



Extending “Scholarship” to Including Teaching in a Digital World

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Outline



- **MERLOT is about value and making contributions visible**
- **Recent advances of the MERLOT project**
- **MERLOT and Review, Tenure and Promotion**
- **Discussion**

MERLOT is about Value and Making Contributions Visible



- **Value to educators and learners**
 - Access to high quality resources across a wide range of disciplines
 - Access to communities (disciplinary, functional such as faculty development)
- **Value to institutions and partners**
 - Extend “local” efforts, make a national impact
 - Independent evaluation of “quality”

MERLOT is about Value and Making Contributions Visible



- **Value to authors**
 - Provides peer reviews, comments and assignments
 - Provides recognition and documentation
- **Value to contributors and members**
 - By making curriculum development visible
- **Value to editorial boards and reviewers**
 - Leadership
 - Participate as a “professional responsibility”

Recent Advances of the MERLOT Project



- **Extending the Admin Team**
 - Flora McMartin: Focusing on member services and evaluation
 - Background in education
 - Worked with NEEDS and SMETE digital libraries for over 4 years
 - Brandon Muramatsu: Focusing on alliances with digital libraries, professional societies and other educational organizations
 - Background in engineering
 - Worked with NEEDS and SMETE digital libraries for 7 years

Technology Update



- **Update to MERLOT website to be released in December/January**
 - Personal (and shareable) Collections
 - “Remember Me”
- **New technologies under development**
 - Federated search with Education.au and SMETE.ORG
- **Top-to-bottom technology update planned**

Partnerships and Alliances



- **New Organizational Alliance Program**
 - Education.au
 - American Association of Physics Teachers
 - New Media Consortium (formerly New Media Centers)
 - A number of others under development
- **New Campus Partnership Program**
- **Improved support for Institutional Partners**
 - Tasting Room
 - Partner Reserve
- **Recruitment**
- **Do you know of any organizations or institutions we should be working with?**

Member Services



- **New Editorial Board/Community**
 - Faculty Development
 - Contact Flora McMartin, mcmartin@merlot.org
- **Peer Review Process**
 - Improved support for editorial boards
 - Training tool to support new reviewers
- **Member Services**
 - MERLOT International Conference
 - Initiative still in planning stages

The Environment



- **Development of digital learning materials continues**
- **Budget challenges in higher education lead to continued interest in “distance learning”**
- **More campuses and systems becoming interested in digital scholarship**
 - University of Michigan

The Environment (cont.)



- **Guidelines for evaluating technology in instruction being developed**
 - Conference on College Composition and Communication
 - Modern Language Association
 - American Association for History and Computing
 - Duquesne University
- **Educational digital libraries under development, some conducting Peer Reviews**
 - National Science Foundation \$25M/year NSDL Program

MERLOT's Core Assumptions



Relationship between MERLOT and the Review, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) process

- **Faculty are, and should remain, in control of online learning processes in collaboration with their students**
- **Faculty need better mechanisms to document their contributions to teaching and learning**
- **Faculty-led peer review processes are key to expanding the use and effectiveness of digital learning materials**

Key Elements Guiding MERLOT's Approach



- **Make digital scholarship “visible”**
- **Enable “electronic portfolios” of digital scholarship**
- **Evaluate materials in the medium that they are created**
- **Focus on peer review through established criteria, processes and outcomes**
- **Peer review and testimony by experts of discipline enhance**

MERLOT Provides...



- **Quality Reviews**
 - Standardized evaluation process
 - Defined criteria customized for each discipline
 - Independent panel of experts, with disciplinary background
 - Training to ensure reliable application of criteria and process
- **Documentation**
 - Formal recognition of contributions of authors, contributors, editors, reviewers and members
 - Ability to form an “electronic portfolio” of contributions and resources used within MERLOT

Value to Editorial Boards and Reviewers



- **Professional development for Editorial Boards**
 - Developing leadership skills
 - Leading scholarship of teaching in their discipline
 - Visibility of expertise
- **Consider reviewing as a “professional responsibility”**
 - New initiative to link MERLOT disciplinary communities and editorial boards to appropriate professional societies
- **Recognition and documentation at home institution**
 - Letter of “Appointment” to editor designees
 - Participation and reviews can become part of RTP package

Value to Authors



- **“Biggest” Impact in Support of RTP Process**
- **Peer Review Process**
 - Independent review of quality of author’s work
 - Feedback for improvement from knowledgeable peers
- **Recognition and documentation at home institution**
 - Two letters summarizing review and process to author identified designees (e.g., Provost, Dean)
 - Review publicly posted
 - Documentation can become part of RTP package
- **New MERLOT Classics**
 - “Best of the best” across MERLOT
- **New MERLOT Editors Choice**
 - “Best of the best” in the discipline

Value to Contributors and Members



- **Makes curriculum development visible**
 - Share resources used in their teaching (by adding them to MERLOT)
 - Add comments, assignments to extend and describe use of resources
 - Create an “electronic portfolio” of contributions (soon to be shareable)
 - Documentation can become part of RTP package

Discussion...



Questions?



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