

From the Vineyard



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Jane Moore - Editor

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From Your Wine Steward

Dear MERLOT Leadership Community,

2017 is the 20th anniversary of MERLOT! We wouldn't still be here if it wasn't for you – your leadership, your contributions, your outreach, and your dedication to providing free, quality, online educational resources for the world!

As a member of the original team who created MERLOT, it is truly amazing how MERLOT has continued to evolve to serve the needs of educators. We began the design of MERLOT with trying to solve a problem within the California State University at a time when “learning objects” were emerging and campuses were investing in developing their own software applications. Our original goal was to enable the 23 campuses of the CSU to share their learning objects within an online library, serving more users with fruits of the few developers. Three other state systems (Georgia, North Carolina, and Oklahoma) learned about the project and they enable the first transformation of MERLOT into a fully open online library of multimedia educational resources for learning and online teaching.

Today, we have people using and contributing to MERLOT from around the world. MERLOT is fueling textbook affordability programs with over 5,000 free and open etextbooks in the library, leveraging its course and teaching ePortfolio tools. MERLOT's strategy enable the California State University to design and launch the largest OER workforce development project in the world within a few months (www.skillscommons.org). I think most importantly, it is the MERLOT leadership community – YOU - who has sustained its passion, vision, expertise, and that extra effort to innovate education.

During 2017, we will be taking time to celebrate MERLOT's 20th anniversary with you and we will continue to work with you to enable MERLOT to reach its 30th anniversary!
New Year's Cheers,
Gerry

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Feature Article – Innovate 2017



The 2017 Innovate Conference will take place at the Sheraton New Orleans, April 5-7, 2017. [Registration](#) is now available for both onsite and virtual attendance at the conference. **Remember that the early bird deadline is February 8.** This year's conference features Wednesday morning summits---one for Community Colleges and the other for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Attendees at these summits will participate in workshops and small group discussions prior to the official start of the conference at noon. Dinner is on your own Wednesday night. Feel free to look at [this list of restaurants](#) for ideas and reservation links.

This year's kick-off activity is a luncheon at noon (included in your conference fee) featuring Lightning Talks designed to energize and inspire.

Thursday's schedule begins early at 8 a.m. with the OLC/MERLOT breakfast and continues with exciting sessions, culminating with a keynote with John Kao at 4 p.m., followed by a street party. The OLC/MERLOT Awards Luncheon is scheduled for noon. It requires a ticket, so be sure to check that out when registering. At that time, MERLOT Classics Awards winners and the House Cup will be awarded. The MERLOT Leadership dinner for PREs, Project Directors, and Editors will be at 6:30 p.m.

On Friday, the keynote by Darlene Cavalier begins at 8:15 and the conference closes at noon. Be sure to make your [hotel reservations](#) and any dinner reservations as soon as possible.

You can see the presentations scheduled for MERLOT leadership at the Innovate Conference [here](#).

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Feature Article – The Year of Open



The Year of Open is community-led campaign, coordinated by the Open Education Consortium launching on January 17, 2017. Although OEC focuses on open education, the goal is to provide an opportunity to showcase why open provides opportunities and solutions for many areas.

To get us started, we have put together a website to provide high-level information both about the Year of Open and different aspects of openness, with referrals to expert organizations for more information. At this point, the website has several features:

- Topic of the month at the top of the home page that will feature information, videos and opportunities for engagement to go more in depth on that topic. January's theme is open education. The topic will change each month, but topic of the month content will be archived and available throughout 2017.
- Short introductory boxes on different aspects of openness. These are intended to give high-level, short, easy to understand descriptions of that aspect, and provide referrals for more information and how to get involved.
- Calendar of Open Events. The calendar will include events that have a fairly broad reach - national, regional or international. There are about 20 events on the calendar now. If you have additional events that should be added, please submit through the [Open Events webform](#).

Please find a preview here, but please bear in mind that it's under active development until January 17th: <https://www.yearofopen.org/> .

