

Title of Session: Online Teaching and Learning - The Future of Education

Moderator: Roger Goodson

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Room: Online Teaching and Learning Group

BJB2: Roger has placed some information in this room as background to his discussion tonight

RogerMG: If you have not done so already, please read the Discussion item in 'Featured Items. Titled" 'The Future of Education (and the Teaching Profession) on this group's homepage. (sorry about the plural of 'education' in the title.)

BJB2: a reminder if you are new to Tapped In, go to Actions in the top right of the chat and click on detach.

DoloresG: I believe what you are saying is true. As I saw the MUVE's come along, the writing seemed to be on the wall.

GeorgeK: I agree to a point...teachers (as we now know them) will disappear, but mentors will take the lead.

JaniceSG: I think you're right, George.

JaniceSG: The VGs will be the mentors.

DavidWek wonders about teachers disappearing

SherylM: When I was in the first grade, Weekly Reader had an article about this. I used to dream that I was in an all glass living room with a big screen 3d image of my teacher.

DavidWek: Do you know who Philip Johnson (architect) is, Sheryl?

SherylM: I am all for it, but I was doing that dreaming in 1960!

SherylM: NO

JaniceSG: Teachers will be part of the design/development process for the software, I think.

GeorgeK: Let's look at the mentors or VG's as conduits to other mentors and Vg's, too.

DavidWek: <http://www.philipjohnsonglasshouse.org/>

SherylM: cool

DavidWek . o O (VG == virtual guide?)

ErinTG: it all seems to far-fetched for me, I am more thinking ahead to the day that my students are all using laptops instead of pen and paper. That is more my speed.

GeorgeK: VG = virtual guide in Roger's piece (I think)

DavidWek: thanks

JaniceSG: It's definitely going to take a while to get us there but it's good to start planning...

JaniceSG: That's one of the reasons I'm getting my Master's in Educational Technology. That's the direction we're heading, I think.

RogerMG: <----being quiet until people have read the discussion in Featured Items. Some arrived late.

ErinTG: Yes but I do think there is a down side to this idea. I have just started taking online courses this summer and I am finding them to be very impersonal and hard to get used to. There obviously is a certain level of convenience but there is also a big sacrifice on the human interaction level.

GeorgeK: The current online courses build on the old model--i.e. pave the cow path--rather than take up the new approach.

DorethiaM: online courses require a lot of discipline.

ErinTG: George - what do you mean?

JaniceSG: I think it depends on how the online courses are handled. I just took my first grad course that way and enjoyed it. It was set up for lots of interaction among the students and the professor.

DoloresG: Erin you may feel that way. But how do our students feel about that

GeorgeK: learning requires discipline

GeorgeK: Many online courses simply digitize the classroom approach most often used now (lecture)

DorethiaM: If you are a procrastinator online learning is not for you.

JaniceSG: Very true.

ErinTG: Dolores - I'm not sure how they would feel but as George said it requires a lot of discipline - I teach middle school so I'm not sure how well they would do.

RogerMG: Just for this discussion ..let's eliminate the word 'students' in our messages and use 'learners'.

ErinTG sorry

JeffC: true... the term "students" has such a negative connotation! ;-)

JaniceSG: I think it's a paradigm shift and we'll eventually get to the tipping point. (from "buzz words R us") ;-)

RogerMG: I catch myself all the time saying 'student', or writing it . . .but I'm getting better at intercepting it. Using 'learners' leads me to a different line of thinking.

DavidWek . o O ("life-long learners")

GeorgeK: I have some friends who teach in private universities associated with K-12 schools. They occasionally are asked to teach below university level. When they do, they treat the learners exactly like the university learners. The learners love it.

RogerMG: Now that you've had a chance to read the discussion ..given that the tech. world the learner will be in will be dramatically different in twenty years. What are we doing now to prepare the learners for it?

