

Fall 2009 Course Syllabus

Title: EDIT 772: Introduction to Web 2.0 / Social Software Tools (2 units)

Course date/duration: meets 8/31/09 to 11/06/09 and is taught via the Web

Instructor Information

Name: Rick Reo, rreo@gmu.edu / Phone: 703-993-8536

Office: Prince William campus, OB231

Office hours: Tuesday, 6-7pm and by appointment.

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to explore examples of a pattern of emerging technology use commonly referred to as Web 2.0. The course focuses, from an e-learning perspective, on the pedagogical applications and implications of a particular group of social software tools that facilitate web-based social interaction, content generation, and resource aggregation. Examples of social software include content, media, or collaboration management frameworks such as blogs, wikis, Flickr, YouTube, RSS feed readers, and iTunes, relationship management frameworks such as Facebook and Ning, and distributed classification frameworks (or social bookmarking services), such as del.icio.us. Students will also be introduced to broader patterns of Web 2.0 technologies, such as, rich Internet applications, mash-ups (APIs), mobile devices, virtual worlds and much more.

The course goals bridge three broad areas: to provide an engaging overview of cutting-edge social technologies, to identify and evaluate best educational practices for using these technologies, and to investigate the role of these technologies for e-learning. Social software has the potential to transform instructional practices and to support the creation of highly constructivist learning communities. Throughout the course students will learn about and evaluate best practices for using social software tools to meet different instructional and training goals. A critical approach to the effectiveness of social software for learning is warranted.

The Edit 772 course learning environment incorporates many of the social software tools under study in the course and involves high levels of student knowledge construction. We will be learning about and using software tools that are freely available on the Web or as Open Source software which has the advantage of learning to use software that is readily available to you in your work place or schools. For the final project, students will create a personal or collaborative learning environment that integrates a selection of these tools.

Nature of Course Delivery

To meet various goals, this course blends synchronous web conferences with online asynchronous learning approaches. We will try to meet once in the beginning and at the end of the course in a live conference system that supports audio and text communication.

Course Week

Because online courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our first week will "start" on Monday, August 31st and officially "finish" on Friday, November 6th. I will go over the details of the course schedule during our first week live, "online" meeting. Estimated Time Commitment: ~ 3-5 hours/week

Textbooks/Recommended Reading:

The class web sites will serve as an electronic textbook. Selected web readings and resources will be provided.

Learner Outcomes

Course goals: As a result of this course, participants will be able to:

- understand the evolution and affordances of Internet/Web-based social learning tools.
- set-up, configure, and share networked learning resources and perform basic Web publishing and social networking operations.
- evaluate the instructional implications of e-Learning organized around social software tools and services.
- identify current Web 2.0 social technologies and future trends impacting K-12, higher education, business, government and military settings.
- gain fluency evaluating the reliability and validity of content resources attached to key social software tools and other open educational resources.
- develop skills evaluating social software tools and technologies to support and enhance instructional applications and strategies used in the development of personal or collaborative learning environments.
- use web 2.0 tool self-help resources to solve user problems and obtain training

Course Requirements

In addition to working through the learning content in each week's module, there are three main graded requirements for this course:

1. *8 Exercises Sets* – students will receive 40 points for completing the individual exercises that accompany almost every unit of the course. A list of the exercises and their grade value will be posted on the course site. Most of the exercises are designed to guide your exploration of the different social software tools by directing you to set up an initial account, personalize it, configure the tool for collaborative work, and complete prescribed tasks.
2. *3 Discussions* are planned for the course and will take place in BlackBoard unless otherwise indicated. **The discussion topics are introduced on Sundays and you have to post your first response by the following Wednesday, with the discussions normally continuing through the next weekend.** Participation in the course through discussions is mandatory as and will be assessed by both quality and quantity of interactions. Students are expected to contribute to the class discussion in a meaningful way. Your comments should add significantly to the discussion by suggesting other solutions, pointing out problems, even totally disagreeing. Make sure you substantiate your comments with reasons and whenever possible, relate your own "real world" experiences to the subject matter of the class. It is a required part of your grade that you actively participate in these discussions. I will evaluate your input based on the quality of your responses, whether your responses were timely and met the deadline, and the ability of your comments to motivate others in a collaborative effort. To learn how your discussion responses are evaluated, please consult the **Grading Rubrics** posted in the **Course Content** section of the Blackboard course site.
3. *1 Final Individual Project* – students will develop a prototype Social Software-based Learning Environment (SSLE) based on a documented design process. A design document is a description of the process used to develop instruction and includes a description of the problem, the need to be met, the content and format of instruction, and the summary of the evaluation. The particular requirements and parameters for developing the SSLE prototype will be detailed elsewhere. This assignment includes a peer evaluation.

