



Dear Faculty

The Academic Technology Department is excited to bring you our first issue of what will be a monthly newsletter. The main purpose of this newsletter is to update and inform you, the members of the BYU-Idaho faculty, of upcoming training opportunities to hone your skills in I-Learn and other computer and internet-related tools. Its second purpose is to give you an opportunity to hear from other faculty members about technologies they are using in their classrooms. Each month's newsletter includes three things: a calendar, brief information updates, and showcase articles. These articles feature the material that will be outlined in that month's training. For example, this newsletter is highlighting *Adobe Connect* and *Grade Center*, and these topics will also be addressed in July's training meetings. We encourage all to take advantage of these meetings and familiarize yourselves with each issue of the newsletter!



Arlen Wilcock
Director, Academic Technology

Bringing Virtual Classrooms to Life - Adobe Connect

Adobe Connect is the next generation of web conferencing software that enables professors to instantly communicate and collaborate through easy-to-use, easy-to-access, online personal meeting rooms. Instructors have the ability to create live virtual classrooms and trainings. Presentations can be tailored to fit most needs. Teachers can record their meetings and allow access to the recorded lecture at a future date. Instructors can teach from any location which can enrich an online course environment. Through Connect, you can also invite a guest speaker from another city, state, or country to present to your class with ease and at no expense.

Adobe Connect—Tools Available

- 2-way video (requires web cam)
- 2-way audio (via computer microphone)
- Shared whiteboard
- Display and annotate multimedia (i.e. PowerPoint)
- Display and annotate computer screen (single or multiple applications)
- Break-out rooms (separate a class into groups to discuss a topic or work on a project)
- Text chat (group or individual messages)
- Poll (receive anonymous answers from questions)
- Notes
- Record/Edit sessions

My Experience with Adobe Connect

By Chris Wilson, Teacher Education

There is a certain degree of anticipation and trepidation that comes with adopting and mastering a new tool. I propose that there are four common phases in this process: the brush-off, the second look, the secret exploration, and the adoption. I have waded through the first three phrases and am currently in the adoption phase with the Adobe software product called *Connect*.

Connect is a program that links learners in a live online-learning environment. It bundles several online communication technologies into a virtual classroom. Its features include a text chat room, live audio and video, an interactive white board, and the ability to share most programs. For me, the most useful feature is the ability to record and review online meetings.



If you are like me, you hear about a new tool, like *Connect*, from some innovator or serendipitously find it along your daily path. Your response is to shrug it off, utilizing one or all of the following three internal discussions: 1) it will never work, 2) I could never get my hands on it, or 3) I would never use it, because it is too much of a hassle. I used all three

approaches in an attempt to stay in my comfort zone, but these excuses were in vain. After a short demo and a brief experiment on my own, I found that it *does* work. It is worth your time to take a second look.

In my secret exploration phase, I used *Connect* for office hours with students who were away from campus. After a few user errors, we were off and running. My next exploration was not so secret. One of my students was ill, but the nature of class was such that he needed to be there. Having gained confidence and skill from previously holding virtual office hours, I set up my webcam to the media station in the classroom. He then could see and interact with the class, and they could interact with him. Just as before, it wasn't perfect, but I learned to be productive in a new way. Since that time, I have been adopting *Connect's* capabilities for many of my needs and would love to discuss valuable practices and new approaches with others.

LYLENE BENNETT
ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY
321 MCK
ZIP +0415

Summer Trainings

Grade Center (I-Learn)

July 2 or 3, 4:00pm-5:00pm

byui.acrobat.com/facultytraining

(This is a “virtual” training session.)

Adobe Connect

July 10 or 11, 4:00pm-5:00pm

McKay 364

(This is a “live” training session.)

E-mail training topic suggestions to ilearn@byui.edu.

Department of Academic Technology



Faculty Technology Center 208.496.1592

Monday-Friday 8am-6pm McKay 355



Department Secretary

Lylene Bennett 208.496.1200



Director

Arlen Wilcock 208.496.1204



I-Learn Development

Orren Squires 208.496.1226



I-Learn Training

Dean Allen 208.496.1211

Tip of the Month

New Features in **Grade Center**:

1. If you prefer to drop the students' lowest homework grade, I-Learn can now do this for you!
2. “Smart Views” allow you to view one section of a class separately from another section of a class. Therefore, two sections can be combined into one I-Learn course.
3. You can easily change a student's grade from the main Grade Center page by simply clicking on the actual cell.

If you have questions regarding the Tip of the Month, refer to the tutorials at <http://www.byui.edu/onlinlearning/tutorials/ilearn/facultytuts.htm> or call the FTC at (208) 496-1592.

Faculty Advisory Committee Formed

A Faculty Advisory Committee was recently approved by Academic Council. This new committee will provide feedback and recommendations on I-Learn training, management and implementation. The six colleges will be represented with one committee member each. Members include:

- Jason Shaw (Agriculture and Life Sciences)
- Mike Whitesides (Business and Communication)
- Larry Thurgood (Education and Human Development)
- Don Hammar (Language and Letters)
- Shawn Randall (Performing and Visual Arts)
- Evan Hansen (Physical Sciences and Engineering)
- Arlen Wilcock, Dean Allen, Orren Squires (AT)