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Mar15

[Bob](#)

## Blogging hits the Chronicle of Higher Education

Ha....So UNS beat [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) to the blogosphere! Welcome aboard Chronicle. For you neophytes, the Chronicle is essentially the bible of higher education news. It's a big deal when RIT gets a mention in the Chronicle, as it is good exposure in the higher ed world. Mainstream journalists monitor the Chronicle for story ideas.

The new [Chronicle blog](#) will focus on news, of course. But to me it simply reads as a news digest. Pretty formal news with a chance to comment. So what....How is this a real blog? I don't get any new perspective on anything here. Am I missing something?

Now, if we can only get the Chronicle to blog about this very blog. Help us fellow bloggers!!!

### 1. [Justin Thorp](#)

Mar16

About your question of why is this a blog... There are different types of blogs and blog posts. Blogger Amy Gahrn has a really good article on this. <http://blog.contentious.com/archives/2004/09/21/link-blurbs-basic-blog-post-formats-part-2> The Chronicle for Higher Education Blog is what Amy calls a Link Blurb blog. It provides links to news stories with a brief blurb of original content. With the web being SOOO huge, it is hard to find out what you should and should not pay attention to. You obviously trust this site. Because of that relationship, you trust the news articles that they are pointing you to. Thus, that style of blog is a pretty valuable service.

### 2. [Bob Finnerty](#)

Mar17

Thanks for the note and reference, Justin. Short news blurbs keep us all sane in today's busy world.

### 3. [Justin Thorp](#)

Mar17

Bob, if your interested in learning more on blogging, i'd recommend: The Cluetrain Manifesto <http://www.cluetrain.com/book/index.html> Naked Conversations by Robert Scoble & Shel Israel <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/047174719X/> They are both preeminent books on blogging and conversational communications.

### 4. [Mike Saffran](#)

Mar17

Justin, The Amy Gahrn site is *excellent!* I was not previously aware of it, so thanks for alerting us to her articles on blog-posting formats. (It's such a good series of articles, I may print them--which for me is a good gauge of an article's value). She makes excellent points--some similar to those I planned to highlight in my post on blogging vs. writing (coming later today). It's nice to see someone (and a *blogger* of all people!) who shares my views on the value of *quality writing*. Hopefully, more bloggers will heed her (and my) advice--because there's any awful lot of awful writing out there in the ether. Just last night, as I was editing (key concept) my blog post for today, it occurred to me that there should be distinct words to describe "brain dump" blogging and high-quality writing on a blog (do you think "wrogging" will catch on?). I especially appreciate Amy's admonition to "keep y our writing tight" (which, as she properly distinguishes, is not necessarily synonymous with writing short, for one can write long--as I sometimes do--and also tight). Also, the Pascal quote (on writing long due to lacking time to write short) has always been one of my favorites--because it's so *true*. I first heard the quote a number of years ago from RIT professor (and my friend) Bill Larsen. It's such a good quote that I shared it with my Public Relations Writing students last fall. I als o strongly agree with this recommendation from Amy (and I had been meaning to make the suggestion for this Weblog): "It may help to specify links in link blurb items to open in a new window. This will keep your blog available while readers follow your links." Silandara, are you listening? Mike

### 5. [Justin Thorp](#)

Mar17

Mike, I agree with you about the importance of quality writing. But in some blog consulting work I have done, I have seen a lot of people that spend smuch time analyzing and editing that they might write once or twice and then quit because it takes so much work. I also think if you over analyze and edit too much you can easily loose your "blogging voice." It won't sound like you writing any more. Itwill sound like marketing speak. When I am reading someone's blog, I want to feel like I am sitting next to them having a coffee or beer with them. I think like anything it is a balance. I often will do brain dumps on my blog. I use my blog as a way a practice articulating how I feel about something. The more I spend time everyday articulating my thoughts via writing, the easier it becomes when i have to write a paper. Getting people who enjoy reading what I write (which I suprisingly have lots)is a bonus. I enjoy this blogging conversation. I hope it continues.

### 6. [Mike Saffran](#)

Mar17

I couldn't agree with you more, Justin, particularly regarding the need to maintain balance and a "blogger's voice." For example, the "voice" I'm using here is much less formal than, say, that used in an RIT news release or a *News & Events* story. What we're both describing (in our own way), I think, is the *critical importance*--to the success of any writer--of having the ability to write with *versatility*. In fact, that's another key point stressed to my PR Writing students last fall (you'll hear a lot of these tips from me in this space). From our text (*Public Relations Writing: The Essentials of Style and Format*, 5th edition, by Thomas Bivins): "The greater the variety of writing styles you can learn to use well, the better your chances of becoming an excellent writer." I recall one writing-filled weekend a few years ago when I was switching among a graduate

research paper (very formal writing style using strict APA style), *News & Events* articles (less formal prose than that in a research paper, but solid, *reliable* newswriting using strict AP—not APA—style, with no editorializing), my freelance radio column for *Business Strategies Magazine* (as a column, somewhat less formal than newswriting and often including my personal opinions), and *UNS Link* (an informal newsletter I produced for RIT faculty, typically written in the first-person). But, whether formal or informal, they were all written with *high quality* in mind. And I loved every minute of it. Why? Because good writers thrive on opportunities to utilize myriad writing styles. (Heck, it's hard to imagine ever having the chance to use "Yabba Dabba Doo!"—as I did in my post here a couple weeks ago—in an RIT news release! And now I've done it twice! :-)) So, I will continue to preach *quality writing* no matter the style or forum. (Remember, I'm the contrarian here, who, two weeks ago, vowed to challenge University News Services to strive constantly to improve this blog.)

# 7. [Silandara Bartl](#)

Mar19

Yeah, Mike, I'm listening. :) I'm just going to ask you about this in the office tomorrow (what, an in-person conversation?) so I understand what you actually mean. I find that links opening in a new window when you click on them is incredibly annoying (if you don't expect it). If you want to stay on the page you're on and still follow links, just right click (or control-click if you don't have a right mouse button on your Mac) and open the link in a new window or a new tab (if you're using a cool browser like Firefox). Plus you'd probably need to learn some more code...unless we can specify it in the style sheet :)

# 8. [Justin Thorp](#)

Mar20

Just in case you guys aren't familiar with them, the World Wide Web Consortium, is a international organization that sets the standards for how the web is made. Their Web Content Accessibility Guidelines has a checkpoint that addresses this issue of links going to new windows. <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT-TECHS/#tech-avoid-pop-ups>

10.1 says - "...do not change the current window without informing the user." Within the web community that is generally seen as, if your going to give someone a new window from a link the link text should contain "(opens in new window.)" This makes it painfully obvious that when you click on the link that you're going to get a new window. Just imagine what it would be like to encounter a new window, if you were a blind user on the web. If they were not alerted in the link text to the new window, they would not get the visual clue to the new window and lose orientation.

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