



THE CENTER FOR  
TEACHING AND  
LEARNING

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# CTL NOTES

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2011

## Why U?: The Relevance of the University Today

The beginning of the 2011 academic year invites the continuing conversation about the purpose of a university education for citizens of the twenty-first century. Every year, more and more students enroll in our classes and programs, hoping a college education will bring them financial success. Traditionally, a college education does translate into greater earning power, it's true; but what other reasons are there for students and teachers alike to become part of a university community?

This year, the Center for Teaching & Learning examines the relevance of the university for today's students and teachers, and considers what skill sets complement the curriculum of a university education to meet the needs of twenty-first century learners. Our focus is two-fold: on the one hand, a college-educated citizen must be competent in using twenty-first century tools to communicate, collaborate and create.

During 2011-12, the CTL will focus on supporting faculty and students in experimenting with new technologies and digital-media production, both in and out of the classroom, so that we become more competent communicators and researchers in today's fast-paced, media-saturated world. On the other hand, it's important that we don't lose sight of our humanity. 21st century learning and teaching includes how the learner contextualizes himself or herself within the cacophony of modern life. CTL Conversations this year will address how students and faculty can develop inner resources to more fully engage with one another and the learning process.

### Save the Dates

**Thursday October 6th 11:30-12:30pm**

**Monday November 7th 12:00-1:00pm**

**Thursday, December 1st 11:30am-12:30pm**

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## **Assignments: Make them work for U**

**Thursday October 6, 2011  
JHN 136/137 11:30-12:30pm**

How do we help students develop the competencies they need for 21st-century life and work? Do you have assignments that you use to help students do this, but sometimes you don't see the development of skills that you are trying to support? Or are you thinking of a new assignment and would like some feedback on constructing the assignment to encourage student success? Come to the first CTL Conversation of the year, where we'll discuss how elements of "backward design" can help you get better responses to your assignments. Bring an assignment, or the idea for a new assignment, and join the conversation!



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



**HELP!**

## Need help? Stop by during Tech Hours!!

Janet Hurn, our new Technology Liaison, is here to assist you with Niihka questions and other technologies in the classroom. Tech hours will be on Tuesdays from 1:30-2:30pm and Wednesdays from 1:00-2:00pm in the CTL, JHN Room 11. Can't stop by? Check out helpful tips below!

### Janet's Tech Tips

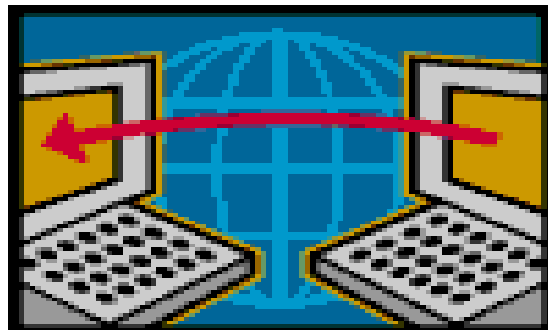
#### Niihka Tip

If you have not tried Lesson Builder in Niihka yet, you should. It is really handy for adding content in a nice orderly fashion into Niihka. It is also easy to navigate for students. You can start using Lesson Builder by going to Site Info, edit tools, and adding it. I also have a [handy video](#) available to help get you started.

#### Tech Tip

If you want to make some slick video tutorials like I did with Niihka, check out this free web based application, [screenr.com](http://screenr.com). You can record up to 5 minutes of screen motion and audio. You can send out a link to your creation or even [embed them into Niihka](#). Another option is emailing the link. Give screenr a try.

Come by the CTL for more great tips during Tech Hours and check out my blog, "Just a Tech Minute!" at <http://janethurn.wordpress.com/>





## Jennifer's Corner

Greetings and welcome back to another fabulous year at MUM!! For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jennifer Pugh and I am the Center for Teaching and Learning's Student Assistant. In each issue of CTL Notes you will see Jennifer's Corner where I will share my perspective on education and learning. I enjoy sharing my thoughts and feelings with you all and feedback is always welcome!

As I enter into my third year of college, I have experienced a different type of learning. This may sound different, but this new type of learning is my learning, and I am in charge! I had a small run in with this type of learning last year; however, this year I have taken it head on. This learning method can be difficult for most students, but I have found a sincere passion for it.

