

Weaving our Web

Faculty Utilize the Internet



In the summer of 1993, a computer science professor from Kansas held a demonstration during a faculty meeting which changed the image of Mount Union College.

Dr. James Klayder, assistant professor of computer science and information systems, introduced the College to a brand new technology — the Internet. “The World Wide Web started in 1993,” said Klayder. “At the time, there were probably only a dozen or so colleges and universities in the world that were on the Web.”

When Klayder introduced his vision of this innovative connection to the world, Mount Union did not have the technology set up to transmit information on to the Web. But in October of 1994, Klayder’s web vision became a reality as Mount Union College officially went “on-line” under the address www.muc.edu.

Klayder first became involved with computers when he purchased a personal system in 1979. “Buying my computer was a wonderful experience,” he said. “I learned how to use it, took a few classes and ended up getting two degrees in the computer field.” His involvement with the Internet began while he worked on

various summer projects at the University of Kansas. And he hasn’t stopped since. His personal web page is ever changing — documenting the newest web development techniques.

Being the leader in web technology at the College, there are few web design techniques that Klayder has not tried. And he has high hopes for the future. “My hope is that all faculty, staff and students will soon be making their own web pages. There are quite a few professors, now, browsing in their field and finding web sites for students to use in their studies,” said Klayder.

Some students are reaping the benefits of Internet

access already, as they experience the world of medieval literature on-line. Dr. Katherine McMahon, associate professor of English, has incorporated web sites and browsing into her medieval literature class. “I wanted to try to do simple things using technology for the class,” said McMahon. “I also found, strangely enough, medievalists have really taken to the Internet.”

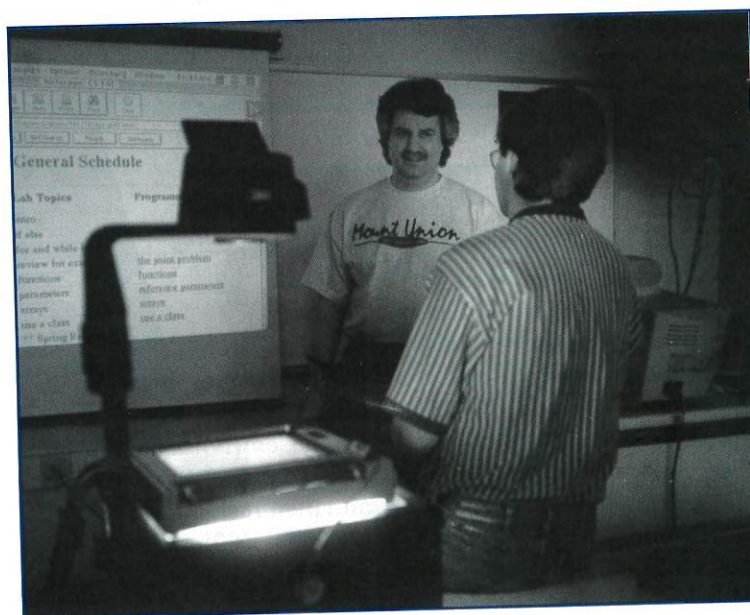
In her class, students visit different sites on the Web and hold student discussions over an e-mail listserv several times during the week. “It works very well,” said McMahon. “Even when they were through with the project, they kept using

the list for discussion.” McMahon had previously team-taught a class with Klayder, combining the Internet and science fiction.

Louise Moses, computer science professor and chair of the department, also utilizes technology for her classes and hopes more faculty will use this practice in the future. “All my class materials are on the Web,” she said. “Students find it easy to use and they are pleased to know everything is in one central location.” This practice helps her update her syllabus and keeps the students informed.

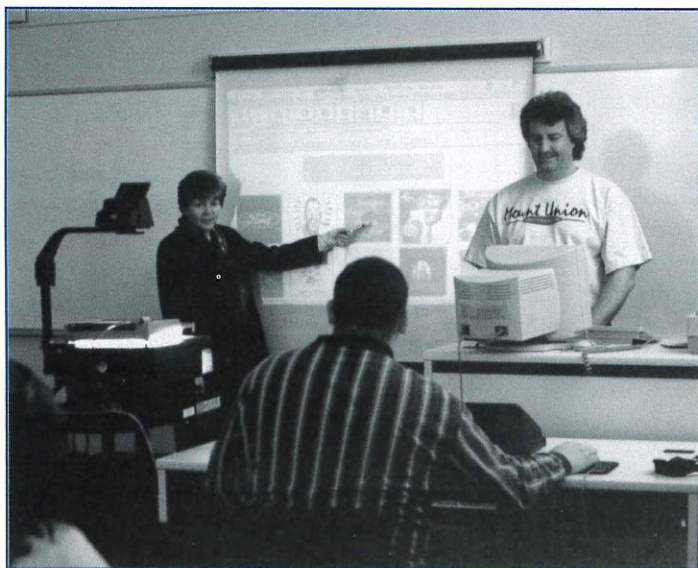
Moses has completed research on using technology across all curricula and will be working with the Pallas Project (Computing in the Arts) at the University of Exeter, England, this summer. Established and named “Project Pallas” in 1984, Pallas was one of the first groups dedicated specifically to the support of an arts faculty in the UK. Along with her research and enthusiasm for technology, Moses has also kept the ideal of “one-on-one” student-teacher contact.

