For week 8 I've selected "synchronicity" as my keyword. In the design of a learning solution the topic of synchronicity must be considered – supporting learners in both synchronous and asynchronous modes. My students and clients are generally looking for more and more support for distributed learning - both temporal and geographic distribution. Anderson highlights this need as he states: "Contrary to popular belief, the major motivation for enrolment in distance education is not physical access per se, but the temporal freedom that allows students to move through a course of studies at a time and pace of their choice" (Anderson, 2008, p.52). Yet temporal freedom can't come at the price of eliminating opportunity for learning with and from peers.

Corporate students face day-to-day work demands that limit time away for learning. And, the clients that sponsor the education demand that education be more effective and have more impact. To that end, providing more opportunities to experience, attempt, reflect and revisit become critical. In addition, more often than not, these students are also geographically distributed. For example, I met with a client today and they will have students participating from 16 different locations across North America.

A demand for supporting virtual, distributed and online learning (and the associated interactions) leads to questions about how to support constructivism. What happens if everyone creates their own learning path and then finds that they are the only ones on the path? In seeking interaction, sharing of ideas, challenging knowledge, co-construction, there are many modalities available. But we need avoid getting stuck in the trap of just replicating the traditional, face-to-face classroom experience. "Attempts at integrating technology within education however, have often focused on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the status quo, replacing traditional instructional approaches with ones that are technologically reinforced, yet qualitatively similar" (Veletsianos, 2011, p.41).

I am also intrigued by the potential extension of the learning model to include groups. However, I do struggle with Anderson's comment that: "The community, however, binds learners in time, and thus forces regular sessions – or at least group-paced learning. Community models are also generally more expensive simply because they cannot scale up to serve larger numbers of students" (Anderson, 2008, p.61). I would agree that there are considerations and constraints. But, is it true that a group binds the learner to a specific time? Is it true that you cannot scale up larger number of students? I expect that communities of practice that use tools such as wikis, blogs, MOOCs, Slack or MS Teams can and should be able to overcome these challenges. An interesting exercise would be to plot these tools onto Anderson's Figure 2 and determine the balance between interaction and temporal independence. The model shows correspondence, but surely Slack or wikis are more than just correspondence? These tools provide persistence, searchability, interactivity, presence awareness, support for public and private interactions as well as a variety of mechanisms to communicate (text, audio and video).

I enjoyed Velestsianos paper and found it to be an inspiring call to act, to think bigger. In reflecting on the paper, I started to think about connections. Not just connections in a curriculum, but connections between students, content, teachers and groups. This reflection led me back to synchronicity. 'While authentic learning activities serve to bridge this gap, learning is often seen as a single and sporadic classroom activity as opposed to an endeavor that is ongoing, lifelong, and independent of educational institutions and age" (Veletsianos, 2011, p.42). These ongoing learning activities are realized both in classes and communities

of practice. "Learners can access these communities while enrolled in the course, but more importantly, they can be given the opportunity to become part of the community, to become contributing and real members, and to continue in this fashion indefinitely" (Velestianos, 2011, p43). And in gaining this access, there is yet further opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

References
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