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Winthrop University

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# Graduate Students Display Educational Technology at Dec. 1 Showcase

## Quick Facts

- Jones said the 21 students in his class chose a technology that, when used appropriately, can make a positive impact on learning.
- He plans to have the technology showcase event advertised as a professional development opportunity for area teachers in the future.



Marshall Jones

ROCK HILL, S.C. - **Smart Pens** can record classroom discussions or help an international child learn English faster. **Flip video cameras** can help working parents see what their children do on field trips. **Skype** can be used to connect students in different countries to discuss books or special events.

Each was a technology displayed during the **Educational Technology Showcase** held in Withers/W.T.S. Building on Dec. 1 by faculty member **Marshall Jones'** class. Jones said the 21 students in his class chose a technology that, when used appropriately, can make a positive impact on learning. There were technologies that were familiar, such as

**Skype**, the **Kindle** or **NetBooks**. But there also were some new items, such as SMART Airlines or an online repository of international children's books that can be downloaded to a **Kindle**, **iPad** or **iPod**.

With each technology the graduate students found significant detail on how it can be used to support learning. This, said Jones, is a way graduate students are able to contribute to the body of knowledge available, something he feels is obligated for this level of academics.

The students wrote white papers that detail a variety of factors related to the technology including: costs, licensing agreements, environmental factors that may impact implementation, the benefits and drawbacks of the technology, and how to use the technology.

These white papers serve an important purpose, Jones noted: They allow students to "focus their experience as a professional educator to apply it to a particular technology.

"Once they write the white paper, create their presentation materials and go through the experience of talking to others about their work, they are well-positioned to share this information with their schools and with other schools through in-house professional development," said Jones.

At least one white paper may receive additional attention. The company that runs **EasyTech** has contacted student **Agaisha Granger** for permission to use her research on its website. She explained that EasyTech is a web-delivered, K-8 technology literacy curriculum that provides tools for a teacher to integrate technology easily into math, science, language arts and social studies.

Jones said that he has received additional requests from area educators to use several of these white papers. He plans to have the technology showcase event advertised as a professional development opportunity for area teachers in the future.

The **Dec. 1 showcase** allowed students to demonstrate and discuss their chosen technologies

through a poster presentation and accompanying equipment, much like at a professional conference.

**Kristen Nuss**, a kindergarten teacher at Druid Hills Elementary School, said the technology class has been helpful in sharpening and increasing her skills. For instance, she learned to record audio, make videos and change formats. "I can really tell I am learning something," she said. Her project was **Discovery Education** which offers digital resources such as educational videos, audio files, lesson plans, virtual labs and an interactive atlas. Some of her own students who had never been to the beach used it and loved seeing the ocean.

Next to her was **Heidi Shadbolt**, who was in her element with the class. "I love technology," she said showing off her project, a **Smart Pen**. "I am an educational technology major. This is what I do."

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