

Bonk Research Group
The “E-Team”
(Extreme Learning + Emerging Learning Technologies and
Web 2.0 + E-Learning & Blended Learning)

Three Areas of Investigation/Inquiry:

- I. Extreme, Informal Learning, Nontraditional, and Self-Directed Online Learning**
- II. Emerging Learning Technologies and the Web 2.0 (e.g. wikis, wikibooks, shared online video like YouTube, blogs, mobile learning, and online language learning)**
- III. E-learning and Blended Learning (of any type or educational sector)**

***Note:** Only Area #1 is active and open at this time.

Introductory Comments: I am not IU- or IST-Centric in my approach. I often involve colleagues from other universities and countries in my research projects. I accept team members from other departments at IU. I am more of an academic rebel with interests in global and international education, learning for the sake of learning (lifelong learning), documenting the different ways that people learn outside of traditional schooling or societal structures, and generally helping people learn how, when, or where they want. Anyone can now learn anything from anyone else at any time. I do not like procedures, forms, requirements, prerequisites, policies, and nitpicky details; especially when it comes to human learning and development. Each human should be able to choose his/her own unique learning path and goals and change it when and where they want as new ways to learn arise as well as exciting contents to learn about.

Area #I. Extreme, Informal, Nontraditional, and Self-Directed Learning:

I am interested in anything “not-school.” Most learning happens outside of school and on one’s own. Unfortunately, most funding is earmarked for traditional forms of learning.

One strand of my research is on self-directed online learning. We have highly unique data from participants in the MIT OpenCourseWare project. In using a mixed methods design, we are looking at participant motivations, successes, challenges and obstacles, and life changes from access to OpenCourseWare (OCW), open educational resources (OER), and massive open online courses (MOOCs). Life change is especially important to these efforts as is the sense of freedom to learn when, where, and what one is interested.

My team and I are also exploring how people learn or teach with technology in unusual ways; such as from planes, trains, boats, mountain tops, islands, icebergs, space stations, parks, war zones, religious missions, retreats, submarines, camps, research stations, outdoor classrooms, museums, zoos, conferences and institutes/summits, cafes, bookstores, nursing homes, hospital beds, shopping malls, virtual worlds, online communities or groups, webinars, webcam experiences, text messaging, mobile devices, virtual schools, open educational resources and opencourseware, open universities, free universities or courses, etc. I currently call this “extreme

learning” though some refer to it as informal learning or nontraditional learning. That is fine with me.

As part of this, I am attempting to record “empowerment moments” wherein people lives, and, in effect, their identities, were changed due to their use of technology. In effect, I intend to document human development and growth as it pertains to life changing moments involving learning technology. The world is open for learning and it is time to collect human interest stories that proves it and is an inspiration for others.

Note: Anyone in the above group can be first author of articles or conference presentations. I am working on books and keynote talks related to it. I do not need more research as a first author.

Area #II. Emerging Learning Technologies and the Web 2.0. During the past few years, I have been looking at the participatory learning, motivational, instructional design, and global educational aspects of Web 2.0 and other emerging technologies. Some of these technologies include wikis, wikibooks, shared online video like YouTube, TED, or TV Lesson, blogs, mobile learning, and online language learning. This has been fun but much of my research is winding down here. I am no longer interested in being first author on much of anything research-wise; especially within Area #2 on Emerging Technologies and the Web 2.0 and Area #3 on E-Learning and Blended Learning. Hence, anyone working with me in these areas can collect and publish whatever they want. I am a guide, mentor, tutor, facilitator, and network leader in the process. I am often the editor and the one who finds research sponsors as well as publication outlets. If members want me as a secondary or third or fourth author, that is fine. I am seeking no ultimate truth and am not looking to discover a new learning theory. I look at this as just another research project on some interesting new technology tool or resource.

Area #III: E-Learning and Blended Learning (of any type). During the past decade or two, I have explored the present and future state of e-learning in higher education and corporate settings. I have also facilitated e-learning projects at the K-12 level. In addition, I have conducted research on blended learning in corporate, military, K-12, and higher education settings. And I have done some technology training and applied research in rural Indiana K-12 schools as well. Many publications have resulted from those projects as well as from continued work since 1990 on synchronous as well as asynchronous conferencing tools and activities.

