

From the Vineyard

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From Your Wine Steward

Dear MERLOT Community,

As we welcome in 2020, we wish you a new year filled with personal and professional successes and joy. MERLOT continues to grow its community, collection, and services for learners around the world. We are now distributing the MERLOT Vineyard newsletter to all contributing members in the MERLOT community. We are so grateful for your energy, expertise, and efforts to build a free and open library for learning and we hope our sharing of updates, activities, and invitations to MERLOT related events helps you recognize the impact of your contributions.

Our principles of inclusion are realized through our openness and partnership processes. Our exciting partnership with [RIUNET Universitat Politècnica de València](#) has added an extensive collection of over 7,000 learning resources in Catalan and Spanish languages. We are enthusiastic as well about our partnership with the [Virtual University of Senegal](#) which is building a French language collection with MERLOT's Open Educational Services. As we continue in our 4th year of partnerships with the Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), we have expanded our [Affordable Learning Solutions services](#) to include 17 HBCUs with the support of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. MERLOT has members in every country around the world and soon we'll be able to showcase a simple user interface for easily finding MERLOT members affiliated with different countries; Opportunities for finding collaborators and advisory will abound and join us at the upcoming MERLOT-OLC INNOVATE Conference in Chicago, March 31 to April 3, 2020.

MERLOT's free and open online library is just one of the elements of our Open Educational Services. MERLOT's SMARTSearch lets you simultaneous search MERLOT, over 60 other open libraries, and the worldwide web so you will always find some materials to meet your needs. Our "sister" open library, SkillsCommons (www.skillscommons.org) is here for you to find workforce development OER and download the materials so you can customize them to meet your own needs. Don't forget you can easily organize MERLOT's materials into your own personal collections with our Bookmark Collections and Course ePortfolio tools. The upgraded MERLOT Content Builder enables anyone to collaboratively or individually build OER that can be easily shared, cataloged, and distributed through MERLOT. You can learn more about these services through the instructional videos on our YouTube Channel – <https://www.youtube.com/user/MERLOTPlace>.

Thank you once again for bringing greater access to online learning to all.

Your Wine Steward and Executive Director,
Gerry Hanley

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Feature Article – Innovate 2020 Building Bridges in Digital, Blended, and Online Learning



The 2020 Innovate Conference will take place March 31–April 3, 2020 at the Sheraton Grand Chicago. For further information and registration check out: <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2020/innovate/program/>

This is year 11 of the OLC Innovate (Sloan-C) conference, in partnership with MERLOT!

You are meant to be here! We want your voice, your experiences, your challenges, and your solutions. OLC conference attendees have made incredible contributions to online learning research, teaching and learning practice, advocacy and leadership, and innovations. Be a part of that history and future!

The OLC Innovate conference experience is designed for everyone, whether one is new to online learning or is a seasoned expert. We have worked hard to design an inclusive, supportive, and engaged experience that transcends a traditional conference design. The professional community at OLC Innovate encourages reflection, celebration, and exploration and we are excited for you to be a part of it.

As we embark on another year of #OLCInnovate, Get Ready To Be...

- **Inspired:** Choose from over (insert number) workshops, presentations, and conference sessions that will educate, challenge, and inspire you.
- **Engaged:** Connect with attendees from around the world to share ideas, discuss challenges, and dream about solutions.
- **Challenged:** Hear from a diverse panel of speakers and keynoters who will encourage you to consider new ideas and opportunities for the future.
- **Transformed:** Take home strategies and solutions for today's online learning challenges! Reflect on future possibilities and opportunities for online learners! Celebrate the development of a larger professional learning network.

We encourage you to get involved early and take advantage of the many opportunities both before and during the conference. Whether this is your first time or you have been with us for many years, sign up for the OLC Field Guide program, utilize the various conference services, and join the Slack team to communicate with fellow attendees prior to, during, and after the conference. We're certain these opportunities will lead to opportunities to engage with a wide network of colleagues who are here to collaborate, share, and learn from one another.

The conference location offers a unique opportunity to experience all the Windy City has to offer. Plan on joining us for opportunities to explore the city and see some of Chicago's iconic landmarks.

