



AUG 2013

# TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING REVIEW

TEACHING, LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## NEW IN OAKS FOR THE FALL SEMESTER — GOOGLE INTEGRATION FOR STUDENTS

by Mendi Benigni

This Fall we are launching Google Apps integration for OAKS. This integration will allow students to login and access their Google Apps email, calendar, blog and Google Drive from a widget on every course homepage. In addition, they can access files in their Google Drive when submitting to the OAKS Dropbox. When they are in the OAKS Dropbox and click **Add File** they will have a new option available called **Google Docs**. This will take a file from their Google Drive and upload it into the assignment submission area.

As of now this is only available to those with a g.cofc.edu email address. Make sure to tell your students about this new feature. Tutorials for your students will be available on the Student Computing Support blog (<http://blogs.cofc.edu/scs/category/tutorial/>).



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## CLASSROOM ENHANCEMENTS FOR THE FALL

by IT Support Services

Over the summer, IT Support Services has been busy refreshing our classrooms and adding new equipment. You might have noticed starting last semester that our old A/V switch solutions have been replaced with an Extron processor, reducing the equipment in a teacher's cabinet to one simple device that controls both audio and video. We've added new digital document cameras to classrooms as well as new

presentation advancer remotes. Also, per the new licensing agreement with Microsoft, all the classroom computers will run Windows 7, replacing Windows XP. Finally, we have created new mobile projection carts and strategically placed them around campus. These carts will be used to ensure functionality in case of hardware failure in the classroom as well as replace the antiquated TV/VCR carts with a PC/DVD/

projector to give students a better viewing experience. Just contact Helpdesk to request a cart a day prior to your class.

IT Support Services would like to thank the Faculty for their input and hope our changes reflect your suggestions. However, these changes do not reflect the *classroom upgrades project* which you can get more information about by visiting <http://it.cofc.edu/projects/classroom.php>.



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## GETTING OAKS READY FOR THE START OF THE SEMESTER!

by Mendi Benigni

Welcome Back! Just a few reminders to help you start your semester:

- **Rolling your OAKS Class**  
Don't forget if you've taught a class before using OAKS then you can copy all of the content, quizzes, assignments, etc. from your old class into your new class. The instructions are available on the TLT Tutorials blog at <http://goo.gl/Xe4KP1>
- **Crosslisting your OAKS Classes**  
If you teach multiple sections of the same course you can combine them into one OAKS shell. This way you only have to post items once and the students in all cross listed sections can see it. To have your classes cross listed just complete the form located on the

OAKS Homepage under **OAKS Requests > Request to Crosslist**.

- **OAKS Training**  
If you're new to OAKS and wondering what to do, TLT will be holding training sessions throughout the start of the semester. For a full listing of all the TLT training sessions check out <http://tlt.eventbrite.com>.
- **Adding a Fake Student to your OAKS Class**  
If you use Release Conditions, Dropbox assignments or Quizzes then you may want to get a Fake Student account. This allows you to experience your course as a real student would. To add a Fake Student complete the form located on the OAKS Homepage under **OAKS Requests > Request a User be added to your OAKS Course > Fake Student**.
- **Adding a Librarian to your OAKS Class**  
If you have a research component to your course then don't forget that you can add a CofC Librarian to your OAKS class. The librarian will work with you to customize a research agenda for your students and your specific subject matter. It's a wonderful resource. To add a Librarian complete the form located on the OAKS Homepage under **OAKS Requests > Request a Librarian**.

**Note:** Please submit your OAKS requests as soon as possible, and remember that it can take up to **three business days** for requests to be processed.

## USING AN IPAD KEYBOARD FOR MATH LATEX

by Stephan Lafortune (Math)



I recently acquired an iPad and then was awarded an *Ungrant* for the purchase of a *Logitech Ultrathin Keyboard* and the *Tex Writer* app to perform *Latex* on the iPad.

