STEP ESSAY PROMPTS

Write a 2-3 page essay that addresses one of the following prompts.

1. College students tend to spend a great deal of time "plugged in" to technologies: iPods, instant messenger, cell phones, the internet. Using at least two of the readings and your own experience, respond to one or more of the following questions:

   --How do these technologies shape interpersonal relationships? Is it easier to make new friends? Harder? Are your friendships more or less personal when mediated by technology?
   --Are you and your friends easily bored? (Does this mean, as one popular song lyric has it, that "if you're bored, then you're boring"): Are you boring? Are your friends tedious? Are your feelings in any way due to being "plugged in"? What is the relationship between your experiences of boredom, your time plugged in, and your "mediated" friendships?

2. Consider the appropriateness of using new technology in education. How can technology help us learn without distracting us? Use at least two of the readings and your own experience to address the subject. You may wish to address one or two of the following questions when forming your response:

   --When should teachers make use of computer technology in their classrooms?
   --How effective are computers, podcasting, or the internet itself in "educating" students?
   --How would you redesign available technology (iPods, laptops, etc) to improve the device's educational potential?

3. Bud, the root of Buddha, means "awake"--but how can we be awake while walking down the street and talking on the cell phone? In the Bible David says, "Be still and know I am God."--but how can we be still while playing a first-person-shooter and listening to Rihanna? Muhammad says "Wherever you look is God's face."--but how can we see properly if we're instant-messaging Jenny? Use at least two of the readings and your own experience to address the subject. You may wish to address one or two of the following questions when forming your response:

   --How does technology affect spirituality?
   --How does one interact with matters of the spirit in this age of distraction?