# Stratenotes

# SIM & the Common Core State Standards Initiative

*Julie Tollefson*
*KUCRL*

In the past year, the fast-moving Common Core State Standards Initiative has grown from bare-bones beginnings to game-changing reality for schools and districts across the country. As of Oct. 20, 40 states had adopted the core academic standards aimed at preparing America's students for college and careers.

During the 2010 International SIM® Conference, SIM Professional Developers Tricia Bronger of Louisville, Ky., and Candace Bixler of Austin, Texas, led a session exploring the content of the common core standards and what their adoption by so many states means for professional development.

The standards were developed through a collaboration involving the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Governors Association, international partners, researchers, and many other stakeholders. They are organized into academic standards for English language arts and academic standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. They establish specific grade-level standards for kindergarten through eighth-grade and use grade bands (9-10 and 11-12)

for high school expectations.

"When you look at these standards, especially the science and history literacy standards, they really are disciplinary literacy," says Candace, referring to the conference keynote address by Tim Shanahan, professor of urban education at the University of Illinois at Chicago. (You can watch Dr. Shanahan's address, *You Don't Have to be a Vulcan to Know about Disciplinary Literacy,* in the Multimedia section of the Center's website: http://media.kucrl.org/archives/577 You also can read about it in the August issue of *Stratenotes,* available in SIMville.)

Accompanying the standards are appendixes that contain a wealth of helpful supplementary materials and a glossary. The materials include sample performance tasks and annotated writing samples at various grade levels.

The standards emphasize college and career readiness, organizing all other components under this umbrella. They also focus on results and accountability—rather than the means by which teachers achieve results—and promote a shared responsibility for students'
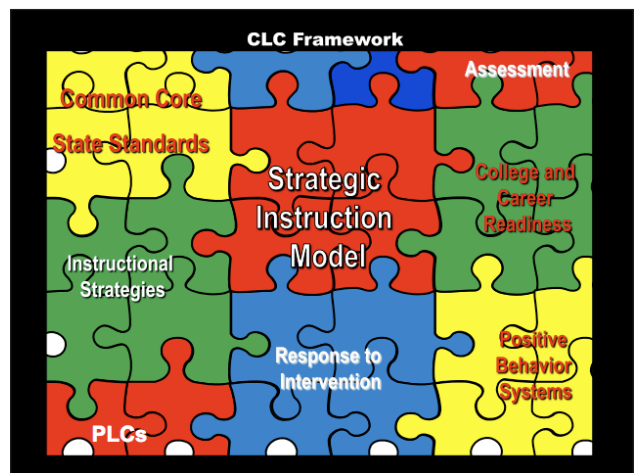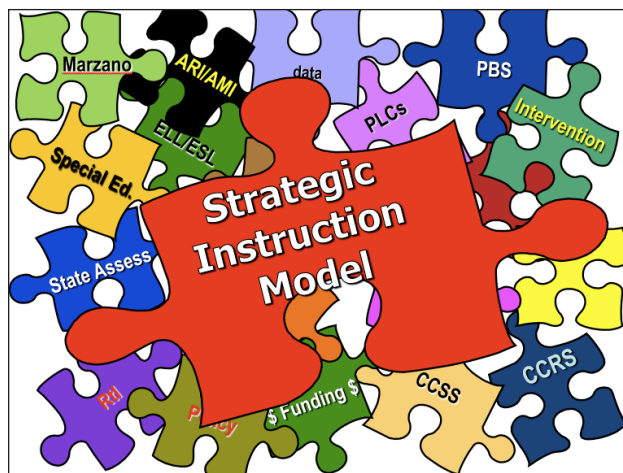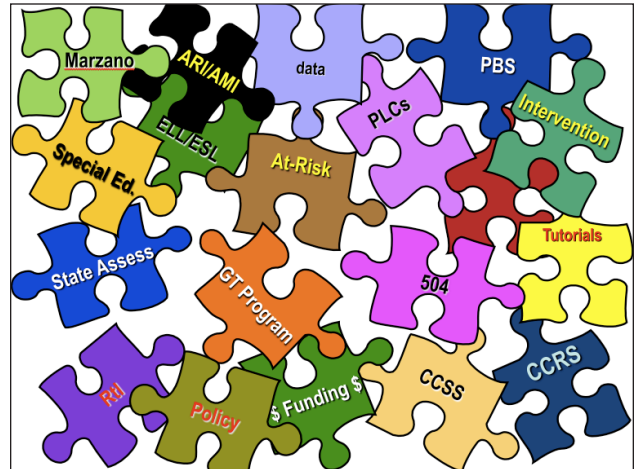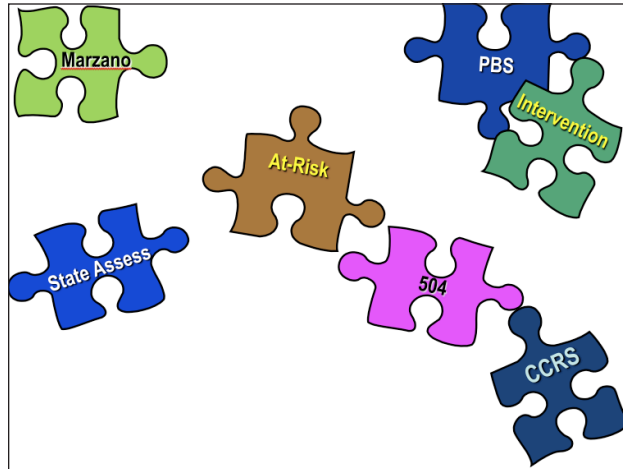
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### More information

