C T L N e w s l e t t e r

Monthly Newsletter of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at IIM Udaipur

Aloha!

Thank you for your excellent feedback of the first edition of the CTL Newsletter. The form and structure of this newsletter will keep evolving based on your feedback and suggestions.

Conversations between faculty and students occur in different contexts and settings. These conversations are an important experience for students as it helps them become comfortable with the idea that they can hold their own in an intellectual conversation. But this is not something that happens overnight. Our first article draws on some of the developmental aspects of these conversations.

Immersive technology like AR and VR is the future of remote education. While the pandemic forced people to get used to learning mediated by 2 dimensional screens and experiences, we have been happy to be back to 'normal' physical classes as soon as the compulsions vanished. But immersive experience technology like metaverse is the future that everyone is betting heavily on. How do you harness it in class? Our next article talks about an instructor certification program in XR that could be useful for those who want to understand and implement 3D immersive experiences in class.

INSIDE:

CONVERSATIONS WITH FACULTY – A KEY DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCE

What may seem like a small and inconsequential exchange carries deep meaning and encouragement for students and forms an important part of the developmental environment

INSTA 360 LINK AI WEBCAM

Technology product overview of an AI enabled webcam that makes taking online classes a breeze

USING AR/VR IN THE CLASSROOM – THE NEXT LEVEL OF HYBRID

Metaverse in the B-school classroom. How and where can you learn how to use it in your classroom

Conversations with faculty – a key developmental experience

A brief conversation between one study group and a faculty right after class to clear a doubt about an assignment. A student bumping into a faculty in the line for lunch and exchanging pleasantries. Feeling adventurous and joining them on the table for a longer conversation over lunch. Having a chat over a cup of chai at the canteen. Discussing academic concerns in office hours. Conversations between faculty and students can have many flavors. But how do they affect students?

Higher education student development theories suggest three principles[1] that teachers can use to support their students in their transformational journey. The teacher's role is to

1. Validate the learners' capacity to know
2. Situate learning in learners' experience
3. Participate in the mutual construction of meaning

Formal and informal one-on-one interactions with faculty or open conversations involving a group of students and faculty in casual settings are an important developmental experience for students

Faculty who expect students to question authority, learn ways of critiquing information, craft their individual opinions, take responsibility for academic as well as other work, become responsible leaders and cultivate mature relationships play a major role in student development.[2] Having a conversation with a faculty is not something that comes naturally to a student, especially in a place like IIMU. For some, the initial interactions with faculty in class within case discussions evoke a sense of fear because faculty question the inputs that students bring to a classroom discussion. Hence it takes some time for students to get comfortable with having informal conversations with faculty outside of the context of academics or even formal conversations related to academic performance. But these conversations are an important part of the experience because of the high quality of interaction and sense of confidence and self-worth that students derive out of them.

Initial conversations may be restricted to faculty who they perceive as being approachable and they feel comfortable talking to. After an initial period of reluctance, students tend to look forward to and plan for such conversations. These conversations are often informal and seemingly trivial. In that sense, not all interactions with faculty are fruitful, but the opportunity being available to students and students making use of it sets things in motion. Some of these initial faculty interactions are usually in the context of academic work and they helped students adapt to the new ways of learning. These interactions help students get over their initial apprehensions and look at faculty as approachable mentors. Very often, slipping into another language that both are comfortable helped bring in another level of comfort.

[1] Magolda, M. B. B., & King, P. M. (2004). Learning partnerships: Theory and models of practice to educate for self-authorship.

[2] Barber, J. P., King, P. M., & Magolda, M. B. B. (2013). Long Strides on the Journey Toward Self-Authorship : Substantial Developmental Shifts in College Students ' Meaning Making. Journal of Higher Education, 84(6), 866–896.

Over time, increasing confidence means students begin to participate in informal conversations with faculty over many topics.
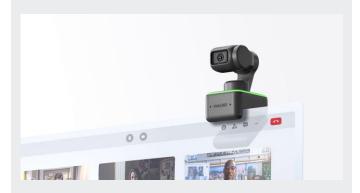
When it comes to open conversations in groups, physical and psychological safe spaces in a campus where faculty and students can meet and such conversations can happen naturally, are essential. Open conversations with faculty often resulted in students learning how to ask questions - well-thought deliberate questions – in a manner that is not overly submissive or deferential - allowed students to grow. These conversations allowed students, even bystanders, to learn which questions to ask, how to ask them, how to frame them within the conversation, and how to ask them confidently. From these conversations, students learned to engage in mature arguments and even conflicts without fear of damaging relationships. Faculty thus validated the learner's capacity to know and participate in meaning-making creating a supportive and open environment.

What makes these conversations attractive for students is that they are at a very different intellectual level - in a sense, flights of fancy, discussions of possibilities and ideas. The influence of these conversations extends beyond the campus as well. As their identities develop, conversations with parents reach a higher level of maturity. The nature and tone of conversations shift from approval seeking to fearless, independent perspectives, gently communicated.

