

Blogging at Emerson

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You may already be familiar with web logs, or blogs—web sites where a blogger posts entries in diary style on a particular topic such as news, politics, or something of social or personal interest. Bloggers often use a blog hosting service to maintain their blogs, such as Blogger, MySpace and LiveJournal. Most news organizations currently have blogs for public opinion posts and commentaries on their web sites. There are also search engines that just track blogs, such as Technorati, Bloglines and Blogdex, to name a few.

Blog entries are usually listed with the most recent post on top and contain all media types: text, graphics, video (vlogs) and audio clips (podcasts). More sophisticated software has allowed bloggers to select from an array of templates, sort by categories or “tags,” and provide trackbacks which link to other sites that refer to an entry.

At Emerson, a variety of blogs are hosted at <http://blog.emerson.edu> as a new way of conveying news to the Emerson community. The blogs are published using **MovableType**, an online publishing system initiated for purchase by John Satriale, the Technology Manager for Journalism, and discussed in detail by Kimberly Hall, Director of Instructional Technology, in the November 2006 edition of *Infotech News*.

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Importing Waldo Budgets Into Excel

As a reminder, you can convert Waldo’s Budget Lookup figures into a Comma-Separated-Vaue (CSV) report and import it into Excel. Note: This procedure only works for users who are authorized to access budgets on Waldo.

For directions, go to http://www.emerson.edu/Information_Systems. Click on the link **Student Information Systems** and scroll down to **Waldo Documentation**. You will need your ECnet account information to download the PDF files. The file *Waldo Basics* includes instructions for budget look-up, printing, and importing budgets into Excel. You may also want to download *Using Core_FTP* or *Using Fetch* if you are not familiar with these programs. For further assistance, contact **Fong Tan** at ext. 8478 or email mengfong_tan@emerson.edu.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Spring Announcements

By Kimberly Hall, Director,
Instructional Technology

Seven Faculty Present Their Teaching Strategies through Faculty Panels: Creative Use of Technology in Teaching

This semester faculty presented and discussed creative ways of designing and teaching with instructional video and course web sites. **Daniel Kempler, Gary Gramigna** and **Cindy Miller** demonstrated their unique uses of video for teaching and learning, while **Flora Gonzalez, Ken Cheeseman, Melinda Robins, John Bell** and **Lisa Diercks** presented their Exemplary Course sites. Faculty shared successes, teaching strategies and lessons learned with their customized uses of technology for teaching.

Interim Director of the First-Year Writing Program and Instructional Technology Present Converged Support Strategies

Instructional Designer **Allison Ruda** and Interim Writing Director **Cara Crandall** recently presented at the New England Regional Computing Association (NERCOMP) WebCT Users Group.

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Blog.emerson.edu (from front page)

In that article, Kimberly Hall discussed Journalism professor Michelle Johnson's use of blogs in her classes. In http://blog.emerson.edu/Election_2006/, Professor Johnson followed the campaign trail in several towns by assigning her class to go out and do breaking news for election coverage. They wrote their stories for the Web, considering images, links and other multimedia elements, and posted the stories using MovableType. "It's a great way for them to focus on the content rather than on the mechanics of producing web pages," said Johnson.

The **Computer Security** blog (http://blog.emerson.edu/computer_security) is managed by Adam Travis, Network and Information Security Manager, and keeps users up to date with all topics related to information security and safe computing practices. Some recent posts in the Security Blog have focused on operating system updates for Windows and Macintosh computers, Daylight Savings Time Changes, and the new Internet Explorer 7. "And of course, I always cover the monthly Microsoft updates, known as Patch Tuesday. I am currently working on articles about the new Windows Vista operating system and Microsoft Office 2007, as well as best practices for web browsers and passwords," said Travis.

Instead of putting out a quarterly newsletter, blogging allows Maureen Tripp, the Media Librarian, to inform faculty and staff about the library's video resources. **Déjà Vu**, (blog.emerson.edu/deja_vu) "grew out of a print newsletter, also called *Déjà Vu*, that I would produce several times a year. The blog allows me to update content frequently, save paper, and engage in dialogue with students and faculty about our video resources," explains Tripp. "It also has the potential for interactivity, since readers can leave comments on the blog." More recently, *InfotechNews* has started a blog (<http://blog.emerson.edu/itnews>) to post computing news and troubleshooting tips as information becomes available. Full length articles as well as archives of back issues and PDFs will still be accessible at <http://www.emerson.edu/itnews>.

Each blog has an **RSS feed**, which is also available on <http://blog.emerson.edu>. RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication and provides a way to "feed" the postings to a feed reader or "aggregator." This allows you to keep up to date on all of your favorite sites in one place. One of the most common feed readers is the Google Reader (<http://reader.google.com/>). Some web browsers, such as Mozilla's Firefox, can subscribe to RSS feeds as a **Live Bookmark**. This means that the bookmark gets updated each time a new posting is made to the blog. For example, on Adam Travis' Computer Security blog, click "**Subscribe to this blog's feed.**" Add the RSS feed to your Bookmark Toolbar. Click on the bookmark to read the latest blog entry.

For more information on using **MovableType** at Emerson, contact the **Instructional Technology Group** at 617.824.8961.

Announcements (from front page)

They described their support of the first-year writing instructors through group workshops, one-on-one instructional design consultations, and starting this past Fall, active involvement in the freshman writing online community forum.

Archiving 2006 WebCT Courses

On Friday, May 4, Summer and Fall 2006 courses will be removed from WebCT and archived. Each semester, the day after grades are due, WebCT courses are removed and archived from the previous semester. This schedule follows the Registrar's process for students making up incomplete courses, allowing them access to course materials during this period. Once the Fall 2007 courses are created, Instructional Technology staff can import faculty's archived course content to new courses upon request. Please contact Instructional Technology at ext. 8961 with any questions.

Faculty, Library, and Instructional Technology Present Exemplary Course Project

Assistant Professor **Katie Youn**, Associate Director for Information Services **Liz Bezera** and Instructional Technology Director **Kimberly Hall** delivered a poster presentation at the NERCOMP Annual Conference on the Exemplary Course Project entitled "Striving for the Exemplary at Emerson." They emphasized the subject-driven information design of course web sites, the collaborative effort in developing the sites, the faculty participants, and student responses.

