Presence Pedagogy: Building Communities of Practice in Virtual Worlds

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Presentation Overview

- Session text chat questions will be addressed by Amy Cheney and John Tashner
- Additional Questions/Discussions will be taken at end of presentation
Presentation Overview

- Who We Are
- Successful Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching and Learning in 3D Environments
  - Capitalizing on Social Aspects (Social Constructivism)
- Presence Pedagogy (P2) Model
- Questions/Discussion
Why Should We Care About Virtual Worlds?

- By 2011, over 80% of active Internet users will have a virtual presence (Gartner, 2007)

- More than 200 virtual worlds are active or in development for children 18 and under (Virtual Worlds Management, 2009)
  - This is 50 more than in August of 2008
Why a 3D Virtual Environment for Education?

- Population served

- Social constructivist philosophy
  - Wanted to build a community of learners throughout North Carolina
  - Hoped to facilitate meaningful interactions in the learning environment
  - Did not think that traditional web-based tools (i.e. WebCT) offered these types of opportunities
3D Environment

- Characterized by significant components of space, movement, physical presence and co-presence
- Conversational and presentation tools with small and large group shared workspaces
- Metaphors and artifacts that assist collaboration and learning online in new and different ways
AET Zone at Appalachian State

- First server purchased more than eight years ago (ActiveWorlds – www.activeworlds.com)
- Core environment for Instructional Technology Master’s program
- Now serving students in Library Science, School Administration, Higher Education, Educational Leadership and Research Courses
What Has Happened?

- More than 2400 citizens of the Zone, including students, alumni, guests and speakers from around the nation and world
- Rich with content and interactive elements
- Collaborative learning environment has developed
What is Gained?
Social Constructivism and Virtual Worlds (RCOE Conceptual Framework)

- Learning occurs through participation in a Community of Practice;

- Knowledge is socially constructed and learning is social in nature in a Community of Practice;

- Learners proceed through stages of development from Novice to Expert under the guidance of more experienced and knowledgeable mentors and among likeminded peers in the Community of Practice;
Social Constructivism

- An identifiable knowledge base that is both general in nature and also specific to specialties emerges from focused activity within the Community of Practice;

- All professional educators develop a set of Dispositions reflecting attitudes, beliefs, and values common to the Community of Practice.
See the Difference?
Group Discussion of Education in Japan in AET Zone
Presence and Co-Presence

- Studies by Rovai (2002) and Tu (2002):
  - Sense of presence and co-presence do seem to be critical factors in creating and maintaining online communities.

- Tashner et al (2007):
  - Combining communication and collaboration tools with a sense of presence and co-presence provides opportunities for developing authentic learning environments.
Creation of Community

- Liu et al (2007),
  - Significant relationships between sense of community and perceived learning engagement, perceived learning, and student satisfaction with online learning experiences
Conversations and Collaborations

- From web pages to web places
- Utilizing telecommunications tools for connections and linkages
- Connections are focused on conversations and collaborations
- Imbedded Web 2.0 tools enable many of these interactions
Necessary Conditions

- Presence and co-presence
  - Facilitated by avatars
  - Instructor presence a requirement
    - Modeling
    - Encouraging conversation and interaction

- Structuring of courses to require both small and large group student interactions around common goals
## Paradigm Shift (Hargadon, 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From:</th>
<th>To:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consuming</td>
<td>Producing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
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<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Hallway</td>
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<td>Access to information</td>
<td>Access to people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning about</td>
<td>Learning to be</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive learning</td>
<td>Passionate learning</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Publication</td>
<td>Conversation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal schooling</td>
<td>Lifelong learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supply-push</td>
<td>Demand-pull.</td>
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Presence Pedagogy (P2) ‘Churn’
Presence Pedagogy (P2)

- Merger of Communities
- Forms new Community of Practice: AETZone
- AETZone = Transformative Space through which members move from CoP to CoP
- Response to Paradigm Shift
- P2 creates the churn of Transformative Learning in this new space
  - Characterized by ten catalytic behaviors
Presence Pedagogy (P2)

- The ways in which educators and learners interact in online environments:
  - ask questions and correct misperceptions;
  - stimulate background knowledge and expertise;
  - share tools and resources;
  - facilitate interactions and encourage community;
Presence Pedagogy

- provide and delineate context and goals to act upon;
- encourage exploration and discovery;
- facilitate distributed cognition;
- encourage reflective practice;
- capitalize on the sense of presence and co-presence;
- utilize technologies to achieve and disseminate results. (Bronack, et al, 2008)
P2 in Action

- Faculty “Making Rounds”
- Commons Architecture
- Interview Assignment (All)
- Case Study Conference Center (ITC, MLS, MSA)
- MLS/MSA Scheduling Project
- Knowledge Communities Reading Project (All)
Resources


Resources


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