

# From the Vineyard

*Issue 43, September 2018*

*Jane Moore - Editor*



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## **CONTENTS**

[\*From your Wine Steward - Gerry Hanley\*](#)

[\*Feature Article – MERLOT at Texas A & M\*](#)

[\*Feature Article – MERLOT and HBCU Affordable Learning Solutions\*](#)

[\*Feature Article – Skills Commons\*](#)

[\*Feature Article – Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire\*](#)

[\*Feature Article – Innovate 2019\*](#)

[\*MERLOT Technology\*](#)

[\*Update on MERLOT Community\*](#)

[\*Editorial Board News\*](#)

[\*Out and About with MERLOT\*](#)

[\*Meeting Notices\*](#)

[\*Moore Musings\*](#)

[\*MERLOT Statistics\*](#)



***From Your Wine Steward – Gerry Hanley***

Dear MERLOT Leadership Community,  
As we start serving another year of MERLOT to the educators, learners, and workers around the world, the CSU-MERLOT team cannot thank you enough for all you have done and will to do in the future to help us keep opening learning for all.

With the OLC-MERLOT INNOVATE Conference planning well underway (I hope you all made the Call for Proposal deadline ☺), and textbook affordability programs expanding around the US with MERLOT's help, we are very excited about the growth MERLOT is continuing to experience. The "Smart Search" continues to provide a "one-stop shop" for finding free and open educational resources. The CSU-led Affordable Learning Solutions (AL\$) program is being adopted by many institutions, especially our wonderful HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and University) Partners. Check out the [showcase of all the AL\\$ projects](#). You can also explore the new [CSU-MERLOT-SkillsCommons](#) services for institutions that support your workforce development programs with excellent OER and customized services.

I wish you all a successful and enjoyable fall 2018 as MERLOT finishes up its 21<sup>st</sup> year as an open community opening learning for all.

Cheers,  
Gerry

-top-

***Feature Article – MERLOT at Texas A & M -Victoria Packard***

At Texas A&M University – Kingsville; I work with the New Faculty Investment Program and the Distance Learning and Instructional Technology department. We work with faculty on available resources they can include in their classes. These classes are face to face, hybrids and online. Every faculty member is provided a Blackboard shell even if they do not have a hybrid or fully online class. I have started to show faculty how to put MERLOT resources into Blackboard either for the online classes or as additional information for the face to face students.

I have shown faculty how MERLOT can help them in many ways. MERLOT can reinforce what students have learned, as additional help for problem areas, as a way to earn extra credit by completing tutorials, and much more. This is a new and sometimes slow process but I have hope that as more faculty see what MERLOT has to offer they will use the services. As usual, the newer faculty are looking for easier and online ways to help with their classes. The faculty that have been here for a while are looking for things to add to classes as additional resources.

It is very gratifying to have faculty call asking to know about MERLOT. They have heard it mentioned by colleagues or at conferences and want to know what it is and if we have access. I love that “teaching spot!”

Victoria Lynn Packard M.L.I.S. & Professor  
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-top-

## **Feature Article – MERLOT and HBCU Affordable Learning Solutions**

HBCU Affordable Learning Solutions Partners:

The eLearning portals are a partnership between HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and the MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching) organization. It represents these institutions commitment to promoting student success by providing affordable educational alternatives to traditional textbooks and quality digital learning materials for learning and online teaching. A wealth of open educational resources (OER) for students, faculty, and staff are located in one convenient location. The sites allow students and faculty to:

- locate free quality online learning materials anytime, from any location;
- lower the cost of attending college for all students;
- improve the learning experience by offering rich educational materials at the point of need;
- organize course learning materials quickly and easily using digital file storage solutions;
- review the great work that faculty and partner institutions are doing through the Faculty and Course Showcase;
- share in the best practices and learning materials with faculty around the world; and
- promote student success by offering digital learning materials at the beginning of the course.

[Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona Beach, Florida](#)

[Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio](#)

[Dillard University, New Orleans](#)

[Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee](#)

[Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana](#)

[Tennessee State University, Nashville, Tennessee](#)

[Xavier University, New Orleans, Louisiana](#)

-top-

## Feature Article – Skills Commons – Rick Lumadue

The US Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program has created a free and open online library called SkillsCommons containing free and open learning materials and program support materials for job-driven workforce development. The Open Educational Resources (OER) are produced by over 700 community colleges across the nation and can be found, reused, revised, retained, redistributed and remixed by individuals, institutions, and industry. [SkillsCommons.org](#) is designed and managed by the California State University-MERLOT program for the U.S. Department of Labor's TAACCCT initiative.

