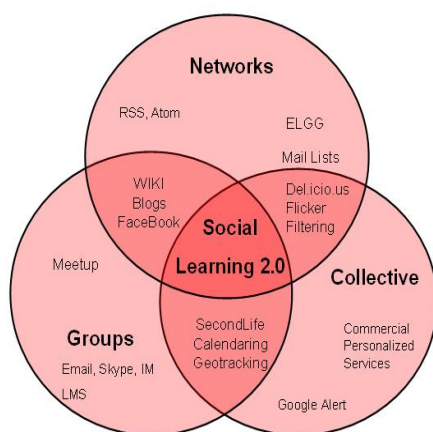


## Web 2.0 applications – issues for the 21st Century teacher

The digital world gives us more opportunities to reach others for global networking, interactive, collaborative and distributed learning. At the same time, we experience more challenges for teaching and learning. We have to find an easier and cost effective way for students to learn. Students will be urged to work with others, negotiate in virtual space, comment on peer work and manage their knowledge. In this generation, we receive and search huge amounts of information. We are able to contribute the new knowledge gained from our previous experiences. Students are encouraged in life-long learning. They can interact with others collecting their ideas and experiences to improve themselves.

The following figure shows the relationship between Networks, Groups, Collective and Social Learning 2.0. "Group and Network members through active or passive tagging and aggregation – thus exploiting and contributing to the Collective."



(Dron and Anderson 2007)

Could networked tools provide them with an environment to do more? Social networking tools support effective interaction between teachers and learners. There are forum, community, relationship, activity, workshop, space and individual control tools. Teachers and students can create a learning community via social networking tools. This comes out of the institution portal system. They get more freedom to contribute to the learning group via the tools in ways such as the exchange of ideas, collecting feedback from others, discussing special topics, etc. The tools also allow them to develop learning connections.

"The challenge they felt was 'to get the senior executive to understand the value of social software because they still think this is fringe.' Institutional support was seen as giving time release to develop these new teaching approaches; exploring methods of reconciling new work practices; investigating the ramifications of opening out sites to participants outside Deakin University; resolving concerns such as the legal position of collaborating with other universities; looking into the copyright and ownership of those collaboratively

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created resources and the reuse of those resources; setting up codes of conduct for students; and determining the usability of files with images of people." (Samarawickrema 2007) Policy should be made to guide the teachers and students about these issues. An institution provides support for teachers to let them understand the trend. They may think the Web 2.0 application is fringe or it cannot help them in the lesson. However, most teenagers are using these applications to communicate and collaborate in new things with others anywhere and at any time. For teaching and learning, the sense of community is very important to its members. A strong sense of community not only increases the persistence of students in online programmes, but also enhances information flow, learning support, group commitment, collaboration, and learning satisfaction (Dede 1996; Wellman 1999). The teachers' role is very important in the community. They have to plan and change the teaching method to adapt it to the new digital world and trend. Students will not participate in learning activities if they do not receive any interest, reward, or feedback from their teachers and peers. Teachers have to post the things first and give minor guidance to students in the learning community then let the students communicate with their peers freely. In addition, teachers can also reply to their students messages and encourage them via networking tools.

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