As you join us in Chicago, March 31–April 3, 2020, or through the virtual community leading up to and during the conference, we hope you'll bring your excitement, your willingness, your challenges, and your ideas and your solutions to this year's #OLCInnovate.

Multiple MERLOT members are presenting at Innovate 2020. Here's a list so you can connect while at the conference. Additionally, the Classics Award Winners will also present Emerging Ideas sessions at the conference. If multiple presenters are involved, only the MERLOT/Skills Commons presenters are listed below. Use the full schedule (https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2020/innovate/program/all_sessions/) to locate the names of other presenters.

DAY	TIME	PRESENTER	TITLE	LOCATION
4/1	8:30 – 10 am	Barb Sperling Jason Stanton	Want Your Own Website? Want to Create OER? Content Builder Can Help	Chicago Ballroom 10 – Level 4
4/1	8:30 – 10 am	Vera Kennedy (Sociology Board)	Arming Students with OER	Chicago Ballroom 8 – Level 4
4/1	8:30 – noon	Sherri Restauri (Editor, Professional Coaching, Psychology Board)	OER Research Summit: Research is for Everyone	Erie – Level 2
4/1	8:30 – noon	Gerry Hanley	OLC Innovate Community College Summit 2020: Vision Design: So You Think You Can Build Edition	Michigan A/B – Level 2
4/1	8:30 - noon	Angela Gunder (Teacher Ed Board)	OLC Leadership Network Event	Missouri – Level 2
4/1	10:30 – noon	Angela Gunder (Teacher Ed Board)	Boldly Awakening the Ordinary: Virtual Design for Human Centered Learning	Chicago Ballroom 9 – Level 4
4/1	10:30 – noon	Gerry Hanley	Work-Based and Online Learning: Blending Hands-On and Heads-Up Learning for Accelerating Workforce Development	Sheraton Ballroom 1 – Level 4
4/1	1:15 – 2:00 pm	Vera Kennedy (Sociology Board)	The No Cost Pathway: Supporting Faculty in Going OER	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/1	1:15 – 2:00 pm	Harriette Spiegel (Instructional Technology Board)	Using Principles of Experiential Learning to Promote Effective Learning Among English Language Learners	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/1	1:15 – 2:00 pm	Teacher Education Board	From Zero to Engagement: Creating Versatile Assignments Using OER in MERLOT	Sheraton Ballroom 3 – Level 4
4/1	2:15 – 3:00 pm	Biology Board	MERLOT Smart Search: A Powerful New Tool for Finding OER	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/1	2:15 – 3:00 pm	Maria Fieth (Skills Commons)	The Gooru of ALL Soft Skills Training is Yours Free	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/1	2:15 – 3:00 pm	Psychology Board	Creator or Curator? An OER Decision Making Strategy for Content Development in Online and Blended Courses	Michigan A – Level 2
4/1	3:45 – 4:30 pm	Gerry Hanley	Navigated Learning and Open Ed Resources: An Open Learning Platform for Using Open Education Resources	Chicago Ballroom 10 – Level 4
4/2	11:15 – noon	Jane Moore (Editor, Teacher Ed)	Bridging the Gap in Your Professional Development: Become a MERLOT Peer Reviewer	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/2	11:15 – noon	Sherri Restauri (Editor, Prof. Coaching, Psychology Board)	Innovation, Collaboration & Advocacy: Strategies and Lessons Learned from Faculty Professional Development in Blended Learning	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/2	11:15 – noon	Angela Gunder (Teacher Ed Board)	To PhD or Not to PhD: Is That Your Question?	Mayfair – Level 2