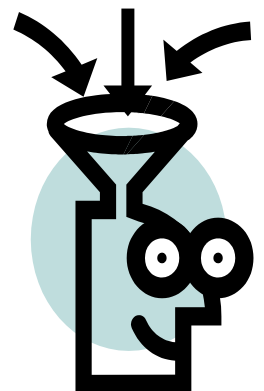
Last year I took an Economics class that was different than the past classes I've taken. In this class, I was in charge of my learning. This is a very easy concept, but it was hard as well. Normally, a student goes to class, the professor lectures, the student takes notes, sends text messages, or falls asleep, and the student leaves. The professor gives assignments, quizzes, and tests, and depending on the student and their success, they pass the class and move on. This is exactly what I expected walking into Economics 201. However, my professor did a ten minute lecture and I was told to complete my online homework. I had no idea how difficult the homework would be, and because my professor didn't lecture me for an hour and twenty minutes, I became frustrated and somewhat angry. I felt I had been cheated because she didn't tell me what or how to do the homework and what I needed to know. What she did do was make me read the chapter, complete my homework, critically think, and put me in a group with students with an assignment that we had to figure out and work through. She did help us, but a lot of times she challenged the group to come up with the answer/explanation. We developed our own sense of learning the material in this class.

I have experienced this same learning over the summer and this year. I have taken matters into my own hands, teaching myself with the help of my professors and my books. I know that this is probably the idea I should have had at the beginning of my college career, however I had felt college would be the same as high school plus twenty page papers.

I have redefined the hands on learner that I am, making difficult learning concepts easier to understand and designing steps to solve problems. I have not only taken charge of my college learning, I also tend to go deeper in life lessons as well. I am reading more books about my interests and I have even found myself reading scholarly articles about these interests as well. Attending and working for Miami has opened my eyes to many resources that I use in and outside of class. I get excited about the things I have learned and what new things I will learn, taking matters into my own hands. I wish more students would open themselves up to take on their learning as well. With hybrid courses and other courses like Economics, they may not have a choice but to take charge of their learning sooner rather than later. I hope they find it as enlightening as I have. As I smile about what I have learned, I feel as though I am taking charge (to one day) live large!!

Signing out,

*Jennifer*



# Libraries & Learning

By Beth Tumbleson

*“...students rarely ask librarians for help, even when they need it.”*

*“They (students at Illinois Wesleyan University) tended to over use Google and misuse scholarly databases.”*

*“...when it comes to finding and evaluating sources in the Internet age, students are downright lousy.”*

*“Many students described experiences of anxiety and confusion when looking for resources...”*

From “What Students Don’t Know,” August 22, 2011, Inside Higher Education

Greetings Faculty & Friends,

As we resume the rhythms of teaching and learning at Miami University, you will be introducing your students to new concepts, content, and experiences in the classroom, the laboratory, and field study. But what do libraries have to do with learning? The answer is not obvious to many, especially in times of budget cuts. Historically, libraries have been places that store resources for learning. At one time, a few privileged people had access. Today, libraries have opened their doors wide and round the clock as virtual libraries with electronic collections can be accessed 24/7. Academic libraries have become places where students gather to study together, craft a group project, or meet friends between classes, F2F or on Facebook.

Keeping up is hard to do and there have been many changes this summer. Some library databases have not been renewed, others have been added, and some have new interfaces. The Gardner Harvey Library instruction librarians will demonstrate searching a few good databases as starting points for online research as well as time-saving tools to cite sources in APA or MLA using BibMe or EasyBib. Librarians understand students perceive faculty as the go-to-research guru. So we gladly collaborate and customize electronic resources that align with your research assignments. When an instructor requires that students search a named library database for scholarly journal articles or overview essays, they do! Thus are 21st century research skills developed in students. Librarians will show up and show students how to navigate the trickier parts of a research project: getting started with a manageable topic or whatever else you deem important. Request an information literacy session this semester or participate in the Niihka embedded librarian program and empower your students in scholarly research.





## National Endowment for the Humanities Opportunities By: Dr. Caryn E. Neumann

Looking for summertime brain candy? The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) sponsors workshops, seminars, and institutes for university instructors. Participants, chosen in a competitive process, come from all disciplines and all career levels. Adjuncts are particularly encouraged to apply. Each instructor also receives a stipend to help cover travel and housing expenses.

The NEH aims to improve undergraduate teaching and to provide participants with the latest knowledge in a key field of the humanities. To give an example of one disciplinary area, "Landmarks of American History and Culture" workshops devote one week to directly experiencing the interpretation of significant historical and cultural sites. In 2011, workshops focused on rhetoric, African American history, and the Transcendentalists among other topics. NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes last from two weeks to six weeks, depending upon the project. Past seminars and institutes covered art history in Rome; Daoist history and literature; and the ethnohistory of Indians in the South.