JeffC: Personally, I think that lifelong learning is a laudable goal, however, I feel the emphasis placed on "achievement" in K-12 (and beyond)... measuring "performance" through high stakes testing thoroughly saps the "learner's" desire to learn.

RogerMG: In one of the festival spots yesterday, Rushton asked what % of the learners thought learning was fun. Most guesses were pretty low.

JaniceSG: I agree, Jeff. The mindset needs to be one of wanting to learn rather than being able to prove that you've learned.

ErinTG: I think we need to help learners find strategies to stay motivated and have the drive to want to try new things and take risks.

SherylM: I agree with Janice and Roger. I have personally experienced differences in online classes, and I believe that the way the virtual classes are setup does make a difference for the learner

MaryCau: I agree that lifelong learning is a desirable goal - it is going to take changing the way education is designed.

JaniceSG: Motivation is a key concern in developing games/simulations/virtual environments.

MaryCau: Online learning can be a valuable tool, but it takes some getting used to

MichaelM: I read an article last week published in an MIT technical journal about Second Life and Google Earth. Fascinating opportunities. I will probably buy some virtual learning land.

RogerMG: If today's learners are going to be living in that world (described in the 'discussion' piece ... what are the most necessary things for them to be learning now?

SherylM: Yes, and sometimes those with strong social (interpersonal) learning styles need human contact

RogerMG: For instance: how to access information and evaluate it.

DoloresG: responsibility

DorethiaM: Learners have changed over the past 30 years. We are a mobile society and technology has changed our lives totally.

JaniceSG: assessment

ErinTG: independence

RogerMG: How has that changed accessing information Dorethia?

GeorgeK: 2nd life is interesting...in the non-virtual world I have heard increasing complaints about unwillingness to be involved in the community....2nd life is all community and tons of people are very involved. I believe the interest is in self-organizing, rather than having politicians, lawyers, and their minions tell you how you have to organize.

JaniceSG: How to recognize skills that will apply in RL.

RogerMG: Do virtual skills intersect with RL Janice?

SherylM: Are the complaints that people outside the virtual world are unwilling to be involved, or that the virtual community won't allow involvement, George, I didn't catch that.

JaniceSG: What the learner does in the course a game/simulation can be transferred to RL.

MaryCau: I have a concern about the young learner (elementary) level getting too involved in virtual world and having difficulty dealing with the real world.

DavidWek: IBM is going to start contributing employees "Educational 401(k)" - article in yesterday's NYTimes - "learning accounts"

JaniceSG: For instance, The Sims provides opportunities for managing multiple priorities.

GeorgeK: If you read Bowling Alone (Putnam) and much from sociologists and political scientists, they decry what they see as the public's (voters') apathy. I don't think its apathy.

SherylM: Yes, but the true interpersonal learner often relates to tactile and visual stimuli, Janice

DoloresG: in RL things like gestures, facial expressions also communicate meaning - that social component is missing in VR

SherylM: Yes, I agree, but not all learners do.

ErinTG: Mary, I agree

SherylM: with Delores

DorethiaM: students are already involved in a virtual world with video games and television. Sometimes it is hard for them to distinguish reality from fantasy

MaryCau: I agree with Dolores

DavidWek thinks that no matter how much simulation training one has, one still needs to drive the REAL car, fly the REAL plane...

JaniceSG: I think as technical capabilities advance, we will be able to incorporate more things like gestures, expressions, etc.

DavidWek gesticulates wildly

MaryCau: Dorothea, that is my concern that the young learner will have difficulty distinguishing RL FROM virtual reality

ErinTG: but does that "advancement" replace the actual face to face interaction that young people need in order to develop social skills

JaniceSG: An airline pilot's first real flight is often one with passengers on a scheduled trip.

