



[MUSIC] Welcome to the UP tech top podcast, coming to you from the academic multi-media studio on the University of Portland campus, produced by academic technology services. [MUSIC] Thank you for joining us for another episode of the UP Tech Talk Podcast. Today I'm joined by my co-host, Maria Erb, the instructional designer at University of Portland, hello Maria.

Hi Ben. [LAUGH] And today, we're just gonna be chatting about some issues that are pertinent in the world of higher education, and technology integration into that world. So I recently had the chance to attend a conference over in Boise, Idaho. And we're just gonna be reflecting a little bit on a few of the sessions that I saw.

And we're gonna get some of Maria's input as a seasoned instructional designer, and see what some of her takeaways are from it. So the first one, Maria, that I went to was called Tell Me What You Really Think, Faculty Attitudes Towards Technology. And it was put on by a very smart woman named Leslie Madison Brooks who's a technology administrator as well as a faculty member over at BSU, just talking about the way that faculty interpret this sort of needs or this wants for them to be using technology at a high level.

Did you have anything that you want to say about that right off the bat? Well I think the title of this session is fantastic. I think that it's really important that faculty have the space and opportunity to really say what they think about using technology. We really don't give them the opportunity that often.

And, it's something that really should be done with a fair degree of anonymity in a lot of cases, because it's just not that easy to come out and say, I really don't want to use technology at all [LAUGH] [LAUGH] Right. And to be labeled as somebody that feels that way.

Right, progressive. Yeah, and that's just not really, I mean, we want to hear their attitudes as they are, that's how we form our support approaches. From knowing what is real out there. And it doesn't really serve them to have to keep that under wraps. So I love the title of that session.

Yeah, absolutely, and it was a very good session, just sort of trying to think about that and put ourselves into their shoes a little bit. So the first thing that we actually did in that session and that was one that was very interactive, as a lot of these at this particular conference were.

So we started by, are you familiar with the poker game where you put a card and you stick it to your forehead and you can't see [LAUGH]- Mm-hm. The card that's on your forehead? So she wrote out a bunch of, essentially, technology buzz words on cards.And we started this session by putting these on our foreheads and then walking around and just having other people tell us how they would react to that technology, or how they felt the faculty reacted to that particular technology.

And then we had a chance to kinda guess or infer what they were talking about. And it was very illuminating, just from going around and being told, oh, I really love you, you're really great. Or oh, I really dread using you, and getting some of the more specifics, and trying to kind of infer what they were talking about.

And what were some of the buzzwords? Well I was BYOD, which it took me the entire 10 minutes of walking around, having people say, oh, yeah, you seem really great. But I'm not really sure if I can count on you to really be there. It really took the emphasis away from what the technology is, and what are the implications for faculty in using it.

And how are they integrating it into their day to day? So, that was kinda fun and there's just a couple, like I get to walk up to the PowerPoint guy and be like, hey everyone thinks you're boring and lame [LAUGH]. Yeah, oh wow. So that was a fun activity.

But then we kinda got into the meat of the session. And actually my favorite slide, because she did actually use a PowerPoint in her presentation, was a diagram, or graphic I guess of these are sort of the five archetypes of technology, her faculty and how they relate to technology.

And it was all swimming based, so it was like put it in that world. So you'd have your toe dippers, you have your, I think she called them explorers. But it was someone basically hanging on to like a floatie for dear life [LAUGH]. [INAUDIBLE] You have your divers and this was someone that was just like jumping into a swimming pool with no water [LAUGH] into it necessarily.

Right. Or as she said they're jumping whether there's water or not. Right. You have your practitioners, so this was someone's that very proficient they're swimming laps. They're really utilizing technology. And you have your deep sea explorers. So these are scuba diving and probably discovering new species of deep sea fish and things like that.

[LAUGH] Did she say what percentage of swimmers falls into each category? No it wasn't so much about an all encompassing kind of a thing. There are some people who can be both, some people move sort of across that spectrum. But I think it was just funny to me cuz I know someone here at UP falls into each one of those categories.

