

communicating for

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*The Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology
Spring Semester 2006*

BGSU—Regional Center for Faculty Learning Communities

One of five universities chosen throughout Ohio

Recently the Ohio Learning Network (OLN), a consortium of 72 Ohio public and private colleges and universities, named Bowling Green State University as Northwest Ohio's Regional Center for Faculty Learning Communities. BGSU will receive \$45,000 to establish a regional center in an effort to expand faculty learning communities. Four other universities have been selected as regional centers: Kent State University (Northeast), Miami University (Southwest), The Ohio State University (Central), and Shawnee State University (Southeast). All of these institutions will be collaborating at the state level.

Securing the Center for BGSU was a collaborative effort between IDEAL in Continuing and Extended Education and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology. Connie Molnar, IDEAL's Director, and Bonnie Fink, CTLT's Interim Director, co-wrote and submitted the regional center proposal.

"Bowling Green State University aspires to be the premiere learning community in Ohio, and one of the best in the nation." Our mission statement directly reflects commitment to learning communities, and the proposal elaborated on that commitment:

BGSU demonstrates its belief in the good practices for undergraduate education through its core values, learning outcomes, student and faculty learning communities, its use of existing computer-mediated technologies, and its research with new online learning environments. As a regional center we would share, facilitate, and grow professional development opportunities, focusing on good practices associated with technology-enhanced learning.



The Ohio Learning Network agreed that BGSU is the right institution for successful Center creation and implementation. These regional centers are a part of the now four-year old OLN Learning Communities Initiative, which supports high quality learning and teaching as colleges and universities employ technology in courses. OLN grants in 2004 funded 22 communities with over 225 faculty members from 16 colleges and universities. Those faculty members have taught more than 18 thousand students.

"Increases in quality student learning made it an easy decision to ramp-up the scope of the Learning Communities Initiative," said Kate Carey, Executive Director of the Ohio Learning Network. "Ohio's citizens and employers expect excellence and this initiative helps support faculty who want to work together and discover new ways to provide excellence." Sheryl Hansen, Director of Professional Development Programs at OLN, says many faculty members and their supporting staff look for ways to improve the student experience in face-to-face and distance courses. "Technology offers tools that must be used well if high quality learning is to take place in Ohio's colleges and universities," said Hansen. "These five universities are ready to support faculty members in their own region of Ohio who want to learn new and exciting ways to incorporate technology into their teaching practice."

In April, all five universities will meet to start on the development of these regional centers. Bonnie Fink will represent BGSU and begin the planning for the Regional Center's implementation and development. ■



John Seely Brown's "vision" is unique and focuses on several areas including the innovation of education through technology. This self-appointed "Chief of Confusion" is the former Chief Scientist of Xerox Corporation and director of its Palo Alto Research Center. He is a visiting scholar at the University of Southern California and spends most of his time researching, publishing, and speaking.

Recently, Brown was a keynote speaker at the 2006 Ohio Digital Commons for Education Conference on the topic of Higher Education in the Digital Age. You can view his presentation and notes online:

www.olin.org/conferences/ODCE2006/ODCE2006keynotes.php

His outlook on engaging "digitally experienced" students is refreshing, challenging educators to think beyond traditional pedagogical practices. He advocates for the development of new social learning environments of a multifaceted nature, or "Blended Spaces," similar to those found in Internet communities and massively multiplayer online games like *World of Warcraft*.

Brown's personal web site is available at www.johnseelybrown.com and contains more information about him and listings of his publications. ■

Snap is "the buzz"

The Center is pleased to announce a new learning opportunity!

Declining the opportunity to receive feedback has been compared to driving without a map; you may eventually get there, but the journey may take far longer than necessary.

As we all teach and learn, we need to read "information maps," that assess the effectiveness of BGSU's communication with its student, staff, and faculty audiences. Creating those maps directly impacts our ability to achieve our goals; therefore, we need to find effective and efficient methods for mapping information.

Surveys have become a very popular tool for collecting information, and online surveys provide a way to rapidly acquire feedback critical in identifying important issues, concerns, and trends. Rather than the weeks or months required to distribute paper questionnaires and receive the results or to contact people by telephone, the Web allows responses to be collected in a matter of hours.

There is now a winning collaboration that can teach you how to

- create and format surveys,
- publish them to the Web,
- set up email invitations and reminders to respondents,
- import and analyze response data,
- create and edit tables and charts of response data,
- export them to other applications, and
- export response data to SPSS.

The BGSU Office of Institutional Research has scheduled two workshops through the Center to show you how to use Snap Survey Software. Snap is available to you at no charge, but BGSU Information Technology Services must install the software and file sharing capability on your PC (Snap does not run on Macintosh computers).

According to Mercator, the author of Snap Survey Software, "the software is used daily by thousands of organizations of every

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The Hot Five

The Center presents its top five list of our hottest online resources.

1

Internet Archive
archive.org

Resource that has been archiving snapshots of web sites and other online media since 1996.

2

The Stock Exchange
sxc.hu

Extensive collection of free stock photos that can be used for classes and otherwise. Registration required.

3

Refdesk.com
refdesk.com

An online index and review source of "quality, credible, and timely reference resources."

4

CThings
cthings.com

News feed and blog that highlights "change-the-world" news and advances in technology.

5

Arts & Letters Daily
aldaily.com

A service of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* featuring daily postings on the arts.

scheduled workshops

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different size ranging from government departments, local authorities, market research agencies, financial services to those involved in media, health and charities.”

Bill Knight, Director of the BGSU Office of Institutional Research, is facilitating the Snap workshops. He believes that “Snap can be used to collect data for University accountability efforts (assessment and program review) and for faculty research.”

