

Global perspective on advanced educational programmes in geospatial information

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Topics covered

- Pandemic response in geospatial (and surveying) education
- FIG Commission 2 – what we've learned
- Key challenges for advanced geospatial education
- What blended learning is, and why it is a key element
- Lifelong learning
- Some thoughts on future directions in geospatial education



Pandemic response

- Rapid and emergency nature of the response.
- Often online only.
- Terrific pivot by academic institutions.
- Many lessons going forward.



FIG Commission 2 – what we've learned

- Student questionnaire results.
- Limitations in online study
- What needs to be face-to-face
- Social networks and community
- The importance of effective student–staff communication.



Key challenges for advanced geospatial education

- Massive upheaval in academic staff.
- SGD Goal 4 - Bias against poor families/Global south. Gender bias.
- Critical need for sound internet and laptop.
- Challenge to attract students.



What blended learning is, and why it is a key element

- *“Blended learning is the thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning experiences. The basic principle is that face-to-face oral communication and online written communication are optimally integrated such that they strengths of each are blended into a unique learning experience congruent with the context and intended educational purpose” (Garrison and Vaughan, 2008).*
- Learning any-time, anywhere.
- Benefits to geospatial education
- Larger access to academic education / larger devolution of expertise / off-campus deconcentration of training



Lifelong learning

- Importance of CPD - staying abreast of the latest developments in technology, theory and practice, which promotes lifelong learning.
- Challenge for working professionals is to find the time to engage in such courses.
- A blended or fully online approach helps to facilitate this. Busy professionals can better juggle their working commitments with their CPD course commitments if the latter is offered online and mostly asynchronously.
- The learning resources developed can also support CPD and form part of an academic and industry partnership to support life-long learning.



Some thoughts on future directions

- Academia–industry partnerships for “work integrated learning” and competency.
- Regional academic networks for knowledge sharing and capacity development.
- Private colleges.
- Microcredentials.