



WFS Learning Section  
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FUTUREtakes publishes the *WFS Learning Section Bulletin* by special arrangement with the World Future Society (WFS) Learning Section Steering Team. Issues of the *WFS Learning Section Bulletin* typically include foresight education exercises, an educator spotlight column, and synopses of the annual WFS Education Summit.

## **World Future 2008 – additional sessions of interest to educators**

*contributed by Susan Echard,  
Vice President, Membership and Conference Operations  
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The following additional sessions scheduled for “World Future 2008: Seeing the Future Through New Eyes” but not part of the Education Summit, will be of interest to educators and others interested in education (for updates or other additional details, visit [www.wfs.org](http://www.wfs.org)):

### **Ways of Knowing: Past, Present and Future**

Father of the Oxford English Dictionary James Murray claimed knowledge is power and that knowledge was largely acquired through the voracious reading of books. Today, individuals in most OECD countries spend significantly more time on the Internet than reading books.

Evidence suggests that reading as a way of knowing is giving way to multi-media experiences. Video game designers routinely use literary devices and mythological archetypes, as well as images and sound to plot their interactive stories. Netspeak acronyms and nonverbal images (emoticons) are creeping into the lexicon of everyday speech.

As computers disappear into the fabric of daily life, information will be accessible on an instantaneous, as-needed basis. The increasing sophistication and portability of machines will reduce the necessity of securing knowledge into non-interactive repositories such as books. This session will highlight implications for developing the mind in an increasingly complicated accelerated, global society.

**Lawrence Baines**, professor, University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio  
**Robert Baines**, consultant, Admiralty Group, Mexico  
**Ryan Gilbert**, writer, Monroe, Michigan

### **Special Event – Foresight Development in the Classroom and on the Web: Ideas for Educators**

In the modern university, not only history and current affairs, but at least one course in Foresight

Development (Futures Studies plus personal foresight skills practice) should be among the required undergraduate general education (GE) prerequisites for a bachelor's degree. This model was boldly pioneered by Tamkang University in the mid-1990s for Futures Studies, and was modified by ASF to include personal foresight skills practice, which we believe increases the attractiveness of FS/FD to academic departments and credentialing committees. In 2007 we exported the "Tamkang philosophy" to a leading technology university in the US (UAT in Tempe, AZ) (Open access course wiki: <http://foresightdevelopment.wetpaint.com/> <<http://foresightdevelopment.wetpaint.com/>> ). Come learn from our experience, and let's discuss how to take undergrad FD courses globally in coming years. If you have an MS or greater credential in Futures Studies/Strategic Foresight, you too can bring a required Foresight Development curriculum to your local university. Let's discuss how.

In the Web 2.0 era, online networking for futures students and futures educators has become a powerful new tool for building foresight culture and practice. Come learn about the value ASF has received in establishing the Global Futures Network (<http://futuresnetwork.org> <<http://futuresnetwork.org/>> ), an online resource directory and "network of futurist networks" (GFN Facebook, GFN LinkedIn, and ShapingTomorrow's Foresight Network on Ning). We'll consider how futures academics, professionals, and laypersons might better use these networks and establish their own, and briefly, where online foresight culture might go in coming years.

**John Smart**, president, Acceleration Studies Foundation, (<http://accelerating.org>), Mountain View, California

### **Future-Oriented University: How Tamkang University Brings Futures Studies to Lives**

Tamkang University is not only the pioneer and driving force for futures studies in Taiwan, it is also the base of one of the most prominent futures studies programs in the world. Currently, all 20,000 undergraduate students are required to take at least one course of Futures Studies before receiving a bachelor's degree from Tamkang. However, we face ever-frequent resistance, indifference, and skepticism from leaders and bureaucrats on campus and from a society that is largely ignorant of or misinformed about futures studies. More and more, academics and laypeople alike are questioning the legitimacy of futures studies as a discipline within higher education. In this session we will share our experience in seeking internal and external support to sustain our presence as an independent department.

**Chien-Fu Chen**, director, Graduate Institute of Future Studies, Tamkang University, Tamsui, Taipei, Taiwan

**Mei-Mei Song**, assistant professor, Graduate Institute of Future Studies, Tamkang University, Tamsui, Taipei, Taiwan

**Shun-jie Ji**, assistant professor, Graduate Institute of Future Studies, Tamkang University, Tamsui, Taipei, Taiwan

### **2021 Vision for Elementary and Middle Schools in a Global Society**

In 2021 U.S. elementary and middle school principals will lead learning communities that prepare students to be global citizens. Schools will become dynamic systems that use

technologies to serve both individual needs and collaborative learning. The National Association of Elementary School Principals studied provocative changes that lay ahead for schools and principals and used their analysis to shape a 2021 vision for the profession. The Institute for Alternative Futures assisted NAESP in a comprehensive futures project that included scan research, provocative forecasts, scenarios, strategic issues and a vision and strategic framework. This panel will highlight the project's major findings and features a visioning exercise. Participants are invited to explore what it will mean for other aspects of society if this Vision 2021 for elementary and middle school principals is realized.

