

CIT Infobits

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About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ITS Teaching and Learning's Center for Instructional Technology. Each month the CIT's Information Resources Consultant monitors and selects from a number of information and instructional technology sources that come to her attention and provides brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

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EVALUATION OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

Evaluation of learning technology is the theme for the latest issue of *Educational Technology & Society* (vol. 3, no. 4, October 2000). Articles include:

"An Evaluation Model for Supporting Higher Education Lecturers in the Integration of New Learning Technologies," by Gordon Joyes, Teaching Enhancement Advisor and Lecturer in Education, School of Education, University of Nottingham

"Evaluating Information and Communication Technologies for Learning," by Eileen Scanlon, Ann Jones, Jane Barnard, Julie Thompson and Judith Calder, Institute for Educational Technology, The Open University

"W3LS: Evaluation Framework for World Wide Web Learning," by Jan van der Veen, DINKEL Educational Centre, University of Twente; Wim de Boer, Faculty of Educational Science and Technology, University of Twente; and Maarten van de Ven, Centre for Didactics and Education Development, Delft University of Technology

These and other articles can be read on the Web at http://ifets.ieee.org/periodical/vol_4_2000/v_4_2000.html

Educational Technology & Society [ISSN 1436-4522] is a peer-reviewed quarterly online journal published by the International Forum of Educational Technology & Society and the IEEE Computer Society Learning Technology Task Force (LTF). It is available at no cost in HTML format at <http://ifets.ieee.org/periodical/>

The International Forum of Educational Technology & Society (IFETS) is a subgroup of the IEEE Learning Technology Task Force (LTF). IFETS encourages discussions on the issues affecting the educational system developer (including AI) and education communities. For more information, link to <http://ifets.ieee.org/>

LTF was founded on the premise that emerging technology has the potential to dramatically improve learning. The purpose of this task force is to contribute to the field of Learning Technology and to serve the needs of professionals working in this field. For more information, link to <http://lfff.ieee.org/>

The IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) promotes the "engineering process of creating, developing, integrating, sharing, and applying knowledge about electrical and information technologies and sciences for the benefit of humanity and the profession." For more information, link to <http://www.ieee.org/>

2000 CAMPUS DESKTOP COMPUTING SURVEY

The latest of Kenneth C. Green's annual surveys of campus computing is now available. Green, the founder and director of the Campus Computing Project and a visiting scholar at the Center for Educational Studies at Claremont Graduate University, has conducted a national survey of desktop (personal computers and workstations) computing and information technology in U.S. higher education institutions since 1990. The survey enables colleges and universities to compare their academic computing capabilities with similar institutions. The data also show current patterns and future trends that can assist campus administrators in planning for technology innovations and growth. The latest survey shows that "more college courses are using more technology resources. Three-fifths . . . of all college courses now utilize electronic mail . . . two-fifths . . . of college courses now use Web resources as a component of the syllabus. . . ."

A summary of the report, "The 2000 Campus Computing Survey: Struggling with IT Staffing," is available online at <http://www.campuscomputing.net/>

The complete report costs \$37.00 (US) and can be ordered online at the same website. Summaries of reports from earlier years are also available online.

SURVEYING THE DIGITAL FUTURE

"The UCLA Internet Report: Surveying the Digital Future," a survey conducted by the UCLA Center for Communications Policy, indicates that the Web is surpassing television and radio as an important source of information among users of online technology. Interestingly, the survey found that "among all mass media sources of information, both electronic and print, books were ranked most often as an important source of information by Internet users, with 73.1 percent ranking books as important or extremely important information sources. Newspapers rank second (69.3 percent of respondents), followed by the Internet (67.3 percent), television (53.1 percent), radio (46.8 percent) and magazines (44.3 percent). The report is available on the Web (in PDF format) at <http://ccp.ucla.edu/newsite/pages/internet-report.asp>

Also see Cnet's five-part series of online articles which suggests ten ways that the Web will change the world. The final installment, "Culture and Education," along with the earlier parts of the series can be read at <http://www.cnet.com/techtrends/0-1544318-7-2047709.html>

VIRTUAL WORLDS AS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Two recent articles in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* report on how instructors are using virtual worlds in their distance learning classes. MOOs (Multiple-user Object-Oriented environments) allow participants to move among virtual rooms and share messages with others logged onto the MOO. These environments have been popular for playing fantasy games, but had very limited, user-unfriendly interfaces. Updated versions have added graphical interfaces, and instructors are working to make them easier to use as an educational chat tool. The article "Instructors Try Out Updated MOOs as Online-Course Classrooms" (by Jeffrey R. Young, *CHE*, October 24, 2000), along with links to two MOO tools, is available online at <http://chronicle.com/free/2000/10/2000102401u.htm>

