



MAGNA ONLINE SEMINARS

Using Web 2.0 to Enhance Classes and Improve Retention

Thursday, July 9, 2009

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM (Eastern)
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM (Central)
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM (Mountain)
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (Pacific)
(Times listed refer to daylight saving time)

Presented by:

Todd Conaway



Today's presenter:

Todd Conaway is an instructional designer at Yavapai College in Northern Arizona. His undergraduate experiences at Prescott College, a very small liberal arts college, and later, his experiences as an online student at Walden University, left him with strong feelings about the online learning experience and the instructor's presence in online courses. He has developed innovative presentations and workshops that reflect the need for deeper instructor presence in online courses. His passion for communication and knowledge of web 2.0 and content management systems have led him to sharing the possibilities with the K-12 community and college level conferences. Recently an interview with him was published in the Online Classroom newsletter. He has been an educator at the college level for six years and he was a high school English teacher for eleven years.



Want to ask the presenter a question?

If you'd like to ask the presenter a question at any time during today's live seminar, simply click on the Chat (Q&A) box on the bottom right of your screen. A moderator will read participant questions during selected breaks.



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Thank you for participating in today's program.

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Faculty Focus is an e-newsletter containing valuable information for faculty, academic deans, and department chairs from the publisher of *The Teaching Professor*, *Academic Leader*, *Online Classroom*, and other higher education newsletters.

If you're involved with teaching and learning on campus, you will not want to miss a single issue.

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FACULTY FOCUS



Upcoming Online Seminars:

Join us in the future for our other informative online seminars:

- **July 23, 2009:** Enhancing PowerPoint for the Online Classroom and Beyond
- **August 6, 2009:** Effective, Time-saving Communication for Online Instructors
- **September 10, 2009:** Six Ways to Teach Students of all Abilities Online

Please visit www.magnapubs.com for a complete list of Magna Online Seminars.



Magna Corporate Overview

Magna has been a valued knowledge and information resource within the higher education community for more than 30 years.

We publish seven national newsletters:

- *The Teaching Professor*
- *Academic Leader*
- *Magna's Campus Legal Briefing*
- *Recruitment & Retention in Higher Education*
- *Distance Education Report*
- *Online Classroom*
- *Student Affairs Leader*

In addition, we produce student leadership and faculty development conferences, numerous online seminars, and online courses.

Additional information about Magna is available at www.magnapubs.com.



Using Web 2.0 to Enhance Classes and Improve Retention

July 9, 2009

Online Seminar CD & Transcript

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- Catch something you may have missed
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**plus
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Special attendee prices:

- *CD ~~\$249~~ \$125
- Transcript ~~\$99~~ \$50
- CD/Transcript Package ~~\$299~~ \$150

This CD contains an audio presentation with PowerPoint and can be viewed on any computer equipped with Windows Media Player (PC) or Silverlight (Mac).

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Using Web 2.0 to Enhance Classes and Improve Retention

Todd Conaway
Instructional Designer
Yavapai College, Arizona, USA

1

What We Are Going To Do

- Incorporate your presence into online courses
- Identify commercial products to help capture your lectures
- Learn to use Web 2.0 tools in your online courses, including wikis or Ning sites to share ideas
- Use blogs as e-portfolios and photo-sharing sites

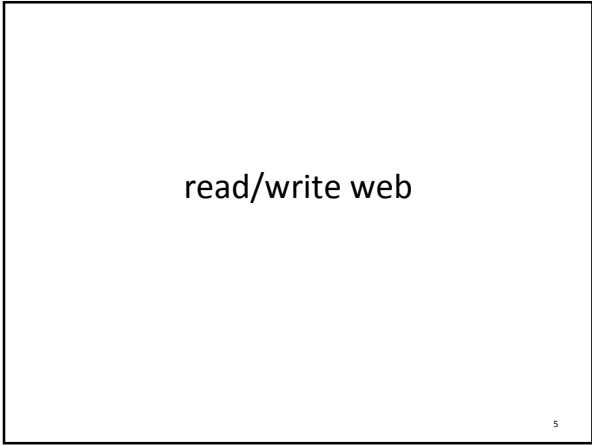
2

- Insert personality into online courses using YouTube and Audacity
- Use Web 2.0 technologies in a less time-consuming way
- Learn Web 2.0 terminology
- Develop a professional portfolio of your work
- Find online professional development opportunities

3



WEB 2.0



read/write web



it can't replace

PASSION

Do We Agree:

- Instructor's personality impacts student learning
- More is learned in a class than "the content"
- Online instruction makes a "personality" difficult to develop or create

The Environment We Learn In

- What does face-to-face classroom “ambiance” look like?
- How is it created?
 - art/furnishings/plants
 - sounds/music
 - the tone/humor/friendly/serious
 - the instructor’s personality
- Does it impact student learning?

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The Role of the Online Instructor

- Pedagogical role
- Social role
- Managerial role
- Technical role

These roles originally came from:

The Role of the Online Instructor/Facilitator
by Zane L. Berge, Ph.D.

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Transactional Distance?

- Do we “get” more from those we “feel” close to?
- How does this apply to the F2F classroom?
- The online class?

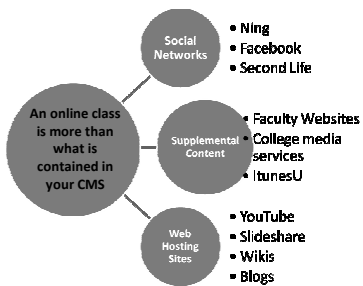
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Online Ambiance?

- What is the ambiance of an online class?
- What role does the instructor play?
- How do instructors create a “learning” environment online?

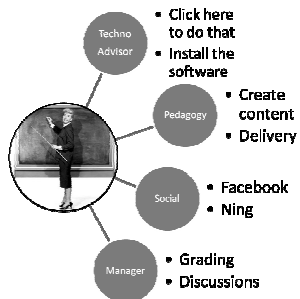
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The Personality of You and Your Course



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The Roles of the Online Instructor



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The Facebook Story & Social Networking

- Started by a Harvard student who wanted to make it easier to network with his classmates

NETWORK WITH CLASSMATES

- The site is just another way for the entire community to engage each other.

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October 10, 2008



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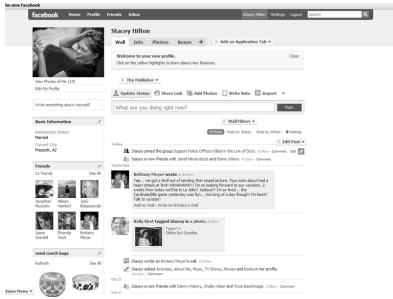
A Digital Footprint

- A larger footprint is like a well-used, comfortable home
- It says I have lived here and am familiar with my surroundings

- A smaller footprint is like one of those homes that is so clean you are afraid to sit on the couch
- Or, it looks as if you are inexperienced and new to this land (the digital world)

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Digital Footprint/ Presence

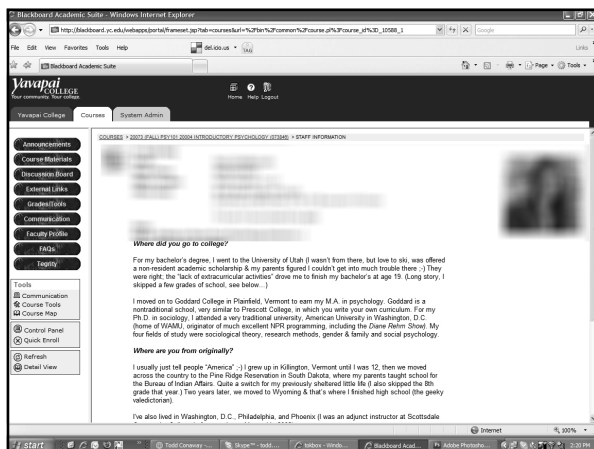
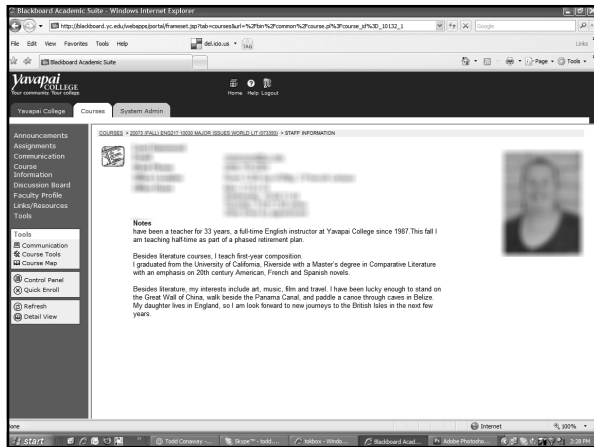


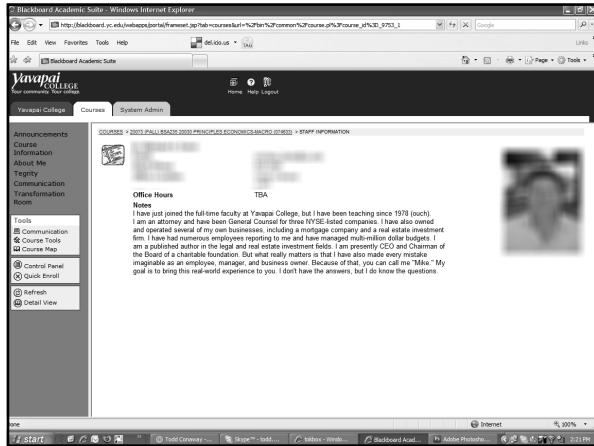
QUESTIONS ?

