Using Wikis to Build Learning Communities
Dan Gilbert, Helen L. Chen, and Jeremy Sabol, Stanford University
ELI Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, January 30, 2006

Case Study and Wiki Technology	Description	Wiki Goals	Key Learning Milestones
SCIL Summer Institute on Learning Space Design [Swiki-Wiki]	A one-week intensive workshop for architects, academics, non-profit staff, and graduate students to integrate learning theory into the design of physical spaces.	To establish a web presence for individual reflection and to create a knowledge base for attendees to reference after course completion.	Dedicating time in class for the first wiki posts gave learners the chance to see that the instructor valued the virtual interactions; it also created an opportunity for learners to support each other (Box 6). The biggest hurdle was moving past the stage of a knowledge base and into a community. This wiki was a tool that learners used for the week they were in class; after class ended, so did their close connections with fellow learners (Boxes 7 and 10).
ME013N: Designing the Human Experience [Tiki-Wiki]	A project-based introductory freshman seminar on design engineering research project experimenting with blogs and wiki environments.	To facilitate student integration and synthesis of learning through increasing student awareness of learning and articulating connections between learning and the design process.	Using templates and creating a structure for the wiki (Box 4) were extremely important in introducing the wiki to the students and getting them to use it. The templates included space for students to put in their IM names, availability for meetings, and space for meeting notes, team decisions, etc. (Box 7). What was most challenging was developing strategies to model giving and receiving of quality feedback (Box 13).
Institute on Engineering Education (ISEE) workshop [WikiWikiWeb]	A weeklong workshop designed to build a community among twenty research fellows from five institutions.	To give participants a place to capture sources of learning and inspiration during the institute including links, documents, photos, insights, questions, and reflections.	A measure of success was identified when one of the scholars (a wiki novice) said to a colleague: "Don't email me the reference, just put it in the wiki!" To support active collaboration (Box 12), we find that an advocate is necessary – someone who continuously brings the wiki back into the forefront of the work as a place for emails, notes, resources and who emails the team links to new material in the wiki plus password reminders.
Philosophical Stages Summer Program [Project Forum Wiki]	A three-week program for high school students that integrates ancient philosophy, drama, and interactive technologies.	To create a forum for individual reflection and to create a knowledge base for attendees to reference after course completion.	With younger students, creating the intellectual and organizational framework for the wiki was critical to getting quality comments; (Box 4). The instructors worked to build the face-to-face relationships among learners during the class and consequently, the wiki has continued to be very active and engaged around many of the topics raised during the course (Box 15). This is a great example of how a wiki functions as a community of practice.