



HCC Students Develop Personal Style for Learning

By Rebecca Emerson, Advising Coach—

Each Sunday night millions of TV viewers watch in amazement and wonder as Ty Pennington, his buddies, and hundreds of volunteers find, demolish and rebuild a family's home all within seven days. Almost 100 HCC students this semester have been asked how this terrific feat was humanly possible. And the answer was almost always the same: Extreme Makeover Home Edition can only do these incredible things because the builders have the right tools.

Community college students are building houses of their own—not necessarily with bricks and mortar, but with books and computers. These houses they build are not the colonial or ranch styles you may picture, but instead they are degrees, certificate programs and diplomas. They build lives through training programs, setting examples for their children while studying together, and through hard and persistent work. Like on the popular Sunday night show, the students can only build these things efficiently when they have the right tools.

Students in two developmental math classes, two developmental reading classes, and four developmental English classes all had the opportunity to complete a learning styles inventory, the VARK, earlier this semester. Each student answered 13 questions such as, "You are about to give directions to a person who is standing with you. She is staying at a hotel in town and wants to visit your house later. She has a rental car. I would:

- Draw a map on paper
- Tell her the directions
- Write down the directions (without a map)
- Collect her from the hotel in a car."

Based on each student's answer, the VARK software is able to pinpoint their learning style, based on sensory modalities, into one of the following categories:

- V—Visual learner: likes graphs, charts, diagrams
- A—Auditory learner: learns through hearing
- R—Read/Write: learns through texts, lists, bullets
- K—Kinesthetic: learns by making things "real."

As Instructor Lilia Joy pointed out during a recent learning styles training, just because a student *has* a particular learning style does not automatically mean that it is a *strength*. Like any skill, the use of learning styles must be understood, developed and put into practice.

With this in mind, each student completing the survey was asked to come to the Advising Center for a one-on-one learning styles coaching session. These sessions, about 15-20 minutes in length, described the student's individual way of intaking, learning and outputting information most effectively based on reported answers. Each student was then given practical note-taking, study and test taking tips based the way he or she best processes information. Lastly, each student was offered the opportunity to return later in the semester with notes or study sheets in hand to receive help putting the tips and strategies into action.

In all, over 45 students chose to return for one-on-one personalized coaching, and ten percent have returned for a follow-up session.

To find out about more about learning styles, individual coaching or to include your students in the process, please contact Advising Coach Rebecca Emerson at 831-9828. The free learning styles inventory is available to all students via our website, www.hencc.kctcs.edu. From the Recommended Links box, click on "Student Self-Advising Tools" and from that page click on the first link, "Learning Styles."

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Gaming vs. Study Time: Addressing Millennial Needs

By **Jonna Ziniel, Academic Success Advisor**

“Just one more game, this time I will win,” I think to myself before bed. Yes, it is my nightly ritual of Spider Solitaire. I play until I win and then go to bed. It amazes me how much time can pass when you are sitting at the computer moving those little cards around. Two minutes suddenly turns into thirty-two minutes. It saddens me to think of all the things I could accomplish in that thirty minutes of trying to win a card game.

Have you ever found the right information at the exact right time, even though you did not even know you were looking for that information? That is what happened to me at the Annual National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Conference in Indianapolis, IN this past November. I was planning on going to a session on at-risk advising, but the session was cancelled. I decided that a session on mental health was the next best thing. That session was a full house without even standing room. Since I was running out of time before the next session started, I just stepped into the next room. The session was on “gaming addiction.” “What have I gotten myself into?” I thought.

It turns out the session was exactly what I needed at that moment. Have you ever had a student who starts out the semester as a “best” student? The student who turns in all of their assignments on time? Gradually, this “best” student becomes more and more distant in class. They may stop attending class, they may turn in assignments late or not at all, or they may just seem disinterested. This can happen to students and advisees, as well as instructors and advisors, and gaming addiction may be the culprit.

This session, led by Lee Kim from Murray State University, offered practical tips for recognizing gaming addiction, a very prevalent problem on today’s college campus. Kim also offered tools to assist advisees and students who are suffering from gaming addiction. Like any addiction, there are often signs of gaming addiction, and they are similar to other addictions. Depression, disinterest, and lying are just some of the characteristics.

What amazed me the most were all the new games available suited for the addictive personality. Games that you need to continue playing or you will lose your progress. Games where you earn more points for the more time spent on the game. However, perhaps the most addictive games are the role playing games available. These are games where the player actually becomes a character in a story, and acts out a part in the story. This can be especially appealing to individuals with low self-esteem or high communication apprehension. Although some research may point to the benefit these types of games may play in raising self-esteem, and increasing interpersonal skills, this session showed the very dangerous side of gaming as a culture.

For more information about gaming addiction, please visit Lee Kim’s article located on NACADA’s web site at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/Gamer-Addiction.htm>

Although I came upon this session by accident, it was very beneficial in providing new insight into a problem that is often overlooked. Lee Kim found in a study she did of graduates, that 1 in 8 suffered from some level of gaming addiction. As advisors and instructors, we need to become more aware of this serious problem on today’s college campus.

