In this issue, you will find the second in a series of three articles devoted to profiling a few of the University's faculty members who were asked to address the topic, *"Innovative Methods of Teaching."*

# Incorporating the Latest Technology: Using Smartphones, Tablets and Social Media to Enhance Classroom Instruction

**By Renee Baggott, Ph.D.**
*Assistant Professor of Mathematics*

The digital age is very much upon us with new advances in hardware, software and the ability to connect to anyone at anytime-- the world is moving and changing at the speed of light. Here today gone tomorrow is the slogan of cyberspace. It is hard to believe the iPhone was first released in 2007 and the iPad will have its fourth birthday on April 3rd, yet those devices, as well as the others that have followed, are ubiquitous in today's society.
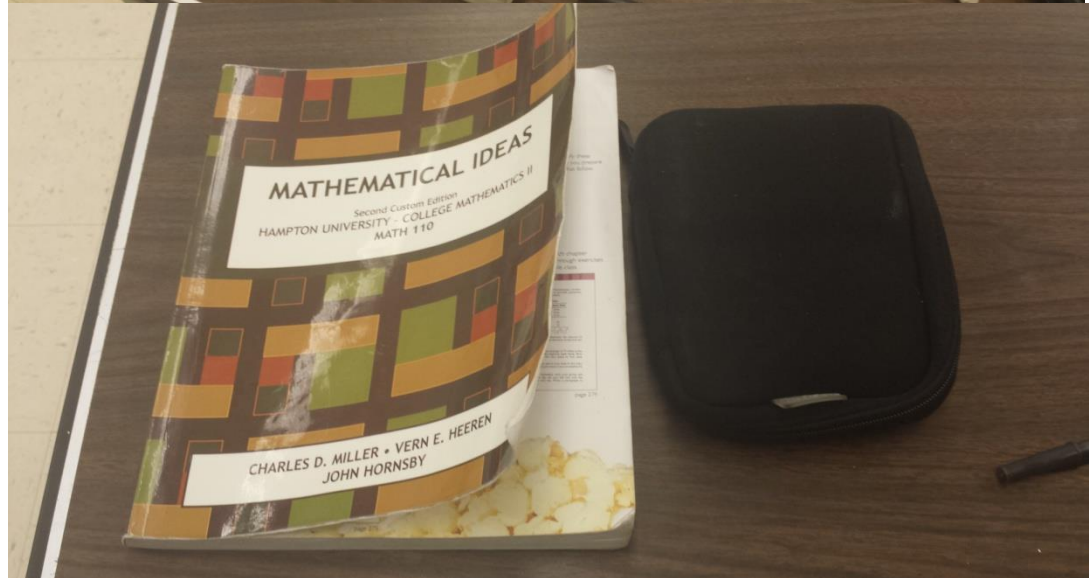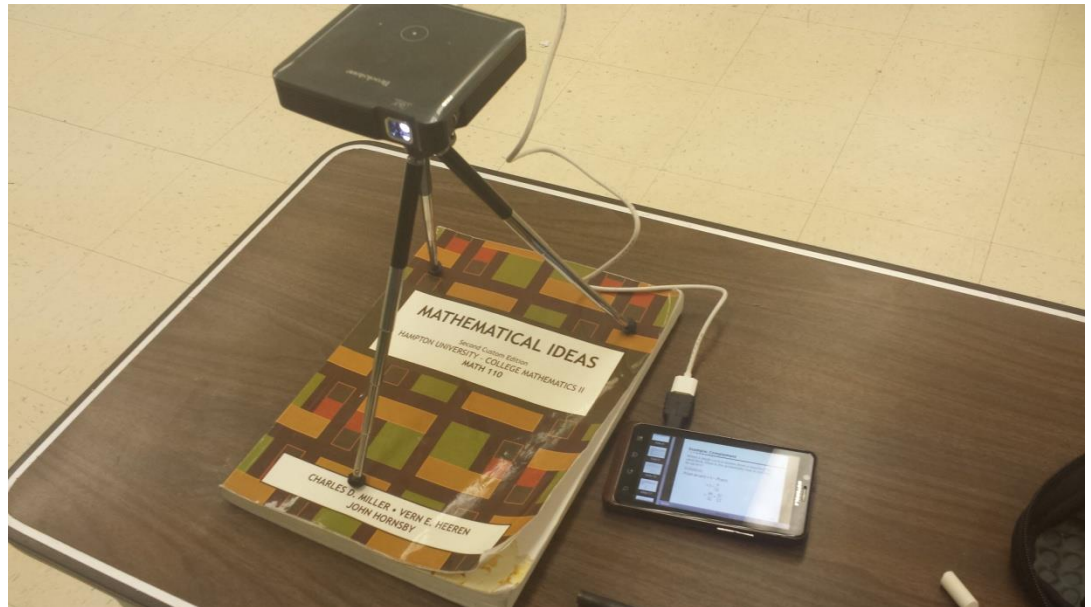
Sometimes it is hard to imagine life before we became connected. Gone are the days of waiting until you get to a computer to check your email(s) or work on a project, missing a meeting because you were stuck in traffic or students unable to complete assignments because they were absent for one or more class periods. Now we experience panic when we cannot find our devices and some anxiety at the thought of powering down for any length of time. For many of us, this is a new phenomenon in our lives but for our students, technology is intimately tied to their everyday lives. Social media websites have enabled them to see, hear and comment on events the world over in less time that it takes to drive through the local McDonald's. The newest sensational video on YouTube with over one million hits

today is old news by tomorrow. So how do we reach students in a world of thirty second sound bites constant connectivity? By utilizing the tools that students are already familiar with.

