Module 1 Summary and Reflection

Summary

Module 1 activities focused upon building a working knowledge of the field of educational technology as it relates to the broader perspective of the educational system, as well as the narrow perspective of my own school and classroom.

Assignments for Module 1:

1. Read and view materials provided on historical, societal, and critical issues in Educational Technology. Required reading and linked videos:

   • *The Machine in Us/ing Us* - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLlGopyXT_q&feature=player_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLlGopyXT_q&feature=player_embedded)
   • *Shift Happens: Educational (Technology) Reform* - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xI7yoZHNHek&feature=player_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xI7yoZHNHek&feature=player_embedded)

2. Access and add resources to the class wiki. For this module, my contributions to the wiki were:
   - Resource: Technology Integration Matrix
   - Resource: EDTECH mailing list

3. Develop a definition of Educational Technology. Through Discussion Board posts, class members contributed ideas and provided feedback, as our definition took shape. The “final” definition that resulted from the collaboration will be posted to the wiki: [https://sites.google.com/a/u.boisestate.edu/theory_fall2009/home/educational-technology-a-working-definition](https://sites.google.com/a/u.boisestate.edu/theory_fall2009/home/educational-technology-a-working-definition)
4. **OPTIONAL: Add additional terms and definitions to the class glossary.** I did not contribute to the class glossary during Module 1.

5. **Add a contribution to the historical timeline for Educational Technology developments.** Class members are editors for the timeline created by Dr. Rice on [http://www.xtimeline.com/](http://www.xtimeline.com/). The event I added to the timeline was June, 1970 – AECT is Formed: [http://www.xtimeline.com/eview.aspx?id=334067](http://www.xtimeline.com/eview.aspx?id=334067)

6. **Read and Review Effective Research Strategies and visit the Edtech Library Guide.** A variety of resources and tutorials are available through the Albertson’s Library on the BSU campus. The Library Guide ([http://guides.boisestate.edu/edtech](http://guides.boisestate.edu/edtech)) has been populated with resources/links specifically related to educational technology. The librarian, Sara Seely, is available to assist distance learners via email and live chat. The step-by-step guide to research for EdTech is available via the website ([http://guides.boisestate.edu/edtechresearch](http://guides.boisestate.edu/edtechresearch)) and a text version can be printed ([http://guides.boisestate.edu/print_content.php?pid=60447&sid=444479&mode=g](http://guides.boisestate.edu/print_content.php?pid=60447&sid=444479&mode=g)). Dr. Rice used screenr to prepare and introduction to the Library Guide: [http://screenr.com/Dis](http://screenr.com/Dis).

7. **Join CiteULike (optional).** I joined and have taken a preliminary look at some of the articles. It looks like several Boise students have joined, but the most of the articles were added by Dr. Rice. I’ve used delicious for some time now and will be interested to see how this compares.

8. **Participate in ongoing discussions and sign up to lead a discussion.** I will be teaming with Linda Deneher to lead a discussion 9/30 – 10/6. I have participated in the definition discussion on several occasions and screen captures of discussion posts are linked to my 504 webpage. This week Dr. Rice began a Cool Tools wiki and I am hoping to contribute. At this point, I have not been able to edit the page, but have sent two tools to be added:

   - **Scratch:** [http://scratch.mit.edu/](http://scratch.mit.edu/)
     Create interactive stories, animations, games, music and art and share them on the web. Free.
   - **TuxPaint:** [http://www.tuxpaint.org/](http://www.tuxpaint.org/)
     Open source (free) drawing software for children ages 3 – 12. Also available, for $6.99, on a CD-ROM which can be shared and copied.

9. **Submit summary of Module 1 assignments and reflect on the readings and current teaching practice.** For each module, I will follow the format of this document: summary first, followed by reflection.
Reflection

The first of our two required readings was a resource I read and used for my EDTECH 501 Synthesis Paper. The authors state that tech use and expectations can be broken down into three phases:

1) Print Automation – drill and practice; focus on content delivery
2) Expansion of Learning Opportunities – applications involved working in groups. Less drill and practice, more open-ended higher-order thinking, more content resources.
3) Data-Driven Virtual Learning – data-driven decisions make schools more effective.

