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Report from The Teaching Professor Technology Conference 2013 in Atlanta, Georgia

Conference Session Notes/Handouts are available from:

<http://www.teachingprofessor.com/2013-teaching-professor-technology-conference-handouts1>

**THEME 1: “FLIPPING”**

Most relevant sessions attended in the three day conference:

**Flip a Lesson: Enhance Student Learning and Engagement**Barbi Honeycutt, Flip It Consulting and North Carolina State University

**The Flipped Classroom: Determining Online and In-Person Activities**
Maria Vazquez and Melody Whiddon, Florida International University

**Blend or Flip? What to Consider Before You Commit**Beverly Amer, Northern Arizona University

**Engaging Student Learning with Flipped and Blended Learning Strategies**Debra Harper-LeBlanc, Lone Star College-Greenspoint Centers

**How Much Technology? Flipping the History and Composition Classrooms**
Scott Horton, Steve Thulin, and Renee Dechert, Northwest College

**Flipping with Prezi: Cloud-Based Interactions That Facilitate Class Discussion and Feedback**
Shawn Apostel, Bellarmine University

**Using Pinterest for Reports: Promote Learning and Anchor Student Interest**
Barbara Looney, Black Hills State University

CONCLUSIONS:

I was already pretty familiar with “flipping” but the conference workshop allowed me to sharpen my understanding and also add to my skill base. I now feel as though I would be prepared to present these skills to fellow faculty members. There was a good emphasis on how to incorporate flipping lessons to the levels of learning presented in Bloom’s taxonomy. There was also discussion on how to incentivize faculty and students to commit the time necessary to engage in this type of learning experience. This whole model is very different from what both students and faculty are used to as part of their educational experiences. Other workshops focused on which activities to handle online versus which types of activities are best done in the classroom. The details from the handouts could potentially be informative. Also important was discussion of the move towards cloud-based applications (i.e. Google Docs, Prezi, Mindmeister, Pinterest, Lovely Charts, YouTube etc.) rather than relying upon traditional desktop applications.

**THEME 2: CHANGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Most relevant sessions attended in the three day conference:

**The Teaching Professor in 2020: Shaping the Future in a Time of Rapid Change**Joshua M. Kim, Director of Learning and Technology for Dartmouth’s Master of Health Care Delivery Science

**Gradually, Then Suddenly: How Technology Has Changed Teaching in Higher Education**Brian Kibby, President, McGraw-Hill Higher Education

**Envisioning an Interprofessional Health Care Education Model: MOOCs and Beyond**Krista Meinersmann and Carla Randall, University of Southern Maine

**Engaging the Change: From Hardback to No Back**
Erin Wood and Forrest Anderson, Catawba College

CONCLUSIONS:

There is a rapid shift towards free courses and free reference material being made available online. This is changing both the approach to in-person education as well as changes to the textbook market.

I have already begun to investigate online options for textbooks and other reference materials with the goal of reducing the cost for students as much as possible. In my human biology course (Biology 115) in summer of 2014, I have already decided to adopt a free online biology textbook available through OpenStax College (<http://openstaxcollege.org/>). I will still have students purchase a printed book for the course but it is not a traditional biology textbook and the cost is much lower (The Machinery of Life by David S. Goodsell).

I have been pushed to investigate MOOCs more closely as a result of this conference. I have participated in a MOOC course myself on HIV/AIDS offered through Coursera and have been able to see both the advantages and disadvantages. I see that traditional faculty will need to change their view of what constitutes instruction in the classroom if in-person learning is going to survive. The traditional modes of learning in the sciences are shifting to an online format and in some cases that online format can be superior. However, there can still be a place for in-person learning to focus on development of higher order learning, especially application, analysis, evaluation, and creation. Faculty have skills that extend beyond textbooks and lectures. We will need to start delivering these skills to our students in order to justify an in-person learning experience. I feel as though this has always been my teaching philosophy so I am continuously working on delivering a classroom experience that goes beyond what students can read in reference material.

