MOOC Instructors Share Lessons Learned

AMELIA PAVLIK
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Two young Iranian women expressing how happy they were to find a strong female figure to look up to. A quadriplegic in Scotland sharing how, for the first time in his life, he felt equal to his classmates.

These are just a few of the stories that Karen Head, assistant professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication, shared about her experience teaching a massive open online course (MOOC) during last Thursday’s MOOC-focused town hall.

“In the case of the Iranian women, I feel like the anonymity of the MOOC allows students to speak up in a way that they can’t always do under other circumstances,” Head replied to a question regarding whether it was more challenging to get students to participate and provide feedback with a MOOC format.

Head was one of five MOOC instructors who joined Provost Rafael Bras to discuss the progress of MOOCs at Georgia Tech and lessons learned.

The other panelists included Bonnie Ferreri, professor and associate chair for undergraduate affairs in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering; Mike Schatz, professor in the School of Physics; Charles Isbell, associate dean for academic affairs in the School of Interactive Computing; and Alex Duncan, a master’s student in Human-Computer Interaction, who served as a teaching assistant for the course (MOOC) during last Thursday’s MOOC town hall.

Obamacare Far from Being Settled Law

DAN TREADAWAY
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

The recent federal government shutdown had a great deal to do with ongoing conservative opposition to the 2010 passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as “Obamacare.”

Even though the legislation was signed into law by President Barack Obama more than three years ago and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2012, the ACA, in reality, is far from settled law, according to Todd Stein, a lecturer in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs and leader of the government affairs/public policy practice at Kitchens New Cleghorn LLC.

Stein discussed the history and possible future of Obamacare last Wednesday as part of the Policy@Tech Speaker Series. “Only 39 of the 58 Senate Democrats who initially voted for Obamacare in December 2009 are still in office, and those senators are getting nervous because they can clearly see things beginning to fray,” said Stein, who served as legislative director and general counsel for now-retired Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut during the debate and passage of the ACA.

Survey Shares Campus Community’s Thoughts on Diversity

AMELIA PAVLIK
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

There’s one thing that faculty, staff, and students seem to agree on — Georgia Tech is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment.

This is one of the pieces of information learned from last spring’s Climate Assessment survey, which was conducted to help define and assess Tech’s progress toward achieving a culture of collegiality.

“For example, about 84 percent of faculty indicated that their school demonstrates a commitment to diversity and inclusion, and about 90 percent of staff think that Tech is a comfortable and inclusive environment,” said Archie Ervin, vice president for Institute Diversity.

“And more than 90 percent of students felt similarly. In sum, the report helps us to understand our strengths and suggests
IRI Intro: 3 Questions with Beth Mynatt

You probably have heard that Georgia Tech has Interdisciplinary Research Institutes (IRIs) — but do you know much about them?

This article is part of a series to introduce the IRIs and their directors. In this issue, Executive Director Beth Mynatt answers questions about the Institute for People and Technology (IPaT).

What is IPaT and its core research areas?

Focusing on sectors such as health care delivery, education, humanitarian systems, and consumer media, IPaT looks at the potential Tech’s research has to transform human behavior in areas of great societal interest. We look at where technology and people come together in powerful ways. For example, we explore novel media technologies that will help motivate healthy behavior and help people manage chronic diseases. We look at new communication technologies to help communities find ways to take care of each other.

MOOCs, continued from page 1

Introduction to Psychology as a Science MOOC

To kick off the discussion, each panelist was invited to share a bit about their MOOC experiences. One person asked if MOOCs are ever going to completely replace on-campus classes. It says: "I don’t think this is the situation," Brax said. "I certainly believe that undergraduate education, especially in an environment like Georgia Tech, will only benefit.”

Duncan added that people often think that MOOCs are in competition with face-to-face courses. Actually, the two formats can complement one another by providing opportunities for those off campus to learn and on-campus contingents to make more out of class time because lectures are done online, he said. View a recording of the town hall here:

What changes do companies want with IPaT?

The more experience I’ve had as a research administrator, the more I realize that companies want the answers to these questions: What makes people powerful? What makes people trust technology? What changes people’s behavior? Companies have confided that these questions are the ones that really challenge them and that they are looking for technical innovation as part of the larger solution to influencing human behavior. Over the years, we’ve learned to focus our partnerships with companies on these larger questions.

In addition, we make it easy for companies to engage Tech. They can sponsor theoretical research, or they can contract with us for specific technologies.

