

Nov. 4, 2011

Assuring quality in online courses

Ask Annette Burden about the importance of quality control in distance education, and she'll tell you about lunch.

“My husband and I went to lunch the other day, and we both ordered a cup of soup and a salad,” she said. “When it arrived, my cup was more like half of a cup and his was filled to the brim. My salad was significantly smaller and was missing the cheese, croutons and pepper. No quality control.”

The same could be said for online courses.

“If there is no quality control over the course development, then students get what they get,” said Burden, interim director of Distance Education at YSU. “One course might be really well organized and easy to navigate while the other is so disorganized that the student can't even find the

assignments without spending a significant amount of time hunting for them.”

Burden is leading an effort to make YSU a statewide model for quality assurance and continuous improvement in distance education and, along the way, ensuring that all of the university's online courses meet nationally-recognized standards.

The effort started about a year ago, when Ohio launched a program for universities across the state to voluntarily assess their distance education courses through Quality Matters, a faculty-centered and nationally-recognized peer review process that sets standards for the sound design of online courses. “Prior to this, there was absolutely no quality control whatsoever in these courses,” Burden said.

More than 400 colleges and universities in 42 states currently subscribe to Quality Matters. Sixty Ohio colleges and universities have signed up, the most of any state. Under the QM program, online courses must undergo an evaluation by a three-member peer review team and meet eight standards, ranging from the organization and navigation of the course to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. “For students, the QM stamp means that they know that course has been examined and has been quality approved,” she said.



Annette Burden

At YSU, six online courses have applied for review, and Burden said the goal is that all 80 online courses will receive QM approval within the next year.

Burden said YSU faculty is actively involved. Fifteen faculty members have been certified as QM Peer Reviewers, which means they are eligible to participate in the evaluation of courses. At least 10 other faculty members have indicated interest in becoming peer reviewers. If they follow through, that would give YSU the most peer reviewers in the state. In addition, YSU also currently has one individual certified as a master reviewer – Burden. Five others have indicated interest in becoming master reviewers, which would give YSU the most master reviewers in the state, as well.

“I am proud to say that the faculty here has really bought into this and recognize the importance of offering quality distance courses, and that does nothing but speak well for the university as a whole,” Burden said.

The Annual YSU Distance Education Conference and Quality Matters Workshop, organized by Burden, was held on campus Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 in Lincoln Hall. The event, which focused on “Computing in the Cloud,” attracted 40 attendees and featured a keynote address by Steve Wheeler, associate professor of Learning Technology at Plymouth University in England.

YSU currently offers 15 online degrees and programs. About 1,500 students annually enroll in online courses. For more information, visit <http://web.ysu.edu/de>.

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Only in academe

Black and Gold, Brown and Orange team up on encyclopedia project

Born in Texas, Adam Earnhardt moved to the Steel City at the age of three.

“I wasn’t in Pittsburgh for more than five minutes before I had on a Steelers jersey,” remembers Earnhardt, YSU associate professor of Communications.

So, it’s not surprising that, over the years, Earnhardt worked up quite a dislike for the rival Cleveland Browns. “And, for my part, there was never any real interest to learn anything about them,” he said.



Steelers fan Adam Earnhardt, left, and Browns fan Jeff Tyus, both faculty in Communications, set their football loyalties aside long enough to collaborate on articles for the new *Encyclopedia of Sports Management and Marketing*.

That all changed when Earnhardt and Jeff Tyus, YSU assistant professor of Communications, collaborated earlier this year to research and write articles on the Cleveland Browns and the Cleveland Indians for the *Encyclopedia of Sports Management and Marketing*, a four-volume set released this fall by Sage Publications in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

“We learned a lot together,” said Tyus, who describes himself as “a diehard Cleveland sports fan.” “I think Adam now at least understands and respects the great history and tradition of the Browns, even-though the last few years haven’t been the greatest for us.”

In all, Earnhardt authored or co-authored nine articles for the 1,960-page encyclopedia, which focuses on the economics, governance, ethics, sociology, media, marketing and promotion of sports. For all of the work, the publisher provided a four-volume set to Earnhardt, who donated it to YSU's Maag Library.

Over the span of nine months starting in late 2010, Earnhardt worked with Tyus and students Chelsea Pflugh and Meg Villers to write the articles. Pflugh and Villers have since graduated – Pflugh is now a producer for CSPAN's BookTV and Villers is an admissions representative for Penn State University.

“This is really the idea of teaching, scholarship and service all coming together under one project.” Earnhardt said.

“When the opportunity came along to write these entries, Chelsea and Megan jumped at it. What they didn't realize is how much research and fact checking went in to writing an encyclopedia entry. You really need to get it right – down to every date, name and statistic. And now, to see their work in print and in libraries around the world, is very rewarding.”

