



Teaching Notes

March 2004, Volume 1, Number 2

Editor: Bill Hill, CETL Director Copy Editor: Randolph A. Smith, Chair of Psychology

CETL Workshops: Mid-March/Early April

A description of listed workshops is available at <http://www.kennesaw.edu/cetl>

If you are interested in attending a CETL Workshop, please e-mail or call Lynn Lamanac, CETL Administrative Coordinator (llamanac@kennesaw.edu; ext. 6410).

WebCT Drop-In Workshops, CETL/CIE House Lab

Friday, March 19, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Thursday, March 25, 9:00 am.-Noon
Friday, March 26, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Friday, April 2, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 8, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

RSVP to Gary Roberts to join us for lunch at 12:30 on March 26 and April 2.

Application of the Parker Palmer Perspective on the Who That Teaches to Everyday Issues in Academe

Friday, March 19, 1:00-5:00 p.m., CETL/CIE House Conference Room

March CETL Book Club

Re-imagine! Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age by Tom Peters

Monday, March 22, Noon-2:00 p.m., CETL/CIE House Conference Room

Reel-n-Rap Series (Cosponsored by the Center for University Learning and CETL)

March Movie: "Leadership Challenge"

Thursday, March 25, 3:30-5:00 p.m., CETL/CIE House Conference Room

The Scholarship of Teaching & Learning: What It Is & How to Get Started

Workshop C: Classroom Research Methods & Writing for Publication

Friday, March 26, 9:30-11:30 a.m., CETL/CIE House Lab

Developing Your Teaching Philosophy & Style

Friday, April 2, 9:30a.m.-12:00p.m., CETL/CIE House Lab

April CETL Book Club

The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life by Parker Palmer

Friday, April 2, 9:30a.m.-12:00p.m., CETL/CIE House Conference Room

Application of the Parker Palmer Perspective on the Who That Teaches to Everyday Issues in Academe

Friday, April 9, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., CETL/CIE House Lab

SoTL in Tenure & Promotion

Friday, April 9, 9:30-11:30 a.m., CETL/CIE House Conference Room

Peer Review of Teaching

Kimberly Loomis

CETL Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

For the most part, even though we spend much of our academic careers in classrooms filled with students, teaching is done in isolation. When we plan for classes, design lessons, research information, and write lectures, we are usually alone in our offices. Even in implementing the lesson, we are all by ourselves in that we conduct "one-man shows," alone onstage with the knowledge and information, doing our best to bring in our audience. After the lesson and after an exam, alone, we analyze the effectiveness of our teaching and reflect on and decide upon modifications as needed.

Perhaps teaching in isolation works for us. Certainly we have all experienced success in teaching, or we wouldn't still be here. So, why change? What is the point of peer review of teaching – inviting a colleague into your classroom to observe your teaching and your students' learning – if all is going well so far? Benjamin (2002) states that if you teach "learn to do it well; if you do it well, learn to do it better" (p. 66). How can we learn to be better teachers? Peer review of your teaching may offer you that opportunity.

We all have wonderful resources in our departments in the form of colleagues. We regularly ask the person next door to review an article we are preparing for submission and value his or her experience and expertise in providing us feedback and input. But when was the last time you invited a colleague into your classroom or to review a syllabus or lesson plan to take advantage of that same experience and expertise? The whole prospect of being observed while teaching may be a bit intimidating to many of us, but its value cannot be disregarded. Why should the evaluation of teaching be so different from that of scholarship?

Responding to the 1991 Pister Report calling for peer review of teaching as is done with research, the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) developed and piloted a 2-year program focused on promoting the peer review of teaching. Pat Hutchings (1994), past director of the AAHE Teaching Initiatives, noted four compelling arguments for peer review of teaching. (1) Student evaluations are not enough to evaluate teaching effectiveness. There are aspects of teaching that only faculty can judge. (2) The more experience one has in teaching, the more opportunities there are to learn about teaching. Collaboration with peers increases these opportunities by providing more experiences upon which to draw. (3) Peer evaluation of teaching will bring more value to teaching as a scholarly endeavor. (4) Peer review of teaching puts the ownership of the quality of teaching in the hands of faculty rather than the administration and bureaucracy.

