



From the Vineyard

 MERLOT

ISSUE 49, SEPTEMBER 2020 | JANE MOORE - EDITOR

From Your Wine Steward - Gerry Hanley

Dear MERLOT Community,

As we start the Fall 2020 semester, the entire MERLOT Team hopes that you and your families are staying healthy physically, mentally, and economically with social support at the proper social distance wearing masks. All the uncertainties have created so many challenges for us all and learning new ways to educate has been a task we've all undertaken. MERLOT has put together an OER portal for some free and open educational resources that you can immediately use: "[Preparing to Teach and Learn Online](#)". The website was built in MERLOT Content Builder so MERLOT members can rebrand and customize a copy of the website for their institution or community. We've had over 25 derivative MERLOT portals created for institutions and organizations. Would you like your own website? Contact us at support@skillscommons.edu.

MERLOT is committed to enabling equity in educational, social, and economic outcomes through inclusive strategies supporting the diversity of human voices, visions, and needs. With the leadership of Tennessee State University and Dr. Robbie Melton, MERLOT will be continuing our support for scaling and sustaining the Affordable Learning Solutions initiative with Historically Black Colleges and University with the support of a newly awarded William and Flora Hewlett Foundation grant. We are very grateful for the Hewlett Foundation's leadership in OER. Explore the [HBCU Affordable Learning Community Portal](#) to learn about the work we've accomplished in the last 4½ years and what's ahead for us to achieve.

Learning from your peers is often the most relevant lessons to learn. Your peers often experience and understand the complexities of teaching your discipline within the institutional and professional circumstances present in higher education. MERLOT's new Open Educational Practices portal (<http://oep.merlot.org>), provides you free and open access to over 1,000 teaching ePortfolios that give voice to faculty's strategies for redesigning your courses with technology, adopting OER to make your course materials more affordable, teaching CTE courses in innovative ways, adopting virtual labs, and moving courses online. If you'd like to create and share your own Open Educational Practice, you can use MERLOT's Content Builder templates that provide you scaffolding guidelines to create a comprehensive and powerful teaching ePortfolio.

Teach STEM Labs online has many challenges. With our wonderful partner, the Online Learning Consortium, MERLOT led a three-day, free "conference" where people shared their strategies and stories in dialogue with many of the 1,000+ registrants. To review the resources and many recordings from the event, explore MERLOT's [Virtual Labs portal](#).

The [Call for Proposals](#) is now open for INNOVATE 2021 - the annual collaborative conference planned and provided by the Online Learning Consortium and MERLOT. The deadline for submitting your proposals is September 23, 2020. INNOVATE will be virtual and it will also have a face-to-face component (OLC Velocity). Please share your expertise, research, and outcomes of online educational strategies for transforming higher education at INNOVATE as higher education is being transformed by the COVID pandemic.

Once again, I hope you stay healthy, take care, and share with those who have needs.

Cheers,
Gerry

In This Issue

From your Wine Steward - Gerry Hanley
Feature Article - Innovate 2021
Feature Article - Open Educational Practices
Parenting in the Time of COVID
MERLOT: A Google for Educators
Feature Article - MERLOT Portals
Feature Article - Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire
Update on MERLOT Community
Editorial Board News
Out and About with MERLOT
Meeting Notices
Social Networking and MERLOT
Moore Musings
MERLOT Statistics

Feature Article - Innovate 2021



Innovate 2021 will take place virtually. The CFP is open until September 23rd. <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2021/innovate/>

A proposal for presentation at OLC Innovate and OLC Velocity 2021: Education Re-imagined, to be held virtually (March 9-18, 2021) and onsite (March 18-20, 2021) at the Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center in Denver, Colorado. OLC and MERLOT are proud to create opportunities for our community that keep our connections strong regardless of challenges that prevent us from collaborating in traditional ways. As we continue to navigate through the many uncertainties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we've made our Call for Presentations flexible in terms of presentation options that accommodate both onsite and virtual participation. Presenters will have a choice to present onsite in Denver, or in a virtual presenter to virtual audience format. Additionally, we have moved Discovery Sessions to a completely virtual format in order to accommodate for social distancing needs in this presentation format.

