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Report Submitted to TRC for TSSA Award in 2006-2007 (Fall 2006)

By

Amy S. C. Leh

I received a TSSA award to attend the international conference of Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) held October 10-14, 2006 at Dallas, Texas. At the conference, I learned strategies of online teaching, especially strategies of using new media, e.g blog, podcast, and wiki, in online courses.

Compared to computer conferencing, blog is relatively new tool for education. Many educators do not see difference between these two tools. One of the presenters compared computer conferencing with blog and pointed out their distinct uses in education. Computer conferencing is appropriate for online discussion and debate while blog encourages individual journaling and personal publication, said he. Should an instructor wants his/her students to discuss a topic, he/she should use computer conferencing. Nevertheless, blog may well reveal progress of student learning and serve as e-portfolio of a student.

Podcast is another new media that becomes more and more popular in education. One presenter argued that many educators use podcast to conduct one-way delivery instruction as a talking-head format in some online instruction. Instead, he had his students write a paper, read it, and record his/her voice. He then created podcast for his students. Although having student participate in creating part of the podcast is a great idea, he failed to use the podcast to conduct any interactive or cooperative learning activities.

One presenter shared how she used wiki to facilitate student collaborative learning. Since wiki is free and may easily be password-protected, I see its merits and look forward to exploring its use in my instruction.