RogerMG: I get up in the AM (about 5:30) have a small breakfast, access my email and websites. I check my voicemail. My spouse leaves for work and I remind her to take her Blackberry (while I forget my wireless phone and have to drive back to pick it up.) I get caught in traffic and phone an admin. assistant to let her know I will be late. I reach my office and again access email, websites. . . .Most of the rest of the day and into the evening it's off and on like this. Now . . .Imagine what today's learners will be up against . . .if what we have now is 'primitive'

DoloresG: I hear you Erin!

DorethiaM: we also have the capability with new cameras on computers to have that smile back in place and see who you are communicating with.

GeorgeK: How much f2f interaction does a learner get in the classroom when expected to sit their quietly until called on to speak?

MichaelM: I think virtual worlds are tools not meant to replace real life, but supplement learning and allowing individual learning spaces. You will never be able to pour a glass of water from a computer at least not in my lifetime.

JaniceSG: Very true, Michael.

RogerMG: Eventually, it is predicted, that the line between VR and RL will be 'thin.'

DoloresG: Ok so we are talking a balance and that is something learners need to learn

DavidWek: You're not THAT old, Micheal, are you?

SherylM: I agree that all this technology can make the experience more personal, BUT I am sincerely saying that some learners can work in VR and NEED to connect with these people in RW

JaniceSG: I don't think RL will be totally replaced because people need people (as Barbra said).

RogerMG: A robot can pour water.

RogerMG: David:-)

GeorgeK: on the water stuff, don't our new Frigidaire's have chips in them?

DavidWek: yes

RogerMG: Good point George. Chips are embedded everywhere.

DavidWek: You can buy a fridge with a surface mounted touch screen, I believe

SherylM: I personally wouldn't have to see anyone, but I know some who couldn't make it through the day without this RW contact.

DavidWek: . o O (laptop next to the ice dispenser)

MichaelM: My mistake. A robot can pour water.

DorethiaM: We have ibooks at school with camera's and luckily the students Do not know how to use them. They all have camera phones. I just upgraded to a camera phone.

DavidWek: The tools will keep coming - the question is HOW to use the tools

JeffC: why is that lucky Dorethia?

DavidWek: Lots of things can be dangerous - they need to be used appropriately

GeorgeK: And I have been to a product demo exhibiting hard/software to control the entire household...to be marketed soon

JaniceSG: I think if education doesn't "keep up" with non-education technology, everyone is going to suffer.

MaryCau: Striking a balance between the RL and VW will have to be an important component in the future.

RogerMG: Mary . . .and that may well be a skill learners will need to learn.

RogerMG: How to discriminate between RL and VR.

MaryCau: I agree

JaniceSG: Excellent point, Roger.

ErinTG: what about the financing of it all? That is a huge undertaking for a school district!

JeffC: take it out of textbooks

SherylM nods

DorethiaM: why do you need a tv screen on a refrigerator. We must remember the purpose for such tools. LEARNERS need to know how to use those tools properly. I often tell my community of learners that I am here to teach and they are to learn. If they want to play they can do that at home

JeffC: textbooks cost way more than tech, and no one ever questions their existence and continuance.

MichaelM: As long as computers serve people in a safe efficient way and not the other way around, you probably have a good balance.

RogerMG: By the way . . .what will happen to the textbooks?

SherylM: no notebooks would save a lot of trees too

SherylM: and no textbooks

SylviaMe: good point

JeffC: they've already started integrating tech with textbooks through CD ROMs and online additions.

MichaelM: We run teacher wikis with 12,000 pages for \$69.00 per month plus volunteers of course

SherylM: yes

JeffC: because the textbook companies know they're in danger.

JaniceSG: VR needs to be made more affordable so schools will start to adopt it. If we could just shift some of the money from video game development to learning tools, that would ease the funding crunch a bit.

DorethiaM: A textbook can be read anywhere and anytime. I cannot lie in bed and read my self to sleep on a computer.

ErinTG: good point Dorethia

SherylM: It is the infrastructure that is the real issue

JeffC: textbooks put people to sleep... good point!

