

# The {Academic Author}

For Creators of Academic Intellectual Property

2009:4

April 2009

## ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

By Kim Pawlak

TAA's Teleconference Series continues to grow, with almost 200 people participating in the first four teleconferences of the season. Many more have listened to the recordings, which are available to TAA members on the TAA website at [www.taaonline.net/membersonly/TAATeleconferences/](http://www.taaonline.net/membersonly/TAATeleconferences/)



Not only are this season's teleconference recordings available there, but those of past teleconferences as well. They can be listened to online or downloaded onto your desktop and loaded into an MP3 player for listening on the go.

We have received some great feedback about the teleconferences so far. Of the February 10 teleconference, "Taxes and Authors -What You Should Know," presented by Robert M. Pesce, partner at Marcum & Kliegman LLP, TAA member Robert Ferrett, a computer textbook author, said: "I'd like to thank everyone involved for setting up today's teleconference on Taxes and Authors. I had not realized the amount of taxes that could be saved by creating a Subchapter S corporation. From what Robert Pesce said, I probably should have done this several years ago. However, this one teleconference probably paid my membership for life ..."

Judging from comments such as, "Thank you for your excellent teleconferences. As someone new [and not yet published] in this field, these have been an eye-opener. I tell everyone to join TAA because it's the best value in an Association that I know of!" and "Thank you for this 'just in time' training that I needed for my next project," it seems these teleconferences have filled a need for many of you.

We plan to continue to offer teleconferences and are already working to develop our schedule for fall 2009. Many of you have shared your ideas for future teleconferences in your surveys, and we appreciate your feedback. Keep it coming!

## TAA announces 2009 Texty, McGuffey Award winners

The Text and Academic Authors Association has selected three textbooks to receive a 2009 Textbook Excellence Award ("Texty"), and four textbooks to receive a 2009 William Holmes McGuffey Longevity Award ("McGuffey"). Two books tied for the College Physical Science category: *An Introduction to Physical Science*, 12th ed., by James T. Shipman, Jerry D. Wilson, Aaron Todd, and Charles Higgins, and *Meteorology Today*, 9th ed., by C. Donald Ahrens.

The awards will be presented during a luncheon at the 2009 TAA Conference in San Antonio on June 27, entitled "TAA Awards Ceremony: Standing Out From the Competition." Learn more about the 2009 TAA Conference: [www.taaonline.net/TAAConference](http://www.taaonline.net/TAAConference)

The Texty winners for 2009 are:

- *Seismic Methods and Applications: A Guide for the Detection of Geologic Structures, Earthquake Zones and Hazards, Resource Exploration, and Geotechnical Engineering*, 1st ed., by Andreas Stark, published by Universal-Publishers, Inc. (College Physical Science category)
- *Operating Systems: Internals and Design Principles*, 6th ed., by William Stallings,



published by Pearson Education (Prentice Hall) (College Computer Science/Engineering category)

- *Challenging Behavior in Elementary and Middle School*, 1st ed., by Barbara Kaiser and Judy Sklar Rasminsky, published by Merrill/Pearson (College Communication/Education/Performing Arts/Visual Arts)

The McGuffey winners for 2009 are:

- *An Introduction to Physical Science*, 12th ed., by James T. Shipman, Jerry D. Wilson, Aaron Todd, and Charles Higgins, published by Houghton Mifflin (Now Cengage) (College Physical Science category)
- *Meteorology Today*, 9th ed., by C. Donald Ahrens, published by Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning (College Physical Science category)
- *Hotel, Restaurant & Travel Law: A Preventative Approach*, 7th ed., by Karen Morris, Norman Cournoyer, and Anthony Marshall, published by Delmar, Cengage Learning. (College Humanities/Social Science category)
- *Probability and Statistics for Engineering and the Sciences*, 7th ed., by Jay Devore, published by Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning



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2009 ★ TAA Conference  
on Text and Academic Authoring  
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## NOTABLE AUTHOR:

## Professor's first book reaches No. 17 on Amazon.com

By Kim Seidel

It took Greg Clark 12 years to complete his first book, and when he did, it reached No. 17 on the Amazon best-seller list. *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World* debuted in August 2008. Published by Princeton University Press, the book evolved from Clark's 20 years of teaching world economic history at the University of California-Davis.