Upcoming Learning Opportunities for HCC Personnel

Title	Description	Date / Time
Excel Beginners	Excel basics, workbooks, editing, and formatting data	March 9, 9—10:30 (or) 1:30—3:00
Excel Intermediate	Math functions, formulas, calculation, alternate worksheet views	March 16, 9—10:30 (or) 1:30—3:00
Beginning Blackboard	Faculty planning classes for Summer or Fall 2007 should consider participating in one of these sessions	March 30, 9—11 (or) 1—3; April 13: 9—11
Focus and Referral: Students in Crisis	Participants will receive tips for recognizing students in crisis (i.e. drug or alcohol abuse, domestic violence, depression, and other mental illnesses) and appropriate strategies for referral	March 30 12:30—1:30

RSS, Podcasting and Progressive Delivery Defined

By Learning Specialist, Marcus Baltzell

In the previous edition of this newsletter, I spent some time reflecting on research I've done relating to neo-millennial students and progressive delivery. One form of progressive delivery generating a buzz in the higher-education community is Podcasting (and to a lesser degree, RSS). The idea behind both of these media is to bring content to an audience on a consistent basis. Podcasting refers to the process of subscribing to and downloading audio and video feeds from a particular source on a consistent basis. RSS is basically the text version. Instead of focusing upon how these delivery formats can and are being used in an educational setting, I thought it may be more important to simply define the two.

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. As the name implies, these syndicated articles are very simply downloaded as feeds. Perhaps you've seen this icon on some of your favorite websites:



This icon indicates that the page you are viewing offers a syndicated feed of some kind. This feed could be RSS or Podcast or another variant. In order to subscribe to any feeds within a website, you must use a feed aggregator- an application that allows you to identify feeds, and subscribe to them.

Using a feed aggregator, your chosen feeds will be updated at a time interval of your choosing. By default, aggregators typically update daily. However, if you are subscribing to a news feed for example, you may want the news more frequently. Feed aggregators vary greatly in reliability and functionality. Generally, you can use them as add-ons to your internet browser, as stand-alone applications or even within newest version of Outlook (to be installed on campus in the near future).

Imagine opening Outlook to check your email, and a list of all your favorite sites with the most recently added articles and headlines appears. You click on the feed, the article and you are redirected to the website. As you can imagine this process eliminates much of the time you previously spent surfing from site to site.

Using feeds to keep your world of information current is something I'm finding to be really beneficial. With a simple scan of my feeds I can see all of the latest content from the likes of: NPR, CNN, The Orlando Sentinel, ESPN, the National Weather Service, and much more. Now imagine that your course offered a feed that students could subscribe to. Without ever doing anything more than updating their feeds, students can automatically have your latest instructional content delivered to their personal media device in audio, video, or text form. Whether or not you ever choose to deliver content in this way, I invite you to contact me to learn more about the technology. I think you'll find that RSS and Podcasting are at the same time enjoyable and time-saving methods for keeping your world of information up to the minute!

Without ever doing anything more than updating their feeds, students can automatically have your latest instructional content delivered to their personal media in audio, video or text form.

RSS & Podcasting Suggested Subscriptions

- CNN Education: http://rss.cnn.com/rss/cnn_education.rss
 - NPR RSS Archive: <http://www.npr.org/rss/>
 - SLATE Magazine RSS Archive: <http://www.slate.com/id/2154868/>
- KCTCS News Feed: <http://www.kctcs.edu/newspublications/kctcsrssfeed.xml>
- RSS Feed Hotlist: <http://subhonker6.userland.com/rcsPublic/rssHotlist>

Changes by Title III Project Director Kim Conley

The philosophers tell us that Change is the only thing we can truly count on. The platitudes are endless, and they all tell us the same thing: Change is hard; Change is painful; and Change is inevitable. Title III is frequently referred to in higher education circles as a “Catalyst for Change”. We have seen this Catalyst at work on our own campus. Title III funds have given us the ability to try new learning strategies in our classrooms and new advising strategies with our students. Title III has also served as a reminder that in order to help students succeed we sometimes have to get out of our comfort zone.

January 2007 brought another change to our Title III Team. Doris Cherry has chosen to return to the classroom full-time and will no longer be serving as Activity Director for our Title III project. This has led to some changes in the way Title III activities will be addressed here at HCC. A new Title III Advisory Team* has been formed and is chaired by Dr. David Brauer. The role of this team is to lead and direct Title III activities in the final two and a half years of the grant. The advisory team has met and discussed the options for filling the Activity Director’s position. It was decided that, in light of the short amount of time left in the grant, the best course of action would be to restructure the position of Project Director to include the Activity Director responsibilities. This option must be approved by our Program Director before the decision is final.

What does this mean for Title III, HCC and the faculty and staff involved in the activities? It means that the day-to-day activities of the grant will be directed by Kim, Rebecca and Marc. Decisions on new initiatives, changes to current initiatives and all other strategic issues will be decided by the Title III Advisory Team. This team will also work to decide which Title III initiatives should be institutionalized and how that institutionalization will take place.

Change. My experiences over the past two years of the Title III journey have certainly emphasized the platitudes of the philosophers. My favorite one is a quote from Mary Englebreit, “If you don’t like something change it; If you can’t change it, change the way you think about it.” I am sure I will be reporting on many more Changes in the next two and a half years of this journey. In fact, I look forward to it.

* Title III Advisory Team—Dr. David Brauer, Patty Mitchell, Mike Thurman, Kim Conley, Marc Baltzell, Rebecca Emerson, Doris Cherry, Bill Gary, Cathy Hunt, Paul Kasenow and Becky Wells.

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