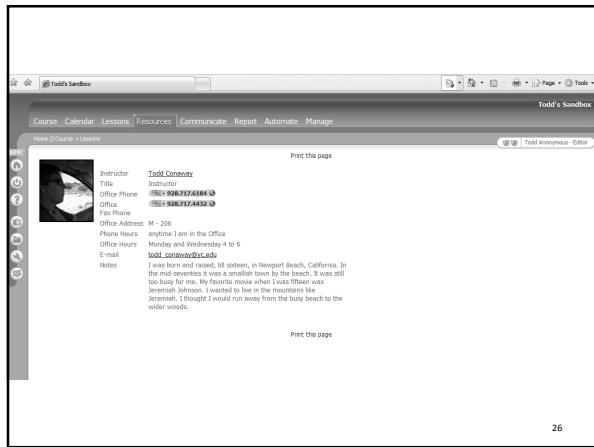
So, now what?

The Online Faculty Profile

- Sometimes, this profile is all students get other than content
- Let's look at some examples







Is That Enough?

- Is there more that can be shared?
- To what end?

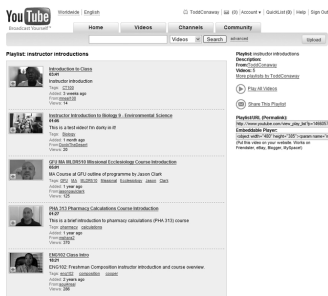
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A “Clickable” Instructor

- What do students want to know about you?
- Where will they look?
 - Google?
 - Facebook?
 - Personal Website?
- What can you share?

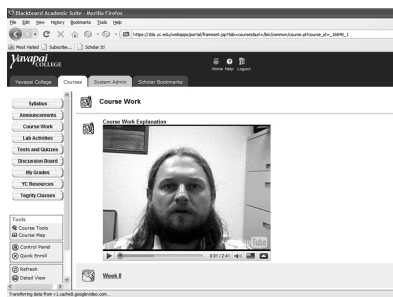
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YouTube Video



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An Experiment



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Using YouTube in Class

“It is quicker and easier for me to make a video and post it to YouTube than it is to write out instructions in Word.”

Matt Percey, Biology Instructor

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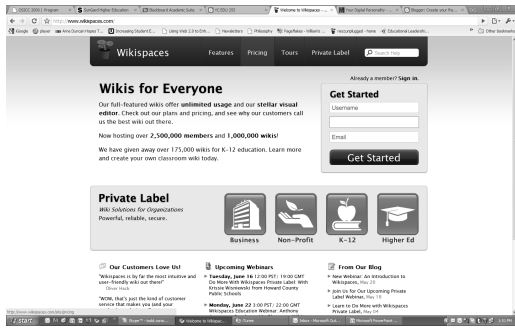
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Let's Look at YouTube

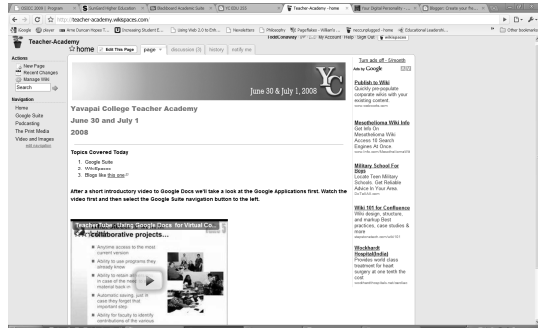
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Let's Look at Blogger

Wiki Wonderland



A Wiki? What For?



Lecture Capture, Tegrity

The screenshot shows the Tegrity website homepage. At the top, the Tegrity logo is on the left, and the phone number 1.800.411.6273 and the text 'Henry Ford | Support' are on the right. Below this is a navigation menu with links for 'About Us', 'Campus 2.0', 'News & Events', 'Showcase', 'Customers', 'Partners', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'Get it. Got it. Good. Impact student achievement and retention' and a photo of a student. Below the banner, there are three columns of content: 'WHAT'S HOT' featuring 'Tegrity Campus 2.0', 'EVENTS & RESOURCES' with a 'CIT 2008' logo, and 'LATEST NEWS' with a date of 'August 31, 2008'.

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Create Content From Office, Home, or Classroom

The screenshot shows a Tegrity recording interface. It features a video window on the right showing a woman speaking. On the left, there is a 'LINKS' section with a 'Tegrity website' link. Below the video window, there are controls for 'Presentation', 'Index', and 'Search'. The Tegrity logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the interface.

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Classroom and Office Screen Capture@ YC

The screenshot shows a Tegrity recording interface with a chemistry lecture. The main window displays a reaction coordinate diagram for the reaction of S_N1 with a substrate. The diagram shows energy on the y-axis and reaction progress on the x-axis. It identifies the transition state, the rate-determining step, and the formation of a carbocation intermediate. Below the diagram is a chemical structure showing the substrate and the carbocation product. The Tegrity logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the interface.

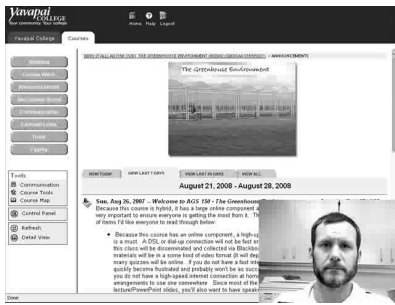
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We Support Camtasia



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Camtasia with the Streaming Server



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A Couple of Examples



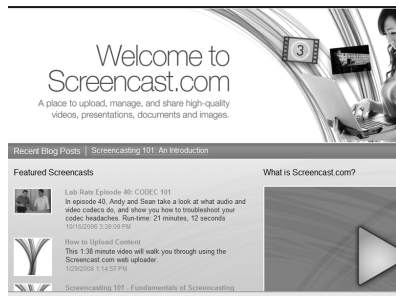
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Free Screen Capture Software

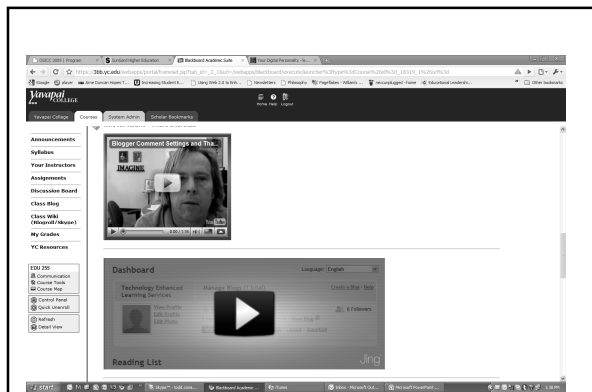


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Free Storage Spaces



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Free Audio Recording Software

The Free, Cross-Platform Sound Editor

Audacity is free, open source software for recording and editing sound. It is available for Mac OS X, Microsoft Windows, GNU/Linux, and other operating systems. Learn more about Audacity. Also check our [FAQ](#) and [FAQs](#) for more information.

The latest release of Audacity is 1.2.6 (beta). Because it is in progress and does not yet come with complete documentation or translators into foreign languages, it is recommended for more advanced users. See [FAQ Features 1.2.6](#) for more information about the 1.2.6 beta series.

For all users, Audacity 1.2.6 is a stable release, complete and fully documented. You can have Audacity 1.2.6 and 1.3.0 installed on the same machine.

Download Audacity 1.2.6
for Windows 95/ME/2000/XP/Vista

Download Audacity 1.3.0 (Beta)
for Windows 95/ME/2000/XP/Vista

Online Office Hours & Free Video Conferencing

USING ASYNCHRONOUS AUDIO ENHANCED TEACHING PRESENCE STUDENTS' SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Philip Lee

SKYPE

Smile, wave or blow a kiss.
Video calls are free on Skype.

Video calls can make conversations much more interesting and intimate. You don't have to tell someone about the things you talked in direct calls, just show them off. And video calls just get a whole lot better with [High Quality Video](#) - giving you our best video call quality yet.

It's free to video a 'hello'
Video calls, like Skype-to-Skype calls are free, so seeing your friends won't cost a thing, no matter where they are in the world.

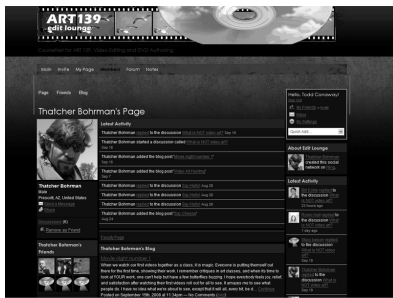
All you need is a webcam

Web 2.0



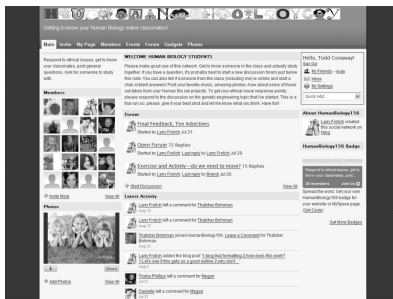
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Ning



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Ning



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Student Comment about Ning

It is not an overstatement to say that there literally exists a "Dr. Frolich's BIO-201 *community*" on campus. For that reason, I blame you for making we, the collective students actually *care* about each other.

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Friends, Peers, Colleagues, etc.



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Sound Familiar

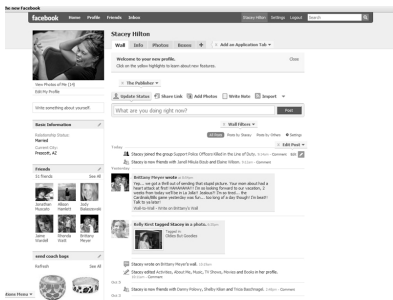


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Let's Look at Ning

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Connections, Conversations

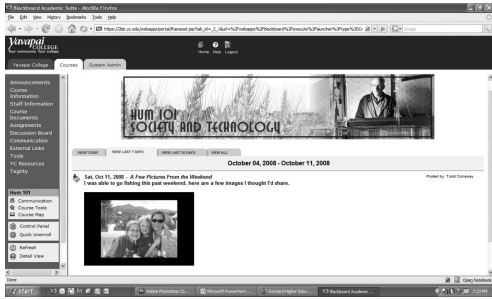


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What Else is Web 2.0?

