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# CTL NOTES

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 2

NOVEMBER 2011



## CTL Upcoming Events



### CTL Conversation

#### Helping Students Navigate the U

Monday, November 7, 2011

12:00-1:00pm JHN 136/137

Have students approached you with questions about how the University works? Do they ask you about financial aid or DARS ? Have you wondered what University resources such as tutoring, child care, or health insurance are available to help struggling students? Join our conversation between teachers, students, and staff as we discuss students' needs, access, and knowledge of available University resources. We all need to learn how to better navigate the institution of higher education. We will ask a panel of students these questions: What helps you be successful at MUM? What would help you improve your success? How we could we serve you better?

Lunch will be provided to the first 20 participants by No. 2 Son's.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CTL T@MUM: Virtual Meetings

Tuesday, November 8, 2011

JHN 110 2:30-3:45pm

In this T@MUM session we will learn how to conduct "virtual" cross-campus meetings using IVDL , Elluminate, Cisco Meeting Place and other web-based options. Please join us for hot tea and cookies.

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### CTL Special: The Care Team

Details TBA

The CTL will host a special with the CARE Team at Miami University Middletown. The CARE Team has a specific role in crisis management situations, particularly issues which may impact campus safety. The CARE Team will take questions from faculty and/or staff, discuss the new "student of concern management system" which allows faculty to refer students with suspected mental health concerns, and introduce the mental health and counseling services available for our students.

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### CTL Conversation

#### Good Citizenship at the U: Balancing Academic Responsibility and Academic Freedom

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

12:30-1:30pm JHN 142

What are the basic cooperative expectations and responsibilities of a Miami University faculty member ? Do they ever conflict with academic or personal freedom ?

How can we help each other meet the needs of our students and colleagues ?

Help us build a shared vision of campus citizenship.

Lunch will be provided to the first 20 participants by No. 2 Son's.

**\*All Faculty, Staff, and Students are Welcome at CTL Events\***

## Why Regional Students in Honors?

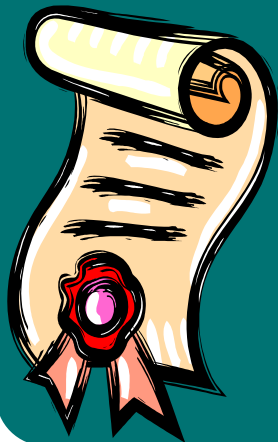
By Janice Kinghorn



Isn't that just for Oxford? What does that have to do with my students?

As of this writing I am preparing to go to the National Council of Honors Conference to present on non-traditional students in honors programs. The Council believes this is so important that they have asked Whitney Womack-Smith and I to write the lead essay in an issue focused exclusively on non-traditional students in honors programs. Should we take it as seriously here on the regionals? Should you take it seriously in your classroom? The vast majority of our current honors students had heard about the program, but did not apply before being nominated by a faculty member. Why should you nominate a student? In particular, why nominate a non-traditional student?

During my time as the director of the University Honors Program at MUM I have observed non-traditional students in particular grow as a result of the program. Some see it as an opportunity to excel. For some, the label of "Honors Student" is not something they would have imagined being applied to them. One of my favorite parts of my job is sitting across from a student and telling them that a faculty member has identified them as a potential honors student. Whether or not they go on to join the program, their academic abilities have been affirmed in a way that is very meaningful. Why offer regional students an honors program? Because it can transform the way students see themselves.



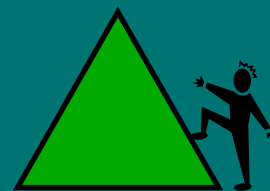
As a classroom teacher I sometimes get discouraged because my students are so busy outside of the classroom with family, community, or work commitments. "If only they could stop all that and focus on my class." I think. Honors can provide a different perspective on activities that we may see as just getting in the way of academics. Honors celebrates those activities and encourages students to see them as vehicles for achieving learning objectives. Regional students tend to have an abundance of "real world" learning (much to my chagrin when I'm in my own economics classroom) and are particularly appreciative to be able to reexamine that learning in an academic context. (Continued)

## Why Regional Students in Honors? continued

Why offer regional students an honors program? Because it celebrates the rich experiences that are fundamental parts of who they are.

One of my students wrote in a reflection about a time he was working at a community service site as part of an honors experience. A group of volunteers from a Cincinnati area business was helping to serve lunch to the clients that day. He noticed that those volunteers did not interact with him and scarcely looked at him. When they learned he was a Miami University Honors student, he noticed a distinct difference in the way they treated him. While we would hope this does not go on, unfortunately too often that is the world in which our students live and work. Why offer regional students an honors program? Because it can help to level the playing field for our non-traditional students.