“I never foresee a time when we would take teachers out of the classroom,” said Moses. “They need someone to make eye contact with and say ‘yes, you are doing that well’ or ‘I can see you need some help with



Dr. Jim Klayder has been referred to as the “Father of the Web” at Mount Union College. He has been a leader in web technology since its inception.

Web ... EDU in Teaching



As part of her classes, Louise Moses puts all of her class materials and syllabi on the Web. In many of her classes, students are required to create their own home pages.

that.” She believes that the Web and technology will be incorporated into all academic majors and will soon touch the lives of everyone.

“A lot of people browse for pleasure now,” Klayder added. “It was not that way even a year ago.” Both Klayder and Moses agree that the future of the Web is exciting and that it will be based on JAVA — a special programming language that works across the platforms of all computers, whether IBM compatible, Macintosh or UNIX.

Klayder and Moses also expect to see rapid improvement in computer software. “There is a whole new marketplace,” said Moses. “If a new software product comes out, you can download it and

try it; previously you could just read about it and buy it.”

Along with the development of new software comes more diverse web sites. Klayder is already embracing a new video broadcasting technique. “As a demo, we were able to broadcast from a VCR over the Web,” he said. “I think that will be much more common in a year and a half or so. It would be great to just put out a Mount Union web station that had promotions for the College.”

The visions for the future are endless. And with the commitment displayed by faculty, staff and administrators...the College has just begun to weave its spot on the Web. ■

WEB WORDS AT A GLANCE!

BOOKMARK: Most web browsers include a facility for building a list of URLs that users wish to keep for future reference. Netscape calls such references bookmarks in its browser.

BROWSER: A Web access program that can request HTML documents from web servers, and render such documents on a user's display device.

HTML: (HyperText Markup Language) The SGML-derived markup language used to create web pages. Not quite a programming language, HTML nevertheless provides a rich lexicon and syntax for designing and creating useful hypertext documents for the Web.

HTTP: (hypertext teleprocessing protocol) The Internet protocol used to manage communication between web clients and servers.

HYPERTEXT: A method of organizing text, graphics, and other kinds of data for computer use that lets individual data elements point to one another; a nonlinear method of organizing information, especially text.

INTERNET: A worldwide collection of networks that began with technology and equipment funded by the U.S. Department of defense in the 1970s that today links users in nearly every known country, speaking nearly every known language.

LINK: For HTML, a link is a pointer in one part of a document that can transport users to another part of the same document or to another document entirely. This capability puts the “hyper” into “hypertext.” In other words, a link is a one-to-one relationship/association between two concepts or ideas, similar to “cognition.”

LISTSERV: An Internet e-mail handling program, typically UNIX-based, that provides mechanisms to let users manage, contribute and subscribe to, and exit from named mailing lists that distribute messages to all subscribed members daily. A common mechanism for delivering information to interested parties on the Internet, this is how the HTML working group communicates amongst its members, for instance.

MODEM: An acronym for modulator/demodulator, a modem is a piece of hardware that converts between the analog forms of voice and data used in the telephone system and the digital forms for data used in computers. In other words, a modem lets your computer communicate using the telephone system.

NAVIGATION: In the context of the Web, navigation refers to the use of hyperlinks to move within or between HTML documents and other Web-accessible documents.

ON-LINE: A term that indicates that information, activity, or communications are located on, or taking place in, an electronic, or networked computing environment. The opposite of online is offline, which is what your computer is as soon as you disconnect from the internet.

URL: (Uniform Resource Locator) The primary naming scheme used to identify Web resources. URLs define the protocols to be used, the domain name of the web server where a resource resides, the port address to be used for communication, and the directory path to access a named web file or folder.

WEB PAGES: Synonym for HTML documents, web pages refers to sets of related, interlinked HTML documents, usually produced by a single author or organization.

WEB SERVER: A computer, usually on the Internet, that plays host to http and related Web-service software.

WEB SITE: An addressed location, usually on the Internet, that provides access to the set of web pages that correspond to the URL for the given site; thus a web site consists of a web server and a named collection of web documents, both accessible through a single URL.

WORLD WIDE WEB (aka WWW or W3): The complete collection of all web servers available on the internet, which comes as close to containing the “sum of human knowledge” as anything we've ever seen.