Exploiting Web 2.0 technologies to forge live connectedness in class

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Event Code: BEAQ

http://goo.gl/JYvamu

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Traditional approach to teaching law units: 2 hour lecture, 1 hour tutorial
Before...
After ...
What expectations to students bring to traditional learning spaces?
Managing distraction in 21st century learning environments
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The LWB241 Workshops
Students would work in groups.
The activities would encourage debate and discussion.
Student contribution would add value.
Each group would work at their own pace.
The correct answer would be provided.
The activity would include full explanation as to why each possible answer was correct or incorrect. This feedback would direct students to further reading to help them come to understand the area of law.
The activity had to be available to online students in an effective form, modified if necessary.
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How could technology assist? Avoiding the cart before the horse.
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How could the space assist? The final frontier.
Student feedback
Unintended consequences
Space became irrelevant. The exercise worked exceptionally well online.
Extensive online use outside class
Application Interface
‘Confused’ button to send quick feedback to the lecturer
‘Faster’ & ‘Slower’ buttons to send feedback on the lecture pace
Post a question or ‘thought’
Respond to a ‘Thought’
‘Like’ a ‘Thought’ or ‘Response’
Sort the order in which posts were displayed
Under take a polls

Application Features
Students appreciated being able to ask questions anonymously and to see what other students were thinking.
Students liked the connectedness facilitated by OWL and felt engaged with their learning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc)</th>
<th>All Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your preferred method of asking a question in class?</th>
<th>All Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking a question verbally</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking a question using Owl</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't have a preference</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lectures using OWL were engaging

| Strongly agree               | 34% |
| Agree                       | 49% |
| Neutral                     | 16% |
| Disagree                    | 1%  |
| Strongly disagree           | 0%  |

**Figure 1: Preliminary pilot — combined data**
“Excellent for seeing what the rest of the class is thinking.”

“I found OWL to be a fantastic tool to use in the lectures. It’s comforting to be able to past a question that might seem silly and look at responses on OWL only to find others have been thinking the same thing.”

“OWL is the only reason I came to lectures.”

“I really enjoyed interacting with OWL. It made what is a very dry subject exciting and stimulating! OWL definitely has increased my ability to learn and absorb the content.”

“OWL made it difficult to tune out.”

“For the first time I felt like I was understanding the content straight away because of the activities! This is seriously the best. I think more students would attend lectures because this program keeps you awake, active in class and interested in what the lecturer is talking about.”

“Far more engaging than ordinary lectures.”
“At first I thought OWL was a poor excuse for people to just continually rely on technology rather than put their hand up and ask a question. I believe there is too much reliance on this type of communication and it is very passive... However, the polling and other activities make the lecture more interesting and applicable to exercises - rather than just being bombarded with information - so it helps it stick and also makes the lectures more accessible.”

“I found the OWL component a distraction. We are all new to the material and required the lecturer to provide it. Too much participation by those not qualified to participate was unhelpful and smacked of ‘ lunatics running the asylum’.”

“I think OWL needs to be used carefully as it could potentially isolate students who do not have laptops etc.”