

PADLET: THE MULTIPURPOSE WEB 2.0 TOOL

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ABSTRACT

For many faculty, Padlet has become an important Web 2.0 tool in face-to-face and online instruction. In this paper, faculty in the College of Business at a large private university located in the Southwestern United States examined best practices in the use of Padlet in the online classroom and explored other ways this Web tool can be used. While integrating this resource to augment classroom instruction is its primary application, we identified additional ways to engage and collaborate with Padlet and recommend using it for student resources, instructor collaboration, student collaboration, practitioner starter kits, faculty starter kits, and conference resources. We also provide applications and suggestions for each.

Keywords: conference resources, consulting resources, faculty collaboration, higher education, online learning, Padlet, student collaboration, Web 2.0

INTRODUCTION

With academia's expansion into digitization, there has been a variety of Web 2.0 tools and resources developed. Additionally, there is a growing interest in and understanding of the use of Web 2.0 technologies in higher education (Collins & Hide, 2010; Ementa & Ile, 2017). Research in higher education highlights increase in use and understanding of available Web technologies that may be used to advance and augment student learning (Collins & Hide, 2010; Davis et al., 2020; Ementa & Ile, 2017; Loar, 2018; Schilling & Hammond, 2019). Studies have also examined faculty self-efficacy in the use of Web 2.0 tools (Alhassan, 2017) as well as student perceptions of their own computer self-efficacy (Loar, 2018).

Web 2.0 presents an opportunity for faculty and administrators integrate into the classroom tools to further engage students. Padlet is one such innovative tools among many (Deni & Zainal, 2018; Hammond & Waltemeyer, 2021; Lucas et al., 2021), including Zoom (Hammond & Waltemeyer, 2021; Lucas et al., 2021;), Loom (Duryee, 2020; Hammond, et al., 2018; Lucas et al., 2021; Schilling & Hammond, 2019; Waltemeyer & Cranmore, 2018), Remind (Lucas et al., 2021), and FlipGrid (Hammond et al., 2018; Lucas et al., 2021). As

faculty in the College of Business at a large private university located in the Southwestern United States, we examined the use of Padlet in the online classroom and explored additional ways to use this web-based tool.

CONNECTIVISM

Prior to addressing the alternative uses for Padlet, it is important to consider the theoretical framework that explains why teachers use web 2.0 tools like Padlet. Connectivism is a learning theory that is based on the idea that people process information and learn by forming connections (WGU, 2020). This theory has largely developed with the digital age and emphasizes new ways of learning through the use of technology (WGU, 2020).

Connectivism is relatively new, and underscores life-long learning. It is important to note that today, individuals seek to gain knowledge beyond formal education through skill acquisition, social and professional networks, and information access through technology (FWGU, 2020). Duke et al. (2013) explained that connectivism allows for enhanced student learning through knowledge and perception acquired through personal networks. Utilizing Padlet in the classroom provides faculty the opportunity to expand their teaching practices

beyond what is available in traditional online learning environments.

PADLET

Most people in education circles have heard of Padlet. Padlet can be used in a variety of ways to provide course content to students via an electronic bulletin board format (Fisher, 2017). Padlet serves as a web-based storage space for teachers to house resources including links, images, text, and files (Deni & Zainal, 2018; Fisher, 2017). We used Padlet in a variety of ways in our online and face-to-face courses and explored additional best practices for use outside of the classroom. As such, we explored the use of Padlet intended for students, faculty, and community members. As it relates to teaching and learning, Padlet can be utilized to further engage students in the course content and learning objectives and to provide collaboration opportunities for them. Additionally, faculty can use Padlet to share best practices and collaborate with peers. Padlet is also a Web 2.0 tool that provides faculty a means to disseminate information with members of the community or academic conference attendees.

Students

Padlet serves as an excellent resource to be used in both the face-to-face and online modalities (Fisher, 2017). Faculty can post resources in one easily accessed location (see Figure 1). Among

the many resources faculty include in Padlet are lecture highlight videos, assignment resources, study guides, outlines, lecture slides, and chapter review slides as well as links to additional online web tools (such as Kahoot, an online quizzing platform) to review course content.

