Learning in an

Online Jazz History Class

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the experiences of participants enrolled in an online community college jazz history course. I surveyed the participants before the course began and observed them in the online space through the duration of the course. Six students also participated in interviews during and after the course. Coded data from the interviews, surveys, and recorded discussion posts and journal entries provided evidence about the nature of interaction and engagement in learning in an online environment. I looked for evidence either supporting or detracting from a democratic online learning environment, concentrating on the categories of student engagement, freedom of expression, and accessibility.

The data suggested that the participants' behaviors in and abilities to navigate the online class were influenced by their pre-existing native media habits. Participants' reasons for enrolling in the online course, which included convenience and schedule flexibility, informed their actions and behaviors in the class. Analysis revealed that perceived positive student engagement did not contribute to a democratic learning environment but rather to an easy, convenient experience in the online class. Finally, the data indicated that participants' behaviors in their future lives would not be affected by the online class in that their learning experiences were not potent enough to alter or inform their behavior in society.

As online classes gain popularity, the ability of these classes to provide meaningful learning experiences must be questioned. Students in this online jazz

history class presented, at times, a façade of participation and community building but demonstrated a lack of sincerity and interest in the course. The learning environment supported accessibility and freedom of expression to an extent, but students' engagement with their peers was limited. Overall, this study found a need for more research into the quality of online classes as learning platforms that support democracy, student-to-student interaction, and community building.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Internet and technology permeate education around the world. New technologies and learning tools in in-person classrooms may include websites such as YouTube, social networks, interactive textbooks, tools such as MP3 recordings, CD-ROMs, and more (Nixon & Comber, 2001; Riley, 2009; Smith, 2003; Waldrep, 1998). In addition, online education has exploded in terms of numbers of students as well as institutions offering or specializing in online classes (NCES, 2008). With the rapid growth and increasing presence of the Internet and technology, education itself is changing, and the tools that are used in teaching and learning may ultimately influence the quality and character of what is learned (Feola, 2010; Robinson, 2006).

One manifestation of the growing presence of the Internet and technology in education is the online class. The exact inception of the online class is difficult to determine. BlackBoard, Inc., one of the most popular learning systems used in online education, was copyrighted in 1997 ("Blackboard" n.d.). Since then, online learning has been in use by universities to varying degrees and is a growing phenomenon in college-level learning institutions (NCES, 2008). According to the U.S. Department of Education (Parsad, Lewis, & Tice, 2008), by 2007, 12.2 million students in higher learning institutions were enrolled in either online or blended (online and in-person) courses.

Given this trend, it is crucial that educators and researchers understand online learning environments and how students act and interact within them. In order to gain this understanding, research examining the qualities of online

learning environments and the learning that occurs within them is necessary. With a greater understanding of these phenomena, better quality online learning environments may be possible.

For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to define various terms referring to the online learning environment. For this study, online education and e-learning are synonymous with distance education. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2003) defines distance education as

> education or training courses delivered to remote (off-campus) sites via audio, video (live or prerecorded), or computer technologies, including both synchronous (i.e., simultaneous) and asynchronous (i.e., not simultaneous) instruction. . . . courses may include a small amount of on-campus course or lab work, on-campus exams, or occasional on-campus meetings. (p. 1)

The online jazz history course in this study aligns with the definition provided by NCES (2003) and is synonymous with a distance education course. According to NCES (2003), online courses can include entirely online instruction or a mixture of online instruction supplemented with "occasional" on-campus exams or meetings. The jazz history course in this study did not have mandatory on-campus meetings or exams. However, students were invited to visit the instructor's office at the college during specified office hours with questions or comments about the course itself or material pertaining to it.

In addition, online learning, in this study, refers to the learning experiences of students enrolled in an online course. The U.S. Department of

Education (2010) defines online learning as "learning that takes place partially or entirely over the Internet" (p. 9). The Department of Education also categorizes online learning based on purpose. One purpose is a "substitute or alternative to face-to-face learning" (p. 9). This type of online learning is conducted entirely online. The second purpose is to "enhance" learning by providing "components that are combined or blended . . . with face-to-face instruction" (p. 9). The online jazz history course in this study aligns with the first purpose outlined by the U.S. Department of Education (2000): an alternative to an in-person class.

The community college that offered the online jazz history course in this study falls under the category of an instructional educational institution, which might include institutions that offer all their courses online or institutions which offer a mixture of online and in-person courses. According to NCES (2010), instructional educational institutions are defined as "institutions that directly provide instructional programs (i.e., teaching) to individuals in an organized group setting or through distance education" (p. 353).

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the democratic qualities of education in an online learning environment by exploring how community college students taking an online jazz history course access and utilize the available technology and interact with the professor, course content, and each other. The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

(1) How do students perceive the efficiency and accessibility of the online environment?

(2) What are the instructional features of the learning platforms used and how do the instructional features serve students' specific learning interests?

(3) How does the online environment support or discourage participation for all individuals in the online community?

This study looked for evidence of how particular course components supported qualities of democracy in the online environment. Three perspectives relative to democracy in the online environment were considered: accessibility, student engagement, and freedom of expression. The key question of the study asked: In what ways do the features of the course support and encourage democratic forms of education?

The terminology used in this study is unique to the field of online learning, and sometimes the definitions used in common language or in other disciplines are not sufficient for the purposes of this study. A list of terms used in this study and their definitions can be found in Appendix A.

The Roots of the Democratic Classroom

Lund and Carr (2008) provide rich and detailed perspectives on how to deepen democracy in systems of education and rebuild schooling to ensure learners are provided with the tools they need to become active citizens in a democratic society. Lund and Carr (2008) summarize democratic learning by suggesting how educational institutions should strive for it. They assert that learning institutions should be environments for students' development and growth into active citizens, instead of simply platforms for students to inactively

absorb information that aligns with the prevailing political and economic structure of society. Portfilio (as cited in Lund & Carr, 2008) explains further that the role of democratic educational institutions is to "serve as beacons for personal and social transformation" of students (p. iii).

These statements align with the project in that democracy was originally defined by scholars such as Dewey (1900), who claimed that neither "object lessons for the sake of giving information" nor "training . . . for the sake of training, can begin to compete with the alertness and fullness of sense-life that comes through daily intimacy and interest in familiar occupations" (p. 8). Dewey believed that passive learning, without meaning or application, directly opposed students' and society's interests. Above all, Dewey (1902/1956) asserted that "learning is active. It involve[s] reaching out of the mind. . . . it is [the student] and not the subject matter which determines both quality and quantity of learning" (p. 9). The learners in Dewey's vision of democracy in education are individuals who think for themselves, acknowledge and have respect for differences, and have concern and understanding for the continuance and improvement of knowledge structures that strengthen our understanding of equity and encourage engaged participation.

While any learning environment may offer promise and possibility for nurturing the values of democratic learning, this study seeks to understand whether and how the features of an online course contribute to democratic education as well as to identify potential barriers to a democratic classroom. Democratic education, as reflected in Dewey's vision, provides an important

framework for researching digital learning environments because this theoretical framework supports the potential to improve the quality of students' experiences and enact Dewey's vision of education.

In two of his most seminal works, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (1916) and *Experience and Education* (1938), Dewey outlines a vision for schooling that is progressive and democratic. Dewey proposes that education should focus on two aims: educating the individual student and preparing that student to become an active and engaged citizen in the world in which he/she lives. Dewey explains that schools should create environments that allow individuals to explore their interests and skills while creating opportunities for students to see their potential as social agents of change. Students' past experiences and interests should inform their education and problems, and experiences in their everyday lives should be the fertile ground from which learning and education evolve.

Woodford acknowledges Dewey's point that "education entails some form and degree of social control by the school" while emphasizing that "personal responsibility" on the part of the student must also exist (Woodford, 2005, p. 5). One of the most important elements of Dewey's democratic classroom is the idea that "solutions to [existing] problems were to be sought in the interests of all society, not just those of a particular class or group" (Woodford, 2005, p. 6). In other words, democratic classrooms should mirror democratic societies. They should give voice and freedom of expression to all, asserting the value of each

person's voice in the process of his or her own learning, thereby enhancing the experience of the group as a whole.

In the twenty-first century, one might wonder what relevance Dewey's philosophy could have for contemporary education and whether that philosophy still offers a guide from which to structure education. Contemporary educators continue to grapple with questions similar to those of Dewey as they consider what aims education should achieve and how pedagogy should be structured to achieve these aims. The goals of some contemporary educators are to give students a complete and meaningful education that includes engagement both as students and as members of society as envisioned by Dewey and others.

To meet the modern challenges of democracy in education, Michael Apple (2010) calls for the constant analysis and re-evaluation of practices in order to navigate a constantly changing educational system that is intertwined with a constantly evolving society. He writes:

> To understand and act on education and its complicated connections to the larger society, we must engage in the process of *repositioning*. That is, we need to see the world through the eyes of the dispossessed and act against the ideological and institutional processes and forms that reproduce oppressive conditions. (p. 152)

Since education is intricately connected with society as a whole, Apple believes that researchers and policy makers must take direct and informed actions that influence education. These decisions should keep in mind those who may be excluded or silenced in educational and policy discourses.

Similarly, Levin (1998) states, “The ideals underlying education are essentially similar to those underlying democracy” (p. 58). He suggests that schools should embody principles of democracy for students as part of a sound education. He underscores the need for ongoing evaluation of education in today’s society to reach democratic goals, saying, “Changes in social conditions make this requirement even more important today” (Levin, 1998, p. 59).

Portelli and Vibert (2002) explore a notion of democracy in education that encourages teachers and students to co-construct the curriculum. They advocate an education process in which teachers and students share and apply their experiences through critical thinking and cooperation with the aim of co-constructing a more complete and satisfying educational experience. Thus, democratic education can be a means for students to engage intellectually with the world around them through exploration and inquiry in courses that evolve to meet students’ interests and needs.

The value in Dewey’s thinking and those who have followed can be found in the inspiration they provide to educators and researchers who seek to look more deeply into the connection between education and democracy and to understand and explore how these two concepts may be connected. If the purpose of education is to create a better society and to produce active and engaged citizens, then democratic education is a framework from which discussion, policy, and practice may ensue. This dissertation will raise questions around whether democratic learning exists in a particular online environment.

Perspectives on Democracy in the Classroom

As Shapiro (2003) explains, "democracy means many things to many people" (p. 146). To most people, the word democracy brings to mind citizens voting at the polls, freedom of speech, equality, access, consensus, and community. On the other hand, democracy may also imply market competition, and the term often has a political connotation. For those in education, democracy may be considered more in light of citizenship or community development and engagement.

Democracy and the teacher. One of Dewey's important philosophical contributions to the democratic classroom, and democratic society in general, is that the "solutions to [existing] problems were to be sought in the interests of all society, not just those of a particular class or group" (Woodford, 2005, p. 6). In other words, democratic classrooms cannot have underlying intentions that serve only one particular group, or democracy will not be fully achieved. The responsibility, according to Dewey, for the growth of democracy in the classroom lies with the teacher. In *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902/1956), Dewey writes that the teacher should be the bridge between the student and the curriculum and provide a rich, purposeful education process. In short, Dewey believes the instructor of a democratic classroom must provide a safe, ethical environment for democracy to grow and provide the guidance needed to achieve that democracy.

Dewey also philosophized that the best way to create a learning environment of this type was to understand that the students' experiences outside

the classroom directly influence their learning within the classroom. He noted that "the facts and truths that enter into the child's present experience, and those contained in the subject-matter of studies, are the initial and final terms of one reality" (Dewey, 1902/1956, p. 12). In other words, the student gains an individualized set of life experiences and an understanding of "facts and truth" of the material studied.

Portelli and Solomon (2001) reference Dewey's notion of democracy as a "way of life" rather than a set of enforced education standards (p. 290), implying that democratic theories of education offer a progressive framework for curriculum. Democratic practices seek to validate and acknowledge the experiences of students and teachers and allow for a natural co-construction of curriculum that can evolve, grow, and flex depending on the changing needs of the group. Such practices facilitate dialogue and embrace change to ensure that the needs and interests of individuals within educational settings, and the community in which they function, are taken seriously.

Creating a democratic learning environment requires attending to literacies, or ways of analyzing and negotiating the world around one's self**,** including literacies already in use by students. The instructor must make the language in which he/she teaches understandable and appropriate for students. For Dewey, making curriculum learnable for the students meant not opposing the students to the curriculum, but rather using the curriculum to aid in the students' journey of learning.

Democracy in cyberspace. While education has evolved and changed since Dewey's time, the most fundamental changes in the twenty-first century are the prior experiences of students who live in a digital media culture and the evolution of the setting in which learning occurs.

Author and economist Don Tapscott (2000) coined the term N-Gen, or Internet Generation, to refer to young people born during the 1980s who rely more heavily on the Internet and technology than any generation before them and whose Internet habits will shape society. Tapscott describes N-Geners as "collaborative," relationship-oriented "innovators" (Tapscott, 2009). According to Annetta, Murray, Laird, Bohr, and Park (2008), children growing up during the first decade of the twenty-first century are known as the Net Generation for many reasons, but the most significant reason is that the Internet is a constant presence for them. They have never known a time without broadband Internet and advanced technology. This definition aligns with that of Tapscott (2000), who believes that success in advertising to, selling to, and reaching this generation depends on engaging them and satisfying their technologically relevant needs. He states: "N-Geners want options. The availability of choice is a deeply held value in the N-Gen culture" since they are used to "navigating in a world of seemingly limitless choice" (p. 24). Similarly, Tapscott claims that "N-Geners expect customization . . . they are used to highly flexible, custom environments that they can influence" (p. 24). The Internet plays an important role in the education of N-Geners as well as current Internet users of any age, and educators must consider the "highly flexible custom environments" that N-Geners expect. The availability

that Tapscott refers to closely relates to the concept of access in this study, which is defined later in this chapter.

In *Grown Up Digital* (2009), Tapscott interviewed over 1,700 teenagers and developed eight net generation norms (e.g., a tendency toward innovation, an expectation of freedom, a demand for constant entertainment, and a tendency for collaboration) that intertwine with ideas about democratic learning. In addition to insights into the value of customizing education to the needs and habits of this generation, Tapscott summarizes why social media are important to youth and explains how teachers and curriculum writers in the online environment can create opportunities and optimize social media in ways that reflect the norms and values of digital natives. These values and norms are also applicable to creating democratic online learning environments.

Reis (1998) and other authors including Howe and Strauss (2007) have used the term *Millennials* to describe the same group that Tapscott (2000) calls the N-Geners. Reis (1998) describes their childhoods as heavily structured and full of sports, clubs, part-time jobs, and other extra-curricular activities. He emphasizes that the time they spent on the Internet and computers in their youth was significantly more than that of any generation before them and that by the time they reach college, Millennials are computer-literate and highly socialized due to frequent media-based interaction with friends and family. When Millennials encounter college educators, the differences in the backgrounds and life experiences of the two groups may be stark, making teaching and communicating effectively a challenge for both sides (Reis, 1998). These

differences may be important when considering and analyzing the educator's role in providing and facilitating a democratic learning environment within the online classroom.

As in any democracy, examining shifts and balances of power is important and often informs qualities of the environment, including whether it is truly democratic. If a power structure exists in which some participants' voices and opinions are not heard or acknowledged, then the lack of balanced power subverts democracy. In cyberspace, power dynamics assuredly exist. Without cyber literacy, or the ability to communicate fluidly and fluently in cyberspace, users become outsiders. These outsiders potentially lose their entitlement to equal treatment if their credibility or knowledge of the space in which they are interacting is questioned by insiders.

Knobel and Lankshear (2002) point out that the Internet is far from a democratic environment where users, by virtue of their anonymity, are entitled to share their opinions and have those opinions acknowledged and democratically debated by their peers. Knobel and Lankshear use an example to illustrate, analyzing the interaction between eBay users in which an angry long-time user (or insider) criticizes new users (the outsiders) for using the rating system improperly. This long-time user calls the newcomers "newbies," who should not use the rating system if they do not understand how it works (Knobel & Lankshear, 2002). The flood of comments from other long-time users in support of this scolding shows the gap between those users with more experience and the newcomers being reprimanded. Thus, there exists, in some cases, a very wide gap between the

haves and have-nots on the Internet. What the haves possess is a unique online literacy and the ability to spot, almost instantly, those who have not, or those users who lack online literacy. The "have nots" are then labeled and treated as outsiders, and their opinions and views are tainted (Knobel & Lankshear, 2002).

This charge applies to classrooms in Dewey's time as well as modern classrooms, both in-person and online. The responsibility of providing this environment falls on the instructor; to create an environment that fosters interaction and contributes to a democratic learning environment, the instructor must have an understanding of the literacies that students use to interpret, understand, and eventually critique the world in which they currently live. This is a complicated endeavor since the modern student is, in fact, currently using a combination of literacies (Knobel & Lankshear, 2002; Nixon, 2001).

At the foundation of democratic theory in education is the belief that a collaborative and constructive approach will allow opportunities for those in school to cope collectively and respond to the here-and-now issues and problems affecting their lives and their communities. This is an approach very much in line with Dewey's belief, as explained by Macbeath (2004), that schools should drive social change and that "isolation is the enemy of improvement" (p. 42). Levin's (1998) conception of democratic practices in education encompasses key elements that underlie some of the aforementioned views. From Levin's perspective, a problematic disconnect between educational ideals and educational practice exists (p. 63). Considering this disconnect and how it can be overcome is one of the goals of this study. Some underlying causes of such disconnect can be

addressed in the construction of future online courses if these causes are better understood.

Educational setting for democracy. The prevalence of online or blended classes, also known as hybrid classes, in higher education is significant (NCES, 2008). Mass migration to online education has altered the dynamic of classrooms significantly; students can now choose whether to take a class in-person or online. This shift provides an important opportunity for education researchers to re-examine Dewey's democratic education experiment. To better understand the relationship between democracy and online learning, this dissertation examines the experiences of participants in an online jazz history course.

Competing demands in education. Online education in the United States is driven by democratic and economic ideals like competition, accessibility, and participant-driven outcomes (Carr-Chellman, 2005). Understanding the manifestation of these ideals within the classroom is essential. Additionally, aggressive recruiting practices with the hope of reaching market capitalization are important motivating factors for promoting online learning. Other motivating factors such as profit have been identified as potential barriers to the quality of online education (Hebert, 2007).

Online learning is embedded in many aspects of educational life at the university and college level across the United States and Canada. Promotion of online learning is largely media and advertisement-driven. The message in the promotion of many online courses includes a combination of affronts to the educational consumer. The promotional voice in many institutions trumpets the

virtues of online learning, referring to its offer of accreditation, ease of use, practicality, and the opening to all of what once was coveted knowledge and learning. The college district in this study advertises with tag lines such as "Education Your Way" (Rio Salado, n.d.). Other popular online universities such as the University of Phoenix tout slogans such as "Online Degrees for Today's World," "Degree Programs for Real People With Real Responsibilities," and "Your Degree on Your Terms" (University of Phoenix, n.d.). Other marketing conveys terms such as convenient, independent learning, learn anytime anywhere, flexible learning, meeting your needs, and easy to use online learning. Whether the marketing message matches the quality of the experience is not yet clear.

Limitations and Frames

The study explores the online course environment to understand what qualities of democracy and democratic education (e.g., Levin, 1998; Portelli & Vibert, 2002) exist in the online classroom. Creating a highly participatory, democratic, and interactive learning environment is essential to effective online learning. Democracy in education is a large theoretical field. For this dissertation, I focused specifically on three qualities of democracy in relation to online learning: issues of accessibility, student engagement, and freedom of expression.

Accessibility. Accessibility is a fundamental quality of democracy. If individuals are to be empowered, they must possess equal access to opportunity. While online courses and the Internet are widespread, accessibility, for the purposes of this study, relates not to the ubiquitous nature of the Internet but

instead to the learning opportunities that students have within an online course. In particular, access to relevant technologies within the online course must be present.

According to the NCES (2003), educational institutions that offered online learning noted student access as an important goal for the next decade of online courses. Specific goals for increasing student access in these institutions included "making courses available at convenient locations," "reducing time constraints for course taking," and "making educational opportunities more affordable" (p. 15). These accessibility goals noted by NCES (2003) are institutional and program goals, whereas accessibility in this study was confined to student access to the online jazz history course.

The responsibility for creating a democratic learning environment for college-age N-Geners falls initially on the instructor and the designers of courses; however, what can be done realistically may be limited by technological constraints and funding of the educational institution. To provide an environment that is accessible for technology users of possibly diverse levels, the instructor and designers must have a good understanding of the technology and computing worlds of contemporary students (Katz, 2008). Understanding how students access, engage with, and interpret the content in online courses is crucial.

Understanding how online course technologies align with the technologies students use in their daily lives is a complicated endeavor since the contemporary student may use a combination of digital and other literacies. The Internet and cyberspace have been a constant presence in the lives of most contemporary

college-age students, and while they have developed literacies that apply to the online environment, they have simultaneously functioned in traditional school environments with books and print media in their education. This has resulted in a multiliteracy (Nixon & Comber, 2001) unique to this generation. Nixon and Comber refer to literacies as the cognitive tools that students use to learn, and their broad conception of literacy includes media such as the Internet, YouTube videos, and online social networks. Making these learning tools accessible in online classrooms may make the online environment compatible with multiliteracy. The accessibility of these learning tools may also make the online classroom learning experience democratic by supporting ways of thinking and interacting to which students are accustomed.

Student engagement. Anderson (2003) describes three different types of student interaction for educational environments: student-to-teacher, student-to-student, and student-to-content. Anderson suggests that a satisfying learning experience includes a significant amount of at least one type of interaction.

For the purpose of this study, engagement includes interaction among learners, interaction between students and instructor, and students' interaction with content. A democratic learning environment should show evidence of students' engagement with each of these. In addition to within-course interactions, a potential indicator of student engagement is the learners' behaviors outside the learning environment and how these behaviors relate to their experience in the class. In other words, how do the students engage as citizens in society, or how do they engage differently as a result of their online learning experiences?

Addressing these qualities of engagement is consistent with Dewey's definition of democratic education.

If students are engaged with each other, the course content, and the instructor, then democratic learning is possible. This study questioned how to accommodate discussion and promote open, free, and democratic exploration within the context of an online course.

Technology can play an important role in student engagement. Internet tools that provide examinations and study strategies in an engaging, interesting way can have successful results (Cheng, Basu, & Goebel, 2009) and may increase the level of student engagement with the course content. The addition of online interactive tools for studying class material may also encourage engagement. The higher the level of engagement and interaction, the more potential there is for democratic learning. This principle of learning by doing, reflecting, and interacting is central to Dewey's philosophy; Dewey believed that this was how students reached their greatest potential (Dewey, 1902).

Freedom of expression. Freedom of expression, for this study, is defined as the comfort level, willingness, and freedom of the students in an online learning environment to participate, interact, and share their ideas. Dewey's democratic classroom allowed for sharing of information between learners. In the context of an online class, freedom of expression has the same foundation but is observed through participation in the online environment.

The Internet as an educational tool has the potential to encourage democracy because individuals are able to express opinions, connect, and voice

freely online, though not face-to-face physically. However, a digital divide may exist between those who have technological skills and those who do not (Knobel & Lankshear, 2002). This divide represents an important intersection between accessibility and freedom of expression. Without satisfying requirements for accessibility in an online learning environment, freedom of expression may be hindered. Further, in an online class, perceived surveillance by the teacher or instructor may influence freedom of expression and the nature of the students' experiences.

Experiences, including tensions in an online course related to frustrations caused by technology, may contribute to or detract from an authentically democratic learning environment. How the course evolves and shifts with students' interests, the flow of discussion that ensues, whether online structures allow for students to engage and interact, and perceived direction of content may impact a perceived freedom of expression and the democratic learning environment.

Brief Overview of Methodology

The study utilizes a case study method. The participants were students in an online jazz history course offered at a community college in Arizona. I gathered data through documentation of student participation in the course and through interviews conducted at the beginning, middle, and end of the class. The data, which consisted of a pre-course survey, interview transcripts, discussion board posts, journal entry assignments, and other course data, were analyzed through the lenses of access, engagement, and freedom of expression, consistent

with qualities of Dewey's democratic educative framework. The findings contribute to the development of constructs that support pedagogical decision making in future online digital course curriculum, particularly in the field of jazz history education.

The goals of this study are to examine how qualities of democracy are either supported (or neglected) in an online learning environment and to answer the key research questions proposed earlier in this chapter. In striving for these goals, this study aims to achieve insight into future creation and implementation of curriculum in online courses that support democratic educational environments and allow for analysis and criticism of current policies and recommends areas of possible future research in online education.

Chapter two includes a review of the literature relating to the study. This literature is organized into themes pertaining to the goals of the study. Chapter three is an explanation of the case study methodology used in the study, and chapter four presents the data collected and provides description of the themes that appeared during data analysis. Finally, chapter five offers findings drawn from the data analysis and a discussion of the implications of this research as well as suggestions for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of literature related to three key areas of investigation: trends in online education, perspectives on democratic education, and jazz education. Literature sources include peer-reviewed studies of technology and student interaction in online environments, as well as online courses, proceedings from education conferences, and articles from online education journals. For some of the phenomena in this study, I also refer to informal literature on education and information provided in technology blogs. This literature, though not formally peer-reviewed, is an important source for information and ideas about contemporary issues in online education and technology. For recently invented or recently popularized technology, these blogs and forums can provide insights into the most current uses of this technology. In addition, some blogs are side projects for highly regarded professors, educators, and authors. These sources are important indicators that more formal research and investigation is needed in the realm of online education, particularly in higher learning institutions.

Trends in Online Education

In the United States, the popularity of online education has been growing rapidly. In 2000, three million students were taking advantage of online education opportunities (NCES, 2003). By 2007, "two and four-year institutions reported an estimated 12.2 million enrollments in college-level, credit-granting, distance education courses" (NCES, 2008, p. 3). Additionally, the NCES reports

that undergraduate enrollment in all types of classes increased by 24% from 2000 to 2008 (NCES, 2010). That enrollment in post-secondary online education has increased significantly in the last decade is noteworthy. Institutions have been increasing their repertoire of online classes in response to this trend. Arizona State University (ASU), for example, predicts that by 2021, a quarter of its students will be enrolled in only online classes (Ryman, 2011). Because of this trend, research and evaluation of online education is more important than ever.

Online education in the United States is driven by ideals such as independence, freedom of choice, and equal opportunity (Carr-Chellman, 2005). Carr-Chellman suggests that the opportunity to choose which courses to take, when to start and end the courses, and when to do the assigned materials draws some students to online education. Additionally, in the United States, online education is seen as an economic venture, making it a field dominated by economic competition, advertising, and a for-profit mentality (Carr-Chellman, 2005). This is evidenced by the multitude of advertisements for new, exclusively online colleges as well as for programs at existing universities that can be completed partially or completely online.

Whether students are influenced to choose online education by good advertising or simply by the lure of convenience and freedom, it is important to know what is happening to the millions of students who are turning to online education in lieu of traditional classes. According to a meta-analysis of over a thousand studies of online education, “on average, students in online learning conditions performed modestly better than those receiving face-to-face

instruction" (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, p. ix). The results of this meta-analysis also suggest that the positive effects of online education were stronger for higher education than they were for K-12 distance learning. In other words, undergraduate and graduate students appear to be the best candidates for online education.

In an online survey of 562 college instructors and administrators, Kim and Bonk (2006) measured predictions for trends in online education in the next 10 years. "Monetary support" was identified as the "factor that will most significantly affect the success of online programs" by 24.7% of respondents, while only 15% of respondents indicated the "Technical competency of online instructors" as most influential (p. 26). Additionally, survey respondents ranked "lecturing or teacher-directed activities" tenth out of 12 pedagogical techniques to be used more widely online in the coming decade, while "discussion" was ranked third and "group problem-solving and collaborative tasks" was the most favored pedagogical technique, with 65.4% of respondents choosing it (p. 28).

However, not all facets of the online environment seem to facilitate higher grades or greater comprehension. The U.S. Department of Education (2010) found that the use of some popular online tools does not necessarily lead to better educational outcomes, such as higher test scores:

> Elements such as video[s] or online quizzes do not appear to influence the amount that students learn in an online class. This research does not support the use of some frequently recommended online learning practices. Inclusion of more media in an online application does not

> appear to enhance learning. The practice of providing online quizzes does not seem to be more effective than other tactics such as assigning homework. (p. xvi)

These results imply that the use of additional online tools is not the reason for the success of online education in general. Tools such as YouTube and audio clips may be useful to students in online classes but do not necessarily lead to differences in learning. This meta-analysis of online education studies, though a useful source of information and a good summary of current research, does not review any studies of online music courses. Perhaps when the subject is fine arts, listening to audio clips, watching videos of performances online, and using other additional media may have a different impact on students. More studies about online music education, and specifically jazz history education, may be an important addition to future meta-analyses.

Contemporary online learning technology. Online education generally utilizes a web-based platform known as a course or learning-management system (CMS or LMS). Ideally the CMS facilitates learning in several ways. It should keep track of students enrolled in the course, open a line of communication between students and instructors, chart student performance and progress, and provide a venue for instructors to distribute course content.

A number of CMSs have been established since the advent of Blackboard in 1997. As the Internet continues to be a significant presence and students have sought out the flexibility and freedom of online education, these systems have become more popular and more advanced. Standard features included in a CMS

are forums, chats, and a system-based email. With technological advancements, creators of online classes have been able to recreate in the online learning environment the social classroom environment that students recognize from their daily lives.

Many advances in CMS technology in recent years are noteworthy. For example, Edvance360 Learning Management System, from Edvance LLC, emphasizes social networking. This interface allows users to create ePortfolios, using a resume and portfolio format built into the system, motivating users to stay with Edvance360 after graduating. The learning system can contain published works of the students, their learning experiences and qualifications, and recommendations from faculty and instructors (Products and overview, n.d.). The social networking infrastructure of Edvance360 helps colleges interact with current students, alumni, and even prospective students.

Another CMS gaining popularity is eFront (eFrontlearning, n.d.). The eFront system specializes in an intuitive design that resembles a Windows control panel with a calendar and forum with instructor updates attached to the side of it. The clean look, which implements a previously established visual setup, is intended to make the platform familiar and easy to use.

Rhode (2009) is critical of modern day LMSs, or Learning Management Systems. Rhode contends that educators and course designers need to determine how to effectively integrate Web 2.0 technologies into their LMSs. The author claims that the "rise of asynchronous and synchronous computer-mediated communication (i.e., email and threaded discussion and synchronous chat,

respectively) combined with the integration of a structured LMS environment has been mistakenly hailed by some as the panacea for developing quality online learning" (Rhode, 2009, p. 2).

In an investigation of learner preferences in online learning environments, Rhode (2009) primarily focused on the various kinds of interactions students in self-paced online learning classes took part in over the course of a year. The first issue he addresses is scheduling and its effect on communication. In an "imposed-pace" course, group work and communication are easily established and maintained because students are working on assignments at the same time. In a self-paced course, as many online courses tend to be, students do the course work when they have available time. Although many students take these courses for the added flexibility, such courses can also add obstacles to the pedagogical process. Each student could potentially be at a different part of the course, making collaboration and relevant learning communication between students more difficult (Rhode, 2009). He sees potential in social networking capabilities and believes that there is an opportunity to expand interaction beyond the confines of the 'course environment,' such as expanding student-to-student interaction in different sections of a course.