And as much as companies love working with our students, they love to work with each other at Tech. Many of our research programs are based on bringing multiple external partners to the same table so they can benefit from an exchange of ideas and collaboration — and enjoy the added advantage of having Tech as a neutral party. Our Nov. 5-6 People and Technology Forum is just one example of this. There are talks and research demos, but equally important are the conversations that take place in the hallways.

The Q&A, in its entirety, is available at [http://c.gatech.edu/1Y3AEm](http://c.gatech.edu/1Y3AEm)
Institute to Revise Definition of ‘Faculty’

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

If you’re looking for a way to develop new skills or refresh those currently in your toolbox, the Workplace Learning and Professional Development (WLPD) team is here to help.

“In creating our new learning curriculum, we are after learning transfer,” said LaTresse Ferguson, manager of WLPD in the Office of Human Resources. “We believe this happens when relevant knowledge is transferred, that knowledge can immediately be applied, and behavior change is observed. This is what helps participants grow and develop to meet their full potential.

A highly-skilled, knowledgeable, and engaged workforce is essential to the success of the Institute. With this in mind, the WLPD team has revamped the faculty and staff professional development curriculum with a focus on competency development in five key areas.

• Communications
• Customer service
• Leadership
• Performance management
• Diversity and inclusion

Courses can be customized based on a department’s needs, and can last a few hours or multiple days. Each course is offered monthly, every other month, or quarterly.

“We have a growing suite of free courses, and although there are minimal costs associated with a few of the courses, these are usually covered by the employee’s department,” Ferguson added.

Questions? Contact Ferguson at latresse.ferguson@ohr.gatech.edu. Also, visit the WLPD website regularly for updated course listings. www.ohr.gatech.edu/learning

DIVERSITY, continued from page 1

areas where we should focus our attention to enhance the experiences of the members of our campus community.”

The survey revealed high levels of satisfaction from many faculty, staff, and students on a number of items, while there were lower levels of satisfaction on others. Satisfaction varied based on social identities such as job function, gender, and race.

Respondents included 439 faculty members, 2,451 staff members, and 3,782 students (undergraduate and graduate). “We received responses from nearly half of our faculty and staff, and from a sizable number of students,” said Jonathan Gordon, director of the Office of Assessment. “This gives us considerable confidence in the reported results.”

Here are a few of the results for faculty and staff:

FACULTY

• About 72 percent were satisfied with support they receive in collaboration on research, with advice on the promotion/tenure process, and mentoring for teaching.

• More than half of responding female faculty (about 52 percent) stated they had experienced instances of marginalization at Tech in the past three years, compared with about 11 percent of responding male faculty.

• Responding female faculty were less likely to feel supported by their chairs in terms of advice on obtaining grants (62 percent of males felt supported vs. 41 percent of females). Responding female faculty were also less satisfied with their school’s efforts to retain faculty from diverse backgrounds (57 percent of females vs. 81 percent of males).

STAFF

• About 95 percent agreed that they could freely interact with colleagues in their work setting, about 85 percent felt comfortable sharing thoughts and ideas, and about 85 percent agreed that collaboration is encouraged in the workplace.

• About 72 percent agreed that promotion practices were consistent with Tech’s commitment to diversity. (About 63 percent of female respondents and about 50 percent of underrepresented minorities — those who described themselves as American Indian, black/African-American, or Hispanic [regardless of race] — felt this way.)

• About 81 percent felt valued by the Tech community. “We look forward to consulting with academic and administrative leaders regarding the outcomes that impact their respective units,” said Julie Ancis, associate vice president for Institute Diversity. “Our office also plans to use the data to inform new and existing initiatives.”

The results (including student data) are available to faculty and staff at http://b.gatech.edu/17c2DzK

Campus News

OHR Launches New Learning Series

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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• Customer service
• Leadership
• Performance management
• Diversity and inclusion

Courses offered by the Workplace Learning and Professional Development team can be customized based on departmental needs, or employees can select from classes listed at trains.gatech.edu. www.ohr.gatech.edu/learning

November 7

The Student Center and Dining Services have partnered to bring local, sustainable food to campus. Stock up, and interact with local vendors and farmers. The market takes place each Thursday on Tech Walk through Nov. 21, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For an updated list of vendors, visit http://c.gatech.edu/100msh7

November 8

The Office of Human Resources will host a campus information session about open enrollment and the 2014 benefit plans at 9:30 a.m. in the Student Center Theater. http://c.gatech.edu/djdyG

November 13

As part of International Education Week and international education, the Office of Human Resources will host an informational event for faculty and staff to participate in an interactive simulation designed to give participants a glimpse into the journey that international students undertake. The event will be held at 11 a.m. in the Piedmont Room, Student Center. Lunch will be provided. RSVP and learn about the other events for faculty and staff at http://c.gatech.edu/1PfFMYX

The Web of Brilliance Employee Resource Group for faculty and staff who are introverts will be held at noon on November 13 in Room 102, Clough Commons.

