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JNCHC

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In This Issue

TECHNOLOGY IN HONORS

With Essays By:

BOB SPURRIER

JON A. SCHLENKER

DON TUCKER

NANCY TENHET,
JUANITA FLANDERS,
JEANNE WELLS COOK, AND
MARGARET JANE STAUBLE

A. MIDORI ALBERT AND
KATHERINE M. BRUCE

AND A DOZEN
"SHORT PIECES"

A PUBLICATION OF THE



NATIONAL COLLEGIATE
HONORS COUNCIL



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A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

TECHNOLOGY IN HONORS

JOURNAL EDITORS

ADA LONG

DAIL MULLINS

RUSTY RUSHTON

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

The National Collegiate Honors Council is an association of faculty, students, and others interested in honors education. *Donzell Lee*, **President**, Alcorn State University; *Norm Weiner*, **President-Elect**, State University of New York at Oswego; *Virginia McCombs*, **Vice President**, Oklahoma City University; *Liz Beck*, **Executive Secretary/Treasurer**, Iowa State University; *Rosalie Otero*, **Immediate Past President**, University of New Mexico. **Executive Committee:** *Ronald Brandolini*, Valencia Community College; *Kate Bruce*, University of North Carolina, Wilmington; *Celeste Campbell*, Oklahoma State University; *Ashley Carlson*, Chapman University; *Bruce Carter*, Syracuse University; *Adam D'Antonio*, Long Island University, C. W. Post; *Lydia Daniel*, Hillsborough Community College; *Michael Gale*, University of Florida; *Maggie Hill*, Oklahoma State University; *Tolulope Olowomeye*, Ball State University; *Sophia Ortiz*, Long Island University, Brooklyn; *Nancy Poulson*, Florida Atlantic University; *Jack Rhodes*, The Citadel; *Ricki Shine*, SUNY Buffalo; *Charlie Slavin*, University of Maine; *John Zubizarreta*, Columbia College.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council is a refereed periodical publishing scholarly articles on honors education. The journal uses a double-blind peer review process. Articles may include analyses of trends in teaching methodology, articles on interdisciplinary efforts, discussions of problems common to honors programs, items on the national higher education agenda, and presentations of emergent issues relevant to honors education. Submissions may be forwarded in hard copy, on disk, or as an e-mail attachment. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to: Ada Long / JNCHC / UAB Honors Program / HOH / 1530 3rd Avenue South/Birmingham, AL 35294-4450 / Phone: (205) 934-3228 / Fax: (205) 975-5493 / E-mail: adalong@uab.edu.

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March 1 (for spring/summer issue); September 1 (for fall/winter issue).

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER MULLINS

CALL FOR PAPERS

The next issue of JNCHC (deadline: March 1, 2003) is a general interest issue on various honors-related topics.

The *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* is now accepting submissions for the Fall/Winter 2003-2004 issue, which will focus on the broad theme "Multi-perspectivism in Honors." We are interested in articles that explore the value of, as well as the challenges surrounding, multi-perspectivism as a topic or means of study, as a feature of student and/or faculty population, and as a goal of admissions, scholarships, and extracurricular programs and activities.

The deadline for submission is September 1, 2003.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. We prefer to receive material by e-mail attachment, but will also accept disk or hard copy. We will not accept material by fax.
2. The documentation style can be whatever is appropriate to the author's primary discipline or approach (MLA, APA, etc.), but please avoid footnotes. Internal citation is preferred; end notes are acceptable.
3. There are no minimum or maximum length requirements; the length should be dictated by the topic and its most effective presentation.
4. Accepted essays will be edited for grammatical and typographical errors and for obvious infelicities of style or presentation. Variations in matters such as "honors" or "Honors," "1970s" or "1970's," and the inclusion or exclusion of a comma before "and" in a list will usually be left to the author's discretion.
5. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to:

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DEDICATION



BOB SPURRIER

Although humble about his role as a technology guru, Bob Spurrier has been a persistent and essential leader toward multiple uses of technology within the NCHC and thus in honors education generally. He produced NCHC's first teleconference in 1989. In 1993, he was appointed chair of the Teleconferencing and Distance Learning Committee, which soon evolved into the Technology and Distance Learning Committee. In 1995, he initiated the NCHC Satellite Seminars that became an annual offering by NCHC and, starting in 2001, have become a joint production with Phi Theta Kappa. He has been a steadfast promoter, supporter, and consultant for many further initiatives, including the NCHC listserv, web site, and various teleconferences. His essay in this issue of JNCHC outlines the history of technology within NCHC, often minimizing but nevertheless demonstrating Bob's role in keeping our organization up to date in the rush toward technological innovation. Bob has performed other services for NCHC—initiating and implementing the annual “Developing in Honors” sessions at our conferences, organizing the 1998 NCHC conference in Chicago, leading a major constitutional revision during his presidency in 1999—and he also keeps his day job at Oklahoma State University, where he is Director of the Honors College and Professor of Political Science. We are grateful to Bob for all his contributions to honors education, and, in special recognition of his leadership in technology, we dedicate this issue to him with respect and affection.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

DAIL MULLINS

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

Welcome to the “Technology in Honors” issue of the *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council*.

A quarter century ago the word “technology” was used almost exclusively in a generic sense to refer to the application of knowledge to solve problems, usually of a material nature, having to do with improved control and/or modification of the physical environment. Typically included in this meaning were, for instance, industrial processes, transportation, medical procedures, and the harvesting of natural resources; if the term was associated with academia at all, it was usually in the fields of engineering and medical research.

All of this changed, of course, with the arrival of the desktop computer in the late 70s and early 80s. With the subsequent development of the Internet and email, an explosion of ingenious software applications, the advent of real-time distance learning capabilities, and rapid improvements in the speed, reliability, and versatility of personal computers, the very meaning of the word and the concept of technology has undergone a revolution. Today, at least in academic settings (and much of the larger society), the word “technology” is typically understood to be synonymous with computers and their many applications in teaching, learning, and the management of information. Few people receiving this issue of *JNCHC* will have understood its theme to mean anything else.

In the opening essay of this issue, “Technology and the NCHC,” Bob Spurrier recounts some of the history of these matters within NCHC from his vantage point as the first chair of our organization’s (then termed) Teleconferencing and Distance Learning Committee. Beginning with a satellite video teleconference in 1989, beamed to 274 sites in forty-one states, Bob describes the evolution of that effort into the NCHC Satellite Seminar series (held annually from 1995 to the present), the advent and development of the organization’s valuable and (at times) lively “electronic bulletin board” (listserv), and our 1996 entry onto the World Wide Web.

In his article “Technology, Distance Education, and Honors,” Jon Schlenker, the current chair of the Technology and Distance Learning Committee, discusses the preliminary findings from a survey of NCHC member institutions conducted by his committee during the spring semester, 2002. Not surprisingly, this survey indicates that honors faculty and programs—like educational institutions generally—are quickly incorporating a variety of new technologies into both the pedagogical and administrative components of their structure. Jon then describes the efforts of his own institution, the University of Maine at Augusta, to offer its honors coursework to students “at a distance.”

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

On what might be described as a contrary note, Don Tucker, a mathematician at the University of Utah, flirts with his Luddite nature in a humorous essay entitled "The Pickup Truck, Being a Scholarly Paper on the Efficiencies Effected by Modern Technology." Readers who have ever lost a critical file to the gremlins of the aether, mistakenly sent an embarrassing email message to the wrong party, or been impolitely notified that they've performed an "illegal operation," will have something to recognize in Don's adventure with modern automotive technology. And he reminds us of the *real* value of duct tape, the Department of Homeland Security's advice notwithstanding!

The Internet, one research librarian has said, can be likened to a "giant information yard sale," with occasional gems of incalculable value scattered here and there amidst a wasteland of mostly useless junk, to which the phrase *caveat emptor* has perhaps never been more relevant. In "Collaborative Teaching of English and Information Literacy in the Community College Honors Program," librarians Nancy Tenhet and Margaret Jane Stauble, instructor Jeanne Cook, and Juanita Flanders, dean of learning resources, all of Hinds Community College in Mississippi, outline their cooperative effort to develop a new course to help their students deal with the growing complexity of technology and "...the overwhelming amount of resources in print and digital formats..." which have become available.

Focusing on one particular but powerful technological tool, the video web-board, A. Midori Albert and Katherine Bruce of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, describe their efforts to incorporate this device into their honors coursework, believing that its versatile capabilities are a good means of simultaneously addressing the many diverse learning styles of their students. "Introducing the Video Web-board as a Technologic Enhancement to Your Honors Course" offers readers a clear and concise overview of video web-board technology and a practical guide to its varied capabilities.

We close this issue with a dozen brief (~ 300 words) invited commentary pieces on various aspects of technology and its application in a variety of honors settings. Included are descriptions of programs in which instructional technology is already well-established, as well as some which are still in the process of implementing these tools; several specific technology-based course descriptions; and some reflective pieces on the pros and cons of technology in the classroom.

BOB SPURRIER

Technology and the NCHC

BOB SPURRIER

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

As an acknowledged “techno-peasant” (as my wife calls both of us), it is more than a little surprising to be thought of as a “techno-guru” (Ada Long’s terminology) within NCHC. Still, I have been around long enough to participate in a number of the technological advances that have been made by our organization.

SATELLITE TELECONFERENCING AND THE SATELLITE SEMINAR

Satellite video teleconferencing marked one of NCHC’s earliest ventures into the use of technology. Thanks to Bill Monroe (University of Houston, five-year chair of the NCHC Portz Fund Committee) and his colleagues on the committee, I received a Portz Fund grant to help underwrite NCHC’s first venture into teleconferencing. Anne Ponder, then NCHC President, and I hosted “The College Honors Program Opportunity” in 1989. Our goal was to increase awareness of the many opportunities available in college honors programs and to allay some of the fears about honors that often are based on incomplete or inaccurate information. Incorporating video clips from several NCHC institutions and a toll-free telephone number for interaction during the teleconference, we reached 274 sites (primarily high schools) in 41 states with this free broadcast.

In 1993 NCHC President Ron Link (Miami-Dade Community College) appointed a Teleconferencing and Distance Learning Technology Task Force that organized NCHC’s next effort with this technology. With NCHC Portz Fund grants assisting the honors programs at Southeast Missouri State University (Larry Clark) and Southwest Texas State University (Ronald Brown and Naymond Thomas), the “Innovations in Honors Programs” national video teleconference was broadcast in 1994. Receiving sites were arranged by 234 colleges, universities, and public school districts in 41 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico for this teleconference that was jointly sponsored by the Great Plains Honors Council and the NCHC Task Force on Teleconferencing and Distance Learning Technology. Once again we included video clips from a number of NCHC institutions, and we featured a 1993 NCHC Portz Scholar (Susan Browning, Utah State University) in one of the “live” portions of the teleconference. Honors student video competition winners’ work also was included. We concluded the broadcast with an invitation from NCHC President-Elect Ada Long (University of Alabama at Birmingham) to the NCHC conference in San Antonio (a bit of “NCHC advertising”). In addition to the Portz Fund grants, funding was provided by NCHC, the Great Plains Honors Council, Southeast Missouri State

TECHNOLOGY AND THE NCHC

University, and Oklahoma State University—an early example of a cooperative venture to produce a teleconference.

