

Steps Towards a Federated Course Model

Dino Karabeg

Aiming to set a stage for a development of a federated knowledge federation course, as a prototype for federated education, this article will propose a set of suitable 'patterns' (desired characteristics); it will outline two University of Oslo courses, "Information Design" and "Socio-Semantic Web and Knowledge Federation," which in part implemented those patterns and discuss the experience gained; it will conclude by proposing an action plan for implementing a federated course.

Aiming to contribute to the formation of knowledge federation as an approach to very large system design, where we undertake to implement all the desired characteristics by taking advantage of new networked media, this article will propose a set of desired characteristics or 'patterns' for education, show how those patterns were implemented in two earlier courses, and propose a plan for a sandbox course to be developed by the KF community.

Some Federated Education Patterns

Learning is flexible regarding time place and content. Just for me and just on time learning.

Learning is active students learn in part by co-creating, which develops creativity and good values.

Learning resources are co-created by field experts, media artists and students globally. This provides economy-of-scale and other advantages.

The course is offered to students world-wide. Both for academic study and for life-long learning.

Information Design Course

The Information Design course was offered at the University of Oslo Informatics Department continuously from yr. 2000 to 2007. The course implemented the Flexlearn course model (for FLEXible EXPloratory LEARNing). The course was organized as a design project, where the students and instructors learn information design by co-designing the course and the learning resources. The students created learning resources by federating the available material.

Socio-Semantic Web and Knowledge Federation Course

This course was offered at the University of Oslo Informatics Department in Spring 2009. The learning resources were organized and presented via a Compendium map. The intention was to provide a first prototype of the course content, and also a way of organizing the resources that is scalable - a possible way for running a globally federated course is to use a Wiki Compendium map, such as the one currently implemented in Bloomer.

Implementation Plan

Our plan is to implement a federated course as a graduate course offered to international students through the IUC Dubrovnik, which is, conveniently, already a federation of leading international universities where students can take courses and receive credit in their mother institutions. In parallel we will be developing a version of this course to be offered to companies for life-long learning. There are many synergies, and they will be explained in the article. One of them is that the material enabling creative use of social media that will be taught will be of strategic importance to businesses. This course will provide a suitable sandbox for developing federated education patterns for both university and life-long learning.