Rhode (2009) approaches the problem with the perspective that student-to-student or student-to-teacher interaction is essential to an effective and healthy learning environment, in person or online. Rhode (2009) attempts to address two questions: examining and discovering what kinds of interaction students who participate in online learning classes want to engage in and determining if a

theoretical system laid out by Anderson (2003) is an accurate framework for higher education institutions to follow when designing online courses. Rhode points out that many higher learning institutions have embraced Anderson's model for its flexibility and economical potential. It affords educators flexibility with things like class size and curriculum if they only have to fulfill one of the three forms of interaction at a high level. Rhode suggests that institutions with high numbers of students now try to teach too many students in an online course with limited faculty. Those institutions are hoping, based on Anderson, that supplying student-to-content or student-to-student interaction, in place of student-to-instructor interaction, will be adequate.

The online courses studied by Rhode implemented Web 2.0 technologies and pedagogical strategies. Aside from the standard LMS, students were also required to use social networking features, such as blogging and "learner-driven communities," provided by an additional software platform (Rhode, 2009, p. 6). To determine which interaction type was preferred by self-paced online learners, Rhode (2009) asked questions that determined (1) which type of interaction the learners engaged in most frequently, (2) which they valued most, (3) which forms of interaction they viewed as equivalent to one another, and (4) what they perceived the impact of interaction was on their learning experience. The participants were from a one-year certification course offered at a northeastern U.S. college that employed the self-paced online system. The course was designed to allow all three types of interaction. The only deadline was a final typed assignment due at the end of the semester.

Out of 15 students enrolled in the course, 11 completed 75% or more of the course and 10 agreed to a semi-structured interview, which included four questions (Rhode, 2009). The first question was: "Which form of interaction is most common in self-paced online learning environments?" (p. 7). According to their interviews, the majority of interaction was student-to-content or student-to-teacher. Students expressed enthusiastic approval of the multimedia aspects of the course, such as the self-contained, audio-enhanced slide shows designed by the instructor. Students also praised "supplementary video presentations linked to from outside the online course room" (p. 9) or videos from sites like YouTube. The social networking aspect did not seem to have been a primary focus of the students, which illustrated that student-to-student interaction in an online environment is a challenge to develop (Rhode, 2009).

To answer the second question, "Which form of interaction did student's value the most?" Rhode (2009) had students rate the various course elements on a 1 to 5 scale. The top ten student-voted elements included assignments, direct student-to-teacher interaction, the instructor's presentations, and the external links to videos. All of the top ten consisted of either student-to-content or student-to-teacher interactions. The poorest ratings were for student-to-student chat, student-to-student message board posts from students of a different section, and student comments on student blog posts.

The third question was "Which forms of interaction do adult learners identify as equivalent?" (Rhode, 2009, p. 10). Students widely identified student-to-content and student-to-teacher interaction as being relatively equivalent.

According to Rhode (2009), students had the view that some interaction with the teacher could be replaced with student interaction, but because of the self-pacing, it was difficult to interact meaningfully about the course content.

Question four was "What impact do adult learners perceive interaction to have on their self-paced online learning experience?" (Rhode, 2009, p. 10). Not surprisingly, students believed there was no substitute for student-to-content or student-to-teacher interaction.

Rhode (2009) concluded that he had refuted Anderson's (2003) claim that certain interactions are interchangeable. Primarily teacher and content interaction cannot be substituted with student-to-student interaction in self-paced online courses. He also concluded that because of the nature of self-paced online learning courses, students consciously gave up meaningful student-to-student interaction, in favor of scheduling flexibility, when they enrolled in the class (Rhode, 2009).

Video, while not a new learning technology, is also becoming an integral part of online learning. Some universities have local channels that show lectures and courses for specific students. Additionally, video sharing websites such as YouTube and iTunes U offer opportunities for college students to view lectures from a variety of courses from universities across the country (EDU-YouTube, n.d.). Universities and colleges have the opportunity to start their own YouTube channels and share information about the school through them (EDU-YouTube, n.d.). (A list of some examples of these pages, or channels can be found in Appendix B.) YouTube.com education online videos are increasingly focused

and directed at students using computers at home, and video lectures can be directed toward a specific group of students. Websites such as Academic Earth have taken advantage of this technology and now provide hundreds of recorded academic lectures on a variety of topics (Academic Earth, n.d.). These previously recorded lectures can range from MIT professors' physics lectures complete with extravagant experiments to a lecture titled "Lying and Principles" from Harvard faculty (Academic Earth, n.d.). This plethora of online video education, along with teachers' own supplementation, provides students with a visual learning experience in the online environment that was available, until recently, only in in-person classrooms. While the potential for the use of video in classroom settings is not new, the effective implementation of this technology in online classrooms is not yet widespread.

Another advancement in online education is the online Whiteboard (Hyder, 2009), which functions as a whiteboard on a computer screen. A user or group of users can use mouse functions to draw on the screen and produce shapes and text boxes, allowing them to visually represent ideas that might be difficult to express through text or email alone. These drawings can be viewed, shared, and edited by other users in the group. Products such as Dabbleboard allow teachers to communicate with students through whiteboard technology anywhere in the world (Hyder, 2009). This free software is just one example of how the online experience has advanced over the years. The combination of Dabbleboard and a CMS chat room resembles a classroom experience without the physical classroom in place.

In a study of technology tools in a classroom, Cheng et al. (2009) found technology to be an integral part of learning. Cheng's study included technology such as online tools for learning, the institution's website, and a website for a specific class. The researchers found that technology that successfully enhances teaching and helps students learn facilitates the process of learning in an online environment. The authors suggest that their strategies for multimedia use in online education will improve learning and support one of their goals to "provide publicly accessible education anywhere, at anytime, and to anyone" (Cheng et al., 2009, p. 16). The technology discussed, Computer Reinforced Online Multimedia Education (CROME), is a group of web-based study and examination activities. CROME implements techniques that range from 'drag and drop' activities to video clips that make for engaging studying, quizzing, and testing experiences.

Cheng et al. (2009) emphasize the need for further outcome-oriented studies based around CROME. In the meantime, the authors present detailed descriptions of these learning technologies. In the construction of online classes, knowing the options that are available for learning tools is important. Although Cheng et al. examine online technologies in science and math courses, versions of these technologies might still be applicable in classes such as online jazz history. CROME is potentially a useful tool for future online class construction and design. However, technologies included in CROME require further research, specifically into how they help students interact and participate.

The potential for enhancing education through the use of information and communication technologies and online tools is an area of research that requires

further exploration. Savage (2005) argues that information and communication technologies (ICT) can enhance education by making it more than just a one-way, solitary experience for students (Savage, 2005). The same potential may exist for music education courses, specifically. On the contrary, Paynter (1997) asserts that the extent to which the same technology in music education is useful is only as a delivery device. Paynter (1997) explains that "IT [information technology] is a means not an end [in] supporting the quest for genuinely musical activities" (p. 107).

Savage (2005), on the other hand, believes there is a more complicated relationship between ICT and music education. He claims that Paynter (1997) should have explored the relationship further. Savage suggests that researchers ask the question "What can be done to make it not only a means but also an end?"

> The relationship between music and ICT is not one of servant and master, but rather a subtle, reciprocal, and perhaps empathetic one in which the very nature of what constitutes musical practice is challenged, mediated and redefined through performers' and composers' uses of ICT. (p. 168)

Savage attempts to answer two questions related to the current stage of development of music ICT: How does ICT impact a music student's learning experience? and How does ICT affect the teacher's pedagogical approach? (Savage, 2005).

After observing a number of test groups, Savage (2005) concluded that a structured compositional process that involved the students is the next necessary step in music ICT (p. 178). He observed that when those processes were adopted

in the classroom, there were impressive results from students, but he emphasizes that this is the exception not the norm. Savage (2005) concludes that educators need to explore the potential of ICT and push the boundaries instead of settling for contemporary uses. Otherwise, educators will fall into the stagnant trap described by Paynter (1997) in which ICT is nothing more than a one-way delivery system.

Online learning in music education. According to Williams and Webster (2006),

> Many teachers develop online resources for formal courses taught at their schools . . . Such course materials might be designed for students in residence or perhaps as part of a distance-learning program of study. Extensive use of multimedia resources such as sound files, graphics, and digital movies is common. (p. 411)

Distance learning in music in higher education includes online courses and even the opportunity to earn online degrees. For example, Berklee's College of Music (Berklee Music, n.d.) boasts 130 online courses and certificate programs. Topics include everything from a series of Pro Tools courses to songwriting and music theory. Each student in Berklee's online music programs has a student homepage, which allows access to the online courses. Inside these courses, a left frame displays three relatively standard sections: course content, which contains announcements from the instructor; a syllabus page with a list of lessons; and a communications tab, which lists classmates, a discussion forum, and a live chat.

Each lesson has a number of topics and activities as well as specific class discussions. Many of the topics have animated learning aids. For example, Lesson 1 of Pro Tools Basics includes a topic about signal flow as it relates to the monitoring of audio track signals. An animated chart shows how the signal progresses as well as a brief explanation of the process from airflow going through the larynx, or other sound source, and then into the microphone to the microphone preamp. An explanation of exactly what each particular piece of equipment does at each point in the system is included. The animation then shows how the signal gets sent to a variety of locations depending on what kind of hardware is used.

Each specific lesson has a chat room communication box to promote consistent discussion throughout the entire lesson. Instructors hold regular live office hours in the course chat room to answer questions. The chat room also enables students to discuss, with each other and with the professor, what they are learning and provides a medium through which students can ask each other for advice. This is particularly useful in a technical field such as sound recording, which teaches not only complicated software like Pro Tools but also techniques such as placement of musicians and equipment and control of the environment for the best quality recording. Many of the activities require students to post their completed work and assignments they have done in the discussion forums.

Courses are linked cleanly into a system (Berklee.edu) that allows students to switch easily between online courses in which they are enrolled using their own student homepage. The student homepage has a personal profile and social

networking features that allow students to promote themselves and their work throughout the Berklee music community.

Boston University (Boston University, n.d.) offers an online graduate music education program as well. The university emphasizes convenience as one of the reasons to enroll in the online program. The online format enables students to reach their academic goals in a way and time that fits their individual needs. Boston University students can pursue an online Master of Music in Music Education (MusM) degree, as well as an online Doctor of Musical Arts in Music Education (MusAD) (Boston University, n.d.).

The coursework for these advanced degrees is almost entirely online. The MusM program consists of eight courses in theory and arranging, music education, research, music history, and other special topics (Boston University, n.d.). These courses may be finished in 17-20 months of study, and the degree is awarded upon the completion of a master's thesis. The MusAD program consists of eleven courses that can be completed in a continuous course of study in 5.5 semesters. It also requires qualifying examinations, a one-week on-campus residency, and the completion of a doctoral dissertation. The subjects of the courses for this doctoral program are similar to the topics studied in the Master's program. One focus of this program is on techniques for applying music theory and musicology in the classroom (Boston University, n.d.). Programs like these have enabled students from around the world to take part in U.S. higher education in music.

Some researchers have investigated online music communities, though not specifically jazz communities. For example, Salavuo (2006) revealed that online music-based communities, populated by members with varying expertise and interest areas, are prevalent and significant. He explains that these online communities are diverse in purpose and their identities are dual-natured:

> Online communities in the field of music are, on the one hand, knowledge communities, since they include members with a wide range of expertise who are seeking and sharing knowledge. On the other hand, these communities are musical communities, where distributing one's own music and listening to the music of one's peers have great importance. (p. 256)

According to Salavuo (2006), these "music-related online communities have created a new culture of listening, creating and distributing music" (p. 256). Salavuo reported that websites such as Soundclick.com, Garageband.com, iCompositions, and Audiostreet.net are some of the most commonly used online music communities. At the time of his study, Soundclick.com and Garageband.com had almost two million members combined (p. 258). Salavuo discovered, through Web-based surveys, that many of the users of the aforementioned sites were capable of writing songs and lyrics, singing or playing in an active band, and using computers instead of traditional instruments to make music. Since the number of people using and visiting these music-related websites is significant, studies that analyze these populations may be useful. In

addition, these websites may have qualities that can be adapted for technological learning environments.

It is important to consider that the people who are attracted to a jazz history class and who may succeed in a class that utilizes online music technologies may be the same population sampled by Salavuo (2006), thus making that study relevant to this investigation. Additionally, the extent of students' musical backgrounds may be important since familiarity with the topic might affect participation, freedom of expression, or overall comfort level in the online environment.

Online education in music education, specifically, is also growing (Hebert, 2007). Hebert (2007) investigated whether online education in music education can truly be of the same quality as traditional face-to-face programs. Hebert discussed five key issues that represent challenges in online music teacher education and their effects on online learning and, finally, corresponding solutions to each of them. These issues were (1) prejudice regarding the legitimacy of online degrees, (2) coordination between distance education and music departments, (3) pressure to maximize profits at the expense of educational quality, and (4) management of student behavior and provision of student services. Hebert (2007) found it is important to recognize the unique challenges in online learning and for university administration, professors, students, and professional leaders to collaborate to overcome these challenges.

Hebert (2007) claims that effective systems can be devised and implemented to lessen the frequency and severity of these challenges. Important

solutions include mentors focusing on assisting full-time and adjunct faculty with their online courses since it appears that “most characteristics of effective university teaching in live classrooms tend to transfer well into online programs with the need for minimal modification” (p. 1). He also suggests that similar online programs at other institutions make efforts to ensure a stringent approach to program evaluation.

Online education and recorded music. Contemporary online courses use technologies that have evolved over many years. The recording industry began through technologies such as 8-tracks, cassettes, and compact disks, and has now evolved to MP3s and online streaming services. Thomas Edison's 1877 invention of the phonograph prototype (Morton, 2004, p. 8) led to what would be considered the ‘record player,’ but it was not the first time humans had captured sound waves.

The first device to capture sound was the phonautograph, created by Frenchman Leon Scott in 1856. The phonautograph was a cone-shaped horn that directed sound to a membrane attached to a rapidly moving pointed stylus. When someone played an instrument or yelled into the horn, the stylus transcribed sound onto a soot-covered cylinder (Morton, 2004). Schools in the United States and Europe purchased the device during the 1860s as did the Smithsonian Institute in 1866, and for the first time, students and scientists could study relatively accurate representations of sound waves (Morton, 2004).

Edison's phonograph, invented 20 years after the phonautograph, recorded sound by making indentations on a strip of tin foil wrapped around a revolving

drum. Like many important inventions, its creator did not initially realize its potential as a medium able to mass-produce and distribute music to a broad base of consumers. The tinfoil was also not an adequate long-term sound-storage solution as the quality degraded after each successive play to the point of being useless after only a few rotations (Brooks & Spottswood, 2004). (For a more complete history of recording technology, see Appendix C).

Today, online courses make use of digital audio and video recordings. The first purely digital audio and video recordings were encoded in 1992 as MPEG-1 Layer 3 and later became commonly known as MP3. These became the standard for the type of compression in which some inaudible sound data are discarded (Morton, 2004). This process minimizes the amount of data in the file and is compatible with devices such as computers or iPods. By 1999, MP3s had become very popular, especially with sites like mp3.com. Napster, the first successful peer-to-peer audio sharing program, began in late 1999 and was later shut down as a result of legal action initiated by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).

Although Apple did not invent portable MP3 players, the company's invention of the iPod was revolutionary (Hormby & Knight, 2005). Creator Tony Fadell wanted to design a hard-drive based MP3 player, as opposed to the flash-based ones available in the early 2000s, for increased storage capacity as well as for providing a means to obtain music legally. The first iPod was released in October of 2001, and the iTunes Music Store began in 2003.

Contemporary online music classes, such as the jazz history course examined in this study, commonly use MP3 technology and streaming audio. MP3 files, including both music and lectures or other recorded information, are typically placed on class websites for students to listen to, and the presence of this technology in online teaching is significant. It has given rise to the use of digital streaming as well as utilization of websites such as YouTube for teaching. Even in non-music classes, MP3 technology has added many options for teaching and learning.

Online Learning

Barnard, Lan, Crooks, and Paton (2008) examined students' epistemological beliefs, or their knowledge of learning and their success in self-regulated learning, in online courses. The participants consisted of over 400 students in an online course at a public university. Data showed that there was not a strong correlation between epistemological beliefs and grade point average (GPA), which researchers used to measure academic performance. There was, however, a correlation between epistemological beliefs and self-regulated learning skills. Students with high self-regulated learning competencies, or who could manage their time and pace of learning effectively, had higher GPAs. The researchers suggest that students' self-regulated learning skills were related to their epistemological beliefs and to their resulting GPAs.

Self-regulated learning skills in communities, including online courses, can be affected by a phenomenon called *social loafing*. Social loafing occurs when a student does not carry his or her share of the workload in a study group or

similar setting (Piezon & Ferree, 2008). Piezon and Ferree (2008) attempted to determine the perception of social loafing of students in online learning groups. The results from the two study groups, public university students and Naval War College (NWC) students, were considerably different. At the public university, 77.4% of students perceived social loafing in online learning groups, while only 8% of NWC students had that perception. Piezon and Ferree stressed that students often had misconceptions of social loafing and labeled a fellow student without understanding that student's actual input and participation. In fact, at times, the student perceived as a social loafer was actually working hard but was struggling with the concepts of the group work (Piezon & Ferree, 2008). The authors suggest that educators who specialize in online learning will have to develop unique methods to combat social loafing and that methods to curb social loafing in face-to-face groups might not apply to online groups (Piezon & Ferree, 2008).

Instructor behavior in the online learning environment. Schutt, Allen, and Lumakis (2009) examined instructor immediacy behaviors, or the lack thereof, in online learning environments. They defined immediacy behaviors as long-established social communication methods, such as intonation of voice, physical gestures, facial expressions, showing concern or encouragement, and recognition. All of those behaviors are conducive to a sense of physical and psychological intimacy (Schutt et al., 2009). However, these elements may be a problem for distance learning because of geographical differences and lack of face-to-face instruction and interaction. The authors conclude that as advances in

online education occur and mediums for education expand, so too do the opportunities for instructors to exhibit immediacy behaviors.

The researchers collected data about students' perceptions of instructor immediacy when the students were exposed to different levels of instructor interaction. Some students saw only text from the instructor, while others heard audio accompanied by text, and still others saw a video lecture in addition to text and audio. Schutt et al. (2009) hypothesized that students who participated in video and audio instruction from teachers, accompanied by a text chat that allowed for questions and feedback, would have the highest perception of instructor immediacy and social presence.

The researchers found that student immediacy perception with the video lecture was very high, which they credited to students' established visual immediacy behaviors. The authors pointed out that this result hinged on the instructors' abilities to use immediacy behaviors and their conscious attempt to form a learning relationship with students. Schutt et al. found that this relationship predicted a positive perception from students, even with the group that had only audio and text, depending on the instructors' abilities to vocally express immediacy behavior. Schutt et al. (2009) concluded that the social presence of an instructor could positively impact students' satisfaction with online courses and that the social presence can be enhanced with video and audio that allow for instructors to exhibit immediacy behaviors.

Student perception of online learning. Tsai et al. (2008) address the sense of isolation expressed by online students compared to their experiences with

face-to-face education. That sense of isolation has been cited as a reason students drop out of online courses at a higher rate than students in traditional educational environments (Tsai et al., 2008). The authors listed five factors that affect learning, both online and in person: sense of community (SOC), social ability, perceived ease of use, self-reported participation, and satisfaction. They defined social community as the students' sense of belonging or being a member of a group. Tsai et al. asserted that students should feel that their success and the success of other students is dependent on the group as a whole as well as a mutual concern for each other's opinions.

Tsai et al. used a questionnaire to calculate social ability, defined as the students' abilities to utilize the available online resources to interact socially and to achieve goals in the online community. The researchers determined perceived ease of use by assessing the students' familiarity with the necessary technologies to facilitate a social online learning experience. Self-reported participation was determined by the answers to questions on a one-point (*no participation*) to seven-point (*a lot of participation*) scale. The authors determined satisfaction using a similar scale as well as questions regarding students' perceived educational experience in terms of learning and retaining relevant course material (Tsai et al., 2008). Interview questions investigated whether students posted on the discussion board, read messages other students posted on that board, sent emails to other students, or uploaded their work to the system.

Tsai et al. (2008) found that factors such as social ability, perceived ease of use, and self-reported participation that resulted in a sense of community

enhanced the students' satisfaction in online courses. The added social and community component was an important part of students' education. When these components were implemented in an online course, overall student satisfaction with the course increased. The study also illustrates that perceived sense of community is built upon the students' participation in discussion boards and other types of online communication with fellow students.

Ladyshewsky and Gardner (2008) investigated students' reflections on clinical fieldwork through the use of blogging, a form of mediated learning that is also available in online classes. Groups in the study were comprised of four to five physiotherapy students in their last year of study and an academic moderator. Students used blogs to discuss professional practice issues based on evidence they gathered during clinical fieldwork. The intention of the blog was that the students' sharing of experiences and insights would broaden each student's personal learning experiences.

The authors found that participants communicated with one another using specific language and drew on similar knowledge about blogs and the Internet. To foster a safe medium where students could talk candidly with their peers, the authors also tried to create an environment that would be free of intimidation, even if unintentional, from superiors or instructors by using the peer-driven interaction forum of the blogs (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008).

The academic moderators were so impressed with the blogs that they favored them over the written examination generally held at the end of the students' clinical work. They found that students were more engaged in their

discussions with other students on the subjects presented in the blogs than they were in past classes that did not use the blogs. Because blogging occurred throughout the clinical study, students tended to be more insightful about the clinical work while they were in the process of doing it as opposed to looking back at those experiences at the end of the year, as would be the case in a typical final examination (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008).

However, the moderators had two main suggestions. First, they recommended that students begin the blogging process earlier in the course, as some students were initially more experienced at a reflective style of writing than others. The other critique had to do with the roles of the moderators themselves. The authors believed students would have been better served with less moderator interference and clearer guidelines that would lessen the necessity of the administrative leadership in discussions (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008).

The authors reported many positive comments from students in this study. Students appreciated the feedback from other students, which helped make their work feel more relevant, created opportunities for them to see beyond their own thoughts, and gave them a sense of empathy with one another. The blog community was also beneficial for students because they developed more open, trusting relationships with their blog groups.

One of the drawbacks, from the student point of view, was that the university supervisors in the form of academic moderators read the posts as well. Some students used nicknames at the beginning of the study to remain anonymous, but this hurt the community dimension for other students who did not

know with whom they were communicating (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008). Also, students tended to agree with the opinions expressed by the moderators on the blog groups, which may have led to fewer original ideas and comments. Students might have been 'piggy-backing' on the ideas of the moderators instead of thinking independently, so less advisor interference led to better discussions between students. The students also felt that beginning the blogging process earlier in the course would have been beneficial to the group experience. In addition, students encountered technical problems with hardware and software as well as some Internet availability issues (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008).

Based on their results and conclusions, Ladyshewsky and Gardner (2008) presented a list of Dos and Do Nots for instructors attempting to foster classroom discussion. They suggest instructors develop a healthy, open atmosphere at the beginning of the semester by using exercises that help students connect and get to know one another and by showing respect for student opinions and enthusiasm for discussion. The Do Nots include letting students feel unsupported and vulnerable, arguing with students or squashing their opinions, and fostering an authoritarian atmosphere (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008).

Platforms for online learning. Annetta et al. (2008) investigated Multi-User Virtual Environments (MUVEs) or, more simply, multi-player educational video games. Annetta et al. believe MUVEs could be advantageous in education if implemented as a team-building environment that supplements the course curriculum. Participants in this study included graduate students in a science education course that was conducted entirely in a MUVE platform. Lectures were

given in a virtual classroom with the instructor using Voice over IP (VoIP), an Internet-based telephone technology, for delivery of voice communications. The authors found that participants were hesitant to respond and ask questions using VoIP but instead relied on the text-based chat available. The reason for this hesitation may have been a generation gap between these participants and the Generation N students for whom VoIP technology may have worked better. Participants in this study were either K-12 teachers or education majors and were older than typical Generation N students. Their discomfort with VoIP and MUVE technology may have been due to their unfamiliarity with it, and the authors suggest that technologies like VoIP and MUVE might have been better suited for a class whose students fell within the N Generation.

Some of the educational professionals in the study suggested that class curricula were too large and complex to make much use of the MUVE they worked with during the study. However, others thought it could be a valuable learning tool for at-home review of class work. In their conclusions, Annetta et al. note that one of the most significant barriers to the participants in this education course was unfamiliarity of the course technology. They conclude that this method of distance learning, an entirely MUVE environment, will be an attractive option to future higher education students who are already accustomed to playing multi-player games regularly (Annetta et al., 2008).

Roehling (2011) describes findings from a research project conducted to examine effective ways to engage students in college courses. The author conducted six focus groups to study how students between the ages of 18 and 21

participated and were engaged in classroom discussion. Students in the focus groups agreed that classroom discussions were useful to their learning experience. The three primary benefits were a more active learning experience, better understanding of the material, and the ability to see the subject from different perspectives (Roehling, 2011).

Roehling (2011) discusses a criticism of members of the Millennial generation regarding their short attention span, suggesting that lack of attention may be attributed to the numerous sources of information, entertainment, and stimulation available to them and their ability to constantly switch between these various sources. The students in the focus group suggested that engaging in discussions helped them pay attention and focus on the subject, confirming the author's belief that class discussions are important to learning. This also means that incorporating discussion boards in an online course may positively affect student engagement in the course.

Finally, Roehling asserts that members of the Millennial Generation are more likely to want to find things out on their own or prefer to be given information and then analyze it and come to their own conclusions instead of being fed facts and opinions without reflection. Roehling claims that these are some of the reasons classroom discussions are important to the learning process.

Based on findings from the focus group discussions, Roehling (2011) suggests that creating a comfortable and inviting environment in which students feel empowered to participate in classroom discussions is crucial. The author lists four factors that students felt empowered them to participate in classroom

discussion: (1) the professor's or instructor's attitude, (2) the instructor's ability to moderate the classroom discussion, (3) the atmosphere of the classroom (or forum), and (4) the students' attitudes. The professor's attitude was most cited by members of the focus groups as either helping or hindering classroom discussions. These suggestions may also apply to online discussions.

Twenge (2006) also points out that Millennials are a diverse generation and the idea that everyone's opinion should matter is prevalent in the Millennial generation. Twenge uses blogs as an example of this. Twenge points to blogs as an example of intricate personal logs of every daily action posted online for everyone to read. It could be said that since 2006, the year of Twenge's book, the "everyone's opinion matters" perspective is more prevalent than ever, and posting of moment-to-moment actions has been taken to an unprecedented extreme.

Twenge (2006) points out that because of the pervasive attitude that everyone is special, students may be hyper-sensitive to criticism and avoid becoming involved in a situation in which they or their opinions could become the target of criticism. Similarly, according to Howe and Strauss (2007), Millennial students are more conventional than previous generations. They tend to respect authority. If they do not feel that their opinions will be openly accepted by the authority figure (e.g., the professor or instructor), they are much less likely to voice their opinion. This is doubly true if the students believe the professor's opinion is divergent from their own. These authors suggest that instructor enthusiasm may be an excellent tool to combat boredom in Millennial students (Howe & Strauss, 2007; Roehling, 2011; Twenge, 2006).

The instructor's ability to moderate discussions is not a new subject. Ladyshewsky and Gardner (2008) found that the academic moderators unfortunately became a major hindrance to open communication in blogs and discussions in online study groups. Roehling (2011) came to a similar conclusion, stating that discussion should be "structured and focused, but not dominated, by the instructor" (Roehling, 2011, p. 4). Some of the focus group students suggested that professors who went out of their way to foster an environment of civility and openness were the best at moderating classroom discussions (Roehling, 2011).

Both Roehling (2011) and Ladyshewsky and Gardner (2008) identified students' comfort with interacting as a pedagogical issue. Ladyshewsky and Gardner found varying levels of student comfort with Internet anonymity, and Roehling (2011) found that 60% of the comments made by students in relation to their comfort in the in-person classroom atmosphere referred to how well they knew the other students in the classroom (Roehling, 2011). Given Roehling's (2011) findings and the reality that students in online classrooms do not necessarily know one another, it is not surprising that Ladyshewsky and Gardner (2008) found that some students were uncomfortable interacting in the online course. It is also important to consider that anonymity and *not* knowing the other students may make some kinds of sharing more comfortable.

Siemens (2005) suggests a learning theory based on connectivism as more appropriate to contemporary digital age learning than behaviorist, cognitivist, and constructivist theories (Siemens, 2005). Connectivism is the idea that learning

takes place in an environment that is not static and is not controllable by the learner. Siemens suggests that the "life of knowledge," which is the time between the moment when the knowledge is gained and the moment when that knowledge becomes obsolete, is no longer measured in decades but in years and months, or even shorter time frames (Siemens, 2005). According to Siemens, digital technologies have vastly shortened the lifespan of knowledge, and educational approaches should be adjusted accordingly.

Siemens's theory of connectivism has a number of principles important to online learning and democratic learning such as the view that "learning and knowledge rest in diversity of opinion" and the importance of the "ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts" (Siemens, 2005, p. 4). These principles are applicable to online learning and the potential for democratic online learning. "Diversity of opinion" occurs in interaction and can refer to social interaction that takes place in an online environment.

Online learning and Web 2.0. In 2003, O'Reilly Media coined the term Web 2.0 to refer to the new generation of websites that are based around communities and user-created content. Duffy (2008) uses Web 2.0 to refer to the surge in online media. This is a shift from the "read write web" that offered few opportunities for community or for users to offer input or content. Duffy (2008) outlines strategies for educators to implement Web 2.0 into students' educational experiences. Duffy also underlines the importance of this system to Millennial generation students.

Duffy (2008) describes a virtual ecology, in which relationships exist between media and users, and points out that this system also exists in the learning environment, where it can be referred to as *learning ecology.* According to Duffy (2008), educators and academics agree that the learning ecology is evolving on the Internet, and this is important for educating Millennial generation students who use media such as blogs, YouTube, and wikis to learn.

According to Duffy, writing a blog engages students and motivates them to think analytically and critically about their course studies in a medium that is simultaneously solitary and social. A student must work independently to think critically and develop an opinion and content for his/her blog. Those thoughts are then read and, ideally, analyzed and interpreted by other students who can then offer feedback.

Duffy emphasizes that the educational potential of the YouTube website, specifically, does not lie within the medium. Rather than lecturing "television-to-student" or just showing clip after clip after clip, he suggests educators use the video as a "vehicle for discovery" (p. 124) by having students watch a single video clip and then encouraging them to search for additional information about the topic by searching for more videos.

