CIT Monthly News and Events
April 30, 2009

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Upcoming CIT events and workshops: May 2009

5/6/2009   Beyond the Stacks: Women's Studies @ the Library
5/6/2009   Stop flipping out: Planning video assignments using Flip cameras
5/6/2009   Technology Buffet: Your choice of Web 2.0 demonstrations
5/6/2009   Lecture busters: Keeping students engaged
5/6/2009   Using digital storytelling with your students
5/7/2009   Beyond the Stacks: Library resources for Public Policy & Political Science
5/7/2009   Introduction to digital video and iMovie
5/7/2009   Technology Buffet: Your choice of Web 2.0 demonstrations
5/7/2009   Effective use of student groups in class
5/8/2009   VoiceThread: Collaborative annotating of video and images
5/8/2009   Technology Buffet: Your choice of Web 2.0 demonstrations
5/8/2009   Thinking spaces: Teaching and learning in flexible classrooms
5/8/2009   Avoiding death by PowerPoint
5/11/2009  Beyond the stacks: Finding images, securing copyright @ the Library
5/11/2009  Technology Buffet: Your choice of Web 2.0 demonstration
5/11/2009  Blackboard 8: What you need to know
5/11/2009  Intro to Blackboard for Instructors
5/12/2009  Blackboard 8: What you need to know
5/12/2009  Technology Buffet: Your choice of Web 2.0 demonstrations
5/12/2009  Wimba Voice: Fast, easy and built-in audio recording in Blackboard

To learn more or to register for any workshop, visit http://cit.duke.edu/events/calendar.do.

Faculty may request a custom workshop for their department on any instructional technology topic by emailing CIT.
Faculty workshops focus on teaching and new technologies

CIT is offering our annual series of workshops for faculty and GSIs, May 6–12, 2009. These are shifted a little later than usual, to allow us to include some workshops on the new Blackboard 8 system, after it's upgraded on May 10.

Themes of our 20 workshops this year include:

- **teaching and learning with visuals** (PowerPoint, digital storytelling, VoiceThread),
- **classroom techniques** (using student groups, lecturing effectively, teaching in flexible classrooms),
- **digital media projects** (using Flip video cameras, intro to digital video and iMovie),
- **library resources for research and teaching** (in Public Policy, Political Science, Women's Studies, and using images in academic work),
- **Blackboard 8 and its tools** (intro sessions for new users, Wimba Voice Tools, Bb 8 new features).

A lunch "technology buffet" will allow registrants to choose two of three short show–n–tell sessions focused on Web 2.0 tools, designed to give you a taste of what these tools are about (Twitter, flickr, blogs, online bookmark tools, YouTube....and more!)

There are still spaces available, so register now! Registration and more information at [http://cit.duke.edu/events/may2009.html](http://cit.duke.edu/events/may2009.html).

Blackboard upgrade is imminent!

Duke University will upgrade Blackboard from version 6.3 to version 8.0. During the conversion, from Thursday, May 7 at 6 pm through Sunday, May 10 at 6 pm, Blackboard will **not be available**. After that, say hello to Blackboard 8.0! All of your materials stored on Blackboard will be transferred to the new version and will be available after the upgrade. Course sites for Fall 2009 will be created after the upgrade, in the last week of May. However, an instructor may **request a course site** (requires Duke net id) at any time.

Overall, the new version of Blackboard looks and acts similarly to our previous version, and some people may not notice any change at all. Those who use the gradebook (renamed Grade Center to reflect changes) and the Discussion Board will notice the **biggest changes**.

This upgrade is to ensure that Blackboard, Inc. will continue to provide support for our system.

Where instructors can get help:

- attend a workshop at the **CIT showcase**
- attend a **workshop in May**
- contact **CIT** to arrange for training for a group of instructors, or an office visit to help you get started
- our **Blackboard help pages** will be updated with short video tutorials and more information at the same time
CIT Showcase: Continue the conversation!

Want to catch up with sessions you missed? The 2009 Center for Instructional Technology Showcase site is still available, and some of the presenters have shared their materials, which we’ve linked to the session descriptions. Find out what people were tweeting about during the Showcase, and continue the conversation. Got some new ideas for your course? Call us to talk about them!

ShareThis

CIT Showcase: The Twitter backchannel

No doubt, many attendees noted the increased use of iPhones, iPod Touches, netbooks and laptops during this year’s CIT Instructional Technology Showcase. Chances are, many of those using mobile devices (even during presentations) were participating in the discussion going on in the micro-blogging tool Twitter. We used Twitter to provide an additional layer to the conference conversation. Didn’t get to attend that session? No problem – someone on Twitter wrote several tweets detailing it. Didn’t get to ask that question? Post it on the Twitter feed, and others just might respond.

