

Conversation between Damon and James, 10 February 2012

[10/02/2012 19:01:38] James Lamb: Hello Damon. I e-mailed around 5pm - two hours ago - and posted on the DB. I'll just quickly check my e-mail for a reply

[10/02/2012 19:02:48] James Lamb: No, no reply there. I guess we just proceed and then share a transcript of this conversation.

[10/02/2012 19:03:21] Damon Plummer: Very good. I looked at the document you posted via tinyurl. Looks fine.

[10/02/2012 19:04:12] Damon Plummer: was wondering if we could perhaps "simplify" the process with 1/2 of us preparing the questionnaire and the other providing the feedback/pilot. Unsure that will be practical.

[10/02/2012 19:04:51] James Lamb: Sounds a good plan - and the course website does recommend task allocation.

[10/02/2012 19:05:18] James Lamb: I guess we also need to bear in mind there's the q survey task and the separate interview schedule.

[10/02/2012 19:05:47] Damon Plummer: yes and a need to select a topic to start with.

[10/02/2012 19:05:55] James Lamb: Correct.

[10/02/2012 19:06:07] James Lamb: And the topic should be related to online learning.

[10/02/2012 19:06:31] Damon Plummer: and manageable for time available. did you have any ideas?

[10/02/2012 19:07:49] James Lamb: I have one idea. Did you see discussion between Carl and Hamish on the DB. Hamish suggest being pragmatic and selecting a topic based around the people we'll be able to find. I could capture some on campus students.

[10/02/2012 19:09:57] Damon Plummer: Yes, but will need to revisit the conversation for specifics - generally a recommendation to be pragmatic and find collegial people, yes? Are you suggesting campus students for actual delivery, pilot, or both?

[10/02/2012 19:10:34] Damon Plummer: and I'm presuming that we would be well served by framing the idea as a research question(s), agreed?

[10/02/2012 19:12:03] James Lamb: I could certainly trying and capture some on campus students but also how about some of fellow e-learners? As a topic perhaps something like 'Attitudes to virtual learning environment amongst higher education students' off the top of my head. What do you think?

[10/02/2012 19:13:37] Damon Plummer: that certainly gets us started and aligns with my own idea - which is perhaps more specific to an aspect of virtual

learning environment, more along the lines of the examining the value and distraction of an online discussion board as part of a virtual classroom.

[10/02/2012 19:14:08] James Lamb: I like that - maybe more difficult to find a sample group though?

[10/02/2012 19:15:24] Damon Plummer: agreed. that's part of my struggle - identifying a sample group given the folks I normally interact with don't typically finds themselves working in that environment.

[10/02/2012 19:16:30] Damon Plummer: so, if we harken back to your suggestion, are there specific areas of interest that you'd want to focus on, or general attitudes? to some extent, that would come out in the questions but need to ensure that questions match the topic

[10/02/2012 19:19:52] James Lamb: Well, I'll give you a bit of background. I work on a fairly regular basis with undergrad students. I'm always keen to get their take on some of the concepts we cover in the MSc in E-Learning. I like to compare what's happening in the papers/case studies we read with the students I come into contact with. Of note, the use of blended learning i.e. e-learning to enhance campus-based learning is very variable between different students I speak to. I think that's interesting - great potential out there, however not being delivered on in the eyes of students. Worth exploring?

[10/02/2012 19:21:33] Damon Plummer: yes, think so. "variable between different students"....

[10/02/2012 19:21:59] Damon Plummer: meaning their level of interest in pursuing it, availability of it in their programs or even awareness that it exists?

[10/02/2012 19:22:25] James Lamb: Yes! I like that - interesting subject too.

[10/02/2012 19:24:14] Damon Plummer: reduced to a 15 minute q. :) a challenge too! but let's propose that as our topic and then we can flesh out the issues in doing so. might be we find we need to reframe the topic so we have a more manageable process but that's partially the point of the exercise, isn't it.

[10/02/2012 19:25:46] James Lamb: Agreed. And we should continue exploration of the specific focus on the db. Can I propose that we use a series of different discussion threads for the key stages - as per the tiny diagram I shared? Just to keep things coherent.

[10/02/2012 19:27:04] Damon Plummer: yes, that should work well.

[10/02/2012 19:28:11] James Lamb: Good. OK, I'll create a set of threads based upon the different stages. So, shall we talk about talk allocation now, and then scheduling dates for tasks to be carried out?

