

# Observed Teaching Session 3 – Media Plan

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LTS502 – Teaching and Learning Methods and Media

## I. INTRODUCTION

Using media and technology in a teaching context is often restricted to using electronic projection media or online blogs/group environments. The first approach can be considered a simple extension to traditional presentation methods using available technology while the second - while useful - can often lead to a sense of detachment from the group by both students and teaching staff.

Teaching in the area of technology and computer networks, using available media is often second nature, and the deployment of blogs or message boards for communal conversations within the student group is typical. It would be to examine pushing the use of technology further and developing different techniques that may be used to promote technology use while in a group teaching environment. To this end I propose to try to use technology in an interactive manner within the classroom environment.

## II. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Unit under consideration is HET306 – “*Unix for Telecommunications*”. This Unit is about introducing students to a new Operating System that many will have never seen before, giving them the opportunity to expand their field of interest. Most of the teaching is expository and while a traditional approach may involve presenting of information, it does not allow students to experiment and learn through hand-on experience which is typically required in Engineering disciplines.

I already push the use of technology during the lectures through the use of live demonstrations on working systems on the Internet, using Unix servers configured at Swinburne and within my own home to demonstrate how systems are designed, deployed and configured. I make changes to server systems in real-time and demonstrate how this effects services provided to the rest of the network.

This form of teaching pushes the limits of what can be achieved with technology in a lecture environment, occasionally resulting in disaster when the technology refuses to work. However, while novel, this approach is not interactive for the students. They are still being exposed to information without experiencing it directly. I hope to push further in this planned teaching session.

## III. MEDIA PLAN

The traditional means to provide interactivity with technology in our field is via the use of Laboratory sessions. Students

are required to complete lab work on provided equipment. While this does provide access to technology for experimental purposes, it is still typically done in a solitary fashion – where students work by themselves or with a single partner to complete the lab work.

There is a place for solitary work and students still learn a lot from these planned laboratory sessions. However the aspect of group work and discussion in front of a large class is lost in this aspect. For this lesson I plan to try and use some advanced technology in a tutorial setting, and allow the interactive experience of students using the technology to perform a live demonstration – similar to the ones I perform during the lectures – followed by class discussion.

### A. Brief Description

The activity will involve the use of my laptop along with a projector in the class room and network connectivity to the Swinburne LAN. Medium size student groups will be required to present some work they have been previously asked to prepare. This will involve a live demonstration of what services they have developed to provide over the network and a brief discussion of why they chose to provide that services and what they did.

### B. Skill Development

No technical skill development is required by the teaching staff for this lesson. Our area of expertise – network design and system deployment – means that the required knowledge base is already present in the teaching staff. Students have already been allocated systems to perform development and lab work with and these systems will be used for the class.

What is new is the development of an interactive session to teaching this tutorial. This is a new Unit at the University and strategies for best delivering the content to students are still being refined and developed. As such the lesson will allow for further development of teaching skills in an interactive environment where students are granted the bulk of the time for content delivery.

### C. Evaluation

The use of technology will be evaluated by the level of classroom participation and enthusiasm displayed by the students in this task compared with typical tutorial activities. I expect it to be successful and plan to try to extend more tutorials in the future with these types of activities. This also requires some extra planning during the timetabling phase to ensure that tutorials are allocated into suitable classrooms.