Conference attendees who wanted to add to the Twitter discussion simply had to add a “hash tag” to the end of their tweets. For the Showcase, the designated hash tag was “#cit09”. Any time this tag was added to a tweet, other conference attendees would be able to see the tweet in the Twitter stream. To watch the Twitter stream, attendees visited http://search.twitter.com and searched for
stream. To watch the Twitter stream, attendees visited [http://search.twitter.com](http://search.twitter.com) and searched for #cit09. [Here’s a direct link](http://search.twitter.com) you can use to visit the feed, and click back through the pages of results to read all of the comments and conversation(s).

If you started using Twitter at the Showcase, or already use it, follow [DukeCIT](http://search.twitter.com) for our most recent updates and info. Also keep your eye on the [Showcase website](http://search.twitter.com), which we’ll be updating very soon with more video, images, and other content from the Showcase.

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**Course wiki facilitates student participation and course design**

At 4:05, when ENV 186S/PubPol 187 is scheduled to end, students enthusiastically continue their discussion, not noticing the time. Students all contribute, and learn from each other’s experience.

Dr. [Rafe Sagarin](http://search.twitter.com) enthusiastically described how he designed his first undergraduate course at Duke, “From Water to Washington: Marine Science and Policy.” This capstone course serves students with a diversity of backgrounds and majors; this diversity has been transformed from a challenge to a benefit. Dr. Sagarin adapted a method used for professional meetings with diverse participants, called [Open Space Technology](http://search.twitter.com), in which the participants direct the agenda.

How? On the first day of class, he gave the students large sticky notes to answer the following three questions: 1) what are you excited about in this course? 2) what do you want to learn about? and 3) what can you teach the class about? He organized the notes into themes on the board, and his course outline emerged. The general plan is that students teach other students what they want to know. In places where the answers to questions 2 and 3 did not overlap, he filled in gaps with lectures.

The course is organized on the wiki within Blackboard. Each person in the class facilitates a class period. This student creates a new wiki page, with a description and a link to a selected article. All of the students are required to read the article, and to contribute a paper, website or YouTube video with a brief explanation that relates to the topic on the wiki page. Then, for each class meeting, almost every student has something to say. Although students are only required to read the assigned article, they often read each other’s contributions and make connections in class.

Dr. Sagarin says the technology has allowed him to get all of the students involved in the course in a way that was not possible previously. The wiki offers accountability – he can tell instantly who has contributed. He finds there are not many technical difficulties; only one student can edit at a time, and sometimes the student–contributed links do not work as they should.

In this course, both students and the instructor are learning enthusiastically. Dr. Sagarin observed that students are much better presenters than when he was a student. His students are poised, clear, polished and skilled at leading discussions and soliciting contributions, and he has learned from them. He points out that the student contributions bring a much wider scope of work into the discussion than he would ever be able to. It’s a great example of successful use of “the wisdom of crowds,” also famously leveraged by [Michael Wesch](http://search.twitter.com), who points out that collectively, students bring a tremendous amount of knowledge to the classroom and that it should be used. Dr. Sagarin is proud of what his students bring to his classroom and what he has learned from them.

**Resources**

- [Using the wiki in Blackboard](http://search.twitter.com)
- [Using blogs and wikis in the classroom](http://search.twitter.com)
- [How to organize your course with a wiki](http://search.twitter.com)
Using Wikipedia for assignments

GMU Center for History and New Media’s Jeremy Boggs has written an excellent blog post describing his approach to assigning Wikipedia in a US History course he’s teaching. Boggs provides a very clear and thoughtful approach that would work well as a model for any discipline. Here’s what Boggs writes about the benefits of students doing this sort of project:

- **Learn how to do research:** A no-brainer here. The assignment involves some basic research and writing skills, a modest but substantial amount for a 100-level survey course.
- **Demystify Wikipedia:** Most people have preconceptions about Wikipedia, but very little experience actually reading AND writing an Wikipedia article. Fewer people have experience communicating with other Wikipedia users, particularly admins and editors. This, in turn, influences how they interact with others on various social sites and services. Moreover, students learn that not just anything can be published on Wikipedia, there are rules and policies in place for the content that gets to stay on Wikipedia.
- **Learn the difference between fact-only writing and analytical writing:** Most of my students have a difficult time understanding how to make an argument, how to differentiate between fact-based “reporting” and analysis. By actually being forced to write a “just the facts” report, they have been able to see the difference between the two.

Read the rest of Boggs’s article “Assigning Wikipedia in a US History Survey”.

Closer to home, Duke graduate student Alexa Garvoille writes about her experiences using Wikipedia in Cathy Davidson’s American Novel course. Garvoille’s post also suggests “a theoretical framework for using Wikipedia in the classroom,” based not only on her experiences at Duke, but also working with Durham Public Schools:

“As a teacher and learner, the experience of evaluating contemporary media and engaging in Web 2.0 materials during a course helped me see the value of maintaining a focus on relevance and immediacy in the classroom.”

Read the rest of Garvoille’s post on her blog, The Rebellious Reader.