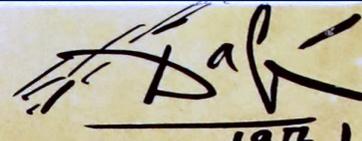


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# Indicators Of The Labor Market In Costa Rica

## Teaching Priesthood

## 20 Years Of Imac



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# COVER PAGE



In May, we are going to learn a little bit about Troy, which is the name of the Bronze Age city attacked in the Trojan War, a popular story in the mythology of ancient Greece. If you have an awesome picture you think could be the cover of one of The ILE Post editions, send it to [eherrera@utn.ac.cr](mailto:eherrera@utn.ac.cr). So far several readers have sent amazing pictures that we will be sharing with you soon. If you want to know what is happening in ILE, follow us in FACEBOOK.

Photo credit: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mazanto/26379935939/>  
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# EDITORIAL

## UTN's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

by Eric Herrera (ILE Professor)



Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN) is 10 years old! 2018 marks the first decade of this great institution. We use this opportunity to look back in time. An anniversary is a time to pause and reflect on our identity, who we are, and what we want.

Over the past 10 years, we have dared to dream big dreams. Our campuses have undergone extraordinary changes - from new infrastructure in Guanacaste and Puntarenas to up-to-date technology laboratories in Alajuela; from more and better training for staff to becoming part of CONARE.

### Creation and Consolidation of UTN

An intense study and review process of the draft law together with the strategic persuasion of political authorities bore fruit on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 when the Legislative Assembly enacted the Law by which UTN was officially established by the unanimous vote of 44 deputies. Later on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the current President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias signed the law, and on June, 4<sup>th</sup>, UTN's Organic Law was published in La Gaceta No. 8638.

### Identity

The short but rich history of UTN strongly reflects the belief of its founders and community colleges, in the equality of people. This has been especially evident in the effort to make most programs available to all students regardless of their economic and social background.

Over the past decade, UTN has firmly established itself as the first Costa Rican university of the XXI century. UTN proudly counts with five campuses, three specialized centers, about 13.259 students, about 7.500 graduates in the last three years, 1.251 people in its academic staff, and approximately 3.978 scholarship recipients.

UTN's objective has always been to be recognized as a leading university in Costa Rica, providing academic, technical and cultural leadership and producing practical, ready-to-work graduates from a broad range of technical disciplines prepared to excel in a technologically driven world.

### Engagement

At UTN, we encourage students to be active participants in their education—within a climate of academic excellence. For this reason, UTN promotes students' participation not only in academic but also in extracurricular activities that allow students to gain a comprehensive understanding of life and the importance of education as an ongoing process by which individuals can achieve their dreams and become part of the labor force of this century. Some of these activities include theatrical representations, sporting competitions, dance and music groups that have represented UTN nationally and internationally.

### Challenges

As it happens with most things in life, the duties specified in legislation concerning universities cannot be fulfilled without adequate resources. UTN is facing escalating operational challenges, including reduced funding, changing student demographics, and questions regarding quality and value at the time of investing. In addition to teaching, facilitators must be able to provide relevant learning experiences that lead to success in the evolving global community. In order to do this, authorities must invest in training and facilitators must be. In order to do this, authorities must invest in training and facilitators must be willing to put away all habits and learn how to impact students' lives through lifelong learning.

To conclude, we leave you with these words from UTN Chancellor Marcelo Prieto that establish the expectations of the youngest public university in Costa Rica: ***The fate of our society depends, in large measure, upon the extent to which we provide an appropriate quality education to all people, and that is why at UTN we try to be better each day.***



## Indicators Of The Labor Market In Costa Rica

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, CONARE's Labor Observatory for Professions (OLaP) presented the findings of the Follow-up of 2011-2013 Graduate People from Costa Rican Universities Study.

The study showed that 90.5% of graduates from public and private universities are currently working. As well as other variables the study collected information on 134 disciplines about employment and program funding. Results from follow-up studies of graduates provide valuable assessment information that can better inform families, students and the government about the outcomes of their academic programs.

The study showed that 90.5% of graduates from public and private universities are currently working, 78.4% are employees, and 12.1% are self-employed workers.

Among the jobs with employment targeted indicators are statistics, medical imaging, optometry, production management, curriculum, criminal law, physics, insurance management, and technology management.

On the contrary, among the jobs with employment indicators are bi-



ology, geography, anthropology, journalism, pre-school education, and respiratory therapy. However, these areas show these unfavorable employment indicators especially for people with a university degree. In the case of people with a higher degree unemployment levels fall.

In addition, 65% of graduates belong to the first generation higher education students, this means these students come from homes where neither parent had earned a university degree. This particular makes people view education as an instrument for social mobility.

Moreover, 84% of graduates lived in the four main provinces of Costa Rica because there are more sources of jobs and income in this area of the country.

In Costa Rica, the employment rate measures the number of people who have a job as a percentage of the working-age population. Employment rate in Costa Rica averaged 54.77 percent from 2010 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 57.79 percent in the fourth quarter of 2013 and a record low of 51.16 percent in the second quarter of 2011.

## UTN Member Awarded A Scholarship By FLACSO

Culture, Recreation, and Sports Director Geoffrey González from the Well-Being Vice Chancellor Department is one of the ten Costa Ricans awarded by Latin American Faculty for Social Sciences (FLACSO) to take a postgraduate course on cultural policy of community-based programs. This is a great opportunity to internationally promote UTN because of the important cultural and sports groups have in our university. Access to and participation in cultural and sports activities can be a vector of cohesion and integration and promote active citizenship, explained Geoffrey González



UTN is an institution free from all forms of prejudice, exclusion, and discrimination due to sexual orientation or gender identity



## Student Advocacy Is Working Hard To Ensure A Better University Life For Everybody

By Jorge Rojas (UTN Student Advocacy Adviser)

In 2015, the UTN University Council approved the creation of the Student Advocacy Office (SAO). However, the new department started working in October, 2017. Since then, this unit has been helping not only regular students but also those enrolled in the courses of the Extension Program.

Beyond solving daily cases throughout all these past months, the SAO has worked on writing its own conceptual framework and regulations. Additionally, this office has been organizing workshops addressed to both students and faculty members. The main purpose of providing training to the UTN community is to prevent conflicts that may impact the educational experience. So far, this organizational unit has performed three training sessions, which took place in Atenas, San Carlos and Alajuela Central campuses. Over time, it is expected to involve the remaining locations of the institution.

In addition to the standalone training sessions, the SAO wants to carry out three main annual events aimed at the whole university community: 1) the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia on May 17th, 2) the International Youth Day on August 12th and, 3) the Human Rights Day on December 10th. Regarding the first commemoration, the main topics are going to be related to the most recent Inter-American Court of Human Rights' Advisory Opinion OC-24/17. Generally speaking, the Advocacy would like to raise social awareness about the Human Rights defense, and the strengthening of the public administration and the Rule of Law in Costa Rica.

