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

- **Introduction**
- **Framework of the case study**
  - The UOC Virtual Classroom (VC)
  - Information on student behaviour
- **Case study**
  - Why 2.0 tools?
  - The wiki
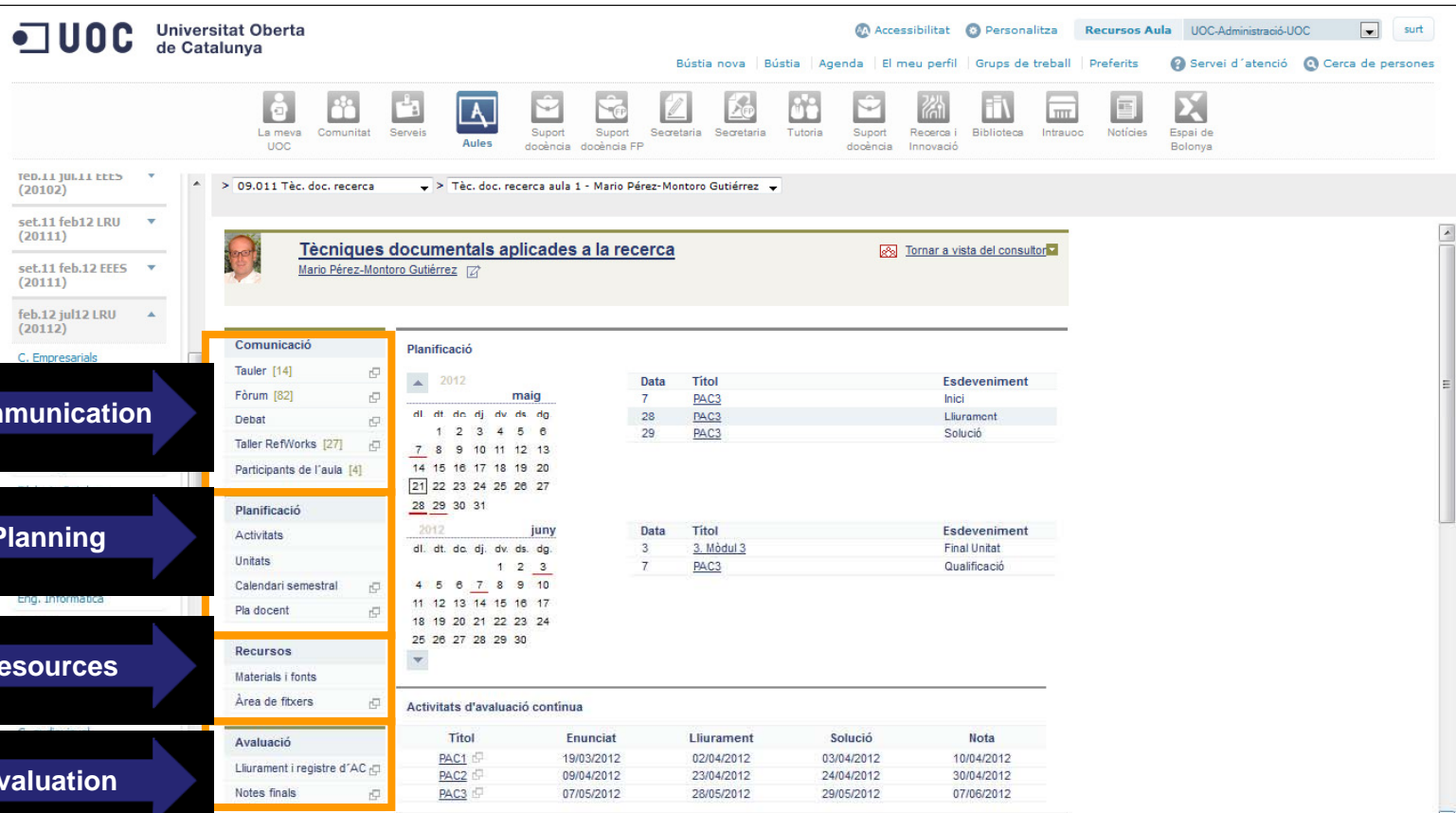 - The blog
  - Survey and results
- **Conclusions**