View the selection of over 100 FREE AND OPEN courseware files that you can use as part of your textbook affordability program. **Over 1 Million items have already been downloaded!**

SkillsCommons has a wealth of resources to help you connect with projects, resources, experts, and support services. For more information explore the SkillsCommons CONNECT CENTER, SUPPORT CENTER, and SHOWCASES at: [www.skillscommons.org](http://www.skillscommons.org)

## Feature Article – Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire 2019 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 Denver, April 3-5, 2019. Awardees also receive certificates of merit and letters of appreciation sent to their deans and/or department chairs. In order to participate, you 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, 2018 and **March 15, 2019**. The first 50 applicants to complete their reviews and submissions will be awarded registration. All who complete the requirements will receive the certificates and letters of appreciation. Please fill out the following form: <https://goo.gl/forms/s1PlokaUVWg4687w2> Jane will contact your editor to make sure that you are assigned enough reviews to complete the process.

Beginning in October, you will receive a monthly update on your reviews completed.

## Feature Article – Innovate 2019



Innovate 2019 will take place at the Gaylord Rockies Resort in Denver, Colorado. The CFP is open until September 26<sup>th</sup>

### Moving Mountains in Digital, Blended, and Online Learning

**Education innovation.** It's how we, as a community, continue to thrive in this rapidly changing learning environment. It's how we respond to, revolve around, and guide student success and satisfaction. Whether embracing emerging tech, incorporating intelligent learning management systems, or designing blended classrooms, now more than ever it is imperative that academic leaders, faculty, and administrators alike come together to ensure that our pedagogies are progressive, organic and continually break new ground.

Advancing education innovation requires continuous visionary leadership from all disciplines. And that's why we're inviting you to join us in Colorado in April 2019. Together we will challenge our teaching and learning paradigms, reimagine the learning experience, and ideate on how disruptions in education today will shape the innovative classroom of tomorrow.

At OLC Innovate, we will conduct a series of engaging hands-on sessions aimed at fostering organic interactions and collaborative cross-disciplinary problem solving. Together we will build new foundations for stronger, better higher education environments. And because innovation scales best when ideas are shared, our work sessions will explore digital technologies and adapted teaching behaviors aimed at informing policy, inspiring leadership, and evolving practice at all levels impacting institutions, universities and colleges.

**Advancing education innovation begins with you. Join us in Denver, April 3-5, 2019, and help us shape the future of online and digital learning.**

You can [sign up for email alerts](#) for ongoing updates.

Many MERLOT members are participating in the planning of the conference, which had a record attendance last year. **Jane Moore**, Editor of Teacher Education is Program Advisor for MERLOT and Track Chair for Open Education. **Angela Gunder**, Associate Editor for Teacher Education is co-chairing Virtual Engagement. **Jean Mandernach** of the Psychology Board is working with Presenter Services. **Barb Sperling**, MERLOT Manager of Technical and Software Development and **Catherine Honig**, Editor of Psychology, are chairing the Career Forum Roundtables. **Sherri Restauri** is Workshops co-chair; **Moustapha Diack**, MAN Africa, is co-chairing the HBCU Summit.

The Community College Summit at OLC Innovate will engage community college educators from across the nation in meaningful and reflective discussions about using online education to meeting the diverse educational needs of underserved students.

The HBCU Summit will involve historically black colleges again this year in developing ways to create affordable learning solutions for faculty and students alike.

There are multiple types of presentations at the conference:

**Educate and Reflect Sessions** – a typical presentation for 1-2 people for a 45 minute period—30 minutes of presentation and 15 minutes for reflection and discussion.

**Conversations, Not Presentations** – a facilitated conversation around a pre-determined topic. (A slide free or single-slide presentation)

**Emerging Ideas** – brief presentations presented multiple times over a 45 minute period. Opportunities for individual and small group discussions ensue.

**Innovation Labs** – hands on demonstrations of tools and strategies : a 5 minute discussion, 20 minute demonstration, and 20 minute lab session

**Workshops** – 90 minute hands-on, interactive sessions.

**Career Forum Roundtable** – a discussion on career issues, challenges and opportunities

**Graduate Student Emerging Ideas Session** – designed to allow graduate students to share works in progress.

The tracks for the Innovate 2019 conference include:

**Effective Tools, Toys, and Technologies** – highlighting the gadgets and gizmos that support pedagogical innovation in the digital and online learning spaces of higher education.

