Why Integrate Technology into the Curriculum?

The Reasons Are Many!  There’s a place for tech in every classroom.

By Edutopia  http://www.edutopia.org/technology-integration-introduction

Technology is ubiquitous, touching almost every part of our lives, our communities, our homes. Yet most schools lag far behind when it comes to integrating technology into classroom learning. Many are just beginning to explore the true potential tech offers for teaching and learning. Properly used, technology will help students acquire the skills they need to survive in a complex, highly technological knowledge-based economy.

Integrating technology into classroom instruction means more than teaching basic computer skills and software programs in a separate computer class. Effective tech integration must happen across the curriculum in ways that research shows deepen and enhance the learning process. In particular, it must support four key components of learning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts. Effective technology integration is achieved when the use of technology is routine and transparent and when technology supports curricular goals.

Many people believe that technology-enabled project learning is the ne plus ultra of classroom instruction. Learning through projects while equipped with technology tools allows students to be intellectually challenged while providing them with a realistic snapshot of what the modern office looks like. Through projects, students acquire and refine their analysis and problem-
solving skills as they work individually and in teams to find, process, and synthesize information they’ve found online.

The myriad resources of the online world also provide each classroom with more interesting, diverse, and current learning materials. The Web connects students to experts in the real world and provides numerous opportunities for expressing understanding through images, sound, and text.

New tech tools for visualizing and modeling, especially in the sciences, offer students ways to experiment and observe phenomenon and to view results in graphic ways that aid in understanding. And, as an added benefit, with technology tools and a project-learning approach, students are more likely to stay engaged and on task, reducing behavioral problems in the classroom.

Technology also changes the way teachers teach, offering educators effective ways to reach different types of learners and assess student understanding through multiple means. It also enhances the relationship between teacher and student. When technology is effectively integrated into subject areas, teachers grow into roles of adviser, content expert, and coach. Technology helps make teaching and learning more meaningful and fun.

**Selecting the Appropriate Communication Tools for Your Online Course**

*By: Rob Kelly*

When designing an online course it’s important to carefully consider which tools align with the course’s learning objectives and the types of communication that will occur. There are three types of communication that can occur in an online course—one to one, one to many, and many to many. In an interview with Online Classroom, Sara Ombres, faculty development instructor, and Anna Reese, production coordinator/instructional designer, both at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University’s Worldwide Campus, talked about how they help instructors select communication tools to suit the situation.

**One to one: journals**

A key strength of online learning is the ability to create learning communities, facilitate collaboration, and foster peer review. However, there are instances where one-to-one communication is appropriate. For example, a journal that only the individual student and instructor can access can be used as a way for students to reflect on sensitive topics in a less public way than using other tools might offer. Or in a writing course, perhaps students would prefer not to share their work with the entire class until they’ve made revisions.

In addition to being useful to the students, one-to-one communication can provide valuable information to the instructor.
“We have students’ journal about what they’re struggling with—things they may not feel comfortable sharing with the group. It’s really good feedback for us as faculty developers and instructors to modify and improve [our instruction] to better meet their needs,” Ombres says.

One to many: blogs
Consider using blogs as a way to provide students with a means to communicate to the entire class. Although blogs can be set up to enable comments from other students, they’re not the best tool for interactive discussion. Rather, they are an excellent way for individual students to share their personal experiences, reflect, and apply what they’ve learned, Reese says.

Blogs provide a sense of ownership. “Students can comment on other students’ blogs, but they cannot add posts to other students’ blogs. The blog is the individual student’s to do what he or she wants to do. And there has been a lot of research about how when students have that feeling of ownership it really does improve their writing and their level of commitment,” Ombres says.

See more at: http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/selecting-appropriate-communication-tools-online-course/#sthash.jdYn4Vwh.dpuf

VIU’s Learning Technologies
At VIU, there are a number of learning technologies you can incorporate into your teaching and learning strategies. This page lists the tools and a brief description of each. If you have a question, contact learnsupport@viu.ca for more information.

