

Learning and Teaching with Web 2.0

Course Syllabus

Catalog Description

The Internet as we know it has been constantly changing and improving over the past several years and these changes have been so numerous and so dramatic as to inspire people to refer to this "new" internet as Web 2.0 or the Read/Write Web. The content of the Read/Write Web, as we will call it, is characterized by open communication, freedom to share and re-use content, and dynamic interactivity among users of varying technical abilities around the globe. There are now a multitude of web-based tools available that can allow people to organize their favorite bookmarks, write online documents, and share information with others through social software like blogs and wikis. These tools can positively impact teaching and learning and the implications are significant. Students can be empowered to see how their ideas can be shared easily with the world and students around the globe can easily collaborate and communicate with each other to build knowledge communities that are not dependent on time and space. A few dedicated educators are sharing their ideas and blogging about these new tools so that they can be used effectively in classrooms. In this workshop, participants will be exposed to many of the tools of the Read/Write Web and will get the chance to experiment with new tools each week. The final session will focus on how educators can help students to use these new tools safely. Discussions will help participants focus on how these tools can be integrated into the classroom to make the most of their potential to enhance student learning.

Prerequisites

This is an introductory workshop for teachers, technology specialists, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, or other school personnel. Participants are expected to have regular access to computers, and proficiency with email and current web-browsers.

Goals

This workshop will enable participants to:

- Understand the fundamental changes that the Read/Write Web is bringing about in all areas including business, politics and journalism
- Learn about some of the tools of the Read/Write web such as RSS feeds, Social Bookmarking, Blogs, Wikis and Podcasts
- Create their own Blogs and Wikis for personal and/or professional use
- Locate resources for downloading and creating educational Podcasts and Streaming Videos
- Create accounts for storing, organizing, and retrieving web-based information using RSS feeds and Social Bookmarking tools
- Explore tools and strategies for keeping students safe on the Read/Write Web

Assessment and Course Requirements

This workshop is divided into six one-week sessions, each of which includes readings, an activity, and an online discussion among workshop participants. The time for completing each session is estimated to be four to five hours.

Course Products

As a final product, participants will complete a planning template (http://edtechleaders.org/documents/web2/Web2%20Lesson_Template.doc) outlining how they can integrate the Read/Write Web tools into a lesson or Unit they currently teach. In addition, participants will maintain a blog throughout the course in which they will reflect on what they are learning. Participants will be expected to view the blogs of their fellow participants periodically and leave comments several times during the course. Course Facilitators will also monitor and comment on all participant blogs throughout the course.

Discussion Participation

Students will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of their discussion board participation. Students are required to post a minimum of two substantial postings each session, including one that begins a new thread and one that responds to an existing thread. Postings that begin new threads will be reviewed based on their relevance, demonstrated understanding of course concepts, examples cited, and overall quality. Postings that respond to other students will be evaluated on relevance, degree to which they extend the discussion, and tone.

Session Overviews

Session One: What is the Read/Write Web?

In this introductory session, participants will read two articles that articulate how the web is changing with new tools that allow users to interact with each other and build learning communities. These articles will also start to explain the implications that these technologies can have for teaching and learning in the classroom. As an activity, participants will explore different blogs and online publications focused on the changing web and its impact on education.

Session Two: Motivating Writers and Enhancing Communication with Blogs

Statistically speaking, there is a new blog created every 11 seconds. The readings for this week will highlight the many ways in which school and classroom blogs can motivate learning in the classroom and enhance communication between schools, families, and students around the world. You will view some exemplary examples of classroom blogs and discuss how you might use a blog for your own purposes. You'll also have an opportunity to create your own blog which we will use as an additional tool for learning and reflection on the content of this course.

Session Three: Tools for Finding and Organizing Information on the Web

This session will expose you to some tools which can make finding, retrieving, and bookmarking resources more efficient and productive. You will learn about RSS feeds and how to subscribe to feed aggregators so you can retrieve new and relevant information in one convenient place. You will also learn about Social Bookmarking tools which allow you to save all of your favorite websites on a web space and enables you to connect with other people who are searching for information on the same topics.

Session Four: What is a Wiki?

Wikis can really exemplify the idea of the read/write web in that they allow a web space to constantly evolve into an informative and ever-changing educational resource, with contributions from people working together across space and time. In this session, you will learn how wikis are constructed and maintained and you will get the opportunity to explore how people are using this technology as an educational tool. You will also have the opportunity to create your own wiki for personal or educational use.

Session Five: Incorporating Podcasting and Video Streaming

Dynamic web content is becoming more accessible. In this session you will read about how streaming video and audio podcasts can enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. You will explore some of the available resources on the web and locate audio or video content that you can use in your classroom and school.

Session Six: Keeping Students Safe on the Read/Write Web

The content of this workshop highlighted the benefits of Read/Write tools for enabling enhanced communication and collaboration across distance and time. It is important that educators help make students aware of the dangers of interacting online and teach them about how they can stay safe and maintain privacy while still having access to the educational benefits of the Read/Write Web. This final session will highlight some available resources that teachers and students can use to discuss and practice safe online interaction. You will also complete your planning templates and share them for feedback in our discussion area.