Sampling of a Few of My Recent Projects:

1. **Self-Directed Online Learning:** In a mixed methods design, we are looking at the motivations, successes, challenges and obstacles, and life changes from access to OpenCourseWare (OCW), open educational resources (OER), and massive open online courses (MOOCs).
2. **Extreme Learning/Nontraditional Learning:** Exploring how people learn or teach with technology in unusual ways; such as from planes, trains, boats, war zones, space stations, religious missions, nursing homes, museums, zoos, etc. I currently call this “extreme learning” though some refer to it as informal learning or nontraditional learning. As part of this, I am attempting to record “empowerment moments” wherein people lives were changed due to their use of technology. In effect, it is time to collect human interest stories that proves it and is an inspiration for others.
3. **Wikibooks and Wikibooks in K-12, Higher Ed, and Corporate Settings:** Explored cross-institutional Wikibook projects; surveyed and interviewed those who have coordinated, edited, or contributed to Wikibooks. Also, looked at how wikis are used in early childhood education; including teacher philosophy

- and pedagogies, activities, school support, parental involvement, satisfaction, etc.
4. **YouTube and Other Online Videos:** Investigated online motivational and collaborative factors in watching and generating YouTube videos. Also looked at participatory forms of learning and pedagogical activities.
 5. **Blogging in Higher Education in Korea and China:** Studied decentralization, augmented socialization, and the pros and cons of blogging in Asian higher education.
 6. **Synchronous and Asynchronous Online Learning:** Various studies over the past 15 years on the role of the instructor in synchronous and asynchronous learning environments, the depth of discussion, and the types of online moderation and interaction. Providing guidelines for synchronous instruction.
 7. **Open Education and Open Source Software:** Researched the open education movement around the world. Interviewing many people involved in creating open courseware, open educational resources, open source software. Also looking at issues of knowledge, communities of practice, and curriculum sharing in online content repositories (e.g., MERLOT, Connexions, OOPS, etc.).
 8. **Delphi Study of Collaborative Learning Opportunities within Blended Learning:** Conducted a Delphi study of computer-supported collaborative learning in blended learning with 20-30 experts who contributed to my *Handbook of Blended Learning* (Bonk & Graham, 2006).
 9. **E-Learning and Blended Learning:** Looked at new directions in e-learning and blended learning in both higher education and corporate settings in the UK, USA, China, Taiwan, and Korea via survey research.
 10. **Online MBA Program:** Explored aspects of the Kelley Direct (KD) online MBA program at IU; includes research on virtual teaming, case-based learning, student and faculty perceptions, instructor roles, technology use, and time management. Research includes student and faculty interviews, focus groups, surveys, and content analyses.

My Professional Interests:

Open education, self-directed online learning, open educational resources, open learning communities, extreme learning or nontraditional/informal learning with technology or distance education; human development and identity in a highly wired world; participatory learning; global/international education, Web 2.0 and emerging learning technologies; Web-based training and teaching; blended learning; online mentoring; interactive learning environments; collaborative learning tools; adult education; problem-based learning; learning in a social context; collaborative writing technologies; alternative instructional strategies; future learning technologies.

Eight Key Functions of E-Team Group and Group Members:

- **Read/ Stay Up-to-Date and Learn:** Find, read, and share articles.
- **Guided Inquiry and Research:** Collect data, share data, write-up data.
- **Connect/Network:** Contact and connect with people related to the project.
- **Write, Right, Rite:** Get experience writing proposals, papers, and reports.
- **Publish and Present (and never Perish):** Get line items for your resume/CV.
- **Teamwork:** Anyone who contributes to any project will find his/her name on papers.
- **Personal Choice:** Members take whatever role(s) they want and help other members.
- **Democracy:** Everyone (including me) is treated equally as a smart graduate student.

Four Membership Types:

- 1. Established researcher on team, friend, and close colleague:** This person shares everything with new members, is entrusted with all that I know, finds online resources of value and other stuff, works with publishers, creates websites, collects data, writes up reports, writes to experts, builds networks, and presents with me. Treated as a colleague and likely becomes a lifelong friend.
- 2. New researcher on team and colleague:** This person listens to experienced researchers, asks questions, suggests research ideas, finds online articles and resources and other stuff, reads what he or she finds, creates websites, collects data, writes up reports, writes to experts, builds networks, and presents with me.
- 3. Active Observer:** An “Active Observer” sits in on meetings, finds research reports, shares, fosters networking, and might move into active research and writing. This type of individual learns from others and contributes to the group but might find his or her unique project that is different from the rest of the team. As a result, he or she might enter or exit at any moment.
- 4. Passive Observer:** A “Passive Observer” is on sabbatical, conducting dissertation research, or is at IU for some other reason, just peeking in, sits in on some meetings and offers opinions, fly on the wall, and comes and goes like a bumblebee.

E-Team Group Application Process:

The student or visiting scholar must contact the instructor for approval. My teams are going to be smaller in the future than they had been in the past as I work on several book projects. Hence, I may say “no” to some membership requests. If I say no to you, feel free to ask again (and again).

E-Team Requirements:

Each team member must show up for at least 2 of the meetings per semester (which could be on phone or via email if located at a distance).