



UWG
ONLINE

 **November**
2011

take a look

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



Associate Dean's Corner

with Dr. Jason Huett

As I write the final column of fall 2011, we are preparing to celebrate the career and retirement of a UWG icon, Dr. Donald Wagner. Dr. Wagner has served UWG and helped shape this institution for more than 30 years. To call his career "impressive" or his impact on this institution "substantial" would be classic understatements. Dr. Wagner's retirement has me thinking about my own career. I am only six months into my new position as associate dean, and it has been an eye-opening experience. I cannot even imagine where I will be 30 years from now.

Less than a year ago, I was a junior faculty member laser-focused on my own "stuff." I tell people that being a junior faculty member often feels like you are living in a silo. Your world is this small cylindrical space where you focus on your own teaching, research, and service, often to the exclusion of most everything else around you. Functioning in that way was a kind of survival mechanism, or, at least, it was for me. When you start a job as a junior faculty member, you have an expiration date. You know if you do not meet certain benchmarks by a certain timeframe, your job ends; that's just the way it works. If you are lucky, as I was, you find good people along the way to mentor you through the process. Lately, it seems like all my mentors are retiring. I wonder if they know something I don't?

Having successfully gone through tenure and promotion, I find myself opening up more to the university community and world around me. My new position has been a lesson in perspective. Working with multiple colleges, schools, departments, and offices, I now have a much greater understanding and appreciation for all the hard work that my colleagues do across this campus and for all that goes into running the institution and making UWG a destination university. As an online teaching and learning scholar, I am a little embarrassed to admit that I have no real idea how much amazing work was being done on my own campus with technology-enhanced learning. Daily, as I go from meeting to meeting, I am continually humbled and blown away by how inventive my colleagues truly are. There is an undercurrent on this campus—a desire to innovate and

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Associate Dean's Corner

Continued

to meet the challenges before us—that permeates every college/school and every position and rank. You can feel it in these meetings. I know times are tough right now for a host of reasons, but I feel very positive about UWG's future.

You may have noticed recently that the Board of Regents approved our new doctorate in Nursing Education. Congratulations go out to everyone involved in the development and implementation of this exciting new program. This is UWG's fourth doctoral program. With this program, we advance to the highest SACS level and continue to further our institutional goal of advancing our Carnegie classification.

Warning: What follows is a shameless plug for all the folks on this campus involved in online teaching and learning.

(On soapbox): I think we also need to take the time to acknowledge that two of our now four doctoral programs are *fully online programs*, and a third is a hybrid online program. In terms of outstanding online programs, UWG is clearly a first choice destination university for Georgia and is poised to become a national, and even international, front-runner as well. We have an amazing faculty and staff who are effectively using the online delivery medium to expand high quality and innovative online programs at all levels. Without targeted, quality online learning experiences, we simply cannot get where we need to go as a 21st century institution. (Off soapbox)

On to the newsletter...

In this issue, we introduce you to one of our newest team members, Matias Marabotto. Many of you already know Matias and have worked with him in the past through the DDEC. We are proud to have brought him on full time as an instructional designer as he brings a wealth of experience to the job. We also have a faculty spotlight on Dr. Brian Mosier—one of our most innovative and outstanding online educators at UWG. In the "I am West Georgia" section, we hear from UWG alumnus Rhonda Boggs, a graduate of one of our fully online programs who has not only won "Teacher of the Year" accolades but also has won first place three times in a national Scholastic contest that brought several thousand dollars and noted best-selling authors like James Patterson, Suzanne Collins, and Heather Brewer to her school's media center. She is a shining example of how our online programs are producing outstanding graduates who have a dramatic impact on their students and beyond.

I hope that you will join us for Dr. Donald Wagner's retirement party on Thursday November 17th at 2pm at the Honor's House. Let's send him off with a "bang!"

Don, here is wishing you a happy, healthy, and long retirement. You will be missed, and I hope I can still depend on you for sage advice.

Happy Holidays Everyone!

