



UWG
ONLINE



January
2011

take a look

Associate Dean's Corner 1
I Am West Georgia 3
Meet the Staff 4
Online Around Campus 5
Online Teaching Tools 5
Online News & Notes 6
Professional Development 6
UWGONLINE Happenings 7
Online Faculty Kudos 7
Online Faculty Spotlight 8
Submissions 9

• **UWG** ONLINE *Thinking Outside the Box* •



Associate Dean's Corner

with Dr. Jason Huett

Happy New Year and welcome back to campus!

I hope your holiday break was “merrier” than mine. For me, 2011 went out with a flush. My three kids, Kim, and I all flew to Texas to visit family, only to come down with the worst stomach bug I have had in over a decade. Five of us fell to the holiday micro-invader that started the day after we arrived and ended the day before we flew home. The juxtaposition of downstairs calls for “pass the wine,” “more mac-and-cheese please,” and “who made this pie?” with the upstairs sounds of folks getting violently ill, left one with some not-easily-forgettable holiday memories. Maybe your break is looking a little better now?

So, I can honestly say that I am happy to be back at work. A couple of notable things have happened since the last newsletter. For the last year or so, I have been working with our *Online Degrees Task Force* to craft a position paper exploring how UWG could leverage the innovative potential of online learning to serve new audiences (like the military and other non-traditional students) as well as how UWG could better position itself in the increasingly competitive regional, national, and international distance education marketplace. In December, we presented our final draft titled *Grow West: A Strategic Plan for the Targeted Advancement of Online Teaching and Learning at UWG* to the Faculty Senate and asked for their endorsement. I am happy to report that we received a unanimous endorsement! My thanks go out to all the taskforce members, senate members, and to our entire hardworking and innovative faculty who never shrink from new challenges and opportunities.

Though I did not know this until two days ago, at the same time we were working on our paper, The University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia were working together in an unprecedented

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Associate Dean's Corner

Continued

partnership to craft their own strategic plan concerning the future of education in Georgia called *Complete College Georgia*. I have linked it [here](#). The document outlines new directions and a series of benchmarks for each campus in the USG system. If you haven't seen it, check it out. It is a fast and impressive read, and I was struck by how much of their document aligns with the philosophy and recommendations in our taskforce's position paper, particularly as it relates to online learning and making education possible for new and underserved audiences.

In our educational system, I believe there is a disconnect between what we know is happening in the world around us and how we continue to educate our students, and I think the writing on the wall is getting big enough that everyone is starting to take notice; this, from my perspective, is potentially a very good thing. No one is promising the path ahead will be an easy one, but I can promise that it will be an interesting and exciting one.

Speaking of exciting, we are pleased to announce the launch of *UWG Online's* first cohort training series for faculty interested in online teaching and learning. Based on our survey responses, we have identified a diverse group of faculty from across the campus who will come together for five intensive training workshops this spring designed to crash-course them in sound instructional design and teaching principles for the online environment. Assuming the model is successful and well-received, we plan to repeat the process for as long as there is demand and, hopefully, to design more advanced trainings as well. If you are interested in future cohort trainings, please contact [Debra Robinson](#) in my office, and she will put you on our list.

In this newsletter, we meet Sandra Lowe—a 47 year old UWG student pursuing her first bachelor's degree *online with Criminology* and hear her story. One of our outstanding graduate student assistants, Jessica Hale, is profiled in our "Meet the Staff" section, and we hear from Dr. Cathi Jenks, an exceptional and innovative member of the Criminology faculty who is helping bring online education to students like Sandra Lowe. And, what kind of husband would I be if I did not also congratulate my wife, Kim Huett, for receiving the Instructional Technology Council's *Award for Outstanding eLearning Faculty*? This is a much sought-after and highly competitive award, so kudos to Kim!

As usual, enjoy the rest of the newsletter and, if you have any feedback or ideas for inclusion, please send them our way.

Here is wishing you a fun, rewarding, and most of all, healthy spring term!

Cheers,

Jason



I Am West Georgia

Featuring Sandra Lowe



Right out of college I had no direction, I worked at a camp for hearing impaired children in Florida, liked the weather and stayed after finding a job at a bank. Not too long after, I attended Seminole Community College in Florida and began working on my core classes. Circumstances changed, and I moved back to Georgia. I fell for the love of my life and supported him in his career, while mine became taking care of our three children. We moved to Indiana for awhile and then moved to Atlanta. At this point, I enrolled at UWG and began taking classes at the Newnan campus, which was still a 20 minute drive. I had visited the campus, all those years ago, and felt very comfortable. I loved the instructors and the classes.