Clark

"The title consciously echoes the Stephen Hawkins book on physics, *A Brief History of Time*," Clark said. "For it is an attempt to write history in the style of physics where there is a beginning, a dynamic to the system, and a final outcome."

Clark started out teaching European History, from 1700 to 1914, "but it soon became clear that all the interesting issues pertained to all societies and to even longer time periods, including hunters-gatherers," he said.

He spent 12 years writing the book, because he could not form the interesting elements of history into a coherent framework. "That was what eluded me for so long," Clark said. "A further problem is that in academic economics, little credit is given for books. Instead, everyone writes articles."

So the book became a "labor of love" for Clark that he worked on in his spare time, in between producing the quota of articles that earned him promotions from assistant to associate to full professor.

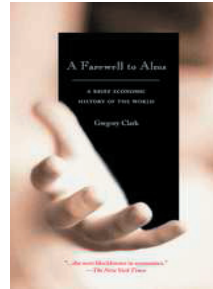
During that time, his students – about 2,000 Davis undergraduates – helped him shape the book. Teaching world economic history at least twice a year for 20 years gave him the equivalent of "40 focus groups" where he could present his ideas and assess the response, he said.

"The main thing I got from the students was an appreciation of what proved interesting and what was dull," Clark said.

"There was a huge amount of 'dull' that they heartily expressed their distaste for that got excised from the book manuscript."

The result of his persistence was "one shining hour (before the modest initial print run sold out)" at No. 17 on the Amazon best-seller list, Clark said. The book also has been featured in dozens of reviews, interviews, blogs, and excerpts throughout the world. Clark had a link to the publisher early on through a friendship with the series editor. "The publisher, Peter Docherty of Princeton University Press, very early saw the potential in the topic and the approach," Clark said. "He was very encouraging, though he did actually urge me to take more time to work on the book. This was a surprise coming from a publisher, whom you would expect to have a short time horizon and a long, sad experience with authors taking far too much time."

As a book proposal, Clark sent in several early chapters. "What really sold Peter Docherty on the book was actually the first figure, which summarized the entire economic



**"Once the book came out and was wildly controversial, various other invitations flowed in for talks as far away as Chengdu, China, and Australia. I am still doing a few book-related talks even this year, 18 months after it came out."**

history of the world in one picture," Clark said. "I think the strong underlying structure of the book was early on a strong selling point."

Clark said he received a \$3,000 advance to write the book. He will earn the standard 15 percent royalty on hardbacks and 10 percent on paperbacks. "Since no one expected the book to sell as well as it did, the size of the advance was never an issue," he said.

Along with the success of the book, another surprise for Clark was the promotion activity

and how much time it took. "As a first time author, I thought you labored to finish the manuscript, and then you were done," he said.

Yet even by the time the manuscript was finished, the publisher knew it had some potential to sell well. One sign was that the book was favorably reviewed "in the rough" in the *New York Times*. Clark had put the manuscript on his web page.

Therefore, Princeton University Press organized a six-month promotion campaign, including asking him to write several opinion editorial pieces on some ideas from the book. The publisher also arranged six to eight talks on the book.

"Once the book came out and was wildly controversial, various other invitations flowed in for talks as far away as Chengdu, China, and Australia," Clark said. "I am still doing a few book-related talks even this year, 18 months after it came out."

Clark has spent a huge amount of time on promoting his book, much of it spent crammed into airplanes. "People who make their living from writing books do a lot more work in promotion than I had ever imagined," he said.

In spite of his surprises, Clark is considering writing another book on the history of "order." "There was a lot of interesting history which had to be pruned from the earlier book to try to justify the 'brief' in the title," Clark said.

Clark and his family reside in Davis, Calif., home of the University of California, Davis, and America's most bike-friendly town. "I like that because by riding my bike to work I can combine

commuting with exercise," he said. He lives with his wife Mary McComb and the youngest of their three children. Their two older children attend college. "My wife's job is much more interesting than mine," he said. "She's an attorney who files the appeal for people awaiting execution on California's Death Row at San Quentin."

