



ILCCO Newsletter: November, 2011

Jeff's Jargon

Jeff Newell, ILCCO Director

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Robin Nash, Oakton

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Raymond L. Lawson, Ed. D., Director of Online Learning & Educational Technology, McHenry

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Jeff's Jargon (full article)**10 Years of Serving Illinois**

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ILCCO is a platform for colleges to work together to provide leadership, facilitate collaboration and share resources in online and technology-enhanced education. ILCCO is currently partnering with the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN) as they develop their statewide network through a TAA grant. ILCCO offers a number of professional development opportunities, including book studies, webinars, and the online conference Growing Online Learning. ILCCO provides numerous networking and collaboration opportunities for members. It remains committed to course sharing between colleges, creating access to instruction so students can achieve their educational goals.

ILCCO spent three years in development from 1999 – 2001, leading to the creation of 281 online courses, a statewide faculty development network, and several online software systems. ILCCO piloted course-sharing in 2001 and 2002. In the fall of 2002, ILCCO opened to all Illinois community colleges providing students access to online courses available at institutions throughout the state but with the emphasis of focusing their learning through their local college.

ILCCO has grown and changed over the last ten years, but remains committed to enhancing colleges' abilities to serve students through online education. We look forward to the next ten years.

Colleges currently participating in ILCCO are:

- Black Hawk
- Carl Sandburg
- City Colleges/Chicago
- Danville
- DuPage
- Elgin
- Harper
- Highland
- Illinois Central
- Illinois Valley
- John Wood
- Lake Land
- McHenry
- Moraine Valley
- Oakton
- Parkland
- Rend Lake
- Richland
- Sauk Valley
- Shawnee
- Spoon River
- Triton
- Waubonsee

ILCCO-NILRC Reception at ICCCA Fall Conference

Are you attending the ICCCA Conference? ILCCO and NILRC ask you to join us this year at our pre-conference reception at the ICCCA Fall Conference in Decatur. Please join us Wednesday, November 16, for refreshments and conversation. Information about the ICCCA Conference can be found at <http://iccca.org/conference.htm>.

Growing Online Learning 2012

Mark your calendars - The 2012 Growing Online Learning conference will be the week of February 20, 2012, and the theme will be "Student Engagement." Registration and the conference program will be available in the near future at <http://ilcco.net/ILCCO/conferences.cfm>. The conference is free to Illinois community colleges.

LMS Event

This past June 21st & 22nd, ILCCO hosted an LMS event at Parkland College providing colleges an opportunity to explore LMS platforms as they evaluate options for the future. The event was precipitated by the end of life of the ANGEL LMS in 2014. Vendors demonstrating their platforms included Blackboard, Canvas, Desire2Learn, Moodlerooms, and Pearson. The event was attended by 60 people from 20 colleges.

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ILCCO Featured College (full article)**Hindi-Urdu at Oakton Community College**

Robin Nash, Oakton Community College

This fall, in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Oakton Community College launched an online Hindi-Urdu course, *Beginning Hindi-Urdu I*, to be followed by both *Hindi-Urdu I* and *Hindi-Urdu II* in the spring 2012 term. Eventually, two full years of Hindi-Urdu will be offered online.

These courses are part of Oakton's Global Studies initiative. A Title VI Grant through the U.S. Department of Education's Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program has partially funded the establishment of the new Hindi-Urdu language program.

Oakton has long offered languages via distance learning, beginning with Spanish and French telecourses in the 1980's. All language telecourses were transitioned to an online delivery format over a year ago, to take advantage of the many multi-media resources available.

The *Beginning Hindi-Urdu I* course was first introduced in the Fall of 2010 as a face-to-face course before being converted to a 16-week online course this fall term.

Hindi is the official language of India, while Urdu is the national language of Pakistan, as well as being an officially recognized regional language of India. Hindi and Urdu are spoken in nearly the same way, with Hindi differing from Urdu primarily in the script. Hindi is usually written in the Devanagari script. Devanagari is the same script used for Hindi, Marathi, Nepali, and the ancient languages of Sanskrit and Prakrit.

The course begins with a focus on Hindi script and grammar. The Hindi script is introduced to learners with demonstrations of how it is written and pronounced. Each character represents a unique sound, so most words are pronounced as they are written. Hindi has several consonant sounds that are not found in English. For example, almost every consonant has an aspirated version as well as an unaspirated version. Aspirated consonants are pronounced like normal consonants with the addition of a simultaneous puff of breath.