The report addresses two questions: What is the effect on learning? What is the significance for educators?

In reading this article again, I realized that the use of technology in my classroom mirrors these phases of tech use. My personal timeline is shorter and began more recently, but the phases are much the same. Though I had been using computers and audio technology on the teacher side of things for several years, my first use of technology with students in my music classes was drill and practice software. Students in need of remediation could gain extra practice while those with more experience could move on to more advanced skills and concepts. Over time, computers were upgraded and software was improved, but significant changes in tech use did not occur until an LCD projector and document camera were installed in my classroom.

With Internet access and a means of projection, the world was our oyster! A world full of music was available for us to access as part of class and access to this technology enabled students to develop a greater depth and breadth of understanding. I began a school-wide music blog so that students could access resources from home. Homeschool communication was enhanced and those resources accessed in class were now easily accessible to students at home. An added bonus was that, with limited curriculum materials in our district for general music, online resources filled many gaps. As I gained experience using a variety of tech tools, additional opportunities were available to my students. Integration of technology provided authentic application of current music class topics and gave students the opportunity to be more active learners. Once I began classes at Boise, these types of opportunities became greater in number and higher in quality.

This year, I find that the pendulum has begun to swing the other way. With the purchase of common curriculum materials last spring, I have now have adequate resources on hand, but in these first weeks of school technology integration has been limited to projecting pages from the electronic student edition of our textbook. As I become increasingly familiar with new curriculum materials, I am hopeful that the pendulum can start swinging back the other way once again. Our district made a huge tech purchase this summer, which included Promethean boards for K-3 all classrooms and 3 mobile computer labs for each of the district’s six schools. Once the mobile labs are operational, learning activities not previously possible (due to Computer Lab scheduling...
difficulties) can be planned. While my classroom is not scheduled to have an interactive whiteboard for a few more years yet, the software has been installed on the computer in my classroom. There is an floating set of voters and a hub that will soon be available for those without a board. I see that technology as having huge potential for revolutionizing formative and summative assessment in my classroom.

When I began coursework at Boise State, I felt comfortable and capable with the day-to-day aspects of technology integration. Though I was comfortable with many “tools of the trade” I quickly came to understand that my foundational understanding of the field was quite lacking. Each course I have taken in the MET program has broadened my view of educational technology and helped me to better understand the most appropriate uses of technology in my classroom and the changing role of technology in education. As a result of this class, I hope to improve my ability to pinpoint those places within the curriculum in which technology can most effectively and efficiently promote student learning. In my (hopefully) future role as an educational technologist, I feel it is critically important to understand the philosophy, history, and theories related to educational technology so that I have more to offer than new toys to play with at school.

With that in mind, it did not surprise me that I was drawn to the readings and discussion concerning various definitions of educational technology. In the article by Luppicini, his purpose was to render a definition that would guide current and future developments in Educational Technology: Educational Technology as a theory, a field, and a profession. The author notes that challenges to defining the field have been associated with differing ideas of what constitutes technology (process vs. equipment) as well as trying to define something large and diverse in very specific terms. In refining a definition of educational technology, the author promotes a “goal oriented problem-solving systems approach” (Luppicini, p. 107) and goes on to stress the importance of viewing new developments in the field through the lens of historical and theoretical tenets.

When reading Luppicini, the point that had greatest impact on me was his emphasis on learning from history and that knowing where you have been allows greater understanding of where you are and where you are going. Having purchased the optional texts for this course, I thought it appropriate to read Educational Technology: The Development of a Concept, at this time. I also read portions of Educational Technology: A Definition with Commentary, which built upon the previous text and takes a close look at the newest AECT definition. Increased understanding of this growing field, the thoughts behind each definition, and the criticisms that led to the each change, are helping me to better understand where we are now.

As I explored resources for Module 1, I found a few more articles by Alan Januszewski, and am hoping to spend time reading that information in coming weeks. As my background knowledge grows, I feel I will have more to offer to our class discussions. I am hopeful that my thoughts and ideas will increasingly reflect a more thorough understanding of the field and of best practice, and not simply be personal opinions based on limited experience.
Sources:

