



OSU Extended Campus, Corvallis, OR; Winter 2008; February 8, 2008

Articles and Quick Links

## Welcome

Welcome to the winter Edition of Ecampus eFaculty News. Feel free to contact [Ecampus Staff](#) if you have questions about any of our services.

[OSU Academic Calendar](#)

## Message from the Vice Provost for University Outreach and Engagement

Scott Reed, speaking on the alignment between Extended Campus and Extension...

### **Our Path to the Future...Outreach and Engagement**

I'm reminded of the second most famous quote by Margaret Mead when she said, "To really change the world, you must start everywhere at once". That's what I gained from reading the evaluations results from the first strategic conference for the OSU Division of Outreach and Engagement. To be truly successful in this venture, many ideas for actions across multiple units were identified. Extended Campus is a crucial part of this relatively new division at OSU, and is made distinctive by its very significant growth rate each year. Clearly, students are finding our on-line coursework and degree opportunities well-worth the investment! And Ecampus is in good company by relating to the OSU Extension Service in new ways.

A notable part of the recent conference was unveiling the draft strategic plan for outreach and engagement. A steering committee developed six major goals as a part of the plan, including the following priorities:

1. Provide access to innovative and relevant educational programs for lifelong learning and access to intellectual resources that meet the broad range of needs for individuals, organizations, and communities.
2. Create and expand mutually beneficial and responsive partnerships that enhance the social, economic, and environmental well-being of individuals, organizations, and communities.
3. Broaden the scope of research and scholarship that emerges from and contributes to effective outreach and engagement.
4. Integrate outreach and engagement throughout the University with expected outcomes from each college, department, and unit.
5. Create a widely shared organizational culture that encourages, promotes, and rewards outreach and engagement activities of faculty and staff.
6. Expand and increase the financial and human resources that enable success in outreach and engagement across the University.

Now we're onto the critical task of implementation. Beginning this month, a team consisting of five members of the Outreach and Engagement Steering Committee and three additional people will constitute the Implementation Committee to develop actions for our success in accomplishing strategic goals contained in the existing plan. Our work is on a path to be completed by April 1, 2008.

### **Changes at Extended Campus**

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[ecampus.oregonstate.edu](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu)

It is with great pleasure that I announce the appointment of two Interim Associate Provost positions within the OSU Division of Outreach and Engagement. Effective January, 2008, David King will assume the position of Interim Associate Provost of Extended Campus and Debbie Maddy's title will change to Interim Associate Provost and Associate Director, OSU Extension Service, without significant changes in her responsibilities. Dave will maintain some responsibilities within Extension and Experiment Station Communications. As the Division evolves over the next 12-24 months, we will make longer term decisions on these two key leadership positions. Please join me in welcoming Dave to his new role and supporting Debbie in her continued Extension leadership.

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## A Word From Our Featured Instructor

### **"The Great Surprise of Teaching Online"**

Will Cowling, Instructor, Department of Philosophy

I taught my first Ecampus course last fall. The course was Philosophy 150, "Great Ideas in Philosophy, a class that I had taught many times on campus, and one that I knew most students found to be an almost irresistible introduction to some of the key ideas of western culture.

I knew that teaching online would present numerous challenges, not the least of which would be trying to figure out how to connect with the students. After teaching "live and in person" for over twenty years, I could not actually imagine how one created the intimacy of the classroom in the void of cyberspace. The one-on-one contact that I relied on in the classroom to develop the rapport I thought necessary for effective learning required that the students be able to talk freely and engage the material through a series of ongoing conversations with me and the other members of the class.

Although I wasn't nervous about it, I was keenly aware of the physical and emotional distance that was an inherent part of distance learning. Ok, maybe I was a bit nervous as the class began to post information about themselves on the Discussion Board. I wasn't exactly certain how to respond so I decided to simply say in writing the sorts of things that I usually said in class. Now, I knew that this was a risky strategy since what a teacher says in front of a class is not merely a matter of words, but also involves body language, affect, and many other physical components. Words alone can be sterile and cold, conveying little information beyond the merely functional matters of class routine. Somehow, my written communications had to paint a vivid portrait of who I am and what my goals as a teacher in this course were.

As it turns out, I never had a chance to not succeed in this new teaching situation. I was fortunate to suddenly find myself immersed in a set of conversations that, from day one, were energetic, convivial, and intimate. My students took over, as it were, the business of the class and dragged me, quite willingly, into a happy maelstrom of questions and comments about the material, about me, and about each other. I had, quite by chance, stumble upon the very group of people in my first online class who could and did show me how deeply caring and involved online students can be. Before I had a moment to think about it, I was part of a community of eager learners who responded to my efforts to move the discussions deeper into the text, and they did so without complaint (well, too much complaint, anyway).

The fall class transformed me from a teacher who thought that distance learning would be a pleasant way to enlarge the domain of students who might find philosophical ideas interesting and rewarding, to a devotee of distance learning. The class was close-knit and generous of spirit in ways that totally surprised me. It was one of the most intimate and rewarding teaching experiences I have known. I know now that no matter how often I teach on campus, I will always look forward to my next online class. The opportunities to get to know and work with students one-on-one is completely satisfying and provocative in ways that both mimic the campus

experience, but are, at the same time, very different. Of course, having a great group of students goes a long ways towards making the experience so enjoyable.

