DEBATE - Brave New World - a Student Perspective on Social Media and Learning

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Workshop outline

How many times have you heard the question "are you on Facebook" ? What is it about social networking that has changed society's natural instinct for privacy? How many of you have a facebook account, a twitter account, are a member of a yahoo group? Why in education are we so resistant to the use of social networks for learning? This workshop will explore a course delivered through social media (Facebook and Yahoo groups). It will look at both organisational content and the application and validity of student created content. It will look at the debate between the students themselves about the use of Facebook. The presenter/Kathy has just completed a course in equine anatomy delivered through social media and asks the questions: • Should social media be used for learning and teaching or should social mean social? •What are we afraid of? E-safety, litigation, under performance? • In this economic climate of reduced funding can providers afford not to look at the possibility of opening up a global market? There will be an opportunity to look at the course and the associated materials/resources

Workshop structure

5 mins	Kathy	Introduction – cover definition of social media Aims for the session
10 mins	kathy	Demo equine course on Googlegroups and Fb Description of student activities and course structure
20 mins 10 mins	Liz	Diamond 9 activity Feedback on activity
10 mins	Liz	Strategies for teaching with Fb
5 mins	Liz	Resources and conclusion

Aims for session;

- To explain what social media is and its features
- To examine its use in t&l in terms of new pedagogic models and some of the attendant strategies

Definition What is social media?

Rebranding of web 2.0 (web based participation and collaborative medium)

Web and/or mobile tools which allow user generated content to be shared on a large scale;

Contrasts with traditional media ie news papers, tv (which are expensive to produce, thus access to production is limited).

Key features;

- Move from consumers to publishers of knowledge
- Move to democratisation of knowledge
- Greater communication channels and means of participation, in terms of no of tools, and opportunity for dialogues
- Reach; ability to reach wide audience through use of SM
- Accessibility; tools easy to access – not privately owned
- Usability ; ease of use, no specialist training required
- Permanence; CAN be altered once published different from print media
- Immediacy; speed of production instantaneous cf print media

Examples include

Text based media eg blogs wikis

Communications services eg Twitter,

MM sharing eg Flickr Youtube

Networking; eg FB linked in etc

Shared docs eg googledocs

Diamond 9 exercise

This exercise asks participants to structure terms into a diamond shape
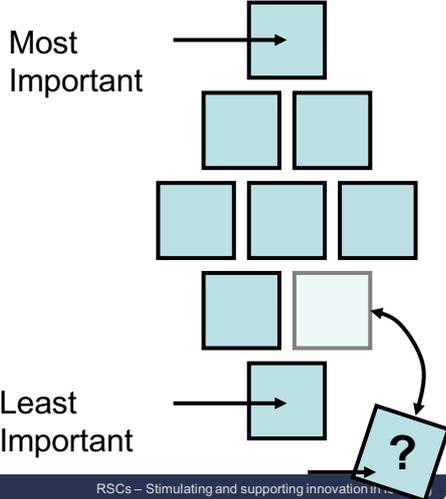
The terms that were given were;

- Quality of Student created content
- It's student private space
- Bullying AdvertisingAdult content
- Reliability (Fb going down)
- Profession identity
- Tutor confidence
- Tutor technical skill
- Reputation of the institution
- Impact on Learning
- Ease of Access
- Tutor Creativity
- No cost solution

Participants could also add their own terms.

Feedback was taken from each group.

Contextual factors

One key point made by one group was that 'context is everything' so in fact the ordering exercise was rather meaningless. We agree with this point, however hope that the exercise supported some illuminating discussions.

Some ways that these issues can be addressed that are within the teacher's control

Bullying advertising, adult content	Getting insititutional support for ways of handing bullying Discussing ground rules Making learners aware of dangers
Professional identity	Increased awareness of the medium and its norms eg how public it is, how to make postings private, Creating of separate id for online work and home use
Reputation of institution	Make students aware of their responsibilities and the penalties for abuse Monitor postings
Quality of student centred content	Does wider audience improve quality – this has been evident in some uptake Develop critiquing activities Allow time for redesign following critiques – reward improvements
Reliability	Develop robustness in students and colleagues in terms of accommodating some flakiness – it is fact of life Contrast to problems that exist in real life eg rooming issues, snow, travel problems Have fall back position if using for assessment
It's students' private space	Use affordances of tools to separate out work from private eg pages in Fb, hash tags in Twitter

Plagiarism	Design out where poss through assignment design
	Teach about what it is and how easy it is to detect
Student resistance	Taking students with you; share your rationale, take time to acknowledge students' perspectives,
Tutor creativity/confidence/skills	Increasing tutors' understanding of what is possible and how to it works

Pedagogical models for learning in social media

Metaphors for learning have traditionally been acquisition (banking metaphor) of getting knowledge or more crudely attending (where students' learning is judged by their attendance at the institution) (Collis and Mooneen 2008 p.97).

For technology enhance learning the metaphors for learning are more active and student centred; participation, contribution, engagement.

Three pedagogical models were introduced based which have been developed for technology enhanced learning;

Contributing student pedagogy– (Collis and Mooneen 2006)

Learners contribute to the learning materials via contributions made available to others in a Web-based system.

The others may be others in the same group or others at other times.

Key characteristics:

(a) the Web site is largely empty at the start of the learning experience; the learners and the instructor will fill it via the process of many activities during the course

(b) Learners learn from realistic materials as well as peer-created materials as much as or more than professionally developed materials

(c) Learning materials contributed by students are re-used in other learning settings

Role of instructor: Designer of activities and of feedback and monitoring strategies for activities.

Role of technology: To facilitate all aspects of the activities

Self organised learning –(Mitra & Dangwal 2010

The ability of children to teach themselves without intervention of a teacher.

Children were given access to a computer and taught themselves computer literacy (2005)

Children were given some web based resources chosen by an expert and tested in their understandings of genetics.(2010)

The claim is made for minimal intervention education. (MIE)

Emergent learning

> learning which arises out of the interaction between a number of people and resources, in which the learners organise and determine both the process and to some extent the learning destinations, both of which are unpredictable. The interaction is in many senses self-organised, but it nevertheless requires some constraint and structure. It may include virtual or physical networks, or both. (Williams Karousou, & Mackness, J. 2011 p3)

The focus is therefore on community (PLNs)

Participatory learning

Davidson and Goldberg refer to this new form of learning as participatory learning and again contrast it to the sort of formal curriculum offered by the academy

A key term in thinking about these emergent shifts is participatory learning. Participatory learning includes the many ways that learners (of any age) use new technologies to participate in virtual communities where they share ideas, comment on one another's projects, and plan, design, implement, advance, or simply discuss their practices, goals, and ideas together.(2009, p12)

References

Collis, B., & Moonen, J. (2008). *Web 2.0 tools and processes in higher education: quality perspectives*. Educational Media International, 45(2), 93-106.

Davidson, C., & Goldberg, T. (2009). The Future of Learning Institutions in a Digital Age

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