Padlet can be used in both traditional and online learning environments as a tool to encourage student collaboration and provide a virtual bulletin board for students to collaborate on classroom assignments, share resources, and organize related course content. An example of a Padlet used for student collaboration is provided in Figure 2. Bugawa and Mirzal (2018) stated that Web 2.0 tools are designed to enhance student engagement, interaction with peers, and collaboration and participation. According to Nachimuthu (2018), there are several benefits of incorporating technology into the classroom that included enhanced collaboration, communication, and knowledge creation. Ramachandiran and Mahmud (2018) stated that collaboration among students in an educational setting can translate into them developing competencies that include conflict resolution, problem solving, critical thinking, and negotiation skills. As such, the use of Padlet as an educational tool promotes creativity and collaborative learning among students and serves as a valuable learning resource.



Figure 1. Student Resources Using Padlet



Figure 2: Student Collaboration Using Padlet

Faculty

Advances in technology have created a space in which faculty members can communicate, collaborate, and share resources. For example, Padlet allows faculty teaching the same course the opportunity to collaborate on course materials, study guides, tutorials, chapter lectures, and assignment feedback, as shown in Figure 3. According to Chadha (2018), using technology as a collaboration tool allowed faculty to share in the responsibility of creating and monitoring course related materials. In addition, faculty members utilized technology-based collaborative tools to share instructional strategies, training materials, and mentorship communication across the college and/or university (Kumi-Yeboah, 2018).

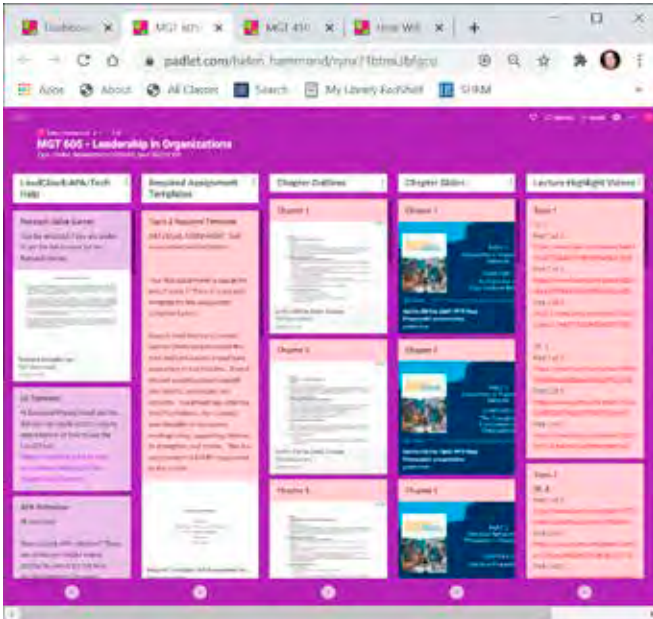


Figure 3: Instructor Collaboration Using Padlet

It is not uncommon for faculty to share best practices and effective teaching strategies with their colleagues. Ongoing knowledge sharing through the use of technology allows faculty members to contribute and access information in real time. For

example, faculty can share resources related to social topics, links to articles, current events, video tutorials, and assignment templates by creating content for a Padlet or even topic-specific Padlets. Li and Greenhow (2015) noted the importance of knowledge sharing through the use of technology as it relates to collaborating on research and academic writing among faculty members. As such, Padlet can provide a single point of reference for research data, questionnaires, surveys, and writing resources. Figure 4 demonstrates the use of Padlet as a resource for faculty.

