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4-1-2010

Exploring Web 2.0 Technologies to Internationalize the Teaching of Psychology

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Velayo, Richard, "Exploring Web 2.0 Technologies to Internationalize the Teaching of Psychology" (2010). *Cornerstone 3 Reports : Interdisciplinary Informatics.* Paper 17.
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PACE UNIVERSITY

FINAL Project Status Report

PROJECT TITLE: Exploring Web 2.0 Technologies to Internationalize the Teaching of Psychology

THINKFINITY PROGRAM: Cornerstone III: Interdisciplinary Programs

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Richard Velayo, Ph.D., Psychology Department, Dyson, NYC Campus

DATE: April 30, 2010

A. Please outline your original goals

This project aims to explore effective ways in which instructors in psychology through the use Web 2.0 technologies in teaching to help with this "internationalization" initiative. Though the focus of this pilot project is the psychology curriculum, an investigation of the ways in which Internet-based technologies are used to internationalize curriculum in other disciplines will also be explored.

The original goals were as follows:

- Create a web portal (www.itopwebsite.com) to help instructors of psychology to internationalize the psychology curriculum, which contains clearinghouse of resources and web 2.0 technologies to facilitate collaboration among students and instructors.
- The development of an online survey to obtain feedback from psychology instructors from various parts of the globe to produce a list of "best practices" that will be valuable in setting up a more international curriculum using collaborative Internet-based technologies. This will be useful for students who seek resources related to the globalization of psychology as a field and for instructors to obtain resources to incorporate in their courses.
- Article/manuscript(s) will be submitted to select peer-reviewed journals in the area/s of psychology (e.g., Teaching of Psychology, International Psychology Bulletin, and The General Psychologist)
- Presentations in national and regional conferences (e.g., Upcoming conventions of the American Psychological Association, New York State Psychological Association). A workshop will be developed for psychology instructors (though instructors in other disciplines interested in internationalizing their courses) pertaining to how the Web 2.0 technologies may be applied and assessed in various undergraduate and graduate courses.

The anticipated outcomes of this study clearly apply to other disciplines and the interdisciplinary nature of this project is reflected in the relevant resources collected that are from various disciplines. Internationalization of the curriculum involves multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary efforts that many institutions and fields of study now consider as one of their major academic and professional initiatives.

Clearly, many empirical and qualitative studies in the field of computer science, business, education, languages, and cross-cultural anthropology have contributed in our understanding of how internet-based education may facilitate a more global perspective of one's discipline and a better understanding between peoples of various nations. Thus, the long-range objective of this project extends to other disciplines as well (especially the social and behavioral sciences) in terms of strategies in which the Internet may be utilized to enhance collaboration, infuse global content, and promote a more international perspective in the curriculum through an integrated portal.

In addition, given Pace's initiatives to have its faculty be more tech-savvy by incorporating web-based tools to enhance student engagement and learning especially in web-based environments, this study will provide a model portal that exemplifies how wikis, blogs, social networking websites, videoconferencing, virtual worlds, and other Internet-based technologies may be incorporated in their teaching, share resources that help internationalize the content, and infuse a more global perspective in these courses.

B and C. What progress have you made towards your original goals on your project to date?
What activities have been completed to contribute to meeting/progressing toward these goals?

The equipment and materials related to this project have been purchases and set up. In addition, the project investigator has gathered several related literature in psychology and from various other disciplines that demonstrate how instructors utilize Web 2.0 tools as a means to internationalize their courses.

The web portal (www.itopwebsite.com) has been created and houses various resources (e.g., articles, weblinks, contact information of key individuals with expertise and interest in this topic). We are also in the process of incorporating and testing Web 2.0 technologies (e.g., blogs, wikis, a Facebook page, webinars, video conferencing) to facilitate interaction among instructors on ways to internationalize their courses, that is, to explore and share ideas and strategies to effectively incorporate international content and collaboration between and among educators, students, and others.

A clearinghouse of electronic resources in psychology (e.g., syllabi, books, articles, weblinks, contacts) has been put together that may be of interest to those who seek to internationalize their courses. We envision that by the beginning of the fall 2009 semester, we will be able to put together a website that will house these resources as well as include Web 2.0 tools within the website to facilitate collaboration between educators, researchers, students, and curriculum managers in psychology who share the common vision of a more internationalized discipline.

The online survey has been developed to obtain feedback from psychology instructors from various parts of the globe to produce a list of "best practices" that will be valuable in setting up a more international curriculum using collaborative Internet-based technologies.

A workshop will be held at the 2010 Convention of the American Psychological Association, which will be held in August 2010 in San Diego, CA. This workshop is geared towards psychology instructors (though instructors in other disciplines interested in internationalizing their courses) pertaining to how the Web 2.0 technologies may be applied and assessed in various undergraduate and graduate courses.

D. What activities have not been completed? Please indicate why they have not been completed.

We have yet to test the WEB 2.0 technologies (Dimdim videoconferencing, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogger, PBwiki and Wikipedia) linked to the main portal site using a select group of individuals who are affiliated with the Division of International Psychology of the American Psychological Association. These individuals are board members of the Division and also a select group of Early Career Psychologists, as well as graduate and undergraduate students.