*Latex* (sometimes pronounced *la-tek*, <http://latex-project.org/intro.html>) is a program used to write and typeset technical articles. The app enables me to use *Latex* on the iPad. More precisely, it works in conjunction with *Dropbox*. *Dropbox* is a free service on the internet that lets you bring your photos, documents, and videos anywhere and share them easily. When I open a *Latex* file from *Dropbox*, the *Tex Writer* app takes over, and I am able to edit and

compile the file as if I was doing this from an ordinary computer.

The keyboard enables me to provide a good protective case, and at the same time, it provides me with a stand on which the iPad sits at an angle perfect for typing. See the accompanying photo.

All in all, these two purchases enable me to use the iPad as my laptop when traveling to conferences. In the past, I travelled to conferences with a laptop that I would use simply to check my email, edit my files and give my presentation. I now have a much lighter iPad that can do all those things.

# CUSTOMIZING OAKS FOR THE #TECHGENERATION

by Samantha Bruce (Geology)

The focus of the 2012 Faculty Technology Institute(s) was Teaching the #TechGeneration. Through discussion we attempted to define what is meant by "Tech Generation" and how this term applies to our students and their learning styles. What I took away from the overall conversation is as follows:

The Tech Generation is the population born after the development and widespread use of computers and the internet. This generation has grown accustomed to quick access to a vast amount of readily available information. Smart phones, tablets and similar technologies have increased the demand and expectations of the Tech Generation to acquire instantaneous answers to both complex and trivial questions. Quality and depth of information obtained and referenced may be sacrificed for prompt acquisition, and many of this generation rely solely on websites for all or most news and facts; perhaps because they don't have much experience using and searching through other sources. The Tech Generation is excellent at learning how to use new technologies and often do not require instruction or references. On the contrary, when conducting research many of the Tech Generation are great at finding surficial information and summaries, but have difficulty accessing comprehensive materials and differentiating between credible sources of data. The Tech Generation is characterized by on-the spot, constant communication through the use of text messages, instant messages, e-mail, social media and video chats. When compared to previous generations, the Tech Generation exhibits loose discretion as to when and where such

The screenshot shows a customized OAKS homepage with several widgets:

- News:** A green header with a dropdown arrow. Below it is a news item titled "NEW: Open Lab Study Time! (Fridays, 11-12)" with a close button (X). The text includes a post date (Jan 23, 2013 3:21 PM) and a paragraph about offering open lab study time for Earth History Lab students on Fridays from 11am-12pm. It also includes a paragraph expressing excitement about the ability to have such a study session and a note that this is an aid to progress through the semester. A "Pre-lab 1" section follows, stating that this shouldn't replace seeking a tutor but that the Center of Student Learning should be used if needed. It encourages speaking with the author for questions and mentions that the open lab time is intended to help facilitate and encourage the studying of rocks and lab materials. A "Begins this week" section for Friday, January 25th is also present.
- Welcome to Earth History Lab!:** A white header with a close button (X). The text says "Hello Everyone," and informs that Earth History (Geol 105) labs will begin next week (Monday, January 14th) in RHSC 116. It mentions that a laboratory manual will be purchased for the class and that students should refer to either Geol 101 or Geol 103 for a useful study guide. It also notes that pre-lab 1 exercises, homework, etc. will be posted on OAKS for printing and completion. A reminder to bring a pencil to class and complete graded work is included. A "Pre-lab 1" section mentions a reading assignment (Reading 1, Reading 2, and Reading 3) and that students should read before class and be expected to know the information from the articles for the lab and quiz the following week. It also mentions a "Lab 1 Presentation" and that students should review the presentation and become comfortable with the material. A final note says "I am looking forward to a great semester and am excited to meet you all! If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me!" and a "Show All News Items" link is at the bottom right.
- To Do For Class:** A blue header with a dropdown arrow. It contains two sections: "To do for Week 2:" with a list of 5 tasks (Complete Pre-lab 2, Part A and Part B; Read the Midterm Project Directions and Rubric; Study for quiz on Lab 1 and Midterm Project Directions; Print Lab 2 Exercise; Study geologic Time Scale) and "To do for Week 3:" with a list of 5 tasks (Answer Midterm Project Question #1; Begin Rock Chart HW; Pre-lab 3; Study for Quiz on Lab 2; Study Geologic Time Scale).
- Weekly Quiz Focus Points:** An orange header with a dropdown arrow. It contains two sections: "Quiz 1: Darwin's Finches" with 5 bullet points about natural selection, environmental changes, and Darwin's research; and "Quiz 2: Sedimentary Rocks and Depositional Environments" with 5 bullet points about rock cycles, sedimentary rocks, and their characteristics.

communication may be appropriate. Lastly, the Tech Generation is creative, likes using technology and uses technology well.

