IPRO 320: Socio-Professional Networking:
An Online Teachers Community for the Chicago Public Schools

Introduction
- Chicago Public Schools (CPS): More than 600 schools and 25,000 teachers
- Teacher conferences and professional development seminars frequently encourage and require a good deal of "networking"

Focus Group Methodology
- Created an online survey (with the help of Kevin Hall) to introduce our idea to teachers
- Analyzed results (Dash Graphics on other poster)
- Created interview questions
- Conducted phone interviews with CPS teachers to get their opinion about the site
- Asked them to take a Wiki and post on the forum
- Related teachers about the site to Development team to make any changes to the site

Development Team Methodology
- Put together a prototype web page with a Wiki, Forum, and FAQ features
- Created a logo and implemented a new front page layout
- Made changes to site after the team and teachers put forth their opinions

Big Problem
- CPS teachers pressured to meet standardized test requirements due to No Child Left Behind policy
  - Lack of resources
  - Budgetary constraints
  - Under-prepared students
  - Time constraints

CPS teachers lack a way to communicate that is:
- Simple
- Shareable
- Unmonitored

Current Home Page

Wiki Page Example
- Healthy Colon with Good Digestion and Fiber

Next Interface (Home Page) Prototype

Forum Page

Our Challenge
- Social network that addresses teachers' needs
  - Examine existing solutions
  - Identify best practices
  - Incorporate findings from surveys and interviews

Objectives
- Create Survey with 100 responses
- Conduct 5 different focus groups of teachers
- Create a prototype web community with
  - 100 registered teachers
  - A front page
  - Forum
  - A wiki with 50 complete articles
  - Usability testing with 25 teachers

Results
- Focus Group Team
  - 115 Online surveys from CPS teachers
  - 4 phone interviews
- Development Team
  - Functional website: front page, wiki, and forum

Obstacles
- Focus Groups Team
  - Paper surveys were unfeasible
  - Focus groups: difficult to work around teachers' schedules
- Low responses on surveys
- Development Team
  - Appearance of front page
  - User registration

Alternate Approaches
- Focus Groups Team
  - Online surveys, instead of paper surveys
  - Phone interviews, instead of focus groups
- Development Team
  - New logo and colors

Future Goals
- Register active users
- Increase use of wiki and forums
- Secure funding
- Expand to serve non-CPS teachers and non-high school teachers