IT TIMES

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A Road Map to New Technology at UC Davis
How We Arrive at Solutions to Our Business Needs

Technology without human creativity is like a good car without a driver. It provides us with a vehicle for progress, but can't blaze trails or set destinations without a person behind the wheel. Technology without collaboration is even worse: like a car with two uncooperative drivers fighting over the wheel, burning up lots of fuel yet getting nowhere. The potential to utilize technology toward improving the vitality and efficiency of a diverse campus raises important questions. With such a powerful engine at our disposal, how do we get where we all want to go?

In other words, when our multi-faceted campus wants to use appropriate technologies to help us overcome technology infrastructure issues so we can better fulfill the campus mission, how do we cut a path toward a solution while navigating the crossroads of technology, people, and problems?

To name a few of the recent challenges…

♦ Internet security concerns us all (especially in the past year as network invasion and identity theft are on the rise), begging the questions: how do we assure that credit-card transactions via the Web are secure and legitimate? What standards and regulations should be in place for conducting the campus' business over the Web? Can one set of standards apply to all the various departments and offices on campus that need this promise of online security?

♦ Campus administrators, faculty, and staff members begin to show an interest in enhancing their interactions with distant colleagues (without having to spend inordinate amounts of money on travel), facilitating guest lectures from remote locations, creating virtual meetings with several individuals from different locations, and accommodating overflow crowds at special events. Can the campus provide reliable, standardized video-conferencing services using the Internet? What will it take to efficiently deploy this service and take advantage of recent network technology advancements?

♦ Since our campus is home to a large group of people, many departments have kept their own large sets of records for all the faculty, staff, and students they serve. The more we grow, the more uncoordinated our collections of data records can become. What can we do about ambiguous or duplicate records? How do we catch erroneous or conflicting records? Can the various administrative system owners on campus collaborate to define and develop an official campuswide directory, adjusting their systems to interact with the new directory?

Getting Behind the Wheel
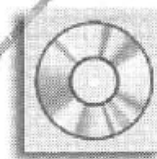
Just two years in the driver's seat, Dr. John Bruno, Vice Provost for Information and Educational Technology (IET), invites a hands-on approach when he sets out to perform a critical element of his job: addressing major campuswide technology challenges. As technology has evolved, so have the ways we implement it on campus. Dr. Bruno recognized early on that IET should not work in isolation from the rest of the campus, but rather, should solicit collaboration and active participation at every stage of the process on even the most complex or sensitive technology projects. "Technology providers like us must be proactive and collaborative so we can discover solutions that help the campus fulfill its mission. When facing campuswide technology tasks, the most effective strategy is to consult the campus technology advisory groups, our customers, and the large community of experts on our campus. If we don't, we could spend inordinate amounts of time researching and implementing the wrong solutions," says Dr. Bruno.

To set the wheels in motion, Dr. Bruno outlined a simple hands-on process for confronting technology challenges. The process is flexible enough to accommodate plenty of research, evaluation, and input, yet sturdy enough to retain focus and avoid runaway projects. Dr. Bruno calls these projects "Advanced Technology Projects" (or "ATPs" for short). The projects are "Advanced" because they are major campuswide issues that involve newer technologies. But something about the collaboration involved, the incoming and outgoing flow of research and ideas makes them especially representative of a new, advanced way of addressing technology on campus.

Navigating an Advanced Technology Project
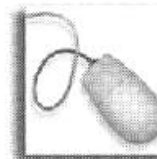
Before a technology solution is implemented on campus, a lot of investigation and collaboration is required:

1. A campuswide business or academic need (e.g., online security, Web-based video-conferencing, or unique directory records) is identified that can be met through the implementation of a technology solution.

2. Dr. Bruno works with campus administrators and system owners to identify a team who can carry out research and develop recommendations for the implementation of possible technology solutions. A project letter is penned, defining the business need, the charge to the team, deadlines, and investigational stepping stones to help the team along the way.