4/2	11:15 – noon	Loretta Driskel (Teacher Ed Board)	Bridging the Gap Between Students’ Lives Inside and Outside the Classroom: Using Personas for Course Development	Michigan B – Level 2
4/2	2:15 – 3:00 pm	Michael Plotkin (Editor, Biology)	Embracing Controversy to Improve the Impact of Online Biology Education	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/2	2:15 – 3:00 pm	Lesley Farmer (Editor, ICT Literacy)	Instructional Design and Online Standards	Ballroom Promenade – Level 4
4/2	4:00 – 4:45 pm	Gerry Hanley	Stone Soup, MERLOT, and Change Management	Chicago Ballroom 10 – Level 4
4/3	9:45 – 10:30 am	Sherri Restauri (Editor, Prof. Coaching, Psychology Board)	OER Implementation Like a Boss: Placing Our Students Back in Front of Educational Policies	Chicago Ballroom 10 – Level 4
4/3	10:45 – 11:30 am	Alexandra Shinert (Skills Commons)	So, Tell Me About Yourself: Personal Branding & Storytelling as Job Readiness Skills	Ohio – Level 2
4/3	10:45 – 11:30 am	Lesley Farmer (Editor, ICT Literacy)	Incorporating Media Literacy Into Instruction	Superior A -Level 2

Feature Article – Inclusiveness and the 4th Annual HBCU Affordable Learning Summit: Come to INNOVATE 2020!

The HBCU AL\$ Summit is the 4th annual meeting of HBCUs at INNOVATE where HBCUs will present and share their AL\$ strategies and outcomes, along with other online education initiatives that emerge as priorities for HBCUs. The Summit will be blended within the INNOVATE conference which will provide forums for informative and stimulating presentations and discussions on strategies that can assist in the creation of a sustainable partnerships in online learning environments, as well as explore issues related to faculty and student engagement and raising awareness about next generation courseware.

The goals of the Summit include:

1. Awareness, Opportunities, and Challenges of Open Education Resources (OERs) as ‘Affordable Learning Solutions (AL\$)’ for addressing the high costs of textbooks and other student related learning materials,
2. Research, demonstration, and presentations of OER-AL\$ for enhancing teaching and improving learning,
3. Utilization of OER-AL\$ for SkillsCommons in supplementing workforce training and careers,

4. Hands-on sessions to assist in developing strategic customized AL\$ Campus Deployment Plans and
5. Discussion sessions for recommending strategies to OLC and MERLOT in advancing and sustaining support for HBCUs and in their implementation of affordable learning solutions and online education.

The Wednesday through Friday HBCU AL\$ Summit is included in the cost of registration for OLC Innovate 2020.

There is a special registration discount available for HBCU affiliates. Please contact us at conference@onlinelearning-c.org for more information or to request the discount code if you are an HBCU affiliate. You may also contact Ms. Reshonda Corley (reshonda_corley@subr.edu) for the registration code.

Learn more about the HBUC Summit at <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2020/innovate/program/hbcu-affordable-learning-summit-2020/>

Explore the HBCU Affordable Learning Community Portal (<http://www.hbcuals.org/>) to learn more about this MERLOT program.

Feature Article – Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire 2020 Program

MERLOT created the Peer Reviewer Extraordinaire award to honor the hard work and generous donation of our members' time, energy and enthusiasm that they direct towards the growth and development of MERLOT. We rely heavily on our Peer Reviewers to help expand the MERLOT collection and create peer reviews. Again this year MERLOT reviewers have the opportunity to earn free registration (either in-person or virtual) at the Innovate Conference in Chicago, March 31-April 3, 2020. Awardees also receive certificates of merit at the Awards ceremony on April 2nd or 3rd. In order to participate, reviewers must have completed MERLOT GRAPE (Getting Reviewers Accustomed to the Process of Evaluation) Camp, complete 15 reviews that have been accepted by your editor, and submit a minimum of five materials to the collection between March 16, 2019 and March 15, 2020.

By the end of December, 6 reviewers have achieved PRE status: Sergey Belyi, Mathematics Editorial Board; Lesley Farmer, Editor, ICT Literacy; Cris Guenter, Teacher Education Editorial Board; Elaine Lawrence, Teacher Education Board; Jane Moore, Editor, Teacher Education; and Sherri Restauri, Editor, Professional Coaching, Psychology Board.

Please contact Jane Moore (jmoore@calstate.edu) if you are interested in participating. Send her your name, email address, snail mail address, your institution, and your editorial board by January 31. She will contact your editor to make sure that you are assigned enough reviews to complete the process.

