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Paper and Pixels: Mobile Learning Practices at Smith College

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Please note: We've also submitted a proposal "Disrupting the Technology Adoption Spectrum: Thinking Creatively about Faculty Technology Use". For relevance and flow, we would ask that you consider grouping these two presentations together. 
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ETS Tech Tips: How to Vet an App

**Key Questions & Considerations**

### Instructional Design & Pedagogy
- Use of technology supports learning objectives.
- Use of technology provides opportunities to increase/enhance understanding.
- Does the app have multiple ability levels, provide feedback or offer summary data?
- Is the content factual, reliable, and free of spelling and grammatical errors?
- Students may: create, evaluate, analyze, apply, understand, or remember.
- Use of technology enables: student-faculty contact, collaboration among students, active learning, gives prompt feedback, emphasizes time on task, communicates high expectations, respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

### Technology makes students feel more connected to

#### Usability
Usability evaluation focuses on how well users can learn and use a product to achieve their goals.
- User interface is aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate, and has a clean, minimalistic design.
- The application loads quickly and does not crash.
- The system language follows both real-world and platform conventions.

### Technical Requirements & Compatibility
- With what platforms is the app compatible? Operating systems and devices.
- Does the app require a connection to WiFi? What if any, functionality is lost when WiFi is unavailable?
- What types of content/data can users produce via the app?
- Can users archive, export or move content? How is data backed up?
- Across what applications is data interoperable? (e.g., Moodle and Panopto Recorder)
- Are support resources available? Are they well-organized with step-by-step instructions?
- Is the app advertising-free? If not, are the ads appropriate for an academic audience?
- Are users required to cite app if publishing papers based on results derived from app?

### Terms of Service
- Are the terms of service and privacy policies easy to find and understandable?
- Who owns the user-generated content? Can content be licensed to third parties? Is data mined?
- If an account is required...
- Can users control their privacy? Do users have a right to leave service?
- How does app handle government requests? Is there a promise to inform users about requests?

Learn more about this topic at [http://tosdr.org](http://tosdr.org)

If all American Internet users were to annually read the online privacy policies word-for-word each time they visited a new site, the nation would spend about 54 billion hours reading privacy policies.

### Mind the "Digital Divide"
- Do not assume that every student has access to mobile technology (laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc). If use of a device and app are required for class participation, contact the Center for Media Production to discuss/arrange loaner devices and/or configure technology tool to accept multiple responses from a single device (allowing students to pair and share).
- Cost should always be considered, and whenever possible, lessened to ensure equal access.
- Does app meet levels of accessibility compliance to be considerate of users with disabilities?

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Sources:
- Emerging Technology Evaluation Tool, 2013 (Smith College, Educational Technology Services, Teaching & Research Group)
- The Annual ECAR Student and IT Study, 2013, (EDUCAUSE)