MERLOT @ EDC

Brandon Muramatsu

Director of Alliances

mura@merlot.org

Outline

MERLOT

➢ **Brief History of MERLOT**

- **What are "Educational" Digital Libraries?**

- **What is MERLOT…**
    - To educators and learners?
    - To project partners and participants?

- **MERLOT Peer Review**
    - Criteria to evaluate technology and its impact on learning

- **Discussion:**
    - How can we go beyond peer review to develop a scalable method of determining technology's enhancement/ improvement of learning in educational digital libraries?

Brief History of MERLOT

MERLOT

- **Begun in 1997 as project in California State University System**
  - Led by systemwide Center for Distributed Learning (1997-2002)
  - Now individual department moving toward 501c3 non-profit organization
- **Builds upon Apple's Education Object Economy**
- **In 1998-1999 MERLOT comes to national prominence**
  - Via State Higher Education Executives Organization/ American Productivity and Quality Center Best Practice Center in faculty development and instructional technology

Brief History of MERLOT (cont.)

MERLOT

- **1999 brings Founding System Partners of collaborative**
  - Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
  - University of North Carolina
  - University System of Georgia
- **In 2000, add additional System Partners**
- **In 2002, add Edusource.Canada as Sustaining Partner**

- **As of 2003, 15 System Partners**

Brief History of MERLOT (cont.)

- **2002 brings first Campus Partners**
  - Individual campus partnerships

- **2002 brings first Alliance Partners**
  - Professional societies, educational digital libraries and collections, educational organizations
  - Formal workplans and activities, MOU

- **As of 2003, 7 Campus Partners**
- **As of 2003, 10 Alliance Partners**

MERLOT's Support

- **MERLOT is supported primarily by Partner fees**
  - CSU > $250,000
  - Sustaining > $50,000
  - System = $25,000
  - Campus = $6,500
- **MERLOT receives some grant funding**
  - NSF NSDL Program
  - Other NSF Programs

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"Working" Description of "Educational" Digital Libraries

MERLOT

…or…how they go beyond traditional brick and mortar library or "research" digital libraries…

- **Either a repository or index to teaching and learning *resources***
- ***Resources and features directly* support teaching and learning *activities***
  - Undergraduate and/or K-12
  - Educators and students
- **Provides *support* for adapting or adopting resources developed by others (through comments of use, lesson plans, etc.)**
- **Uses technology to support *collaboration*, *personalization*, *recommendation* of resources**
- **Supports *communities* of users**

Why "Digital Library"?

MERLOT

- **Useful to recognize specific focus on teaching and learning**
  - Types of materials
  - Users and sophistication level of users
- **Somewhat useful analogy**
  - "Horseless carriage"--Len Simutis, ENC
- **Similar Features**
  - Search and Browse for Resources
  - Collection Development (Cataloging)
  - Curation
  - Some Archiving

How "Educational" Digital Libraries Go Further…

- **Collection Development by Users**
  - Contribute Materials (MERLOT)
  - "Self-cataloging" (NEEDS/SMETE)
- **Reviews**
  - Peer Review (MERLOT/NEEDS)
- **Use of the Resource**
  - Member Comments (MERLOT)/User Comments (NEEDS/SMETE)
  - Assignments
- **Awards Programs**
  - Classics and Editors' Choice (MERLOT)
  - *Premier Award* (NEEDS)

How "Educational" Digital Libraries Go Further… (cont.)

MERLOT

- **Personalization**
  - Personal Collections (MERLOT)
  - My Workspace (NEEDS/SMETE)
- **Recommender Systems**
  - Related Resources, Interest, Community (SMETE)
- **Interoperability**
  - Federated Search (MERLOT and SMETE)
- **Community**
  - Developers (SMETE)
  - Editorial Boards, etc. (MERLOT)
  - Members (?) (MERLOT)

MERLOT

Brief Demo

www.merlot.org

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What is MERLOT to Educators and Learners?

MERLOT

- **Audience: Primarily Higher Education Faculty**
  - Colleges and Universities
  - Community Colleges
- **Links to Resources**
  - 10,000 total (websites, applets and other "learning objects")
  - Primarily across 14 disciplines with Editorial Boards
- **Member Directory**
  - 17,000 registered Members (62% Faculty, 18% Students, 13% Staff, 7% Other)
  - Membership is free, membership needed to contribute materials, comments, assignments, personal collections
- **MERLOT International Conference**

What is MERLOT to Partners and Participants?

- **Community of Peers**
  - Project Directors, and Campus Liaisons
  - Editorial Boards
- **Leadership in Issues in Higher Education**
  - Educational technology and impact on colleges and universities
  - Promotion and tenure, raising level of teaching activities

What is MERLOT to Partners and Participants? (cont.)

MERLOT

- **Shared Development of Technologies**
  - Primarily development of Educational Digital Library (collection)
  - Agent on behalf of Partners
    - Explore new areas such as repository and digital rights management
- **Professional Development**
  - Brings educational technology into Partner professional development
  - Brings professional development to participants

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MERLOT's Peer Review Process

- **Basic Criteria Developed in 1999**
  - Quality of Content
  - Potential Effectiveness as a Teaching/ Learning Tool
  - Ease of Use
- **Form discipline-based Editorial Boards to refine criteria and perform reviews**
  - 2002, Refined Editorial Boards to allow for expansion and better scalability

Editorial Boards

MERLOT

- **Selected and Supported by System Partners**
  - 1-2 Editors, Associate Editors, Peer Reviewers
- **Current Boards**

Biology	Music
Chemistry	Physics
Engineering	Psychology
Health Science	Teacher Education
History	Teaching and Technology
Information Technology	World Languages
Mathematics	Statistics*

Peer Review Process

MERLOT

- **Roles**
  - Editor, Associate Editor, Reviewers
  - Filled initially from Partners
- **Triage-Review-Reporting-Post**
  - Multiple step process
  - Rating

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