Nowadays, the Advocacy team has two members: the Student Defender and an adviser. Both are committed and focused on helping students reach their academic success by protecting their rights, and thus, enhance the performance of the UTN as one of the most significant institutions for national development. As readers already probably know, the team members of this unit are Human Rights defenders. This means that the Student Advocacy Office is capable of approaching multiple affairs associated with vulnerability conditions. For the SAO, one of the most relevant features of Human Rights is universality. In this sense, according to this principle, everybody needs to have access to the same rights than others, regardless of sex, social origin, nationality, political perspective or another status. To illustrate, when it comes to education, article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 states the following:

**"Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.**



***Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace (...)"***

Any student may raise complains to the SAO in writing or via email. If the former, the complainant must visit the UTN Students' Affairs Vice Chancellor Office, where the new office is located. Otherwise, if the latter, the person must address his/her concerns to [defensoria@utn.ac.cr](mailto:defensoria@utn.ac.cr). The Defender, Georgeanela Mata, expects to execute in the upcoming months a system in which a complainant will be able to submit their allegations and proofs through the institutional website. In this respect, an electronic form will be available.

Subsequently, after receiving all the requirements and information that is legally needed, this office starts investigating the facts, and then, begins implementing Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) tools, such as negotiation, mediation and conciliation. If ADR methodologies fail, this unit usually releases recommendations based on its findings.

"I am honored to be the first Student Defender of the UTN. I am really proud of all the work that has been done during the last few months. Undoubtedly, the Student Advocacy Office is an institutional effort that tries to give a voice to all of those learners who believe that a better university is possible. Everyone of us deserves a better place to learn. Improvement should be a permanent and integral part of the university management," Mata said.

## Trump Systematically Destroying And Dismantling Everything

by Frank Seller May 13, 2018

As the EU has increasingly faced an atmosphere of disunity and disruption, Trump's ditching the JCPOA only threatens to make matters worse for Europe.

But that's not all, says the EU's foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, it also increasingly isolates America as she points out that 'no country is big enough to face this world alone'.

It seems that Trump's hubris is big enough to try it.

The Iran nuclear deal can survive without the United States' support, **Federica Mogherini**, the EU's foreign policy chief, said last Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mogherini said she has received assurances from Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that the country would stand by the agreement, despite U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw and reimpose sanctions on Iran earlier this week.

The Italian diplomat will meet with the foreign ministers of Germany, France and the United Kingdom — the three European powers that brokered the nuclear deal along with the EU, U.S., China and Russia

to discuss the future of the agreement. The European diplomats will also meet with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

"We are determined to keep this deal in place," Mogherini said, adding that **only Iran has the power to unilaterally wreck the deal.**

Europeans are seeking to demonstrate that they can still deliver most of the economic benefits Tehran was promised in exchange for giving up its nuclear weapons program and allowing a robust system of international inspections, as well as persuade European companies active in Iran not to abandon their deals out of fear of being penalized by the U.S.

In her speech, Mogherini took several shots at Trump, though she did not mention the U.S. president by name, saying: **"It seems that screaming, shouting, insulting and bullying, systematically destroying and dismantling everything that is already in place, is the mood of our times.** While the secret of change — and we need change — is to put all energies not in destroying the old, but rather in building the new.



But it hasn't all been quite as rosy as was hoped. Europe hasn't been paying attention to America's belligerent and narcissistic ways. America has overthrown regimes, waged wars and slighted international law whenever it suits them. Why, then, should they be expected to be a reliable partner in anything, when they have such a long history of breaking their word and violating their own principles? Now, it seems, Europe is finally starting to see what their unfaithful partner is really about.



Information taken from: <http://theduran.com/trump-destroying-and-dismantling-everything-says-eu-foreign-policy-chief/>

Image taken from: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Federica\\_Mogherini\\_Official.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Federica_Mogherini_Official.jpg)

## South Africa Miners Reach \$400m Settlement

South African gold producers have reached a settlement with lawyers representing thousands of miners who contracted fatal lung disease, in the country's largest-ever class action suit.

Officials said the six mining companies involved agreed to the 5bn rand (\$395m) settlement on Thursday, Reuters news agency reported.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of miners who contracted the **lung disease silicosis, which is caused by inhaling fine silica dust and has no known cure**, and tuberculosis in South Africa's mines.

"This is an historic settlement, resulting from years of extensive nego-

tiations. The agreement provides meaningful compensation to all eligible workers," the lawyers said in a statement.

South Africa is one of the world's biggest producers of gold, but the country's mining companies have been accused of exploiting workers and neglecting their health and safety. Almost all claimants are black miners from South Africa and neighbouring countries such as Lesotho.

Local media reported the draft settlement provides for a medical examination and compensation to mineworkers who have worked in South Africa's gold mines from March 1965 onwards.

Individual claimants can receive as much as 500,000 rand (\$39,500) for the worst cases of silicosis, TimesLive reported. There is no limit to the number of people who can make a claim. The settlement will have to be approved by a high court before it is implemented.



Information and image taken from: <http://mwcnews.net/news/business/71834-south-africa-miners-reach-400m-settlement.html>

## Hawaii's Kilauea Volcano: When, Why And What's Next?

Several earthquakes struck Hawaii after a massive eruption of the Kilauea volcano on the US state's Big Island.

About 1,700 residents have been ordered to evacuate their homes and some of them may not return for quite some time.

Here is what we know so far:

### What happened?

- On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, Hawaii's Big Island was on high alert after the Kilauea volcano erupted spurting lava near the island's eastern edge; the eruption was preceded by hundreds of earthquakes.

- One earthquake took place on May 4<sup>th</sup>, measured at magnitude 6.9 hitting the south flank of the volcano at 12:33pm (local time) the most powerful to hit the island since 1975.

- Kilauea volcano did not only produce the strongest earthquake but it also opened nine fissures inside Leilani Estates, sending lava into residential areas.

- In a 48-hour period, experts detected 152 quakes of magnitude 2 to 3, and 22 of magnitude 3 within five kilometres of the volcano's crater.

- Around 1,700 people were forced to evacuate, the number of houses destroyed went to 26 on Sunday as scientists reported lava spewing more than 61 meters in the air. At least two people have died since Thursday, according to reports.

- Lava has spread around 36,000 square meters, surrounding the most active fissure. About 240 people and 90 pets spent Saturday night (May 5) at shelters.

- "The challenge with this activity is the fact that it occurred in a populated area, now the question is will it stay in that area, will it move to another part and how long will it last?" Diana Roman, a volcanologist said.



### Kilauea

- Kilauea is one of the world's most active volcanoes in the world, continuously erupting since 1983.

- Normally the lava flows through subterranean channels to the sea. But the new eruptions are following a different pattern.

- The USG's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory issued a notice in mid-April stating that there were signs of pressure building in underground magma.

- The volcano is close near several small Hawaiian towns that could be affected by the eruption.

### Updates

- The state's Department of Education has announced all public schools on the Big Island will open on Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> and will operate on normal schedules.

- Air quality will be monitored, if the air quality drops, schools are prepared to shelter-in-place in designated locations.