Feature Article – Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire 2017 Program

MERLOT created the Peer Reviewer Extraordinaire award to honor the hard work and generous donation of our members' time, energy and enthusiasm that they direct towards the growth and development of MERLOT. We rely heavily on our Peer Reviewers to help expand the MERLOT collection and perform the Peer Review process. Again this year MERLOT reviewers have the opportunity to earn free registration (either in-person or virtual) at the Innovate Conference in New Orleans April 5-7. Awardees also receive certificates of merit at the Awards luncheon on April 6. In order to participate, reviewers must have completed MERLOT GRAPE (Getting Reviewers Accustomed to the Process of Evaluation) Camp, complete 15 reviews that have been accepted by your editor and submit a minimum of 5 materials to the collection between April 1, 2016 and **March 15, 2017**.

By the end of December, six MERLOT reviewers have already achieved PRE status: **Cathy Swift**, Editor of Business; **Lesley Farmer**, Editor of ICT Literacy; **Larry Green**, Editor of Mathematics; **Jane Moore**, Editor of Teacher Education; and from the Teacher Education Board, **Stephanie Burch-Bynum** and **Mary Wall**.

Please contact Jane Moore (jmoore@calstate.edu) if you are interested in participating. Send her your name, email address, snail mail address, your institution, and your editorial board by January 15. She will contact your editor to make sure that you are assigned enough reviews to complete the process. Thus far, 28 MERLOT reviewers have signed up for Peer Reviewer Extraordinaire.

Feature Article – Getting Professional with ACET – Lesley Farmer

Among the professional organizations that are relevant to MERLOT members is AECT: the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. This professional organization was established over a hundred years ago, back when AV consisted of stereopticons. Several of its divisions align with MERLOT's mission: design and development, distance learning, emerging learning technologies, international, and teacher education.

In October, AECT's conference was held in Las Vegas. I had the privilege of presenting at that venue: "Optimizing MERLOT to Optimize ICT literacy in curricula." Most of my time, though, was spent learning from colleagues in various sessions. Here are some of the trends that emerged from the presentations that impact the MERLOT community.

Instruction. Speakers were clear that learning begins with the student, and that instructional design (another key term at the conference) should incorporate student interests and experiences more explicitly in instructional practices. Speakers suggested that a lesson should start with an authentic, compelling problem or issue for the

students to try solving on their own. Students then self-identify their information needs, and then the teacher can provide the scaffolding needed (e.g., resources and processes) to solve the problem. This approach motivates students, and is more effective than building a series of little activities that eventually lead to some culminating demonstration of competence. Sounds like inquiry-based learning, no? It was also suggested that during instruction, that after each concept is presented, that students are given a couple of minutes to share-pair processing that information.

Gaming. Learning through games or game-like activity such as simulations was encouraged. This approach is based theories such as situated cognition (e.g., authentic concrete situations and tasks), multiple representations of information (e.g., visuals, charts, videos, text), low stakes failure (so students can take intellectual risks without fear of lowering their grades), “flow” (enough of an intellectual challenge to be engaging while seeing that eventual success is feasible), and reflective action. Gaming can also build habits of persistence and resiliency. “I never lose; I either win or I learn”

Learning analytics. Faculty need to gather data about students’ learning factors: demographics, learning behaviors, technology use (e.g., computers, library web portal, database). By analyzing these data, not only can faculty see possible gaps or areas for teaching and learning improvement, but their findings can inform the rest of the school community to showcase curricular strategies that lead to student success.

I encourage MERLOT members to attend a variety of educational PD opportunities, be they face-to-face or online. As you experience these learning events, think about how the cluster of presentations relate to each other and to your own practice. This approach offers a holistic way to consider MERLOT and its impact.

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MERLOT Technology

2016 was a very exciting and busy year for the development team! A lot of our work can’t actually be seen by users visually but you should notice improved performance on the site. We worked closely with the Chancellors Office Security team to ensure “hackers” cannot penetrate our site.

Besides the behind-the-scenes work, MERLOT added new Editorial boards and task forces and over 2,000 materials to the site. We have also worked very hard at increasing our social media presence to bring more exposure of MERLOT to the online teaching/learning community.

Lastly, we have worked with our Internet service provider (ISP) to upgrade our servers, our software and database, all with the goal to improve performance. Later this month, we will finish these upgrades and finally release the much anticipated and talked about MERLOT Super Search!