The OLC/MERLOT Program Committee seeks proposals that reflect and showcase our vibrant community of practice - promoting theory, research, methodology and/or applied effective practices in online, blended, and digital teaching and learning. Both research and evidence-based proposals are encouraged for submission.

Registration will be open soon. Check the URL above for updated information.

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. You can access descriptions of these sessions at: <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2021/innovate/cfp/session-types-details/>

Note that the emphasis again this year is engaging attendees to participate in the sessions.

Deadlines for the conference include:

- Proposals due by 11:59pm ET September 23, 2020
- Notification of acceptance by November 9, 2020
- Deadline for presenters to accept is November 20, 2020
- Deadline for presenters to register is January 20, 2021
- Final date for presenters to edit abstracts is January 20, 2021
- Final presentation upload date is March 1, 2021

Proposal Reviewers for Innovate 2021

Support MERLOT and OLC by reviewing for the Innovate conference. The sign up form link is: <https://forms.gle/qL9wkHG7hLcA497>.

Reviewing takes place October 9-23rd. While you are at it, submit your own proposal for either Innovate 2021 or Velocity. <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2021/innovate/cfp/>.

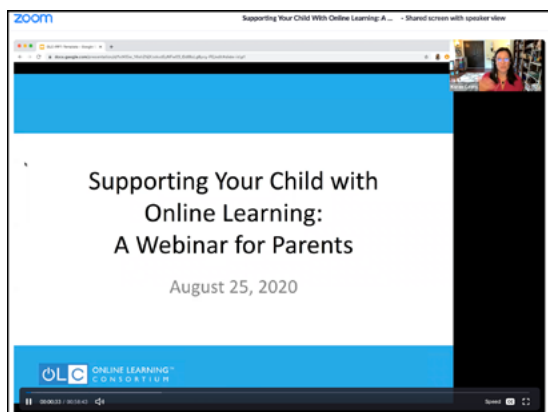
Feature Article: NEW Open Educational Practices Portal



MERLOT/Skills Commons has created a [portal](#) highlighting open educational practices. The site includes a variety of supporting material for educators:

- [Open Educational Practices for Moving Online](#) - these sites, which can be customized for your institution have materials for both students and educators as they move to online teaching and learning;
- [Course Redesign with Technology](#): Over 700 ePortfolios address how individual educators have enhanced and redesigned their courses using technology. You can search by discipline, and use the template to redesign your own course.
- [Affordable Learning](#) - Explore over 100 portfolios which chronicle adoption of OER, saving students money on textbooks.
- [Virtual Labs](#) -- Redesigning STEM laboratory courses with virtual labs (open or not) is becoming an emerging requirement. Openly sharing educational practices with virtual labs could accelerate the scaling of the effective adoption of virtual labs. [MERLOT's Virtual Labs portal](#) provides guidance and collections of OER and non-OER virtual labs for you to explore. Check out SkillsCommons' collection of [augmented reality OER healthcare scenarios](#) too. Explore the collection of over 50 open teaching ePortfolios by faculty who adopted virtual labs, participated in learning communities, and captured their plans, implementations, and assessments of the student learning outcomes. The faculty also video recorded their reflections on their redesign of their lab courses as part of the open educational practice.
- And there's more....

Parenting in the Time of COVID



Our friends at the Online Learning Consortium have prepared a webinar to help parents coping with online education for their children. **Supporting Your Child With Online Learning: A Free On-Demand Webinar for Parents.** Now available free on-demand, [share this webinar](#) with parents as a helpful resource in supporting kids with online learning during this incredibly challenging time. A panel of online teaching and learning experts (and parents!) discuss how to manage stress, consider the role of routines and schedules, and gain specific strategies for success.