VIULearn (D2L)
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/viulearn

VIULearn (D2L) is the learning management system used at VIU. VIULearn provides a framework you can use as an excellent supplement for your face-to-face classroom experience, blended offering or fully online environment. You can use the Content tools to organize and provide files, links and other resources to learners. Communication tools allow you to pose questions, send mass emails, post announcements and send updates to your students. Assessment tools allow you to upload rubrics, conduct online quizzes and exams, collect assignments digitally, monitor student progress, and give students the ability to check their grades.
VIUOnline Rooms
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/technology-tools/viounline-rooms-virtual-meeting-spaces

VIUOnline Rooms (powered by Collaborate Ultra) is designed to provide faculty members and students the option to communicate in a synchronous online environment. With live video streaming faculty members can conduct small or large group instruction without the need to all be in the same location as you can share your computer screen over the internet. Web conferencing gives you the functionality you need to support a 21st century teaching and learning environment, such as two-way audio, multi-point video, interactive whiteboard, application and desktop sharing, rich media, breakout rooms, and session recording. Educators and students can engage as if they were in a traditional classroom, with as good as, or even better, outcomes.

VIUTube
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/technology-tools/viutube

VIUTube gives faculty the option of sharing large video and audio files in a secure and advertisement-free environment. Files uploaded to VIUTube are automatically converted and optimized for streaming and can be linked in your VIULearn content. Any material you or your learners upload to VIUTube stays on a Canadian server, thus avoiding any FIPPA concerns that arise with any non-Canadian based video storage provider. Since all content uploaded to VIUTube is not made visible to other users unless you share the link with them, you can upload videos of your lectures (or other media materials you have created) and make them available to your online or blended classes so your students can watch content that they may have missed in class.

VIUBlogs
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/technology-tools/viublogs

VIUBlogs (powered by Wordpres) give faculty and learners the ability to create blogs, websites or even ePortfolios. Faculty can also create course sites, project sites or department sharing sites within VIUBlogs. There are a variety of themes and options available to help customize your blog or site. VIUBlogs is hosted on campus and is compliant with FIPPA, although it is important to remember that a blog or site will be more open and visible to the online community then other tools.
Interactive Whiteboards
Interactive Whiteboard Systems you may be familiar with include SMART boards, Promethean boards and MimioTouch. Interactive Whiteboards, in general, require a computer and projector in addition to production software and the board itself. They allow users to control the computer from the board and most systems can capture notes written on the board when the appropriate interface device is used. Please check with your department chair to see if there are interactive whiteboards available in your department.

Classroom Response Systems
Otherwise known as Clickers, Classroom Response Systems (CRS) are handheld wireless voting devices/cards. They are interactive systems that allow instructors to question students and see their answers in real time. They can be used in a number of ways with the five main uses being pre-assessment, new content reinforcement, review, opinion polling and peer instruction. The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning has sets of Clickers that they can sign out on a weekly basis to interested faculty. There are also now several online systems that work well for similar purposes.

Data Projectors
Many of the classrooms at VIU are equipped with data projectors but you always want to check the classroom you are assigned to for the technology that is available. If you find that your assigned room is not equipped with a specific piece of hardware you can make a request online at www.viu.ca/library.

Accessing VIULearn Course Shells
Each course you are assigned has will automatically be provided with an empty VIULearn course shell.

To access the VIULearn login page:
1. From the VIU Homepage (www.viu.ca), choose Login from the top banner (top of page and top right) and select VIULearn from the drop down list under “Login” OR
2. Type learn.viu.ca directly into your Internet browser’s address bar

On the left hand side of the page you will see the login area. The username and password are the same ones you use to login to a campus computer or your Outlook webmail account provided by VIU.

For help with all aspects of building a VIULearn course, visit the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning’s website which contains many helpful videos and instructions for teaching with VIULearn: https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/viulearn
You can also gain access to videos, handouts and other training materials by going through the Centre’s main website at ciel.viu.ca. (Go to VIULearn under the green banner entitled Learning Technologies and Innovation.)

There is a self-paced, fully-online training course available for faculty members through the Centre called “The Operations and Functions of VIULearn for Faculty”. You can begin the course at any time and there is no time limit on course access. Please email learnsupport@viu.ca to register for the course or receive more information about it.

If you run into trouble, you can email learnsupport@viu.ca to arrange a consultation about your course.

**General Information about your VIULearn Course**

The online components of your courses can be stored in VIULearn. VIULearn is linked to both the Student Registration System (SRS) and the Schedule and Workload System (SAWS). Each night, SRS and SAWS send information to VIULearn letting it know courses at VIU are currently open for registration, who is teaching them, which students are registered in those courses, and details about students’ contact information. All changes to courses and enrollments are processed nightly, and appear in VIULearn the next day.

