Transforming an Educational Technology On-Line Course for 21st Century Learners

The redesign of an instructional technology course for pre-service and graduate education students to include new Web 2.0 Technology that meets the needs of our students today.

Introduction:
Most pre-service teachers and school media specialists only receive one course in the use of instructional technology. The changing nature of available technologies in school today, and “savvy technology student users” showed a need to change from teaching general Microsoft Office applications to Web 2.0 content that integrate newer technological tools that meet the needs of our 21st Century learners.

Objective:
This poster session will provide course design information for an updated educational technology course that includes wikis, blogs, digital storytelling, and other Web 2.0 topics. This course was well-received by our students and provided unique opportunities for project collaboration.

Selected Unit Content

Unit 4: Blogs
This unit explores blogs as collaborative communication tools that can be used to enhance instruction and enrich learning opportunities.

- Identify a blog as a communication technology that enhances instruction and enriches students through collaboration.
- Identify a blog as a collaborative tool that can be used to develop and track a project.
- Create a blog account and a classroom or media center blog, and invite members to participate.

Lecture Notes

What is a blog?
The word “blog” was formed by combining the terms “Web” and “log” and was named by Jorn Barger in December 1997. It is a Web site that typically is maintained by one person.

READINGS:
Print and read the following articles. The information will be used in the assignment, so you will need to be able to make notes.

- Missing the Internet: A Space for “Writing without Writing”: Blogs in the Language Arts Classroom
  http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000001c/002a3153.pdf

Sample Blogs:
Watch this YouTube video for a very simple explanation of a blog (also appears in lecture notes):

- Blogs in Plain English: (2:58)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOX

Sample Blogs

- These are all educational blogs. Some are general:

Blogs in Education – Your Thoughts:

Now that you have created your own blog and blogged with your peers, share your thoughts integrating this tool into your classroom or media center.

Read your peers’ comments and respond to at least two.

Lessons learned from this experience:
- Pre-service teachers are eager to learn new technology skills, especially when taught in depth.
- Teacher identified connections were made between course content and personal teaching practice.
- The use of collaborative inquiry groups was a positive practice for our students.
- Changing from a “skills level” course to a Web 2.0 technology course was well worth the course design time.
- Due to the changing nature of technology and the need to constantly update online course content, preparation, assessments, and grading can take a significant amount of time each semester.

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