Duffy offers an interesting list of potential pedagogical strategies for using YouTube in the classroom, including watching the video in convenient smaller segments or pausing to ask students to review what has happened or to predict what will happen next. Also helpful is the ability to mute the sound and narrate or pause the video and have students describe what is happening on screen. Duffy

suggests that videos are an excellent way to improve students' note taking skills by giving students specific viewing focus and responsibilities or specific viewing goals to direct students' attention as opposed to a lecture that can become monotonous. Other strategies include assignments that require students to search for video references relating to the subject of instruction or using YouTube as an archive for classroom lectures.

Duffy cautions against using YouTube clips without a strong pedagogical strategy. Educators themselves must think critically about how best to implement the tools provided by Web 2.0 before it can become the tool that will transform standard educational practices and teaching into strategies that will actively engage Millennial students.

According to Ruthmann (2007), the Internet has dramatically changed over the past decade. It is no longer viewed as simply "a repository for information and a conduit for communication" (p. 1). With the dawn of Web 2.0 technologies, the Internet has become a personalized tapestry of artistic expression and collaboration (Ruthmann, 2007). There are a number of new tools that music educators need to learn about and adopt in order to engage music students in a meaningful way in both in-person and online courses. The value in these tools comes from their ability to encourage collaboration and interconnectivity between students and teachers.

For example, blogs, podcasts, and wikis are three major collaborative tools for music pedagogy (Ruthmann, 2007). Blogs have great potential for educational use. They encourage engagement because they are easily

personalized and depend on content that is updated regularly. Another educational feature of most blogs is the ability to post comments. This allows the potential for teacher and student interaction through feedback and the initiation of conversation. Ruthmann created a blog for each one of his classes containing syllabi, calendars, and important files. He found that the greatest benefit of using blogs in his classroom was that they provided "expanded online possibilities for peer-feedback and peer-teaching" (Ruthmann, 2007, p. 7).

Ruthmann describes another tool, podcasts, as Internet radio stations. The creator of a podcast has the ability to create multiple shows or episodes that can easily be accessed and downloaded online. These easily accessible, shared audio files offer increased flexibility for educators. The potential uses for podcast technology in the classroom are nearly limitless. Ruthmann suggests teachers use a podcasting website such as Odeo.com to create online audio galleries for students to listen to and discuss (Ruthmann, 2007).

A third tool for use in the online classroom, wikis, is the epitome of online collaboration. A wiki is an online archive of information created by a group of users about subjects of varying specificity. It is "designed for large numbers of people to collaboratively create, edit, and publish a webpage or website" (Ruthmann, 2007, p. 5). To Ruthmann, the wiki embodies interactive learning and is an intriguing tool for online learning. He claims "The power of wikis to support music learning is rooted in the democratic and collaborative nature of the technology. Any user with a password can enter a wiki and add, edit, or remove

content" (Ruthmann, 2007, p. 10). As the moderator of the wiki, the teacher has the ability to review the student contributions before they are updated.

Ruthmann also lists websites such as dBass.org, MusicDelta.com, and SoundJunction.org as tools music teachers should utilize in order to achieve high levels of democratic collaboration (Ruthmann, 2007). Instead of working within the preconceived boundaries of the web, educators ought to embrace these tools and harness the web's potential in their classrooms.

Greenhow, Robelia, and Hughes (2009) assert that instructors have an obligation to familiarize themselves with and become fluent in the newest learning technologies, including Web 2.0. The authors described how educators evaluated the first stage of the World Wide Web (Web 1.0) for its potential pedagogical usefulness and how the educational outlook on the Internet has changed in the Web 2.0 age. The authors reference Windschitl (1998), who set out three primary factors educators should consider when approaching the Internet for pedagogical purposes. First, and probably most importantly, is the web's potential as a repository of information that could fuel nearly limitless research. Second, Windschitl (1998) saw the web as a medium for communication and suggested in 1998 that further study be done on some sort of international e-pen-pal type system. Lastly, Windschitl wanted academics to use qualitative research methods to document and track how online learning and teaching was evolving and changing.

Greenhow et al. (2009) describe changes from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 and provide an important interpretation of Web 2.0 knowledge. Instead of educators

relying on published sources, knowledge in Web 2.0 is based on collective agreement of a community of online users. The authors cite Dede (2008), who notes that collective agreement "may combine facts with other dimensions of human experience, such as opinions, values, and spiritual beliefs" (Dede, 2008, p. 80). Because of these factors, the validity of information, though collectively established, can be questioned.

Greenhow et al. (2009) suggest viewing Web 2.0 as a learning ecology. They cite Barron (2006), who explains that examining ecology in nature entails studying how various living organisms in an environment interact with one another. The concept of a learning ecology is similar, but the environment is an educational environment and the participants are the students, instructors, and technologies being implemented in the online learning environment. Learning ecology can be used as a framework for understanding the diverse and interactive factors that contribute to education and development of students within a classroom setting. Various players—including the teacher and student as well as parents and friends—and socioeconomic factors, gender, and other variables impact a learning ecology.

Greenhow et al. (2009) make four assumptions about learning ecology based on Barron's work: (1) individuals operate among a variety of learning settings, including at home on the computer or in the classroom with a book; (2) they bridge those settings with learning, such as a child learning to read in school and reading a book at home for enjoyment; (3) therefore, the settings do not have concrete impenetrable boundaries; and (4) enjoyment taken from the learning in

an educational setting and brought to the home setting will eventually create a self-sustained learning situation. Given the importance that multimedia forms—whether Internet videos, music, social networking, or video games—have in the ecology of young people's lives, it seems that Web 2.0 has a significant role to play in education.

Greenhow et al. (2009) map out goals similar to those of Windschitl (1998) for examining Web 2.0 learning ecologies "for Web 1.0 practices" (p. 249). The researchers' first conclusion is that further study needs to be done on students' usage of Web 2.0 technology in their lives. They also conclude that educators need to become fluent in Web 2.0 technologies and immerse themselves in this technology in their own lives (Greenhow et al., 2009). With the dawning of wiki-materials and questionable information, the authors suggest that scholars and educators need to work on improving the validity of those sources of information. Lastly, the authors theorize about the future of Web 2.0. They suggest that Web 2.0 is moving in two directions: an evolution of social networking, called a social operating system; and cloud computing. Both may impact education.

McLoughlin and Lee (2008) argue against what they call the outdated "closed classroom models" in which the student is just an information consumer and that information is "delivered" by the instructor and curriculum (p. 10). They suggest that many learning management systems (LMSs) that are in common use facilitate this same type of closed classroom course in an online environment. The authors emphasize that most LMS are inadequate in their Web 2.0

capabilities. McLoughlin and Lee (2008) seek to open educators' eyes to the potential Web 2.0 has to revolutionize higher education.

McLoughlin and Lee (2008) define Web 2.0 as more than just innovations in software and the Internet's capabilities. They believe there is an equally important ethos that allows for cooperation and constant improvement by the users. The authors claim that "It is not just an assembly of tools, software, and digital strategies but a set of concepts, practices, and attitudes that define [Web 2.0's] scope" (p. 11).

To illustrate this point, the authors contrast Wikipedia and Encyclopedia Britannica. One is an encyclopedia created by a Web 2.0 community, and one is created by few a selected scholarly experts. McLoughlin and Lee (2008) cite Berinstein (2006), who studied the science sections of both Wikipedia and Encyclopedia Britannica, and concluded that the accuracy of both was comparable and quite high. But Berinstein cautions that neither is perfect. This comparison illustrates the point that while Web 2.0 technologies have great potential, it is not the content of the tools that reach that potential, but rather the way in which the tools are used.

McLoughlin and Lee (2008) make two other important points. Learning how to use the various Web 2.0 tools has become a necessity for the "digitally literate" members of the millennial generation. They also point out that many of these new Web 2.0 tools have one foot in reality and the other foot in the online world. For example, sites like YouTube involve taking video footage from real life and uploading it to share on a website. McLoughlin and Lee (2008) suggest

that for educators to simply use Web 2.0 tools currently available is not enough; educators must work toward evolving a pedagogy that "involves engaging learners in apprenticeship for different kinds of knowledge practice, new processes of inquiry, dialogue, and connectivity" (p. 12).

The authors approach pedagogy with the perspective laid out by Sfard (1998). The first is the classic pedagogical approach of doling out information, also referred to as the acquisition model. The other is teaching the "process of participating in various cultural practices and shared learning activities," or the participation model of learning (McLoughlin & Lee, 2008, p. 13). McLoughlin and Lee (2008) take the second approach, that encouraging student proficiency in Web 2.0 technologies and communities will ultimately help students understand Web 2.0 ethos. As a result, instructors may teach students how to learn and how to be involved with education for a lifetime.

The authors outline potential guidelines for what they call "Pedagogy 2.0" (McLoughlin & Lee, 2008, p. 15). They suggest content be in small modules and that the curriculum should be learner-negotiated to a certain extent. They also believe students should be given a wide array of options for communication and learning resources. Lastly, there should be reflection, dynamic critical thinking, and creativity involved in the learning process.

As an example of this type of learning, McLoughlin and Lee (2008) include a reference to a psychology professor who held weekly meetings to discuss the course work and also let students ask any psychology questions unrelated to the course work. These meetings were then recorded and provided

online in podcast form. Students who did not attend were still encouraged to e-mail in questions that were then answered at the meetings. McLoughlin and Lee (2008) also cite an example of a law professor who set up a law wiki, called "CJ Encyclopedia," for his students to contribute to. It grew and was so successful that other educators started using it for the same purpose. Eventually, it grew too big for the professor to handle with his limited time and resources, and he closed it. Participation, personalization, and productivity were all achieved by the professors in these examples. They did so by giving their students the freedom to direct their own education and learning subjects while also making students productive participants in the process.

Cloud computing, though not directly relevant to this study, is relevant in a Web 2.0 environment, which is important in online education. Katz (2008) defined cloud computing as the online environment in which technology tools facilitate interaction, collaboration, and sharing of information. Understanding the behaviors of users in this type of environment could inform an understanding of users' behaviors in online jazz history.

Katz (2008) underscores the importance of teachers operating and educating in a world dominated by new technologies and provides definitions of terms as well as a strategy for going about organizing technologies in order to effectively use them. Katz also explores, at length, the academic and scholarly potential of cloud computing. Emphasizing that cloud computing is a relatively new concept and quite broad, thus difficult to define, Katz provides four characteristics of cloud computing:

(1) Open information content, software, and services

(2) Service orientation and delivery

(3) Server and storage virtualization

(4) Standardization of computing across the Internet leading to what some describe as the democratization and industrialization of IT. (p. 14)

A website such as Google provides an example of cloud computing. Google began as a search engine, branched into email, and blossomed further into RSS (Really Simple Syndication) readers, personal home pages, calendars, and a plethora of other customizable features that are saved on Google servers. Users log in to their Google accounts on any computer with Internet capabilities and then access all previously set up tools, settings, and data. Using various Internet protocols, users can then log into sites such as Finance Yahoo by clicking a button that sends their Google ID to that website and allows them to log on and access their content. These kinds of standardization, storage virtualization (information stored only on the web), open content and services, and networked delivery systems are hallmarks of cloud computing.

The Phenomenon of Creepy Treehouse

A common theme in online and even in-person class pedagogy has co-evolved with social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Just as students and young people are creating profiles and interacting with each other through such sites, professors and teachers are also using them. The term *creepy treehouse* describes this phenomenon of including social networking in college courses. Creepy treehouses began to arise with the advent of social networking

sites such as MySpace (2003) and Facebook (2004), when students became uncomfortable, or even horrified, at the idea of their professors being on these sites and interacting with them and other students. A question arises as to whether or not a professor simply having a profile on Facebook is discomforting or whether a professor integrating these same profiles and sites into his/her curricula and courses is what causes the discomfort for students.

Informal definitions and observations of this phenomenon exist mainly in education blogs and among technology writers. Jared Stein, from Utah Valley University, has defined creepy treehouse as

> Any institutionally-created, operated, or controlled environment in which participants are lured in either by mimicking pre-existing open or naturally formed environments, or by force, through a system of punishments or rewards. (Stein, 2008)

Being "lured in" refers to making, joining, and keeping up with the social networking site page as part of the required coursework. Especially in online classes, this use of social networking sites has become commonplace as university and college faculty members attempt to use newer technologies in courses.

While educators may believe that using new technology in the classroom makes learning more dynamic and interesting for students**,** the creepy treehouse syndrome is cropping up across education blogs, websites, and discussions. A *Chronicle of Higher Education* blog explains that students actually see interaction with their professors on social networking sites as an intrusion into the lives they live separately from class:

> Though such systems may be seen as innovative or problem-solving to the institution, they may repulse some users who see them as an infringement on the sanctity of their peer groups, or as having the potential for institutional violations of their privacy, liberty, ownership, or creativity. (Young, 2008)

The Chronicle of Higher Education blog also points out that these creepy treehouses are often meant to be innovative to the classroom, making the educational experience more meaningful and interesting to students.

Indeed, Tapscott (2009) believes such innovation is essential to keeping the N-Geners interested and engaged. Discovering the key to using social networking sites effectively in online and in-person classes may be an important step toward satisfying the needs of contemporary students and engaging them in a meaningful and democratic way. Additionally, it is important to understand how the characteristics of the students' personalities affect their motivations and thus behaviors in online courses (Bullen, 1998).

Questions arise, however, about whether social networking in educational contexts can be democratic and about what qualifies as a creepy treehouse. Apparently, the definition is broad. On his blog, Flexknowlogy, Jared Stein claims that even Blackboard, a widely used educational platform, falls under this category. He says:

> The Blackboard family of learning management system products is often seen as creepy treehouses, as they provide e-learning tools in a very rigid, closed environment that is institutionally controlled in an attempt to

> "engage" students through technological novelty or mimicry of existing Web-based tools for social engagement. (Stein, 2008)

If Blackboard, one of the most widely used interfaces for online and in-person courses at the college level, is, at times, a creepy treehouse to students, one must question how a democratic environment can ever emerge in an online learning context.

As discussed earlier, students in modern online learning environments are able to function with multiliteracies (Nixon & Comber, 2001). Thus, integrating various forms of literacy into online classrooms should amplify the learning experience, making classroom materials available for analysis and discussion through different lenses or literacies. The form of literacy being used in social networking sites, or the lingo that dominates communication on such sites, is an example of the multiliteracy in use by contemporary students. In my study, social media, outside of the Blackboard environment, was not a required part of the course.

Online Interaction

Knobel and Lankshear (2002) refer to interacting in online environments as a "complex social practice," which includes an ability to write and communicate as an "insider." "Insiders" are "long-term participants in a particular social space on the Internet" or people who are familiar enough with the Internet to have mastered the nuances and lingo used in communication over the Internet (Knobel & Lankshear, 2002, p. 1). I would argue that Knobel's definition of insiders as "long term" users no longer covers all the people

practicing this literacy since many of the young people who employ this literacy are not "long term" but rather consistent users. They have grown up or have spent a significant part of the last decade negotiating cyberspace and interact through it almost constantly.

Knobel and Lankshear (2002) argue that the dual-natured literacies of the "long-term" participants have already infiltrated learning environments. Students who have developed digital literacy in cyberspace environments use it to negotiate their learning environments as well. In other words, they critique and understand other parts of their lives using digital literacies, and there is no separation. This is consistent with Dewey's educational philosophy. A student does not compartmentalize his/her life experiences by only applying them in certain settings; instead, these experiences are applied to all facets of life and all future engagement (Dewey, 1900). Thus, this contemporary version of Dewey's hands-on learning, in which students apply literacies and points of view gained in cyberspace to "class space," may contribute to the democratic nature of the online classroom environment. That literacy, however, is not yet fully understood and more research is needed. Knobel and Lankshear (2002) explain:

> Very little research attention has been given over to examining the critical literacies young people are already using in cyberspace by dint of their detailed "insider" knowledge of how the social spaces of the Internet work to exclude some people and not others, or how the Internet can be put to use in presenting their informed critiques of political and social events and practices. (p. 1)

Understanding and examining the literacies, both critical and in general, used by consistent digital participants will be instrumental in creating curriculum and course design of future classes, both online and in-person, that support and approximate democratic goals. There is no potential for a democratic environment if there is no possibility of discussion and meaningful interaction. Participants in the democratic learning environment require a medium through which to communicate that allows for creativity and discussion. Applying the students' existing literacies to create this medium should achieve the goal of democratic learning. However, more research is needed, specifically research that targets these consistent users and their behaviors in online learning environments.

Despite potential hindrances, there is great potential for the existence of democratic online classroom environments. A more revealing question is "Are educators who teach online courses reaching that potential?" In many cases, the answer is no. Though there are few exceptions, the exceptions in this case prove the rule. The majority of online courses depend on outdated learning systems (McLoughlin, 2008) that were established over a decade ago and significantly predate Web 2.0.

Although there have been studies of student success in online education, findings are inconclusive and sometimes contradictory. While Savage (2005) demonstrated that Web 2.0 technologies applied to music education could serve as catalysts for collaboration and peer-to-peer teaching, he admits that the broader educational community has not yet effectively implemented these tools on a wide scale.

> Just adopting new pieces of technology in the classroom will not affect any meaningful educational change. There needs to be a wider appreciation of the working practices that accompany such technologies. (p.178)

Educators are essentially leaving the vast potential of Web 2.0 technologies untapped. Democracy in the online classroom will be unattainable until education institutions adopt a pedagogical approach to online teaching that embraces the use of Web 2.0 technologies and student interaction.

Selected Studies in Jazz Education

Jazz, which has been called America's art form (Larson, 2002), can be defined by its elements of improvisation, rhythm, dissonance, jazz interpretation (or inflection), interaction, and historical background. Today, jazz programs are in place in high schools and colleges throughout the United States. However, the research literature on jazz education and particularly online jazz education is limited. The question of how we teach jazz, both live and online, requires further exploration.

The incorporation of jazz music into the school music curriculum as a legitimate formal study of jazz has been a slow process, as has the development of an effective way of teaching jazz history. Learning how to play jazz, learning about jazz history, and appreciating its impact on American culture occurred outside the traditional classroom in the early decades of jazz (Baker, 1996). Historically, jazz was an aural phenomenon, without any kind of written documentation (Murphy, 1994). Early jazz education performance activities were

often based on careful listening and purposeful rote memorization. This informal strategy served as the first "organized" group education activity in jazz (Murphy, 1994), and it was targeted largely at those who wished to play or sing jazz. By the 1920s, jazz was becoming more standardized with the widespread use of the phonograph and the radio. These early recordings served as the first method books and historical sources, and they continue to be a necessary part of jazz education.

Jazz music has been a part of college and university culture since the 1930s with jazz bands at schools such as Fisk University and Alabama State (Scott, 1973). By the 1940s, ten colleges offered jazz performance courses on a non-credit basis, and five colleges offered jazz for credit (Baker, 1973). Among those were the Berklee School of Music, Westlake College of Music, Los Angeles City College, California State Polytechnic, and North Texas State College, which is now the University of North Texas (Baker, 1996).

Today, a basic jazz curriculum is considered fundamental in contemporary approaches to preparing not only college-level jazz musicians, but also music teachers and humanities students as well. To mainstream music educators, jazz is no longer considered a fad or trend; jazz has been affirmed as both a highly expressive style and an appropriate topic for serious study amongst music majors and non-music majors alike. Although limited, current research has enhanced the historical, theoretical, and pedagogical knowledge of jazz. In the last decade, scholarly investigations have become more prevalent, and this research has helped jazz become recognized as a legitimate art form and strengthened its position in

academia. With the exception of Goodrich's (2005) study, little research has been published on the topic of jazz pedagogy.

It is important to consider how the online jazz environment can mimic traditional classroom discussions, maximize technology to individualize learning, and allow for analysis of music and exploration. Research needs to be done to provide more effective online instruction and to help implement effective evaluative tools in ways that will enhance the students' interactions and online learning experiences.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the democratic qualities of education in an online learning environment by exploring how community college students taking an online jazz history course access and utilize the available technology and interact with the instructor, course content, and each other. I selected a single-case study approach for this investigation.

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) explain the case study approach, noting that a single case is

> a bounded system, for example a child, a clique, a class, a school, and a community. It provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles. (p. 180)

The bounded system for this case is an online jazz history course consisting of 29 students. The case is also bounded by the time frame of a single semester and by the context of the community college at which the online course was offered. Stake (2000) states case study research design is not a methodological choice but "a choice of what is to be studied" (p. 435). In other words, a researcher must base his/her choice of methodology on the study, not tailor the study to fit a chosen methodology. This study focuses on the experiences of particular participants in a particular online jazz history course.

The purpose of a case study is "not to establish relationships between variables but rather to see what a phenomenon means as it is socially enacted

within a particular case" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 10). Qualitative research approaches allow for the feelings and reactions of the participants to be both heard and interpreted. Case studies permit the observation and investigation of complex lived experiences as the researcher is in the unique position of being part of the "construction" of a reality rather than being part of a reality that is "found" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 3). Thus, the researcher can be a participant in the story as it unfolds and potentially "develop an acute awareness" not obtainable through other methods of study (p. 5). In this study, I was a participant, and I was also the instructor in the online course.

According to Hutchinson (2004), the details that a case study often yields allow for the identification of issues that may have been "disguised" by other research methodologies. The changing nature of the environment provides the researcher with opportunities to make appropriate responses and clarify or reiterate when the researcher or participants have questions or are unsure of what is being asked, observed, or perceived. Further, case study is a flexible design and aims to capture life as it is. This flexibility may lead to discoveries that emerge through the unpredictable set of circumstances that may arise. Flexibility is crucial in that each of the research study participants is "intricately connected to political, social, historical, and personal issues" (Soy, 1997).

In reports of case study research, the researcher describes what is observed with the purpose of providing specific examples that may be relevant to other experiences in other contexts (Spiro, 1956). Thus, case study reports may enable readers of the study to better understand how abstract principles or separate

experiences of individual participants can fit together (Cohen et al., 2000). By selecting a single-case study with multiple participants, I intended to maximize opportunities to gather dynamic and comprehensive data on the ways technological features of an online jazz history course support and encourage democratic forms of education. This may inform other readers and those who have experiences with design or teach and learn in online environments.

Limitations of the Case Study

Case study methodology can be limited by the potential for the single case, or even a handful of single cases, to misrepresent the group as a whole. Individual cases cannot always speak to all situations, and the outcomes of any study may not be universal. To overcome the weaknesses of the case study methodology, the researcher must understand and make clear connections among and between data that may include observations, interviews, and, as in this study, additional media such as discussion board posts.

Researchers must also interpret the data while considering their own subjectivity, thus challenging the researchers to consider the tension between objectivity and subjectivity throughout the study. For example, in this study, discussion board posts and interactions of students on discussion boards were considered data, and the interactions of the students through these posts were observed throughout the course. As a teacher, I wanted to see that the students were learning and interacting. As a researcher, I had to also look for evidence that they might not be having meaningful educational interactions. It was important to maintain objectivity while viewing these assigned materials as data

for my study even though the posts were also assignments for the course. At times, I had to remind myself that the assigned posts, which I graded and gave feedback on, were to be observed as data for my study. The grades I assigned were based on participation. There was potential to get attached or interested in certain students' discussions and interactions and neglect my researcher mindset simply because the discussions were those of my own students. In order to avoid this, I concentrated on other aspects of the discussion posts while grading them, such as length and detail of posts, and how fully students addressed prompt questions. Keeping these qualities of the posts in mind as well as keeping the content and opinions of the students in mind allowed me to grade evenly and without bias.

Mindful of potential limitations, this project was designed as a case study to generate detailed student information that may be overlooked in large-scale studies and that could be significant to the understanding of students' experiences and to the improvement of future online jazz history courses.

Course Information

The online jazz history course in which participants in this study enrolled was open to all majors at the college and fulfilled a general humanities and cultural awareness credit. It is not a requirement for music majors. The course was titled "American Jazz and Popular Music." In the course catalogue, it was described as "The study of cultural and social contributions to the evolution of American jazz and popular music from the mid-1800s to present," with no prerequisites.

The course curriculum was organized by topics relating to jazz. Course content included instruments of the jazz band, blues, song structure, improvisation versus score music, important jazz musicians, and jazz styles and their historical importance. This online jazz history class, for the purposes of this study, took place in the Fall 2010 semester, from September 12, 2010 to December 14, 2010, and was a "late start" class, meaning that it started a few weeks after the official beginning of the community college's semester.

Research Site and Participants

This qualitative case study examined the experiences of participants in a community college online jazz history class. This section describes the community college site and the participants.

The site. The online course chosen for this study was administered by a large community college of over 25,000 students located in a populous city in the southwestern United States. The community college itself was chosen based on convenience and reputation. The researcher is on the faculty, and the institution is nationally recognized as being a forerunner in online teaching and learning. A mix of students, including music majors, non-music majors, and students of diverse ages, participate in this and other live and online courses offered at the college. The college offers certificates and two-year degrees in over 150 programs of study. Two-year degrees transfer to all public universities in the college's state and many private institutions nationwide. Students may also pursue a Certificate of Completion (CCL) or an Academic Certificate (AC).

The music program at the community college is one of the largest of its kind in the United States, offering ten different academic degrees as well as certificate programs. Focus areas and two-year degrees and certificates in music include Audio Production Technology, Music Business, Music Education, Music Humanities and Theory, and Music Performance. Music Certificates, known as CCLs, can be completed in Music Humanities and Theory, Music Education, Music Performance, and Music Business and are linked to degrees at a local university. Many of the CCLs consist of a pre-determined series of required courses in the field of study along with program competencies to help prepare students for careers and national certification exams in their field of study. An Associate in Applied Science (AAS) requires more than 60 semester credits for the program of study and is designed for students planning to transfer to four-year universities with all their courses as a block.

The college music department is considered part of the fine-arts department, which includes Music, Dance, Music Theatre, Theatre, and Art Departments. The online jazz history course in this study was offered by the Music Department. The researcher, one of 14 full-time music faculty members, taught the online jazz history course. The college's remaining music faculty and staff consist of over 60 adjunct or part-time instructors serving approximately 2,200 combined instrumental, choir, piano, and music theater students; 800 dance students; 400 theater performing students; 3,240 music humanities students; 200 dance humanities students; 250 theater humanities students; 1,300 music theory

students; and 1,250 audio production and music business students from Fall 2010-Summer 2011 (Appendix D).

Participants. According to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 26,408 students enrolled in Fall 2010 at the college. More information, based on age, gender, ethnicity, and other student characteristics, is available in Appendix D. In Fall 2010, 29 students enrolled in the jazz history course for this study, and 4 students were inactive, meaning they did not respond to any assignments or complete any quizzes or examinations. Thus, the participants for this study consisted of 25 students. The course fulfills humanities and culture requirements; therefore, students who take this class are typically of diverse personal and academic backgrounds and have a wide range of academic and personal goals.

I collected information about age, gender, musical background, and field of study from the participants via an assignment in which students introduced themselves to the instructor. Table 1 includes information about ages of participants, their various majors, and their musical backgrounds. Six participants reported having musical backgrounds; one listed music as his major. All 25 of the respondents were invited to participate in a series of interviews conducted by a research assistant. Of the ten students who responded to the interview request, seven were female and three were male. Six students were non-responsive to requests to schedule interviews. Thus, two male students and two female students participated in the full series of interviews planned for this study. Two additional students eventually opted to participate in the post-course interview. Interview status is also shown in Table 1.

Table 1

List of Students Who Were Enrolled in the Jazz History Online Course and Their Status in the Study

Participant #	Gender	Interview Status	Formal Music Training	Major/Area of Study
1	M	Full Participant	Y (high school music)	Business Administration
2	F	Full Participant	Y (music training before high school)	Business Management
3	F	Full Participant	N	Arts
4	M	Full Participant	N	Marketing
5	M	Post Interview	Y (music major)	Music
6	M	Post Interview	N	Business Administration
7	F	Declined	N	Business
8	F	Declined	N	Dental Hygiene
9	F	Declined	N	Undeclared
10	F	Declined	N	Nursing
11	M	Declined	Y (Jr. high band)	Undeclared
12	M	Declined	N	Network Technology
13	F	Declined	N	Film
14	F	Declined	N	Dance
15	F	Declined	Y (high school orchestra)	Mortuary Science
16	F	Declined	N	Culinary Studies
17	F	Declined	N	Math
18	M	Declined	N	Audio Technology
19	F	Declined	N	Undeclared
20	M	Declined	N	Veterinary Technology
21	M	Declined	Y (high school band)	Nursing
22	F	Declined	N/A	N/A
23	F	Declined	N/A	N/A
24	M	Declined	N/A	N/A
25	M	Declined	N/A	N/A
26	F	Inactive	N/A	N/A
27	F	Inactive	N/A	N/A
28	M	Inactive	N/A	N/A
29	M	Inactive	N/A	N/A

Participant descriptions. The participants in this study had differing levels of experience in online courses; for some, jazz history was their first online class. Some of the participants in the interviews reported being familiar with

technology, were accustomed to the interactions that take place on the Internet, and communicated over the Internet. These qualities align with Knobel and Lankshear (2002), who use the term "long-term participants" to describe such individuals. These qualities also align with what I call consistent participants since some of the participants were older than the N-Geners and thus lived much of their lives without the Internet.

Overview of each primary participant. Eight students of the twenty-five enrolled in the course provided the bulk of data for this study. These students and the extent of their participation are described below.

BB was a 25-year-old part-time student taking just one class, jazz history, in the semester of the study. She was working as a bartender while finishing her Associate of Arts degree, and jazz history fulfilled the last requirement. Jazz history was her first online class. Her grade point average (GPA) was 2.8, and she planned to transfer her two-year degree to an in-state university. BB reported having one laptop, from which she worked at home, and she also used the Internet on her phone for email and other correspondence as well as for entertainment, such as listening to music. BB participated in three interviews throughout the course.

SW was a 22-year-old part-time marketing student taking seven credit hours in the semester of the study. He had a full-time job at which he reported working eight to nine hours a day. Jazz history was his only online course during the semester though he had taken two online courses in previous semesters; one was at the same college, and the other was through an online college. His GPA

was 3.8. SW reported having a laptop with wireless Internet, an Xbox 360, and a cell phone, which he used to text and receive and respond to email. SW participated in three interviews throughout the course as well as the post interview.

FB was a 22-year-old student who worked every day from six a.m. to three p.m. For her job, FB researched and contacted prospective customers for a business through the Internet. She had finished her Associate of Business degree the previous May and was working toward completing the last three required classes to transfer to an in-state university, where she planned to pursue her Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration. During the semester of the study, she took ten credit hours. Though online jazz history was her only online class that semester, she had taken three or four online classes in the past. Her GPA was 3.2. She reported having two laptops at home as well as a desktop computer and a cell phone with Internet, which she used to check her email and social networking sites daily. FB participated in three interviews throughout the course as well as a post-course interview.

PT was a 50-year-old freshman in business administration. He was married and had a seven-year-old child. During the semester of the study, he took four classes, three of which were online. He reported having taken about ten online classes during his college education. He worked from a laptop and a desktop at home and cited CDs, videos, and word processors as technology he used often. He had work experience as an electronic technician and said he

enjoyed technology in general. PT participated in three interviews throughout the course.