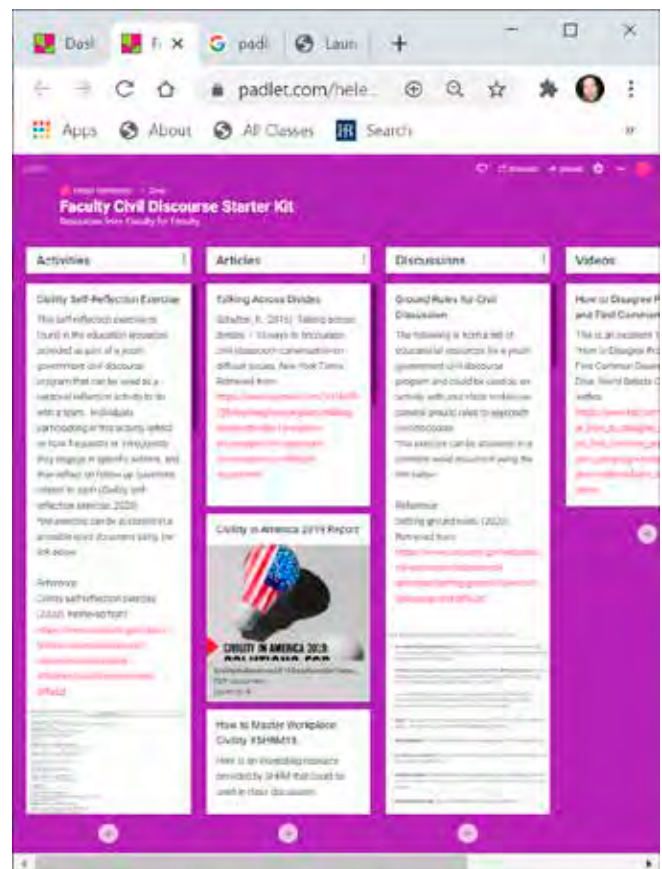


Figure 4: Faculty Starter Kits Using Padlet

Community

In addition to all the ways that faculty can integrate Padlet into the classroom, there is also

an opportunity to use this web-based tool beyond student-teacher interactions. For example, faculty often engage with the professional community in an educational and consulting capacity. Figure 4 provides an example of a Padlet used to house practitioner resources.

Creating a Padlet allows faculty members to share content that is specific to an individual, group, or organization. Levy et al. (2016) stated that on-going collaboration and engagement, once information has been shared, is instrumental when implementing the new knowledge. Padlet is dynamic and provides a single web-based depository of tools and resources that community members can use and update indefinitely. In addition, a resource like Padlet serves as a “starter kit” from which tools and resources can be added, based on business/industry needs, as demonstrated in Figure 5.

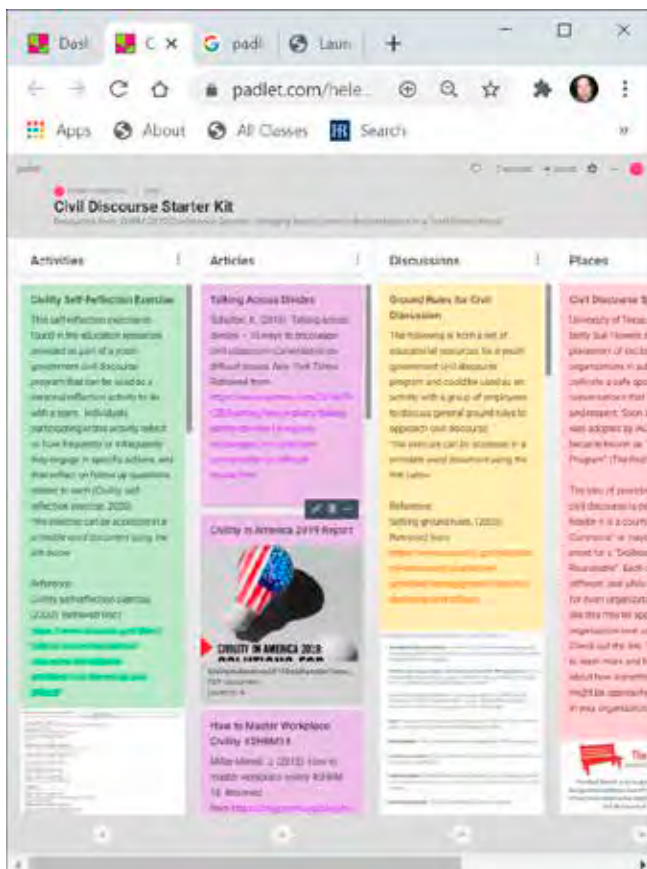


Figure 5: Practitioner Starter Kits Using Padlet

Padlet can also be used as an effective tool for faculty members presenting at in-person and virtual academic conferences. Figure 6 illustrates