**Craig Bettles**, Institute for Alternative Futures, Alexandria, Virginia

**Elizabeth Carlson**, assist executive director, Affiliate Relations and Special Programs for the National Association of Elementary School Principals, Alexandria, Virginia

**Marsha Rhea**, senior futurist, Institute for Alternative Futures, Alexandria, Virginia

### **Distance Learning: Coming to a Theater Near You**

We will start where distance learning is today, explore technologies on the horizon, and cast light on technologies that are only the on drawing board or not yet even conceived. Parents seeking to communicate with their kids, business managers who must communicate with their associates, or world leaders and politicians facing demanding constituents should find these ideas very useful. Whether macro or micro, new methods of communication are emerging that reveal how today's methods of interactivity are only the first step in our new age of open ended multi-sided communications. Whether you learned from a blackboard or computer, today's rate of learning has surpassed the rate of scholarships. But over the next ten years, ideas yet conceived will be the norm in educating others, whether in the traditional school setting, corporate campus or anywhere in the world.

**Adam Cohen**: senior Web architect, The New York Law School, New York, New York

**Stan Cohen**: former president, Earth Society, New York, New York

### **Starting a Futures Institute: Topics, Tools and Tasks**

A futures institute is a catalyst for change drawing on local resources to promulgate futures thinking, to develop leadership in the art of foresight, and to disseminate futures information and instructional expertise. As a vehicle to actively support the community, a futures institute provides local training opportunities grounded in the futures perspective and utilizing foresight tools and methodologies as well as sponsors futures-based community events. Several active models reflecting differing stages of developing a futures institute. Presenters will overview the key elements their futures institute while offering examples of successful strategies.

**Lawrie Gardner**, advisory team member, Institute for the Future at Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland

**Steven T. Henick**, Director, Institute for the Future @ Anne Arundel Community College, [stehenick@aacc.edu](mailto:stehenick@aacc.edu)

**Mark Horstmeyer**, futuring initiative, Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills, Illinois

**Margaret Lehner**, futuring initiative, Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills, Illinois

**Stephen F. Steele**, professor of sociology and futures studies, Institute for the Future at Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland

**Kay Strong**, Initiatives for the Future, Bowling Green State University at Firelands, One University Drive Huron, Ohio

### **End of the Written Word**

While school kids' reading and writing skills have fallen below grade level in many electronically-developed countries, their ability to communicate and access information using non-text technologies is clearly on the rise. Cell phones, video games, Ipods, MySpace, and YouTube are the IT (information technology) instruments of choice for not only young people, but for people of all ages around the world. Voice-driven email and voice-driven internet search (think Google Talk) are on the verge of replacing some of the last vestiges of digital text. And text messaging, with its unique grammar and spelling, seems to symbolize the de-volution of written language. Will we soon be using voice-recognition software to talk with our computers while our keyboards gather dust? Are we leaving the Age of Literacy behind and moving rapidly into the Post-Literate Age? Are we on a back to the future track to become a worldwide oral culture (again)? Is this a positive or negative!

What potential opportunities does this shift hold for the world's people? How will it affect traditional education and the 3 Rs (reading, riting, and rithmetic)? How will it impact world business and commerce, international relations, the arts, and human consciousness itself? Panelists will analyze these trends and address vital questions about the future of IT and our world.

**Stacey Aldrich**, deputy state librarian, California State Library, Sacramento, California  
**Les Gottsman**, director, general education, Golden Gate University, San Francisco, California  
**William Crossman**, founder, director, ComSpeak 2050 Institute for the Study of Talking Computers and Oral Cultures, Oakland, California

### **Change in a Digital Age: An Impetus for a Collaborative, Educative, Democratic Future**

Technological advancement has always brought new jargon and new-fangled gadgets broader society. These terms and gadgets are becoming more than just fads or trends; they're converging with our everyday lives causing a corresponding--yet new--kind of accelerated change from the workplace to the home and everywhere in between.

By realizing the precursors, phases, and essential components involved in the dynamic, cyclical process of change in a digital age--including the recognition and tending to resistive forces, the identification and utilization of digital tools to facilitate change, and a continual assessment of the entire change process--individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, and communities will be better prepared for the transformations ahead.

**Carrie Rathsack**, assistant director, Bowling Green State University's Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, Maumee, Ohio

### **"Stealth" Future Studies in Higher Education**

Even when you don't see "future studies" in the title of a college course, that's what students

may be studying. This presentation uses current examples to illustrate how futures studies can be important components of graduate and undergraduate courses-of both traditional and outside-the-box offerings. The examples provide a jumping-off point for facilitated discussion of higher education courses and course components, examining participants experiences, plans, concerns, and options.

Kenneth L. Nichols, associate professor, University of Maine, Orono, Maine

### **Future City: Technology Education for the World**

The Future City program is already building the future in engineering and the social sciences for middle school students in the United States, India and other countries. In the United States alone, 30,000 young people compete each year in teams to design the transport, energy, health, and commercial communities for the future. The teams build scale models and explain their innovative ideas in written and oral format.

**Carol D. Rieg**, national director, Future City, Alexandria, Virginia; board member, Maryland Transportation Authority, Gaithersburg, Maryland

### **Special Event – Trends in Education: Implications for the Future**

The social and economic changes sweeping our globe will profoundly influence education programs everywhere, especially in the developed world. While steady growth is expected in that sector for another five years, the ability of national and even local government to support quality education has been steadily declining. School populations are growing and changing rapidly, due to immigration and other forces, while schools struggle to keep up with demands for new technology training and resources. Finally, the complexities of a teaching career have discouraged many young adults raised on promises of material prosperity and abundant leisure time--neither of which are likely in the teaching profession--from becoming educators.

**Marvin Cetron**, president, Forecasting International, Inc., Falls Church, Virginia; author; member, World Future Society Board of Directors

*This list is updated on a regular basis, and updates are available at [www.wfs.org](http://www.wfs.org).*