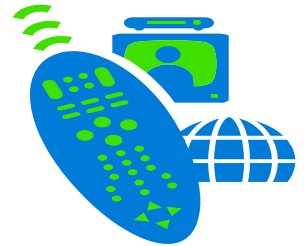
I have heard many classroom teachers comment on the benefit non-traditional students bring to the classroom. The benefits include the effect of maturity on study habits and classroom behavior. Others are about the contribution that students from varied backgrounds bring to classroom discussion. Many times I hear faculty talking about how traditional students can benefit from the interaction with non-traditional students within the classroom. That is a point I often make myself when talking to parents of prospective traditional-aged students. It is no different in the University Honors Program. The University Honors Program benefits from our regional students. Why regional students in an honors program? Because it strengthens the program as a whole.



## Tech and Niihka Tips

By Janet Hurn

**Tech Tip :** Have you tried using the TurningPoint Clickers in your classes or for a campus tour or some other application? The student response system (clickers) are great to quiz students on the previous day's reading assignment, take a survey, or respond to a given problem. Questions can be prepared ahead of time in PowerPoint. Questions can be put on paper and students can respond at their own pace in a quiz mode. Using TurningPoint Anywhere you can ask students spontaneous questions. There is a new receiver now that can be used away from a computer. This can be used on a field trip, outside, or on a tour to poll students anywhere. So give clickers a trial run. You can check out a set from the library and get the new receiver by contacting me. I would be happy to help someone get started using clickers.



**Niihka Tip :** The Niihka gradebook can be a really useful tool to keep your student's grades organized. I think it is much more reliable than the Blackboard gradebook. You can choose to keep your grades in categories or in weighted categories or no categories. Categories can be things like tests, quizzes, discussion boards, homework, etc. You can choose to put your grades in as percentages, points, or letter grades. You can adjust the grade scale to match your grading system. One thing Niihka does not currently do is display the total points for each student. That has been requested as a new feature. One nice feature is that you do not have to release scores to students until you want to. They cannot see unreleased scores. Unfortunately since we are not used to this feature, we sometimes forget to release those grades. They show up as blue in the gradebook when released. I admit that I have forgotten this in my own gradebook. If you need more help with the gradebook, check out my videos: <http://googl/deXpv>



### 2011-2012 T@MUM Series: Technology & U! Laurel Gilbert



The T@MUM series continues to offer technology workshops and pedagogical discussions at “high teatime” with the Center for Teaching and Learning. Our first T@MUM for the 2011-12 year was held on October 26, during which we introduced the basics of using Microsoft Movie Maker 2.6 and the Flip digital video cameras available for checkout at the Gardner-Harvey Library. Two more technological tea-times are scheduled for fall 2011 semester. On Tuesday, November 8, we’ll introduce a variety of ways that Miami faculty can conduct “virtual” meetings with faculty on other Miami campuses—and beyond—using our IVDL system, Elluminate, Cisco Meeting Place and other web-based options. Then, at semester’s end on Tuesday, November 29, we’ll present a “Tool Round Up” of various fun and free (or very cheap) digital and online tools that can help you in your pedagogical and technological (or just plain fun) endeavors.

These are exciting technological times at Miami University Middletown, not to mention in the entirety of higher education. It seems every day there’s a new tool, or a new way to implement an older technology, and it’s daunting to keep up to date. Our students grow more digitally adept every year, and they inhabit a world that expects a variety of technological skills and competencies from them. And us. I think we at MUM are, by and large, excited about the technological possibilities, but we’re also often overwhelmed at the prospect of choosing and learning about new technologies and presenting them to our students. As the CTL plans the spring T@MUM series, we’d be thrilled to hear what topics, tools & technology issues interest you: please email me at [gilberlm@muohio.edu](mailto:gilberlm@muohio.edu) if there is a particular issue or technology you’d like to see featured in a spring semester tea, or, a specific tool you’ve found that you’d like to share. Also, feel free to drop by my Monday morning CTL hours (9 – 11 a.m.) if you’d like to chat about using digital and/or multimodal techniques and technologies in your teaching. I’m looking forward to learning together how to integrate all sorts of new technologies into the classrooms at MUM.

## Libraries and Learning: 21st Century Learning

By Beth Tumbleson

Educators have been teaching in the classroom throughout the centuries. Recall Socrates and his “seminar” in which he peppered his students with questions until understanding dawned. The Socratic method & Socratic irony have proven very effective:

“The method of teaching in which the master imparts no information, but asks a sequence of questions, through answering which the pupil eventually comes to the desired knowledge. Socratic irony is the pose of ignorance on the part of the master, who may in fact know more about the matter than he lets on.”