*Kim Seidel is a writer in Onalaska, Wis.*

## University test pilot program may eliminate print texts

By Kim Seidel

Northwest Missouri State University is test piloting a program that would eliminate print textbooks in favor of digital versions.

"We think that an electronic approach to course materials is a more efficient way to teach and learn," said Paul Klute, assistant to Northwest President Dean Hubbard. "There are many 'tools' that eTextbooks have that can help students and instructors. Another advantage is the cost - adopting eTextbooks will help Northwest control costs associated with the acquisition of course materials." Through the pilot, Northwest is looking into ways to increase the value of two related, long-standing programs - the Electronic Campus, which provides laptops to students and tablets to faculty, and the Textbook Rental Program, which rents books to students rather than requiring them to purchase texts.

The year-long pilot started last fall, and continues this spring with testing the concept of eTextbooks. The university worked with publishers to acquire electronic content for about 500 students formally involved in the pilot. These students are in courses with no access to printed textbooks. In addition, several thousand students are informally involved in the pilot. These students are using printed textbooks, but they have access to the eTextbooks.

The university is testing three concepts:

first, moving away from traditional textbooks; second, the utility of eReading devices like Amazon Kindle or Sony eReader; and third, the utility of eTextbooks as delivered on the students' laptop computers.

The pilot began when President Hubbard asked the faculty for volunteers to use Sony eReaders in their classrooms. "We anticipated five volunteers but instead received over 50 volunteers - out of 220 faculty," Klute said. "We, of course, were not able to accommodate all requests, but were able to use about 200 eReaders in four courses."

Data was collected on the use of eReaders from the fall pilot phase. Results were varied. "Students like the concept of eReaders, but found the device (Sony's PRS-505) we were piloting to have limitations," Klute said. "The PRS-505 was not designed for the higher education market. It was fine for reading 'front to back' but few students read textbooks in that manner. Students are more likely to jump from page to page, looking for key concepts, charts, and graphs. The PRS-505s also wouldn't allow students to annotate the text, highlight, or search."

The university shared those results with Sony. The company then suggested that the university try out one of its newer models, PRS-700, that hit the markets in December. The university is testing that device on a much smaller scale this spring, and preliminarily, it's a much better model for higher education,

Klute said.

Currently, Northwest is evaluating the spring pilot phase, such as the use of eTextbooks on laptops. "So far, the response has been split - 50 percent of students and faculty like the eTextbooks and 50 percent do not," Klute said. "One thing that will factor into our data collection is the fact that eTexts are significantly less expensive than printed text."

Northwest has long been known for those two progressive initiatives - Electronic Campus and its Textbook Rental program. Students pay a nominal fee that's included in their tuition for services associated with both programs.

"The Electronic Campus was 'switched on' in 1987 when the campus was wired with fiber to transmit voice, video and data to terminal in faculty offices and student dorms," Klute said. "Today the Electronic Campus has evolved to provide laptop computers to all students and tablet computers to faculty for use in the classroom."

Since the school was established in 1905, Northwest has "rented" textbooks to students. "The cost of the laptop program is \$10 per credit hour," Klute said. "The textbook rental fee is \$6 per credit, providing students with combined savings totaling hundreds of dollars per semester."

*Kim Seidel is a writer in Onalaska, Wis.*

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TEXT AND ACADEMIC AUTHORS ASSOCIATION

## Innovative online textbook delivers timely, real-world content

by Kim Seidel

Faced with the challenge of keeping up with the rapidly changing field of information systems (IS), author and teacher John Gallagher opted to write an open source textbook with a new online company, Flat World Knowledge (FWK).



Gallagher

"The content in traditional IS textbooks is very weak," said Gallagher, an associate professor in the Carroll School of Management, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass. "The cycle time is also quite long, so the



Frank

content is often out-of-date. Consider how old content in Facebook or Google is with each traditional publication cycle. It's ludicrous to expect a student to spend \$175 for this kind of product."

