A Unit of the Office of Academic Affairs

Teaching Notes

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Editor: Tom Pusateri, CETL Associate Director for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

Welcome to Our New CETL Staff

Meghan Burke, Professor of Mathematics
CETL Associate Director for Mentoring for Faculty & Student Success

Meghan Burke earned her Doctorate in Mathematics from the Centre for Mathematical Biology at Oxford University in 1992. Her research interests are in Mathematical Biology, that is, the modeling of the mechanisms of biological, biochemical, and medical processes. Since 1995, she has also devoted herself to teaching and student success in the early undergraduate mathematics courses. She headed the effort to develop and implement the innovative Mathematics Advisement and Placement Test (MAPT), and has coordinated one of the new mathematics courses developed to give students more choices and greater success. She has developed curricular materials and has been invited to speak in national forums on the subject of incorporating mathematical biology into undergraduate education. She serves on the Mathematics Association of America Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics Subcommittee on Mathematics Across the Disciplines and on the Board of Directors of the Society for Mathematical Biology. In 2004, she won the Kennesaw State University Distinguished Teaching Award.

Amy Buddie, Assistant Professor of Psychology
Faculty Fellow for Advancing Undergraduate Research

Amy Buddie earned her PhD in 2001 in Social Psychology from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and joined the faculty at KSU in 2003. Dr. Buddie's research examines the role of alcohol in sexual aggression/risky sexual behavior, college students' attitudes about rape, and people's experiences of consenting to unwanted sex. In addition, she conducts research on the extent to which attitudinal change occurs in social psychology classes and gender-themed learning communities. She has publications in various journals, including Personality and Social Psychology Review, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, Sex Roles, Psychology of Women, Journal of Studies on Alcohol, and Journal of Interpersonal Violence. In addition, she has coauthored book chapters in Advances in Psychology Research and What Social Psychology Can Tell Us About the Holocaust. She is currently working with faculty members across the university to examine the extent to which interdisciplinary learning occurs in first-year learning communities. Dr. Buddie is a member of several professional organizations, including the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, and the Society for the Psychology of Women.

Fall 2008 Initiatives from the CETL Faculty Fellows

Amy Buddie, Faculty Fellow for Advancing Undergraduate Research, will be collecting data on faculty perceptions of undergraduate research and will be creating a website containing resources for faculty and students engaged in undergraduate research. Funding for undergraduate research initiatives is available through the CARET awards and undergraduate research travel stipends.

Jorge Pérez, Faculty Fellow for E-Learning, will continue to offer workshops and create opportunities for faculty to come together to discuss the pedagogy of e-learning.

Dede Yow, Faculty Fellow for Diversity in the Curriculum, will continue to offer opportunities for faculty to study and generate ideas about inclusivity in classroom teaching and learning through book clubs, Reel-n-Rap discussions, and Dinner-and-a-Movie events.

Upcoming Workshop on LGBT Issues

On Tuesday, October 14, 2008, 12:30 p.m.- 2:00 p.m., Katie Mason, Assistant Professor of English Education, and Dede Yow, CETL Faculty Fellow for Diversity Across the Curriculum, will conduct a workshop "Creating a Space for YAL with LGBT Content in our Personal Reading: Creating a Place for LGBT Students in Our Classrooms." Basing discussion on Dr. Mason's research, we will explore the following ideas:

Future teachers must be prepared to become trusted adults for all their students and initiate positive changes in their classroom and school communities regarding differences in sexual orientation and gender expression. Young adult literature (YAL) with LGBT content is one possibility for initiating those changes. The verisimilitude of these texts and their ability to act as windows into experiences that may be unfamiliar to the reader make them ideal resources to equip both teachers and teens to create, maintain, and defend a safe community for people who represent all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.

Our discussion will:

- reveal local in-service and pre-service teachers' perspectives on reading and teaching YA literature with LGBT content,
- identify YA texts with LGBT content that are "must-reads," including those that focus specifically on gender expression, a topic rarely acknowledged in YA literature, and
- invite participants to consider concerns about teaching YA literature with LGBT content and suggest specific ways for including and examining it in the curriculum.

To register for this and other upcoming CETL events, visit http://www.kennesaw.edu/cetl/event_form.html

What Students Miss: Underuse of Academic Resources

Lauren A. Taglialatela
Assistant Professor of Psychology

Christine Miller
Undergraduate Research Assistant

The mission of KSU is to foster a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning. To this end, administrators and instructors continue to create and to maintain resources meant to facilitate student learning and academic success. We examined the utilization of several free resources, available either within KSU or outside of the university, by administering an online survey to the following participant group.