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## New Sheriff in Town

Joan, Cindy, Gayle, and Vickie, Ecampus Department and Student Services

Paula Minear hung up her spurs as Director of Department and Student Services at the end of December 2007. Alfonso Bradoch (formerly Deputy Brad), who was Paula's right hand man, and rode shotgun, will now be taking over as the new Sheriff in Extended Campus (Director of Department and Student Services).

Alfonso has been with Extended Campus 3 years, and has worn many hats in the Education arena (since 1979); graduate advisor, graduate teaching assistant, Admission and Financial Aid counselor, Assistant Admission Director, Vice President for credential evaluation, at Foundation for International Service, and Assistant Director American Field Service.

Sheriff Brad's posse is looking forward to working with him to continue to bring excellent service to Extended Campus students and faculty.

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## Proctored Exams/Test

Cindy Lehto, Department and Student Services, Administrative Program Assistant

Do you require proctored exams in your Ecampus courses? To make proctoring arrangements, students must access our Exams and Proctoring page and login to the Exams and Proctoring Form. We encourage students to familiarize themselves with the process and make testing arrangements as soon as possible.

Ecampus offers on-campus proctoring sessions, but we are limited to classroom availability, so these sessions fill quickly. Because on-campus courses get priority in campus classrooms, we cannot set-up our midterm proctoring schedule until the third week of the term and finals schedules are not posted until the ninth week. We also have a link on our website to other available testing centers, both in Oregon and around the country.

As more on-campus students make the choice to enroll in Ecampus sections, seats in our proctoring sessions will continue to be at a premium, but please know that we are aware of the problem and are taking steps to rectify the situation.

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## Incomplete Grades – Just the Facts!

Tom Watts, Associate Registrar

**Old** - In the past when an "I" (incomplete) grade was issued to a student the "I" grade stayed on the student's academic record, until it was changed by the instructor. The timeline was a decision made between the instructor and the student. The student had up to one year to complete the course. In short – if the student didn't complete the work, and the instructor did not submit a removal of incomplete form to change the I, then the "I" grade remained on their record.

**New** – Starting with fall term 2007 instructors were required to submit an "alternate" grade with the Incomplete grade. The alternate grade is the grade that will default for the student, if the student does not complete the work within one year. For example, if the student has earned a "B" at the point when the Incomplete is agreed to, but would receive an F if the outstanding work is not finished, then the instructor should submit an I/F. If the student completes the coursework, the instructor will submit a Removal of Incomplete to change the grade to the appropriate grade (e.g., A, B, C,

etc.). If the student does not complete the work within one year, the grade for the student will automatically change to an F (or the alternate grade that the instructor submitted).

**Miscellaneous** – Incompletes are between the student and the instructor. The time line is at the discretion of the instructor, or before the end of the same term the following year (example: student has an incomplete grade from winter term 2008 – you can allow them until the end of winter term 2009 to complete the course). The student does NOT need to re-register for the course!

**How does the student finish the course?** – The student will need permission from the instructor to have access to the course through Blackboard in the current term, to participate in discussions. Please contact Extended Campus Student Services to let us know.

**Defaults** – After the academic year is over, and the student has not completed their work, their grade will “default” to what was entered.

**Any recourse?** – Of course, the student has the option of filing a petition to extend the incomplete. The instructor will also need to be in favor of the extension, and would also need to sign the petition.

**Limitations?** – Of course, there are always limitations to what one can do! Please see [Academic Regulations](#).

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## Online tips and tricks

Victor Yee, Multimedia Developer

Creating a PDF file doesn't have to be a difficult, time-consuming process. PDFCreator is a free utility that allows you to easily create PDFs from within most Windows applications. Visit the [TSS website](#) to learn more about PDFCreator.

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## Getting Web-Based Learners Into the Soil Pit

Ron Reuter, Assistant Professor Cascades Campus

Online degrees in natural resources are becoming more common. A concern for graduates of such programs is lack of in-the-field education and hands-on experience. A glaring omission from online natural resource and environmental science education has been a lab and field based soils course. CSS 205, a lab-based introduction to soils for non-majors has been developed for online instruction through Oregon State University's Ecampus. The course is designed to meet the general physical and/or biological sciences requirements for OSU undergraduates. An article in the December 2007 issue of Journal of Natural Resources and Life Science Education describes the layout of the course, developed by Dr. Ron Reuter of OSU's College of Forestry.

In addition to the lecture materials, there are seven labs for the course, dealing with sample collection, parent materials, color, texture, organic matter, pH, nutrients, bulk density, and soil profile description. Students collect soils from specific landscape types in their locale and use these samples throughout the course. The final lab requires the student to visit a road cut or dig a soil pit and describe the horizons they observe, including labeling of master horizons, hand texturing, coloring, pH, and nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium analysis and interpretation for land use.

A study on student success for the online class compared to success in the same class on-campus is underway says Reuter. Comparison is done by a pre-course test that assesses student soil knowledge prior to the course and an identical post-course test. Preliminary results indicate that students in both delivery modes achieve similar comprehension of soil concepts. Interestingly, on-campus students tested significantly higher for pre-course knowledge compared to online students. For this particular set of cohorts,

the online students traversed a steeper learning curve than on-campus students.

The [Journal of Natural Resources and Life Science Education](#) article on CSS 205 is out now.

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## Parting Notes

Thank you for taking a few moments to read the Ecampus winter 2008 edition of eFaculty News.

Please let us know if you have a topic you would like addressed in a future edition, would like to submit an article, or have any comments or suggestions. We appreciate any feedback that is given!

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