Building a Culture of Evidence Around Our Use of Technology

By Gail Rathbun, Director, CELT

If learning can happen anywhere and at anytime, that’s evidence of how the availability of mobile technologies has altered the context of teaching and learning. The use of technology in more traditional contexts has, along with the acceptance of new theories of how we learn, changed the role of the teacher to that of a “ringmaster,” in the words of Malcolm Brown, Director of the Educause Initiative and the keynote speaker of the April 8 Technology Showcase. Teaching is now more of a team sport in which technologists, designers, students, and colleagues are active participants—the days of the “lone ranger” approach have vanished. Given these fundamental changes to the contexts of teaching and learning, gathering meaningful evidence that will help us explain and predict learning outcomes grows challenging and complex. Yet having evidence in hand is crucial in making decisions about investments in new technologies or increased support for older ones.

The Educause Learning Initiative has launched a Seeking Evidence of Impact project through which it will assemble a library of reports about measuring the impact of teaching and learning innovations, practices and technology. Brown explained this initiative in concurrent sessions, and invited participants to contribute to this library of case studies, which will be a resource for the teaching and learning community. On September 15-16 the ELI will host a national focus session online, bringing together a variety of teaching and learning (Continued on page 2)

eBook Basics: An interview with Jens Clegg

By Michelle Drouin, Assistant Professor, Psychology

For this issue of CELT news, I interviewed Jens Clegg, ILCS, about his use of ebooks, which was also the focus of a recent Technology Showcase. Jens was kind enough to sit down with me (virtually) to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this innovative course material.

Why did you decide to switch to ebooks? I have not switched entirely to ebooks; instead, I have added them as an option in my course. The majority of the students are not ready for ebooks, and as a result it would be difficult to use the ebook only. As a language instructor, I use the ebook because I like teaching from it. All of the media and extra resources that are available in the textbook are integrated into the ebook and are only one click away. This makes showing videos, playing audio clips, and visiting external websites much easier. Projecting the ebook onto the screen also makes it easy to keep all of the students "on the same page." This is especially important since I speak to my students (Continued on page 4)
professionals to address ways of seeking evidence of impact of our instructional innovations. To learn more about this focus session go to http://net.educause.edu/eli113.

The rest of the conference included “standing room only” hands-on sessions using the Apple iPad. Ray Gildner, GEOS, demonstrated his use of the iPad in the morning session, and Jens Clegg, ILCS, demonstrated his use of a Spanish eTextbook in the afternoon. Representatives from Apple and from Follett’s CaféScribe software team generously provided equipment and expertise for the hands-on sessions.

Others presenting at the Showcase included: Nancy Virtue, ILCS, Iskandar Hack, MCETI, Gokhan Karaatli, MGMK, Joseph McCormick, ITS, Samantha Birk, CELT, and Mary Ann Fricker, Apple.

The 78 people attending the Showcase were offered the opportunity to participate in a “Learning Happens Anywhere, Anytime” Mini-Project. The purpose of the Mini-Project is to give faculty and staff the opportunity to explore the uses of the iPad for teaching and learning and to provide an incentive to share those experiences with the campus community. The project is part of a larger effort to encourage wide adoption of mobile learning technologies by IPFW faculty. Thirty people prepared short project descriptions from which three were selected: Jo Vaughan, Military Student Services Coordinator; Britton Wolfe, Assistant Professor, Computer Science; and Becky (continued on page 3)
By Gail Rathbun, Director, CELT

Although the sudden overnight snowfall prevented many of the 220 pre-registered participants from attending, the 2011 Fort Wayne Teaching conference was lively and rich in innovative ideas. Conference presenters showed us how far beyond PowerPoint we really are, demonstrating interactive software with ease, and providing impressive data in support of the impact on learning that using these technologies has.

Keynote Speaker Lorne Oke, Executive Director of the Center for Innovation at Indiana Wesleyan University, urged faculty to think systemically in response to the current challenges of disparate expectations of students, parents, faculty, and society, the diverse backgrounds from which our students come, and blurred boundaries between work, home and school, between faculty and students, and between disciplines. Oke’s graphical representation of systemic thinking depicted the interaction and mutually influencing relationships of faculty, students, environment, and content.

