Teaching with Wikis

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Collaborative Software

- Assists a group to achieve a goal
- A mechanism for computer supported cooperative work
- Examples
  - Teleconferencing
  - Email
  - Chat
  - Wiki
- Social software is a more general term

Wiki software

- A web site that can be updated
- Introduced in 1995; entered the OED in March, 2007
- Very well suited for distributed, collaborative authoring
- Best known example is Wikipedia
- Enormous variety of types of wikis.

Wiki Features

- Individual pages can be edited.
- New pages are introduced by naming them.
- Links are easily added.
- Wikis have been integrated with other tools
  - Integrated Development Environment
  - Configuration Management
  - Issue Tracking Software
  - Project Planning Software
  - RSS Feeds
  - Secure Access
  - Tagging

Wikis as a teaching and research tool

- Well suited for team projects
  - Members can collaborate without face-to-face meetings.
  - Members can contribute from many locations.
- Also appropriate for individual projects
  - One can access the project from multiple locations
  - Faculty supervision is more convenient
- Can be made fully secure and private by using certificates.
- The class as a whole as well as every team and individual can be given its own wiki.

Wiki Demo

Issues with using wikis

- Simply providing a wiki environment does not automatically result in beneficial outcomes.
- Previous experience with wiki based communities is useful.
- The integrated tools can be more important than the wiki.