The use of twitter by students and lecturers: the potential impact on feedback and engagement.

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Why should students use twitter?
10 GREAT TIPS FOR USING TWITTER AS A DESIGNER
The use of Twitter by students and lecturers can follow and discuss topical issues.
The use of twitter by students and lecturers

http://search.twitter.com/search?q=flu
### Most popular words found in all tweets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flu</td>
<td>138,260</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>7,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swine</td>
<td>99,179</td>
<td>News</td>
<td>6,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have</td>
<td>13,534</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>6,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>13,300</td>
<td>Just</td>
<td>6,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1N1</td>
<td>9,134</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>5,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has</td>
<td>8,010</td>
<td>Case</td>
<td>5,647</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From almost 3 million tweets collected during May to December 2009
“I have swine flu”

12,954
“I have the flu” 12,651
Fig. 3 - A plot showing the RCGP ILI rate for England vs the number of self-reported cases on Twitter.
Introduction to #COMP1314 by @DrEddeQuincey

During your time at university, and in your future career, it is important to keep up to date with current developments and people in your field. One of the key advances in this area has been the invention and adoption of social media websites. A popular example of a social media website is twitter, described as “a real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting” (twitter, 2011)\(^1\). Twitter allows you to post short messages called tweets, that other users can view and in turn you can view and reply to other users’ tweets. The following resources give a good overview of twitter and what you can use it for:

- Twitter basics (article)
  - [http://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics](http://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics)
- Twitter basics (video)
- The twitter tutorial (presentation)
  - [http://www.slideshare.net/Griner/the-twitter-tutorial](http://www.slideshare.net/Griner/the-twitter-tutorial)
- The ultimate guide for everything twitter (article)\(^2\)

Stage 1 – Signing up for an account (if you already use twitter go to Stage 3)

Go to the twitter website at [http://www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and sign up for an account by entering your email address. You will then be asked to enter a password and log in.
Using twitter with this course

We are intending to use twitter with this course in 3 ways:

1. As an alternative method for posting useful course specific information to students e.g. links to articles, emergency changes to lecture times etc.
2. Enable students to ask questions about courses e.g. clarifying something from a lecture, asking about coursework specifications etc.
3. Encourage students to help one another and create communities of practice/learning.
#COMP1314

you could also use hashtags such as #COMP1314Lec1 if you are asking about something in the first lecture, #COMP1314Lab1 for the first lab session, #COMP1314CW for information about the coursework and so on. Just make sure that the hashtag includes #COMP1314
Twitter was introduced during the first tutorial session for 3 courses at UG and PG level, across 2 Schools within the University by 2 lecturers (@DrEddeQuincey and @AvrilHocking).
Results

The use of twitter by students and lecturers
Tweets collected

1. All tweets posted from lecturer accounts
2. All tweets that contained the relevant course codes
3. All direct messages and replies (for @DrEddeQuincey and @AvrilHocking)
@DrEddeQuincey

created in April 2011 solely for student/University related tweets, currently has 130 followers
The use of twitter by students and lecturers

@DrEddeQuincey

a rough estimate is that 80 (62%) are present or past students within the University.
102 students on COMP1314 and COMP14444 (Greenwich Campus)
@DrEddeQuincey

289 tweets have been sent from the lecturer account between September 2011 and April 2012
The use of Twitter by students and lecturers

frequency of terms used within those 289 tweets
161 tweets (56%) were @mentions i.e. the lecturer replying to a student’s tweet indicating a good level of 2 way-communication
@DrEddeQuincey received 93 @mentions from 32 users

The use of twitter by students and lecturers
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@DrEddeQuincey

received **40 direct** (private) messages from **11 students**, all asking **questions**, again indicating a good level of 2-way communication
The hashtags for the 2 courses had less impact than the use of messaging, with #COMP1444 being used 98 times (50% by the lecturer account) and #COMP1314, 75 times (33% by the lecturer account).
created in January 2012 solely for student/University related tweets, currently has 15 followers
12 students on NURS1301
Learning Disability: Transition from Learner To Practioner
(Avery Hill Campus)
49 tweets have been sent from the lecturer account in February 2012
The use of twitter by students and lecturers

frequency of terms used within those 49 tweets
36 tweets (73%) were @mentions i.e. the lecturer replying to a student’s tweet indicating a very good level of 2 way-communication.
@AvrilHocking received 7 @mentions from 7 users
“hi mummy :D”
@AvrilHocking
Did not receive any direct messages
The hashtag for #NURS1301 was used 33 times (61% by the lecturer account). Generally used once when doing the tutorial.
“Anyone fancy getting together to do the genetic competencies? #NURS1301”

Only one example of use after the first attempt.
Conclusions

Around **31%** students used twitter as a way of **communicating with @DrEddeQuincey** regarding the course and although a few individuals made attempts at sharing information by the use of **hashtags**, this was **not** the primary use.
Conclusions

For @AvrilHocking twitter was used mainly to communicate with students but extended use was limited.
Lessons Learned

The use of twitter by students and lecturers
Students were willing to sign up for twitter and the majority sent at least one tweet, but their continued use was very much dependent on whether they were already active users or whether they understood it’s potential uses during and after the course.
“This was very stressful.............. but successful.... #nurs1301”
A number of students have utilised twitter as a quick method of communication between themselves and the lecturer. This enabled for almost real time communication outside of lectures and tutorials and immediate resolution of issues.
Why not just use email?
students have to ask **concise questions** that can be answered within the same limitation. From the lecturer point of view, **replies can be quick** and to the point, **no need for email etiquette** and format e.g. salutations and sign-offs.
For lecturers that utilise twitter on a continuous basis as a natural part of their work, the ability to monitor and send quick replies to students via a range of devices is more efficient and does not get lost amongst other work related email.
other students who follow the user who sent the @mention can also see the @reply from the lecturer, potentially reducing the number of communications that ask the same question.
The hashtag course codes were primarily only used by the lecturer and was sparsely used in all courses to share information, discuss course content etc. by students.
Differences between groups seems to have affected twitter usage, in particular the class size and frequency of face to face contact had the largest impact.
@DrEddeQuincey VS @eddequincey
Pastoral Care?

The use of twitter by students and lecturers
Pastoral Care?

@StreetNames becuase they knew you should be in a lecture at 10

Why would u start building at 10am? dumb neighbours so
Guidelines?
How have other people used it?
Other potential uses?