

eTools: Using YouTube in the Classroom

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Introduction

At first glance, the classroom and YouTube, a global video-sharing website often associated with entertaining user-uploaded viral videos, may not seem like a natural partnership. However, YouTube can be a versatile classroom tool for instructors seeking opportunities for customized videos, personalized instruction, content review, global connection, increased access to students, and inspiration. Although Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Blackboard or Canvas may also serve as video repositories, YouTube offers an opportunity for instructors to connect with students on a platform they are already regularly using. This is how YouTube can emerge as a way to engage students inside and outside the classroom.

What is YouTube?

YouTube is a global video-sharing website where you can upload, view, share, rate, and comment on user-generated and corporate media videos. Although most YouTube content uploaded in the form of .MOV, .MPEG4, .MP4, .AVI, .WMV, .MPEGPS, .FLV, 3GPP, or .WebM files are uploaded by individuals on their own channels similar to the channel you may decide to create for yourself, media corporations also upload material through the YouTube partnership program. YouTube allows users to view videos either directly through their website or outside their website through embedded

links on social networking pages, social networking blogs, and LMS. YouTube does not usually offer a download link, because YouTube videos are designed to be viewed through its website interface, a smartphone/tablet application available for download on Android and iOS devices, or a smartphone/tablet optimized website YouTube mobile.

Instructors can create user-generated videos and have control as to who can access these videos via the privacy function that allows users to post a video as public, private, or unlisted. Public videos can be viewed by anyone. These videos appear in your channel and YouTube search results. Private videos can be viewed by you and users of your choice. These videos do not appear in your channel or YouTube search results, making them invisible to other users. Unlisted videos can be viewed by anyone who has the link to the video. These videos do not appear in your channel or YouTube search results unless someone has added your unlisted video to a public playlist. Be aware that your video link can be re-shared by any users with whom you share your video link. If you prefer to restrict who can access your video and do not want your video re-shared by others, make sure that you select the private setting.

How can I get YouTube for use in the classroom?

Access to YouTube is simple. Go to www.youtube.com and register for a free standard account if you would like access to YouTube's other applications. (You do not need your own account to watch YouTube videos, however.) To register, click on the Sign In link and choose an account. You can choose an existing account if you have an

existing Gmail account you would like to associate with your YouTube account or you can select Add Account to create a new account. Enter all the necessary details in all fields and agree to the Google Terms of Service and Privacy Policy. Verify your email using the e-mail address you provided. With this account, you can upload full HD (1080p) and 4k videos, customize videos, interact with your audience through comments, annotate videos, and select privacy options for your videos. There is unlimited hosting and bandwidth included with all free standard accounts.

How can I use YouTube in the classroom?

YouTube provides a place where students can access public, private, and unlisted videos you have created and uploaded specifically for them as well as any public videos of your choice that have been uploaded by other YouTube users. Additionally, YouTube enables students to be engaged inside and outside the classroom. More specifically, YouTube can be used as:

1. *an archive for videos you have created specifically for your students.* YouTube allows you to post your own videos. These videos might include full lectures you have recorded in a previous semester, critical parts of lectures that you would like students to either review or sharpen their focus, or creative videos designed to complement classroom content. With an organized video archive, you can easily refer back to your work in subsequent semesters and years as you start preparing for a new semester.

2. *a repository for videos you want students to view.* YouTube takes the place of

the list of hyperlinks professors previously included on their LMS shell. With custom playlists, students have a single place where they can view instructor-selected and instructor-approved user-generated and/or corporate media videos. Playlists can be created for different chapters within a single course, different sections of a single course, or for different courses.

3. *an engaging attention grabber or discussion starter.* Opening a lecture with a YouTube video can engage your students, spark lively discussion, introduce alternative perspectives and viewpoints, and encourage students to consider new perspectives or viewpoints that might differ from the perspectives and viewpoints to which they have been exposed in their home, residence hall, and classroom communities.

4. *a personalized classroom.* Through YouTube videos and playlists, you can supplement classroom teaching for students who are struggling with the course content. You can also enrich classroom teaching for students who are excelling in your class and interested in exploring additional content. Students can review videos from home following a lecture or prior to a quiz or exam. Moreover, you can use YouTube to upload and share short video messages with your students as a way to introduce yourself to your students or update students when you are away from the classroom.

5. *a quiz or exam review.* Test review material and flashcards can be converted to narrated videos so that students can hear your explanations as they study for their quizzes or exams. Having this resource available to students prior to a quiz or exam can

reduce the amount of time spent answering e-mails the night before the quiz or exam.

6. *a platform to share student-generated video content.* Students can upload their own user-generated content on a classroom or personal channel. They can also respond to you or their classmates using the comments feature, which can be especially useful for courses with public speaking assignments as students are able to practice and receive feedback from you or their peers prior to the speech.

7. *a "flipped" classroom.* Assign your students videos to watch outside of class to introduce them to new material or to review content you have already covered in class. Doing so can increase classroom time for hands-on practice and activity.

Conclusion

YouTube is a versatile classroom tool for both faculty and students. With a robust free version that does not restrict user hosting or bandwidth, YouTube provides a place for instructors and students to easily upload, view, share, rate, and comment on videos. As institutions continue to encourage instructors to find engaging ways to help students retain information and understand classroom concepts, YouTube allows instructors to easily connect classroom topics with the world outside the classroom.