In consultation with Lee Shulman, 12 universities participated in the peer review of teaching program initiated by AAHE. Faculty members developed various projects at departmental and university levels that promoted peer review of teaching activities and, in effect, encouraged faculty to take ownership of their teaching effectiveness (Hutchings, 1994). Since its inception, many lessons have been learned. In reviewing the initiative, (continued on next page)

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Hutchings noted that: (1) Given the opportunity, faculty want to talk about teaching. (2) Class visitations are but one way of participating in the peer review of teaching. Other opportunities exist such as inviting colleagues to review syllabi, developing teaching portfolios for review, participating in teaching mentor relationships, or developing and maintaining a local teaching library (consisting of syllabi and materials for courses taught within the department). (3) Requiring that candidates for departmental positions demonstrate and reflect on their teaching skills and philosophy and then considering these qualities when making hiring decisions. (4) Peer review of teaching can be integrated into the culture of a department, affording time, attention, and value to teaching.

Parker Palmer (1998) asserts that we must not only look inside ourselves to become better teachers, but some of our greatest resources for teaching lie in each other. Yet, we teach in isolation. Palmer says that one price we pay for this isolation is in the evaluation of teaching. He states that, "There is only one honest way to evaluate the many varieties of good teaching . . . it is called being there" (p. 143). By visiting each other's classrooms and by participating in conversations about teaching, tenure and promotion decisions can be informed by firsthand observations rather than only by student evaluations that are too often either dismissed or inflated to serve a predetermined purpose of influencing these decisions one way or the other. Allowing faculty to teach in isolation not only limits opportunity for growth, Palmer notes, but may also hide incompetence.

Barbara Cambridge (1996), current director of the AAHE Teaching Initiatives, also notes that based on the experiences of the pilot project's participating campuses, materials on the peer review of teaching have been developed and are available. (For a list and descriptions of these materials and their availability, as well as a description of the AAHE Teaching Initiative on peer review of teaching, please visit http://www.aahe.org/teaching/Peer_Review.htm.) In addition, many professional organizations have come on board promoting peer review of teaching by accepting proposals for presentations and publications and hosting national conversations on the topic.

Certainly, the experiences and materials provided by the AAHE project offer us ideas and opportunities to participate in peer review of teaching and the words of Parker Palmer inspire us. What holds us back then? Most often, it is fear. Of course anyone would be hesitant to open him- or herself to criticism and judgment, especially when "performing" a self-authored "screenplay" in front of a class of students. Palmer notes that some of us have a sense of self that is so closely tied to our teaching, it is hard not to take criticism of our teaching to heart, since our hearts are in it. However, he also notes that the mere fact that we fear offering our teaching up for scrutiny is an indication that we care about it.

As academics, it is easy for us to believe that we've got our teaching all figured out and to go with what we already do rather than allow someone else's ideas to cause us to rethink, redesign, and revise our teaching. But, as academics, we also know that with the consideration and integration of new ideas come knowledge and growth. We have all had experience enough to know that the powerful learning and growth that occurs as we struggle to rethink, redesign, and revise is worth the effort, benefiting us and our students.

So, assuming we are convinced that the rewards outweigh the risks, how and where can we start our involvement in peer review of teaching? Reciprocal classroom visits between pairs or among small groups can offer valuable insights into our teaching and the teaching of others. A colleague may provide feedback on a particular strategy of yours as to why it is or isn't working as well as you'd like after having visited your classroom,

and you may walk away with some different ideas for strategies after having visited your colleague's classroom. Intra- or interdepartmental classroom visitations can be valuable. We all face similar challenges in teaching. For example, a marketing professor's ideas for managing a large class can be transferred to an education professor's large class (and even taught as content if the education course is one in classroom management)! Many teaching strategies are applicable across disciplines when adapted by faculty who are willing to try some creative and novel approaches to helping their students learn.

Consider asking a colleague who teaches a section of a course you are teaching to review your syllabus. Perhaps you can do the same for the colleague or even arrange for all instructors of a particular course to share their syllabi. At the very least, students in all sections of a course should be able to expect to walk away having achieved the same objectives. Instructors will have different methods for helping students reach those identified objectives, some of which may work better than others. Sometimes, even though what you do in class is effective, it's renewing to try something different. That idea for something new could very well come from a colleague. Sharing syllabi, strategies, and assignments does not mean encroaching on the academic freedom of faculty. While course objectives should be consistent across sections, methods taken to reach those objectives may vary. It is still valuable to get input from other experts in the field by reviewing syllabi and participating in conversations about the goals, objectives, content, and teaching of the course.

