Laptops in the Classroom

Presentation for CEHSP
February 27, 2008
Helen Mongan-Rallis

Overview

• Use of laptops in classes
  – Web-based uses
  – Non web-based
• Practical advice

Image source: www.edb.utexas.edu/ltc/labs/lapclass.php
Uses of Laptops in Classroom: Web-Based Uses

- Using course materials & resources on course web page (e.g. accessing course site (Moodle or WebVista) or faculty web pages that have syllabus, handouts to be used in class)
- Students can integrate materials into their notes from course website or other online resources (e.g. paste diagram into notes)
- Make classroom discussions and activities more dynamic and real time (have students go online and seek ideas, resources as discussion evolves)
- Internet searches for resources (on the fly or as part of group work)
- Taking online tests (in Moodle. WebVista, TestPilot, or other)
- Incorporate online activities in class (e.g. PBS Sorting Exercise)

Web-Based Uses (cont)

- Evaluating online resources as part of class activity
- WebQuests created by instructor or others
- Accessing UMD library
- Accessing online forms (e.g. special education forms on the web where they create their own IEP)
- In class sharing of ideas (e.g. Using Google Docs, on a wiki)
- Students can seek online assistance on the fly (useful for ELL students for translation)
- Students can collaborate in real time with others at remote sites (IM, UMConnect, Skype). Small group work can involve students not physically in the room.
- Partner with other classes in other sites (local, national, international)
Uses of Laptops: Non-Web

• Students note taking
• Small groups: recording group ideas to share with whole class (e.g. using Inspiration, PowerPoint, Boardmaker)
• Using discipline specific applications & peripherals (e.g. assistive technology for Special Education)
• Concept mapping using Inspiration
• Taking, downloading & showing digital photos to illustrate their understanding or experiences
• Taking tests (easier & quicker than writing by hand). These can then be uploaded to course management system.
• In class writing/writing days (e.g. M.Ed. weekend writing days)

Practical Advice

• Assume that students can multi-task and don’t be offended by this
• Accept that knowledge is at students’ fingertips, so ask questions that draw on and have students apply knowledge, rather than restate information
• Keep it simple: no need to go high-tech just because the tools exist. Learning is the point, not technology
• Don’t do in class what can be done out of class
• Explain your expectations