Perhaps inquiry-based learning can be traced back conceptually to such a pedagogical approach? So one naturally inquires: why tinker with a proven educational tool just because another century has arrived? What has 21st-century learning got to do with me in my classroom at Miami University?

In today’s information age, the landscape resembles a jungle. Instructors must avail themselves of a machete-yielding-guide to cut a path through information springing up everywhere. Indeed, those in higher education are overwhelmed by too much digital information and wonder how they are going to find that one perfect piece needed for their research project, out there somewhere. This is where 21st-century skills are required, because the world has changed radically in terms of technology, publishing, and finding information.

Today’s students are online, looking for information, and feeling confused and anxious because it is not obvious to them where they should begin research. Succeeding academically and in the workforce requires a new set of skills drawing upon emerging technologies. Remember the room-sized computer? Compare that with the smartphone in your hand.

Partnership 21 is a national advocacy organization that “provides tools and resources to help the U.S. education system keep up by fusing the 3Rs and 4Cs (Critical thinking and problem solving, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity and innovation).” (<http://www.p21.org/>) Information literacy has become essential in today’s changing world of print, electronic, and digital media. Scholarship is in flux as some publish in print scholarly journals while others post in open access sites, and many articles are archived in research databases. Going online for scholarly information has become standard-operating-procedure, but faculty should not assume students draw upon sophisticated search skills when conducting course-related research. The professional literature documents the lack of such 21st-century skills. Fortunately, librarians bridge the worlds of technology, digital collections, and instructing students.

Why not invite an instruction librarian to work with your students, using one of the available methods: embedded librarian, instruction session, or individual research consultations? See the new menu of information literacy skills that can be emphasized: <http://www.mid.muohio.edu/library/Information%20Literacy%20Menu.pdf> Select those skills most needed by your students to succeed in the research assignments you have designed. Then contact a librarian to schedule instruction. Step into the 21st century with reinforcements.

(Socratic method" The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy. Simon Blackburn. Oxford University Press, 2008. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press.

Miami University - Ohio. 4 October 2011

<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t98.e2907>)



## Jennifer's Corner

Over the weekend I had the opportunity to spend some time with a good friend of mine. Jeannie has been my friend for over 6 years and she enjoys reading, spending time educating children, and loves the Pittsburgh Steelers! During the cold weekend we played Jeopardy, and she used a simple term with me. I became frustrated when trying to form a question from an answer out of a pretty stiff column to me, Anagrammed Countries. As she was keeping score with me in the negative, I chose the column for \$400, and it read: In Asia: Thorn Ear Ok. After her voice buzzer sounded, she says, "Jenn, it's not that hard. Use your common sense, it's North Korea."



What is common sense? I asked myself this question for about an hour after she had won the game. Is it something you spend your life learning? Do I have common sense, or all the common sense that I need? What rubric do I use to evaluate my common sense? Was I lacking common knowledge or common sense? After thinking of this concept, I had to investigate the definition of common sense, and see what others had to say about it.

According to Webster's Dictionary, common sense is defined as "sound practical judgment that is independent of specialized knowledge, training, or the like; normal native intelligence". I dug a little deeper and found some interesting material on this "common sense."

### 8 Steps to (Possibly) Improve Your Common Sense:

1. Admit you have a problem.

Probably the hardest step of all.

2. Slow down.

Many errors in judgment are a result of impulsive, hasty decisions. If you know you've got a problem with common sense, you'll need to sacrifice decision speed for decision quality. When in doubt, sleep on it. At least one night, maybe two. OK, maybe a week.

3. Bite your tongue.

If there is any doubt that what you're thinking of saying might be taken the wrong way or get you in trouble, then don't say it. Yes, you'll be less talkative, less funny, and find yourself bleeding at the mouth a lot, but that's a lot better than having your foot in your mouth all the time. At least I think it might be – actually, both sound pretty uncomfortable.

4. Get feedback from others.

Before you send that email, have that conversation, spend that money, or whatever other train you're about to wreck, and seek out the advice of others. Test the decision with your manager, peers, direct reports, or anyone else that can give you honest, constructive feedback. Then, make sure you listen to that feedback.

(Continued)



## Jennifer's Corner continued

### 5. Take a personality assessment.

Take the MBTI, DISC, Hogan, or some other credible personality assessment in order to identify your natural tendencies and biases, and how those tendencies may be influencing your analysis, judgment and decision making. It's even better, maybe even required, to have a professional help you interpret the data.



### 6. Get a coach.

In this case, I'd even go as far as to say get a coach with a clinical background. Someone that can help you examine your thinking process, a sounding board to test pending decisions, and someone to slap you in the side of the head.

### 7. Find a role model.

Find someone you admire that always seems to make the right decisions and ask how he/she does it. Walk through a number of examples of decisions they've made, and ask them to explain their thought process.