In Devanagari, the letters in each word hang down from a "clothesline," such as the following:

यह हिन्दी स्क्रिप्ट का एक नमूना है

Urdu script is introduced in the fifth week and students are expected to practice both the scripts as much as possible. Urdu has a very different look:

یہ اردو سکرپٹ کا ایک نمونہ ہے

The online course utilizes live student/instructor interaction via Elluminate, and recordings using Audacity, in addition to text, videos, and rich media content. For example, “A Door into Hindi/Urdu” takes students to a South Asian world with the help of several audio and video materials. This culturally relevant material is a great resource for a wide variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening practice/activities.

Oakton is also engaging the services of a Hindi-Urdu tutor in the school’s learning center to further support students in their studies.

Locating an instructor to teach Hindi-Urdu was a unique challenge for Oakton. Those few instructors in the Chicago area qualified to teach the language have many employment opportunities and are kept quite busy. Oakton was fortunate to obtain an excellent instructor, Zeeshan Ali, who first came to Oakton to work as a teaching assistant for the on-campus course piloted last fall. Zeeshan has also been instrumental in developing the materials used in the online courses.

Zeeshan completed her Masters in English in 2007 from Patna University, Bihar (state university) in June 2007, and just recently was awarded a Ph.D in English.

In August 2007, she was placed as Assistant Professor of English at Maulana Azad College, Patna (Bihar), where she teaches English to undergraduate Engineering students. In 2010, Zeeshan was selected for a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) program to teach Hindi-Urdu. She came to Oakton in July 2010 to complete the grant, but has now returned to her home in northern India, from where she teaches Oakton’s online course. Hindi and Urdu are her native languages.

In addition to teaching Hindi-Urdu, Oakton has an active study abroad program in Hyderabad, India. Students can elect to study the history and culture of India for one month each summer in India, earning (6) Oakton credits. Scholarships are available. The study abroad experience in India includes cultural visits, fieldtrip excursions, tutorial assistance, on-site library and study areas. Students will live in an International Student Dorm, with free Wi-Fi access and a full meal plan included.

Oakton is also offering a study trip to Egypt for the Spring 2012 semester, earning (3) Oakton credits, titled “Exploring Modern Egypt.” The trip will be led by Jaleh Sherbini, who teaches Political Science at Oakton, specializing in International Relations and Middle East Politics, with an emphasis on Egypt. Also leading the trip will be Erick Mann, Ph.D., Professor of History and Chair of the Historical and Policy Studies Department at Oakton. The trip will enable students to experience the country, and learn first-hand about the political, cultural and historical life of modern Egypt by spending seven days in Cairo, and one day in Alexandria. During this time, students will participate in seminars led by academics in the field on contemporary Egyptian society, interact with college students, women's groups, local non-governmental organizations, and public officials. The trip will also include a number of excursions. The trip will take place May 19-28, 2012, with three meetings at the Des Plaines, IL campus upon return.

For further information about Oakton’s Hindi-Urdu courses, please feel free to contact Marguerite Solari, Ph.D., Oakton’s Modern Language Department Chair, msolari@oakton.edu , ph: 847-376-7012.

Students interested in Oakton’s study abroad opportunity in India may contact Katherine Schuster, Ph.D., Coordinator of the Education and Global Studies Programs at Oakton, schuster@oakton.edu, ph: 847-376-7118. For information about Oakton’s study abroad trip to Egypt, contact Jaleh Sherbini, jsherbin@oakton.edu.

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Social learning: Using Wikis and Blogs in Online Courses (full article)

Raymond L. Lawson, Ed. D.

Director of Online Learning & Educational Technology, McHenry County College

Social Learning

It is known to the research community that learning is a social process. A process during which, participants involved in the learning event interact for the purpose of sharing knowledge and experience. Social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. In face-to-face classroom teaching, the instructor as the “sage of the stage” conducts and directs mainly the social interaction that occurs in the classroom. In the online classroom, where students are separated by distance and time zones, Wikis and Blogs could be used to engage students in a social process of learning. In online learning environments, learning occurs through sharing ideas and thoughts (Palloff & Pratt, 1999) and personal interactions between participants (Walker & Fraser, 2005).

Social learning in online courses becomes an important requirement for effective distance learning. Wikis and blogs provide a relationship dimension necessary for the development of human personality. This relationship dimension refers to interactions and mutual support that occur in learning environment. According to Knowles (1980), adult learning environments are characterized by mutual trust and respect, acceptance of differences, and sharing of responsibility among students and teachers. More importantly, in online learning environments, learner-learner and facilitator-learner relationships are critical.