"Thank you [@karenraycosta](#) and [@OLCToday](#) - I couldn't make it yesterday but watched the webinar on "Supporting Your Child With Online Learning: A Webinar for Parents." I feel seen/heard/validated--and optimistic. Great job, great panel!" - Kate Drezek McConnell ([@KateDMcConnell](#)), AVP Research & Assessment, Association of American Colleges and Universities

Feature Article: MERLOT: A Google for Educators by Cathy Swift

Cathy's article was published in TRECC (Teaching Resources for Economics at Community Colleges)

Have you discovered MERLOT? Not the wine, but the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching. According to Campus Technology, MERLOT should be considered the Mothership of OER. MERLOT was the first program available for finding and sharing free materials for teaching, as it was created by the California State University system in 1997 as a means of sharing materials between the 23 CSU campuses. Since then, MERLOT has expanded its horizons and includes over 91,000 materials and has MERLOT Members from around the world (over 175,000). Although there are benefits to joining MERLOT (it's free to join), the resources are available at no cost.

What can MERLOT do for you? With MERLOT, you can find a variety of Economics resources, from simple animations and classroom activities to complete textbooks and courses. You can Browse Materials in the Economics collection by sub-discipline (See Figure 1). The numbers in parentheses are the number of resources in each category. You can also Search Materials on a specific topic (Break-Even Analysis, Comparative Advantage, Aggregate Demand, etc.). Many of the resources have been peer-reviewed by MERLOT Peer Reviewers who are experts in their disciplines, so you can be confident about using them with your students. MERLOT has been called a "Google for Educators," as you find resources that are academic resources specifically. Like Google, MERLOT does not host the materials, but provides a link to where they are located.

One of the recent additions to MERLOT is the MERLOT SMART Search. Using the Search box at the top of the page, one can search the MERLOT collection for a topic of interest, for instance, GDP. MERLOT first searches the materials in the MERLOT Collection that have been contributed by authors and users (see the first tab below). MERLOT also searches Other Libraries and finds additional materials from sources such as OpenStax, OER Consortium, etc. (see the second tab). Finally, through a proprietary algorithm, MERLOT searches other resources on The Web that are academically oriented. All of these resources are free for you to use in your classes, whether you're looking for an assignment, or you want to see how someone else teaches a course. Just go to www.merlot.org and begin your search.

Not only can you use these resources, but you can also participate in MERLOT by cataloging your own resources that you have created or used in your classes. You do have to be a MERLOT Member to submit your own resources, but it is free to join. In addition to submitting resources, you can become a MERLOT Peer Reviewer and participate in the MERLOT Peer Review Process. After a brief orientation, you work with the Economics Editorial Board and begin reviewing materials in which you have an expertise. MERLOT Peer Reviewers receive a certificate upon completion of the orientation and receive a letter of appreciation at the end of the year. In addition, your name is listed as a peer reviewer on the MERLOT site. If interested in being a MERLOT Peer Reviewer, contact cathy@merlot.org.

The screenshot shows the MERLOT website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Browse', 'Add', 'Communities', 'Partner Benefits', 'News & Info', and 'About MERLOT'. A search bar is prominently displayed with the text 'Search keywords, title, URL, ISBN, or author'. Below the search bar, there are three tabs: 'MERLOT Collection', 'Other Libraries', and 'The Web'. The main content area displays search results for 'online learning', showing 1-24 of 3,303 results. Four result cards are visible, each with a title, a representative image, a brief description, and metadata including material type, author, creation/modification dates, and user ratings. The first card is for 'Online Courses: Teaching and Learning...', the second for 'Online Training Needs Assessments...', the third for 'K12 Blended and Online Learning', and the fourth for 'Digital Media/Online Learning'.

Feature Article: MERLOT Portals of Many Varieties

MERLOT has over 50 portals designed to focus your search for materials and pedagogy. They are curated for specific purposes and communities. Here are a few you might want to explore:



Teaching and Learning Online - This portal has everything you need to know to move from face-to-face to online learning and teaching. Be sure to explore all the possibilities.



Virtual Labs - Science faculty throughout the world are adopting virtual labs to engage students in learning through active participation rather than passive observation. Technological advances, combined with bandwidth maturity and mobile access make virtual labs an increasingly viable part of the teaching and learning.

We invite you through this site to learn about current and innovative virtual labs technologies, lab experiments, and simulations used in teaching the science, technology, engineering, and math disciplines in higher education.



