

Enhancing the Classroom Experience: Social Software, Teaching, and Learning

Workshop for DeGroot School of Business

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Social software and Web 2.0 are concepts that have recently been developed to enhance the evolution of the Web from a one-way information access vehicle to a dynamic platform that thrives on user-generated content. Given this shift and the recent proliferation of collaborative tools for generating content and community, educators often find themselves wondering why & how they might make use of these tools in the classroom. This workshop provides an introduction to social tools such as blogs, wikis, social bookmarking and online social networks, beginning with a survey of the world of social software and including hands-on exercises involving certain tools. The session will also cover pedagogical case studies and examples of ways in which other post-secondary institutions and educators are using these tools in the classroom.

Presenter

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Presentation Slides

- Online at <http://blogwithoutalibrary.net/talk/degroote07.pdf>

Intro video

- *The Machine is Us/ing Us*, Michael Wesch, Assistant Professor, Cultural Anthropology. Kansas State University. http://youtube.com/watch?v=NLIgopyXT_g

Web 2.0

- The “participatory” web where users contribute content and participate in conversations
- The “Read/Write” web – web 1.0 was the “read” web; web 2.0 is the “read/write web”

Social Software

- Web-based software tools that facilitate interaction, sharing, collaborating, conversations and community.
- Examples of social software tools: blogs, wikis, social bookmarking tools, media-sharing (Flickr, YouTube, etc.), online social networks (MySpace, Facebook, etc.)

Tools we will use in today’s workshop

- Blogs:
 - WordPress (<http://wordpress.com>)
- Wikis:
 - PBWiki (<http://www.pbwiki.com>)
- Social bookmarking:
 - del.icio.us (<http://del.icio.us>)
 - CiteULike (<http://www.citeulike.org>)

Blogs

- Features:
 - Reverse-chronological display
 - Permalinks
 - Archives
 - Comments
 - Categories and/or tags
 - RSS feed
- Software:
 - Database-driven
 - Can be installed on your own server or hosted
 - Popular examples: Blogger (<http://www.blogger.com>) and WordPress (<http://wordpress.com>)

Teaching, Learning & Blogs

- Distance education or blended learning
- Extending the classroom conversation
- Encouraging students to engage with the subject matter, express & take ownership of their opinions, engage with the broader community outside the classroom
- Examples:
 - Advanced Organizational Communication: <http://cmnu531.blogspot.com/>
 - Economics of Sport: <http://mariettaecon.blogspot.com/>
 - Social Software & Libraries: <http://lis757.blogwithoutalibrary.net>

Wikis

- Software: can be installed on your own server or hosted
- Editing interface is usually wysiwyg or uses easy “wiki markup”
- Popular example: PBWiki (<http://pbwiki.com>)

Teaching, Learning & Wikis

- Excellent for group-work, collaborating on writing projects
- Examples:
 - Canadian Inventory of Glacial Landforms: <http://cigl.wetpaint.com/>
 - International Finance: http://www.jerryslezak.net/greenlaw/wiki/index.php?title=E482wiki_here
 - Intro to Applied Statistics: http://wiki.math.yorku.ca/index.php/MATH_2565_W_2007_Section_M

Social Bookmarking

- Web-based software to save your bookmarks/favourites online
- Searchable
- Tag, share, find links
- Folksonomies: bottom-up taxonomies built “by the people” (more current, not static, not authoritative)

Teaching, Learning & Social Bookmarking

- “Distributed research”
- Encourages students to find and read new content related to their course topic(s)
- Examples:
 - Social Software & Libraries (tag is “lis757”): <http://del.icio.us/tag/lis757>
 - Social Software Affordances (tag is “cte”): <http://del.icio.us/tag/cte>