

Integrating alumni, librarians and student services colleagues into the intellectual life of the college classroom via Information Technologies

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Abstract: Contemporary college students have high expectations of their classroom experiences. To support those expectations, alumni, support staff, and librarians can be productively integrated into the intellectual life of classrooms. These colleagues often have underused expertise and skills that can be discovered and utilized so as to enrich courses and provide additional value to students. Information technology tools can support this approach in both local and geographically dispersed classrooms.

Introduction

Faculty members are faced with both new student expectations as well as new opportunities in their classrooms. As students pay more for courses, and the work environment becomes more and more tenuous, they expect more value for their educational dollars. Heightened expectations place more onus on the classroom instructor to provide not only content expertise, but also effectively managed courses, quick turnaround times and 24-hour-7-day-a-week access via phone and email. This phenomenon is also driven by greater expectations for immediate gratification and a high level of service; currently, it is also driven by the state of the economy. Students are now more vocal about those expectations in classrooms, of course, but more and more they make their needs and dissatisfactions known publicly with, for example, social media tools.

Colleges are listening and responding as students can “vote with their feet” and enroll in institutions that meet their needs. There is now a concerted effort in colleges to provide increased level of services to students, including counseling, job placement, networking, student organizations, and the greater performance efficiencies that can be provided by electronically mediated registration, financial, retention and other systems. All of this may mean that instructors are casting about for how to provide expected additional value in courses.

This paper discusses adding value by using information technology as a tool that can integrate existing university people-resources into the intellectual life of courses. We discuss those people-resources in terms of alumni, student services colleagues, and librarians.

Student perceptions and the satisfactory classroom experience

What does experience tell us about a “satisfactory” educational experience? In our institution, which proudly features a “practitioner approach” in courses, students in the recent past valued the specific content and the discipline expertise of instructors. Golden Gate University, in fact, speaks to this pragmatic approach in the university mission.

Instructors are aware that contemporary “Gen-?” and “Millennial” students expect more from their classroom experience. They expect instructors to (a) provide highly organized course materials; (b) provide direction, rather than to expect self discipline, self motivation and curiosity, and (c) include Internet/Web technologies as a significant part of the experience.

They are less willing to accept administrative problems, such as errors that may be made in course textbook ordering in the bookstore, or having to wait in lines for registration and advising. When students are frustrated in any way, their complaints, which used to be grumbled about, now may begin, rather than end, with the university’s president. Of most importance to this discussion, these students expect that their education will relate directly to the work environment, and their perceived opportunities in the world of work (see http://www.usatoday.com/money/workplace/2005-11-06-gen-y_x.htm, <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/erm0342.pdf>, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/13/opinion/13herbert.html>, for a review of student characteristics).

These expectations make it clear that definitions of the satisfactory course experience now include not only content and instructor expertise, but other services, attractions and extrinsic motivators. Three of these available resources and services may be found within the university infrastructure: alumni, student services and librarians. Although technology as a part of this experience is a given, it may not be clear how technology tools can be used to integrate these people-resources into courses. The remainder of the paper discusses the integration of technology and people-resources in the activities of classrooms.

Technology tools available for the classroom

A variety of free, easy to use tools are available to teachers with computer and network access. This section discusses some of those tools with suggestions for their use. While tools such as YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn are referenced, we discuss primarily weblogs, wikis and the open source classroom environment called Moodle.

A “prime directive” for the use of these tools is that they must have a purpose, and to accomplish that purpose, they must be well-managed, with performance expectations and deliverables attached. A weblog with no theme or an ad hoc wiki mounted with only good intentions will prove to be a waste of time. Knowing this makes the integration of our people-resources somewhat easier. Let’s say, for example, that we have an alumnus, librarian or other resource person who is willing to participate in our course during two

specific weeks. She will be discussing her career progression from function area manager to a C-level position; she lives in Richmond, Virginia, and our real-time course meets in Los Angeles once a week.

Our alumnus will no doubt have a personal and/or corporate Facebook page and will have a presence on LinkedIn. Students will be invited to engage the alumnus on those sites, but the real interactions will come from a weblog and a wiki. What will be the purpose of each?