Oklahoma State University hosted the NCHC Summer Honors Forum (“Moving into the 21st Century”) in 1994, out of which came an issue of *Forum for Honors* (the predecessor of the *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council*). The Summer Forum was attended by thirty-five participants eager to discover what the future might hold in terms of technology and honors. In addition to several presenters from Oklahoma State, sessions were presented by Elizabeth Anne Viau, California State University-Los Angeles (“Technology and Education: The Future is Now”); Bill Robinson, University of Nevada-Las Vegas (“Enhancing Honors Learning with Computers: From Novices to Network Surfers”); and John Splaine, University of Maryland-College Park (“Critical Viewing—Stimulant to Critical Thinking”). Splaine also presented information on the “C-SPAN in the Classroom” program that allows educators to use off-the-air videotapes of C-SPAN broadcasts as well as providing access to the extensive C-SPAN video archives. This Summer Forum allowed participants to explore ways in which technology could be used in honors programs, and it also gave an opportunity to brainstorm about the possibility of a “satellite seminar” as an NCHC event.

NCHC’s first Satellite Seminar, “Resolving Disputes in a Contentious World,” was broadcast in the 1995 fall semester. This NCHC project involved a total of twenty-seven colleges and universities that paid a subscription fee (to underwrite the production costs) and developed their own honors courses or other activities around the theme. E-mail communication among participants was encouraged, and once again live interaction with the on-camera presenters was provided via a toll-free telephone number. The Satellite Seminar was rated as a great success by the participants, and it was decided that NCHC should move ahead to make it an annual event.

Also in 1995 the Task Force became the Technology and Honors Committee (a standing committee), demonstrating NCHC’s willingness to embrace the use of technology in the honors experience. This committee currently is designated the Technology and Distance Learning Committee (chaired by Jon Schlenker, University of Maine at Augusta).

In 1996 NCHC was joined by Phi Theta Kappa (Billy Wilson) as a co-sponsor of the Satellite Seminar at the suggestion of Ann Dempsey (St. Louis Community College, Florissant Valley) who also was an on-camera presenter that year, and in 1997-1999 Celeste Campbell (Oklahoma State) took over from me as coordinator of NCHC’s Satellite Seminar efforts. There was a one-year “vacation” in 2000 when OSU determined that we could no longer handle the responsibility of coordinating the Satellite Seminar and no other institution came forward to take on the role. In 2001 NCHC and Phi Theta Kappa agreed on an arrangement by which Phi Theta Kappa would take over the management of the Satellite Seminar as a joint venture with NCHC. The Satellite Seminar has continued to be a success—with more than 200 participating institutions in the each of the last two years. By way of chronology, the topics covered by the Satellite Seminar have been:

1995 - Resolving Disputes in a Contentious World

1996 - The Arts: Landscape of Our Times

BOB SPURRIER

1997 - Family: Myth, Metaphor, and Reality

1998 - The Pursuit of Happiness: Conflicting Visions and Values

1999 - The New Millennium: The Past as Prologue

2001 - Customs, Traditions, and Celebrations: The Human Drive for Community

2002 - The Dimensions and Directions of Health: Choices in the Maze

In addition to Billy Wilson, thanks go to Rod Risley, Mike Watson, Nell Ewing, and Jennifer Dockstader at the national headquarters of Phi Theta Kappa for their efforts that make the Satellite Seminar an ongoing venture.

One technological step that NCHC has not yet been able to take was suggested in the 1990 winter issue of *The National Honors Report*. A live satellite transmission of portions of our national conference to those who cannot attend in any given year could make it possible for almost all members of our organization to participate in at least a part of the largest undertaking of NCHC.

THE NCHC “ELECTRONIC BULLETIN BOARD” <LISTSERV>

Another technology employed by NCHC was the “electronic bulletin board,” or listserv, housed at George Washington University that was announced in the 1992 fall issue of *The National Honors Report* by David Grier (George Washington University), Bill Mech (then NCHC Executive Secretary/Treasurer and honors director at Boise State University), and David Mowry (State University of New York at Plattsburgh). Starting small at a time when not many honors directors had e-mail access, the list has grown to 539 members—and it has become an indispensable tool for communication among honors professionals. By way of additional institutional history, the 1993 fall issue of *The National Honors Report* contained a suggestion by Len Zane (University of Nevada-Las Vegas) that a directory of e-mail addresses be compiled, and the 1994 winter issue included a list of 19 e-mail addresses. The 1994 spring issue appears to have been the first to include an e-mail address along with an author’s name.

Recent examples of the utility of the listserv include queries and spirited responses on ways to compensate honors faculty and the impact of Advanced Placement and concurrent-enrollment college classes on honors programs and colleges. Rather than being isolated at our respective colleges and universities, we can obtain instant assistance from our colleagues across the nation when an honors issue arises. Interestingly enough, both “old timers” and relative novices in honors education post both questions and responses—to the benefit of all of their colleagues.

In addition to the posting of queries on specific topics, the listserv also is used for NCHC business. National conference program chairs solicit members’ opinions about the shape of the conference, volunteers for “Developing in Honors” workshop panels are sought each year, and information about conference events is provided. This issue of the *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* is in part the result of Editor Ada Long’s use of the listserv to solicit brief descriptions about how technology is being used in honors education.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE NCHC

If you do not already subscribe to the NCHC listserv, let me encourage you to do so. To subscribe to the honors listserv, send an e-mail message to <listserv@hermes.circ.gwu.edu>. The command to subscribe is: "SUB HONORS your name". Replace "your name" with your actual name. E-mail this command to <listserv@hermes.circ.gwu.edu>. You should receive a prompt e-mail response that includes instructions about posting items to the list and other list-related matters.

Let it appear that everything on the listserv is of a serious nature, I must confess to having once posted a message directing colleagues to <<http://perp.com/whale/>> to view the "infamous exploding whale" web site. (You have to see it to believe it.) Reference to this site (still in existence) brings me to discussion of the technology of the World Wide Web.

NCHC AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

The advent of the World Wide Web provided another technological venue for NCHC. Susanna Finnell (NCHC conference program chair and then honors director at Texas A&M University) announced a web site for the upcoming San Francisco conference in the 1996 spring issue of *The National Honors Report*. In the same issue Chris Dent and Ed Gubar drew attention to the fact that the Indiana University Honors Division was hosting a web server with an NCHC home page.

Thanks to Gayle Barksdale at the NCHC Headquarters, then located at Radford University, the NCHC web site at <<http://www.nchchonors.org>> has expanded and improved over the intervening years. The 2003 version of the NCHC home page on the Web contains information about NCHC's mission statement and benefits of membership, rosters of NCHC committees, a calendar of events, national conference information (including on-line registrations for some conference events), a link to the Honors Semesters and another link to the Satellite Seminar, information about the *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* and *The National Honors Report* (including a link to its archives at Tennessee Technological University (where Connie Hood is honors director), a link to the NCHC Student Concerns web site (created by Morgan Goot, State University of New York at Pottsdam), job listings in honors, and links to the web sites of member institutions and regional honors councils as well as links to major scholarships' web sites.

At the time I am writing this article the NCHC web page includes an announcement of the winners in the 2002 elections and address information for the new NCHC Headquarters at Iowa State University. There also is a link that allows members to purchase the third edition of *Peterson's Honors Programs and Colleges* edited by Joan Digby (Long Island University – C. W. Post Campus) and recognition of President Constantine Papadakis of Drexel University as the recipient of the second annual NCHC Presidential Leadership Award.

At the 1998 NCHC conference (also in Chicago) we employed for the first time a live computer connection to the World Wide Web as part of several sessions in which presenters demonstrated the use of computer technology in their honors programs and colleges. Numerous other sessions, before and since 1998, have used personal computers in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, the costs for computer

BOB SPURRIER

equipment at conference hotels have become astronomical, and the desire for such equipment frequently exceeds the parameters of the conference budget. As more faculty and students become adept with computer technology, it would seem that this will continue to be a challenge for conference program chairs well into the future.

LOOKING AHEAD

Just as one may assume that Gutenberg's contemporaries did not completely anticipate the changes his printing innovations would bring to the world, it seems reasonable to speculate that we will continue to see exciting and unanticipated ways in which technology and honors can advance together. Honors faculty and administrators espouse the goal of helping their students prepare to be "lifelong learners" to adapt to an ever-changing world. To heed our own advice we must be willing to be the "learners" when it comes to new technologies and new applications of existing ones—lest we become this century's "academic dinosaurs" who cling to the old way of doing things until we become extinct. The challenge, of course, is to retain the crucial aspects of an honors education while embracing the technology available to us. As the articles and brief summaries of technology utilization in this issue of the *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* demonstrate, honors programs and colleges are making extensive use of technology to advance the honors endeavor. The 21st Century is upon us, and clearly many of our honors colleagues are willing to lead us into what promises to be an exciting millennium.

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Technology, Distance Education, and Honors

JON A. SCHLENKER

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT AUGUSTA

INTRODUCTION

Few people would deny the advancements that have occurred in educational technology in recent decades. Scarcely a generation has passed since educators have gone from 16-mm projectors, slide projectors, overhead projectors, and opaque projectors to video players, DVD players, computers, and power-point presentations in the classroom. Indeed, for many teachers these “modern” technologies have become “traditional” and indispensable classroom features.

This “educational technology revolution” has likewise been extended to the offering of honors courses in honors programs and honors colleges across the country. The preliminary results of a survey of member institutions of the National Collegiate Honors Council, conducted by the NCHC’s Technology and Distance Education Committee during the spring semester 2002, indicated that of the 139 colleges and universities responding, 102 (73.4%) reported utilizing technology in the delivery of their honors courses.

Again, a preliminary review of the survey data showed that there is a wide range of technology employed in the delivery of honors courses: from the standard to the complex. Since the survey questions were open-ended, the responses were not specific enough to allow for solid conclusions. Nevertheless, the 102 honors programs/honors colleges reporting the use of technology in the delivery of honors courses did identify several educational technologies as the most popular.

Forty-five of the 102 (44.1%) honors programs/colleges utilized personal computers, specifically PowerPoint, in presenting course content. The next popular technology involved web sites/web pages designed to include course syllabi and course materials (31 respondents or 30.4%). E-mail to communicate with course participants was listed by 30 schools (29.4%). Various other technologies were used to facilitate discussions about course topics: “Blackboard” (27 respondents or 26.5%); listserv (8 respondents or 7.8%); chat rooms (5 respondents or 4.9%).

Honors programs/colleges also employed the internet with on-line (internet-based) courses (12 respondents or 11.8%); courses via Web CT (10 respondents or 9.8%); and accessing the internet for course resources (15 respondents or 14.7%).

Other technologies included VCR, CD, and DVD players (29 respondents or 28.4%); interactive television (5 respondents or 4.9%); and document cameras (2 respondents or 2.0%) to deliver course materials. And four respondents (3.9%)

TECHNOLOGY, DISTANCE EDUCATION, AND HONORS

identified their subscriptions to the NCHC/Phi Theta Kappa Satellite Seminar Series as a use of technology.

