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CTL Winter 2012 Newsletter

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CTL Winter 2012 Newsletter

Description

Winter 2012 Newsletter from the University of Denver, Center for Teaching and Learning. The newsletter highlights events, workshops, software updates, and resources for faculty.

Keywords

CTL, Center for Teaching and Learning

Disciplines

Higher Education and Teaching | Teacher Education and Professional Development

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Provost Conference in Review

Renew DU Initiative CTL Expands to the "Office of Teaching and Learning"

As a part of the University's strategic plan to further strengthen its academic programs, the CTL will expand to the "Office of Teaching and Learning" under the Provost's Renew DU initiative.

Renew DU identifies six themes to prioritize the University's response to the ever-changing and increasingly global environment of higher education: *internationalization, interdisciplinary programs, academic research, academic technology, undergraduate academic experience, and faculty enhancement.*



Two of the "incubators", small groups made up of faculty members and administrators that are being established as a part of Renew DU, will work closely with the Office of Teaching and Learning. The University Teaching Incubator will explore and fund pilot projects designed to advance faculty teaching, informed by national best practices. The Academic Technology Incubator will explore and fund pilot projects that are focused on the expansion of innovative uses of technology to improve and support teaching and research.

So that the Office of Teaching and Learning will be positioned to effectively facilitate the University Teaching and the Academic Technology incubators, and support the expansion of the ideas generated through

Missed the 2011 Provost Conference?

Recordings of Keynote speaker Candace Thille's talks, along with materials from the breakout and digital poster sessions, are available on the [DU Portfolio site](#).

Congratulations to this year's CTL Grant Recipients!

20K Grants

The following projects were awarded funding through the [20K Grants Program](#):

"Food for the Future: A Learning Laboratory in Hydroponics"

Project Manager:
Martin Quigley,
Biological Sciences

"Technology and Learning: A New Curriculum Model for Main Campus and Off-Site Students"

Project Manager: Jean East,
Graduate School of Social Work

"picoSpin NMR for Guided Inquiry in Chemistry"

these two groups, Bridget Arend will serve as the Director of University Teaching, Kathy Keairns will serve as the Director of Web-Based Learning, and Julanna Gilbert will head the Office as its Executive Director.

Many of you are accustomed to our "CTL" name, please be patient while we slowly transition to "OTL" over the coming months.

Winter Quarter Workshops

The Center for Teaching and Learning invites you to attend the following upcoming workshops:

ADOBE CONNECT BASICS
Wednesday, February 1, 12-1 pm
or
Wednesday, March 7, 12 - 1 pm
Online via Adobe Connect

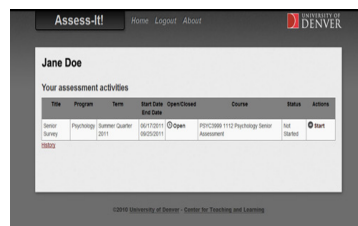
Adobe Connect is an online web conferencing system. In this workshop, you'll get an overview of DU's Adobe Connect application and learn ways to incorporate it into your interactions with students.



[Register online](#)

ASSESS-IT! BASICS
Friday, February 10, 10-11 am
CTL Classroom, 102 Nagel Hall
or
Wednesday, February 15, 12-1 pm
Online via Adobe Connect

In this info session you will learn about the features of Assess-It! and how it can support your program assessment efforts through electronic collection, evaluation, analysis, and archiving of program assessment data.



[Register online](#)

Education"
Project Manager:
Byron Purse, Chemistry

Teaching Excellence Initiative

The following groups have been awarded grants to focus on understanding, documenting, and improving outstanding teaching with their departments.

The Anthropology Department

The School of Accountancy

The Mathematics Department

Law and Society Program at The Women's College

Creating Online Courses

In addition, 22 faculty members from across campus were approved to be part of the 2012 Creating Online Courses Grant Program.

Congratulations to Joseph Labrecque!

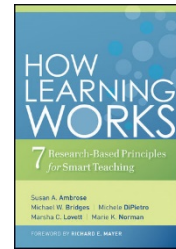
Joseph Labrecque, Senior Interactive Software Engineer at the CTL, has recently had two new books published.

[What's New in Adobe AIR 3](#)

HOW LEARNING WORKS: PART I

Friday, February 17, 9:30 - 11:00 am
CTL Classroom, 102 Nagel Hall

Sometimes even our best teaching efforts are met with blank stares and incorrect answers. Drawing from the book, *How Learning Works*, participants in this session will discuss practical strategies to address the issues of "prior knowledge" and "knowledge organization" in teaching.



[Register online](#)

CLICKER BASICS

Wednesday, February 29, 12 - 1 pm
Online via Adobe Connect

Curious about clickers? In this session, hosted online in Adobe Connect, you will learn to use clickers to engage students in large and small classes with questions that stimulate learning using polling software.

[Register online](#)

Due to popular demand, the **Advanced Tools in Blackboard** workshop will be offered again in March, check back on our website for the exact date.

Teaching Tip:

Encouraging Critical Thinking in Your Discussions

Critical thinking is not something that is taught once and "mastered." Rather, critical thinking is a skill in continual development, one that develops slowly through many opportunities for practice under skilled guidance. Discussions are effective methods for teaching and modeling to students the process of thinking.

What are some effective practices to teach thinking through discussions?