Another move landed us in Savannah, and I still had not completed my initial degree sought from UWG. Then, I discovered the undergraduate online program in Criminology at UWG. This is a topic that I've been drawn to since I was in middle school. Discovering that I was able take all of my classes online made all the difference! I could have transferred to other, closer colleges, but they didn't offer what I wanted, and there was always the issue of losing credits. Therefore, I was able to easily apply previously earned credits from UWG towards my new path in Criminology.

I am, unquestionably, a non-traditional student. At 47 and pursuing my first BS degree, I have three adult children (the youngest of which just graduated from Auburn) and a grandson. I own a retail store and also maintain a few outside interests. Pursuing my degree would never have been possible without online classes. I just can't schedule one more thing (like commuting to a face-to-face class) into my life, or my iPhone may explode!

The program I am involved in is a growing program and it is always exciting to be a pioneer of sorts. In my department, Criminal Justice/Criminology, I think many of us experience growing pains due to its acceleration. As a distance student, I am unaware of face-to-face classroom challenges, but I am very aware that we need more distance classes! The Facebook page for our department is active; I know. I read it constantly and it really keeps us, the students and faculty, on the same page.

I don't know exactly where this degree will lead me in my life, but I am willing and able to continue following the path that I am on, thanks to distance education.

I am West Georgia, and I am an online student.



Meet the Staff



Jessica Hale
Graduate Assistant

I began my college career as a math-hating dance major at a small liberal arts college in Southern California. Over a decade later, and after a life-changing introductory course in astronomy, I now hold a BA in Astrophysics from San Francisco State University, an MA in Mathematics Education from Stanford University, and will complete an MS in Mathematics here at UWG. I'm currently applying to doctoral programs in hopes of working towards a PhD in Mathematics Education next fall. So, in short, I'm a math and science education nerd!

My professional career is diverse and a unique combination. I have held multiple customer service positions at various coffee shops, restaurants and Disneyland, taught middle school and high school mathematics, and have also developed science curriculum for NASA and the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. I have also previously worked in technical support, program development, sales and retail training for Apple. I have greatly enjoyed almost every position I have worked in, but by far my most challenging, fulfilling and relevant job has been as a mother to my amazing little girl, Allyson Justice.

As a Graduate Assistant, I have the unique opportunity to blend and apply my customer service, education, and technology skills into one position. Currently, I provide on-site and over-the-phone technical support to both faculty and students, assist faculty with instructional design support, facilitate workshops and training, as well as create tools that will help push the accessibility of online learning here at UWG. Not a day goes by when I'm not faced with new challenges and experiences at work. This is by far the most fun job I've had! Exposure to the School of Nursing and creative applications of [Wimba Classroom](#) to online courses has pushed me to discover and learn a plethora of [Wimba solutions](#). My background in science and mathematics education puts me in a unique position, as I am more readily able to assist such instructors, especially when adapting face-to-face courses to an online setting.

My passion is making learning accessible to ALL students. It is in our ability to create accessibility for students who traditionally would not have access to brick and mortar institutions; this, I find, describes the true beauty of online education. Because of this, I find myself intrigued with resources that are free for students and instructors to use: [Livebinders](#), [Google Docs](#), [Khan Academy](#) and MIT's [Open CourseWare](#) are just a few examples of these. Livebinders and Google Docs are particularly useful for organization and sharing of materials, while Khan Academy and Open CourseWare promote access to quality instruction to any student who's interested in the material. I feel blessed to have the opportunity to be involved in the ever-growing field of online education. As an educator it is such an exciting time to be involved, as the field of online education is surely growing; whether we are ready or not, this is certainly the future of education.



Online Across Campus

Richards College of Business

The mission of the Richards College of Business is to educate and prepare students for positions of responsibility in business and society. Our primary goal with online instruction is the same as with in-class instruction: to provide learning opportunities that build students' understanding of business concepts and build toward a successful transition into the business world. We offer courses in the evening and online to accommodate students' needs. All Area F and core courses in the BBA program are offered as online or hybrid courses at least once per year. Most courses in the RCOB curriculum require use of technology, and all undergraduate students are required to take a Fundamentals of Computers and On-line Learning course (CISM 2201) as a part of their Core F curriculum. Additionally, all BBA students are required to successfully complete the Management of Information Systems course (CISM 3330) as a part of their junior business core. Both courses are designed to provide training and practical application in various software programs and to help develop and hone students' technology skills. At the graduate level, the RCOB offers an [online MBA](#).