- Leilani Estates residents will be allowed to continue evacuation to check on their property from 7am to 6pm (local time) each day until further notice.

- On May 7<sup>th</sup>, County of Hawaii will open an Eruption Information Cen-

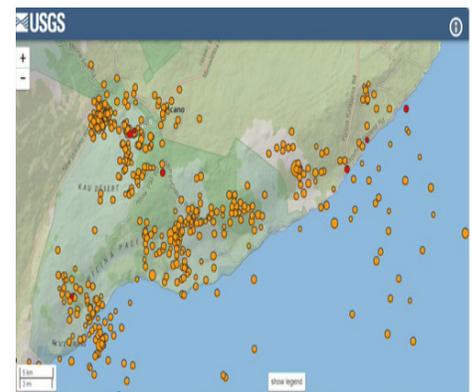
ter in Pahoa to address questions of people affected by the eruption.

The Hawaiian Volcano Observatory reported that fissure eruptions have been continuous.

- The Hawaii Fire Department reported "extremely high levels of dangerous sulphur dioxide gas" in the evacuation area.

- Aftershocks have continued seismic activity at Kilauea's remains elevated.

- Scientists say **there's no way to predict when the eruption will end.** It could be days, months, or longer.



**Another very active day on Kilauea volcano with earthquakes occurring on nearly every part of the volcano. This map shows an amazing 477 earthquakes over the last 24 hours (as of noon HST May 5<sup>th</sup>).**

## Teaching Priesthood

By Merlin Pérez (ILE Professor)

**"TEACHING IS ONE OF THE NOBLEST OF PROFESSIONS. IT REQUIRES AN ADEQUATE PREPARATION AND TRAINING, PATIENCE, DEVOTION, AND A DEEP SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY. THOSE WHO MOLD THE HUMAN MIND HAVE WROUGHT NOT FOR TIME, BUT FOR ETERNITY."**



Alongside the accelerating changes in a global world, teachers' skills have changed in a significant way. Teachers' professionalism has become more challenging but also more complexed. If teaching is a profession full of complexity then why it is not, respected? Why are professors all over the world struggling for recognition, better work conditions, higher status, more pay, and freedom of mediation?

Many years ago being a professional in education was more than a noble work it was an outstanding activity since everybody could recognize that the society needed not only to read and write but also to be informed of all of the facts and issues around the world. Then the technology made the information more accessible to every single citizen on the globe. Up to this point, supplying information was not part of professors' duties since everything was available and affordable to all. Therefore, it was the time to develop new hard skills by updating the educator's knowledge related to electronic devices, trainings that were going to be the perfect complement for their teaching areas, a new emphasis in their majors and even new languages. Professors went through all of the

required changes and for sure, they will keep on doing it to cope with the demands of the global village. It is quite indispensable to remark that many organizations have worked tirelessly to achieve significant accomplishments such as the **World Declaration for All and the framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning needs** in 1990 in a world conference. Despite this attempt to improve, the basic level of education for all children has not been reached yet.

Then if we analyze what is happening in high school and university we have faced a bigger problem since there are many school dropouts due to the economic conditions of families. Major setbacks of economies in many places of the globe have caused that many millions of people remain in poverty, unschooled or illiterate. Being conscious of all of the problems, professors try to do their best in the classrooms applying new soft skills to ensure not only significant learning but also to highlight their role in the learning process and their preponderant goal, which is to improve human living conditions. **Being a professor means living an ongoing process of learning, embracing new tendencies, theories, methods, methodologies, procedures and techniques.** It is to provoke a feeling of joy, interest and love for all the tasks the learners have to complete, it is to lead the learners to the path of

**CALVIN COOLIDGE**

success and eventually to crystallize it. I will allow myself to compare education professionalism to the priesthood since vocation; mission and vows of hope are indispensable to cope with infamous educational systems that put everybody into the same mold ignoring that every country has its own culture, rapid population growth and economic disparities. Education professionals have the responsibility of adapting and adopting changes for the students' wellness.

The education we need requires a full understanding of the demands of the global world, a commitment to excellence and above all the professional conviction of the courage and importance of teaching priesthood, the recognition of the strength of our duty. We all have to be aware of the fact that it does not matter if the system tries to defeat us with all the tangled issues it has, we have to stand for our principles and ideals of molding hearts and brains to build up a better world. If we have to continue struggling for money, professional recognition and respect, we have to fight with excellence to let the entire world know that we believe in our potential as knowledge, feelings and success mediators. We will continue working for molding humans because we focus on education to change the world, **we focus on teaching priesthood.**



## Learning A Second Culture

By Aaron Torres (ILE Professor)



Learning a second language always means learning a second culture. Language and culture are connected. When you greet someone or say no to an invitation or talk with people in an informal conversation – all these situations are cultural. Culture is a set of guidelines for communicating with other people,

rules for being polite or formal, and customs or ways of doing things.

Think about people who try to learn the language and culture of your country. What are some of the differences between your culture and theirs? What kinds of difficulties do they have? They probably have to learn about such things as:

**Food:** shopping, restaurants, menus, and ordering.

**Transportation:** trains and buses and how to use them.

**Work:** what to say and do while working.

**Time:** being on time, keeping appointments.

**Entertainment:** songs, TV shows, movies, theater.

**Health:** getting medical advice, talking to doctors.

**Dress:** clothes that are used for different occasions.

**Respect for others:** showing proper respect.

**Friends:** making friends.

This list could continue. If you want to participate in these aspects of culture, you must be able to speak the language of the culture. Even if you never go to an English-speaking country, you still need to learn the culture because some day you may need to speak or write to someone from an English-speaking culture.

To improve your English, try to understand the culture of an English-speaking country. When you see differences, ask people about them, read about them, and learn about them. Use your English to find answers to your questions about the culture. Enjoy the differences.

However, be careful, because sometimes what you think is true about a group of people is not. For example, not all North Americans are friendly, have a lot of money, live in big houses, and look like Keanu Reeves or Jennifer Aniston. North Americans can sometimes be unfriendly, poor, live in small, crowded apartments, and look like Asians, South Americans, or Africans.

Ask yourself, what do people from other countries think about people in your country? Do they think you all look alike or live in the same kind of houses? With your English, you can tell people about the culture in your country, too.

Do you know the English expression “put yourself in someone else’s shoes”? It means “try to understand another culture by becoming a part of the culture.” If you are living in an English-speaking country, you have a perfect opportunity to put yourself in different shoes. You can learn something interesting about native English speakers and practice your English at the same time.

If you are not living in an English-speaking country, you still have an opportunity to learn as much as you can about English-speaking cultures. With your skills, you can read, watch television, and talk to people from other countries in English.

To end, it is important to remember that when experiencing another culture, most people have culture shock for a few months or even a year after they move to a new country and have to speak a new language. Try to find some strategies to help you overcome this shock as:

- **Finding things to enjoy.**
- **Make friends with as many local people as possible.**
- **Ask questions when you don’t understand something about the local culture.**
- **Try to think positively about the new culture.**
- **Remember, no place is perfect, including your country.**
- **Don’t be upset: culture shock is normal, and you will get over it.**



## Parlez-vous Français?

By Clare Goodman (ILE Professor)



Parlez-vous Français? All my students ask me this question. Unfortunately, I tell them that I do not, and to tell you the truth, I really wish I did.