- **Use a "triggering event" that provokes thought and is relevant to students.** Good opening questions or problems are ones where



and

[What's New in Flash Player 11](#)

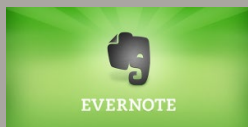


Both books are available through O'Reilly Media.

Staff Picks: Apps We Love



Working on a document from multiple computers from DU and from home? Need to share documents with others? **Dropbox** is a free service where you can store documents, photos, and videos and retrieve them from any computer.



Want a central place to

the students have not just the ability, but also the motivation to participate.

- **Understand the thinking process you are asking students to undertake.** Read up on the elements, rules, and fallacies of the critical, reflective, creative, or dialogical thinking you are trying to develop. Think through possible responses to your questions and anticipate common roadblocks and misconceptions.
- **Give students time and opportunities to think.** This sounds obvious, but allowing time for students to think before answering a question, such as asking them to respond in writing to a question or talk with a neighbor first, will create a more thoughtful dialogue.
- **Create a safe environment where students are allowed to make mistakes in their thinking.** If discussions feel like an oral exam, students will not be encouraged to think critically but will be instead preoccupied with coming up with the answer the instructor deems correct, even if they don't fully understand it.
- **Manage the discussions.** Allow students the opportunity to respond to each other, but at the same time, take the lead in keeping students on track. Encourage multiple perspectives, make sure harmful or unsupported assertions do not go unchecked, and continually ask meaningful, probing, open-ended questions.
- **Model critical thinking yourself.** Students do not have the benefit of the extensive background and knowledge organization of their instructors. Share your thinking processes with them, explain why some insights are incorrect as well as which ones are correct, and talk through the ways a problem is solved or an issue is conceptualized.

Technology Tip: *Using Tests in Blackboard*

Blackboard has a robust system for assessing students via online quizzes and exams. However, there are certain precautions you should take to avoid the most common problems associated with online exams in Blackboard.

keep notes or jot down ideas while you are on the go? **Evernote** is a free digital notebook that allows you to take notes, organize information, and save pictures in one common place, accessible from your computer, tablet, and mobile device.

CTL Contacts

CTL Helpdesk

ctl@du.edu

303-871-2084

Academic Technology

Blackboard

[Alex Karklins](#)

[Kathy Keairns](#)

DU CourseMedia

[Alex Karklins](#)

[Jenn Light](#)

DU Portfolio

[Jenn Light](#)

[Carrie Lorenz](#)

Clickers (Student-Response Systems)

[Jenn Light](#)

[Alex Karklins](#)

Lecture Capture

[Jane Maurer](#)

[Alex Karklins](#)

Adobe Connect

[Jenn Light](#)

[Joseph Labrecque](#)

Faculty Technology Lab

[Alex Karklins](#)

- **Make sure your students are accessing exams directly through <http://blackboard.du.edu>** rather than through WebCentral. WebCentral is set to time out after five minutes of inactivity, which will prevent students from submitting their answers.
- **Give your students a practice exam**, and make it count for points to ensure that they take it. This will help identify any issues with your students' browsers or settings before they take a "real" test or quiz.
- **Think twice about using Blackboard for "high stakes" tests and quizzes**, such as a midterm or final, especially if you have not administered a test or quiz in Blackboard before.
- **Have a back-up plan** in case students are unable to access or complete the test due to a network failure or a connection problem.

Respondus & Respondus LockDown Browser

If you do plan to use Blackboard tests, you may want to utilize Respondus and Respondus LockDown Browser. Respondus is a tool for creating and managing exams that can be published directly into Blackboard from Word or a publisher's test bank. Respondus LockDown Browser is a custom browser that limits the testing environment within Blackboard, preventing students from being able to print, copy, go to another URL, or access other applications. Visit the [BbSupplements/Building Blocks support page](#) for more information.

Questions? please contact Blackboard Support at x12084, blackboard@du.edu, or visit the [DU Blackboard Support Portfolio](#).

Coming Soon...MediaManager!

The newest project from the CTL will create a University-wide video system for DU faculty and staff. MediaManager, to be released at the end of February, will allow faculty and staff to request a videographer to record an event, upload their own videos, and provide a video player compatible with most devices - including iPads.

[Cheryl Jackson](#)

Software Development Projects

[Joseph Labrecque](#)

Mobile Development

[Joseph Labrecque](#)

ECTD (Electronic Capstone, Theses and Dissertations)

[Alex Martinez](#)

[Gary Taylor](#)

UTS Help Desk

303-871-4700

Teaching Resources

Workshops/Seminars

[Bridget Arend](#)

[Kathy Keairns](#)

Teaching Resources and Consultations

[Julanna Gilbert](#)

[Bridget Arend](#)

Teaching Online

[Kathy Keairns](#)

[Bridget Arend](#)

Funding Opportunities

Faculty Grants

[Julanna Gilbert](#)

[Cheryl Jackson](#)



"MediaManager will make it simple for University members to upload videos for encoding and give people an embed code to paste into websites," says Alex Martinez, who has been coordinating this project for over a year. "The project has many educational and marketing benefits. Control and management of University videos has been a long standing issue." MediaManager will organize, track and deliver hundreds of University videos. Once a significant number of videos are organized, there are plans to create a video portal website similar to [Cornell Cast](#).



Try it FREE today.