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ON CAMPUS AND AT A DISTANCE: TEACHING WITH STATE OF THE ART TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract

This session will include a walking tour and informal discussion of Bentley College's \$22M in academic technology facilities, followed by a hands-on workshop with the two technologies it uses to support its highly popular web-based courses – Centra Symposium and Blackboard. Bentley has an extensive history of incorporating technology in the curriculum. Together with its curriculum and its state of the art facilities, Bentley has earned a spot on PC Computing's list of America's Most Wired Companies - the only higher education institution to make the list.

Bentley College has a long history of technology use in the curriculum. While many campuses are now launching student laptop programs, some sixteen years ago Bentley became the first college or university to require all undergraduates to have laptops. Its advanced IT infrastructure – including a gigabit ethernet backbone, wireless connectivity, 24 MB Internet connection, and a Virtual Private Network – has earned it a spot on PC Computing's list of America's Most Wired Companies - the only higher education institution to make the list.

Bentley has spent \$22M on its academic technology facilities over the past two years, producing a level of classroom technology that is truly state-of-the-art. These facilities include:

- 63 “smart” classroom facilities with LCD projectors and podium-mounted PCs
- 30 port-per-seat classrooms
- 10 classrooms with installed student PCs
- 6 videoconference-enabled locations (3 with fixed equipment)

Perhaps most interesting, Bentley has an array of new, high tech specialty lab facilities that support innovative methods of on-campus teaching. While “smart” classrooms serve the needs of many faculty and students, the College's drive to remain “The Business School for the Information Age” has required an additional set of discipline-specific, hands-on learning environments that include:

- Accounting Center for Electronic Learning and Business Measurement (ACELAB),
- Center for Marketing Technology,
- Hughey Center for Financial Services (Trading Room),
- Design and Usability Testing Center, and
- Center for Languages and International Collaboration (CLIC)

Visits to all of these facilities should provide opportunities for holding discussions surrounding the creative integration of technology in the curriculum. Each lab has been designed around a specific set of pedagogical goals, and thus represents the embodiment of a unique approach to the teaching and learning process. More information can be found at <http://atc.bentley.edu/facilities/labs.html>.

Following the walking tour, this session will provide an opportunity for attendees to try using the two popular applications Bentley uses to offer web-based courses. To support the synchronous components, Bentley employs Centra Symposium, a special courseware application that enables classes to “meet” in real-time, over the Internet. Centra99 allows for live, two-way voice

communication through student and faculty PCs over even 28.8K dialup speeds. Lectures are enhanced with PowerPoint presentations, video, synchronized browsing to relevant web sites, and other on-screen graphics, assuring that students experience the same high caliber of instruction that they would expect from campus-based courses.

The synchronous components of web courses are supported through the use of Blackboard, used in over 800 on-campus and distance learning courses at the College in the past 14 months. Blackboard enables faculty to post syllabi, course documents, offer quizzes and polls, hold electronic discussions, make announcements, etc., all without knowledge of HTML or even FTP. Bentley's unique launch of Blackboard, including "Quick Start" workshops and a customized front-end interface, enabled the most successful rollout of the product in the company's history.

This session will be offered by:

- Dr. Phillip Knutel, Director of Academic Technology at Bentley. Dr. Knutel is Project Director of the Bentley Technology Adoption Initiative, a program to help faculty integrate technology into the curriculum that has thus far received \$275,000 in external funding. He received his Ph.D. in higher education from the University of Michigan, holds an Ed.M. from Harvard, and a B.S. from Vanderbilt. His 1998 dissertation focused on how and why faculty use computer and internet technology in their teaching. Before coming to Bentley, he was Director of Academic Technology at the University of Michigan Office of Academic Outreach. A member of EDUCAUSE and the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), Dr. Knutel has presented at a number of EDUCOM, ASHE, and EDUCAUSE conferences.
- Dianne McCorry, Academic Technologist/Courseware Specialist at Bentley. She currently supports faculty use of Blackboard (<http://ecourses.bentley.edu/>) and is researching the viability of other web-based technology tools for research and teaching. Dianne explores technology projects and ideas with faculty, and helps with brainstorming, researching technology tools, and testing and implementing applications into courses. She coordinates a series of faculty IT workshops. Dianne holds a BA in Education from the College of New Jersey and an M.Ed. in Technology in Education from Lesley College. Dianne contributed to the design and opening of the Knapp Media and Technology Center at Wellesley College and was Co-Director of this facility for nearly three years. Dianne is an adjunct faculty member at Lesley College, where she teaches multimedia in the Technology in Education (M.Ed.) program.
- Ruth Horwitz, Multimedia and Distance Learning Coordinator at Bentley. Her responsibilities include integrating distance learning technologies into the curriculum, such as videoconferencing and Centra (<http://www.centra.com/>). She helps faculty design multimedia programs (incorporating graphics, audio and video). Ruth will develop and deliver training and workshops for faculty on the integration of video and distance learning technologies in instruction. Ruth has been at Bentley for twenty years. Prior to joining the ATC, she was a Video Producer in the Media Services department. Ruth has served as Adjunct Faculty at Bentley as part of the Business Communications Program, and has produced programs for non-profit organizations including the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, International Institute of Boston, and the Nat. 1 Heritage Museum, on a freelance basis. She holds a BA in Religious Studies and History, from Penn State University, Secondary Education Teaching Certification from Keene State College and a M.Ed. in Instructional Technology from Boston University.