Students have their phones with them almost every minute of the day. Why not incorporate them into your instructional palette? You could have them pull up the e-book for the class, find a YouTube video supporting a just learned concept, take snapshots of problems worked out on the board for later review at home. Many of their findings can be posted to Blackboard for all the students to take advantage of as well as contributing new material for your future classes.

I've repurposed one of my old cell phones to use during my lectures without paying a monthly fee by using the phone for WiFi only. I download all the powerpoints and videos needed for the lectures and use a portable projector. My entire multimedia hardware fits in a 7"x 6" case which includes a tripod and a cable to connect my phone to the projector with room to spare. The projector has an internal battery for use that removes the need to carry the power cord or finding an outlet in the classroom. I can use this setup anywhere there is a space to project images. Sometimes my students will ask me about the location of information on Blackboard or MyMathLab. It is easy to log onto Hampton University's WiFi connection to show them during class with an immediate response. The students like that they are able to see exactly what I am referring to at that moment in time.
One of the best tools the University has is Blackboard for around the clock instruction and interaction. It is the portal to enhancing student learning and communication on the go. I post pertinent information for my classes to access at anytime. The best part is that I am able to post an announcement and send it in an email in one shot so that if a student doesn't log into Blackboard, the message is still received. Many students lose the syllabus after the first week, but posting the information on Blackboard still gives them access to all the information through the entire semester. It is also a great place to post class surveys, polls and assignments utilizing electronic media to reduce the environmental impact of teaching materials i.e. printing supplies. Incorporating virtual office hours via Blackboard is a good way to meet with students outside of your office hours on campus. Just set up a time and send the announcement to your class.

The use of new and emerging technology and software helps us to keep up with the way our students receive and process information in the ever changing digital age. Embracing change can help us work smarter not harder.

# Announcements

**Global Learning in College:Cross-Cutting Capacities for 21st-Century College Students**

A Network for Academic Renewal Conference
October 16–18, 2014
Minneapolis, Minnesota
**Proposals Due Tuesday, April 22, 2014**

The Association of American Colleges and Universities is pleased to announce the Call for Proposals for the *Global Learning in College* conference. Session proposals are invited to address how campuses are defining global learning and redesigning courses, program, curricula, and cocurricula to include global contexts for and connections to student learning outcomes.  Priority will be given to proposals that address the "how" and "why" (not just the "what") of their particular topics and provide evidence that their work is effectively helping all students become global learners.

We look forward to your proposals in the context of any of these five domains.

- **Global Knowledge:** Students understand multiple worldviews, experiences, histories, and power structures

- **Global Challenges:** Students apply knowledge and skills gained through general education, the major, and cocurricular experiences to address complex, contemporary global issues (problems and opportunities)
- **Global Systems and Organizations:** Students gain and apply deep knowledge of the differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems
- **Global Civic Engagement:** Students initiate meaningful interaction with people from other cultures and take informed and responsible action to address ethical, social, and environmental challenges
- **Global Identities:** Students articulate their own values as global citizens in the context of personal identities and recognize diverse and potentially conflicting positions vis-à-vis complex social and civic problems

Visit the **Call for Proposals** to find out how to submit a proposal to share your work at this **conference**. For more information, please call 202.387.3760, or write to Siah Annand at **network@aacu.org**.

## Transforming STEM Higher Education

A Network for Academic Renewal Conference
November 6-8, 2014
Atlanta, Georgia
**Proposals Due Monday, April 7, 2014**

The Association of American Colleges and Universities and **Project Kaleidoscope** are pleased to announce the Call for Proposals for the *Transforming STEM Higher Education* conference. Proposals are invited and encouraged to showcase evidence-based practices that reflect any of the themes below, and that are poised for immediate uptake and adaptation in a wide range of institution types, including community colleges and minority-serving institutions. Of particular interest will be proposals that effectively integrate two or more of the conference themes.

We look forward to your proposals in the context of the four themes listed below.

- **Research, Development, and Assessment of Undergraduate STEM Teaching and Learning:** This theme will include presentations and sessions that describe innovative approaches for enhancing undergraduate STEM learning through implementation of engaged pedagogies and high-impact practices including, but not limited to, integrative, interdisciplinary, and discovery-based learning.

- **Inclusive Excellence in STEM Higher Education:** This theme will include presentations and sessions that highlight theory-driven models and innovations directed toward the recruitment, retention, and persistence of students from underrepresented groups in the STEM disciplines.

- **Recruiting, Supporting, and Rewarding STEM Faculty:** This theme will focus on sessions and presentations that provide faculty with knowledge, materials, and strategies for revising STEM curricula and enhancing teaching and high-impact practices, as well as innovative mechanisms for acquiring necessary resources (if applicable) for implementing new strategies.

- **Advancing Institutional Change Strategies for STEM Reform:** This theme will include presentations and sessions related to campus-wide institutional change efforts toward undergraduate STEM education reform. While there is a pervasive need to provide opportunities for students to participate in research, collaborative assignments, and other innovative engagement practices, oftentimes the culture of STEM departments is not conducive to the implementation of modern pedagogies

Visit the **Call for Proposals** to find out how to submit a proposal to share your work at this **conference**. For more information, please call 202.387.3760, or write to Siah Annand at **network@aacu.org**