## How I responded in the classroom:

Knowing that Tech Generation students like using and interacting with technology I decided to treat my OAKS homepage like a Facebook page (of sorts). I customized the homepage through the use of widgets that were updated regularly to give the students quick and easy access to the most pertinent information that would help them do well in the course (See picture above). The first widget I created contained my contact, information and I

displayed it as a banner across the top of the page. This was great (for the students and me!) as it ensured every student had the information to get in touch with me and the information couldn't be lost. In years past, I have had students use the excuse of not knowing how to contact me or not knowing where my mailbox was located as an explanation for why they didn't turn in an assignment or make-up a missed lab. This year I didn't have any students who missed an assignment or make-up lab because they didn't know how to get in touch with me.

For the full article, please visit <http://goo.gl/vPHX5>.

## PROBLEM BASED LEARNING

by Leena Karambelkar (Asian Studies)

Among the methods of integrating course material with real-life situations, problem-based learning, also known as PBL, is an increasingly popular approach in which students learn to think critically in the classrooms while applying acquired knowledge to their worldly perception. PBL gives students intrinsic enthusiasm to establish their own projects to pursue through the lectures and philosophies provided in the traditional classroom setting. I was first introduced to this theory when I attended a lecture by Dr. John Peters during the Faculty Technology Institute last summer. Even though PBL is well-known in the field of sciences, I was intrigued by its student-focused approach and wished to incorporate it in my Hindi classes. Along with learning Hindi through my instruction, I wanted them to find a way to bring this language and the meaning of the Indian culture closer to their hearts by establishing real-life connections with the objectives of acquiring various language skills. According to M. M. MacKinnon, PBL "empower[s] students with valuable skills that will enhance their motivation to learn and ability to achieve."

When I introduced PBL in my Intermediate Hindi 201 class, I gave the students some information published in scholarly reviews such as Stanford University Newsletter on Teaching and we discussed the overall concept of PBL. Then, it was their turn to search for 'ill-structured' problems from their areas of interest that "serve[d] as the initial stimulus and framework for learning" (Wilkerson and Gijsselaers 101). Even though bothered by starting difficulties, they gradually established excellent personal goals ranging from communicating with the school children in India to imagining a trip to India. They soon realized the fabulous opportunities PBL offered: to convert classroom training to the actual world, gain more knowledge about their own goals, and even facilitate aspects of their own careers.

Some of the projects initiated and completed by the students include translating William Blake poetry into Hindi, creating pen pals in India, studying life in rural India, and creating language resources for Hindi classes. One of my students, Elizabeth Burdette,

worked on planning an imaginary trip to India, communicating with the host family, researching the city of Jaipur, and creating real-life situations. After she learned that she had won one of the most coveted national scholarships (The Critical Language Scholarship) to study in India for two months this summer, she knew that she had already prepared a solid groundwork for her trip through her PBL project.

The class objectives of acquiring language skills and understanding cultural perspectives were underlying parts of their projects. PBL experience taught students life skills such as planning, research, having ownership of the project which they started using in other classes too. I believe that through their PBL involvement, students fulfilled the core purpose of our college by pursuing and sharing knowledge through study, inquiry, and creation in order to empower the individual and enrich society.

For the full article, as well as citations, please visit <http://goo.gl/LGJZGN>.

## NEVER MISS A TLT EVENT OR DEADLINE AGAIN!

TLT is launching a new notification service to help you stay abreast of events and deadlines. You can now sign up for text alerts, via *Remind101*, for events such as Faculty Roundtable Discussions, Faculty Technology Institutes, and Ungrant application due dates. If you want to receive these updates just text **@tltnews** to **843-628-2187**.



Text the number

With the message

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