3. The team begins working on the project, consulting with appropriate groups, such as the TIF (Technology Infrastructure Forum), AC4 (Academic Computing Coordinating Council), NBA (New Business Architecture), AdC3 (Administrative Computing Coordinating Council), and other campus organizations. By drawing all the key folks into the loop and holding open meetings, the team gathers a thorough and varied array of input. The team then provides Dr. Bruno with updates, and presents progress on the campus' ATP Web site located at http://vpiet.ucdavis.edu/advancedprojects/.

4. The team completes the investigation phase, writing a formal recommendation about how the campus should proceed with the project. When appropriate, the ATP results in the formation of an implementation workgroup to set the project into motion on campus.

Defining the ATP teams is a crucial step. "To encourage the leveraging of our collective expertise, I recommend diversifying our team membership," Dr. Bruno explains. For example, the Common Authentication project currently underway includes specialists from IET, Accounting and Financial Services, the Office of the Registrar, the Computer Science Department, and the UC Davis Medical Center. Customer advisory groups are often consulted, and Dr. Bruno adds that he'd "also like to encourage more faculty involvement."

For regular updates on current ATPs, visit http://vpiet.ucdavis.edu/advancedprojects/. For announcements on new ATPs, keep visiting the site and checking in with IT Times. Questions or comments about ATPs should be directed to vpiet-info@ucdavis.edu.

In this issue…

How do we meet business and academic needs with new technology solutions? In this IT Times, read about specific issues the campus is confronting head on. We are rethinking the link between technology solutions and business or academic needs, not just because the New Business Architecture (NBA) calls for the leveraging of new technologies, but because we are always finding ways that technology can improve our learning and working environment. The campus Web portal, MyUCDavis, has been an enduring exercise in facing challenges head on. As you will read, our campus certainly has a foot in the door of portal technology. Of course, our faculty and students use educational technology in ways that are as challenging as they are exciting. We also recognize the personal computing challenges you face daily with our Q&A about spam. Check out our Web site for more news, including an announcement of an NBA Project Manager job posting.

Legend

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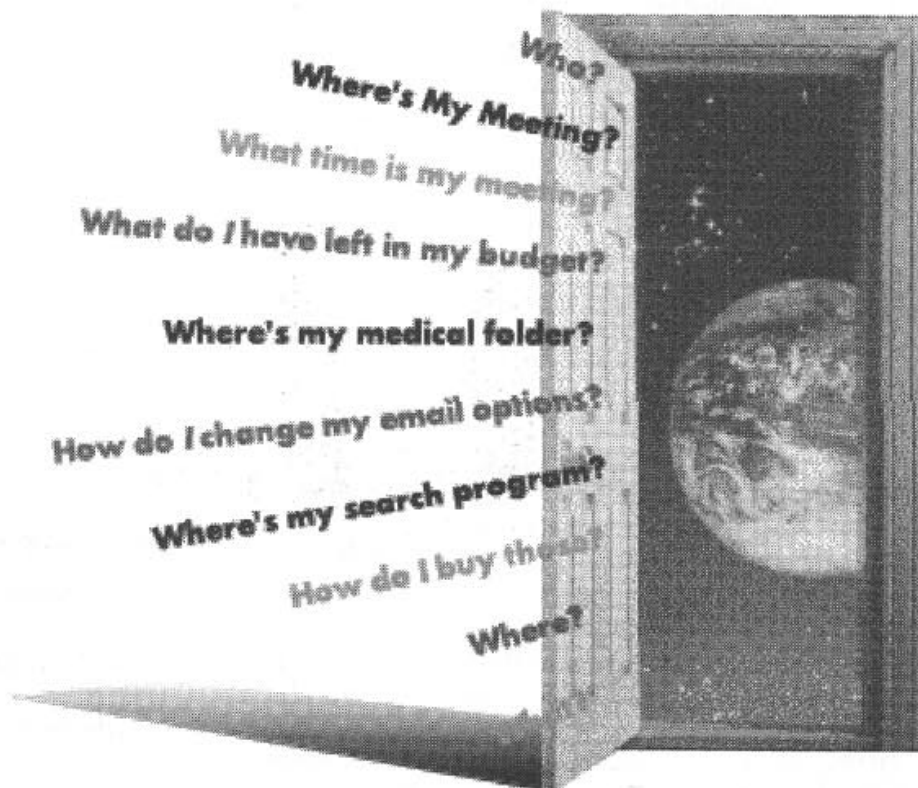< communication