Skills Commons Open CourseWare - Open CourseWare are collections of fully online learning materials organized in the scope and sequence of a college course. The online course materials are free and open for anyone to use and the learner can use the open courseware to acquire skills and knowledge at their own pace and on their own time. There is no instructor for open courseware. You can search the courses by occupation.

Feature Article - Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire 2021 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 to the Innovate Conference, to be held virtually, March 8-17th. 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 March 16, 2020 and March 1, 2021. You must register to formally intend to complete the requirements. 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://forms.gle/8jpkCetNVERefePK6>. 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.

Update on MERLOT Community

GRAPE Camp Information | Become a MERLOT Peer Reviewer | 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, with a few exceptions
- 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. coswift@outlook.com

You can attend GRAPE Camp Orientation three ways:

- You can attend the live webinars at the dates and times listed below
- You can sign up for the asynchronous session in which the recording of the live session is sent out right afterwards.
- You can opt for our self-study which you complete on your own.

Live sessions are scheduled on the following dates and times:

- October - Thursday (15, 22, 29) at 11 AM Eastern, 10 AM Central, 9 AM Mountain, 8 AM Pacific
- November - Thursday (5, 12, 19) at 3 PM Eastern, 2 PM Central, 1 PM Mountain, 12 PM Pacific
- December - Tuesday (1, 8, 15) at 11 AM Eastern, 10 AM Central, 9 AM Mountain, 8 AM Pacific

You can sign up for any of these sessions at the following site.

<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/gFs6h7jr#/0>

You can also participate in the discussions about GRAPE Camp in MERLOT Voices.

<http://voices.merlot.org/group/grapecamp/forum/topics/grape-camp-fall-2020-discussions>

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."

"It helped me a lot to learn how to make my lesson and materials better by reviewing others. I could find my own problems by watching peer's lessons."

"I didn't realize that peer reviewers normally receive awards. This definitely interested me"

"It is apparent that MERLOT is a fine organization that appreciates its reviewers and operates as a team."

"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."

"I realized that we can learn a lot by communicating with others who are in the same field with you and MERLOT just provides us this great platform to upgrade ourselves."

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

"Cathy is prompt in responding to me (once time zones have been factored in), and has been a useful contact point throughout."

"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:

Name	Board	Institution
Elcie Douce	Instructional Technology	SUNY Stonybrook
Adrian Antonio	Teacher Education	
Michael Hebert	Health Sciences	Southern U & A & M
Lindsey Bryde	English	Empire State College
Peter Chua	Sociology	San Jose State
Megan Lupek	Biology	North Carolina State University
Vicki Dunk	Biology	James Cook University
Ofelia Olivero	Biology	NIH
Brianne Selman	Library & Information Serv.	University of Winnipeg
Kathryn Sarachan	Chemistry	Wilson College
Arianna Fognani	World Languages	Coastal Carolina
Melissa Randall	Criminal Justice	Community College of Colorado
Nicole Klimow	Teacher Education	CSU San Bernadino
Alisa Henrie	Engineering	U of Alabama Huntsville
Anne McCormick	World Languages	Peralta College
Shanda Hood	Mathematics	University of Arkansas
Abir Ghenalet	World Languages	
Dominique Hallett	Library & Information Serv.	Arkansas State University
Elizabeth Kulpers	English	Albany State University
Jamie Murphy	Health Sciences	SUNY Delhi
Beth Case	Instructional Technology	University of Louisville
Mulugeta Wayu	Chemistry	Tennessee State University
Parkash Lohana	Computer Science	Usman Institute of Technology
Carlos Garcia	Chemistry	Bhairab Ganguly College
Adewale Saka	Teacher Education	Olabisi Onabanjo University
Seyi Osunade	Computer Science	University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Timothy Mitchell	Mathematics	Bridgewater State College
Stacey Brown	Library & Information Serv.	Colorado Mesa University
Hernan Garritano	Business	Universidad Austral, Argentina

News

Editorial Board News

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

Congratulations!

Carla Meskill and Natasha Anthony, founding editors of the World Languages Board have published two new texts for teaching online.