Finally, fifteen honors programs/colleges reported that multimedia or “smart” classrooms were available for their faculty to present courses. In these situations, a combination of educational technologies is available in the classroom. Typically, a “smart” classroom would include computers that are internet connected, personal computers, VCRs, DVD players, CD players, document camera, overhead projector, slide projector – or any combination of these.

TECHNOLOGY AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

Besides the application of educational technologies to deliver honors courses on campus, the possibility or necessity exists for some honors programs/colleges to offer their courses to students at a distance. The occurrence of distance education in higher education in the United States has increased markedly in the past fifteen years. About one-fourth of the accredited colleges and universities in the U.S. are presently providing some form of distance education to students, ranging from individual courses (credit or non-credit) to entire degrees (Connick, 1999). The *Peterson's Guide to Distance Learning Programs* listed nearly 900 accredited schools offering courses and programs in the U.S. and Canada.

The concept of “distance education” has historically had several meanings. Some people preferred the term “distance learning,” which tended to focus on the end product (“learning”) of distance education (Willis, 1993). Others used the term “distributed education,” especially when referring to computer-based courses where collaboration and “virtual interaction” among students was intended (McMahan, 1998). Most commonly, however, the term “distance education” implied a physical separation between the teacher and the student, involving distance teaching as well as distance learning.

Compared to campus-based delivery of courses, educating students at a distance involves several options that are not location-bound, limited by space, limited by time, and limited by curriculum. As a result, there are different levels of delivery – each one characterized by increasing use of technology and innovation (Connick, 1999).

For many years, correspondence courses have been available to students away from a campus (Saba, 1999). The older correspondence methods consisted of packaged print materials that would usually contain a textbook, study guides, course materials, and assignments. Later, pre-produced telecourses were developed to add a more visual component to distance education, and these courses were broadcast over public television (Moore, 1990). More recently, audiotapes, videotapes, and CD-ROM (computer-based instruction) have been added to off-campus education offerings.

Technological developments have created other educational possibilities. Audio-conferencing uses a telephone bridge to connect a number of lines at the same time (“real time” or synchronous) on a single telephone line.

As more people have become familiar with electronic mail (E-mail), this mode of communication has become an important component of distance education (McMahan, 1998). With E-mail, a listserv (mailing list) can be set up in which

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participants subscribe to the service. This mechanism has the advantage of connecting people at a greater distance with minimum difficulty.

Another method of distance education is computer conferencing, which permits either synchronous (at the same time) or asynchronous (at different times) communication capability (Connick, 1999). A web-based bulletin board system on the World-Wide Web can be established and once established, provide relatively easy access via browsers such as Explorer or Netscape. Software is now available to produce graphics, photos, print material, and "form-based" surveys which allow participants to fill in text, respond to polls, or click in answers. Also, software enables students to interact with the teacher and other students.

Video-conferencing is another possibility (Van Dusen, 1997), in which a television monitor with a camera mounted on it enables participants to see and hear one another. Additionally, desk-top video-conferencing allows participants to see one another and to work on the same file.

The most technologically complex level of distance education at present is interactive television (Vincent and Vincent, 1996). This technology is a closed-system (using microwave and/or fiber optic cable) or a satellite system (relying on an up-link and down-link connection). Depending on the system, the connection can be one-way video with two-way audio or two-way video with two-way audio.

When developing a specific distance education system, it is possible for a college or university to use any of these methods independently or in combination. Of course, the particular system is dependent on the needs, and available resources, of the institution and its participants.

According to the NCHC survey, twenty-three (16.5%) of the 139 responding honors programs/colleges indicated that they participate in distance education. Of the twenty-three, nine offer courses via the internet and seven use interactive television; compressed video, video-conferencing, satellite courses, and E-mail are also used to deliver honors courses to students at a distance. Only two institutions reported offering all of their honors requirements to students at a distance: Eastern Oregon University and The University of Maine at Augusta.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT AUGUSTA'S EXPERIENCE WITH OFFERING ITS HONORS PROGRAM TO STUDENTS AT A DISTANCE

Since 1987, when The University of Maine at Augusta (U.M.A.) began its statewide instructional telecommunications system, the Honors Program at U.M.A. has been delivering its honors courses to students throughout the state of Maine. The telecommunications delivery system is now known as University College of the University of Maine System, and the seven campuses of the university system provide courses, programs, and teachers. The University of Maine at Augusta permits students the opportunity to study for U.M.A. undergraduate certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees, while the other six campuses support their own bachelor's and master's degrees.

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University courses are delivered to over 100 locations throughout Maine. These locations include the seven campuses, ten university centers, seven technical colleges, and scores of off-campus sites. Also, U.M.A. has two programs (A.S. and B.S.) in library information technology that are available entirely on the internet, with students worldwide. Consequently, any student matriculated in one of U.M.A.'s associate or bachelor's degree programs, and who is accepted into the Honors Program, is able to complete honors requirements regardless of location.

Access to courses at a distance is accomplished by way of a variety of delivery mechanisms. Most U.M.A. distant courses are broadcast over the statewide interactive television (ITV) system. Technologically, courses on the ITV system are broadcast from the campus to the receive locations via point-to-point microwave and fiber optic cable. The system involves one-way video and two-way audio transmission. Students communicate with the instructor during the class time by telephone, and the broadcast classroom can entertain four calls simultaneously. Also, the telephone system includes phone bridge capability, which allows up to twenty-six students from distant locations to be placed in discussion groups.

Another technological delivery system for courses is the compressed video (CV). CV permits two-way video and two-way audio between locations, but only between university campuses and the University College in Bangor.

The university also offers online courses. These computer-based courses are available over the Internet to anyone who has access to a computer that is connected to the Internet. As such, these web-based courses are asynchronous.

Further, many distance education courses use the Internet for communication, research, and information resources. Computer conferencing ("Blackboard," "First Class," Web CT), E-mail, and the World-Wide Web are available for faculty and students. Some courses use prerecorded videotapes for part or all of the course material. And still other courses employ multimedia, where streaming video and/or audio technology enable the students to view and/or listen to the class on a multimedia PC connected to the Web.

Therefore, although offering the entire U.M.A. Honors Program to students statewide represents a challenge, honors faculty have been able to adapt their courses effectively to match the capability of the various types of technology.

The University of Maine at Augusta has three campuses (Augusta, Bangor, Lewiston) where students may take honors courses on-site. All faculty and students associated with honors courses on-campus have access to computer conferencing, E-mail, PCs with Powerpoint, Internet connection, VCRs, DVD and CD players, overhead projectors, slide projectors, and telephone conferencing: in other words, the "smart classroom" described earlier.

U.M.A. students who do not take classes on the three campuses have the option of driving to a university center, where there is a combination of on-site instruction and distance education courses, or to an extended site where there are only distance education courses. Sometimes honors courses are scheduled on-site at centers, but most often the honors courses are received off-campus via ITV or the Internet.

The U.M.A. Honors Program requires a minimum of fifteen semester hours for associate degree students and a minimum of twenty-one semester hours for bachelor's

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degree students. HON 300: Critical Thinking and Writing is the foundation course in both degree sequences. This course is offered every spring semester over the ITV system, with a class size limit of 35 students.

The second course in the honors sequence is HON 301: Honors Colloquium. When offered as an honors course at a distance, HON 301 is cross-listed with a regularly scheduled course, such as Psychology of Human Development, which is listed as PSY 308/HON 301 in the course guide. Students in the honors program register for the honors option, and the course requirements for the honors students are altered to reflect honors-level effort. HON 301 distance education courses may be ITV, compressed video, or web-based courses.

For associate degree honors students, at least six semester hours of elective honors courses and, for bachelor's degree honors students, at least twelve semester hours of elective honors courses are required. For these elective requirements, whether on-campus or off-campus, honors program students may satisfy the requirements through a variety of means. More HON 301 courses may be taken, honors independent studies may be pursued, honors readings courses may be developed (especially in conjunction with the NCHC Satellite Seminar topics), honors international/intercultural experiences and service learning experiences may be granted credit, or students may waive three honors elective credits by completing 45 hours of documented voluntary community service. For many of these options, technology facilitates the educational process: ITV, CV, the Internet, computer conferencing, telephone conferencing, E-mail, satellite up-link and down-link.

For each honors student a capstone experience is required: a project for associate degree students (HON 210) and a senior thesis (HON 410) or leadership seminar (HON 401) for bachelor's degree students. A mentor is matched with the student for the project and senior thesis, depending upon the nature of the topic. All honors program students are encouraged to take the leadership seminar, but it may be used to satisfy one of the capstone experience requirements as well. Besides being scheduled on campus, the leadership seminar is also offered to distant students using compressed video between campuses (two-way video, two-way audio). There are also faculty at the various CV locations to facilitate discussions, exercises, and projects.

CONCLUSION

For administrators and faculty in higher education today the question no longer is whether the relationship between technology and distance education will continue, but rather what form that relationship will take in the future. And when the relationship is extended to honors programs, those colleges and universities that desire or need to present their honors courses and programs to students at a distance are only limited by their resources (human and financial), creativity, and imagination. As The University of Maine at Augusta has demonstrated, the honors experience can be made available to off-campus students through the use of technology in an effective and efficient manner.

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The Pickup Truck Being A Scholarly Paper on the Efficiencies Effected by Modern Technology

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Sometime last spring, Dr. Bill¹ bought a two-year-old pickup truck from one of his patients who is a used car dealer. Dr. Bill² and I are hunting and fishing buddies, and the pickup seemed a good idea for towing a boat and such things. The pickup has an extended cab where my chocolate lab girl-dog can ride on our outings. I asked if the truck could be repaired with bailing wire and spit. He said one might also need a roll of duct tape since friction tape was hard to find these days. I said that I thought he'd made a good choice, as this high tech stuff makes me a bit uneasy.

One Tuesday this fall during a brief lull at his office, the good doctor remembered it was the birthday of his lovely bride of nearly thirty-five years and he had not yet acquired the obligatory expression of his affection and high esteem. As there is a shopping mall just down the street from his surgery, during his lunch break he drove there in his truck and did the necessary things. Upon returning to the truck he found that the engine would turn over, but it would not fire up. After some moments of frustration, he called his older sister, now retired, to come with her car and afford him transport in his efforts to make the situation aright.

He was reasonably certain that it might start if only he could obtain a can of starting fluid to spray into the carburetor, so they began a search for such. Since it was early fall, shops had not yet stocked up on wintertime products, and they were nearly three hours in finding a vendor with a can left over from the last season. They returned to the parking lot, Dr. Bill³ popped the hood, and he discovered that his truck is fuel injected and has no carburetor into which he might spray his hard come-by ether. Like so many in his profession, Dr. Bill⁴ has many patients, but very little in the way of patience. It was not a good day at the mall.

1. Beaugard Camille Louie La Fayette Marie de la Poussin Boudreaux, which is why we call him Bill

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. Ibid

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A younger man who was walking past with his lady noted the frustrated physician and offered to help. The offer was readily accepted. Upon looking under the hood, the young man noted a small 2-inch-square decal which instructed that should the engine refuse to start, one should check the fuel shut-off valve and please see the instruction manual. The manual directed that the fuel shut-off valve was located behind the kick panel on the passenger side in the cabin and had a reset button which one might press to make things all better. The younger man found the button, pressed it, and Dr. Bill⁵ inserted his key in the ignition, and the truck roared into life.

