Teaching Learning Center

The Teaching Learning Center (TLC) nurtures instructional design, critical thinking, and technology skills for faculty at Cedar Valley College. The TLC provides assistance in instructional design and technology in a supportive environment. It also provides a forum for informal faculty discussion.

Group Learning Guidelines

These principles for a productive learning environment derive from Kurt Hahn, the person most responsible for developing the Outward Bound program:

1. **The Power of Self-Discovery**: Learning happens best when the activity evokes positive emotion, presents manageable challenges, and involves the support of those who have already mastered these activities. We can best discover our abilities in situations that offer adventure and provide for the unexpected. Self-discovery will most likely evolve when there are tasks which demand perseverance, skill, imagination, self-discipline, and considerable effort to achieve the stated goals.

2. **The Need to Think**: Activities which foment learning and growth build upon the learner's curiosity, his or her willingness to experiment, and the capacity to reflect on the meaning of what was experienced. Without the time for reflection, much of the learning will dissipate within a relatively short time.

3. **The Responsibility for Learning**: Learning is both a personal process of discovery as well as a social experience. We are most receptive to the learning environment when we are convinced of the interpersonal benefits of the skills to be mastered as well as when we understand the social relevance of learning. The more the individuals believe themselves to be responsible for their own learning and that of others, the more committed they will be to the process.

4. **Intimacy and Caring**: Learning and growth are best fostered in small groups where there is trust, sustained caring, and mutual respect among and between participants. The people in charge of the activities must be committed to individual growth, be patient with the learning process, and be skillful in their approach to the participants' failings.

5. **Diversity and Inclusivity**: Diversity and inclusivity in all learning groups dramatically increases the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and the art of finding the best in others. The best learning environments are those in which participants are encouraged to investigate, value and draw upon one another's histories, talents, and points of view.

Paraphrased by *The News, Mexico* City from *Into the Classroom: The Outward Bound Approach to Teaching and Learning* by Mitchell S. Sakofs and George P. Armstrong

FAQ: When can I learn about Blackboard 7?

Pat Lawton from LeCroy tech support will offer Blackboard 7 at CVC three times in March.

No later than the day before the training, e-mail Mary Lou O'Neal to register. In addition, you may contact her if you need a Saturday session. Saturdays are possible if CVC registers enough trainees.

Expect additional training dates in April.

eCampus I	Tuesday, March 6 2:00-4:00 p.m.	All sessions in A206B
eCampus II	Thursday, March 8 2:00-4:00 p.m.	
eCampus I and eCampus II	Friday, March 23 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	

Bb
Blackboard

**February/March
TLC Events**

February

- Tips for Online Classes (2/5, 2:00-2:50)

- From Russia with Love (2/14, 12:30-1:30)

- Media/Technology Brown Bag (2/27, 12:30-1:30)

March

- Workflow for Digital Darkroom/Web Efficient Photos (3/5, 2:00-3:00)

- Formative Assessment (3/8, 1:00-2:00)

- 12-Step Program on Retention (3/13, 1:00-2:00)

- Learning Communities (3/21, 2:00-3:00)

Cedar Valley College Values of the Month

Teamwork

Working together collaboratively and respectfully to implement the goals of the college

Joy

Sharing a climate that encourages humor, laughter, and fun, and that celebrates accomplishments

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Managing Your Online Course

Director Tim Barker offers tips and tricks from his recent TLC workshop

1. When you need to check student enrollment, use eConnect without leaving Blackboard. eConnect has its own tab at the top of your opening screen.

2. Save time by developing standard responses to common student questions. E-mailing them to yourself will put them where you need them, right there on the same screen with your students' messages. Simply copy, paste, and personalize!

3. To check course navigation and technology/Blackboard skills, require an introductory assignment for students' first interaction with your course. (Barker gets their attention by calling this "Assignment 0.") Although you may not want to award credit for this assignment, insist on its completion before a student can begin the course itself. Create tasks that include practice with all Blackboard features the student must use in the course.

4. Try the Performance Dashboard for checking student participation and progress in a single location (Control Panel>Assessment> Performance Dashboard). The Performance Dashboard is particularly useful at certification time.

5. Be careful with dates. Rather than setting start and end dates when adding course items and listing dates in multiple areas of your site, make everything available all the time. Simplify your life by providing a link to a single, easily updated, course calendar.

6. Explore the "Training and Support" tab at the top of the eCampus/Blackboard opening screen. One of those nineteen videos may address the skill you need.

7. Use the Blackboard manual (beneath Help on the right side of the Control Panel screen).

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