UWG ONLINE

September 2012

UWG ONLINE · *Thinking Outside the Box* ·

Associate Dean's Corner

with Dr. Jason Huett

Welcome everyone to another exciting year at UWG! I also want to extend a special welcome to the new faculty joining us this year, as I know many of you will be teaching online or hybrid courses. You have chosen a great new place to call home, and we are here to help you thrive in the online environment.

If you are unfamiliar, I put out this newsletter every month or so, and, within its pages, you will find information about online programs offered on this campus, profiles of faculty currently teaching online, useful online teaching tools, news, and notes as well as highlighted services, trainings, and other important information out of this office.

Our newly renovated offices are located on the bottom floor of the Old Auditorium building across from the library under the blue awning. We provide a host of services to faculty, colleges, and department—from help with designing and developing new online programs to individual and group training sessions for faculty members already teaching online or interested in starting. We are now a "one-stop-shop" for faculty interested in online teaching and learning in any form. I encourage you to come visit us, see our new space, and check out what we have to offer.

As I hope you are well-aware, this spring we will be migrating to our new learning management system called Desire2Learn or D2L for short. We are offering an extensive array of training opportunities for faculty to help with this transition. This newsletter will contain important information about this changeover. Also, please watch for emails from me on the All-Faculty listserv with timely D2L updates, and feel free to call this office for more information at any time. If you will be teaching a course that has *any part of it* delivered online, now is the time to begin learning D2L and to build your class for spring. No waivers to use the old system will be granted, and you will not have access to the WebCT version of CourseDen for instruction after January 7, 2013. Like it or not, you will be delivering your online/hybrid/tech-enhanced course this coming spring in D2L. However, there is much to like about the new system, so please give it try before you judge.

While we are always here to help, if you wait until the last minute to prepare your class in D2L, you will be in the queue with other procrastinators, and we only have so many staff. Additionally, from my experience, a hurried, last-minute build of an online class (especially in a new platform) is never a good thing for you or the students. As a faculty member who still teaches online every semester, I can empathize with your busy schedule and lack of time. I have two classes I have to rebuild as well and will be working through all the trainings alongside my colleagues. However, as we often tell our students, time management is a key to success. So, let us help you manage your transition to D2L.

I have been teaching and designing online courses for almost a decade. Most of the time, I feel like I have seen and heard it all when it comes to the pros and cons of the delivery medium. It is rare when something stops me cold. That happened to me recently when Dr. Mary Beth Slone, the professor who tells her story in our "Online Faculty Spotlight," came up to me after a meeting to tell me about how her first foray into online teaching was going.

She was explaining her impressive progress and how positive her student feedback was in the class. I was telling her how proud I was of her efforts (I know firsthand how hard Mary Beth has been working to learn how to design and teach effectively in an online environment), and she said to me something akin to "No, you don't get it. The teaching, the positive student comments, and all I have learned are not the whole picture. Now, I feel like I get to keep my job. I get to keep doing what I love." You see, Mary Beth has multiple sclerosis, and it is becoming harder and harder for her to function in the physical classroom and to maintain her energy level and high standards. Learning how to function well in an online environment will allow her to teach, to do what she loves to do, for much longer than she ever imagined.

I was speechless. I have spent a lot of time thinking about ways to use technology to better facilitate the design of online learning environments for students with disabilities. It honestly had not occurred to me that teaching online could literally change the life of a faculty member with a disability for the better and extend her career. Those are moments when I love this job. You can read more about Mary Beth on page 7.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the newsletter. Again, do not hesitate to contact us if the need arises!

Here is wishing you a great fall term!

Cheers,
Jason Huett
Associate Dean of Online Development and USG eCore

Meet the Staff

Charles Akin

Casual Labor / Instructional Designer

First, let me start by saying how good it is to be back at the University of West Georgia. Having grown up in Carroll County and graduating from Central High School, it is good to be back in my home town. Things have really grown in my absence, but it still feels like home. After high school graduation, I tried out several different and varied careers as an auto mechanic, public safety dispatcher/security guard (at this very institution), radio teletype operator in the Army Reserve, and as an EMT. However, not being satisfied with these choices, I decided to try education and have had no regrets. I started my undergraduate studies here when it was West Georgia College and transferred to and graduated from The University of Georgia with a B.S.Ed. in Middle School Education. Having a natural curiosity and aptitude for computers and technology, I decided to combine my two passions and enrolled in the Instructional Technology program at UGA and graduated with a M.Ed. in Instructional Technology in 2002. I have since worked as an Instructional Designer at a regional hospital, a major telecommunications company, and now in the higher education setting and couldn't be happier.

My position here at UWG Online in the Faculty Development Center gives me the opportunity to use my skills and passion for instructional technology every day. I assist the two full time Instructional Designers, Matias Marabotto and Debra Robinson, with the cohort training sessions, the creation of job aids and tutorials, video production, this newsletter, and maintaining the laptops, netbooks, and cameras for faculty checkout. I also assist faculty and staff with all aspects of course design and development such as help with Captivate and Camtasia software through deployment to CourseDen. So if you need to borrow a web cam, flip cam, laptop, netbook or need help with software or course deployment please drop by the FDC in the Old Auditorium conveniently located between Anthropology and the Richards School of Business, and I will be happy to assist you.