For a successful student online educational experience, it’s imperative that the instructor wears several hats, including the one of a facilitator, a guide, and a mentor. The instructor becomes a coach on the sideline that directs and cheers students during their learning. Social media such wikis and blogs provide a framework for an effective coaching.

Several learning management systems, including Blackboard, Angel, and D2L offer socialization tools that support social learning and student engagement. Online instructors should integrate these tools into their teaching activities to foster social relationship between and among students. Wikis and blogs are two of these tools that are embedded in Blackboard, Angel, and D2L. Using these tools within the learning management system helps the educational institution circumvent privacy, copyright and intellectual property issues since only students enrolled in a specific course and individuals authorized in a course have access to wikis and blogs used in that specific course.

Using Wikis in Online Courses

In an online course, wikis can be used for asynchronous communication and group collaboration. Wikis provide space and opportunities for students and instructor to engage in collaborative learning activities. Learning activities in wikis can range from brainstorming session and meeting session, to group project and group e-portfolio. For a successful implementation of wikis in online courses, it is important to set clear guidelines and expectations that support five key elements of collaborative learning (Johnson and Johnson, 2009):

1. Positive interdependence: It occurs when group members share common goal, roles, and resources. The sharing of tasks, roles, and resources among group members fosters motivation and participation.
2. Individual Accountability and Personal Responsibility: They refer to the need for group members to have individual accountability as well as personal responsibility.
3. Promotive Interaction: It “occurs as individuals encourage and facilitate each other’s efforts to accomplish the group’s goals” (p.368).

4. Appropriate use of social skills: This necessitates that group members use interpersonal and group skills to communicate accurately and work together efficiently and constructively.
5. Group processing: It occurs when group members maintain effective working relationship and provide feedback to each other regarding the effective with which “members carry out task the processes necessary to achieve the group’s goals” (p.369).

In a wiki platform, the role of the instructor is to facilitate group activities and provide guidelines. In terms of instructional design considerations, the following elements need to be considered: feedback procedures, assessment of group activities, procedures for monitoring postings, group size, and completion time for students. If the wiki is used as a class assignment, the instructor should develop an assessment tool that needs to be communicated to students.

Using Blogs in Online Courses

Blogs are now being used in online courses as a reflective communication tool. They are considered as ‘transformational communicative technologies’ which “allows users to connect and become part of an active social corpus, while exercising and legitimating their personal expressive spaces” (Farmer et al., 2007, p.263). The use of a blog in an online or face-to-face course leads to critical thinking and deep reflective learning. Blogging allows students to participate in the learning process as “critical, collaborative, and creative participants in the social construction of knowledge” (Burgess, 2006, p. 105). In a blog, students have the flexibility to organize their thoughts related to a discussion question. Blogging within a course provide opportunities to students to personalize their comments leading to a sense of community through the sharing of personal experiences.

Unlike wikis, blogs are often used as follows:

1. Reflection on course content - a course blog is set up for student to use to reflect on course content and learning activities. Students are invited to reflect on course content and learning activities by posting and commenting on fellow students’ postings.
2. E-Portfolio – in this case, individual student blogs are created and students are instructed to use their blogs for posting learning activities they want to showcase demonstrating that the student has met the requirements of course learning outcomes.
3. Reflective journal – an individual blog in which the student reflects on the course activities and process.
4. Learning journey– an individual blog in which the student reflects on her/his learning process and experience.

While using blogs in a course, the role of the instructors is to motivate students to contribute on the blog and to encourage student feedback on fellow student posts. The instructor should also participate in the blog activities by making regular comments to student posts. Just like in wikis, if a blog is a part of the course assessment, then an assessment tool should be created and communicated to students. In my online courses, I use blog as one way to assess student active participation in the online course.

Pedagogical Advantages

There are several pedagogical advantages in using wikis and blogs in online courses:

1. Wikis and blogs motivate students to participate in the learning process. These tools enable students to contribute to the learning content by empowering them to (1) do the required reading, (2) process what they read, and (3) seek out help in understanding the learning materials.
2. Wikis and blogs enable students to be producers of learning objects. Students reflect on the learning materials and use their personal and professional experience to contribute to the learning process.