**THEME 3: TECHNOLOGY FOR WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

Most relevant sessions attended in the three day conference:

**Translation and Transformation of Writing Pedagogy: Moving from Face-to-Face to Online**
Tawnya Lubbes, Nancy Knowles, and Stephen Clements, Eastern Oregon University; Heidi Harris, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; and Jacob Harris, Pulaski Academy, Little Rock

**Writing Across the Curriculum Using Technology**
Gail White, DeVry University and Tim Hibsman, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

I was already using writing technology tools in my biology courses but wanted to find out whether there were other affordable and effective alternatives that I could implement. As it turns out, I am already using one of the better solutions out there (Criterion by ETS) and the alternative (Grammarly.com) is much more expensive and not very useful for tracking student progress. Criterion by ETS is excellent for assessment purposes and I wish that the district and/or college would consider an institutional subscription. Right now, I am having students purchase their own subscriptions through the bookstore but that may come to an end with the change in bookstore vendors. I am not sure whether the new vendor carries this Criterion product. From what I have seen on TextbookX.com, it does not appear that Akademos orders and sells this product.

**THEME 4: BUILDING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS**

Most relevant sessions attended in the three day conference:

**Showcasing Student Achievement through Electronic Portfolios**Dean Beckman, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota

**Digital Tools for Tomorrow’s Teachers: Blended Classes & Technology Integration**
Judy Britt, Winthrop University

**Science and Digital Stories: Can it be Done?**
Sabrina Timperman, Mercy College

CONCLUSIONS:

I have started to focus more on building 21st century skills in my courses and intend to continue to do so. Many of our students do not realize that social networking is one of the major factors (if not, the one major factor) necessary for career development. Electronic profiles and portfolios are becoming necessary to market a student’s educational accomplishments and development of professional skills. The ability to guide students in the right direction is crucial. For example, steering students towards developing a LinkedIn or Google + profile while cleaning up or deleting their Facebook profile. Online profile management is fast becoming a major concern to the development of a professional’s career. Also important was discussion of the move towards cloud-based applications (i.e. Google Docs, Prezi, Mindmeister, Pinterest, Lovely Charts, YouTube etc.) rather than relying upon traditional desktop applications.

Here is an example of how I have been starting to engage students in this endeavor. The following article about creating a LinkedIn profile was distributed by e-mail to all of my students from the past two years.

What Every College Student Should Post on LinkedIn (<http://mashable.com/2013/08/12/linkedin-college-students/>)

Are you waiting until after graduation to start building up your [LinkedIn](http://mashable.com/category/LinkedIn) profile? It's time to reconsider.

"Every student is blindly trying to make a resume, but surprisingly many don't have great LinkedIn profiles," says [Natan Edelsburg](http://linkd.in/nedelsburg%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), senior vice president at [Sawhorse Media](http://sawhorsemedia.com/). "I often hear, 'Here's my resume. My LinkedIn isn't great, but here's the link.' I usually respond, 'Make it great, and then get back to me!'"

**SEE ALSO:**[**10 Creative Solutions for a More Productive Workspace**](http://mashable.com/2012/09/30/workspace-solutions/)

Thirty-seven percent of [surveyed job recruiters](http://www.slideshare.net/linkedin-talent-solutions/global-recruiting-trends-2013-global-final) identified social professional networks as one of the most important sources for hiring. Social professional networks are also the [fastest growing](http://www.slideshare.net/linkedin-talent-solutions/global-recruiting-trends-2013-global-final)source of quality hires.

Still not convinced? [Ninety](http://press.linkedin.com/about) of the Fortune 100 companies use LinkedIn's corporate talent solutions to find future hires.

"Employers are looking for recent graduates," says Nicole Williams, LinkedIn's Career Expert and the founder of [WORKS by Nicole Williams](http://www.nicolewilliams.com/), a lifestyle brand for young, career-driven women. If you're active on LinkedIn as a college student, "you may be able to be identified as a college student, and as a potential candidate, passively," she says. Being identified "passively" means job recruiters could find your profile and consider you for a position, without you even having to apply.

But how do you actually build a great LinkedIn profile as a college student? Mashable has you covered.

## Post a profile photo.

Some college students are wary of including their profile pictures on LinkedIn for fear of looking too young. But Williams explains a profile picture could actually work in your favor. A photo provides a face for your digital personality and helps recruiters see you as a human, rather than a hyperlink.