Jason



I Am West Georgia

Featuring Rhonda R. Boggs



In 1992, I returned to college as a nontraditional student to earn a Master of Education and a Specialist in Education degree from the University of West Georgia in secondary education. At the time, I was a high school science teacher so I would teach all day, drive an hour, sit three hours in a class, and then drive an hour home. I was married but did not have children so although it was a chore, attending college while working was manageable. After the birth of our son in 1996, I decided to quit teaching and stay home for a year. Before I knew it, nine years had passed, our daughter had begun kindergarten, and my husband began to strongly “encourage” me to return to work. After all, I had three degrees but no steady paycheck.

Much had changed since I had been in the classroom. The Georgia Performance Standards had been implemented and a multitude of new technology had been incorporated into classrooms. Did I want to spend my nights and weekends grading papers? I was the teacher that ALWAYS had graded papers returned the next day. Could I be the effective teacher that I wanted to be and the kind of mother and wife that I wanted to be? The answer to those questions was “no,” but what could I do?

At the time, I was the PTA president of my children’s school, worked as a part-time instructor at the West Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center, and taught science programs for three elementary After-School Programs. Working with those programs showed me that I still loved to teach and be around the students, and that I was fulfilled when I served others. What job in education would provide me the opportunities to teach and serve others but not require me to devote my family time to planning and grading papers? The job as a media specialist was calling my name! I could teach, help others, and instill in others an appreciation of something that I had always loved to do – read! However, there was one large obstacle – I was not certified in media. I was a very busy lady so how was I going to fit college into my busy life?

The University of West Georgia’s online program in Media and Instructional Technology was the answer for me! I was already familiar with the campus and other programs and knew from experience that a quality education was available from UWG. However, I was not familiar with the online program. I met with my advisor, Dr. Phyllis Snipes, who answered my questions and eased my worries. I finished the program in the spring of 2007 but had been hired as a media specialist for the 2006-2007 school year. Suddenly, I was a full-time media specialist, full-time college student, and full-time wife and mother.



I Am West Georgia
Continued

What a blessing UWG Online was to me! I was able to work at my convenience and my pace. I could submit assignments in my pajamas and work late into the night after my children had gone to bed. I could sit at my computer and take tests, post comments, research, and complete activities while my children were in the same room with me. I could stop in the middle of working on lessons and do laundry, cook dinner, play with my children, or spend time with my husband. UWG online saved me the cost of babysitters, gasoline, time traveling to and from the campus, and allowed me to be available to my family as I pursued the education necessary for my dream job.

Not only had it been years since I had been in the classroom as a full-time teacher, but it had also been eleven years since I had attended college. So much had changed! However, the online program was extremely user-friendly which was helpful since I had never posted assignments, chatted online, or contributed to a wiki. I was definitely much more technologically proficient after completing the program!

Completing the UWG online media program enabled me to obtain my dream job as a media specialist. Dr. Phyllis Snipes, and my other professors, Dr. Patricia Bennett, Dr. O.P. Cooper and Dr. Dawn Putney taught me principles and skills that I use on a daily basis. Their influence shines through all that I do, every program that I plan, every reading promotion, every collaboration, and every technical skill that I perfect. Within three years, I was one of the first media specialists in my county to be named a local school "Teacher of the Year." The crew of students that I use to plan and promote our book fairs has been recognized all six times we have entered Scholastic's national contest with three first place awards and three second. As a result, we have earned our media center \$9,000 in Scholastic shopping sprees and visits from best-selling authors James Patterson, Suzanne Collins, and Heather Brewer. I am especially proud of the collection I have developed as the media specialist of a new school with empty shelves. Our media center is warm, inviting, constantly busy, and a safe haven for our students. My students produce a daily live morning news program and in the past, my school technologist and I have hosted a monthly Tech Café to showcase new technology and resources that our teachers can implement into their curricula. I have helped create a culture of reading at my school and our test scores reflect those efforts.

My job as media specialist encompasses so much more than I anticipated. It has actually been more challenging, but at the same time more rewarding than I could have ever imagined. I have no doubt that UWG Online more than adequately prepared me for the challenges I face every day and for that I am forever grateful – and my family is too.

I am West Georgia, and I am a former online student.

