Assignment:

Describe your role in teaching and learning: student, faculty, staff, onlooker. Given what you’ve learned in this class, how do you hope to see learning analytics put to work in your environment during the coming year?

Currently, my role in teaching and learning is as a student. I consider myself an onlooker and student as regards Learning Analytics. During the coming year, I hope to change this status to that of staff/ researcher with some paper publications and research studies.

First, I plan to use the material and lessons of this class to contribute to a collaborative paper publication in my old alma mater. The focus will be on how best to tap the potential of Learning Analytics in Indian higher education and address the concerns of the different stakeholders.

In the pipeline is another paper, on application of Learning Analytics in Indian institutions, given the different issues: Learner Management Systems are still in their nascent stages; digitization of data is in its infancy- e.g. student data, records, class data; IT support is available to limited items- say final grades, and not class records or notes on assignments or class participation.

The aforementioned (niche) research and hopefully, paper that I plan to pursue, is performance of ICSE and GCSE students in tradition higher education in India. These two boards of education are international in their curriculum but way different in their teaching methodology as compared to traditional Indian education. So, the focus is on the impact on GCSE/ICSE student performance. Do they face a handicap as they are new the assessment styles in contrast to their peers who are familiar with the same? Do they benefit from learning focused on understanding and give them an edge over their classmates? I will be doing extensive research (scholastic only) on these points. I will not have access to work on the real data, but will be providing inputs to the  analyses on the actual data- such as different angles to study, ways to interpret, suggestions on threads of interest, etc.

On the personal front, I intend to improve my R programming skills to an expert level. This is so that I can use the synthetic data provided in this course and delving deeper into it. I have outlined a few interesting points that I intend to focus on. [Currently, my knowledge is not enough to code and extract from given data to get meaningful results. ]

First , GPA difference in majors and introductory classes. I will be looking at all the introductory and consequent majors one by one. This is something akin to a deeper probe into the  persistence bar plots. Gendered difference will be the next step.

Second, GPA difference in introductory courses and other courses taken at the same time. Again, this is similar to more in depth analysis of the persistence bar plots. This should be a promising insight into whether good or bad grades in one course can have any sway on other courses taken in same term. Gender based differences is the next step of investigation.

Thinking farther out, what do you imagine learning analytics will be like in 2035? How will a student understand and demonstrate what they know? How will an institution measure and represent what students learn in the future? How will learning analytics alter the nature of evaluation and inform the transcript of the future?

Learning Analytics in 2035:

1. Learning Analytics will be a greatly progressed and widely growing field.
2. LA studies will be collaborative and work across continents and student groups.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge exclusively on Learner Management Systems. These will be similar to what we those used today in terms of handling and using, just completely digital with no paper/offline component. For instance, questions and assignment, discussion forums, project work submissions and receipt of grades, everything will be online. No submissions will be offline at all. Even practical classes will involve submitting theses, manuals and videos as proofs and using wearable technology and digital (remote) inspection for grading.
4. LMS will however, be more sophisticated in terms of the services they provide.
5. Professors and coaches will be able to instruct the systems to give real time feedback to students based on inbuilt assessment criteria.
6. LMS will be able to provide feedback to teachers and course designers to improve class engagement and meeting final goals of the class. All this as the course progresses, in the same term itself, using extrapolations made on current and previous data.
7. Personalization will be key to student learning. Just like we have recommendations, reminders, on different sites like Google+, Amazon, Facebook, even Coursera, Learner Analytics will work in the background to give students a more attentive and customized education. This will be similar to an advanced version of Coach, working on not just homework, but discussions, class notes, exam performance, mock tests, even comments on social media specific to a particular course- basically all interactions of a student in a course. It will improve morale and involvement and help learners achieve their aims with each course that they undertake.
8. MOOCs and Online education will be on par with traditional education. As in the educational market share, so to speak, will be equally divided between online and traditional institutions.
9. Attrition rates in higher education will be minuscule, thanks to preventive coaching and tailor fit course completion paths- say, a combined form of Student Explorer and ART.
10. Learning Analytics will cause grade differences for women, minorities, etc. to drastically reduce through a combination of techniques- identification of grade differences, zoning on probable causes and timely intervention with tested solutions.
11. LA will provide suggestions (like ART does) to students to better understand different course paths. But it will be able to provide a comprehensive picture of the different paths that can be taken and provide meaningful tracks that students can choose. Like course paths that they have a better shot of success (passing/ enjoying) at and others that might require more effort and training. It will also provide recommendations on how best to achieve all the goal paths including the difficult ones (more chances of failing/ not understanding) with additional learning, training and or exempting.

Students will be able to view best techniques of learning for the classes they wish to enroll before they enroll. They will then accordingly, efficiently direct their efforts to maximize their output/ learning from each course.