



Faculty Technology Newsletter

Spring, 2016



As the semester ends, thoughts are probably shifting to summer conferences and travel, as well as the upcoming fall semester. Read below for some ideas on how to incorporate technology into teaching and scholarship. Consider a trip to the McMullen Museum to see how virtual reality is enhancing the current exhibit on the Irish Arts and Crafts Movement (ends June 5th). As always, please send me your stories for future issues of this newsletter. Happy summer! - *Clare O'Connor* (clare.oconnor@bc.edu)

Keep your computer secure as you travel.

Insecure wireless connections are a real concern while traveling with your computer. Fortunately, BC offers several options for obtaining secure network connections off campus. If you are traveling to any of the thousands of universities in the Eduroam network the solution is simple. Simply log into the local eduroam network with the same BC username and password that you use on campus. (Don't forget to include @bc.edu in your username!) Lists of eduroam institutions are available at <http://eduroam.org>.



If you are using a questionable public network or are traveling to a country that restricts internet access, you might consider using the Eagle virtual private network (VPN). When a user is off campus, communications to and from BC computers are encrypted by the VPN. Your TC and the Help Desk are happy to help you install the VPN.



ITS also recommends that you backup your computer, change your passwords and update software applications before leaving home. These and other tips for traveling can be found at:

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/help/gethelp/techabroad/travel-security.html>

Is it OK yet to upgrade my computer to El Capitan? Operating system upgrades at BC.



Some Mac users have expressed frustration with the lag between the time that operating system (OS) upgrades are released and the time that ITS approves the OS upgrade for use on BC computers. By the time that Yosemite OS was approved for use, for example, it had been replaced by El Capitan. An explanation of the ITS process may be helpful.

ITS provides both Apple and Microsoft operating systems as a “software image” that can be installed on BC computers. Each time a new OS is released, ITS evaluates its compatibility with “core services,” which include antivirus, backup, email, productivity (e.g. Office) and academic applications. The software that constitutes these core services are supplied by a variety of third party vendors. An ongoing challenge for ITS is the asynchrony between the release of OS upgrades and updates to core services software needed to keep the applications compatible. ITS publishes the current status of its compatibility tests on its emerging technology site. In some cases, it may be possible to safely upgrade the OS, even if a “supported” software image is not yet available. With respect to El Capitan, an upgrade is probably safe for most faculty users. As a precaution, faculty are advised to consult with their TC. Going forward, ITS hope to make OS update process more modular, with the potential for self-service.

Joseph Nugent advances the digital humanities at BC

Associate Professor Joseph Nugent's goal is to bring the works of James Joyce to wider audiences. He has worked with students on several innovative digital projects to make Joyce's works more approachable to the public. In his first project, *Walking Ulysses*, Nugent and students designed an interactive map of Dublin that reproduced the journeys of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus through the streets of Dublin on June 16, 1904. With the help of an outside developer, *Walking Ulysses* morphed into *Joyce Ways*, an iPhone app that received an award as best Irish tourism app.



Nugent and a class of 15 English students next developed *Digital Dubliners*, an enhanced iBook version of Joyce's original *Dubliners* (available as a free download). Each student took the lead on one of the stories in *Dubliners*, adding media and commentary to provide the historical and cultural background. In his new project, *Immersive Ulysses*, Nugent and students are developing a 3D Oculus-ready depiction of interior scenes from *Ulysses*.

Nugent's digital projects extend beyond Joyce. The current exhibit at the McMullen Museum, *The Arts and Craft Movement: Making It Irish*, features an iBook guide as well as a virtual reality experience that brings viewers to Honan Chapel and a series of medieval Irish churches that inspired the art and architecture of the Crafts movement. Nugent's students are currently producing 3-D panoramic images of BC's most beautiful buildings; visitors to the September 3 football game in Dublin will be able to enjoy this fully-immersive experience of the campus.

Instruction goes online: Faculty cohort engages in hybrid course design

Over the next several years, we can expect to see the increasing use of online in instruction in BC courses. Over the next academic year, Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) staff will be working with a cohort of faculty members on hybrid course design. The nine members of the faculty cohort will be redesigning one of their courses so that at least 25% of the instruction occurs online. Given the diversity of home departments and schools, we can look forward to a variety of creative solutions.

Cohort members will be able to use the CTE's upgraded recording studio, which includes a teleprompter as well as green screen technology. Soon, the studio will also be equipped with Learning Glass, basically a transparent white board on which the presenter can write while facing the camera. (The streaming image is flipped, causing a right-handed writer to appear to be left-handed.) Non-cohort faculty are also welcome to use the studio. Contact the CTE (centerforteaching@bc.edu) to make arrangements.

Technology tidbits

- **Voicemail upgrade** - A new voicemail system will be installed over the summer. Expect a variety of new features, including voicemail transcription and message forwarding to your inbox or phone.
- **Canvas Commons** - Faculty are now able to share course resources with the BC community using Canvas Commons. This option may be particularly useful for faculty involved in courses with many sections (or for faculty who are tired of copying over the same course material every semester!).
- **Conferencing tools** - The CTE offers a suite of communications tools that can be used for office hours, meetings, and instruction. The *Big Blue Button* (BBB) tool in Canvas, allows synchronous communication with up to 50 students in a class. *Adobe Connect* is a more robust tool that allows faculty to host meetings, webinars, and virtual classes. *Zoom* is a video conferencing tool that accommodates multiple conference rooms. Contact the CTE to discuss your conferencing needs.
- **BCServices** - ITS will be rolling out a new service catalog that makes it easy to locate a wide range of BC services in an interactive graphical interface. The beta version of the catalog is now available at <https://bcservices.bc.edu>. BCServices is expected to ultimately replace the Agora portal.

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