When I was in elementary school in Canada, they had just started teaching French as the second official language of Canada. I recently had the opportunity to go and visit my sister, who now lives in Ottawa. While I was there, I could hear French everywhere I went and deep down I really wish I had paid more attention in my French classes. The question I started asking myself is **why do not more Canadians speak French? Could it be the distance between provinces, the educational system or the lack of French speakers in Canada?**

First, the French-speaking province of Quebec is in the eastern part of Canada about 3000 km away from Vancouver, B.C. So, as a Vancouverite it is very difficult to practice the language on a daily basis. While I was visiting Ottawa and Montreal, I actually felt like I was visiting a different country, because almost everyone around me was speaking French. Another interesting fact is that Canada is the second largest country in the world, so due to the vastness of this country and although small French speaking communities exist across the country. It is unusual for people who live in the western provinces to come into daily contact with French speakers, which in turn makes it hard for people to

speak both languages.

I started learning French in elementary school. The classes were boring and all I remember is just listening to the teacher and repeating the words. I think that if we had been shown how important learning another language is in life; it would have been a different story. In section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms addresses the right to instruction in English or in French of a minority population. As I investigated further about studying French in Canadian schools, I stumbled across something interesting that in Ontario you can apply to receive French in a French-language school. The applicant must be a parent or guardian who lives in Ontario, is a Canadian citizen and meets at least one of the following criteria: His/her native language is French, that is, the first language learned and still understood; or He or she has received his or her education at the elementary level in a French-language education institution in Canada; or He or she is the parent (guardian) of a child who has received or receives his/her education at the elementary or secondary level in a French-language education institution in Canada.

In all the other provinces and territories, learning French is undertaken on a voluntary basis. French is taught in elementary school, but optional after grade 10. I am not sure how French classes are taught now, but I am sure they have improved regarding methodologies. Unfortunately, becoming bilingual takes constant practice and ex-

poser to the language, so with little opportunity to use French makes it difficult to achieve.

In addition, only about 22% of Canadians use French as their first language (Statistics Canada, 2006). **Most of the French-speaking population lives in Quebec**, where French is the official, provincial language. Other high concentrations of French speakers live in New Brunswick, northern Ontario, and Manitoba. The mother tongue of about 60% of Canada's population is English (Statistics Canada, 2006). French is not required learning outside of Quebec. This shows that there are few French-speaking Canadians in Canada, but most of them still try to preserve their language and culture.

In the end, I ended up moving to Costa Rica and learning Spanish. After visiting part of eastern Canada, I began to realize how important French is. Many factors contribute to the lack of bilingualism in Canada such as the distance between Western and Eastern Canada, the educational system and the lack of French-speaking Canadians. I would like to leave you with this quote "The ability to speak French, English – as well as Spanish or Mandarin – should be seen as a source of pride and as an investment in the future that will yield dividends over a person's lifetime. Canadians should feel blessed – not cursed – to be home to two of the world's great languages." (The Globe and Mail, 2012) **Learning to speak a second language is a blessing, and I wish I would have looked at it this way when I was learning French.**

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## Empowering Students And Teachers With Blended Learning

by Marcia Kish on August 20, 2015

Whenever I told people that I am a blended learning coach, I'd often get a quizzical look. "A what? What's a blended learning coach?" Just as frequently, I'd also get the question: "What exactly is blended learning, anyway?"

These reactions have become less common recently as more and more people become acquainted with what blended learning is—a powerful instructional model in which teachers integrate technology into their teaching in order to better personalize learning and increase student engagement.



### Becoming a Learning Facilitator

Although many educators are now familiar with the idea of blended learning, it is not always easy for them to implement such a model in their own classrooms. In fact, the move to blended learning can be a very challenging transition for teachers who are used to a more traditional instructional model that relies heavily on teacher-led knowledge transmission.

**Blended learning empowers students to take ownership of their learning and customize experiences according to their individual needs.** This is not to say, though, that blended learning give students complete autonomy. Rather, in blended learning models, teachers function as learning facilitators, guiding students to the resources and learning activities that are most appropriate for their needs. I like to create rotating learning stations that enable students to choose from a range of different resources that are targeted at their skills needs. This enables me to ensure that the resources are appropriate while also ensuring that students choose their own

learning path.

As might be expected, to accurately identify specific student learning needs and provide the instructional resources that address those needs, teachers need to be able to use student data effectively. Data inform the steps that blended learning teachers take to guide students and facilitate growth. If a teacher sees a student has excellent math skills but her reading skills need more work, the teacher can provide the student with additional resources and activities that target and improve the specific skills that are underdeveloped.

I used programs like [PowerMyLearning.org](http://PowerMyLearning.org) that allowed me to find specific online learning activities that focused on the reading skill at the appropriate learning level for the student. One student of mine, for example, entered my class reading well below grade level. But, by using assessment data to identify the student's learning needs, I was able to provide resources that helped him grow his reading skills two grade levels by the end of the year.

Of course, the importance of data to blended learning means that teachers need access to high-quality data. Without real-time data from reliable assessments, teachers struggle to effectively implement blended learning in their classrooms. Interim assessments can be very useful in this respect. The [MAP assessment](#), for example, provides key data that allow teachers to periodically check on learning progress in reading and math. The reports that MAP generate enable teachers to see exactly what students already know and what they are ready to learn.

A third grade teacher from Columbus Public School in Ohio used the MAP test this past year to help identify the math skills his students were ready to learn. The students were placed into flexible groups based on their scores. The teacher would find online resources through IXL, PowerMyLearning, and LearnZillion for each group of students to practice during the digital station. [This video](#) will show a quick example of how the teacher used Station Rotation within his classroom. He started with a quick overview of elapsed time and then allowed the students to work through the content at his/her own learning level based on formative assessment and MAP data.

# ACADEMICS AND MORE

## Principles for Effective Blended Learning

The best blended learning teachers understand that blended learning is student-centric. As a coach, I emphasize that “three Ps and a D” should guide how teachers approach student driven blended learning:

- **Students choose their own path:** By empowering students to pursue the topics that interest them in formats that best suit them, blended learning is appealing, engaging, and personalized. What's more, it helps students feel a sense of ownership over their learning, while teachers provide expert guidance.

- **Students work at their own pace:** By customizing the pace of instruction and learning to meet individual student needs, blended learning enables students to spend their time more productively. Students can focus on improving skills that need work and skip past material that they have already mastered, which makes instruction more targeted and responsive to the differentiated learning levels in a particular class.

- **Students choose the place where they learn:** Because so many useful and engaging resources are available online, students can learn from home and on the go, as well as in more traditional classroom spaces. This means that learning can happen anyplace and anytime.