JaniceSG: One can take a PDA to bed. Or a PSP.

DavidWek hopes Dorethia isn't reading a textbook in bed - much too heavy to hold

DorethiaM: Not all of my learners have a computer, or access to the internet. Some parents can barely pay the utilities bills.

SherylM: When my dad caught me sleeping under my College Bio book, he wanted to know if I thought I was getting the info by OSMOSIS. LOL

ErinTG: learners respond well to different modalities.

JeffC: not to mention the extra structure that has politicians insisting on NCLB "standards" etc.... tech is an afterthought... and a "dangerous" one at that which needs heavy filtering (etc.) in their minds.

RogerMG: Of course, the textbook companies have been a 'force' in how learning occurs for years . . .just look at reading series in elementary schools. Curriculums have been built around textbooks. Will this 'go away'?

SherylM: yes

DavidWek . o O (digital divide issues are important to consider)

DorethiaM: Actually I read the textbooks in my private library (bathroom ;)

ErinTG: actually it would be diffusion - osmosis is only with water! :)

DavidWek: poor schools don't have textbooks just in the same way they don't have technology

DavidWek . o O (Erin - good scientific point!)

DoloresG: are state sponsored online learning programs already providing computers and more to online learners?

RogerMG: Good point . . .how will we deal with the 'new' technologically poor?

SherylM: Some of you know that I live in a rural area where people who want and can afford broadband can't get it because the infrastructure is not available.

DorethiaM: I think that we are seeing the demise of textbooks with technology. It is like NCLB or NO Child learns from books.

DavidWek . o O (Rural Electrification)

RogerMG: I hope so Dorethia.

JeffC has to run... let me leave people with this thought... I'm trying to get a team together to explore the possibility of getting a Gates Foundation grant exploring the use of "speech to text and text to speech" in the classroom for K-6, SPED, Alted, ESL and at-risk students. Yes, different modalities exist... but why try and give a blind kid a Braille

textbook when you have tech that can ameliorate the problem much more readily, not to mention making it easier for all to learn?

ErinTG: NCLB is just social promotion with a new name.

JeffC: if interested... email me at jbcoops@gmail.com

SherylM: My parents have dial-up. They can't get dsl, much less broadband

DorethiaM: We continually want to put square pegs in round holes.

RogerMG: Thanks Jeff.

SherylM: I know about rural electrification, but it is still only on the demonstration level

DavidWek: Where are they, Sheryl?

ErinTG: actually I think in this age of technology we have just created a larger divide between the "haves" and the "have nots"

SherylM: Southeast Kansas

MichaelM: Hughes network satellite, but it is more expensive.

RogerMG: Learners are not pegs looking for holes .. they are looking to be understood and understanding.

DorethiaM: There are text to speech and vice versa. the Mac does this. You just have to scan the books in

DavidWek nods to Sheryl

JaniceSG: I agree, Erin.

DavidWek . o O (blind people can use Kurzweil Reading Machines to read a standard book)

SherylM: there is some reason why they can't get a satellite connection, I forgot what they told me.

GeorgeK: Interestingly, Gore had a plan in the late 80s to duplicate the actions of the Rural Electrification Act (circa 1920's) with broadband. The nationwide average cost was \$75 a household (cheap where concentrated in urban areas, expensive rural, but averaging to \$75)

MichaelM: Libraries usually have free broadband thanks to the Gates foundation and others.

RogerMG: Kurzweil is an interesting futurist . . .I recommend his books to you.

DavidWek . o O (that's "I'm Al Gore and I invented the Internet")

DavidWek agrees with Roger

GeorgeK: He has his faults but he recognized the need early.

SherylM: Yes, I we were thrown back years since Gore's first proposals. Even the first Freedom to Farm Act promoted this, but the administrations didn't promote it.

JaniceSG: I think it comes down to priorities. Where do we (as individuals and as the government) want to spend our money?