[10/02/2012 19:28:20] James Lamb: Task allocation, sorry

[10/02/2012 19:29:34] Damon Plummer: :) think we're going to be challenged on task allocation and dates but let's make the attempt.

[10/02/2012 19:31:34] James Lamb: True enough. OK, so we basically have 2 weeks for both activities. We're almost at the end of week 1. I think we basically need to fire on with this. I'm happy to lead this qsurvey exercise - actually, that's not the right word - oversee? Are you OK with that?

[10/02/2012 19:32:57] Damon Plummer: think we should review the high-level steps first...

[10/02/2012 19:33:15] Damon Plummer: select topic - proposal coming forward from this discussion

[10/02/2012 19:34:22] Damon Plummer: devise questions for qsurvey - when you say oversee, what does that mean? [I'm already thinking that based on how our topic works out, I may be able to reuse portions of it later.]

[10/02/2012 19:34:44] Damon Plummer: evaluate ethical considerations, both qsurvey and interview

[10/02/2012 19:36:26] James Lamb: Oversee - yeah, not the best phrase. Basically, I meant I would try and put a structure in place where we can all chip in and then try and check that we're on schedule. I'm not proposing to dominate this (blush)

[10/02/2012 19:37:40] Damon Plummer: very good. one reason I ask is one step is the pilot. think we need to resolve whether we can ask Sindhu and Charmaine to be pilot reviewers? in other words, splitting the work so that we're developing the initial qsurvey and they're taking QA on it. Thought?

[10/02/2012 19:38:15] Damon Plummer: then we come back together to finalize it as a team?

[10/02/2012 19:38:34] James Lamb: Sounds good...what's QA? Quality Assurance?

[10/02/2012 19:39:39] Damon Plummer: yes, quality assurance - but per process more accurately "testing the clarity of the questions." [I live in an acronym world. sorry.]

[10/02/2012 19:42:05] James Lamb: Yes, that's all good. So just to check, you're proposing that we get the ball rolling on the first stage and then hopefully Sindhu and Charmaine will be able to follow up the initial survey? Sounds like good task allocation (or TA, if you prefer ;-)

[10/02/2012 19:43:02] Damon Plummer: TA makes me speechless but timecards are due today. selection of participants - if we stick with attitudes, I can probably coerce 2 participants - and sounds like you have a ready-made group. Sindhu and Charmaine could add others and that would be useful so we can experience the difficulties of targeting a population or devising a sample that meet individual research needs.

[10/02/2012 19:44:11] Damon Plummer: and yes, on getting started and seeing if Sindhu and Charmaine are agreeable as well.

[10/02/2012 19:44:31] Damon Plummer: if not, we obviously accommodate their ideas on how we proceed as a team.

[10/02/2012 19:46:06] James Lamb: Sounds like a plan. OK, first thing tomorrow I'll create a set of discussion threads, named by stage, to recognise the different tasks to be undertaken. I'll also post a copy of this discussion on the DB to keep everyone in the picture and enable S and C to come back with comments. Are you OK with that?

[10/02/2012 19:46:37] Damon Plummer: yes, OK and appreciative.

[10/02/2012 19:47:33] James Lamb: No problem, happy to do that. However we've only talked about the first activity. Do we want to discuss the interview schedule or perhaps we do that another time? I have about another ten minutes.

[10/02/2012 19:49:31] Damon Plummer: why don't we tackle the qsurvey first and see if we have any lessons learned that we can funnel into the interview schedule. my initial thinking is that the qsurvey and the interview will follow a similar process, with qsurvey perhaps feeding into interview structure.

[10/02/2012 19:51:46] James Lamb: I think you're right. Need to be realistic here. And in terms of a timeline for this (as suggested on the course website), I'm happy to propose some dates however it's a bit artificial without knowing everyone's availability to contribute. Is it worth putting something out there anyway?

[10/02/2012 19:52:07] James Lamb: And i'm happy to draft something.

[10/02/2012 19:52:36] Damon Plummer: yes, I'm hoping to dedicate a good part of Saturday to some of these tasks...

[10/02/2012 19:54:15] Damon Plummer: keeping in mind timezone differences. was going to look at the BOS and see if I could start something out there that would be useful.. [BOS is another internal acronym and I have to stop myself every now and then to remember what it is in CONTEXT.]