Building Cyberlearning Communities at the Crossroads: Successes, Challenges, Lessons Learned, and the Extreme Road Ahead

http://education.sdsc.edu/tg11/

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The Portals (& The Tools)

- The SDSC Discover Data Education Portal (Moodle)
- The TeacherTECH Community Portal (Moodle)
- The MSI-CIEC Community Portal (Joomla)
- The Campus Champions Portal (Liferay)
- The SDSC StudentTECH Portal (Joomla)
- TeacherTECH (Postnuke)
- Open Grid Computing Environment (OGCE)
- SDSC Education (Collage)
- SDSC Gordon (Cascade)
- HPCU (Shodor custom)
App Distinctions

- Commercial, open source, custom
- Content Management Systems
- Learning Management Systems
- Grid Portal Toolkits
- Mashups
  - Portlets, widgets, modules, plugins, blocks
The Issues

- Define your goals and measures of success clearly
- Obtain adequate funding
- If you build it they will not necessarily come
- Know your community and yourself
- Use the Technology Appropriately
- Practice What You Preach
Obtain adequate funding

• Develop a clear idea what this is and make a case for it
• Specify *both* start-up funding and a plan for sustainability
If you build it...

• ...they will *not necessarily* come
• If you do not already have an audience demanding a portal, reconsider,
  ...or...
• Plan a strategy to build interest and create synergy
• Assign specific tasks to specific team-members
• Identify at least one person responsible for keeping content current
Know Your Community

• Know your communities’ (and your own) technical limitations

• Know your communities' online social skills/inclinations

• Identify community leaders, synergy catalysts, change agents
  • give them incentives if possible

• Ask them how they like to interact
  – use surveys or polls to learn more
Use the Technology Appropriately

• Consider experimenting with a subset of technophilic community members
• Identify examples of appropriate uses of social networking technologies, tied to the community culture
• Many content management systems support a wide range of social-networking add-ons
Practice what you preach

• Be sure you are ready to use the technology yourself, or find a partner who is

• Strike a balance in staff between introverts and extroverts
  – Introverts will help configure and troubleshoot
  – Extroverts will help with content creation
Let’s See Some Examples