

David Hamill
*Training & Publications
Information System Services*



Cliona Hannon
Director of Trinity Access Programmes & Mature Students' Office

Social Networking - Engaging access students in a collaborative learning experience



TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF DUBLIN

Who?

- I.T trainer with Training & Publications group of IS Services
Trinity College Dublin
- I.T tutor for the Trinity Access Programme
- M.Sc. Technology and Learning



Why?

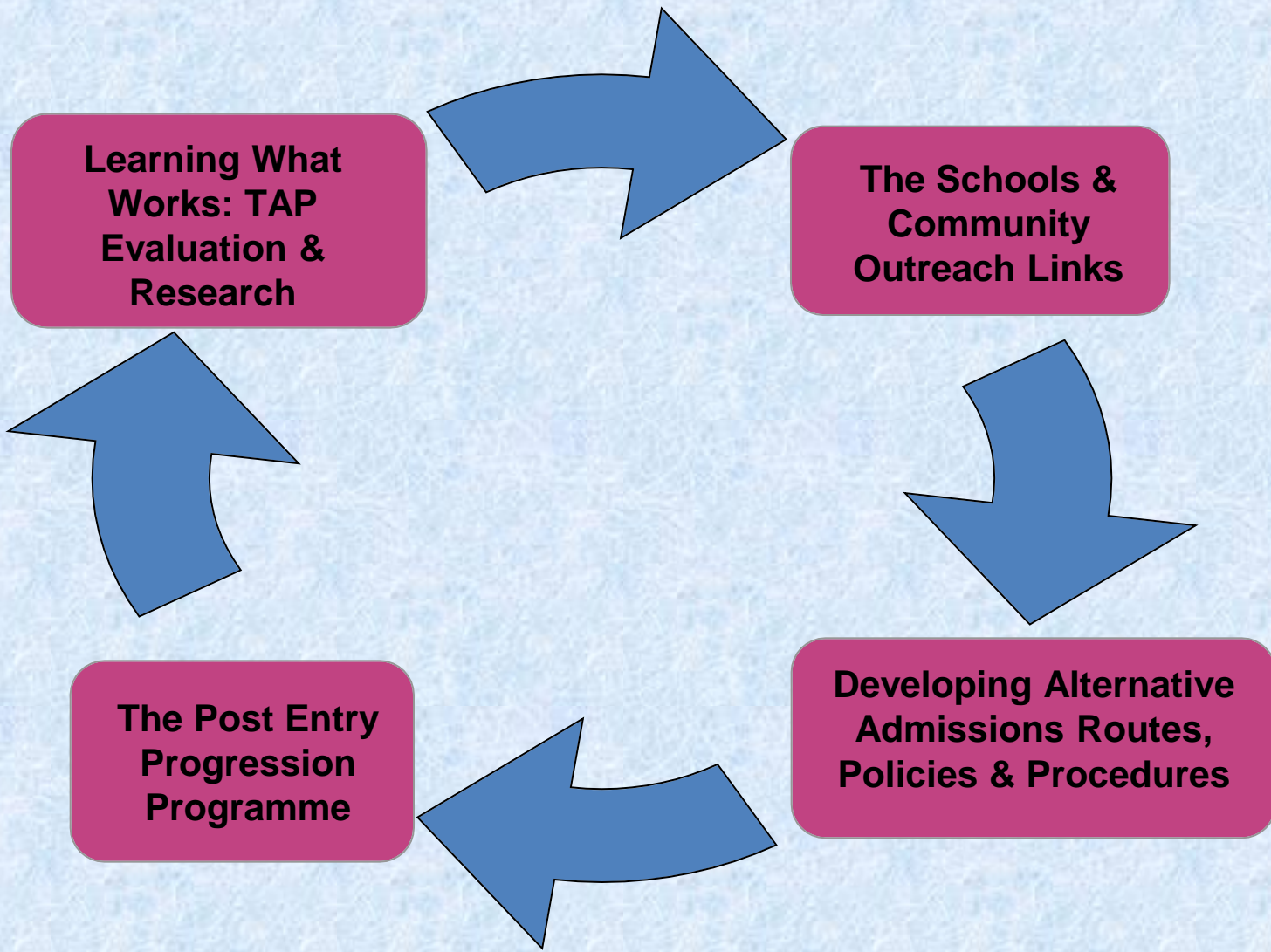
- Trinity Access Programme - Tackling social exclusion, through a range of innovative, targeted initiatives for individuals who, for socio-economic reasons, have not yet realised their full educational potential.