With those realities, he supplemented his courses with online sources for many years. "I then found it easy to wrap durable course concepts around contemporary cases," Gallagher said. "I decided to move to the online venue when Flat World Knowledge approached me."

Gallagher's open source textbook, *Information Systems: A Manager's Guide to Harnessing Technology*, has an expected publication date of summer 2009. Yet, he is publishing chapters and case drafts online as they're ready for release. About 40 percent of the book was online by September, and the material was already being used by faculty worldwide. The content is being added to the FWK platform as reviewers and other adopters provide feedback.

For teachers and students, open source textbooks provide fresh, current and engaging content, he said. The FWK format brings free, online content accessible from anywhere.

Gallagher has found many benefits in FWK's model, including:

- Retention of the copyright of his material.
- Fast production cycles allow him to get content to consumers quickly.
- The ability to provide a free online version of the product.
- Low-cost print versions — the print version

of Gallagher's online textbook starts at less than \$30.

"There is also an opportunity to have my content become among the most widely adopted material used in my discipline," he said. "What a great way for faculty to have an impact."

In addition, the online version FWK is developing for Gallagher's textbook includes a sophisticated interface. The online version will eventually include pop-ups for keywords and definitions. Plans for optional supplemental content include audio podcasts versions, along with ways for readers to easily engage the author to help make additions and improve subsequent versions.

FWK was founded in February 2007 by Jeff Shelstad and Eric Frank. Before starting their business, they had recently left a division of Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, where Shelstad was editorial director and Frank was director of marketing.

"We love the industry," Frank said. "We love signing great authors, developing books together, and putting together and executing sales and marketing campaigns that establish new market leaders. We have been as successful as any two people in doing that consistently throughout our careers."

But Shelstad and Frank realized the world was changing rapidly around them. "We couldn't get textbook publishers to change fast enough with it," Frank said. "We had this terrible feeling that we were spending our days rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. So it was time to move on and try it ourselves."

FWK pursues two types of author profiles in its acquisitions. The first are those who have already written a market leading textbook and who remain free agents to write their next book in a new course area with FWK.

"The second are those who display the characteristics of a highly successful textbook author, and who, therefore should write a textbook because together we can make it a market leader," Frank said. "John Gallagher is this category."

FWK also looks at the prospective author's teaching accomplishments. "John is one of those 'top one percent teachers.' Students love him and are inspired by him, despite the fact that his course is consistently one of the most challenging," Frank said. "He has won numerous teaching awards, and his excellence in the classroom has been recognized in places like *Business Week*. His love for teaching comes through 30 seconds into a conversation with John. And no lecture or class is ever good enough for him. Despite the fact that student

ratings of his course are consistently off the charts, he is always revising them, always looking for ways to improve them, always pouring his soul into ensuring that the next time he teaches a class it is the best time."

FWK also looks at a potential author's perspective in his or her discipline area. Gallagher represents "the complete package" for the company, Frank said. "Besides being a phenomenal teacher, John is a highly respected and well published researcher. Additionally, he maintains a weekly technology blog with a wide readership, and he regularly consults with business clients on their IT (information technology) issues. These factors combine to form the kind of perspective on his discipline that we believe is the foundation of a future best-selling textbook."

In addition, authors with FWK need to have demonstrated the ability to execute their creative ideas and to be ambassadors to promote the book, Frank said. Authors also need to be "fun" to work with and have a shared mission with FWK, he added.

"We are signing new books at the rate of about 1.5 new books per month, or 18 to 20 per year," Frank said. "From signing to publication, the process takes about 18 months. The number of authors is growing at a nice rate, and as we become more public and more potential authors learn about our model, the rate of acquisition will grow."

The biggest question Gallagher tackles in his book is how can IT creators compete when everyone can copy their technology and competition is so fierce. "We address this issue with real-world examples of what's happening in IS today delivered in a mix of chapters and cases," he said. "The book can be used across many levels, from first-year management studies to MBA's. We're using the content for both of these groups at Boston College."