The weblog's best use in this situation is as a meeting place for thematic discussions, with the alumnus as discussion leader and the teacher as weblog manager. No-cost weblogs can be created by using entities such as wordpress.com (see the graphic titled "Tom 'Real World' Jones"). The teacher or alumnus can determine a theme, direction, and look-and- feel for the weblog. As you know, weblogs generally are structured so that the weblog owner creates discussions that invite comment; this inherent structure is "resource-person friendly" by nature. The weblog owner, in this case the visiting expert or teacher, or both, can create content available to all, invite responses, and in turn respond. Engagement with the alumnus will be expected of the students. A form of directed conversation can ensue that will unite parties that in this case are geographically separated.

Another benefit of the weblog is that some students who are less likely to speak and interact in a face to face course may feel comfortable contributing in weblog environments. Yet another dynamic exists. It may be that the resource person is available for students, but for any number of reasons may choose to interact on a weblog rather than (or in addition to) face to face. There is still another possibility, that a student may have skills to design and manage the design of a particular course weblog. Given that many students already have these skills, it may be that the student weblog product can be engaging and of high quality. When other students know that a classmate has had such input, they may be more favorably disposed to engage in discussions.

Wikis are often confused with weblogs, but a wiki is a specific type of tool. It is a repository for documents and other artifacts, with different levels of access, editability and visibility. One such wiki creation tool is found at pbwiki.com (see the graphic titled "wiki"). In addition to being a work and communication site, wikis can be used to store graphics, audio/video pieces and other artifacts.

Wikis are best used for task-specific functions that require people to actually work together on common products, or to share products for editing and other input. Specific to our integration of people-resources, wikis might be mounted at the beginning of a semester to be used for different ongoing course projects.

If you are interested in experimenting with an online teaching/learning environment, but your organization does not have a relationship with an online learning entity such as eCollege or Blackboard, you might consider the open source tool named Moodle. In the Moodle environment, teachers can create lectures, exams, links and discussions. A

graphic of a sample moodle page for a real Golden Gate University course is included in the annotated graphics section.

“Learning Objects” is a term that implies digital artifacts that can be reused. Digital environments such as wikis, weblogs and course management tools such as Moodle allow for the reuse of any number of interviews, events, papers, projects, videos, graphics and conversation threads. This ability provides a way to extend and repurpose the relationship with our people-resources into other sessions and semesters.

The previous sections have discussed in general the electronic tools that can be used to integrate people-resources into our classrooms. The following sections provide a number of general suggestions to be considered in engaging alumni, librarians and other people-resources.

Integrating alumni into the life of the classroom

Having willing alumni actively participate in courses can connect students with the real world. Alumni represent reality and hopefully, the positive outcomes of the university’s education. As well, they can provide timely content expertise, and discuss that course content as it applies in the real world of work.

Several suggestions follow that describe a range of contributions that alumni can make, but perhaps the most important for this discussion is that alumni can be called on to contribute to course and program design, providing practical curricular input and assistance for other instructors and colleagues. This sort of planning work is relatively easy to manage in electronically mediated environments, through the use of conference calls and ad hoc wikis. If the university can afford to stipend such activities, alumni can work in one-off projects to accomplish some specific curricular or program work and be rewarded for their contribution. Their participation in this way is useful to programs, and can engage alumni in the intellectual makeup of programs.

Another common service alumni can provide is as classroom speakers, panelists in public forums, and in informational presentations for larger audiences as well as specific programs. This utility provides a significant sense of value added for students, but it proves to be highly stimulating for the alumni, who report that they feel reconnected with the student world by having a venue in which to present their own expertise. An approach that has proven successful at our university is to engage alumni as a review panel in a technology program capstone course as evaluators of course or program projects. Technology tools such as weblogs offer a way to extend these activities across time and space, for the convenience of everyone involved.

In our institution, the alumni services offices maintain relationships with the university’s alums. Of course they are often massaged for contributions, but many of them are active in student activities as speakers and presenters, employers, and advisory board members. If their university experience has been successful, they are waiting to be of service, and will be willing to support courses and programs.

In order to discover alumni who fit students' needs, the instructor may have to proactively seek the services of his or her university's alumni services organization. That organization may have information about specific alumni or groups of alumni who may be willing to become involved. If that information is available, the instructor can then take it upon himself or herself to contact people and ask them to participate.