DorethiaM: I teach special ed and the buzz word is differentiation. Yesterday it was individualization. We are not from the same mold. Learners need to be taught best for their learning modality.

DavidWek: Aren't there places where "successful" education is happening now?

SherylM: Well, some interpret differentiation as individualization of all students.

SherylM: Yes

DorethiaM: Maybe some of the charter schools are successful. Mostly we are all struggling in America to keep up with the rest of the world.

SherylM: Iowa, lol

RogerMG: I believe successful learning is occurring all the time . . .we just don't know how to look for it, or how to recognize it when we see it many times.

DavidWek: why aren't we keeping up with the rest of the world?

ErinTG: laziness

MichaelM: Fear

JaniceSG: Greed

RogerMG: Let's not get into politics David)

DavidWek . o O (OOOh, the 7 Deadly Sins!)

SherylM: We started first, and now our stuff is old....technology favors the new technology

DavidWek: Americans landed people on the moon (38 years ago)

SherylM: lol, how circular

DavidWek: Americans invented the Internet (38 years ago)

DorethiaM: What are they doing differently in Iowa? Here in California, we have a steady stream of immigrants from Mexico. Some of them come with very high academic skills in math and their primary language. they regress because we assume because they don't speak English they are not intelligent

RogerMG: And we brought rocks back . . .

JaniceSG: I won't get into politics (although I'm biting my tongue in not doing so) but I think that's where our priorities come into play.

ErinTG: Roger I agree that successful learning is occurring all over the place but success cannot be defined as any one thing and not by a standardized test - success is progress on the individual's part.

DavidWek: So, how come we were doing pretty well, then, in the midst of a lot of political problems, we were still coming up with pretty cool inventions?

ErinTG: some people still think the moon walks were staged and taped in a movie studio!

RogerMG: Genetics changed with Crick and Watson . . .now we have biotech . . .a whole new industry. Are we preparing our learners for that world? Or do we let our politicians 'rule' what can be developed and what cannot be developed.

DorethiaM: If California can spend \$40,000 a year to house prisoners, then I think they should match that for education. Just think of the return on their investment. We would have world class schools that produce world class learners.

RogerMG: ?

SherylM: and we left a mirror on the moon

GeorgeK: Gerald Ford made the comment once, that "if government had to make things a six pack of beer would cost \$50". Perhaps the problem is letting government determine how education will happen. Government is not good at making things.

RogerMG: I agree George.

JaniceSG: Ultimately, the government is us.

DavidWek agrees with Janice

RogerMG: The 'gov't' likes to let us think that:-)

SherylM: yes

ErinTG: I don't know what the answer is but I just want to help kids learn and be successful.

MichaelM: We have all kinds of technology. We must work together to apply what is available for reasonable ROI

GeorgeK: No, it isn't. Most people avoid government like the plague.

DorethiaM: We need a national system of education with national standards where the playing field is equal. math is the same whether you learn it in Kansas or New York.

JaniceSG: Amen!

DavidWek: Not always, Dorethia, but I understand what you are saying

AnaV: agree with Dorethia

SherylM: because we are lazy and don't want to assert ourselves in the business of government

DavidWek: we don't always agree, even in math education, what constitutes one particular course

RogerMG: I agree with Erin . . .and we're back to 'skills' they will need for the rapidly tech. advancing world.

JaniceSG: Not sure it should be nationalized but an equal playing field should be the goal.

ErinTG: Yes but property taxes are much higher here in NY and so we get more money for our schools. Not fair but that is the way it goes right now.

AnaV: same expectations for all the students...

DoloresG: If you put in national standards how does that help these learners in the VR who will be moving at their own pace

DorethiaM: the only difference is when you learn about your state. Maybe we need a national income tax for education, money that should go to learners and not bureaucrats

RogerMG: I tend to think that the 'No Child Left Behind' political idea is a dismal failure and in some ways, anti-learning. What do others think?

