**Bridging the Digital Gap:**

**​ A Conversation on Uniting BYOD and Instruction in the Higher Education Classroom**

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**Abstract:** The proliferation of personal devices has grown to astronomical levels. This is an untouched resource in many educational facilities because it is viewed that students are not disciplined in their use of technology in the classroom. Many educators and schools are putting in their syllabi not to bring or use technology during class. As instructors, if allowing students to BYOD how do we keep students on pace or on track with tasks? You want to give the freedom to use technology but will freedom yield effective results? What instructional changes should be implemented to effectively incorporate the use of personal devices (laptops, iPads, smartphones etc.)? This is a conversation of how we, as educators, can effectively incorporate personal devices while maintaining classroom integrity.

**Literature Review**

Bring your own device, BYOD, is an increasingly common occurrence in educational facilities that permits the use of one’s own personal device in conjunction with the Internet as part of learning and instruction. (DiFilipo & Kondrach, 2012). The utilization of personal devices has the potential for altering the way teachers instruct their students as well as how students learn in an educational environment. (Singh, 2013). Using technology allows students to get immediate feedback so they can adjust their thinking and actions in order to develop their own connections or niches.  This allows students of all ages and learning potentials to approach the educational process in a manner that is suited to their learning style.(Collins & Halverson, 2010)The multitude of school improvement reforms through the increased use of technology in classrooms has added pressure to today’s educators. (Keengwe, 2007)  According to Singh’s (2013) research, a chasm exists between the availability of technology today and its effective use in instruction or the classroom. The educator is critical to the effective transformation of our education system. (US Department of Education, 2013).  This conversation will focus on the efforts of the educator for the integration of BYOD in the classroom and its effect on student learning.

**Goals and Objectives**

The goal for this session is to create a conversation to discuss the effective integration of the BYOD phenomenon into higher education classrooms. This session will focus on:

* Distinguishing how to maximize BYOD use while maintaining classroom integrity,
* Defining BYOD and its importance in today’s classroom,
* Discussing strategies on how BYOD can be utilized effectively in higher education,
* Identifying the issues associated with this process while pinpointing potential resolutions, and
* Promoting conversation to identify how BYOD can become a part of the curriculum.

**Description of Practice**

Participants who attend this session will gain a greater understanding of BYOD and its evolving importance in current and future education. Conversation with the presenters will be encouraged by all attending participants regarding the challenges they face as well as the potential benefits that are associated with permitting device utilization in the classroom. Additionally, we will be encouraging and monitoring back channel chat and adding it to our ongoing conversation.

**Facilitation Techniques**

The session will begin with a brief summarization of BYOD giving us common ground with which to move into our conversation. This conversation will be guided by a panel of facilitators who will provide the perspective of the instructional technology design specialist, the higher education instructor, and the learner. The conversation will be guided by the introduction of various questions such as:

* What benefits does BYOD present for both the instructor and student?
* How distracted are BYOD learners and what methods/technologies are available to stimulate focus?
* What are some common barriers that threaten the proper incorporation of this multimedia opportunity?
* How can we as instructors actively incorporate BYOD in our classrooms yet maintain classroom integrity?
* What instructional changes should we implement to effectively incorporate the use of personal devices?

**References**

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