Trinity Access Programmes (TAP)

- 2004 TCD first Irish University to establish 15% target for non-traditional students
- Central aspect of TCD's strategy to encourage under represented groups to realise their full educational potential
- Four separate & interlinking aspects to TAP's work



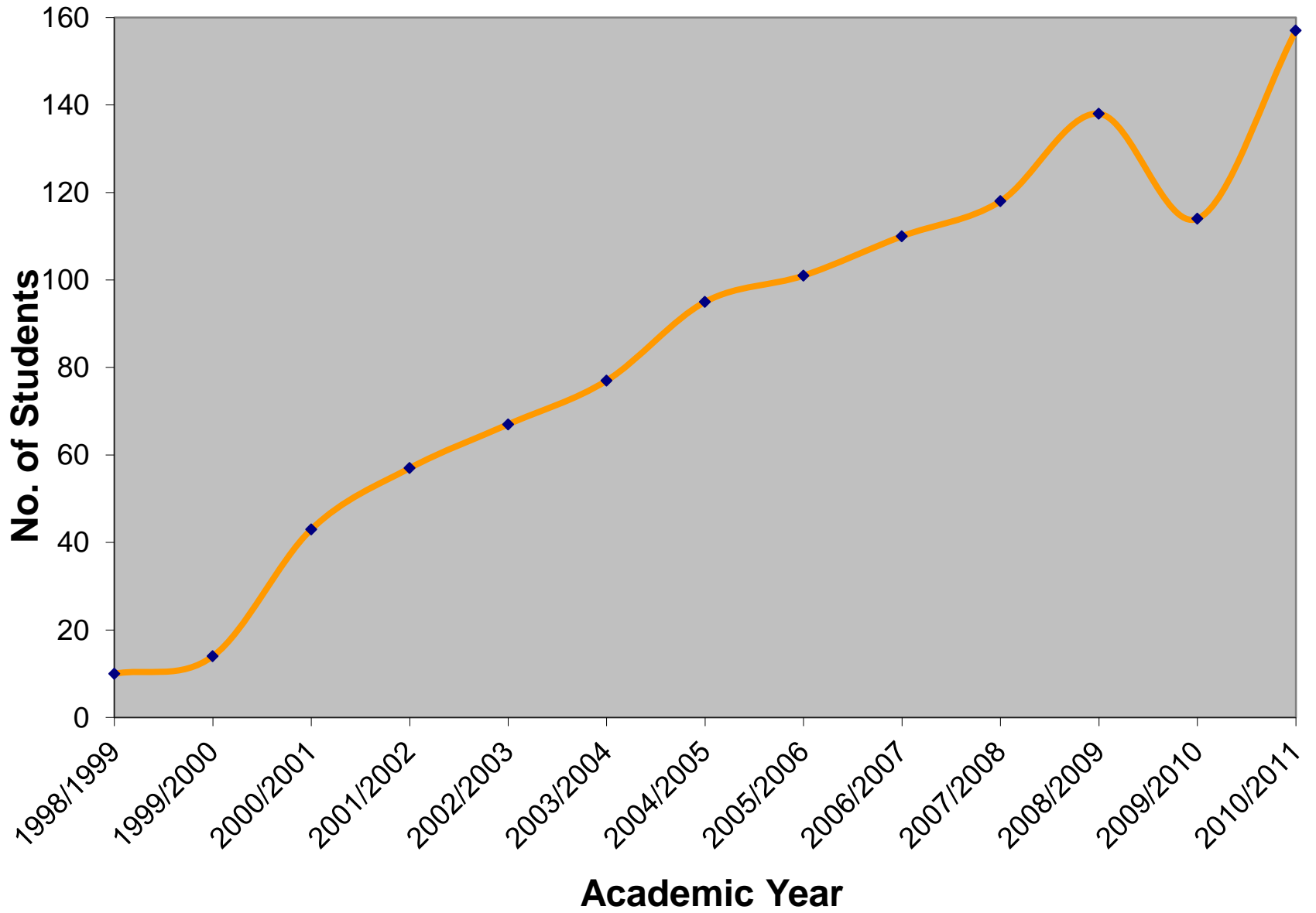


Rationale for Targeted Entry Routes

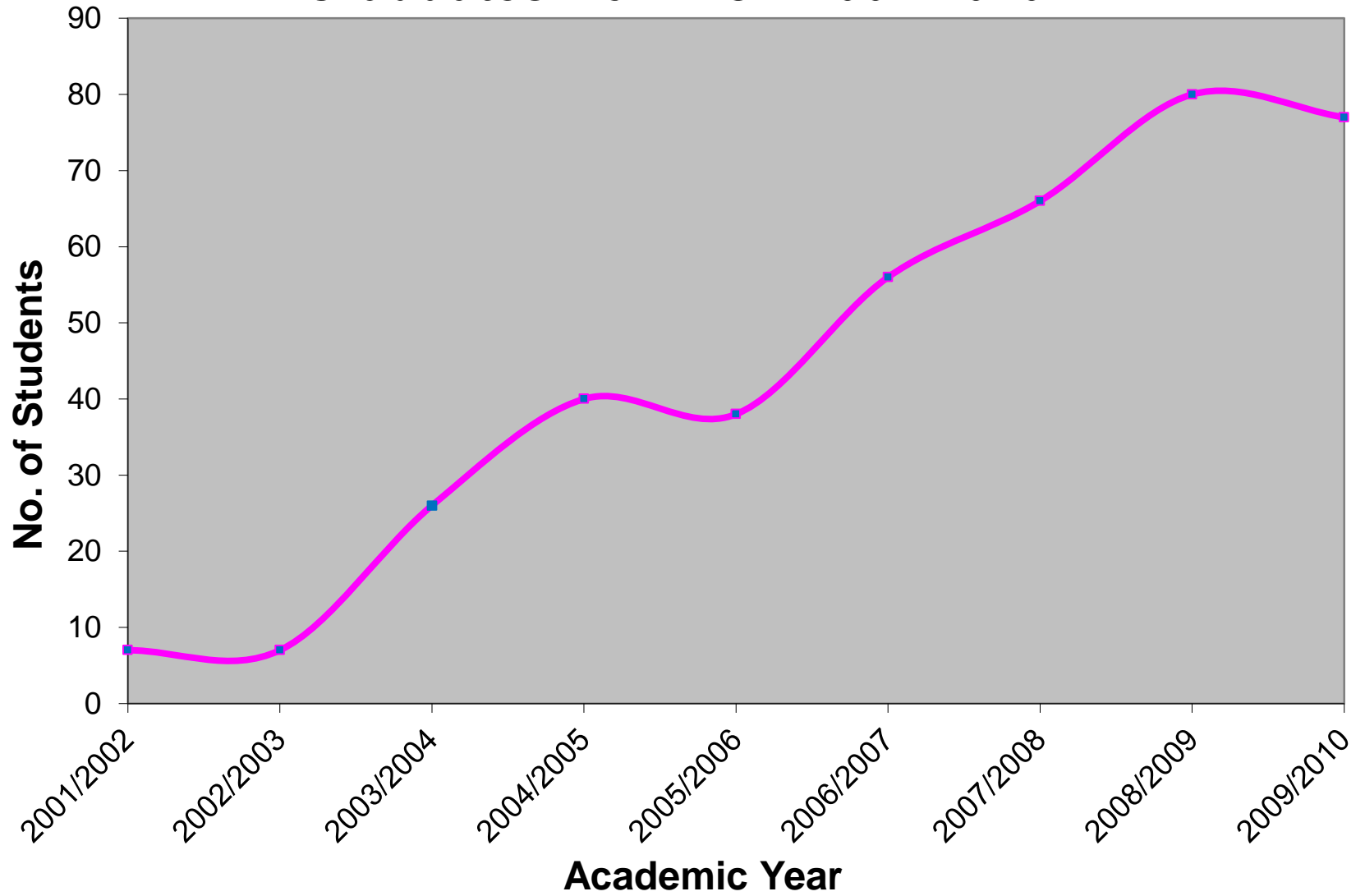
- Increase in participation rates in higher education over last 25 years has not been shared equally across socio-economic groups (OECD 2004)
- Differentiated expansion in the Irish context is well documented (Clancy 1988, 1995, 2002; Clancy & Wall 2000; Fitzpatrick & O'Connell, 2003)
- Proportion of students from lower socio economic groups continues to be lower (Thornhill, 2004)
- Class-based participation figures mirror other countries (Tett & Blair, 1999; Parry, 1997; Cooke et al., 2004)



Entrants to TCD 1998-2010



Graduates from TCD 2002-2010



Impact & Achievements

TAP in Numbers

- 400 TAP graduates from Trinity since 2002
- 157 TAP students entered degree programmes through TAP routes in 2010
- 524 TAP students currently in undergraduate study
- 725 students from TAP linked schools progressed to higher education in 2009
- 5,000 students, parents and teachers participated in primary and second level activities in schools and on campus



'What Happened Next?' Graduate Destinations Research, 2010

- Academic outcomes at graduation are equivalent to 'traditional' students
- Starting salaries equivalent to 'traditional' students
- 57% TAP graduates engaged in further or professional study post-graduation
- Graduates mainly represented in the public sector, health and education



Course Objectives



Course Structure

- An academic & personal preparation course for degree level studies
- Full-time course, running from mid September to mid May
- Approx. 25 places are available each year on each course
- Free
- Students are registered students of Trinity College/Liberties College



Subjects

Educational Guidance, Study Skills, IT



Arts

Science

Social Sciences

Student Supports

- Financial
- Pastoral Care
- Maths Help Room
- Writing Resource Centre
- Computer Facilities
- Trinity Student Supports
- Social Programme
- Grant Thornton Mentoring Programme



The Track Record of the FCYA

- Over the last 4 years...
 - 92% progressed onto degree courses in TCD
 - 98% retention rate on degree course



Class of 09/10 progressed into...

