

Paper 55 – Pecha Kucha

Building community with Facebook[®]: Teaching with Web 2.0 technologies in higher education.

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Abstract

This presentation will present the findings of a project that sought to explore how Web 2.0 technologies could be used to build a sense of community among teacher education students. This is a particular concern for the first year of a higher education program where students can feel isolated and may struggle with the sense that the course, the university and the expectations are overwhelming. It was this concern, to build a sense of rapport and community between Bachelor of Education students majoring in business education that guided this project. Facebook[®] was selected as the Web 2.0 tool that would be used to create a sense of community within two cohorts of pre-service education students whilst they were undertaking teaching practicum placements. The findings indicate that Facebook[®] is a successful means to communicate with tertiary students and can be used to build rapport, to support students during important transition phases in their university studies and to build a sense of community. It was also found that Facebook[®], due to its high uptake rate and popularity among students, was a useful tool to maintain contact and build relationships with students. The findings of this project would indicate that existing social networking behaviours of students could be harnessed as supportive learning tools by higher education institutions.