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## Connecting the Dots

The Mitre Corporation's Edge Table has been the main project of the Rochester Institute of Technology's Innovation and Invention course of Fall 2011. It is a "telecollaboration" device, meaning its purpose is to be able to share and hold a meeting from multiple places at once. The class, and myself, have been contributing to this project in several ways by using each of our specific skills to pull together new ideas and advancements.

My role was established early and firmly. I assumed the role of a "documentarian" for the class. What this entailed was to take charge of notes from the class meetings and putting them online for everyone in the class to access, and to organize it in a legible, understandable format. This was just a part of the larger role I play in the project; to collect all the class data and package it into an accessible web application. That larger overarching project has proven to be the biggest hurdle in the course of this class.

Some of the minor problems I encountered were surprisingly simple. The immediate challenge facing me was to find a way to present all of the data I collect from each class meeting. Fortunately, Professor Schull enlightened everyone about a website called mindmeister ([www.mindmeister.com](http://www.mindmeister.com)) during the first class. This site is a brainstorming machine. Starting with a central idea or theme, branches and nodes can be added to expand on different areas of thought. It also automatically moves data around on the map as a way to correct any overlapping branches, which is useful for keeping things spatially organized. This mapping system is also able to be shared with the entire class for viewing and editing, so any one of them could add missing information to it.

Mindmeister solved my short term problems, however, the tricky task of putting together all the class data needed a more clever solution than that. Things I had to think about for this new objective were: How to package it for future use, how to present that package, and how to organize it and make it understandable for people to use in the future. I consulted with Andrew Kiproff, and we eventually came up with the idea to use his web development skills to create a website that contains all of the class information. This way, it is accessible to everyone, not just the class, and it allowed us to structure the "endgame package" any way we pleased. GO ON TO DESCRIBE FUNCTIONALITY AND REASON BEHIND WEBSITE FEATURE CHOICES...

CONCLUSION MATERIAL: Throughout this class I have been in a role of putting pieces together and connecting everyone's information and work together, and also to a single source.