As the first week of the fall semester draws to a close, it is a good time to make a few changes in your syllabi if needed. Before doing so gather some data from your students. Perhaps they would like to see the test dates or due dates for assignments modified a little bit to ease their overly heavy days. Do the students understand what is expected of them? Perhaps you need to elaborate on what you want them to do. If it's a fully online course consider recording an audio or video to clarify these things for all your students. After seeing who is registered for the class, do you need to modify the schedule a little? Perhaps you need to spend more or less time on the introductory material at the beginning of the semester. These are the types of minor modifications that you can make now and go a long way to **improving student learning** and **satisfaction** in your courses.

Blackboard's Student Preview

The Student Preview feature in Blackboard provides faculty a way to see the course exactly how a student would see it. It allows faculty to easily transition into and out of a system-managed preview account that is automatically enrolled in the course as a Student. This provides all the advantages of a "pseudo-student" account while eliminating the need to login twice. The Student Preview provides an efficient way for faculty to confirm the design of their course content from the perspective of a student. It is also useful for confirming course behaviors such as time/date availability, adaptive release criteria, grade weighting, and other course behaviors that control what a student sees in the course or require some particular interaction from the student to be triggered.

To enter Student Preview mode, click the button that is shaped like an eye, next to the Course Themes and Edit Mode buttons, in the upper right corner. While in Student Preview mode, the faculty member can interact with the course as a student, including taking quizzes/tests, submitting assignments, posting to forums, posting to blogs, etc.

Upon exit, the faculty member is prompted as to whether the preview student, and all of the data created as the preview student, should be deleted (the default) or kept. If data is kept, the faculty member can view the results of the preview activity, such as by viewing Assignment or Test submissions in the Grade Center. The preview student is clearly identified by the text "_previewuser" appended to the username and last name. Choosing to delete the data unenrolls the preview student from the course (and, if not in use in any other of the faculty member's courses, deletes it from the system). All activity conducted or created as the preview student is removed from the course permanently. This includes attempts, submissions, grades, posts, etc.

Have you turned off the tools in your Blackboard course which you won't be using? Simplify your students online experience with this great tip!
A **Best Practice Tip while Teaching and Learning Through Blackboard** is to TURN OFF ALL UNNECESSARY TOOLS.
To simplify your class on Blackboard you will want to hide the links of all the tools you and your students will not be using during the semester. There is no need for a student to see the discussion board link in your course if they are not going to be using at all. For best usability and to simplify the students' online experience just have available the tools they will be using in the course. If you decide to use a tool later in the semester you may make it available at that time. Both course and communication tools are combined into a single Tools area in the Course Menu.
1. In the upper right-hand corner, select Edit Mode ON.
2. Select Tools on the Course Menu.
3. Click Hide Link next to the tools that you are not using.
4. To view the Tools that will be available to students, turn off the Edit Mode button.

Last couple of Blackboard Jumpstart Workshops (For Faculty) – TODAY!
In these fast paced, focused sessions you will learn the critical skills about using Blackboard, particularly if you are using it for the first time and need to get your course ready quickly. Topics will include course management, content organization, basic communication, and using the grade center. Please join Ms. Cynthia Johnson today on any of the following workshop sessions:
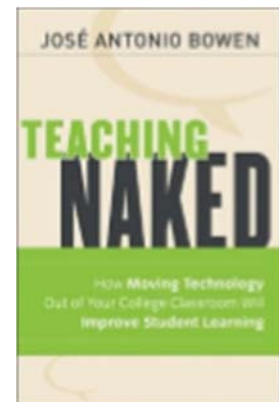Friday, August 26, 10 AM – 12 PM or 2 PM – 4 PM in Founders Hall, Rm 136

Availability of DLIT Assistance
Fall start-up is one of our busiest times. We are available in DAL 2, Rm 122 for faculty to drop-in, or make an appointment if your question will take more than 5 minutes. You can email us at UNTDDistance@unt.edu or call us at (972) 338-5580 to make an appointment.

This semester we're starting a book club… The DLIT Book Club offers an opportunity to meet with a diverse group of faculty and colleagues each semester to discuss a book that focus on issues related to teaching and learning in higher education. A lively and relaxed setting combined with light refreshments provides an ideal setting in which to share teaching experiences and to gather new teaching ideas.

Our first book selection to encourage conversation about teaching and learning at UNT Dallas is **Teaching Naked: How Moving Technology Out of Your College Classroom Will Improve Student Learning** by **J. A. Bowen** (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012).