This has a few important consequences:

1. You do not have to request a course (known as a “course shell”). When a course is created in SAWS it will be automatically generated in VIULearn.
2. You must be listed as the course instructor in order to access a course. Until you are the instructor of record in SAWS, you will not be able to see or make changes to a course.
3. If you are teaching multiple sections of the same course, you can email learnsupport@viu.ca to request the sections are “mapped” together. This will create a single course shell that all of the sections of your course will share. These requests are processed nightly.
4. When a student registers for your course, they will be automatically enrolled in the VIULearn course shell overnight. This means that your VIULearn class list will not reflect changes made that day.

5. Waitlisted students do not appear in the VIULearn Classlist tool as they do not have an official “seat” in your course. You will see waitlisted students on the official VIU class list, however.

6. Students who have outstanding fees (tuition or other fees) will be automatically removed from the VIULearn Classlist about halfway through the term. Once the student pays any outstanding fees they will be automatically added back into your course overnight. Students withdrawn in this manner will not lose any data.

All courses created in VIULearn will be empty (contain no content) by default. You are responsible for adding material to your VIULearn course.

Material you have developed previously in VIULearn (for instance, in a past term) can be quickly copied into your new course shell within the system.

Additionally, an instructor can choose to share material with another instructor by enrolling them in their course. The newly enrolled instructor could then copy the desired course materials into their own course.

Remember to provide the learn.viu.ca link for your students to access VIULearn in as many areas as possible. This webpage is where you and your students will log into VIULearn to access your course.

**Semester Start-up Checklist for Courses supported by VIULearn**

1. If you require multiple sections to be mapped together, send an email to
   learnsupport@viu.ca and wait for the mapping to be processed before adding any materials to your course shell.

2. If you have copied course components from a previous year, term, or from another instructor please check that:

   - The start, due and end dates for all content and activities (such as Discussions, Quizzes and Assignments) are updated for the current year or term
   
   - Any unwanted content or activities are set to “Draft” (hidden) or deleted from your course shell
   
   - You check any links, feeds, or other third party integrations in your course to ensure they are still functioning as expected
   
   - You have updated your course syllabus to reflect the current year or term as appropriate
Check that any other instructors, TA’s or support staff members that need to access your course are enrolled correctly

- Compare your official VIU class list to the class list in VIULearn to ensure your students are enrolled correctly, remembering the new changes will not be reflected in VIULearn until they are processed overnight

3. Once your course is ready for students, you must activate, or “open” your course for them. You can also edit the start and end dates of your course so it is not available to your students right away.

4. The Centre offers student orientations to VIULearn at the beginning of the term. Consider contacting learnsupport@viu.ca for information regarding student orientations.

5. Check your class list to ensure accuracy once the Add/Drop deadline has passed and changes are no longer being made to enrollments.

The Centre has a semester start checklist complete with links to support resources on their website under VIULearn and Semester Start for Faculty Members.

**Protecting the Privacy of Student Data**

**Required Actions for Compliance with BC’s FIPPA Law**

British Columbia (BC) has one of the strictest privacy laws of personal data in all of North America - enabled to ensure BC citizens are protected when it comes to storage and access of personal identifiable information.

To abide by BC’s Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act (FIPPA) Regulation, faculty members must deploy **three principles when in situations about privacy of student information**: 1) give notice to students when they are sending/requiring them to send their data to a location outside of Canada, 2) provide knowledge of why they are doing this, and if required, 3) obtain written consent from students for doing so. These principles you can apply to almost any privacy situation in order to show you have done your due diligence.

Written consent is the highest level of ‘due diligence’ when classroom work requires the use of social media, or when a faculty member or student forwards email to Gmail/Hotmail (web email services), and when a course requires the use of online textbooks or textbook activity sites.

Educating students is an important part of maintaining their privacy.

It is the responsibility of individual faculty members to ensure that they are compliant with FIPPA regulations. The following information is provided to help ensure that faculty members are aware of their responsibilities.
When to Think About FIPPA
Any time students’ personal, identifiable information (first name, last name, date of birth, course student is enrolled in, student grades, home address, student VIU ID) is stored on a server outside of Canada, or the parent company that owns the server is located outside of Canada, students must be provided with notice, knowledge, and consent. Personal, identifiable information includes any information that can be used to identify an individual student including photographs, file names of documents, student assignment titles, videos, audio files etc.