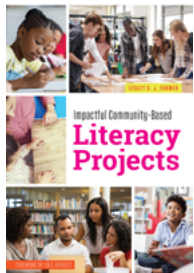
Teaching Children Online Conversation

https://www.amazon.com/Teaching-Children-Online-Conversation-based-Text-books/dp/178892200X/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=teaching+children+online&qid=1598479089&s=books&sr=1-3 and

Teaching Languages Online

https://www.amazon.com/Teaching-Languages-Online-Textbooks-Book-ebook/dp/B01MZ-FOLAV/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=teaching+languages+online&qid=1598479149&s=books&sr=1-1

Kendra Miller, reviewer in Teacher Education, is redesigning the Integrate Arts course for the Humanities department at Prince George's Community/Technical College to refresh the material, align it with integrative arts practices, and providing models for how prospective teachers can integrate the arts (visual art, music, dance, theatre) and communications with K-12-grade level STEM courses. The course fulfills the Maryland state arts integrative credit for the A.A. in Teacher certification, so it's an exciting refresh for the College and the county's public school system.



Lesley Farmer, Editor of the ICT Literacy Board has published Impactful Community Based Literacy Projects:

<https://www.alastore.ala.org/impactliteracy>

Diane Bandow, Associate Editor for Business has published

Bandow, D. & Matuszek, T. (2020). Developing Leadership Capabilities Through Applied Learning. *Quarterly Review of Business Disciplines*, (7)1, 9-24.

Abstract:

Increasing numbers of adult students, including those who have significant industry or military backgrounds, seek graduate degrees in the business field. These older, work savvy students are not a good fit for the primary focus of traditional business education, which is preparing traditional students to assume entry-level roles in organizations. Many of these midcareer adults already hold positions of responsibility and leadership. Through a master's program that addresses the needs of experienced, working adults, and through multiple, integrated theories, student experience is brought into the classroom to prepare students to return and solve problems and present solutions in their current organizations.

Congratulations! (continued)



Esperanza Zenon, Associate Editor for Teacher Education, and an Associate Professor of Physical Science at River Parishes Community College (RPCC), is using MERLOT and Skills Commons, to design OER versions of courses for RPCC's technical education programs. The college's Plant Safety, Statistical Quality Control, Millwright, HVAC, Drafting, and Medical Assistant courses all utilize open content that was adapted or adopted from Skills Commons and MERLOT. These course redesign efforts were possible because of grant funding provided by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) and the Louisiana Library Network's Affordable Learning LOUISiana project.

Leila Halawi, Information Technology Board has been busy:

2020 Pacheco, Jr., G., Camargo, M., & Halawi, L. (2020). An Evaluation of the Operational Restrictions Imposed to Congonhas Airport by Civil Aviation Instruction 121-1013. *International Journal of Aviation, Aeronautics, and Aerospace*, 7(2). Retrieved from <https://commons.erau.edu/ijaaa/vol7/iss2/11>

And these 2 accepted to be soon published

Diogo Youssef, Fabiano Gomes de Oliveira, João Centeno, Luciano Figueiredo Vale de Oliveira and Leila Halawi (2020). Contingency Fuel Reduction in Brazil, *International Journal of Aviation, Aeronautics and Aerospace (IJAAA) Journal*, (accepted)

Christian Gruber Delamare, Douglas Cabrera Lopes, Patrice Ramos, Raioni de Oliveira Santos and Leila Halawi, Automated Disruption assistance in Brazil, *IACIS Conference and Issues of Information Systems Journal* (accepted)



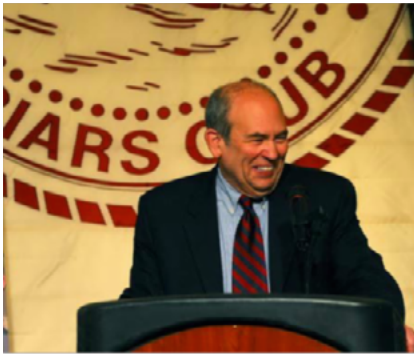
www.skillscommons.org was recommended by the National Governors Association as a worthy work-based learning resource to support state initiatives in their response to COVID 19. <https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Work-Based-Learning-Adjustments.pdf>

