So Many Tools - So Little Time

Presentation to the Academy of Distinguished Teachers
October 6, 2007

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Dept. of Education, Univ. of MN Duluth

or...Power Tools Are a Girl's Best Friend

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Session objectives:
To provide a framework that will help you to:
• Be aware of the types of educational technology tools that are available and the purposes of each
• Be able to make informed choices about which tool is appropriate to use in different contexts
Questions to ponder…

• How many of you typically:
  – Use a phone rather than going to colleague’s office to ask a question in person?
  – Use a cordless phone rather than a cord one?
  – Use a digital camera rather than 35mm?
  – Use a white board rather than chalk board?
  – Use PowerPoint (or equivalent) rather than overhead projector?
  – Show photos using a computer rather than a slide projector?
• Why?

More questions…

• Is it necessary to use technology to be an effective teacher?
• If we are already teaching effectively, and achieving quality results, using the tools that have stood the test of time and with which we are comfortable and competent, why consider embracing the new technologies?

Sharing your “techno-journey”

• How has your use of technology as a tool to enhance teaching & learning evolved over the years? (what changes have you made in your use of technology over time?)
• Why did you make these changes?
• Have they improved your teaching & your students’ learning?
Important considerations…

• Changing demands: lead, follow, or get out of the way…
  – Learners -- digital natives
  – Instructors -- increasing use, expectation of colleagues
  – Education institutions
  – Employers
  – Market competition & collaboration
  – Global society
• Changing tools, ease of use, & support can now make it possible

Criteria for Decision Making

• Course objectives
• Nature of the learners
• Nature of the instructor
  – “Tech-savy-ness”
  – Teaching skills
  – Beliefs about teaching & learning
  – What you enjoy about teaching
• Tech support available
• Pros and cons of each tool

Some cautions…

• It is important to have a balanced perspective on both the oppressive and liberating aspects of technology.
• In the rush to embrace any new technology, we always need to be aware of the danger of hegemony of PowerPoint … or any other technological tools.

(Brookfield, 2006).
Some of the more recent tools

- SMART Boards
- Personal Responders
- Course management systems (WebVista, Moodle)
- Synchronous online communication:
  - Chat/IM
  - Audio or video conferencing
- Asynchronous discussion forums
- Blogs
- Wikis
- UMConnect (formerly Breeze)
- Podcasting & video casting
- RSS aggregators
- Online testing
- Online surveys
- Photo sharing
- Virtual worlds
- Academic searches:
  - Google Scholar
  - RefWorks
  - Furl

Moodle Course Management

WebVista Course Management

Source: http://webvista.umn.edu/version4/wv4_stu.jpg
UMConnect

Asynchronous Discussion: Web Crossing

Asynchronous Discussion: Moodle Forum
Office Hours Wiki

Office Hours for Helen Morgen-Ralls

# Helen's Office Hours

See below for a list of office hours. If you need to schedule a time, please let me know. I will make an effort to be available during office hours, but I may be available at other times as well. Call or email me to arrange a time that works for you.

Office Hours:

- **M** - 10:00-12:00 PM
- **W** - 2:00-4:00 PM
- **Th** - 10:00-12:00 PM

If you need immediate assistance and can't reach me, please visit the department office at (304) 59-5000.

Teaching Blog

UMW World Regional Geography Blog

**Source:** [http://regionalgeography.org/101blog/?p=27](http://regionalgeography.org/101blog/?p=27)

Student Blog

**Source:** [http://regionalgeography.org/101blog/?p=27](http://regionalgeography.org/101blog/?p=27)
RSS Aggregator - e.g. Bloglines

Audio Conferencing: Skype

Video Conferencing: Examples

For more information on Skype, visit: http://www.skype.com

Image source: http://www.microsoft.com/windows/NetMeeting/default.ASP
Interactive Television (ITV)

Podcasting (listening to) -

Podcasts - Creating
You Tube

Photo Sharing

Students & faculty can share photos

Online scholarly searching
Virtual Worlds e.g. Second Life

Given what we identified as most important of AAHE learning principles…

1. [20 votes] Principle 3 - Active search for meaning
2. [19 votes] Principle 1 - Make/maintain connections
3. [13 votes] Principle 4 - Cumulative process
4. [12 votes] Principle 10 - Self-monitoring/strategizing
5. [12 votes] Principle 9 - Context/transfer/unlearning

And now you are aware of the many tools…

• Which might you consider using to improve and extend student learning in your classes?

Remember:
– Course objectives
– Nature of the learners
– Nature of the instructor
– Tech support available
– Pros and cons of each tool