Over the summer, I participated with 25 other instructors in a "Landmarks of American History and Culture" workshop in Michigan called "United by Water: Exploring American History through the Shipwrecks and Maritime Landscapes of the Great Lakes." We spent a week learning about Great Lakes history and marine archeology at the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Participants, from all career stages, came from all over the country with adjuncts in the majority. Archaeology, English literature, developmental reading, art, gender studies, and history were among the disciplines represented. We were housed in a dormitory at Alpena Community College with some participants opting for motel rooms. (One guy camped with his dog.) A few instructors brought spouses. It was a wonderful opportunity to discuss teaching with colleagues and to improve my teaching. I strongly recommend the NEH programs, particularly the Shipwrecks workshop. If you would like to discuss the program, please contact me at [neumance@muho.edu](mailto:neumance@muho.edu). The NEH website is: <http://www.neh.gov/projects/index.html>



## CTL Teaching Initiative Funding: A Presentation at AURCO

By Caryn E. Neumann

Four faculty from MUM (Louise Davis, Corinne Miller, Caryn Neumann, and Sharon Zechowski) were funded by the CTL's Teaching Initiative program to present at the AURCO Conference at Wright State University Lake Campus in April 2011. AURCO (Association for the University Regional Campuses of Ohio) began in 1993 as a means of promoting the contributions of Ohio's regional campuses to higher education as well as the economic and cultural development of the communities that they serve.



Most of the AURCO presentations addressed pedagogy although a few did focus on specific disciplines. The MUM faculty, most of whom are associated with the BIS program, presented a roundtable on the challenges of service learning: "Dismantling the Controversy over Service Learning: Bridging the Gap, the Ivory Tower, and the Community. Other presentations included: "A Student-Centered Approach to Learning by Utilizing Electronic Quiz Games," "Rural Youth Retention," "Awarding Points for Homework without Over-Burdening Yourself with Grading," and "Giving Chemistry Students Real Life Experience: From Projects to Posters to Campus Students' Poster Competitions." One of the most interesting presentations, "Things I Learned as a Student That I Didn't Know as a Teacher: How Experiential Learning Can Dispel Teaching Myths," brought together three faculty from the University of Cincinnati – Raymond Walters College. These instructors enrolled as beginners in language courses. They described feeling at sea, disliking the sense of being "weaponless," and the other discomforts of being a student. The session proved a useful reminder about what it is like to be a student, particularly for those of us who have been on the other side of the desk for many years.

## Part-Time Faculty Perk: PEP Funds! By Beth Tumbleson

The Part-Time Educator's Program or PEP from CELTUA offers part-time faculty at Miami University a real deal! Anyone teaching part-time at Miami University, including full-time staff with part-time teaching responsibilities, is eligible. By registering and participating in PEP you may earn up to \$300.00 of professional development funding by attending professional development opportunities offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning, Center for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching, and University Assessment (CELTUA), or other pedagogical events upon verification. PEP members earn \$25 dollars for each session attended. PEP members may also attend the annual Lilly Conference in Oxford, OH for FREE as the \$50.00 registration fee is waived; moreover, one may earn up to half of one's PEP funds by attending 6 Lilly sessions in just one day. PEP funds may be spent for conference registration and travel, technology items related to teaching, etc. PEP members must meet a spending deadline of June 1 each year. Contact Alicia Miller by emailing [mille226@muohio.edu](mailto:mille226@muohio.edu) to request that a PEP account be created for you this academic year, 2011-2012. For more information, go to: <http://www.units.muohio.edu/celt/faculty/pep/>



## SGIDs-Know Your Students' Response!



Do you want to find out how your students are experiencing your class? The CTL's Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) program can help.

Any MUM instructor can request a SGID to be scheduled during a class meeting. Last year facilitators conducted nearly 50 SGIDs at MUM. In addition, those teaching at the VOA may also request a SGID through the CTL. Faculty find they can use SGID feedback to fine-tune their teaching and better address their students' learning needs.

MUM SGIDs take about 30 minutes of a class period. During this time a SGID facilitator (one of your colleagues who has been trained in SGID facilitation) comes into your class to meet with your students without you being present. Students respond to the following questions: *In what ways has the instruction/instructor helped you learn in this course? Can you suggest some changes in the instruction/course that would better help you learn?* The CTL uses a "clicker"-mediated SGID process, where students provide feedback through a remote response system. Students use clickers confidentially to indicate degrees of their agreement or disagreement with each suggestion and comment. The facilitator captures students' responses in a written report sent to you and is also available to discuss the results.