Introducing a new way to think about higher education, learning, and technology that prioritizes the benefits of the human dimension. José Bowen recognizes that technology is profoundly changing education and that if students are going to continue to pay enormous sums for campus classes, colleges will need to provide more than what can be found online and maximize "naked" face-to-face contact with faculty. Here, he illustrates how technology is most powerfully used outside the classroom, and, when used effectively, how it can ensure that students arrive to class more prepared for meaningful interaction with faculty. Bowen offers practical advice for faculty and administrators on how to engage students with new technology while restructuring classes into more active learning environments." (Amazon.com)

The Book Club is limited to 12 participants and everyone will receive a free copy of the book. We will meet five times over the course of the semester. Participants are asked to commit to a minimum of four of the following scheduled sessions:
The club will be meeting in Founders Hall, Room 127. Meeting times will be determined based on registrant's availability.
Fridays, September 16 and 30, October 14 and 28, and November 11.
We hope that participants will share their learning and excitement with colleagues!
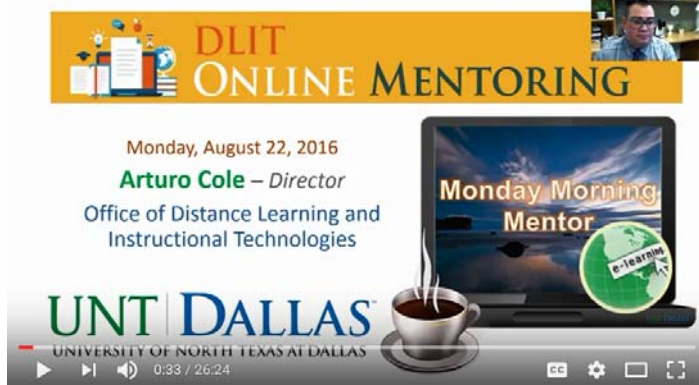Please feel free to contact Arturo Cole if you have further questions or to sign up!

Monday Morning Mentor

This last Monday we kicked off our Online Mentoring Series. Join us every Monday for the **Monday Morning Mentor** where we'll answer common online teaching and learning questions in a practical and convenient series of brief online sessions. Start every week with dynamic professional development programming for you right in the convenience of your office or your home.
Sessions will be held online every Monday during the semester, starting at 8:30 AM.
It's a great way for you to start the week!
If you missed this week session you can go to our YouTube channel or just click the following:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jko03MLT3vg

...COMING NEXT WEEK!

Monday Morning Mentor: Cynthia

It's a great way for you to start the week!

Join Cynthia this upcoming Monday morning from a PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android device by clicking on the following link:

Monday, August 29, 8:30 AM - 9 AM, virtual (online)

Use of Blackboard LEARN Groups to Encourage Online Collaboration

Blackboard LEARN is a very versatile tool. Did you know that students can use it to collaborate using the Groups tool? In this hands-on workshop, you will learn how to use the Groups tool in Blackboard LEARN, to provide students with various options for collaboration. Learn about the different ways you can deliver groups in your course and how to use the tool to your advantage.

Presented by Brian Miller, Digital Media Instructional Designer

Monday, August 29, 10 AM—12 PM, Founders Hall, Rm 127

Send email to register for this event.

E-Learning for Newbies, Beginners and the Confused

[Track 2: E-Learning Design]

Presenters: Diane Elkins, President, and Amy Morrisey, Vice-President of Artisan E-Learning

It can be challenging to understand e-learning information without a baseline of knowledge. This session is designed to give you that foundation so you can understand everything else you see, hear, and read about online learning.

For an e-learning beginner it can be like trying to jump rope when other people are already spinning the rope very fast. In this session, we'll set the rope down and explain all the basics in a clear, safe, and easy way.

This session will include a broad brush on many topics such as:

• The different types of e-learning (self-paced, webinar, MOOC, etc.)

• Technology used for e-learning (authoring tools, LMSs, social media, etc.)

• The overall e-learning design and development process (analysis, storyboarding, media, testing, etc.)

• Managing e-learning projects (timelines, costs, etc.)

Tuesday, August 30, 2016 @ 11 AM - 12 PM, Founders Hall, Rm 127

Send email to register for this event.

The Gamification of Learning

[Track 5: Gamification]

Presenter: Monica Cornetti, Gamification Guru

Learn important best practices about gamification of learning. Monica Cornetti, rated as a #1 Gamification Guru in the World by UK-Based Leaderboarded, shows us how and why Gamification works, in what context it is most effective, and what the limits are to this approach of employee engagement in corporate learning.

Simply defined, gamification uses game mechanics and rewards for non-game applications in order to increase engagement and loyalty. Gamification is an important and powerful strategy for influencing and motivating people.

This webinar is designed to help you:
• Identify the current best practices in gamification
• Avoid 4 major mistakes when planning your gamified experience
• Upgrade your organization's learning programs through gaming scenarios
• Discover the 5 essential steps to developing a successful Gamification program
• Approach gamification from a practical viewpoint for your organization
The good news is that Gamification does NOT mean making a computer or a video game, and expecting it to motivate people … it means taking the concepts around games and using them in an authentic way to drive the behavior you want to get.
Tuesday, August 30, 2016 @ 12 PM - 1 PM, Founders Hall, Rm 127
Send email to register for this event.