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Campus Learns Portal Lessons
Princeton Expert Shares Web Portal Visions

Question: How is UC Davis tackling portal technology?

A. It builds its very own Web portal called MyUCDavis to serve faculty, students, staff, and guests as they enter the online world of UC Davis.

B. It commits to continue researching and implementing the most appropriate application of portal technology for the campus.

C. It invites a national portal expert from Princeton University to campus to discuss the future of Web portals.

D. All of the above.

Correct Answer: D. All of the Above.

Explanation of correct answer: (A&B)You probably already know about the campus' Web portal, MyUCDavis, located at http://my.ucdavis.edu/. You may even know about the New Business Architecture and the Advanced Technology Project underway to explore the viability of maintaining a robust Web portal into the campus' future. (If you'd like to learn more, visit http://vpiet.ucdavis.edu/advancedprojects/projects.html). (C) However, did you know that the campus went one step further in its plan to fully immerse itself in portal proficiency when, on March 15, Information and Educational Technology (IET) hosted a special symposium with national portal expert, Howard Strauss?

If You Didn't Answer the Question Correctly, Read On For Extra Credit

On March 15, Howard Strauss delivered a presentation and instigated a lively brainstorming session with a campus community that is rapidly becoming conversant with portal technology. Strauss, a contributor to the recent book, *Web Portals in Higher Education* (reviewed below), spoke to a unique combination of individuals, from technologists to campus administrators and users. Some participants traveled from Berkeley, Merced, and Santa Cruz to participate in Strauss' discussion. The Manager of Academic Applications at Princeton University, Strauss is widely known as an expert on the Web, presenting workshops and sessions at conferences and virtual seminars nationwide.

Vice Provost Bruno co-sponsored the event in which Strauss explained the multiple ways by which "A Home Page Doth Not a Portal Make." With this intriguing title, he led the audience through a series of questions: What's a portal? Why have one? What are the components that make a portal vital? What technical and administrative issues come along with portal development and implementation? In other words, he reminded us that not only is a portal a Web hub from which users can locate all the Web content they commonly use, but it is also a tool dedicated to revolutionizing the computer desktop with the following principles:

Customization: A good portal knows its users, and tailors itself to the user's role (e.g., staff, student, faculty) as well as the type of hardware from which the user accesses the portal.

Personalization: A good portal allows users to determine the look and feel of their portal page, (choosing which blocks of information show up at login time, which colors, fonts and columns the user likes, which links the user needs, etc.) As Strauss so aptly puts it, "Bill Gates, Steve Jobs and Scott McNeilly shouldn't determine what appears on your screen; you should."

Adaptation: A good portal knows the user's schedule and workflow so that it can help create the user's schedule, provide her with reminders, and automate her common paper-based tasks.

Strauss provided an altogether exciting vision of how technology providers can make technology users happier. At a time when there are more than 3 billion institution-centric Web pages on the Internet offering millions of different services, it's about time we see individually-tailored Web hubs for each and every one of us. After all, as Strauss says, "cutting-edge service is much more important than cutting-edge technology."

Another Statute of Portal Common Sense (For Next Month's Quiz)

In the ideal portal, users shouldn't have to enter a password more than once for all the various applications they access. Strauss could easily make our campus feel a little proud about the progress of our own portal, MyUCDavis. True to Strauss' portal forecast, MyUCDavis is beginning to develop a single sign-on authentication process for the various portal functions that require passwords.