Feature Article – Research in OER

The Vineyard plans to highlight some new research in OER. Members of our community have been doing some exciting research that can help us all be more successful in planning and implementing OER for improved learning.

This issue we'd like to showcase Dr. Meina Zhu's article:

Zhu, M., & Bonk, C. J. (2019, December). Designing MOOCs to facilitate participant self-monitoring for self-directed learning. *Online Learning*, 23(4), 106-134. doi:10.24059/olj.v23i4.2037. Available: <https://olj.onlinelearningconsortium.org/index.php/olj/article/view/2037> (special issue of Online Learning journal: <https://olj.onlinelearningconsortium.org/index.php/olj/issue/view/113>)

Explore the new book on MOOCs and Open Education too!

Zhang, K., Bonk, C. J., Reeves, T. C., & Reynolds, T. H. (Eds.). (2020). *MOOCs and open education in the Global South: Challenges, successes, and opportunities*. NY: Routledge. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429398919>

You can find the Forward, Preface, and Chapter 1 in the links below:

Taylor and Francis: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780429398919>

Routledge: <https://www.routledge.com/MOOCs-and-Open-Education-in-the-Global-South-Challenges-Successes-and/Zhang-Bonk-Reeves-Reynolds/p/book/9780367025779>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/MOOCs-Open-Education-Global-South/dp/0367025779>

You can find more info about MOOCs and Open Education at <http://moocsbook.com/>

Feature Article – Angela Gunder and OLC



On December 4, the Online Learning Consortium announced Angela Gunder as their new Vice President of Learning. In this role, Angela will provide guidance and thought leadership in the development, curation and sharing of the intellectual capital created by the organization. She will work directly with many of the established teams within the OLC, to include the Institute, the Research Center, grants and awards, and conferences, as well as with stakeholders and partners at organizations and institutions across the globe. She shares “The OLC has been more than just a support system for my work within the field of online learning. They’ve helped to elevate my professional, academic and personal goals at every point in my career, and are at the foundation of my community of colleagues and friends. It is only fitting that I now have the opportunity to serve the same organization that has been so instrumental to my success and professional growth.”

Angela is also excited about the propensity for bringing her work with MERLOT and the open education community into closer collaboration with the OLC. “MERLOT and the OLC have long worked in partnership on synergistic missions to advance both quality in and access to online learning. I’m eager to explore the ways that we can extend the impact of this mission by bringing in new members into this already thriving community.” A long-time contributor to MERLOT, Angela became a Peer Reviewer and an Associate Editor for the Teacher Education Board in 2012 and 2013, respectively. Over the years, her editor, Jane Moore, introduced her to opportunities to volunteer with the OLC in their joint conferences held with MERLOT, ET4OL and now OLC Innovate. “It was in moving through the ranks of volunteers, from a peer reviewer all the way up to a conference chair, that I grew so very close to both organizations. Without Jane encouraging me, I don’t think I would have come as far as I have!” Angela is the recipient of an Innovative Use of MERLOT award, as well as the 2018 MERLOT Distinguished Service Award, the organization’s highest honor. She is also the recipient of two OLC Effective Practice Awards for the creation of a framework for personal learning networks, and for the creation of exploratory installations of education technology, respectively. In 2019, Angela was named an OLC Fellow for her dedication to service, innovation, scholarship and students in online learning.



MERLOT Technology

MERLOT Content Builder

Need a quick, easy, and FREE platform to create websites for serve educational needs? Want to build a teaching e-Portfolio that captures your innovative teaching methods and successful student outcomes? How about authoring online learning activities the day before you assign them to your students? MERLOT’s Content Builder provides templates and guidelines for you to do it easily! Want to assign a web-building exercise for your students? Students creating learning ePortfolios can be great but how do you minimize the faculty’s burden in supporting the technology? Try MERLOT Content Builder! Or maybe you need to create a website for research or a campus program to share information quickly and easily. The solution is here! MERLOT has redesigned its Content Builder, a web development and authoring tool available to all MERLOT members for FREE! Don’t forget, MERLOT Membership is FREE too!