For a more comprehensive listing of events and updated dates, visit www.gatech.edu/calendar

Classifieds

Available items:

2005 CRV-V EX AWD, 142,000 miles, very good condition, clean maintenance record, new tires, forest green, CD player, $7,400. Contact Jeanne Balsam, chair of the Subcommittee on Faculty Governance, at 404-894-9599 or jeanne.balsam@ohr.gatech.edu.

2004 Legacy, 130,000 miles, black/gray, automatic, power sun roof, $5,000. Call Paul at 404-894-6000 or paclyn96@gmail.com.

2007 Prius, 79,000 miles. Excellent condition, smoke and pet free. Clean title. Backup camera, Bluetooth connection, and radio/CD aux music system. Very fuel efficient. $13,000 OBO. Contact 404-534-6466 or gouldtoby@gmail.com.

2006 Prius, 79,000 miles. Excellent condition, smoke and pet free. Clean title. Backup camera, Bluetooth connection, and radio/CD aux music system. Very fuel efficient. $13,000 OBO. Contact 404-534-6466 or gouldtoby@gmail.com.

2001 Honda CR-V EX AWD, 142,000 miles, very good condition, clean maintenance record, new tires, forest green, CD player, $5,200. Call Paul at 404-217-5927.

1991 Harley-Davidson XLH883 Sportster motorcycle, 28,000 miles, five-speed, belt drive, black, $2,200. Call 404-894-9399 or email jwstudent@gmail.com.

2008 Audi A4 QUATRO with tech package, 75,000 miles, bronze pearl, navigation, sun roof, backup camera, satellite radio, leather, dealer maintained, power seats/windows, roof rack, and more. Excellent condition ($7,500). Email ad18@facilities.gatech.edu.

For a more comprehensive listing of events and updated dates, visit www.gatech.edu/calendar

The Whistle • October 28, 2013 • page 3

The Whistle • October 28, 2013 • PAGE 3

www.whistle.gatech.edu

www.whistle.gatech.edu
Bader’s Love for Teaching Goes Way Back

AMELIA PAVLIK
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

It’s around 9:30 a.m. on a Thursday, and David Bader is explaining how trick-or-treating is connected to graph theory.

“For example, we get together with our friends to figure out which houses to go to for optimal candy rewards — and optimization is one component of graph theory,” said Bader, professor and executive director for High Performance Computing. “And when you get home, you sort your candy — yet another concept. We should consider October graph theory.”

Welcome to Bader’s Computational Science and Engineering Algorithms class — and his approach to teaching.

“When I prepare for class, I think about the story I’m going to tell and try to incorporate current events and real-world cases into the curriculum,” he said.

But these skills didn’t develop overnight.

FROM TECHIE TODDLER TO FULL PROF

It began in 1972, when Bader started playing around on a mainframe computer at the college where his dad worked. He was 3.

“Then, when I was in elementary school in the late 1970s, I began holding computer retraining classes for my friends and neighbors who were being laid off from a nearby steel plant,” he added. “Things just seemed to evolve from there.”

After spending time at the University of Maryland as a National Science Foundation postdoctoral research associate, Bader began working his way through the professorial ranks at the University of Mexico in the late 1990s. He was recruited to Georgia Tech in 2005 to launch the School of Computational Science and Engineering.

Bader’s research aims to solve real-world problems by using computational and data-intensive solutions.

For example, Bader might use massive data sets to help him figure out how to keep people safer during severe weather or how to design more personalized medications.

“I love that my job is fun,” he said. “I can’t believe I get paid to collaborate with the most amazing students and colleagues, and solve grand challenge problems that have a lasting impact on society.”

THE MAN BEHIND THE MONITOR

When Bader isn’t conducting research or teaching, you might find him enjoying one of his favorite spots on campus, the Klaus Advanced Computing Building.

Get Discounted Software for Personal Use

INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

If you’ve ever tried to buy Adobe or Microsoft software — think Photoshop or Microsoft Word — you know it’s not cheap. That’s where a program offered by the University System of Georgia (USG) comes in handy.

The Software Resource and Services (SRS) personal software store was created to provide USG faculty, staff, and students with discounted, brand-name software for personal or work-related computers.