- History (1)
- English & Ancient History (1)
- English & Sociology (1)
- Geography & Psychology (1)
- Psychology (1)
- Modern Irish & Sociology (1)
- Sociology & Social Policy (1)
- Social Studies (1)
- Law (2)
- BESS (2)
- Nursing/ Midwifery (4)
- Dental Science (1)
- Medicine (2)
- Occupational Therapy (1)
- Physiotherapy (2)
- Science (1)

Pedagogy – Out with the old



TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF DUBLIN

Pedagogy – In with the new

Blended learning, collaboration,
reflection, social constructivism,
peer-mentoring,

Wikis, **Podcasting**, Blogging, **Virtual
Worlds**



What are the problems/issues for students?

- Digital Divides – skill set
- Geographical exclusion
- Physical disabilities
- Socio-economic exclusion
- Significantly poorer access to technology
- Reinforces the existing learning divide
- Only rectified when gaining access in higher education



How - Engagement?

Virtual Learning Environments

Blended Learning

Collaboration

Mentoring



VLE - Moodle

The screenshot displays the Moodle VLE interface. At the top right, it indicates the user is logged in as Steve Hargadon. The main header features the Moodle logo. The interface is divided into several sections: a Main Menu on the left with links to EGRPS Home Page, file access, policies, and site news; a My courses section listing various subjects like French 1, English 9, and Health; a Site news section with a 'Subscribe to this forum' button and an 'Add a new topic' button. The Site news section contains two posts: one about a Moodle 1.7.2+ upgrade by Jeff Crawford dated August 25, 2007, and another 'Welcome to Moodle!' post by Jeff Crawford dated February 19, 2006. A Calendar widget on the right shows the month of January 2008. At the bottom, there is a search bar and navigation controls.

You are logged in as Steve Hargadon (Logout)

moodle

Main Menu

- EGRPS Home Page
- Access your files from home
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Terms of Use
- Site news

My courses

- French 1
- English 9
- Test Behrendt
- EGRMS VIDEO YEARBOOK
- Test Williams
- DDT Mayes Page
- Health
- 8th Grade Social Studies
- Biology
- Sensory Processing/Sensory Integration in the Classroom
- Test Pfister

Site news [Subscribe to this forum](#) [Turn editing on](#)

[Add a new topic](#)

We are now using Moodle 1.7.2+
by Jeff Crawford - Saturday, 25 August 2007, 04:45 AM

The Technology Department is pleased to announce that the EGRPS Moodle System has now been upgraded to version 1.7.2+!

This is a significant upgrade from the previous version, 1.5.3+.

This is just a milestone upgrade. The Technology Department plans to perform one more Moodle upgrade before the start of the 2007-2008 school year.

Thanks,
Jeff Crawford
Manager of Networking and Security
East Grand Rapids Public Schools

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#)

[Discuss this topic](#) (0 replies so far)

Welcome to Moodle!
by Jeff Crawford - Sunday, 19 February 2006, 11:52 PM

Calendar

January 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Find: [Next](#) [Previous](#) [Highlight all](#) Match case

Done



VLE - WebCT



WebCT Campus Edition™ My WebCT | Help | Log out

Biology 101 - Section 1

Your location: **Course Content Home**

Biology 101

Welcome! Please use the links above to access announcements, your grades, mail and discussions. Below you can access your weekly units, group work and the course syllabus.

 <p>Class Syllabus Click here to access your course overview.</p>	 <p>Assignments Access all of your assignments and the all important sign-up sheet!</p>	 <p>My Tools Tools specific to your learning style.</p>
 <p>Weekly Units Content for weekly activities.</p>	 <p>Certificate Access your certificate of achievement!</p>	 <p>Community Space Access blogs, podcasting and social networking tools.</p>

Course Tools

- Course Content
- Announcements
- Assessments
- Assignments
- Calendar
- Chat
- Discussions
- Learning Modules
- Mail
- Media Library
- Search
- Local Content
- Syllabus
- Web Links
- Who's Online

My Tools

- My Grades
- My Files
- My Progress
- Notes



Today's reality – Social Networks

“These teens were born into a digital world where they expect to be able to create, consume, remix, and share material with each other”

Lee Rainie, Director, Pew Internet and American Life Project



Aim

Research Question:

“In what ways can a Web 2.0 themed VLE help enable students, from social and economically excluded backgrounds, to engage in collaborative learning experience? “

With the emphasis on promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing this study seeks to leverage effectively the Web 2.0 tools available to engage students within a social VLE



TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF DUBLIN

When?

