

## High-tech Classroom Appeals to Faculty, Students

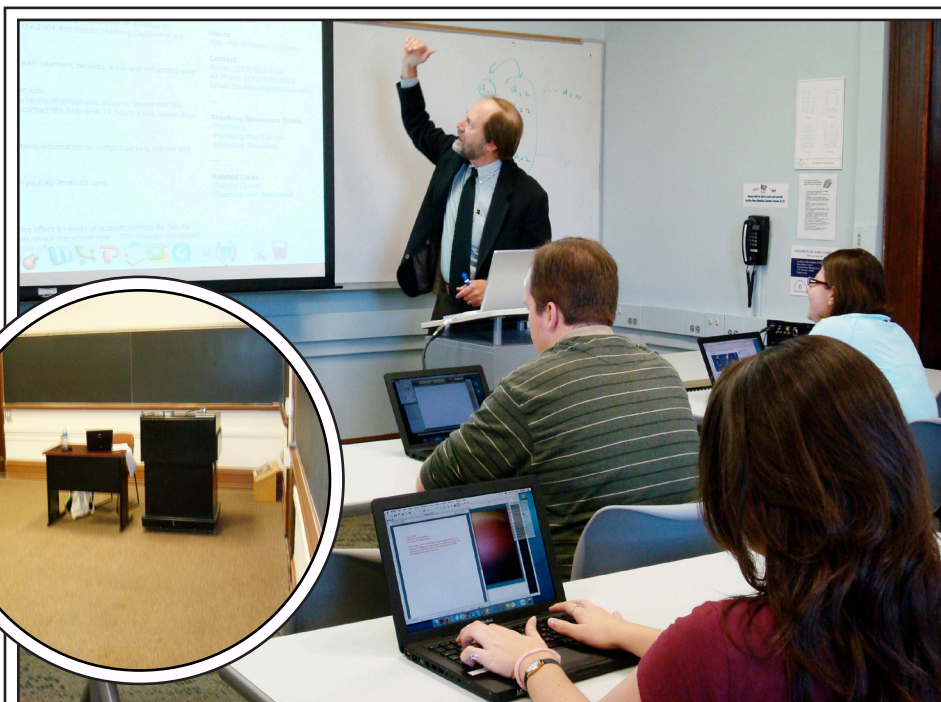
By Jim Lee

Associate Director, Teaching & Tech.

Since its formal ribbon cutting on October 26, many professors have utilized the resources available in the newly renovated and revamped Model Classroom.

Professor Christine Chin likes the combination of how the room works with the technology. She teaches Cross-Cultural Com-

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Before and after: the newly-renovated Model Classroom in Hurst Hall

## Democratic Cultures: Results-Oriented and Affirming

### Letter from the Director



Each August, a new cadre of part-time staff members joins CTE. At orientation, we discuss seven principles entitled "Serving the AU Community and relating to one another." I believe the most important principle is this:

*In CTE, every staff member, from the Director to our most junior hourly worker, is expected to do what needs to be done, when it*

*needs to be done, irrespective of their job descriptions. Even more, CTE staff members are expected to proactively and creatively seek out what needs to be done, without waiting to be told. How can I make a difference? How can I strengthen the results we produce? How can I improve the quality of work life and the quality of human relationships in CTE? How can I create positive Karma? These are questions we must ask ourselves every hour of every working day.*

Not long ago, I shared our principles statement with Traci Fenton,

SIS/MA '02, a charismatic AU alum. Traci is founder and CEO of WorldBlu, an organization whose mission is to promote and celebrate "organizational democracy," particularly in the private sector. WorldBlu's research has shown that democratic organizations are often more efficient and profitable than their competitors.

In return, Traci sent an article, "Engines of Democracy," from the management journal, *Fast Company* (#29—Oct. 1999, pp. 174, ff.). It described the achievements of

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**Areté** is often equated, seamlessly, with the English terms "virtue," "excellence," "goodness," and "knowledge." It embodies a belief that "the highest human potential is knowledge and all other human abilities are derived from this central capacity."

## Adjuncts: Part-Time Faculty, Full-Time Life

By Heather McDonald  
Assistant Manager, Faculty Corner

Open up the Faculty Corner while not awake. Check out four laptops. Brew five pots of coffee. Instruct how to use scanner. Scarf down sandwich. Update computers. Shift's over!

Run across quad in time to meet with a librarian about thesis formatting. Dash to Battelle. Grade three papers while waiting for student. Meet with student. Miss the bus. Cram on to the shuttle. Jot down lesson plan ideas on Metro. Walk home and pick up groceries.

Make dinner. Eat dinner. Spend two hours editing thesis. Spend another hour grading papers. Fall asleep on keyboard. Wake with a jolt, save everything, and put USB drive in backpack, so I can do it all again tomorrow.

