

ASCILITE
(Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education Conference)
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University of Melbourne

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The annual ASCILITE conference, <<http://www.medfac.unimelb.edu.au/Ascilite2001/>>, was held this year at the University of Melbourne. There were 450 delegates, as the conference is highly regarded by professionals, both nationally and internationally, in the area of learning and technology. My participation in the conference involved a joint presentation with Jacquie McDonald, DEC, at USQ, of a refereed paper, 'A comparative study of software to aid the development of a conceptual framework for instructional design theory'. Our paper presentation was well- attended and provided us with useful interaction with others from other institutions. An added bonus was the presence, in the audience, of three of our past online students, whom I had never met face-to-face before.

The conference had four themes:

Reflection: in and on action; for reflective inquiry; for students;
 for teachers; for design and development; for evaluation; for organisations

Convergence: approaches; modes of delivery; modes of instruction;
 integration of media

Collaboration: between students, teachers,
 institutions/organizations, within institutions/organizations, in design and
 development, internationalisation

Innovation: creative solutions, overcoming limitations, What's New?,
 possibilities, emerging technologies, alliances.

This year, the conference had a very strong online focus.

Notes and quick observations (and quotes)

Professor Lloyd Rieber (Department of Instructional Technology, University of Georgia) was one of the keynote speakers. His interest and research is grounded in "play theory" (sounded good to me!). Have a look at Lloyd's website <http://www.NowhereRoad.com>; and some of his students' work <http://it.coe.uga.edu/studio>; a resource site <http://it.coe.uga.edu/wwild> for "experiential learning" ("the Best" archive) and a site he recommended called ExploreScience.com <http://www.explorescience.com>,

for examples, ideas.

- learning is a journey, not a destination
- experience first, explain later
- RMIT has conducted a review of all online courses in every faculty (evaluation of learning environment, learning process, and learning outcomes) and provided feedback to course owners. They have also implemented a process of peer review of all courses. Each course has the following documents to support the process: Course guide; Online checklist; Peer review report; Evaluation plan.
- see the report Reinventing Undergraduate Education <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer.nsf/> by Boyer (1998)

Papers are online: <http://www.medfac.unimelb.edu.au/Ascilite2001/>.