# Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) Professional Development Event Thursday June 8th 2017

# Exploring the Ecology of Learning, Teaching, Pedagogy & Creativity Norman Jackson

### Powerpoint slides can be downloaded from

http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/gmit.html

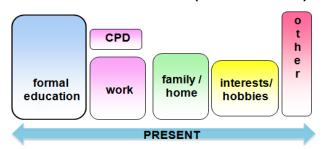
The presentation will introduce the idea of learning ecologies and the proposition that in the world outside higher education we continually develop our own ecologies to learning and achieve something significant and deal with complex situations, solve problems and engage with opportunities. An ecological perspective on learning requires teachers to think of themselves as part of a specialised ecosystem within which teaching and learning takes place. Through their pedagogical thinking and practices, their personal pedagogy, HE teachers create ecologies within which students learn and have potential to use their creativity. Learners are involved in these ecologies but they also create their own. An ecological view of higher education takes account of the opportunities students have to create their own ecologies for learning within and outside the academic curriculum.

This talk explores the idea that learning, teaching and creativity are ecological phenomenon and our ecologies for learning are the vehicles for integrating our creative imagination and critical reasoning to create new meaning.

GMIT Google+Forum - for follow-up conversations relating to talk and workshop https://plus.google.com/communities/107636045739419069502

### **Core concepts**

- 1 Lifewide learning (Jackson et al 2011)
- 2 Lifewide Curriculum (Jackson 2011)

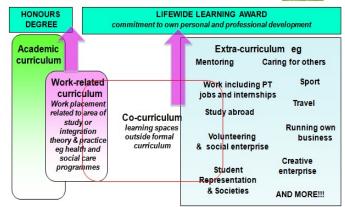


Lifewide learning: All learning and personal development that emerges through activities in the multiple contexts and situations we inhabit contemporaneously at any point in our life, with the aim of fulfilling roles and achieving specific goals, and continuously developing knowledge, understanding, skills, capabilities, dispositions, values and meaning within personal, civic, social and/or employment-related contexts.

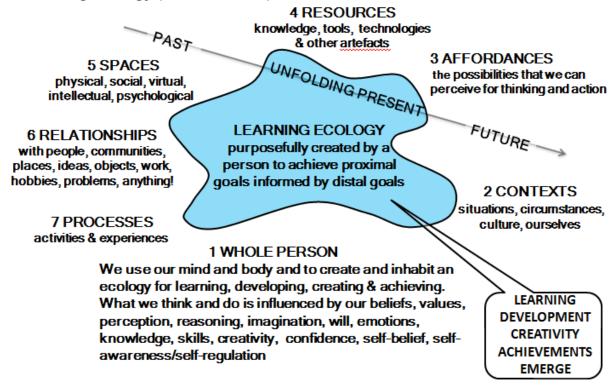
Ecologies for learning occur at all scales & in all parts of a students' higher education experience

To accommodate all the affordances for learning in a students' life we need to adopt a Lifewide Curriculum

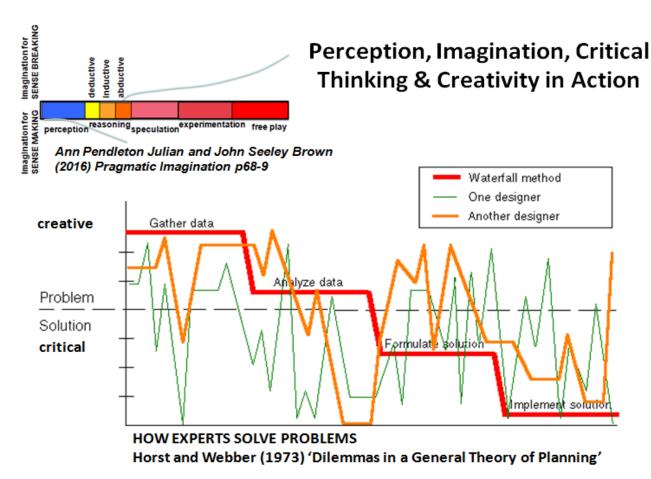




### 2 Learning ecology (Jackson 2016)



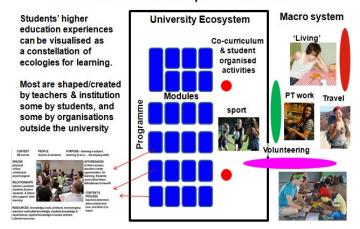
3 Learning ecologies are the vehicles for the integration of perception, ecological and critical thinking (ecological thinking)



