**ENSE 496ab, Social Software Systems Design. Fall 2019**

**Activity: Community characteristics & orientation**

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**NOTE**: Each student will fill out this file given the responsibilities and deliverables in their “pod.” It might help to include whatever information you find interesting based on our discussion with our key customers on September 20.

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| **Community characteristics** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Community life-cycle (current state)** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Where is your community in its life-cycle?** | | | | | | | | **What you need to focus on:** | | | **Special needs** | |
| **Just forming**  Need basic tools to connect, but not sure from there | | | | | | | | Discuss the potential of some basic tools with members, explore what ideas it might give them, and see what they might bring in with them. | | | / | |
| **Self-designing**  Information stage, but with a strong sense of what it wants to accomplish | | | | | | | | Contribute ideas to the design. Analyze systematically the implications of their community design for technology, infrastructure, and technology skills. | | | Current accreditation process validated by latest visit by Engineers Canada, though system should be able to react to changing requirements. Highly configurable and modular system may be impractical; agile software development would make changing code in future easier. | |
| **Growing & restless**  Ready to add new functionality to its tool configuration | | | | | | | | Try to make this a community reflection and self-design event. Does their restlessness suggest a major change, such as a transition to a new platform? | | | The community needs processes for improving course performance; currently it has only processes for assessment and analysis. | |
| **Stable and adapting**  Just needing some new tools | | | | | | | | How much disruption will the community tolerate? How will the new tools be integrated into or affect existing practices? | | | / | |
| **Constitution** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Diversity:** How diverse is the community? | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Topic** | | | | | | | | **Your notes** | | | | |
| What are the different types of members and what are their levels of participation? | | | | | | | | Engineering professors and the OBA committee are the core members with the most participation (professors input data and the committee reads it). Other fringe participants include local employers, alumni, and non-engineering staff. | | | | |
| How spread apart is it in terms of location and time zones? | | | | | | | | All core members are in the same location, but some fringe members (alumni) are spread globally. | | | | |
| What language(s) do members speak? | | | | | | | | English | | | | |
| What other cultural or other diversity aspects may affect your technology choices? | | | | | | | | Some university staff have lesser English skills and require any instructions to be extremely clear. Additionally, Microsoft Office is used by the office. | | | | |
| **Openness:** How connected to the outside world is your community? | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Topic** | | | | | | | | | **Your notes** | | | |
| How much do you want to control the boundaries of your community? Does your community need | | | | | To be private/secure  Open boundaries  Both private & public spaces | | | | Faculty members strongly oppose sharing their own data to anyone without a specific reason for having access. Professors want their assessments to be shared only with the OBA community and to be inaccessible by other staff. There is no reason for the public to be able to read this system’s data. | | | |
| How does your community need to interact with other communities? Do you need common tools for sharing and learning with them? | | | | | | | | | This community gets assessment data from other faculties when non-engineering courses are used to meet accreditation requirements. Other faculties need simplified tools to share relevant information to the OBA committee. | | | |
| **Technology aspirations** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Technology savvy, tolerance, & constraints**: What are your community’s technology interests and skills and patience thereof? What are the constraints imposed by technology factors? | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Topic** | | | | | | | | **Your notes** | | | | |
| How interested is your community in technology? | | | | | | | | It is very interested in new technologies to replace or augment the existing Microsoft Office setup. | | | | |
| What is their capacity for learning new tools? | | | | | | | | Good; the staff learned UR Courses well. Learning new tools will be especially easy if this system is simple and fast to use. | | | | |
| What is the range of skills? If their interests and/or skills are diverse, could it cause conflict or distraction? | | | | | | | | / | | | | |
| How tolerant are members of the adoption of a wide variety of tools? | | | | | | | | Highly tolerant of simple tools | | | | |
| How many technological boundaries are they willing to cross, e.g. sign in to more than one web-based tool, learn to use new tools, or give up old favorites? This helps you understand what level of integration you need. | | | | | | | | The community may resist giving up their own excel files, particularly members who track their own course performance beyond what is required for this assessment. A tool that extracts accreditation information from provided excel files may aid these members adapt to the new system. | | | | |
| What are your members’ technology constraints (e.g., bandwidth, operating systems, etc.)? | | | | | | | | Mainly Microsoft Windows and Firefox, but some use other operating systems and web browsers. The system should function on as many modern web browsers as possible to avoid inconveniencing members. | | | | |
