# Tools and Techniques

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Welcome back. In this presentation, we'll review some of the most popular tools and provide some suggestions on how they can be used in your online or hybrid course.

Getting information to students is most likely at the top of your priority list. Video is a top choice for presenting lecture material. UF has a site license for Camtasia Relay. This is a screen recording software that is available to you at no cost. It will record whatever is on your computer screen which might be PowerPoint, any software that you have on your machine, or even a webcam video of yourself.

The Camtasia Relay pros include the fact that it is free to UF faculty, it is easy to use and the video goes directly to the server. You receive a link to your video in your e-mail. Simply copy and paste this link into your course page for your students. One nice thing about this tool, is that you can install it on your home computer at no cost.

Camtasia Relay cons are the limited editing capability. You can trim the beginning and the end, but you can't cut out anything in the middle. Also, getting it set up on your computer can be tricky. If it is not already installed on your office computer—this is the case for many departments across campus, then you'll need the help of your department's IT team. If you want to do anything with the Camtasia videos that are on the server, you'll need to set up FTP access. Finally, do not confuse this tool with Camtasia Studio which is a full-feature product from the same company (Tech Smith.)

To set up a Camtasia Relay account, go to video.ufl.edu. Fill out a Service Request form for Camtasia Relay, and fill out another Service Request form for a Media Storage Account. You will receive an e-mail containing the link for you to download and install the software on your computer. If you are using a Mac, put that information into the "notes" section of the form so that you are sent the correct software for installation.

VoiceThread couples multimedia with discussion. This is useful if you would like a bit more interactivity with your presentations, you can present a short lecture and then invite student comments. The presentation can use ppt., images and video. In this sample, you can see the icons beside the main presentation.

This is where people have made a comment. Students can comment through text, video, and audio. The comments appear in the order that they were made.

VoiceThread is fairly easy to use. You can login and record video immediately. This is a webtool, so there is no software installation. You can use it at home or at work. You can even create a video at the office and then edit it at home.

The possibility for students to provide comments and ask questions can add an interesting dimension to your presentations. Since VoiceThread is available to students at no cost, they can use it for their own presentations.

VoiceThread can be viewed on iPads and other mobile devices, but you'll need to install the app for Apple devices. At the present time, commenting and recording features are not fully functional on the i-devices.

On the con side, VoiceThread will require some experimentation for you to figure out how to do what you want. If students are going to do anything with this tool—even post a comment, you'll need to give them very specific instructions. If you are teaching a high enrollment course, you may find it is too cumbersome to use the collaboration features.

# VoiceThread: Setup

- ufl.voicethread.com
- MyVoice
- Request Premium account from lss.at.ufl.edu/help
- citt.ufl.edu/tutorials

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To get started with voicethread, go to ufl.voicethread.com. You will need authenticate through Shibboleth with your Gatorlink username and password. Click on your gatorlink e-mail address in the upper right hand side of the screen to access your account. Click on MyVoice from this drop down menu to reach tutorials on how to use the tool. The blue icons indicate tutorials. Your students can access these as well.

When you first log in, you'll automatically have a "basic" account which allows you to record three VoiceThreads. All UF Faculty may have a premium account by requesting it through the Learning Support Services website. Lss.at.ufl.edu/help The premium account allows you to create unlimited voicethreads.

For ideas on how to use VoiceThread, visit the CITT website at citt.ufl.edu/tutorials

There are a couple of other popular presentation tools that might interest you.

Prezi is a visual presentation tool that zooms from the big picture down to the details. It is most helpful when you want to explain how pieces fit together. You can link YouTube videos, sound, websites and so forth. It is web-based, so you can edit it anywhere. Some find that the zooming in and out can cause motion sickness. The tool does not have an easy way to add voice-over, so the presentation either needs to stand alone with the visuals—or may be better used in a face-to-face class. The basic account is free and you can find it at prezi.com

Jing is a free screen capture and video recording tool from TechSmith, the same people who created Camtasia Relay and Camtasia Studio. You can record whatever is on your computer and then add text, highlights, arrows and draw on your presentation. This program requires you to download and install software—so you would need help from your IT team to put in on your computer. There is a 5 minute limit for recordings. Since it is free, it is something that your students could use for short presentations.

