

## NEIU's First Graduating Class in Online Teaching Preparation

The Center for Teaching and Learning would like to congratulate the first graduates of the Online Teaching Preparation Course, which started on October 5, 2009 and ended this past Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>. The course was designed and facilitated by the CTL's Coordinator of Learning Technologies, Angela Velez. The course was completely online, and the faculty participants were immersed in the online environment, both as students and as teachers. The esteemed graduating class members are:

*Shelley Bannister (Just. St.), Suzanne Benson (ELAD), Julia Berkowitz (Teacher Ed), Anita Bross (El Centro), Vicki Byard (Engl.), Ingrid Castro (Sociol.), Crystal Chen (Acct.), Suzanne Gaskins (Psych.), Katherine Gleiss (Learn. Ctr.), Donna Goering (ELAD), Charletta Gutierrez (Acct.), Jean Hemzacek (Earth Sci.), Elizabeth Iehl (El Centro), Leslie Kleinmuntz (Manage.), Elizabeth Landerholm (Teacher Ed), Paul Lempke (Art), Jian Li (Manage.), Mary Ellen McGoey (For. Lang.), Dragan Milovanovic (Just. St.), Adeline Pierre (Poli.Sci), Elisa Rzany (Engl.), Laura Sanders (Earth Sci.), Rose Sperrazza (Music), Wendy Thomas (CTC), Daniela Truty (ELAD), Cris Toffolo (Just. St.), Jacquie Ward (Econ), and Mickie Wong (Special Ed.)*

Congratulations for all of your hard work and dedication!

### What did they learn?

Faculty members who participated in this class learned how to navigate a Blackboard course, add items, add website links, create discussion forums, create discussion threads (or conversation starters to which students respond), grade student participation quickly and efficiently, create a test or quiz, design a comprehensive syllabus appropriate for the online environment, facilitate an online discussion, the importance of instructor participation, give quality feedback to students, and so much more. Here are some quotes from the course participants:

*"Early on I stated that I had a very steep learning curve because although I use and love technology, I had never taught or taken an online course. Yes, I had researched it with a colleague that is very well versed in this format, but I did not have the skills to teach it myself; I keep thinking that this is something I would do one day. I have learned so much in such a short period of time that I can hardly believe it!"*

*"This online training course is very important in order to prepare the instructor to get ready for online teaching. I think it should be a required program for all the instructors who would teach an online course in NEIU."*

*"This truly felt like a playground, i.e., a site where I could be me and where I could play, explore, discover, and ultimately learn. I learned so many new functions in Blackboard that I haven't used before. Additionally, I learned about some of the theory that underlies Blackboard use. I'm ready and willing to learn how to do these things and to seriously consider implementing them as quickly as possible."*

*"I was one of those more skeptical and perhaps also less technologically sophisticated with on-line work. But the course, and [Angela], has made me appreciate what a quality on-line course could look like. I appreciated the continuous feedback, with humor. I liked the two-pronged direction: we as teachers, we as students. That rounded things off nicely. I really appreciated the terrific dialogue amongst colleagues."*

### **How can you learn some of these functions of Blackboard?**

Angela Velez and Marc Raskinski from the CTL have recently added many videos to the CTL website that narrate Blackboard tools and processes. You can find a list of these videos on the CTL website at: <http://www.neiu.edu/~ctl/blackboard.html>. Access the video by clicking on the video title; you will need your speakers on in order to listen to the narration.

Videos are added often, so check back on occasion. You can also call the CTL to request a tutorial if one is not available for a process you would like to know. As you can see in the picture, a video called "Blackboard tutorial for students" is included as well. This is a 16 minute tutorial that takes a student through an example NEIU course that is offered through Blackboard. The video shows students how to navigate, how to email their professor, how to check their grades, how to respond to a discussion board post, and more.

#### **"How To" Videos**

- [Make course available](#)
- [Remove old courses from the menu](#)
- [Upload syllabus](#)
- [Create assignment link](#)
- [Grade assignments electronically](#)
- [Creating discussion forums and discussion threads](#)
- [Reading, replying to, and grading student discussion posts](#)
- [Provide feedback on discussion grades using discussion grader](#)
- [Helpful, time-saving discussion board tips](#)
- [Blackboard tutorial for students](#)
- [Upload the Blackboard tutorial for students to your course](#)
- [Grade electronic copies of papers efficiently with Annotate for Word Pro](#)
- [Track face to face class attendance through Blackboard](#)
- [Add grades quickly to the gradebook for a face to face assignment](#)
- [Set up and use student groups through Blackboard](#)

You can put this video in your Blackboard class (yes, there's even a video that shows you how to do that) and your inexperienced students can learn how to do necessary processes.

### **What else can you do to become more tech savvy?**

If you would like to participate in the online teaching preparation course, you can email Angela at [a-velez4@neiu.edu](mailto:a-velez4@neiu.edu). Another set of courses will begin in the Spring semester; currently two sections are filled and no more than three sections will run during the semester.

You can also request to be added to the "Distance Instructor Collaboration Station", which is a Blackboard course filled with helpful tools, articles, and websites that make using Blackboard fun, exciting, and engaging! Email Angela to have access to this growing repertoire of educational resources.

If you have a technical or "how to" question, call Marc at x4463; if your question is pedagogical or design related, call Angela at x4497.

**All CTL Bulletins are available on our website at: [www.neiu.edu/~ctl/](http://www.neiu.edu/~ctl/)**