- Read the Common Core State Standards:
  **http://www.corestandards.org**

- See which states have adopted the Common Core State Standards:
  **http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states**

- Download *International Benchmarking: State Education Performance Standards,* a report by Gary W. Phillips, American Institutes for Research:
  **http://www.air.org** (search for "international benchmarking")

- Purchase a DVD of the SIM and State Standards session, presented by Candace Bixler and Tricia Bronger (see order form on page 3)

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## CONTENTS

**SIM**
Strategic Instruction Model®

## Puzzle activity



*In Candace Bixler's puzzle activity, pieces of a puzzle appear on a PowerPoint slide one at a time. Each piece is labeled with the name of an initiative. The puzzle can be customized to match the number and types of initiatives under way in a district.*

literacy development.

"It doesn't say, in this course, here's this standard," says Tricia. "It says, in this timeframe, this is what we're all responsible for."

The standards also are notable for what they are not. They are not a federally mandated effort—as evidenced by the leadership of the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association—and they do not prescribe specific instructional practices.

"It will not say you need to teach the *Paraphrasing Strategy* for looking at main ideas and details and putting it in your own words," says Tricia. "It

won't tell you exactly what to do."

The standards also do not include differentiation for gifted and talented or advanced work or supports for students with special needs or English language learners.

The empty spaces represent a prime opportunity for SIM Professional Developers. Think about the missing pieces as you prepare for workshops. What SIM components can fill in the gaps for a school or district? What unique challenges exist for a school, district, or state, and what role can you play in conversations about those issues at each level? Can CLC provide the framework a

district needs as it evaluates its programs and initiatives in light of the core standards?

As you consider how to integrate SIM, the standards, and other initiatives, you might want to conduct a discussion with your colleagues or workshop participants about the benefits of having common core standards from state to state. Participants in the core standards session at the summer conference identified several potential benefits:

- *Mobility of students and teachers.* Common standards could help with the transition when students or teachers move from district to

district within a state or from one state to another.

- *Equity.* Some schools do not provide everything students need to be ready for college or careers.
- *College expectations.* Students applying to out-of-state colleges would have the same preparation and be able to compete equally with in-state students.
- *Communication.* Common standards may provide increased opportunities for shared conversations about specific strategies and supports.

Tricia, Candace, and session participants brainstormed a list of other activities you might incorporate into your workshops to help participants understand core standards and SIM in light of other initiatives they already are involved in:

- Do a "brain dump" in which participants list all of the initiatives they already have in place, and then help them see that SIM is not just one more thing to add to their list. "We have to get them to realize that we're here to help," says Candace.
- Use a "pieces of the puzzle" PowerPoint activity developed by Candace (see example on page 2). Puzzle pieces appear on the screen one at the time, each one labeled with the names of initiatives under way within a district. When all of the initiatives pieces are scattered across the screen, put them together and overlay SIM as a way to begin making connections and CLC as the framework to put the whole puzzle together. (Download

a copy of Candace's puzzle pieces PowerPoint from the SIM General Information section of SIMville.)

- Use a "plus-delta" activity to have participants indicate which initiatives they think are working well and which aren't.
- Use SIM tools, such as the Frame or Concept Diagram, to explore aspects of the standards or to show connections with SIM.
- Conduct a research pass. Highlight important passages from several research articles. Distribute them to participants, who read one passage and then pass it on to the next person until all have read the relevant passages.

- Use SMARTER planning to plan your workshops. To illustrate how SIM and the common core standards can be woven in to any course, Candace demonstrated how to construct a unit using SMARTER planning and an integrated set of Content Enhancement Routines (*Course* and *Unit Organizer, Concept Anchoring, Concept Mastery*, and *Question Exploration*). Her course, in keeping with the conference's Star Trek-inspired theme, was government of the United Federation of Planets. Watch the video of this part of the session in the Content Enhancement section of SIMville.