We are part of a six-university consortium that offers the [Georgia WebMBA](#), recently ranked number one for student satisfaction and number two for reputation among online AACSB-accredited MBA programs. We have provided training programs for faculty early in the development of online courses and will follow that up with more extensive training this semester for all faculty interested in developing or improving their hybrid courses.

-Faye McIntyre
Dean & Chair of Private Enterprise

[Department Website](#)

Online Teaching Tools

iSpring Free (Presenting...!)

This free PowerPoint to Flash converter offers a simple method of preserving your original PowerPoint file and settings, while incorporating your presentations more seamlessly into a Learning Management System, such as WebCT (CourseDen). The resulting Flash (.SWF) presentation embeds all resources within your presentation into one easily managed file.

AnyMeeting (Meet with Anyone, Anywhere!)

Hold small and, or large online meetings or webinars, share your computer screen within online presentations, conduct a live video conference with up to six people, record your meetings, and more! AnyMeeting allows you to export attendance and survey results in order to assess the success of your webinar meetings. This free resource also comes with developed [technical support](#) to help you through its processes, when needed.

SmarThinking (Extra Support for Students!)

[SmarThinking](#) may be right for you and your students: use the Internet to connect students with professional educators, SmarThinking has the online tutoring, writing services, and homework help that students need to succeed. Tutors are available up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in a variety of subjects. SmarThinking is available for free to faculty and students involved in 95-100% fully online courses and/or 50% online programs at UWG. Go [here](#) for extensive tips and guides for faculty and students.



Online News & Notes

Online Learning Factoid of the Month:

According to Complete College Georgia: “the ‘traditional’ college student who enters directly from high school on a full-time, residential basis makes up only 25 percent of the nation’s student body. Commuter, part-time, and adult learners constitute the majority.” This 75% majority of nontraditional students are also the fastest growing group of online learners.

If you only Try One Thing this month, try this:

willyou.typewith.me — *Will You Type With Me* is an open source website that allows users to collaboratively work on a short word processing document (referred to as a ‘Pad’) in real-time. Simply click on the link, provide the ‘Pad’ with a name and send the resulting URL to others in order to import files, complete a document, chat, etc. in real-time. Your document can be exported in various formats, including PDF and HTML. Remember: anyone with the link can access the information!

If you are Adventurous check out:

[Glo Maker](#) — [Generative Learning Objects](#) (GLOs) are designed to be reusable and pedagogically effective, incorporating interactive multimedia in order to create rich learning experiences within Learning Management Systems, such as CourseDen. GLO Maker is an authoring tool wherein instructional content can be added and scaffolded, producing design driven learning objects that meet learner needs and instructor preferences. Check out the [User Guide](#) and [Tutorials](#).

Professional Development

Top 10 Key Trends Shaping the Technical Communication Industry of Tomorrow:**An Industry Research**

Tuesday, January 17, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

This free Adobe webinar presents the top 10 key trends found to be shaping technical communication aspects rounding out today and looking towards tomorrow. An increasing global economy, localization needs, and the demand for rich media and interactivity are addressed. [Register](#).

The Design of a Completely Online Community with SoftChalk as Textbook

Thursday, January 19, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

This webinar will walk you through the ways in which [SoftChalk](#) (e-learning authoring tool software) and open source content can assist you in creating personalized content in order to address the diverse learning needs of students. From choosing majors, to time management, to creating portfolios, to flexible start dates: multiple support functions are available to students along with self-paced deadlines and mobile access. The webinar will address instructional models that are founded in personality, usability, and accessibility. [Register](#).

What is the Future of Indexing for Technical Documentation?

Tuesday, January 31, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

With the rapid growth of e-books, tablets, and mobile devices, the ways in which we consume content are changing; the methods readers use to find content are also changing overall. Despite that, the need for quality indexes will not fade, but the appearance of indexes will be different, while concepts for indexing content will remain the same. Check out this webinar to view what future indexes will look like. [Register](#).



UWG ONLINE: Happenings, etc.

Training & Workshops: UWG Online Spring 2012: Getting Started & FDC Open House

The following events are scheduled *drop-in sessions* to be held at the Faculty Development Center:

[Directions to FDC](#)

For more information contact Debra Robinson @ debrar@westga.edu or Matias Marabotto @ mmarabot@westga.edu

***Go Live with Collaborate:
Conduct Synchronous Meetings within
CourseDen***
January 13: 10am-12pm

***Did You Know....Shift Happens:
Are You a 5-Star Course Instructor?
Quality Matters, Self-Evaluation & More***
January 24: 10am-12pm

***Make & Take Course Support:
Cloud-Based Tools to Support Learning***
January 31: 10am-12pm

For an extensive day-to-day account of upcoming available **Training Sessions & Workshops** offered by UWG ONLINE [click here](#) and select UWG ONLINE from the category list.