To contact Charles Akin, email cakin@westga.edu

Online Around Campus

The School of Nursing

The Ed.D. in Nursing Education program has officially accepted its first online cohort. A mandatory three-day, on-site orientation seminar took place on August 8th, 9th, and 10th and introduced learners to key components of the doctoral program. Through structured activities and facilitator-guided dialogue within the orientation seminar, doctoral students gained an understanding of the doctoral program's goals, structure, and culture.

During orientation learners also developed strategies for successfully engaging in online doctoral studies and building an effective online doctoral community. Classroom instruction for this program will be delivered primarily through asynchronous and synchronous learning modalities and will encourage meaningful interaction between students and faculty.

On a national level, only three Ed.D.s in nursing programs exist, and it is anticipated that the UWG Ed.D. in Nursing Education will address the issue of the nursing faculty shortage and increase the number of graduate students that nursing schools will ultimately prepare.

Susan Welch, Ed.D., RN, CCRN, CNE
Interim Ed.D. Director and Assistant Professor
School of Nursing

Online Teaching Tools

Adobe Captivate software helps you rapidly create a wide range of interactive eLearning content. You can create software simulations in HD, import Microsoft® PowerPoint slides and enhance them with multimedia, insert interactive elements and quizzes, and much more. With Captivate you can deliver content to virtually any device. For a free 30 day trial of Adobe Captivate 6, click here. You can also try before you buy, the FDC has laptop computers with Captivate preinstalled available for you to check out.

Respondus 4.0 is a powerful tool for creating and managing exams that can be printed to paper or published directly to Blackboard, Desire2Learn, Moodle, and other learning systems. Exams can be created offline using a familiar Windows environment, or moved from one LMS to another. You also have access to thousands of Respondus-compatible publisher test banks free if you have adopted a participating textbook. For more information on this valuable tool click here, also the FDC has laptops and netbooks with Respondus pre-installed for you to try. This is a free tool for all faculty to download and use. Once downloaded contact the FDC at 9-5289 to obtain registration information.

StudyMate Author 2.5 is a Windows-based authoring tool that enables instructors to create learning activities that students access within online courses or anywhere on the Internet. StudyMate helps students "master the basics" of course material through learning activities, self-assessments, and games. A dozen activities – such as flash cards, crosswords and quizzes – engage students with course content in an individualized way. For more information on this tool click here , also the FDC has laptops and netbooks with StudyMate pre-installed for you to try. This is a free tool for all faculty to download and use.

Online News & Notes

Online Learning Factoid of the Month: Harvard, MIT, and UC Berkeley have joined forces to form edX and will offer online classes, held to the established rigor of each institution, with the goal of educating a *billion people around the planet for free*.

If you only *Try One Thing* this month, try this: Log in to our new learning management system, Desire 2 Learn. You can access your currently migrated courses as well as Self-Paced tutorials. Use the following link: https://westga2.view.usg.edu/ Click on the "Forgot Password" button and enter your Username which will be the same Username that you use for CourseDen. An email will be sent to your Westga account allowing you to create your own unique password. Don't forget to sign up for one of our Introduction or Topical Workshops. You can access workshop descriptions, calendar, and registration via the UWG calendar.

If you are *Adventurous* check out: Twitter and the UWG|Online twitter feed. If you don't already have a Twitter account sign up for one for free and follow us at @uwgonline.

Professional Development

Join us for the D2L Transition Town Hall Meeting Friday September 7th Room 1303 in the TLC: You are invited to attend a Town Hall meeting regarding our upcoming migration to Desire2Learn. Each meeting will include a brief overview of Desire2Learn as well as information regarding the upcoming transition.

Click here to register.

If you cannot come to the meeting, you may participate live from anywhere you have internet access. You can even ask questions in real time via live chat.

Click here to attend the remote session. (Note: This link will only be active during the scheduled event time.)

If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard Collaborate, here is a link to quick tutorial. It is probably a good idea to watch this before joining the session.

Click here for a quick Collaborate tutorial.

Join us in the Club House: Beginning in October, join us every Thursday from 12 to 1 at your desk for D2L Clubhouse. Via Blackboard Collaborate, we will be convening to discuss the latest tips, tricks, and tools; answer questions; and discuss best practices in designing courses in Desire 2 Learn.

Use the following link and join us beginning Thursday, October 4th at noon!

https://sas.elluminate.com/m.jnlp?sid=2012076&password=M.E9C9107420C99671ED6C267801CEFC

UWG ONLINE: Happenings, etc.

Training, Workshops, & Events

Introduction to Wimba Classroom: FDC / Old Auditorium, Sept 6, 11:30am-12:30pm

UWG Online Town Hall meeting: TLC 1303, Sept 7th, 2pm-4pm

Introduction to D2L: There are many of these workshops being held in September please click here for a complete list of times and dates.

