Curriculum, Instruction, and Learning on the Internet

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This special issue of *Educational Technology & Society* began as a position paper that I wrote as a premise for an online discussion conducted on the distribution list of the International Forum of Educational Technology & Society. At that time, I was looking for diverse and creative ways that educators were addressing the monumental educational distinctions of curriculum and instruction on the Internet. As I prepared the call for papers for this Special Edition, I felt that I should expand the topic to include learning, for what is curriculum and/or instruction without the all important end-result: learning?

Curriculum

This first group of papers evidences diverse curriculum issues related to subject matter content and ways to elicit content on the Internet. Parthasarathi Banerjee suggests that the WWW is such a storehouse of information that individual learners can search out subject matter content that specifically fits their specific learning agendas. Charalampos Karagiannidis, Demetrius Sampson and Fabrizio Cardinal create a method for exploiting the potential of the Internet in education by suggesting a model for the production of adaptive Internet content that fits into multiple learning situations. Irvin Katz and Malcolm Bauer suggest that course content preparation can be improved by using a specialized search engine, SourceFinder, that locates text-content on the Internet based on linguistic features not used by traditional search engines. The final two papers emphasizing curriculum on the Internet target the subject of research. Kim Lie and V. Cano describe the use of a website to link web resources as curricular supplements, while Ian Hughes describes the use of web-based resources to teach the important topic of action research.

Instruction

The second group of papers for this issue focuses on instructional issues related to Internet education. Again, this section represents diverse views of instructional issues related to content delivery via the WWW. Norshuhada Shiratuddin, in a research study, investigates the effect of different Internet instructional methods on student performance in a course on Multimedia Design. Julia Matuga discusses electronic pedagogy in designing and teaching an educational psychology course online. Amy Grigsby, an elementary school teacher, shares her experiences in using chat rooms with children in alignment with curriculum guidelines. Chris Jesshope details the use of AudioGraph as a tool for using multimedia in Internet-based instruction, while Michael Grace-Martín and Geri Gay discusses students’ use of wireless laptop computers to aid Internet instructional efforts in a communication course.

Learning

The final group of papers focuses on issues related to learning in Internet education. Brent Muirhead analyzes research studies about interactivity between online students and online instructors and the resulting effects on learning. Mahnaz Moallem provides an overview of using instructional design principles to ensure web-based learning. Barbara Daley, Karen Watkins, Sandra Williams, Bradley Courtenay, Mike Davis and Darryl Dymock, representing Australia, UK, and USA, use the Dimensions of Learning Framework to explore the connections between learning and Internet technology. Finally, Alfred Bork, eminent educator, discusses several flaws of existing Internet learning material and proposes a remedy to ensure effective learning.

In closing, I extend my thanks to all the contributors to this issue and to Dr. Kinshuk, who have worked with me to put together such a diverse collection of high quality papers for this special issue.