Engaging students in an e-learning experience
how to manage information resources through wikis and web blogs

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SC3 Social networks and reference services

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Summary

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Introduction

- Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, UOC (Open University of Catalonia) case study: collaboration between the Virtual Library and the Information Science studies.
- Enabling students to acquire literacy skills, on how to manage information resources by means of collaborative learning through social networking, using web 2.0 tools.
Framework of the case study

- Completely Virtual campus (VC), a virtual environment that allows students to engage in all aspects of the learning process online and asynchronously.
- Educational model focused on the learning activities

Figure 1: Virtual classroom.
Information on student behaviour

• The analysis of 24 face-to-face interviews (Ferran, 2010) showed that:
  – To involve students in collaborative learning tools in e-learning environments are a key factor for acquiring information literacy, linked to a proactive attitude.
  – The existing digital content provided in UOC’s VC need to be done to embrace learner-centered approaches, based on constructivism, collaboration and cooperation. EHEA.
  – Contents can be improved by the use of social networking, web 2.0 tools:
    • a wiki
    • a blog
Why web 2.0 tools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Canned contents</strong></th>
<th><strong>Open contents</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of teacher</strong></td>
<td>Instructor, dispenser of knowledge</td>
<td>Facilitator of learning processes, coach/mentor; learning context manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of learner</strong></td>
<td>Receive, digest and reproduce knowledge</td>
<td>Active learner who develops competences, knowledge and skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td>Removed from learning process (educational content industry; often monodisciplinary perspective)</td>
<td>Part of enquiry-based learning process, learners engage with real world, “interdisciplinary” content, and contribute own ideas and study results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control</strong></td>
<td>By subject and instructional experts</td>
<td>By learners and teachers in the learning process (study group, community of practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services</strong></td>
<td>Database search and download for preparing courses/classes</td>
<td>RSS feeds for thematically relevant content (text, audio, video), peer-to-peer content services, bookmark sharing, discussion fora, social networking, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: extracted from OLCOS, 2007, p. 46-47: [http://www.olcos.org](http://www.olcos.org)
The wiki

http://wikieducator.org/TDR

Figure 2: Wiki of the Information skills applied to Research course
The blog

Figure 3: Weblog of the Information skills applied to Research course
Survey and results

Figure 4: Survey monkey online survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HYL2RCZ
Conclusions

• It has been essential the collaboration and cooperation between academic staff and the expert librarian during all the process: from tool choice and support design, to the assessment of the results obtained.

• Clear preference of the students for open content and social content vs. canned content and unidirectional knowledge transfer.

• Although there is no difference in the academic results, a higher level of satisfaction in students can be stated, and also the feeling of having acquired information-related competences.

• This is one more evidence that traditional roles for teachers, students and other support units (like libraries) in higher education are changing, as well as the way students perceive how education must be taught.

• Using a blog for library training is one step forward in the path towards a new educational model.
Bibliography

Thank you for your attention!

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