Why the hectic life? I'm an adjunct. Many of us are students as well as teachers, torn between holding our own office hours, and tracking down *our* professors during *their* office hours. Other adjuncts balance a full-time job with teaching one or more courses, shuttling from boardroom to classroom. Some adjuncts teach at multiple universities, tweaking personas to match. I am lucky to have all of my selves centered here on the AU campus; currently I'm student, faculty, and staff.

Some days I love that I still understand what it means to be a full-time student while teaching. Other days I don't know quite where (or whom) I'm supposed to be when. A faculty member will approach me with questions about technology

as I am headed to meet my thesis committee, or I'll be meeting with a student when one of my classmates comes by with a juicy bit of gossip. The look I get is always the same, like seeing your third-grade teacher at the grocery store and being amazed to find out she didn't live at school. Similarly, off campus, my three lives make for awkward dinner party conversation:

"What do you do?" someone making conversation will ask.

"Well, it depends on the hour," I'll reply blithely, biting into crudité. Then I get the speech about how the person always wanted to teach or has a novel sitting in her desk. *Every time*. In class, I'd ask my student to define "so what?" about this statement. Instead, I just smile and remind myself that a dinner party isn't an essay.

I hope my three lives have made me more human to my students. They've certainly made me re-evaluate my expectations of my professors, and students. Many full-time faculty—between research, teaching, and other obligations—are just as frazzled as I am. (They just have health benefits to ease the pain.) And many of my students are, like me, balancing a job with their studies, as well as that great big overwhelming thing called *life*.

### The Faculty Corner



Computers, couches, and free coffee...what could be better?  
Visit Hurst 204-B, x2734

## New Media Night Life: NMC 2.0

By Jason Diebler  
Manager, New Media Center

During its Grand Opening ceremony this past October as part of the New Media Center's 20th Anniversary celebration, CTE proudly launched a new enterprise, NMC 2.0. Located in Hurst 207 directly across from the New Media Center, NMC 2.0 distinguishes itself from many of the other CTE facilities by serving as a multi-purpose room that caters to students, staff and faculty.

Space is a highly sought commodity on the American University campus, so creating a flexible, useful space was important. In order to maximize the room's utility, a creative organizational scheme was required. The solution was in the furniture.

NMC 2.0 has flexible furnishings, making it easy to quickly transform the room. By day it's a conference room—with seating for 10—able to support videoconferencing or VoIP (Skype or AIM) solutions. By night it's a fully functioning digital media lab, offering customers some of the best post-production technology on campus. With capturing support for most standard video formats, a 30" HD display, as well as two dual-display 23" monitors, this room is ideal for tackling advanced multimedia projects. Also, the cozy and quiet atmosphere makes for an undisturbed, comfortable environment when working on long-term projects.

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## A Home for Innovative Teaching

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munication and records her student presentations. She can review each presentation and give feedback on its content and effectiveness.

Professor Carolyn Gallaher says she uses “the model classroom to mix old-fashioned lectures with PowerPoint graphics, media clips, and visual data analysis!”

Most faculty in the room have found how easy it is to move the

furniture into configurations that match the course learning objectives, from a traditional lecture format to square or even angled tables for seminars of ten or twenty students.

Some classes have utilized the twenty some Mac laptops that can operate as Macs or PCs. Students work on group projects or individually to explore websites or other multi-media resources.

## Saving Time with Blackboard

By Jim McCabe

*Manager, Blackbaord*

*LinkMaker: A quick way to online readings and images*

Traditionally, you build a list of online readings by emailing the e-reserves Library staff and waiting for them to build your e-reserves folder in Blackboard.

Now, you can add materials yourself to reuse semester after semester. Build your own reading, viewing, or listening list for your students from articles, images and other media that the Library has licensed for the campus.

Use the LinkMaker feature to create durable links to the media you have searched for and selected. Open the Control Panel, and then see Content Areas on the top left. Choose a link such as Course Documents. See the pull-down menu at

the far right, and click on Library Electronic Resource LinkMaker.

The Library has documentation describing how to link to articles or images in each database at [http://www.american.edu/cte/bb\\_faculty.htm](http://www.american.edu/cte/bb_faculty.htm). Please see the LinkMaker link for the information you need.

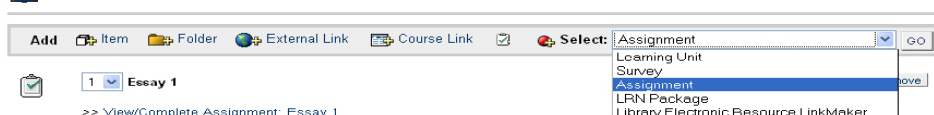
*Assignment Manager: Collect all your assignments in one place*

With the Assignment Manager feature, you can email assignments to students. Submitted assignments appear in your Gradebook for your comments and grades.

