Call for Papers

Special Issue

The Applications of Social Networking for Universal Access in Online Learning Environments

About the UAIS Journal

The UAIS Journal solicits original research contributions addressing the accessibility, usability and acceptability of Information Society Technologies by anyone, anywhere, at anytime, and through any media and device. Universal access refers to the systematic effort to proactively apply principles, methods and tools of universal design, in order to develop Information Society Technologies which are accessible and usable by all citizens.

The Journal’s unique focus is on theoretical, methodological, and empirical research, of both technological and non-technological nature, that addresses equitable access and active participation of potentially all citizens in the Information Society.

For further information, please, refer to the “Aims and scope” section on the Website of the UAIS Journal.

Aims and scope of this special issue

Social networks and related technologies have continued to gain in importance in modern people’s worlds (Cook & Pachler, 2012). Through social networking services (SNSs), individuals are able to contact family, friends, even strangers, through the ease and comfort of computers or mobile Internet devices (Myers, Endres, Ruddy & Zelikovsky, 2012). As more and more importance is attached to the application of SNSs in educational fields (Selwyn, 2009), researchers indicate that SNSs (e.g. Facebook) are one of the latest examples of communications technologies that have been widely adopted by learners and, accordingly, have the potential to become a valuable resource to support collaborations and educational communications among teachers and faculties (Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman & Witty, 2010; Tsai, Shen & Chiang, 2013). However, there is relatively little theoretical and empirical attention paid by social researchers and educators to the form and nature of learning in such context (Merchant, 2011; Pimmer, Linxen & Gröhbiel, 2012). Modern educators should devote more effort to investigate and explore the potential application of SNSs and integrate them into online or blended courses to improve students’ learning and teachers’ teaching.

This special issue spans technological, psychological, behavioral, pedagogical, theoretical, and interaction issues of universal access in online education. Research on social networking, online learning, and evaluation of innovative application of interactive technologies for universal
access in online learning environments are appropriate for this special issue. Practical experiences and experiments in applying social networking, online learning, and web-enabled educational technologies are also welcome. Contributions are expected from academics, researchers, and educators worldwide.

Original research contributions are solicited, which focus on social networking, online learning, and educational technologies to improve learning and accessibility for all learners in all contexts of ubiquitous learning, empowering individuals to fully participate in, and benefit from, the knowledge society.

The thematic scope of this special issue includes scientific issues related to social networking and online learning, such that they may contribute to enhance and widen the effects of universal access in online learning environments.

**Main topics**
This special issue will focus on research work on the application, design, implementation, and evaluation of social networking and online learning. Authors of submissions should carefully explain how the application, design, and adoption of social networking, as well as their support for accessibility and interaction, directly impact learning effects in online learning environments. Submissions may also provide reference for future design and applications of social networking by online educators and scholars.

Contributions are solicited in, but not limited to, the following topics:
- Social networking
- Online learning
- Evaluation of social networking in universal access
- Application of social networking for learning
- Possible functions of social networking sites for students’ interaction and learning
- Integration of social networking and traditional teaching
- Innovative application of educational technologies
- Best practices

**Important dates (tentative)**
Deadline for submission of papers: April 1, 2015
Notification of the results of the first round review: May 15, 2015
Deadline for submission of revised papers: June 20, 2015
Notification of the results of the second round review: July 30, 2015
Deadline for submission of camera-ready version of accepted papers: August 20, 2015
Expected publication date of the special issue: late 2016

Authors should submit their manuscripts electronically as both WORD and PDF files to the Guest Editor of the special issue, Chia-Wen Tsai (jawen12b@gmail.com).

**Manuscript preparation**
Please, refer to the “Instructions to authors” section on the Website of the UAIS Journal.

**Review process**
All research articles submitted to this special issue will undergo rigorous peer review. All papers will be peer reviewed by at least three reviewers, experts in the field, appointed by the Guest Editor.

Copyright information
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– it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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References