

Meg Colasante



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Dr Meg Colasante is a Lecturer at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. Meg returns to RMIT after working at several other universities, including La Trobe University, University of Melbourne, and Deakin University. Most recently, at Deakin, Meg taught and was Unit Coordinator for three units (courses) in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education (Learning and Teaching). This, and preceding roles, demonstrate her interest in collaboratively advancing higher education teaching practices, along with completing a PhD in co-constructing digital teaching practice in higher education (using a cultural-historical activity theory perspective). Meg received her PhD from the School of Education at Deakin University in 2021, and earlier her Master of Professional Education and Training (Flexible, Online and Distance Education) from the School of Education at Deakin University in 2010, and prior to that, her Graduate Diploma in Industrial Education and Training at RMIT. Now back at RMIT, Meg is working in the WIL (work-integrated learning) space, teaching into and Course Coordinator for several on-campus and internship courses. Meg also leads a SoTL (scholarship of teaching and learning) support project across the College and is leading an innovation grant on student assessment options for their understanding of Indigenous perspectives.

The above work follows a background of innovating in university teaching practices. For example, Meg designed the pedagogical affordances of a media annotation tool (MAT) that was built by EduTag at RMIT, and at La Trobe led a project team to design, develop, trial, and research the hybrid-flexible StudyFlex model under the sponsorship of John Bevacqua. In other roles, Meg innovated in faculty development and curriculum design, and taught instructional design and research design courses.

My interest in activity theory was sparked by Damian Blake, Head of the School of Education, Deakin University, and my principal PhD supervisor, when he introduced me to the work of Yrö Engeström. My PhD employed cultural-historical activity theory as a methodology to investigate a team of university anatomy teachers' activity of digital teaching, with my unpublished thesis titled *Co-constructing digital teaching practice in higher education: An activity theory perspective*. I am extremely grateful to my PhD examiners, who generously provided detailed 'what next' advice for extending angles from my thesis for post-doctoral publications (currently in various stages of 'in-press' [see below], 'submitted', and 'in development').

I continue to be inspired by the Finnish tradition of cultural-historical activity theory. This includes mechanisms such as the *Cultural-Historical Activity Researchers (CHAR)* special interest group led by John Cripps Clark at Deakin, and the excellent Tampere University *Key Concepts of Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)* MOOC led by Annalisa Sannino and facilitated by Pauliina Rantavuori. Both these mechanisms enabled hearing directly and candidly from various activity theory experts, and I now look forward to connecting with more activity theory experts and researchers at ISCAR2024. I don't think I will ever tire of cultural-historical activity theory; there seems to always be something further to think about.

Activity theory publication:

Colasante, M. (2024). Five methodological dilemmas when implementing an activity theory transformative intervention in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2024.2367655>

Examples of other publications:

Duffy, J, Cham, KM, **Colasante, M** & Cochrane, A. (2023). Developing a professionalism curriculum framework for teaching optometry students in Australia and New Zealand. *Clinical and Experimental Optometry*, 106(3), 342-345.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08164622.2022.2121643>

Colasante, M. (2022). Not drowning, waving: The role of video in a renewed digital learning world. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 38(4), 176-189.
<https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.7951>

McDonald, AC, Green, RA, Zacharias, A, Whitburn, LY, Hughes, DL, **Colasante, M** & McGowan, H. (2021). Anatomy students who are "Team-Taught" may achieve better results than those who are "Sole-Taught". *Anatomical Sciences Education*, 14(1), 43-51.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ase.1954>

Colasante, M, Bevacqua, J & Muir, S, (2020). Flexible hybrid format in university curricula to offer students in-subject choice of study mode: An educational design research project, *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, 17(3). <https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol17/iss3/>