Social Networking and MERLOT

We have many ways for you to stay connected with MERLOT and all the wonderful things happening with the website and initiatives. Please share these sites with your colleagues. Note in the chart the increased interest in MERLOT in part due to social media initiatives.



MERLOT has a [Facebook page](#) and we'd love for you to Like us!



You can also [follow us on Twitter](#).



MERLOT also has a [LinkedIn group](#). We invite you to join us and network with other MERLOT Users.

MERLOT Blog



Last week a new blog entry “All Those OERs, and eTexts Too” was posted.

The MERLOT blog can be accessed at <http://blog.merlot.org>. Our blog was

created to provide commentaries on contemporary issues written by MERLOT Managing Director, Sorel Reisman

Please have a look and follow what we have to say. Feel free to add your comments and join the discussion about the topics you find there. If you have any suggestions about topics you'd like us to address, please email (webmaster@merlot.org).

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Update on MERLOT Community



Become a MERLOT Peer Reviewer and GRAPE Camp Information

To become a Peer Reviewer for MERLOT, individuals must be an instructor in an institution of higher education and have:

- Expertise in the scholarship of their field

- Excellence in teaching
- Experience in using technology in teaching and learning, and
- Connections to professional organizations in their discipline.

MERLOT has developed training for Peer Reviewers to ensure that they become familiar with MERLOT processes and policies on Peer Review. MERLOT Management conducts GRAPE Camp (Getting Reviewers Accustomed to the Process of Evaluation) to train Peer Reviewers on a regular basis. GRAPE Camp consists of a series of three one-hour workshops online, one per week. In these webinars, participants will:

- Develop an understanding of MERLOT
- Learn how MERLOT evaluates Learning Materials
- Conduct a group review
- Complete an Individual Review
- Learn how to use the Workspace tool, and
- Introduce participants to the Editorial Board of their disciplines.

The webinars include people from a variety of disciplines and is archived so participants can review the material as needed. For information about GRAPE Camp, contact [Cathy Swift](#).

GRAPE Camps are scheduled for Winter/Spring 2017 in:

- January – Tuesdays (17, 24, 31) at 11 AM Eastern/ 8 AM Pacific
- February - Thursdays (9, 16,23) at 5 PM Eastern/ 2 PM Pacific
- March – Mondays (6, 13, 20) at 11 AM Eastern/ 8 AM Pacific
- April – Tuesdays (11, 18, 25) at 11 AM Eastern/ 8 AM Pacific
- May – Thursdays (18, 25, June 1) at 5 PM Eastern/ 2 PM Pacific

To register for any one of these sessions or to sign up for asynchronous sessions, please complete the short form [questionnaire](#).

If these times don't work for you, you can also participate **asynchronously** by completing the questionnaire above and indicating that you want to do it asynchronously. You can also participate in the discussions about GRAPE Camp in [MERLOT Voices](#).

Comments from GRAPE Camp Participants:

"Overall, this was very well done. I'm glad I participated."

"Well-designed orientation."

"It was very helpful for me to do this asynchronously due to changing computer systems in the middle of the training! I am pleased to be part of your reviewer group."

"Respectful of participant's time by keeping sessions valuable and on-time."

"I think it's a great idea and appreciate the time of the facilitator."

"Grape Camp was a good learning experience. The materials were organized and clear."

"The instructor is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and responsive. Thank you."

"It was an enjoyable and comfortable 'classroom' environment."

"I think Grape camp is a good way to learn about doing reviews. The format is flexible,

as in my case I missed a session and could watch the archived presentation".
"I thought the amount of time was just right and the instructor was available for questions between instructional sessions."

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Editorial Board News

Many thanks to **Rizalia Klausmeyer**, who just retired as editor of Chemistry, Congratulations go to Riz who was appointed Director of the Science Research Fellows at Baylor University.

We are looking for those interested in becoming editors in Agriculture, Chemistry, and Communication Sciences and Disorders. If you are interested or wish to nominate someone, please contact Jane Moore (jmoore@calstate.edu). Thanks!