### 3 Learning Ecologies: the students' perspective

### Example of a student's ecology for learning

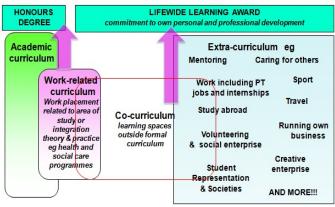
Ecologies for learning, developing & achieving occur at all scales & in all parts of a students' life



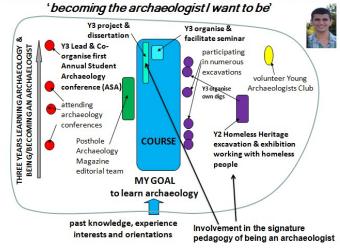
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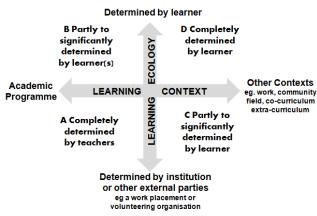




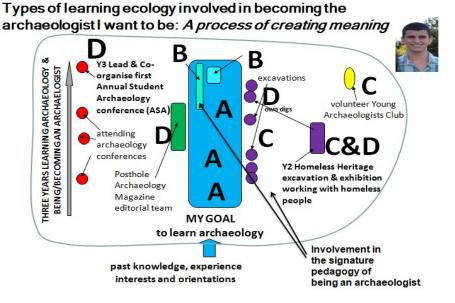
### A student's ecologies for learning, developing & achieving



## Conceptual tool for making sense of a students ecologies for learning, developing & achieving



Learning ecology includes goals, affordances, processes, spaces, relationships, resources (knowledge, tools, technologies, mediating artefacts)



### 4 Personal pedagogy

### Ecological concept of pedagogy

Pedagogy is more than teaching method, more than curriculum, more than assessment practice. It is all these things, but it is also how they are made into patterns of actions, activities and interactions by a particular teacher, with a particular group of students [in a particular context]

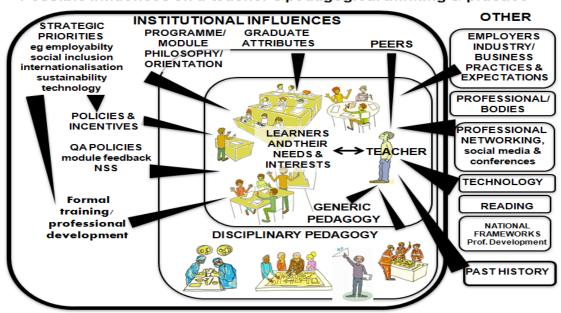
The concept of pedagogy encompasses relationships, conversations, learning environments, rules, norms and culture within the wider social context. It takes in the ways in which what teachers and students do is framed and delimited within a specific site, a policy regime and the historical [cultural] context.