The advantages of designing and using Web-based surveys include no direct cost for printing or mailing and the ability to reach large numbers of participants in a short period of time. The chief disadvantages, knowing that you will be contacting your respondents using email, are email overload and survey fatigue.

Web-based surveys and the software that creates them are technology tools that you can use to develop your “information map.” Perhaps your destination is assessment or collecting information for program review or your research interests—whatever you choose, you can learn how to use Snap Survey Software by attending two Center workshops:

- Part One, April 3, Monday, 1:30-4:30 p.m. in 207 Olscamp
- Part Two, April 10, Monday, 1:30-3:30 p.m. in 207 Olscamp

The Center thanks the Office of Institutional Research and Information Technology Services for the opportunities to learn about and use Snap. ■

Assessing Student Learning

A Two-Way Communicative Partnership

How does this sound? “Teachers spend too much time teaching.” That’s the opening teaser of an article in the February 2006 Education Update newsletter put out by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). It’s an interesting statement, made by Grant Wiggins, one that could spark a lengthy discussion of pedagogy, assessment, professionalism, scholarship and a host of other important aspects of what it means to be an educator in our ever-changing, ever-striving-for-improvement world. The overall message seems to be that as teachers, we should do “less teaching, (and) more assessing.”

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Scheduled Tools Workshops

These workshops assume that you already know how you will use these technologies in your classes:

Advanced Podcasting

Friday, April 28, 10:30–12:00 p.m.

Film and Slide Scanning

Monday, April 10, 11:30–12:15 p.m.

Photo Manipulation

Monday, April 3, 9:30–10:30 a.m.

“RefWorks” Bibliography Creator

Monday, April 3, 1:30–2:45 a.m.

Friday, April 7, 9:30–10:45 a.m.

“SNAP” Survey Software—

with Bill Knight, Director of Inst. Research

Hosted in 207 Olscamp

Monday, April 3, 1:30–4:30p.m.

Monday, April 10, 1:30–3:30p.m.

Workshop listing and registration information continued on reverse. ↻

To continue the dialogue on assessment, you may be interested in the following workshop. Lis atis nulputat. Lisl ea augiam veliquisit, velenis nisl del irillam, summod elit, verat lam zzriuscil ullaort inciliqui tat vel doluptat. Lisl ea augiam veliquisit, velenis nisl del irillam.

Guiding Authentic Learning Experiences

Tuesday, April 18, 5:30–7:00 p.m. 📍

Did you know?

The Center’s studio area has been recently rearranged. There is now a dedicated training area, consulting area, and a discussion seating area. Stop by to check out the new studio arrangement!

scheduled workshops

Workshops continued from reverse.

Teaching Techniques and Communication Tools

Pedagogical strategies and technical tools to facilitate communication:

Integrated Course Design (Threaded)

Wednesday, March 29, 5:30–7:00 p.m. 🍕

Monday, April 3, 10:30–12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 12, 5:30–7:00 p.m. 🍕

Wednesday, April 19, 5:30–7:00 p.m. 🍕

Collaborative Visual Narratives

Tuesday, March 28, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Monday, April 24, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Building Shared Reflections

Tuesday, April 4, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Extending the Classroom Experience

Tuesday, April 11, 3:00–4:30 p.m.

Using Epsilon ePortfolio in Your Courses: The Basics

Monday, March 27, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Advanced ePortfolio Topics: Using Epsilon in Your Program

Thursday, March 30, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Registration Information

To register for one or more workshops, contact Kris Sautter at 2-6898 or ctl@bgsu.edu.

Unless noted otherwise, all workshops will be held at the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology in 201 University Hall, Bowling Green State University.

The most recent listing of workshops can always be checked online at: www.bgsu.edu/ctl/page11755.html

🍕 Workshops denoted by this icon will have pizza or other food provided.

This newsletter is a publication of the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology. Visit our web site online at www.bgsu.edu/ctl/.

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Why do we assess or evaluate students' learning?

Hopefully the answer is to gain feedback—to learn more about what students know and what they still need in order to move forward toward additional knowledge, experiences and successes. In essence, assessment “feedback” should be a true dialogue between student and teacher, centered on the expression of individual experiences and connections to the content, skills and processes of the course.

Along with feedback from the student comes the need for reflection by both student and teacher regarding what was learned or gained and also what might still be missing. From here, the teacher can make a connection to other student misconceptions or successes and in turn, redirect the course path as needed.

How do we assess student progress (i.e., gather feedback)?

A good place to start is with the book “Classroom Assessment Techniques” (or CATs) by Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross (1993). Although over 10 years old, most CATs stand the test of time, unaffected by technological upgrades or pedagogical shifts and therefore can be utilized essentially “as is” today.

Some of the more common or popular CATs include Background Knowledge Probe, Minute Paper, Muddiest Point (These and others are described in more detail on our blog, facultydevelopmentbgsu.blogspot.com). All of these assessments can be implemented with or without the use of technology and are meant to be for feedback and reflection, therefore they are not graded. Most only take a minute or two to administer, but the resulting information may become integral to the direction of your next lesson or, better yet, generate intrinsic student motivation toward greater understanding.

What can help with all this assessment and evaluation?

Figuring out your course goals can be a strong foundation on which to build your course assessments. The University of Iowa's Center for Teaching (www.uiowa.edu/~centeach/tgi/) has created an online version of Angelo & Cross' Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI) that can be used to

- help college teachers become more aware of what they want to accomplish in individual courses
- help faculty locate Classroom Assessment Techniques they can adapt and use to assess how well they are achieving their teaching and learning goals
- provide a starting point for discussion of teaching and learning goals among colleagues.

The information gathered from this inventory will allow you to craft your course and assessments around the goals most critical for your students' success. ■