All sites created in the new Content Builder are accessible and scalable to any sized device. The new tool is intuitive and includes our most significant improvement: allowing users to collaborate with other MERLOT members and colleagues on a project. Individuals and teams can create open educational resources by sharing authoring on the same platform and easily apply a Creative Commons license. With the easy-to-use design, building websites can be shared, reviewed, and completed in a short period of time.

The new Content Builder incorporates a Design Center, a WYSIWYG editor that allows users to control site styles globally and edit site content directly on the site itself. Users can add multiple images,

videos, or documents with ease. You can share the website privately and publicly easily and then catalog it in MERLOT so the world can discover it if you want.

For current Content Builder users, anything previously created will appear on the new site’s main page under My Legacy Content Builder Sites. Nothing will be lost. All public websites built with the previous Content Builder will remain public. To edit legacy pages in the new Content Builder, just click to import a site into the new Content Builder and modify the formatting as needed. It’s that easy!

To get started with the new Content Builder, select ‘Create a Material’ in the middle of the MERLOT homepage at merlot.org. If you aren’t a Member, you’ll be prompted to join – an easy process. Once on the Content Builder main page, click “Create a Website.” That’s all there is to getting started! For more information on how to get started, go to our user’s guide at bitly.com/content-builder-help. You can also visit our YouTube channel for a playlist of 20 how-to videos to get you started. For more information, contact webmaster@merlot.org

Social Networking and MERLOT

We have many ways for you to stay connected with MERLOT and all the wonderful things happening with the website and initiatives. Please share these sites with your colleagues. Note in the chart the increased interest in MERLOT in part due to social media initiatives.



Update on MERLOT Community

Become a MERLOT Peer Reviewer and GRAPE

Camp Information

To become a Peer Reviewer for MERLOT, individuals should be an instructor in an institution of higher education and have:

- Expertise in the scholarship of their field
- Excellence in teaching, with a few exceptions
- Experience in using technology in teaching and learning, and
- Connections to professional organizations in their discipline.

MERLOT has developed an orientation for Peer Reviewers to ensure that they become familiar with MERLOT processes and policies on Peer Review. MERLOT Management conducts GRAPE Camp (Getting Reviewers Accustomed to the Process of Evaluation) to assist Peer Reviewers on a regular basis. GRAPE Camp consists of a series of three one-hour workshops online, one per week. In these webinars, participants will:

- Develop an understanding of MERLOT
- Learn how MERLOT evaluates Learning Materials
- Conduct a group review
- Complete an Individual Review
- Learn how to use the Workspace tool, and
- Introduce participants to the Editorial Board of their disciplines.

The webinar includes people from a variety of disciplines and is archived so participants can review the material as needed.

For information about GRAPE Camp, contact Cathy Swift (cswift@calstate.edu)

During January and February 2020 we will only be conducting the Self-study GRAPE Camp. To register for it, please complete the short questionnaire (<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/IVtoWZb1#/0>)

You can also participate in the discussions about GRAPE Camp in MERLOT Voices. C:\Users\Cathy Swift\Documents\1GRAPE Camp\About Us\1_020\GrapeCamp_AboutUS_Jan_Feb_2020.docx

Comments from GRAPE Camp Participants:

"I've been reviewing papers for years, but this is the first time I've actually been taught how to do it properly. Grape Camp will improve the quality of my work as an author and as a reviewer."

"It helped me a lot to learn how to make my lesson and materials better by reviewing others. I could find my own problems by watching peer's lessons."

"I didn't realize that peer reviewers normally receive awards. This definitely interested me"

"It is apparent that MERLOT is a fine organization that appreciates its reviewers and operates as a team."

"This was a really enjoyable training experience. I'm quite excited at the prospect of applying the skills I learned toward (potentially - hopefully!) improving the OER experience for educators in search of materials."

"I realized that we can learn a lot by communicating with others who are in the same field with you and MERLOT just provides us this great platform to upgrade ourselves."

