



THIS WEEK IN THE CTRE

JANUARY 8-14, 2012

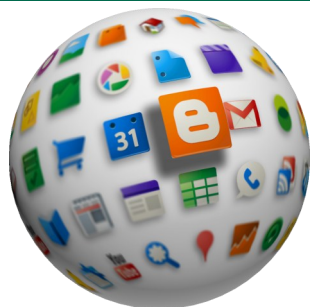
CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Upcoming Events

Course Design for Curriculum Reform Workshop	1/13 12:00-2:00PM LIB 301 RSVP
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LiveText Workshop	1/17 2:00-4:00PM LIB 144 RSVP
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NFO Redux: Share and Prepare	1/19 12:30-2:30PM LIB 301 RSVP
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APPEALING APPS

App: [Wolfram Alpha](#)
Price: \$2.99

The amazing “computational knowledge engine” can now be used on your smartphone or tablet. Likened to the Star Trek computer, it can prove very useful for research purposes (or just plain curiosity).

4 Ways to Keep Current on Tech

Keeping up with educational technology can seem daunting these days, with new programs, apps, and devices coming out all the time. But there are ways to stay on top of trends that don’t require you to spend hours every day trolling the web for information. Below are some useful resources to keep in mind.



1) **Email newsletters** are an easy way to bring trends straight to you. [TechRepublic](#), [Tech&Learning](#), and [Campus Technology](#) all have ones worth reading.

2) **Twitter** is surprising many by gaining steam as an information source for headlines. Follow feeds from the [CTRE](#), [HigherEd TechDecisions](#), [Jason Rhode](#), and [e-learn.net](#) for up-to-the-

minute news.

3) **Podcasts** are a convenient, and often entertaining way to inform yourself. Consider subscribing to [InsideHigherEd](#), [The Chronicle of Higher Ed](#), or [EDUCAUSE](#).

4) **Training sessions** offered by the CTRE and online by other institutions can really provide some valuable skills. Just a half hour a week on sites like [EducationWorld](#) can make a big difference.

Getting on the Soapbox

Imagine the following situation: You are delivering a lecture that you spent weeks preparing. Every few minutes, you ask the class if there are any questions. No one says anything, so you assume they understand everything perfectly. After the class is over, nine students send emails saying they didn’t understand the lecture at all because it was confusing, and “the whole class agrees.”

If this kind of situation has

ever happened to you, there’s good news. **SoapBox** is a program that you can incorporate easily into your classroom that allows



students to tacitly give real-time feedback on how well they are understanding class content, literally by selecting between “I am getting it” and “I am confused.” They can also type ques-

tions, vote on which topics are most confusing, and answer polling questions you can create for them ahead of time.

And all student feedback is anonymous, so they won’t be afraid of looking incompetent in front of their peers.

You can learn more about SoapBox’s features by watching [this video](#). And if you decide it’s something you’d like to try in your own teaching, you can download it [HERE](#).

Looking Forward

Ambrose Video in the Classroom

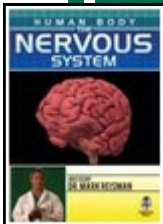
On **January 13**, CSU will begin a month-long trial with Ambrose Video's entire online collection. With the equivalent of over 1,000 DVDs of educational video, Ambrose is one of the pillars of proprietary digital content.



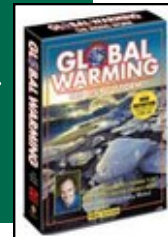
The collection will be made available to all CSU faculty to use in the classroom, and will include such titles as **A History of Black Achievement in America; The Human Body: Nervous System; and Global Warming.**



All content areas are represented, including English, which has **The Complete works of Shakespeare** to take advantage of.



Watch for updates on how to access Ambrose Video's content. The trial will expire on February 15, but if there is sufficient positive feedback from faculty, then the CTRE will consider purchasing an institutional membership for further use.



What On Earth Is This Thing?

Chances are you've seen this black-and-white square around Chicago—on advertisements, on flyers, even on business cards and t-shirts. But what is it?

It's a Quick Response code, or QR code for short, and it's changing the way people interact. When you see one, you can scan it with a smartphone or any mobile device that has a camera, QR code reader, and internet access. Once you scan it, you will automatically be taken to a particular website. For example, if you were to scan the QR code shown here, it would take you to the CTRE website.



To scan a QR code, you will need to download a QR code reader like [Qraft-er](#) or [Scan](#). Just use it once and you'll be surprised at how easy it is.

Until the past year, QR codes have primarily been used for marketing purposes, but people are finding innovative ways to integrate them into the classroom as well. By using a

QR code generator like [Kaywa](#), you can do some really neat things. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Include links to supplemental online materials and readings
- Code your class outline or syllabus
- Create an internet-based scavenger hunt
- Advertise upcoming educational events on campus or around Chicago
- Have students come up with creative ways to use QR codes!

To learn more about QR codes, click [HERE](#).

MERLOT
Multimedia Educational Resource
for Learning and Online Teaching

Call for Papers!

The **MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching (JOLT)** is a peer-reviewed online publication addressing the scholarly use of multimedia resources in education. They are now seeking manuscripts for upcoming issues in the following categories: research papers; case studies; concept papers; and position papers.

To learn more, click [HERE](#).