An Overview of E-Learning at Ryerson University

Toronto, Canada

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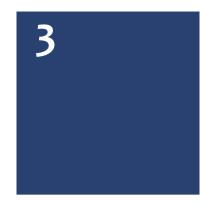
A short bit about my e-learning background

- Graduated in 1997 with an MBA from Queen's University
- Course was taken with other mid-career professionals
- Groups or "pods" located across Canada
- In-session classes held alternate weekends on Fridays and Saturdays
- Subject of many focus groups results



Geographic Overview

- Largest city in Canada with population of 6M+ persons
- Over 140 languages spoken
- Many students commute via subway, bus, tram and train to Ryerson
- Little room to expand the university, cost of urban space is very expensive
- Canada is geographically large and diverse
 - Many potential students do not wish to leave their home communities



Cultural Overview

- For many students, English is their "other" language
- Students bring a vast expanse of cultural backgrounds into the classroom
- Increase in the number of students with learning and mental health challenges
- Employment opportunities for our graduates is very strong
- Parents want their children to leave home experience education the way they did
 - Classroom communications leading to marriage



Student Overview

- "Digital Natives"
- Many students commute via subway, bus, tram and train to Ryerson
- Cost of commuting from \$6.00 to over \$20 per day
- Many students hold down part time jobs in addition to their studies
- Tuition increases/class size increases
- Lack of study space on campus



- Many "first generation" students have extraordinary family responsibilities
- Flexibility around their personal scheduling
- Some students take more than four years to complete a degree
- Few dormitory rooms for student housing on campus



Faculty Overview

- Experiential learning is fundamental to supplement theoretical learning
- Some labs/practices are not currently possible in an e-learning environment
- Students benefit from faculty interaction
- Issues related to academic integrity
- Faculty already utilizing e-learning tools such as Moodle, Blackboard, turnitin.com and others for classroom management & organization



University Planning Overview

- Teaching space increases are unlikely
- Co-development projects
- Use of local movie theatres as classrooms
- Cost savings to departments due to blended learning applications

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University Overview "Our Time to Lead"

- Academic 5-year Plan for 2014 2019 currently being developed
- To become "Canada's leading comprehensive innovation university"

• Four goals:

- Enable greater student engagement and success through exceptional experiences
- Increase scholarly, research and creative (SRC) excellence, intensity and impact
- Foster an innovation ecosystem
- Expand community engagement and city building

29 Strategies

- Number 11:
 - University-wide blended e-learning strategy which incorporates the principles of inclusive design and accessibility, in order to expand technology-enhanced and high quality online offerings

E-learning Applications in Use G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education

- Largest continuing education program in Canada
- Rumored over 60,000 course registrations
- 91 certificates 22 of these can be completed online
- Distance education is composed of:
 - Internet
 - Blended classroom and internet learning)
 - Videoconference and internet learning
 - Print and audio-learning



E-learning Applications in Use

- <u>Google Apps</u>: Google Apps at Ryerson is a package of web applications that includes Gmail, Calendar, Drive (Docs, Forms, Presentation, Spreadsheet), Contacts, and Mobile.
 - Google Drive is used to share documents, sheets, presentations and online forms. These tools promote collaborative learning.
- Technology available at Ryerson and supported by the <u>Digital Media Projects Office</u> (DMP): The DMP provides educational technologies to support Ryerson's faculty and instructors.
 - <u>Blackboard</u>: The current learning management system implemented for Ryerson. It offers various features to enhance classroom learning experiences.
 - <u>Ryecast</u>: The Ryecast service is provided by Ryerson University's <u>Computing and Communications</u> <u>Services</u>. Ryecast can be used to provide live lecture, seminar, and event broadcasts as well as host streaming video and audio on demand.
 - <u>Blogging</u>: Currently, Ryerson has <u>blog.ryerson.ca</u>, running <u>Wordpress Multisite</u>, for courses and administrative purposes. The DMP can accommodate various needs and ways of using blogs for teaching and learning.
 - Wikis: The DMP supports the Blackboard wiki, and a wiki plug-in through blog.ryerson.ca

- Visit the <u>Digital Media Projects Office(DMP</u>) website for a complete list of educational technology tools and support services.
- <u>Computing and Communications Services</u> (CCS) at Ryerson provide "How To" documents on the following:
 - Microsoft Office
 - Internet
 - <u>Web design</u>
- Microsoft free self-paced training courses are available to faculty and staff in departments currently participating in the Campus License Agreement; provided by <u>CCS</u>. These online self-paced modules includes tutorials for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Communicator, Groove, InfoPath, OneNote, Outlook and Publisher for Windows and Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook for MAC. <u>Install Requirements</u> (Note: Known issue with XP, awaiting MS solution) <u>Acquisition Options</u>
- Blackboard in the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education: All continuing education courses in The Chang School are supported by a Blackboard course shell as a means to enhance student interaction, engagement, and communication, as well as to support Ryerson's sustainability and paper reduction goals.

Resources

- Learning and Teaching Office
 - http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/online/
 - http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/online/online_course_ design.html
 - http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/activities.html
 - http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/tech_tools.html
 - http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/video.html
 - http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/video.html

Resources

- Ryerson University
 - www,ryerson.ca
- G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education
 - www,ryerson.ca/ce

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