We have yet to gather enough people (a total of 10) to help test the site, but it is anticipated that we will be able to accomplish this in the middle of the summer. Many of these individuals who volunteered have

been busy with their academic work but have given their commitment to participate at the beginning of the summer.

We also have yet to analyze the data collected from the online survey form regarding internationalizing the teaching of psychology.

Another feature that we have yet to include in the site is a language translation feature. We are exploring a number of alternatives on how this may be done across the various web 2.0 tools built within the portal. This project will soon generate a specific lists of suggestions will need to be generated on how an instructor may best incorporate Web 2.0 technologies to facilitate the internationalization of the course. One of my primary objective is to be able to share the findings to the Pace community, specifically to our faculty. The results from this study may provide valuable information for administration and faculty to implement useful policies given Pace's distance learning as well as international education initiatives. Such findings will also be shared through conference presentations and publications in peer-reviewed journals. As mentioned previously, this project will yield of list of best practices in the use of Web 2.0 technologies, and generate learning goals and outcomes to assess if a course objective of incorporating international content and perspective has been achieved. I hope to be able to share the findings associated with this project with fellow psychologists as well as faculty in related disciplines so that they may be able to utilize Web 2.0 tools in their teaching through collaboration with those from other countries or even utilize content materials from non-U.S. sources. More importantly, I perceive the direct beneficiaries to be psychology students who will have the kind of international perspective about the psychology, especially how such perspective is manifested in their chosen career within (or even outside of) the field.

An article/manuscript has yet to be submitted to select peer-reviewed journals in the area/s of psychology (e.g., Teaching of Psychology, International Psychology Bulletin, and The General Psychologist)

E. Please outline the outcomes you have received as a result.

The web portal (www.itopwebsite.com) has now been put together and is almost ready for testing so that we may determine how it may be best used and possible how it may be tweaked.
The outcomes that have been accomplished are as follows:

The development of an online survey to obtain feedback from psychology instructors from various parts of the globe to produce a list of "best practices" that will be valuable in setting up a more international curriculum using collaborative Internet-based technologies. This will be useful for students who seek resources related to the globalization of psychology as a field and for instructors to obtain resources to incorporate in their courses.

A workshop will be held at the 2010 Convention of the American Psychological Association, which will be held in August 2010 in San Diego, CA. This workshop is geared towards psychology instructors (though instructors in other disciplines interested in

internationalizing their courses) pertaining to how the Web 2.0 technologies may be applied and assessed in various undergraduate and graduate courses.

F. Has your project impacted students? If so, how many?

Students in one of my graduate courses (PSY634 – Instructional Psychology: Multimedia Applications) which will be taught during the Summer 1 2010 semester) will be involved in the testing of the web portal. They will also be required to critique the site and to suggest ways in which it could be enhanced. In addition, one of their projects in the course is to provide content resources (e.g., weblinks, articles, samples syllabi, videos) to include in the site related to internationalizing the curriculum. Eventually, this site will serve to help students find resources that will help them incorporate international content in the psychology course that they are taking, perhaps include material relevant to final projects or research work that they are involved in.

G. Has your project impacted other faculty members? If so, how many?

One of my colleagues in the Psychology Department at Pace U., Dr. Mercedes McCormick, is involved in helping incorporate relevant content into this portal. There is also another colleague from Illinois State University, Dr. Michael Stevens, is also doing the same. Eventually, this site will serve to help instructors find resources that will help them incorporate international content in the psychology course/s they teach, perhaps infusing material relevant to making students more global in their perspective about psychology as well as to be able to communicate with psychologists and other students worldwide as part of their learning in the course.

H. Were there any unintended outcomes achieved?

Yes. In fact, the Division of International Psychology is interested in linking this web portal to make it an integral part of their own website (www.internationalpsychology.net). I am currently negotiating how this may happen and to make sure that I maintain some level of autonomy to this site. In addition, there is a possibility that this Division may be able to contribute some funds to the continuance of this project.

Another unintended outcome is the development of virtual lab on Second Life, which will be used as a way to conduct research through this new medium, a venue that has not been fully explored, especially in terms of conducting experiments.

H. Do your outcomes reflect the change or benefit you were hoping to receive?

Yes. The value of this project is foreseeable and expected, especially given that "internationalization" is now an explicit goal explicitly stated in the mission statement of various colleges and universities, as well as in numerous disciplines. Providing a venue through a web portal allows for a low-cost, efficient, and easy access to communicate

and collaborate, which is especially relevant in the field of psychology as we venture into a more globalized world/society.

J. How has your project furthered the Thinkfinity Cornerstone you selected?

This project will provide an opportunity to determine ways to enhance communication and collaboration between and among faculty, students, and professionals in the field.

K. Describe your future plans for sustaining the program or project.

This study is primarily an initial attempt at building a portal, so now that it is built, it needs to be tested so that we may be able to determine ways to enhance it for use by various constituents from with the U.S. as well as those from abroad. Its pedagogical value will be determined and hopefully, instructors of psychology and other fields interested in internationalizing their discipline/s will utilize this portal. Thus, this will be an ongoing project that will test and possibly incorporate technologies that will be helpful in internationalizing the teaching and training of psychology, and to promote collaboration from those involved.

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