Cambridge (1996) and Hutchings (1994) mention other strategies for participating in peer review of teaching. Opportunities exist at KSU for those interested in pursuing peer review of teaching. The CETL Teaching Community consists of several small groups of faculty, called Teaching Circles, who are focused on various issues related to teaching. Several Teaching Circles are currently conducting interdisciplinary reciprocal classroom visitations. Another Teaching Circle is looking into the development of teaching and course portfolios. The Teaching Community as a whole comes together to discuss the activities of the Teaching Circles and to participate in conversations devoted to teaching at KSU. Faculty interested in peer review of teaching are invited to join the Teaching Community and one or more Teaching Circles. If you do not wish to join the Teaching Community, consider investigating the opportunity to start similar conversations and activities in your department. Such efforts are becoming increasingly regarded as scholarly endeavors in higher education, and there are several avenues for presentation and publication available. Please contact Kim Loomis, CETL Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning, for more information on the Teaching Community, the Teaching Circles, and other opportunities for peer review of teaching.

References

- Cambridge, B. (1996). *From idea to prototype: The peer review of teaching. A project of the American Association for Higher Education...moving into a next phase of work*. Washington, DC: American Association of Higher Education. Retrieved February 18, 2004, from http://www.aahe.org/teaching/First_Two_Years.htm.
- Benjamin Jr., L. T. (2002). Lecturing. In S. F. Davis & W. Buskist (Eds.) *The teaching of psychology: Essays in honor of Wilbert J. McKeachie and Charles L. Brewer* (pp. 57-67). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
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- Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

March Kudos

Wise leaders generally have wise counselors because it takes a wise person themselves to distinguish them. Diogenes

Please feel free to send us your story of anyone on campus who went "above and beyond" to make your classroom teaching just a little bit better. We'll recognize them in this column. Email your nominations to cetl@kennesaw.edu, and make it ATTN: Diogenes.

1. A special recognition to Merle King, chair of the KSU Technology Advisory Committee (for the 3rd straight year): "Merle starts on time, finishes on time and sticks to the agenda. What more can you ask from a committee chair? Thanks!" (College of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty member)
2. "The KSU STARS program has been around for almost 10 years, helping dozens of faculty members with implementing classroom technology. Thanks go to Shannon Cronin, Associate Director of the Presentation Technology Department and STARS Director, and Wendell McMurray, KSU STARS Coordinator, for their work over the years. I couldn't have done it without their help!" (College of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty member)
3. "The CETL WebCT drop in sessions and training could not have been done without the courtesy and support of both Luan Sheehan, CIE Administrative Coordinator, and Lynn Lamanac, CETL Administrative Coordinator. They help in so many ways, especially with the lunch preparations and clean up, that are well beyond the scope of their normal jobs. Many thanks from a lot of faculty!" (Coles College of Business faculty member)

WebCT Tip of the Month

Adding Style to Text

Gary B. Roberts, CETL Faculty Fellow for e-Learning

Want to spice up your e-mails and forum postings? It's easy enough to do if you remember that WebCT can read HTML programming. Don't know HTML--not to worry. Here are a few tried and trusted tricks that you can start using right away. Don't forget you can view your message using the preview choice to see if what you did actually worked, before you send it to the students. ;-)

Bold, italics, and underline all add emphasis to your text. Just remember that with these options, you must stop whatever you start: the `</>` is the key to stopping the format change--otherwise you'll wind up with the rest of the entire document underlined, etc. ;-(Also, these instructions must be put between the open carrot "`<`" and the close carrot "`>`". Here are some tricks:

Bold start `` and stop ``

Italics start `<i>` and stop `</i>`

Underline start `<u>` and stop `</u>`

Center start `<center>` and stop `</center>`

Don't forget that you can combine these and have **bold text that is underlined**.

