Distributed learning in practice

Abstract:
In semester 2, 2015 the School of Marketing has supported the teaching staff for Retail Marketing and Distribution unit in a move to adopt a new pedagogical concept: distributed learning. While in trial run during that semester, the School has decided to continue to support this initiative due to its widespread success, amongst students and the benefits that this teaching pedagogy entails.

So, what is distributed learning in this context? This is a new method of virtual teaching. Live high definition video conferencing connects the Bentley campus classroom with Miri, located in Malaysia in real time. This initiative has removed the isolation of distance and evolved the traditional classrooms into a global classroom where lecturers can co-teach.

Students are put in an experiential situation which offers various benefits. Being in different geographies and cultures encourage students to know and understand one another’s culture. In so doing, students also develop skills that a traditional classroom setting may restrict.

The structure of the unit encourages students to put theory into practice. However, the nature of this pedagogy implies that students are able to remember the concepts with probably more emotional salience; hence, solidifying their understanding of the Retailing concepts.

Embedded in Curtin’s vision (2015) is the goal to “develop internationally focused graduates”. The overarching impact of distributed learning in the context of Retail Marketing and Distribution is that it enhances pluralism to better prepare students for a global marketplace.

Students’ Evaluate feedback: students felt that this new environment offered opportunities for learning about a new culture, collaborating with others outside of Australia as a team, equity amongst fellow students regardless of location. Others also believe that they befitted from deeper Marketing insights which they believe has added value to their degree.