MyUCDavis is Teacher's Pet

In fact, Strauss was interested enough in MyUCDavis to invite some of its developers to join him at the major higher education conference, EDUCAUSE, where he'll present a seminar on portals. Of particular interest to Strauss were the help icons for each of the channels, the Channel Builder feature, and the fact that our portal is "homegrown."

Challenges for the Future

After a lunch break, Strauss greeted symposium participants with a colorful vision of future portals. Who needs a wallet when you've got what he calls a Personal Ubiquitous Portal (PUP)? Not only does Strauss believe that PUPs, or telematons ("personal, special purpose, wireless, networked, intelligent devices with local memory"), will replace general purpose computers, he also argues that these telematons will come in different functional shapes and sizes, meeting different purposes, from togamatons (wearable computers built into your watch, glasses or clothes) to automatons (built into your car) to refrigermatons (built into your refrigerator door) and cartmatons (built into your shopping cart). To top it all off, Strauss described the kinds of advanced authentification methods telematons will use, ensuing a fascinating discussion about emerging technologies such as biometrics (digital scannings of fingerprints, for instance) that he feels will efficiently replace the use of passwords.

If you'd like to find out about the host of topics Strauss discussed, visit his dynamic and easy-to-understand PowerPoint presentations at http://ietsymposia.ucdavis.edu/portals/index.cfm/.

Join the Portal Generation
Web Portals and Higher Education: Technologies to Make IT Personal

Book Review by Nancy Harrington
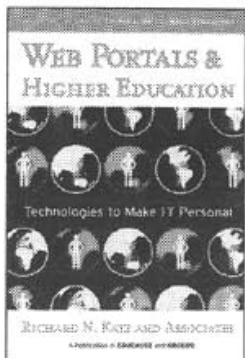
Do you remember when being online meant queuing up with a whole bunch of people to get tickets to a Stones concert? Remember when a Web site was a spot in a corner of the room that hadn't received quite enough house-cleaning attention? I realize that I'm getting dangerously close to going totally Andy Rooney on you, but do you also remember when a portal was a grand, imposing gateway to a parallel universe in science fiction movies?

Well, nostalgia ain't what it used to be! 'Portal' is now the common term among information technologists to describe…what? If you want to find out, you'll be hard-pressed to locate a better resource than *Web Portals & Higher Education: Technologies to Make IT Personal*, by Richard N. Katz and Associates.

It's not that this particular volume manages to avoid the inevitable spate of acronyms that techno-doofuses and language-lovers among us find daunting or dismaying: the book has its share of VEPs, HEPs, CPADs, ERPs, and CRMs. Reading about "Aggregators" and "Configurators" still makes me think of Arnold Schwarzenegger. And I can't resist mentioning the charming, albeit oxymoronic, something-or-other called "Forms Nirvana" that shows up in article number five.

That aside, this book gave me a better understanding that 'portal' is now the common term among information technologists to describe a site that welcomes you onto the Web and provides one-stop shopping for all the online resources you use most. How, you may ask, does it do this? And how is it different from any other Web site?

Students and Faculty Brave Technology Together
Educational Technology Partners Program Underway

Editor's Note: At the end of Fall quarter, we introduced the new and innovative Educational Technology Partners (ET Partners) program. Initiated by Mediaworks, the campus educational technology and digital media unit, ET Partners pairs specially trained students with faculty members for one-on-one technology training. The purpose of the program is to help instructors effectively integrate educational technology into the classroom. In December, IT Times highlighted two of the eleven student employees of the ET Partners program as they underwent technology and communication training that would prepare them for their Winter and Spring Quarter faculty partnerships. Since that time, the program has generated a lot of buzz on and beyond the Davis campus. We caught up with the student-faculty pairs now that they have completed their first quarter working together.

Dr. Miyo Uchida of the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department made an agreement with her Educational Technology (ET) student partner Lenora Cheung: Dr. Uchida won't address the sophomore as "Cheung san," [the Japanese way of addressing a student] and Cheung won't address the Japanese instructor as "Sensei." Instead, the two are on a first-name basis in their relationship as ET Partners.

