

Challenging E-learning in the University



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This book examines some of the underlying principles and approaches which underpin e-learning in today's higher education. It takes a critical lens to both policy and practice at the micro and macro level, exploring how e-learning and its association with broader agendas concerning teaching and learning in higher education is reconfiguring what counts as learning in today's university. This provides a backdrop for challenging some of the more dominant approaches in the field of e-learning and presenting a unique perspective drawn from studies of language, literacies and learning. In so doing, the volume raises questions about the ways in which theories of social constructivism, collaborative learning and learning communities have tended to take centre stage in the field. It suggests that this has resulted in very little attention to the production and negotiation of the specific and contextualised texts and practices which are central to these learning environments. Through single and joint-authored contributions the authors develop a case for locating the concept of e-learning within a language and literacies based account of teaching and learning which foregrounds the social practices of the university, its literacies and discourses, and the ways in which these interplay with technologies. The authors contrast their approach, which pays attention to the broader institutional context of learning, with those which focus only on the individual learner's engagement with the technologies. The book explicates the principles being explored through detailed case studies which are designed to help practitioners think through how they might be able to adopt such an approach in their own work. It also looks forward to how the literacies perspective that is being proposed will be particularly appropriate in the light of developments in the use of social media for learning.

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