As it happens, I had purchased a previously owned pickup of the same make as his just a couple of weeks earlier and, being aware of this, Bill called me that evening to tell me about the fuel interrupt switch. He was a bit peeved to learn that my used car salesman had warned me about it and his had not mentioned the matter to him. We did, however, determine that we should take his Boston Whaler boat to Pelican Lake⁶ two weekends hence, fish on Friday and hunt ducks on Saturday, that being the opening day for duck hunting. We agreed to leave on Thursday, drive to Vernal,⁷ spend the night, drive to the lake early Friday and fish for bass, crappie and blue gills. Pelican Lake is one of the few places in our state where one can do this.

We reached the lake without mishap. There were hundreds of waterfowl on the surface, a sight that pleased the good doctor no end. He drove off the tarmac twice watching the birds rather than the road. I suggested it would be just our luck that they were all coots. Bill stopped the truck, took out his seventeen-hundred-dollar Swarovski binocs and scanned the lake. He then announced that I was only about ninety percent correct. Some of the birds were not black. I didn't have the heart to tell him that sea gulls are not black.

He parked near the boat ramp, and we readied the boat for launching. We removed the cover, put our gear, coolers and the dog in the boat, and were ready to launch. Bill got in the truck, the engine turned over, but it didn't start. Bill was irritated, but still cheerful as he knew what the problem was this time. He ripped out the panel on the right side of the truck cabin, we looked in the manual, identified the inertial fuel cut off switch and found that the red reset button had not been tripped.

That did not bode well.

I took the point of my Swiss Army knife and tripped it, then reset it. The engine would not start. Bill was no longer cheerful. He got the vice-grips from the tool box on the boat and removed the self-tapping-hex-headed metal screws with which the switch was attached. We unplugged the electrical connection from the bakelite switch, took a paperclip and jumped from one side of the connection to the other.

The truck still didn't have any love for us.

We sat, nursed coffee from my thermos and worked on our gloom.

An old couple came up the boat ramp with a bucket of fish and inquired⁸ as to the nature of our problem. They remarked that they were going to Roosevelt⁸ and one

5. Ibid

6. a small man-made reservoir fourteen miles west of Vernal

7. a small town on the eastern edge of Utah

8. a smaller town fourteen miles west of Pelican Lake

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of us could go along by riding in the camper on the back of their aging truck. Bill climbed in and they were gone. Mocha⁹ and I remained with the equipment. Some four hours later a tow truck from the dealership in Roosevelt arrived with a driver/mechanic and the saw-bones inside.

The driver installed a new inertial fuel switch. No help.

He checked various things under the hood and some things in a box of computer-like chips near the battery box. He announced that they were not working properly and the only other help he could afford us was to tow us to the dealership in Roosevelt.

We enquired whether said purveyor of parts, products and services could check out the miscreant chips, and he assured us that they could do it first thing next Monday morning. I wondered aloud as to why they couldn't do it on a Friday, and he informed us that only one member of the service staff was trained in the use of the electronic diagnostic machines and that that person had left town on Thursday to go elk¹⁰ hunting. He would be back Monday morning, first thing.

Bill was quiet beyond description. We weren't going to go fishing, we weren't going to go duck hunting, and all our gear was in a motel in Vernal some thirty miles away.

I asked whether we could rent a car in Roosevelt and he said no, but we could rent one in Vernal. Swell.

Bill recovered his voice and asked if the driver could take us to Vernal. No, he couldn't because some hunter had to be towed out of the woods up on Pole Creek,¹¹ or some such place.

Was there a taxi service in Roosevelt?

Sorry.

Did he have anything to suggest?

Not really.

The tow truck deposited us, dog, pickup and boat in a gravel-covered lot behind the dealership and drove away. A man at the parts counter said that old so-and-so lived in Vernal and worked in Roosevelt, maybe he'd give us a ride when he got off work. The parts man made a 'phone call and said yes, old so-and-so¹² would pick us up at about 6:00 give or take twenty minutes.

He didn't.

At about 8:30, Bill started walking the street (there's only one so far as I could tell) to try to persuade someone to take us to Vernal. He eventually found a sandwich shop open and the young men assured him they couldn't help us as they were all working. Bill was the only other person in the establishment. Bill produced a crisp hundred dollar bill and one of the young men suddenly noticed that it was about time for his shift to end. A few minutes later he appeared in a car that had fenders of four different colors, no muffler and no glass in the driver's door.

We were off to Vernal!

9. above-mentioned chocolate lab girl-dog

10. a large animal of the deer (*Cervus canadensis*) family sometimes called wapiti

11. I just made that up; I don't remember the name he told us

12. Ibid, mutatis mutandis

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The young man recited the many adventures of his exciting life in Houston, Texas, the oil fields of somewhere, the intellectually taxing other jobs he had held in the past few years including the challenging one he now had at Arby's. Bill snuggled under Mocha in the back seat and the two of them dozed off in spite of the rousing bedtime story which was unfolding from the driver's seat.

Our enthusiastic driver proved his worth by finding the darkened used car lot about six miles east of Vernal where our rented sedan was left for us. We went to the motel, spent the night and subsequently returned to Salt Lake City¹³ in the rented car.

The following Monday evening, Dr. Bill called me at home. I asked if the truck was ready to be picked up, and he said it was. I asked what had been wrong with it, and he said there was nothing wrong with it. I asked whether he was going to explain then the reason for our adventures, and he said he'd rather not but supposed he should anyway.

It seems that many automotive products of recent vintage have a computer chip embedded in the handle of the ignition key. Without that chip/key, the onboard computers will not function. I said I knew that, which was a mistake on my part. While Bill was in the mall that Tuesday shopping for his wife, he had three extra keys made for the truck so that she and he could each have a key and a spare. The key maker didn't tell him about the required chip. Each of the adventures had occurred because Bill had inadvertently tried to use his spare key.

I suppose I should tell the end of the story about getting the rental car back to Vernal and picking up the truck and boat in Roosevelt while Bill was away in Rochester, New York,¹⁴ but I really think the additional excitement might not be good for an old man's heart.

I want my next truck to be one that can be repaired with bailing wire, duct tape and spit, one that can be hot-wired by this aging former junior high school boy.

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13. site of the 2002 national conference of the NCHC

14. a suburb of Oswego

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Collaborative Teaching of English and Information Literacy In the Community College Honors Program

NANCY TENHET

REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, RAYMOND CAMPUS

JUANITA FLANDERS

DISTRICT DEAN OF LEARNING RESOURCES

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

JEANNE WELLS COOK

INSTRUCTOR HONORS ENGLISH

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, RAYMOND CAMPUS

MARGARET JANE STAUBLE

LIBRARIAN

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, VICKSBURG BRANCH

“**T**he honors program, in distinguishing itself from the rest of the institution, serves as a kind of laboratory within which faculty can try things they have always wanted to try but for which they could find no suitable outlet. When such efforts are demonstrated to be successful, they may well become institutionalized, thereby raising the general level of education within the college or university for all students. In this connection, the honors curriculum should serve as a prototype for educational practices that can work campus-wide in the future.” (NCHC. “Basic Characteristics of a Fully-Developed Honors Program.” National Honors Report 22(7), 42-43)

INTRODUCTION

The increased complexity of technology and the overwhelming amount of resources in print and digital formats have created an exciting learning arena in which students can grow and develop. But, as teachers expect students to excel in

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this new environment, new approaches are continuously needed to bridge the gap between information resources and the classroom. Previous evaluation of the Honors students at Hinds Community College showed a need for additional training in research skills and in effective selection and evaluation of appropriate resources. To meet this need, a collaborative effort between the faculty of the English and Library departments was initiated for Honors students. The goal of the collaboration was to develop the information-gathering and critical-thinking skills of the students and to assist them with their class assignments and research needs. An ongoing evaluation of this collaborative program has led to revision and upgrading of instruction in literacy skills. In the future, the collaborative format may be considered for implementation among all students.

DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION LITERACY COURSE

The traditional bibliographic library orientation/tour used by most educational institutions does not necessarily meet the needs of the community college student. Historically, this has been more a tour of the facilities than instruction in information-gathering and critical-thinking skills needed for lifelong learning. In addition to their traditional roles, librarians are now helping students develop information literacy skills such as locating, accessing, evaluating, and utilizing information in the new online learning environment. In 1996, several of the librarians at Hinds Community College recognized a need and developed a semester-long credit course (*Information in the Electronic Age*) to teach community college students to use the variety of electronic and other library information resources available. The course has been offered at all six Hinds Community College locations. To increase the flexibility of the course, it was transferred into an electronic format using Blackboard software in fall 2000. This software is a web-based course management program enabling instructors to integrate assignments, quizzes, discussions, group work, and a real-time virtual classroom.

Course participants have included faculty, staff, traditional and non-traditional students, local residents, and retirees. Faculty participants have included the Director of the Honors Program at Hinds Community College, Kristi Sather-Smith, and several members of the Honors Program faculty.

COLLABORATION

In the spring of 2000, Kristi Sather-Smith approached the Learning Resources staff about the possibility of collaboratively teaching Honors English (*English Composition II*) and the information literacy course (*Information in the Electronic Age*). Ms. Sather-Smith envisioned the course, *Information in the Electronic Age*, as helping the Honors students effectively articulate their information needs, identify appropriate sources, and evaluate and cite resources retrieved. In addition, the course would help the students utilize the technological advances of today and to locate information digitally as well as in the traditional manner. This course would also free

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the English instructor to work more with literature and composition during the class period than teaching basic library skills.

By structuring the two courses to work together, units from both courses coincided for maximum benefit for the students. The Honors English instructor, Jeanne Cook, collaborated with the information literacy instructors so the students would immediately use the research skills learned in the information literacy class.

In the information literacy class, the literacy skills are taught prior to the presentation of the research assignments. Before periodical articles are needed, the unit on online periodical databases is taught and the students locate articles for their research topic. Literary databases such as *Contemporary Literary Criticism Select*, *DISCovering Authors*, and *Contemporary Authors* are demonstrated by the librarians and accessed by the students prior to literary criticism paper assignments.

In the English class, research skills are used in writing research papers and in learning more about assigned plays, novels, and short stories. The English instructor and librarians carefully coordinate their semester plans so that what was learned in one class can apply to the other. Thus, research skills are gradually and sequentially learned from simple skills to more complex tasks. For example, at the first of the semester upon finishing *Medea*, students are asked to find a book and critical article about the play and a book containing the play. This assignment applies what they had been learning about using the electronic catalog. A later writing task requires that the students argue a controversial topic. To do so, they use what they have learned in the information literacy course to help identify controversial topics, narrow them, and then locate information related to the topic. When students study literature, they find sources about the author, the author's times, and important ideas related to the literature; they also consult critical articles about the literature. Through research and discussion, students expand their appreciation of the literature. The course's culminating writing task—the research paper—requires them to consult the variety of ways of locating a wide range of sources and to incorporate what they have learned into a lengthy paper.

The paired classes have many advantages. The pairing provides additional time to study more literature in class since time that would ordinarily be spent on research techniques can be used for discussing reading assignments. Similarly, more time can be provided for more in-depth research techniques. Best of all is the opportunity to interrelate the two areas and thus expand students' knowledge of the subjects.