Discussions and Assignments in CourseDen: FDC / Old Auditorium Conf. Room Sept 12th, 10am-11am

D2L: Working with Your Migrated Course: TLC 1116 Sept 14th and 21st, 9am-11am

Gradebook (Blackboard Vista): FDC / Old Auditorium Conf. Room, Sept 18th, 10am-11am

D2L: Content with Course Builder Tool: TBA, Sept 19th, 9am-11am; TLC 1116, Oct. 26th, 9am-11am

Online Faculty Kudos

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

Brian Moser, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Health and Physical Education in Leadership and Applied Instruction. Dr. Moser has received a perfect 5.0 on the website "Rate My Professor," and one of his students from his summer course stated that it was the best online course he had ever taken.

Kudos to the following faculty for completing the Spring 2012 UWG|Online Cohort training!

Dr. Li Cao	Dr. Dawn McCord
Dr. Chad Davidson	Dr. Brian Mosier
Dr. Holly Dever	Dr. Keith Pacholl
Dr. James DeVita	Dr. Ravic Ringlaben
Dr. Jill Drake	Dr. Andrea Stanfield
Dr. Courtney Flowers	Dr. Francis Stonier
Dr. Karen Harris-Brown	Dr. Colleen Vasconcellos
Dr. Elizabeth Kramer	Dr. Lara Willox

Online Faculty Spotlight

Mary Beth Slone, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Department of Educational Innovation, College of Education

"The value of identity of course is that so often with it comes purpose."

-Richard R. Grant

When we think about the word identity, so many things can come to mind. There are many different facets to our identity, many different parts and pieces. The classroom is where I have always found some of the bigger slices of my identity pie. Whether it was as a student or a teacher, much of who and what I am, both professionally and therefore, personally, is due to the more traditional classroom environment. I was, after all, formed in that environment. That traditional classroom environment and the view of what constitutes a classroom experience has undergone the most sweeping changes I have ever seen (at an exponential rate) in the last several years, and I was admittedly digging my feet into the sand to fight the changes occurring around me. Just to make sure we are on the same page, the change I am discussing here is the shift from fully face-to-face instruction to a classroom experience that includes at least some, if not all, online instruction. I own the notion that my reluctance was voiced in that ever so popular vein of reasoning that we were going to "ruin education" and that we cannot possibly teach our students to think in that "alternate" world. I was unsure. I was scared to fail. It was something that I was NOT looking forward to challenging. I cherish the successes I have had and continue to have in the "traditional" face-to-face classroom, and I was not sure if I had the ability to take what I love and what I know and present it in a world that was as foreign to me as the Latin I studied in the 7th grade.

"The trouble with always trying to preserve the health of the body is that it is so difficult to do without destroying the health of the mind."

- G.K. Chesterson

Another very prominent slice to my identity pie is that part that is continually influenced by my life with Multiple Sclerosis. I have struggled with MS most of my academic career, but have seen it become more and more influential in my ability to do my job as effectively as I want. When

such a big part of who you are comes from what you love to do, not being able to do that "part" effectively can be very scary. The traditional classroom that I love so much was becoming my enemy in a constant battle with physical and mental fatigue that left me feeling depleted and often ineffectual. The days of gaining energy as I moved through class and being able to identify all of-my students by name were gone. I began to realize that if I wanted to continue to do what I love, something was going to have to give. Slowly I started to lower my shields and resistance to the technology movement (or maybe they were lowered for me), and in the purely ironic nature of life, the identity I feared to lose the most is being transformed by the technology that I just plain feared!

"All the world is a laboratory to the inquiring mind."

-Martin H. Fischer

I taught my first fully online classes last semester and was busier than I have ever been. I am not yet used to being so continually "wired in", but I did my best to rise to the challenge. It did not take long before I began to notice that I had more energy in my face-to-face classes (I am very active in class), because I was using less physical energy on a daily basis and had more time options for presenting my online classes. If I feel good at 4am…. I work. If I feel good at 3pm… I work. I found myself with a much stronger sense of mental clarity, as I could move at my own pace and no longer felt the need to have to be able to constantly recall names and information on the spot. It is a whole new world, and one in which I believe I will do my best to participate! Do not get me wrong; I still struggle with pedagogy issues as well as my own computer skill limitations (not to mention the conversations that I have with my retired "Education Professor Father"). If you want to know how I am dealing with these issues, come to my department and see the wonderful colleagues that have shown me a direction I never knew I wanted to go!

"We know what we are, but not what we may be."

-William Shakespeare

Mary Beth Slone, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Innovation, College of Education. Dr. Slone was selected as The University of West Georgia's nominee for the Board of Regent's Teaching Excellence Award in 2009 and has been selected as Faculty Member of the Year several times by the Student Government Association at West Georgia. This year marks the beginning of her 16th year at West Georgia!

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 Charles Akin:

cakin@westga.edu

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

UWG ONLINE CHALLENGE

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

1. When will the university be migrating to the new learning management system D2L?
2. What will be the cutoff date for accessing your old WebCT CourseDen courses?
3. Name one way online teaching has changed Mary Beth Slone's life for the better?
4. Who can you contact a the FDC to check out a laptop or camera?

Please email cakin@westga.edu, 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!

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