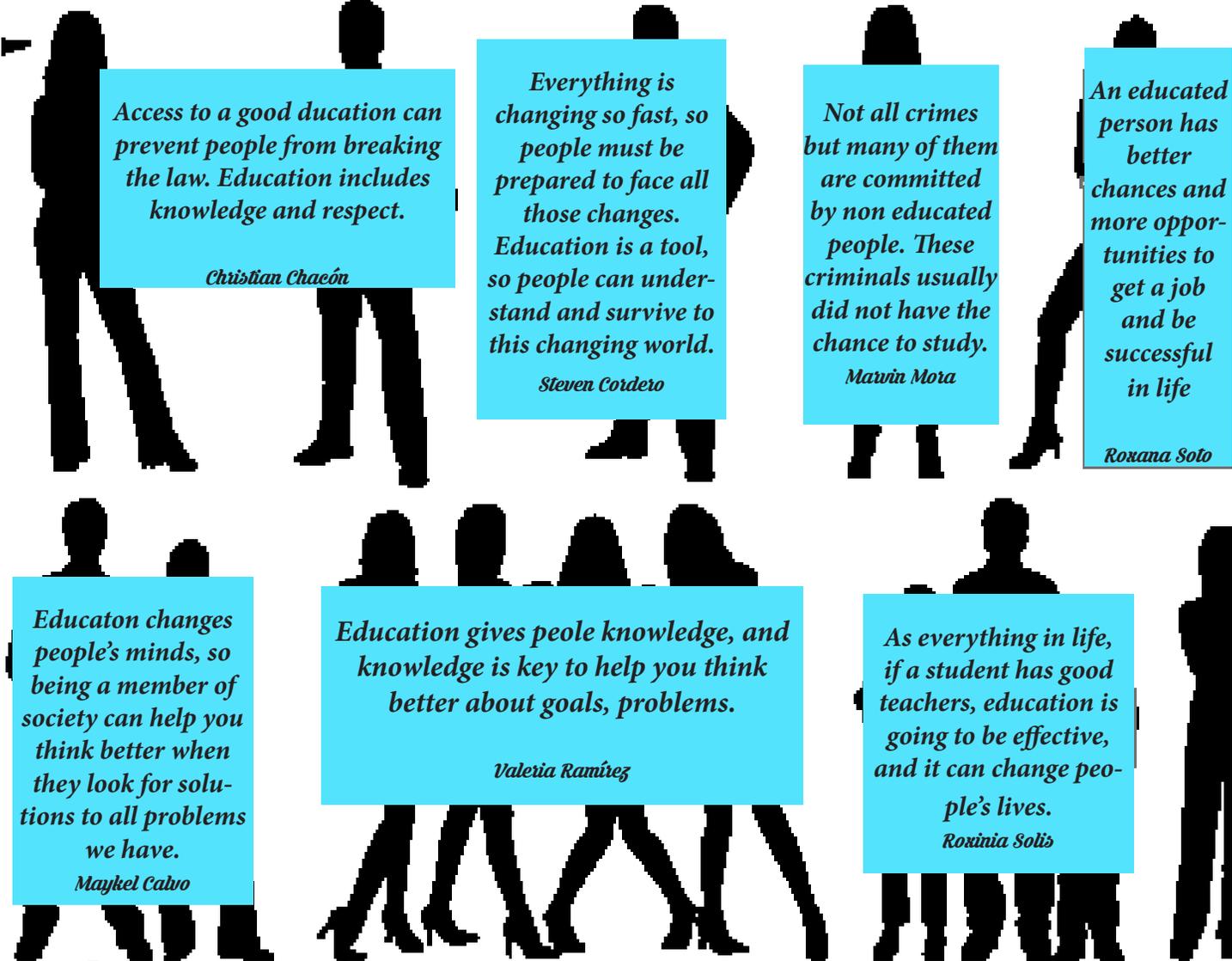
- **Teachers use data to inform instruction:** Data help to facilitate effective differentiated instruction by showing teachers the areas where students are strong and the areas in which they need additional support. Teachers can determine whether or not a certain learning path is helping a student to grow, and, if it is not, help the student to find a more appropriate path.

Making the switch to a blended learning model of instruction takes time and no small amount of patience, but the rewards are well worth it. To see students actively engaged in their learning, excited about forging their own paths and growing every day is an educator's dream.



The UTN community includes professors, administrative staff and students. Each individual has something to say about everything. In this section, we give the university community the opportunity to express what they feel about different school, country and world issues that in one or another way affect or impact our lives, feelings and opinions. This month we asked students:

**Can education really change a person's life?**



*Access to a good ducation can prevent people from breaking the law. Education includes knowledge and respect.*

*Christian Chacón*

*Everything is changing so fast, so people must be prepared to face all those changes. Education is a tool, so people can understand and survive to this changing world.*

*Steven Cordero*

*Not all crimes but many of them are committed by non educated people. These criminals usually did not have the chance to study.*

*Mawin Mora*

*An educated person has better chances and more opportunities to get a job and be successful in life*

*Roxana Soto*

*Educaton changes people's minds, so being a member of society can help you think better when they look for solutions to all problems we have.*

*Maykel Cabvo*

*Education gives peole knowledge, and knowledge is key to help you think better about goals, problems.*

*Valeria Ramírez*

*As everything in life, if a student has good teachers, education is going to be effective, and it can change people's lives.*

*Roxinia Solís*

*Some examples of how education can change people is what happens in societies like Finland and the Netherlands where the educative system has proven to improve society.*

*Handel Enríquez*



## A Hacker's Hideout In An Abandoned Building

By Mariano Chaves (ILE Student)

Abandoned buildings might not only be dusty and decaying, but they might also hide obscure secrets. I discovered this after a long skating afternoon. It was a lovely afternoon, and I had decided to skate in order to relax and forget about the tension of the day. At 2 pm, it started to get colder, and I felt a little chilly; honestly, I should have headed home, but I stayed a bit longer. When I was sliding down the sidewalk, I saw an enormous building. In fact, I had seen it before; however, I never thought about breaking in and eyeing what it hid on the inside. Therefore, I removed the old wooden piece, which covered the entryway and embarked on my mysterious journey. Since it was an abandoned building, I had thought there was no electricity; however, I was quite impressed to see that the lights turned on when I hit the switch that was placed on the wall. As I began to move throughout the place, I could sense something atypical in the environment; and also, an eerie feeling ran down my spine. There were books and papers scattered all over the place. The drawers were filled with canned food. "What's this place?" I wondered. Then, I panicked when I got to the basement and found a working server room. Finally, I tried one of the computers and realized it contained a database with binary numbers along with other complex codes. There were archives with photos and confidential information of people I knew. That was when I freaked out and abandoned the place. Was it a hacker's hideout? I do not know, yet I am willing to investigate more.