Technology pervades this system. He singled out parts of that system as obstacles to surmounting current challenges to higher education. Oke observed that faculty members are focused on research, and not on teaching; that college is important to students, but is a part-time activity for them; and that administrators, policy makers, and parents accept this situation as the natural order of things. Thus, college students will remain “academically adrift” unless 1) the parts of the system start to collaborate in new ways, 2) faculty focus on intentional practice, 3) institutions measure what matters, 4) elements of the system communicate strategically, and 5) an iterative “change-learn-change” paradigm becomes dominant.

Presentations throughout the day showed how faculty are using technology to implement many of these winning strategies. Dr. Oke’s presentation may be found at http://prezi.com/cafsrlgbnwz/aligning-institutions-for-integrating-innovations/.

Participating from IPFW were: Dacia Charlesworth, COM, and Irwin Mallin, COM, presenting They Built It, We Came: Interrogating Blackboard as Philosophical, Rhetorical, and Technological Fields of Dreams”; Sharon Parnin, EDUC, presenting with Abby Johnson, Arcola Elementary School “Strengthening a Community Partnership Using Social Media Sites”; Patrick Ashton, SOC, presenting “Using Hand-held “Clickers” to Promote Student Engagement and Learning in the Classroom”; Gail Rathbun, CELT, presenting “Evaluating the Impact of Instructional Technology”; Debrah Huffman, ENGL, presenting “Giving Student Work a Voice…Literally”; and Sarah Beckman, NURS, with Cheryl Sorge, NURS, presenting “Student Created Web Sites: Demonstration of Information Literacy Skills.”

The Fort Wayne Teaching Conference is a project of a consortium of seven Fort Wayne area universities: Huntington University, Indiana Tech, Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, Ivy Tech Community College—Northeast, Manchester College, Trine University, University of Saint Francis.
Interview with Jens Clegg...Cont. from pg. 1

entirely in Spanish from the first day of class.

What would you say is the major advantage to ebooks? The major advantage is that the book is available to the student at any time from any computer and that the students can quickly access any link or additional information. The ebook can be very convenient.

What is the major disadvantage of ebooks? There are two main disadvantages. First, not all ebooks are good ones. Some are just the text of the book with no real extras; whereas others (the better ones) take the textbook to a whole new level. You have to review and choose carefully. Second, not all students are ready for ebooks, and some do not have the necessary technology to use them.

How have students responded to this change in class materials? In general the students like the ebooks and especially like that I use it in class. I have several comments in my evaluations stating that the technology was helpful to the students. So far I have not had any complaints about the use of the ebook, but it is not a mandatory requirement, so those who do not like the technology don't have to use it.

Have you seen any impact on student learning? I only have anecdotal evidence of impact on learning, but I know that the number of times that I have to help lost students figure out where we are is definitely down.

Are you eager to try any other new class technologies? If so, what? I use a lot of technology already. I use PowerPoints daily and post them on Elearning, I play videos and audio in class, and I use a smartboard. I am excited about two new technologies: the newest version of Blackboard (which we will get soon, I hope) and the use of mobile technologies in the classroom. I am hopeful that these new technologies will help me to expand the learning beyond simple homework and beyond the classroom.

Chancellor’s University Engagement Awards

The IPFW Community Engagement Council invites nominations for four types of community engagement awards offered by Chancellor Michael Wartell. These awards were developed to honor outstanding community engagement on the part of faculty, staff, and students. Nominations are due by May 5. For more information, contact Kathy O’Connell, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Community Engagement, at oconnell@ipfw.edu.

CELT Summer Grants

The CELT Advisory Board is pleased to announce the names of the 2011 Summer Instructional Development grant recipients. Linda Wark, Associate Professor, Human Services, will receive a grant in support of her work on “Web Sites to Assist At-risk Populations,” which will test the impact of students designing and presenting web sites on their level of intellectual engagement in the study of case management. Donald Linn, Professor, Chemistry, will be working on “Video-logging CHM 241 to Create a Tool for Formative Creation of Concrete Lab Experiences Linked to Chemistry Concepts in Lecture,” explore the question of how the viewing of a video of a prior to performing the lab will stimulate interest and enhance student motivation. Grant awardees will attend a half-day Summer Instructional Development Institute in May and will present the results of their work in Spring 2012.

Finals are just around the corner!

