

# SEDA Spring Conference 2024



**Session Title:** EdD CoP: Developing Teaching and Learning through Communities of Practice

**Session Type:** Workshop (60 mins)

**Main presenter(s):** Dr Cassie Violet Lowe, University of Cambridge

**Co presenter(s):** Dr Helen Morley, University of Leeds

Dr Isabelle Winder, Bangor University

Dr Tracy Part, Goldsmiths, University of London

Dr Eszter Kalman, University of Sydney

Dr Alyson Lewis, Cardiff University

Dr Jo Hall, University of Brighton

**Session Summary:** This workshop will explore communities of practice (CoP) as a means of engaging academic colleagues in the development of education. This workshop will provide an overview of and engage colleagues in the use of a recently developed resource for building, sustaining, and evaluating teaching and learning (T&L) CoPs. By the end of this session, delegates will have gained a greater understanding of communities of practice approaches, have produced initial plans for developing a T&L CoP at their home institution, and have started to undertake building a theory of change model to aid with evaluating their CoP.

**Session Outline:** In an increasingly alienating academic landscape (Hall, 2018), it is more important than ever to find opportunities to facilitate community building and networking opportunities to support academic colleagues to embed new approaches, without change feeling mandated from the 'top' down. One such way to address the tension between the role of the educational developer as being facilitator of change, rather than an enforcer of change, is through establishing communities of practice for teaching and learning. The term Community of Practice (CoP) refers to groups of people who interact regularly to discuss topics of shared concern, passion, and interest, to develop knowledge and expertise in those areas (Wenger, 2002). CoPs move away from educational development (ED) being viewed as an imposition and towards ED being seen to focus on members' interests and needs, in shared spaces that facilitate social and collaborative learning environments (Handley et al., 2006).

Following a call on the SEDA JiscMail, a group of colleagues from across the UK and AUS organically formed a community of practice to discuss teaching and learning focused communities of practice – EdD CoP. EdD CoP welcomes new members and is open to all who are interested in forming, developing, and evaluating T&L CoPs. The group found that supporting guidance for this work was lacking in the sector and sought funding from Advance HE to develop a resource that provides a framework through which to build a CoP for teaching and learning in a

variety of contexts and supporting guidance on how to evaluate the impact of CoPs. This workshop will provide an overview of and engage colleagues in the use of a recently developed resource for building, sustaining, and evaluating teaching and learning (T&L) CoPs. By the end of this session, delegates will have gained a greater understanding of communities of practice approaches, have produced initial plans for developing a T&L CoP at their home institution, and have started to undertake building a theory of change model to aid with evaluating their CoP.

**References:** Hall, R. (2018). 'On the Alienation of Academic Labour and the Possibilities for Mass Intellectuality.' *Triple C* 16(1): 97-113.

Handley, K., Sturdy, A., Fincham, R., and Clark, T. (2006). 'Within and Beyond Communities of Practice: Making Sense of Learning Through Participation, Identity and Practice.' *Journal of Management Studies* (41(3): 383-681.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R. A., Snyder, W. (2002) *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business Review Press.