In addition to his collaboration with Tyus on the Indians and Browns, Earnhardt co-authored articles on the Pittsburgh Penguins and the National Hockey League with Pflugh and an article on the New England Patriots with Villers. He also wrote four articles on his own on the Baltimore Ravens, Media Audience, Motive and Typologies of the Sports Fan and the Super Bowl.

Earnhardt, who joined the YSU faculty in 2005, is executive director of the Ohio Communications Association. His forthcoming book entitled *Sports Fans, Identity, and Socialization: Exploring the Fandemonium* focuses on athlete and fan identities. Tyus, who came to YSU in 2007, is a past president of the Ohio Communications Association. His research agenda involves the study of underrepresented groups in American society and public relations efforts in grassroots political campaigns.

(Editor's note: *The Steelers and Browns square off for the first time this year on Dec. 8 in Pittsburgh and meet again on News Year's Day in Cleveland.*)

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Prof starts scholarship: ‘It just seems like...the right thing to do’

David E. Stout, an endowed accounting professor in the Williamson College of Business Administration, has established a scholarship to be awarded annually to a full-time undergraduate majoring in accounting at YSU.

“It just seems that, in these challenging economic times, establishing a scholarship was the right thing to do,” said Stout, “and we hope it will encourage the development of other scholarships.”

He plans to fund the scholarship using royalties from a textbook he co-authored in 2010. “We try to instill in our students a sense of community responsibility and giving back, and in our minds the scholarship provides a vivid example of that,” he said.

To be eligible for the David E. and Anne C. Stout Accounting Scholarship, an applicant must be of junior standing or higher, have a GPA of at least 3.0 and be an active member of the Student Chapter of the Institute of Management Accountants. Stout helped reactivate the chapter at YSU in 2009.

The first scholarship for \$1,500 will be awarded this spring.

Stout came to YSU in 2003 when he was named the John S. and Doris M. Andrews Endowed Chair in Accounting, coming from Villanova University where he was accounting department chair. Stout has authored more than 80 published articles in addition to the textbook, *Cost Management: A Strategic Emphasis*. He has received several prestigious teaching awards, including most recently the 2011 Mark Chain/FSA Teaching Innovation Award for graduate-level instruction from the American Institute of CPAs. Currently, he is editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Accounting Education* and serves on the American Accounting Association Board of Directors.

To apply for the scholarship, contact the Lariccia School of Accounting and Finance at 330-941-3084.



David E. Stout

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McDonough collects memories of historic downtown theater

YSU's McDonough Museum of Art and students in the telecommunications and art departments are collecting stories about the historic Liberty-Paramount Theatre in downtown Youngstown.

The Paramount Oral History Project seeks people to share their memories of the theater through interviews that will be taped and edited by YSU students. The interviews will be included in an exhibit at the museum early next year, said Angela DeLucia, assistant to the director at the

McDonough Museum.

The 1,700-seat theater on Federal Plaza opened in 1918, featuring silent movies and vaudeville acts. Despite modernization efforts, the theater was not able to survive the affects of deindustrialization and suburbanization, and has lay dormant and in decay since 1976.

The Paramount Oral History Project is part of the Paramount Project, an effort aimed at restoration of the terracotta façade of the theater. The remainder of the building is no longer viable for restoration and will be demolished to make way for an open gathering space.

Interviews for the Oral History Project will take place between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturdays Nov. 12 and 19 at the museum on Wick Avenue. Participants should call the museum at 330-941-1400 to schedule a time slot.



The historic Liberty Theater in downtown Youngstown in its heyday.

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Faculty/staff awards, publications, presentations

Kin P. Moy, associate professor of Electrical Engineering Technology, received a Society of Automotive Engineers' 2011 Technical Standards Board Outstanding Contribution Award for his service and leadership within the technical committee activities of SAE. He was formally recognized at the 2011 SAE World Congress Awards Ceremony in Detroit, Mich. Joining other recipients from such research facilities and companies as Boeing, Argonne National Laboratory and Thales, he was the only engineer from an academic institution to receive the award.

Karen A. Becker, coordinator of the Reading & Study Skills Center, had a textbook published this fall. *The Art and Science of Quality Learning* is written for RSS courses, combining a student-friendly style with an increased emphasis on functionality. YSU students had the opportunity to be among the first students in the country to use this textbook in its cutting-edge interactive digital textbook format, the "D-Book," which allows students to customize and create an educational experience that best fits their individual learning style. The textbook is also published in print version.

Brad Shellito, associate professor, Geography, presented a paper, titled "Applying 3D Modeling, GIS, and Geospatial Technology to University Campus Visualizations," at the 2011 Ohio GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Conference in Columbus.

Catherine Cala, director of University Development, presented a workshop on planned giving at the fifth annual Nonprofit Summit, sponsored by the Raymond John Wean Foundation this fall at YSU.

