MOOC

Self-directed learning for higher education MOOC

Course description

Self-directed learning (SDL), where students take responsibility for their own learning, is an essential requirement for students within the 21st century context. This massive open online course (MOOC) provides a short introduction to SDL for teachers, faculty and facilitators in the higher education context. This MOOC covers the basic theoretical foundations of SDL. In addition, the typical characteristics of a self-directed learner and the way in which learner-centred and SDL-oriented learning environment can be created are explored. On a more practical level, the MOOC focuses on the affordances of strategies, such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning and play-based learning for SDL. Finally, the MOOC concludes with a section on the role of assessment in promoting SDL throughout the learning process.

Learning Outcomes

After completion of this learning opportunity, you are expected to be able to:

- Explain SDL and the theoretical foundation that underpins SDL
- Create a learning environment that is conducive to the promotion of SDL
- Use strategies such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning, as well as play-based learning to foster SDL
- Plan and implement assessment tasks to support the development of SDL

Who should participate?

This MOOC is a free, four-week course offered by the Commonwealth of Learning in collaboration with the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning from North-West University, South Africa and is open to anyone, anywhere, and is mobile-friendly. The focus is specifically on faculty and facilitators in higher education institutions.

At a glance

Schedule	1 - 26 May 2023 (4 weeks)
Intended audience	Faculty and facilitators from higher education institutions
Language	English
Expected workload	6 hours per week
Challenge level	Introductory
Prerequisites	None
Certification	Certificates of Participation and Completion are available at no charge

Course details

Week 1

- Explore SDL definitions
- Apply the SDL process
- Explore the historical background of SDL
- Explain the theoretical foundations of SDL
- Identify the characteristics of a self-directed learner and evaluate your own SDL characteristics

Week 2

- Explain the relevance of SDL for higher education
- Discuss and compare different models and dimensions of SDL
- Apply SDL models and dimensions in the design of learning environments

Week 3

- Define the concepts of cooperative learning, problem-based learning and play-based learning
- Design a learning environment which includes an appropriate active teaching and learning strategy to promote SDL

- Discuss the role of assessment in SDL
- Discuss the components of self-directed learning-oriented assessment
- Plan and evaluate the use of cooperative learning-embedded assessment within higher education

👥 Meet the instructors

Dr Byron J Bunt is a senior lecturer in History Education in the Faculty of Education, NWU, and a member of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning. He has been working in the field of teacher education for the past 11 years. His research niche encompasses cognitive education as well as game-based learning, specifically focussing on developing students' creative and critical thinking via gamification approaches.

Professor Marietjie Havenga is a professor in Computer Science Education in the Faculty of Education, NWU, and a member of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning. She currently holds a C-rating from the National Research Foundation (NRF). Her research interests are problem-based learning to enhance self-directed learning with specific reference to Computer Science Education and educational robotics.

Professor Dorothy Laubscher is an associate professor of Mathematics Education, in the Faculty of Education, NWU, and a member of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning. She has been working in the field of teacher education for the past 15 years. Her research interests include mathematics education, technology-enhanced learning, self-directed learning, cooperative learning, and blended and multimodal learning environments to foster self-directed learning.

Dr Marisa Verster holds a PhD degree in Curriculum Studies, focussed on enhancing teachers' curriculum as praxis from a self-directed learning capability approach. Dr Verster is a lecturer in Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education, NWU, and a member of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning. Her main research focus is on curriculum studies, self-directed learning and curriculum as praxis.

Dr Sukie van Zyl holds a PhD degree in Computer Science Education, is a senior lecturer in Computer Science Education in the Faculty of Education, NWU, and a member of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning. She has been working in the field of teacher education for the past eleven years. Her research focus is to develop deeper self-directed learning in cooperative learning environments in Computer Science Education.

Dr Anitia Lubbe holds a PhD in Natural Science Education, focussing on self-directed learning assessment, and is a senior lecturer in Life Sciences Education in the Faculty of Education, NWU. She has been working in the field of teacher education for the past eleven years. She is also a member of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning. Her research has a distilled focus on how assessment, assessment literacy, and cooperative learning could influence the development of self-directed learning skills.

Professor Elsa Mentz is the Director of the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning in the Faculty of Education of the NWU. She is also a professor in Computer Science Education, and her main research focus is the promotion of self-directed learning through the implementation of cooperative learning. She is a C1-rated researcher with the NRF, and was editor of two book publications: Self-directed learning research: *An imperative for transforming the educational landscape* and *Self-directed learning for the 21st Century: Implications for Higher Education*.

🏅 Certification

A **Certificate of Completion** will be awarded to participants who complete the following:

- Participation in two major forum discussions.
- Participation in any eight out of the thirteen general forum discussions.

A **Certificate of Participation** will be awarded to participants who complete the following:

- Participation in any eight out of the thirteen general forum discussions.

👥 Registration

For registration, go to: **https://www.mooc4dev.org/sdl**

Commonwealth of Learning
Dr Jako Olivier
Adviser: Higher Education
4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500
Burnaby, BC
V5H 4M2 CANADA
https://www.col.org

North-West University
Professor Elsa Mentz
Project Administrator
11 Hoffman Street
Potchefstroom
2351 SOUTH AFRICA
https://education.nwu.ac.za/research-unit-self-directed-learning/home