Online Faculty Kudos

We would like to commend the following faculty on their efforts and achievements!

Kim Huett: *Instructor, Media & Instructional Technology*

Congratulations to Kim Huett on the tremendous achievement of being nominated and selected to receive the Instructional Technology Council (ITC) Award for Outstanding eLearning!

Deborah Jenkins, PhD: *Professor, Collaborative Support & Intervention*

Dr. Jenkins enables ease and access of information to students by providing faster downloads and access through the “cloud” rather than through CourseDen only. Dr. Jenkins utilizes [iSpring](#) to allow for quick narrated PowerPoint downloads, as well as takes advantage of [LiveBinder](#), wherein course resources are more accessible. Although these efforts may *seem* small, the length of time it takes for a student to access information is reduced and contemporary student learning needs are more readily provided for.

Robert Morris, PhD: *Professor, Leadership & Applied Instruction*

Dr. Morris works hard at providing personality and guidance to his 100% online, doctoral students. Personalized videos accompany each CourseDen instructional module, guiding students’ growth and professional identity. As students receive this added touch with reports of high satisfaction, Dr. Morris continues to expand his efforts by providing the upcoming doctoral cohort with student video testimonials. The recordings will provide tips and insight into what to expect and how to succeed as a doctoral student approaching his, or her dissertation in a 100% online learning environment.

*Online Faculty Spotlight***Catherine Jenks, PhD**

*Assistant Professor of Criminology
Director, Survey Research Center*

Dr. Catherine Jenks is currently an Assistant Professor of Criminology in the Department of Criminology at the University of West Georgia, as well as the director of the [Survey Research Center](#) in the College of Social Sciences. She received her doctoral degree in Criminology from Florida State University in 2006. Prior to her current appointment at the University of West Georgia, Dr. Jenks was a survey coordinator for the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, California. Her research interests include survey research, public attitudes, civility, and law and society. Dr. Jenks' professional interests have branched out into international perspectives on civility as a part of the formal training of police officers and has co-presented a paper on this topic at the [International Police Executive Symposium](#) held this past June in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Dr. Jenks is currently teaching Criminology Senior Capstone, online. The main project that she is currently involved in, that utilizes online instruction, is the development of the Bachelor of Science degree in Criminology as a fully online program. This online degree will be unique, as it will serve as the only one of its kind in the state of Georgia. She participated in a roundtable discussion of the scaling of this new program with the other tenure-track faculty members in the Department of Criminology at the [American Society of Criminology](#) Conference in Washington DC this past November.

Dr. Jenks uses [CourseDen](#), [Camtasia](#), and [podcasting](#) to assist her online instruction. Her favorite online learning support software is Camtasia. She feels that being able to upload videos to an online course adds an integral interactive and personable element to students' online experience that is reminiscent of face-to-face learning environments. Students have been very receptive to the video introductions that she records for each learning module within CourseDen.

Dr. Jenks believes that online education provides an avenue for those who would not otherwise be able to obtain a college degree, high school diploma, or various other credentials, the ability to do so. She also believes online instruction to be highly practical, considering the advances in technology that have taken place over the past decade.



Questions & Submissions

For questions, suggestions, or items to include in the next newsletter such as:

- *Upcoming Events, Workshops, & Trainings**
- *Publications & Other Achievements**
- *Online Teaching/Learning News & Insights**

Please contact Rhea Wojcik:

rheaw@westga.edu

We look forward to learning about and sharing your experiences and achievements.

Thank you for your contributions!

Check it out: [UWG Online Newsletter Archives](#)

UWG ONLINE CHALLENGE

The first person to email the correct answers to the following questions will win something cool!

- 1. Name the factors which characterize Mrs. S. Lowe as a non-traditional UWG student.**
- 2. Name the medium Dr. Morris includes in his fully online dissertation courses in order to facilitate student growth and professional identity.**
- 3. Name the online teaching tool that provides online tutoring, writing services, and homework help to students enrolled in 95-100% online courses and/or 50% online programs at UWG.**

Please email rheaw@westga.edu, list your full name, contact information and your department. All questions must be answered correctly and previous winners are ineligible (we are trying to spread the love around.) Items awarded are for faculty use and will be transferred to department inventory.

Thank you !

