CIT Monthly News and Events
January 6, 2010

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Upcoming events: January/February 2010

1/11/10  Web Seminar: Continuous Improvement in Teaching and Learning
1/19/10  Teaching IDEAS: Flexible Learning Spaces at Duke: The Link
2/8/10   Teaching IDEAS: Learning Style Inventories and What We Know about Duke Undergraduates
2/9/10   Mobile Devices in Education Discussion group
2/18/10  Managing Long Documents in MS Word
2/23/10  Teaching IDEAS: Developing an Electronic Teaching Portfolio

Faculty may request a custom workshop for their department on any instructional technology topic by emailing CIT.

Students map civil and human rights in Durham

The Duke Human Rights Center’s Pauli Murray Project is a site honoring the Durham lawyer, activist, poet and Episcopal priest. As part of the project, students in a Center for Documentary Studies course taught by project Director Barbara Lau are using Google Maps to bring together oral history interviews and photographs about locations important in Durham civil rights history.

The maps on the site, http://paulimurrayproject.org, are part of the project’s growing efforts to engage Duke’s students with the community through dialogue. The project was featured in a Durham Herald–Sun story.
Students give advice on teaching with Google Earth

Chris Erlien (Thompson Writing Program) teaches “Google Earth’s Impact” in her Writing 20 classes. Students researched and wrote about Google Earth throughout the semester.

Now, you can read their ideas about teaching and learning with Google Earth. Each student wrote an enthusiastic blog post with suggestions for using Google Earth in college classes. The blog, “Teaching (and Learning) with Google Earth” includes lesson plans and information about layers so the site will be useful for instructors at any level.

We will repost some of the student suggestions here in coming weeks. Check out their blog for many suggestions and ideas!

What are my students thinking? Ask!

We’ve been meeting monthly to discuss using mobile devices in teaching. Several faculty have been interested in trying Poll Everywhere, which uses the students’ phones or computers as clickers to answer poll questions during class. Faculty expressed several concerns about asking students to pull out temptations like phones and computers in class:

- students may be distracted by technology,
- students may not have a text message plan, and
- if students do not have the capability of using either the internet or cell phones to respond, they will be left out.

Participants brainstormed an answer:

Ask students to work on questions in small groups during class, with one person assigned per group to use the device to answer for the group.

Advantages:

- One student assigned to be the reporter will be responsible to the group for staying on task.
- Groups would include at least one participant who is willing to text from their phone or respond in another way.
- Small groups should be able to address more advanced questions.
- Small group work combined with polling will work with any size class, particularly large classes.
- Peer instruction in small groups provides the opportunity for increased student learning.
- Poll Everywhere is free for fewer than 30 responses per poll.

If you are interested in more ideas for using student devices to increase learning, or would like to discuss this idea, join us. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month, starting in February. Register and receive a reminder before the meeting.
See what students see: enroll in a sample Blackboard site

Ever wondered what students see when they log onto your Blackboard course? Ever asked yourself what Blackboard can do besides letting you upload your syllabus? We have constructed a sample Blackboard course site based on a past Duke course. The site provides an opportunity for you to see a student’s view of some of Blackboard’s features, such as the ability to participate in class discussion boards, comment on a course blog post, download lecture materials and view library E-Reserves. We hope the sample course site will inspire you to get the most out of Blackboard.

The site has been set up under the Self Enrollment option. Please follow the procedures below to enroll yourself:

2. From the Courses tab, type cit sample into the Course Search box and click Go.
3. The Browse course catalog page will appear.
4. Scroll down and find the sample site (Course ID: CIT–SAMPLE, Course Name: Sample Blackboard Course Site).
5. Click the Enroll button.
6. Enter cit as the access code.
7. You should get a Receipt: Success... message indicating you have successfully enrolled in this course site as a student.

Or you can follow Neal in the short video below to enroll yourself in the course:

Things you can do as a student within the site include:

- Post to the Discussion Board by adding a new thread or replying to a thread.
- Comment on a blog post or create a new post of your own. Posts are viewable only to others enrolled in the course.

Want suggestions for using Blackboard? Contact CIT at cit@duke.edu, or visit our Blackboard help site. Alternatively, request an office visit and we will come to you.

Open Learning Initiative Web Seminar

Join us for a web seminar on Carnegie Mellon University’s Open Learning Initiative. This initiative
offers "open courses backed by learning research."