Here's a quick tip. If you use one of the video screen capture tools, you can use the PowerPoint drawing options to emphasize points. Hover your mouse in the lower left corner of your presentation, a pen icon will appear. You can choose between pen and highlighter tools and you can change the ink color.

The presentations you have been watching in the Faculty Institute were created using Mediasite. As you can see, there is a video of the speaker that is synced with this type of lecture-capture requires special equipment. This equipment is currently available in 10 classrooms on campus. You can contact Video Services to request to have your class recorded. You will receive a link to the recording that you can put into your course website. Visit the video services website at video.ufl.edu to see which classrooms contain the equipment.

Some campus units, such as the College of Engineering and the College of Dentistry have lecture-capture recording equipment as well. Check with your department to see how to reserve the equipment and/or studio space as well as possible cost. CITT has two small studios that are available for recording. Be aware that the space is typically scheduled at least two weeks in advance—so it is wise to record your videos as early as you can. You can request studio time through the *Course Assistance Request Form* that is found on the teach.ufl.edu website.

If you are looking for a way to create the type of experience you have in the classroom, you might consider using one of the synchronous tools. UF has Adobe Connect licensing available for purchase. Some units may use other tools such as Black Board Collaborate. There is a cost associated with Adobe Connect and the other higher-end tools. This cost can be added to your course as a Distance Learning Fee. If you wish to do this, contact your chair as soon as possible, as this fee must be requested and approved BEFORE students register for the term you wish to use the tool.

To determine which of the synchronous classroom tools will work best for you, consider how you wish to use the tool. Adobe Connect will support a large class and you have the ability to record the entire presentation. This can be helpful for students who miss the live class. The tool also supports desktop sharing and groups. There is a pretty high learning curve with using Adobe Connect, and you'll need to decide if you want to add to the cost students must pay to take your course.

If you have a small seminar class, or you simply want a video presence for your office hours, Google Hangouts might be right for you. There is currently a 10 person limit, but it is free and easy to use. Some students already use Google Hangouts and are familiar with it.

And Skype will work for a class of fewer than 25. Many students already use Skype. If you are using the free Skype, then you will have audio only. You'll need to pay for a premium account if you would like to use the desktop sharing or video for more than two people. There are some 3rd party programs you can use to record your Skype session. They run between 15 and 30 dollars.

The most important thing about using a synchronous classroom tool is to practice with the tool well in advance of the class meeting. Practice multiple times until you are comfortable with how to use the tool. This is critical, as you'll lose credibility with your students if you forget how to use the basic features of the tool.

As I have previously mentioned, you need to list any necessary equipment in your syllabus. Your students will most likely need to purchase a headset/microphone if they are going to use any of these tools. This is important, as you'll get terrible audio feedback if students try to use the speakers and mic on their laptop.

If you are asking your entire class to meet on a specific day at a specific time, you MUST list this in the registrar's schedule. If this is not correctly listed, you won't be able to expect your students to have that time available. Double check to make certain that this has been listed correctly within ISIS.

It's likely that there will be technology issues with these tools. You can avoid some of them by requiring students to do a test with their equipment before the class meeting. You can make it an assignment and require them to submit a screen capture of their successful connection. Have a backup plan in place in the event that the technical difficulties are too much to solve during the class session.

Finally, if you will require students to be online at a certain day and time, be sure that there is reason. If you simply lecture to them, this is something that could be recorded that they

could watch at any time.  So it is important for the session to be interactive.

Today, there are many webtools that will support student collaboration. The suite of tools that Google has created makes it easy for students to work together on a project or presentation and get feedback from their peers.

Because the Google tools are web-based, the issues with uploading and downloading are reduced. Because the tools are free, students can create their own documents and share them with the members of their group. They can then post a link to the finished document on the discussion board for peer review.

The Google tools include documents, presentations, spreadsheets, forms and drawings as well as GoogleMaps and GoogleEarth. Students find these tools fairly easy to use as they operate very much like their Microsoft Office counterparts. If you think that a Google tool is the right fit for your assignment, keep the best practices that we discussed in the first presentation in mind. In particular, be conscious of student privacy and personal information. Google tools should not be considered “secure.”