"The students in my Japanese language courses call me 'Sensei' [the Japanese address for a teacher], but I don't look at Lenora as a student." In this case, the women feel they have surpassed the student-teacher relationship for something more like a partnership, which is exactly the intention of the ET Partners program. Another intention of the ET Partners program, according to program manager Chris Sarason, is that both the students and faculty experience distinctive challenges and exceptional learning experiences.

The faculty and student partners have learned to draw upon each others complementary strengths. "She's a Mac person," Lenora giggles, "and I'm a PC person, so in order to get our project done, she had to teach me a lot of Mac stuff."

Meeting in the middle is something the two have mastered as they work to accomplish Miyo's goals of creating a course Web site using software such as Dreamweaver and Fireworks, and specially edited clips of video and audio. When asked how their learning styles or personalities might intersect, the two burst out in friendly laughter. Besides having a similar eye for art and design on Web pages, they mention a few of the non-academic hobbies they share. "We're both huge fans of Anime," beams Lenora. Seated beneath the array of Anime [Japanese animation] posters in her office, Miyo confirms: "Yes, and I requested a partner who also plays a musical instrument. We're both artistic and creative."

The creativity with which the ET Partners program was designed trickles down into each ET partnership. Case in point, these two combined their creative skills to begin working toward Miyo's long-term goal of maintaining her own Web site. It will include not only the typical course Web site features (lectures, assignments, messages, and grades), but also clips from Japanese movies. Miyo explains, "I will edit sound in and out of the videos, so students will have to fill in Japanese dialogue spoken by the characters in the movies. Since these mini-movies I edit together will be clips from Japanese TV and film, they will not only help students practice language skills, but will also allow them to experience Japanese culture."

"Lenora really helped me set up the foundation for achieving this long-term goal," Miyo explains. Not only did Lenora get Miyo started by showing her how to use MyUCDavis (the campus Web portal) to create a quick no-nonsense course Web site, she has also helped her learn to create a more complex Web site to be housed on the department's server, complete with

an attractive front page indicative of their mutual love for Japanese animation.

Miyo, who claims to have relied on a typewriter in graduate school, has thought about creating a course Web site since she attended the 1996 SITT (the campus Summer Institute on Technology in Teaching), but was discouraged by the time-consuming prospect of learning HTML. "As a lecturer, I have a large teaching and grading workload. But now that MyUCDavis makes it possible to create a course Web site without needing to know programming code, and now that we have ET Partners, this actually became a reality for me."

Miyo is part of a growing force of instructors here at UC Davis and across the nation who are interested in enhancing their teaching through technology, but for whom, according to a recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* by Dianne Lynch, "technology raises all kinds of troublesome issues, most obviously the plain and annoying fact that it takes a lot of

Dr. Miyo Uchida (l) and sophomore Lenora Cheung (r) worked together through the ET Partners program to incorporate educational technology into Miyo's classes. But the two share other interests, such as music and Anime.

time and effort to figure out how to use it."

Not only does the ET Partners program respond to this sentiment, it also sets up a situation in which instructors can begin talking to each other about methods for enhancing instruction with technology. Miyo has been sharing her ET Partners experience with colleagues: "This program is so great. Some of my colleagues who didn't know how helpful and easy MyUCDavis was before this are now using it on their own!"

Spam on the Rise
Q: Lately, I have been receiving increasing amounts of junk email, some of which is very offensive. Is UC Davis doing anything about this problem? Is there any way to prevent these messages from reaching me?

Yes, spam is a real problem, and not just at UC Davis; all the UC campuses, as well as other universities, are grappling with this issue. You may receive ten or twenty unsolicited emails in a day, which you probably trash the same way you do the paper junk mail you get in your mailbox at home.