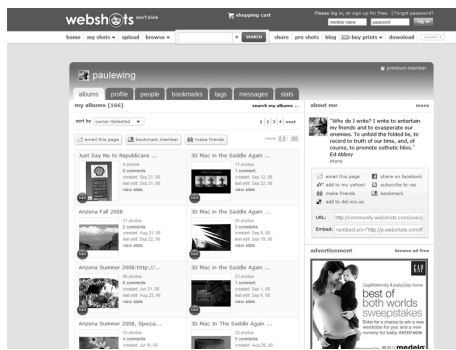
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Free Image Sharing Resources Like PicasaWeb



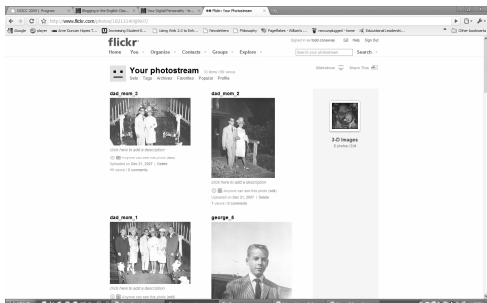
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Your Passions



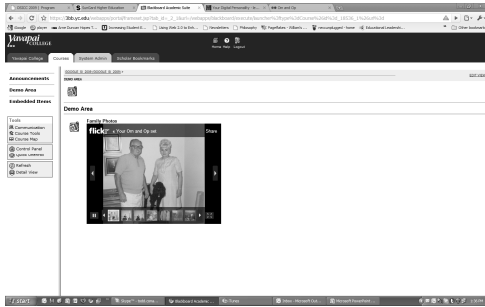
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Flickr

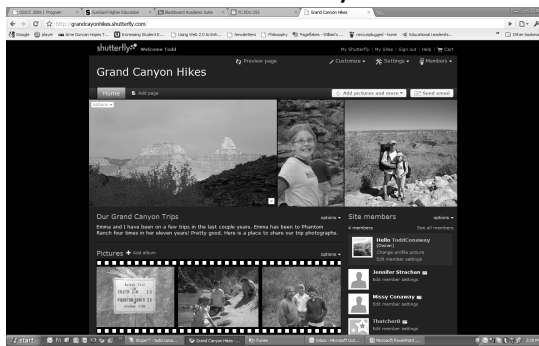


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Slideshow in Blackboard/blog



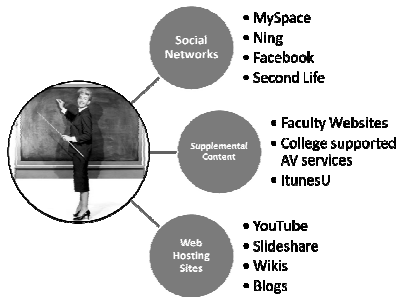
Shutterfly



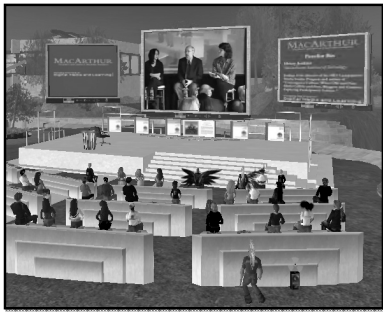
Faculty Websites



The Personality of You & Your Course



And the future?



We Should Wonder?




2008 Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference
 Mesa Community College • May 12, 2008

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Michael Wesch
 Assistant Professor:
 Cultural Anthropology and Digital Ethnography
 Kansas State University

 Click To Play

Featured Speaker
Julie Evans
 CEO, Project Tomorrow

 Click To Play

Maricopa Tech Conference Page


Maricopa Center for Learning and Instruction (MCLI)
 A Division of Academic and Student Affairs
 Maricopa Community College

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This was a 3rd generation version of the one I gave last year for Faculty Academy and then last October in Australia. I must admit to managing the time as well, because I ended up about 14 slides short of the finish line. But I was having too much fun.

I did a number of things to try and capture the presentation- I had set up my Edirol audio recorder so I have the audio now synced to the slides, posted to Slideshare (and tried to make the notes liberally commented and linked):



And have the audio as well:
[www.arsj.org/beingthere@maricopa](#) (35.4 Mb MP3, 51:29)

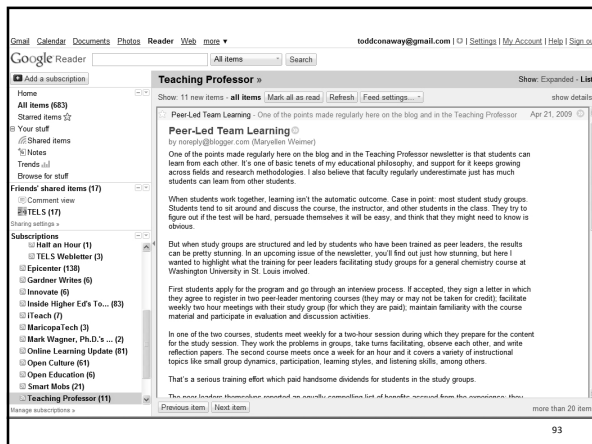
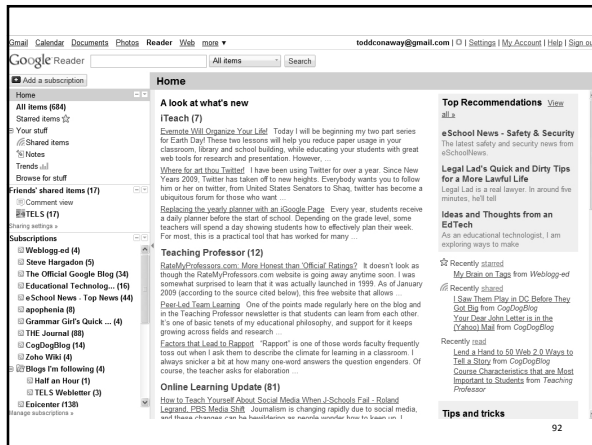
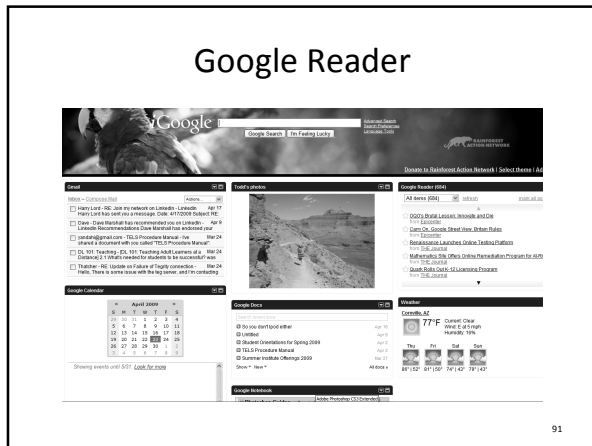
I maintain this is about the best way to capture a presentation, but its some effort to do the recording and sync, And OMG, the "tom" filter was not working at all.

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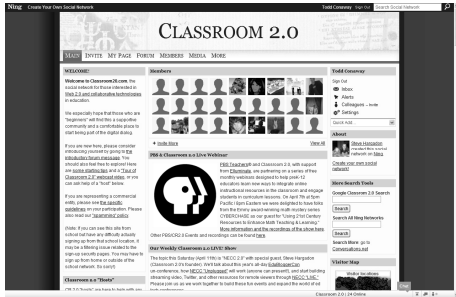
In the "Olden Days"
 professional development was...

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Google Reader



Classroom 2.0



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Classroom 2.0 LIVE

NECC Unplugged EdBloggerCon-NECC 2009-Facilitators: Steve Hargadon & Wm Fryer
04/11/2009

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2009
Time: 9:00am PDT/10:00am MDT/11:00am EDT/12:00pm EDT
Location: Elluminate

Recording (full): <https://www.elluminate.com/live/external/recordings/playlist.jsp?id=2009-04-11-0923M11FC6419B32C93E4DBA3B8BFC>

Recording (audio): <http://www.education.com/2009/04/11/0923M11FC6419B32C93E4DBA3B8BFC>

Recording (khat): <http://wiki.classroom20.com/CR-20-LIVE-11-Apr-09>

Topic: NECC Unplugged, NECCLive, EdBloggerCon

Newsie Question of the Week: What are un conferences?

Sharetable link: <http://www.sharetable.com/?classroom20live04112009>

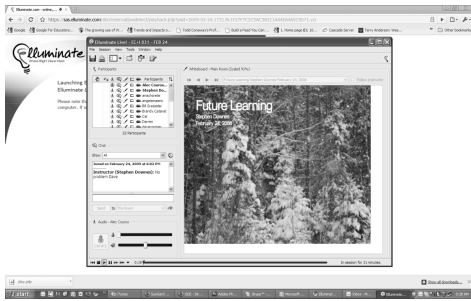
Screen-casting-Presenter: Lorna Costantini
04/04/2009

Show Archives
Weekly show descriptions and links to access recordings and chat logs for each archived session.

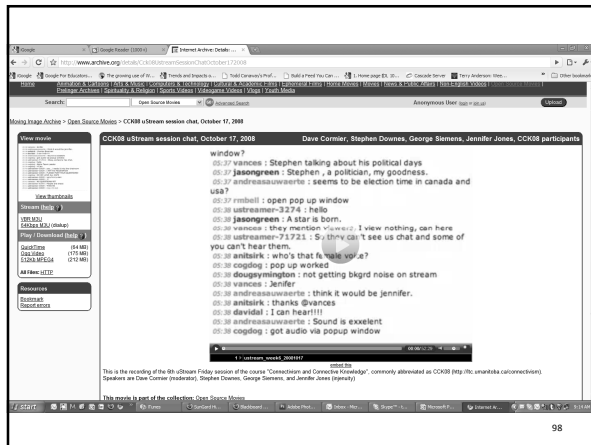
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More Elluminate sessions



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Sloan-C in Second Life



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QUESTIONS?