Are you planning to use Scantron forms?

Are you planning to have them processed at CELT?

Have you scheduled your appointment yet? You haven’t? Uh-oh!

Please schedule your finals week appointments by Friday, April 29th.

Whether you plan to wait on them or drop them off for pick-up later, your appointment helps us to better utilize our time and ensures the fastest turn-around possible.

Scheduling is quick and simple with our online form. You’ll find it at www.ipfw.edu/celt/forms/scantron.shtml

Congratulations, CELT Luminary, Pat Ashton on receiving the 2011 P.A. Mack Award for Distinguished Service to Teaching
Mobile Learning and the iPad

By Tiff Adkins, Reference and Information Services Librarian, Helmke Library

The Technology Showcase: Learning Anywhere, Anytime, recently held at IPFW on April 8, 2011, offered a variety of sessions that demonstrated the impact that technology is having on education. Mobile computing devices are helping students to learn when and where they want. According to the 2011 Horizon Report this is a key trend. It reports, “People expect to be able to work, learn, and study whenever and wherever they want to” (Johnson, L., Smith, R., Willis, H., Levine, A., and Haywood, K., 2011, pg.3).

Technology Showcase presenter Mary Ann Fricker from Apple Inc. offered a session entitled, Trends in Mobile Learning. Her timely presentation took a look at how mobile computing devices are changing how we teach and learn. In particular she put forth compelling information about the impact the Apple iPad is making. In case you haven’t heard, the iPad is Apple’s mobile computing device that is based on tablet technology and operates with a touch screen. The Apple in Education Web site states the “iPad isn’t just the best device of its kind—it’s a whole new kind of device” (http://www.apple.com/education/ipad/).

In fact in a recent CNBC report, John Melloy (2010, Oct. 4) comments that the iPad has had the fastest adoption rate ever of a non-phone electronic product (http://www.cnbc.com/id/39501308/iPad_Adoption_Rate_Fastest_Ever_Passing_DVD_Playe).

During her presentation, Fricker demonstrated several of the over 65,000 “apps,” available from Apple’s iTunes Store that are native to the iPad. Although they are not all geared towards learning, there are apps specifically geared for educational pursuits. One can learn Advanced Italian or more about Zhong Biao, the amount of educational apps is astounding. She also pointed out that many of these apps accept input from the user that can then be shared with others. What a great way to improve student engagement.

eBooks and eTextbooks are another intriguing area where mobile computing devices offer amazing capabilities. Fricker showed how the iPad serves as a reading platform for eBooks. But publishers are utilizing the robust capabilities of devices like the iPad to make eBooks much more dynamic. As audience members watched, Ms. Fricker opened an eBook and quickly went from watching a full featured video concerning the topic covered in the text.

Educators are constantly developing new content and technology makes sharing that content much easier. The Apple creation, iTunesU is a prime example. Students can access it from anywhere they have an internet connection and many institutions of higher education are providing educational content for free through iTunesU (See: http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/whats-on.html). Fricker stated that iTunesU has approximately 400 universities offering the public free access to their content. Imagine being able to view course content, syllabi, or maybe lecture notes from college courses around the world. The possibilities for mobile learning are only expanding. Fricker’s session put forth great examples of how students are investing in their own education by taking advantage of how, when, and where their learning occurs.

References:
Upcoming Events

Plug in your charger and rev up the Wi-Fi.

Get ready for an exciting journey into learning more about making media for mobile technologies.

We’ll leave on June 8 for a 3-day road trip. So save the date now. Seats will be limited.

New CELT Advisory Board Members Announced

The CELT Advisory Board welcomes three new members who each serve a three year term starting in Fall 2011 and continuing through Spring 2014. The new board members are: (top from left to right) Deb Huffman, Assistant Professor, ENGL, Becky Jensen, Assistant Professor, NURS, and Yvonne Zubovic, Associate Professor, MATH. These outstanding faculty replace the three outbound board members, who are: (below, from left to right) Stella Batagiannis, Assistant Professor, EDUC; Michael Bendele, Continuing Lecturer, PSY; and Michelle Drouin, Assistant Professor, PSY. Outgoing members will continue to work on board committees with new members. The board will hold its annual retreat in late May in order to plan the Fall conference and CELT activities for the upcoming academic year. ▼