SG was a 22-year-old community college student who was studying jazz guitar and had been at the community college for three years. In the semester after the study, he planned to transfer his credits to an in-state university where he planned to study guitar performance. His cumulative GPA was 3.7, and in the semester of the study he took 16 credit hours. Jazz history was his only online class in the semester, but he reported that he had regularly taken online classes to lessen the amount of driving to the campus. SG had a laptop and several video game consoles, including a GameCube and a Wii. He had a cell phone but did not receive emails or the Internet on this phone. SG participated in a post-course interview only.

GG was a 23-year-old married community college student who worked a full-time job while majoring in business administration. His GPA was 3.5. GG planned to get his two-year associate's degree from the community college and then transfer and complete a two-year program at an in-state university. He received email on his phone and took all his classes online during the semester of the study for a total of nine credits. He reported using technology every day: GPS for his job as a delivery truck driver, online games on his smart phone, online bill pay for his banking, and online updates to check brackets and game times for his community sports leagues. GG participated in a post-course interview only.

BR was a 29-year-old part-time student. She was married and had dropped out of college when she was 21. At the time of the study, she was going

back to school and taking classes at the community college to earn an Associate's Degree in Business. She was not sure whether she would transfer her credits to a university to pursue a four-year degree. She was taking six credits during the semester of the study, and jazz history was her only online class. She had taken one online class in the past. She reported being familiar with technology and used a laptop and an iPod. She also had an Xbox that was connected to the Internet. BR did not participate in interviews; however, her discussion posts and other responses to assignments are referenced in chapter four.

KR was a 21-year-old full-time student. She was attending the community college to finish her core credits and then planned to transfer to an in-state university to study education. She listened to music on her laptop as well as on her iPod and admitted she rarely used the radio. This jazz history class was one of two online classes she was taking during the semester of the study; an English class was the other. KR did not participate in interviews; however, her discussion posts and other responses to assignments are referenced in chapter four.

In addition to KR and BR, other participants who did not participate in interviews provided discussion board posts and journal entries that served to create a big picture of student interaction in the class. Their posts are not referenced directly in the next chapter but instead served to inform the direction of emerging themes of the study.

The researcher. My interest in studying instructional technologies in the context of the online jazz history course was born of both professional and personal experiences. For seven years, I taught high school instrumental music in

a large, metropolitan area. At the same time, I was active as a jazz and commercial trumpet player. Upon taking a leave of absence from public school teaching to work toward my doctorate, I became interested in the use of technology and the roles it plays in teaching and learning.

Shortly after my residency as a doctoral student, I was awarded a full-time music teaching position at a large metropolitan community college. During my second year of teaching (2002), the college president mandated that all full-time residential faculty teach some online classes. The college president's rationale statement cited the explosive growth of online enrollment and claimed that offering online courses was necessary to meet the needs of the student population of over 25,000. Additionally, one of the major universities to which students transfer from this community college had also expanded its online education programs (Ryman, 2011). To successfully bring about more online classes, the college's president believed that full-time faculty needed to lead the way by teaching online.

To meet this challenge, I engaged in learning the college's online educational environment known as Blackboard and our college's course management system, WebCT, a digital learning tool and the online classroom gateway for students to find their classes and to explore the online education environment. Instructors on my campus utilized WebCT as an online classroom to which they added learning tools such as discussion boards, messages, course content, and even directions to class locations. Although I went into this quest with hesitation, I eventually embraced the opportunity with the goal of enriching

the students' learning and enhancing teaching. Especially relevant for me as a teacher was gaining a better understanding of ways those new learning technologies, such as the incorporation of online discussion forums, can serve students of mixed ability and of various musical backgrounds. I quickly learned about how both music majors and non-music majors socialize and form communities in the online educational environments.

Because I was working as the sole online jazz history content writer and instructional designer at the time (2003-2004), hundreds of hours working collaboratively with the college's digital learning environment specialists (other teachers and staff who were pioneers in teaching and developing online classes) were required to develop the course. Very few policies or design protocols existed at the time, and the development process along with standards of pedagogy and quality of design were my sole responsibility. Since then, I have taught more than 20 online college classes in jazz and rock history spanning more than five years of my career. I consistently modify and enhance the online teaching platform as software, resources, and technology become available.

In my dual role as an educator and student, I have witnessed an evolution in various online architectures that facilitate instruction. I have noted gravitation towards specific training and digital approaches in teaching and learning in both music and humanities classes at the college. This is demonstrated clearly in the ways in which both students and teachers interact with educational content through the increased use of forums, blogs, podcasts, online training programs, instructional videos, e-newsletters, and, more recently, software specifically

aimed at online teaching environments. Online communication tools such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and other social networking formats have become exceedingly important to community building, teaching, and learning.

In this study, I was a participant in the setting as the instructor and an observer as the researcher. Thus, I was both an insider and an outsider. For the majority of my observations, I strove to be a detached observer rather than an active participant. I considered that my background as a jazz band director and as designer of the course could allow potential opinions and ideas to become biases, and I was careful to bracket my biases and consider my dual roles.

Data Generation & Collection

Qualitative data typically include field observations, artifacts, and interviews. I describe these types of data and how they were generated and collected in this study below.

By definition, field observations are collected in person by observing and recording participant actions and interactions. Glesne (1999) describes types of observations, including setting, participant, event, and gesture observations. In this study, the field is an online environment—an online course facilitated using WebCT and BlackBoard. As an observer in an online environment, I gathered data that included discussion board posts and responses to other interactive digital assignments, such as journal entries or comments posted relative to various tasks. Since the students interacted with each other and the instructor through the WebCT with BlackBoard and discussion boards, the traditional definition of field observation (Glesne, 1999) was adapted to fit the parameters of this study.

In this study, field observation data and artifact data are similar. Glesne (1999) defines artifacts as documents such as diaries, letters, lists, and newspapers that help to "corroborate your observations and interviews and thus make your findings more trustworthy" (p. 58). The software for the course in this study saves all information, including discussion posts, emails sent to the instructor through the class site, and journal entries. These saved items constitute data for the study. Discussion board posts, homework assignments, and other feedback provided in the online course supported the field observations. Data were collected from all 25 participants, whether through interviews, assignments, or posts. Although they are not all directly quoted, their contributions helped direct the study and make emerging themes clear. My goal in observing and collecting information from all participants in the class was to create a foundation of rich data for analysis.

Interviews are another source of data in qualitative research and an important means of gaining an understanding of the phenomena being studied. However, they are not reliable as the only source of data for qualitative studies and are best supplemented with artifacts and other data sources (Maxwell, 2005). Interviews are, at their foundation, interactions between the researcher and the interviewee (Glesne, 1999). In this study, all students enrolled in the class were invited to participate in a series of in-person interviews. At the start of the class, I sent an email with information about the study and a request for participation in the interview portion of the study. The four participants who responded to interview requests became primary participants, and two additional students

participated in post-course interviews only. Interviewee names were not available to me until after the course was over to prevent a conflict of interest with grading. The goal was to use the interviews "to build a composite story" of students in an online learning environment.

The interviews were conducted by a research assistant to ensure that the students' answers were not influenced by talking directly with the instructor, who was also the researcher. For example, if the instructor asked the students about the quality of the class, an unbiased answer could not be guaranteed as the student might change his/her answer assuming that his/her grade for the course was at risk. The research assistant was a recent graduate of a doctoral program in music education and an experienced qualitative researcher.

I prepared an interview script (Appendix E), which was used with the four primary participants and two post-course interviewees. The guide allowed for the examination of different topics and issues, depending on each participant's responses to questions. Interviews were completed at various locations during the course of the semester, depending on the participants' convenience and location. Interviews took place over telephone when participants lived too far away or even out of the state. One interview occurred via telephone, which prohibited the interviewer's ability to be reflexive and adjust the questions by reading body language and other physical characteristics. The length of each interview varied, though interviews were intended to last for about a half-hour. The interviews were audio taped using a digital recording device. Transcription took place by a research assistant soon after.

The research assistant created “verbatim transcripts” from interview recordings (Maxwell, 2005, p. 110) and then listened through each interview once more, reading the transcript along with it to ensure that nothing was missed or typed incorrectly. At times, a complete verbatim transcript was not possible because of ambient noise in the background of the interview or because the speech could not be understood or was not loud enough. These moments were minimal and did not affect the overall integrity of the data.

The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that they included both structured and un-structured questions. This structure enabled me to learn from reading interview transcripts and to adjust the questions for the following interviews. The strengths of the semi-structured interview questions were utilized through interviewing at various times during the semester and changing the style of questions when necessary, allowing the interviewer to tailor questions to the interviewee and the direction of the interview. The disadvantage of the semi-structured questions was that interviewees occasionally went off-topic and lost focus; however, the interviewer was able to redirect through her questioning technique. One disadvantage of having a research assistant perform the interviews was that I could not personally guide the questions to themes or issues emerging from the data in real-time.

Confidentiality

After receiving approval from the ethics review committee at Arizona State University and the community college (Appendix F), students were invited to participate in the study through a descriptive email that I sent at the start of the

semester. Positive student responses were considered evidence of consent. All consented, apart from the four inactive students.

All of the study participants were given pseudonyms in this study as well as on their typed interview transcripts to ensure anonymity. To ensure that students felt comfortable being open and frank with the researcher, students were reassured during interviews, which were done by a research assistant, that their data would not influence their grades and that the instructor would not know from whom the interview data were generated during the course. Findings would not expose or target students or teachers in ways that would make individuals known, and original data would be destroyed within five years of the completion of the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed guidelines set by Maxwell (2005). A master list of data was gathered, which included interview transcripts and observations and artifacts from the online class, including discussion board posts, journal entries, and assignment posts. A data collection matrix (Saldaña, 2009) was created by organizing the master list of data on a spreadsheet and using the spreadsheet to view the bigger picture and identify potential themes. Open coding was used to form "initial categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information" (Creswell, 1998, p. 57). Data sources were coded by marking directly on interview transcripts with highlighters. A different color highlighter or different symbols marked next to a quote visually organized the data. For example, I looked for changes in students' opinions or attitudes from

the first to third interview. I also analyzed the feedback and assignments collected from the students during the duration of the course via discussion boards, journals, and other interactive environments available in the course.

Coding data was an important and ongoing process for this study. After reading through the master list of data, I was able to identify common phrases and repetitive themes. Examples of these themes were "convenience," "schedule-mindedness" among participants, "ease of use" of the college website and class website, "familiarity" with the class layout and the assigned technologies, "accessibility" to information for the class, "interaction" that was happening or not happening between students and the instructor, as well as other themes. These themes were then laid out in diagram form and then discussed with colleagues, peers, and advisors.

My goal during the analysis process was to create models based around common themes and then apply those models to answer the research questions. For example, I read the interview transcripts searching for phrases or ideas that were mentioned or brought up by multiple interview participants and found that the participants talked specifically about taking the class online because it worked well with their busy schedules. Recurring themes like this one became Tier 1 themes. I then summarized Tier 1 data, either by the words they had in common or by the ideas they implied, and created Tier 2 themes. For example, the theme "schedule-minded" referred to a quality that defined the participants on the whole and included Tier 1 statements such as the fit of online courses with busy schedules. After combining meaningful themes, three Tier 2 themes emerged:

accessibility, freedom of expression, and student engagement. I compared these themes to the research questions about democracy in the learning environment.

At the onset of the study, I believed I was going to look at democracy, but this theoretical lens changed to democratic education. I was not looking to make my own theory based on this study but rather to view the course through the lens of democratic education as described by Dewey and others. As I better understood the participants during the study, my focus shifted to democratic education and to three large themes of accessibility, student engagement, and freedom of expression.

To increase the credibility of data interpretation and the study, I aimed to establish trustworthiness through various techniques described by Glesne (1999). I used multiple data collection procedures, as described above. Peer reviews were included throughout the research process by discussing initial coding schemes and by asking colleagues questions such as, "What would you want to know if you were doing this study?"

Reflexivity of the Design

Reflexivity in a qualitative study is understanding that "as a researcher, you are inseparable from your findings" (Glesne, 1999, p. 177). Reflexivity is only possible when the researcher realizes and constantly reminds himself that "what you know about your research . . . is intertwined with what you know about yourself" (Glesne, 1999, p. 176). This means that the researcher is always present in his or her research process, from its inception to its conclusion, and constantly considers "the researcher's position and how the researcher is affected by the

fieldwork and field relationships" (Glesne, 1999, p. 177). Further, in qualitative studies, the researcher constructs the account, which includes presenting data, telling the story of the study, and pointing to findings. The researcher's decisions and conclusions are unique to his or her study. Additionally, the researcher must keep in mind that the process is individual to the study. In other words, no methodology perfectly fits a given study or vice versa. Flexibility and creativity must be characteristic of any qualitative methodology.

Consistent with a reflexive approach, this study, and the researcher, underwent multiple changes. For example, the interviews that took place during the course informed subsequent interview questions and the post-course interview. Further, as in any qualitative study, this study was an experience of learning and growth for me as a researcher. I learned from my participants and their interview transcripts, and findings in this study are based on these insights. I found I made assumptions about what participants' responses might be, many of which were incorrect. For example, I predicted that the oldest participant in the interviews, who was 50 years old, would be frustrated with the learning tools used in the course since they were new to him. However, he said the opposite; he enjoyed getting a chance to be exposed to new technology. In addition, themes and common topics emerged during the course that I did not anticipate. As a result, I adjusted the post-interview questions to fit these emerging themes.

Reflexivity allowed me to intensify the search for meaning and the insiders' (participants') perspectives (Glesne, 1999). By maintaining and seeking reflexivity, this study became more effective in revealing such interactions.

Outline of the Document

In chapter one, I introduced the purpose of my study as well as the current trends and technologies in online courses. In chapter two, I outlined literature related to the overarching themes of accessibility, freedom of expression, and student engagement. I also highlighted how key findings in this literature relate to online learning. In chapter three, I discussed methodology that guided this study. In chapter four, the data are presented and organized by themes relating to the democratic classroom and by relevance to certain sections of the course. The final chapter is an analysis and discussion of the data and the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Chapter four presents data including information about the participants, brief descriptions of the assignments from which data was collected, and quotes from interview participants as they referred to specific topics and overall themes. In this chapter, I refer to Tier 2 themes that were derived from the data analysis process: accessibility, freedom of expression, and student engagement. These were derived from Tier 1 themes that included convenience, student independence, condensed classes, accessibility, ease of content, fun, technological interaction, efficiency, flexibility, schedule-mindedness, and overall freedom. For this chapter, I will explore Tier 2 themes in the context of Dewey's vision of democratic learning.

Platform for This Study

Prior to starting the online class, students were sent an email with introductory information. Students were reminded to acquire the required print text, *History and Tradition of Jazz* by Thomas E. Larson, and the accompanying CDs. Students were also asked to confirm and check their college email account and make sure that they could access the WebCT class site.

Articulating the college's tuition refund policy, also of importance prior to the students entering the online environment, related to the theme of access in this study. Specifically, the information provided indicated that if a student decided not to continue in this class, he/she must initiate withdrawal paperwork immediately and that it would not be the instructor's responsibility to drop the

student. In fact, "no show" students were not dropped from the instructor's roster in the third week of class and full tuition was charged regardless of students' ability to log in to the class or complete any assignments. While these details might not seem directly related to this study, understanding as much as possible about why students enroll and stay in or drop out of a class is necessary to understand their access to and interactions in the class. For instance, if the penalty for dropping a class were severe, students may be more motivated to stay in the class and finish it even if they do not find it interesting or fulfilling. Conversely, students might drop a class at the smallest inconvenience if there were no penalty for dropping out. In short, these qualities of the class could indirectly mask matters of democracy.

Students accessed the WebCT class site through the college's website portal. To do this, students went to the college homepage, clicked on "MYMCC," and logged in with their ID and password. On the page that displays the student's class schedule and individual classes, there was a link next to each class that uses WebCT. Students followed that link to get to the jazz history class.

Complications arose when students forgot their passwords and when AOL users needed to download an outside web browser such as MSN Internet Explorer or Netscape to make the system work. Once they did this, they logged in through AOL and then minimized that window and accessed the class through one of the other browsers. Issues also arose with accessing the class website and quizzes through the AOL browser. Furthermore, students frequently experienced

problems with their pop-up blocker or a firewall (especially with the quizzes). I asked students to disable these programs before logging on.

Students taking an online class for the first time were pointed to the Distance Learning area of the college's website. The Distance Learning homepage offered a wealth of information and tips for Distance Learning students as well as an orientation for first-time students. Students were able to take the Distance Learning orientation and explore other tutorials and topics, including a "Student Resources" link with answers to frequently asked questions in regards to the online experience.

On-campus orientations were available during the first few days of class for students struggling to access the platform. I referred students who were experiencing difficulty with WebCT or any other technical aspects of the course to the college online designated Help Desk phone number. Students were able to speak with personnel who answered questions about the use of PC or Macintosh computers. However, the Help Desk was only open during normal business hours (Monday through Friday) and not during the hours many students were engaged or working on their class materials (weekends and/or evenings). Email help via the Help Desk was also available during standard college business hours, and the Help Desk website offered support in conjunction with the Information Technology Services Department. In addition, I asked students to contact me immediately when difficulties arose. Since there were no on-campus requirements for the class, all coursework and communications were done online via the class website and email. I provided an external email in case the system went down.

Most communication was done via announcements posted on the WebCT class site, not through email.

I explained my role as a teacher and my status as a full-time faculty member at the college to the students in an introductory email. I invited them to attend any of the college's live music events and to visit me personally during office hours with questions or just to talk about jazz or music. I expressed my goal for students to gain a new perspective on jazz music through the class and that by the end of the class they would listen to music in a different way and be more knowledgeable about the musical roots of their own favorite music, regardless of the genre. I cautioned them regarding the online class, stating:

> As you get ready to start the semester, think a little about whether distance learning will work for you. To be successful, it is extremely important that you fulfill the following requirements:
>
> - Be able to dedicate the time and energy required to make this course a successful learning experience. (Be prepared to spend as much time on this course as you would if you were in class.)
> - Be self-motivated, self-disciplined, organized, and independent.
> - Be unafraid to share, ask questions, and receive feedback.
> - Enjoy and be comfortable with reading and writing at a college level.
>
> It is very important that you stay current with the class, so check DAILY for new announcements and new Discussion Board postings. Also, refer often to the syllabus and outline, as most of your questions will

be answered there. You are responsible for knowing ALL INFORMATION in these documents. (Jazz History class introduction)

I explained that the "course will constantly be undergoing renovations. . . If you have constructive feedback I would love to hear it." I also encouraged students to contact me if they experienced "trouble accessing or viewing anything (especially hyperlinks)." Most importantly, I cautioned that uncontrollable or serious "issues . . . during this course which create a hardship for" students should be brought to me, the instructor, for resolution (class introduction). I also explained that I would normally be logged on and working on the class in the evenings, between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m., Sunday through Thursday. There was no requirement for the students to be logged in to the class website at specific times or for a certain duration of time throughout the course. However, assignments were organized so as to encourage students to log in at least once a week.

Course Structure

This section provides a short overview of the course to give the reader a sense of how the students navigated the course's webpage. For more information about the course, refer to the complete Jazz History Syllabus, in Appendix G.

This class was a product designed and created by me. I had influence from other professors who taught online history classes, but there was no template for the design of a jazz history online course. The homepage for the course was the entry point for students to complete and submit all assignments. Access to and ease of use of the class homepage was essential. When students arrived at the homepage for the course, they had several units from which to choose. Each unit

or area of the website had a picture and a link with a unit title or information. When students clicked on the unit link, they were taken to the lessons included in the unit and course content that corresponded to their textbook and study questions. Additionally, a menu on the left side of the homepage provided links to assignments, grades, a calendar, and other classroom tools. These links took students to the interactive portions of the course, including discussion boards, journal postings, and assignments. Figure 1 shows the homepage.

Figure 1. The home page for the online jazz history course.

Lessons. Once students gained access to the system and were enrolled in the course, they could log into WebCT, which is part of the college's Blackboard learning platform, and from there, active students could see their course list. A banner, "Welcome to Jazz History, MHL 145," along with seven album-cover icons made up the homepage for the course. The first album cover link listed instructions for getting started in the class as well as the syllabus. The second

linked to the class syllabus. Following this, four more album covers each linked to a corresponding unit. Within each unit, there were normally five content areas: (1) chapter questions, which were from the textbook; (2) journal entries, which included instructions for posting; (3) discussion, which included instructions for posting; (4) a quiz, which went live 48 hours before the deadline and was accessible to students at that point; and (5) other special topics, such as links to YouTube videos and interactive modules.

Evaluations. Aside from assignments, which included discussion board posts, YouTube viewing, journal entries, chapter summaries, and concert attendances, the course included periodic evaluations and a final exam. I evaluated students through untimed assigned quizzes within a required time frame (around 48 hours) but not with a time limit in which to finish the quiz once started. Students were encouraged to use resources such as notes and the textbook to answer quiz questions. The questions were mixed multiple choice, short answer, and deliverables such as a completion certificate from an interactive module. In other words, a student's quiz would require him/her to leave the online jazz history platform and visit another site, complete a learning module on that site, and then return to the quiz on WebCT and finish.

The quizzes and final exam were interactive as well as structured. While students could explore and interact with learning modules in an unstructured way, questions on the quiz relating directly to course content and activities were structured and had correct and incorrect answers.

The final exam was structured in the same way as the quizzes but was cumulative and included material from throughout the semester. For the exam, students were required to visit YouTube and explore YouTube videos of jazz artists assigned during the course and then return to the final exam and report details about the videos. These details included multiple-choice questions, such as "What era of jazz is this from?" Multiple-choice answers might include bebop, big band, and hard bop. Questions also included instrumentation, artist identification, style, and historical significance.

Students were made aware that media library discussion boards, web-linked media postings, and live chat were public and that all other students could see their input. Conversely, the students were made aware that journal entries, quizzes, and chapter summaries were viewed only by the instructor. Students were openly invited to email me with questions or stop by my office at the college during my designated office hours.

Data Analysis by Sources

In this section, I summarize data gathered from the various online sources and students' commentary related to those sources. The primary digital sources of data include pre-course surveys, YouTube posts, discussion board posts, journal entries, and an interactive module.

Pre-course surveys. Each participant was asked to complete a pre-course survey online. The purpose of this survey was to achieve a sense of the technology already in use by the students and to get a window into their native technology habits. The surveys revealed that each participant used the Internet

and email on a daily basis, usually in both job and school environments. Participants reported using the Internet 1-4 hours a week for school and 10-30 hours per week for non-school related activities. Additionally, survey responses revealed that participants had exposure to different types of technology apart from computers. Examples of such technology were digital cameras; video game consoles such as Xbox and Wii, DVD, and BluRay players; and cell phones. In general, the surveys revealed that the technologies used by students in their everyday lives, such as email and Internet, were the same as those used in the online jazz history course. For the complete pre-course survey, reference Appendix H.

Posting links from YouTube. YouTube postings were a required assignment for the online jazz history course. The task directed the students to visit YouTube and find music videos that were from jazz eras or that used jazz style. As the course progressed from unit to unit and through different artists or genres of music, students were required to post YouTube videos corresponding with the new content. They were also encouraged to discuss and explain why they selected the videos they posted, but the student interactions surrounding these shared posts and corresponding discussions were not part of the grade for the assignment.

This assignment required being able to navigate and re-post links by copying them from YouTube and inserting them into the jazz history discussion board labeled "Web Links." Students were required to "post 1 link per week and . . . to discuss and share" their reasons for posting (class website). One example

of a YouTube assignment asked students to pick three YouTube videos featuring Louie Armstrong and discuss and share the style, characteristics, and instrumentation of the songs. These YouTube links were posted on a designated page on the class website, shown in Figure 2. This assignment required students to engage with course content through using technology. The students' access to the content of the assignment may have been impacted if they could not master the technological skills required to copy and re-post the links.

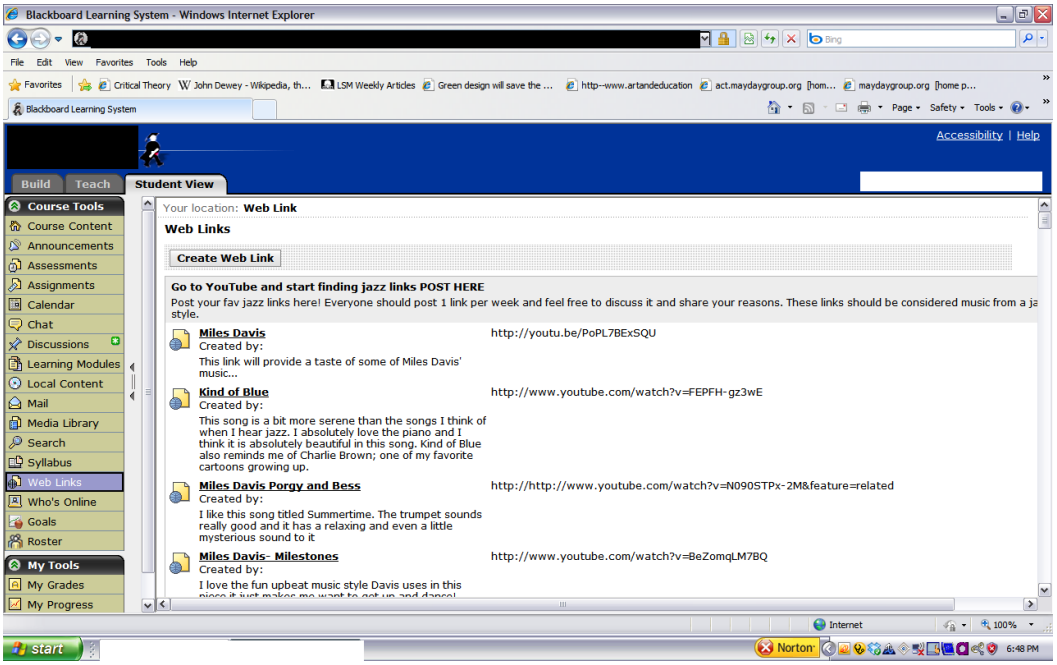

Figure 2. The YouTube link posting assignment.

Perceived effects of YouTube assignment on learning experience.

Students commented that finding and posting YouTube videos was a familiar process to them. Some students reported that the assignment was "simple" and that they enjoyed using YouTube in their daily lives outside of school:

> I love YouTube music videos! Since YouTube has come out, it's been wonderful . . . I've had quite a bit of experience ever since I started

> hearing about it a few years ago . . . the assignment was an easy transition. (SW 2)
>
> There's everything on YouTube. I mean, you can find any video, not just music videos. But, I mean, instructional videos on how to do anything. I mean, I could look up how to bake a chicken and it's going to be there. So I mean I had a lot of experience with YouTube before this class. The assignment was very easy for me. (BB 2)

Some said that even though they were not familiar with YouTube before the jazz history class, they now enjoy using the site:

> This is the first time I've really used it before. I was aware of [YouTube], but I never used it really before . . . Opens up a new way of doing things I guess. (PT 2)

Others found the YouTube assignment a welcome break from print media, indicating that getting to visit YouTube and look at videos "just gets you out of that zone, that textbook zone, so that was more efficient" (KR 3).

Overall, students commented on their own discussion posts, as prompted in the assignment. These posts were usually a few paragraphs (1-3), as directed in the assignment description. However, they rarely commented on the posts of others. All interview participants admitted being aware of other students' links and looking to them for a template or example of how to do their own assignment, but students did not comment on the links of others. No one reported having any trouble with the YouTube links or the technology used to post them. If there were problems, students may not have vocalized them.

Posting on discussion boards. The discussion board page was included on the class website. Students were directed to the discussion board six times during the course. They were encouraged to monitor discussion boards regularly for new posts and had the opportunity to respond to the posts of others at any time during the course. Additionally, students were encouraged to pose questions about assignments or to post information about upcoming jazz concerts to their peers through the discussion boards. In other words, although there were only six graded discussion boards, students had continuous opportunities for interaction on the discussion board throughout the course. Students were also invited to come to my office during his office hours to engage in live discussion about the topics posed in the discussion board. I displayed periodic announcements on the class website of these invitations to visit during office hours.

The intention of the discussion boards was two-fold. First, assignments required students to respond to topics listed by the professor; topics were related either to course content units or to discussions about jazz or music in general. A second intention was to provide an opportunity for student-initiated collaboration and communication. Part of the directions for the discussion board encouraged interaction beyond assignments:

> Please refer to the Discussions link on a regular basis for posted discussion topics. There will be six discussion topics total: an introduction topic, and then one for each unit. You are required to respond on the Discussion Board to each topic posted as part of your participation in this class. I will also allocate extra points based on your participation in discussion boards

(this will really help you if an exam grade needs help). The Discussion Board is dedicated to building a student community. Use the board to respond, but also use the board to share and learn! (syllabus)

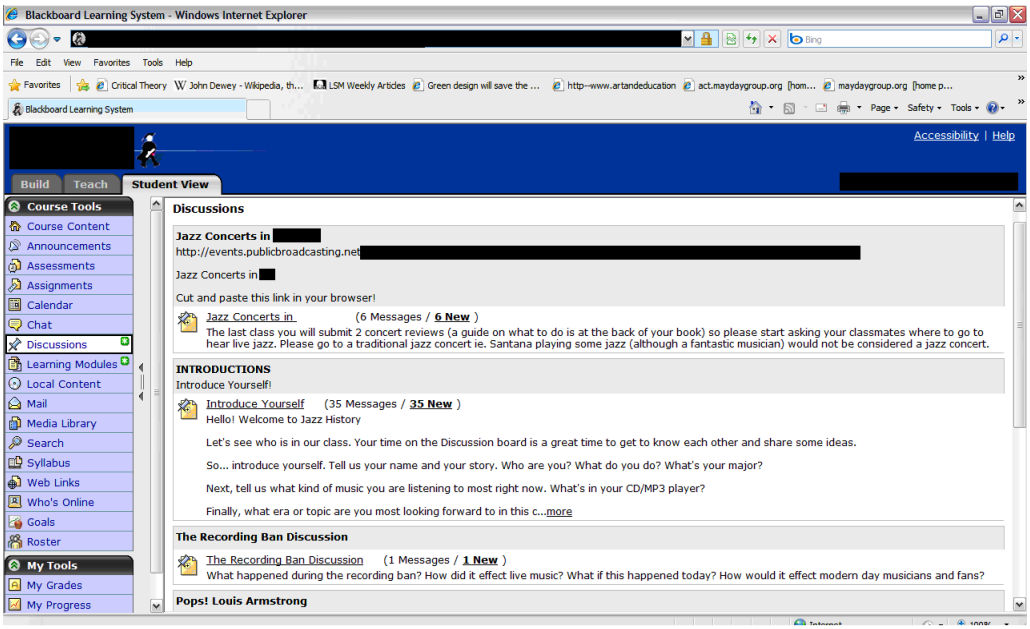

Figure 3. Example of discussion board assignment prompts.

