

Participatory Learning & Mentorship (600 level)

Course Description:

In this course students will investigate the current global transformation toward a culture of participatory learning and mentorship. This participatory culture is one with relatively low barriers to engagement and where knowledge is distributed freely fostering informal mentorship where novices learn from those with the most experience. Students in the class will investigate how these participatory cultures are being fueled by emergent participatory media such as wikis, social networks, blogs, RSS feeds, and podcasts. The course will focus on how these participatory cultures are changing citizenship, community, economic enterprise and education.

Philosophy of the course:

This course was developed for administrators, educators and trainers who are looking for a forum to investigate the large scale shift that is being witnessed and propagated by readily available publishing tools and distribution media. This investigation will include how individuals are using these new media to significantly influence and in some cases transform cultural production, citizenship, economic enterprise, and education. The technical networks that carry bits from node to node and the media woven from those bits enable the humans at those nodes to learn, argue, deliberate, transact, and organize on scales and at paces that were never before possible. To understand this subtle but significant shift it is widely believed that individuals must become participants fully engaging in the culture and learning to use participatory media. Therefore, this course will require that each student spend a significant amount of time using online collaborative websites. Students will use wikis, podcasts, social networking, and other online collaborative tools to better understand learning in these emerging spaces. In addition, a significant amount of time will be spent discussing implications for education / training and how the participatory culture demands significant reform within the classroom.

Course Objectives (Students will be able to):

- Articulate the significants of the participatory culture and media
- Develop a public voice and contribute to critical discourse about issues.
- Apply the basics of collaborative peer-production as well as the mechanics of online group authoring
- Apply the rhetoric of online audio production (podcasting) and video production (vlogging)
- Argue the significants of the emerging participatory culture on education