TAP Life
Trinity Access Programme 2008

“Our own Bebo?”

Main :: Invite :: My Page :: Members :: Photos :: Videos :: Events :: Live Chat :: Links :: Blogs :: Groups :: Manage

Trinity Access Programme 2008

members

13 members

groups

- Politics: 13 members
- Psychology: 21 members
- Physics: 11 members
- Law: 15 members
- History A and B: 15 members

+ Add a Group

blog posts

Jack Yeats: Comic Creator
Jack Yeats (1871 - 1957, England) Jack Yeats, the son of an Irish painter and brother of the famous poet William Butler Yeats, was born in London in 1871. In 1888, he published his first drawing, then shortly afterwards started contributing horse sketches to Paddock Life magazine. In 1892, he created the illustrations for his brother's book 'Irish Fairy Tales'. Yeats began drawing joke cartoons, and created his first regular character, Chubb-Lock Homes. On June 16, 1894, 'Chubb-Lock Homes' mad... [Continue](#)
Posted by [theresa oconnor](#) on 17 January 2009 at 10:30pm

Sample Essay: Karl Parker--Close Reading of Yeats' two "Byzantium" poems
Yeats' Two Byzantiums
"Gather Me Into The Artifice of Eternity": Yeats and His Two Visions of Byzantium by Karl Parker Karl Parker graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in August 1994 with a Bachelor of Philosophy in English Literature. He is currently working in Rome. It is an important and curious fact that Yeats apparently rewrote one of his major works, "Sailing to Byzantium," three years after its... [Continue](#)
Posted by [theresa oconnor](#) on 6 January 2009 at 6:52pm

David Hamill - I.T Tutor
Sign Out
Inbox
Alerts
Friends - Invite
Settings
Quick Add...
+ your box
+ Add Text
+ events
+ Add an Event
+ notes
Beckett Film Series
Beckett Film Series
http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=1A046EB41
Created by [theresa oconnor](#) Jan 31, 2009 at 12:22am. Last updated by [theresa oconnor](#) 31 Jan.
[Postmodern Thought/History and Glossary](#)



What is Ning?

- Ning is a social networking service that allows users to set up their own networks.
- There is a 'free' service, funded by advertisements, and a paid-for service with some additional features.



Ning – Pros & Cons

- It's very easy to set up.
- It's free - those teaching 13-18 year olds can have an ad-free version for free. A commercial version is available.
- You can set up your own private network.
- It is very customisable.
- Development of the software is dependant on the company.
- Advertising and lack of institutional branding



Ning - Applications

- File exchange & sharing
- Photos
- Videos & Music
- Live chat
- Blogging
- Instant Messaging
- Discussion board
- Specific groups
- Latest activity
- RSS feeds
- 3rd Party integrated apps – Google Docs, Flickr, Facebook



Ning - Administration

- 50 students aged from 15-55
- 8 admins (tutors & lecturers)
- 50% Mature students
- 25% Digital Immigrants
- <http://tap2008.ning.com>



Ning – Implementation

- If we want to achieve effective online learning (Salmon, 2000) proposes a 5-step model with emphasis on directing students to engage in critical thinking and self-evaluation.
- In this context any prejudices, race, gender, age, skill set and socio-economic background are removed from online learning.



Implementation – Steps required

- **Step 1:** students require individual access and the skills to use the communication tools.
- **Step 2:** students create an identity online and finding others with whom to interact.
- **Step 3:** students give information relevant to the course to each other.
- **Step 4:** course related group discussion takes place and interaction becomes more collaborative.
- **Step 5:** students look for benefits from the system that will help them achieve their goals.



So what has changed?

- Students are defining where they meet and discuss issues of relevance to them today
- Technology has changed – social and business networks
- Society too has changed – social networking online



What's so different about Ning?

What's so different from using Moodle or WebCT?

- It's their domain – external
- More opportunity to collaborate and socialise
- They are comfortable within this environment, not un-similar to Bebo or Facebook
- More opportunity to share resources
- Moodle & WebCT are both very 'institutionalised'



Student content

TAP Life
Trinity Access Programme 2008

Main | Invite | My Page | Members

18, Female
Dublin
Ireland

as you all may know i am clinical crazy! I love colours chocolate nah im just joking but i am random! i have and a wee sis shauna and there only the ones law.

