

Professor Gordon Sanson

Monash University (Australia) and Academic Liaison at Pearson eCollege (US).

Gordon Sanson is a biologist and has been a research and teaching academic for over 40 years. He has had a long but often frustrated interest in how to educate for deep understanding and sustained learning. Over the last 20 years he has had a special interest in the development of innovative and flexible teaching and learning practices and spaces that integrate pedagogy, space and emerging technologies, particularly in large classes of around a thousand students in first year biology. As Head of the School of Biological Sciences at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia's largest university, he led the redevelopment of more advanced laboratories that integrated collaborative technologies into the teaching space. This resulted in a Business and Higher Education Round Table Award for Outstanding Achievement in Collaboration in Research in Education and Training in 2006. He was awarded a national Carrick Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning in 2007. As the Founding Director of the eEducation Centre at Monash University he deliberately focused on the integration of pedagogy, space and technology and among other achievements the team he led received an eLearning Industry Association of Victoria Excellence Award for 'myLearningSpace' in 2010 and again in 2011 for the 'Simple Pens' application. He is a Founding Father of the John Monash Science School, a public secondary school on the university campus that is embedded in the Science Faculty and is a lighthouse for professional development in science education, and is his proudest achievement. He believes that education is undergoing transformational change, but is concerned that much of the technological change being seen in the education sector is being driven by what can be done, rather than by what needs to be done. He believes that, in time, technology has the power to give each individual learner a voice that will contribute to enabling each of them to engage in and take responsibility for their own learning and reach their individual potential. However, he also acknowledges that the biggest challenge is the human condition and the willingness to take risks and adopt new practices in both teachers and learners and that effectively embracing the emerging opportunities requires cultural change in education.