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## WEB 2.0 IN THE CLASSROOM – THE POSSIBILITIES

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### Abstract:

The term 'Web 2.0' has taken on great momentum. Discussed as an ideology complemented by a set of Web-based technologies, Web 2.0 is finding its way into the classroom, albeit, its application is just in the beginning stages. A few anecdotal reports are available that describe how various Web 2.0 technologies have been incorporated into the classroom and some limited studies have indicated positive results in terms of student acceptance of these methods. However, there is still very little empirical research into how Web 2.0 which focuses on interactive and collaborative development, design and sharing of information, impacts learning. This tutorial explores Web 2.0 technologies, how they might be implemented and utilized in the classroom and invites participation from the audience to share and discuss the implications of Web 2.0 for information systems education.

**Keywords:** Web 2.0, information systems education, Web-based technologies

## I. TUTORIAL

Educational practice evolves over time and the implementation of new technologies in the teaching/earning process has resulted in new modes of instruction both in and out of the classroom. When a new articulation of emergent Web based technologies surfaced in 2004, discussion naturally began on how Web 2.0 might be incorporated in academe. Web 2.0 is the term coined to describe the evolving vision of the Web as a dynamic, interactive and collaborative place. Web 2.0 technologies center on the mutual creation, editing, and sharing of content. Ideologically, Web 2.0 encompasses greater user participation in the development and management of content, which inherently changes the nature and value of that information as more people interact with it (Ullrich et al., 2008). Several Web 2.0 technologies and applications exist to facilitate the interactive vision of the Web. These include social software such as blogs, wikis, and social bookmarking, media-sharing services with examples such as You Tube, iTunes and Flickr, social networking and social presence systems such as MySpace and Facebook, collaborative editing tools such as Google Docs, syndication and notification technologies such as RSS feeds, and integrated applications such as mashups. Using these tools students not only acquire and share knowledge, they also reshape and generate new information. In the discipline of information systems, we face a dual challenge – not only how to incorporate these technologies into our teaching but also how to incorporate these technologies into the concepts we teach.

This tutorial will present an overview of commonly identified Web 2.0 technologies using a three-dimensional approach. The technology will be defined, the implementation and use of the technology will be examined and the educational implications of incorporating the technology into an IS course will be explored. The following technologies will be covered:

**Blogs** – The idea of using blogs in education has been discussed for several years and several options for implementation, from using a hosted site to operating your own blogging service, exist. Some argue blogs are analogous to a course learning system (ie Blackboard) discussion board.

**Wikis** – Wikis have drawn quite a bit of interest in the academic arena with such visible projects as 'Wikibooks.' The idea behind a wiki is user participation in the creation and editing of content. As with blogs, several options for their implementation exist. Supporters have said that Wikis invite spontaneous participation.

**RSS Feeds** – RSS feeds (Really Simple Syndication) provide a way to distribute headlines or other notifications via the Web to interested parties. An RSS aggregator checks RSS feeds and collects new content from subscribed sites. Advocates say RSS feeds help students organize and track information related to a specific topic of study.

**Folksonomy, Tagging and Social Bookmarking** - The term, folksonomies, arose from the tagging phenomenon that has occurred on the web. This type of tagging is free form unlike the formal processes employed in library taxonomies that use constrained vocabularies. Social bookmarking allows users to store, manage and share bookmarks to web sites. In addition, social bookmarking services allow users to tag bookmarks using their own keywords or comments. These technologies provide additional mechanisms for organizing, evaluating and tracking information.

**Mashups** – Mashups are the result of combining content sources and applications from non-related entities resulting in the creation of a unique presentation experience. Mashups are touted as providing an engaging and relevant way to enact a more interactive teaching/learning process. They also provide for the development of more customized and personalized learning experiences.

**Collaborative Content [Media] Creation, Editing and Dissemination** -. The ideal behind collaborative creation and sharing is a move towards team based construction and sharing of knowledge. Some claim that this facilitation of collaboration is the true value of Web 2.0.

Web 2.0 technologies in the classroom have great potential to impact traditional pedagogical models. They also introduce new challenges. This tutorial proposes to begin the investigation into realities, possibilities and challenges of Web 2.0 in the information systems classroom. The tutorial will be structured to be interactive incorporating user discussion with topic presentation. The various Web 2.0 technologies will also be demonstrated.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Meg Murray** is an Associate Professor of Information in the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems at Kennesaw State University with over thirty years of experience in the discipline holding positions both in industry and academe. She specializes in the area of emerging technologies and the development and implementation of those technologies to meet business and organizational needs. She is co-PI on a NSF grant to develop software animations to support the teaching of database concepts. Most recently, she has become involved in a project to explore and redefine what it means to be technologically literate in today's society especially in the context of the ideology surrounding Web 2.0.

**Dr. Paula C. Jackson** has a B.S. and Ph.D. in Biology, and is an Associate Professor of Biology in the Department of Biology and Physics at Kennesaw State University. Her research involves the ecology and physiology of plants and she is the recipient of the NSF/RUI grant (# 0516387) to look at water acquisition patterns of trees in the tropical dry forests of Yucatan, Mexico. She has worked extensively mentoring undergraduate students in research, and has taught and developed several upper level biology courses (e.g. Ecology and Ecology Lab, Tropical Biology, Plant Ecology, Plant Ecology Lab). Currently she has partnered with Meg Murray to begin studying the effect of the use of Web 2.0 technologies in the classroom.