

**ITC 435 - Week of 10/10 - Veletsianos Emerging Technologies in DE Chapter 6
Developing Personal Learning Networks for Open and Social Learning.
By Alec Couros**

Couros emphasized three main pieces to a successful open course ware learning

1- Key theoretical foundations in design and development of course

a. open movement - groups work collaboratively and share work that allows greater accessibility and transparency. I found an interesting phrase - "Democratization of knowledge construction and dissemination." Primary to this movement is the boom in Web 2.0 tools that allow students to create, share and collaborate. Content development evidenced by Wikipedia, MIT Open courseware and multimedia such as You Tube (I would add Khan University to this list) have also advanced this open movement as well.

Author notes the choice given - and the need to acquire skills desired to choose wisely from these options (information literacy)

b. Complementary Learning Theories - Couros is influenced by several learning theories including social cognitive theory SCT, Social Constructivism and adult learning theory
A key point in this section of chapter 6 is this statement, "Understanding how students construct knowledge and skills, the social setting and design of learner support can increase student performance face to face or DL." I think this a key point that these strategies are equally as strong in Face to Face teaching.

c. Connectivism - "Net Aware" stresses development of "metaskills" for information literacy and network connections.. Connectivists recognize the influences that emerging technologies have on human thought and believe that technology is reshaping how we utilize knowledge. I found this to be of high interest as a library media specialist. I think these skills are essential to 21st century learning and our role has grown in importance. Yet, these are some of the first teaching positions being cut.

2 - Course experience which includes emerging technologies

Open Teaching - the Facilitation of learning experiences that are open, transparent, collaborative and social. Open teachers advocate for free and open knowledge in environments that are reflective, responsive, student-centered, and that incorporate a diverse array of instructional and learning strategies. Because most of these open source tools are free it provides an opportunity for a level playing field not affected by economics.

3- PLN building

I primarily picked this chapter because of the PLN piece. I am really intrigued by this concept and believe it is another way to complete professional development in an ongoing and constant fashion. Almost in On-Demand fashion if I may borrow a phrase from cable.

Couros' PLN definition is simple: personal learning networks are the sum of all social capital and connections that result in the development and facilitation of a personal learning environment.

I have included his suggestions for PLNs because I think his suggestions are wonderful!
PLNs for teaching and learning

Immerse yourself! - use and understand social media

Blog, Wikis, Social Bookmarking, Photo sharing, video sharing, microblogging

Learn to READ Social Media use social media search engines like Technorati, Google Blog Search or WhosTalkin. Social media browsers - Flock, Feedly produced specifically for those who view produce and interact with social media. Blog aggregators such as Google Reader or Bloglines are essential for tracking student blogs - Social Media read differently than traditional media

Know your Connections - interact with your PLN to know their backgrounds and skills

PLN's central to Learning - These are important for sustained, long-term learning. Create communities based on communal learning

In summary: It is important to have support for open teaching, Social justice important and open teaching supports that philosophy of more accessible learning in society which goes back to our earlier article we read entitled, " RETHINKING EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY: THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION AND THE SCHOOLS"

I think library media specialist create PLN's maybe more often than content teachers. I think this happens because there may be one LMS per school or shared between schools and we must rely on PLN's to continue to grow.

Works Cited

Veletsianos, George. *Emerging Technologies in Distance Education*. Edmonton, AB: AU Press, Athabasca University, 2010. 231-247. eBook.