While these conversations with faculty are among many other important life-shaping conversations that students have on campus, they are crucial because they form the meaning-making safe spaces in which new beliefs and values are formed and new identities evolve.

-   Joel Xavier

Insta 360 Link AI Webcam

If you are a gadget afficionado, and over the last 2 years tried out many technological innovations, especially those that help you be a more natural teacher in front of the camera, then this is a device you need to check out. While the technical specs of this camera are impressive for a consumer camera, the AI features make it stand out.

As a teacher the AI tracking feature of the camera allows you to the freedom of movement in a wide arc while the camera automatically tracks you. You can also use gesture control to shift focus seamlessly to a whiteboard or presentation screen that you are using, or to zoom in and out in the frame. You can use overhead mode if you want the class to view the notes on the desk in front of you. Built in privacy protection ensures the camera will physically point downwards after 10 seconds of inactivity. What's more, you can manually correct camera settings including brightness, exposure etc. unlike most built in or strap-on cameras.

There's only one hitch. This camera is currently not available in India. If you like what you see and want to buy one, time to call in a favor from that friend abroad. It retails for USD 285. I use two other products by the same company, and I can vouch for the build quality and user-friendly interface. If you are wondering why this camera wasn't released during the pandemic when we needed it the most, I am with you.

Here's the [insta360 link camera product page](#) and the [product video](#)

Using AR/VR in the classroom – The next level of hybrid

Prof. Vijay Govindarajan, (Coxe Distinguished Professor at Dartmouth College's Tuck School of Business) in a recent article presented an interesting perspective of how VR can be integrated into business education.

Based on learnings from a course he offered recently at Tuck, he explores the potential of virtual reality (VR) in business education in this article. It looks at the advantages of using VR in business education, such as providing a more immersive learning environment, allowing for more interactive collaboration, and providing access to remote locations. It is fascinating how a group of students in Dartmouth can be immersed in a neighborhood pan-shop in India and get immersed and see for themselves the immediate context of the product and how it reaches the consumer without resorting to field travel. What is more, the immersion is repeatable and potentially offers new perspectives every time a student revisits. While a student is within an immersive environment, the possibility of distraction is also reduced as the entire audio/visual environment is simulated and not just a part (as in a screen).

In part 2 of the article, Prof Govindarajan argues that business schools should adopt these technologies to provide a more engaging and immersive learning experience and to enable more collaborative activities, even across geographies. These technologies can be used to create virtual campuses and to facilitate more remote learning. Business schools should embrace the potential of VR and AR to remain competitive and deliver skills that are needed for the future.

Post-pandemic, as faculty and students return to physical classes, there is a growing agreement that the physical learning environment is tough to beat for student engagement even though many have adapted to the virtual classrooms during the pandemic. But that may change with VR. Virtual reality and augmented reality make a compelling use case for designing educational modules of the future. They are going to be an inevitable and inseparable part of education in the (very near) future. They might even prove to be game changers.

Extended Reality (XR) is an umbrella term that describes Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), Mixed Reality (MR), and everything in between. There are many flavors of training available for learning how to use the XR platforms available today. One such program which is engineered towards equipping professors to design their own XR enabled courses is Edstutia's Instructor Certification in XR (ICXR) program which enables a teacher to understand emerging technologies and their application in teaching and training. It gives professors the knowledge and tools they need to create engaging simulations for students. 3D Models in AR University programs utilize interactive 3D models in AR to teach complex concepts.

If, as a teacher you are actively seeking more tech-driven teaching solutions. You want to integrate immersive technologies into your courses to get students excited about participating and learning. At the same time, If you fear that using and

1. Prof Govindarajan with his class at Tuck (https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/business-school-in-the-metaverse-realizing-the-power-of-vr-and-ar)

applying these technologies requires coding and other technical tools, then the course introduces you to applications like Reality Composer that lets you create AR experiences using your preferred device – including your phone. This is just one of the tools covered in this certification

I interviewed a participant in the most recent ICXR cohort who answered a few questions that can help if you are trying to make a similar decision. The program runs over 10 weeks (2 hours per week) in a cohort of 15 (participants) with a blend of live online instructor led sessions and a variety of asynchronous content. You also work within a team of 3-4 participants to independently create a 45-minute module to be delivered as part of the course assignment thus giving hands-on experience in creating XR modules. This prepares you to immediately apply the learning and create your own learning modules. Edstutia also provides a digital certificate in Immersive technologies training. Participation in the course requires you to have access to an Oculus quest 2 VR headset. The Edstutia XR campus is based on this platform. In addition, the course itself costs USD 4,000 per participant (scholarships are available). The [registration for the next cohort](#) for this certification closes January 3, 2023.

Feedback

Please click on the link below to share your feedback and comments and to let us know what kind of content you would like to read about in future newsletters.

https://forms.gle/oT73PwW9tafiTmXb7

For queries or for making a guest contribution, please contact the Centre for Teaching and Learning at ctl@iimu.ac.in