Teaching Tip

Kimberly Loomis

CETL Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Teach upside-down! Instead of lecturing and then asking students what they think, pose an open-ended question and ask students what they think first. Then, follow up with additional information in the form of a lecture and assigned readings. Asking students what they think allows them to draw on their prior knowledge, acknowledges their previous experience, provides them with ownership in their learning, and gets them into modes of higher-order thinking rather than playing "guess my answer" at the end of a lecture. This type of lesson design, called inquiry teaching, is consistent with constructivist learning theory, which proposes that students construct their own powerful and meaningful knowledge by comparing what they already know to new information and then drawing conclusions.

Lessons Learned in the WellStar School of Nursing Online Learning Course Option

Beverly J. Farnsworth, Janice B. Flynn, Christina D. Horne, & Lois R. Robley, WellStar School of Nursing

Online learning is an exciting method of conducting courses. Students appreciate the convenience of being able to take a course without having to come on campus as well as the flexibility in doing coursework when they desire. However, online learning is not suitable for every student. Online learning assessments can be found on the Internet to assist students in determining whether or not an online course is appropriate for them. The Kennesaw State University WellStar School of Nursing (SON) refers their students to the Student Online Readiness Tool (SORT) developed by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents Advanced Learning Unit. Access to this assessment can be found on the SON Web page <http://www.kennesaw.edu/chhs/schoolofnursing/DLIsOnlineLearningForYou.htm>

At this Web site the prospective student can access the SORT tool and other information about taking a SON online course. In Fall 2003, using SORT as a pre-online course readiness assessment, a total of 92 students took one or more SON online courses; only 5% of the students either withdrew from the course or switched to the on-ground version. By comparison, in Fall 1999 when no pre-online course readiness assessment was available, 69 students were enrolled in an online course, and 17% of the students withdrew or transferred to an on-ground course. The lesson learned: Based on five years of collected assessment data, the SON faculty found that a pre-online assessment of student readiness is one successful means to decrease student attrition from online courses.

Faculty development is also very important. The SON requires that all faculty contemplating teaching online take a six-week course on the pedagogical principles of online teaching. Certification is granted upon successful completion of this course. Participation in this certificate course not only provides the faculty member with the methods most effective for teaching a course online, but also demonstrates for the faculty member what it is like to be a student taking an online course. Faculty use this development to modify their on-ground courses for the online environment. Lessons learned: Faculty are more confident and facilitate their courses more effectively when they have had formal course development.

Constructivism is the theoretical basis for SON online courses (Jonassen, Davidson, Collins, Campbell, & Haag, 1995). This theory emphasizes a highly interactive environment--faculty to student, student to student, and student to Internet. The correspondence-type online learning, where the student simply completes assignments and emails them into the faculty, is not the course design and philosophy used by the SON. Lessons learned: Students state they may work harder in the SON online courses, but they learn more and retain more, because they are more active in their learning.

Finally, the SON has done both qualitative and quantitative research while implementing the online course option since 1999. Additionally every semester, students complete an Online Learning Evaluation. Lessons learned are numerous and provide faculty with valuable information to continually improve and evaluate the SON Online Learning Option.

Jonassen, D., Davidson, M., Collins, M., Campbell, J., & Haag, B.B. (1995). Constructivism and computer-mediated communication in distance education. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 9(2), 7-26.

Change is Slow: An Exploration of Sex Specific Professional Concerns of Women Faculty

Lisa Lyon, Keisha Hoerrner, & Rebecca Long¹
Communication Department

We recently completed a national survey of female faculty members in communication to explore gender-specific job stressors and the support mechanisms in place to help alleviate them. The survey was modeled after Riffe, Salomone, and Stempel (1998). We wanted to build on their data and determine how much progress, if any, has been made to reduce the gender-specific stressors females face as they pursue careers in the professoriate.

Women in the academy, like those in corporate America, face unique challenges in their professional life. They must contend with gender discrimination, lingering stereotypes of women's capabilities, and even tokenism. Many must also face work/family issues such as "second-shift" responsibilities, childcare, and caring for aging parents. As a recent *New York Times* article explained, women faculty members are struggling to balance their work and family responsibilities, especially those involving children, in an environment that is not always conducive to their success (Cohen, 2002). In 1975 Hochschild explained that the "classic profile of the academic career is cut in the image of the traditional man with his traditional wife" (p. 49). This sentiment seems outdated in 2004, yet it was reiterated just a few years ago by Suito, Mecom, and Feld (2001) in their study of household labor distribution among professional men and women.