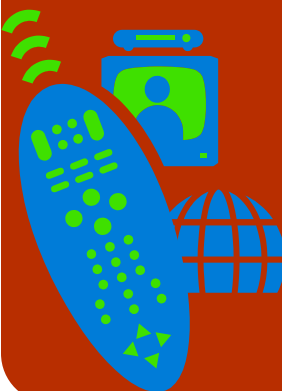
The CTL uses a "clicker"-mediated SGID process, where students provide feedback through a remote response system. Students use clickers confidentially to indicate degrees of their agreement or disagreement with each suggestion and comment.

You can find more information on the SGID process on the CTL website at: <http://www.mid.muohio.edu/ctl/SGID.cfm> To request a SGID, complete the SGID request form. Questions? Call the CTL at 7-3464 or email us at [mumctl@muohio.edu](mailto:mumctl@muohio.edu). *\*Note: MUH Faculty may request a SGID by contacting Suzanne Gord at [gords@muohio.edu](mailto:gords@muohio.edu).*\*

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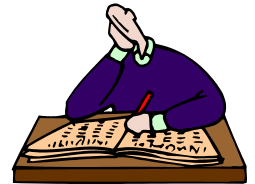
### Managing Editor for the JCTL

The Journal for the Center for Teaching and Learning (JCTL) is looking for a Managing Editor. The JCTL is a peer-reviewed journal co-sponsored by the Oxford-based Center for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and University Assessment and the Middletown-based CTL. You may contact John Tassoni at [tassonjp@muohio.edu](mailto:tassonjp@muohio.edu) for more information on how to apply. To view the JCTL, follow this link: <http://celt.muohio.edu/jctl>



## Don't Fade Away and Burn Out: Work Together to Renew Our Energy

By Eric Luczaj



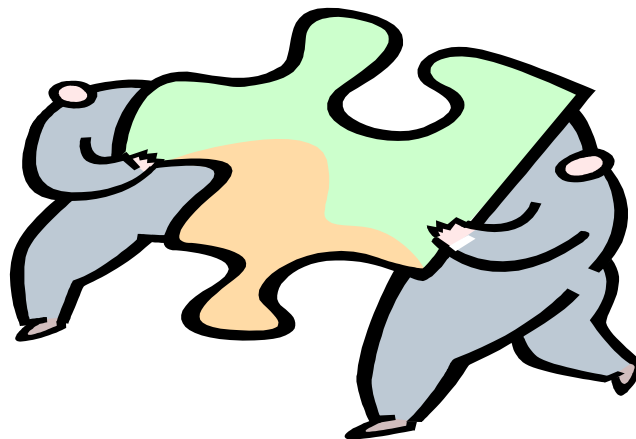
According to Dr. Beverly Potter, "Tens of millions of workers in the United States suffer from feelings of powerlessness in the workplace which can destroy motivation and enthusiasm for work." This is especially true in an environment where we face increasing demands with diminishing resources.

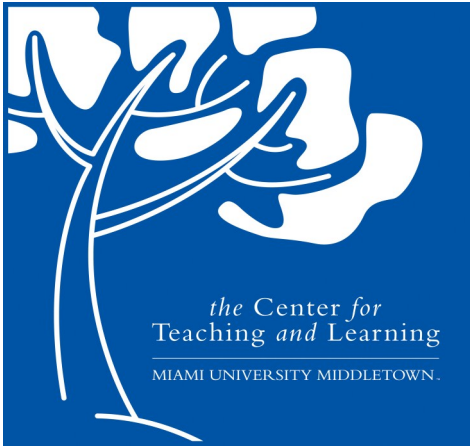
While most faculty, staff and students on the regional campuses will acknowledge that educational success relies on our community's energy, efforts and time, the reality often reveals an imbalance between to do lists and time available.

This FLING will weigh the rewards of teaching and learning at open-access campuses against the degrees of burnout that faculty and staff might experience as they negotiate the individual interests and concerns that balance and shape our academic, classroom, and personal lives. In particular, this group will first explore sources of stress and de-motivation within an environment of steep economic recession that shape our community's ability and willingness to teach and learn. Then second, and more importantly, this group will construct strategies to affect positive personal change.

Our first meeting will be held meet October 28 with two follow-up meetings November 18 and December 2.

For more information or to join this FLING, please contact: Eric Luczaj at [luczajje@muohio.edu](mailto:luczajje@muohio.edu)





## 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.

### RM 11 JHN Hall

4200 N University Blvd.  
Middletown, OH 45042

Phone 513-727-3464

Email: [mumctl@muohio.edu](mailto:mumctl@muohio.edu)

## CTL Office Hours

Monday 9:00 am-11:00 am Laurel Gilbert  
12:30 pm-1:45 pm CTL Leadership-  
Collaborative Meeting

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

Tuesday 9:00 am-11:00 am Beth Tumbleson  
11:00 am- 12:00 noon Susan Joyce  
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