How is TAP gain?
TAP is gain ok right now, im still pretty messed out bout what im gain to choose. the people are great, (give yourselves a pat on the back) *clap clap*

On Beckett: "Laughter in the Dark"

[Send a Message](#)
[Share](#)
[Remove as Friend](#)
[Block Messages](#)

[events](#)
[+ Add an Event](#)
[notes](#)
[On Beckett: "Laughter in the Dark"](#)

TAP Life
Trinity Access Programme 2008

Main | Invite | My Page | Members | Photos | Videos | Events | Links | Blogs | Groups | Manage

Welcome to my page

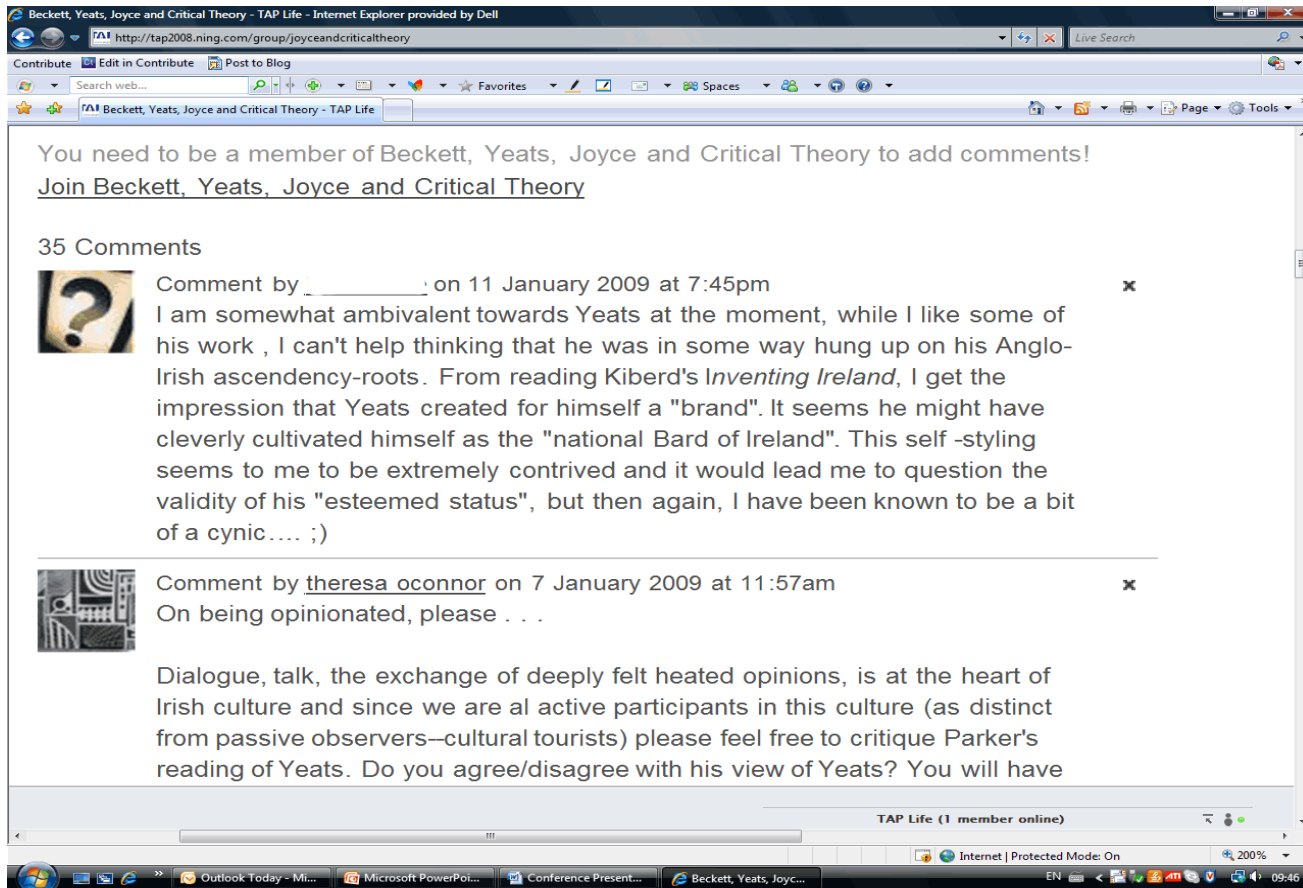
David Hamill - I.T Tutor

[Add as Friend](#)
[Send a Message](#)
[Share](#)
[Block Messages](#)

[Add Comment](#)
[Add Comment](#)
[Add Comment](#)

[Add Comment](#)
[Add Comment](#)
[Add Comment](#)

The effect



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a Ning blog post. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <http://tap2008.ning.com/group/joyceandcriticaltheory>. The page title is "Beckett, Yeats, Joyce and Critical Theory - TAP Life".