And they immediately spring to mind. [LAUGH] [UNKNOWN] At least one person. Absolutely, yeah. [INAUDIBLE] And that's sort of how we view them, and kind of help us realize where we need to meet people where they're at, essentially. But the question for us is, then is how do we leverage the explorers and the practitioners, and have them sort of help along some of the other people on their journey?

Yeah, that's something, I mean I feel like those archetypes are definitely true to form. It's something I've observed over the 15 plus years that I've been in this field. I feel those are very accurate. I think though that at either end, the deep sea explorers and the toe dippers, they both, they're roughly like 10% to 15% percent, on either end, and most people are in the middle.

Oh Yeah. And it's really a question of, kind of, I think you use the word elevating their status in some ways to a mentoring world-Right. For the other people, and this is something that used to be a lot easier to do just because faculty schedules were a lot different than they are now.

There's more of a challenge now, and we do need to think of a way of how [UNKNOWN]- Yeah, technology changes faster, there's more of it. And there's less time for faculty to take on these other roles. Yes, anyway I just found it to be definitely be a really great session, just in terms of sort of everyone kind of almost letting their hair down, be like let's just really talk about this.

Yep. And one thing that she said, that really stuck in my mind just sort of because of where I am. She said, some faculty, especially if they're more in the explorer or the toe dipper area, they may suffer from imposter syndrome. Which is the feeling that you're constantly about to be exposed as an imposter if you try to present yourself as an expert, in using technology.

Wow. And, that just struck me that everyone feels that way at some point in their life. Even, I, am pretty experienced and proficient in using technology myself. But I learn things all the time, where I'm like oh, I totally did that wrong. [LAUGH] [LAUGH] Chalk that one up to inexperience, or whatever.

So that just really stuck with me. I think it's real important for us all to keep in mind, that no one knows everything. We're all learning, [LAUGH] Even the deep sea explorers. So, that's what drives them right is that passion for learning about new things.So, Yeah. I think that's good point.

And I also feel that we know that we can't know it all because we're in this field, and I feel like a lot of people who aren't in this kind of a field have that feeling that they should know things, or I should know [CROSSTALK] [UNKNOWN]. Or they assume that we do know everything.

Yeah, but I still feel like there's this feeling because they're coming from other areas that, oh, I'm expected to know these things.It's a knowable thing, it's a masterable thing. Mm-hm. And because we're in the tech field, we know that that's absolutely not true at all. That things change instantly, that there's no way you can kinda master a body of knowledge.

Right. But I feel that we're constantly making this point to people who aren't in the tech field because it's It's so normal for us in fact there is no other way you could possibly survive in this field if you didn't feel that way but for other people they are coming from different places where you actually can master things and you actually can sort of become a master level.

It's something- Exactly. That doesn't change every 15 minutes. Right, and to put it in different terms it would be like expecting an English teacher to have the dictionary memorized and a thesaurus memorized. You're literate, you know how to read and reflect on things and build your knowledge. And really that's what we want to build in the digital world is like digital literacy and fluidness to be moving across these different technologies.

Not knowing it like memorize it and all the manuals front to back or anything like that. Yeah it's just not a fixed entity. That's-Exactly. Yeah, I would say the current approach is that we've adopted and I would assume are pretty commonplace in those places are to kind of do what we've been doing for the last 10 or 15 years.

Which is offer workshops and training sessions and these kinds of opportunities. And again, in the past, those were good kind of places to offer support. However, again, with the sorta changing nature of the way that just faculty schedules are. This is a good time to really rethink a lot of those things.

We know that people just don't have time for workshops. And training I think is starting to have a very negative connotation for people. [LAUGH] Yeah, and I'm doing a little bit of that, not to sort of plug my own stuff. But I did start the UP Tech Tips Initiative, which is less of a focus on Or a one-time workshop or a very described training session.

It's really meant to be, I guess it's really meant to be more of a consumable, bite-size driven feed, constant driven feed, rather than, here's a giant chunk of Outlook, an hour of a giant chunk of training. Every Tuesday and Thursday you get a three minute video to watch. It will maybe let you learn something that you didn't know or maybe reinforce the technology that you weren't really thinking about using.