CONCLUSION

The effort to develop a collaborative relationship between Learning Resources Centers and Honors Programs represents a new way of working. For two years at Hinds Community College, the library staff has collaboratively taught *Information in the Electronic Age* with the Honors' *English Composition II*. This type of collaboration has allowed students to learn more about library resources and research strategies and has freed the English instructor to spend more class time on other areas.

The positive response of students to this collaborative effort leads us to believe that, even though this experiment was done with the Honors Program, the paired

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classes might be used successfully with other departments. The students have expressed appreciation for the close coordination and relevance of the two programs. The instructors feel that a broader spectrum of expertise has been used in planning and implementing the course and that the students have benefited from more faculty/student interaction.

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Introducing the Video Web-board as a Technologic Enhancement to Your Honors Course

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INTRODUCTION

Most instructors of honors courses strive to engage students in interactive, interdisciplinary and experiential learning. Small class sizes are almost universal, and discussion format is common. While no one learning style is common to all honors students, academically talented students tend to be intuitive learners; that is, they are abstract and insightful thinkers (Clark, 2000). They look for patterns and new relationships. Technology, such as multimedia and Internet resources, has been recommended as a pedagogical tool to enhance honors and non-honors teaching (Cooley & Johnston, 2001; Hagner & Barone, 2002; Lea, Clatyon, Draude, & Barlow, 2001; King, 1997), and here we describe ways to incorporate technology into the intuitive process.

There are several ways technology can contribute to learning. In general, incorporating websites and Internet research assignments provides a means to address multiple learning styles through myriad venues of presenting course content (Clark & Crockett, 2000; Grasha & Yangarber-Hicks, 2000; Hung, 2001). Course websites and Internet-based assignments allow students access to information that can be read, seen and heard, printed, and visited more than one time, for any length of time, through the use of text, digitized images, sound clips, digitized audio and or video clips, etc. Although professors may present course material in a variety of formats in class, such as lecture, discussion, overhead transparencies, slides, video and audio tapes and so forth, the benefit of course materials and assignments posted and/or processed online is that students can review the content as many times as they like for any length of time beyond the one-time offering in a classroom setting. For students who take a bit longer to process information, or who process information in unique ways, course materials posted online and Internet-based assignments are indeed an added bonus.

Technology in an honors class is meant to *add to* the experience of the class as opposed to *replacing* something. We believe teaching should drive the technology

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rather than having technology drive the teaching, a point supported by Pyle and Dziuban (2001). Instructional technology was not incorporated into our class simply because it was fancy or novel; we strongly believed it would engage students and encourage more in-depth reflections on course content. In our case, the video web-board was useful because it employs both visual and audio components and is used outside of class time. Thus, we capitalized on assignments that allowed the students *time* to think about opinions, reflect on impressions and convey their ideas. Students created their own video clips and reviewed those of other students. A critical feature was that the video clips could be viewed and reviewed. Whereas in a class discussion each person may not have a chance to comment on the topic, the use of technology allows each person the chance to participate after reflection. Further, each person has a chance to review what others in the group report; this allows more opportunity for reflection on individual comments than is possible in a more traditional seminar style course.

The specific content of the seminar was conducive to video web-board technology. We used the video web-board in an interdisciplinary sophomore level honors seminar entitled Anthropology of Human Sexuality, team-taught by a physical anthropologist (AMA) and an experimental psychologist (KEB). Because the subject matter of the class related to such an emotionally charged topic and required students to integrate several different perspectives and readings each week, we developed a way for students to “interact” with each other outside class, to hear opinions and conclusions about discussion topics, and summarize them. Topics in the seminar included evolutionary perspectives on mate choice, parenting, gender roles, and sexual orientation. Cultural and species similarities and differences were discussed. In honors and non-honors sections of Human Sexuality (a psychology course taught by KEB) and Physical Anthropology (an anthropology course taught by AMA), it is often the case that some students are reluctant to share their questions, comments and opinions about evolutionary theory and human sexuality topics in class. Even with a small seminar, we expected that there would be differing opinions and differing levels of comfort expressing questions and comments. Using the video web-board was a way to give all students equal voices, especially when topics were controversial. An added feature was the heavy use of the web to give assignments, review questions, and suggest additional readings (i.e., through a course website with an online syllabus). Appropriate Internet links to informational sites were provided via the class website, and students were urged to search related sites. As the Internet has been touted as an important, but sometimes unreliable, source of information about sexuality for teens and adults (e.g., Flowers-Coulson, Kushner, & Bankowski, 2000), we included discussion of ways to assess the validity of Internet sites.

METHOD

SAMPLE

We present features and characteristics of the novel video web-board technology as a pedagogical aid for honors courses based on our experiences in and

evaluation of a team-taught honors seminar: Anthropology of Human Sexuality. Ten sophomores were enrolled in this honors seminar elective; nine were female, one was male. Student majors were in the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities. While we recognize the sample size is small, we believe the student feedback was generally reflective of what a majority of students might experience. Moreover, our methods of teaching the course, and the way we designed and evaluated the video web-board assignments were no different than if the class size had been larger. Indeed, many of the points we discuss later would most likely be reinforced by a larger sample size.

VIDEO WEB-BOARD ASSIGNMENTS: DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Four video web-board projects were assigned over the course of a 17-week semester. One assignment was due roughly every three to four weeks. Each assignment was composed of two parts: (1) responses to an issue or question related to class topics, articulated in video format, and (2) written summaries discussing key points of each student's response. More specifically, each video web-board assignment entailed our proposing in class a discussion question based on recent topics presented in class, where one week's time was allotted for students to research information to be used in the response to the question posed (each student responded to the same question) and articulate their responses through a video recording. This was followed by one week's time to review other students' responses and submit a written summary of each person's key points through a discussion of similarities and differences. Thus, students had two week's time to complete two parts to each video web-board assignment.

A two-minute time limit was set for each student video web-board response, and each written summary was one to two pages in length. Students received separate written instructions for each of the four video web-board assignments, thoroughly explaining requirements for each part of the assignment, due dates, and examples of items to reflect upon. There was little to no student-professor confusion or misunderstanding concerning what was required and or how to go about completing the assignment.

Each video web-board assignment was scored according to both the student's development of the video clip and the written summaries. Assessment criteria for the video clips included how well the student addressed the question posed and adherence to the two-minute time limit. Grading was fairly lenient for the video clips as we did not want to imply a "performance" aspect to this part of the assignment. We were aware of the sensitive nature of the subject matter (human sexuality) and focused on recognizing effort rather than an abstract level of perfection in delivery *per se*. We assessed written summaries more stringently than the video clips, considering how well the student expressed key points made by other students, how well similarities and differences in responses were compared, whether or not the student included every other student's response (i.e., did the student view all video clips and understand the major theme of each one?), and how well the one- to two-page summary was written overall in terms of flow, continuity, and grammar.

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Four video web-board assignments accounted for 30% of the course grade. In designing a course using video web-board assignments, it is important to consider the workload for the overall course. The honors seminar we taught required, in addition to the above mentioned video web-board assignments, weekly written summaries of readings for class discussions (20% of the total grade), a mid-term essay examination (25%), and a final essay examination (25%). Thus, the four video web-board assignments together were worth more points than each of the other components of the course grade. We believe the strong effort and good quality work on the video web-board assignments resulted from this higher assigned point value, thus encouraging students to perceive the assignments as important and meaningful for understanding how both to express their own ideas and to observe and learn from others' ideas.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

We were fortunate to have the assistance of a campus computing consultant from our Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (UNCW). Students scheduled video recording appointments with the computing consultant, who then digitized the videos and posted them to our class website. It is noteworthy that, while a technical assistant was indeed helpful, it was not necessary. New low-cost computer hardware and software packages on the market today make the creation of individual video recordings quite feasible for college students and professors.

EVALUATING THE EFFICACY OF THE VIDEO WEB-BOARD AS A TECHNOLOGIC TEACHING TOOL

At the end of the semester, we conducted a brief evaluation of student perceptions of the effectiveness and likeability of the video web-board technology. All ten students completed subjective evaluation forms anonymously. The forms were composed of six questions, and a section at the end where students could add any extra comments. The six questions were as follows:

1. Did you find creating your own video clip an interesting addition to classroom discussions? Why/why not?
2. Did you like the video web-board? Why/why not?
3. Do you feel that viewing other students' video clips helped you see other points of view whereas you might not have during classroom discussions? Why/why not?
4. How would you assess the workload you put into the video web-board: light, moderate, heavy?
5. What aspect(s) of the video web-boards did you like the most and why?
6. What aspect(s) of the video web-boards did you like least and why?

RESULTS

STUDENTS' EVALUATION

Seven of the ten (70%) students agreed that the vide web-board assignments were "interesting." Student responses to question 1 included comments such as:

- "Yes, I enjoyed the different format and new form of expression"
- "Yes, it allowed me to see my reactions that I was not aware of, like gestures that demonstrated nervousness and uncomfortability [sic] discomfort"
- "I thought that it was an interesting feature because it was an interesting integration of technology in the class that I haven't seen done before."

Similarly, only two students (20%) did not like the video web-board technology while most liked the assignments. Comments to question 2 included:

- "Yes—nice change of pace"
- "Not really; I do not like being videoed and therefore I did not feel as free to discuss my opinions ad I did in class"
- "I did like the video web-boards...it gave me a chance to express myself"
- "Yes I thought it was interesting and an enjoyable opportunity"
- "Not personally. I don't enjoy being videotaped alone. It was very discomfoting"
- "Yes it is part of cutting edge technology but with a more personal note, more classes should incorporate it into the curriculum"

Only half of the students (5 of 10, 50%) deemed the video web-board technology and assignments as especially helpful for seeing the viewpoints of others (question 3). Thus, while some students thought the video web-board technology enabled them to better understand other student opinions on class subject matter, other students thought the video web-board assignments made no difference. Comments included:

- "Yes, I could see their facial expressions and hear their tone of voice after they had time to think about their responses"
- "In a way—I think that most of the points brought up in class were repeated a lot with the videos, but there were a few times when other points of view were introduced"
- Yes, because not everyone always expressed their opinions in our (class) discussions"
- "Not really. People basically repeated what had been said in class or in the readings"
- "Yeah—because it allowed me to hear others' opinions and relate them to my own"

Students also evaluated the "workload" of the video web-board assignments in question 4. While eight of the ten students rated the workload as moderate to heavy, this was not necessarily perceived as a negative quality, as seen in the comments:

- "Moderate. Video web-boards required of me to not only give my opinion, but also to support it with examples"

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- “Heavy—considering the time it takes to get there, rehearse to fit 2 minutes and paper and watching others”
- “Heavy—the heaviest part was trying to find time in my schedule to come out here and tape it—then the next week watch all of them and write a summary in addition to the readings and paper for that”
- “Heavy. I worked really hard to make the video concise and accurately corresponding to what I thought”

Comments for questions 5 and 6, addressing what aspects of the video web-board concept or assignments were liked most and least, respectively, are presented in the following table:

VIDEO WEB-BOARD STUDENT ASSESSMENT: QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK FROM QUESTIONS 5 AND 6 ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS LIKED AND DISLIKED

Aspects liked	Number mentioning aspect*
Novelty, “cool” factor	3
Seeing what others had to say, even if in disagreement	2
Chance to reflect on topics, beyond the classroom	1
Chance to reflect on topics in a different way than in the classroom	1
Provoked a different type of thought from standard in-class questions	1
Performance—fun	1
Liked viewing facial expressions, people talking	1
Privacy, no pressure from others in a classroom	1
Aspects disliked	
Having to write summaries in addition to watching the videos	3
Workload, assignment plus regular outside work was heavy	2
Too many, or assignments too close together	1
2-minute time limit	1
Some questions were difficult, but not too bad	1
Questions were not open ended	1

* Note that total number of aspects liked is greater than ten because some students mentioned more than one aspect.