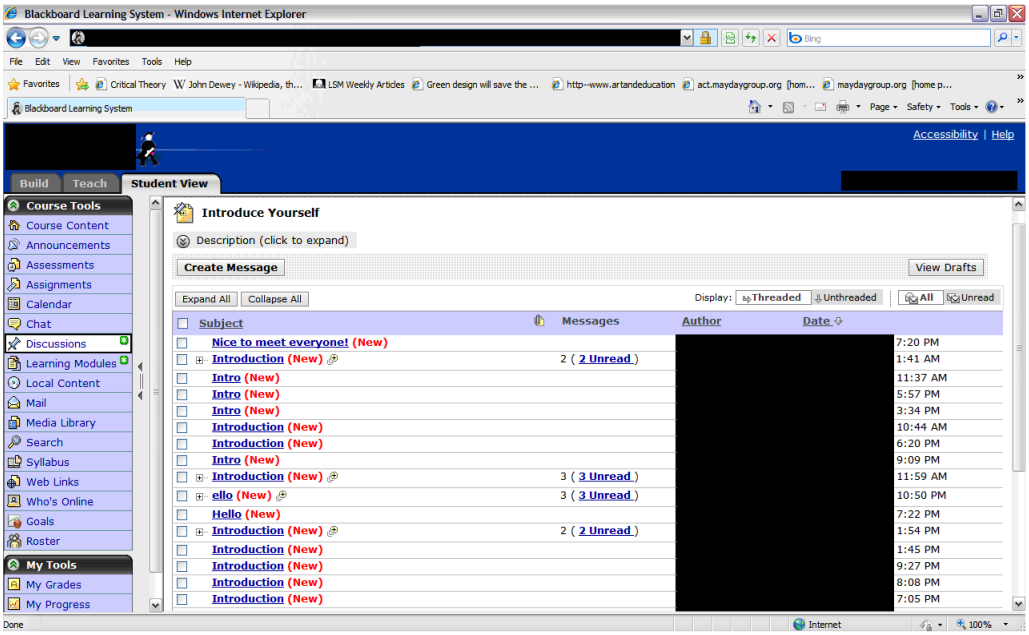

Figure 4. List of discussion board responses pertaining to the 'Introduce Yourself' prompt.

Perceived effects of discussion board on learning experience. In some ways, the discussion board served as an interactive forum. Students explained that they enjoyed the ability to get help on a topic in a discussion board post from both other students and the instructor as highlighted in the following interview excerpts:

> Usually if you have a question, you can put it out and students or the teacher will help you find out the information if you need it. (PT 1)
>
> I guess, it's kind of interesting to be able to read everyone's . . . discussions, to be able to see everyone's input also . . . feedback for . . . discussions. That's kind of nice. (PT 2)

One student admitted that he often replied to discussion board posts of others because of his expertise in the music being discussed.

> I like the subject, I guess. And I try not to be like . . . a snob about it, but I would share information if I could because I listen to all those people and more every day that we're supposed to listen to. (SG Post)

Other participants noted the lack of interaction in the discussion boards and how this lack of interaction affected their view of the quality of the class. These comments often referred to the absence of immediacy in the discussion board:

> I wish it was more of a text chat type rather than posting and then waiting a day or two for someone to respond back. I try to stay away from those just because by the time I put something on there, I post it, come back and it's been answered two days later, and I've already got the answer the day of, so it's quite difficult. (PT 2)

> . . . there wasn't that much interaction with all the students as far as discussion boards. I mean, we would post some things, but I think I only posted a few items and it was just a requirement. It wasn't additional information to help out. (KR 3)

Still more participants noted that there was little to no engagement or interaction opportunity on the discussion board and that their responses to the discussion board were simply done to finish the assignment, with no intention or desire to further their learning or to create a community with their peers:

> For every online class I've taken, there's usually some girl who does it like way in advance, so I just look at hers and do like half the amount that she did. (SG Post)

> I kind of see it as--and it was like this in previous online classes I've taken--it's "post five discussion boards and respond," and it's really black and white. There's no interaction. (SW 2)
>
> . . . it's like a forced response. So people make half-ass responses just to get the points . . . I've done it plenty of times. Well the times in this class so far, I've given pretty sincere ones. But in other online classes, almost every post I did was incredibly insincere. (AL Post)

The prompts for the discussion boards garnered different qualities and numbers of responses. For example, the assignment with a prompt titled "Pops! Louis Armstrong," which required students to post 10 interesting facts about Armstrong, resulted in mostly short or missing responses. For example, some students commented to others, "Interesting. Thanks!," "Interesting fact list!," or similar, short responses. On the whole, less than 25% of original posts had responses.

In contrast, a prompt titled "The Recording Ban Discussion" garnered numerous, sometimes lengthy responses. The prompt required students to respond to a few questions about the recording ban of the 1940s. These questions were: "What happened during the recording ban? How did it affect live music? What if this happened today? How would it affect modern day musicians and fans?" Responses to this prompt were more verbose than responses to other prompts, and almost half of the posts had additional responses from other students. Out of 17 responses, 10 were commented on or responded to by other

students. In addition, for each response there were two or more additional responses from other students.

Students also posted questions on the discussion board pertaining to upcoming jazz performances since attending two jazz performances was mandated. Sometimes students shared their knowledge of jazz groups or upcoming performances, and their peers sometimes asked for more information, such as where or when a performance was. Responses to questions like these were not always common or timely. Only three students received an additional response after posing the question about where or when a performance was taking place. In this way, the discussion board posts had the potential to act as a form of student-directed curriculum content, but this was hindered due to disconnect in posting and responding.

Submitting journal entries. Journal assignments, as opposed to discussion boards, were not public. Each student's journal entry was visible only to him/herself and the instructor. Journal assignments were given five times throughout the semester. Students used a link on the class website to reach the journal assignment. On the page, current and previous journal assignments were visible (see Figure 5). The purpose of these assignments was to encourage students to think about their interests in music and how it might relate to their lives and to provoke individual thought. Journal assignments were explained as follows:

> There are no right or wrong thoughts in this assignment. Points given are based on the amount of thought you put into it. Develop your own system,

your own thoughts and opinions. Be creative. This is an opportunity to reflect as we think about the world we live in. Everyone has a unique perspective. . . . There are no right answers, just interesting thoughts. Have fun with it! (syllabus)

Discussions that required free thinking, a focus on non-linear instead of purely academic conversation, and drawing on life-experience were encouraged in the journal entries. Journal entries were places for students to simply express themselves, whereas the discussion posts were more content-oriented and had stricter requirements. My intent was to foster freedom of expression; I hoped students would not fear being judged by their peers since journal entries were private assignments.

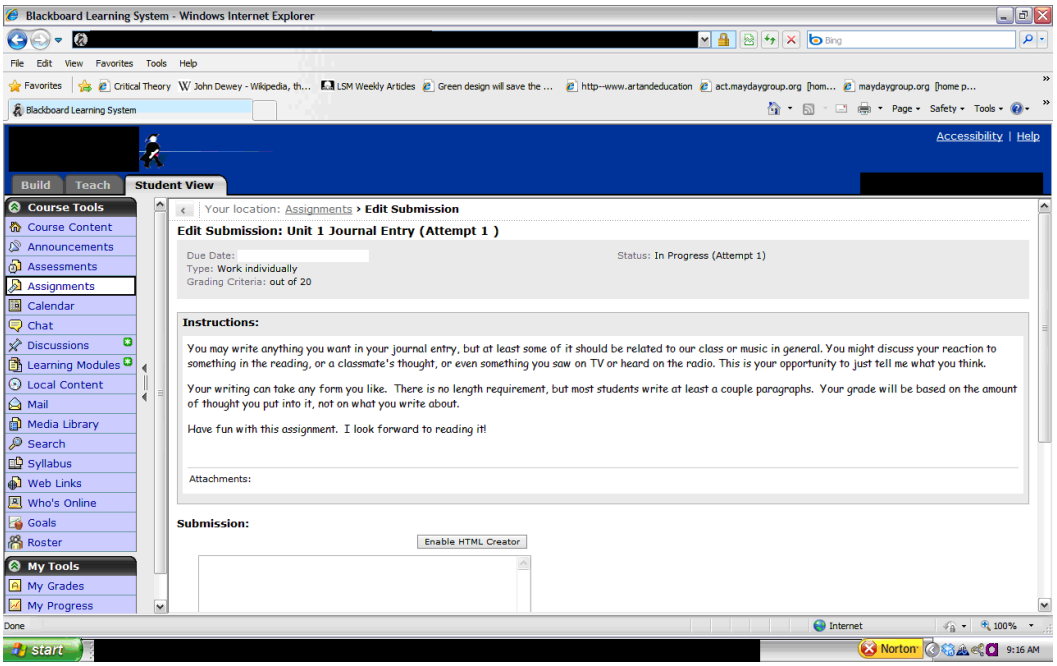

Figure 5. Journal entry assignment example.

The content of the journal entry assignments was not as structured as the discussion boards. There was one prompt, given at the beginning of the course,

which simply asked students to share their thoughts about "whatever you want . . . but at least some of it should be related to our class" (class website). The same prompt was used for the later journal entry assignments. Once the students responded to the original prompt, the instructor responded to every student's initial journal entry, but further responses from the students were rare.

In the journal assignments, some students expressed what they hoped to learn in the class. Their responses were usually one or two paragraphs. For example, one student wrote, "Hopefully by the end of the semester, I will be listening to jazz in a different way . . . able to recognize the players, instruments and different styles used" (KR Post). Others talked about their experiences with jazz prior to the class, and some talked about enjoying the concerts they went to for the concert attendance requirement portion of the class. Overall, topics in the journal entries varied but almost always referred to jazz and music. The following excerpt is an example of a typical initial student journal entry:

> I have been involved [sic] with music for a long time I started playing the stand up bass when I was about ten years old and played for about 8 years. It was a really great thing for me, it taught me a lot about discipline to practicing and to see the progress of getting better and better. I really enjoyed one teacher I had in particular . . . he was an amazing teacher and he would teach us some jazz so we could impress our parents. I was also able to attend some bass competition classes called Bass Jam. I enjoy most types of music and am excited to learn more about jazz. I was also able to go to a small jazz show I think it was in Tempe about 4 or 5 years ago and

> that was fun to hear the music and watch the musicians play and really get into the rhythm of the show. I hope that by taking this class I will be able to learn more about the music history of jazz. (CH Post)

My response, the next afternoon, was as follows:

> Do you still play bass? You should consider playing in one of the groups at MCC or in town. I look forward to working with you this session. Welcome to the class! (RH Post)

The student did not post an additional response.

Perceived effects of journal assignment on learning experience. Students may have readily volunteered information about themselves in journal assignments because they knew their peers did not have access to their responses. One student admitted that his post would not have been as revealing if other students had been able to read it.

> At first, I thought it was like one that everyone could see. I was like, "Whoa, that's a lot of information to just put out there" (laughs), but I quickly figured out it wasn't. Other than that, I mean, it was a good assignment and I didn't mind it (SW 2).

One participant said she enjoyed the one-on-one interaction with the instructor:

> When I got responses to my journals, I always liked reading them. He was really encouraging, and he said my journal was interesting. I think once he recommended a song from a singer I said I like . . . Yeah, I liked the journals. (BB 2)

The majority of the journal entries from students during the course consisted only of the initial posts that were required for each assignment. Students rarely wrote additional journal entries throughout the course.

The PBS Kids module. The PBS Kids module is an interactive, multi-step module that teaches history, musical qualities, and important artists of jazz. This module served to take the students out of the immediate online class environment and expose them to a different way to learn about and experience jazz. PBS Kids is a site dedicated to interactive, game-like scenarios that are fun and promote learning for children. In the Band Leader game (PBS Kids, n.d.), players can choose different instruments used in jazz, place them in different roles within the jazz band, and then hear their chosen instruments played together. This game was used in conjunction with course content and a quiz about the different styles and instrument requirements of a jazz ensemble. This section of the PBS Kids module was referred to often by participants in the interviews.

In addition, the PBS Kids module includeds an activity called "Become a Jazz Musician," in which students can select styles of jazz and jazz instruments based on their preference, answer simple quiz questions about the musical and rhythmic composition of jazz, and read short facts about the history of jazz. At the end of this activity, the student is awarded a certificate, which includes his/her name and a short number code. An example of the certificate is in Figure 7.

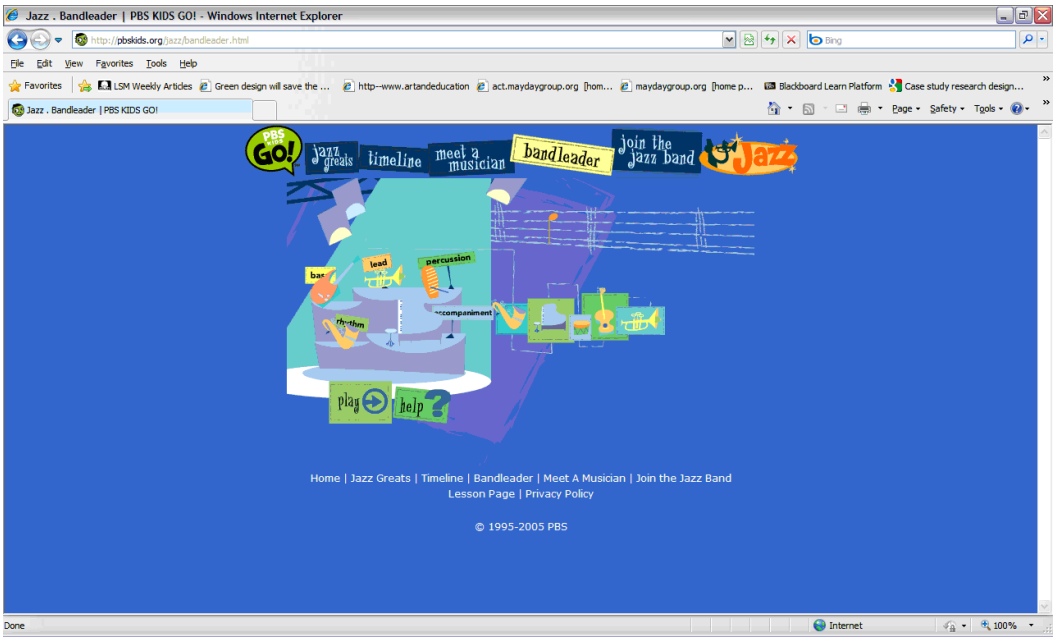

Figure 6. PBS Kids Band Leader 'performs' a song with the ensemble organized by the user.

Figure 7. Certificate of completion of the PBS Kids module.

During a course quiz, students were re-directed to the PBS Kids website where they were to explore and interact with the Band Leader module, including the "Become a Jazz Musician" activity. Once they finished, they returned to the

course quiz (on WebCT) and were prompted to enter the code generated by the PBS Kids website as the answer to the quiz question. They were also invited to try the PBS Kids module prior to the quiz as a study tool during the first unit in the course.

Perceived effects of PBS Kids module on student engagement. The students found the PBS Kids module to be a novel experience. Interviewees reported enjoying it and remembered it as engaging and colorful and a welcome change from the academic environment of the college website. Participants commented on the overall "friendliness" of the technology, including the childlike nature of the module, the vibrant colors, and the simplicity of the interface:

> I did enjoy it. It took me out of the MCC environment, from the regular online site, and it took me to a completely PBS Kids [environment] where, I guess, the graphics, the color of it, was more interesting than anything else. It was very user friendly and it's probably designed that way because of the kids that use it. It just seemed like it made it a lot easier to use. (SW 2)

> . . . in reality, when we learn about music and technology, it's just basic tools that we start off with, so it's a good stepping stone for anyone that's beginning to learn computers, and very simple and very user-friendly. (KR 2)

However, it is questionable whether the assignment contributed to student engagement since some participants either did not remember the assignment later in the semester or did not think it enhanced the instructor's lesson content. Some

participants described the module as interesting and fun but unrelated to the course curriculum:

> I kind of didn't see it relating to what the quiz was, 'cause it was kind of, it seemed like it was at the end of the quiz so it was something kind of fun to do. I could see it relating to jazz, but as far as overall with the quiz it was different, a different approach. But it was nice. I like that he was able to offer a website, something outside of the box for us to see something different. (FB 2)

One student did find the site useful for identifying instrument sounds: "It's good to be able to click and be able to figure out which [instrument] was which and how to differentiate between them" (BY 2).

Some participants noted a sense of accomplishment related to the Band Leader module. In the Band Leader game, students created their own examples by picking certain instruments to fulfill the roles in the jazz band and then listening to their chosen combination. After they placed their instruments, it was "nice to hear the instruments, the different sounds, when you put it all together." (PT 2)

Also, the PBS Kids Band Leader module did not include a penalty, negative response, or cue to the user for picking the "wrong" instrument to play a part. Students appreciated the opportunity to experiment with different ensembles until the mix satisfied them. Regardless of their selections, they were able to listen to the instruments play together and try new combinations until the sound

was the best. Even though certain instruments were suggested for certain parts by the program, the user could still choose non-typical combinations of instruments:

> You click on the link, it takes you right to the [PBS Kids Band Leader] quiz and if you got the answer wrong, it told you what answer it was, like what instrument you can put there, until you got it right! . . . You could keep going until *you* wanted to stop. (SW 2)

The PBS Kids Band Leader module gave students the freedom to choose combinations of instruments, and the PBS Kids Become a Jazz Musician quiz allowed them to go back and re-try the questions if they did not get the right answer. Participants appreciated that component of the module and often took advantage of it.

> [For the PBS Kids quiz], When I went to click on the right answer, I think I did it twice, two or three times, because there were a few of them that I got incorrect. I kept going back and doing it again. (KR 2)

Themes: Accessibility, Freedom of Expression, and Student Engagement

Accessibility, freedom of expression, and student engagement are qualities of democracy that impact and reflect the degree to which democracy is promoted or absent in the online classroom. These themes emerged from the data throughout the process of data analysis and were the three strongest themes related to the democratic qualities of this jazz history online course.

Accessibility. Accessibility in the online learning environment is characterized by the students' access to the content of the class, including the textbook, syllabus, and other information about assignments; their access to tools

such as discussion board, journal entries, learning modules and YouTube posting space; and their access to the professor. Essentially, access to the content students need to learn and to the assignments used to evaluate their learning is mediated by their ability to use the online class platform and the effectiveness and ease of use of that platform. Accessibility can also be facilitated by an instructor who has a good understanding of the technology and online tools being used and the support systems that provide information for the students (Katz, 2008).

In the jazz history class, access is also related to interaction in that students have access to each other's work and postings, thus making other interactions within the class visible. During in-person classes, students may share their work during discussions and projects; for online courses, various tools may facilitate discussions and sharing of projects. For example, the discussion boards in this course were public and could be read and added to by any student in the class. This online class included constantly visible discussion boards, public YouTube postings, and the comments left on these assignments from other students.

Perceived accessibility to the online environment. In general, technology can either enhance or collapse accessibility in an online classroom (Ladyshewsky, 2008). The failure of communication systems, such as the college's email system, can affect students' experiences. Since online classes are dependent on the Internet and email, the absence of these technologies due to outages or other problems hinders the learning experience. This was not the case in the jazz history course. During the course, no outages were reported by the college, and

students did not email me with complaints of technology problems. However, students had experienced technical difficulties or outages in other online classes, which complicated accessing class information, and accessibility suffered. Participants commented on accessibility and technology interruptions in their past online experiences as well as in the jazz history course.

> Um, I don't think I've had any hang-ups. Sometimes when you take the class, sometimes the assignments for the class--if you try going to them, you can't find them or sometimes they don't work. But so far, for this class, everything has been working properly. (PT 1)
>
> In a past class I had problems with the stuff. The teacher would say . . . that the software was the problem and then you'd call the software company and they'd say the teacher can take care of that . . . they're saying it was the teacher and the teacher was saying it was the software, so you just go back and forth never getting the problem solved. (PT 1)
>
> Um, our system . . . the WebCT was always off and on. So, I mean, I think if everything is dependable and reliable and it was consistent then there would be no problem at all . . . this [semester] I got lucky and there were no problems. (BB 2)

While the technology worked, access was impacted for some students by connectivity speed or browser problems:

> One of my biggest challenges . . . is the connection speed that we have. I mean, if you have three windows open and you're trying to get a fourth window and your browser is very, very slow, it kind of stalls the entire

> process and delays time and makes you spend more time on your computer than you want to . . . Sometimes I just wanted to finish the assignment for this class because I was frustrated with the Internet speed. (SW 1)

Other students pointed to access problems related to organization rather than connection or speed of connection.

> There's still a lot of problems with the way [jazz history] is organized. But that's not the teacher's fault. Again, it's just the program . . . it doesn't organize [assignments] by date. When you put assignments in that are new, it just goes to the end of the list. It doesn't automatically do things for you like it should. I mean its technology, right? But other than that, he does it better than what I've experienced in the past. It's probably the easiest to use. (AL Post)

Perceived accessibility to information. The online jazz history course included a print textbook that was accompanied by an audio CD. The chapters in the textbook coordinated with the course units. Throughout the units, students were assigned reading from the corresponding chapters, and the content from this reading was included in the corresponding quizzes as well as the final exam. Participants described the textbook for the online jazz history course as a useful tool for learning.

> As opposed to some classes in which the textbook ends up being a superfluous resource, in this course, it was nice that the textbook for online jazz history went along with the assignments. (BB 2)

> In the actual textbook it gives you characteristics of each individual style, whether it's bebop or swing, and that was the most useful because when you read a textbook it could be 100 pages and you still don't understand what the characteristics are of that style. But in this case, I think it was used more for like a sixth grader to read. (SW 3)
>
> It was in the book in the very beginning of the class they had one of those little sections, it kind of gave you play-by-play of what was going on in the song and being an amateur in jazz I think that was really helpful. You can go back and listen to it again and again and say, "This is what's going on." And that was helpful. (BY 3)

The ability to turn immediately to the Internet for answers to questions about the class content was a positive aspect of accessibility in the online jazz history course. The participants acknowledged the limitations of using written media such as print textbooks as opposed to online media and study tools. When the assignment or reading was done online, students could type an unfamiliar word into Google or Wikipedia, and in an instant, a basic answer was almost always available. Though this tool is also available by using a computer while studying for an in-person course or from print text, participants referred to it as being a positive aspect of the online jazz history course specifically. Students explained:

> A lot of the times, I would Google something I wanted to learn, to find out about whatever artist we were reading about at that particular time . . . And, like, if I wanted to see a song that that artist had, I could just type it

> into YouTube . . . I loved it. It was cool being able to have the visual right there with the textbook and the notes. (BB 3)
>
> Oh, I would not take away Google search. I use it every day and [for] any questions that I have. I love how I just type in a few words and . . . get hundreds of pages of explanations, research, or basically my answer. Like Wikipedia--even though teachers don't like that website--it helps when I don't understand something . . . it's almost just a click away. It's like my answer key to everything. (FB 3)

Overall, students reported that the jazz history online course was easy to negotiate and the mix of both online tools as well as print materials was helpful. The information in the course and the opportunity for learning were accessible in this course.

Desired accessibility to information. Achieving a democratic learning environment entails, in part, understanding what participants desire for specific learning tools and tools to enhance accessibility. During the interviews, participants were asked what type of learning tool they would like to see implemented or invented for online classes. Students suggested using an improved version of the textbook that incorporates both the Internet and the text to create a more interactive experience. The following comment summarized the desire for such a tool:

> . . . like the text book, it would be nice if it was like an e-book so when you're clicking on it, it's more interactive. You could just click on a [jazz

> artist's] name or whatever, click on it to be able to get our [listening] example. (PT 2)

Participants also expressed a desire for video lectures or, optimally, an online live virtual classroom or a lecture session during which students could see and talk to the instructor.

> Also, I guess it would be kind of cool to be able to, if you're online to be able to have a time, which probably is kind of . . . difficult, then you could be online and be able to talk to your instructor. Like video conference or whatever. It's always nice to be able to hear the instructor or someone talking about the subject sitting in front of you while you're watching it. Plus then you could probably rewind it and listen to it over again. (PT 2)

However, they also admitted that such course components might not be realistic or easy to coordinate.

> It seems like [a live virtual classroom] would be some sort of a hassle and it's not really necessarily then called an online course because [an] online course is more on your own pace whereas if you have to go on a webcam and meet all of the students at a certain time, it may not be as successful as it sounds, as we would like it to be, I guess. (FB 3)

Some students desired this type of real-time interaction with classmates as well as with the instructor:

> I know realistically not everyone can do that, but there are some people that might have the same opinion. They might say, "It's ten o'clock at

night, who's on here and who can help me?" But if there are other jazz classes, maybe just a chat forum for those classes. (KR 2)

Well, maybe they already have webcam type of stuff so I think maybe that would be a fun thing to do. 'Cause I've never really done that with an online course, to see a lecture online or have everyone get together. (FB 3)

Some students' comments referred to a recorded lecture posted by the teacher for the students. Unlike the "visual chat room," this recorded lecture would not be interactive. According to the students, recorded lectures would be a way for the instructor's personality, opinions, and personal experience with the subject to be visible to the students. The desire for the social presence of the instructor through recorded video lectures included comments such as

I'd like to be able to see to have a chapter that we read that the instructor would have available comment or something. Like a video, a little sort of video to just discuss that a little bit, from their point of view, or whatever. (PT 2)

Recorded lectures were not a part of the online jazz history course in this study.

Some students explained that although the class was available online through a computer, it was not accessible from their smartphones. Students perceived this as a limitation because they were with their smartphones more often than they were with computers. A common suggestion was an application (or app) for a smartphone that would offer course updates and a calendar of due dates for the online class. Students believed that this type of constant availability of the class would increase access to the course and improve learning and

participation. Some of these comments about such a learning tool from participants included:

> If there was an app for my phone for taking the classes, like, on the go, on the phone, that would be phenomenal, you have no idea. I mean, sometimes . . . I have Wi-Fi and I can't bring my laptop everywhere 'cause I don't get the connection, but my phone does. If I could just get an app that gives me all of my assignments, when they're due, sync it to my calendar, put it in there, I would love that. (SW 3)
>
> . . . there's probably some way they could make an app or something [that alerts me] every time there's an assignment that's due, I would like some kind of update. . . . I know they're obviously not going to make an iTunes app, but something along that line. Something that'll give you notifications pretty much any time the teacher does anything. (SG Post)

Another suggestion for a learning tool that might increase access was a system of reminder emails (which could be checked on a computer or smartphone) to enhance the learning experience by reminding students of course events.

> I know that I did forget sometimes when I had quizzes or things like that. I would have to say [that I would suggest] a reminder tool or, you know, a notification to your personal email saying, "Don't forget you have a quiz due on this date," or "You have to turn in this assignment." (SW 3)
>
> I think it's pretty good, though, to have an email announcement once in a while in case something's coming up. (PT 2)

While the app and email suggestions above referred to convenient ways to be reminded of course dates and events, other comments and suggestions were more specific to content. Another tool suggested by participants was a page or search engine on the class website, similar to a Wikipedia page but specifically for the class, with information pertaining to the class content. This page would be in addition to WebCT and include extra definitions or explanations of the topics covered in jazz history. According to the participants, students could access and use this information in the same way they would use a teacher in an in-person jazz history course. If there was a question about content or background information for an assignment, for example, the student could simply reference this "Jazz History Wikipedia." It would function as a course-specific search engine and would be different from a Google search engine, which includes results from a much broader pool. The following interview excerpts demonstrate students' desire for a classroom search engine and database:

> . . . if would be helpful if they could have a search engine . . . that, you type in a name and it gives you all of the associations . . . with that name. If we were to do that with the online tools we are using now, I think if it grouped everything together and for instance: instrument name. You type in an instrument name on Google; it'll give you so many search options. If we could have that with our online experience I think it'll be a lot easier for all of us to grasp and learn a lot of new concepts. (KR 3)

> It would have been nice, like if there had been some information on some of our readings there on the web. When we look up for each unit or each chapter that there would be some extra comments. (PT 3)
>
> I really, really like Wikipedia; I think that's the greatest. I think that maybe if the class had its own page or something like that, for a resource that's not there. I mean, for this class, jazz history had its own page, but I would like a resource with all these pages and you can go there if you have questions and just kind of look up things . . . one page and it had all the resources and answers and, you know, kind of like a guide. (BB 3)

Freedom of expression. Freedom of expression, in this study, refers to the students' comfort with posting and participating in journal entries, discussion boards, and posting of YouTube videos. It is the level of comfort and willingness the students have with articulating their own opinions and views in an environment in which their peers or the instructor can read and respond. In order to be consistent with Dewey's democratic classroom, students must be willing to participate, interact, and share these ideas.

When students in an online environment have freedom of expression, their learning experience may be more complete (Stacey, 1999). Having the opportunity to share with their peers and receive feedback or acknowledgement can create a sense of community and trust, which is an important dimension of democracy. There are, however, different dynamics of freedom of expression in an online course. In this course, journal entries were intended to contribute to a dynamic of freedom of expression that was relatively private in that it was only

accessible to the professor and the author. The content of discussion board posts, however, were intended to contribute to a different dynamic because the posts were available for all students to read and respond to. Posting YouTube videos was also a more public interaction. The transparency of students' work and their peers' and the instructor's potential access to their work might have influenced students' participation and thus influenced freedom of expression.

Perceived freedom of expression. For some students, jazz history online was an environment in which they felt safe expressing their opinions. They were not worried about their posts being judged, and they, in turn, did not judge others' posts. For some students, freedom from judgment seemed related to an online anonymity:

> I kind of enjoy it. You don't really know who anyone is; you just kind of have like an online personality, I guess, that you deal with and everyone is really friendly and no one is judging you or your comments or, I mean that's what it seems like . . . everyone generally seems to be on the same page and interested in the course and not about judging your opinions, which I like. (BB 2)

Some acknowledged the incidental adoption of an "online persona" in this online class. In other words, they felt their freedom of expression was increased because stereotypes or judgments often levied by them and to them in in-person classes were no longer a factor in an environment where they could not see each other. Participants admitted that people in their in-person classes were more

likely to be judged. Their comments exhibit these sentiments and concerns about stereotypes and discrimination in both online and in-person environments:

> . . . everyone does have a different view of people once you see them [in an in-person class]. I mean, if you have a guy who's like saggy pants, boxers hanging out, chains, you know, greasy hair, hat backwards, shirt with a huge bad word on it, I mean, obviously he's going to be judged and everyone's going to think a certain thing about him and his comments may be weighed differently. I mean, it's sad to say, but that's how it is. (BY 2)
>
> . . . it can be a problem for regular classes. If I had to take a class with someone who I thought was annoying because of the way they dressed or talked or something, I probably wouldn't listen to their comments the same . . . it would be different if they were in an online class with me because I would never know any of that. (AL Post)

Other students felt pressure in the public post forums, such as discussion boards, and it affected what they chose to write:

> Sometimes I just feel intimidated when some of the students have longer topics or longer discussions that I do; then I feel like I need to put more. (FB 2)
>
> Like if I think that [another student] wrote something really good I might raise the bar on my response, just so I'm not compared to them and fail the assignment or something. (AL Post)

The presence of disagreement or difference of opinion between students might indicate freedom of expression was present. However, there were no

instances of this in the online jazz history course in this study. There were instances in which different students' responses to the same prompt demonstrated divergent opinions, but there were no direct student-to-student responses to discussion posts that disagreed or indicated a different view from that of the original author. The presence of different, independent responses to the same prompt does not indicate freedom of expression since there is no way to know whether the students ever read each other's conflicting posts.