Utilizing the services of alumni will first require some thought. Students will enjoy the experience and the alum will be momentarily energized, but there may be no significant contribution to the course. To increase the alum's value to programs, the instructor can, prior to a class visit, establish a wiki or weblog and expect student discussion on relevant issues, trends and questions pertinent to the alum's skills. After the visit, ask the alum to interact with the students for follow up discussions.

Ask the alum to provide an overview in writing, or perhaps as part of the visit, of opportunities, connections, suggestions and professional organizations that can be of value to students. Professional organizations often have student prices that are highly attractive, and provide access to both people and practical resources.

Well-managed alumni experiences can benefit everyone. The course is enriched, an alumnus can bring useful skills and information to the course, course content is supplemented, and students will gain additional knowledge. Because the student can see the alumnus role in an attractive context, he or she will be becoming prepared to be a supportive alumnus as well. The proactive instructor will recognize the value of using weblogs and wikis to facilitate these interactions and conversations.

Integrating university services colleagues into the life of the classroom

Many institutions now offer significant and highly customized services to a broad range of students. Such services include advising, retention communication, paths to completion, job counseling, resume workshops, writing assistance, psychological counseling, management of internships and Curricular Practical Training experiences. International students may enjoy those services with additional levels of customization and attention. Overall, these services provide a broad range of assistance options for most student needs.

These services live outside the classroom. They are generally not considered the purview of the classroom experience, with perhaps the exception of a Writing Center (http://www.ggu.edu/student_services/caps/learning_support_services/owl_main_page). This is unfortunate, because many of these services can be utilized for specific educational purposes inside the classroom via institutional site links and weblogs and wikis.

Student Services folks, like alumni, are often repositories of content specific knowledge that goes unused in courses. The interested instructor can form alliances with various support staff who have backgrounds and interests that can supplement courses. An internship support person who has degree and practical expertise in Human Resource

issues can be assigned to specific course content areas. Another example is the Writing Center tutor who is widely travelled and who has some experience in European business practices. Those colleagues then become a dual resource, able to supplement the intellectual life of the course according to their job descriptions and again according to their other backgrounds, interests and skills.

As in utilizing the services of alumni, it will be necessary to plan for the best use of technology in the integration of these colleagues. One-off presentations to courses about particular services may still be the typical use of those colleagues, but the instructor who is willing to plan ahead by, say, instituting and managing an in-house informational weblog or wiki aimed at uniting resources within the university, will be rewarded.

Integrating librarians into the life of the course

Librarians, like support service and alumni colleagues, are an underused resource. Their intellectual presence in education continues to be strongly evidenced in “Information Literacy” discussions (American Association of School Librarians, 1998). However, they inevitably have professional and personal expertise that can contribute to courses in other, significant ways. As mentioned above, instructors may have to interact with librarians to discover those skills and expertise, but the results can be rewarding. In our setting, a librarian has a significant background and professional presence in the Human Resources field, that can enrich any number of several courses and programs. (See the graphic titled Lib Guides, Profile for for Margot Hanson, at the end of this document).

Librarians differ slightly from alumni and services staff in that they have a traditional role in the life of university classrooms. However, that role is often that of cheerleader for research resources, or as tour guides for the library itself. Teachers still often refer to the library and librarians in their syllabi, and exhort students to visit the library for research and course project assistance, but this approach more often than not results in little or no follow up (See graphic pages titled “the Eclectic Strategist” and “Ask a librarian”).

A more productive relationship can begin by moving past the “one shot” approach toward utilizing technology to create co-mingled activities that are integrated into the life of the course.

Here are several suggestions: first, the instructor must commit to extending the relationship with the librarian. This is more difficult than it may seem, given that course design is the result of perhaps years of planning and practice. Updating content to support an additional classroom resource is time consuming.

The librarian can of course visit your class for specific purposes and activities, such as to discuss critical thinking and its application in research and research paper formulation, to provide virtual / real library tours, or to be a participant in course panels and presentations. Instructors can continue the practice of inviting librarians to classes, but should consider making that first visit is one of a series that has some type of “story arc”,

that is, a meaningful relationship to course content. The use of a course-specific weblog featuring a library/librarian theme can be implemented.

The availability of video means that such visits can occur in person or online, and that there can be a number of such interactions designed for specific purposes. Here is an instance where a tool such as YouTube can be helpful. Even if your institution is not able to support video creation, ad hoc videos can be easily created and made available for institutional and classroom audiences.