The most commonly liked aspects of the video web-board technology and assignments (question 5) were the novelty or “cool factor” and seeing what other student opinions were. The least commonly liked aspects of the video web-board technology and assignments (question 6) were having the video web-board assignment due along with regular outside work (outside readings and weekly summaries of those readings) and having to write summaries of the video clips in addition to having watched the videos. While we are somewhat sympathetic to the workload issue, we continue to support the summary-writing component of the video web-board to ensure that students do watch all other student videos and so we can see what they have learned from seeing and listening to other people’s points of view. Ironically, students commented on liking the opportunity to see and hear what their peers’

opinions or views were, but did not like writing about them. We strongly feel that restating what another individual said is a useful communication tool. Restating or summarizing in writing what another individual's opinions are is an effective means of checking one's accuracy of comprehension and level of understanding.

PROFESSORS' EVALUATION

In assessing the efficacy of the video web-board technology, it is important to note what we observed the students to have learned. Overall, we believe students learned the value of spending time reflecting on others' opinions regarding various sensitive topics. Moreover, students learned how to better listen to other people's opinions and to consider how to organize and compare the range of responses offered for a discussion question since the video web-board assignments required both the expression of ideas and the written summarizing of all ideas. Indeed, one of the major criticisms of college teaching today, in a high-tech world, is that "Students are losing the ability to listen, especially mindfully, and with pleasure" (O'Hara, 2002). In addressing this criticism, the video web-board is one use of technology *enabling and requiring* strong listening skills, particularly pertinent in a seminar-style course.

We support the continued use of the video web-board concept as a technologic aid facilitating better communication and understanding, and as an effective supplement to classroom discussion. We do not intend for video web-board assignments to be interpreted as a replacement for valuable in-class discussions. Rather, we see the video web-board tool as an aid to students to improve their awareness of themselves when speaking and reflecting upon an issue as well as improve their understanding of and appreciation for differing points of view on various topics. Further, we see the video web-board concept as a meaningful technologic tool for instructors to use to gain insights into what their learners are thinking and feeling about any given subject matter in any given course.

Honors students are often encouraged to study a variety of subjects more in-depth or with a broader scope. Indeed, instructors of honors courses often design in-class discussions or lectures with this idea in mind. Video web-board assignments can facilitate a student in demonstrating a more in-depth grasp of knowledge or a wider breadth of understanding. While students may certainly demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through in-class discussions, not all classes may be small enough in size to allow time for each student to share his or her thoughts during the class period. Likewise, a discussion period may not be feasible for every honors course due to the subject matter or format of the course (i.e., lecture or laboratory).

Moreover, given the myriad learning styles, not all students are able or willing to immediately pose an answer during a class period, particularly if the subject matter is sensitive or controversial. While instructors can offer questions in advance to be answered in an upcoming class, there will most likely be a few students who still feel pressured when having to speak in front of others. The video web-board exercise, while not comfortable for everyone (as indicated by some comments shared earlier), is a good first step toward a student's seeing him or herself in action and enables a critical evaluation of his or her style of conveying ideas when speaking—body

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language, facial expression, inflection, intonation, rhythm of speech, and so forth. The opportunity for students to learn about others' opinions, and perhaps view and review others' video clips as well as their own, can be an insightful supplement to any honors course, or any university course for that matter. The opportunity for instructors to hear from each student, orally and visually, is also an advantage. Video clips are unique in that not only can they be viewed and heard, they can be re-viewed and re-heard as many times as one desires.

Video web-board assignments do not have to be used solely as a discussion tool. Other applications include an assignment at the beginning of the semester for students to introduce themselves, such that all students can get acquainted without having to feel pressured on a first day of class, or if class time is not available for each student to make a thorough introduction. Another application of the video web-board concept is for class projects. Pairs or groups of students may work together on a video web-board assignment. In-class presentations or viewings of each group's work can add a novel dimension to a course. Instructors may choose to employ video web-board technology in collaboration with other instructors and classes—either on the same campus or with another campus across the country and even internationally.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

EFFICACY

The success of video web-board technology as an aid to classroom discourse was evident in three areas: First, the technology enabled students to hear one another's thoughts and opinions completely, uninterrupted, and in a low-pressure situation. To this end, student responses were generally quite positive. From the instructors' point of view, the video web-board assignments facilitated student learning in three major ways: students were required to (1) think through a particular question or issue beyond the classroom setting; (2) carefully articulate their opinions; and (3) assess peer opinions. While a few students complained about having to listen to others' comments, the fact that they were required to do so ensured that everyone was heard, and that all ideas were appreciated.

Second, the video web-board assignments provided us with insights into each student's grasp of course content. Knowing what students are thinking and feeling about the subject matter they are studying allows instructors to augment the course, lectures, discussions, and so forth during the semester to best meet pedagogical aims and student interest. In the absence of the evaluation component of video web-board assignments (i.e., the written summaries), it would have been difficult for us to note whether students were paying sufficient attention to their peers' comments during class. Sharing and understanding other ideas and not just one's own is vital to seminar pedagogy. To this end, the video web-board was deemed effective.

Third, students gained some experience with computer technology in a novel learning situation. Although students were not required to adopt video-recording skills, or editing, digitizing, and streaming capabilities, the video web-board exercises exposed honors students to alternate ways of using computer technology to learn

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about others as well as oneself. Seeing and hearing oneself in a video provided the opportunity for self-analysis. For a student observing his or her speech cadence, vocabulary, body language and facial expressions, the self-analysis could be seen as a useful tool for self-improvement, assisting students in developing professional mannerisms, regardless of the subject matter of the course. More technically, students who were otherwise quite knowledgeable about Internet surfing, electronic mail, and word-processing were exposed to a unique, creative application of computer technology in learning.

BENEFIT TO THE STUDENTS

The aim of the video web-board assignments was to encourage student interest, raise awareness of the importance of hearing others' opinions, and help students learn to reflect more deeply on sensitive course topics. Students did not appear inhibited by the video web-board; rather, they seemed quite willing to convey ideas on highly sensitive topics. While we had no way of knowing if the video web-board responses were more revealing than what in-class discussion responses alone would demonstrate, students were at least given the opportunity beyond classroom time constraints to offer opinions on sensitive topics through the use of the video web-board. Further, while we had no way of measuring whether or not students had a *better* grasp of course material, we know from the oral presentations (i.e., the video clips) and the written summaries that students (1) took time to think about discussion questions and answer them, whereas not all students may proffer an opinion during classroom discussions or recall what other students said in class, (2) listened to each student's response since each student was required to write a summary of all video web-board responses where comparisons between similar and different responses needed to be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our experiences with the video web-board concept, it seems that few assignments with a generous time limit for preparation is ideal. Four assignments over one 17-week semester did not appear to burden the majority of students. Two or three assignments are also adequate; the number of assignments may vary by course content, instructor objectives, class size, and other course assignments such as readings, papers, examinations, and so forth. A two-minute time limit in our experience seemed to allow for either more detailed responses or responses that covered greater breadth. Only one student out of ten seemed constrained by the two-minute time limit. Similar to the ideal number of video web-board assignments, the time limit should correlate with the complexity of the question to be addressed as well as how much of the course grade the assignment is worth. We were careful to avoid evaluating students on their "performance"; rather, we emphasized the relevant content, accuracy, and thoroughness of their responses. The written summaries were necessary to ensure that students watched the video clips of their peers to learn what others were thinking and saying. Without the written summary portion, we would have not been able to gain insights into what student perceptions of each other were.

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Student perceptions of other student thoughts and ideas were a useful aid in monitoring student progress and our own teaching effectiveness.

When planning the video web-board assignment due dates, the instructor must consider the time it takes to prepare a question that not only directs students to particular learning objectives, but also remains “open” enough to encourage multiple student perspectives upon feedback. The instructor must also be aware of student preparation times. Students require time to ponder the assignment question, research the question, compile information, compose a response, and finally record the response. Lastly, students will need time to evaluate peers’ responses and write up a summary of key points. The majority of students are likely to find two to four assignments challenging yet not overwhelming, exciting without becoming monotonous, whereas too many assignments are likely to push the limit of novelty, resulting in lower quality work.

MINIMAL TECHNOLOGIC REQUIREMENTS

Funding for the development, integration, and execution of the video web-board technology in our honors course came from a grant from the Center for Teaching Excellence at UNCW, and we were fortunate to have staff assistance from CTE. A computing consultant scheduled appointments with students, videotaped student responses, digitized the videos and posted them to our class website. While having a staff person can greatly assist with the technical aspects of video web-board development, this is by no means a necessity. Students can create their own videos and send them to their instructor as an electronic mail attachment; the instructor can easily post the video files to a university media server, where they can be accessed for viewing via hyperlinks from a class website. Any student proficient in basic computer skills and any instructor proficient with basic HTML and web-design can employ the video web-board technology without a great deal of computer instruction or experience.

A webcam and the free RealVideo recorder package is recommended (information is available online, by using “webcam” and “RealVideo” as keywords in Internet searches). The webcam costs about \$60.00, and students can either purchase a webcam for their own computers, or a university honors program may be able to fund some webcams for on-campus use (e.g., in computer labs or residence halls). The \$60.00 price entry point is more feasible than the alternative, explained below. One drawback to the webcam and RealVideo recorder software is the inability to edit a video clip once it is recorded. However, one can simply re-record. Given that video web-board assignment lengths will probably not be longer than two to five minutes, this should not pose a significant problem. The webcam and RealVideo availability, ease of use, and affordability make this the top choice for instructors planning video web-board assignments.

The second hardware-software option for developing video web-board assignments would be digital video (DV) editing. DV editing has a price entry point of around \$99.00 for a firwire card bundled with editing software. For better quality

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software and more powerful editing capacities, the cost could go up to around \$1000. A digital video camera costs a minimum of \$500 at present. DV editing does allow for the highest quality video, but the necessary skills to use it and the required equipment would be prohibitive to the majority of students and instructors.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

With a feasible low-cost, minimal effort video-recording setup, such as the webcam and RealVideo package explained above, and with some creativity and enthusiasm, video web-board technology can be used with ease while greatly enhancing an honors course, or any course. Video web-board technology allows for asynchronous communication, extended reflections upon course subject matter outside the classroom, and an opportunity for students and instructors to gain insights into multiple points of view. These assets are especially useful in courses where discussion, debate, and/or sensitive issues are addressed.