DavidWek . o O (politics, huh, Roger?)

DavidWek grins

GeorgeK: agreed

MaryCau: I agree!

ErinTG: agreed - it's the only way to get all schools equal money

MichaelM: Sometimes people need to ask questions to understand or have it explained differently.

JaniceSG: Not necessarily national standards but equal opportunities.

SylviaMe: I agree

DorethiaM: NCLB has it's pros and cons. Positively, it makes us think about what and how we are teaching.

JaniceSG: Definitely agree on NCLB.

BJB2 wonders if Roger planned on resolving this discussion topic during one session?

ErinTG: BJ - if we could do that then it would be a miracle!

DavidWek . o O (Roger's mini-Festival - next month, Bj)

JaniceSG likes that idea

BJB2 chuckles...good idea, David!

DavidWek smiles

RogerMG: Ohhhh NOOOOooooo

DorethiaM: national standards are needed. We have it for food, medicine and other things.

BJB2 puts David and Roger in charge

RogerMG -)

SherylM: Yes, Kansas already had one of the first standards based educational systems in the US. We always scored in the top 3 to 10 on the NAEP Science and our Quality Performance Accreditation was tied into our North Central evaluations. We never needed NCLB

DavidWek remembers NEVER to volunteer

JaniceSG: I won't get started on the medicine, etc. I just saw "Sicko" last weekend. ;-)

DavidWek: but look what Kansas State Board of Ed. did about biology curriculum and "evolution"

MichaelM: Ok. We have a nonprofit, let's organize and begin collecting donations and/or taxes so we can make a difference.

DorethiaM: evolution vs creation. What does it matter. We are here and we need to look to how we can stay here.

DavidWek smiles

SherylM: Yes, and that was an anti governmental revolution that the great majority of Kansans opposed. Most were unaware of this constituency.

RogerMG: BJ . . .seriously .. I think this will be a recurring theme in this discussion forum.

BJB2 nods to Roger. Good idea.

DavidWek: It's an exciting topic for discussion, Roger

RogerMG: And, we are running out of time. The future is getting closer!!!!

SherylM smiles

JaniceSG: Hey, we gotta start somewhere. Why not here?

DavidWek agrees

DorethiaM: put something on when you file your taxes, every person give \$1 minimum. Look how much we could raise.

RogerMG: I would like to thank everyone for your participation. This was fun.

ErinTG: Roger - are we really that close to such a drastic change in the way we educate children?

SherylM: What is one thing that each person can promote in the place where they stand?
VR or RW

GeorgeK: Roger, may I provide a paragraph or two as pre-reading for next month's discussion- thoughts on why our traditional classroom approach may be doomed from the start?

SherylM: That seems to me a good place to start

RogerMG: Some put it at 30 years from now.

SherylM: They were doomed when I was in the first grade.

DavidWek . o O (hard to predict the future)

ErinTG: well ok because I can retire in 21 years - so I'm good because I'm not sure I'd like it!

RogerMG: Sure George. Go ahead and post them in 'Discussions'

DavidWek: how much does a 5th grade classroom today look like my 5th grade classroom 38 years ago? - pretty close to the same, I would guess

SherylM: Yes

JaniceSG: that's scary

SherylM: Yes

SylviaMe: wow very true

MichaelM: Looser pants

SherylM laughs

JaniceSG: Here we are, lagging behind again...

DavidWek smiles

RogerMG: . . .and for my next act in FROL . . coming up in 5 minutes . . .we are going to talk about cultural lag.

DavidWek . o O (more cell phones)

GeorgeK: but with suspenders

SherylM: we are moving away from that style here

ErinTG: thank you all for a very interesting and enlightening discussion - good night!

GeorgeK: bye all.

DavidWek waves

JaniceSG: Thanks everyone!

DoloresG: bye

MichaelM: Bye everyone.