Feedback from users helps him improve the book and increases its credibility among users. Everything he does in class is online. "This not only includes the text, but also PowerPoint slides, student questions to consider for reading, even podcasts," Gallagher said. "I've also included marketing material to promote technology study among management students."

Gallagher remains extremely passionate about his work, especially as the number of U.S. students studying IS and other

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Visit the TAA website at: [www.TAAonline.net](http://www.TAAonline.net)

## AWARDS

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(College Mathematics/Statistics category)

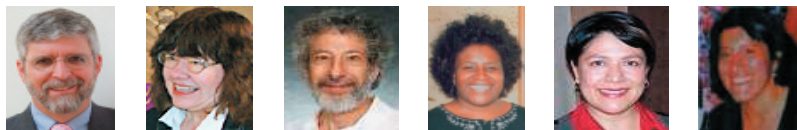
TAA created the Textbook Excellence Award in 1992 to recognize current textbooks and learning materials. To be nominated, a work must carry a copyright date for the previous or current year. TAA created the McGuffey Longevity Award in 1993 to recognize textbooks and learning materials whose excellence has been demonstrated over time. To be nominated, a work must have been in print 15 years and still be selling.

A special section of the TAA website is being devoted to this year's winners. It will include photos of the authors and their book cover images, as well as authoring advice and a description of the books and why the authors chose to write them. View it at [www.taaonline.net/awards.2009winners.html](http://www.taaonline.net/awards.2009winners.html)

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## TAA Council election candidates announced



**l to r: Kleiner, Switzer, Spiegler, Jackson, Sanchez, Lopez-Class**

Six TAA members are running for open positions on the TAA Council. Open positions include Secretary and two Council positions. Ballots will be mailed to TAA members on March 15. The deadline for receipt of ballots is April 15. Terms begin on July 1.

Fred Kleiner, who is currently serving a one-year term on the Council that will expire in July 1, 2009, is running for the Secretary position unopposed. Council position candidates include Angela Jackson and Claudia Sanchez, who were appointed by the TAA Council for one-year terms in July 2008; Michael Spiegler; Maria Lopez-Class; and Mary Kay Switzer, who is running for her third term on the Council.

Kleiner is the author of the 2007 Texty Award-winning *A History of Roman Art* and co-author of the 2001 Texty and McGuffey Award-winning *Art through the Ages*, and was

recently elected to TAA's Council of Fellows. He is professor of art history and archaeology and chair of the art history department of Boston University, where he has taught since 1978.

In his position statement, Kleiner said that he has always admired the work TAA has done on behalf of authors and deeply appreciates the many valuable services it provides its members. He decided to run for a position on the TAA Council, he said, "in order to 'give back,'" and hopes that his varied experience as an author of textbooks, journal articles, and scholarly monographs; as an academic editor; and as a mentor to younger colleagues as long-time department chair, would benefit TAA's membership.

Kleiner, if elected, would replace Ron Pynn, who has served one term as Secretary and has

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## ELECTIONS

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decided to step down. Pynn is one of TAA's founding members and served as TAA's executive director for more than a decade.

Jackson is president and CEO of Culturally Competent Consulting, Inc, and is currently fulfilling a one-year contract with the Michigan City School Administration as a Cultural Liaison. She has a B.S. in Industrial Management, an M.Ed. in Community Counseling, and a Ph.D. in Counselor Education from Virginia Tech where she also specialized in Race & Social Policy. She has published academic articles and taught as an assistant professor in counseling/psychology programs teaching courses such as Abnormal Psychology, Practicum/Internship, and Multicultural Counseling.

In her position statement, Jackson said she was attracted to service on the TAA Council because of TAA's mission of assisting textbook and academic authors to publish and its work to enhance educational materials. "I have a passion for writing and inspiring others through the process," she wrote. "This new appointment would allow me to support the association in achieving its goals. I aspire to publish materials in multicultural education and as a council member I bring an exciting area to the publishing discussion. I envision using my strengths of empowerment, fortitude, and dedication to forward the approved agendas of TAA."