### 8. Read a few books on judgment, decision making, problem solving, and/or critical thinking.

Will all of any of these work? I honestly don't know, however, I don't buy into the notion that anyone is "hardwired". People can change if they want to and are willing to work at it.

Works Cited: <http://www.greatleadershipbydan.com/2010/04/can-common-sense-be-learned.html>

Overall, I feel my common sense can probably be sharpened however knowledge can be gained by reading more books and maybe taking some assessment tests. As a learner and being in charge of my learning, I want to know as much my brain cells can hold. I don't only want to have common sense, but I want to challenge my knowledge, and learn more. I want to be unique in my knowledge I possess, and use that wisely throughout life. Sharpening my common sense will help me to gain a common knowledge as well. I don't want to have a degree, just to say I have one or appear to be a person that seems to know a lot, but my actions speak differently. I want to be well-rounded person, acquiring knowledge and know how to use it. That way the next time I play Jeopardy with Jeannie, my common knowledge will kick in, and I'll know the right question to ask in Anagrammed Countries when I see: In Central America: Agate Maul.

*Signing out,  
Jennifer*

P.S. The answer to "In Central America" is, what is Guatemala?



## Directing Faculty? Notes on Being a Faculty Director

### By Moira Casey

Does a  
Faculty  
Director...  
direct  
faculty?

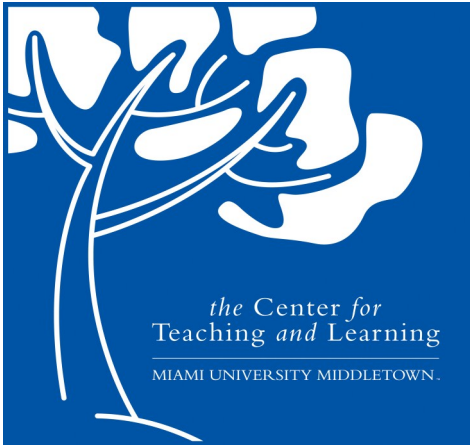
The persistent question I get these days usually goes something like this, “So, what does a faculty director actually do? Direct faculty?” someone recently quipped. “Can’t be done, right?” But really, very little of my current position involves any kind of directing of faculty. My list of responsibilities includes planning curricular offerings at the Greentree Health Science Academy and the VOA; mentoring probationary faculty; keeping tabs on course enrollments; chairing the MUM Strategic Enrollment Management Committee; serving as the Dean’s office representative on the MUM Care Team; and helping assemble a regional two-year course plan.

Those are the responsibilities that will likely be fairly consistent as I move forward in this position; however, it has also become clear to me that my position is flexibly-defined for a reason. On any given day, various issues and concerns come to the Dean’s office, and one regionalized academic dean simply cannot follow up on all of these. For example, the CTL’s own Beth Tumbleson forwarded information about the Ohio Education Department’s Race to the Top initiative, a program to which higher education administrators were invited to attend. I volunteered to go to one of the informational meetings, and then I reported what I learned to both Rob Schorman, our Regional Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and to Whitney Womack, my faculty director counterpart at Miami Hamilton.

In some instances, faculty, staff, and students are also having a say in how my position evolves, and they are coming directly to me with questions and concerns. Over the past month, I have answered questions about the academic dishonesty process and mediated conflicts between faculty and students. Those are tasks for which my short stint as English Coordinator prepared me well!

In the course of transitioning out of the English Coordinator position and into Faculty Directorship, I have still managed to keep up with the goings-on at the CTL. Just this past week, I attended the special event about the Khan Academy and the inverted classroom, and I am helping to coordinate an upcoming CTL special featuring the MUM Care Team, on which I now sit. I am still teaching one course per semester, and I still look to the CTL as my primary source for keeping my teaching practices fresh and interesting. As my position develops and my set of responsibilities crystallizes, I plan to continue attending CTL events whenever possible and looking for ways that I can support and contribute to the CTL in my new role.





## CTL Office Hours

Each member of the CTL Leadership Collaborative staffs the office during the week. Staff welcomes faculty, staff, and students who want to discuss issues related to teaching and learning or browse the library of books, journals, and handouts.

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## CTL Office Hours

Monday 9:00 am-11:00 am Laurel Gilbert  
11:00 am-12:00 noon Susan Joyce

Tuesday 9:00 am-11:00 am Beth Tumbleson  
12:30 pm-1:45 pm CTL LC Meeting  
1:30 pm-2:30 pm Janet Hurn

Wednesday 10:30 am-1:00 pm Eric Luczaj  
1:00 pm-2:00 pm Janet Hurn

Thursday 11:00 am-12:00 noon Susan Joyce  
12:00 pm-2:30 pm Ellenmarie Wahlrab