how Padlet may be used as a tool to share conference resources. In addition to conferences, faculty are often called upon to present content-specific material as part of continuing professional development. According to Spilker et al. (2020), there is a need to move away from the traditional conference formats and incorporate a hybrid approach that includes technology and interaction. Presenters can utilize Padlet as an interactive engagement tool to increase attendee learning and participation. For example, faculty can create a Padlet that contains information relevant to the presentation while also providing conference attendees with resources, tools, and strategies they can implement in their own professional lives.

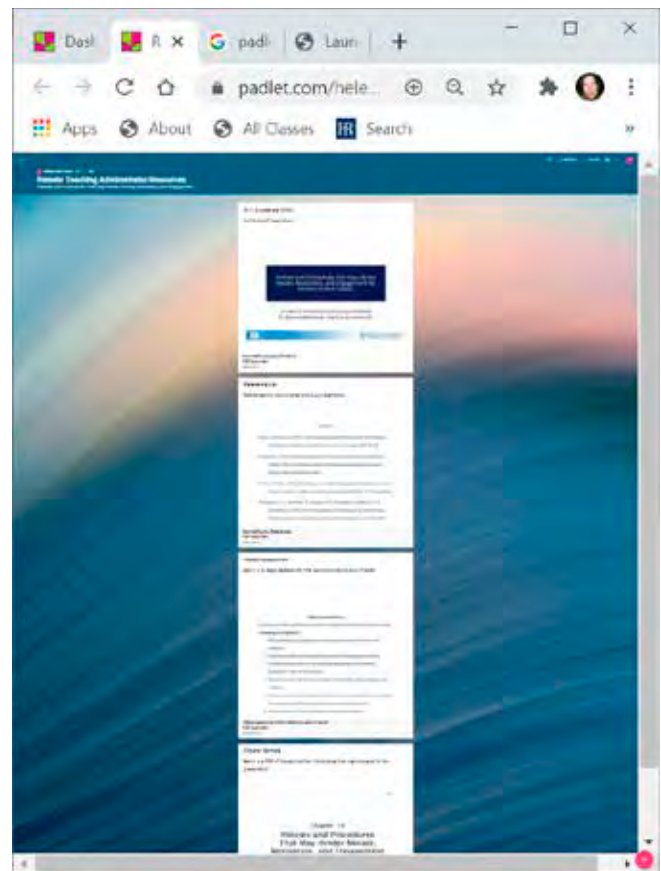


Figure 6. Conference Resources Using Padlet

CONCLUSION

There are many tools that are in current use for teaching and classroom administration. Although Padlet is often primarily used in the classroom, this virtual bulletin board can be put to use in other ways. Furthermore, faculty can look for ways to continue to better serve their students

and share their best practices with university business partners, the community, and industry professionals. The research aligns with these recommendations related to the use of interactive technologies to support bilateral communication (Deni & Zainal, 2018). Padlet is a virtual file room where experts and educators can compile all the information that is related to a course or subject and easily share with colleagues and/or students. Faculty can benefit from using Padlet for internal and external collaboration and any other areas where information is shared in an organized and a “one-stop-shopping” fashion.

Developing a Padlet for internal and external use can be a valuable and successful endeavor with positive outcomes. We provided examples that demonstrate its ease of use and the practical applications beyond the classroom. There is an opportunity for faculty to pivot from here and look for other ways to utilize Padlet as a learning tool for students and as a platform for faculty to share resources in community outreach, consultation, conference presentation, and collaborative endeavors.

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