Mohammed Kaabar, Mathematics Board member sent exciting news:

"I have become an associate editor for four journals indexed by SCOPUS/Web of Science: *Bulletin of Electrical Engineering and Informatics*, *International Journal of Electrical and Computer Engineering*, *IAES International Journal of Robotics and Automation*, and *TELKOMNIKA*. I am an approved member of Science and Democracy Network (SDN) which is a part of the Science, Technology, and Society program at Harvard Kennedy School. I am an invited member of the expert editorial advisory board for the Big Data and Advanced Wireless Technologies Springer Book Series. My research interests are fractional calculus, applied mathematics, STEM education, and data science. In addition, I have become an ambassador of a non-profit organization, Reviewer Credits (<https://www.reviewercredits.com/ambassadors/>) which is endorsed by University of Milan-Bicocca in Italy.

I have been appointed as a Sustainable Ambassador of the Cuenta Conmigo NGOs in Buenos Aires, Argentina (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342365880_Certificate_of_Appointment_as_a_Sustainable_Ambassador_of_the_Cuenta_Conmigo_NGOs_in_Buenos_Aires_Argentina) am also an invited Member of "Association for the International Development of Academic and Scientific Collaboration" (AIDASCO) in the Republic of Serbia (<http://aidasco.org/about/>). I am currently working on many collaboration research projects on fractional calculus with researchers from all over the world.

Meet the Editor - Arthur Finkle, History



The History Committee Peer Reviews approximately 75 submission per year. Miriam Kahn of Kent State University is second in command. Arthur notes that whenever any of his students want to pursue a subject, he sends them to MERLOT. "The history board is diverse; four members are active currently." Arthur also noted that his work with MERLOT allows him to receive the "latest teaching vehicles."

During the past three years Art has published:

Emigration: Clara and Baron Maurice de Hirsch: Colossi of Jew Emigration (DE, Hadassah Word Press, 2019)

U.S. Immigration, 1833-1965: Amalgam of Ideals, Nativism and Foreign Policy, (DE, Hadassah Word Press, 2019)

Make America American (Arthur Finkle Co.: Newtown, PA, 2018)

Trenton's Jews: Beginning, Adaptation and Achieving the American Dream, Saarbrucken, DE, Hadassah Word Press, 2015.

Shofar: History, Technique and Jewish Law, Saarbrucken, DE, Hadassah Word Press, 2015.

Jewish Farming Communities in NJ: Southern and Central New Jersey, Saarbrucken, DE, Hadassah Word Press, 2015

If you are interested in reviewing for the History board, contact Jane Moore, jane@merlot.org.

Meet the Board Member - Miriam Kahn



I've been a member of the History Editorial Board since 2012 and review at least ten Open Educational Resources each year. These resources vary from interactive educational websites to Open Access Textbooks, from classroom lectures to educational programs. Every Open Education Resource I evaluate is an opportunity to learn history from a different perspective and to understand the diversity of approaches undertaken by resource creators.

Over the past few years, I've noticed contributions to MERLOT shifting from websites and interactive learning projects to Open Access Textbooks. This trend follows a drive to make education available in a digital mode, to provide a textbook and readings that can be consulted over and over again. What is lacking is the interactive aspect of learning and education in the classroom. These textbooks, often written for community colleges and introductory courses, focus more on overview, less on critical thinking about topics. If the chapter lacks

thought questions, then students are encouraged to read passively rather than actively. On the rare occasion, the MERLOT submission will challenge upper class college students to wrestle with concepts and trends in history.

With the move to remote and blended learning at all levels, reviewing MERLOT resources is more important than ever, particularly as adjuncts and supplements to in-class learning. The inclusion of images, maps, video and audio will enhance the usefulness of all Open Educational Resources. Evaluators and Board members will be challenged to test OER materials in various browsers and on mobile devices. This will continue to be the challenge for 2020 and beyond.

Out and About with MERLOT

From Engineering Board Editor, **Eduardo Montero Garcia**.