The course materials are freely available online and can be customized and incorporated by instructors anywhere.

Each course includes frequent opportunities for students to assess their own learning and receive immediate feedback, including context-specific assistance during the problem solving.

Courses are currently available in: [Engineering Statics], [Statistics], [Causal and Statistical Reasoning], [Modern Biology], [Chemistry], [Economics], [French], [Logic & Proofs], [Physics], [Empirical Research Methods], [Computational Discrete Mathematics] and [Visual Communication Design].

To learn more, browse the courses on the Open Learning Initiative website. Intrigued? [Join us] at a web seminar on Monday, January 11th.

Speaker: Candace Thille
Director of the Open Learning Initiative (OLI)
Carnegie Mellon University

Topic: Continuous Improvement in Teaching and Learning: Open Learning Initiative (OLI) and Open Learning Net (OLnet)

Date: Monday, January 11, 2010
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Perkins Library – please [register] for room information, and join CIT to view and discuss this seminar.

[ShareThis]

**Collecting, sorting and archiving tweets**

Information goes by quickly on Twitter – so quickly that sometimes you might feel like you need to save some of those useful tweets (and links included in those tweets) for later.

**Collect interesting tweets using the favorites function**

Twitter provides a function called [favorites] that allows you to click on a little hollow star icon to copy a specific tweet to your favorites feed. Your favorites feed has its own web address; just add /favorites to your twitter address. For example, CIT’s favorites feed page is [http://twitter.com/dukecit/favorites](http://twitter.com/dukecit/favorites).
This can be a great option for faculty who want their students to see an ongoing list of tweets and links that might be relevant to a course. Just set up a Twitter account for a course (or use your own if you prefer) and start collecting and ‘favoriting’ interesting tweets. Students can visit your favorites page directly, or even subscribe to your favorites feed using an RSS reader like Google Reader.

**Collect and archive Twitter discussions**

People participating in ongoing Twitter discussions focused on particular topics often use hashtags (#) to designate a particular tweet as being part of that conversation. Conveniently, hashtags can make searching Twitter for a particular discussion easier as well. A service called Twapper Keeper provides a way to either create new archives for hashtag searches or just access previously stored archives. The image below shows a Twapper Keeper search for the #iran hashtag archive.
Saving web links you share via Twitter

Many of us use Twitter to share links with our social networks. However, what happens when you want to go back and search for a particular link? You can go look through your recent Tweet history, or you could try using a social bookmarking tool. Social bookmarking tools like Diigo and delicious already exist to help you save and share URLs to websites – so why not try to incorporate them into your Twitter workflow?

The methods for using each service (Diigo and delicious) with Twitter are a bit different. For Diigo, you capture a link into Diigo (using the Diigo toolbar add-on) and then choose to tweet that link.

To capture your links using delicious, you'll need Firefox and a small add-on for Firefox called Tweecious. Once you've added Tweecious to your Firefox browser, you'll be prompted to enter your delicious and Twitter account info. Tweecious will then scan your Twitter account for any tweet you create that also includes a link and will post that link to delicious with the added tag ‘Tweecious’. I've been using this for a few weeks, and it does work (see image below).

If you're not really all that interested in social bookmarking and just want a list of the links you've sent using Twitter, you might also consider creating an account with one of the URL shorteners which many Twitter apps use to shorten the length of a URL to make the link fit in Twitter’s 140 character limit. If you've used Twitter, you'll no doubt recognize URLs from the likes of bit.ly. If you sign up for a bit.ly account, you can shorten and track your tweeted links as you go. You can even send tweets directly from bit.ly, or copy/paste their API key into several Twitter apps to track links you tweet using their interface.
Backing up your entire Twitter account

Finally, sometimes you just want to download everything into an Excel spreadsheet (or another application that accepts CSV files). Using Tweetake, you can download tweets from your own account or the accounts of you and all of your followers as one large text-based data file. Load that file into Excel and search and sort it to your heart’s content.
Start Here

Please Note: If you are running Tweetdeck or a similar Twitter client it may prevent Tweetake from working. Please shut it down and wait a few minutes before running Tweetake. Thanks.

Your Twitter name: dukecit

Your Twitter password: ********

- Followers
- Favorites
- Direct Messages
- Friends
- Your Tweets
- Everything

Get 'em!
For more useful suggestions for collecting and/or archiving tweets, see ReadWriteWeb.