Another approach is to require evidence of the use of library or other online resources in evaluated course deliverables. For example, it might become a real requirement (that is, points attached) for students to interact with librarians in the development of topics, or to show evidence of having dialogued with librarians over both research processes and application of findings in specific course contexts. If librarians are content experts in some areas, these interactions can supplement a student's research and learning skills.

This approach can be made more substantive if all parties in the course are expected to interact within a Wiki or weblog on course topics. In this way, the Wiki/weblog becomes a knowledge creation and management tool as well as a communication mode.

Toward the end of the semester, a student(s) can collate and interpret the information from the various course wikis/weblogs and create a report or portfolio for classmates' take-away materials.

These few activities can integrate the librarian into the intellectual life of the course. There is a beginning and end, and beginning/end products that provide takeaways for students, teachers and librarians. A team product based on a common collaborative effort will support the particular course, and can become a model for other teachers and other courses.

Using the integration of technology approach as an exemplar for generating institutional support

Creating change is difficult, and using technology to integrate colleagues into courses is an example of such a change. The above discussion has centered on technology tools and approaches that can bring together existing people and physical resources in single courses, but with an eye toward applications in other environments.

The processes discussed here support scalability; Facebook and LinkedIn are hosted elsewhere and create no technology overhead for the institution. Weblogs and wikis have learning curves, but they are minimal, and they require little of technology in addition to Web access. The cost is right for cash-strapped institutions. Their benefits as communicative environments to unite teachers, students, alumni, librarians and other people-resources make them attractive tools, whose applications will only grow and become more diverse as people become more comfortable with their use.

There are several potentially desirable long-term outcomes of using these tools. Students can become more involved in courses, leading to greater satisfaction. Resource people will be engaged with classroom activities and will experience a greater involvement in the teaching/learning process, in addition to experiencing a closer relationship with the institution and its stakeholders. Finally, the teacher who utilizes these tools can become a model of behaviors that are seen as desirable and educationally credible by peers and colleagues, and in so doing will garner their support for future such efforts.

Those who have integrated colleague resources in their classrooms can then become faculty development mentors and presenters, interacting with their fellow instructors in applying these approaches into their own classes.

Using the integration of technology approach to support course and program assessment

The approaches and tools discussed here have implications for programs, departments and schools. This approach is scalable in that one success story can provide the framework for adapting the approach to, say, a group of core courses in a program, or perhaps for use as a teaching model in a department or school.

Assessment plays a large role in contemporary university settings. Informal assessment is naturally supported because of the use of wikis and weblogs as discussion portals and information repositories: the interactions, discussions and materials that support class interactions can remain available for analysis and revision.

Formal assessment processes are another matter, requiring clarity on course and program objectives, and how they are tied together. If an organization is engaged in formal assessment for an accrediting body, there are multiple processes to be engaged in over time, and much paperwork. If you are considering utilizing librarians, alumni and other community members such as is suggested here, you should be particularly aware of the need to thoughtfully integrate their contributions into your accrediting schema.

Conclusion

Having students and colleagues work together in low or no-cost electronically mediated environments has only recently become possible, and represents a singular opportunity to unite teachers, staff, librarians, alumni and students in ways that can easily and inexpensively transcend traditional information and culture boundaries in our classrooms. Forward looking teachers can use information technologies to create engaging, participatory educational environments that increase educational effectiveness, and that increase student satisfaction with their courses and programs.

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Graphics

Weblog example, wordpress.com

The screenshot shows a WordPress blog post. At the top is a blue header with the author's name 'Tom "Real World" Jones' and the tagline 'Just another WordPress.com weblog'. A mouse cursor points to the tagline. Below the header is a search bar labeled 'search this site'. The main content area features the post title 'Real world IT finance' and three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph introduces Tom Jones as a principal in a Silicon Valley startup. The second paragraph mentions he will be a guest in a class. The third paragraph asks for input from class members. Below the text is a link to 'Edit this entry'. To the right of the main content is a sidebar with sections: 'Pages' (link to 'Real world IT finance'), 'Archives' (link to 'March 2010'), 'Categories' (link to 'Uncategorized (1)'), 'Blogroll' (links to 'WordPress.com' and 'WordPress.org'), and 'Meta' (links to 'Site Admin', 'Log out', 'Valid XHTML', 'XFN', and 'WordPress'). Below the main content is a comment section titled 'One Response to "Real world IT finance"', featuring a comment by 'bfulkerth' dated March 9, 2010, with a small profile picture.

