session
- No, I am not available to join the sessions but I plan to watch the recordings
- No, I do not plan to attend the sessions or watch the recordings

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: 12 October
- Session 2: 19 October
- Session 3: 26 October
- Session 4: 2 November
- Session 5: 9 November

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

Would you prefer more content delivery or more interaction in the iMOOC Live Sessions?

- Content delivery
- Interaction

What other suggestions would you offer to improve the design and delivery of our iMOOC Live Sessions?

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.