Sanchez is an assistant professor in the department of teacher education at Texas Woman's University. Her academic interests include grant writing, mentorship in teacher

education programs, multicultural teacher competency, Spanish-English biliteracy, and English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching methods. She is director and co-director of three federal grants totaling over 4 million dollars, which focus on the preparation of teachers in critical need areas.

In her position statement, Sanchez said that as a Council member she would like to "continue to grow as a published author while supporting the endeavors of TAA's membership." She is interested in promoting TAA among text and academic authors, and has a special interest in attracting authors from diverse backgrounds to our Association: "I strongly believe that the more diverse we are, the greater we become."

Spiegler is a professor of psychology at Providence College and previously taught at the University of Texas, Austin. He has been a successful textbook and academic author for more than 40 years with several leading textbooks, including *Contemporary Behavior Therapy* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) and *Personality: Strategies and Issues* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). For the past 13 years, Spiegler has worked to promote quality college textbooks by giving workshops and presentations on textbook writing at universities and professional conferences (he is a TAA Workshop presenter). He also teaches a 3-day intensive course on all phases of textbook writing in the national Chautauqua program. He regularly reviews manuscripts for publishers and serves as a consultant/mentor to college textbook authors in diverse disciplines. Spiegler is currently writing a comprehensive *Handbook for College Textbook Writing*.

In his position statement, Spiegler said he is president of TAA's fan club and has been ever

since he attended the 2006 TAA Conference in Buffalo: "I've been actively involved in TAA, including presenting TAA-sponsored textbook writing workshops, recruiting members, and serving on panels at our annual meeting. I've also been working with our executive director on an exciting grant to foster scholarly writing among culturally-diverse high school math and science students. I'd like to further contribute my experience in and enthusiasm for textbook and academic writing as a council member. Two specific initiatives I would sponsor are (1) expanding TAA chapters and facilitating their activities and (2) broadening TAA's purview to other scholarly endeavors including conference presentations and discipline-based writing for the public."

Lopez-Class is a research instructor in the department of oncology at Georgetown University with the Latin American Cancer Research Coalition, has worked with minority populations for over 10 years. She has experience with community outreach services and health-related research that addresses psychosocial factors and disparities among Latinos, Asians, and African-American groups. Her dissertation research was an in-depth multi-variable examination of socio-ecological factors that hinder Latinos from engaging in diabetes self-care.

In her position statement, Lopez-Class said that as a recent junior faculty member, she has learned the importance of publishing and networking. "Writing is time-consuming and requires significant academic creativity," she wrote. "Networking is not an institutional

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## AAP: States including ethics provisions in textbook laws

The Association of American Publishers (AAP) reports that several states, including Oklahoma, California, Florida and New York, have begun including ethics provisions in their textbook laws. "The AAP has written and supported these kinds of provisions in numerous cases, which is particularly important as we've seen an up tick in the disreputable practice of profiting from the sale of complimentary copies," said Stacy S. Skelly, director for Higher Education.

Oklahoma has the strictest provisions, she said. Its HB 2101 prohibits faculty from demanding or receiving payment for the adoption of specific course materials — sometimes referred to kickbacks — ends the practice of faculty profiting from the sale of their complimentary copies, and bans bookstores and vendors from engaging in the sale of these copies.

California's AB 1558 prohibits "kickbacks", bans bookstores from soliciting faculty for the purpose of selling unsolicited instructor of complimentary teacher editions. Bookstores are also banned from engaging in the trade of unsolicited instructor or complimentary instructor editions.

Florida's HB 603 states that faculties are unable to request anything of value from publishers in exchange for requiring certain texts. Faculty and other public institution employees are banned from selling marked free sample textbooks for compensation.

New York's SB 3063 prohibits faculty from demanding or receiving payment for adopting specific course materials and bans them from selling their sample or instructor copies.

Virginia and West Virginia have similar language that bans inducements for adopting course materials and prohibits faculty members from reselling their free sample or instructor copies.

Faculty at Sante Fe College in Gainesville, Florida, received a memorandum on September 25 from Anne M. Kress, the College's provost and vice president of academic affairs, that shared guidelines for how to deal with solicitations from textbook buyers.