## Caught Red-Handed

By Michael Granados (ILE Students)

Robert could not believe it. He just found out that his girlfriend Jennifer was cheating on him. Robert was desperately crying when he came at me and told me that he had lost his gorgeous girlfriend. He told me about what Jennifer looked like when he saw them. She was wearing a white black spotted blouse and a pink short skirt. She had her blonde hair tied; moreover, she was happy with him. On the other hand, Jennifer's lover was handsome. He had brown short hair; he was wearing a blue shirt with green lines and blue jeans. Besides, he seemed to be funny; maybe that is what Jennifer found attractive about him and cheated on Robert. Robert ended up in a depressed mood and confused because he wondered why Jennifer did not tell him about it from the beginning. It seems as if it would take a long time to Robert to recover.

## An Alien's Message

By Mariano Chaves (ILE Student)

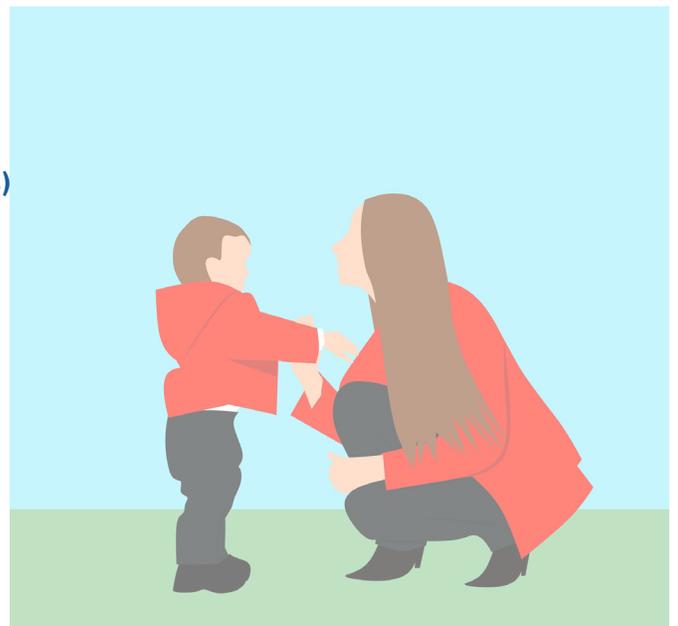
I remember experiencing a UFO sighting when I was thirteen years old, and it changed my life completely. I went camping to California with my Astronomy I class; we went to the Yellow Dear's Forest. The night was cold to the point that I needed three blankets and to cuddle up close to the fire in order not to freeze. Besides, the forest was completely dark and desolate. There were no houses near, no electric lights, and no other people besides my class friends, two teachers, and two dads. The sky was dark blue, but billions of shiny stars decorated it in such a majestic manner that took my breath away. Then, we heard an acute buzzing sound; we thought it was some sort of security or seismic alarm, but we fixed our eyes on the sky and realized that a big spherical object was falling down from the sky. At first, I thought it was an instrument from an N.A.S.A. base heading toward the earth. However, I was petrified when it got closer to the ground and opened two little windows. I closed my eyes and pinched myself to see if I was dreaming, but nothing happened. Indeed, the spaceship was there. As I grabbed my telescope to see it closer, one of the small-grayish creatures on the spaceship smiled at me. Similarly, the other one tossed a tiny bottle near the lake. After that, they disappeared. Although I was panicky, I decided to go to the lakefront and pick up the bottle. The message it had inside, on a piece of paper, froze my blood; it said, "we have been watching you for very long Erick, and we want to meet



## Mother

By Josue Solano (ILE Students)

**M**y mother is my biggest companion,  
**O**r simply my everything and accomplice.  
**T**he only one I keep in mind.  
**H**appiness comes to me when I see her.  
**E**very simple moment is perfect with her.  
**R**adiance is what her presence brings.



## CHI ENERGY AND CHI KUNG



Chi (qi) is an ancient Chinese term, which can be translated as **energy**. Like energy, the word chi is used in both abstract and concrete terms, and applied to both general concepts and specific phenomena. In other words, chi is ambiguous. (People who use the term often have a specific meaning in mind.)

In the broadest sense of the word, chi is generally understood to be pervasive, present in everyone and everything, but it is not uniformly distributed.

**Chi moves freely around the universe, assuming various forms along the way.** Disciplines such as Chi Kung (Qigong) and Feng Shui purport to observe and manipulate chi, for the specific benefit of human life.

According to this model, chi is present in the air. Therefore, it is sometimes understood to be synonymous with air. Chi circulates around the body, as do oxygen and blood; some people therefore assert that chi is breath or blood. Within the realm of martial arts, physical postures are known to affect circulation, and subsequently chi has been equated to good posture itself. All these conceptions must be seen as incom-

plete, if not plain wrong.

By definition, chi is not a specific form of matter (e.g. element or molecule), nor is it a specific expression of energy (e.g. kinetic or thermal). On the contrary, these are all specific expressions of chi.

If chi does not take one specific form, is it therefore a non-falsifiable and unscientific theory? Not exactly. As in the case of dark matter, we can look for indirect evidence of its existence. Regardless, chi-based models are useful where they provide explanations for past observations, and correct predictions for future events, e.g. medical diagnosis and treatment.

**What then is chi kung?** Simply put, it is a set of exercises with reproducible results, which are most easily understood within a chi-based model, and more difficult (or sometimes impossible) to explain with other models. **Chi kung is a practice, not a theory or a belief.** Chi kung is not occult magic, and it is not a religion or cult affiliation.

When performed properly, many chi kung exercises can improve the practitioner's health. Some have no such effect, and others can result in injury. Here are instructions for a very simple and safe introductory exercise.

### Steps

- 1. Relax your body and mind.** If this is your first time performing this exercise, find (or create) a distraction-free environment.
- 2. Stand in a martial arts horse stance.** Any stance will do. Remain in the stance for one minute or longer; doing so may enhance your results in the next steps. If you are extremely weak, then you may skip this step.

**3. Exit the horse stance, and stand up straight.** Again, relax your body and mind. Physical, intellectual or emotional tension will degrade your sensitivity and impair your results in the next step. Rub your hands together for a few seconds. Close your eyes.

**4. Move your palms toward and away from each other, as if gently squeezing a small beach ball.** Visualize the chi gathering between your hands. Move at a speed of 1-3 squeezes per second, within a distance of 6 to 24 inches. Continue this kneading for 2-4 minutes, or longer as necessary, until you notice an unexpected sensation in your hands. You may feel heat, tingling, vibrating, or strong magnetic repulsion. Many people will experience these feelings on their first attempt; others will need to repeat the exercise daily until a result is obtained.

These sensations constitute the observation of a "chi-effect", and not necessarily a direct experience of chi itself. Other exercises will produce different sensations and effects, in different parts of the body, or outside it.



## Charleston, South Carolina



Charleston is the largest and oldest city in the state of South Carolina in the United States of America. Its historic downtown is on a peninsula formed by two rivers, the Ashley and the Cooper, flowing into the Atlantic, and protected from the open ocean by surrounding islands. Charleston was captured in the American Civil War without much property damage, so the historic part of town has buildings that are hundreds of years old. The current downtown skyline, with prac-



tically no tall buildings due to the city's height restriction ordinance, is dominated by church steeples and the stunning Arthur Ravenel cable-stay bridge over the Cooper River. The city is a major port on the eastern sea-board of the US and a popular destination for domestic and international tourists.

