



CTL *notes*

the Center for Teaching and Learning

The CTL logo is a mature tree, symbolizing the developed roots and continued growth of Miami University Middletown's excellence in teaching and learning under the canopy of its Center for Teaching and Learning.

Volume 4, Issue 5

MARCH

2007



MARCH

13 CTL SPECIAL
Dual Credit Program with Cathy Bishop-Clark from 12:00-1:00
Room 136-137 Johnston Hall
Pizza provided

17-23 SPRING BREAK WEEK

APRIL

- 3 CTL CONVERSATIONS ON CONNECTIVITY :**

THE BIS PROGRAM

*** Note that this is on THURSDAY instead of our normal Tuesday*

Room 136/137 Johnston at 12:00
Lunch provided to first 20 participants
- 5 2008 AURCO Conference** at UC's Raymond Walters Campus
- 7 SCHOLARS AND ARTISTS**
Presentations from 12-2 in Campus Community Center
- 9 CTL SPECIAL**
Communication Across the Curriculum Faculty Learning Community Presentation 12:00-1:00
Room TBA
Pizza provided

REMINDERS

SGIDs AVAILABLE!
As we approach midterm, you may want to have feedback from your students about how they are experiencing your class. If so, please contact the CTL and schedule a SGID.



MARCH 24 is the deadline for students to drop a course without a grade. This is the first day back from Spring Break, so it would be helpful to have a discussion with any student who might be having difficulties in your course before March 14.



KATE'S CORNER



Hello All!
I recently surveyed students to see if they felt PowerPoint given along with lectures hindered their learning or increased it. The students ages ranged from 18 to 32 and they also ranged from one to five years in college. *Seventy-five* percent of those students felt that PowerPoint definitely helped with their learning of the material and only *five* percent thought it prevented them from learning. After discussing this issue with many students, most seemed to agree that the main issue lies with how PP's are used, which determines how helpful they are to the student.

A majority of students recognized that one of the most useful assets of PowerPoint is that it is more legible than a professor's handwriting. Mentioned also, was the fact that PP is another source besides the text and it can be enticing to the eyes. On the flip-side, a couple problems that were found with PowerPoint lectures are when they are read word-for-word along with how overcrowded the screen can be.

I've compiled a few of the most common student suggestions for increasing their learning with PowerPoint. It seems as if the students would greatly appreciate if more professors would use PowerPoint presentations with their lectures. A lot of students felt like they can pay attention better and maximize their learning potential if the information on the slides is limited to critical information as well as using a minimal amount of lines: less clutter for us and less typing for you. The most popular comment I received was how much it is appreciated when professors post the PP outlines on Blackboard so the auditory student can listen to the lecture in class instead of worrying about writing notes.

I hope this student's perspective has been insightful to you. If you have any comments or suggestions, feel free to e-mail me at hesskl@muohio.edu.



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BOOK NOOK

Crossing the Digital Divide: Race, Writing, and Technology in the Classroom. Barbara Monroe. College Press, c2004.

If you are using technology to improve the writing skills of your students, *Crossing the Digital Divide: Race, Writing, and Technology in the Classroom* will provide you with thoughtful reflections. Barbara Monroe presents three studies that examine technology access issues and implications for learning in diverse educational settings. Hopefully this research will challenge readers to examine how technology access and race affect written communication in the classroom.

The first study examines online information sharing between students of differing socioeconomic backgrounds. Success for student pairs could be predicted along race and gender lines. Some students unintentionally revealed clues to their status and

financial situation. Other students refused technical assistance because they did not want to appear uninformed. Why is this important? While it is essential to respect the identities and culture of our students, we must provide an environment that will help them successfully work with others of differing backgrounds. This study provides clues to potential pitfalls and successes.

Traditional digital divide research groups individuals into those with technology and those without it. The second study demonstrates that digital have-nots should not be grouped into a single homogeneous group. The study pairs two high poverty schools; one populated by predominately Latino/Mexican students and another populated by predominately Plateau Indian students. Although the two groups had some cultural similarities, their online reactions to social justice were significantly different. Traditional thinking often overlooks these important differences.

The third study focuses on storytelling practices in differing cultural settings. In traditional “white” homes, storytelling often takes the form of bedtime stories with one on one attention between a child and a parent. Alternately, Monroe observes in “non-white” homes that there is a focus on electronic media storytelling. Therefore, students from non-white homes may be more familiar with learning situations that are

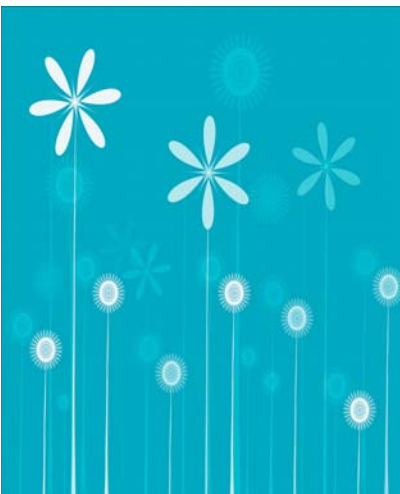
“peer-to-peer” or “demonstration-based.” This study may be an encouragement for educators to employ a variety of teaching methods in their courses.

This book presents information often overlooked in digital divide studies and offers thoughtful implications for educators. *Crossing the Digital Divide: Race, Writing, and Technology in the Classroom* is a quick read at 125 pages and is available for checkout at the CTL in RM 11 Johnston.

Reviewed by *Donna Evans*
Visiting Instructor (CIT)

A CoOL TEACHING TIP

If you are looking for a way to integrate Blackboard more into your courses, here is a suggestion. Create an assignment that can fall anywhere in your curriculum (it may be an integrative assignment that you don’t have time to pursue more fully in class) and keep it aside for a snowy day or perhaps a day when you will be out for a conference or illness. It can be a worksheet in Word or a web assignment. Or perhaps you could use the test tool in Blackboard to create a self-assessment or survey of some sort. Post it on Blackboard the next time you have to be out of class and see how it goes with your students. It could even be a discussion board question that the students need to comment on over the next week. Start with one or two activities and you will be surprised how your “library” of assignments grows in Blackboard from year to year. Contact the Center of Online Learning (CoOL) for more ideas!



The CTL Leadership Collaborative welcomes its newest members for 2008-2009! They are John Burke (Library), Moira Casey (ENG), Brad Farr (Computer Labs), and Eric Luczaj (CIT). They join Ellenmarie Wahlrab, Lizz Howard, Chris Metcalf, and Kate Duskey in the CTL.

They will be very busy next year as the CTL

publishes its first peer-reviewed journal, hosts the 2009 AURCO conference, plans the CTL Conversations and Specials, conducts SGIDs, and sponsors faculty learning communities and teaching initiatives. This is an impressive agenda, and we know that this team of talented and energetic individuals will do an awesome job of promoting teaching and learning on the Middletown campus!