Future studies could explore comparisons and contrasts between seminar and lecture style courses taught with and without the video web-board concept. The purpose of this paper is to present preliminary findings and observations of the first known use of the innovative video web-board concept in teaching and learning. Given that research on the use of instructional technology in teaching addresses how multimedia can integrate various learning styles (Hung, 2001) and enhance student learning (King, 1997), and that the importance of investigating the effectiveness of technology in teaching has been emphasized (Grasha et al., 2000; Harris, 2002; Lea et al., 2001), further studies of the benefits and limitations of specific technologic applications to teaching should be examined.

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Short Pieces

During the preparation of this issue of the journal, Ada Long sent out a message on the NCHC listserv, requesting brief submissions (approximately 300 words) "...about the use of technology in honors, ideas [people might] have about imaginative (or unimaginative) uses of technology in an honors setting, and/or other topics that [could] contribute to a national dialogue on the topic of technology in honors. These brief pieces might...be valuable sources of information, inspiration, and even some harrumphing."

What follows are the twelve pieces we received:

THE COMPUTER BASED HONORS PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

CATHY RANDALL

The first university-wide undergraduate research program in America was founded at the University of Alabama in 1968 with a grant from the National Science Foundation. The Computer Based Honors Program chooses 20 outstanding incoming freshmen each year and gives them an opportunity to learn how computing technology is used in their major fields of study. The Computer Based Honors program serves as a minor for students who major in any discipline. They receive an accelerated introduction to computer technology in their freshmen year. In their sophomore, junior, and senior years, they choose computer-oriented research projects being conducted by members of the faculty in their major for whom they serve as a research assistant. Six or seven in each class receive full-tuition scholarships. Many students are included as co-authors of papers published as a result of the research.

The University of Alabama faculty members enthusiastically submit proposals to secure the services of these top students (average ACT=32; average HSGPA=3.9), who receive 3 hours of credit each semester. Most faculty report that these undergraduate students often contribute as much as graduate students. There is no computer laboratory on campus faster than the CBH lab, which is open 24 hours, 7 days each week to CBH students.

The value of technology in this honors program is that the students learn invaluable research and project management skills much earlier in their college careers than most students. The National Institute of Education cited Computer Based Honors as one of the six most intriguing honors program in America, in part because of its imaginative use of technology in an honors setting.

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SHORT PIECES
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
PAM MACK

While the honors program at Clemson University has not developed its own technology plan, the university's efforts have opened interesting opportunities. Most of our interdisciplinary honors seminars are taught in a smart classroom, with a computer that projects onto a screen, so Internet resources can easily be accessed. I've taught honors seminars there, such as one on "2001: The History of the Future," and use the computer projection to show web pages to the class. I am particularly fond of the Oxford English Dictionary on line, to which Clemson subscribes; looking up the definition of a word that has become important in a class discussion can be very illuminating. I'm looking forward, as soon as my teaching schedule allows, to teaching an interdisciplinary seminar on the impact of computers on society, which would be a laptop-enhanced course, requiring students to bring laptops to class and log into the network.

Clemson now requires laptops for students in engineering, physical sciences, business, and social sciences, and plans to do so for the remainder of the student body in a year or two. The process of revising courses to make use of student laptops goes slowly; this fall semester only three of the approximately 35 honors sections offered at the 100 and 200 level were laptop-enhanced and in the spring only two are. I taught one of the three last fall, a separate honors section of a course on "History, Technology, and Society," designed for freshmen engineers. I had students use their laptops to read web sites, do searches, write contributions to a discussion board, and fill out opinion surveys that I could then discuss in class. I also allowed them to write in-class tests on their laptops, if they preferred, as most did—then I didn't have to read their handwriting. Laptops open many opportunities for new classroom experiences that we are just beginning to explore.

Honors students are not necessarily more enthusiastic about the use of computers; in fact, they can be more difficult because they want to do things their way or they aren't willing to admit what they don't know. However, some of the most significant opportunities for computers in the classroom have particular value for honors teaching. I'm excited about the use of the Internet in teaching because it helps students explore what interests them and share that knowledge with the rest of the class through discussion boards and student-written web pages. The Internet opens a much larger world than the old model of professors telling students what they need to know, a new world that I hope honors students will want to explore.

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SHORT PIECES
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

TREVOR J. TEBBS

“Art is the representation, science the explanation – of the same reality”
—Herbert Read, *Education through art* (1943)

“In search of Arthur” is the title of an interdisciplinary field trip dedicated to the exploration of traditional – and not so traditional – sites of the legendary King Arthur in England and Wales. It took place during spring break of 2002 but was tied to a semester-long special Honors course entitled “Interpreting Arthur.” The courses were altogether rich and fascinating, affording opportunities to visit several centuries of texts from Wales, Ireland, ancient Britain, France, and modern England, while also wending our way from hill fort to cathedral to Stonehenge to castles perched upon cliff tops to Roman temples to ancient amphitheaters. It was truly memorable, but how to record it? A traditional essay? A final exam? A standup presentation of some sort? PowerPoint?

PowerPoint presentations are either very dry and boring, or the technology becomes an end in itself providing little more than testimony of someone’s ability to include all the bells and whistles imaginable but *very little content!* Only when PowerPoint is carefully and consciously allied with higher order, critical, and creative thinking do we have at our fingertips a superb means of ordering thought, bringing disparate elements together, communicating, and teaching. Through inclusion of digital photographs, scanned pictures and text, music, recorded interviews and other commentary sensitively blended using various techniques built into the program, an audience may be captivated and a point forcibly made.

Students were given the option to use technology as the prime means to finalize their course of study. Several chose this route, and their product was impressive. They had a complex mass of material from which to work, but technology helped them synthesize ideas, make connections, evaluate the purpose and meaning of the various elements of the course, reflect what they had learned, and decide how best to convey that knowledge to others. Their presentations were clearly products of much thought. They documented deep interest in and knowledge and enjoyment of the subject; provided a record of an experience that was both academically and creatively satisfying; and made it abundantly clear that the task was *fun*. A perfect blend of “art” and science ...and who said learning shouldn’t be fun?

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SHORT PIECES

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

MERI-JANE ROCHELSON

Having participated in a university-wide initiative to learn and use WebCT, I began using it in my Honors classes last spring. This is my second year with the platform, and I'm finding it an excellent adjunct to classroom work. I use WebCT primarily to communicate with students and to post assignments and relevant websites. Students have sent me drafts of papers via the system, and I have sent back my comments in the same way. Of course, all of these exchanges may be done through regular e-mail and communications programs and more ordinary course websites; although I've been pleased with WebCT, I'm not touting it *per se*. But I am delighted with what it has enabled me to do.

To give one example, in my Honors course on "Aesthetics, Values, and Authority" we start out with a philosophy text called *Puzzles about Art* (Margaret P. Battin et al., St. Martin's, 1989), which presents "hard cases" in aesthetics. The puzzle cases are drawn from all areas of the arts and refer to numerous examples of artworks, many of which are not reproduced as visuals. This year, using WebCT, I was able to link my students to a picture of Claes Oldenburg's *Floor Burger*—a giant soft sculpture of a hamburger, with bun and pickle, that was highly controversial when first exhibited—so that they could really see what the fuss was all about. Similarly, when a puzzle case interrogated the aesthetic status of paintings by ducks or monkeys, I was able to link all of us to a website with images of chimpanzee art, available not only for display but as notecards. Once my students became accustomed to viewing the sites I had posted, they began sending me relevant sites they had found so that I could post them to the class. The text of an NPR program on *Hamlet* performed in a prison, the elaborate landscaping that replaced *Tilted Arc* in the New York City federal building plaza, and an account from a Chilean newspaper on the 4,000 people who accepted photographer Spencer Tunick's invitation to pose nude in a Santiago park all found their way to my course website via students who had discovered them on the internet.

When asked about the value of WebCT, most of my students praised the interactivity it allows. Some additionally mentioned the effective use other professors had made of the quiz-taking and grade-posting functions. I don't give quizzes in Honors, and I've shied away from posting other grades electronically. But I was hesitant about other functions of WebCT to begin with, as well. Now that I have seen how this internet platform expands student involvement and truly broadens both the space of the classroom and the content of the course, I may try some of its additional functions in a future semester.

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SHORT PIECES

GLENVILLE STATE COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

ALISON WITTE

PHILIP TAYLOR

Glenville State College established a new honors program in the fall of 2000. The *Presidential Scholars Program* (PSP) was developed to reflect the *Renaissance of Shared Values*, a conceptual framework of values identified to guide Glenville State College in its mission to serve the State of West Virginia. Each of these values, Civility, Freedom, Tolerance, Responsibility, Excellence, Fairness, and Integrity, is taken as a focus for one semester in a variety of class activities: readings, discussions, field trips, and finally, a relevant service project. The continual goal is that the PSP student be able to articulate a personal definition of the value, internalize it, and carry out a service project that reflects commitment to the total *Renaissance of Shared Values*.

Students are assigned develop an *Electronic Portfolio* in which they record their reactions to assignments and class discussions. Ideally, the portfolio also includes biographical background and descriptions of their service projects. The portfolio is not graded but serves as a tool for intellectual growth.

The requirement for an *Electronic Portfolio* has been a limited success. The coordinators have found that although students are comfortable with developing the *Electronic Portfolio* on a semester basis, the concept of a long term record of their personal and intellectual growth is new to them. Several students are still uncomfortable with submitting their work by e-mail or on disk, preferring to print out their portfolios. In addition, these academically focused students seem to attach less value to a project which does not result in immediate feedback measured by a grade. However, the coordinators hope that eventually the portfolios of students in the *Presidential Scholars Program* will be available on the college web site.

Glenville State College has embraced the concept of Portfolio Evaluation for all students. The coordinators expect that as the program develops, students in the *Presidential Scholars Program* will be able to present an impressive portfolio on graduation, electronically available, reflecting depth in course work and a fundamental commitment to values.

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SHORT PIECES

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY, C. W. POST CAMPUS

JOAN DIGBY

At this point I think it is quite fair to say that technology is simply the machinery of our daily lives, in honors programs as in every other sphere of activity. For that reason the impact of technology on honors in particular is extremely difficult to assess. Of course, we keep our records on computers, contact students through e-mail and listservs, and utilize media of all kinds.

For a while—a short while—I attempted to use WebCT to keep track of my class assignments and generate threaded discussions with my students. In the end I simply quit because the tedium of setting up all the records and inventing reasons to continue class on a twenty-four hour basis wore me out. I could never find that threaded discussions were any more useful than our class discussions. They were certainly not any deeper, and they chewed up too much time.

Both my time and student time could be much better spent going deeper into texts. Oddly enough, I have found the Internet particularly useful in that regard. I can expand reading lists at no additional book costs by assigning works that are on line. Some works are linked to a vast network of web sites that lead the students on great adventures into culture, geography, philosophy, bibliography, etc. It is not easy to make freshmen feel right at home in the world of Ishtar and Gilgamesh. But finding ancient Mesopotamian artifacts, examples of cuneiform tablets, and virtual trips around Uruk on line makes the text tangible and real. (All too tangible when they happen on Uruk, the exotic dancer!) You would think that students living 25 miles from the Metropolitan Museum would want to visit the Near East Collection and see artifacts at first hand. But the truth is that they love these Internet searches and feel more like archeologists handing in their own treasure “finds.” That suits me fine because I am able to teach them how to cite and use Internet materials, and so the process of doing a certain kind of basic research moves forward. Getting first-year students to do some intellectual “travel” on line also seems to generate some interest in actually going places, which I hope will pay off when I start to talk to them about study abroad later on.