**Experiential and Life-Long Learning** – Designing educational and career pathways with technologies, services, and online opportunities for a lifetime of learning and successful employment; active learning, project-based; community-based; game-based.

**Leadership and Advocacy** – Making change actionable within the spaces and groups that foster innovation in online and digital learning.

**Open Learning** – Open learning spaces (physical or digital; MOOCs), open scholarship, open access and OERs.

**Problems, Processes, and Practices** – Spotlighting the cyclical nature of defining and defeating obstacles to innovation in digital and online learning.



**Research: Designs, Methods, and Findings** – Innovation, including the improvement of existing methods and identifying new practices inside and outside of the classroom starts with research.

**Teaching and Learning Practice** – Creating effective approaches to and practices for online teaching and digital learning with technology.

## **Proposal Reviewers for Innovate 2019**

Thanks to all of you who signed up to review proposals for Innovate. The reviewing period is October 1-17. MERLOT has contributed reviewers to the conference since its inception. OLC appreciates your commitment to the conference, as do we at MERLOT.

## **MERLOT Technology**

### **MERLOT Smart Search**

Back in April 2017, we announced a new Smart Search, a significant upgrade to searching capabilities in MERLOT. The **MERLOT Smart Search** extends access to online learning materials well beyond MERLOT's curated and peer reviewed collection. Over the past 1 ½ years, we've refined our list of libraries, allowing users that are looking for OER to search a variety of collections at once and get results from each.

Smart Search searches the World Wide Web specifically for the kinds of learning materials that the typical MERLOT users seek. It uses a proprietary MERLOT user profile design to find the newest and most popular learning materials available in digital libraries and also on the WWW. While these resources are not peer reviewed or curated, users can contribute materials that show up in the results hit lists, to the MERLOT collection for subsequent curation and peer review by our 25+ MERLOT Editorial Boards. And materials discovered by Smart Search can be added to users' MERLOT Bookmark Collections and Course ePortfolios.

Smart Search is easy to use: after you perform a search, just click on the tab that describes the universe of resources you want to explore and MERLOT does the smart searching for you! For more information on the MERLOT Smart Search, go to [http://info.merlot.org/merlohelp/topic1.htm#basic\\_merlot\\_search.htm=&t=MERLOT\\_Smart\\_Search.htm](http://info.merlot.org/merlohelp/topic1.htm#basic_merlot_search.htm=&t=MERLOT_Smart_Search.htm)

The screenshot shows the MERLOT website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the MERLOT logo and links for Browse, Add, Communities, Partner Benefits, News & Info, and About MERLOT. Below this is a search bar with the text "Search keywords (title, URL, ISBN, or author)" and a "Go" button. A red box highlights the search results tabs: "MERLOT Collection", "Other Libraries", and "The Web". Below the tabs, the search results are displayed for the query "education". The results are sorted by Relevance and show 1-24 of 30,540 results. The first four results are:

- Education World**: A searchable database of 50,000+ education-related sites. Curriculum ideas are emphasized and new... see more. Material Type: Collection. Author: Education World. Date Created: August 27, 2000. Date Modified: August 8, 2018. Peer Review: ★★★★★. User Rating: ★★★★★.
- Digital Commons Network [Open...**: The Digital Commons Network: Education Commons contains 134,300+ Open Access full-text articles pertaining to Education. Material Type: Collection. Author: Digital Commons Network: Education Commons. Date Created: October 5, 2016. Date Modified: June 23, 2018. Editor Review: ★★★★★. User Rating: ★★★★★.
- Art Education from the Teacher...**: This site is a collection, developed by the MERLOT Teacher Education Editorial Board, of materials useful to art... see more. Material Type: Collection. Author: Jane Moore, Teacher Education Editorial Board. Date Created: November 5, 2014. Date Modified: August 30, 2017. Editor Review: ★★★★★. User Rating: ★★★★★.
- Clearinghouse for Special Education...**: This national clearinghouse was designed and developed by the Special Education Department at the University of South... see more. Material Type: Case Study. Author: Dr. Betty Epanchin, Dr. Karen Gluski. Date Created: August 11, 2003. Date Modified: June 28, 2018. Peer Review: ★★★★★. User Rating: ★★★★★.