Some sort of try take that approach and let people take their professional development has more of a slow pace but steady kind of a thing. That's definitely something that I've been trying to build and I think I'm getting to the point now where I'm on a pretty regular schedule.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, as you're coming out, you can subscribe via email If you go to my site at states.up.edu/kaahn. And it's available there pretty much on anywhere that you's wanna subscribe. Yeah, I think that should be part of the [UNKNOWN] siteThat's actually a great point, Maria. It is part of the T and L site.

I forgot to mention that. [LAUGH] So we have sites.ep.edu/tl and the tech tips automatically go there as well. And so that's where you can find this podcast. That's where you can find detectives. And then they also live next to some faculty blogging that's happening around not just technology, but all sorts of different tips for incorporating more advanced techniques into your teaching in different areas.

Okay. So I'm glad that we Talked about sort of a new approach that we're taking. I think moving forward it's gonna be making technology ubiquitous to the point where it isn't popping up in your face all the time. It's what, I mean, it's what we all want but it seems like the more we strive for it the more we keep seeing it and we keep tripping over it and keep

[LAUGH] Slamming us in the face in so, so many ways. So it kinda feel like we're just always gonna be struggling with this.Because we want it to be so user friendly and so in the background. Mm-hm. And just absolutely not require us to pay attention to it in any way.

But yet at the same time, it just seems like, I mean I just think about this so much. How much time do I spend just dealing with my online banking or some website to make a reservation or to do this, that, and the other thing. And it's like, more and more and more time goes to maintaining just anything in life.

But at the same time, it's less and less time you're spending at the bank, physically, right? Well, but I mean, the idea of freeing up all this time that you would be spending at the bank- [LAUGH] And doing all these other things was supposed to be so you could insert

More things that you wanna do in life into that space. Totally. But it just seems to me like that space keeps getting co-opted by more and more things that draw you back into maintenance and all this other stuff, too. Right. I know, and I just feel like we saw that in the classroom situation a lot, too.

We encourage faculty to use technology, whether it's showing YouTube videos or Kind of using PowerPoint, whatever it is. But yet, in the classroom space you know the computer that will boot. And it's still drawing more and more resources to supporting and maintaining those spaces. Yeah, I tend to take a little bit

I think more of an optimistic view of that. Mm-hm. Cuz I think technology allows all these amazing things to happen that couldn't have happened. Yeah. 40 or 50 years ago. It's true. And then it just sticks out so much more when they fail because it's so integral- [LAUGH] [LAUGH] To the process, so it's like we can't go back, right?

I think it's really interesting when people Try to you know, when they try to unplug and you know and unfriend and [LAUGH] Yeah.And do all these things. I think that those are kind of important exercises every now and then to do. Do that. Yes, no, I agree with you there.

It's important to keep it all in perspective. And realize if my video won't play- [LAUGH] I'll have to just go back to talking to my students and lecturing them in a very old school way. But that yeah, I do agree that it can feel like a little bit of a rat race, just as more and more things are made possible by technology.

And then it becomes- Yeah. Expected that you You're gonna fit that into your curriculum somehow. Right. And it is really about figuring what's appropriate. Were you able to enhance your pedagogy in a meaningful way? Mm-hm. And there's lots of opportunities to do that And it's important to keep in mind that you don't have to utilize every tool in the tool box at all times.

Right. And I just think that this kinda balance few as something we just keep needing to beat the drama and be [UNKNOWN]. I just feel like that just doesn't come across very easily to people. You know what I mean. Automatically it's like we've got two initials on her for head.

Not like the Scarlet Letter but we have the scarlet I and the scarlet T- [LAUGH] Over our head. And I feel like that's- That's awful.I think I've heard that before. [LAUGH] It's like really frightening to people because they automatically assume that we're gonna have this one point of view.

