Supporting Transparency between Students

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Purpose

The purpose of the paper is to explore potentials of digital media to support transparency and empowerment of students.

Case study

A case study that explores the potentials of weblogs and social bookmarking to support transparency in a university course.
Transparency: Personal tools and social networks

Personal tools

Transparency: Personal tools and social networks

Social networks

Virtual Canuck

Object learning

Udkast 1 til flyer
December 12th, 2008

Tag: Peteter

Pigel

Architecture

VI har fundet et navn: [T.A.G.]
December 10th, 2008

VI har efter "naha" overskudte fundet et navn til venstre, inviterer:

T et leje

T og jæger

6 erle
Empowerment through transparency

The objective of transparency is to empower students

Assumptions:

- Students are empowered by making them more present and visible in the course
- Transparency can support and encourage participation
- Transparency can make student opinions and thoughts available
Case study: Pedagogical approach

A socio-cultural approach

- Problem-oriented and self-governed learning activities
- Learning is an active process
- Learners should govern their own problem-oriented activities
- Social interaction are central to learning
Case study: Background

- Department of Information and Media Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark
- Course title: “Knowledge sharing, IT and organization”
- 15 ECTS masters course
- 20 participants
- Five whole-day face-to-face seminars
- Online periods
- Seven groups (of 2-3 students)
Case study: Findings

Weblogs

79 posts (in two months)
18 comments

3 dominating kinds of weblog posts were identified:
- Answers to the assignments
- Summaries of curriculum texts
- Communication and coordination between group members
Social bookmarking

12 students used social bookmarking actively
110 bookmarks (in four months)

5 kinds of bookmarks were identified:
- Websites
- Academic articles
- Weblogs (related to course)
- Researcher’s websites
- Academic institutions
Case study: Findings

- Have you read the other students' weblogs?
- Have you been following the other students' social bookmarks?
- Have you read the other students' abstracts for their assignments?
- Have you used other digital tools in your group work?
Conclusion: Pedagogical potential

Use of digital media for transparency can support empowerment and inspiration among learners

- Students gained ownership of the tools
- Students’ thoughts and opinions were made visible in the course
- Students used the writings of fellow students for inspiration

Challenge

To create a balance between personal tools and tools for collaborative group work that are also suitable for transparency between students
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