<http://yourdigitalpersonality.ning.com/>

This will be available
for all of us after this event

100

Using Web 2.0 to Enhance Classes & Improve Retention

Developing Your Digital Personality

Todd Conaway
Instructional Designer
Yavapai Community College
Prescott, Arizona
todd_conaway@yc.edu

Resources for this presentation are available at:

<http://yourdigitalpersonality.ning.com>

Within Your CMS (Blackboard, WebCT, Moodle, Angel)

Your content management system, or CMS, has more functionality that you probably use. From making tests, embedding newscast videos, including flash or hyperlinks, to adding images and video of you, it is likely that more of you can be added to your course.

The faculty profile in Blackboard for example allows an unlimited amount of text but only one picture of you. The same is true for Angel. Blackboard allows you to either create the "profile" or add a new folder to the staff information page. By adding a new folder you have complete editing control in that folder. You can add whatever you want, just as in any content area.

This is a great location to add links as well. Links to a website you have developed, blogs you use, or other websites you have interest in or participate in. It just shares a little more of you with your students. Often this is the only place that students can "see" their instructor. It is certainly the first place they look. What you choose to put in the faculty information will make that all important first impression.

As discussed in the presentation, audio, video, and text all play a part in describing your personality to your students.

Ning and Blogging

The website you were shown in the workshop was a Ning social website. That is one I am most familiar with and the one I learned first. To make your own, for free, go to www.ning.com and sign up.

Like many others, Ning is a free "blogging" site that allows you to use images and text, PowerPoint files, and video to share more of yourself with students. Ning is more of a fully functioning website than other blogging type of sites. It is more interactive. Here is a description of a blog.

"Blog" is an abbreviated version of "weblog," which is a term used to describe websites that maintain an ongoing chronicle of information. A blog is a frequently updated, personal website featuring diary-type commentary and links to articles on other websites. Blogs range from the personal to the political, and can focus on one narrow subject or a whole range of subjects.

Many blogs focus on a particular topic, such as web design, home staging, sports, or mobile technology. Some are more eclectic, presenting links to all types of other sites. And others are more like personal journals, presenting the author's daily life and thoughts.

Generally speaking (although there are exceptions), blogs tend to have a few things in common:

- A main content area with articles listed chronologically, newest on top. Often, the articles are organized into categories.

- An archive of older articles.
- A way for people to leave comments about the articles.
- A list of links to other related sites, sometimes called a "blogroll".

Faculty Webspace

Many schools provide faculty with web space. The challenge is that you may either have to use a template (that may or may not look like you want it) or you may need to learn how to create a website. Learning how to create a webpage can be time consuming. It does however give you more freedom than the CMS you use for your classes. You not only have content control, but you have, potentially, artistic control.

Some faculty put their accomplishments or even resumes on websites. These items can share a lot about you without having to add or do more stuff to make your personality shine through.

Adding Audio and Video and Photosharing

Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net)

Flickr (www.flickr.com)

Camtasia (www.techsmith.com)

Picasaweb (is a part of Google)

Tegrity (www.tegrity.com)

Webshots (www.webshots.com)

Windows has an easy to use sound recorder that will use the microphone on your computer to capture the sound. It is in the "accessories" in the start menu. That is a cheap and easy way to create an audio file. Buying a 20 dollar microphone is not a bad idea. You can also buy a webcam for 40 or 50 dollars and they have microphones as well. Logitech makes a variety of camera and microphones and I have always found them to be well priced and reliable.

Using the Windows Recorder, the audio can be recorded and saved to your desktop. It will most likely be a .wav file and can easily be added to the content area in your CMS. A nice and free piece of software that captures audio is Audacity. It is very functional and has lots of editing capability. It has far more potential than the audio recorder in Windows. For Mac users, GarageBand is great for producing audio files.

Camtasia is what I am most familiar with as far as screen capture software. For simply shooting some video most of the monitor-mounted "webcams" come with software that will allow you to capture video. Using either Windows Movie maker, which is installed on Windows XP and Vista, or iMovie, the free Apple equivalent, you can easily make and edit video.

We use a streaming server to stream video so the video looks like a simple URL to the students in the content area of the class. When you click on the link, it opens your default media player, Windows Media Player for example, and the video plays there. You can place the video into Blackboard, but video has a pretty large file size and often makes the pages load slowly. Placing the video on YouTube or some other video host allows you to not only embed the video into the content area, but it also keeps it off your servers.

Tegrity integrates well into Blackboard much the way some of the building blocks work. You can capture lectures or short videos and place them into blackboard really easy.

Photo sharing sites such as Picasaweb, Flickr, and Webshots all can be used not only to share information about you, but they can be a good resource for students if you use them to organize images. For example, if you had a number of images related to biologic concepts, you could place all of them in an album on one of the web hosts.

WHAT IS WEB 2.0?

Web 2.0 is a term that tossed around everywhere right now. It is not a specific technology, but a set of concepts and functionalities that power the internet differently than

*in the past. The first generation internet (web 1.0) was mostly information presented in a static form. **Web 2.0 is dynamic, participatory and collaborative in nature, where everyone is invited to create as well as consume internet content.***



While the flood of new technology can seem overwhelming, everything covered in this Teacher Academy have these basic core concepts and functions in common.

CORE CONCEPTS

Read/write: 1. The ability for anyone to create content quickly and easily, and 2. the ability to comment and respond to create dialogue.

Sharing: The ability for people to collaborate across the web on documents, websites, etc.

Embedding: The ability to place content, such as a streaming video, from one website into another website by copying and pasting a bit of code (the “embed code”).

Free: Basic tools are free. Upgrades to basic services are available, but usually unnecessary.

TERMS TO KNOW

Tag – A term associated with a piece of information, such as a web page, image, or computer file, that describes it, and assists in the classification and search-ability of that information. syn: keyword.

Post – User-generated content that is added to a website. Used as a verb and a noun.

PLN – A Personal Learning Network. A group of resources collected around the interests and needs of an individual learner.

Avatar – The photo or graphic users associate with their online identity

Keep in mind that all these things are evolving daily.

BLOGS

Blog is short for “web log”. It’s basically an online journal that you can add extra features to. There are many free sites to get a blog. We are going to use Blogger, which is part of Google, so if you already have a Google account, you can simply add a blog to your account, otherwise you will set up a Google account when you create your blog.




Set up your blog by going to <https://www.blogger.com> and clicking “CREATE A BLOG”.


Then follow the steps. Keep these things in mind as you do so:

- **You can change the title, template, and otherwise alter your blog later**, so don’t worry about what choices you make at the initial setup. ***The blog address is permanent and cannot contain spaces.*
- **You can have multiple blogs on one account**, so you can easily make separate blogs for work, school, family, and so on.

Once you’re set up, you’ll write your first post, which should look similar to writing an email. You can add images, links and use the formatting tools at the top of the composing window.

-  - **Posts appear chronologically.** You can change the order of their appearance by changing the post date. *You can edit or delete posts at any time.*
- Reader feedback via **comments** can be allowed or not allowed with various levels of moderation.

Customize your blog by using the “Layout” tools.

-  - **Add Gadgets:** hundreds of modular tools to add snippets of information, feeds, videos, and so on to the periphery of your blog. One of the most popular is the **blogroll**, which is your list of links to other blogs or websites.
- **Change the look of your blog:** fonts and colors, templates, header image, and much more can be customized.

WIKIS

You know about Wikipedia, the “wiki” that changed the way knowledge is collected and shared. You can harness that same power for your courses. A wiki is a website that can be modified by any number of people or the public, making it an ideal way to collaborate in a shared space online.



Set up your wiki by going to <https://www.wikispaces.com> and click

Get Started

When you're set up, add some content into the main page by clicking the **EDIT tab** and using the WYSIWYG editor. Type right into the webpage content area to add text.

- **Make as many pages as needed:** the “New Page” link opens the editor and creates a new link in the navigation bar.
- **Invite others** to join and take part in developing the wiki content.

Managing your wiki



- **Add Widgets (aka gadgets):** hundreds of modular tools to add snippets of information, calendars, feeds, videos, and so on to your wiki. Click the little TV icon in the WYSIWYG editor to access these.



- **Permissions:** set up your wiki to be public, protected from editing by non-members, or make custom permissions. Private wikis are available for a price.



- **Customize the appearance:** themes, fonts and colors, images, and much more can be customized.

Wiki functions

- **Messaging:** use the built-in email for wiki-specific communication.



- **Image and file upload:** add pictures with a built-in picture manager, as well as documents, audio files and video.

- **Discussion Board:** make forums on unlimited topics.

- **Page History:** see who edited pages, what they did, and when.

GOOGLE DOCS

Do you ever need to work on a document with someone in another state? Another country? Google Docs allows you to easily create a document and share it with one or more people. You can collaborate in real time, or asynchronously. Google Docs also allows you to store these documents in cyberspace and access them from anywhere. No CD, flash drive, or media needed, just login to your account and work.



Google Docs allows you to create and share documents at

<http://docs.google.com>

You can use your Google account Username and password, or if you don't have one, create a Google Docs account and you'll also have a Google account!


One of the finest features of Google Docs is that there is no need to have your own computer or media to drag around your documents. You can access your documents from any computer with an internet connection.


As part of the **Google Products**, Google Docs is easy to place in your iGoogle homepage or share on other web applications.