"It was very helpful for me to do this asynchronously due to changing computer systems in the middle of the training! I am pleased to be part of your reviewer group."

"Grape Camp was a good learning experience. The materials were organized and clear."

"I think Grape camp is a good way to learn about doing reviews. The format is flexible, as in my case I missed a session and could watch the archived presentation"

Recent Graduates of GRAPE Camp include:

Katie Rumrey, Instructional Technology, Coastal Carolina

Susmita Hazra, Physics, Cameron University

Carlos Ferran, Business, Governors State University

Adwoba Addo-Boateng, Sociology, Petals of Love Foundation

News

Editorial Board News

We are looking for those interested in becoming editors in Agriculture, Chemistry, and Communication Sciences and Disorders. If you are interested or wish to nominate someone, please contact Jane Moore (jmoore@calstate.edu). Thanks!

Three MERLOT Editorial Boards submitted proposals to Innovate and had them accepted: Biology, Psychology and Teacher Education. Be sure to check them out on the list of presentations for the conference.

Luz del Carmen Vilchis Esquivel, Professional Development Board member has been appointed as a member of the International Academic Committee Design Schools Forum. She's also published this year:

- *Archival on Historical Research of Graphic Design. Documents from the CONADICOV Archive: 100 years of History of Graphic Design in Mexico*. Spain: Spanish Academic Editorial (EAE), 2019. ISBN 978-613-9-43568-5

- *TIME Model for the Elaboration of Thesis in Arts and Design*. Mexico: CEIDSA / CONADICOV, 2019 ISBN: 978-607-98149-4-6

- *Reflections on Design and Technology*. Germany: Publicia / Omni Scriptum Publishing, 2019. ISBN: 978-620-2-43215-3

Esperanza Zenon, Teacher Education Board member mentored six students at Port Allen High School (PAHS) through their science projects. She also shared with the school's science coordinator some OER resources including MERLOT that could be used to develop lessons/activities. Esperanza plans to continue working with PAHS for their science projects next year.

Meet the Editor – Larry Green, Mathematics and Statistics

Larry Green has been active with MERLOT since its beginning and has served as the chair of the mathematics editorial board for the past eight years. He received his PhD from UCLA as has been a full-time faculty member in the mathematics department at Lake Tahoe Community College since the 90's. He served on the Lake Tahoe Unified School district board of education for nine years and is the past president of the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges (CMC3).



Larry has been authoring OER mathematics and statistics materials since the early 1990's and his site was one of the first recipients of the MERLOT Classics Award. Over 10,000,000 students from all over the world have learned from his collection of online math and statistics lecture notes, videos, problem sets, activities and learning games. He has directed and participated in several OER related grants and is currently the statistics director of the LibreTexts federal grant. Most recently he has taken on the role as the MERLOT statistics chair where he is working on reinvigorating the peer reviews in statistics. In his spare time he enjoys outdoor adventures on a bicycle, kayak, skis, or carrying a backpack.

Meet the Board Member – Sergey Belyi



Troy University was my first (and the only) academic job that I took right after finishing my PhD at the University of South Florida in 1996. When I joined the school, it was officially called Troy State University and known for its strong connections to the military. The main idea was to provide education to the men and women in uniform while they are still on the active duty. Among other incentives, this approach led to

developing a strong new distance learning program that has begun to rely on quickly developing internet educational technologies. In 1999 Troy University school officials got involved with newly born MERLOT and, in the year 2000, our Dean of Arts and Sciences offered me to be a part of the freshly formed MERLOT Mathematics Editorial Board. After abandoning the hope to finally participate in wine testing as part of my work duties, I (reluctantly) agreed and came to my first MERLOT meeting held in Nashville. That was when I first met the group of math enthusiasts from different schools and colleges nationwide that formed the “first edition” of MERLOT Math Editorial Board. Since then I have been part of MERLOT for almost two decades now.