## #Found in MERLOT

As discussed on a previous Editors call, we're starting a weekly showcase of materials in MERLOT with the hashtag #FoundinMERLOT. If you'd like us to highlight a material from your discipline, please send the link to [webmaster@merlot.org](mailto:webmaster@merlot.org).

The MERLOT Development team is always busy working on MERLOT and thinking of ways to make improvements. Since the release of the new site 6 months ago (I know, can you believe it!), we have been swatting a few bugs. We are also working on a redesign of the Content Builder. Over the next few months we may be asking some of you to participate in a focus group to provide some feedback on early designs. In addition, if you are a regular Content Builder user and have thoughts on what you would like to see or what you think is missing, please contact Barb at [barb@merlot.org](mailto:barb@merlot.org) and share your ideas!

## *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 Voices** <http://voices.merlot.org/>

## MERLOT Blog



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](mailto:webmaster@merlot.org)).



## ***Update on MERLOT Community***

### **Fall GRAPE Camp Sessions**

**To become a Peer Reviewer for MERLOT, individuals should 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 an orientation 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 assist 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 webinar includes 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](#).

2018 GRAPE Camps are scheduled for Fall in:

- October - Wednesdays (24, 31, Nov 7) at 5 PM Eastern/ 2 PM Pacific
- November – Tuesdays (13, 20, 27) at 11 AM Eastern/ 8 AM Pacific
- December – Wednesdays (5, 12, 19) 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. (<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/Pxe5v8x8#!/0> )

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. In addition, you can sign up for a Self-Study, which you do at your own speed.

You can also participate in the discussions about GRAPE Camp in MERLOT [Voices](#).

Comments from GRAPE Camp Participants:

I've been reviewing papers for years, but this is the first time I've actually been taught how to do it properly. Grape Camp will improve the quality of my work as an author and as a reviewer."

"This was a really enjoyable training experience. I'm quite excited at the prospect of

applying the skills I learned toward (potentially - hopefully!) improving the OER experience for educators in search of materials.”

"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."

#### **Congratulations to the following Grape Camp Graduates:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Board</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Becca Neel	Library	U. of Southern Indiana
John Hansen	English	Mohave Community College
John Chatterjee-Woolman	Mathematics	Leicester College
Alicia Muhammed	Teacher Education	Appalachian St. University
Ashley Sergiadis	Library and Information Services	East Tennessee State University
Jennifer Brooks	Instructional Technology	National University
Octavia Little	Teacher Education	Appalachian State University
Sara Ferguson	World Languages	Grossmont College
Rebecca Cockrell	Health Sciences	Hinds Community College

-top-

## **News**

### ***Editorial Board News***

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](mailto:jmoore@calstate.edu)). Thanks!

### ***Congratulations!***

**Vera Kennedy**, Sociology Board has authored an original text in Cultural Sociology. The book is available in MERLOT:

<https://www.merlot.org/merlot/viewMaterial.htm?id=1377012>

*Beyond Race: Cultural Influences on Human Social Life* is a text for introductory courses on cultural sociology. The book is an open educational resource (OER) that provides sociological terms, concepts, theories, and research in the study of culture. The book contains five modules with sociological applications on: 1) Culture and Meaning, 2) Culture as a Social Construct, 3) Cultural Power, 4) Cultural Identity, and 5) The Multicultural World.

## Monthly Reviewer Incentive Awards

Congratulations to our monthly reviewer incentive award winners!

**May – Gary Ackerman**, Instructional Technology, Independent Consultant

**June – Jody Paul**, Computer Science, Metropolitan State University of Denver

**July – Mina Richards**, Business, California State University, Los Angeles

**August – Miriam Kahn**, History, Kent State University

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.

## Meet the Editor

### Jennifer McAllister Duncan, English Board Editor

I'm Jennifer Duncan, Assistant Professor of English at Georgia State University's Perimeter College where I teach composition, world literature and British literature courses. As part of my commitment to student success, I believe that affordable textbooks and learning materials increase student access to learning, especially in



freshman and sophomore courses. I have served on the Affordable Learning Georgia Committee, presented on the importance of OERs at local, regional, and international conferences, and I encourage instructors to consider every option for providing the most cost efficient, high-quality materials for their classes.