In some departments the use of technology has been transforming. The evolution of Computer Graphics has given my Art majors a positive focus on professional careers that was not common among Fine Arts majors in the past. Traditional Art majors tended to shy away from business or regard it with contempt. Now students well-trained both in Fine Arts and Computer Graphics are doing honors thesis work in graphic and product design, book illustration, and public relations that are both extremely original and pragmatic.

My honors program happens to be situated around the corner from Computer Graphics and other artistic technologies: the Computer Music Composition Laboratory and Television Studio. The attraction of these media fields is undeniable. They are among the most popular majors among honors students as well as among the rest of the undergraduate population.

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In my own mind it is impossible to separate technology from learning in any age or culture. In thinking about what we mean by the “new” technologies our universities have invested in, we must face the truth that one important difference between pens and computers or slide shows and power point is cost. Technology drives up the cost of learning, the cost of tuition or of running an honors program. And that’s before we consider all the broken and discarded machines that fill up our closets.

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SHORT PIECES
LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY
CLAIRE BLACK MCCOY

Honors students studying art history often find it challenging to think and work creatively—discovering formal relationships between works of art or recognizing the transmission of a style or tradition through visual analysis rather than research. Often they are most comfortable with very concrete and somewhat limited paper topics such as an analysis of a particular painting, iconic image, or the work of an artist during a discrete period.

To overcome this limitation, I have students create virtual exhibitions that require them to leave their textbooks and MLA handbooks behind and develop their own groups of paintings and/or sculptures that are linked on a thematic or formal level. First, students choose the images that interest them and that seem to relate to one another on a purely visual level. These pictures form the exhibition and the basis for a very simple web page that includes the digital images and identifying information. Second, they write a short statement that explains what the pictures or sculptures have in common and why they were chosen. It may be on the page with the pictures or may be set up as separate linked page. One might consider this page to be the initial text that one sees on a wall at an actual exhibition. The third component is a paragraph about each image with a brief bibliography at the end. Most students link this paragraph directly to the pictures they have chosen. In evaluating the students' work, I focus on the choice of images and the students' interpretations of the paintings or sculptures. I look for images that show imaginative thought and a willingness to risk daring interpretations. Freed from the comfortable confines of writing papers, the students seem to think and write with greater independence of thought.

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SHORT PIECES

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

JOHN WALL

For the past two years, the University Honors Program at NC State has co-sponsored with the College of Engineering a wireless laptop program. Incoming students in the Honors Program are offered the opportunity to purchase specially-configured and specially-priced laptop computers with wireless cards. Students then enroll in Honors seminars and other classes that meet in rooms with wireless access to the Internet. In the first year of this program, about 40 students participated. This year the number of participants has almost doubled.

The program is viewed as a pilot, with potential for expansion across the campus. NC State does not have a laptop or computer requirement at the moment. We believe that before we ask students to invest in computers we should understand how to make them worthwhile for the educational mission of the institution. The Honors/Engineering Pilot Program is a way to discover whether and how the use of computers in the classroom can enhance learning.

So far, the experience has been both exhilarating and daunting. With this equipment, students and faculty can have full and fast Internet access without wires, cables, or cords. Battery life for the laptops is easily long enough to accommodate a two-hour seminar class. Communication among students and faculty is also greatly enhanced, with message boards, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic connection making it possible to continue class discussion outside the bounds of the regular schedule.

The challenge for faculty has been to discover ways of taking advantage of this technology in the classroom. Technology has affected both course content and class process. Students communicate with the teacher and with each other, submit assignments, and make class presentations using their computers. Faculty make assignments, respond to student work, and receive feedback from students on the progress of the course. Assignments take advantage of streaming audio and video as well as text-based communication.

In the area of content, faculty use electronic syllabuses, making assignments that are linked when possible to on-line databases. Classes explore computing resources in computer-assisted design and mapping. One faculty member in Freshman Composition had students read a hypertext novel, exploring this new form of fiction. Other faculty find they can dispense with textbooks because of the availability of on-line course materials. Faculty have come to rely on the availability of information during class; issues that come up in class discussion can be researched and explored on the spot rather than being deferred to later classes.

Overall, we believe this program is very successful; we plan to expand it further.

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SHORT PIECES

PENN STATE SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

CHERYL ACHTERBERG

Penn State's Schreyer Honors College utilizes technology to enhance its key learning, assessment, communications, outreach, and operations efforts.

In terms of learning, honors students learn more than just course schedules, policies, and due dates for their annual academic plans from the SHC website. Our most important learning assist comes from our thesis website with annotated examples, faculty and student tips, and a calendar planning tool. Honors faculty are also encouraged to use ANGEL, a course management tool that allows for on-line syllabi, course chat rooms, posted readings, grading records, and various email options. Some honors courses also participate in shared assignments with international student counterparts abroad using web technologies. We hope this expands greatly in the future as it brings a global perspective to the students' key pads with force and immediacy while maintaining the professional context.

A web-based honors advising assessment tool will be released this spring along with a research interest database for students and faculty to facilitate thesis match-up's. All in-coming first-year students and seniors will also complete a thorough electronic survey assessment about interest and career expectations beginning fall '03. The results will be used to plan co-curricular programs.

In terms of communication, our webpage is critical to our college recruitment efforts; we could never afford to provide the color, richness of detail, number of student profiles or quality of information in any other media. Our listserv is equally crucial to on-campus communication with students, advisors, and faculty. Nearly all SHC forms are available electronically. We are also converting paper student records to electronic images this year. Technology frees staff to become more student-centered in the delivery of services (our highest value), spares paper and time, increases efficiency, and extends our reach dramatically. In past years we relied on student wage payroll for our technology support; this year we created a full-time staff position.

We are eager for the new opportunities technology will create for us, both inside our classrooms and beyond. Without communications technology, many of our special programs and support services would wither, co-curricular program attendance would deflate, and mentoring programs would disappear. Technology in itself holds no magic, but technology applied to our mission and strategic plan leverages our ability to make good things happen.

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SHORT PIECES

RED ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

AMY BRAZILLER

CHRIS HOWELL

In the spring of 2001, an Introduction to Literature course was integrated with a Western Civilization II course, creating an honors learning community taught by two full-time Red Rocks Community College instructors. Of the eighteen students enrolled, approximately half were in the honors program. The hybrid course met twice a week for 2 ½ classroom hours total (the typical hours for a traditional class); other course work was completed online.

The hybrid learning community presented a wonderful opportunity to utilize technology to enhance this unusual learning environment. The strength of the community turned out to be online discussions using WebCT, an online course delivery system. Student participation was extremely high, with over 50% of the class registering over 1,000 posts each. More important than quantity was the quality of discourse. Students embraced online anonymity to dialectically discuss controversial topics with deeper levels of analysis than found in traditional classroom discussions. Additionally, students broke out of old cliques and formed new online intellectual friendships.

Beyond branching into new groups and forging new alliances, communication levels transcended the typically short answers of the classroom environment. Smart responses, critical thinking, questioning, and integrating the learning environments characterized the online discussion area. Strong class communication is illustrated through the following assignment:

Please read Blake's verse "Mock on Mock on Voltaire Rousseau." Blake is attacking the Enlightenment and could be seen as representing Romanticism of the 19th century. In verse or in modern English short answer form, respond as if you were Rousseau or Voltaire defending against Blake's blistering attack.

Students leapt to the challenge and exceeded the instructors' expectations with thoughtful responses including:

mock on...mock on? be still, i say blake, you are a bore for you would exalt the very superstition you do scorn take stand, say i and use reason in all you think and do not expect an Unseen Eye to keep watch over you ~Voltaire

Regardless of the question's complexity, students discovered connections between literature and history, responding thoughtfully and articulately in ways not always present in the in-class discussions.

Not only did student responses lend themselves to meaningful discourse; students also used technology to take over the learning environment. Questions and answers were no longer consistently directed toward the instructors; students often spoke directly to each other, pushing classmates to critically examine topics. Student online postings asked others to explain, clarify, and reply to specific inquiry.

Technology use in education is a contingent proposition. Its successful implementation depends upon the instructors, the students, and the course content. In our

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case study, online discussions greatly enhanced the honors learning community and were, in turn, greatly enhanced by the quality of the learning environment.

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SHORT PIECES

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

GEORGE MARIZ

Some classes in the Honors Program at Western Washington are beginning to use instructional technology, chiefly as a result of initiatives from individual instructors. Some employ internet resources in their non-Honors university course offerings, and when they teach cognate classes for the Honors Program, they bring these innovations with them. These classes have been universally in the general education program. The geology department, which teaches a general education course for the program most years, has been the most aggressive in this regard and uses everything from readily available internet sites that have good collections of material on mineralogy and continental drift, to more sophisticated internet resources that deal with volcanism. Honors seminars have sometimes been extremely innovative, and one, on gender issues offered during the 2001-2002 academic year, required students collectively to create a webpage, which proved to be both a daunting and academically rewarding exercise. In short, while there is no mandate from the program or the university to use technology, it is moving into the instructional regimen of virtually every department and program, Honors among them.

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SHORT PIECES

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

SUSAN CARRAFIELLO

Technology is indispensable to the University Honors Program (UHP) of Wright State University. Fundamentally, the UHP uses Microsoft Access to maintain a comprehensive student database that allows us to keep track of our students' academic progress and their fulfillment of UHP requirements. We also regularly use an Honors student e-mail list (updated quarterly) to notify students of upcoming Honors events, courses, and scholarship opportunities. And we of course use our web page (<http://www.wright.edu/academics/honors/>) to explain the program, make announcements, and provide links to scholarship information. Additionally, all of our forms and our student handbook are available online at our web site.

With respect to the curriculum, at least 5 of the 75 Honors classes we will offer this year will be online, web-only Honors classes. These courses are both first-year general education Honors sections and special Honors junior/senior seminars. Our Honors students clamor for these sections—indeed, they fill up within the first hour of registration. Most of the students in these classes are onsite students. Drops are rare.

Student evaluations reveal that the students find online Honors classes convenient, flexible, and innovative. In fact, students are requesting more online Honors courses all the time. Nevertheless, we want to explore two related questions before we schedule more of these classes. First, we need to decide whether or not we should restrict the number of online Honors classes that a student can take. Students may currently arrange to take two or more of their eight required Honors classes online. Second, we must examine whether or not these classes provide a true “Honors experience” and make sure these classes fulfill the Program’s broader mission. To help us find the answers to these questions, we plan to develop a special assessment and evaluation instrument before we consider increasing the number of online Honors classes.

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Amy Braziller, a member of the English faculty at Red Rocks Community College, has developed and taught online/hybrid courses for more than five years. With Professor Chris Howell, she has developed a hybrid honors learning community that promotes critical discourse.

Kate Bruce is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Honors Program at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. She currently serves on the Executive Board of the National Collegiate Honors Council and is active in the state regional honors association. She studies sexuality questions in both humans (risky sexual behavior) and nonhumans (mate choice) and enjoys involving students in research projects.

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NOTES

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