Call for Papers

Special issue on
Advances in Research on
Social Networking in Open and Distributed Learning

Special Issue Guest Editors
Miltiadis D. Lytras, Ph.D, Research Professor
The American College of Greece, Greece, mlytras@acg.edu
Hassan I. Mathkour, Ph.D., Dean, College of Computer and Information Sciences
King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, mathkour@ksu.edu.sa

Overview
The International Review of Research Open and Distributed Learning (IRRODL) seeks original manuscripts for a special issue on "Advances in Research on Social Networking in Open and Distance Learning" scheduled to appear in mid/late 2017.

From the well-defined scientific and application domain described as information and communication technologies, we focus on some of the most revolutionary technologies of the last few years, namely social networks and social media, immersive words, and ambient and wearable technology. These technologies are the focus of this special issue, which aims to foster a debate about the new era of higher education, where academic institutions will have to develop strategies for the adoption of technologies in the daily educational process beyond the limitations and barriers of the traditional classroom-based paradigm.

Social media and social networks, as well as wearable technologies and immersive words and applications, have received growing attention in recent years. Thriving numbers behind social network adoption and exploitation in higher education have captured the attention of higher education, computer engineering, and business researchers who, in the past few years, have been trying to decipher the phenomenon of social networks, its relationship to already conducted research, and its implications for new research opportunities that affect innovations in teaching and higher education dynamics.
The current applications of ICTs in open and distance learning worldwide present a very interesting picture. Several medium- to big-scale information systems provide a variety of services to all the stakeholders in institutions of higher education, including students, professors, managers, and professionals. A key strategic shift in the focus of education is evident, from a core-knowledge oriented education to a collaborative-dynamic evolving paradigm. It seems that we are at a crossroads where the traditional, classroom-based model of higher education has to be critically enriched with technology-enabled, added-value components.

These widely accepted endeavors in social networking and modern ICT systems demonstrate that a wide range of social networking applications are available and present viable, robust alternatives to traditional, monolithic solutions to higher education. In parallel, a number of surveys in higher education directly link the satisfaction of students to the use of advanced ICTs in classrooms.

The purpose of the special issue is to demonstrate state-of-the-art approaches to social networking systems and other innovative technologies that have had successful applications all over the world and to show how new, advanced educational models and adoption strategies can expand sustainability frontiers in knowledge management toward smart learning and knowledge-society visions.

Consequently, manuscripts are sought that touch on these aspects and extend technical and domain knowledge in local economies. This special issue is intended to initiate a dialog between the participants in educational, computing, business, human, and technical fields that could affect the open and distance learning environment through the adoption of novel ICT solutions and approaches. Sound, technological social networking solutions are anticipated.

**Topics**

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- social networking systems and applications in Open and Distance Learning (ODL);
- social networking applications for research and development in ODL;
- immersive words, ambient and wearable technologies in ODL;
- social networking applications for learning and knowledge management in ODL;
- business models for social networking in ODL, including industry collaboration;
- potentially large-scale applications in ODL (e.g. personal knowledge management, semantic desktop, knowledge portals);
- use of social media and SN for peer tutoring;
- personalized strategies in ODL through ICTs;
- knowledge networks in ODL;
- advanced learning labs;
- dynamic composition of learning spaces based on mobile learning pedagogies;
- personalized apps based on learner profiling and matching;
- dynamic semantic annotation of profiles and content towards the integration of personal learners' entities to qualitative learning content;
- taxonomies of learning objectives for social networks;
- artificial intelligence approaches towards the sustainability of learning communities powered by social networks;
- mapping of related learners at a global scale;
- cloud services for learning spaces;
- and security and evaluation;
- Knowledge Society Showcases in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries; international benchmarks and related
research from other regions of the world; interacting with Social Web Data in ODL; social web content creation and annotation; design guidelines for mobile personalized educational systems enabled by social networks and cloud computing; open social architectures for learning content delivery; integration of semantic web approaches for enhanced educational quality and customization; representation of meaning in social networks; social learning analytics, Internet of Things for Social Learning Networks; social learning innovation.

Important Dates:

- Manuscript submission deadline: February 20, 2016
- Notification of acceptance: April 25, 2016
- Submission of final revised paper: July 15, 2016
- Publication of special issue (tentative): Mid 2017

Submission Procedure:

Authors should follow the IRRODL Journal manuscript format described at the journal site [http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl](http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl)

Authors must register with IRRODL, on the journal site, [http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/user/register](http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/user/register) to submit online their Manuscripts.