

# Center on Innovations in Learning

The innovator's motto is this; I succeed or I learn but I never fail.

—Paul Sloane, *author on lateral thinking and innovation*

August 2013

Dear Colleague,

Greetings from the Center on Innovations in Learning (CIL)! As the summer comes to a close, we know everyone is gearing up for a school year filled with new ideas to help students learn.

We hope you had a chance to join our lively webinar, entitled **E-Learning 101: Putting the Big Picture Into Focus**, presented by Dr. Janet Twyman, director of innovation and technology at CIL. This informative 1-hour presentation introduced participants to the rapidly changing world of e-learning and e-teaching. If you missed the session, you can view the archived webinar at <http://www.centeril.org/webinars/>.

Join us for our next **webinar on September 19<sup>th</sup> from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. EDT** when **Dr. Sam Redding**, CIL's senior learning specialist, will present an interactive webinar on **personalized learning**. Sam has examined personalized learning in two CIL publications about to be released: a chapter in the *Handbook on Innovations in Learning* and a practice guide for teachers, titled *Through the Student's Eyes: A Perspective on Personalized Learning*. To register for the **Keeping the Personal in Personalized Learning** webinar, click [here](#).

The beginning of the new school year seems a perfect time to learn more about what students take away from gaming. Check out CIL's new Solution-finding Report, *Play-based Technology Platforms That Assess Student Learning While They Play Games and Read Books*. This and earlier CIL Solution-finding Reports are archived for free download on the CIL website at <http://www.centeril.org/reports/>

At the request of the State Superintendent **Lynn J. House** of **Mississippi**, Sam Redding, representing the Center on School Turnaround, developed an agenda for a 1-day strategic planning meeting with the chief and her deputies. In August, Sam, with CIL's Janet Twyman, and **Tom Kerins** and **Susan Hanes** of the Building State Capacity and Productivity Center, met for a 1-day, intercenter, technical assistance collaboration in Jackson. Following the meeting, the multicenter team prepared a report of recommendations for Mississippi and will follow up with consultation as requested.

The web-based school improvement system **Indistar** continues to keep the CIL staff on the move. Shepherd Maureen Richel and **McREL's Sue Mutchler**, met with **Wyoming's Bill Pannell** and **Beth Vandewege** to refine a comprehensive Indistar indicator list to satisfy Wyoming's state statutes, federal obligations, and Advance Ed accreditation. Maureen also traveled to **Washington** state's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to assist **Nate Marciochi**, **Travis Campbell**, and **Andy Kelly** with a 2-day training for Indistar coaches. Shepherd Stephanie Benedict visited **North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction** to work with **George Hancock**, **Diane Antolak**, and other personnel on supporting schools in the use of NC Indistar. Shepherd Larry Kugler provided a 1-day coaches training for 25 school improvement and content specialists from **Maine's Department of Education**. Maine will begin implementation of Dirigo-Star for the 2013—2014 school year.

**Meet the CIL staff:** Below is this month's featured staff person, Dr. Catherine Schifter, a CIL scientific consultant on technology and motivation in education. Check out her story and the attached **e-sources** to support the good work that you do. We hope your new academic year gets off to a great start!

Best,  
*Marilyn Murphy*  
Director

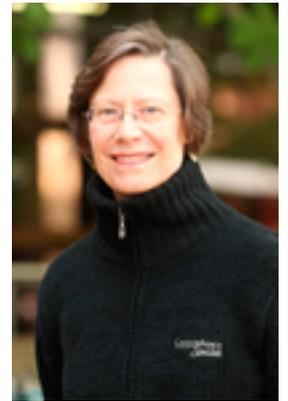
[www.centeril.org](http://www.centeril.org)

# Meet the Staff

## CATHERINE C. SCHIFTER

Scientific Consultant

Catherine Schifter is an associate professor at Temple University and serves as a scientific consultant in CIL, with expertise in game theory in learning and motivation. Her professional work revolves around technology in classrooms, specifically how to infuse technology solutions into teaching and learning so all children learn as best they can. She is currently establishing a new certificate program for instruction, teaching, and learning with technology for teachers and trainers. Her current research concerns the uses of the virtual “sandbox” to support learning in general and, in particular, the uses of virtual game environments in assessment. Among her recent publications is *Teaching and Learning with Technology: Beyond Constructivism* (Routledge, 2010), a volume which she co-edited. Her chapter “Game Theory in Learning and Motivation” will appear in CIL’s forthcoming *Handbook on Innovations in Learning*.



Catherine  
Schifter

Catherine followed a nontraditional path into higher education, initially pursuing her father’s profession, dentistry. After receiving her bachelor’s degree from Baylor University College of Dentistry, she decided to follow her mother’s path into teaching. After completing her master’s in health education at the University of Houston, she joined these two disciplines and taught in the dental hygiene program in the School of Dental Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

While teaching at SDM-UP, Catherine earned her Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from U. Penn’s Graduate School of Education. She helped introduce distance learning to U. Penn when she spearheaded the placement of a satellite dish on the roof of her college building, thus enabling the sharing of national and international broadcasts to the university campus as a whole.

At Temple University, Dr. Schifter served as assistant dean in the Temple University College of Allied Health Professions and became the director of Temple’s Online Learning Program in 1997. In 2000, she was named a Carnegie Scholar in the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and more recently served as chair of the College of Education’s Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technical Education.

The logo for the Center on Innovations in Learning features the text "Center on Innovations in Learning" in a sans-serif font. "Center on" is in a light blue color, "Innovations" is in a medium blue, and "in Learning" is in a dark blue. The text is positioned to the right of a stylized graphic of vertical bars of varying heights in shades of blue and green, which also forms a partial frame on the left side of the page.

## Center on Innovations in Learning

CIL's *e-source* database has hundreds of resources for leaders of change and is growing constantly. It can be searched by topic and keyword. Below are some selected items from the database.

### Change and Innovation

#### ***InstructureCon 2013: Morning Keynote*** (video)

*Richard Culatta*, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology (2013, July)

In this presentation, Culatta advises, "Don't put a thin coat of awesome-colored paint [i.e., technology] on top of something that is structurally flawed." He discusses individualized learning, student data use, the Learning Registry, discovering content, measuring completion, and more.

### Personalized Learning

#### ***Early College, Early Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study*** (2013)

*Berger, A. et al.*

This study finds students (including all subgroups) participating in early college high schools were more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in college, and complete a degree.

### Students with Disabilities

#### ***Culture Shift: Teaching in a Learner-Centered Environment Powered by Digital Learning*** (pdf) (2012)

*Wolf, M. A.*

Building on the urgency for utilizing digital learning and innovative teaching practices to meet current needs, this paper delves into the characteristics of a learner-centered approach to education and the support that educators and schools require to transition to this model.

### Learning Environments

#### ***Teacher, Principal, and Leader Evaluation in Online and Blended Learning*** (2013)

*Center on Innovations in Learning*

This annotated bibliography addresses the topic of teacher and principal/leader evaluations in online and blended environments.

### Data Use and Analytics

#### ***Harnessing Data and Analytics*** (pdf) (2013)

*Fullerton, J.*, Wisconsin Policy Research Institute

This chapter from WPRI's *Pathway to Success* asserts that, while plenty of data is now available, too few people are analyzing and reporting it to tap its power to help states, districts, schools, and parents; Milwaukee, Wisconsin, serves as a case study.