

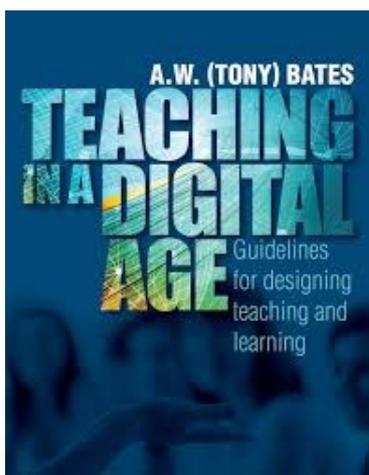
BOOK REVIEW

TEACHING IN A DIGITAL AGE: GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR A DIGITAL AGE

Written by Tony Bates

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid digitalization of our everyday life has had an inevitable reflection on education and instructors at universities have been caught unprepared. The question of how to give effective education within the dynamics of the digital age to diverse student groups with different tendencies and expectations has already been the most important issue among the instructors following the new trends in education. However, in some other cases, as written in the first scenario at the beginning of the book, universities have had their instructors give blended or hybrid classes all of a sudden at the beginning of the semester. Tony Bates, an expert in the field of educational technology and the author of the book, is giving instructors what they need

and more in this book. As he states in his podcast, this book addresses the very neglected area of how to teach in a digital age by "providing knowledge (to the instructors) so that they can make appropriate choices about how they want to teach".

REVIEW OF THE BOOK

The book provides many practical examples while dealing with mainly the following topics:

- different approaches to teaching based on the different views on the nature of knowledge
- most useful science and research for teaching
- giving the right decision about face-to-face, blended or fully online courses
- best working teaching strategies in a technology-rich environment
- most effective teaching methods for blended and online classes
- making the right choices among all the available media: text, audio, video, computer or social media
- maintaining high quality in teaching in a rapidly changing learning environment while managing one's workload
- real possibilities for teaching and learning using MOOCs, OERs, open textbooks

The book was published as an open textbook through BC campus in April, 2015 and has had 8 updates since then. It is an open textbook that can be reusable, redistributable, revisable, remixable, retainable as long as one acknowledges the author. As the author suggests, readers can send feedback for future updates. That is to say, this book is a digital book that is completely in line with the digital age. There are twelve chapters about different aspects of teaching in a digital age.

In the first chapter, the author mentions the fundamental changes in the economy, society, technology, skills and needs of the students, teaching methods and platforms and gives readers good reasons to continue reading the rest of the book.

Second chapter is about the epistemology and theories of learning that prepares readers for the third and fourth chapters of different teaching methods and their implications for teaching in a digital age. In chapter three and four, various teaching methods are examined through their advantages and disadvantages, their implementation on different settings ranging from classrooms to fully distant learning. Chapter five takes it from distant and online learning to MOOCs and their theoretical base.

Moving on to incorporation of media and technologies in educational settings, the main focus of chapter six and seven is on their specific pedagogical use cases. A set of criteria derived from educational characteristics of different media is presented in a model in chapter eight. These criteria are for teachers to use when they decide on media and technologies in their teaching.

Chapter nine elaborates on the educational settings, also referred as modes of delivery, which were discussed in chapter four. A more detailed information on online education and innovations in open research, open data, open publishing, open content is given in chapter ten. Chapter eleven precedes an appendix that lays out necessary components of high quality learning environments and proposes nine steps for designing and delivering quality education in digital age.

Chapter twelve, the final chapter, looks into institutional support that is needed to accomplish high quality teaching. This support is discussed in the scope of various forms including support from schools to support from policy makers and they are examined in the context of teaching in a digital age.

A distinct feature of this book is that each chapter can be separately beneficial as they each present a model, an appendix, a list of steps or a framework. This book can be a clear handbook for all instructors and educational administrators who seek to find ways to employ educational media and technologies in their programs and teaching.

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