

The Implementation of Social Networking as a Tool for Improving Student Participation in the Classroom

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This paper details the implementation of social networking tools in the classroom as a mechanism to enable undergraduate student “passengers” to become more active participants in their learning. Tools exist that allow teaching staff to embed social networking into their teaching materials. Using a tool (Twitter) that many of these students are already intimately familiar with in their social lives (Smith and Caruso, 2010), students were able to interact with the academic through devices such as iPhones, iPads and laptops (which students already own) and have their queries appear directly on the lecture slides as twitter posts during the lecture without needing to interrupt the class. The lecturer then used this feedback to amend their teaching style and provide a response to queries and comments. This paper outlines the benefits and challenges of using this tool and provides guidance for academics attempting to use Twitter in their classroom in the future.