ASSETT
Arts & Sciences Support of Education Through Technology

September 2015

From the Director

My best insights into teaching a particular course typically arrive mid-semester, and not, regrettably, during advance preparations. Or, if I did put a new idea on the syllabus, when the week arrives to implement it, I wonder, what was I thinking?—I'm way too busy. Such frustrating moments can also be productive and ASSETT is here to help you capitalize. We can support both you and your students when you introduce a new technology with our Technology Teaching Assistants (TTAs): skilled undergraduates who assist individual faculty, their students, or whole departments by researching, demonstrating and supporting various instructional technologies. I'm glad to be working with a TTA this semester as I debut a WordPress project in one of my classes. As for the idea that's too big to fit in this time around, consider putting in a proposal for an ASSETT Development Award. Whether you need equipment, software, or course design support, these awards fund innovative approaches to integrating technology in the classroom (up to $5000 each). Our pedagogy and technical experts can help you develop your proposal before applications are due on October 19. Despite our crowded calendars and endless to-do lists, don't let those insights and ideas fall by the wayside. Let us help you bring them to your students – next week or next semester. Phoebe Young

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Tips & Tricks

As much as we try to make our lectures engaging, we know students' attention spans are decreasing. In fact, a 2015 study found the average attention span, or the amount of concentrated time on a task without becoming distracted, is 8.25 SECONDS! Even goldfish have longer attention spans of 9 seconds![1] Below are simple strategies you can use to keep students focused.

Rest Breaks: Incorporate intentional rest breaks throughout your lecture. At natural

break points, show a relevant (short) video, cartoon strip, or pose a question and give students 3 minutes to discuss with their neighbors.

Movement: There's a substantial amount of research that shows how movement affects learning and engagement. Have students role play, stand, demonstrate a motion, or predict the trajectory of an object in motion.

Quick Writes: After covering a substantial amount of content, have your students write for one minute. This can include answering specific questions, having them recall as many facts as possible, or asking them to create a concept map of how the content relates to each other. Fun quick writes include: writing a witty statement for a bumper stick, five words to describe today's content, or describing the lecture through a newspaper headline.

Clickers: Seamlessly incorporate questions into your presentation. CU's Science Education Initiative and University of British Columbia Science Education Initiative staff & associates developed an Instructor's Guide to the Effective use of Personal Response Systems ("clickers") in Teaching: http://bit.ly/1UEtGBt

Use a variety of activities to best meet your goals. Keep in mind that activities such as group discussion or the use of clickers take time, so consider adjusting your lecture to accommodate the shorter lecture time. Visit the Survivor series for additional resources and to learn how six of your peers incorporate some of these strategies into their large courses!

Tech of the Month

Do you have annotated images and illustrations that you can ONLY use in PowerPoint? Do you need a quick way to visually get students attention? Or, do you need a quick way to visually capture an important concept? If so, check out Canva.

What is it?
Canva is a free online design tool that helps you create visually beautiful flyers, presentations, blog graphics, posters, infographs, and more! Canva provides free templates, images, fonts and backgrounds that you can use by simply dragging and dropping your favorites on your page.

Why use it?
With Canva you don't need to be a graphic designer. Create eye catching images that can help students remember important concepts or it's even a great tool that students can use to create visually appealing presentations, infographs, or flyers.

How Can I Learn More About it?
To get started, go to http://canva.com and sign up. There are free tutorials to help you select the right font, color, and design. And, if you need help, Canva developed a comprehensive Self Help Center.

What's Happening @ ASSETT?

Development Award

ASSETT invites proposals from Arts & Sciences Faculty, GTPIs, Departments, and Programs for awards relating to the use of technology and course related improvements primarily for undergraduate teaching and learning. Proposals for equipment, software, and design of courses and/or course materials will be considered.

Prior to submission, we strongly suggest proposers contact ASSETT's staff to discuss ideas or learn more about what is expected in a proposal. If you would like personal help

in preparing your proposal, please sign up for an appointment.

Complete the proposal submission form by October 19, 2015. More details about these awards can be found here. Any questions about the form can be directed to Joyce Holliday, ASSETT program assistant, at joyce.holliday@colorado.edu or 303-735-3813.

TTA

Maybe you want to try something new in the classroom without worrying it will break and cost you precious class time. Maybe you want to make sure your students have some written help and tutorials before they start using a new tool. Or maybe you'd like to just get some recommendations on what technology is available for teaching. Teaching Technology Assistants are helpful undergraduates who are familiar and comfortable with a variety of technology tools for your classroom, and they can help you with these scenarios and more. Learn more about the TTA program here: http://bit.ly/TTAhelp

ASSETT Needs Assessment

Our new Education Researcher, Sarah Wise, is conducting a needs assessment. This project will help guide our future initiatives! You may see flyers posted for students to participate in a survey. Stay tuned for a short faculty survey, in November.

Innovation Pit Stop

You're invited to hear guest speaker Janet Casagrand (Integrative Physiology) discuss her use of Google Communities as a discussion board alternative on Friday, October 9, 2015, 2:00 – 3:00 pm in ATLAS 105. No RSVP necessary

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About Us

Teaching and Learning Consultants:
seek to inform, facilitate connections and encourage inspiration in those exploring new way of teaching with technology.

Our Creative Services Web Team:
is comprised of talented experienced web and graphic designers committed to bringing fresh design ideas to your academic web site redesign.

ASSETT's Teaching Technology Assistants:
are familar and comfortable with technology. Their primary goal is to help people in A&S learn to use and maintain technology in an educational environment, rather than to fix broken technology.

Contact us:
assett@colorado.edu or 303.735.3813.

ASSETT Custom Tools and Applications:
Places, OCR, Syllabus Archive, and ASSETT Blog

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