To learn more about ILCCO, contact Jeff Newell at jeff.newell@illinois.gov

3. Wikis and blogs enhance communication. Students have the tendency to think through their ideas before posting, thereby using their critical thinking and communication skills effectively.
4. Wikis and blogs enhance collaboration. Students exchange and answer each other questions while using these tools.
5. Wikis and blogs enhance connectedness. Since students in online courses are habitually separated by distance and time zones, these tools offer them opportunities to connect with fellow classmates, thereby diminishing the feeling of social isolation and increasing the sense of community.

Conclusion

Teaching and learning in the 21st century require the involvement of both parties (instructor and students) in the learning process. Tools such as wikis and blogs provide opportunities for this engagement. Research has shown that student engagement contribute to student retention and success.

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Research to Read (full article)

Motivations and Incentives to Teach Distance Education Courses

Stephanie Phillips, John Wood Community College

As a distance education administrator, one of the constant struggles is to maintain reliable faculty to teach online courses. Many times, adjunct faculty instead of tenured/non-tenured faculty are chosen to teach online offerings.

This study looks at the factors that motivate instructors, both adjunct and tenured/non-tenured faculty, to teach distance education courses and what incentives are needed in order to attract and retain instructors.

The findings in this study are very interesting. The study highlights both the similarities and differences between the motivators and incentives for both adjunct and tenured/non-tenured faculty.

To find out more, you can view the entire study [here](#).

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Designing an Effective Online Science Course Workshop (full article)

David Wilson, Parkland College

Parkland College's Natural Sciences (NS) and Distance and Virtual Learning (DVL) departments presented their third annual [Designing an Effective Online Science Course](#) workshop at Parkland on Friday, November 4. This was the largest and most successful of the workshops with instructors, administrators and instructional designers from as far away as Massachusetts, California, and Alaska. There was also a healthy contingent from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

There were a number of other successful features of the workshop. During the lunch hour, faculty from Parkland and other schools had an opportunity to share their distance course with others during our virtual poster session. Vendors had an opportunity to share what they have learned about the effectiveness of online science labs. And a number of concurrent workshops gave attendees the opportunity to dig deeper into the nuts and bolts of delivering online content, effectively communicating with students, engaging in productive assessments, and several other topics. Just before the conclusion of the workshop, attendees had an opportunity to share with everyone a tip or trick that they use in their own online course in a "Take 5" session.



One of our Alaskan friends was greeted with this specter on her return home from the conference.

The conversation throughout the day suggested that buy-in to distance education from faculty and administration is spreading but far from universal. Clearly, much still needs to be done through research and assessment to tout the merits of distance education. Please see our [blog](#) for more on this topic and to discuss other aspects of distance education.

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Web Site Watch (full article)

Guidelines for Open Educational Resources (OER) in Higher Education

Jeff Newell, Illinois Community College Board

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has published the new document *Guidelines for Open Educational Resources (OER) in Higher Education* to encourage "governments and institutions to invest in the systematic production, adaptation and use of OER and to bring them into the mainstream of higher education in order to improve the quality of curricula and teaching and to reduce costs." The guidelines are broken down by higher education stakeholders (governments, institutions, academic staff, and student bodies), providing suggestions for how OER can be promoted and developed.

The guidelines are available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002136/213605E.pdf>.

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Tech Tool Talk (full article)

Screen Sharing: Join.me and Jing

Stephanie Fortney and Susan Harmon, Waubensee Community College

It is common knowledge that not all online students are “tech savvy”. Providing technical assistance to students over the phone can be difficult at times. In some cases, the student contacts the tech support help desk, but has a difficult time describing the issue he/she is experiencing. The student cannot progress with her/his online course work without a resolution. Adding further to the challenge, many online students do not have the ability to come to campus for assistance, or they are working on a desktop versus a laptop.

One option for working around this issue is screen sharing. Here are two screen sharing applications that can be very useful when trying to assist online students with technical issues: **Join.me** is a screen sharing application that allows users to instantly share their computer screen with up to 250 viewers. It allows users to share control of the screen, chat and send files. There is also a mobile app available for the iPad or iPhone and Android.

Jing is an application that allows users to instantly capture and share an image or video of their computer screen with anyone. Images and videos can be shared by email or instant messaging. Users can also edit images and add audio to videos. An example of how this could be employed is showing a student how to turn off a pop-up blocker in a browser. You could capture an image or video on your computer showing students exactly where to find the pop-up blocker in a browser and how to turn it off.

Both applications are easy to use, free, and require little or no software to be downloaded to a computer.

Links

<https://join.me/>

<http://www.techsmith.com/jing/>

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