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Technology in the Classroom – Assignment 1

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Technology in the Classroom EDU 560

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January 18, 2010

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**3. Personal Perspective Essay:** Read Chapters 1 & 2 (The landscape and Future … & Gazing Yet again into the silicon Chip The future of Computers…) by O’Neil and Perez (See your textbook) and use the information to prepare a three-page paper in which you present your views on teaching and learning and how the integration of technology fits within your **own framework.** You may also use other professional literature to support your views. Be prepared to share your work with the class. **(Inquiry, Intellectual growth, Professionalism) (10%)**

Technology is the direction in which the world is headed and though there are some drawbacks with the use of technology in education, the benefits of technology have been proven. First I will mention some of the disadvantages of using technology in education and will then discuss the benefits.

One shortcoming of the use of technology in education is the loss of social interaction between teacher and students and students and students. Students learning from computers are not interacting with their teacher as much as in traditional methods of education, therefore the student, especially if used extensively in early childhood is not receiving the level of social instruction that he should. The child also is not developing necessary social skills such as interacting, communicating with peers and teachers, as well as conflict resolution.

Another shortcoming of using technology in education is that it serves to widen the disparity between the rich and the poor. While all schools try to provide students with access to computers, the situation still exists that children from low income families will have less access to technology at home than children from higher income families. In the Cayman Islands all students have similar access to technology at school, as the private schools and public schools, which are attended by the vast majority, are on par technology-wise.

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When performing on-line or computerized assessments, students can potentially cheat by switching between the test and websites where the answers can be available. In this case, students must be monitored throughout the test to make sure that this is not happening. Students can gain access to inappropriate websites as well, so these must be blocked. Also, where an assignment is a research paper, students are able to plagiarize or purchase complete papers online. One way to get around this may be to have an oral quiz on the information that has been presented in the research paper, so that at least students have to memorized the information they have copied or purchased.

Despite the shortcomings of integrating technology into education, technology has proven beneficial to students, teachers and schools in many ways. One obvious plus in my opinion is the fact that technology is the language that most students speak. After all they were born in the technology era and as such, it is expected that today’s child lives and breathes technology. Technology seems to captivate student interest more than traditional methods can as this is the medium that they are accustomed to in every faucet of life. Interactive software is available, which gives students immediate feedback or reinforcement. Simulation software is available so that students are able to engage themselves in a realistic setting and more concrete learning takes place. When students are more involved in their learning, better learning takes place and it is therefore a more pleasant experience. Studies have shown for example, that students using the Jasper Woodbury series of math software, usually do better on math tests than students who have been taught traditionally. This series engages the students’ intellects and trains their analytical thought processes and critical thinking skills. (O’Neil Jr. & Perez, 2003). Therefore through the use of interactive software my students can learn better and enjoy improved performance.

Another benefit of technology in education is more thorough assessment and then faster grading for more efficient feedback to students and teachers. The use of on-line testing would save me time

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enabling me to be more creative in my lesson planning for better use of class time. I would have to make sure to take the necessary measures to prevent cheating, such as monitoring students during class tests and making answer keys available after all tests have been submitted.

I would be able to enjoy increased communication with my students’ parents as emails are quick and easily accessible. It is also now the accepted mode of communication. I can keep parents abreast of the children’s performance and behavior as well as school events. For mass mailings, I will be able to save both paper resources and time that would have normally been spent printing and handing out a newsletter or quick reminder to parents.

The most frequent use of technology in education today is research however, and my students would have access to a whole host of information through access to the internet. Instead of students having to spend time researching at the library or bulky encyclopedias, much more information is available on-line, at their finger-tips. I would be certain to block access to inappropriate websites so that students are not exposed to these in my classroom

Despite the time I would invest in learning to use new technologies in the classroom, this would be a smart investment of time. The benefits far outweigh the disadvantages of technology. I will actually be able to save time by the use of technology and my students will be more interested and involved in their learning. They as a result will enjoy enhanced learning and improved life-skills by the use of simulation software, as I strike a balance between time on the computer and interactions with their peers and I in order to learn the necessary social skills they will need for life. Education without the use of technology seems pointless as we strive to prepare our students for their future in a technological world. My classroom will therefore, without a doubt, employ the use of technology.

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