### Talk

The dialect here varies from standard American English, having a "Southern Coastal Accent" that contains British influences. For those who learned Standard English, some

speech may be difficult to comprehend here. Generally speaking, one can easily get by with Standard American or British English, though. The inhabitants of Charleston are, to a large degree, transient (due to several military installations, port labor, rail labor, and other factors), and therefore many other languages are inherent in a minority role.

### Historic Attractions

Charleston's primary attraction to visitors is its historical setting and landmarks. A list of some sites to visit includes:

**Fort Sumter.** The island site of the start of the Civil War, now a National Monument. One must board a ferry for an additional fee at either Liberty Square in downtown or Patriot's Point in Mt. Pleasant. The ferry ride is about 30 minutes. Fort Sumter is in ruins, but there are markers telling you where things used to be, as well as a museum.

**The Market.** An old shopping district at the foot of Market St. where vendors still sell wares. Contrary to popular legend, the Market was never a slave exchange. However, the remnants of an old slave market are located a few blocks away.

### Parks and Gardens

**The Battery and White Point Gardens.** A park located at the southern tip of the Charleston peninsula with beautiful views, especially along the Battery Promenade by the Cooper River. Don't miss the elegant historic mansions along the

Promenade, some of which have sold for nearly \$20M.

**Liberty Square,** at the east end of Calhoun St. fronting the Cooper River. Has the South Carolina Aquarium and the Fort Sumter National Monument Visitor Center, both offers views of the Ravenel Bridge. This is also where you may take a boat tour to Fort Sumter.

### Museums

**Gibbes Museum of Art.** Since 1905, this striking Beaux Arts building has housed a premier collection of over 10,000 works of fine art, principally American works with a Charleston or Southern connection.

**South Carolina Aquarium, 100 Aquarium Wharf**

### Sleep

Charleston is serviced by many local hotels and virtually all of the ma-



for U.S. hotel chains. Expect to pay a premium for a room on Charleston's downtown peninsula, especially in the historic hotels. A vehicle is not needed - nor recommended - to explore the historic downtown. If a vehicle is accessible during the trip, one may want to hop across the rivers to West Ashley or Mount Pleasant where hotels are less expensive. Both West Ashley and Mount Pleasant are less than a five to ten minute drive to the downtown peninsula. Also less expensive are hotels in North Charleston, which is convenient for the Charleston Airport, the Coliseum, and the Convention Center.



# DISCOVERING TECHNOLOGY

Another major downfall is the inability to access the .css and other files. If you have some coding edits you would like to do, you are basically out of luck on Wix. It seems that full customization is not possible as of now with this builder.

The final, huge drawback of Wix is the lack of a blogging platform. They have advertised for over 6 months that this feature would be coming shortly, and as of April 2013, it is not available. While the premium account lets you edit the majority of ALT and META data, if you plan on building your website to be ranked higher in Google, your blogging platform is a crucial factor to consider. You can always create a blog on WordPress and link it to a sub-domain, as described in [Setting up the Right Blog for Your Website](#), but this is extra work you shouldn't have to do. Your blog will also not keep the same theme as your normal website, a major drawback of blogging in this fashion.

## Weebly

Weebly has been around a bit longer than Wix and seems to have some of their bugs figured out. There are some features that Wix performs better, but overall Weebly is a far superior "drag and drop" site builder.

Just like Wix, Weebly has both a free and a paid version. While Wix allows you to place text, image, html code, etc. wherever you would like, Weebly limits users to specific formats. You cannot place an image anywhere you would like, but rather must be placed in a formatted fashion. This definitely does limit how customizable your site could be. Though this may seem like a downfall when compared to Wix, I have never had a formatting problem with Weebly. Wherever my site editor shows that my box or text ends, is exactly how it shows up. I consider this a pro for Weebly over Wix. Though the formatting is strict, you are allowed access to the .css file and .html layout files. This means if you have something specific you need designed, you can, you just need a bit of coding experience. This is great especially since they do not have as many apps available as Wix.

Just like Wix, Weebly allows users to edit the majority of ALT and META tags. The bonus that Weebly has in terms of SEO is the built in blogging platform. Creating a blog on Weebly is as easy as dragging

it on your screen. You can then click "New Post" and you are ready to go. This blog is not only easy to maintain and set up, it keeps with the current theme of your site.

	 Wix.com	VS	 weebly <small>web creation made easy™</small>
Free Version Available	✓		✓
User Friendly	✓		✓
Can edit ALT and META tags	✓		✓
Fully Functional Editor	✗		✓
Lots of Applications and Widget	✓		✗
Access to .css and .html files	✗		✓
Integrated Blogging Platform	✗		✓
Fully Customizable	✗		✗

As you can tell, I included "Fully Customizable" on the bottom with neither Wix nor Weebly checked. This is because neither of these builders are ideal for a fully customized website.

One final thought to keep in mind is your plans for the future. Do you think you will ever want to change your site builder in the future? If you end up deciding Wix is the best option for you, they currently do not have a 301 redirect option, meaning you are basically stuck with them. If you ever decide to switch to WordPress or something similar in the future, you will be starting from scratch and you would lose all authority built over the years on your Wix site. Though I have not personally done it, Weebly claims to have the ability to have a 301 redirect, giving Weebly an extra bonus.

## Troy



Our major source for the Trojan War are the great epics written by the blind poet Homer. He was not contemporary to the war but lived centuries later, c.850 BCE. Stories of the Trojan War had been handed down orally for generations and he was the first to put it in written form – in Greek. His works Iliad and Odyssey are of prime literary importance in Western history. But many wonder about the truth of his stories. How much can we rely on an account of the Trojan War written centuries later? We believe there very likely was a Trojan War but not as grand as his story leads one to believe – there were likely not 1,200 Greek ships attacking the city of Troy and the war probably didn't last ten years. It was very likely a much smaller affair that grew into what he wrote as the story was passed down from one generation to the next.

Homer wrote of King Agamemnon, from Mycenae, being in charge of the Archaic Greeks. There were other kings, but he was the one to whom they all answered in a somewhat loose hierarchy. His brother, Menelaus, was married to Helen, who was abducted by Paris, a son of the king of Troy. His honor had been challenged with the “theft” of “his woman,” and he wanted it back. Homeric

Greeks saw women as property, and Menelaus was far more concerned with the sleight on his honor. Troy was ruled by King Priam, who had a single main wife and many others, as was common in the ancient world. The entire Trojan War was allegedly fought over the “theft” and “recovery” of a woman.

In Homer's story, the people were polytheistic as expected, but the gods actively participated on the battlefield, swaying one way or the other. Achilles was assisted by Athena in his final confrontation with Hector, and Apollo tried to help Hector by luring Achilles away so that he could escape (which didn't work). Zeus was there as an arbitrator. The gods were taking human forms and acting among them, which wouldn't be a stretch to Homer as Greek gods were anthropomorphic.

