The 2006 MERLOT International Conference is presenting three outstanding keynote speakers each of whom is widely known for their contributions to education and research in the area of higher learning. The three presentations will provide a fascinating view of the learning process from the fundamental pedagogy of effective instructional design, through to how the brain actually processes new information into learning and, finally, to how what we learn is actually what we teach and how our practice can be shared with our peers and students.

Dr. Diana Laurillard is Professor of Educational Technology at the Open University, UK. She has spent twenty-five years in research, development and evaluation of interactive multimedia materials and internet services in education and training, covering a wide range of discipline areas. She has made a significant contribution to fundamental research on the relationship between student learning and learning technologies. Her book 'Rethinking University Teaching' is widely acclaimed, and is still used as a set book in courses on learning technology all over the world. As Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning Technologies and Teaching), her role is to ensure that learning technologies achieve their appropriate balance within the full range of learning and teaching methods in the University's courses.

Abstract Faculty who want to re-use shared digital resources for innovative learning and teaching are often working in an environment with limited pedagogical support. They need practical assistance in understanding how best to use such resources in activities for their learners, given the *intended outcomes* defined in terms of the curriculum skills, knowledge, and expected progression; the *student body* defined in terms of learners' needs, prior experience, expectations, skills and competences; and the *learning environment*, defined in terms of human, physical and digital resources, tools and services. MERLOT Peer Reviews have been a key source of pedagogical knowledge to support re-use of shared digital resources, and the MERLOT community is now exploring how best to enhance the space of pedagogical expertise for instructors to complement resources for learners.

In this presentation, we will explore the 'learning design' approach, and the tools and objects it is generating, as one way to capture and share such knowledge. This approach derives from a computationally robust and rational analysis of instructional design: it is logically valid, but may not be psychologically valid in terms of how instructors will want to apply shared pedagogical knowledge. This session will look at ways of bridging the gap between a technical learning design specification and the reality of the teaching context. ☏

Dr. Mel Goodale is Professor of Psychology and a Canada Research Chair in Visual Neuroscience at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario. Dr. Goodale is best known for his work on the functional organization of the visual pathways in the cerebral cortex, and was a pioneer in the study of visuomotor control in neurological patients. His recent research uses functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to look at the activity in the normal human brain as it performs different kinds of visual tasks. He also developed virtual-object technology to study the visual information used to program and control grasping movements. Dr. Goodale holds major research grants from both the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. He is currently Director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Group on Action and Perception.

Abstract Why do we need vision? As it turns out, there are two answers to this question. On the one hand, we need vision to give us detailed knowledge of the world beyond ourselves – knowledge that allows us to recognize things from minute to minute and day to day. On the other hand, we also need vision to guide our actions in that world at the very moment they occur. These are two quite different job descriptions, and nature seems to have given us two different visual systems to carry them out. One system, *vision-for-perception*, allows us to recognize objects and events, and to build up a 'database' about the world. This is the system we are more familiar with, the one that gives us our conscious visual experience – and allows us to incorporate new vision-based knowledge, and make decisions based on visual information. The other, much less studied and understood system, *vision-for-action*, provides the visual control we need to move about and interact with objects in the world. This system does not have to be conscious, but does have to be quick and accurate. Converging lines of evidence suggest that these dual functions of vision – perception and action – are mediated by separate visual pathways in the human cerebral cortex. Nevertheless, there is a complex but seamless interaction between the two systems in the production of adaptive behaviour; both streams are engaged when we interact with our visual world and learn new visually-guided skills. ☏

"Inspired me to think in new ways—especially internationally about my work and focus. It opened my eyes to problems that go far beyond my own classroom and campus Thanks!"

As Associate Vice-President of Learning Resources & Innovation at the University of Waterloo, **Dr. Tom Carey's** mandate is to enhance learning at the University of Waterloo through innovations in teaching and technology. He currently has leadership roles in several higher education collaborations for online learning resources, including co-chairing the Advisory Board for the MERLOT Community.
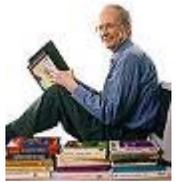
Dr. Carey is a Professor of Management Sciences in Waterloo's Faculty of Engineering, and is a founder of Human-Computer Interaction as an academic discipline in Canada. Dr. Carey received awards for his pioneering contributions to curriculum development, research papers and corporate-university partnership.