| How much time are members able to be online and from where (office, home, field)? Some people have limited online time, or are able to be online only in specific locations. Others are always on. Very diverse situations can affect participation | | | | | | | | / | | | | |
| **Community orientation** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Relevance to community**: Use the range from 0 (no relevance) to 5 (high relevance) to determine what matters most to the community. Look at these from the perspectives of the different types of members (under “constitution”). Also discuss the “value-added” to each member group | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **0** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | | **5** | **Orientations** | | | **Variants** | | **Key activities/your notes** |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Meetings**  Many communities place a great emphasis on regular meetings where members engage in shared activities for a specific time. Meetings, and the visible participation of members, assert the community’s existence | | | Face-to-face/blended  Online synchronous  Online asynchronous | | / |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Open-ended conversation**  Some communities maintain ongoing conversations as their primary vehicles for learning. Open-ended conversations are common when a community is co-located and people keep the conversation going as they “bump” into each other. | | | Single-stream discussions  Multi-topic conversations  Distributed conversations | | Assessors should be able to provide their own interpretations of their data |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Projects**  In some communities’ members want to focus on particular topics, go deep, and collaborate on projects to solve problems or produce useful artifacts. Learning is not just a matter of sharing knowledge or discussing issues. Members need to do things together in order to develop their practice. Projects usually involve a subgroup within the community | | | Practice groups  Project teams  Instruction | | / |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Content**  Some communities are primarily interested in creating, sharing, and providing access to documents, tools, and other content. Valuable and well-organized content is a useful resource for members | | | Library  Structured self-publish  Open self-publish  Content integration | | Professors don’t want to share their assessments |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Access to expertise**  Some communities create value by providing focused and timely access to expertise in the community’s domain, whether internally or externally. Communities with this orientation focus on answering questions, fulfilling requests for advice, or engaging in collaborative, just-in-time problem solving | | | Questions & requests  Access to experts  Shared problem solving  Knowledge validation  Apprenticeship & mentoring | | Professors don’t like asking the Dean for assistance, but may not mind asking a peer. |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Relationships**  Some communities focus on relationship building among members as the basis for both ongoing learning and being available to each other. This orientation emphasizes the interpersonal aspect of learning together. Communities with this orientation place a high value on knowing each other personally, emphasizing networking, trust building, and mutual discovery | | | Connecting  Knowing about people  Interacting informally | | Classes shared by multiple programs (eg. ENEL class required by software program) have multiple stakeholders. |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Individual participation**  Learning together happens in the context of a group, but it is realized in the experience of individuals. People bring different backgrounds, communication styles, and aspirations to their participation in a community. People have different levels of commitment, they take on different roles, and they use tools differently | | | Levels of participation  Personalization  Individual development  Multi-membership | | Professors and committee members have defined and distinct roles |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Community cultivation**  Some communities are happy with loose self-organization and unplanned evolution, while others thrive on attention to community cultivation. They have a need to reflect on the effectiveness and health of the community to make things better, joined with a willingness to work on it | | | Democratic governance  Strong core group  Internal coordination  External facilitation | | Programs do what they want but should follow a common framework.  Changes affecting multiple stakeholders (modifying the attribute map for a course – multiple faculties may be stakeholders) should involve them. |
|  |  |  |  |  | |  | **Service context**  In some cases, serving a specific context becomes central to the community’s identity and the ways it operates. They may live inside an organization, whose charter their practice needs to serve. They may have a mission to provide learning resources to the world or to recruit members widely. Or they may seek interactions with other communities whose domain complements their own | | | Organization as context  Cross-organizational  Other related communities  Public mission | | Objective of the community is to assess classes for accreditation.  Other related communities include other faculties and the accreditation authorities. |
| **Scratchpad (other interesting insights, questions/answers, etc.)** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ENGG-classes do not have a program responsible for them as they are not part of any particular program; this software should enable each program to have input into the assessment of these classes.  Some classes have multiple sections; eg. ENGG 303-001 and ENGG 303-002.  Dave discussed the value of a highly configurable system; following agile practices with rapid deployments will make adding features easy in future. | | | | | | | | | | | | |