Thomson, P. Hall, C., Jones, K. and Green, J.S (2012)
The Signature Pedagogies Project Final Report. Available at:
<a href="http://creativitycultureeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/Signature\_Pedagogies\_Final\_Report\_April\_2012.pdf">http://creativitycultureeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/Signature\_Pedagogies\_Final\_Report\_April\_2012.pdf</a>

# Societal ecosystem HE education ecosystem University ecosystem – culture, policies, QA procedures, frameworks, timetables, tools, resources, rooms/specialised spaces, training/CPD

Within a university, teachers create ecologies within which students learn, develop, create & achieve. These learning ecologies are shaped by their beliefs, values & pedagogical knowledge & skills

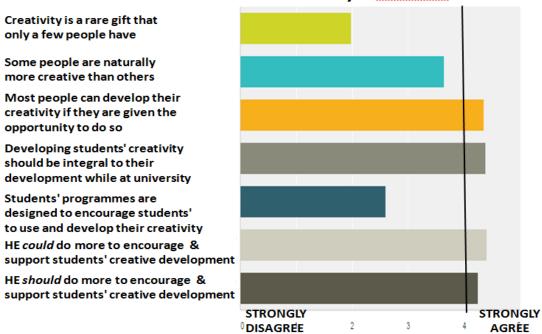
### Possible influences on a teacher's pedagogical thinking & practice



### 5 Creativity in higher education - The Wicked Problem of Creativity in Higher Education

### **Teacher beliefs**

### HE teacher beliefs about creativity #Ithechat n=40



### What being creative means in eight disciplines

Based on surveys within each community (Jackson & Shaw 2006)

Being imaginative - ability to think generatively & associatively

Being original / inventive - new ideas which add value Being able to adapt/improvise (re-creation)

Being curious having an enquiring disposition – having the desire to find out

Being able to think synthetically and relationally – connect in novel ways, work with incomplete data, recognise patterns

Being able to think critically to evaluate ideas

magination for imagination for

Being resourceful - finding and making use of what is available

Being able to communicate in ways that help people comprehend and if necessary, see things differently

Pedagogical thinking and practices that encourage students' to use their creativity and create their own ecologies for learning and achievement

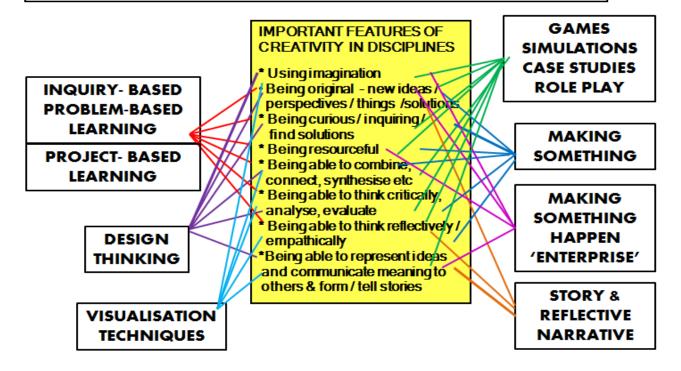
# Encouraging students to use their creativity PEDAGOGICAL DESIGN TOOL

### PEDAGOGIC APPROACHES THAT

- · foster intrinsic motivation
- •immerse the learner in challenging, solution-finding situations and tasks
- •involve inquiry-rich approaches to learning and problem working
- are rich in peer2peer interaction and collaboration
- •involve teacher as co-creator, activist, facilitator not just a transmitter
- \* Involve teachers in getting out of the way to enable students to create
- · involve space for reflection to enable learners' to understand their own creativity
- involve the use of strategies for recording, <u>curating</u> and communicating learning, creativity and achievement

### AND CREATE OPPORTUNITY FOR LEARNERS TO

- create their own ecologies for learning & achieving
- ·experience contexts that are unfamiliar
- experience novel tasks and challenges
- experience real word situations
- ·use their imaginations to design, invent, adapt and/or develop something
- ·use their skills to make something or make something happen
- ·take risks without being penalised for not fully succeeding
- ·reflect on their processes and grow personal understandings about their own creativity
- ·gain recognition for their creativity



Further resources relating to creativity in higher education

Creative Academic community website includes articles and a magazine free to download. You can register your interest on the home page <a href="http://www.creativeacademic.uk/">http://www.creativeacademic.uk/</a>

#creativeHE Google+ Forum https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041

Creative Pedagogies project http://www.creativeacademic.uk/creative-pedagogies.html