Zbigniew Piotrowski, professor, Mathematics and Statistics, gave a talk, "On a property of all real-valued pointwise discontinuous functions," at the Mathematics Department of the Pomeranian Academy in Slupsk, Poland.

Sherry Linkon, professor, English, was the visiting scholar at Loyola Marymount University's annual Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Showcase program. She gave a keynote presentation, "Dialogic Pedagogy: Improving Students' Learning through Faculty Interactions," and led a workshop on collaborative course design for faculty who are creating courses for LMU's new interdisciplinary core curriculum. Linkon also recently had published *Literary Learning: Teaching the English Major* as part of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning series of Indiana University Press. The book examines strategic knowledge in literary studies, outlines models for teaching upper-division literature courses and provides advice on designing research projects on student learning.

Ruigang Wang, assistant professor, Chemistry, together with his graduate student, **Samuel I. Mutinda**, recently published the article “The Dynamic Shape of Ceria Nanoparticles,” in *The Journal of Chemical Physics Letters*. The research is supported by the funds from the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation-CTME project and the YSU University Council Grant.

Weiqing Ge, assistant professor, Physical Therapy, was selected as a 2011 Adobe Design Achievement Award semifinalist in Innovation in Interactive Media in Education for the development of an interactive CD-ROM on the internal structures of the brainstem. It is currently being used in the Applied Neuroscience for Physical Therapists class in YSU’s Doctor of Physical Therapy program to improve teaching and learning. Ge was a member of the Better Learning through Technology Learning Community sponsored by YSU’s Council on Teaching and Learning, and the project was partially supported by a mini-grant from YSU’s Office of Assessment.

Karla Krodel, director of Metro Credit Education Outreach, and five students from the Bridges Out of Poverty Student Union – **Brandy Bates, Rebecca Banks, DeAudra Egerson, Margaret Gratz and Terrell Wesley** – presented papers at the Annual Bridges Circles National Convention in Indianapolis this fall. Krodel presented: “Understanding and Engaging Under-Resourced College Students: An Overview,” “A Systems Approach to Improve College Retention and Graduation,” and “New Curriculum for College Students: Investigations into Economic Class in America.” She also participated as a panelist in “On the Cutting Edge: Challenges and Successes of Early Adopters in Higher Education” and “Getting Ahead and Investigations in Higher Education: A Conversation for Facilitators and Graduates.” All five students presented their experience and perspectives in “Beyond Investigations.” Bates and Gratz presented their study “Student/Client Perspective on Career Pathways,” soon to be included in a statewide Career Pathway report.

Amy Weaver, instructor of Nursing, published her article “High-fidelity Patient Simulation in Nursing Education: An Integrative Review” in *Nursing Education Perspectives*.

Rammohan Kasuganti, professor and chair, Management, and **Patrick Bateman**, assistant professor, Management, co-authored an article, “Culture’s Consequences: Aligning Strategic IS Planning with MNE Regional Strategy,” which was recently published in the *Journal of Global Business Development*.

A paper titled “Arguing the Value of Virtual Worlds: Patterns of Discursive Sensemaking of an Innovative Technology,” co-authored by **Patrick Bateman**, assistant professor of Management, was published in the September 2011 issue of *Management Information Systems Quarterly*, the premier journal in the field of information systems and also recognized globally as one of the elite journals for business school research.

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YSU Alert – Sign up now!

With autumn in full force and winter weather right around the corner, there's no better time to sign up for YSU Alert.

YSU Alert is the university's emergency notification text messaging and email system. In the event of an emergency – including weather that causes the university to close – a text message and/or email will be sent. But you must sign up to get the messages.

For more information or to register, visit <http://alert.ysu.edu/>.

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Vets remembered at Nov. 10 ceremony

The names of Youngstown State University students and employees who died while on active military duty will be read at a ceremony 11 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 10 at Veterans Plaza on the YSU campus.

The 14th annual Reading of the Names ceremony will also feature a 21-gun salute and the playing of taps. In addition, the YSU Office of Veterans Affairs will present the Cincinnatus Award. The award recognized an individual who has carried the spirit of his or her military service into the community by the contributions of their time and talents.

For more information, contact the YSU Office of Veterans Affairs at 330-941-2503 or 330-941-2523.

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YSU: A Military Friendly School for three straight years

For the third consecutive year, Youngstown State University has been designated a Military Friendly School by G.I. Jobs, a magazine for military personnel transitioning into civilian life.

The 2012 Military Friendly Schools list honors the top 20 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools that are doing the most to embrace America's military service members and veterans as students.

In its effort to help student veterans find the right school, G.I. Jobs incorporated a survey of student veterans for the first time. This feedback provides prospective military students with insight into the student veteran experience at a particular institution based on peer reviews from current students.