All-You-Can-Learn Blackboard Buffet

Whether you're just starting work on your spring course or putting on those finishing touches in your fall courses, come and enjoy the All-You-Can-Learn Blackboard Buffet where we'll have tons of Blackboard related items for you as well as expert advice and assistance in a collegial place to work.

Start your buffet with some appetizing tutorials and brief videos. For the main course, you'll have a hearty selection of tools available in Blackboard. Dessert consists of yummy handouts and quick guides on how to use Blackboard Learn.
 Staff from the Office of DLIT will be available to discuss online/hybrid/traditional course design and help with Blackboard or other instructional technology.

Please note, there is no formal program and there's no need to make an appointment.
This is a drop-in-whenever-you-can event.
Wednesday, August 31, 10 AM – 12 PM in FH Rm 127
Send email to register for this event.

From Technology to Talk: Digital Resources for Deeper Classroom Conversations

[Track 3: Technology in the Classroom]
Presenter: Kevin Baird, Chairman of the Board at the nonprofit EdCenter: The Center for College & Career Readiness
Move beyond one-to-one digital content to leverage existing resources to deepen classroom conversations, engage students in accountable talk, and develop language skills including vocabulary, speaking, and listening.

In this research-driven webinar, Kevin Baird, Chairman at the nonprofit Center for College & Career Readiness, presents practical, pragmatic methods to use digital content in groups to drive deeper accountable conversations. Student-to-student talk is a critical element for accelerated language development, the critical foundation for reading comprehension and effective writing skills.

As schools move into the critical spring assessment window, increasing usage of existing tools while focusing on foundational language and comprehension skills is the key strategy to making a difference in student performance in a compressed timeframe.
Thursday, September 1, 2016 @ 12 PM - 1 PM, Founders Hall, Rm 127
Send email to register for this event.

Articles

(Click the images to read the articles)

Buzzword Decoder: Adaptive Learning
by Pamela Hogle
Source: Learning Solutions Mag
⏰Time to read: **4 min**
Technology puts adaptive learning, tailoring educational content to each learner's level and progress rate, within easier reach of millions of people. The advantages to this approach include greater engagement and real-time monitoring of progress. Here's an explanation of the concept and how it fits into instructional design.
Read more...

The Truth Behind 5 Social Learning Myths
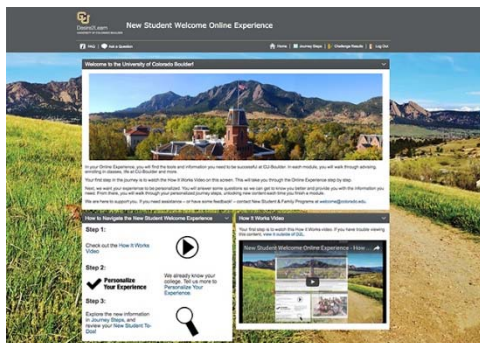By Christopher Pappas
Source: elearningindustry.com
⏰ Time to read: **5 min**
Social learning is a hot eLearning topic as of late, especially since the rise of social media and online forums. But how much do you really know about this collaboration-centric eLearning approach? In this article, I'll shed light on the truth behind 5 social learning myths.
Read more...

Taking Student Orientation Online
By Dian Schaffhauser
Source: Campus Technology
⏰ Time to read: **12 min**
This state university turned to software it already uses — its learning management system — to transform new-student orientation.
While the traditional orientation process at the University of Colorado Boulder was meant to bond new students to the institution from their first moments on campus, its structure often had just the opposite effect. So the university came up with a different approach. The "New Student Welcome Online Experience," introduced in 2015, doles out content just in time, using a blend of videos, text, quizzes, checklists and rewards to engage and entice students to learn more continually.
Read more...

Mark Your Calendars!

| SEP 6 | DLAC Monthly Meeting (10 AM - 12 PM) FH, Rm 127 | SEP 8 | Using Panopto for Recording and Syncing Lectures to BB in F2F (10 AM - 12 PM) FH, Rm 337 |
| SEP 6 | Learning Technology Strategy for | | |

	the Modern Learner (1 PM - 2 PM) FH, Rm 127	**SEP 12**	**Monday Morning Mentor** (8:30 AM - 9 AM), virtual (online)
SEP 7	**Overcoming the Top 5 Challenges of Video Instruction** (12 PM - 1 PM) FH, Rm 127	**SEP 12**	**2016 Excellence in Online Teaching Awards**—Call for nominations
		SEP 13	**How to Create Personalized E-Learning** (11 AM - 12 PM) FH, Rm 127

Contact Us!

The **Office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies** invites faculty and staff to join and participate in our development programs. These events provide an opportunity to network with faculty from other departments, learn new instructional strategies and tools, and become aware of best practices in online teaching and learning. Hope to see you there, and don't forget to register for our workshops and sessions!
Please contact us with ideas and suggestions for future events:

Web: http://www.untdallas.edu/dlit
Phone: 972-338-5580
Email: UNTDDistance@unt.edu

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