Given these concerns, we surveyed 809 female colleagues in the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication, receiving over 300 responses. The survey addressed the following three questions: (1) What sex-specific job stressors (sex discrimination and difficulty combining work and family) currently affect female communication faculty? (2) What are the top professional concerns currently affecting women communication faculty? (3) How are these concerns different from those affecting women communication faculty five years ago?

The results were intriguing. Female faculty rated their overall job satisfaction relatively high (6.72 on a 10-point scale). Still, they were quite clear that sex-specific job stressors affect their professional lives. Over a quarter of respondents (26.4%) interrupted graduate school, delayed accepting a position, or postponed pursuing their career in order to have children. Almost 18% did so to support a spouse or living partner's career, while another 8.9% made these decisions to care for an aging family member. Almost one-third of respondents (32.3%) said they have not been taken seriously as an employee because of sex. Close to one-fifth (17.9%) of respondents said they have experienced denial of advancement or salary increase or the lowering of merit ratings on the basis of sex. Other forms of discrimination were also reported.

The top five professional concerns were (1) lack of time to do research, (2) salary, (3) organizational politics, (4) stress related to the job, and (5) lack of leisure time. This list almost exactly mirrors the top concerns five years ago.

There are support mechanisms in place for many of the respondents, however, showing that some institutions of higher learning have recognized the stress on female, and male, faculty. Almost two-thirds (62.4%) of respondents have maternity leave at their institution, while 41.3% have campus childcare available. Other support mechanisms include an employee assistance program (36.6%), an option to stop the tenure clock or pursue a part-time tenure track (26.7%), and a mentoring program for female faculty (21.1%). Only 5.6% of respondents were aware of job sharing programs at their respective institutions.

The bulk of the data showed little to no statistical difference with the 1998 responses, showing that change in the academy is slow. The open-ended responses showed that the pace of change and their current job stressors distresses many female faculty members.

References

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- Riffe, D., Salomone, K., & Stempel, G. (1998). Characteristics, responsibilities, and concerns of teaching faculty: A survey of AEJMC members. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 53, 102-119.
- Suito, J.J., Mecom, D., & Feld, I.S. (2001). Gender, household labor, and scholarly productivity among university professors. *Gender Issues*, 50-67.

¹ Rebecca Long is an alumna of the KSU Communication Department

Promoting Student Success Through Parker Palmer's Teacher Formation Principles

Army Lester

CETL Faculty Fellow for Student Success and Retention

When John Gardner was on campus in January, he prompted faculty to think of three things as we go about the good works of educating our students. The first was to clearly define our goals. Second, he wanted us to clearly define the methods used to achieve those goals. Third, he wanted us to assess the effectiveness of our efforts. His words led me to reflect on Parker Palmer's visit to campus when he encouraged us to move beyond classroom pedagogy and techniques to a place where we are fully engaged and all of our passion for teaching shows. It seemed as if Palmer was encouraging us to simply commit fully to the process of teaching and enjoy it. If we do this, the students would see it and emulate it.

Palmer's work is a critical component of classroom success. When we are energetic, passionate, and committed, our students know it. Combining this attitude with state-of-the-art pedagogies and curricula creates an environment where students feel free and motivated to learn. There are those who would state that creating an environment of opportunities, pedagogy, and information is all that is required of us as teachers. However, Palmer pushes the notion that these things are components of good teaching, but the great teachers add themselves to the class environment. They are alive in the classroom and show commitment to the students, the discipline, and themselves.

What are you to take from this? First, teaching is a profession that is built on integrity. You must be true to yourself and those you serve. Next, we have the right and maybe even the responsibility to enjoy our profession. It is perfectly fine to go into the classroom and have a great time. Finally, if these are the foundations on which we build our expert pedagogies and curricula, our students will likely respond positively and show greater levels of success.

Resources

- Teacher Formation Web page:
<http://www.teacherformation.org>
- Parker Palmer Web site:
<http://www.miracosta.cc.ca.us/home/gflore/palmer.htm>
- John Gardner's Web site:
<http://www.sc.edu/fye/center/fellows/john.html>
- Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.