

E-learning and “Learner-centered Approach”

The trends of Internet technologies, wireless communications and networking, mobile computing and handheld devices, embedded systems, wearable computers, sensors, are bringing revolutionary changes in the paradigm of education in the 21st century. E-learning is no more a buzz word as many universities worldwide have already started exploiting ubiquitous computing (also called pervasive computing) for e-learning. The more recent e-learning models include; blogs, podcasts, Face book, wikis, virtual realities, virtual learning, shared worlds all embedded into learning models. The new e-learning models are advocating “learner-centered approach” in higher education. In a “learner-centered approach” knowledge is considered constructed by students through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with skills such as inquiry, communication, and critical and creative thinking. In learner center approach, the instructor’s role is coach and facilitator; students and instructor assess learning performance together and the learning culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive. “learner-centered approach” of e-learning would bring many changes including but not limited to ; curriculum reform (the content), changes in teaching methods and changes in assessment. How to transition from traditional instructor-based teaching approach to new “learner-centered approach”? How will new e-learning approaches impact curriculum, faculty compensation, assessment and what kind of technology infrastructure should be in place for effective e-learning? These are the kind of questions that are addressed through this presentation.