ICED COUNCIL MEETING – July 2012

Flemish Network "Lerend Netwerk Onderwijsondersteuners"(LNO2)

LNO², which stands for 'Lerend Netwerk voor OnderwijsOndersteuners' – learning network for educational developers has been active for four years now.
In 2010, the website (www.lno2.be) was launched.
In May 2011, the first official LNO2-conference took place in Leuven.
In 2012, Special Interest Groups (SIGS) about different topics (a.o. teacher training, study success) were founded.

Aims of the network
- Professionalization of educational developers and development of their professional identity
- Create community of practice that supports educational developers to:
    - advocate for high quality teaching
    - develop teaching through focused initiatives (policy and support)
    - do research about educational development

Co-ordination of the network
Four institutions for higher education (one university college and three universities) are in charge of co-ordinating the network:
- Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
- Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Universiteit Antwerpen
- Artevelde Hogeschool Gent.

In 2012 we sorted out a leadership structure: each year, one of the four co-ordinating institutions is replaced by a new one. This new institution will organize the conference in its 3rd year of co-ordinating membership. During the 4th year it hands over its responsibilities.
The aim is for the co-ordinating institutions to be geographically spread throughout in Flanders. In addition, we aim for a proportional membership of 2 or 3 university college and 1 or 2 universities in the co-ordinating team.

Ties to the network are loose; the educational developers do not need to register, nor is there is a membership fee. Attendance to the annual conference, however, will be charged at 50 euro. Currently this approach seems to work. In the future we obviously need to sort out better defined membership structures.

Aspect of our network's activities which has been especially successful

The first official LNO2-conference received positive feedback from its participants. They liked the format and felt the content was interesting and applicable to their job as an educational developer. They especially appreciated the time that was reserved to exchange ideas with colleagues from other institutions.

Because there were hardly any negative comments, we organized a new conference in the same format in June in Brussels. This conference had an attendance of 130 educational developers. This year's theme was: "New Higher Education Accreditation/Quality Assurance System in Flanders". This particular system will take effect mid 2012. First off, in the morning, the new system was presented

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after which a panel discussion took place discussing the impact of this new system on our work as educational developers. During lunch there was time to exchange ideas, (re)launch a SIG (discussed later). In the afternoon 12 break-out sessions discussed methods, research, shared practice and so on.

A particular difficulty our network experienced this year

During the LNO2-conference 2011 it became apparent that there was also a need to collaborate on certain topics (as there are: teacher training, study success, assessment policy, distance learning) in between annual conferences. After the conference, in the evaluation we asked the members if they were interested to lead and/or take part in one or more Special Interest Groups (These are the so called SIGS I mentioned earlier). Five members showed interest in leading a SIG and were contacted to establish one. Email addresses of the interested members were sent to them. As co-ordinating institutions, it was seen as unnecessary to further intervene.

Just before the annual conference the co-ordinating team asked the SIG-leaders about the SIG developments. Unfortunately, not one SIG had been set up properly in between the conferences. One had created an environment on a learning platform but there had been no interaction.

To "re-launch" this initiative, the co-ordinating team 1] created a webpage about the LNO2-SIGS on the website (www.lno2.be/sigs) and 2] made an announcement about the existing SIGS, how to start a new one, become a member etc during the welcome speech at the 2012 conference.

As a result, during the conference, not only had the existing SIGs made new appointments but also new SIGs had been initiated. It is the hope of the the co-ordinating team that SIGs will really become functional this year. For the 2013 conference, the plan isnning to reserve a time slot for the SIGS. This will increase their visibility and possibly deliver new members.

Pictures of the LNO2-conference 2012