



Bottom-up growth of learning analytics at two Australian universities: Empowering staff with actionable intelligence to improve student outcomes

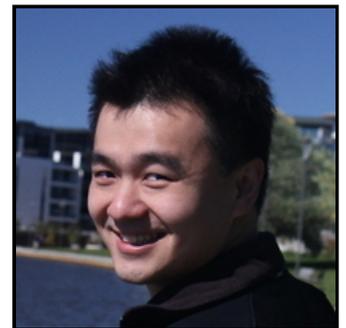
Facilitated by Dr Danny Liu (Lecturer in Academic Practice, Macquarie University)

This presentation will outline two approaches to learning analytics at the University of Sydney and Macquarie University, where staff are closely involved in the coevolution and development of two bespoke learning analytics tools to personalise student-staff interactions at scale. The University of Sydney system, called the Student Relationship Engagement System (SRES), is a highly-customisable web-based tool that supports the efficient capture and collation of student datasets. A companion mobile app helps staff quickly collect and access student data. Through an embedded messaging system, teaching staff can set up fully customisable rules



to contact students via personalised emails and text messages. A nascent feature allows staff to leverage machine learning to uncover hidden patterns and relationships within and between datasets. The Macquarie University system is an enhancement of an existing Moodle plug-in, the Moodle Engagement Analytics Plugin (MEAP). MEAP can readily access data on student assessments, completions, login activity, forum activity, and the gradebook, amongst others, which are customisably represented as 'risk indicators'. MEAP allows flexible and customisable interrogation of these data, and provides staff the ability to send personalised emails to students based on these risk indicators. At both institutions, these learning analytics approaches have grown from the grassroots to address pressing staff needs, highlighting the importance of this bespoke coevolution process of design, development, and implementation. The systems have enjoyed substantial organic adoption and are associated with positive student outcomes. As open source developments, we are very interested in working together to open up accessible learning analytics to teachers and students.

Danny is a senior teaching fellow in the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Macquarie University, and was previously with the Faculty of Science at the University of Sydney. A molecular biologist by training, programmer by night, and educator at heart, Danny has a PhD in plant molecular and cell biology and has published in the fields of both biology and education. He has convened and taught undergraduate courses with over 1000 students (give or take a few hundred), and his current research interests include learning analytics, student engagement, technology enhanced learning, and student transition. Danny has received a number of university and national teaching awards, including an Australian Award for Teaching Excellence, and was a finalist in the inaugural ascilite Learning Analytics Special Interest Group's Awards for Excellence in Learning Analytics. He is



currently co-leading a trans-Tasman venture to build an open source, human-centric learning analytics platform.

Video recording

Presentation slides



If you would like to join this research group or would like more information please contact Lorenzo Vigentini I.vigentini@unsw.edu.au

Event date:
12th Apr 2016, 3:30pm to 5:00pm
Location:
Room 1025, Level 10, Library Tower

Open to:

Public: Event open to all

Seats available:

40

Cost:

Free

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Document Version Date 14/04/2016

UNSW CRICOS Provider Code: 00098G

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