In the last The Vineyard (May 2020), the Engineering Board reported the acceptance of a contribution concerning MERLOT at the ICEUTE 2020 conference <http://2020.iceuteconference.eu>

Even before the celebration of the conference, the proceedings of the conference have been edited by Editorial Springer in an international collection series. It is available at the website

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-57799-5> The board's contribution is in pages 295-306. (https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-57799-5_31)

Muñoz-Rujas N., Baptiste J., Pavani A., Montero E. (2021) Enhancing Interactive Teaching of Engineering Topics Using Digital Materials of the MERLOT Database.

In: Herrero Á., Cambra C., Urda D., Sedano J., Quintián H., Corchado E. (eds) The 11th International Conference on European Transnational Educational (ICEUTE 2020). ICEUTE 2020. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, vol 1266. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57799-5_31

Tamer Osman, reviewer in Teacher Education writes the following:

Virtual Teaching

By: Tamer Osman

Since the whole world withstands tumultuous times, many educational institutions asked their teachers to resort to virtual teaching. I am one of those teachers who has gotten involved into this unprecedented experience. That is because my virtual teaching experience has been limited to private tutoring. But in the winter semester 2020, I found myself encountering a new academic challenge when my previous university decided to convert all the on-site courses into virtual courses.

These challenges were represented in knowing how to target all the academic objectives of the course outlines successfully online. In fact, that necessitated adapting the course materials, so that they could be displayed clearly on the teaching platform. It took me a portion of time to handle the preparedness step for the course, taking into consideration that this step usually takes place a few months before the beginning of the academic year. Undeniably, having blended courses was not an option, since the panic of pandemic paralyzed dawning of any other educational options. On the other hand, the communication between the students and me was effective, as social media facilitated that process. At the same time, the in-class activities were not guaranteed to be handled by all the students exclusively. It was difficult to manage the virtual environment since several students declined to actively participate in tasks. Accordingly, assessing the performance of some students was eventually an uneasy process.

In fact, the mid-term and final exams were a crucial problem. Most of the students resorted to plagiarism and cheating, since the virtual environment eliminated the traditional academic formalities furnished in on-site environment. Consequently, assessing the students' academic performance did not yield to genuine credibility or transparency or practicality. But my lack of experience in fulfilling this particular academic requirement forced me not to rely only on the writing assignments and exams, but also on the general performance of the students during the courses. In a nutshell, I learned through this experience that asking the students to search for knowledge is the most convenient methodology for virtual courses rather than having teachers spew knowledge to students and getting tested on it.

Definitely, all the drawbacks occurred in my first experience in an official university course will be taken into consideration in my virtual courses in Fall 2020.

Meeting Notices:

Online Learning Consortium Accelerate and Velocity



Join your fellow MERLOTians at the OLC Accelerate Conference in Orlando, Florida,. You can register for the conference at: <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/attend-2020/accelerate/>

OLC is offering our annual fall conference in two modalities. OLC Accelerate will be the all virtual option (virtual presenters to virtual attendees, November 9-18) and OLC Velocity will be the onsite program in Orlando (November 18-20).

The OLC Accelerate & OLC Velocity conference emphasizes the most innovative and impactful research and effective practices in the field of online, blended, and digital learning. Supporting administrators, designers, and educators alike, this conference offers a comprehensive list of sessions and activities tailored to addressing the challenges and goals of our entire community. Our curation of conference tracks and exhibits promises a cross-section of the prime topics in our field, offering exciting programming formats, myriad formal and informal networking opportunities, and a wealth of resources aligned to supporting quality online, digital and blended learning.