-Rhonda R. Boggs



Meet the Staff



Matias Marabotto
Instructional Designer

Matias is a native from Montevideo, Uruguay. Matias came to the United States in 2005 with a Rotary Club Scholarship in order to pursue a BBA in Management Information Systems. He worked as a computer and network technician in the telecommunications industry, research and development, as well as a Distance Learning Support Specialist at UWG prior to his current position. Matias has a BBA in Management Information Systems from the University of West Georgia and is currently pursuing his MBA. After graduating at the University of West Georgia in 2009, Matias began working for the Distance Learning Department as a Support Specialist. Matias has also received various distance learning trainer certificates, including the Distance Education Certified Trainer, Distance Learning Certificate Program and the WebCT Vista Certified Administrator.

In his present job in the Faculty Development Center, Matias is an Instructional Designer for UWG Online, assisting online faculty with curriculum design and implementation within various online environments. Additionally, Matias has varied responsibilities regarding technical training and support for faculty at UWG who may utilize varied methods of distance education and course evaluations. Matias's professional interests are aligned with diverse and integral aspects of faculty and student success in distance education; technical assistance, including general and instructional software support, faculty training, and instructional design are examples of facilitation.

Matias works to incorporate contemporary instructional software and applications in order to produce optimal learning environments. Matias introduces Google Apps to many UWG online faculty by emphasizing the importance and benefit of Google Calendar and Documents. Google Apps produce heightened online learning experiences in organization and collaboration. Mr. Marabotto also sees Blackboard IM (BB IM) to be an essential online instructional tool. BB IM allows faculty to hold office hours at a distance, meeting the needs of students enrolled in online courses. BB IM also works as a Helpdesk, providing faculty and students with just in time support and assistance during synchronous and asynchronous online instruction.

Matias lives in Carrollton and enjoys soccer, surfing, and traveling.



Online Around Campus

Department of Educational Innovation

The mission of the Educational Innovation Department is to prepare our graduates and their students to anticipate, meet, and solve existing and emerging challenges. The department has the capacity to prepare educators to address those challenges. The Instructional Technology programs are offered 100% online through CourseDen and the School Library Media programs are offered 95-100% online through CourseDen. The support courses taught in the department are offered in a range of delivery formats – from totally face-to-face to 100% online to meet the needs of each program requiring the courses. Even courses delivered face-to-face utilize online components to support student learning. As a result of the College of Education reorganization, the new Educational Innovation Department houses faculty with a wide range of online course delivery capabilities. Some faculty in the department have been involved in distance education at UWG since the days of GSAMS and have moved gradually into the world of totally online instruction, others have never taught without an online format such as CourseDen, and a few are just beginning to explore the possibilities of online instruction. The Educational Psychology and Foundations faculty prepare educators to think deeply about learning and cognition - and how technologies can be used most effectively to support different ways of learning. The Instructional Technology faculty are leaders in exploring alternative ways of delivering education and using technology to support learning and problem solving. A major challenge faced by educators is information overload, and our School Library Media faculty prepare educators to quickly and efficiently retrieve and evaluate information that provides insight into a problem. The Research faculty prepare educators to assess a variety of educational programs and environments with the intention of identifying what is and is not working and recommending changes. Together we are able to both assist and learn from one another as we work to provide educationally sound instruction in formats that will best meet the needs of our current and future students.

-Dawn Putney, Ph.D.

Professor of Media and Instructional Technology

[Department Website](#)

Online Teaching Tools

Jing (Instant Sharing!)

Record and edit what you see and do; narrate on the fly; share easily and efficiently: Jing is a simple screencapture tool that will help enliven and support online curriculum. Check out a [tutorial](#) for more details!

TED Talks (Blow Your Mind!)

Ideas Worth Spreading. Addressing Technology, Education, and Design, TED brings people together with innovative, ground-breaking, and insightful information in the form of presentations, or “talks.” Check out this resource for an ever-evolving and diverse plethora of information regarding contemporary educational, technological, and design-related ideas that are pushing boundaries.

Academic Earth (Beef up your Resources!)

Academic Earth provides free full video courses and lectures from the world’s leading scholars. Geared towards online instruction, Academic Earth is an extensive resource that may facilitate comprehensive course curriculum. Search by University, Subject, or Top Rated Instructor, Lecture, Course, & Playlist to find the most relevant content for your instructional needs.