Abstract Throughout this conference, we have been exploring how our use of online resources and collaborative expertise can enable student learning in our subject areas, and faculty community in our disciplines. Our last general session proposes that we extend this value chain with one more link: sharing our learning design processes with our students. What happens when we make visible to our students how we – as teachers – work with and learn from the world's best? We model for them the values, strategies and capabilities we want them to develop and sustain in work and in life. We intentionally apply a *Teaching by Example* approach.

In this presentation we will look into the future of current learning object repositories and learning management systems. Our goal will be to see how we could use interactions with shared online resources and community teaching expertise to shape an online Teaching Commons – and how we can make that process visible to our students. In this teaching by example, we can demonstrate for our students the key attributes of the collaborative communities they need in order to lead social and economic innovation in a global knowledge society. ☏

"How we teach is part of what we teach… The methods we use to help students learn are part of what they learn."
Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*

Together, these three presentations will give us a unique perspective on the role of "intelligent technologies" in higher learning: from considerations of the appropriate "input" to the mental systems that "process" visual input into learning and then to a vision of what we are all attempting to achieve as "output" from our students' learning.

We look forward to you joining us in Ottawa for the 2006 MERLOT International Conference.

CONFERENCE THEME

The Sixth MERLOT International Conference (MIC06) is devoted to faculty development in the design, creation, utilization and evaluation of online teaching and learning materials. The MIC06 conference theme, **Working With and Learning From the World's Best**, recognizes the importance of MERLOT's fourteen core teaching disciplines and the continuum from novice to expert in the development and use of online resources.

MIC06 will include a full pre-conference day of workshops and seminars. Reflections on the Design and Implementation of Technology Enabled Health and Medical Science Education, a pre-conference event organized by the University of Ottawa, is confirmed. Development of other pre-conference seminars and workshops are in the planning stages along with events focused on the libraries, archives, and institutes unique to the host city, Ottawa. Watch the MERLOT website for additional information.

CONFERENCE TRACKS

The two and one-half day MERLOT conference is organized into six tracks, all of which focus on bringing the world's best resources to MIC06 in Ottawa for an exceptional opportunity to learn, share, and network.

The MIC06 Conference Committee invites prospective participants to submit proposals in any of the following six conference tracks described in detail on the MERLOT website:

1. **Authoring Learning Objects**
2. **Research and Scholarship**
3. **Faculty Development**
4. **The Digital Library**
5. **Case Studies**
6. **Communities of Practice**

QUESTIONS?

http://conference.merlot.org/2006

Conference Hosted by:

Co-operative Learning Object Exchange (CLOE)
and
University of Ottawa

ABOUT MERLOT

MERLOT— Multimedia *Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching* — is an international cooperative of higher education institutions working to amass the highest quality online resources to improve learning and teaching. At www.merlot.org, MERLOT's digital library consists of online teaching and learning materials.

MERLOT, however, is so much more than a digital library. MERLOT is an engaged community that supports learning enhancements such as peer review, e-portfolios and personal collections. MERLOT also provides meaningful strategies for educators to explore online teaching and learning so they can bring it to their classrooms in productive and vibrant ways

Excellent—idealistic and practical. I learned about initiatives and resources here that were very new to me. Thank you."

TRAVEL & LOCATION

MIC06 will be held at the Westin Ottawa Hotel and Ottawa Congress Centre. The Westin Ottawa Hotel is attached to the Congress Centre and is located in the heart of downtown Ottawa within walking distance of many major tourist attractions. The Conference group rate is $170 CAN plus applicable taxes (approx. $145 US, depending upon exchange rate). The deadline for group rate hotel accommodations is June 30, 2006.

Ottawa, Canada's Capital, is home to an amazing array of museums, galleries, night clubs, fine dining, world-class shopping, World Heritage sites, stunning architecture, festivals and cultural activities, natural wonders, and some of the most welcoming people in Canada.

Check the MERLOT conference website for additional information on registration costs, air travel, special needs, Ottawa area attractions, and much more.

Photo courtesy of the Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority

Working With

and Learning From The World's Best

MERLOT
Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006
8-11 August