“The store was created back in 2011 and was initially only available to some institutions in the system,” said Jack Delinsky, director of SRS. “But now all USG colleges and universities participate.”

Read on for more about the personal store.

How do you determine an item’s price?

SRS compares it against online stores such as Amazon.com and lowers it as much as possible. Depending on the cost we can get from the distributor, it can vary greatly. If we can’t provide the best price, based on our research or input from employees and students, we won’t put the item in our store.

What do I need to make a purchase?

An account and a credit card. (Accounts are established using your Tech email, which will serve as your account ID.)

Can people download software online?

Many of our products are available for download — meaning you don’t have to wait for us to ship you discs.

Can I continue to use software purchased in the store if I leave the USG?

If you are purchasing something from the personal store, the license is yours to keep, even if you leave a system institution.

How does the full version of software differ from the student/educator version?

The version for students/educators is often a stripped-down version offered at a lower price. In our case, we usually just offer the full version, because we can offer it at a lower cost than what the student/educator version would normally cost.

For more information about software available from the SRS personal store, visit www.srs.usg.edu

From Techie Toddler to Full Prof

David Bader

“It’s just a beautiful faculty that inspires me to make contributions to computing and to think about the impact of my research on society,” he added.

Or you might catch this vegan enjoying the various dining spots around campus to try their takes on international cuisines ranging from African to Asian.

And one last fun fact about this computing wizard — he also has a strong interest in genomics (simply put, the study of genes and their functions). “Many people might not be aware that I have a twin sister — who happened to earn her doctorate in genetics,” he said. “My full mitochondrial genome is even available in GenBank, a database that contains publicly available DNA sequences.”

CLASSIFIEDS

REAL ESTATE/ROOMMATES

Lowly, 1,050 sq. ft. 2BR/1BA garden apartment with fencered yard in Ansley Park for rent. Off-street parking. Walking distance to Piedmont Park and the High Museum. 15-minute drive to Tech. $1,400/mo. Email 53theprodad@gmail.com.

For rent: 3BR/2BA bungalow; minutes to Tech, quiet in-lawn neighborhood (NW ATL). HW floors (carpet in bedrooms), gas FP central HVAC, granite countertops/ cherry kitchen, gas stove, DW, disposal, alarm system, fenced back yard, W/D connections; pets OK. $1,250/mo. Contact suzanne.bock@gatech.edu.

3BR/2BA bonus room/2BA, 2,543 sq. ft. city-de-sac house (quiet neighborhood) rents ($1,250) or sells (less than $179,000), available now. Custom-designed; 1½ stories, hardwood and neutral plush carpet; privacy-fenced backyard; master and laundry on main. Only 17 miles from Tech (pt 1.5). Call 404-384-5571.

1BR/1BA modern condo for rent in heart of Buckhead. Interior story in quiet building. One block off Peachtree Road, walking distance to two MARTA stops, retail, dining, multiple grocery stores, $1,000/mo. includes water/trash/electric/ parking. Email kristenshaw@gmail.com or call 404-414-0981.

2 BR suite in Arts Center Tower Apartments, available Nov. 16, 2013 to March 10, 2014. Rent is $1,545. Conveniently located in Midtown and next to Marta. Call 650-336-3519.

MISCELLANEOUS


Orion Skyquest XT6 Dobsonian Reflector Telescope with stand and case. Asking $350. Pretty, six-drawer dresser, bookcase, vanity and mirror, $75. Photo on request. Contact 404-652-7902 or call@gt.edu.

Baldwin Pianovox PS1500 digital conservatory piano with bench, dark rosewood finish, more than 400 studio-quality sounds (pianos, organs, strings, brass, bass, and percussion). Multi-track MIDI playback and recording. Manual included. $975. Email radama1616@gmail.com.

Looking for partner(s) to join a guided climb of Mt. McKinley (Denali) during June or July 2014. Interested? Contact jgfwang@gmail.com.

Fancy chest of drawers with rounded-top doors closing over the top. Three draw- ers. Two large bottom drawers. Top of chest is bell shaped. Furniture stores sell lower quality for $800 and up. $250 or make an offer. Call 678-429-4964 or email nynchpen@windstream.net.

Free black and white bunny available for immediate adoption. The bunny is in excellent health and friendly. Cage and food provided. Email ludmilaylm@gmail.com.

Several beautifully framed paintings for home or office including a Thomas Blackshear painting the Prayer of Jabez; The Commandment; and a large pen- nant featuring famous African-American writers and poets. Call 404-642-1283.

www.wistle.gatech.edu