The article "Virtual Reality on a Desktop Hailed as New Tool in Distance Education" (by Jeffrey R. Young, *CHE*, October 6, 2000), shows how several instructors are using three-dimensional virtual environments in their teaching. These environments are more graphically sophisticated than MOOs, and the students' interactions are closer approximations of real classroom interaction. Virtual reality environments can simulate science laboratories, lecture halls, and models of machines and human organs that students can "walk" around in. The article is available online at <http://chronicle.com/free/v47/i06/06a04301.htm>

The Chronicle of Higher Education [ISSN 0009-5982] is published weekly by The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inc., 1255 Twenty-third Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037 USA; tel: 202-466-1000; fax: 202-452-1033; Web: <http://chronicle.com/>

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THE COST OF TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

"The COSTS Project: Capturing the Cost of Supporting Technology Services in Colleges and Universities" is a collaborative project of David Smallen, Director, Information Technology Services, Hamilton College and Karen Leach, Chief Information Officer, Colgate University. Long-term goals of the project are to:

- identify a core of IT services that should be common to most institutions of higher education
- identify exemplars for each IT service
- develop benchmarks that are useful for comparing the costs of providing IT services among various institutional categories
- determine components of the total cost of ownership for desktop computer equipment in higher education

To participate in or read more about the COSTS Project, go to <http://www.costsproject.org/>

ENGLISH DOMINATES -- OR DOES IT?

An article cited in the September issue of *CIT Infobits* ("English Dominates in Higher Education," <http://its.unc.edu/tl/infobits/bitsep00.html#4>) noted that English was becoming the lingua franca of the online world. In "What Global Language?" [*The Atlantic Monthly*, November 2000], Barbara Wallraff argues that the predicted eventual dominance of English as a global language is not a fait accompli. "[W]e monolingual English-speakers may never be able to communicate fluently with everyone everywhere. If we want to exchange anything beyond rudimentary messages with many of our future fellow English-speakers, we may well need help from something other than English." The article, along with links to several related articles, is online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/cgi-bin/o/issues/2000/11/wallraff.htm>

The Atlantic Monthly [ISSN 1072-7825] is published monthly by The Atlantic Monthly Company, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114 USA; tel: 617-854-7700. Annual subscriptions are available for \$12.95 (U.S. and territories). To subscribe, link to: <http://www.theatlantic.com/store/freetrial.htm>

ONLINE DATABASE OF SCHOLARS' ARTICLES

"All Academic: The Guide to Free Academic Resources Online" is a database of scholarly articles and convention papers searchable by subject, author, publication, or article title. The site also includes a lengthy list of links to online versions of scholarly journals. The collection, although still small, has traditional features, as well as those not usually found in article databases on the Web. The search results include article abstracts; all citations are available in APA, MLA, and Chicago styles. The database's designers have also included fields for the author's place of employment, degree, and other qualifications.

All Academic's founders encourage scholars to submit their own scholarly work. If you have a working paper that does not exist online, you can send them an electronic copy and they will host your paper. You can reach the site at <http://www.allacademic.com/>

MODERN MONSTERS SITE

This year's Halloween site is "An Exploration of Modern Monsters." The website is a collaborative project created by students in "Research and Technology in the Humanities," an English course taught by Professor Eric S. Rabkin at the University of Michigan in Fall of 1999. Using examples from literature and films, the site's developers explore the symbolic aspects of monsters in American culture and propose four categories of monstrosities: Reanimated Monsters (once-dead monsters revived); Ecological Monsters (monsters with environmental origins); Human Monsters (genetic freaks and psychotics); and Technological Monsters (monsters coming into being through the (mis)application of technical knowledge). An extensive bibliography is also included on the site. You can explore the site at <http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/Monstrosity/index.html>

RECOMMENDED READING

"Recommended Reading" lists items that have been recommended to me or that Infobits readers have found particularly interesting and/or useful. Send your recommendations to kotlas@email.unc.edu for possible inclusion in this column.

CIT Infobits subscriber Louis Fox (email: lfox@u.washington.edu) recommends the following book and related links:

Being Fluent With Information Technology

By the Committee on Information Technology Literacy, National Research Council.

National Academy Press, 1999. ISBN: 030906399X

". . . this report describes an intellectual framework for fluency with information technology, i.e., the knowledge and understanding that individuals need to use today's information technology effectively and to adapt to and learn about tomorrow's information technology. The report also describes an implementational effort to increase and promote fluency with information technology among college students, an important first step in increasing fluency for all citizens."

For more information link to this National Academy Press web page:

<http://www4.nas.edu/cpsma/cstbweb.nsf/86e5876b3bf8be848525631f00688fc5/6c110fe6e6c543648525678c005505dc?OpenDocument>

See also, "Logging in with . . . Lawrence Snyder. Computer Scientist Says All Students Should Learn to Think 'Algorithmically'" (by Florence Olsen, *CHE*, March 22, 2000) at <http://chronicle.com/free/2000/03/2000032201t.htm>

The chair of this NRC committee, Larry Snyder (Computer Science, University of Washington) has also put together a course based on the principles outlined in the report. The Autumn version of the course can be found at <http://www.cs.washington.edu/education/courses/100/99au/>