Meet the Editor

Professional Coaching Editorial Board



The Professional Coaching Board developed out of the tremendous interest in the topics surrounding mentoring and coaching in the professional workplace environment, and related to this interest, the number of useful learning objects submitted for curating within the MERLOT collection. Sherri Restauri, who has served on the MERLOT Psychology Editorial Board since 2012, has now taken the lead as Editor for Professional Coaching with MERLOT. Work initially has begun in triaging all 283 Learning Objects, and in recruiting potential reviewers and members for the Coaching board. Initial learning object evaluations are also beginning for this new collection. If you have an interest in serving as a reviewer for this board, or expertise in the area that may lead to a place on the Board, please reach out to the Editor at srestauri@coastal.edu. We encourage individuals with relevant, high quality learning objects to submit these to the Professional Coaching collection. Sherri serves as Director of the Coastal Office of Online Learning at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina.

Monthly Reviewer Incentive Awards

Congratulations to our monthly reviewer incentive award winners!

September – **Laurie Borchard**, CSU Northridge, Library Science and Information Services Board

October – **Raj Mohan**, Cuyahoga Community College System, English Board

November – **Paula Jordan**, National Louis University, Business Editorial Board

December – **Bertrand Tchoumi**, Morgan State University, World Languages Board

Thanks to all for the work they do for MERLOT. Each month a name is drawn from those who have contributed reviews to MERLOT during that month. The winner receives a \$50 electronic gift card to the store of their choice. The more reviews you do, the better chance you have to win.

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Out and About with MERLOT

Sally Robertson, Library Science and Information Services Board member from Nashville State Community College recently presented a workshop on using the MERLOT Content Builder. The Tenn-Share conference is an opportunity for librarians across the state of Tennessee to share information. Sally graciously shared her presentation with MERLOT and now you at:

<https://contentbuilder.merlot.org/toolkit/users/bikinglibrarian/skillscommons>

After the presentation, Sally received a note from an attendee:

“Thank you for your help. I am going to join the MERLOT for my major classes. Your helping was incredible for my last assignment. I was freaked out when I found out I needed one more book for this semester.”

Sally encourages all of us to spread the word about MERLOT

John Okewole and **Irene Knokh** of the Instructional Technology Editorial Board did a presentation on 'MERLOT: A Case Study of Sustainability in Open Educational Resources (OER)' at the [Eight Pan-Commonwealth Forum](#) (PCF8) which was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from Nov. 27-30, 2016. Several participants of the session indicated interest to further use MERLOT and we are following up on them

Diane Bendow and **Cathy Swift** (editor) of the Business Board have scheduled a WebEx presentation for the business faculty on MERLOT on January 25. This is part of the Sorrell College of Business (SCOB) goal to improve teaching and learning.

Esperanza Zenon, Associate Editor for Teacher Education was elected to serve as the

Director of the Science Education Division (2017-22) for the Louisiana Academy of Sciences (<http://laacademy.org/index.html>). The Academy encourages both professional scientists and K-12 science teachers. Their annual meeting at Louisiana Tech, Ruston will be March 11, 2017.

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Meeting Notices:

OLC Collaborate – San Francisco



Textbook Affordability + Your Campus: Strategy, Data, and Sustainability is the topic for the February 16th Collaborate at the San Francisco Airport Bayfront. The event is hosted by California State University. Join your fellow online learning professionals, educators and administrators to hear from the experts and collaborate on solving the challenges we all face in online higher education today. You'll get the chance to hear from regional experts regarding current and emerging trends in online learning, collaborate and network with your regional peers during group discussions on top-of-mind challenges that may impact the future of online learning – and your career.