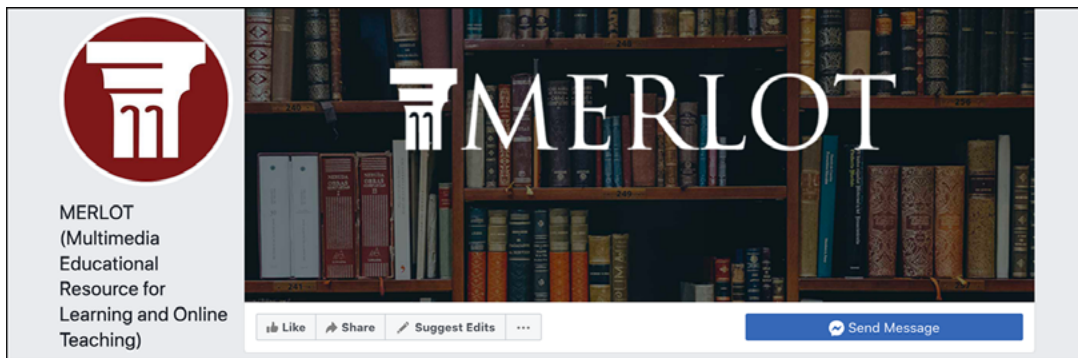
OLC Accelerate (virtual, November 9-18) is devoted to driving quality online learning, advancing best practice guidance and accelerating innovation in learning for academic leaders, educators, administrators, digital learning professionals and organizations around the world. This portion of the conference is presented in an all virtual format.

OLC Velocity (onsite, November 18-20) brings together individual participants and teams for active learning sessions that move presentational-style knowledge sharing into collaborative change work for immediate application within institutional contexts around the future of online and digital education.

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.

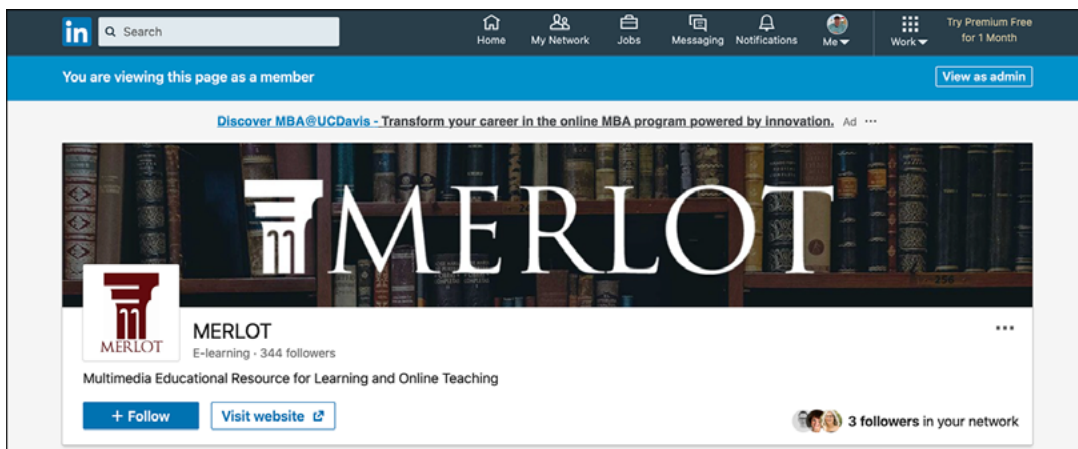
MERLOT has a [Facebook](#) page and we'd love for you to Like us!



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



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



Moore Musings

Dear Jane:

Since the pandemic, I have been overwhelmed at work—new responsibilities, new initiatives, and moving all my courses to online. I keep seeing information about becoming a MERLOT reviewer. How will I find the time?

— Overwhelmed

Dear Overwhelmed,

I get it. Lots of new stuff. But, here's the perk of being a reviewer: you get to review items in your own discipline, so you are finding resources that will help alleviate the stress of moving your courses to online. MERLOT has a pedagogy portal (<https://www.merlot.org/merlot/Pedagogy.htm>) and a great resource for teachers and students who are moving to online: <https://www.merlot.org/merlot/viewMaterial.htm?id=773402030> Additionally, to be listed as a MERLOT reviewer, one only has to complete two reviews a year. You'll find yourself in a community of educators who are all dealing with the same issues you find. Give it a try! Check above for information on GRAPE Camp and join the "family."

— Jane

MERLOT Statistics

MERLOT Collection as of August 31, 2020

92,406	# items in Collection
5,514	# of materials w/a Peer Review
13,517	# of materials w/an Editor's Review
12,256	# of materials w/a Comment/Discussion
1,547	# of materials w/a Learning Exercise
175,654	# of registered users

Usage Statistics for 2020, to date

787,925	Total # of visits in 2020
3.29	Avg. # pages/visit
2:49	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!