Student engagement. For the purposes of this study of the online environment, student engagement was divided into three categories: students interacting with each other, the course content, and the professor. Each student had opportunities to interact by sharing ideas and questions and acknowledging and critiquing others' work. Each student also had the opportunity to voice problems or questions to the professor.

Perceived student-to-student engagement. Students had many opportunities to interact with each other in the online jazz history course. The discussion boards were one opportunity for engagement because they were available for assignments as well as for question and answer forums. The YouTube video links, which were posted by students to the class webpage, were also visible to every student and provided another opportunity for student-to-student engagement.

A few participants voiced a dislike of group work settings regardless of class context and preferred to work independently as opposed to interacting with other classmates in study groups, lab groups, or small working groups.

> Right now, I'm taking a biology class and that course, to be quite honest with you, the lab is pointless. You have five or six different people and you want to move on . . . it's not like you don't want to be in a group setting, but when you can go on an online class [instead] and track things on your own levels and learn and be able to do projects by yourself, then I learn a lot more quickly and more efficiently. (SW 2)
>
> I don't personally [form study groups]. Ever. But other people do that and I'm sure it helps . . . The reason I think I'm fine [with online classes] is because I'm a very independent person and an independent learner and I'm more likely to succeed in online classes. (SG Post)

This was surprising given research that revealed that students of this Internet generation are accustomed to interacting in groups and socializing on a constant basis (Apple, 2010; Tapscott, 2006).

Conversely, other students admitted that less engagement in an online class had a negative impact on their study habits:

> I guess you do a lot less one-on-one interaction. I don't generally get to know . . . classmates as well or my teachers as well [in online classes]. And if you don't have that type of correspondence with people it's easier to slack off and not make that [class] a priority . . . sometimes that happened in the jazz [history] class. (BB 1)

Other participants' comments reflected introverted tendencies, certain personalities, or a reluctance to engage with peers at all:

> I tend to stay away from the classrooms in the music major because I hate all the other music majors usually. They're all stuck up. Unless it's a performance class I probably would avoid taking it [in person]. (AL Post)

The discussion board posts, aside from being an opportunity for student-to-student engagement, were forums for directing questions to the entire class as well as a resource for finding answers to questions. Generally, interview participants admitted that the discussion board assignments were not viewed as opportunities to interact and exchange ideas to enhance learning but were instead a task to be completed. Overall, their interactions were not driven by interest and engagement, but rather by course requirements.

Similarly, participants recalled looking at others' YouTube postings often but did not generally respond to them online. These students typically commented on their genuine interest in and enjoyment of their peers' YouTube postings:

> Yeah, I see different things that I've never listened to or wouldn't consider, I guess. Which is kind of odd for me. But that's the way it is. (PT 2)

> . . . you look at one and then there's a bunch more and there's links to more and then, you know, what was supposed to be five minutes you're there for another thirty minutes looking at all the different videos because you're curious and they just pop up, so I definitely spend a lot more time on that. (BB 2)

Others admitted they only referenced others' work as a template for their own posting or to ensure that they were not posting repetitive links.

> I've gone through two of them and it's more to get ideas about what to post, rather than for entertainment or out of interest. (SW 2)
>
> I just look at how they set it up and how they turn it in--the format is what I look at when I look at the other [posts]. But other than that, I don't click on their links. (FB 2)

Perceived student-to-teacher engagement. Each participant had comments about his/her interaction with the professor, though comments about level of interaction in this course and in online courses in general varied. Students valued positive feedback from the professor, and instances in which they received positive feedback were memorable to them. When the professor answered questions promptly, participants saw this as more significant interaction.

Each participant considered it important to be able to communicate with the professor, but not all actively did so throughout the course. Participants also recalled other online classes in which a breakdown in communication with the professor detracted from their learning experience to the point that they dropped the class or retook it.

> Sometimes it's hard with the communication. Just by email and even by phone. Sometimes you think that you understand what you're supposed to be doing, but you could be totally wrong . . . And usually it's hard to find out about it until after you turn in your assignment . . . In a past class, I

> was communicating with the teacher, I was thinking I was doing assignments right, and I was actually here at the writing center getting help. I didn't understand. I thought I was doing it right; turned out I wasn't. This quarter, I'm taking [the class] on-site. (PT 1)

Other interviewees cited a lack of instructor response to their problems in other courses as being frustrating and even the cause for dropping an online class.

> The problem was that the teacher would never respond to my emails . . . so I didn't know exactly what I was supposed to [do for my assignments]. And then I would be graded worse because I didn't do exactly what she said, but she would never respond to emails. . . . I just dropped the class after that. (SG Post)

> Sometimes the communication, you know, going back and forth with emails or phone with the teacher and sometimes you'll get no response in some cases. Sometimes [there is] no response ever for something. (PT 1)

Some students seemed to predict that an online course would not facilitate communication with the teacher or access to teacher-specific content.

> I guess maybe the interaction with the teacher and maybe their own perspective and their own examples and being able to talk to them would probably be the only thing that would be taken away in taking an online class because there's not much of a discussion about . . . the teacher's experience. (FB 2)

Students commented on positive interactions with the instructor, and some mentioned that they regularly seek out interaction with their instructors for online classes.

> Yeah, I emailed him [during the course] about assignments and stuff because I, personally, like to get into a little bit more depth and know more details about my assignments. (GG 1)
>
> . . . the feedback that we would get from the professor, stating "Good job on doing this," and "Good submissions on this one," and "You referenced the question perfectly." You know, those type of comments were great. (SW 3)
>
> Um, I like the fact that if you have a question or anything that any of the students would be there to answer and also the professor; he was very quick to respond, and that's a big deal to me. (BY 1)

Other students indicated that they would seek communication with the professor more readily in an in-person class.

> If it's [a class that's] in person, I would go to the professor or the students [for answers to questions]. If it's online I would go either to the books or the Internet first. (SG Post)

At the outset of the study, I thought journal entries would facilitate student-teacher engagement since only the individual student and instructor could see the journal entries. In general, however, interview participants did not mention journal entries often when answering questions related to interaction. When they did, it was clear that the journal entries were approached by the

students much in the same way that the discussion boards were. That is, they were an assignment, not an opportunity to share information and interact with the instructor, the only other person to whom the journal was accessible. This is evidenced by the students' lack of further responses when I responded to their journal entries.

Student engagement in the future. The participants commented that their positive experience in jazz history online would influence their decision to take more online classes in the future:

> Like I said, it's my first [online] class, and so far it's been a good experience for me, so definitely, when I get to ASU I'm probably going to take some classes online. (BY 2)
>
> I love it. It's my first online class. If it wasn't the end of my community college career, I would definitely take more. (BB 1)

Throughout the interviews that occurred during the course, participants were asked about course content in learning modules or assignments but not about student engagement with course content in the future. The three participants interviewed after the completion of the class indicated that their future lives would not be greatly impacted by the content in the online jazz history course. Curiously, however, they indicated they would be encouraged to listen to more jazz. In fact, students indicated that appreciating jazz and participating in future live jazz concerts were the only noted changes that would occur for them as a result of the online jazz history class.

Other participants also gained an appreciation for jazz music and noted that they learned about the structure and characteristics of jazz from taking the course:

> Before [this class], when I would listen to a jazz CD, I would just listen to the music, not really pay attention to the chords, to the rhythm . . . This course has helped me find the difference between . . . the different styles of jazz and only because it says "jazz" doesn't mean it just falls into one category . . . I don't listen to jazz that often, but I think it will be more interesting to me now. (SW 3)

Creepy treehouse in the online jazz history environment. Creepy treehouse is a situation in which students feel uncomfortable or unwilling to participate in an online, usually social media, environment because their participation is required by an instructor as part of a class grade or for class requirements (Young, 2008). Participants reflected on other online courses in which they were required to keep up with the social networking site of the class as part of an assignment or requirement. One student commented:

> As a whole, the assignment was comfortable. It was an easy transition. Most people already had a Facebook. The communication was great when we used it. The actual group participation is what I think Facebook is supposed to be used for. You have to have group presentations and you have to do all this stuff as a group. So instead of making you have to meet out of class, you could just do it on Facebook. It made everyone more accessible. (BB Post)

The positive perception of this student indicates that creepy treehouse syndrome did not exist in that particular situation.

When asked if they would welcome the addition of a Facebook page or other social networking site to the online jazz history course, some students responded affirmatively. One participant said:

> I think it would be fun to get to see everyone in the class. Your Facebook page is a good way . . . to make friends in your classes. I think it would be interesting. I would be okay with a Facebook page. (SG Post)

However, when asked about the value of the Facebook page for learning the material in the online course, participants' responses were mixed. One participant explained:

> I think it could be easier to keep up with your assignments if there were just little reminders on my Facebook. Maybe he could do that . . . it would be easier. (BB 3)

Another participant thought a Facebook page would be fun but not helpful to learning the material in the jazz history course. The participant explained:

> I don't know. I don't see how I could learn more. I would like to see more about the other students in the class and it might be cool to see the professor's page. I just don't see how I could learn *more* about what we're learning in the class. (GG 3)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the students in the online jazz history class perceived their experience in this particular online learning environment as convenient, familiar,

and interesting. They enjoyed the integration of online tools in their learning experiences, and few students had any problems with the technology used in the class, which meant that accessibility, or lack thereof, to course content did not detract from democratic learning in this course. The students participated in the interactive assignments, but some had different intentions from others. In other words, some students interacted only to complete the assignment and not out of genuine interest or enthusiasm. This general lack of student-to-student engagement during the course is not consistent with a democratic learning environment. Freedom of expression appeared to be present throughout the course, but observations were somewhat limited by lack of student-to-student engagement.

The next chapter consists of a discussion of the findings in this chapter. The discussion offers insights into the experiences of the students in this class and the perceived and actual quality of their learning. It also offers insights into future studies of online education environments that encourage interaction and learning and how the qualities of these environments may contribute to a democratic learning environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the democratic qualities of education in an online learning environment by exploring how community college students taking an online jazz history course access and utilize the available technology and interact with the instructor, the course content, and each other. The research questions that guided this study were

(1) How do students perceive the efficiency and accessibility of the online environment?

(2) What are the instructional features of the learning platforms used and how do the instructional features serve students' specific learning interests?

(3) How does the online environment support or discourage participation for all individuals in the online community?

Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

The findings in this study were considered through the lenses of accessibility, freedom of expression, and student engagement, qualities that point to the potential for democracy in the classroom. When these qualities are absent, democracy in the classroom is unlikely. The following chapter outlines the ways in which these qualities were evident in the online jazz history course in this study, pointing to the possibility of a democratic learning, or, by their absence, indicated the absence of a democratic learning environment.

Accessibility. Accessibility was a key theme framing the data analysis. In this section, I describe the impact of technology on accessibility and how accessibility impacted the democratic learning environment in the online environment in this study.

Impact of technology on accessibility. The impact of technology on accessibility was instrumental in fostering opportunities for interaction. Technology that does not serve the needs of the learning environment will influence interaction (McLoughlin & Lee, 2008). For this online jazz history course specifically, the participants did not identify problems interacting with the technology other than slow connectivity or platform organization. However, they did point out significant issues with the WebCT and community college online learning platforms in other online experiences. While this does not relate directly to the jazz history course under investigation, it speaks to the issues of systemic dysfunctions and the impact these have on limiting or interrupting participation.

Online access and a functioning and maintained digital environment are critical factors in ensuring full participation in online courses (Ladyshewsky, 2008). If the students are enrolled but have problems accessing the interactive forums or even the class website and course content, then they may sign on less often and interact with the instructor, each other, and course content less frequently. Overall, access problems detract from the democratic character of the online class environment.

In addition, problems with the college website might prevent students from both taking and recommending online courses to other students. Further,

understanding who is affected by technology access, or lack of technology access, and whether the online learning environment is inclusive remains important. If, for example, those in rural or dial-up areas have more problems than those living in urban centers, a systemic barrier to entry exists. For this course, however, no such problems were reported by participants, although they did report frustrations with speed of Internet connection in previous courses.

Accessibility and democracy. Participants in this study indicated a desire for additional digital tools to enhance their learning. However, the tools they imagined would enhance their learning experience were more practical than educational in nature. For instance, one participant described a smartphone application that would essentially keep track of assignments. This integration would only eliminate the need for students to make their own calendar of due dates or to check the class website. Another participant expressed a desire for automatic email and text reminders of assignments. These suggestions are geared not at enriching content or curriculum but rather at using technology tools to lighten the students' responsibility for planning, checking the class website, and keeping track of the syllabus.

This desire to improve the procedural and organizational functions of the course and the lack of interest in addressing or volunteering information on content may imply passivity in terms of the level of input students assumed they had in the content itself. Dewey (1900) emphasized learning by doing, meaning that students actively take a role and participate in sharing ideas, critiquing and challenging content, and co-creating and directing the curriculum. A truly

democratic environment is one that nurtures opportunity for these actions and allows meaningful deliberations about the learning and curriculum. The responses in this study indicated more of a "How can I get this done in the least amount of time" approach.

The procedural nature and concretization of learning expectations that are embedded in the design of this online jazz history course could be factors limiting and fragmenting the potential for a democratic learning environment. In this study, course content decisions were made prior to the start of the course. In some respects, students did not have choices or an influence over content. In others ways, students had opportunities to influence content in the course. For example, the discussion board prompts were decided before the course started; however, the direction and topic areas of the responses to the prompts were decided by the students themselves. Therefore, it is suggested that when examining factors that influence democratic learning, one must consider whether or not the class structure provides such an environment.

Freedom of expression. Freedom of expression was another key theme framing the data analysis. In this section, I describe the ways in which participants expressed and shared ideas throughout the course, as well as the ways in which freedom of expression in the online course was consistent or inconsistent with a democratic learning environment.

Participants in this study had a mixed notion of their freedom of expression in the online course. Some felt comfortable posting discussions and comments publicly because they viewed the online environment as a place for

free, uninhibited, and non-biased expression. Others felt intimidated by these public posts because they feared their responses would not be sufficient. Comments during interviews suggested that some students felt insecure about whether or not their posts measured up to other posts in the forums.

While democracy is secured by participation, it is also important to consider how the exposure element, or the level of transparency of students' work, in an online course affects what individuals choose to say, think, and feel. For example, students with an extensive musical background were comfortable sharing their expertise with the instructor as well as with other students. This was not common in participants who had little or no jazz or musical background. These participants were less likely to comment on the posts of others or to add input about jazz or music past the required assignment.

Freedom of expression in action implies a true exchange of ideas and viewpoints. When students are able to exchange ideas authentically, there is evidence that democratic learning occurs. However, when students adjust their posts and potentially edit their own ideas to protect themselves from being criticized, problems arise and barriers to true expression of ideas occur. That said, if students feel obligated to post high-quality content, or at least to put more effort into their public discussion posts, more meaningful or thoughtful commentary might naturally result. This, in turn, may encourage more meaningful interaction, including exchange and possibly critique of ideas between those who post and those who read and respond. Participation in discussion boards, if framed differently and considered along with other communication behaviors in the

online classroom, might directly enhance community building in the online classroom, as predicted by Tsai et. al (2008).

It is important to understand what kind of forum, format, or instructional strategy is most likely to produce engaged responses that show true citizenship and participation in learning. In this study, students admitted piggy-backing off of other students' work. This form of self-reporting was rare in the results of Piezon & Ferree (2008), who found that more students accused others of social loafing than admitted that they had committed social loafing themselves (Piezon & Ferree, 2008). In the jazz history course, participants admitted only reading each other's posts and viewing each other's links on the YouTube postings and discussion boards to get a template for their own submissions or to decide how much input they had to include to avoid a lower grade than other participants. This behavior falls under the category of social loafing and does not support democratic learning (Piezon & Ferree, 2008).

As the instructor, I imposed the structure of the discussion boards, and structure may change the level of freedom of expression of students. The way I structured discussion board prompts or responded to students' posts may have influenced freedom of expression. Some prompts generated more interest than others. Though I did not respond to discussion boards by the students often, I occasionally answered questions about due dates of assignments or concert attendance assignment details. I did not partake in discussion topics, only in answering questions about course requirements.

Students who are English language learners or for whom writing is not a strength may be especially vulnerable and intimidated by judgement they perceive from other participants regarding their ability to write and communicate clearly. However, there were no students in this online jazz history class who identified themselves as English language learners.

Student engagement. In this study, I sought evidence about what students experienced when they engage with each other, with their instructor, and with content in an online course. These three types of interaction can vary in their degree of influence on a student's learning experience in an online course (Anderson, 2003). I looked for evidence of students' abilities to analyze course content, think for themselves, and act and express their ideas in ways that might align with or be contrary to others' opinions or expectations.

Perceived student-to-student engagement and democracy. On the surface, student-to-student engagement appeared to occur in this course; however, a closer examination of data from discussion boards and YouTube link postings calls the degree of engagement into question. Throughout the class, students appeared to diligently post interesting comments to the discussion board and sometimes enthusiastically responded to and acknowledged others' posts. However, when asked about discussion boards in the interviews, the responses of the participants indicated a lack of interest and investment in the discussion board posts. One student even went as far as to call the discussion boards "forced response" (AL Post). The notion that students would not visit the discussion boards unless they were part of an assignment that affected their overall grade is

contrary to the principles of a democratic learning environment. In this ideal environment, students discuss and interact while working toward the completion of a task. They also learn from discussion and use learning to inform future decisions. It was evident in this study that discussion boards did not contribute to a democratic learning environment.

Similar dynamics of engagement occurred with the YouTube postings. Duffy (2008) suggests that including YouTube in online learning can enhance interaction, and some participants reported that they clicked on links posted by other students and then viewed several videos by an artist. Normally, however, participants completed posts as assignments and viewed others' posts only when requested to do so. On the whole, these student-to-student interactions were insincere, occurring only when required, and showed a lack of curiosity and a focus on achieving the grade. While there was some indication of self-directed learning when students, on their own, chose to post and view clips that were not required, the majority of postings were made in response to expectations, and side conversations or honest, quality discussions that showed expansion and augmentation of learning beyond what was required rarely occurred.

Although the use of YouTube did not appear to be conducive to democracy in this online jazz history course, the use of YouTube in future online classes still holds potential to enhance democracy in the learning environment. As various authors suggest (Duffy, 2008; Nixon & Comber, 2001; Riley, 2009; Smith, 2003; Waldrep, 1998), contemporary students, or Millennials, are comfortable with and interested in YouTube, and they may respond positively to a

class environment that utilizes YouTube as a "vehicle to discovery" or as a way to incite interest and participation instead of acting as a stand-alone representation of the information. However, the manner in which YouTube is employed requires further research; YouTube use in this online jazz history class did not contribute to a democratic learning environment.

In essence, the data from this course suggest that students interacted with each other only to fulfill a class requirement, not to learn content or engage with or learn from each other. Findings support that the current orientation of the course, including the structure of discussion boards and YouTube experiences, provides too few possibilities for a more genuine and on-going exchange. For example, if there had been more opportunities for student-initiated discussion prompts or student-initiated YouTube posting assignments, students may have interacted more since the topics may have been more relevant or interesting coming from a peer instead of from an instructor.

As Ladyshewsky and Gardner (2008) assert, the ability of the instructor to create and foster meaningful discussion environments that are both safe and engaging can have a profound impact on student engagement. Although discussion boards and YouTube postings fall under student-to-student engagement, the instructor is also involved, indirectly, in providing the foundation for this engagement. The types of prompt questions may have had something to do with the ways in which students engaged.

In this course, an element similar to a creepy treehouse may have existed in that students were forced into a social setting and their interactions were not

authentic since some of them reported feeling that their responses were forced when completing discussion board and journal entry assignments. This may explain, in part, their low levels of interaction. Students may be less willing to participate in discussion boards or journal entries if personal interaction is required or if observation by the instructor takes place. When students perceive attempts to integrate discussion through social media as a creepy treehouse, the problem may not lie in the technology itself but instead with the type and level of intrusion. By presenting social media as a potential source of information, rather than requiring social interaction, creepy treehouse syndrome may be avoided.

In the online jazz history course, the symptoms of creepy treehouse manifested themselves in the journal entry assignments. Students diligently posted initial responses to the journal prompts and continued to post as assigned throughout the course but did not respond to comments from the instructor. However, Young (2008) indicates that if the use of social networking in classes does not infiltrate the students' own social settings and *then* force interaction, the requirements of creepy treehouse have not been met. The course in this study did not infiltrate a pre-existing social network, yet the lack of interaction between students and instructor in the journal entries and between students in the discussion board and YouTube posts, where the instructor was present as grader, showed indication of a creepy treehouse. Similarly, students' reactions to the possibility of a Facebook page linked to the course in the future were mixed. Some students said they would not mind it and had, in the past, experienced

courses in which social networking sites enhanced a class. Others said it would not enhance learning but would be welcomed.

Whether or not the creepy treehouse phenomenon is possible to avoid for teachers and professors who seek to integrate contemporary social media technologies in their courses remains a question. The degree of "creepiness" seems directly proportionate to the level of surveillance, the purpose of use, and the requirement for personal interaction. It may be possible to avoid creepy treehouse if a social networking site were used as a class schedule-related tool as opposed to something in which personal information was shared. In addition, if the social network page functioned as a group page, not a personal profile page, then the tool's main result may increase accessibility to information, thus providing the potential for a democratic learning environment and avoiding creepy treehouse.

Perceived student-to-teacher engagement and democracy. Data in this study were also analyzed for student-to-instructor engagement. Overall, participants appeared comfortable engaging with the professor. Participants seemed to value the online journals and the opportunity to interact with the instructor on a more personal level. Participants also expressed the importance of receiving quick responses to emails and questions and the professor's dependability when it came to answering questions. However, student-to-instructor interaction rarely went beyond questions about assignments or deadlines. This may be an indicator that a democratic learning environment was not consistently encouraged by the teacher's interaction with the students.

A possible solution to this lack of interaction may be found in video lectures or interactive, real-time chat opportunities with the professor, which is something students in this course reported they would like in future courses. A more direct social presence of the instructor might contribute positively to students' perception of the community of the class (Schutt et al., 2009) and might, in turn, support democratic learning in this and other online courses. However, Kim and Bonk (2009) cited "lecturing or teacher-directed activities" as tenth of twelve pedagogical techniques to be used more widely online in the coming decade (p. 28). The desire of students in this study to see the instructor and listen to recorded or in-person virtual lectures coincides with Schutt et al. (2009), who found that students succeeded when instructors displayed immediacy behaviors, like video lectures or live chat opportunities, but that finding does not coincide with what educators plan to do in the next decade of online teaching (Kim & Bonk, 2009). Disconnect in pedagogical practices of instructors (Kim & Bonk, 2009) and factors that influence students' success (Schutt et al., 2009) may negatively affect democratic learning environments.

Student engagement with content. Overall, student engagement with course content was supported by certain technologies. Students found MP3 files, YouTube videos, and content resources such as the print textbook and accompanying CDs most valuable. These resources gave the students the ability to control their own learning and may have allowed students to contribute to and participate in the online learning environment, although this did not appear to occur. For example, participants enjoyed and interacted with learning modules

such as PBS Kids. Unfortunately, this specific resource did not have a significant lasting impact on students' learning. Students could not remember what they learned from it when asked later in the semester, and they reported that the module did not enhance the lesson or course content. This learning module did not support democratic learning in this class since engagement with the content was brief, and Dewey (1902/1956) insists that on-going engagement with learned material is an important characteristic of a democratic learning environment.

Student engagement in the future. Since a democratic learning environment implies that students' future behaviors be influenced by their learning experiences in the classroom (Dewey, 1900), one indicator of student engagement with content may be whether the learning experiences and content were memorable. In this study, specifics of the course content were not memorable to participants. When asked in interviews to reflect on lessons or learning modules, participants said, again and again, that they could not remember specifics. For example, when asked what she remembered from the PBS Kids lesson, SW replied, "No, I don't know. It was a little while ago. I don't remember" (SW 2). BN responded in a similar manner to the same question, saying, "to be quite honest, I don't really remember what the questions were, or the answers" (BN 2). BB commented, "I think I remember just what type of instruments. I remember the--maybe like the saxophone and things like that. I don't remember much" (BB 2). Overall, the participants enjoyed the module but did not appear to retain specific content from it.

The textbook was also another source of student engagement with content. The participants said they approved of the organization of the textbook but did not give specific examples of what they learned or how it would affect their future behavior outside the classroom.

Student engagement with content extends beyond the classroom, and there was some indication of future engagement, specifically with jazz music. The subject of the course, jazz history in general, did seem to have a lasting impact in that participants said because of what they learned, they would enjoy jazz more, listen to it, and look for style, rhythm, and specific artists. BB reported that "listening to jazz will probably be more interesting for" her after what she learned in the course. Similarly, FB commented, "Now when I listen to jazz, the different styles and instruments will come out and . . . I will be able to know more about the song just by listening to it." From these observations, it appears that content may have an effect on student engagement in the future. However, participants' predictions for their own future engagement pointed to little or no change as a result of this online class, apart from their mentioning that they would listen to jazz in the future.

Other evidence in this study points to incidental learning related to extra musical skills and attitudes acquired. For example, some students commented about whether or not they would enroll in future online classes based on their experiences in this course.

Discussion

The following discussion of findings refers directly to the research questions posed at the beginning of the study.

(1) How do students perceive the efficiency and accessibility of the online environment?

Accessibility, in an online course environment, provides either a sense of success or frustration for students. The community college where this study occurred set up opportunities for students to access the online infrastructure and to receive assistance via a helpdesk, online learning tools, and troubleshooting information. The accessibility to the jazz history site, as well as other online class sites, was based on the individual college IT department's ability to keep the site running in addition to the ability of Blackboard, the corporate platform provider, to maintain its capabilities. In this study, most of the technology frustrations, which were minimal, had to do with the students' Internet connection speeds. Frustrations surrounding technology use seemed to be fewer among students who dealt with technology on a daily basis. For this study, participants indicated they were comfortable with the technologies in the course and exposure to new technologies or learning tools was not significant. However, technological literacy varies from class to class and from student to student and may be problematic in other settings or for other students.

Democracy can be stifled in online courses when there is a breakdown in technology and the learning platform and instructional tools or content become inaccessible. In a traditional, live teaching environment, technological barriers

can be changed or manipulated to move forward with the teaching process. For example, if a PowerPoint presentation is not projecting, the professor can continue the lecture without the visual aid. In an online teaching environment, however, progress can come to a complete stop if technological tools are disabled, pointing to crucial obstacles to online learning related to administrative and technical control.

None of the students mentioned that the jazz history online course was their first time using email or other Internet technology. In fact, some students found Blackboard and WebCT to be outdated and uninspiring from a technological perspective. These students used technology such as smartphones, laptop computers, streaming media devices, web-based software, and a multitude of other technological staples daily. They took notes with their computers and utilized online calendars and instant messaging to contact classmates, and some even maintained blogs. Instead of being hindered by technology and a lack of skills to operate in the online learning environment, these students seemed to be looking for novel technological features such as live video chat, real-time instant messaging, dynamic assessment opportunities, and multi-media content delivery such as real-time video feeds of live jazz performances. The students' feelings align with Ruthmann (2007), who claimed that highly interactive technologies have great potential for online learning. These students' requests for integrating more technology, more interactive modules, and more "live" experiences have implications for this course and others. The addition of tools like the ones referred to by participants in this study would align with the characteristics of a

Web 2.0 learning environment (Duffy, 2008; Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009; Ruthmann, 2007).

When considering accessibility, future researchers also need to question students' motivations for taking a class. Students taking an online class to participate fully may perceive accessibility differently than those looking for an 'easy' way to finish uninteresting credits. Thus, future studies should concentrate on how students' motivations drive their behaviors in the online environment. Specifically, other researchers point to the flexibility of online courses as a prime motivator for students (Richardson & Swan, 2003). Flexibility seems to be beneficial for students who work part- or full-time and have difficulties scheduling their courses around those obligations. However, online courses also allow students to rationalize their way out of participation in course work. Some students simply did not participate in the engaging activities, such as message board discussions. More studies focusing on what motivates students to enroll in online courses are needed, as motivation might be able to explain discrepancies in student engagement in online courses.

For example, Bullen (1998) investigated unique characteristics of motivation and student behavior in online courses and found that students did, in fact, feel disconnected from both the other students and the instructor (Bullen, 1998). Bullen points out that

> Although the technology may have attributes that have the potential to facilitate a dynamic and interactive educational experience, making this happen depends on much more than the technology. (p. 30)

Bullen (1998) found that success in online courses, or meaningful participation and absorption of knowledge, is dependent on various student characteristics. Factors such as a student's previous experience with online courses, cognitive maturity, and experience with participatory and interactive online learning environments all seemed to be necessary prerequisites for a student's experience in an online course to be considered successful (Bullen, 1998).

(2) What are the instructional features of the learning platforms used and how do the instructional features serve students' specific learning interests?

The instructional features of this course included the assignments, learning modules, email system, and course page as well as anything else related to content that was incorporated into the online course and curriculum. The features of the learning platform served students in the course differently, depending on the students' own application of the course tools.

The technology tools used in this online learning classroom were chosen and implemented by the instructor. Instructors, according to Duffy (2008), must be familiar with the technology-driven world in which their students live. The instructor's understanding of the learning tools available for the construction and implementation of an online course is crucial to the success of the course. In other words, if the instructor is not putting these technologies to their best use, then students will not receive the full benefit of them (Paynter, 1997; Savage, 2005). However, Kim and Bonk's (2006) survey of online educators and administrators indicated that the "technical competency of online instructors" is

not as important as other factors, such as the institution's "monetary support" and the instructor's "pedagogical competency" in the future of online education (p. 26). In this study, students did not complain about the instructor's lack of expertise or competency in technology used in the course and praised the organization of the class. In future studies, the technological competence and flexibility of the online course instructors should be more closely examined. Additionally, the relationships between students' perceptions of instructors' pedagogical and technological abilities should be examined.

A lack of cooperation and logistical organization of music departments and distance education departments can hinder instructors' abilities to teach effectively (Hebert, 2007). At the college in this study, a network of resources existed to facilitate effective teaching. These resources included comprehensive faculty development and quality standards to support online education. In 2009, the college initiated a pilot framework to meet the needs of online education programs. This framework was designed to help with faculty development and support, online course design, and, consequently, student success. This framework offered guidance for instructors through resources such as wiki discussion boards and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Handbook for Peer Evaluation of Online and Blended Courses (eschool news, n.d.). These and other resources may be useful to those who wish to develop online courses. All universities and schools interested in developing and maintaining high quality online courses would be best served by supporting faculty with similar resources.

Some of the course tools intended to facilitate group interaction in this study (discussion boards, YouTube postings) appeared to be successful based on the volume of posts but not on the degree of interaction. Students responded to initial prompts, but significant student-to-student interaction occurred for only a few, namely the "Recording Ban" and "Where Do You Buy Music?" prompts. For the students who responded to each other's posts, group interaction moved toward a democratic learning environment. The implication is that incorporation of current topics into a class about historical topics is important in supporting connectivism (Siemens, 2005) and a more interactive learning environment. However, interviewees in this study claimed that they were not always genuinely engaged in discussion boards and other assignments intended to foster peer interaction. This juxtaposition of apparent results and interview feedback is important to consider as a potential misrepresentation of the reality of democracy in the online class.