OLC member pricing is \$115. You can get more information and register at <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend/collaborate/sanfrancisco-2017/>

International Conference on Mobile Technology in Teacher Education (MITE)



The International Conference on Mobile Technology in Teacher Education (MITE) will be held in Los Angeles January 12-14, 2017. Educators from institutions of higher education, County Offices and K12 schools will exchange ideas at the LAX Crowne Plaza. Featured speakers include Dr. Bill Rankin, Dr. Clark, Quinn, Dr. Danny Brassell, Sabba Quidai, Lucy Gray, and Michael Hernandez. The conference includes 40 research and practitioner papers, ten poster sessions, and a workshop day with twelve hands-on learning sessions. Sample topics include project-based learning, badges, social justice, cinematic storytelling, VR, MOOCs, coding, mobile student engagement, personalized

PD, and mentoring. A banquet and mobile dance contest rounds out the conference. Registration is \$450 until December 12, and then increases. For more details, go to <http://www.MiTE2017.com>

QM Connect Conference

QM Wants Your Proposal for the QM Connect Conference!



September 24 - 27, 2017
Fort Worth, Texas

Pathways to Excellence

The QM Connect Call for Proposals is open! You can do all of this and more by sharing your ideas, experiences and research at the 2017 QM Connect Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. All the sessions will be 50 minutes this year and we have a new format titled “Quality Talk” that might be just perfect for your topic.

Interested? Then follow these simple steps for an opportunity to showcase your work:

- **Develop** and submit a proposal in one of these [six concentrations](#)
- Choose a presentation format
- **Submit** your proposal

Don't wait. **Get started today.** There will be a discount on the conference registration fee for those who submit a proposal by February 8 and are selected to present.

We look forward to your submission! Contact events@qualitymatters.org with questions.

Open Education Global 2017 Conference



About the Open Education Global 2017 Conference

The Open Education Global Conference is where the world meets to discuss how opening education helps us achieve universal access, equity, innovation and opportunity in education. The OE Global conference is the most internationally diverse conference devoted exclusively to open education, attracting researchers, practitioners, policy makers, educators and students from more than 35 countries around the world.

Open Education Global 2017 Conference will be held March 8-10 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa

The theme of the Open Education Global 2017 Conference is Open for Participation. We welcome all proposals concerning taking an open approach in education. This includes formal and non-formal education; primary, secondary and higher education; open educational practices, projects, policies, research, collaborations and impact; open data, open access, open science, open organizations, open source software, etc. We are open to your ideas!

Call for Proposals Opens: 16 June 2016
Submissions Due: 17 October 2016
Acceptance Announcements: Week of 12 December 2016
Speaker Registration Deadline: 10 February 2017
Early Bird Registration Deadline: 31 January 2017
Standard Registration Deadline: 28 February 2017

Past conference attendees liked the most: International diversity
Networking opportunities
Quality of Presentations and Action Labs

"Beyond my expectations. I was really excited about how elevated the conversations were."
"I was most positively surprised with the high quality, global approach and invited speakers."
"I was hugely impressed with the interesting and thought-provoking presentations and workshops."
"Great opportunities to network during breaks, lunches, receptions."

For more information

 <http://conference.oeconsortium.org/2017/>
 conference@oeconsortium.org

Organized by:

 **OPEN EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM**
The Global Network for Open Education



Moore Musings

Dear Jane:
What's the House Cup all about?

Sincerely,
A MERLOTian

Dear MERLOTian:

Each year the editorial boards vie for the House Cup, representing the Board that is the most productive. Editors agree on a weighted system which highlights reviews and contributions to MERLOT and the award goes to the board with the most points. The Award will be announced at Innovate 2017 on Thursday, April 6 at the noon luncheon. Be sure to add a ticket to the luncheon to your conference registration!

Jane

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MERLOT Statistics

MERLOT Collection as of December 31, 2016

78,248	# items in Collection
4,537	# of materials w/a Peer Review
12,583	# of materials w/an Editor's Review
6,073	# of materials w/a Comment/Discussion
1,035	# of materials w/a Learning Exercise
143,999	# of registered users

Usage Statistics for 2016

853,230	Total # of visits in 2016
3.03	Avg. # pages/visit
3:40	Avg. length of visit

Are you interested in writing for *From the Vineyard*, or adding news and updates? *From the Vineyard* is published September, January, and May. Getting your information in print is easy. Send your submission to [Jane Moore](#) by the first Wednesday of the month in which you wish it to be published. Unfortunately we can't publish all articles/stories in each issue; if you don't see your story in the issue, we promise to try to get it into the next one!