Tom "Real World" Jones

Just another WordPress.com weblog

search this site

Real world IT finance

Hello everyone, I'm Tom Jones, currently a principal in a Silicon Valley startup aimed at managing data in cloud environments for medium-sized businesses.

I'm going to be a guest in the class for the second four weeks, leading a discussion of IT finance. I have a history as a Chief Information Officer for two organizations, so I have a good sense of how IT finance works.

To kick off our discussion, I'd like to hear from each class member (by Friday at 11 pm) on these questions: what is your current level of expertise in business finance. Second, what are two things you want to know about Information Technology finance and budgeting?

[Edit this entry.](#)

Pages

- » [Real world IT finance](#)

Archives

- » [March 2010](#)

Categories

- » [Uncategorized \(1\)](#)

Blogroll

- » [WordPress.com](#)
- » [WordPress.org](#)

Meta

- » [Site Admin](#)
- » [Log out](#)
- » [Valid XHTML](#)
- » [XFN](#)
- » [WordPress](#)

One Response to "Real world IT finance"

bfulkerth Says:
March 9, 2010 at 6:58 pm | [Reply](#) [edit](#)

Mr. Jones, thanks for being in our class. I have trouble balancing a checkbook, and am afraid of business finance, but I know I have to know about it. Can we talk about how to help a person like me?

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Wiki example, pbwiki.org

The screenshot shows a PBWiki interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Wiki', 'Pages & Files', and 'Settings'. A search bar on the right says 'Search this workspace'. Below the tabs, there are 'VIEW' and 'EDIT' buttons. The main content area is titled 'FrontPage' and shows it was last edited by 'bob fulkerth' '0 mins ago'. The page content includes a greeting to 'Leona Librarian', a paragraph about sharing information on resources and tactics, a paragraph about 'rules of the road' and communal knowledge, a paragraph about categorizing knowledge with tags, a paragraph about tagging information, and a closing statement 'See you in class in two weeks!' signed 'Leona'. On the right side, there is a sidebar with options: 'Create a page', 'Upload files', 'Invite more people', 'Share this page', 'Put this page in a folder', 'Add Tags', and 'Control access to this page'. Below that is a 'Navigator' section with 'Starred Pages' and 'Unfiled Items'. At the bottom right of the sidebar, there is an 'edit folders' button.

Moodle page, from a real Golden Gate University certificate course

Participants

Administration

- Grades
- Profile

GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY | CyberCampus

Leadership In Nonprofit Organizations

An Online Certificate

Using the Class Interface

Syllabus

Welcome Video by Instructor Nancy Wiltsek

Introductions

Articles of Interest

Bibliography

HelpDesk

March 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Events Key

- Global
- Course
- Group
- User

Quickmail

Compose Email ?

1

Week 1: January 6-12
Week 2: January 13-19

Weeks 1 and 2: Introduction to Nonprofits and Personal Journey Part 1

Overview:

At the conclusion of week 2 you will be able to:

- describe the size and scope of the nonprofit sector
- delineate the legal tests for tax-exempt nonprofit status
- discuss at rationales for the existence of the nonprofit sector
- identify your Enneagram personality type and how it has served you

Week 1 Lecture: Introduction to Nonprofits

The Golden Gate University General Library landing page

(http://www.ggu.edu/university_library/).

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FRI: 10am - 5pm
SAT: 10:30am - 5pm
SUNDAY: 12noon - 5pm
CLOSED: Jan 18 - MLK Jr

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or 1-877-448-8542

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GO GREEN!
10 Ways to Go Green and Save Green (from *Worldwatch Institute, Vision for a Sustainable World*) - and more in the January 2010 issue of [The Update](#)



Librarian Margot Hanson's page (<http://ggu.libguides.com/profile.php?uid=17199>) demonstrates her work in creating study/research guides for the specific disciplines aligned with her expertise. Note also the information for contacting her, either by chat, phone or email.

The screenshot shows the profile page for Margot Hanson, a Librarian at Golden Gate University. The page header includes the Golden Gate University logo and the tagline "Educating Professionals Since 1901". Navigation links for "University Library Home" and "LibGuides Home" are present. The main heading is "LibGuides - Profile for Margot Hanson".