Assessment and Grading

Introduction:

The design document and SSLE and discussions will be evaluated by the instructor using rubrics that are available in Blackboard.

Requirements:

- Exercises = 40 points
- Discussions = 15 points
- Design Project Document = 20 points
- Personal/Collaborative Learning Environment = 20 points
- Peer Review = 5 points

Grading scheme:

A = 94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ = 86-89; B = 83-85; B- = 80-82; C = 70-79; F = 69 and below

College of Education and Human Development Statement of Expectations

Introduction: All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit [Professional Behavior and Dispositions](#).
- Students must follow the guidelines of the [University Honor Code](#).
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](#).
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [GMU Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. Call 703-993-2474.

Course Expectations

- Students will be required to join and/or create accounts on multiple free, web-based tools/services specified by the instructor to complete assignments & learning activities.
- Students are required to use system self-help resources, in addition to the instructor and peer support to solve problems related to the access, download, and operation of course tools to complete assignments.
- Students understand that portions of their work will be take place on the open web and that their statements and other artifacts may be publicly discovered.
- Each student is expected to complete all readings and class exercises and contribute to in-depth asynchronous threaded and synchronous discussions as assigned by the instructor or as part of a class team's lesson.
- To enable individualization of the course to the needs of each student, special arrangements on requirements and assignments may be negotiated in writing with the instructor. Revised assignments typically involve direct, extensive involvement in some project related to research or evaluation of a network-based educational experience that makes use of social software tools.
- Students missing the due date for an assignment or exercise must make immediate arrangements with the instructor to fulfill that requirement before the next class.
- The class schedule may change as the course progresses; changes will be posted to **Blackboard Announcements**.

EDIT772 Class Schedule – Fall '09

Dates (Mondays)	Topics & Readings	Discussion 15%	Exercises 40%	SSLE Design Project 45%
8/31 Week 1	MODULE 1: UNDERSTANDING WEB 2.0 (SOCIAL SOFTWARE) TOOLS UNIT 1: Course overview and introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Web 2.0 and Social Software ○ Learning Affordances of Social Software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous class meeting via Adobe Connect Pro, TBD • Course Introduction and lecture • Setup basic course collaboration tools • Post Personal Introductions to Bb 		
9/7 Week 2	UNIT 2: Key Web 2.0 Educational Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Software-based Learning Environments (SSLEs) ○ Open Educational Resources (OER) ○ Security, Privacy and Copyright 		Complete Ex#1 – sketch a concept map of your personal learning network	
9/14 Week 3	MODULE 2: EXPLORING WEB 2.0 TOOLS UNIT 3: Blogs and Wikis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twitter, WordPress, Wikispaces 	Join Disc.1: Web 2.0 & Learning	Complete Ex#2 – setup & configure WordPress blog Complete Ex#3 – setup & config Twitter	Submit Design Document 1 – Idea
9/21 Week 4	UNIT 4: RSS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSS feed aggregators • RSS feed conversion • OPML 	<i>Open Online Lab (optional)</i>	Complete Ex#4 -- setup & configure Bloglines	
9/28 Week 5	UNIT 5: Social Bookmarking and Tagging	Join Disc. 2: Tools 1	NIT	Submit Design Doc 2 – Audience / Content
10/5 Week 6	UNIT 6: Social Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flickr, YouTube, iTunes, WikiMedia, Slideshare, Scribd, Skype, VoiceThread, and Podcasting 		Complete Ex#6 – setup & configure Social Media tool	
10/12 Week 7	MODULE 3: CREATING SOCIAL SOFTWARE-BASED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS UNIT 7: Portal Pages and Social Networking Spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PageFlakes, iGoogle, Netvibes • Facebook, Ning, Google Apps • Flock – the social browser • Zotero – Firefox extension 	<i>Open Online Lab (optional)</i>	Complete Ex#7 – setup & configure PageFlakes	Submit Design Doc 3 – Format
10/19 Week 8	UNIT 8: Advanced RSS, Mash-ups & Widgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small pieces loosely joined -- techniques for integrating your tools. 	Join Disc. 3: Tools 2	Complete Ex#8 – create mash-up or advanced widgetry	SSLE prototype due
10/26 Week 9	UNIT 9: Emerging Web 2.0 Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and work on final projects 			Peer Reviews Due Submit Design Doc 4 -- Evaluate & Refine
11/2 Week 10	Final class live meeting via Adobe Connect Pro <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSLE student demonstrations 			Final Design Doc & Final SSLE Due