

SCIENCE & TECH

Techie Tips

Featuring Julia Houtchings

"Ready...set...Stumble!"

Yes, Stumble...upon, that is. Although not entirely practical, this little jewel is just plain fun and goodness knows we all need at least a little in our busy lives. StumbleUpon (SU) is a nifty tool that can help you discover and share websites that you might find interesting. After creating an account and installing an add-on in your Internet browser, you can save preferences for the types of random sites you "stumble upon." Search preferences range anywhere from animals to painting to video games, and you can change them anytime you want.

The process is simple: after SU sends you to a site, if you like it, give it a thumbs up; if you hate it, give it a thumbs down. Or if you have no opinion, there's no need to do anything at all. Sites that you decide to like are saved in Favorites for easy access later. It's also possible to share a site with friends on Facebook, to Tweet it, or to send a link via email.

So far I have over 450 saved links, many of which are of amazing photography and recipes. I once discovered a recipe for caramel swirl brownies; I had no choice but to give that one a thumbs up! I have no regrets about that decision, of course.

Disclaimer: The Techie cannot be held responsible for any potential negative effects this week's tip may have on productivity. Reader's discretion of implementation is advised.

New Blended Learning Initiative in Summer Courses at Meredith

Dr. Cynthia Edwards

Meredith is launching a new initiative to develop "blended" summer courses that combine online and face-to-face instruction. The goal is to provide students and faculty with flexible and innovative course options during the summer, when many are traveling or working away from campus. Summer 2011 will see the introduction of seven new pilot courses in a variety of disciplines and formats, including enhanced delivery of some established courses, as well as some brand new offerings.

- Art: Who let the dogs out? Photographing for the web, taught by Shannon Johnstone
- Biology: Biology and Society, with Bob Reid
- Computer Science: Web site Design and Management, with Kristin Watkins
- Economics: Principles of Macroeconomics, with Anne York
- English: Travel writing, with Rebecca Duncan

- Foods and Nutrition: Principles of Food, with Susan Fisher
- Psychology: Psychology of Exceptional Individuals, with Doreen Fairbank

Faculty in the pilot group will participate in a blended class experience of their own while they undergo training, and collaborate with one another and Technology Services staff to adapt courses to the new format. Director of Summer School, Cindy Edwards, who is leading the initiative, states "Blended learning opens up tremendous opportunities for innovation and the potential for improved outcomes for students, but it also challenges us to rethink methods and assumptions that are fundamental to how we have approached teaching."

Dr. Edwards also reports: for the online portion, we will be using Blackboard as the framework for providing online instruction, since it is a tool with which students and faculty are already comfortable. Blackboard has many features that support online instruction, and provides a good starting

point. We will also be using a package called Elluminate which creates a virtual classroom. Elluminate allows synchronous (real time) class sessions or project group meetings with the potential for video, audio, text, and shared white board space. Students even get an emoticon that shows the instructor if they are happy, confused, curious, so the teacher can monitor how well things are coming across. Beyond those two basic packages, every class will be a little different. The point of the pilot is to gain an understanding of what works well for Meredith, so we are trying out several different models. Some classes will be exclusively or primarily distance classes, other involve a mix of online and face-to-face instruction, giving students and faculty more flexibility in scheduling their summer. More information about the individual classes will be publicized a little later this semester and students can preregister in January.

SPORTS

Tailgating Etiquette 101

Caitlin Griffin, Staff Writer

The votes are in and they are unanimous: the favorite reason for the fall season is tailgating at NCSU football games! Thanks to our favorite co-ed university's excellent 5-2 record, more people than usual are headed out to Carter Finley Stadium to cheer on the Wolfpack this year. The next time you're invited to tag along at a pregame tailgate, how should you act? There are a few manners that every winning Meredith woman should always display:

1. **BYOFD (Bring your own food and drink).** A true Meredith woman never mooches! Excuses such as "But all of my money goes to my tuition!" are unacceptable. If you can't afford to throw in a few bucks on a Bojangles tailgate special at least have the courtesy to spend your spare change on some packs of

Crystal Light lemonade to flavor your friends' water bottles.

2. **Keep it classy.** There is nothing more unattractive than an intoxicated woman in public and already out of her underwear by 10:00 am. Hilarity ensues when fraternity boys get drunk and run around naked like barnyard animals, but it just doesn't have the same effect when it's you. Sorry to hit you with the gender double-standard again, but you make the rest of us look bad.

3. **Flirt with caution.** See that girl over there? The one glaring at you as if she is gleefully imagining your cold, lifeless body parts scattered all over the Beryl Road train tracks? She's the girlfriend of that guy at whom

you're giggling and batting your eyelashes and she means business. Pick another player—there are plenty to go around.

4. **Wear the right colors.** That sexy, sky-blue dress that matches the exact shade of your sultry eyes won't win you any favor with the fellas at NCSU football games. Don't worry about color-coordinating your outfit to your fair skin and light hair: As far as those boys are concerned, red looks good on everyone.

5. **Don't drink and drive.** Paying for a taxi or for your sober buddy's gas money is much cheaper than paying for a DUI ticket, a lawyer, and court fees. Additionally, there's no price you



photo via http://hostedmedia.reimanager.com/rmag/easyEntertaining/outside/Tailgating-Party_315.jpg

can attach to someone's life, should you be the idiot who carelessly ends it. Be the mature model of excellence for the sense of responsibility that your Meredith education has instilled within you by either turning down the beer or refusing to take the wheel.