On the other hand, the more independent learners among the participants in this study simply wanted to be left alone, and the instructional features of the course intended to foster group interaction seemed to have little appeal to the independent learners. These students stated that the individual environment, rather than the peer group or facilitated interaction, enabled them to meet the learning goals. Those individuals tended to finish the discussion board prompts earlier than other students. These results do not align with the predictions by teachers and administrators of online classes, who believe that group interaction and peer collaboration will and should become increasingly common in online

education (Kim & Bonk, 2006; Tapscott, 2009). The presence of independent learners and the opportunity for these individuals to work ahead and avoid interaction and group activities may not foster democracy in future online classes.

In general, the opportunity for the students to work ahead seemed to be a deterrent to democratic interaction among students, based on the evidence in this study. For example, two students completed the first three weeks of assignments within the first week of class. Their posts were not read by other students until sometime later, and limited interaction with their peers on the discussion boards may be attributed to their early submissions. The relevance of their posts diminished in the days or weeks after they were originally posted since the content was no longer current. Interestingly, these students both had three incomplete assignments at the end of the course and received lower grades. Additionally, both of these students only replied to each discussion board prompt (aside from the ones they missed completely) once, as required, and did not respond to my comments on their journal entries. In this case, the individual learning goals of these students appeared to be based on completion of the assignments rather than interacting in a meaningful way. This does not align with Barnard et al. (2008), who found that students who had high independent learning skills had higher GPAs. On one hand, these students had the freedom to manage their time and assignments and chose to work ahead; on the other, if they had followed the recommended timeline and not worked ahead, their missed assignment count may have been lower and their engagement with other students may have increased. Their self-directed mentality seemed to be inconsistent with

an interactive democracy (Dewey, 1900), and, despite that mentality and contrary to the findings of Barnard et al. (2008), their grades suffered.

Some of the course features that the students valued differed from those valued by the instructor. I anticipated that students would choose to engage with content and to interact with each other; however, students behaved in task-oriented ways, simply doing the minimal work required to achieve a passing grade instead of internalizing and finding meaning in the content or engaging with each other. For example, one student commented

> It was really nice the way I could go and get everything done when I needed to, like I could work ahead if I happened to have time, or I could just do it when I needed to and I didn't have to think about anyone else's pace. That's what was a good quality of the online class. (SW 3)

For future studies, it will be important to discover whether the behavior described above is related to students' expectations of online courses, personalities, learning styles, and/or learning goals. In addition, future studies should investigate whether these kinds of behaviors are consistent in the same students in both online and in-person classes. This lack of interest in working at the same pace as others could be driven by the nature and expectations of some of the students who may fall into the Millennial Generation (Tapscott, 2009). It might be more likely that a student who usually participates in an in-person class disengages in an online class because the student may have chosen the online class only for convenience and not because of interest in the topic. This may be especially true for general studies classes, such as the one in this study, which may fall into the

"convenience" category. This aligns with Rhode (2009) who found that students purposely forgo interaction when convenience and scheduling flexibility is of more concern.

As the instructor, I intended the discussion boards to encourage student-to-student interaction consistent with democratic learning, but that goal was not always met, as students did not participate. Students in this study reported a willingness to participate in the discussion boards because they did not feel they were being judged and therefore felt greater freedom of expression. They intimated their fear of being judged in in-person classes and admitted that they themselves judge others in in-person classes based on physical appearance and presence. While physical appearance was not a factor in online interactions in this study, the author of each post was known, which may have helped foster genuine interaction, since it has been demonstrated that anonymous posts can detract from the quality of the learning experience (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008). Still, students in this study did not interact past initial exchanges. Kim and Bonk (2006) predicted that discussion would be widely used in the pedagogy of future online classes. The results of this study indicate that more research on the use of discussion boards and similar formats is needed.

Another feature of the course that supported some dimensions of democratic learning was the PBS Kids website. This was a unique learning tool in the class in that it encouraged exploration without penalty for wrong answers in a different environment than the college website. Students appreciated the opportunity to be creative. They also commented on their enjoyment of selecting

and hearing the instruments in the Jazz Band Leader module of the PBS Kids website. The reward of hearing the final product of their decisions was important to them. This sense of reward for creativity is important in education of students. Although participants did not seem to be impacted significantly by the module, they commented on their enjoyment of and willingness to participate in it. This course feature enabled participation and freedom of expression, supporting democratic learning. However, engagement in the future did not appear to be supported. Future research should include studies about the learning effects of similar types of interactive media that are closely related to course content.

(3) How does the online environment support or discourage participation for all individuals in the online community?

This study suggests several possible interactive techniques that may support participation and interaction among the students, thus fostering a democratic learning environment in the online course.

Students had many opportunities for participation in this online course. Their participation was sometimes supported by the online environment, as in the case of the YouTube postings. Students expressed their enjoyment through freedom of expression by sharing their various YouTube links, commenting on them, and touting them to their classmates. Due to this freedom, the YouTube assignment was where students seemed to flourish and showed their individuality.

Another area in which students participated and freedom of expression was supported was during the "Where Do You Buy Music?" discussion prompt surrounding copyright violations and recording bans. This discussion area

showed stronger numbers and more responses than any other, perhaps because it is a current topic and not a historical one and has more relevance to students' everyday lives. In future online jazz history courses, democracy and participation can be supported through making discussion prompts more relevant to current events or topics.

Student participation in the online environment appeared limited due to the lack of opportunity to ask and answer questions in real time. For example, students posted questions on the discussion board pertaining to upcoming jazz performances; attendance at two jazz performances was mandated, and students shared their knowledge of jazz groups or upcoming performances. Once the recommendation was posted, some students asked for more details. Unfortunately, only three students received timely responses from their peers providing them with relevant additional concert information. This was a missed opportunity for participation. Recommending jazz concerts to other students could have been a way to direct and influence the curriculum of the course based on the interests of the students.

In general, student participation and interaction was limited in this course. Students were required to participate in discussion topics; however, most failed to interact after the initial required post. When further interaction did occur, responses were often limited to one sentence. When they did interact, students asked questions relating to upcoming concerts, musical preferences, and outlook on controversial areas such as copyright laws. Few students responded to each other's comments more than once. While I hoped, as the instructor, that this

hands-on educational platform would consistently involve all students and enable everyone to participate and have a voice in the classroom, this was not the case.

Clearly, more free-flowing discussions would offer higher levels of interaction and potentially greater freedom of expression. Making the class more progressive could assist the internalization of knowledge or magnify the impact of the course content. That many students seemed to be task-oriented may have been due to their feeling of being under surveillance by the professor or limited by the parameters of the class. Given different structure in the online jazz history course, the students may have, in fact, been willing to interact more.

Long-term effects of the course and what the students did once they completed the course are also unknown. Students did comment on their appreciation for jazz and on whether they felt encouraged to take more (or fewer) courses online as a result of this course, but there was no evidence to indicate that their behavior would be influenced any further. It would be wonderful to assume that all of the students left the online jazz history class with a greater appreciation for jazz, artistry, and perhaps even media technology, but this study was not designed to address the future behavior of the students in this class, and so this remains unclear.

Future Research

This insider look into the experience of the students in an online course provides direction for further studies and raises questions of how best to accommodate discussion and promote open, free, and democratic exploration within the context of a prefabricated online course.

This study also provides insight on how a larger, more comprehensive study might be completed to a greater degree of success. Several studies will be needed before a meaningful picture can be drawn about what techniques are best suited for supporting democratic environments in online teaching and learning. I particularly hope that such studies will suggest how music educators can help individual students reach their maximum potential in an online environment. In addition, this research might suggest instructional approaches that teachers can use to help students in the development of overall stronger online curricula.

Understanding future engagement. Future studies should include research that measures and follows up with students during and after the completion of the course in order to gain insight into student satisfaction and participation in content following completion of the course. Additionally, future studies that include measurement of short and long-term effects of technologies aside from the ones used in this online course, like video chat, Skype, and other virtual face-to-face activities, may be informative. Lastly, a study that revisits the same participants one to five years after completion of the class would provide a better sense of how their experiences in the class affected their lives.

Also, future research should be informed by the interview questions used in this study. When I added questions that addressed future engagement to the interview script, I did not predict that the answers to these questions would be so uninformative. Future research should look carefully at the questions asked in interviews and whether or not they are useful for providing information about potential future engagement.

Understanding student-to-instructor engagement. In future studies, searching for data that informs student-to-teacher engagement will be important since engagement between students and teachers is just as important to a democratic classroom as interaction between students (Dewey, 1900). Some studies show that the instructor's role is somewhere between a moderator and a participant (Ladyshewsky & Gardmer, 2008; Roehling, 2011). However, it is the ability of the instructor to lead students into discussion or collaborative work that is central to the learning process in an online course (Roehling, 2011).

Connectivity. Some students in this study expressed lack of interest in interacting with or getting to know their classmates and chose to do the bare minimum in regard to interaction. The majority could not recall any other classmates in the post-interview questions. Any connections appeared temporary.

When asked about the type of interaction they had with other students in the class, some students commented on their feeling of anonymity. Even though they knew each other's names, they still felt anonymous. This feeling of anonymity may have negatively impacted the democratic learning environment since studies have shown a similar negative impact in online interaction as a result of anonymity (Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2008; Roehling, 2011). Future research on student connectivity during and after participation in an online class is needed to further understand this area.

The results found in this study could be indicative of the personality type of some students who are drawn to online classes and might not be a representation of all students. For example, indicators of such personality types

include participants' comments that they liked to work alone or that they preferred to work ahead.

Native media habits. Does the online environment facilitate, acknowledge, and integrate students' past experiences? Students' native digital habits are also of interest in online courses. During this study, students felt fairly comfortable due to their native technology habits. They did not report problems with tasks such as posting links from YouTube videos. Although diversity of age and background existed, all participants seemed to have similar comfort levels surrounding technology used in this course. Online learning is potentially a frustrating learning style for some, and in such a case, the convenience would be stifled by a lack of native technology habits.

In the case of participants, age was not a deciding factor in their familiarity and comfort with the technology used in the class; however, native technology habits prior to taking the online class may have been a deciding factor. Future studies are needed regarding the native technology habits of students and how these habits align with the technology used in jazz history courses and online courses in general. Participants indicated in interviews that they wanted more technology, such as smartphone applications and Internet-based class websites with more information about course content, integrated into the course,.

Understanding creepy treehouse. It would also be of interest to gain a holistic understanding of student preferences in relation to integration of their native media habits. For example, would having students sign in to their WebCT

Blackboard account with Facebook Connect be convenient or create a creepy treehouse effect?

Creepy treehouse may be a threat to democracy and community building in online classes (Young, 2008). Future research should pay special attention to uses of technology and learning tools that might cause a creepy treehouse to occur. The perceived effect of a creepy treehouse may detract from students' willingness to engage and to express themselves freely, thus negating the possibility of democratic learning. While the potential for increased motivation and interest in a course due to innovative class structure might be reached by implementing tools like social networking sites (Tapscott, 2009), students will not be responsive if they interpret such technology as a creepy treehouse. It is, therefore, imperative for future researchers and studies to better understand this phenomenon in the online environment.

Future research should also examine the level and types of personal interaction between students and instructors through social media. Since this is an important factor in judging the presence of a creepy treehouse, it is imperative to examine these boundaries. Personal interaction is important to a democratic online learning environment, but the amount and kinds of interaction taking place through social networking media may have negative as well as positive impacts on the learning environment.

Online education and what students want. Another question to explore is whether the community college jazz history online course model aligns with what participants said they wanted from the class. A democratic learning

environment allows participation that is thought-provoking and genuine for all. Simply giving learners what they want (i.e., a convenient, fast, easy-to-navigate course) may not lead to a democratic learning environment and may even result in hindering it. For future studies, this relationship between structure of the online learning environment and resulting qualities of learning and interaction in the learning environment is important to consider.

The introverted nature of some of the participants in this study is important to consider in creating future studies and future online courses. If students chose the online course for its convenience and to utilize the anonymity to work independently, is it even possible to foster Dewey's vision of a democratic learning environment? Students admitted that they preferred to post discussion responses that were not meaningful just for the sake of completing the assignment. Is it possible to structure online classes, and in-person classes, so that more authentic learning occurs? Insincere engagement, which exists in discussion boards in online classes, can exist in in-person classes as well. Further research is necessary to examine kinds of engagement in all types of classes.

Using research to create online courses.. A question to explore is whether or not more research will lead to a holistic understanding of students in the online environment and subsequently empower instructors to create higher quality online courses. Currently, individual instructors have the freedom to create their own curriculum with either only vague guidelines from administration or informal advice from fellow instructors. For example, the amount of time the instructors give to student feedback is unregulated, and in some cases this may

lead to students' lack of interaction and lack of fostering of academic and technological skills. Although the instructors teaching online courses may have a reasonable amount of live teaching experience, their ability to reach students in a meaningful way via the Internet can be limited. Also, the time and support necessary to alleviate technical hurdles can potentially paralyze a teacher who is unfamiliar with the platform, thus hampering the students' learning processes.

Jazz research. This study also has implications for future studies in online jazz education research. Future studies should include (1) models for nurturing jazz and technology in a cultural, sequential, and developmental fashion that students can relate to and apply to their lives, (2) an increased understanding of how to help the amateur musician learn to improvise and listen so they can better understand jazz and how this might apply to music in general, (3) an inquiry into the relationship between human communication in sound and jazz, (4) a comparison between ways that online jazz history students listen, respond, and interact with each other and their teachers in both pure online and hybrid educational environments, and (5) a study of whether or not online classroom culture should be similar to or different from face-to-face classrooms.

Questions of how we can increase free-flowing discussions and avoid teacher-directed power in online jazz history environments are important for research, as well as for practice. Although student respondents in this study did not perceive the learning environment to be intimidating or threatening, they still felt censored and judged.

Digital Democracy

Dewey's vision for democracy in the learning environment requires participation and engagement on the part of the learner as well as the teacher (Dewey, 1902/1956). Qualities needed to encourage this type of environment include interaction, learning by doing, and reflection. The themes in this study aligned with these qualities. Reflection aligns closely with potential student engagement in the future as a result of the course. Learning by doing aligns closely with student participation and freedom of expression. Lastly, Dewey's idea of interaction aligns closely with student-to-student engagement and student engagement with course content. Accessibility, in regards to the technology used in the course and the course content, is an overreaching theme that influences all of Dewey's qualities of democracy as well as the themes discussed in this study.

Democratic education may be in conflict with personal and institutional goals. Motivations for taking the online jazz history course may be to fulfill an interest in the history of an American music genre or to fulfill the academic requirements (humanities and cultural awareness) in a convenient format. Understanding these motivations will influence the instructor's ability to tailor the class to the needs of the students and to promote an interactive, democratic learning environment. These convenience motivations align, partially, with the motivations of promoters of online learning. Convenience is a quality promoted heavily in advertisement of online courses, and it is something that participants in this study reported valuing and enjoying throughout the online jazz history course. Whether or not the alignment of these ideals in the online jazz history course

serves a democratic learning environment is questionable. Future studies should address the needs of students as they relate to or differ from the needs and wants advertised by online education.

Motivation for choosing online courses over onsite courses seems to be varied, but some students value the practicality and ease of use of scheduling online courses provide. At the onset of online learning, the marketing messages of schools initially appealed to "distant learners" who could be reached through this new opportunity. As online learning moved forward, the range of opportunities and flexibility of scheduling that online learning affords have become a draw for students from any geographical location. The format appeals to those who may be struggling to juggle part-time jobs while being full-time students. Mature students may be motivated as they contend with the demands of family life and the extra travel costs that an on-site course imposes. On a very practical level, learners find the online format offers, if nothing more, a solution to the demands of their daily lives. Promoters now advertise these "advantages."

While promoters portray courses to have the draw of accreditation and, in some cases, a reduced cost with enhanced learning, the sometimes limited contours of current online learning programs are seldom considered problems by students looking for a "quick fix" to a scheduling problem or a way to get a course over with. With this motivation driving the educational consumer, it has been increasingly easy for universities and colleges to offer online courses and then, with the intrinsic motivation of their users, expand course offerings and even programs in response.

Parker (2008) grapples with quality control issues that plague online programs, stating that "buyer beware is the watchword for students, institutions and public agencies alike" (p. 317). While promises are made about what online learning can deliver, evidence about whether or which of these promises have been met remains questionable. In what ways can educators be informed by guiding principles of democratic design to address gaps in what promoters of online education say it provides and what is actually provided? How can we ensure instructional decisions are in balance with and not led by market competition and capitalism?

The over-arching question as to whether or not an online learning environment can support digital democracy cannot be answered in a vacuum. The inquirer must consider that education that is immediately valuable to the students' lives co-exists along with education that strives to enable students to contribute to society. Some students take classes simply to fulfill requirements, while others aim to gain learning experiences that will influence the rest of their lives and be memorable. In many cases, these two behaviors can be displayed by the same student, depending on the circumstances of his/her personal lives during a particular class or semester.

The prospect of a digital democracy, which would combine the qualities of Dewey's democracy with contemporary students' needs, wants, and motivations for pursuing higher education, is an intriguing prospect. However, the possibility of a digital democracy may not be within the reach of contemporary online educators or students. Findings in this study did not indicate the presence of a

functioning version of Dewey's democratic classroom but instead a learning environment dominated by a need for convenience, a lack of interaction beyond requirements, and little future engagement or reflection.

Implications for Practice

Online learning has grown exponentially and is rapidly gaining momentum. The results of this study indicate there are instances when the course of study under investigation created opportunity for democratic learning to occur and other instances when it did not occur. If educators understand when courses foster democratic teaching and learning and when there are gaps, we can then focus attention on improving and implementing strategies to support democratic teaching and learning. Considerations surrounding the online environment include isolation and distraction, hindered social development, professors not being ahead of the technological learning curve of their students, and unmotivated students. Although it is often perceived that technology such as webcams, Skype, instant messaging, and the inclusion of hybrid classes has positively affected online teaching, the democratic framework has been endangered. Online courses are convenient, especially for the adult learner, but are they democratic?

In the past few years, there have been an increasing number of studies surrounding student satisfaction, types of motivation, and online student behavior in college level classes. More of these studies are needed, particularly in the area of music and specifically online jazz history, to truly gain an understanding of future learning trends and to anticipate online learning scenarios. Implications of

this study also show that there is an overlap in online learning features and trends as they relate to the students' native technology habits.

Educational gaming is not a new phenomenon, but it would be novel to educate through an entirely MUVE environment (Annetta et al., 2008). The concept of distance learning students being taught in a virtual classroom surrounded by their peers has potential for traction. Students could also enjoy new levels of educational community or collaborative learning opportunities that have not yet been achieved by most online education learning management systems (Annetta et al., 2008).

In the future, virtually interactive games and other motivational tools along with assessment opportunities should be implemented to enhance online learning. As Cheng suggests, further research into the effectiveness of tools for online learning needs to be a priority (Cheng, 2009). The use of such tools has great potential for engaging students and contributing to democracy in the online learning environment.

In the jazz history platform in this study, the relatively structured, disciplined, and ordered environment represents a paradigm war with student-directed, progressive education. The curriculum design in this setting inherently polarizes these extremes. For example, students are required to answer some quiz questions in traditional styles, such as multiple-choice, while also working through a web-based music software program exploring the instruments in a jazz ensemble. To truly understand the nature of human experience, further research is necessary about traditional and progressive forms of education in the online

environment. It is imperative that we have a better understanding of our students' present and future needs. Some learning platforms that employ game-based learning activities have been successful (Annetta et al., 2008), and future research into learning modules that are interactive and game-like and their impact on democracy in an online environment is necessary.

Additionally, feedback, communication, and rewards from the instructor to the students seemed to be appreciated and also motivational in this study. Students commented on the ease of communication with the instructor. Questions arose about topics such as the hiccups in the technology, late submittals, clarification of concert dates and venues, guidelines for the class, and other assignments, resources, and technological support. None of this interaction with the instructor was democratic in nature. It was instead simply a question-and-answer interaction without discussion. However, the mere fact that the instructor's responses to students' questions came in a timely fashion was highly regarded by the students as a motivational facet of the class.

One of the attractive points of the course for students in this study was the flexibility of scheduling. Although a hybrid course that required students to meet with each other and the instructor face-to-face might enhance interaction, it could also be perceived as a burden for students such as PT, who had to complete the course in his spare time when not caring for his child or working his full-time job.

On the rare occasions that content was student-directed and students could choose what they wanted to share and discuss, freedom of expression blossomed. It is possible that the reason for this was a combination of the type of question as

well as the willingness of students to jump in and interact. Discovery and exploratory learning seemed to evolve when the instructor got out of the way. In fact, the instructor commenting in open discussion forums often decreased interaction in the learning community.

There are very few studies in the area of online jazz history and democratic approaches to online teaching and learning. More studies are needed to reach a clearer understanding of an effective democratic online learning environment. The issues that come about in an online class through student interaction, accessibility, and freedom of expression are important facets in understanding the democratic learning experience. Since very little research attention has been given to examining democracy in the online jazz history learning environment, specific studies in this areas as well as research applying to general online learning environments will be necessary in the development of online learning in the future. Further research is needed in areas especially relating to how the social spaces of the Internet work and how students interact with each other, technology, and their instructors. As technology continues to develop and as the social spaces in which society interacts continue to change and evolve toward online environments, research into how to best adapt to these changes in democratic educational environments must be done. Simply put, as learning environments and society change, research and investigation become increasingly vital (Levin, 1998).

Having examined my online jazz history platform, the reality is that the interaction and learning in this and other online classes may not follow Dewey's

vision of a democratic learning environment. By virtue of their anonymity, the students are creating an even wider gap between traditional and progressive forms of education. Through themes illuminated by the students in interviews and discussion posts, it is clear that the students are not using their online presence to participate in meaningful ways in this online course but are instead using anonymity to (at times) avoid interacting and to get through the class assignments unnoticed. Online learning at the college level is rapidly changing and impacting the quality and character of education. This study has shown that although online environments may be perceived to be safe, ethical, and of value, the ability of online environments to provide a democratic environment where students interpret, critique, and understand the world in which they live is far removed from reality.

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APPENDIX A

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN STUDY

Blogging:

Prefabricated Course: A course design that is laid out or implemented before students enroll, or before the start of the course. The course in this study was a prefabricated in that the construction of the course was already in place and students did not have an opportunity to direct course content.

Web 2.0: this is a shift in the layout and purpose of websites. Web 2.0 online tools are based around communities and user created content. O'Reily Media, in 2003, originated the term. Web 1.0 was a "read write web" that offered few opportunities for community or users to offer input or content. Web 2.0 offers more of these opportunities to users.

Cloud Computing: Cloud computing, though not directly relevant to this study, is relevant in a Web 2.0 environment, which Katz (2008) defined as the online environment in which technology tools facilitate interaction, collaboration, and sharing of information.

Online Community: a community of both individuals and organizations who, though geographically dispersed, are connected by the Internet. Another phrase for an online community is *virtual* community or *web community*.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): an online system designed to operate in an educational setting. A VLE works over the Internet and provides a collection of tools for communication, uploading and delivery of content, administration of student groups, assignment and return of students' work, collection and organization of student grades, and implementation of questionnaires and other progress-tracking tools. BlackBoard is one such

virtual learning environment, or web-based server software platform. BlackBoard is equipped with functions that facilitate course management. It has a customizable open architecture and a scalable design, which allows for integration of the students' own information systems. The goal of BlackBoard is to add online elements to courses that are in-person. It also provides a platform for courses delivered entirely online.

Native Media Habits: the students' existing proficiencies and knowledge of the Internet and related technology, specifically technology used in an online learning environment.

The N-Generation: according to Tapscott (2000), this refers to "the Internet generation, [or] the 'echo boom,' born from January 1977 to December 1997- the children of the baby boomers. As a group, they make up 30% of today's population" (p. 24). For this study, some of the participants may fall into this category while others will be older. The comparison of N-Geners and those who are not N-Geners will be important in this research.

Discussion Board: one of many functions of learning systems like BlackBoard that allows instructors and students to initiate and respond to existing discussion threads or conversations online.

Discussion Forums or Internet Forums: similar to a discussion board in that its users respond to posted questions or topics. The difference is that the venue for discussion forums is the web, in general, instead of a learning system, like BlackBoard. Additionally, a discussion forum response or

prompt can include things like media, pictures, or web links as well as text.

Web CT: the first successful course management system for colleges and other higher education institutions. It is now owned by BlackBoard.

MP3: an abbreviation for the audio compression technology MPEG-2 Audio Layer III used in the exchange and use of digital music. An MP3 file compresses CD-quality sound by a variable factor. MP3 files can be played on a computer via media player software, such as iTunes or Windows Media Player, as well as on iPods and other portable media devices. MP3 sound quality cannot fully match that of the original CD, but it is still widely used.

Podcast: a group of digital media files that are organized episodically and can be played on many handheld MP3 players. Podcasts can either be audio files or video files with audio. The word *webcast* is synonymous, but podcast has become more widely used as the popularity of the iPod has increased.

YouTube: according to the online PCmag Encyclopedia (YouTube, n.d.), YouTube is a web video sharing site that allows users to store short videos, either original or TV and movie clips, for private or public viewing. Founded in 2005, it was acquired by Google in 2006.

The Jazz Bandleader: on the PBS Kids website, this is an interactive software module designed to help students better understand musical concepts and learn to identify instruments in a jazz ensemble. It uses sound clips to teach identification of instruments as well as to convey a sense of the

instrument's role in the jazz ensemble, e.g., lead, rhythm, or accompaniment.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE YOUTUBE CHANNELS

College or University	YouTube channel
Arizona State University	http://www.youtube.com/user/ASU#p/a/u/0/eIcv1BIC_p0
University of Michigan	http://www.youtube.com/user/UMNewsService
New York University	http://www.youtube.com/user/nyu?blend=6&ob=5
University of Arizona	http://www.youtube.com/user/uanews?blend=8&ob=5
University of Miami Middletown	http://www.youtube.com/user/MiamiMiddletown?blend=9&ob=5
University of California Berkeley	http://www.youtube.com/user/UCBerkeley
Notre Dame College	http://www.youtube.com/user/NDdotEDU
Mesa Community College	http://www.youtube.com/user/mesacc
Indiana University Athletics	http://www.youtube.com/user/IUAthletics

APPENDIX C

RECORDING HISTORY

After setting the invention aside for nearly 10 years, Edison returned to his phonograph, in frustration, after other inventors began making improvements on it. Soon after, he developed the wax drum, which was considerably more durable than that of tin foil (brooks, 2004, p. 4).

Edison and a few other entrepreneurs started the first record label in Washington DC in 1888 (Brooks, 2004, p. 5). Sony and CBS Records can actually trace their lineage back to that original venture, Columbia Phonograph Company. Records began as an oddity but soon led to jukeboxes (Brooks, 2004, p. 5), and by 1890, smaller and less expensive units were designed and sold to the public.

During this period artists and musicians could still make more money performing than recording. Even if they had the desire to record, the fledgling labels could not afford to pay huge contracts for them (Brooks, 2004, p. 5).

It was during the record period that jazz was first taught at a conservatory. The Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, Germany started a jazz program in 1928 (DRA). Unfortunately, the program was shut down in 1933 under pressure from the Nazis. A former student of the Hoch Conservatory, Percy Grainger, took the next step. After becoming Dean of Music at New York University in 1932, he included jazz on the syllabus there. He also invited Duke Ellington to the school as a guest lecturer (Lawrence, 2001).

The Danish engineer**,** Valdemar Poulsen**,** invented the magnetic sound recording, the precursor to the cassette disc, in 1869 (Morton, 2004, p. 50). For this device, a microphone sent an electrical current to an electromagnet, which

radiated a magnetic field and created something like an invisible magnetic image (Morton, 2004, p. 50).

This technology remained relatively dormant until the late 1930s, when inventors and laboratories began re-working the concept again. In the United States, it was the military who saw the value of the technology and subsidized more research and development. The steel-tape recorder, developed by Bell Telephone Laboratories, resulted and was first sold by Western Electronic (Morton, 2004, p. 106). A portable, battery-powered version was used by the Allies' signal corps and journalists during World War II (Morton, 2004, p. 109-111).

In Europe, Poulsen's technology developed differently when the Germans invented the magnetophone in the early 1930s. This device more closely resembled the later cassette tape that would gain popularity, and required a highly specialized production process to create the fine iron powder attached to the recording strip (Morton, 2004, p. 114). In 1936, the London Philharmonic tested a musical recording on tape, marking the birth of recording music to modern tape (Morton, 2004, p. 115).

Recording techniques continued to advance through the late 1940s and 50s with the ability to record in stereo and the ability to splice, which made getting sound recorded perfectly in one take unnecessary (Morton, 2004, p. 144).

In 1955, the first battery-powered tape players began appearing (Morton, 2004, p. 156-167). In 1964 both the cassette tape and 8-track were introduced. In

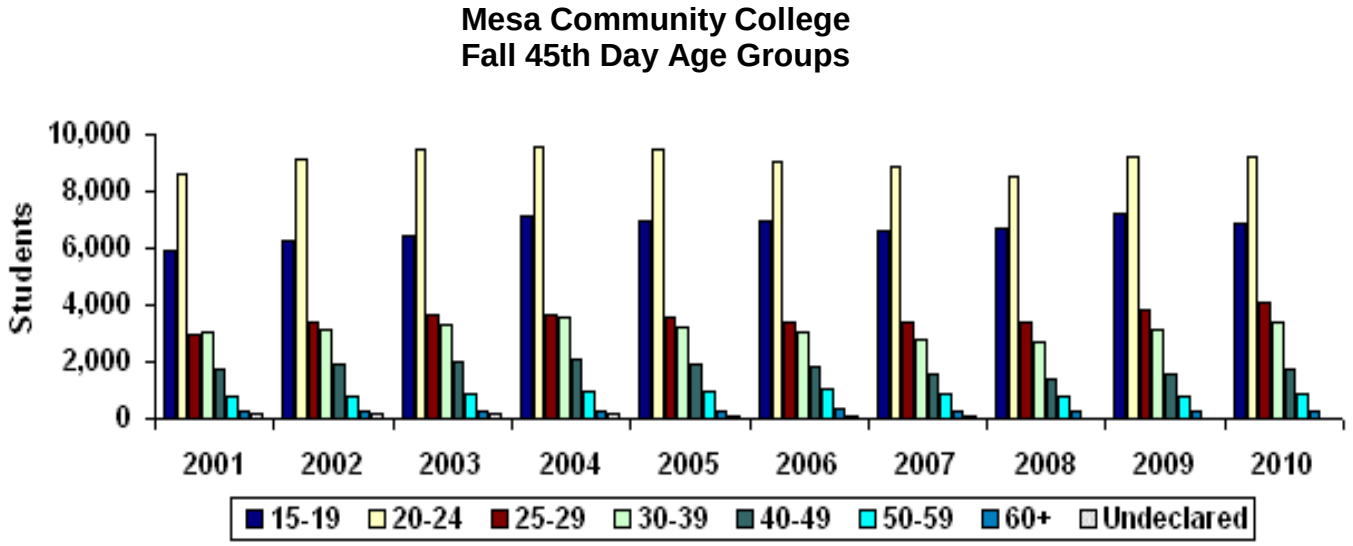
the mid 1970s records still reigned supreme, followed by 8-tracks, and then cassettes, but by 1985 the cassette was dominant.

