Using Social Media to Enhance Instruction in Higher Education

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1. What is Social Media (SM)?

1. SoTL research on Twitter & Facebook

2. 7 ways to integrate SM into the classroom

3. 7 suggestions for successful integration

4. Generating Ideas

Outline
“Web-based & mobile applications that allow individuals & orgs to create, engage, and share new user-generated or existing content, in a digital env. though multi-way communication.”

- Social Networking Sites (SNS)
- Digital Natives
- Being utilized by higher education institutions

What is SM?

(Davis, Deil-Amen, Aguilar, & Canche, 2012; Facebook, 2012; Junco, 2012a,b,c).
Considering such explosion in usage, should social media be considered as a tool in the higher education classroom?

1. Student Perceptions
2. SoTL evidence
3. Authenticity

(Davis et al, 2012; Gibson, 2010)
97 college students across the US
25 questions on general SM usage & SM in the classroom
Results:

Experience with SM in the classroom

Student Perceptions
97 college students across the US

25 questions on general SM usage & SM in the classroom

Results:

- Perceived effectiveness for:
  - Communicating with peers
  - Creating or collaborating on documents
  - Awareness of deadlines or meetings
  - 29% reported that SM was “somewhat effective” in helping them understand course material.

Student Perceptions
97 college students across the US
25 questions on general SM usage & SM in the classroom
Results:

If asked to use SM for course related work...

Student Perceptions
“How would you like to see social media used in classes?”
97 college students across the US
25 questions on general SM usage & SM in the classroom

Results:

- Reluctances include
  - Separate personal and professional lives (64%)
  - Distractions (58%)
  - Privacy (38%)
- Familiarity is a significant predictor of positive views

Student Perceptions
140 characters called “tweets”
Follow others
# used to seek out relevant conversations

Educational Applications
- Instant feedback in the classroom
- Learning tool outside of the classroom
- Communication (ex: facilitate study groups)

Twitter

(Grozdanic, 2011; Kassens-Noor, 2012)
Advantages

- Quick communication
- Limited personal information
- Concise writing
- Link to detailed information
- Real world application
- Student enjoyment
- Connection to peers
- Increase learning

Disadvantages

- Limits interaction though one way communication
- No file sharing
- Familiarity
- Multitasking / Distractions

Twitter

(Dunlap & Lowenthal, 2009; Grozdanic, 2011; LaRue; 2012; Lowe & Laffey, 2011; Rinaldo et al., 2011; Wright, 2010; Estus, 2010; LaRue, 2012).
Healthcare Courses

- Discussion using Twitter vs. control
- Improved academic scores & student engagement indices

Cross Disciplinary Class including: urban planning, construction management, and environmental studies.

- Communication using Twitter vs. in-class discussions
- Control group had greater retention & were more self-reflective in assignments
- Character limit

Evidence (SoTL)

(Junco et al., 2011; Kassens-Noor, 2012)
Open to public in 2006
Create a user profile to “friend” others
Share pictures, messages & personal information

Educational Applications:
- Discussions out of the classroom
- Links to related course content
- Student groups
- Connection to outside resources
- Real world application

FaceBook

(Metzger, Finley, Ulbrich, & McAuley, 2010; LaRue, 2012)
Advantages

- Ease of communication
- Meaningful discussion
- Student motivation
- Sense of belonging to a group
- Link to real world application
- Understanding of material

Disadvantages

- Faculty prefer email
- Viewed as social not academic
- Security issues
- Misuse
- Inaccurate information
- Distraction

FaceBook

(Cain & Policastri, 2011; Estus, 2010; Haverback, 2009; Jabr, 2011; Junco, 2012; LaRue, 2012; Roblyer et al., 2010).
Geriatric Pharmacology Course
- Students blogged about course material in a closed FB group
- Written comments were more structured & insightful
- Students appreciate time to formulate thoughts & ease of use

Business Management Course
- Informal learning tool to connect students with 3 guest lecturers outside of class
- Optional FB page: viewed favorably
- Students reported increased interest
- Student to student interaction was limited

Evidence (SoTL)

(Estus, 2010; Cain and Policastri, 2011)
Blessing, Blessing & Fleck (2012)

- 63 total participants
- Conceptual knowledge vs. Humor control
- Students could follow Twitter or FB (63 % FB)
  - 84 total tweets (6 per ch.)
  - 83 to 90 % attended to the feeds
- Open ended recall: list 5 items
- MC exam questions: (2 per ch.)

“Why did the basketball player bring a duck to the game? She wanted to shot a foul shot!”

Freud: @Watson The unconscious is more important than the conscious! What lies beneath drives all of behavior.
Open ended recall

- 33% tweeted items remembered
- 29% humor items remembered
- Low source recognition (n=19)

Results

Twitter/FB

Humor

% MC correct

0.6 0.65 0.7 0.75
“Real or genuine” “True or Accurate”

Adopt technology in the classroom that
1. Resonates with you
2. Allows your students a “real” experience
   ✷ Deliberate / intentional

Authenticity
Seven Ways to Integrate Social Media into the Classroom
Seven Suggestions for Successful Implementation
Small Group Discussion:

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Have you used SM in your classrooms?

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What ideas discussed today might you use in your classroom? Which ones would you not use?

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Could your idea become a SoTL study? If so, discuss how.

Generate ideas
Additional questions or Discussion?

Chapter & article copies available via email upon request

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Thank you!