# More Tools

- Audacity
  - Audio recording
  - Podcasts
- Gliffy
  - Diagrams
  - Timeline
- Dipity
  - Timeline
- Pinterest
  - Share links

*Timeline created in Gliffy*

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Some other potentially useful webtools include Audacity which is a free audio recording tool. Students can use it to create their own podcasts which they can upload them to your course discussion board for peer review or to the assignment tool for grading.

Gliffy is a diagram tool. Students can create their own free account and work individually or as a group to diagram timelines, processes, and even furniture layout for interior design. Students can post the link to their finished assignment for grading or peer review.

Dipity is a timeline tool. Again, students can create their own free account. They can work individually or collaboratively. The tool supports links to other Internet content. Be aware, that any Dipity timeline is completely open to the public.

Pinterest is like a virtual scrapbook. This tool might be useful for assignments that ask students to determine appropriate visual material. Again, this tool is completely open to the public. So students should not use their names when creating their Pinterest account.

# CMS Tools

- Discussion board
- Wikis
- Blogs/Journals
- Polls/Surveys
  - Qualtrics
  - Lss.at.ufl.edu/teachingtools

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Don't overlook the tools that can be found in your course management system. In fact, the more activity you can keep within your course site, the easier it is for students and for you to track and grade. Keeping assignments within the CMS has the added advantage of being secure. Your CMS can support discussions, wikis, blogs or journals and polling or surveys. If you would like a more robust survey tool, UF has a site license for Qualtrics. To access Qualtrics, go to lss.at.ufl.edu/teachingtools.

## Free Microsoft Office Suite

- Offer includes students, faculty and staff
- Professional Plus for Windows
- Office Standard for Mac
- Can be downloaded
  - software.ufl.edu/
- Physical disc from Hub or Bookstore
- Can be downloaded/installed once only
- Lynda.com:
  - lss.at.ufl.edu/training

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You may want your students to use Microsoft Office software for some of their assignments. If you would like your students to submit work using Word, PowerPoint and Excel, it tends to work best if everyone in the class is using the same version of the software. The Microsoft Office suite is available to students, faculty and staff at no cost.

The software is available for both Windows and Macs. The programs can be downloaded from software.ufl.edu. Or a physical disc can be purchased for $15.00 from the Hub or Bookstore. Be aware that the software can be downloaded and installed only once on one computer.

Remember that lynda.com has tutorials on how to use the Microsoft programs. So you can save time for yourself and your students by providing students with the link to access the lynda tutorials for free. Lss.at.ufl.edu/training.

# Finding Tools

- CITT toolbox:
  - Citt.ufl.edu/tool-box
- Educause
  - 7 Things you should know about. . .
- Instructional Designer
  - Teach.ufl.edu

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There are too many webtools to cover them all in this short presentation, and new ones are being created all of the time. The CITT toolbox can quickly provide you with information on different tools as well as examples and directions on how to get started. The toolbox can be found at citt.ufl.edu/tool-box.

The Educause website provides useful information on the pros and cons of various tools in their 7 Things you should know about. . . series of .pdf publications.

And finally, your best resources are the instructional designers here on the UF campus. If your unit does not have an instructional designer, you can request a consultation through the *Course Assistance Request Form* that is found on the teach.ufl.edu website. An instructional designer can look at your learning objectives and recommend appropriate tools as well as suggest the best method to get started using them. These folks spend a lot of their time looking at tools and considering how they might be used for education. Take advantage of this resource!

## Photo Credit

- Slide 2: Mitchell, John. *Mass Relationships in Chemical Reactions*. CHM1025. University of Florida. 2011. Web. 26 Dec. 2012.
- Slide 5/6: Smith, Jennifer. *Instructional Design Group: November Meeting 2011*. VoiceThread. Nov. 2011. 27 Dec. 2012.
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- Slide 12: Porter, Wendell. Transportation Project. AOM2520. University of Florida. 5 June 2012. 27 Dec. 2012.

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- Slide 15: Brandman, Rusti. *Final Project—Using GoogleDocs*. DAN2100. University of Florida. 2009.
- Slide 17: Smith, Jennifer. *Timeline Sample*. Gliffy. University of Florida. 2009.
- Slide 18: Discussion Group 9. *Module 2 Discussion*. DAN2100. University of Florida. Aug/Sep 2011.
- Slide 20: CITT Tool Box. University of Florida. 19, Sep 2012.

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