The memo outlined two Sante Fe College Rules that specifically address the issue of conducting business on campus, including a prohibition on commercial solicitation or sales on college premises, and the use of college facilities to earn a personal profit.

The memo also mentions a new Florida bill that prohibits state employees from selling textbooks marked not for resale, and from requesting anything of value from publishers in exchange for requiring certain texts.

Download a copy of the memorandum at [www.taaonline.net/news/textbook\\_buyer\\_memo.pdf](http://www.taaonline.net/news/textbook_buyer_memo.pdf)

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## ELECTIONS Continued from page 6

based endeavor, but rather one that spans across many disciplines and outside living quarters (e.g., institutions). As a TAA council member, it is my hope to apply my networking skills to create a forum for others to collaborate on projects."

Switzer is an associate professor in the communications department at California Polytechnical State University in Pomona, Calif. and a former news anchor. She is also a highly successful grant writer, curriculum developer and author and is involved in television and video production.

In her position statement, Switzer said that as a textbook author and academic author, she

feel that she can continue to support issues concerned with both of those constituencies. "I want to work to improve the use of new technology to enhance educational materials and textbooks," she wrote. "I am also concerned with stopping the practice of the selling of desk copies."

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### ONLINE TEXTBOOK Continued from page 4

technology disciplines are falling dramatically: “I see the book and online material as a special opportunity to share this content as a sort of ‘great course in a box’ with other faculty. I’ve been delighted to hear from others who have used the material. In fact, after just a single day, the Google Analytics tracking downloads lit up on all continents - save for Antarctica - no University of South Pole yet.”

For Gallagher, it has been a natural transition to write an open source textbook. He’s created online content and blogged since 1997 - before the term “blog” was even coined. He’s the author of the well-known blog *Week in Geek (WiG)* ([www.gallaughher.com/](http://www.gallaughher.com/)); it’s one of the oldest, continually published digests of its kind online. He said that authoring an online textbook has been an experience that he has found different from previous writing ventures, but tremendously rewarding.

“I’m writing material for students - future managers,” Gallagher said. “This gives me an opportunity to write in an engaging style, yet still wrap key managerial concepts around these ‘fun’ reads. My goal with the textbook was to make the content as easy to read as, say, an article from the mainstream trade press, such as *BusinessWeek* or *Fortune*.”

The textbook also gives Gallagher an excellent opportunity to share his experiences from his field work through Boston College. He spends several weeks a year with senior executives in tech firms in Silicon Valley, Seattle and throughout Asia. “While I can’t take everyone with me on these experiences, the textbook project provides me with an accessible outlet to share this learning with the broader student and faculty community,” he said.

As Frank noted, Gallagher’s, blog, WiG, attracted FWK. Gallagher said his job is to

keep track of interesting developments at the intersection of business and technology and to share these with his students and the broader community of scholars. WiG helps him to do just that. Many former students subscribe as well. “It’s a great way to stay connected,” he said. “Many WiG readers have helped us arrange site visits from Boston to Bangalore for our field study experiences, while others have come back to campus to speak, or have suggested other articles that have made other WiG additions.”

Gallaugher highly recommends leveraging blogs to promote textbook content. “If other sites write about a topic, and you’ve got something important to say, you might mention a blurb and refer them to your online content,” he said. “But do not use the blog as a flagrant self-promoting opportunity. Blog and article comments should add value; otherwise, you’re seen as a spamming huckster. Online readers are fairly good at seeing through shill posts.”

Gallaugher resides in Newton, Mass., and has two young children. For him, work and hobbies intersect; he loves what he does. “It’s my motivation for teaching so much,” says Gallagher, a tenured research professor who voluntarily takes a three-course, teaching overload. “Being able to give back to our community via the book project and supplemental material is great. With FlatWorld’s composition model, it will be wonderful to turn this into a lucrative move as well. That (monetary payback) will be key for authors because many authors will become disinterested if there’s not a strong incentive for continued contributions.

“The winning textbook publishing model is one that empowers authors to make an impact and to make money. I think Flat World has cracked the nut, but we’ll see.”

*Kim Seidel is a freelance writer based in Onalaska, Wis.*



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