FACEBOOK AS A LEARNING TOOL

Implications for ubiquitous learning
Introducing Facebook

Finally, I don’t have to explain it’s a big deal

Structures and functions (overlapping)
- Identity and affiliation (profile, groups, pages, tags)
- Communication (events, wall, messages, status, chat)
- Multimedia sharing (pictures, video, apps)
- Applications (multipurpose)

LOTS of people. Arguably still powerfully oriented by the youth audiences. Possible demographic issues, though.
Social norms of the system

- Interface encouraged norms
  - Connecting and sharing (language, generally open, share functions – outgoing and incoming, common interests, sharing multimedia, feedback mechanisms everywhere!)
  - Activity and involvement (recent activities, memberships and affiliations, tagging within multimedia and notes)
  - Content vs. form (character limits, western style, given navigation options and colors, refresh rates on walls, EULA)

- Offline community norms
  - Relationships to other people (authority, friends, etc...)
  - FBP studies (gender, the Chief, race/ethnicity)
  - Availability of information?

- What motivations do people bring to the system?
Enter Ubiquitous Learning

- Well, what is learning?
  - Acquiring new knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, preferences or understandings
  - Processing information, may be termed ‘education’ or ‘personal development’
  - Conscious and unconscious, habitual and through play, structured or unstructured

- Predicated on Ubiquitous Computing (network effects; population-specific)

  - New opportunities for learning
    - New environments (altered place; distance)
    - New teachers (direction of information; authority)
    - New timelines (a-synchronous, in-demand)
Facebook as an educational tool?

- **Advantages**
  - Massive and “assumed” (near-ubiquitous) user base
  - 0$
  - Range of tools (groups, media, events, pages, apps, chat, integrated information sharing)
  - Relatively fast deployment, reduced community management (information handling, abuse)

- **Dangers**
  - Data ownership
  - Blurred lines of information sharing
  - Kids… and parents
  - Issues for evaluation and research
  - Social only?
Social aspects of Web2.0, again!

- Information Access in a Networked World
  - Osmosis
  - Pull
  - Push
- Digital Literacy
  - Play
  - Performance
  - Simulation

- Appropriation
- Multitasking
- Distributed Cognition
- Collective Intelligence
- Judgment
- Transmedia Navigation
- Networking
- Negotiation
What can we learn from literature?

- **Student-teacher relationships** - Mazer, Murphy and Simonds (2007).
- **Use in education institutions** – Fred Stutzman’s material (many references, 2005-2009), National School Boards Association (2007)
- **Applications in libraries** – Laurie Bridges (2007)
- **Gauntlet of researchers on privacy and data sharing** (far too many to name, see Facebook Project resource list)
- **Growing number of researchers on youth and community engagement** (Lampe, boyd, MacArthur series on digital learning)
Ideas for learning!

- **Creative application use**
  - Competitive learning games (words, typing, problem-solving)
  - Instructor feedback systems (rate my professor, class evaluations)

- **Information needs**
  - Search Google, search YouTube, search Facebook
  - Website replacement
  - Not Yahoo Answers but Facebook Answers

- **Mobilizing people**
  - Political engagement and discourse
  - Cause awareness and agent activation

- **Classroom project ideas**
  - Design an application for FB (social engineering, advertising, sociology, etc...)
  - Easy environment for social research (group content analysis, survey deployment, etc...)