Chapter 14
The Changing Roles of Faculty and Students when Mobile Devices Enter the Higher Education Classroom

Teresa Franklin  
Ohio University, USA

Yanyan Sun  
Ohio University, USA

Nick Yinger  
Ohio University, USA

Jeffrey Anderson  
Ohio University, USA

Eugene Geist  
Ohio University, USA

ABSTRACT
Mobile devices pose a challenge for most faculty members in higher education as they view the device as disruptive and in competition with the work to be completed in the classroom. The goal of this chapter is to examine the implementation of HTC tablet devices and the changing roles of the faculty instructor and learners when using this device in an undergraduate business management course in a business college and a graduate course in early childhood in a college of education in a large Midwestern university. The chapter describes the classroom setting, instructor and student perspectives of the implementation, and the use of the tablet both in class and out of class as well as the barriers associated with tablet use when embedded in a higher education course.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-2985-1.ch014
INTRODUCTION

Mobile learning seems like such an easy term to understand and logically it seems that mobile access to content should enhance learning. What educator does not want 24/7 access to content for learners? After all, isn’t this the age of the digital learner—the independent learner that has technology at his/her fingertips?

While we often speak of today’s learner as a digital native, the faculty member in higher education is most often referred to as a digital immigrant (Prensky, 2001). The role of the faculty member in the classroom as teacher is expected but the roles of ‘IT specialist’ and ‘content developer’ for a mobile learning is a new wrinkle in the duties of a faculty member in higher education. When mobile devices enter the higher education classroom a unique change in how the faculty and students approach learning is required. Can the learner become the teacher?

The goal of this chapter is to examine the changing role of faculty instructors and learners when a mobile device (HTC tablets) is introduced into an undergraduate business management course in a college of business and a graduate course in early childhood in a college of education to provide opportunities for mobile learning. The chapter describes the classroom setting, instructor, and student perspectives of the implementation and the use of the tablet during in class and out of class activities. Barriers associated with tablet use are provided along with student and faculty perspectives on overcoming these barriers.

BACKGROUND

The use of e-readers has in a sense lead the way in the use of mobile devices (McCarthy, 2011). Duke University recently replaced standard textbooks and course materials with online open source multimedia content, recorded lectures, ePub texts, captured whiteboard instruction and PDF files as a means of providing access to course content that can be easily distributed across the Web under the creative commons designation. Students working during course sessions are able to collaborate as teams in solving problems while accessing course resources as needed through their laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Faculty facilitate the work of the course by moving from group to group answering questions, noting progress and guiding the work of the teams. In this sense the faculty member is better able to maximize class time for problem-solving, synthesis and evaluation of problems and build critical thinking, communication and collaboration skills among the students (Fusch, 2010).

One question that typically appears as universities begin to examine the adoption of a technology is ‘What is the availability of the technology to the largest group of students and how well will that technology serve the largest group of students.’ In January 2012, the Pearson Foundation Survey on Students and Tablets “…was conducted to gauge the opinions of college students and college-bound high school seniors regarding digital device ownership and purchase intent; perceptions toward tablets; tablet usage and features of interest; and preferences between digital or print formats when reading, studying, and doing other school-related activities. The survey identified interesting trends pertaining to students’ use of tablets and mobile technology, including:

- Tablet ownership among college students and college-bound high school seniors has more than tripled from a year ago. Further, a large number of students plan to purchase a tablet within the next six months.
- College students and high school seniors believe that tablets are just as valuable for educational purposes as they are for personal entertainment.
- Students agree that tablets will transform the way college students learn in the future.
- More students are reading digital books, and a majority of college students now pre-
Related Content

Indoor Positioning Using FM Radio
[www.igi-global.com/article/indoor-positioning-using-radio/46085?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/indoor-positioning-using-radio/46085?camid=4v1a)

Handoff and Route Optimization in Mobile Networks over IEEE 802.16e
[www.igi-global.com/article/handoff-route-optimization-mobile-networks/78384?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/handoff-route-optimization-mobile-networks/78384?camid=4v1a)

Relay Selection Scheme for Cooperative Communication Systems in Fixed Decode-and-Forward Mode
[www.igi-global.com/article/relay-selection-scheme-for-cooperative-communication-systems-fixed-decode-and-forward-mode/129001?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/relay-selection-scheme-for-cooperative-communication-systems-fixed-decode-and-forward-mode/129001?camid=4v1a)

Wearables for Performance Support and Learning
[www.igi-global.com/article/wearables-for-performance-support-and-learning/235487?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/wearables-for-performance-support-and-learning/235487?camid=4v1a)