The profile is divided into two main sections:

- Librarian Profile:** Contains a photo of Margot Hanson, her name, and an "Instant Message" widget. The widget shows "university_library is online" and provides a text input field for sending a private message. Below the input field, it says "Type here and hit enter to send a private message." and "edit nickname: meeboguest91221". There is also a "get meebop" button and a "Contact Info" section with the following details: "Web Services Librarian", "University Library", "415-442-7258", and a "Send Email" link.
- Guides Created by Margot Hanson:** Lists six guides with their titles, authors, and last update dates:
 - Accounting:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Dec 01st, 2009. Description: "This guide contains helpful tips and resources for doing research in Accounting."
 - FI 300A: Corporate Finance:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Dec 03rd, 2009. Description: "Resource sheet for Gilead cohort with Professor Sarsfield, Summer 2009"
 - Finance:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Dec 21st, 2009. Description: "This guide has some helpful tips for doing research in Finance using resources available at the GGU University Library."
 - Healthcare Information Technology:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Dec 09th, 2009. Description: "This guide provides suggestions and recommendations for research in Healthcare Information Technology"
 - Information Technology Management:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Nov 03rd, 2009. Description: "This guide has some helpful tips for doing ITM research using resources available through the GGU University Library."
 - ITM 191: Capstone: Creating Value in the IT Career:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Jun 09th, 2009. Description: "This guide suggests relevant resources and research strategies for the ITM 191 course."
 - ITM 395: Strategic Information Technology Planning, Organization, and Leadership:** by Margot Hanson - last updated on Aug 12th, 2009.

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The Ask-a-Librarian page (<http://www.university-library.org/meebo/index.php>) provides another venue for communication between clients (alumni are included) and library staff.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASK-A-LIBRARIAN

Who is eligible for this service?

Current students, faculty and staff as well as alumni are encouraged to submit request for the ask-a-librarian services.

What is the expected response time?

Queries are examined daily. You can expect a response within 1-2 business days.

What types of questions are appropriate for electronic reference services?

We will try to provide factual information and resource suggestions as well as search strategies for your GGU related research.

If you are having trouble accessing databases, please see the [Database Access page](#) on the library website.

If you need an article or book that is not available at the University Library, please refer to the [Document Delivery and Interlibrary Loan page](#) on the library website.

Note: Fields marked with an * are required.

Personal Information

First Name:*	<input type="text"/>
Last Name:*	<input type="text"/>
School ID:*	<input type="text"/>
E-mail:*	<input type="text"/>
Phone number:	<input type="text"/>
Affiliation:*	<input type="radio"/> Student <input type="radio"/> Staff <input type="radio"/> Faculty <input type="radio"/> Alumni <input type="radio"/> Other

Question

Subject:*	<input type="text"/>
Course name and number:*	<input type="text"/>
Name of Professor:*	<input type="text"/>

Question: Please be clear, concise, and specific about your information needs.*

The Library Weblog (<http://www.eclecticstrategist.blogspot.com/>) is a venue for general information sharing and dialoguing on topics of interest to the GGU community. Note the subheading, indicating the range of topics modulated “via the GGU university library.”



Eclectic Strategist
RESOURCES, EVENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY, VIA THE GGU UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2009

Balancing work and school number one reason students leave college, according to Public Agenda survey

"The number one reason students give for leaving school is the fact that they had to work and go to school at the same time and, despite their best efforts, the stress of trying to do both eventually took its toll. ..." according to a survey by Public Agenda, <http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/theirwholielivesaheadofthem.pdf> funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

p 5

"So what would help?"
Most "point first to options that would give them more flexibility in schedules and help them mitigate the challenge of working and going to school at the same time. Eight in 10 of those who did not complete college supported two proposals that they believe would make college graduation feasible: 1) making it possible for part-time students to be eligible for more financial aid (81 percent said this would help 'a lot'); and 2) offering more courses in the evening and on weekends so that they could continue working while taking classes (78 percent said this would help 'a lot')." p. 18

We were alerted to the study by an entry in an Academic Impressions e-mail which linked to a Washington Post article, "Majority of College Dropouts Cite Financial Struggles as Main Cause," by Jenna Johnson, Washington Post Staff Writer Wednesday, December 9, 2009; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/09/AR2009120903045.html>

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