## Include coursework and extracurriculars.

Your LinkedIn profile should weave together the story of your professional development, so it's good to be as detailed as possible. Include information about relevant coursework, clubs and organizations in which you've participated at school. If you've done any internships or gained work experience, be specific about what skills you developed, how many hours you worked or how many students you tutored.

"Part of your differentiator as a college student is that you know technology and you know how to build a professional brand," says Williams. "Employers want to know that you can bring that to their company."

## Show off your schoolwork.



You can now [visually illustrate your skills](http://mashable.com/2013/05/01/linkedin-visual-profile/) with rich media, such as pictures and videos. If you have a presentation you're especially proud of, or a design project you executed for an internship, include it on your profile to help recruiters visualize what type of talent you bring to the table.

## Ask professors and advisers for recommendations.

One common misconception of LinkedIn recommendations is that they have to come from previous employers. A recommendation from a university professor or academic adviser, especially one with experience in your desired field, speaks volumes to your ability to stand out from the crowd. Aim to get recommendations from professors who know you personally, or who have a good sense of your work ethic, and can speak specifically to your accomplishments in the classroom.

## Connect with industry leaders.

One of the most exciting aspects of social media is the access it gives you to influential people in your industry.

Don't be intimidated by someone's professional clout; reach out to people whose careers you admire, but be sure to personalize your request to connect.

Don't be intimidated by someone's professional clout; reach out to people whose careers you admire, but be sure to personalize your request to connect.

Your request should include two elements, says Williams. The first should contain a detail that connects you to the person. Look at his or her LinkedIn profile and pull out a piece of information that will help you personalize your request. Ideally, include something you both have in common, like a hometown or a favorite publication. If you can't find anything significant to mention, offer a compliment or a respectful comment about the person's professional work instead.

Second, include a reason. Why do you want to connect with this person? **Your reason should not be a request for a job.**Instead, engage him or her with a request for career advice, a personal question, or offer up a skill that could be of service.

Right before he graduated from college, John Kowalski used [Twitter](http://mashable.com/category/twitter/) and LinkedIn to network with PR industry professionals. Once he had connected with people in his industry, he offered his services free of charge.

"I wanted to demonstrate that I had a passion and that I would do whatever it took to get my foot in the door. I didn't need to tell them that I was looking for a job; they knew why I was there. But I wanted to be the first person on their mind when a new position came on the table," he explains.

Sure enough, when a position opened up in the same company at a neighboring branch, Kowalski's connection called in and strongly recommended him. "My application was in the 'maybe' pile, but that phone call turned me from a maybe into being hired for the position."

## Comment on industry-specific articles.

When you post industry-specific articles, you prove you are passionate, engaged and paying attention to your career of choice.

Avoid including controversial or personal opinions on LinkedIn, unless you want that opinion to be associated with your professional persona. Instead, suggests Williams, offer a professional takeaway or ask a thoughtful question. This shows that you are not just reading industry-specific news; you are also engaging with it analytically.

## Ask questions in LinkedIn groups.

LinkedIn groups are a great way to engage directly with people in your industry and establish yourself as a contributor rather than a passive reader.

"One of the best ways to get noticed is to elicit conversations and ask smart questions," Williams advises.

While the saying "there are no stupid questions" may ring true in most situations, be conscientious of what you ask in groups. Do a bit of research, or at the very least a Google search, before you ask a question. This will ensure you convey an informed professional persona, and your questions will most likely be stronger if they don't have an easy answer.

## Look into different career paths.

LinkedIn lets today's college students access information on career paths in a way no other generation could. Now, you not only see where someone has gotten in her career, but how she got there. More often than not, people are surprised to see how [non-linear](http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20130425182632-5973711-the-strongest-careers-are-non-linear) careers are today. And who knows, looking at someone else's career path may inspire you to take a chance you otherwise wouldn't.

## Check for spelling and grammar errors.

As is the case with any professional work, your LinkedIn profile should be error-free. After you've combed through your profile for spelling errors, ask a friend to look it over for unclear phrases or grammatical faux pas.

What kinds of posts do you find most engaging on LinkedIn? Let us know in the comments section below.