Google functionality

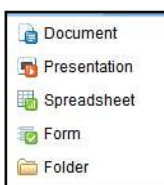
- **Save documents to the web and retrieve them anywhere there is an internet connection.**
- **Invite others** to join your share your documents.

Creating and Managing your Google Docs

 **Create a new document:** Google Docs allows you to create text documents, presentations, spreadsheets and interactive forms.

 **Upload existing files from your computer:** Select the upload icon to upload PowerPoint files, Excel spreadsheets, Word documents and more.

 **Share your works with anyone you choose:** Documents can be shared and edited by one or more users and can be embedded into other HTML environments.



Customize the appearance: No longer tied to a CD or flash drive or a specific computer. All the files are available anywhere you can access the internet.

You Tube

You **don't** have to know much about video to be a YouTuber. You **do** have to get the video into the computer, and **do** have to follow these basics:

- **File can be no larger than 1 gigabyte**
- **Video no longer than 10 minutes**

Easiest of all, you can make a video with "Record from webcam" in no time.

[Help](#) | [Sign Out](#)

Upload ▾

Upload Video File

Record from Webcam

The Player

YouTube is constantly evolving, so adapt as you go. The **player** is now wide-screen (16 x 9) by default, so 'older' videos not in this format have black side "boxes".



On/Off Options:
Captions
Subtitles
Annotations

"Scrub" timeline to jump back and forth

High Quality version

Full Screen

WHAT WE LIKE ABOUT YOUTUBE:

- **Unlimited uploading**
- Videos play on all computers with Flash
- **Embedding:** place your video players on your own webpage, course or blog. Customizable embedded player.
- **Custom video player** using playlist and cool interface
- **Comments:** dialogue with your audience (must be YouTube account holders).
- **Annotations:** Really helpful to add notes on to spontaneous recordings to flesh out and fill in gaps in information. *NEW: you can share annotating capabilities with others!*
- **Captioning:** using free downloadable tools: www.urusoft.com
- **Seeing the hits!**

EMBEDDING

Customize your player

Unless forbidden by the channel, embedding of any video is the norm, simply by copying the code.

The URL field creates a link to the video page; the Embed code can be pasted into another webpage, blog, Blackboard content area, to play the video in a customizable player.

The Customize button opens the options to make a player that fits your specifications. **BE SURE TO UNCHECK** "Include related videos" to avoid videos from YouTube linking to your player.

The screenshot shows the YouTube embedding interface for a video from 'YCWebServicesVideo'. It includes a 'Subscribe' button, the video title, date, and a description. The 'URL' field contains the video link, and the 'Embed' field shows the HTML code. A 'Customize' gear icon is highlighted with a callout: 'Customize icon' and 'Opens up Embed Customizing options you see here.' Below the URL field is a 'Preview' window. A callout 'Uncheck This' points to the 'Include related videos' checkbox, which is currently unchecked. Another callout 'Border Color combo' points to a set of color swatches. A callout 'Player size' points to four size options: 500x315, 580x360, 660x405, and 873x525. A 'Show Border' checkbox is checked, and 'Enable delayed cookies' is unchecked. A '(close)' button is at the bottom right.

PLACE IT INTO YOUR COURSE. Copy the code in the embed field. Make a new **Item** in Blackboard, then click the <> button to open HTML source mode, and paste it in.

Annotations

You can make multiple notes on your video, from simple text, to links and pauses that create interactivity.

The annotation tool appears on your videos, which you use while viewing.

The advanced Annotations Editor in Edit Video>Annotations, gives you even greater precision.

Annotating your videos

The screenshot shows a video player interface with an annotation tool. A toolbar at the top contains 'Publish', a comment icon, a link icon, a color palette icon, and a trash icon. A callout 'The options box for formatting your note' points to this toolbar. Below the toolbar is a text box containing 'Enter your text here' with a callout 'Text box with sizina handles'. At the bottom, a video control bar shows a play button, a progress bar, and a volume icon. A callout 'The options box for formatting your note' points to a small toolbar on the left side of the video player. Another callout 'Gold Points mark the in and out point where your note appears' points to two yellow triangular markers on the video player.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Are you on Facebook yet? This and many other online spaces allow people to talk, share, and connect in ever more complex ways. Using these spaces to create educational settings allows students and teachers to relate in more personal and productive ways, with a new level of comfort and creative freedom.



Ning allows you to set up your own social networks at <https://www.ning.com>

Just give it a name and a no-spaces address like you did for your blog and wiki. You should see many similarities between these technologies by now.

One of the hallmark features of the social network is allowing members to make a customized, personal page of their own. The sidebar shows **Member avatars** and who is currently online.

Ning has an **advertisement bar** on the right side, which they will remove if you let them know that you are using it for education and some or all of your students are 17 or under.

Ning functionality

- **Blogs, discussion forums, and email inbox**
- **Invite others** to join your social network.

Managing your social network



- **Add Features (aka widgets, gadgets):** a set of modular tools to add information, feeds, videos, audio and so on.



- **Expand the content areas:** Go to the Manage tab> Tab Manager and select the "Add New Tab" link to create a new tabbed page. You can also make sub-pages within existing tabs or make tabs link to other websites.



- **Members:** see a list of members, set privileges, and set overall access in the Privacy area.



- **Customize the appearance:** themes, fonts and colors, image and much more can be customized. You can even get into the coding of the page if you have those skills.



- **Flickr Importing:** special import for Flickr photo sharing users.

ONLINE COURSE CONFERENCING



Free Mikogo and Skype applications allow you to see remote presentations, hear multiple people in real time, and screen share with multiple users. Students enjoy the ability to connect with instructors and share experiences via the web, and everything works equally well in Mac and Windows.

Step 1 is connecting via Skype. www.skype.com

Skype is a free internet phone service that supports a conference of up to 10 people, and includes a chat client. Being able to hear each other is the first step to achieving a level of comfort and amicability that is conducive to learning. Skype has proved reliable and easy to use across a spectrum of users; the most common troubleshooting issues have to do with users' microphones. A headset and microphone setup is the best for conferencing because, even with echo cancellation, someone inevitably has an echoey connection that is murder on everyone. USB mics are nice, though I have found a mic that plugs into the old mini-plug jack still available on some computers can be even more convenient.

You can create a calling group in Skype or add and receive conference callers ad hoc.

The chat tool allows you to send text and hyperlinks to all or select users. Users can also have group or private chats among themselves.

Step 2 is connecting with Mikogo [www.mikogo.com]

Mikogo is a web conferencing tool for up to 10 people. This technology is also called screen sharing, or remote desktop sharing. Whatever you call it, it means the ability to connect between computers to show each other what's happening on their screens in real time. Mikogo also allows users to be able to control each other's computers, use annotations and other features.

You **start a Mikogo meeting** by downloading and registering on the mikogo.com website, then open the software just like you would any other application:

Windows

1. Go to Start> Programs> Mikogo.
2. Then the "M" icon appears in the system tray. Click it and select "Start Meeting" from the menu.
3. Send the instructions to participants.



MAC

1. Mac: start the Mikogo application.



2. Click the “M” icon in the Mac task bar and select “Start Meeting” from the menu.
3. Send the instructions to participants.

You have participants join the meeting in 3 different ways:

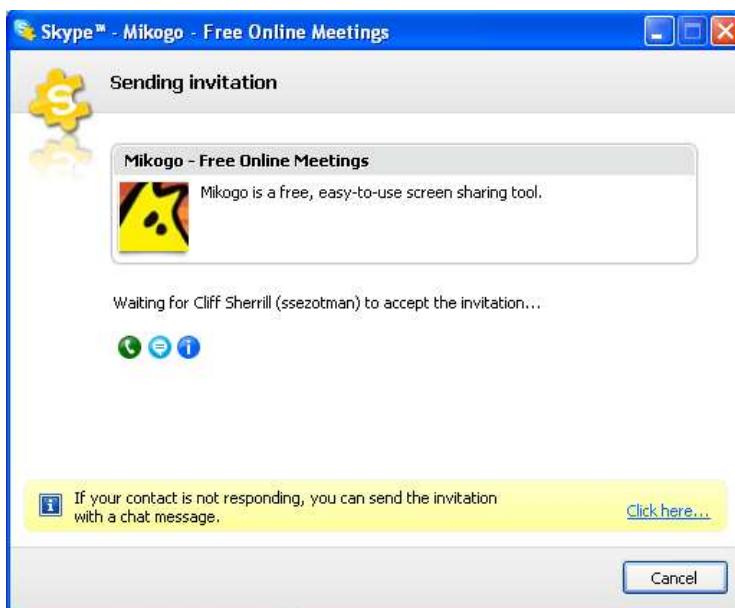
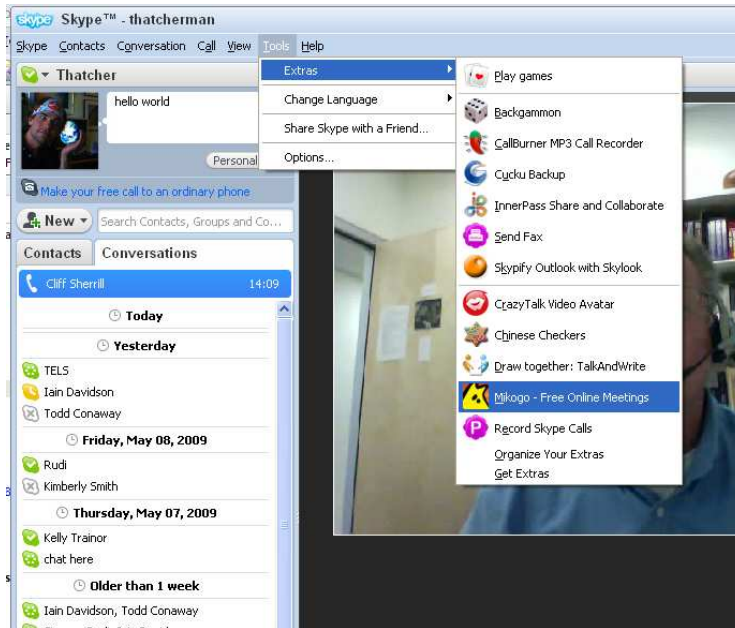
1. Directing them to the Mikogo website, www.mikogo.com
There, they will click on either the Mac or Win “Join Meeting” buttons, be asked to download and run a small executable file (no install required), and then enter the meeting ID and their name. *They are not required to register with Mikogo.*
2. Putting a Mikogo “Join Meeting” button in your course.
This saves them the step of going to the Mikogo website.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a Blackboard Academic Suite course page. The browser title is "Blackboard Academic Suite - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar shows the URL: "https://zbb.yc.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_2_1&url=%2fwebapps%2fblackboard%2fexecute%2flauncher%3ftype%3dCourse%". The page header includes the Yavapai College logo and navigation links for Home, Help, and Logout. Below the header, there are tabs for Yavapai College, Courses, System Admin, and Scholar Bookmarks. The main content area is titled "20091 (SPRING) ART139 10001 FLUID VIDEO EDIT & DVD AUTH (091484) (20091 ART13910001) > COMMUNICATION". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with buttons for Announcements, Course Information, Lessons, Projects & Assign, Discussion Board, Communication, Media Resources, Your Progress, and Tegrity Classes. Below this menu are sections for Course Tools (Control Panel, Quick Unenroll), Refresh, and Detail View. The main content area has a "Communication" section with a "Skype - internet telephone" announcement. The announcement text says: "Once you have microphone or webcam on your computer, we can talk via video phone or voice only. I love it. Free calls to Korea! Once you get hooked up, look up my username (Search for Skype Users under Contacts): **mrzohrman**. I will open this up during office hours every Thursday 2-4pm. You can even use this button to start a call:". Below the text is a "Call me!" button with a phone icon and a "Skype download" link. There is also an "Online Labs" section with the text: "Mikogo is now the tool of choice for our web conferencing / online labs. Click the button for your OS to join the meeting." Below this text are two buttons: "Mac mikogo Join Meeting" and "Win mikogo Join Meeting". At the bottom, there is a "Send email" section with the text: "Send to instructors and or fellow students." and an email icon.

3. Using the Mikogo Skype extra

Using the Skype extra is a fast way to connect, but it does not work in Mac. Step one is installing the extra for yourself by going to Tools>Extras> Get Extras (There are many cool things here, especially if you like Chinese Checkers☺). Mikogo is under the Sharing section, or simply search for “Mikogo”, then click the green play button to install it in Skype.

To **use** the Mikogo Skype extra, go to Tools>Extras> and choose Mikogo from the list.

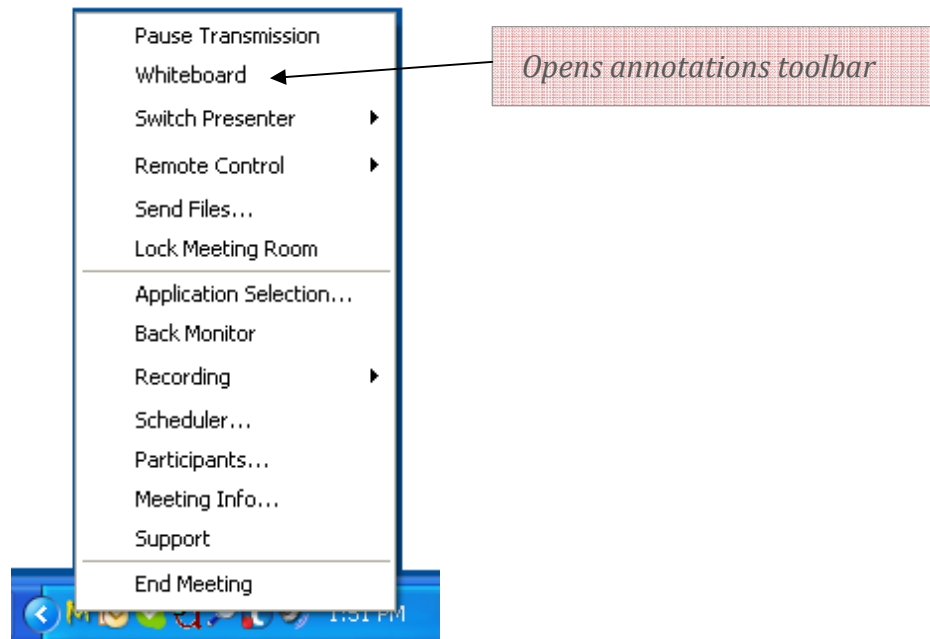


Then choose the participants (up to 10) from your list of contacts to “invite” to use Mikogo; the next message alerts you that an invitation has been sent, and if your invitees don’t have the latest version of Skype, there is a link at the bottom of that to send them the invitation via Skype chat – handy!

The participant will get a message to accept the invitation and install the Mikogo extra. Once they do, they will automatically join the meeting, which you started by sending the invitation.

Meeting options

Click the “M” icon during a meeting to open your other options.



Conferencing best practices

- Use a headset-mic to reduce echo.
- Managing an audio conference of 5+ people can be challenging; address people by name, do your best to keep people involved and “check in” with those that are quieter.
- If audio is choppy, in Skype> Tools> Options> Audio settings, and uncheck “Automatically adjust microphone settings”.
- Don’t forget to end your meeting (Mikogo) and end your call (Skype) to avoid unintended post-meeting moments!

Mikogo on Mac has fewer features than in Windows

- No Skype extra for connecting through Skype
- No annotations, recording
- If you get an error when joining a meeting: “failed to connect to server”, you should start a new meeting and try again.
- Can’t send files from a Mac (yet)

JANUARY 2009

Instructor's Personality: An Essential Online Course Component

By Rob Kelly

An instructor's "digital" personality can influence student achievement, retention or completion, and satisfaction with courses, says Todd Conaway, an instructional designer at Yavapai College in Arizona. This is why he encourages instructors to infuse their personalities into their online courses. In a recent email interview with *Online Classroom*, Conaway described how instructors can use widely available tools and techniques to express their personalities in online courses.

Whether or not you make a conscious effort to project your personality into your online courses, students draw inferences about you through whatever information about you is available to them. "Some [instructors' digital personalities] are just very, very flat and lacking in information," Conaway says. This can be due to the instructor's underestimation of the importance of this aspect of his or her courses or lack of confidence and/or experience in the online environment. The persona you present online can affect the online classroom in the following ways, Conaway says:

- **Student satisfaction:** "Student satisfaction, persistence, and

achievement are all influenced by the relationships they develop in courses. Any event is influenced by how we feel about the experience. Humanistic theory would agree that we would choose to stay in environments that feel safe, comfortable, and rewarding," Conaway says.

- **Learning:** "Transactional distance research suggests that we get more from those we interact with. In online education, that distance can be closed by interacting with students. That interaction does not have to be an email or discussion thread. It could be the interaction they have with your website or an image of you, or a video clip. I think that instructor presence leads to the potential for deeper learning."
- **Interaction:** "Role modeling interaction with students in the class is more likely to create student-to-student interaction. It's the same with the online class. Of course, in the online environment there are students who choose that delivery because they do not have to interact as much. Very independent learners shy away from those student

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5 >>

TIPS FROM THE PROS

Technology and Personality—A Couple of Examples

Using technology to infuse personality into a course can easily be integrated into normal course activities, serving content and interactive purposes simultaneously. Todd Conaway, instructional designer at Yavapai College, offers two examples below.

One Yavapai College instructor created a video demonstrating how to navigate his online course, providing students with some very practical information about the course and an indication of the instructor's personality.

Other instructors use various software to provide audio feedback on students' work. Using Tegrity or Camtasia Studio enables instructors to provide narrated critiques of students' work.

"Screen-capture software is wonderful for generating powerful interaction. I suppose the difference is similar to getting a paper back with some teacher comments on it and being able to sit with that teacher for ten minutes and have them explain to you in detail the comments they have on your work," Conaway says. "Research says that in the online environment, an audio clip conveys more information to a student than does the same response in text. A video clip is even better." @

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Tapping Into Higher-Level Thinking in Online Courses

By Anne Saxe

One of the most important responsibilities online instructors face is teaching students how to think critically. Successful achievement of this task requires that instructors provide the right setting and the appropriate activities that will prompt a student on to higher-level thinking. Though this mission is not exclusive to online instruction, the online environment presents some unique challenges and opportunities that distinguish this type of learning environment from traditional face-to-face classroom instruction.

Educators are continually reminded that successful demonstration of higher-level thinking by students is an essential objective of their classes. Thus, faculty members are well aware of their responsibility to provide critical-thinking learning opportunities. What may be less clear, however, is what exactly “critical thinking” means and just how students may practice and accomplish it.

Teachers are very familiar with the illustrious taxonomy Benjamin Bloom and a group of educational psychologists created in 1956. Bloom’s taxonomy classified intellectual behavior on a hierarchy from the most basic level (knowledge) to increasingly complex classes including comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Overbaugh and Schultz 2008). Critical thinking involves all levels of Bloom’s taxonomy, as the higher levels cannot be obtained without achieving the more basic levels.

The constructivist aspect of higher-level thinking seen in the more advanced classes of Bloom’s taxonomy is especially noteworthy:

critical thinking requires students to not only analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and problems, but also to examine their own thinking. Students must be permitted to construct their own knowledge by monitoring, directing, and correcting how and what they think (Paul and Elder 2006). Research shows that meaningful learning results when students are empowered to self-direct their learning. When educators change their role from givers of information to collaborators and instigators (Ó Murchú 2005), and when students are engaged in critical thinking via stimulating and supporting activities, then faculty assist students in becoming self-directed learners and critical thinkers.

Even when instructors clearly understand what critical thinking is and what it entails, implementing activities that promote higher-level thinking may still present a challenge. Any number of assignments that fit the criteria/definition for critical thinking described above may be appropriate. Each educator’s specific discipline and subject matter will determine the exact critical-thinking elements that should be stressed. Nevertheless, there is at least one tool that online instructors from every discipline may use to support critical inquiry: online discussions, particularly those that promote collaborative learning and that are problem-based in nature.

In order for online discussions to successfully generate critical thinking among students, faculty must first set and clearly communicate preestablished discussion guidelines. Examples of guidelines

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 >>

include the instructor's expectations, e.g., deadlines, proper netiquette, how discussions will be graded. It is also important that students are aware of the goal of the discussion activity and why it is relevant to their learning, as this knowledge tends to motivate students and generate enthusiasm for the discussion.

Faculty support focused and disciplined discussions by clearly stating information for learners to critically reflect upon and review at their own pace in advance of the discussion. Good class discussions start with problem-based springboard focus questions. Critical-thinking questions require students to go beyond facts and discuss problems to work out. Problem-based focus questions require students to provide evidence, evaluate assumptions, describe implications and potential consequences, and/or propose solutions. Examples of questioning techniques that promote critical thinking include convergent, divergent, evaluative, and Socratic-questioning strategies.

Convergent questions require students to demonstrate understanding of content by interpreting information in a new way. These questions utilize verbs such as judge, explain, demonstrate, and support. Divergent questions seek to stimulate creativity by asking for alternative outcomes or variations to a scenario. Evaluative questions afford learners reflective opportunities through questions that call for justifying beliefs and gathering resources to defend and support one's opinions. Socratic-questions ask learners to examine reasons, assumptions, and perspectives and to provide justification and evidence for them (Walker 2005). Use of these question types is most effective for promoting critical interaction when implemented in asynchronous online discussions.

After the focus question is asked and students are given the opportunity to reflect, it then becomes the

instructor's job to facilitate the discussion. Once discussion begins, faculty must encourage participation whereby students demonstrate respect for each other's ideas and where they build upon each other's ideas. Instructors are responsible for keeping the discussion focused and asking probing questions that require students to reason through their thinking and construct their own understanding, e.g., by asking for elaboration or clarification (MacKnight 2000). Examples of clarification questions include "What do you mean when you say ___?" "How could you rephrase that statement?" and "Would you please explain that point further?"

When online class discussions require student collaboration, the opportunities for practicing critical thinking are further enhanced. The instructor may instruct the class to engage in discussion using an online expanded group format in which the springboard question is discussed by both instructor and students. For example, groups may be assigned to analyze a real or simulated complex problem and offer a solution or decision. Another collaborative approach includes dividing the class into debating teams in which students are required to argue a position and defend it against a counter-position. A third approach includes breaking students into subgroups to discuss specific parts of a topic and then teach the other students that information (MacKnight 2000).

Opportunities for tapping into higher-level thinking in online classes abound. Discussions are a unique tool of the online environment in that they provide students with occasions for careful reflection and review before participation is required. Instructors play a critical role in online class discussions if they are to generate higher-level thinking among students. The educator's responsibility is twofold: 1) instructors initiate productive and

stimulating online discussion by formulating questions that prompt analysis, synthesis, reasoning, and/or evaluation and 2) faculty continue to support online discussion by monitoring the discussion and keeping it focused through their participation and through clarifying questions. Instructors cultivate learning and problem solving in discussions by modeling critical thinking and questioning techniques. By using these methods, educators enable students to gradually accept more responsibility for their ideas and to practice higher-level thinking.

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- Anne Saxe is a geography instructor at Saddleback College. @

That's Debatable: Pump Up Your Online Courses, Part 3

By Patti Shank, PhD, CPT

In this series of articles, I am presenting practical ideas that you can adopt or adapt for in your online courses, in order to try new things, engage students, and add depth to existing (and new) content and assignments.

Debate, anyone?

In last month's article, I discussed integrating current news and opinions into your online courses. Doing so can infuse your content and assignments with here-and-now relevancy. This can be a great way to engage students in critical issues happening in your field of study.

Another way to engage students in considering critical issues related to the course content is to use debates as a course activity/assignment. Can you debate online? Absolutely. I'll get into some how-tos later in this article.

Debates are typically based on a stated proposition, a statement that can be agreed with or disagreed with. Here are a few examples of propositions in a variety of disciplines that could be used as the basis for student debates.

- Business: Businesses should be required to provide health care to all workers.
- Marketing: Advertising targeted at children should be banned.
- Economics: Barriers to trade (such as tariffs) should be eliminated because free trade is ultimately best for all.
- Political Science: Political term limits should be expanded to apply to members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Debates and learning

Debating—researching, offering, and defending sound arguments—helps learners more deeply consider the nuances of a given proposition. It offers good opportunities to think through different positions, evaluate the logic of a position's tenets, and understand the opposition's point of view. It can advance an individual's understanding of how to organize and sequence arguments. And debates can help students see that positions are often based on an *interpretation* of the facts rather than the facts themselves.

Most educators agree that preparing people to think deeply about important issues is an important teaching and learning objective at all levels of education. Thinking deeply can foster open-mindedness, tolerance for opposing viewpoints, and seeing beyond the obvious.

Online debate how-tos

You may agree that debates can be valuable for learning but wonder if they can be done online. It's interesting to see how others have used the Internet for debates and then decide whether you could adopt or adapt these methods.

I think that the economic, policy, and political debates at *The Economist* (www.economist.com/debate/debates/overview/136) provide a terrific model for online debating. They adapt the Oxford style of debating to work asynchronously, using technology. Each side (typically an invited expert) has three chances to persuade readers: opening, rebuttal, and closing. Readers participate by voting to determine the debate's winner and by sending comments to the moderator, who determines which

comments are worthy of discussion by the debaters. And—this is so cool—as long as the debate is open, readers may change their vote if the “other side” has changed his or her view.

How might you use this approach? It wouldn't be hard to set aside discussion forum space to house opening, rebuttal, and closing statements from designated debaters. Or debaters could post opening, rebuttal, and closing papers. Either the instructor or another student could serve as the moderator, and the rest of the class could post comments to the moderator. Many course management systems contain polling tools, which could be used to vote on arguments and the winner. Or the winner could be chosen by the instructor, a combination of votes plus the instructor, or a guest expert.

I can think of numerous ways to tweak this process. For example, the instructor might produce the opening statements for both sides and ask students to select a side based on these opening arguments and then defend it through rebuttal and closing. You might allow students to change sides if the other side's arguments are compelling enough. You could assign more than two positions for each debate, such as agree, agree but disagree in the following circumstances, disagree but agree under in following circumstances, and disagree. You may be able to think of other twists.

Other online tools that can be used for online debates include blogs and wikis. A blog could be started by each side and the audience could post comments that

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the debater (one student or a team of students) could respond to. A wiki page could be used in a similar way.

Making it work

Debates need rules that support the stated intent—building understanding. First, provide clear instructions and guidelines. For example, will you assign sides or can students pick them? Will both sides post simultaneously or one first and then

the other? How will others participate? Who will moderate?

It's a good idea to provide a checklist of what is expected in the opening, rebuttal, and closing. For example, here are a few guidelines I'd provide for opening statements.

- State your position on the proposition.
- Open with the most important argument for your position.
- Present other critical arguments for your position.
- Provide clear examples that support each argument.

- Leave personal opinions out.
- Provide attribution when discussing others' words and ideas.
- Close with a strong summary.

You may also want to provide guidelines about the tone of the debate. Here are a few that come to mind.

- Assume the other side deserves a voice and respect.
- Disagree with positions and interpretations, not people.

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interactions. Learning styles and a student's comfort with social situations vary, but I think role modeling frequent and quality interaction is very important."

Here are some steps that Conaway recommends for expressing your digital personality in order to enhance the learning experience:

1. Include some biographical information in your course.

Course management systems have spaces for instructor information. The default setting typically includes space for a small photograph of the instructor, office hours, and an email address. As a first step toward improving on this, Conaway recommends including more information on that page—a few photographs, descriptions of hobbies and interests.

2. Consider students' expectations.

Today's students are typically quite familiar with interactive technologies and expect their instructors—especially online instructors—to understand and use technologies that promote interaction as well.

3. Explore new technologies.

"Just looking at what has happened to the capabilities of the Internet and computers in the past ten years should be enough to guide us in what we should be doing. YouTube tells us we can create videos and share them with our students. That content that once could only be played in the classroom or living room on VHS tape can now be placed in your online class. Social networking sites tell us that our students do want to communicate with each other. The recent developments in open courseware tell us that there are instructors all over who have great information to share, and we can incorporate it into our courses. The Internet is not just scrolling text anymore. We need to use its capabilities to address learning styles and promote interaction," Conaway says. Here are some products Conaway recommends investigating:

- Tegrity—www.tegrity.com—lecture capturing software
- Camtasia Studio—www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp—screen-capture video software
- Ning—www.ning.com—an

online platform that enables users to create social websites and social networks

- Jing—www.jingproject.com—screencasting software that takes a picture or video of the user's computer screen and uploads it to the Web
- Skype—www.skype.com—software that enables users to make free telephone calls over the Internet
- Audacity—<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>—open software for recording and editing sound

4. Create a Web page.

Some students will want to know more about you. If they do a Web search and don't find much about you, they make take this as an indication that you are not very tech savvy, which as an online instructor is not a good impression to make, Conaway says. In addition to serving as a space to convey your personality, a personal Web page is also a great place to put reusable resources for your courses—handouts, links, etc.

Contact Todd Conaway at todd.conaway@yc.edu. @

Your 2009 Online Teaching Guide

By Errol Craig Sull

It's 2009 and a new teaching year is ahead of us—much to be excited about! Yes, I know there are some courses that are ongoing from 2008 into 2009, but no matter: if only symbolically, 2009 is a year in which we can start our teaching anew and refreshed, right our teaching wrongs from the previous year, make our current teaching the best experience yet for our students and us, and look for new professional opportunities and experiences. There are many items that can be listed to accomplish all this, but that's a book and this is a column, so I'll pick what I consider my top 10, wish you a wonderful New Year(!), and hope this is your best-yet teaching year:

Get very organized and stay very organized. This always seems so obvious—but it's also so often overlooked or underused. Your course will start out clean and organized and so will you. But once it's time for postings and responses and grading and other aspects of your course—not to mention the demands of daily life—it's all too easy to let the organized and neat become disorganized and messy. Don't! Do whatever works best for you to stay organized and on top of things; if you don't, eventually your students and your courses will suffer ... and, ultimately, so will you.

Be aware of economic fallout possibly touching you. These are rough times economically—you don't need me to tell you that. But stay aware of how this may impact your teaching. Two most often mentioned are (1) the growth in the number of students taking college courses, either because they are out of work and have the time or because they need to update their

skills so they can find better employment, which may translate into more teaching opportunities for you, and (2) the reality that some schools may have to cut back on their faculty and/or number of courses offered due to economic shortfalls. For both of these reasons, always have an updated résumé at the ready.

Keep all your school's important announcements and dates in one place. This is a little tip that also seems obvious—but by not doing this, many faculty miss important dates or information (and thus may have unnecessary “uh-oh” conversations and emails with school administrators and students). And be sure you have a calendar—that you check daily—with important dates jotted down (including when paychecks arrive, classes begin, classes end; dates of exams; and official school closings). Finally, by having all school policies in one place you can keep yourself always on the right side of what is expected of you.

Be timely with all postings, grades, and responses. These will mount up; if you let them go for but one or two days it can seem like a mountain of work to do—especially if you are teaching more than one course and particularly if you are teaching for more than one school. Be aware of what your school requires you to post and when, then be sure to do it. But also know that the majority of postings you do in any course will be responses to students. Try to anticipate questions students may ask, and then include all answers in an early posting/email to the class. This will cut down on the number of student emails you will receive. Unless your school already has a policy on this, set one for yourself: respond to each student

posting within 24 hours.

Remember to err on the side of the student. Yes, there will be many times when you know you are right and the student is wrong—but before you send that email that might come back to haunt you or take an action that might elicit a problem, think over the student's argument and consider whether a “second chance” is warranted. Of course, you need to follow your school's guidelines. But when unsure, ask “the powers that be” and, when up to you, see if there is an opportunity to give the student a break. The student is taking your course to learn, and if a student's oversight, misunderstanding, or problem can be rectified or turned into a “teachable moment,” do it.

Don't forget that students are learning from you. Sometimes, it can be easy to get frustrated with students who just don't seem to “get it,” no matter how clear you believe the directions or information posted to be. It can be vexing when students just don't seem to catch on to the subject matter as easily as you think they should—no matter how detailed your comments on assignments, no matter how many resources are available. But remember: they are students—sometimes very young students—and many are just putting their toes in the waters of an online course and/or the subject matter where you have been swimming for quite some time. Remember this—it will help keep your blood pressure low and your teaching enthusiasm high.

Be professional in all aspects of your teaching. While this obvious, a little reminder never hurts. Be mindful of what you say

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in posts, email, and comments. Give positive, motivational feedback. Let the students know you really care about the course by being a constant and interested presence in the course. Have the mind-set of a true professor: probing, engaging, understanding, interested, knowing but never condescending, upbeat, eager, serious, passionate about the subject—and all with a twinkle of humor.

Know how to pace yourself—and do it. Too many online teachers write me to ask about preventing burnout, about getting back their passion for teaching. One way to help prevent burnout is by knowing how much time you have to do a certain task and remembering that you must also do other tasks, and never forgetting what helps you relax. Getting into a schedule of a balanced life equates to being refreshed each time you sit down at the keyboard to teach, embracing relaxation activities with gusto because they are so important, and doing everyday tasks without feeling rushed.

Keep on top of all the technology that can help you be a better teacher. There is so much technology out there that can help in our teaching, but the rate at which it changes is dizzying. Look to your institution for software and other online updates. Ask colleagues for input on what they have found helpful. Read my two annual columns on tech updates (late summer/early fall). Make favorite folders for websites and downloads that enhance your efforts. Read tech columns and magazines. You've elected to teach online, thus you must always be up on all technology available to help you be the best possible teacher.

Never be a status quo teacher. You must stay current in all aspects of your profession—the subject, teaching strategies, student demographics, etc. Continually explore your subject area, read, and research teaching strategies and activities; become active in Listservs and groups devoted to your subject or course; stay active in professional associations; attend professional conferences; and write to publish in your

discipline. Schools and students need teachers who embrace their teaching, not those who simply allow teaching to embrace them.

REMEMBER: A dictionary definition of “teacher” is easy to find—yet we have only ourselves to live that definition, so do it wisely, enthusiastically, elegantly, and humbly.

Please let me hear from you, including sending along suggestions and information for future columns. You can always reach me at erolcraigsull@aol.com. And remember: please forward me your computer tips and suggestions to make teaching in the online classroom more efficient and productive.

Errol Craig Sull has been teaching online courses for more than 12 years and has a national reputation in the subject, both writing and conducting workshops on it. He is currently putting the finishing touches on his next book—The Student's Complete Guide to Online Learning. @

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- Disagree without being disagreeable.

If you like this idea and want to adopt or adapt it, I'd recommend that you base most of the grade on strength of arguments. You may want to provide points for strongest opening, strongest rebuttal, and strongest closing. You could also provide points for the best comments from the “audience.”

This Education World site provides rules, rubrics, and other materials you can tweak to plan, implement, and evaluate debates: www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson304b.shtml. You can find lots of information on a wide range of debate topics at the International Debate Education Association (www.idebate.org/debatabase/topic_index.php).

Debates can provide students with critical ah-has about the content that are difficult to achieve

using more traditional teaching methods. These kinds of activities are experiential in nature, and experience is often the very best teacher.

Patti Shank, PhD, CPT, is a widely recognized information and instructional designer and writer and author, who helps others build valuable information and instruction. She can be reached through her website: www.learningpeaks.com. @

Burnout and Online Instruction: 10 Tips to Revive Your E-Classroom and Yourself, Part 2

By Jody Oomen-Early, PhD, MS,
CHES

Last month, I shared with you several tips that have helped me overcome burnout as an online instructor. In this issue, I offer the remainder of my 10 recommendation for reenergizing as an online instructor.

Tip #3: Create a more “affective,” diverse environment.

As learning theory supports, the affective domain is just as important as the cognitive or psychomotor. Add in some “affective” type questions or assignments that allow for a range of answers and perspectives. Consider adding in some opinion-related questions, discussion topics, or field activities that allow students to share their own experiences. Avoid posing discussion questions that initiate only one possible answer. The students’ responses will grow stale if you don’t incite a diverse scope of dialogue. Over time, students will feel less enthused about logging in and, therefore, will be less inclined to do so.

Try posting audio messages to the class as well as to individuals. This can be done by using a simple computer headset with microphone (from Best Buy, Wal-Mart, or Target) and your computer (or phone or voice recorder). Or try some asynchronous and synchronous forms of group audio discussion by visiting www.yackpack.com or www.voicethread.com.

Tip #4: Collaborate!

Form a learning community with your fellow faculty and friends (even if it’s a small group), and meet at least once a month to dialogue about your experiences, best

practices, and e-learning literature. Working together, across disciplines, can reduce feelings of isolation and can even lead to vita-enhancing projects.

Tip #5: Establish boundaries, but keep your social presence.

To reduce the “24/7” feeling some of us experience, inform your students of days and times that you will be available for office hours (live) in person, via online chat, or by phone. Also, consider asynchronous mechanisms of communication, such as a Q&A board that you check twice a week.

Tip #6: Include informal, nongraded assignments to stimulate discussion and increase learning comprehension.

This can also reduce the amount of grading required of the instructor, but allows the students to stay connected to the content. Self-quizzes, online games (speak to one of our TWU instructional designers), Web tutorials (e.g., breast health quiz at www.komen.org), online chats, wikis, online scavenger hunts, digital storytelling, and blogs are just a few tools used for informal application.

Tip #7: Take a break.

Back away from your monitor and do something that does not require use of your computer. As hard as it may be, try to reserve your weekends for yourself and your family and/or friends. Otherwise, that feeling of “24/7” will begin to overwhelm you. You may also consider applying for faculty leave or taking a summer off if possible.

Tip #8: Use the resources available to help you.

More and more administrators

are becoming aware of the time and effort it takes to produce a quality online course. If your plate is full and you just never seem to find the time to concentrate on course development or skill building, talk to your chair or department coordinator. He/she may be able to juggle your workload to accommodate this request since quality course development benefits everyone involved.

Tip #9: As Thoreau once wrote, “Simplify, simplify, simplify!”

Start by clarifying your job responsibilities and (if applicable) tenure requirements. Like all service-oriented professionals, we have a tendency to feel guilty about saying “no.” Because of this, we often have too much on our plates. Determining how much of those portions come from external demands and expectations and how much we put there ourselves is a critical step in reducing and eliminating burnout.

Tip #10: Don’t try to do everything at once. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by technology because it evolves at lightning speed. Keeping abreast of what is going on in e-learning is important, but don’t try to do more than you can handle. Oftentimes, your students may not be ready either. So take it one step at a time. Try incorporating a new tool once per semester (or year) and/or focus on improving the *quality* of your design and instruction.

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