# SIM & State Standards DVD Order Form
Cost: $15 per DVD

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

VISA/Mastercard #: _____ Expiration Date: _____

❏ Personal Card          ❏ Business Card

If business, name of institution: _____

Signature authorization: _____

Phone #: _____

_____ **copies of SIM & State Standards DVD @ $15 each**

**Total for Order: $_____**
(To order DVDs of other sessions presented during the 2010 International SIM Conference, see the order form in the September issue of *Stratenotes.*)

# 2011 International SIM® Conference
## July 13-15, 2011 • Preconference: July 12, 2011

Exciting news! Steve Graham, professor and Currey Ingram Chair in Special Education and Literacy at Vanderbilt University, will be the keynote speaker for the 2011 International SIM® Conference.

Graham, who received his doctor of education degree in special education from the University of Kansas, is co-author of *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools* (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007) and *Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading* (2010, Alliance for Excellent Education).

### Get a head start on conference learning!

Prepare for the 2011 conference by reading Steve Graham's work before you get here. We recommend you download and read these reports (available as pdf files):
- *Writing Next,* http://all4ed.org/files/WritingNext.pdf
- *Writing to Read,* http://all4ed.org/files/WritingToRead.pdf

*Steve Graham*

## 2011 venue: Oread Hotel

We heard so many positive comments about last year's conference venue that we will be returning to the same hotel for another year. The 10-story Oread Hotel, located on the edge of the University of Kansas campus, offers stunning views of the university and downtown Lawrence.

Among the hotel's amenities are an on-site spa—where participants can schedule a relaxing massage after a long day of intense learning and sharing—and wireless Internet.

The facility offers several dining options, including a restaurant/bar on the roof with a spectacular view of Lawrence and the surrounding countryside. In addition, the Oread is only a block from the Kansas Union, where there are more eating options as well as retail stores that cater to your every Jayhawk need.

*The Oread*

The hotel is taking reservations now for the SIM conference. Watch @StrateTweets on Twitter for conference announcements and look for all conference details in the January issue of *Stratenotes*.

## CONFERENCE NOTES

### Surveys

Each year, we rely on your evaluations of the past year's conference to shape our decisions as we plan new offerings. Another tool we have used in recent years is online surveys. Look for announcements in the next few months as we develop surveys to ask for your input for the 2011 conference. Watch our Twitter account (@StrateTweets) and *Stratenotes* for instructions for participating in conference surveys. Your answers really do make a difference in what we offer during the conference.

### Handouts

For the past two years, we have distributed most conference handouts on flash drives that participants receive at registration. In 2011, we're going completely on line. Handouts will be posted to the conference website, and you will be able to download them to your laptop or print them before your arrival in Lawrence.

# 2011 Summer SIM® Classes

### SIM® Learning Strategies for Pre-service Educators

$975 until April 29, 2011
May 31-June 3 • 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Friday

This class will enable preservice educators in teacher education programs to provide empirically validated SIM interventions to prospective teachers. The institute will focus on exploring strategies from the SIM® Learning Strategies Curriculum.

### SIM® Content Enhancement Routines for Preservice Educators

$975 until April 29, 2011
May 31-June 3 • 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Friday

This class will enable **higher education faculty** who are engaged in teacher preparation to implement a variety of empirically validated teaching routines from the SIM® Content Enhancement Series. Content will emphasize inclusive course planning and the use of a variety of routines to ensure content-area mastery of critical ideas and concepts by all students.

### SIM® Strategies for Reading and Writing

$675 until May 13, 2011
June 14-17, 2011 • 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday; 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-noon Friday

This class will introduce **teachers** to the foundations of SIM and teach them to implement research-based interventions to help students acquire the skills necessary to understand grade-level reading materials. Institute participants will be offered two reading strategies, one vocabulary strategy, and the *Sentence Writing* and *Paragraph Writing* strategies. Time will be allowed for planning for implementation.

### More SIM® Strategies

$675 until May 13, 2011
June 14-17, 2011 • 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday; 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-noon Friday

This class is directed toward **teachers** who work directly with students. Participants who have previously received instruction in the *Sentence Writing Strategy* (*Fundamentals* and *Proficiency*) and have already implemented Learning Strategies in their classrooms will be able to select more strategies to support their literacy efforts. All participants will learn the *Paragraph Writing Strategy*. Other options include additional reading and writing strategies as well as strategies related to studying and remembering information, improving assignments, and motivation.