My interest in OERs led me to MERLOT, and, hoping to be part of putting high quality materials into the hands of all of our students, I joined the English review board. Since taking on the role of Editor of the English Editorial Board, my goal is to build up our team of reviewers in order to assess the tools that have already been submitted and to expand the repository by encouraging our team to submit their own work as well. I have started tapping into contacts at my own university as well as through the Two-Year College Association's Southeastern Conference to build our team.

## ***Out and About with MERLOT***

**Irene Knokh**, Editor of Instructional Technology is a mentor in the [ID2ID program](#), a cross-institutional peer mentoring program for instructional designers. Irene has a resource on [Universal Design for Learning, Accessibility, and User Design](#) that she is sharing with the MERLOT community. She also presented on Universal Design to the Accessibility Group at the University of Michigan.

### **Open for Teachers Workshop**

Open4Educator an initiative of **John Okewole** (member MERLOT Instructional Tech Editorial Board) recently organized Open for Teachers Introductory Workshop for Secondary School teachers in Lagos, Nigeria. The workshop partly funded by a Creative Commons Community Activities Fund introduced the educators to OER, Open Licensing, MERLOT etc. Jane Moore was on hand to facilitate remotely about MERLOT.

Read more <https://sites.google.com/view/open4educator/event/O4T052018>

**Tamer Osman**, a PRE from 2018 notes, "To achieve success in my academic career as an English/French language lecturer in Zhengzhou University, China, MERLOT has been the catalyst that is assisting me in promoting the skills of such professional development. This experience has taught me how to germinate a critically sharp eye on the materials that can be added to MERLOT website, and considered beneficial to its users. In addition to writing constructive critique about significant materials, I have learned how to make the website users more cognizant of the drawbacks of the underrated materials as well. Therefore, all the website users are informed of the academic content quality of these materials before tackling them. Accordingly, they might definitely save time."

-top-

## ***Meeting Notices:***

### **Online Learning Consortium Accelerate**



Join your fellow MERLOTians at the OLC Accelerate Conference in Orlando, Florida, November 14-16, 2018. You can register for the conference at: <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2018/accelerate/register/> Both onsite and virtual registrations are available. MERLOT's own **Sherri Restauri**, Editor of Professional Coaching and member of the Psychology editorial board is Program Co-Chair for the conference!

### Quality Matters Annual Conference

10th Annual Conference on Quality Assurance in Online Learning

Meet the QM Community in St. Louis this October and open the Gateway to Quality. Discover solutions to your online learning challenges including engagement, accessibility and sustainability with 10 concentrations to choose from. You'll connect with colleagues from around the world — build your network and exchange ideas to help deliver on your online promise. Participate in the future of online learning. And celebrate the journey — QM Connect is turning 10! Join us to mark 10 years of connecting and sharing, as well as 10 years of growth in online education.

[Register Now >>](#)



**Oct. 30 - Nov. 2, 2018**  
**St. Louis, Missouri**

### Online Learning Consortium Innovate 2019



The OLC/MERLOT sponsored conference will take place at the Gaylord Rockies Hotel, April 3-5, 2018. You can make your reservations and get further information here:

<https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2019/innovate/> It's not too early to think about your travel plans!

-top-

## **Moore Musings**

Dear Jane:

What are some of the perks of being a MERLOT peer reviewer?

Sincerely,

A Possible Peer Reviewer

*Dear Possible Peer Reviewer:*

One of the perks of being a peer reviewer is the opportunity to win the monthly Peer Reviewer Incentive Award – a \$50 gift card to an e-merchant of your choice. Fifty Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire (PRE) can attend the annual Innovate conference with a free registration (either onsite or virtual) by completing 15 reviews and adding 5 materials to MERLOT. After peer reviewing for some time, you may be asked to join an editorial board, an opportunity to collaborate with colleagues across the world.

Probably the best perk is that you get to review amazing materials in MERLOT that can support your teaching and your students' learning in the coming year.

*Jane*

[top](#) –

## **MERLOT Statistics**

### **MERLOT Collection as of August 31, 2018**

81,288	# items in Collection
5,020	# of materials w/a Peer Review
12,865	# of materials w/an Editor's Review
6,293	# of materials w/a Comment/Discussion
1,020	# of materials w/a Learning Exercise
156,644	# of registered users

### **Usage Statistics for 2018, to date**

#### MERLOT Usage as of August 31, 2018

1,230,303	Total # of visits in 2018
2	Avg. # pages/visit
2:36	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](#). 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!