There are, of course, technologies attempting to rid Internet users of spam. You may have heard of spam filtering systems; but there are a number of issues that complicate any attempt at large-scale filtering of email messages. One problem with filtering systems is the accidental yet inevitable snagging of wanted emails along with the unwanted ones. Many Internet Service Providers, including the largest, America Online (AOL), implement services designed to

block emails which come in from certain unwanted spamming domains (a "domain" is simply a related group of Internet addresses—for example, at UC Davis our main domain is "ucdavis.edu"). Some of these filtering services add domains to their database in response to complaints. But other filtering services are more proactive, searching the Internet for spammers and adding any they find to their database, even in the absence of any evidence of spamming. In fact, some UC Davis departments have mistakenly been added to such lists, and have found it very difficult to get removed from these lists. Thus, filtering systems often catch innocent domains in the traps they set for spamming domains.

There are still plenty of options if you want to confront that spam! Read the complete version of this story online to find out much more about spam and links to other informative articles about this nagging problem. You'll also find tips for how to deal with and report spam.

For the complete version of this story log on to http://ittimes.ucdavis.edu/.

My UCDAVIS
Post it Legally
Want to Place Course Materials Online?

ADVICE FROM THE LIBRARY

Now that MyUCDavis has made it so easy to build a course Web site, instructors have begun to store published articles or other additional course materials in electronic form for students to retrieve with minimal hassle. Along with this practical use of the technology comes the instructor's responsibilities to comply with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and all the other federal and state copyright laws, stay within the definition of the fair use exception to the permission requirement, seek written permission (a license) where those conservative limits may be exceeded, and provide compensation to the copyright holders if required.

Furthermore, some copyrighted materials, such as journals and databases in electronic formats are generally made available through institutional site licenses, which can alter and restrict what would otherwise be a fair use exception. While the University respects the conservative limits of the fair use exception, some licenses may deny the right to use the copyright-protected material in class Web sites without prior written permission from, and compensation for, the copyright holder.

General Library Reserve Services units have traditionally aided instructors in these matters. If you are an instructor, here are some suggestions for making the best use of the Web sites you can create in MyUCDavis without breaking federal and state copyright laws:

♦ You may altogether avoid the need to ascertain license restrictions, evaluate fair use qualifications, and seek permissions by using hyperlinks which do not carry constraints or require permission. Instead of storing an electronic copy of the article on the class Web site, instructors should link to the article at its location on the publisher's Web site. According to current laws, obtaining permission to link to copyrighted sources is unnecessary as long as the link goes directly to the source and is not framed as part of the original content on the class site.

♦ You may strengthen your qualification for a fair use exception by limiting student access to electronic copies of the articles by using only the minimal amount of material needed for your purpose, by removing materials promptly after the quarter ends, and by not reusing the articles in subsequent quarters.

For advice or questions regarding copyright issues, call Shields Library's Reserve Services at 752-2760 or visit Reserves online at (http://libweb2.ucdavis.edu/access/reserv/placing.html). For services at the Carlson Health Sciences Library, call 752-2144 or visit Reserve Services for UCD Instructors online at (http://lib.ucdavis.edu/heathsci/reserveinst.html).

Thanks to Karl Kocher of Shields Library, who coordinated this article and to Jan Carmikle of Business Contracts, who contributed to this article.

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This month:

♦ Students Tackle Hanging Chads with Online Elections
♦ Why is Spam Getting Worse?
♦ Bits and Bytes: Free Technology Training Opportunities for Faculty
   Mondavi Center for the Arts Ticket Purchase
   New Electronic Communications Policy Adopted
♦ UC Davis Initiates Recruitment for NBA Project Manager

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Example: subscribe ittimes Jane Austen.