That we're only gonna wanna see one style of teaching from them. And that just simply isn't true, and I feel like at least with us, having at least two different viewpoints here that we're putting forth. I think that is the beginning of getting the word out to people that we don't all see things the same way and that we don't all advocate the same uses a lot of times, that there is a smorgasbord you can pick from, and we welcome that.

Yeah. And when I think that also faculty, especially a lot of the faculty here at UP here that I've met that are just such exceptional people and such exceptional teachers, I mean, understand that we really respect what you do and we realize that we're really here in an ancillary role to support what you do.

Yeah. And we strive to help enhance it where we can. But ultimately, you're the one that's making the call about what's the best way for you to teach your students. Right, and that's why talking about the classroom space and design is so important. As you know I've been shooting B-Roll all over the place, and so I've had the opportunity to sit in on a lot of classrooms, and I've seen, even just today in a theology class really engaged students, really incredible discussion.

Mm-hm. With the chalkboard, with a teacher doing old style lecture in front of a class. And it's amazing to me to see that. I mean I, as an undergraduate at a technical engineering school. I didn't even see that there, so for me to observe it now a couple of decades later, its just fascinating to me to see the level of engagement that can be had with just these kinda small discussion, chalkboard, and old-school style stuff.

Yeah. It's amazing to me. Absolutely. Yeah. [MUSIC] Let's see, well I think we're running a little short on time to go into the other session that we were gonna talk about. Mm-hm. Should we wrap up this conversation and maybe we can do the app recommendation if you want. Or are you just anti-app now?

I'm not anti-app. [LAUGH] Because now that I'm new to the whole Droid platform here, it's seeing what, what looks good on Droid. Or what crosses over easily. Right. So for context, Maria made the switch from iPhone to Android. The world did not end.[LAUGH] But she's just get a nice new phone.

It is nice, it works. That's the thing I like about it the best. Mm-hm. Yeah, so so far enjoyed, ah well, I have to admit, I turn to my iPad Mini for my [UNKNOWN] so I can [LAUGH] [UNKNOWN]. So I still love that a lot. I'm trying to keep my screen more like less cluttered [LAUGH] so that's one thing.

But I will- But what about- Okay one app I'm going to use a lot in the next week when I do my bike trip down the California coast is a warm showers. Oh. Okay. Which is the bicycle hosting app and that's gonna be super handy to have right on the phone.

So, this is like an Uber app where someone comes and picks you up pedals you around on their bicycle? [LAUGHS] That would be so nice. No. That's what I want. It's like couch surfers for- Hold on I'm gonna actually write that down. That might be like a million dollar idea.

Hold on. It's a [LAUGH] it's like, it's just like couch surfing for, bike people. So it's kind of like, you just say hey, you know what, I'm gonna be pedaling for Eureka. Mind if I set up camp in your backyard? And, somebody says yay or nay on it. In fact, I got a request in my email yesterday, from somebody who wants to camp in my yard.

And were you gonna let them? Oh Yes. Because they're a biker. Well yeah. That's the whole thing about it. It's bikers helping bikers. Got you. Well that sounds cool. Yeah. Okay, well for my app recommendation, I find one that's good for creating little graphics and adding text to them is Canva.

C-A-N-V-A. Oh Yeah, I remember that one. Yeah, it's just real easy. So you have a bunch of images you can just search in there, and they have free ones that you can use. Mm-hm. Other ones they will sell to you for a dollar. Or you can upload your own, of course, if you're using Flicker for creative comments, licensed image that you want to use.

So it's, you just add it in. There's some kind of Instagram-ish filters that you can put on. And then you just drag and drop some text elements over it. It's an easy way to sort of create a little attractive kind of graphic that you can use in the web, so

And that's a free one right? Yes. Totally free, it's I think it's on all that platform's and on the web as well Yeah. So it's easy to use.Nice. All right, well I think that wraps it up for the UP Tech top broadcast this week, Maria, thank you for joining me.

And giving us all your- We'll talk about classroom design Yeah we have much more to talk about. So we'll have get to that next week. So thank you for listening and we are out. And we will see next time. Yeah. [MUSIC]. Thank you for joining us for another episode of the UP Tech Talk podcast.

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