From Stephen Brookfield’s keynote this morning:

- 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 reification Beware the hegemony of PowerPoint … or any other technological tools.

Objectives:

- In order for us to model the critical reflection that Brookfield calls for, we need to:
  - Understand the types of web-based 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; selecting the right tool for the job.

Criteria for Decision Making:

- Course objectives
- Nature of the learner
- Nature of the instructor
  - “Tech-savy-ness”
- Tech support available
- Strengths and weaknesses of each tool

Questions for you:

1) Under what circumstances might you consider using each tool? Why that/those tools rather than other tools or low/no tech tools?
2) Which of these tools would you most like to learn more about in this session? Rank your top 3.
Sharing your responses: modeling critical reflection...
- From your response to the “Which tools..” question, what scenarios/circumstances caused you the most ambivalence? (i.e. Where you couldn’t decide between two tools)?
- David Lesniaski’s decision making...

Using Matrix of Tools For Decision Making

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Blog: Disadvantages

- Comments are not threaded, so can be difficult to follow responses
- So new, some aren’t comfortable using yet
- Unsolicited and inappropriate comments may be posted, unless you limit access

Wiki: What is it?

- From Hawaiian word for “quick”
- Web page that can easily be edited by anyone
- Allows collaborative creation of documents
- Pictures and other digital files can be pasted in wiki or linked to wiki for others to access
- No special software needed
- No knowledge of html or web page design needed
- Can be accessed via any computer with Internet connection

Wiki: Example

Image source: https://wiki.umn.edu/twiki/bin/view/HelensWiki/WebHome

Image source: http://middlej.pbwiki.com/

Wiki: Why use it?

- When you want to post information on the Internet so it can be accessed and edited by others
- When two or more people want to co-author documents
- When group members want to work on a project asynchronously
- When you want to be able to trace the development of a document

Wiki: Advantages

- Quick and easy to create
- Anyone can add, delete, revise document
- People can collaborate without having to meet synchronously
- Instructor can see who contributed what content
- Can be open to the public, or limited to class members or a specific group
Wiki: Disadvantages

- Only one person can edit wiki at a time
- Others can change or delete your work
- So new, people aren’t comfortable using
- Somewhat difficult to detect changes – have to look at page history

Asynchronous Discussion: What is it?

- Text-based discussion on a website, to extent or replace in-class discussion
- Written dialog allows instructor to see each student’s thinking and learning
- Threaded discussion allows students to reply to comments made by others, to challenge or support their thinking

Asynchronous Discussion: Web Crossing

Image source:
Helen’s Educ 5413
Su05 Teaching with Technology Forum

Asynchronous Discussion: Moodle

Image source:

Asynchronous Discussion: Why use it?

- For learners to engage in reflective, asynchronous written dialog with others, usually about something they have read, seen or experienced
- So all learners are responsible for participating in a discussion

Asynchronous Discussion: Advantages

- Easy to use
- Allows critical reflection and discussion of course topics, readings, speakers, etc.
- Makes student thinking “visible”
- Students individually accountable for their learning
- Extends (or replaces) class discussion, giving time for more thoughtful responses
- Allows students to participate more fully, even quiet, shy, students
- Students can learn from each other
**Asynchronous Discussion: Disadvantages**

- Time-consuming to read all responses
- Focus is on written communication; not all students are equally skilled at this
- Non-verbals and tone of voice are lost
- Delay between a student’s post and a response is frustrating
- Questions must be carefully framed in order to elicit critical thinking/reflection

**Synchronous Chat: What is it?**

- Text messages are typed in by people in “chat room”
- Messages appear in the order received
- Allows immediate response to questions or comments
- Works well for “virtual” office hours

**Synchronous Chat: Example**

![Chat room example](image)

**Synchronous Chat: Why use it?**

- Allows students to access instructor from anywhere to get immediate response
- If multiple users online at same time; can see others’ questions and answers

**Synchronous Chat: Advantages**

- Students can use to plan group projects
- Can use to access advisor or instructor for “virtual” office hours
- Quicker response, compared to email query
- Students can “lurk” and learn from questions and responses

**Synchronous Chat: Disadvantages**

- Difficult to follow discussion (not threaded)
- Rapid-fire nature limits use; not conducive to reflective thought
- People are waiting for an answer, so replies are brief and superficial
- If enter chat room late, most of transcript of chat may not show on screen
- Have to be available at the scheduled time
Video/Audio Conferencing: What is it?

- Synchronous audio and/or video connection between two or more computers communicating via the Internet.
- Wide variety of options available, from 1-1 communication to class-class communication.