The Compact Disc (CD) resulted from the introduction of laser discs in the 1980s. First introduced in 1982, it cost $2,000 for a player and $12-15 a disc (Morton, 2004, 172). It took 12 years after introduction of the CD for it to begin outselling cassette tapes.

APPENDIX D

COLLEGE STATISTICS FROM OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN THE MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

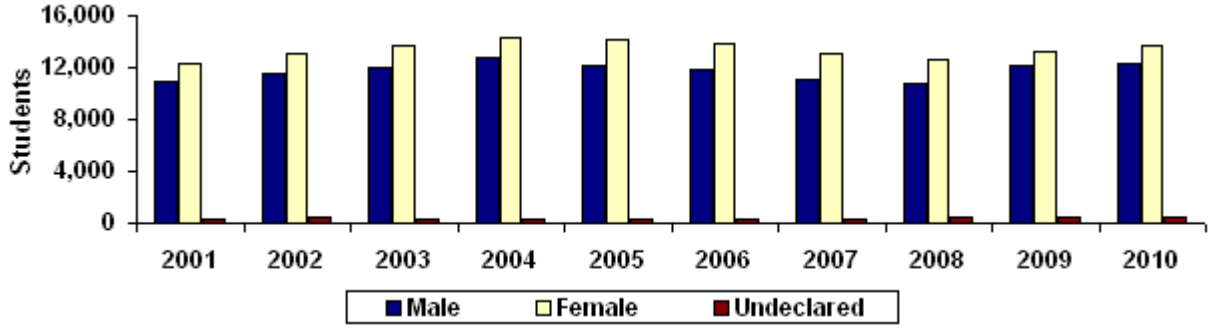
From:
http://www.maricopa.edu/business/ir/trends/HTML/Fall45_MC.htmhttp://www.maricopa.edu/business/ir/trends/HTML/Fall45_MC.htm



Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
15-19	5,888	6,232	6,454	7,127	6,968	6,993	6,567	6,720	7,191	6,859
20-24	8,601	9,109	9,485	9,528	9,462	9,063	8,886	8,564	9,188	9,221
25-29	2,988	3,398	3,623	3,660	3,559	3,413	3,429	3,356	3,827	4,095
30-39	3,067	3,136	3,277	3,533	3,255	3,025	2,760	2,712	3,107	3,348
40-49	1,755	1,900	2,003	2,103	1,923	1,866	1,590	1,407	1,569	1,738
50-59	809	800	870	972	998	1,082	896	797	798	894
60+	254	229	235	262	260	321	293	247	259	239
Undeclared	200	201	191	147	103	118	49	22	21	14
Total	**23,562**	**25,005**	**26,138**	**27,332**	**26,528**	**25,881**	**24,470**	**23,825**	**25,960**	**26,408**
% 15-19	25.0%	24.9%	24.7%	26.1%	26.3%	27.0%	26.8%	28.2%	27.7%	26.0%
% 20-24	36.5%	36.4%	36.3%	34.9%	35.7%	35.0%	36.3%	35.9%	35.4%	34.9%
% 25-29	12.7%	13.6%	13.9%	13.4%	13.4%	13.2%	14.0%	14.1%	14.7%	15.5%
% 30-39	13.0%	12.5%	12.5%	12.9%	12.3%	11.7%	11.3%	11.4%	12.0%	12.7%
% 40-49	7.4%	7.6%	7.7%	7.7%	7.2%	7.2%	6.5%	5.9%	6.0%	6.6%
% 50-59	3.4%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%	3.8%	4.2%	3.7%	3.3%	3.1%	3.4%
% 60+	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%
% Undeclared	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

Print in landscape for best results Last updated onNovember 18, 2010
Source: Official 45th Day headcount as reported by colleges.
Maricopa Community College District • Office of Institutional Effectiveness • Maricopa Trends • www.maricopa.edu/business/ir

Mesa Community College
Fall 45th Day Gender



Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Male	10,863	11,484	12,051	12,742	12,088	11,787	11,049	10,816	12,175	12,300
Female	12,352	13,135	13,727	14,245	14,105	13,776	13,120	12,543	13,266	13,674
Undeclared	347	386	360	345	335	318	301	466	519	434
Total	**23,562**	**25,005**	**26,138**	**27,332**	**26,528**	**25,881**	**24,470**	**23,825**	**25,960**	**26,408**
% Male	46.1%	45.9%	46.1%	46.6%	45.6%	45.5%	45.2%	45.4%	46.9%	46.6%
% Female	52.4%	52.5%	52.5%	52.1%	53.2%	53.2%	53.6%	52.6%	51.1%	51.8%
% Undeclared	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	2.0%	2.0%	1.6%

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Last updated onNovember 18, 2010

Source: Official 45th Day headcount as reported by colleges.

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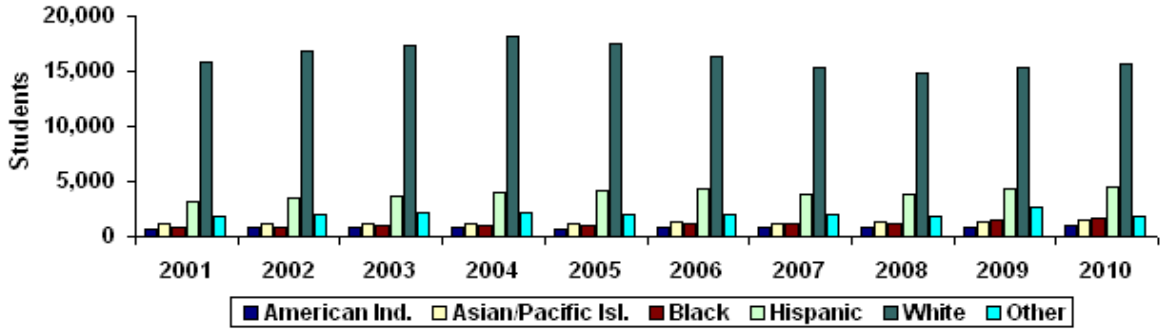
Mesa Community College Fall 45th Day Ethnicity



Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
American Ind.	699	761	834	763	746	814	842	812	900	1,076
Asian/Pacific Isl.	1,242	1,179	1,209	1,208	1,237	1,251	1,243	1,271	1,332	1,417
Black	806	841	987	999	1,018	1,150	1,157	1,199	1,469	1,713
Hispanic	3,176	3,462	3,708	4,053	4,143	4,289	3,905	3,810	4,351	4,583
White	15,819	16,804	17,295	18,116	17,452	16,370	15,314	14,908	15,316	15,716
Other	1,820	1,958	2,105	2,193	1,932	2,007	2,009	1,825	2,592	1,903
Total	**23,562**	**25,005**	**26,138**	**27,332**	**26,528**	**25,881**	**24,470**	**23,825**	**25,960**	**26,408**

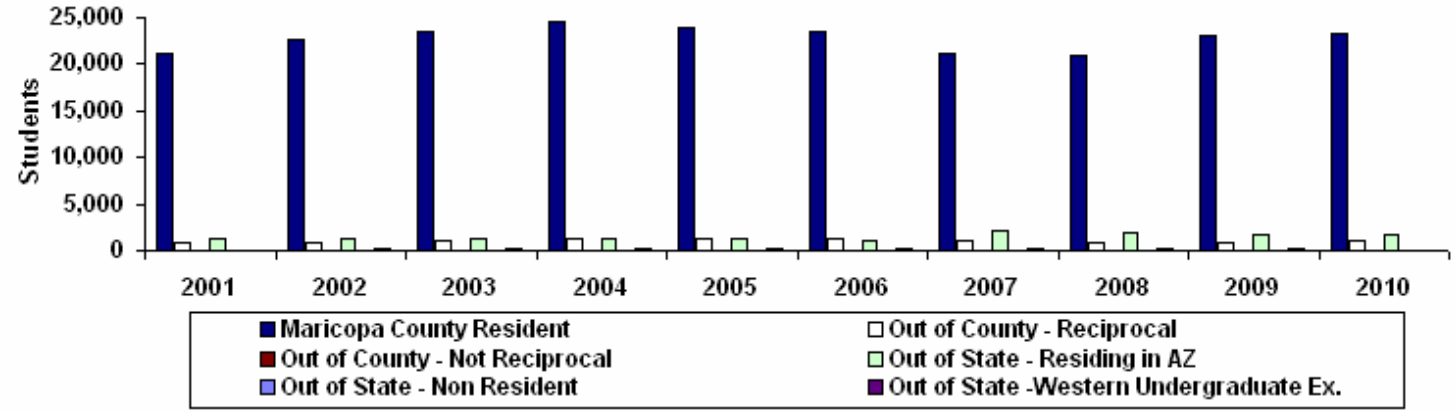
% American Ind.	3.0%	3.0%	3.2%	2.8%	2.8%	3.1%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	4.1%
% Asian/Pacific Isl.	5.3%	4.7%	4.6%	4.4%	4.7%	4.8%	5.1%	5.3%	5.1%	5.4%
% Black	3.4%	3.4%	3.8%	3.7%	3.8%	4.4%	4.7%	5.0%	5.7%	6.5%
% Hispanic	13.5%	13.8%	14.2%	14.8%	15.6%	16.6%	16.0%	16.0%	16.8%	17.4%
% White	67.1%	67.2%	66.2%	66.3%	65.8%	63.3%	62.6%	62.6%	59.0%	59.5%
% Other	7.7%	7.8%	8.1%	8.0%	7.3%	7.8%	8.2%	7.7%	10.0%	7.2%

Print in landscape for best results Last updated on November 18, 2010

Source: Official 45th Day headcount as reported by colleges.

Maricopa Community College District • Office of Institutional Effectiveness • Maricopa Trends • www.maricopa.edu/business/ir

Mesa Community College
Fall 45th Day Residency



Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Maricopa County Resident	21,212	22,571	23,550	24,594	23,900	23,406	21,115	20,935	23,082	23,301
Out of County - Reciprocal	823	950	1,100	1,227	1,185	1,210	977	844	919	1,094
Out of County – Not Reciprocal	83	97	48	39	49	41	35	40	37	47
Out of State - Residing in AZ	1,366	1,264	1,303	1,323	1,249	1,076	2,202	1,850	1,742	1,780
Out of State – Non Resident	0	1	0	3	4	3	8	45	55	82
Out of State -Western Undergraduate Ex.	78	122	137	146	141	145	133	111	125	104
Total	**23,562**	**25,005**	**26,138**	**27,332**	**26,528**	**25,881**	**24,470**	**23,825**	**25,960**	**26,408**

%Maricopa County Resident	90.0%	90.3%	90.1%	90.0%	90.1%	90.4%	86.3%	87.9%	88.9%	88.2%
%Out of County - Reciprocal	3.5%	3.8%	4.2%	4.5%	4.5%	4.7%	4.0%	3.5%	3.5%	4.1%
%Out of County - Not Reciprocal	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
%Out of State - Residing in AZ	5.8%	5.1%	5.0%	4.8%	4.7%	4.2%	9.0%	7.8%	6.7%	6.7%
%Out of State - Non Resident	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
%Out of State -Western Undergraduate Ex.	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%

Print in landscape for best results

Last updated onNovember 18, 2010

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APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCRIPTS

Interview Part 1 Questions

Protocol:
-Introduce the study fully before beginning any interviews
-Ensure that students participating are only those who have signed permission forms
-Reassure students that they are free to answer questions honestly and that the aim is to work together to figure out a way to create technological learning tools that are effective
-Give students and participants opportunities to ask questions
-Speak clearly and repeat questions, if necessary
-Ensure students understand the questions
Samples of Questions Designed For Students

Part A: Personal Information

Grade
Age
Gender
Current course load

Questions for First Interview, Experience with Technology

1. Have you even taken an online class before?
2. Do you enjoy using technology? Explain.
3. Do you have a computer at home?
4. How often do you use e-mail and computers outside of school?

5. Tell me how you use technology in your life?
6. How often do you use technology for educational purposes?
7. How do you feel about the use of technology for educational purposes?
8. In what ways do you use technology for educational purposes?
9. What do you see as barriers to technology use for educational purposes?
10. How well have you coped with the technology for this course so far?
11. What's working for you-have you had any trouble?
12. Why did you choose to do an online course?

Questions for Second Interview

1. You just experienced using _____ online interactive learning tool. In what ways did you find this tool useful?
2. What kinds of things did you learn from this lesson?
3. Did you feel that your instructor's lesson was enhanced by the use of this technology? Please elaborate.
4. In what ways do you feel you would you learn best about Jazz history online?

5. If you could learn completely online with a laptop in front of you at all times would this appeal to you? Why or why not?
6. Has this experience prompted you to think about this topic differently?
7. What kinds of questions do you have now that you have experienced a lesson on this topic?
8. Do you have any concerns about interacting through discussion forums with other students?
9. How much prior experience do you have viewing YouTube music videos?

Questions for Third Interview

1. What topics do you feel you were most useful in the online learning environment? Why?
2. Are there any particular learning tools that stood out to you? Why?
3. What additional support do you feel might have helped you to learn?
4. What kinds of learning tools would you like to see developed in the future?
5. What was your initial reaction to the online learning experience?
6. Would you recommend this kind of course to others?
7. If you could have any kind of online resource, what would it be?

Post Interview Questions

1) What factored into your decision to take an online class?

    i) A lot of students said that they take online classes because they have more freedom that way. Did that factor into your decision to take an online class?

2) What would you say if someone asked you if they should take an online course?

3) What have you heard people/other students say about online courses?

    i) Have you heard that they're not good to take?

4) We've heard others say that online courses are intimidating. Do you find them intimidating?

5) Some students said that they believe online classes are not good if you are a procrastinator. What do you think?
6) If you were giving advice to someone who is designing an online course, what would you tell them?
7) What would be the biggest differences between the same class taught online and in person?
    i) Which would be more challenging?
    ii) Talk about the difference between your interactions with other students in an online environment as opposed to an in-person class."
    iii) Are your interactions with other students the same in in-person classes as they are in online classes? How are they different?
    iv) Is there a difference between how you interact with the instructor in an online environment versus an in-person environment?
    v) Do you feel your instructor is more accessible in an online class or an in-person class?
    vi) In your in-person classes, how have you interacted with the instructor?

User Experience Questions

1) Please talk us through the user experience of:
    1. YouTube posting
    2. Journal
    3. Discussion Board
    4. PBS Kids

2) Talk me through every step and if you run into something that stood out to you either because it was easy to use or because it was difficult, tell my why and how you would change it.

After unit completion

1) If something hadn't worked or if you had run into a hang-up, what would you have done?
    i) Were there any particular assignments where that happened?
    ii) What did you do then?
2) After you finished this particular assignment, did you go back and look at it ever again?

APPENDIX F

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR APPLICATION FOR THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Protocol Title: An Examination of Particular Technological Features in an Online Jazz History Course and How Students Learn, Interact and Form Communities

Protocol Type: Expedited/Full Board

Approval Period: 09/09/2010-08/31/2011

Important Note: **This Print View may not reflect all comments and contingencies for approval.**
Please check the comments section of the online protocol.

*** * * Event History * * ***

Event History

Date	Status	View Attachments	Letters
08/22/2010	PROTOCOL CREATED		
08/24/2010	SUBMITTED	Y	
08/24/2010	PANEL ASSIGNED		
08/25/2010	REVIEWER(S) ASSIGNED		
09/09/2010	APPROVED	Y	Y

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Sandra Stauffer MUSIC
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	09/03/2010
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	09/03/2010
IRB Protocol #:	1008005443
Study Title:	An Examination of Particular Technological Features in an Online Jazz History Course and How Students Learn, Interact and Form Communities

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) (2) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Sandra Stauffer MUSIC
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	09/03/2010
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	09/03/2010
IRB Protocol #:	1008005443
Study Title:	An Examination of Particular Technological Features in an Online Jazz History Course and How Students Learn, Interact and Form Communities

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You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

APPENDIX G

SYLLABUS

You are responsible for ALL information in this syllabus. Read carefully.

SYLLABUS & COURSE OUTLINE

MHL 145: JAZZ AND POPULAR MUSIC

Instructor: Rob Hunter

Office Hours: M/W 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Office: MU-10

E-mail: ***jazzhunteronline@gmail.com***

Office Phone: 480-461-7884

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The study of social contribution to the evolution of American Jazz from the mid 1800's to the present.

PREREQUISITES: None

REQUIRED TEXT: *History and Tradition of Jazz,* Thomas E. Larson - accompanying CD's (Any edition will work but you should strive to use the most recent)

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

1. ATTENDANCE

Online participation is a very important aspect of this course, serving the obvious function of giving you the opportunity to hear and see the music that is discussed in your text. A significant amount of lecture material does not appear in the text, and various support materials are also given out. Illness or other circumstances may cause you to miss class

2. WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If you decide not to continue in this course, YOU are responsible for completing a "drop-add" form with Student Records to withdraw yourself from class. You are also required to notify me of your decision. If it is too late in the semester to drop yourself without my signature, I can do it for you, but only AT YOUR REQUEST. If you fail to login to the class site for three weeks or more, or miss two consecutive unit assignments, you may be dropped from the class, at my discretion and without warning.

MCC REFUND POLICY CHANGE!

> **To qualify for ANY refund of your tuition and fees, you must process your withdrawal paperwork within the 100% refund period, as specified by the Cashier's office. If you are withdrawn from the class after the 100% refund period (whether you complete an add-drop form, are dropped by your instructor, or being purged for non-payment) YOU STILL MUST PAY ALL TUITION AND FEES.**

3. **CHAPTER QUESTIONS***:* At the end of every chapter are Study Questions. Each question should be answered with at least one thoughtful paragraph. Use your own words when answering questions, and be sure to use quotation marks and citations when quoting the text, otherwise you are plagiarizing!

4. **CONCERT ATTENDANCE**: You will be required to attend two live jazz concerts or jazz nightclub engagements and write a review. Specific information on this assignment will follow. Many of these events are free for students if you plan ahead. http://jazzinaz.org/http://jazzinaz.org/ is a good place to start.

5. **LISTENING**: Listen to jazz recordings in preparation for exams and chapter questions.

6. Keep an organizational file of handouts and class notes.

7. **QUIZZES and FINAL EXAM**: There will be 4 ONLINE QUIZZES during the term and a FINAL EXAM. They will be announced in advance.

8. **ASSIGNMENTS AND QUIZZES**: Reading, writing and listening assignments are required.

GRADING:

You will be graded in the following areas:

1. Quizzes (include listening from your CD): 4 @ 125 points = 500 total

2. Chapter Study Questions: 5 @ 50 points = 250 total

3. Concert attendance and critique: 2 @ 25 points = 50 total

4. Journal Entries: 5 @ 20 points = 100

5. Discussion participation: 5 @ 10 points = 50 (points will be included at end of the semester)

6. Listening Discussion = 50 extra points when applicable

The total of all of these areas will result in your final grade.

A: 1000 - 900; B: 899 - 800; C: 799 - 700; D: 699 - 600; F: 599 or lower.

GRADE TABULATION

Quiz 1:_____ Quiz 2:_____ Quiz 3:_____Quiz 4:_____

Concert Attendance and Critiques 1: _____

Concert Attendance and Critiques 2: _____

Chapter Study Questions 1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____ 4: _____ 5: _____

Journal Entries 1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____ 4: _____ 5: _____

Discussion Board

Listening Discussion

THE GRADEBOOK

You may access your grades at any time through the "My Grades" link. The "Percentage Grade" column displays your current cumulative percentage for all work that has been submitted and graded. Your "Current Letter Grade" is based on the Percentage Grade value. Assignment and Discussion grades will appear in the grade book after I have graded all submitted assignments for that unit. Quiz grades will appear in the grade book as soon as you complete the

quiz, but will not be included in the "Percentage Grade" value until after the due date, when everyone has had a chance to complete the quiz. If you have any questions about anything related to grading or the grade book, contact me immediately.

UNIT ASSIGNMENTS: CHAPTER QUESTIONS AND JOURNAL ENTRY

Located within the *"Learning Modules"* link of our course, you will find introductory lecture notes for each unit along with links to the assignments that need to be completed. You can also find all Journal Entry and Chapter Question instructions through the *"Assignments"* link.

One JOURNAL ENTRY is required for each unit (5 in total).
Your Chapter Questions should be answered in complete sentences. This is a requirement for all 5 units (questions are from chapters in your book) and journal entries are to be submitted on, or prior to, each due date throughout the course. Your work should be submitted through the ***"Assignments"*** area of the class website, and must be submitted by **11:59 pm** to receive full credit. This deadline is firm, so plan ahead. Write and save your work using a word processor program, then copy the text of your essay and journal into the textbox provided. In you want, you may also include your assignment as an attachment, in addition to copying the text into the textbox, but the file must end in file extension ".doc", or ".rtf". Please DO NOT SEND ATTACHMENTS ONLY.

Due dates for all assignments can be found in the COURSE OUTLINE portion of this Syllabus (below), as well as on the class Calendar. All units are due on either a Tuesday or a Friday, approximately 10 days apart. So that you do not lose track of important due dates, I recommend printing the following Course Outline and posting it somewhere near your workstation.

Late assignments will be accepted for reduced credit, if submitted BEFORE THE NEXT UNIT'S DUE DATE. Assignments received within 24 hours will be penalized 20% of the total points possible. Assignments received more than 24 hours late will be penalized 50%.

CHAPTER QUESTIONS (50 PTS EACH) Questions located at the end of each chapter in your required text

CHAPTER QUESTIONS UNIT ONE (ANSWER QUESTIONS AT BACK OF EACH CHAPTER)

Chapter 1: Understanding and Defining Jazz

Chapter 2: African Music and the Pre-Jazz Era

UNIT TWO
Chapter 3: Jazz Takes Root

Chapter 4: The Jazz Age

UNIT THREE

Chapter 5: New York and Kansas City

Chapter 6: The Swing Era

UNIT FOUR

Chapter 7: Bebop and Modern Jazz

Chapter 8: Fragmentation

UNIT FIVE

Chapter 9: The 1960's and Beyond

Chapter 10: Jazz Today

I STRONGLY SUGGEST typing out your responses first in a word document to assure Chapter Questions are doubled-spaced, 12-pt font. When finished, cut and paste your work into your assignment submission. Since technology can be unpredictable, make sure you SAVE YOUR WORK, in case you need to send it again.

IMPORTANT: It is *highly* recommended that you proofread all your written work at least twice before submission. (This means more than just running the spell check!) Extensive spelling and/or grammatical errors WILL negatively affect your grade.

Assignments will be evaluated on how well you put together the course material and the conclusions you draw from your information. The information should be gathered from the text readings, the Unit Introductions, and any other necessary research. Take advantage of the suggested websites to find additional information. **Some topics are not covered in much depth in the text, and therefore *require* extra research.** To be really successful, take the initiative to make sure you have all the information. DO NOT use the assignments as a forum to champion your favorite artists. Instead, critically examine the material you have gathered.

JOURNAL ENTRY (20 PTS EACH)

The journal is an on-going, non-linear collection of thoughts. It is not a "finished" form like the Chapter Question portion of the assignment, but rather it stresses *process* instead of *product*. Therefore, WHAT you write is important.

You are required to submit ONE JOURNAL ENTRY PER UNIT**. DO NOT post your journal entries to the Discussion Board.** The Discussion Board discussions are a completely separate requirement.
Your journal is a confidential document – *for my eyes only*.

Use the journal to record your thoughts as you progress through the class. The journal records many levels of responses and should therefore have a variety of material in it. You may record your initial responses to a song, an assigned topic, an idea in the text, or to a classmate's comment from the Discussion Board. You might later comment on earlier journal thoughts in light of further thought, readings, study, or knowledge.

Do not restrict your journal solely to academic and scholarly matters. Try to relate what you are reading, listening to, and experiencing in this class to what is happening in your own life outside of class. Synthesize! Use the first person! Be involved!

As with any reaction to art, consider a balance between emotional and intellectual responses realizing that each impacts the other. The journal is an ideal form for this course. It is an opportunity for you to reflect or discuss a topic, or a tidbit, or a newly discovered fact, or an idea, or whatever. There are no right answers, just interesting thoughts. Have fun with it!

QUIZZES (125 PTS EACH)
You can access the examples through the "Assessments" link or through each unit's Learning Module. All exams include multiple-choice questions. The purpose of the exam is to encourage a well-rounded understanding of the course material. **Each exam may only be taken once.**

Exams are open-book and open-note, but are also timed. **You will have a pre-determined number of minutes to complete each exam.** You WILL NOT have enough time to look up each answer from scratch, so you *must* do the reading and familiarize yourself with the material before you begin the quiz.

You may only take the exam once. If you are interrupted you may not take the exam again. No exceptions. DO NOT open the exam until you are ready to complete it.
Each exam must be completed by 11:59pm on the due date. (normally the same day the chapter questions and journal are due.) After 11:59 PM of the due date, the quiz will no longer be available, and you will not be able to make it up.

IMPORTANT: Online service can be unpredictable. You can expect to encounter a certain amount of problems with your server or the MCC server during the course of the semester. ***Allowances will not be made on due dates because of technical difficulties.*** Plan ahead and ALWAYS leave time for unexpected technical problems. This is especially true for the quizzes. If you have any technical problems of any kind, notify me immediately.

In other words: *Don't wait until the last minute!* If you encounter a problem, you will not be able to resolve it before the quiz becomes unavailable.

NO MAKE-UP EXAMS ARE GIVEN. If you miss an exam, you miss it.

THE DISCUSSION BOARD (50 POINTS TOTAL)
Please refer to the ***Discussions*** link on a regular basis for posted discussion topics. There will be 5 discussion topics total: an introduction topic, and then one for each unit. **You are required to respond on the Discussion Board to each topic posted as part of your participation in this class. I will also allocate extra points (this will really help you if an exam grade needs help)**
The Discussion Board is dedicated to building a student community. Use the board to respond, but also use the board to share and learn!

You are required to respond to one discussion topic per unit on the Discussion Board. To earn the full 50 points, your response should include opinions and original thoughts that are the result of thoughtful consideration of

the topic (DO NOT simply restate what has already been said). **To get full credit, you MUST post your original response as a new message, not as a reply to another message.**

Reactions and responses to classmates' opinions are an important part of each discussion. **For each topic that you post one or more replies to a classmate's thoughts (in addition to your own original posting), you will receive 5 bonus points** (Max 5 points per topic). If you post more topics, you could have as much as 50 extra credit points. This is an easy way to augment your grade and contribute to a more lively discussion at the same time.

The deadline for posting a response to a Unit topic for extra credit is THREE DAYS AFTER THE UNIT DUE DATE.
Even though the Discussion Board is a casual environment, keep in mind that this is still an **academic forum**. Debate is encouraged, but profanity and other inappropriate language or attitudes will not be tolerated. If you wouldn't say it in a live classroom discussion, don't say it here. Any inappropriate comments will be deleted, and repeated offenses will be subject to disciplinary action.

LISTENING

This leads to the greatest dilemma in studying music as an independent online course: how does one get to hear the music being discussed? **It is essential to listen to the artists or songs being studied**. Within each Learning Module *(and with the CD included as part of the textbook)*, you will find a list of relevant recordings. **It is your responsibility to find and listen to the recordings!!!!**

I will also provide a number of website links which often offer audio and video material and additional music to augment this experience. Take advantage of these!

Many local libraries carry jazz music recordings. I also suggest that you scan radio dials and satellite channels to hear material being studied. Those of you familiar with the process of downloading music will also find that to be a helpful strategy. Many students like to use one of the music download services which charges a flat monthly fee for unlimited downloads. This is a good way to have access to ALL of the music. The more you hear, the more you will appreciate the music we discuss.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to uphold the principle of academic integrity in all the work you do for this course. This means that all of the work you turn in must be entirely your own. **If you borrow any material from external sources (including the text, lecture notes, or internet articles), you MUST give credit to the authors and publishers of the borrowed information.**

Materials for this class were used and modified with permission from instructor Kelly Hayes * **

I am VERY strict about this offense, and if I ever suspect that your words are not your own, be assured that I WILL check. It is surprisingly easy to find the source of your information. If you are in the habit of disregarding the Academic Integrity policy of Mesa Community College (found in the Student Handbook), then you should drop this class right now.

IMPORTANT!
Students who plagiarize (either intentionally or unintentionally) or engage in other forms of academic dishonesty will be given a zero on the assignment, withdrawn from the course, or receive a failing grade for the course at the instructor's discretion.

I cannot emphasize this point strongly enough! Even one offense will severely impact your final grade.

Please be assured that I am willing to make any reasonable accommodations for limitations due to any disability, including learning disabilities. Please contact me during the first week of class to address your concerns.

Whew! **There is a great deal of information provided.**
You are responsible for ALL information in this syllabus.
Please read through very carefully, and refer to this course introduction frequently!
(*I reserve the option to make changes in this course as necessary)*

APPENDIX H

PRE-COURSE SURVEY

1. What is your gender? □ Female □ Male

2. How many years of undergraduate coursework have you completed?

   □ Less than 1 □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ More than 4

3. What is your current course load at MCC or another college/university? _____

4. Do you have any formal music training? (Circle one) Yes or No

5. Is your training instrumental or voice? (Circle one)

6. How many years of that training do you have? _____

7. On average, how many hours per day do you watch television? _____

8. On average, how many hours per day do you use your computer? _____
   a) How much of your computer usage is spent surfing the Internet? _____
   b) How much of your computer usage is spent on school work? _____
   c) What else do you use your computer for? _____

9. Do you primarily listen to music on a mobile device (iPod) or a laptop/desktop computer? (Circle one)

10. What operating system do you use primarily?
    □ PC □ Linux
    □ Mac

11. What types of computer programs/tools do you use for school work?
    □ Word Processor □ Spreadsheets □ Power Point
    Other (please list): _____

12. Select any of the following for which you use the **Internet**:
    □ information (news/weather/health/sports)
    □ social media (Facebook, twitter)
    □ email
    □ instant messaging
    □ play games
    □ online shopping
    □ downloading music
    □ forums
    □ blogs
    Other: _____

13. Do you use computer technology for any of the following?
    - □ create/design web pages
    - □ create/edit audio
    - □ create/edit video
    - □ write blogs
    - □ create graphics (such as Photoshop or flash)

    Other: _____

14. What types of technology do you use for social purposes?

    _____
    _____

15. If you use Instant Messaging or Chat Rooms;
    a) What language(s) do you communicate in?

       _____

    b) What acronyms (lol, l8r, etc) or emoticons (☺) do you use to communicate?

       _____
       _____

    c) Who do you usually chat with?

       □ Friends □ Relatives □ Strangers Other _____

16. Which methods of online communication do you find appealing?

    □ Email □ Instant Messaging □ Chat Rooms □ Video □ Audio
    Other _____

17. In what ways do you think technology should be used in the classroom?

_____
_____