

Exploring Competence with Technological Devices

in the context of Global Educational Learning Observatory (GELO)
and Fully Online Learning Community (FOLC) Environments

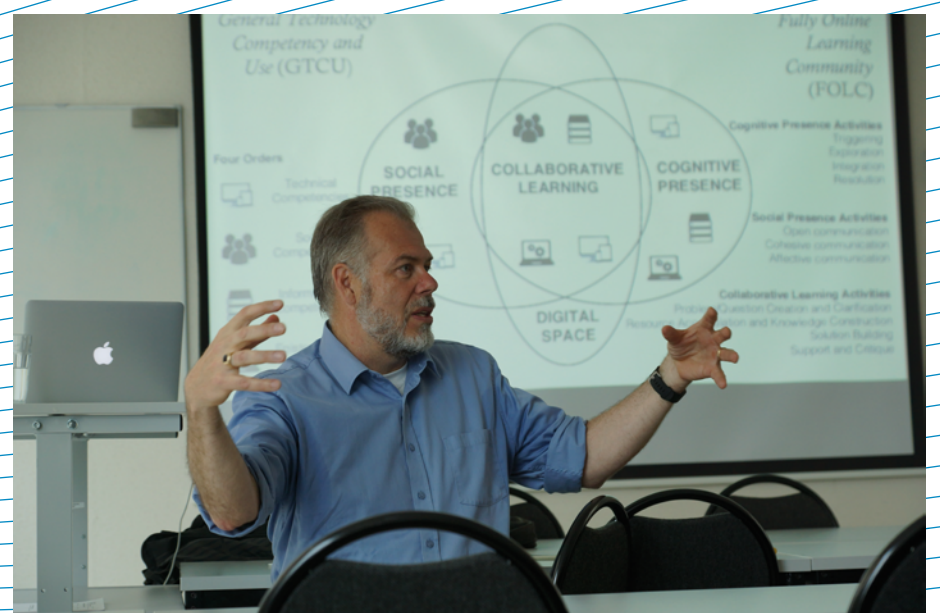
Post-secondary institutions around the world are increasingly integrating digital technologies in courses and programs. As students and faculty become progressively immersed in an academic digital world, there is growing need to critically assess the value and effectiveness of systems in use, especially in terms of essential competencies required for their use. Within the academy and beyond, there are calls for the development and assessment of enhanced competencies in critical thinking, complex problem solving, creativity, and collaboration; competencies closely aligned with those required for online learning.

The Educational Informatics Laboratory (EILab) at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) in Oshawa, Canada, has begun development of the Global Educational Learning Observatory (GELO), a global network of post-secondary institutions enabling collection and analysis of large quantities of digital competency data for generating digital competency profiles. Furthermore, data collected through the GELO will assist in the development of predictive analytical models enabling individuals and institutions identify, characterize, and assess competencies which support technology-enhanced learning. Integrating a wide variety of tools will enable GELO to provide users with rich snapshot profiles of their views regarding digital technologies, and their competencies in using these technologies for varied purposes. This presentation will describe GELO in greater detail, examine its theoretical underpinnings, and discuss its implications for assessing and enhancing the digital competencies of individuals and groups globally. Recently a joint application to NSERC in Canada and BMBF/DLR in Germany was submitted using the GELO platform as a means of determining employee readiness to move into Industry 4.0 (or SmartFactory) environments.

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