On the Use of Web 2.0 Technologies for Enhancing Course Delivery

Jim Garven
Finance Department Workshop
January 23, 2014

1. Some personal background...
   - I began blogging at blog.garven.com in 2004, and I have used course-related websites since 1994.
   - See “Blogging, tweeting, facebooking, etc.” for further historical/philosophical perspectives and various other caveats and cautionary tales.

2. Some sociological consequences to consider...
   - The web encourages a more collaborative and interactive learning environment by transforming the professor’s role from “sage on the stage” to “guide at students’ sides”.
   - The web does not render faculty members obsolete (notwithstanding a recent Chronicle of Higher Education article to that effect). Social media complements, but does not replace, the classroom experience.

   - I use Blackboard for two purposes: 1) pointing students to my “self-hosted” (WordPress-based) course websites (at fin4335.garven.com and fin4366.garven.com) and blogsites (at risk.garven.com and options.garven.com), and 2) posting grades.
   - Generally, I find that these sites are more flexible and easier to use (for student and professor alike) than Blackboard.
   - Some good news for Baylor faculty: Baylor provides hosting and technical support for WordPress, and most of the capabilities that I show here (e.g., posting via email and automatically publishing the same information on Facebook and Twitter) are available at http://blogs.baylor.edu/site-registration-instructions/.
   - For WordPress support at Baylor, contact Lance Grigsby via email at Lance_Giggsby@baylor.edu or by phone at extension 4553.

4. What about Facebook?
   - Quoting from the Chronicle of Higher Education, “You hunt where the ducks are... Facebook is where... students are.”
   - Thus, I republish my course-related blogsites (risk.garven.com and options.garven.com) on Facebook at the following addresses: riskfb.garven.com and optionsfb.garven.com.
5. Other social networks (besides Facebook)

- Subscription options (other than Facebook): RSS, Twitter and/or email (subscribe via email by using the finance.garven.com email subscription form on the left-hand side of this page).

- WordPress also supports LinkedIn, Tumblr, Path and Google+.

6. Research-related blogging

- For a current example, see Adverse Selection in Reinsurance.

7. Learn by doing...

1. Obtain your own email subscription to this blog.

2. Post to this blog by using the following email address: funa203tezo@post.wordpress.com.

3. Upon posting your blog entry, you will receive a copy of it via email (assuming that you obtained an email subscription in step 7.1.). Also, check the Twitter Page and the Facebook Page for your blog entry and click back from those pages to the blog.

4. Post a comment to your blog entry and/or reply to others who may have commented on your blog entry.

8. MOOC’s

- Asset Pricing, taught during the Fall 2013 semester by University of Chicago finance professor John Cochrane.

- The Finance of Retirement & Pensions, taught during the Fall 2013 semester by Stanford University finance professor Joshua Rauh.

9. Further Reading and Viewing

- Further Reading

  - The Online Education Revolution Drifts Off Course, NPR, December 31, 2013.

- Further Viewing

  - “Big Question” video showcase of research by University of Chicago Booth School of Business faculty