

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Technology
- Blackboard
- Electronic Classrooms
- Teaching Techniques
- Delivery Facilitation

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:

The Challenge...	1
Website of the Month	2
Hotmail / Bb Email Issues	2
Career Fairs	2

Distance Learning Today

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The Multiple Generation Challenge

Baby Boomers, Generation X'ers and Millenials (also known as Generation Y)...teaching across the generation gap in a traditional classroom is hard enough. So, how can it be done effectively in distance learning courses?

As with most things, planning is a major key. Before ever entering into a distance learning course, instructors must first consider the differences in the students within an audience:

- **The Millenials** (1982-2003) were born into the internet and are often more technology savvy than their professors. They keep up with the latest trends and tend to prefer visual to auditory experiences. (Example—success of gaming consoles.)
- **The Gen X group** (1965-1981) are those individuals that are already in the workplace possibly and could be at the mid-point of their careers. This group often returns to college to attain further education that can in-

crease their earning potential. Gen X students are normally computer literate but not to the extreme of Millenials.

- **Boomers** (1946-1964) are older returning students that tend to resist technology more than younger students. Some have never been online. Older students are more likely to request technical help from the instructor versus calling a help desk.

For young students, online courses are 'old hat'. They are usually comfortable with technology but may lack motivation. For older learners, technology itself can become an obstacle and these potential students may be reluctant to sign up for distance courses.

To help bridge the multigenerational gap, some instructors offer options to students of reading the textbook, watching a video, viewing a CD, or a mix of media.

Prior to the beginning of the course, an instructor may conduct a [learning style assessment](#) to find how students

learn. This assessment may also be an indicator of knowledge of uploading / downloading documents, email usage and other relative technologies.

When creating group projects, students that are from the same generation often gravitate to one another in groups which may facilitate the comfort zone. On the flip side, there are benefits to getting students from different generations to interact with each other regarding course content. Younger students may be able to help a boomer to get up to date on how to interact and navigate as well as provide cultural references and peer support.

There are always going to be challenges for faculty and staff to face when teaching across generations and it is our responsibility to create a learning environment that is inviting for people of all ages. The key is always going to be in planning based on what eras make up an instructors class population.

If you have have a unique experience regarding multi-generational instruction, please shoot us an [email](#) and share it.



Visit **Amazon** and **Epitonic** for freebie downloads.

Website of the Month

So, you got that new handy dandy MP3 player that you wanted, but now don't have the cash left to download audio files for it. What do you do now? With all of the recent copyright law violations, downloading free music is risky, not just for the provider but for the receiver as well. There are still some websites around that allow the downloading of free audio files in exchange for a little information such as an email address or zip code. Some of these are:

1. **Epitonic**—Here you can listen to selections from jazz, rock and alternative recordings. The only information requested is an email address, country and zip code.
2. **Amazon**—Even though Amazon.com is traditionally a product for purchase site, there are all sorts of freebie downloads floating around if you already have an Amazon account.
3. **iTunes**—This mainstream iPod site features free daily downloads from new artists and podcasts just for signing up for an account.
4. **CommonTunes**—This music for sale website offers music for sale and
5. Check the websites of favorite performers and even some radio stations for free downloadable MP3's. Often new material is offered as a free sampling.

Suggestions or comments:
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Not receiving Bb emails in Hotmail?

Many popular email clients, such as Yahoo, Hotmail and even AOL, may identify email from Blackboard users as junk mail and then either automatically delete the email or move it to a junk mail folder. In Hotmail, the problem can be fixed by turning off your junk mail filter and setting your junk mail deletion option to delayed.

If there are problems receiving Blackboard emails in other email programs, check the user preferences or options for settings regarding the handling of junk email.



Helping Students Find Jobs...

The Career and Development Office at SwVCC is always looking to help students find employment whether part or full time. During the next couple of weeks, several career fairs will be happening to acquaint students with potential employers. These include:

1. **The SwVCC Career Connection** will be hosted in the SwVCC Richlands, VA campus Community Center, **April 12th from 10a.m.-2p.m.**
2. **Bluefield State Job Fair** will feature employers interested in hiring individuals from the region on **April 13th, from 9a.m. to 2p.m.**

If you would like more information on these job fairs or other career opportunities, please visit the [Career Resources Center online](#), phone 276.964.7544 or email, sharon.peery@sw.edu.



What do you want to hear?

All SwVCC faculty and staff are encouraged to submit items or request topics for inclusion. Email comments or suggestions to: lanna.lumpkins@sw.edu

Yahoo, Hotmail and even AOL, may identify email from Blackboard users as junk mail...