The assignment feature appears in the same spot as LinkMaker.

Please see animated tutorials at [http://www.american.edu/cte/bb\\_faculty.htm](http://www.american.edu/cte/bb_faculty.htm) for more information about the Assignment Manager feature, or call the Blackboard Support Team at x3904.

Course Documents



## A Culture of Continuous Improvement

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GE's jet engine assembly plant in Durham, North Carolina. This 170 employee facility leads the world in the efficiency and quality of its work. It has the lowest defect rate and best record of on-time delivery. It has reduced production costs by 30% in ten years. It was selected as the sole source provider of engines for the new Boeing 777. Its employee turnover rate is the lowest in the business.

GE Durham embodies the principles of Organizational Democracy that WorldBlu promotes. There is only one boss, the plant manager, “which means that on a day-to-basis, the people who work there ... essentially run themselves.” A “culture of continuous improvement” is pervasive. GE Durham employees “have challenging jobs that matter, they have a degree of control over their work that is almost unprecedented, they adhere to demanding performance standards, they receive the training and support they need to do the best work they can—and, as a result, they do just that.”

Traci shared “Engines of Democracy,” she told me, because my description of CTE reminded her of the GE Durham plant. All of us were gratified by her compliment. CTE has a long way to go before matching GE Durham's world-class performance standard and affirming culture. But we are working on it.

*John Richardson*



## A Teaching Conference With Useful Lessons

By John Doolittle  
Associate Director, TLR

Last October, I joined over 650 other educators at the Lilly Conference on College Teaching in Oxford, Ohio to discuss teaching concepts, tips, and issues. The faculty, staff and students came from nearly 150 colleges and universities that represent a cross-section of higher education from big state universities like Minnesota and Virginia to well-known private schools like Harvard and Syracuse.

Miami University of Ohio hosted the gathering. Its new president, David Hodge, gave a compelling plenary talk entitled "Mainstreaming Undergraduate Research." He argued that the student-as-scholar model makes sense in the cyber world where students easily access and manipulate raw material. By bringing research into the curriculum, Hodge sees faculty becoming the core framing agent for all classes and the means for reaching the goals of a liberal education.

I attended a workshop led by L. Dee Fink, a national consultant and professor emeritus at the University of Oklahoma, who drew from his recent book on course design. He got my attention when he asked "How can I provide significant learning experiences for my students?" The answer was to shift from a content-centered approach to a learning-centered one that en-

gages the student with lectures, discussions, lab activities and emails. Fink believes the most limiting factor in effective teaching is that most teachers have had little or no training in how to design a course. He offered suggestions that drew from important existing ideas in the literature on college teaching (e.g. active learning, educative assessment), and added some new ideas (a taxonomy of significant learning, the concept of a teaching strategy). He showed how to systematically combine these concepts in a way that results in powerful learning experiences for students. I left the session with a new appreciation for what it takes to ensure that students will have a significant learning experience in my courses.

Fink's Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning is online at <http://www.ou.edu/pii/significant/selfdirected1.pdf>. I guarantee you that any time spent perusing the site will pay off.

### *Two Rooms in One*

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Whether it's your first time making a video Skype call or you need assistance capturing a Beta tape, New Media Center consultants are always on call and ready to help. NMC 2.0 can be reserved through the New Media Center (located in Hurst 212): call x2560 or AIM "newmediactr". For other questions, please contact Jason Diebler, Manager of the New Media Center, at [jason.diebler@gmail.com](mailto:jason.diebler@gmail.com).

## CTE Hours & Locations

### MAIN OFFICE

Hurst Hall 206, x2117  
Mon - Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### BLACKBOARD

Hurst Hall 11, x2553  
Mon - Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### FACULTY CORNER

Hurst Hall 204B, x2734  
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### TEACHING & LEARNING RESOURCES

Hurst Hall 11, x3904  
Mon - Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### AUDIO & VIDEO SYSTEMS & SERVICES

Anderson Lower Level, x2296  
Mon - Thu: 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.  
Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
(later as requested)  
Sat & Sun: as requested

### NEW MEDIA CENTER

Hurst Hall 212, x2560  
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.  
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Sun: noon - 11:00 p.m.

### SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH LAB (SSRL)

Hurst Hall 202, x3862  
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.  
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Sat: noon - 7:00 p.m.  
Sun: 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

### SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS LAB

Ward Sub Terrace, x3866  
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.  
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Sat: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### STARS LAB (for undergraduates)

Hughes Hall - First floor, x3709  
Open 24 hours, staffed:  
Mon - Thu: 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.  
Sat: 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Sun: 3:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

### Need Software Help?

[www.american.edu/cte/training](http://www.american.edu/cte/training)