“The Military Friendly Schools list is the go-to resource for prospective student veterans searching for schools that provide the right overall experience,” said Michael Dakduk, executive director for the Student Veterans of America. “Nothing is more compelling than actual feedback from current student veterans.”

The 2012 list of Military Friendly Schools was compiled through extensive research and a data driven survey of more than 8,000 schools nationwide. The full list is available at <http://www.militaryfriendlyschoools.com/mfsList.aspx>.

The YSU Office of Veteran Affairs was established January 2009 as part of the YSU Division of Student Affairs Division and reports directly to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The office assists YSU students who have served or are currently serving in the armed forces in attaining their educational goals. The office also actively engages in the recruitment of prospective students with military history. For more information, visit <http://web.ysu.edu/veterans>.

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Dana sets Music at Noon performances

Youngstown State University's Dana School of Music, in collaboration with the Butler Institute of American Art, presents six more Music at Noon performances this fall semester.

Performances are Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m. at the Butler Institute of American Art. The concerts are free and open to the public and parking is free at the Butler. The concerts will resume in January.

The performances for the months of November and December are as follows:

- Nov. 2 - Jazz Combos**
- Nov. 9 - Saxophone Studio Recital**
- Nov. 16 - String Area Recital**
- Nov. 23 - Brass Chamber Music**
- Nov. 30 - Winter Pops Concert**
- Dec. 7 - Clarinet Studio Recital**

For more information call the Dana School of Music at 330-941-3636. For a complete calendar of events for the College of Fine and Performing Arts, visit <http://web.yzu.edu/fpa>.

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Helping Hands Across America

For the third year in a row, Youngstown State University and Sodexo Campus Services are teaming up to help stop hunger in the Youngstown community.

Through Nov. 11, YSU and Sodexo are participating in a community outreach initiative called Helping Hands Across America, designed to help neighbors in need by collecting and donating non-perishable food items to local charities like the Rescue Mission, Second Harvest Food Bank and St. Vincent De Paul Society.

Donations may be dropped off Monday through Friday at locations on the YSU campus, including Staff Offices & Pete's Place Restaurant in Kilcawley Center, and at Christman Dining Commons.

This collection drive culminates the week of Nov. 14, with the official weighing of the donations, performed by the Ohio State Patrol, followed by the distribution of the products locally.

Helping Hands Across America is a Sodexo program running simultaneously on college and university campuses across the country.

For more information, contact Kim Bacchetti at 330-941-1977.

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13 companies earn Emerging 200 credentials

The U.S. Small Business Administration will honor the 13 participating companies in its Emerging 200 Initiative (e200) at a graduation ceremony 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 1 in the atrium of Williamson Hall on the campus of Youngstown State University.

The e200 graduating companies are: A to Z Drain Services LLC, American Maintenance Services, Canfiel Computers, Color Embroidery, Crogan Plumbing and Heating, Drawn Incorporated, Empyra.com Inc., Hudson Fasteners, Humtown Products, Industrial Machining and Design, PTNE Telecom, The Agent Insurance Services and Treeman Industries.



The program, which provides more than 40 hours of advanced management training, is a collaboration of the SBA Cleveland District Office, the City of Youngstown Department of Economic Development and the Ohio Small Business Development Center at YSU.

The e200 initiative focuses on small companies in Youngstown's inner city and surrounding areas that have the potential for rapid expansion and job creation. Firms had to have an operational track record of three years or more to gain entrance into the e200 Program.

Youngstown is one of 27 e200 participating cities nationwide. Others include Albuquerque, Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Farmington (NM), Fresno, Helena, Honolulu, Jacksonville, Memphis, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, Santa Ana, Seattle, St. Louis, Syracuse, and Tulsa.

Expected to attend the event are Youngstown Mayor Charles Sammarone; Betty Jo Licata, Dean of the YSU Williamson College of Business Administration; Marianne Markowitz, SBA Midwest Regional Administrator, Gil Goldberg, District Director, SBA; representatives of the Ohio Small Business Development Centers; and Rick Sheridan, CPA and the instructor for the e200 Course.

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Hoop it up

It's hoops season again and the Penguin men's basketball team opens the home schedule Nov. 15 against Notre Dame (Ohio) in Beeghly Center.

In all, the men play 13 home games, including two that are scheduled to be nationally televised by the ESPN family of networks – Jan. 20 against Milwaukee and Feb. 9 against two-time national runners-up Butler.

The women's team, featuring Horizon League Preseason Player of the Year Brandi Brown, opens its home schedule Nov. 21 against American University in Beeghly Center.

For full schedules and for ticket information, visit www.ysusports.com.



YSU's BrandiBrown has been named Horizon League Preseason Player of the Year.