Online News & Notes

Online Learning Factoid of the Month:

Did you know that more than 90% of the growth in online programs in the US is coming from existing traditional brick-and-mortar universities and not from for-profit institutions (Allen & Seaman, 2010)?

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

FileZilla —FileZilla is free and provides you with [FileZilla Client](#) and [FileZilla Server](#) software in order to transfer files across the Internet. Among many other features, FileZilla allows you to access, search, and edit files remotely. Share this handy tool with your online students!

If you are Adventurous check out:

Wimba Voice Tools —Increase interaction and students' level of engagement within your online courses! Wimba Voice Tools facilitate and promote vocal instruction, collaboration, coaching, and assessment. Wimba Voice Tools incorporate the use of threaded voice boards, voice-enabled email, embedded voice within online course pages, as well as live group discussions and debates. UWG faculty have access to this resource under their account in CourseDen. [Get started!](#)

Professional Development

Common Assessments: What You Need to Know

Tuesday, November 29, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Using \$360 million in *Race to the Top* money, two large groups of states are designing assessment systems towards common standards that have been adopted by 44 states and the District of Columbia. Move past the current one-shot, multiple-choice-only approach by requiring essays, projects, and other tasks designed to gauge deeper, more complex learning. The groups are also working on a variety of resources for teachers, such as model instructional units and formative assessments. [Register.](#)

A Day in the Life of a Blackboard Collaborate Faculty Member

Wednesday, November 30, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

See Blackboard Collaborate live in action! Enter Blackboard Collaborate: create virtual classrooms, offices and meeting spaces that open more possibilities to more students. Learn how Peter Campbell can now more fully engage with students with improved outcomes, collaborate with colleagues, and get professional development via a wide spectrum of collaboration choices. [Register.](#)

Composition & Layout for Online eLearning: Adobe Photoshop CS 5 .5 Basics

Wednesday, December 7, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Create compelling, effective & engaging eLearning materials for online distribution. Principles of design, combined with a deep understanding of educational theory and methodology will help you master the art of creating great designs for your online learning content. Attendees will learn basic methods to create interface elements from scratch with an emphasis on pragmatic solutions that are quick to produce, creative in practice and lead to aesthetically pleasing finished eLearning content. [Register.](#)



UWG ONLINE: Happenings, etc.

Training, Workshops, & Events:

Make & Take: Narrate a Slide Show

Put into practice the tools discussed in the Audio Lite training. Develop and create a voice narrative to an existing slide presentation using Wimba Voice Tools, iSpring, or Impatica.

11/18/11 @ 10-12 pm

For more information & to sign up:

Contact Debra Robinson
@ debrar@westga.edu

Face 2 Face: Taking Your Course to the 4th Dimension

This training is designed exclusively for face-to-face instructors who would like to better utilize CourseDen to support their instruction.

11/29/11 @ 10-12 pm

For more information & to sign up:

Contact Matias Marabotto
@ mmarabot@westga.edu

Did You Know...Shift Happens

This training will explore ways to increase your instructional effectiveness using CourseDen and other Web 2.0 Tools. Develop and create various instructional tools that can be exported into existing course structure.

12/2/11 @ 10-12 pm

For more information & to sign up:

Contact Matias Marabotto
@ mmarabot@westga.edu

For an extensive day-by-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!

Bonnie Bar, MSN: Associate Professor of Nursing

Professor Bar provides creative interest and teaches stress reduction and self care to online Nursing students: using Audacity and the [Podcast Server](#), Professor Bar records and uploads relaxation exercises and musical elements to her courses within CourseDen. UWG Online commends Professor Bar for original and contemporary online instructional techniques!

Roberta Siler, Ph.D: Professor of Nursing

Utilizing asynchronous and synchronous methodologies, Dr. Siler practices experiential instruction processes, as students are required to take advantage of [Wimba Classroom](#) audio and video capabilities. Students conduct live presentations and collaborate via synchronous and asynchronous discussions, wherein they are encouraged to incorporate learning activities that engage their peers. Dr. Siler urges her students to use various media outlets when conducting presentations and providing resources within an online context, thus building students' technological repertoire.