Instructor Emails
Any email that contains student’s personal, identifiable information should ONLY be accessed from Canadian-based services, such as the official VIU Outlook email account (hosted at VIU). Services such as Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc, host their services outside of Canada (on servers around the world), and should not be used to access emails that contain student personal identifiable information (including accessing VIU webmail from a public computer in another country). This would be a violation of the FIPPA law.

Note: It is possible to have emails forwarded from VIULearn to faculty members’ personal email accounts. Emails from VIULearn DO contain students’ personal, identifiable information, and SHOULD ONLY be forwarded to official VIU email accounts, and NEVER to services like Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. unless notice, knowledge and written consent have been obtained from the students.

Online Textbook Resources
Any online learning resource, such as textbooks or any supporting materials included in textbooks (labs, quizzes, resources to access), that faculty require students to use should only be hosted in Canada. If the resource is located outside of Canada, or the parent company is located outside of Canada, faculty must ensure they give students notice of information that will be stored outside of Canada, knowledge of why they need to access the site, and ensures there is student consent (written or some alternative form of recording consent). In this way, students are made aware of the implications of having their data reside outside of Canada and what other companies can do with their data.

Social Media/Web Tools Used in the Classroom
Many students access social media and various web tools outside of the classroom. What students do with social media outside of the classroom on their own is their business, and not the responsibility of faculty. If students are required to use social media, web tools or online resources as part of their classes (make a Prezi, post to Twitter, create a Facebook account, upload video to YouTube etc.), and that tool is based outside of Canada (which almost every company is!), faculty are responsible to ensure they give students notice of information that will be stored outside of Canada, knowledge of why they need to access the tool and how it is
impacted by BC FIPPA laws, and captures student consent (written or some alternative form of recording consent).

Obtaining Student Consent
1. Look at the fine print for the resource, activity or website you are requiring students to use in their classes (remember if it is an optional assignment/activity and they can use other tools not hosted online outside of Canada - you are fine). Reading the privacy policy, what data the resource captures, where the data lives and what alternatives there may be for how much data is required is key to being diligent.

2. Once you have all the information, create a consent form for your students. A consent form is required **FOR EACH COURSE** clearly outlining the assignments, activities and required learning that makes use of a tool or resource that is putting student information on servers outside of Canada. Unfortunately you can’t have a ‘blanket’ program or degree consent form as you need the details for each course assignment/activity spelled out.

3. There is a **Sample VIU Consent Form** for an Online Textbook Site (Word version) for you to download, edit and use with students. Ensure you remove all ‘sample’ content and insert your own information.  
[https://ciel.viu.ca/sites/default/files/sample_viu_student_consent_agreement.docx](https://ciel.viu.ca/sites/default/files/sample_viu_student_consent_agreement.docx)

4. You are also able to create a ‘digital consent form’ through an online content page in VIULearn where students read and by selecting the response to a question (consent) so you have record of their consent/non consent. Email the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning for assistance.

5. If you wish some assistance to proofread your consent form or you have questions, kindly email [learnsupport@viu.ca](mailto:learnsupport@viu.ca) for a consultation.

Alternatives to Student Consent
1. Research the technology and your assignment/task to ascertain if your students/you require the collection, upload, and use of personal identifiable information (often you may not and can use the social media or web tool without needing such information). You may be able to have students skip sections intended to capture personal identifiable information.

2. If you or the web tool requires personal identifiable information – find out how much your students really need to supply (or are connected to through accounts) and what are the privacy risks or abilities to make more private information – then use a consent form.

3. If a student refuses consent – have a Plan B. Some students who wish to not not engage in privacy-laden activities, should still have an alternative that still fulfils a lot of the main
learning intentions, but doesn’t expose them to privacy risks (e.g., use learning management system at VIU etc.)

4. Inquire about ‘on site’ or ‘Canadian hosted’ tools that may allow you to do similar activities but not have to use US servers (e.g., VIU’s learning management system is hosted in Ontario, VIUTube large file video storage is hosted at UBC/Vancouver, VIUBlogs is hosted at VIU etc)

5. Educate students – let them know what is going on. They may have some solutions!
6. Try using pseudonyms for some social media elements that won’t release personal identifiable information.

“Education is not filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.”
— William Butler Yeats