Presentation title: Why not Wiki for collaborative communication and idea generation?

Presenter:
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Abstract:
Wiki’s are a unique and powerful way to communicate via the web. Like blogs, Wiki’s are free web based tools that can be used to present information and collaboratively build knowledge. Unlike blogs, Wiki’s can be appended in multiple ways for even further active collaborative learning. This round-table presentation will discuss the use of wiki’s for collaborative and communicative educational uses. Using Wikis in education will be discussed and demonstrated and Wiki software will be distributed. In addition, student generated Wikis will be presented from graduate level courses in educational technology and media studies. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own ideas and questions for how to use this powerful tool.

Type of presentation:
Round table presentation (but can be modified into other categories as well)

Media to be used:
Will use personal laptop computer, some handouts, and Wiki software.

Objectives
1. Demonstrate how Wiki’s work.
2. Explore ways that Wikis have been used in graduate level media and technology courses.
3. Discuss ways to further extend the use of the Wiki in educational contexts.

Purpose or problem:
Today’s students have an abundant variety of media sources with which to spend their time, as computer and Internet technologies rapidly add to what seems to be an already ample supply (Leu, et. al., 2004; Roberts et al., 1999). While the advent of computers has afforded the dissemination of media information and resources, they have also tested and perhaps even strained the definition and redefinition of what it means to be literate in a world replete with information. With the Internet taking a prominent role in student lives at home, it has also taken a prominent role in the instructional practices of teachers.
Teachers and students have begun the process of moving from classrooms in buildings to “classrooms” that meet over computer networks. Increasingly, teachers create web sites for student use, use course management systems like WebCT or Blackboard as a way to either supplement or completely maintain their materials and courses. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, these numbers continue to increase. During the 2000-2001 academic year, for example, college level credit-granting distance education courses were offered by 55% of all two and four year institutions. Of that number, 88% indicated plans to start or increase the number of Internet courses using asynchronous instruction as the primary mode of instructional delivery, and 62% indicated plans to either start using or increase the number of Internet courses using synchronous computer based instruction as the primary mode of instructional delivery (NCES, 2003). The networked courses offer the benefit of reaching students anytime, anywhere, but also leave some teachers pondering how to appropriate best practice pedagogy in this new environment. With increased access, availability, literacies, and unique learning practices, therefore, teachers need models for effective, meaningful computer mediated learning and literacy practices.

The purpose of this presentation, therefore, is to examine how Wikis can potentially contribute to pedagogical practices that take advantage of the growing use of the Internet in education. The session invites people to attend who have already used Wikis in teaching as well as those who are curious about what they are and how they can be used. Some sample software will be distributed along with discussion for how it can be installed on a web server.

References: