1-2013

CIRT Newsletter--January 2013

Center for Instruction & Research Technology (CIRT)

CIRT Newsletter Podcast

- **Faculty Spotlight: Establishing Community in an Online Course with Social Media**
- **Distance Learning Strategic Plan**
- **Upcoming Events**
- **Digital Thinking: Screen Recording**
- **Best Practices Online: Managing Multiple Sections in a Single Blackboard Course**

- **Blackboard News: Catalyst Awards and May Upgrade**
- **Blackboard Support for Students - New Resource**
- **App Review: Index Cards**
- **News from ITS: Accessing ITS Services Remotely**
- **New in CIRT: New Faces and New Process for Narrated PowerPoints**

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY IN AN ONLINE COURSE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS
Elizabeth Fullerton, Department of Childhood Education, Literacy, and TESOL
Listen Now
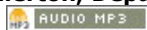
When Dr. Elizabeth Fullerton began the process of transitioning the **Early Childhood Graduate Certificate program** to the online learning environment, she immediately expressed an interest in incorporating other web technologies into her courses. She wanted her students to establish a sense of community in the course and determined that the use of online social media tools would foster that . In consultation with her assigned instructional designer, Syleste Hoskins, Fullerton came up with an introductory assignment using **Glogster**, a "visual" social networking website that allows anyone to design a free online multimedia image. The objective of the assignment was to build a learning community by creating a poster that reflects their goals and interests. Glogster, short for "graphics blog" is a Flash-based online interactive poster that allows users to post backgrounds, text, images, photos, audio, and video effects.

For this assignment in her Program Planning for Infants and Toddlers course, the students were required to create a Glog poster by uploading pictures of themselves and their interests into the poster tool. They then pasted the link to their poster into a Blackboard Discussion forum to serve as an introduction of themselves. Fullerton and Hoskins created the first "Glogsters" as an example. By posting the link in the Discussion Board, other students were able to respond to the introductions and discover shared interests and build a mental picture of the classmates with which they would interact throughout the course. The students took to Glogster right away. She noticed in the course mini-surveys that many students mentioned how much they enjoyed creating the poster. Fullerton was impressed with the quality of their work, and one student even suggested the use of Glogster for the presentation of an assignment later in the course.

Fullerton plans on continuing her use of social networking tools in her courses for a variety of learning objectives. She has already set up a collaborative "Pinboard" on **Pinterest**—a photo-sharing social media tool—based on feedback from other teachers and students who mentioned how popular the site is for early childhood educators. Pinterest is similar to using online bookmarks. Users can upload images and "pin" websites to their personal boards. Students will be pinning photos connected to useful resources for early childhood educators.

In her Curriculum and Instruction in Early Childhood course Fullerton is using the Blackboard Wiki tool in another course to establish a learning community, having students model their wiki pages after the website **www.biography.com** to introduce themselves to their classmates. In all of her courses, Fullerton puts special emphasis on providing her students with valuable online resources in early childhood education. She says that providing field resources while teaching content is an important process in helping students become successful online learners and successful professionals.

Other tools that Fullerton has found useful in her online classes having students listen to podcasts from popular early childhood resources like zerotothree.org, and using Blackboard Collaborate to have students create group presentations on controversial topics ?

If you are interested in using any of the above-mentioned tools in this article, please come in to CIRT and speak with any of our instructional designers about the effective use of web technologies in the online or hybrid course environment.

top

UNF DISTANCE LEARNING STRATEGIC PLAN AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT MODEL
Deb Miller, Director *deb.miller@unf.edu*
Listen Now   AUDIO MP3

UNF's 2012-17 Distance Learning Strategic Plan
The Distance Learning Strategic Plan has been in development since the 2011-12 academic year and was unveiled to the campus community last week. Drafts were developed and shared with faculty through college-based distributions by college representatives, open townhall-style forums and a thorough all-faculty survey. The plan was also shared with department chairs and deans. Feedback from each round of reviews was examined by the Distance Learning Committee (DLC) and revisions were made to the plan during hte process. At the September 2012 DLC meeting, the 2012-17 Distance Learning Strategic Plan was finalized and unanimously approved. It has also been shared with the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee of the Faculty Association. The DLC will now begin the process of implementation and developing the approriate infrastructure, policies, and procedures to implement the plan.

I am very excited about this plan and think it will provide UNF with a roadmap for developing distance learning courses and programs that remain true to our core institutional values and campus culture. As with any planning endeavor, it is an iterative process and the DLC will review, note progress, and refine annually,

To view the 2012-17 Distance Learning Strategic Plan website, which includes a downloadable version of the plan, **click here**.

Faculty Development Model
One of the goals in the strategic plan is to develop a more robust and flexible faculty development model that provides a tiered training system for faculty teaching and developing distance learning courses. We began that effort last year and I'm proud to announce that we have made great progress already. Our full model can be viewed **here**, and the program brochure can be downloaded by clicking on the cover image to the right.

We have redeveloped our faculty development model for DL to include more options and flexibility. Our traditional Teaching Online Seminar has become TOL6100 and we have accepted 50+ applications for the Spring and Summer 2013 Cohorts. We had **nearly 70 faculty members** complete the program last year. This seminar prepares instructors to develop and deliver a fully online course. The experience combines online coursework, cohort-based seminars, and consultation and addresses the important pedagogical, logistical, and technological issues involved in designing and delivering effective online courses.

We have also established new opportunities available fully online to support general Blackboard use and to offer training for course delivery. These courses are titled TOL4100 and TOL5100.

TOL4100 is a self-paced course appropriate for all instructors utilizing the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) at UNF. Six modules cover the LMS, incorporating best practices for tool use throughout. Each module contains learning objectives, tool overviews, best practices, an assessment activity, and an optional advanced unit. Faculty can register and start at any time and completion is estimated to take 4 - 6 hours. Approximately 50 faculty members have completed this course since it launched in the fall.

TOL5100 was designed primarily for part-time faculty, but is appropriate for any instructor teaching an existing distance learning course. Participants learn about the important pedagogical, logistical, and technological issues involved in delivering effective online courses. This is a six-week asynchronous course with live instructor and completion is estimated at 25-30 hours. 12 faculty members completed the course in its initial offering this fall and we will run another session beginning in March. I will send a call out to chairs and program directors to nominate their part time faculty for a spot and a stipend is available. We plan to offer this course each semester.
Prerequisite: Teaching Online Tool Essentials (TOL 4100)

We also have a cohort of 8 veteran DL faculty members beginning a national program to achieve Master Teaching Online certification. This rigorous process takes approximately 18 months to complete and those faculty will then provide service to the university community by serving as mentors, instructors, and course reviewers.

Visit **our faculty development model** for more details. These new initiatives will allow us to respond to growing student demand for the convenience, access, and unique learning experiences and environment offered by high-quality DL courses. Effective DL courses are designed to engage students actively in learning and can offer the opportunity for more one-on-one interaction with the instructor and more individualized feedback than a traditional course. They can also provide broader opportunities for students to participate and reflect on course content through interactive discussion.

I firmly believe that we can implement this type of high-quality distance learning at UNF without changing the character, values, or mission of our institution. I also believe that by doing so, at a reasonable scale, we can extend opportunities to our students in ways previously not possible. I hope you have found this informative and I welcome opportunities for further discussion.

top

UPCOMING EVENTS

Online Assessments, Part I: Improve Student Learning with Diagnostic Assessments
Date: Tuesday, January 29, 3:00 - 4:00pm
Location: Online
In this online workshop, participants learn about the pedagogical value of diagnostic assessments, learn to identify different types of diagnostic assessments, and see examples of effective feedback and remediation learning activities to improve student learning. Strategies for implementing this type of assessment in Blackboard are also discussed.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu** to receive session link.

Virtual Communication
Date: Friday, February 1, 11:00 am - 12:00pm
Location: Online
In this online workshop, participants explore strategies that instructors can use with Blackboard tools to consult with students virtually. Specifically, the use of 'Collaborate' and 'Chat' tools for holding online office hours and other student consultations. Best practices for using those tools are addressed.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu** to receive session link.

Creating and Managing Online Surveys- Level 2
Date: Friday, February 1, 2:00 - 4:00 pm
Location: Building 53 (Hicks Hall), Room 1400
This class covers the advanced functions of the University's online survey application, Qualtrics. Participants learn how to use the library feature to save surveys and questions for reuse and about survey distribution methods, including customized email links, panels, and inclusion in social media sites. These methods provide more efficient communication to the survey participants. Participants learn how to modify the available reports and export survey results into PowerPoint and MS Word. Creating and Managing Online Surveys, Level 1 is prerequisite to this class.
Register via **CPDT website**

Distance Learning Discussion & Lunch
Date: Friday, February 8, 12:30 - 2 pm
Location: Building 2, Room 2221
Join current distance learning faculty for a discussion of teaching online courses. Best practices, tips, and techniques will be discussed, so bring your ideas and questions. CIRT will provide lunch. Please RSVP by February 6 so we can include you in the count.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu**

Build Your Faculty Profile
Date: Friday, February 8, 2 - 4 pm
Location: Building 15, Room 1104
This hands-on session assists faculty in creating a faculty profile which includes their picture, contact information, areas of expertise, brief biography, and selected publications. The Faculty Bio website has been developed to achieve several goals, including the development of an expertise database, and will reach both internal and external community members. In this session, faculty members who have not yet built a faculty profile will get a brief demonstration of the system and have CIRT staff available for support as they build their profile.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu**

Tips and Tricks in Blackboard Collaborate
Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2:00 - 3:00pm
Location: Online
In this online session, participants learn about the following features in Blackboard Collaborate: Profiles, Polling, Audio and Video, the White Board, Web Tour, and Application Sharing. Best practices for use are shared through the workshop.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu** to receive session link.

Creating and Managing Online Surveys- Level 1
Date: Monday, February 25, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Location: Building 53 (Hicks Hall), Room 1400
This class introduces the basic functions of the University's online survey application, Qualtrics. Participants learn how to create, edit, format, publish, and share surveys. Creation of several question types is covered, including matrix and conditional branching questions. Participants learn how to export survey data and display reports. This course is prerequisite to Creating and Managing Online Surveys, Level 2.
Register via **CPDT website**

Online Assessments, Part II: Improve Student Learning with Formative Assessments
Date: Wednesday, February 27, 3:00 - 4:00pm
Location: Online
In this online workshop, participants learn about the pedagogical value of formative assessments, learn to identify different types of formative assessments, and see examples of effective feedback and remediation learning activities to improve student learning. Strategies for implementing this type of assessment in Blackboard are also discussed.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu**   to receive session link.

Creating and Managing Online Surveys- Level 2
Date: Thursday, February 28, 2:00 - 4:00 pm
Location: Building 53 (Hicks Hall), Room 1400
This class covers the advanced functions of the University's online survey application, Qualtrics. Participants learn how to use the library feature to save surveys and questions for reuse and about survey distribution methods, including customized email links, panels, and inclusion in social media sites. These methods provide more efficient communication to the survey participants. Participants learn how to modify the available reports and export survey results into PowerPoint and MS Word. Creating and Managing Online Surveys, Level1 is prerequisite to this class.
Register via **CPDT website**

Effective Presentations with Prezi
Date: Friday, March 8, 2:00 - 4:00pm
Location: Building 51, Room 1201
Prezi is a free online tool for creating and showing presentations. It breaks from the bulleted-list approach of Microsoft PowerPoint and Apple Keynote. Unlike other presentation software that uses slides, Prezi presentations are more similar to concept maps or poster presentations. This two-part workshop begins with a demonstration and discussion of how Prezi is conceptually different from other presentation software. The second part of the workshop is hands-on. Participants use the ideas presented in the workshop to create their own Prezi.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu**

Creating and Managing Online Surveys- Level 1
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 1:30 - 4:30 pm
Location: Building 53 (Hicks Hall), Room 1400
This class introduces the basic functions of teh University's online survey application, Qualtrics. Participants learn how to create, edit, format, publish, and share surveys. Creation of several question types is covered, including matrix and conditional branching questions. Participants learn how to export survey data and display reports. This course is prerequisite to Creating and Managing Online Surveys, Level 2.
Register via **CPDT website**

Creating and Managing Online Surveys- Level 2
Date: Friday, March 15, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Location: Building 53 (Hicks Hall), Room 1400
This class covers the advanced functions of the University's online survey application, Qualtrics. Participants learn how to use the library feature to save surveys and questions for reuse and about survey distribution methods, including customized email links, panels, and inclusion in social media sites. These methods provide more efficient communication to the survey participants. Participants learn how to modify the available reports and export survey results into PowerPoint and MS Word. Creating and Managing Online Surveys, Level 1 is prerequisite to this class.
Register via **CPDT website**.

Online Assessments, Part III: Improve Student Learning with Summative Assessments
Date: Friday, March 29, 2:00 - 3:00pm
Location: Online
In this online workshop, participants learn about the pedagogical value of summative assessments, learn to identify different types of tools and methods for obtaining information about what students have learned, and see examples of effective feedback to improve student learning. Strategies for implementing this type of assessment in Blackboard are also discussed.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu**   to receive session link.

Online Assessments, Part IV: Improve Student Learning with Authentic Assessments
Date: Friday, April 5, 2:00 - 3:00pm
Location: Online

In this online workshop, participants will learn about the pedagogical value of authentic assessments, learn about Blackboard tools to assist in the development of these assessments, and see examples of tools to measure student learning.
RSVP to **cirtevents@unf.edu** to receive session link.

Online Introduction to Blackboard (TOL4100)
Learn to use Blackboard on your own schedule! This online, asynchronous course is designed for instructors who will be teaching enhanced, hybrid, or distance term-based courses using Blackboard. The course will provide the basics of requesting and managing courses, setting up and customizing courses, creating and organizing content, assessments, and assignments, managing grades in the Grade Center and communicating with students using course tools such as e-mail and announcements.
To enroll in the Introduction to Blackboard course, e-mail **cirtlab@unf.edu**

Coming later this spring

- **Blackboard Learn SP11 Demos- become familiar with the changes and new features available afterthe May upgrade**
- **Creating Quality Online Discussions**
- **Choosing Social Media Tools with Saurubh Gupta**
- **iPad Social**

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top

DIGITAL THINKING: SCREEN RECORDING
Dave Wilson, Coordinator of Educational Media, **david.wilson@unf.edu**
Listen Now   [AUDIO MP3]
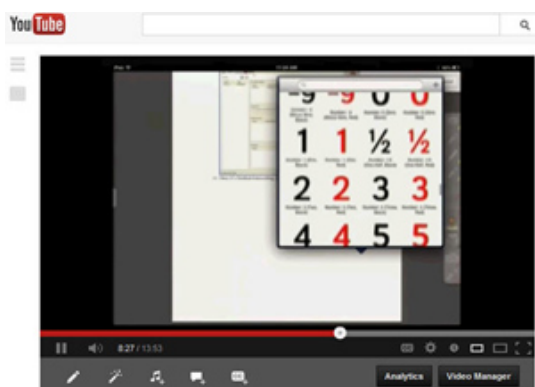
Over the past year we've noticed an increased interest from faculty who want to create screen recordings, or screencasts. I'm astonished and encouraged by the many ways people are using this technology to interact with their students. Now is a great time to discuss the different tools available for screen recording and to go over a few examples of how instructors at the University of North Florida use these tools.

To start, let's look at some of the different tools available. There are too many choices to cover, so I will go over the most popular and useful screen recording software that I know of. New tools for creating screen recordings are being released fairly frequently, so this list will probably be out of date soon. I wouldn't be at all surprised if, in the near future, Google releases a tool for recording the screen directly into YouTube.

I'm going to break the recording tools down into categories to make them easier to compare. The first category includes tools built into the operating system of your computer. Expression 4 Encoder SP2 and QuickTime Player are offered by the operating system developers, and are free. Expression 4 Encoder SP2 is Microsoft's solution. It's not preinstalled on Windows computers, but can be downloaded from **http://www.microsoft.com/expression/**. Expression 4 Encoder SP2 is primarily a video encoding software, but when you install it the Expression 4 screen capture tool is also installed on your computer, which for this article is all we're interested in. Microsoft seems to be phasing out their Expression line of products and including them in either their Visual Studio or Azure line. If the screen recorder function of the software gets moved, I'll let you know in a blog post on our blog at **http://cirtblog.wordpress.com**. QuickTime Player **http://www.apple.com/quicktime/** is Apple's solution for screen recording. It's preinstalled on Macs running OSX 10.6 or greater. Any Mac that's less than four years old is almost guaranteed to have it. Both QuickTime Player and Expression 4 Encoder SP2 are limited in what they can do; their primary use is capturing audio narration along with the video of the screen. Typically, the results are then brought into a movie editing software, like iMovie or Windows Movie Maker to produce the final screencast. If you want the ability to create a screencast, don't plan on creating them frequently, and don't need to edit them, then these are the tools you'll want to use.

The next category of software contains screen recorders that are either web-based services or tied tightly into a web-based service. It includes Jing **http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html**, Screencast-o-matic **http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/**, and Screenr **http://www.screenr.com/**. All of these tools allow you to easily publish to the web, and have a limit on the length of time you can record (which isn't as bad as many people think). Screencast-o-matic and Screenr have free but limited versions with more options available for a fee.

Of the three, Screenr is the lightest in features, it's focused on people that want to quickly record a short video, skip the editing step and publish it to social media sites like Twitter, FaceBook, and YouTube. You don't even need to create an account with Screenr, you can log in with one of your existing web accounts including FaceBook and Twitter. Jing is made by TechSmith. It has comparable features to Screenr, with the biggest differences being that you download and install the recorder to your computer. Jing is also used for creating and sharing screenshots, and Jing doesn't have a feature to add to

YouTube. The final software for this category, Screencast-o-matic, is my go-to tool for screen recording. The maximum length of a Screencast-o-matic recording is fifteen minutes, compared to the five of Jing and Screenr. It has many more features including webcam support, basic editing features, recording from a browser or their Java app, the ability to store your recording locally, and the ability to publish to a number of different online sites including YouTube, Vimeo, and Google Drive.

The final category contains only one recorder, Camtasia Studio **http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.html**. Camtasia Studio is more than a screen recorder, it's really a full movie editing and production tool that allows you to record the screen, edit it fully, and produce it to a number of different formats for different purposes. In addition to regular screen recording Camtasia, allows for picture in picture webcam recording alongside a screen recording, and has a plug in for Microsoft PowerPoint that allows for recording presentations. The editor is a full multi-track editor that lets you combine different screen recordings, insert video from other sources into the project, and add background music. One of the best features of Camtasia Studio is zoom and pan, which allows you focus on a particular part of the screen after you've recorded it to make your video easier to see and understand. Camtasia has a 30 day trial, but it does not have a free version. As of January 2013, the educational price of Camtasia Studio is approximately $180. If you're going to be doing a lot of screen recording and editing them it is worth the cost. It's the software CIRT uses for most of our recordings.

Now that I've covered the different tools available, I'll go over some uses for screen recording. The most obvious use is software demonstration. Several faculty at UNF have used screen recording software to teach their students how to use a range of software from SPSS to online library databases like JSTOR. There are other uses as well; a faculty member in Accounting and Finance uses Camtasia in conjunction with a tablet computer to record his handwritten notes on PowerPoint presentations. He then edits the videos and uploads them to his Blackboard courses for students to review.

Another use of screen recording software is to record video reviews of assignments. Students can see where you make changes to their work and hear any comments you make. Because many of the tools I've covered are free the opposite is also possible. Andy "SuperFly" Rundquist, a physics professor at Hamline University, has his students record screencasts of their work so he can get a better sense of how well they understand the material. You can read about it on his blog, SuperFly Physics **http://arundquist.wordpress.com/2012/06/03/student-lab-screencasts/**. T.J. Mullen in Chemistry uses Doodle Cast Pro on his iPad to give students feedback on solving practice and exam problems, using a Thinkaloud approach. See his recent **Spotlight** for more information. Dan Richard in the Department of Psychology uses a combination of both techniques. His students create video presentations and he uses Camtasia to provide audio feedback on their videos. He plays the student's video without record until he gets to a place where he wants to provide comments. He then pauses the student's video and starts recording his screen. The students are able to see where he is in their video. When he has finished commenting he stops recording and then starts playing the student video again until he gets to the next time he needs to add a comment.

In CIRT we have started using screencasts to record UNF faculty demonstrating how they use a particular tool in their teaching and research. Ron Lukens-Bull in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology recorded a screencast showing how he uses iAnnotate PDF to download student work from Blackboard and grade it on his iPad, and Scott Brown in the Department of Art and Design recorded a screencast to demonstrate how he uses the powerful image display tools of ArtSTOR's online image viewer as an alternative to PowerPoint. You can view their videos on YouTube **http://www.youtube.com/user/CIRTUNF** or on our blog at **http://cirtblog.wordpress.com**.
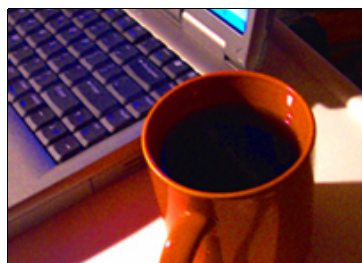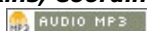
If you would like to start creating your own screen recordings and have questions please contact me in CIRT. I'll be happy to help you select the right tool for your needs and teach you how to use it.

`top`

MANAGING MULTIPLE SECTIONS IN A BLACKBOARD COURSE
Syleste Hoskins, Coordinator of Instructional Design
Listen Now   `AUDIO MP3`

Many instructors teach co-listed graduate and undergraduate courses (or multiple sections of the same course) and wish to have them in the same Blackboard course. This allows groups of students in the same discipline to collaborate with other students, but view different materials and submit different assignments. For a clean delivery, this can take a bit of setup, but it is a feasible task and only has to be done once in the semester. You can either request your course and wait for the students to populate in order to complete the setup all at once, or you can complete the initial setup in a development course and separate the graduate and undergraduate students once they are in the course.

The following example will show you how to set up a co-listed course with both graduate and undergraduate students or a multi-section course.

Set Up Groups
Begin by using the **Groups** tool to create two or more Single Groups using the Manual Enroll option. When setting up your groups, give each group a distinct name, like Graduate and Undergraduate, or name them by their course ID numbers. You will need your list of course enrollments to separate students. On the setup page under Tool Availability, you can uncheck all

of the available tools and make the group unavailable.

If you want the groups to communicate, leave the group as available and leave the collaborative tools available to give students the option to communicate with the members of their group or section. Remember to continue looking at your roster and updating groups until the end of the first week of classes. Students will not be automatically placed into groups once they enter the class.

Create Adaptive Release Rules
If students have different reading materials and separate assignments, create these and use the **adaptive release** feature to ensure that specific groups of students can view the appropriate content. When creating items, uploading articles, or embedding videos, the initial creation is the same. You may have two of some items, for example, two tasks lists or two course schedules.

Make sure that you do not set up assignments for groups of students using the option in the creation of the assignment. This will create a Group Assignment and only allow one student for the "group" to upload and submit their work. This will create two columns in the grade center that students can see by default.

Try to leave any introductory course information (syllabus, tutorials, course schedules, etc.) without adaptive release rules. These are things students will see when they first enter the course, and it's better to have these readily available as soon as you make your course available to students.

Manage Your Grade Center Columns
An assignment that students in your course submit may differ according to their status in the course. For example, the undergraduates might complete a short answer quiz while the graduate students submit a more application-based assignment on the same date. In the student Grades page, all students can view all of the assignments created in the Grade Center unless hidden by the instructor, so all students whether graduate or undergraduate will see both the quiz and the application-based assignment, but only their own grades for each.

In order to avoid repeat questions from students on their "missing" grades, you can make their view of their Grades page to be as clean and simple as possible. You can do this by setting up calculated columns with the due date of the assignment, including both the quiz and the assignment columns in the calculated column, and then hiding the quiz and assignment columns from the students using the Hide Users option. You can also create Smart Views to aid yourself in grading these assignments.

Create Smart Views in Your Grade Center
For your convenience, creating **Smart Views** in the Grade Center will help you quickly look at student grades organized by section or status. In this case, creating a Group Smart View and selecting it as a Favorite will provide you with a quicklink in the Control Panel so you can easily change Grade Center Views. It might be a good idea to create a Smart View of Selected Columns, and choose the Total calculated columns that are averaging your student's grades for an easy look at their grades. This prevents you from having to constantly hide and unhide columns from your Grade Center, or navigating through numerous columns to find grades. Keep in mind that the View you are in will reflect just above the Grade Center columns. It's a good idea to check this if it seems like you're missing columns or students in the course.

For further assistance with managing multiple course sections in one online course, please contact CIRT for help with setting up your Blackboard course.

top

BLACKBOARD NEWS: CATALYST AWARDS AND MAY UPGRADE

The Exemplary Course Award program from Blackboard recognizes courses that represent innovative use of technology and learning. The program began in 2000 with the goal of identifying and disseminating best practices for designing online courses. Courses are evaluated using the **Exemplary Course Rubric** that focuses on four major areas: course design, interaction and collaboration, assessment, and learner support. Submitting a course for review provides you the opportunity to reflect on your own course through self-evaluation using the Exemplary Course Rubric and to receive feedback on your course from peer evaluators and Exemplary Course Program Directors. Exemplary Course Award winners are invited to attend the Blackboard World conference to be recognized for their accomplishment. **Submissions** for the 2013 Exemplary Course Award may be completed online. In addition to the Exemplary Course Award, Blackboard Catalyst Awards also include categories for Mobile Innovation, Teaching and Learning, Hall of Fame (Blackboard Collaborate) and Staff Development. **Click**
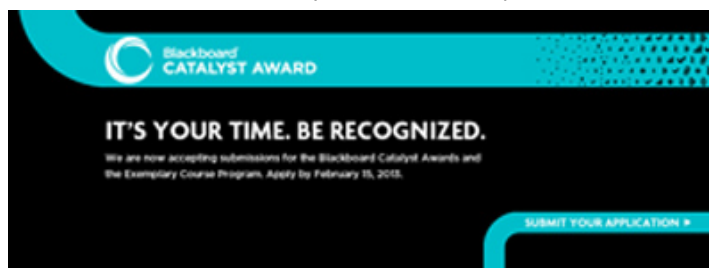
**here** to learn more about the Blackboard Catalyst Awards. Submissions for each of the 2013 Blackboard Catalyst Awards are due February 15, 2013.

Blackboard Learn Upgrade
During this semester we are preparing to upgrade our Blackboard Learn system to Service Pack 10+, and we are currently in the process of reviewing the **new features** offered. Our preliminary investigation revealed that the Blackboard Learn Service Pack (SP) 10+ platform has been simplified and offers a more intuitive interface. Special attention was given to making the interface as streamlined and user friendly as possible, yet easy to learn. In addition to the new interface, SP 10+ offers several new features:

- My Blackboard – A new tool that consolidates information from Blackboard courses, organizations, profiles, people and posts and presents it in a single, easy to navigate space. Learn more about My Blackboard **here** or check out the My Blackboard Tour **here**.
- New Content Editor – The improved content editor makes it easier to enter text and copy from Microsoft Word in all areas of Blackboard. Learn more about the new content editor **here**.
- Text Course Notifications – Students can now choose to receive automated text notifications for their courses (new announcements, assignments due, etc.)
- Improved Calendar – The Blackboard Calendar now offers a modern calendar interface that displays multiple calendars, drag and drop options for moving appointments on the calendar, an external calendar link for import into other calendar applications.
- Assessment Item Analysis and Automatic Regrade – The item analysis feature in Blackboard Assessments offers improved functionality and gives instructors the option to automatically regrade tests exempting ineffective questions via the Automatic Regrade feature.
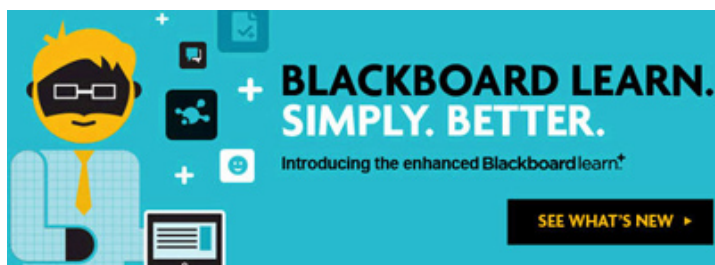
To see the complete list of new features in Blackboard Learn SP 10+ and for more information on the new features, visit **http://go.blackboard.com/faculty**

If you would like to get a preview of the features and interface in Blackboard Service Pack 10+ you can register a free Blackboard CourseSites course at **www.coursesites.com**. You may also want to visit the **Guided Trial**, which provides access to a pre-populated course in Blackboard Learn so that you can check out the latest features as well as tips and tricks for grading and student collaboration.

`top`

BLACKBOARD STUDENT SUPPORT: TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE CENTER IN CARPENTER LIBRARY

The Carpenter Library, the Center for Instruction and Research Technology, and Information Technology Services have joined together to offer enhanced services to students in the Carpenter Library. Available Monday through Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the second-floor desk is a cross-trained team with staff from the library, CIRT, and the ITS Help Desk. In addition to research help on databases and papers, assistance is available for Blackboard help, account access, application questiongs, wireless connectivity, and media assistance.

This is a great place for students to get help from a variety of experts, so please help us spread the word!

`top`

APP REVIEWS: INDEX CARDS
Guest Reviewer, Dr. Ron Lukens-Bull, Sociology & Anthropology

A Low Tech Writing Tool for a High Tech Age

Ron   **Index Cards** by DenVog, LLC is an iPad app that allows the user to return to the low tech approach to writing that we all learned in middle school. Visually, Index Cards looks like a spread of index cards. The user can add additional cards, move them around, and even organize them into stacks of related cards. Once a project is done, it can be exported as a text or rtf file and imported directly to any word processor. The imported text presents the material on the cards in a linear fashion.

I have found it to be a tremendous tool for punching through two writer's blocks since purchasing it about a month ago, because Index Cards allows the user to write blocks of text with seemingly no predefined limit to length. Once written, the user can rearrange the cards into any order. I found this tremendously helpful when dealing with writer's block because I did not have to think about how one set of ideas related to another set of ideas at the time of writing. I could focus on writing out a single train of thought and later worry about how they interrelated. The stacking features allows the user to gradually build units of closely related text. Once exported, I found the output very easy to work with in Word and to create a fully developed narrative.

Index Cards costs $4.99, which makes it more expensive than many apps for the iPad. However, for the writing solutions that it provided me it would be worth the money at several times the costs.

APP INFO
Index Cards for iOS Devices
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/id389358786?mt=8

Cost: $4.99
Platforms: Compatible with iOS devices
Current Version: 3.4
Updated: January 17, 2013
Category: Productivity

top

NEWS FROM ITS: ACCESS UNF'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES REMOTELY

There are a number of information technology services that can be accessed from home or while traveling. If you want to access Microsoft Office applications, UNF email using Outlook, or files stored on your I:, O:, or N: Drives, you can connect to a remote desktop server called RDS. Once you set up the connection on the remote computer and login, you can launch MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, or Access. You can go to "Computer" to open or save files to your I, O, or N: Drives. Visit **http://www.unf.edu/anf/its/help_desk/Remote_Access.aspx** for directions on connecting to the remote desktop server.
Another way to connect to UNF's information technology services is using a Virtual Private Network (VPN). It is a method of securely connecting to a private network (UNF's network) by way of a public network (the Internet). Once the VPN connection is established, you can then access information technology services that you typically can only reach when on campus. Visit **http://www.unf.edu/anf/its/vpn/_Home_VPN.aspx** for directions on setting up a VPN connection.
If you want to use a web browser to easily access your UNF email, go to **http://webaccess.unf.edu** and login using your UNF ID and password.

Accessing Blackboard and UNF Email Directly
In the event Blackboard and UNF email cannot be accessed within myWings, it may be possible to reach them using direct links. To access Blackboard, students and faculty can login at **http://blackboard.unf.edu**. To access UNF email, students can login at **http://outlook.com** and faculty can login at **http://webaccess.unf.edu**.

top

NEW IN CIRT: NEW FACES AND NEW PROCESS FOR NARRATED POWERPOINTS

We have three new assistants in CIRT, so please stop by and say hi. Veronica Zuniga is our new CIRT Tech and will be assisting with equipment maintenance and checkout, scanning, and other general CIRT functions.

Taylor Kennedy and Sasha Marshall are now part of our Distance Learning Assistants team and providing Blackboard support and assistance to faculty and supporting the instructional designers developing online courses.

Narrated PowerPoints
We are moving to a new tool for creating narrated PowerPoints. iSpring software converts PowerPoint content into Flash presentations and supports narration and a number of other PowerPoint features. The Flash format provides a more universal playback option than Impatica and should be less problematic for students and faculty. For more information, please read Kevin's recent post on the **CIRT Blog** and contact us if you have any questions.

Equipment Available for Checkout
The **Kindle Fire** has become an increasingly popular alternative to the iPad as a personal tablet/media device. If you're interested in trying out out for yourself, please let us know as we have one available for checkout, for up to two weeks.

top

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Deb Miller, Editor

Please direct any comments or questions to **cirtlab@unf.edu**

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