Examining factors that influence faculty decisions to adopt Web 2.0 technologies

Abstract: Today’s student body is made up primarily of “digital natives”, while faculty members are primarily “digital immigrants”. Consequently, while students are immersed in a culture of cell phones, text messaging, YouTube, wikis, social networks and other Web 2.0 technologies, many faculty still have not made the switch to these emerging technologies and use course websites and e-mail as their predominant means of connecting with their students. Are faculty missing out the opportunity to better connect with their students by not utilizing the Web 2.0 tools available today? This presentation will discuss the results of a study to assess faculty’s awareness of the pedagogical benefits of Web 2.0 tools to supplement in-class learning, as well as assess faculty’s decisions to adopt these tools using the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior.

Introduction

Internet technologies such as course Websites and newsgroups have added value to traditional classroom knowledge delivery (Brochers, 1998). These web technologies have impacted the course delivery and design in many colleges and universities (Barnett et al, 2004). In the past few years a new wave of Web 2.0 technologies has emerged with the potential to provide additional enhancements and additional value to the classroom learning environment. With the use of Web 2.0, students no longer access only the web for static information; instead, student access is can be dynamic as they create collective knowledge through a variety of social interactions (Maloney, 2007). The use of Web 2.0 tools enables students to connect different pieces of information and create new information that could be shared with others (Maloney, 2007).

Are these Web 2.0 technologies beneficial to learning? Currently, little research exists on this topic. However, we do know that these technologies have many affordances to improve teaching and learning (Ferdig, 2007). These affordances include the ability to support scaffolding and active learner participation, provide opportunities for student publication, feedback, and reflection, and the potential for development of a community of learners (Ferdig, 2007). To further explore the pedagogical benefits of Web 2.0 technologies, it is essential that faculty employ their use in the classroom.

In this presentation, we will address the results of a study that assessed faculty’s awareness of the pedagogical potential of Web 2.0 technologies to supplement in-class learning and assess factors that facilitate or inhibit the adoption of such technologies using the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior as the theoretical foundation (Taylor and Todd, 1995).