### Introduction to Teaching with SIM® Content Enhancement Routines

$675 until May 23, 2011
June 21-24, 2011 • 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday; 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-noon Friday

This class will introduce **teachers** to a selection of routines from the Content Enhancement Series. Participants will spend each day learning and planning how to implement the routines in their own classrooms. Participants should bring the lecture notes, textbooks, or other resources they will need to restructure one of their courses. A laptop is also strongly recommended.

### SIM® for Administrators

$500 until May 23, 2011
June 22-24, 2011 • 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday; 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-noon Friday

This class is offered for administrators who want to know more about the Strategic Instruction Model® (SIM), how it is implemented, and the administrative support and accountability pieces necessary to ensure implementation. Led by Rosalind Davenport, a SIM Professional Developer and former school and district administrator, the class will focus on the Content Literacy Continuum® (CLC), leadership, change, and SIM Content Enhancement (CE) Routines and Learning Strategies. Administrators will learn two CE routines that will be useful in their own work and will have an opportunity to interact with teachers participating in the Content Enhancement class. KU-CRL researchers will participate.

### Institute for Potential SIM® Professional Developers in Content Enhancement

$800
June 20-24, 2011 • 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday; 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday

### Institute for Potential SIM® Professional Developers in Learning Strategies

$800
June 20-24, 2011 • 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday; 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday

Registration forms are available on our website: http://kucrl.org/classes.

All classes will be held in the Burge Union on the University of Kansas campus. Class fees do not include transportation, meals, or housing. Additional tuition fees payable to the University of Kansas apply for those taking these classes for graduate credit.

# Attend a SIM conference, virtually

We're pleased to announce a new option for you to continue to grow in your knowledge of the Strategic Instruction Model®. The SIM® Virtual Conference, coming in January, brings all of the energy and learning opportunities of a face-to-face update to your living room or computer. The SIM Virtual Conference is open only to SIM Professional Developers who have attended at least one face-to-face conference in the past.

Complete the registration form printed in the September issue of *Stratenotes* to participate in the SIM® Virtual Conference.

### How will the SIM Virtual Conference work?

You will register for the virtual conference just as you would for a face-to-face conference. We will send you a package of conference sessions on DVDs, a USB drive containing handouts from the 2010 International SIM Conference, links to additional online content, and instructions for completing the virtual conference.

You will be expected to watch each DVD, complete activities associated with each session, and reflect on how you can use the information in your work. You must complete an online evaluation for each session before you receive credit for attending an update.

### Does this fulfill the requirement to attend an update every two years to remain an active member of the International Professional Development Network?

Yes, the SIM® Virtual Conference fulfills your update requirement. Remember, to be considered active in the SIM Network, you must attend an update every two years *and* subscribe to *Strateworks.*

### Can I stop attending face-to-face conferences and just complete my updates virtually?

No. You may attend a virtual conference in lieu of a face-to-face conference every four years. In the interim, you must attend at least one face-to-face conference to maintain your active status within the network. In addition, you must have attended at least one face-to-face conference in the past before you can register for the virtual conference.

### How much does the virtual conference cost?

The cost is $350. However, you will not have the travel and lodging costs associated with attending a face-to-face conference.

### SIM® Virtual Conference Content

⇨ DVD: Keynote speech by Tim Shanahan, *You Don't Have to be a Vulcan to Know about Disciplinary Literacy*
⇨ DVD: Strand (choose one): *SIM & Literacy* or *SIM as a Change Agent*
⇨ DVD: Choice of three additional sessions (see list on the registration form)
⇨ USB drive containing handouts from the 2010 International SIM Conference
⇨ Online content: poster session, research pecha-kucha, SIM online resources treasure hunt, affinity group summaries, and 2010 CRL awards video
⇨ Conference call to discuss sessions and lessons learned. We have scheduled two conference calls; you need only participate in one. Calls are planned for 10 a.m. Feb. 16 and 4 p.m. Feb. 17 (all times Central). Your virtual conference materials will include instructions for registering for one of the calls.
*(Descriptions for all sessions are available on the 2010 International SIM Conference website, http://sim2010.kucrl.org.)*

### Deadlines

The registration deadline for the SIM® Virtual Conference is Jan. 7. Materials will be mailed to participants the week of Jan. 24, and you will be expected to complete all activities and evaluations for your conference sessions by Feb. 18 to receive credit for attending an update. Space is limited. Register early.

**The registration form for the SIM® Virtual Conference was printed in the September issue of *Stratenotes*. You can find it in the *Stratenotes* archives on SIMville or with the virtual conference listing at http://kucrl.org/classes. If you have any questions, please contact the Center at simpd@ku.edu.**

# CRL & Social Media

We're excited about the new ways you can stay in touch with the Center and SIM. In the past month, we've added two new social media connections. Please visit!