Audio Conferencing: Example - Skype

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

Video Conferencing: Examples

- iChat video conference
- NetMeeting conference

Video/Audio Conferencing: Why use it?

- For synchronous communication between people in two locations.
- For guest speaker at remote location to speak to local class.
- For "virtual field trips" to museums, science labs, etc., including interaction with "experts".
- When ITV facility is not available.

Video/Audio Conferencing: Advantages

- Free download of easy-to-use software for audio conference via computers.
- Enables individuals to participate in synchronous learning experiences from any computer with access to the Internet.
- Less expensive than ITV.
- Equipment easily portable.

Video/Audio Conferencing: Disadvantages

- Need broadband connection for good quality video conferencing.
- Equipment expensive for class-to-class communication (e.g., Polycom).
- Free audio conferencing sites usually limited to 1-to-1 connections.
- Need microphone for audio; need camera for video.
Breeze: What is it?
- Web-based application enables people to communicate synchronously via Internet
- Can include video, audio, text, and presentations such as PowerPoint
- Can be transmitted from and received by any computer with Internet connections

Breeze: Why use it?
- When teachers and learners are in different locations at class time
- When ITV and other videoconferencing equipment are too expensive or not available
- When users want/need to access class without traveling to class or ITV site
- When guest speaker can be accessed in “real time” via the Internet

Breeze: Example
Image source: http://www.adobe.com/products/breeze/productinfo/meeting/experience/index_mm.htm

Breeze: Advantages
- Students/faculty can participate in a multi-media synchronous learning experience from remote locations
- Can be interactive (audio, video, chat)
- Class sessions can be archived and viewed later

Breeze: Disadvantages
- So far, Breeze connections have been poor, even with broadband connection
- If not using a high quality microphone audio cuts in and out
- Need to provide transcript of audio to make accessible to all users
- Limited discussion; only one person can speak at a time and sound quality poor

ITV: What is it?
- Instructor teaches from specially equipped classroom to students in that location as well as others at remote ITV locations
- Location must be wired for ITV transmission
ITV: Why use it?
- Allows one teacher to teach classes in two or more locations at the same time
- Enables high quality video and audio between designated sites

ITV: Example
- Photo of one of UMD ITV labs

ITV: Advantages
- Saves commuting time and cost for students and/or instructor
- Synchronous participation by all participants
- Teacher and students can interact with people at all sites, learning from all
- Sessions can be recorded and archived for later review

ITV: Disadvantages
- Students at remote sites may feel disconnected
- Harder to stay focused at remote sites
- Difficult to see faces and read non-verbal communication at remote sites
- Need technical support at all sites
- Some sites may be "stranded" if audio or video doesn’t work

What is Podcasting?
- Media files automatically downloaded (using RSS) from the Internet to computer --> copied to portable mp3 player (e.g. iPod).
- RSS feed: users subscribe to podcast (new casts automatically downloaded)
- Podcast as noun = content; as verb = process

Why Podcasting?
- Automatic subscription to podcast feeds
- Users can listen/watch any time & place
- Enables users to review F2F lectures and/or listen to lectures from online classes or any other event that is podcast
- Incorporate contributions from guest speakers (especially from distant locations)
- Personal & professional: news, video, journals
- Students create demonstrate understanding in form of pod/vodcast projects
Podcasting Aggregator Examples: Vienna

Pod & Vodcasting Example: iTunes

Podcasting: Advantages
- Automatic subscription saves having to check for updates
- Flexible learning opportunities: can listen/watch any time
- Students learn through more than one modality (listen to audio files/watch video on content as well as read course materials)
- Do not have to use computer for playback -- can review audio files while driving, walking, biking etc
- Audio files can easily & inexpensively be created & uploaded to course website/blog/wiki
- Valuable as review tool for students

Podcasting: Disadvantages
- Accessibility:
  - Transcripts must be made of files to ensure accessibility (time consuming & costly)
  - Large file size (especially of vodcasts) requires broadband connection --> thus also an accessibility issue
  - Creators need to ensure that file format is appropriate for all mp3 players (not just on iPods).

Case studies - practice! Which tool(s) would you pick & why?
1. You want to extend student in your face-to-face class by having them engage in critical reflection, connecting their in-class work, readings, & practicums/work experiences.
2. You are teaching a distance education skills-based course to students who live in remote, rural areas of MN.
3. Students need to produce an original final group project that synthesizes their learning from the course. They have very limited (if any) common times to meet face-to-face.

To Access Presentation Online
To download this PowerPoint & to see detailed notes on each of the tools described in this presentation, go to:
http://www.d.umn.edu/~hrallis/professional/presentations/cotfsp06/index.htm