Our board underwent different transformations, we have tried approach things differently, people would join Math board and leave but the spirit of MERLOT has always been active. Outside of the standard set of editorial activities such as writing reviews, participating in monthly conference calls, and attending yearly MERLOT conferences, I was always trying to implement as much of MERLOT as possible in my teaching both in class and online. Troy University has been and still is one of the faithful MERLOT partners. MERLOT is well known and used by Troy faculty body as well as our students. For all these passed years and now I am proud to be a part of MERLOT and to serve as Troy University connection to this wonderful organization.

Monthly Reviewer Incentive Awards Congratulations to our monthly reviewer incentive award winners!

September – Ahmed Alwan, Library and Information Services, Calstate – Northridge

October – Lynn Ritchey, Sociology, University of Cincinnati

November – Jody Paul, Computer Science, Metropolitan State University of Denver

December – Michelle Kunz, Business, Morehead State University

Thanks to all for the work they do for MERLOT. Each month a name is drawn from those who have contributed reviews to MERLOT during that month. The winner receives a \$50 electronic gift card to the store of their choice. The more reviews you do, the better chance you have to win.

Out and About with MERLOT

MERLOT in China – by Tamer Osman

I have been teaching English and American literatures and linguistics in China for 4 years. The Chinese university students always stumble with issues related to cultural aspects belonging to the English-speaking world in addition to linguistic incomprehension resulting from inadequacy of available references. Therefore, I refer my students to MERLOT as a source of useful knowledge, since it is difficult for me to cover all the intricate academic issues of the students in classes. Luckily, MERLOT is available on Baidu, a Chinese browser, so the Chinese students do not have to install a VPN (Virtual Private Network) to visit MERLOT's website.

In fact, MERLOT plays a vital role in solving some of these issues, since my time as an academician with many duties cannot be allocated to respond to all the students. The students find the requested knowledge, whether in literatures or linguistics, accessible without restrictions as well as being easy to understand. Moreover, MERLOT is the magical solution of solving the problem of the unavailability of books in English and American literatures and linguistics either in the University's library or bookstores. It must be taken into consideration as well that the students are in need of references of critical analyses to elucidate literary works or clarify linguistic vagueness.

Undeniably, the obvious result of resorting to MERLOT by the students has changed the nature of my classes positively. The students are involved in more constructive discussions in my classes. They build their point of views on strong thresholds scaffolded from the knowledge read on MERLOT.

This result would lead me to think of setting up an ESL/EFL board on MERLOT where all the Chinese or may be the Asian students benefit from MERLOT's references. Gaining limitless knowledge from MERLOT should not dedicated to my students exclusively. And I am very ready to allocate time for this suggested board because I believe that the number of MERLOT's users might augment. Please contact Jane Moore (jmoore@calstate.edu) if you are interested in working toward building an ESL/EFL board.

Meeting Notices



QM Connect Conference

April 2 & 3, 2020

California State University
Fullerton, CA

Registration now open:

<https://www.qualitymatters.org/events/attend>



OLC Collaborate - Oregon

February 7, 2020

Registration open: <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2020/collaborate-oregon/>

Moore Musings

*Dear Jane,
What can I expect at Innovate 2020?*

– Curious

Dear Curious,
Chicago is my hometown (well, I live in the suburbs). It's a gorgeous city, so besides all the wonderful sessions you can attend, there are opportunities for the Chicago Architectural Boat Tour (a gem—be sure to sign up early, limited seating), bus tours and fabulous restaurants just steps from the hotel. The location is incredible as is the schedule.

– Jane

MERLOT Statistics

MERLOT Collection as of December 31, 2019

91,306	# items in Collection
5,237	# of materials w/a Peer Review
13,435	# of materials w/an Editor's Review
6,329	# of materials w/a Comment/Discussion
1,017	# of materials w/a Learning Exercise
166,041	# of registered users

Usage Statistics for 2019

1,439,338	Total # of visits in 2019
3	Avg. # pages/visit
1:30	Avg. length of visit

Are you interested in writing for From the Vineyard, or adding news and updates? From the Vineyard is published September, January, and May. Getting your information in print is easy. Send your submission to Jane Moore by the first Wednesday of the month in which you wish it to be published. Unfortunately, we can't publish all articles/stories in each issue; if you don't see your story in the issue, we promise to try to get it into the next one!