Todd Matthews, Ph.D: Assistant Professor of Sociology; Assistant Dean of Social Sciences

Dr. Matthews uses CourseDen within his face-to-face courses, as well as with his fully online Research Methodology course. The learning management system (LMS) allows the professor of Sociology and Criminology to employ various instructional techniques; a fully online senior-level research course may pose challenging to the instructor and student, as rings true within a face-to-face format. However, Dr. Matthews works to broaden instructional methodologies in order to appropriately stimulate student learning and fairly assess progress. Specifically, Dr. Matthews creates developed learning modules within the LMS that incorporate high levels of student discussion and participation, and an overall heightened written component which encourages student creativity and resource towards testable research questions. Students are also required to produce various media, such as images or videos, of which they must critically assess using social science theories. Dr. Matthews instructs with model online methodologies!

*Online Faculty Spotlight***Brian Mosier, Ph.D.**

*Assistant Professor of Health &
Physical Education*

Dr. Brian Mosier taught physical education for four years (2001-2005) at public schools in Tallahassee, FL, while earning a master's degree in Sport Management. Brian was then an instructor at the Florida State University (2005-2010) while completing his doctoral degree in physical education, and is currently in his second year as an assistant professor at the University of West Georgia. At the University of West Georgia, Dr. Mosier spends most of his time working with the Health and Physical Education majors primarily teaching methods, assessment, and skill-based activity courses. His research interests focus on the promotion of physical activity, effective teaching and supervision, and online learning. Brian contributes to the profession by publishing and presenting at the national, state, and local levels. Brian is currently serving on the NASPE Physical Best Committee, the GDOE Physical Activity/Physical Education Committee, and is the GAHPERD State Fitness Coordinator. See [here](#) and [here](#) for insight into Dr. Mosier's current projects related to online learning. The links provided are related to Dr. Mosier's work with online instructional innovation with the Florida Virtual School and Cobb Virtual Academy research, respectively. Dr. Mosier will teach UWG's first online course in the PHED program this summer, PHED 3401, Technology in Physical Education.

Dr. Mosier utilizes the [Video Analysis Tool \(VAT\)](#) in support of curriculum in an online format and also instructs via [Wikispaces](#), [iTunes](#), and [CourseDen](#), UWG's Learning Management System. Dr. Mosier sees the Video Analysis Tool as very helpful in reaching students during student-teaching experiences. Through VAT, students upload their teachings using any file type. Dr. Mosier can then download the videos and evaluate the teaching through a customized rubric built into the software. The students can access evaluations and comments immediately. VAT has been efficient and economical for the PHED students and faculty.

Dr. Mosier looks forward to teaching Technology in Physical Education this summer and would eventually like to help PHED teacher candidates learn strategies in teaching online. Dr. Mosier feels that many high school physical education programs around the nation have gone to a blended model, but only a handful of physical education teacher education programs have begun to incorporate this type of teaching into the curriculum. Dr. Mosier believes that online learning continues to grow and affect all facets of teaching and learning, and that it is important that UWG continue to offer excellent workshops and resources in order to keep faculty up-to-date in current strategies for best practices in online learning. Dr. Mosier also encourages those who are interested to check out the "[fast facts](#)" for K-12 online learning.



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:
rheazerr@gmail.com

*We look forward to learning about and sharing your experiences and achievements.
Thank you for your contributions!*

UWG ONLINE CHALLENGE

End of the semester GRAND PRIZE giveaway. There will be only one winner. Previous winners ARE ELIGIBLE for this one. First person to email the correct answers wins!

- 1. Who is retiring tomorrow and how many years has he been here?**
- 2. According to Dr. Dawn Putney, what is a major challenge educators face today?**
- 3. How does Professor Bar teach stress reduction and self care to online Nursing students?**
- 4. Name the type of certification that Rhonda R. Boggs received in 2007 from UWG.**

Please email rheazerr@gmail.com: list your full name, contact information and your department. All questions must be answered correctly. Items awarded are for faculty use and will be transferred to department inventory. Thank you & Happy Holidays! Look for our next newsletter mid-January, 2012!

