

Cornhuskin' season has begun

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Brightspace

By Mimi Mays, Associate Editor

Over the summer of 2018, Meredith broke ties with Blackboard and joined over 1200 schools, colleges, universities, and businesses around the world who use the learning management system Brightspace. Meredith piloted some courses on Brightspace starting in Spring 2018, led by 59 total instructors. It was their feedback that helped facilitate the campus-wide transition later in the year.

As of 2016, Brightspace's rate of use by U.S. collegiate institutions fell in fourth place behind the three most popular learning management systems: Blackboard, used by 33% of institutions; Moodle, used by 19% of institutions; and Canvas, used by 17% of institutions. In July of 2015, Blackboard released a new interface that excluded colleges who were self-hosted, like Meredith. "We felt pushed to adopt a managed hosted approach (cloud-based)," says Director of Instructional Design & Academic Technology Cheryl Todd. "The cost of Blackboard's managed hosting solution and the additional costs they charge to add features that other LMS providers included in their licenses led us to consider researching other solutions."

To tackle this task, Meredith hired an external consultant and formed a Learning Management System Advisory Committee to examine the full needs of the

Taking on D.C. as Students from M.C.

By Abigail Ojeda

On the night of Aug. 20, from women's suffrage to Hamilton, Meredith Honors students took over our nation's capitol last weekend. Every year, Honors students take a trip to explore a new city and investigate a specific topic through a mini-course taught by a Meredith professor. This year's topics focused on the themes of gerrymandering, the history of marching on Washington, space technology and the Cold War, an important business dinner as depicted in the musical Hamilton, and the history of journalism and news. With plenty of food, walking, and learning, the Honors trip to D.C. created a unique take on visiting Washington.

In the gerrymandering mini-course taught by Dr. Manzo, students toured the capitol building, visited the office of U.S. Representative David Price, and learned about the prevalence of gerrymandering. Olivia Slack reflected on her time with the group: "Our experience was fascinating; meeting with David Price's staff assistants was really insightful because I am considering a future career in politics. We learned about conferences for women in politics and how to build a network of women in politics that we can trust."

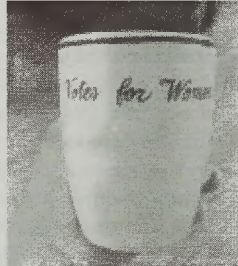
Following events in Washington from the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom to the 2018 March for Our Lives, Dr. Robbins' students learned about the monumental societal shifts that instigated marches on D.C. Student Naomi Hill said: "I think my favorite

faculty, staff and students. They reviewed the Blackboard features and determined the most-used aspects and what would be required of a new LMS. "Our primary goal was to identify a suitable LMS that would efficiently and effectively support Meredith College, supporting face-to-face instruction, blended/hybrid courses, and online course and program delivery," explains Todd.

Desire2Learn, or D2L, the software company behind Brightspace, reports that the system is "more than just a [learning management system], combining all the tools and support you need to offer a great teaching and learning experience for students and faculty." However, some professors here at Meredith may disagree in part. "There are kinks," said an SMB professor who wishes to remain anonymous, "but it's hard to tell whether it's Brightspace itself or just how we've learned to use it."

For any hardships, however, it's evident that both Meredith and

part about our mini course was the story we learned at the Belmont-Paul house. The fact that Alva Belmont had mugs made that say "vote for women" shows her intelligence and commitment to the cause. She shows that you can have both humor and



strength."

Dr. Waddelow's course focused on events portrayed in Lin Manuel Miranda's musical Hamilton and assessed the music against historical comparisons and evaluated the music itself. The group stopped in at Kramerbooks & Afterwords Café, a bookstore and coffee shop open until 3 a.m. on the weekends, to fuel their learning experience. Melanie Cusick said, "I loved being able to discuss one of my favorite musicals in depth with other angels!"

Former C.I.A. employee Dr. Rogers led his mini-course through the Air and Space Museum to discover some of the technology

used to propel the United States' intelligence, power, and exploration. For example, students saw old and new versions of astronaut suits—the newest one consists of thirteen layers. Haley Parsons, a member of the group, said, "The mini course with Dr. Rogers was a great experience. It brought together people from several majors, and we were able to view the spy exhibit to learn about the space race."

After monitoring local, national, and global news sources for several days and taking two trips to the Newseum, Dr. Walton's mini-course focused on the meaning of news and journalism both in a historical and present day context. One room in the Newseum held archives of the front pages of newspapers since the days of Martin Luther. Katie Thompson described her experience, saying, "While visiting the Newseum, I was opened up to the world of news—the sad, the gruesome and happy stories that occurred and are occurring all across our world."

In their spare time, students visited art galleries, museums, book stores, and restaurants. The best part was that many activities in Washington D.C. are free, making them particularly great opportunities for college students. The next time you're in D.C., Honors students recommend you check out the places they visited.

D2L are committed to resolving errors and assisting all users maximize their experiences.

According to Technology Services, Meredith is "still using the Feedback form with faculty and students to collect information to share with D2L with hopes that it will influence future updates." "One of the positive outcomes that we've experienced throughout this [transition] process is that more faculty have reached out to our team for assistance with Brightspace and have participated in our workshops," guarantees Todd.

At today's Tech Fair in the Cate Center from 9:30 to 3:30, there will be Technology Services staff members addressing student inquiries.

Comic by Micah Clark

