Outline for De Brief of Seminar 4 OLTD 503- Student Led Seminars

- **Jean and Sonny**-Self – Introductions- My name is Jean Kloppenburg. I am a fine arts teacher at Woodlands Secondary in SD68 in Nanaimo, BC. I am in my seventh year of teaching.

Jean-Summary of required reading: Chapter 6 Karen Kear's Online and Social Networking Communities-

Summary of Chapter six on Karen Kear's Online and Social Networking Communities

"Feeling Connected"

Chapter six focused on the ideas of feelings of community in an online setting and the aspect of "social presence" as an added ingredient to increase that sense of community. Tips on how to build community were offered, as was the potential for social networks to be used for online learner interaction.

Overall, the importance of a feeling of community within an online course had varied individual responses. Some learners stated that the sense of community helped motivate them in tough times in the course and alleviated feelings of isolation. Most online learners agreed that online contact with other students was very important. The greater the sense of community felt by learners the more comfortable they became with intellectual interactions and with asking and receiving support from their peers. In this same study, students were more comfortable with asynchronous settings and placed more value in them.

Social presence or the sense of "real" interactions with real participants is important to help a community to develop. Welcoming messages, ice breaker activities, face-to-face initial meetings, mixed methods of communication and shared profiles encourage students to get to know each other better and begin to build a sense of community.   Building online community with group forums calls for careful construction that focuses on visual and organizational groupings plus facilitator awareness of netiquette and social presence. Student interaction and engagement through their messages was deemed the most genuine way online learners became familiar with each other.

If messaging becomes the most genuine way for students to feel acquainted with each other, then it is no wonder that social network sites have been found useful to support online learning communities. Connections made with social networks are effective and powerful when students engage and take ownership of the communication tool.

- **Jean-**Process of Seminar Planning
  - Exchanged ideas at first through emails
  - We both had same viewpoint on making our activities all about getting to know each other, the non-professional side
  - Met on Skype for planning details and discussing rationales
  - Preliminary emails sent out early, dual purpose of a "hook" and preparation for upcoming activities
  - Focus was on modelling activities to create closer bonds
  - Wanted the week to be one of "doing" and "creating"
  - Presented created examples to each other via email and links for approval
  - Created a seminar outline on skydrive(on the cloud) where we both contributed
  - Once a section was completed, it was highlighted in green. We both worked at our own pace for part of it and in real time to tighten and edit. Sonny had the tech side assembling website and I worked on audio side using Vocaroo
  - We set planning deadlines way ahead of time to kick off the week with sites and links and examples all up and running smoothly
  - Website outside of D2L allowed for a creative and personal space for our activities
  - Planned for a balance of activities, DG questions from the chapter reading, optional readings and a survey to obtain feedback from participants
  - Closing thank you email, post survey results and highlight topics in DG thread

  - **Sonny and Jean:** Rationale, selection and showcase of Tools
  - **Sonny-** Showcase Directory Page
  - **Jean-** Welcome Letter(Introduction slide on Website)
    - Short and sweet with a heads up as to what is to come
  - Narrated in a non-threatening, friendly voice

- o Set the "tone" of the week with "soft due" dates (hard to deliver in text form)
- o Verbal instructions to reach different learning styles(some people rather listen then read)
- **Sonny**- Simply Me
- **Jean**- Voicethread-Conversations in the Cloud
    - o What is Voicethread? A tool to upload, share and discuss documents, presentations, images, audio files and videos
    - o Used a photograph of a childhood memory to invoke a feeling of reminiscing in the hopes of sharing a bit of one's personal life
    - o Voicethread adds a voice or video to a picture and enables viewers to a obtain a greater sense of " social presence" of their learning community
    - o Create more familiarity with the group, face to voice recognition plus life story

- **Jean**- DG in D2L
    - o Questions taken from the readings
    - o Allowed group to analyse topics discussed in chapter
    - o Opportunity to provide ice breakers used in classrooms
    - o Asked for responses to ice breaker question and one other post of choice
    - o Separated questions as individual posts to ease confusion and long threads
- **Sonny**- Survey
- **Jean and Sonny**- Seminar Facilitation Process
    - o Added element of caring and responsibility to oversee DG group and activity pages
    - o Checking discussion groups every night and if unavailable, letting partner know

- o Checking on directory page, voicethread and Simple Me pages every night.
- o Replying to postings, commenting on Simply Me blogs
- o Closing email to Group for thank you and remind survey synopsis on the way
- o Summation of Survey and DG Group
- o Email contact with partner during the week, check ins
- **Jean and Sonny-** Summarize the outcomes, Lessons learned
  - o **Our goal was to create a closer "connect" with our group and to bring more of a social presence to the forefront on hopes of building on a sense of community we all in some degree share**
  - o **We wanted the group to feel relaxed, engaged and willing to share parts of their personal lives with each other**
  - o **We were curious about the use ice breakers, social networks and the divulging of personal backgrounds to create closer connections and increase contact in an online setting**
  - o **We purposely chose asynchronous setting because Unfair to meet on such short notice, we have had numerous occasions for synchronous activities in previous courses, and we aimed to have the group have flexibility, time and a comfort level to engage in activities chosen**

  - o May have chosen to do ice breaker as a learning activity, instead of a DG posting. Some ideas were flat and it would have been exciting to see group create something like we modelled. But in saying that, we did not want to overtax the group and take energy and time away from our main objective to create

connections and engage wholly with our other offerings

- Would have explicitly used directions to add a blog page for the Simply Me because we asked for the group to comment on them, I was one of the few who forgot to do that and made just a website
- All in all, our objectives had been achieved and were confirmed with student feedback from our survey

- Both students to summarize the outcomes—lessons learned
- Develop and design intentional learning activities suitable for the appropriate environment and the learner
- Design inclusive learning environments
- Share engagement strategies and tips
- Undertake engagement with environments through online facilitation for effective learning Moderation and mediation