### *Vimeo*
*http://www.vimeo.com/kucrl*

Vimeo is a video sharing site similar to YouTube. It allows us a little more flexibility in the length of video we can share with you. We are steadily loading all of our existing video to this site and organizing it into albums. Check out the first four albums: Strategic Instruction Model, Instructional Coaching, KU-CRL Guest Lectures, and CRL Learns.

### *Facebook*
*http://www.facebook.com/kucrl*

Our Facebook page will feature a combination of news and fun stuff that goes on in all six of our divisions. Check out the Halloween door decorations photo album. Be sure to "Like" us to get automatic updates in your own Facebook feeds.

Vimeo and Facebook join these additional social media options offered by the Center:

### *Twitter*
*http://twitter.com*

Follow these Twitter accounts for the latest CRL and SIM communication in 140 characters or fewer:
**@kucrl**
http://twitter.com/kucrl
**@stratetweets**
http://twitter.com/stratetweets
**@stratepedia**
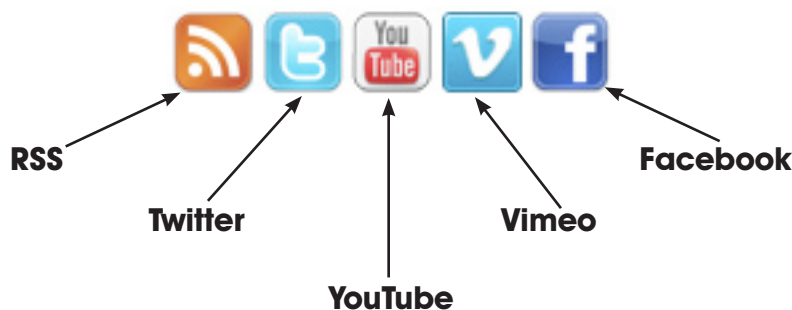http://twitter.com/stratepedia

### *YouTube*
*http://www.youtube.com/kucrl*

The KUCRL channel on YouTube currently features 2010 award stories as our most recent additions.

You can easily access all of these services using the icons at the bottom right side of our home page. Also, don't forget to use the RSS subscription button to receive notifications through an RSS feed when we post news to our home page.



RSS    Twitter    YouTube    Vimeo    Facebook

## SIM & CRL Online Resources

**www.kucrl.org**

**Strategic Instruction Model**
http://kucrl.org/sim

**Content Literacy Continuum**
http://clc.kucrl.org

**Stratepedia**
http://stratepedia.org

**SIM Workshops and Updates**
http://www.kucrl.org/classes

**SIMville Sign-On**
User name: Network
Password: strategic

**CRL News**
http://www.kucrl.org/news

**CRL Learns**
http://crllearns.kucrl.org

**CRL Project Profiles**
http://www.kucrl.org/profiles

**CRL Multimedia Archives**
http://media.kucrl.org

**CRL Publication List**
http://www.kucrl.org/research

### CRL Divisions

**Advanced Learning Technologies**
http://www.altec.org

**Division of Adult Studies**
http://das.kucrl.org

**e-Learning Design Lab**
http://elearndesign.org

**Institute for Research on Adolescent Learning**
http://iral.kucrl.org

**Kansas Coaching Project**
http://instructionalcoach.org

**Professional Development Research Institute**
http://pdri.kucrl.org

**Get *Stratenotes* in color!**
You can download a full-color version of this newsletter from the *Stratenotes* archives section of SIMville.

# CALENDAR 2010–2011

**Feb. 3-4, 2011**
West Region Update Conference for SIM Professional Developers
Las Vegas
http://kucrl.org/classes

**Feb. 24-26, 2011**
Southeast Region Update Conference for SIM Professional Developers
Charleston, S.C.
http://kucrl.org/classes

**May 31-June 3, 2011**
SIM® Learning Strategies for Preservice Educators
Lawrence, Kan.
http://kucrl.org/classes

**May 31-June 3, 2011**
Teaching Content to All: SIM Content Enhancement Routines for Preservice Educators
Lawrence, Kan.
http://kucrl.org/classes

**June 14-17, 2011**
SIM Reading and Writing Strategies
Lawrence, Kan.
http://kucrl.org/classes

**June 20-24, 2011**
SIM® Learning Strategies Potential Professional Developers Institute
Lawrence, Kan.
http://kucrl.org/classes

**Complete calendar of coming events
at http://kucrl.org**

**CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON**
# KU LEARNING
The University of Kansas