TEACHING WITH TECH
News from the Office of Distance Learning

JOHN BROWN UNIVERSITY

July 9, 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are providing several on-campus workshops during August to help you prepare for your upcoming courses. In addition, during the faculty workshops on August 20th, we will be presenting during a breakout session to introduce you to some exciting new features in Blackboard. Review our schedule of upcoming August workshops to decide which sessions to attend.

Faculty Workshops

click here for more information

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Q&A

Rebecca Burkes
Adjunct Faculty, Graduate Business
Tool of Choice: VoiceThread (www.voicethread.com)

Q: **How do you use VoiceThread in your course?**
A: At first, I use VoiceThread as an introductory exercise, so students can experiment with the technology in a low pressure assignment. Students learn to use the voice and text features and get to tell a little about themselves. Next, I use it as a fast-paced "discussion board" to begin exchanges about a very provocative article on ethics.

Q: **What is most beneficial in using VoiceThread?**
A: VoiceThread is an exciting tool because students get to hear each others' voices, upload a photo and exchange ideas using a small text bubble. The text bubble is small which encourages students to state their thoughts in a succinct manner.

Q: **What challenges did you/have you faced with using VoiceThread? How did you overcome those?**
A: I have had a hearing impaired student who needed to have the voice recordings transcribed to participate in the assignments. Fortunately, JBU has an excellent resource in Jackie Wright, and that was not a problem at all!

Q: **What tips do you have for someone who would like to use VoiceThread?**
A: Begin by giving the students an easy exercise to introduce the tool. Use just a few slides and make the exercise about learning the tool at first to avoid frustration. Then use the tool for more complex substantive material. Try to keep the slides simple with one issue per slide and remember that you want student responses to be quick and concise. Explain this up front. When other students go into VoiceThread to listen to their peers' responses, they will have limited time and attention span.

Q: **What impact does using technology have in your courses?**
A: Most students enjoy having learning about new cloud based tools that they can incorporate into their own presentations at work. I do think some are intimidated by it occasionally, and it is important to be aware of this and keep an open line of communication so you can provide assistance and encouragement for those who have any trouble.

Q: **Anything else you'd like instructors to know?**
A: Keep trying new tools and then ask your students how they liked them! You never know which tools are going to work until you try them.

TECH TUESDAYS

How To: Blackboard Collaborate

Advanced Features of Blackboard Collaborate

July 23

July 30

Blackboard Collaborate is our web-conferencing system, which allows students and faculty to interact live over an Internet connection. Attend the How To session for an introduction to Collaborate and continue on to the Advanced Features for further practice and ideas. Visit the ODL website to sign up.

Online Session: New Features in Blackboard

Faculty Breakout Sessions

August 6

August 20

The online session (12:00-1:00 p.m.) will be an in-depth look at the exciting new features in Blackboard. This is designed for adjuncts and online instructors. Sign up for access to the online session.

If you are a full-time faculty member, plan to attend these breakout sessions to learn about new Blackboard features. No sign-up required.

WHERE HIGH-TECH MEETS HIGH-TOUCH

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