Why should we motivate teachers to use instructional technology in their teaching process?

Panel discussion prepared by Dr Armand St-Pierre

Learners are moving from a traditional educational environment into an open learning society where they can learn anywhere anytime. They are brought up in a multimedia and technology environment where new media are available to promote learning outcomes. More learners are connected on a daily basis to the Internet and they have the opportunities to surf virtual libraries and electronic journals to enhance learning outcomes. The web offers a rich platform of educational contents. The use of information technology could help to support new ways of collaborative learning, electronic communication, and independent learning. Research shows that conservative institutions entering into an information and communication age still emphasize the university professor as the classic information-giver, while nowadays several research studies advocate a collaborative learning environment where the professor becomes a mentor to his/her students.

The author of this article believes that Web media and technology should be used simultaneously in the teaching and learning processes, i.e. there should be equilibrium between the left-hand side (teaching) and the right-hand side (learning) of the equation with respect to the uses of Web resources in the curriculum. If the professors were using Web media in the delivery of course contents, the students should be learning how to integrate these tools into their learning process and vice versa. The technological delivery platform for the curriculum is ineffective if the students are frequent users of Web resources and technology in their learning process; whereas, professors do not know how to integrate these media into their teaching process. Based on the author’s experience in using technology in teaching for several years, the author firmly believes that Web media and technology had to be in equilibrium if the institution wants to effectively deliver the curriculum. In fact, empirical results of different surveys done by the author corroborate the theoretical justification for using Web resources and media in the teaching and learning processes.

The goal of this panel is to discuss the pros and cons why any school, college, and university should introduce in an efficient and effective ways instructional technology in their teaching process. Some of the issues to be discussed could be: what is the tradeoff between increase in student learning with traditional methods versus time invested in learning new technology—Is it worth the effort? Technology integration takes valuable time and effort …. Are we willing to do it?

Participants from the floor will have the opportunity to present their experiences with respect to this topic. A summary of key factors will be presented at the end of the panel discussion to help participants to introduce technological media in their educational environment.