

Class wiki

Method	Class wiki
Introduction	
<p>A wiki is a website on which users collaboratively modify content and structure directly from the web browser. Creating your own wiki with your students enables you to co-create much of the (ancillary) material of your course with your students. It can also have the added benefit of being available for the following cohort of students so that they too can contribute and expand on your wiki. Content can be added either individually or in groups and can then be assessed for suitability again either individually or by group. Specific assignments related to topics or issues can be allocated and it lends itself very well to courseware which is particularly resource and reference rich. This method is probably best applied to modules or course units rather than individual lectures as it can be quite time-consuming. You can also use it as a way to assess students formally and informally where the quality of their input to a specific topic can be evaluated</p>	
Aim	<p>The aim of this technique is to foster a spirit of collaboration amongst students and to enhance their general co-creation skills. It also can enhance their knowledge of a subject and help to teach them the necessary critical skills they require to filter and qualify information available online.</p>
Target group	<p>Creating a class wiki can be applied in any discipline and at any level. It is as already mentioned, best applied to a significant part of a course as it can be quite time-consuming and to ensure students fully benefit from its use, it should be available for quite some time after the course is over.</p>
Intended learning outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended knowledge in a specific discipline • enhanced ability to collaborate and function successfully in a team • better ability to successfully co-create content with other students 	
Description	
<p>Once operational, students are expected to contribute to the wiki on an on-going and often specified basis throughout the lifetime of the course. The scale and quality of their contributions to such a wiki can be an assessment criteria.</p>	
Preparation	<p>Setting up the wiki before launching it with your students is obviously important as is making sure you are familiar with how to add and edit in a wiki.</p>
Required resources and equipment	<p>Set yourself up with Mediawiki and learn how to use it for your classwork. MediaWiki is a free server-based software. Its pages use MediaWiki's wikitext format, so that users without knowledge of HTML or CSS can edit them easily.</p>

Success factors	Language can play a role in the success or otherwise of a wiki in that students who are multilingual can identify resources in languages other than that in which the course is being delivered and so contribute to the content availability. Students skills in finding, selecting and referencing online materials is also a factor that needs to be considered.
Advantages	Setting up a class wiki means that you can collate all relevant online resources and do so in a manner that enhances students collaborative and deductive skills.
Disadvantages	A wiki can become too extensive and distributed unless care is take to scaffold the information it contains carefully right from the start and to plan in regular review and editing opportunities as part of the maintenance of the wiki.
Additional information	<p>The Bookshelf project provides a step by step plan for setting up and using a wiki in your course, take the time to go through it here.</p> <p>Vanderbilt university has a very useful page with lots of links about using a wiki in your teaching here.</p> <p>This short video by Vanessa Van Edwards, explains what a wiki is and how it can be a beneficial educational tool for teaching staff.</p> <p>Wikipedia is the best known of these projects and is a free and open encyclopaedia where anyone can view and edit content. It is edited and written collaboratively by people from all over the world and anyone can edit and contribute. Note, wikipedia is not considered a reliable source by many academics and academic institutions because of its open nature and the fact that anyone can adjust and change information, so you should always check your sources carefully and do not depend exclusively on wikipedia for references.</p> <p>WikiEducator is a community project working collaboratively with the Free Culture Movement towards incremental development of Open Educational Resources, aiming at building capacity in the use of Mediawiki and related free software technologies for mass-collaboration in the authoring of free content, developing free content for use in different education settings.</p>