Book Review

The key is personalization. When you visit a standard Web site, you basically navigate within the framework and set of predetermined options. In a portal, you, the user, get to choose which items, links, and information will show up when you log in. Portals allow you to constantly customize the site to fit your needs, changing them around anytime you want, eliminating those no longer useful to you and adding new items to the mix. Today you can organize your portal to include getting your email, checking on your stocks, finding out about the weather, and paying your bills. Tomorrow, should your needs change, you can rearrange the items on your portal to get rid of the stock quotes (it's too depressing to read anyway!), and add a joke-of-the-day update! This 'user-centric' approach is intended to help all of us sort through the daily deluge of electronic data by allowing each of us to focus on only those items that are most important to us. And that can make campus computing a lot more convenient. As one of the articles in *Web Portals and Higher Education* notes, the user-friendliness of campus Web portals will play a key role in the ability of colleges and universities to "…attract, retain, and serve customers [faculty, staff, students, et al.], of all types."

You may already have heard about the New Business Architecture (NBA). No, it's not a sport associated with unusually tall people, but rather a long-term UC-wide initiative to improve the working and learning environment on all the UC campuses. And portal technology will be integral to implementation of the NBA.   So log on to MyUCDavis at http://my.ucdavis.edu/ to see our campus Web portal, and while you're at it, read this book.

As a result, you'll be a better-educated campus citizen who knows a lot more about some of the impacts that portal technology is expected to have on campus life: for students, ease of access to information and professors; for faculty, ability to identify which technology resources actually make a difference in student learning; for staff, a breakdown of the organizational stovepipes to allow more streamlined administrative processes; and for each of us, power to the individual. The book is fairly accessible even to the lay person. Sure, there's some tech-talk involved, but you can get through (or past, or around) it and reasonably garner the basics about portals and their use in higher education.

Am I saying you'll want to substitute this volume for those bodice-rippers and murder mysteries you've got slated for beach reading this summer? Absolutely not!!! But if you want more information on how portal technology is expected to improve campus life, this is the book for you!

Nancy Harrington is the Human Resources Coordinator in IET

TIMES

Student-Faculty Partnerships

In another partnership, Professor Blake Stimson of the Art History Department and sophomore Elizabeth Upton focused on digital imaging they needed to create a digital archive of nearly 1,500 images for Professor Stimson's Art History courses. During the quarter, Professor Stimson and Elizabeth explored new techniques and developed an efficient system for obtaining and manipulating images for use in Professor Stimson's PowerPoint presentations in class and on his Web site. In the process, the two warmed up to a digital camera. Elizabeth laughs that she and Professor Stimson "learned how to use the digital camera together."

While she recognizes the benefits of hands-on learning, group training, and increased familiarity with certain applications, Elizabeth also noted that an invaluable part of her experience has been coming to understand the challenges instructors face in trying to implement educational technology and to recognize "all the work that goes into creating a [PowerPoint] presentation."

Professor Stimson expressed his appreciation for the "collaborative troubleshooting" afforded by the ET Partners program's continuous training of the students, who meet each week to discuss their partnerships and seek advice from each other before their next appointments with the faculty members.

The program greatly empowers the students to collaborate amongst themselves and to enhance their communications skills. "I've learned that I enjoy teaching. Even though I'll probably declare an Electrical Engineering major, I think being able to communicate and teach effectively will help me when I begin working in technical jobs after college," Lenora explains.

Thinking about next quarter, when Lenora will be assigned to another faculty partner, Miyo laughs and asks, "I'm not ready to be on my own, am I?" Lenora reminds her of all the reasons that she is, in fact, ready for future self-guided explorations in technology: Lenora is leaving her intrepid ET Partner with a set of technical tips to keep handy, and has already made her aware of the many campus technology resources, which Miyo confirms she is "no longer reluctant to take advantage of."

"I've recently been attending workshops on sound editing at the Language Learning Center," she confirms.

Miyo expresses her gratitude as the two reminisce on their learning experiences together. "She has been such a patient teacher, very flexible and even willing to go on late-afternoon excursions to Fry's with me to pick up hardware goodies."

The ET Partners is a pilot program. Learn more at http://mediaworks.ucdavis.edu (click on 'Educational Technology'), or call Chris Sarason at 753-9545.