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

Virtual classroom

- 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.
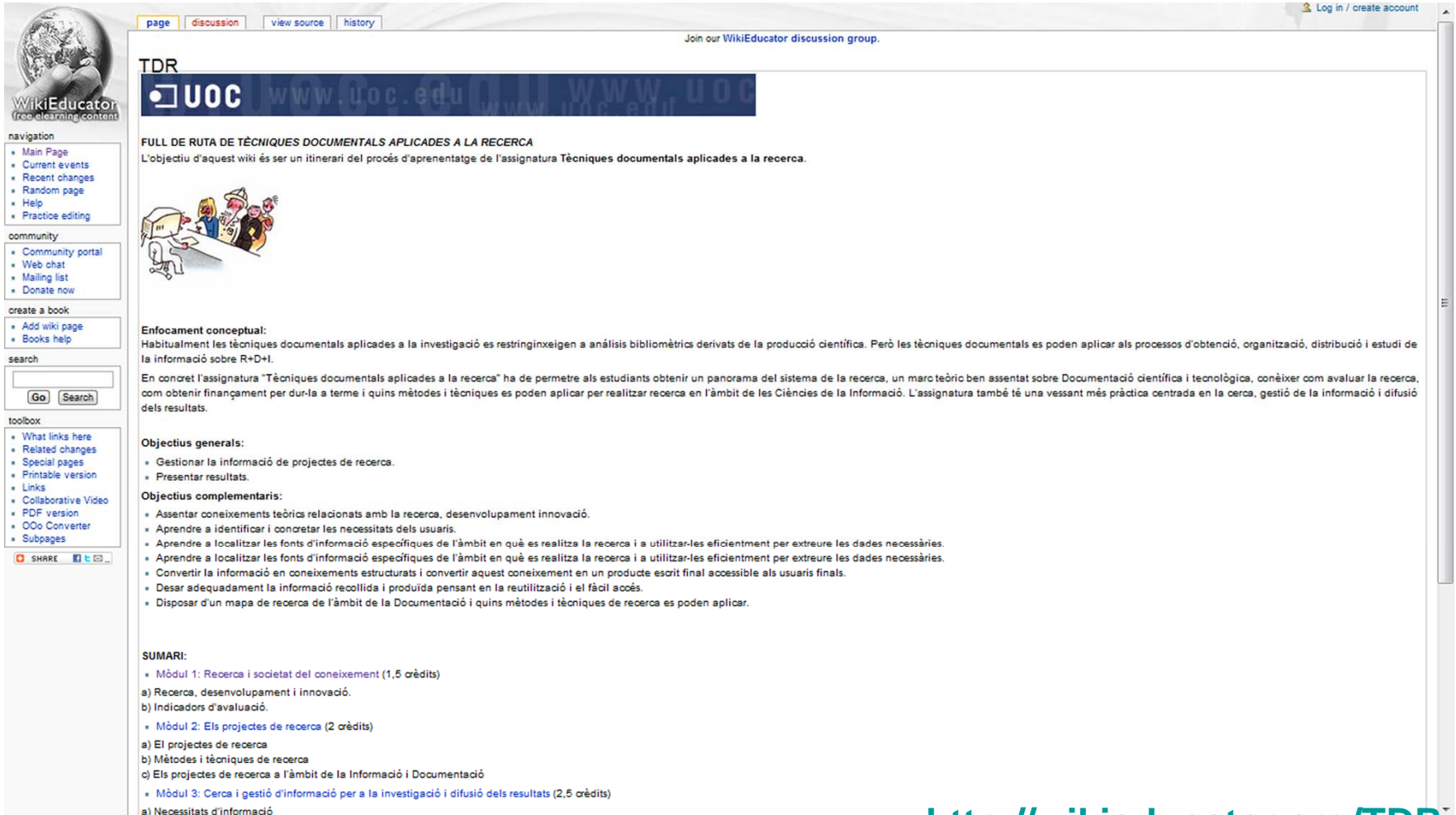
Information on student behaviour

- 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?

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

Table 1: extracted from *OLCOS,* 2007, p. 46-47: 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

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

Figure 4: Survey monkey online survey.

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.

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Thank you
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