

# ***Finding the Best Educational Resources on the Web***

## **Course Syllabus**

### **Catalog Description**

The World Wide Web provides rich resources for educators, but they are only useful if educators know what resources are there and how to find them. Participants in this course will explore the range of educational material available on the Internet and learn time-saving skills to search the Web more effectively for useful curricular resources. Participants will become familiar with popular search engines and subject directories and will learn techniques to use them appropriately and efficiently. The course will also examine the importance of critical evaluation of web resources and consider how to develop evaluation skills in the classroom. Participants will leave the course with a collection of web resources appropriate for their own classroom use.

### **Prerequisites**

This is an introductory course for teachers, technology specialists, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, or other school personnel. Participants are expected to have regular access to computers. In addition, participants should be proficient with using email, browsing the Internet, and navigating to computer files.

### **Goals**

This workshop will enable participants to:

1. Learn effective techniques for using popular search engines and directories to find useful educational resources
2. Critically assess the content and quality of web-based resources
3. Teach students how to evaluate content on the Web
4. Develop a collection of appropriate web-based resources for curricular use

### **Assessment and Course Requirements**

Each session includes readings, an activity and a discussion assignment, which participants are required to complete.

#### **Course Products**

As a final product, participants will develop a collection of web-based resources to accompany a lesson plan. These resources will be saved on the Internet in Trackstar, an online lesson-building tool. The completed collection will be submitted to the instructor for evaluation.

#### **Discussion Participation**

Participants will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of their discussion board participation. Participants are required to post a minimum of two substantial postings each session, including one that begins a new thread and one that responds to an existing thread. Postings that begin new threads will be reviewed based on their relevance, demonstrated understanding of course concepts, examples cited, and overall quality. Postings that respond to other participants will be evaluated on relevance, degree to which they extend the discussion, and tone.

### **Required Readings, Activities and Assignments**

#### **Session One: Introduction and Overview**

Participants will read:

- *Working the Web for Education* by Tom March  
<http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/mar00/march.htm>
- *Strategies for Using the Internet in the Classroom*  
<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/internet/internet-in-the%20classroom.htm>

As an activity, participants will explore several of the links mentioned in the readings.

### **Session Two: Search Engines Basics**

Participants will read one of the following:

- *Choose the Best Search for Your Purpose*,  
<http://www.noodletools.com/debbie/literacies/information/5locate/adviceengine.html>
- *UC Berkeley's Table of Recommended Search Engines*,  
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/SearchEngines.html>
- *University of South Carolina - Beaufort Library's Bare Bones 101 - A Basic Tutorial on Searching the Web, Lessons 1- 4*, <http://www.sc.edu/beaufort/library/bones.html>
- *Search the Internet*, <http://www.internet4classrooms.com/search.htm>

Participants will begin doing sample searches in different search engines and compare the results they receive.

### **Session Three: Effective Searching Techniques**

Participants will read:

- *Four NETS to Better Searching* by Bernie Dodge  
<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/searching/fournets.htm>
- *Searching With Savvy: The Best Search Engines for Teachers and Students*  
[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_tech/tech001.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_tech/tech001.shtml)

Participants will use techniques presented in the Four NETS article to begin focused research into a topic area for use in their final product and they will bookmark or save the url's of the web pages to add to the *TrackStar Planning Template* ([http://www.edtechleaders.org/documents/finding/Track\\_Star\\_Template.doc](http://www.edtechleaders.org/documents/finding/Track_Star_Template.doc)) which will help them to plan for the Final Product that they will create at the end of the course.

### **Session Four: Educational Search Engines and Directories**

Using the following directories, participants will search for resources supporting development of their final product lesson plan.

- *Blue Web 'N*, <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluwebn/>
- *EDSITEment*, <http://edsitement.neh.gov/>
- *Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators*, <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/index.html>
- *KidsClick!*, <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick%21/>
- *Internet for Classrooms*, <http://www.internet4classrooms.com/>
- *Educational Resources HotList*, <http://www.schoolsite.com/schlsite/NHLER.HTM>

### **Session Five: Evaluating Internet Resources**

Participants will read an excerpt from *NetResearch: Finding Information Online* by Daniel J. Barrett, Ph.D., on considering the accuracy of information available on the Internet.

<http://www.ora.com/catalog/netresearch/excerpt/ch01.htm>

Participants will use the following tools to evaluate some of the resources located during the research done in previous sessions.

- *UC Berkeley's Evaluating Web Pages*,  
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>
- *Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators: Critical Evaluation Surveys*  
<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html>

### **Session Six: Internet Resources for your Curriculum**

Participants will visit the *TrackStar* site, view a set of example sites, and use the *TrackStar* tool to implement their own lesson plan.

<http://trackstar.4teachers.org/trackstar/index.jsp>