The main content of the page is a message: "You need to be a member of Beckett, Yeats, Joyce and Critical Theory to add comments!" followed by a link: "[Join Beckett, Yeats, Joyce and Critical Theory](#)".

Below this message, it says "35 Comments". Two comments are visible:

- Comment 1:** Posted by a user with a question mark profile picture on 11 January 2009 at 7:45pm. The text reads: "I am somewhat ambivalent towards Yeats at the moment, while I like some of his work , I can't help thinking that he was in some way hung up on his Anglo-Irish ascendancy-roots. From reading Kiberd's *Inventing Ireland*, I get the impression that Yeats created for himself a "brand". It seems he might have cleverly cultivated himself as the "national Bard of Ireland". This self -styling seems to me to be extremely contrived and it would lead me to question the validity of his "esteemed status", but then again, I have been known to be a bit of a cynic.... ;)
- Comment 2:** Posted by [theresa oconnor](#) on 7 January 2009 at 11:57am. The text reads: "On being opinionated, please . . .". Below this comment, the text continues: "Dialogue, talk, the exchange of deeply felt heated opinions, is at the heart of Irish culture and since we are all active participants in this culture (as distinct from passive observers—cultural tourists) please feel free to critique Parker's reading of Yeats. Do you agree/disagree with his view of Yeats? You will have".

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications: Outlook Today, Microsoft PowerPoint, Conference Present..., and Beckett, Yeats, Joy... The system tray shows the time as 09:46.



The design

1. Blended Learning – (Hofmann, Miner, 2008) – enrich the learning process.
 2. Web 2.0 - (Anderson, 2008) facilitate communication, sharing and collaboration.
 3. Formation of on-line Learning Communities- (Salmon, 2000) achieve effective online learning.
 4. Peer Mentoring - (Burgstahler and Cronheim, 2001) facilitate the learning development process.
 5. Reflection - (Dewey, 1933) learn from experience.
1. Combine both classroom and VLE models to deliver materials and tasks.
 2. Implementation of accessibility to Web 2.0 applications/services. Sharing of user generated content.
 3. Implement scaffolding learning process (5-step model).
 4. Messaging and chat system to post Q&A.
 5. Blogging service is implemented within the VLE as a means to post reflections.

