

# The Online Teaching and Learning SIG Newsletter

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## Website Info

The OTL SIG will be launching a new website in the upcoming months! The website will be a central hub for communication and information exchange, and will include information about the OTL SIG and the membership, committees, officer bios, and the activities of the OTL SIG in the AERA Annual Meetings.

The website will also be hosting the newsletter and the links to our social media pages (i.e. Facebook and Twitter). If you have any questions concerning the website, or if you would like to volunteer to help, please contact to Stevi Colby ([stephanie.colby@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:stephanie.colby@postgrad.curtin.edu.au)). In a few months, you will be able to reach to the website using the following URL: [www.AERAOTL.com](http://www.AERAOTL.com).

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## Research Highlights

1. Why online? Perspectives, attitudes, and behind the scenes of online learning and teaching:

Macleod, H., Sinclair, C., Haywood, J., & Woodgate, A. (2016). Massive Open Online Courses: Designing for the Unknown Learner. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(1), 13-24.

What does the notion of “knowing” the learners in an online learning environment actually mean? This paper explores the meaning of the teacher’s presence in a MOOC course, and has implications beyond open learning environment, challenging standardization and homogenization of education.

2. Online learning and teaching tools:

Mathiowetz, V., Yu, C.H., & Quake-Rapp, C. (2016). Comparison of a Gross Anatomy Laboratory to Online Anatomy Software for Teaching Anatomy. *Anatomical Sciences Education*, 9(1), 52-59.

Is it possible to create an anatomy lab online? The main theme of this paper compares a traditional anatomy laboratory to online anatomy software tools, with the foci of student achievement, self-perceived learning, and satisfaction.

3. Broader spectrum of online learning:

Daniels, L. M., & Stupnisky, R. H. (2012). Not that different in theory: Discussing the control-value theory of emotions in online learning environments. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 15(3), 222-226.

Do differences exist in emotions of online and face-to-face learners? This paper examines a broad range of emotions in eleven different articles, using numerous methodologies and theories with special attention to the control-value theory of emotions (Pekrun, 2006).

## Innovation, Technology, & Tools

### Humanizing Online Learning and Teaching via the Internet of “Empathetic” Things

What would happen if your smart objects can understand your feelings, and respond to you accordingly? This vision offers a high level of personalization as today’s emotion-sensitive devices offer new opportunities to humanize online learning and teaching.

Around 17 years ago, Garrison, Anderson & Archer (2000) developed the Community of Inquiry Model, and two of the three constructs of this model addressed the need for affective and social connections among online learners and instructors. This suggests socio-emotional interactions play a significant role in online learning. However, as Ericsson Consumer Lab (2016) posits, individuals prefer more direct and natural interactions. The main roadblock preventing online education from providing such an experience is the very same feature that makes it advantageous: being distant. This dilemma raises the question of how it would be possible to humanize online learning and teaching by providing more natural socio-emotional interactions to the learners and instructors. A collaboration between the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create emotion-sensitive online learning experiences can yield answers to this question.

Any device (IoT) that can connect to the Internet and/or to the each other offer the opportunities of sensing real-time emotional body reactions, and communicating with people in real-time based upon the results of the analysis (Morgan, 2014; Pavliscak, 2016). The combination of the skills of these applicable devices with the personalization algorithms of AI yields transformative implications for online education in a way that the learning experience can adapt itself immediately based on real-time emotional states. Pedagogical decisions can be made based on the emotion-focused analytics, and more natural interactions can be actualized. Detecting emotions in real time, synchronously analyzing them, and providing responses accordingly can provide online learning experiences where the learner can cognitively and emotionally connect to the content, other learners, and the instructor. For now, the focus of emotionally-aware IoTs seems to be more commercial, but given the huge potential of such tools for more meaningful, personalized and human experiences, it might time for online education to explore this emerging field more deeply.

### References

- Ericsson Consumer Lab. (2016). Wearable Technology and the Internet of Things: Consumer views on wearables beyond health and wellness. Retrieved from <https://www.ericsson.com/assets/local/networked-society/consumerlab/reports/wearable-technology-and-the-internet-of-things-ericsson-consumerlab-2016.pdf>.
- Garrison, D.R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based Environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 2(2-3), 87-105.
- Morgan, J. (2014, May 13). *A Simple Explanation of ‘The Internet of Things’*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2014/05/13/simple-explanation-internet-things-that-anyone-can-understand/#24368fc1d091>.
- Pavliscak, P. (2016, April 20). *Designing For the Internet of Emotional Things*. Retrieved from <https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2016/04/designing-for-the-internet-of-emotional-things/>.

## OLC Corner



The *Online Learning Journal* (OLC), formerly the *Journal of Asynchronous Learning*, wishes to invite the presenters at the 2017 AERA Annual Meeting to publish in a special issue devoted to the Online Teaching and Learning Special Interest Group (OTL-SIG). The *Online Learning Journal* is the Online Learning Consortium's (OLC) scholarly journal providing readers with rigorous peer-reviewed research in a variety of educational contexts from K-12 to higher education in the US and internationally. The journal is currently in the midst of an extended effort to further develop quality and rigor in systematic inquiry in online learning in support of the larger mission of the OLC, which is the leading professional organization devoted to advancing quality online learning by providing professional development, instruction, best practice publications and guidance to educators, online learning professionals, and organizations around the world.

Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research articles are welcome for the Special Issue, and the topics include but are not limited to research on: *Strategies for Student Engagement; Virtual or Online K-12 Schools; Community of Inquiry, including Social Presence, Teaching Presence and Cognitive Presence; Online Interaction (e.g. Instructor, peer-to-peer); MOOCs; Strategies for Online Discussions; Online Group Work; Blended Learning and Flipped Classrooms; Integration of Tools for Online Learning Environments; Retention in Online Courses and Programs; Instructor Readiness; Designing for the Online Environment; and Assessment Strategies and Issues.*

### Submission Guidelines and Preliminary Timeline:

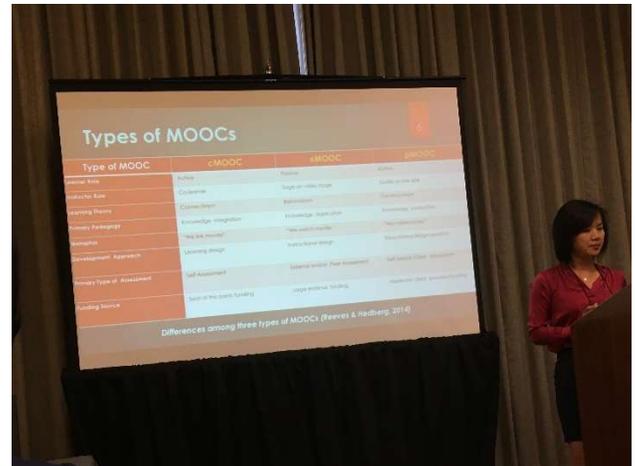
- To be considered for inclusion in the Special Issue, please complete the following form: <https://goo.gl/forms/G7Pks01ckV4Nc71x2> (Deadline: **June 20<sup>th</sup>**).
- Invited authors will be notified on **June 16<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>**.
- If invited, please submit manuscripts through the [Open Journal System](#) (OJS), the OLC journal system by **July 31<sup>st</sup>**. Select the Special Conference Issue: AERA Online Teaching and Learning SIG.
- Papers should be about 6,000-8,000 words using general APA Style 6th edition except for a single-spacing requirement. The Guide for Authors can be found here: <https://goo.gl/oALXSW>.
- Contributors will also be requested to serve as reviewers for this project.
- Manuscripts will be sent out for reviews on **August 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>** and expected to be returned to editors by **August 28<sup>th</sup>**.
- Feedback from special issue editors will be provided by **September 8<sup>th</sup>**. Revised articles are due back to editors by **September 25<sup>th</sup>**.
- Manuscripts are to be sent for copyediting on **October 15<sup>th</sup>**. The Special Issue is expected to be published on **December 15<sup>th</sup>**.
- *Note:* Final acceptance notifications will not be delivered until after revised manuscripts have been submitted.

### Special Issue Editors:

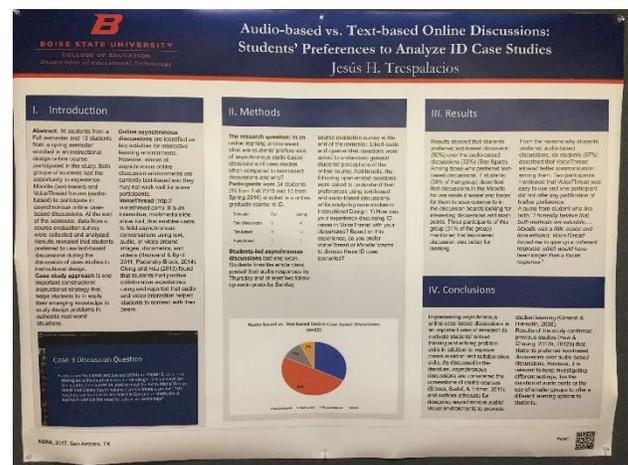
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# AERA 2017 Highlights

The OTL SIG provided 14 sessions with a full range of posters, papers and discussions at the AERA Annual Meeting this year!. The sessions mostly addressed the hot topics such as “how to understand and promote student success, satisfaction and engagement in online learning environments”, “how to humanize online teaching and learning through design considerations”, and “how the Community of Inquiry model is/should be/can be incorporated in online teaching and learning”. Along with these insightful sessions, we also held our Annual OTL Business Meeting, where the existing and the new members of OTL socialized and expanded their professional networks in a very welcoming atmosphere over delicious food and drinks. The OTL SIG Best Paper Award winners presented their research: *A Meta-Analysis of Studies Examining the Community of Inquiry* (Secil Caskurlu, Jing Lv, Yukiko Maeda, & Jenifer Richardson). Congratulations to this team for great scholarship!



To sum up, the 2017 AERA Convention was extremely productive, engaging, and fun for The OTL SIG. Many thanks to all who contributed to making this possible. Let’s keep up the great scholarly work, and produce more excellent sessions and events for 2018 in New York City!



If you have ideas or suggestions, please contact Stephanie Colby at [stephanie.colby@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:stephanie.colby@postgrad.curtin.edu.au)