On the Trojan side were King Priam with his main wife Hecuba. They had many sons. One, the most prominent in the story being Hector (who was married to Andromache and had a son – Astyanax), and Paris (who abducted and married Helen). Helen was really Helen of Sparta, not Helen of Troy. Other important names on this side were Aeneas, Sarpedon, and Dolon. The gods on the Trojan side were Apollo, Ares, and Artemis. On the Achaean (Greek) side were

Agamemnon (married to Clytemnestra), his brother Menelaus (whose wife was the abducted Helen), and Achilles (son of Peleus and Thetis – a goddess). Other important names were Patroclus (dear friend of Achilles killed by Hector), Nestor, Ajax, and Odysseus (hero of Homer's next epic, the Odyssey). The gods on the Greek side were Athena, Hera, and Poseidon. Achilles, being the son of a goddess, was impervious to death except for one weakness. Thetis had dipped him in the river Styx at his birth but held him by his heel, which thus wasn't dipped – hence the weakness we know today as one's “Achilles Heel.”

The Trojan War was very possibly one of the last major events during invasions by the Sea Peoples. Homer provided a reliable description of what life was like during that vacuum – what was worn, what the physical world looked like, etc.

To read the story of Troy, go to: <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/h/homer/>



## “English For You CR” presents, Who vs. Whom



**Whom** should be used to refer to the object of a verb or preposition. When in doubt, try this simple trick: If you can replace the word with “**he**” or “**she**,” use **who**. If you can replace it with “**him**” or “**her**,” use **whom**.

- **Who** should be used to refer to the subject of a sentence.
- **Whom** should be used to refer to the object of a verb or preposition.

In a sentence, **who** is used as a **subject**. Let’s look at a couple of examples:

- **Who** would like to go on vacation with me?
- **Who** made these delicious burritos?

**Whom** is used as the **object of a verb or preposition**.

- To **whom** was the letter addressed?
- **Whom** do you believe?
- I do not know with **whom** I will go to the party.

You can listen to our podcast including this section, music in English, news, and more in:  
<http://www.EnglishforYouCR.com> and [www.facebook.com/english.foryoucr](http://www.facebook.com/english.foryoucr)

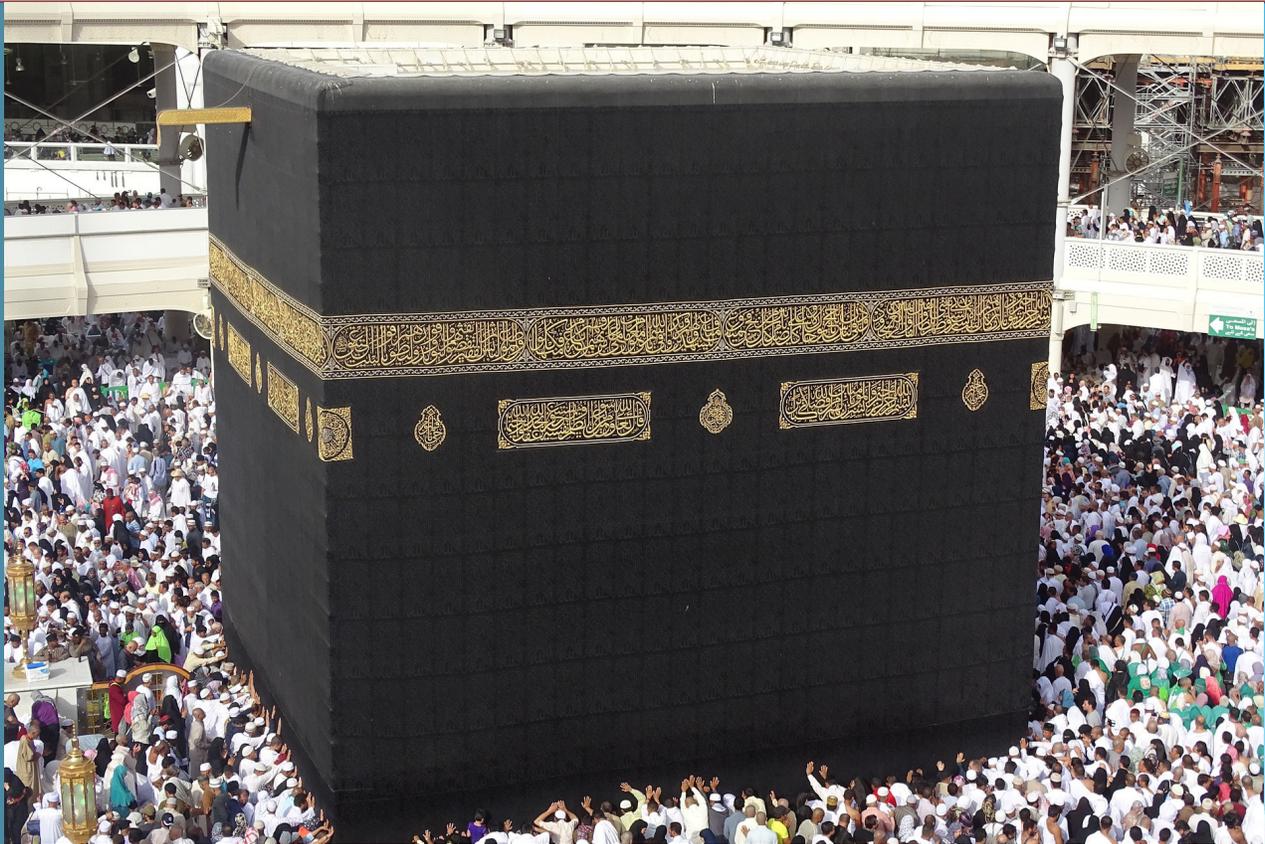
## ***lollapalooza***

an extraordinary or unusual thing, person, or event; an exceptional example or instance.

### EXAMPLE:

The magnificent new cruise-liner was a lollapalooza that no other ship could hold a candle to.

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)



## Ramadan

The traditional annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, the Hajj is a mandatory religious duty for Muslims and is the largest annual gathering of people in the world. It occurs between the **8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of the last month of the Islamic calendar**, Dhu al-Hijjah. Hajj is that symbolic pilgrimage when millions of Muslims from around the world belonging to different ethnic groups, socioeconomic strata and cultures travel to Mecca together and praise to Allah and ask for forgiveness of their sins.

The five day spiritual Hajj, which dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century of the Christian calendar, is designed to promote the bonds and affection between Muslim communities and shows that everyone is equal in the eyes of Allah by wearing simple white garment Ihram. Pilgrims spend days worshiping in and around the holy city of Mecca and perform rituals that make up the Hajj.

In medieval times, people made the pilgrimage to Mecca by camel caravan or by ship; the journey often took months, sometimes even years.

Today, most pilgrims arrive via the airport at Jeddah. Airlines in most Muslim countries offer special flights specifically for Hajj and Jeddah has many regular commercial flights as well, in particular flights to most major European or Middle Eastern hubs.

Information taken from: <https://en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Hajj>

Photo credit: <https://pixabay.com>