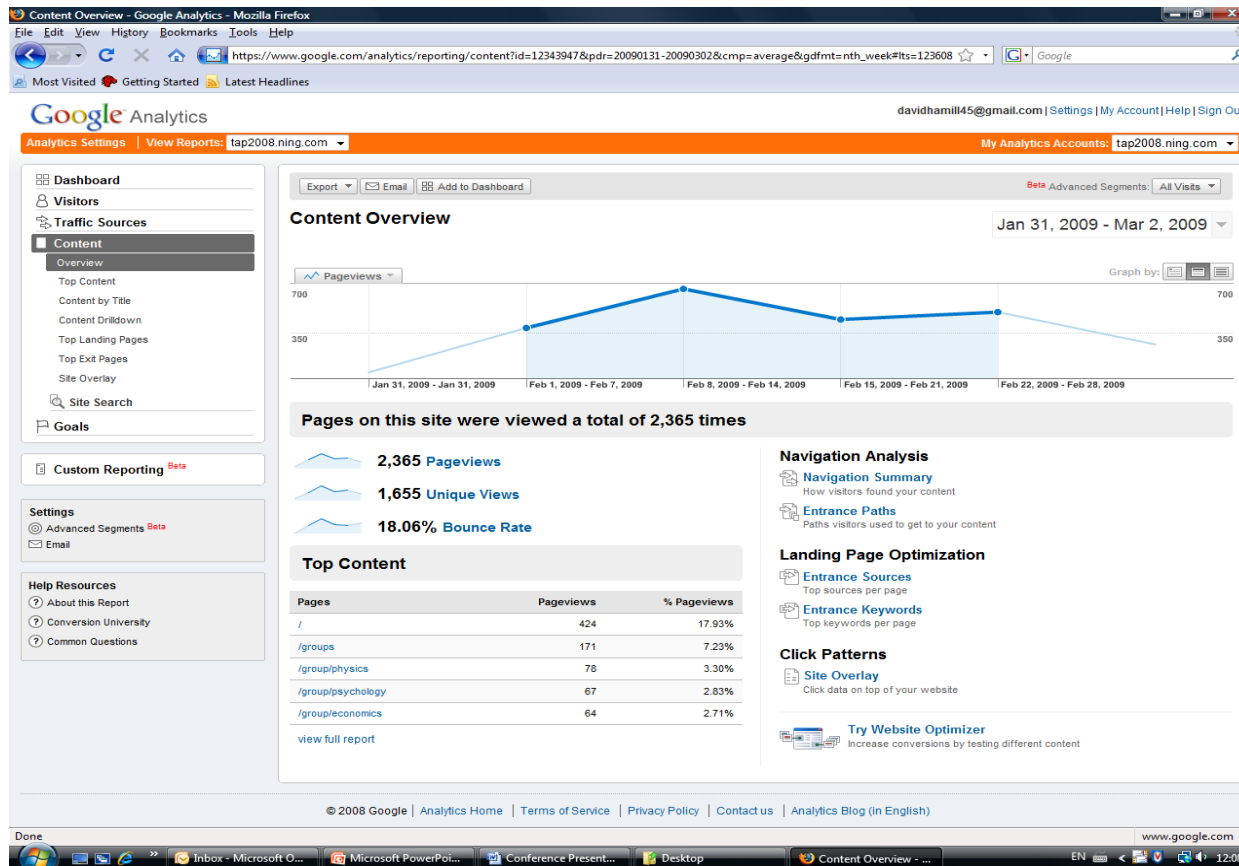


Methodology

- Study Method: Qualitative & Quantitative
- Research questions: Was it an interesting and satisfactory collaborative learning experience? Did Tap Life add value to existing class lectures? Was help available online when needed? What did not work?
- Ethics: Course attendees fully aware of the studies purpose
- Bias: All reasonable attempt by the author to remove any bias
- Data Sets: Survey, observation, interview, reflection
- Implementation: Live from 21st October 2008
- Summary: Extensive array of data to base findings



Web Analysis



Findings

- The website has promoted collaborative learning, as it afforded the users an opportunity to create dynamic content, share ideas, discuss and instantly connect with their peers
- Certainly from the responses of students and tutors alike the social network website has made an impact on the delivery and pre-conceived ideas of what learning is.



Tutor - thoughts

“And that you can have specific groups and invite individuals to participate, you need that type of framework. I also like the community it creates for TAP, the sense of community spirit within this program is excellent, because I think it bonded the students together and I think they needed that. The fact that it is interactive was also good. I note that they used the blog at the beginning for student presentations and I felt that was fantastic because it gave them a broader audience. I think that was excellent for them; they are very bright students, what they need is confidence and a sense of being part of a community of scholars. They do need a forum for debate and intellectual discussion”



Student - thoughts

“questions could be asked that time did not permit during the lecture. Also clarification of items and additional information and reading suggestions were given. Could also vent my frustration from time to time if something was particularly difficult for me. Also invaluable for help from other students and different points of views and suggestions.”



Examples

- Used very effectively in History – first assignment is a blog entry
- Galvanising support - fundraising
- Great ongoing political/economic debate with Foundation Course and undergraduate students, and alumni



My Office... Post IMF Bail Out



Today – TAP Life & Ning



The screenshot shows the Ning page for 'TAP Life Trinity Access Programme 2009'. The page has a blue header with the title and a navigation menu including 'Main', 'Invite', 'My Page', 'Members', 'Photos', 'Videos', 'Events', 'Links', 'Blogs', 'Groups', 'Chat', and 'Manage'. Below the header, there are several sections: 'Members' with a grid of profile icons and a '+ Add a Group' button; 'Groups' with a list of groups including 'Class Rep' (18 members), 'Politics' (15 members), 'English Literature' (8 members), 'Sociology' (29 members), and 'Grant Thornton' (38 members); 'Blog Posts' with three posts, the first starting with 'hi' and the second with 'Trinity ball ticket any1??'; and a right-hand sidebar with a user profile for 'David Hamill - I.T Tutor' and various utility buttons like 'Sign Out', 'Inbox', 'Alerts', 'Friends - Invite', and 'Settings'. There are also sections for 'Text Box', 'Events', and 'Notes'.

Ning announce phasing out of 'free-service'. To be replaced by new paid models.

- Ning Mini - \$2.95/month
- Ning Plus - \$19.95/month
- Ning Pro - \$49.95/month



Conclusion

- There were some interesting unexpected outcomes with regard to tutor's experience of Web 2.0 technologies, censorship and the issue of copyright of content published within the VLE
- Approximately 92% of the students took part in the survey and unanimously declared a very positive response to the introduction of a Web 2.0 VLE
- Students and educators alike agree that the introduction of this artefact has successfully engaged students in a collaborative learning experience