Participants were 128 psychology majors:

- Age: 18 – 54 years (M = 24.86, SD = 7.70)
- GPA: .80 – 4.0 (M = 3.14, SD = .55)
- Academic Rank: Freshman 11%, Sophomore 19%, Junior 35%, Senior 35%

Survey Items and Utilization Percentages:

I utilize all available academic resources
NEVER: 0.8%
RARELY: 6.3%
OCCASIONALLY: 20.3%
MOST OF TIME: 52.3%
ALWAYS: 20.3%

I have sought help in the Writing Center[1]
NEVER: 62.5%
ONCE: 16.4%
TWICE: 10.9%
3 TIMES: 2.3%
> 3 TIMES: 7.8%

I have sought help in the Psychology Laboratory[2]
NEVER: 59.4%
ONCE: 11.7%
TWICE: 7.1%
3 TIMES: 6.2%
> 3 TIMES: 15.6%

I have sought help from my instructors outside of class
NEVER: 3.1%
RARELY: 27.3%
OCCASIONALLY: 40.6%
MOST OF TIME: 18.8%
ALWAYS: 10.2%

I have utilized an online textbook companion site (when available)
NEVER: 11.7%
RARELY: 23.3%
OCCASIONALLY: 32.8%
MOST OF TIME: 25.0%
ALWAYS: 7.0%

[1] The Writing Center is maintained by the English Department, Room 242 – Humanities Building

[2] The Psychology Laboratory is maintained by the Psychology Department, Room 4026 – Social Sciences Building

It seems clear that students are not utilizing available academic resources and that there is a disparity between the actual utilization of resources and student perceptions of the utilization of such resources.

By underutilizing these resources, students are forfeiting numerous opportunities including obtaining substantive and stylistic feedback for writing assignments from trained English and Psychology instructors and laboratory coordinators, testing knowledge and exam preparedness by using online multiple choice and short answer quizzes, and having one-on-one tutoring from instructors outside of class. Fully using available academic resources may increase GPA, facilitate better understanding of course material, and enhance long-term retention of information. Even though 85% of surveyed students indicated that they wished their grades were higher, most are not using the academic resources available to them.

Perhaps students do not recognize laboratories/writing centers, online companion sites, or instructors as readily available and useful resources; rather, perhaps students rely on the 'traditional' academic resources and strategies such as attending class, taking notes, and reading the textbook. The traditional approach is certainly a solid start, but students could benefit by incorporating additional academic supports into their study regimes.

Generally, instructors present resources to students in course syllabi or by word-of-mouth, but apparently these delivery systems are not effective ways to encourage utilization. Perhaps we could encourage uptake of resources by

- presenting students with the options available to them numerous times during the semester
- distributing a handout/study guide listing resources prior to each exam
- prior to an exam and/or after an exam, polling the class about what resources they used to prepare and pointing out when students are not using resources effectively
- taking students to laboratories/writing centers as an introductory tour
- demonstrating the utility of online companion sites in class by visiting sites and highlighting the resources available
- incorporating utilization of particular resources as class assignments (e.g., complete Chapter 2 quiz from textbook companion website; scavenger hunt requiring students to obtain signatures of laboratory/writing center personnel)

Although we surveyed Psychology students, the results may be applied across academic majors, and may indicate a general lack of resource utilization accompanied by students' inaccurate perceptions that they are 'doing all they can'. On a more global note, identification and use of available resources are life skills that can be used long after graduation and that can be applied to the home and the workplace; therefore, teaching students to identify and to use resources can have broad and long-lasting utility outside of the classroom.

The following article is reprinted with permission from The Tomorrow's Professor Mailing List (Msg. #874) http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/

Online Tutorial for Designing Effective and Innovative Courses

Barbara Tewksbury & Heather Macdonald
Hamilton College College of William and Mary

Is it time to really shake the tree and do something about one of your courses? Do you have a great idea for an innovative course but aren't quite sure where to start in designing it? If so, you might try using the following online tutorial designed to provide practical and effective help for faculty members interested in designing or redesigning a course: http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/coursedesign/tutorial/index.html

This tutorial is an on-line version of a face-to-face course design workshop developed and taught to literally hundreds of undergraduate faculty in a variety of disciplines for over 12 years by Barbara Tewksbury (Hamilton College) and Heather Macdonald (College of William and Mary). While the workshop was originally designed for geoscience faculty, the tutorial provides examples from other disciplines, including those of you outside the sciences, and offers an easy-to-apply strategy for designing courses in any discipline. This tutorial is designed to give you a way to get your arms around what is typically a daunting task and will guide you through a practical, effective strategy for designing or redesigning an effective and innovative course.

Overall philosophy: We believe that a course should do more than provide students with a strong background of knowledge in a field. We believe that a course should enable students to use their strong backgrounds to solve problems, and that a truly valuable course should focus beyond the final exam to add to students' future lives, abilities and skill sets and prepare students to think for themselves in the discipline after the course is over. Designing such a course is a challenge and involves providing not only opportunities for students to master content but also opportunities for students to practice thinking for themselves in the discipline so that they will be prepared to do so after the course is over.

Why use our tutorial?: This tutorial provides a pathway through what can look like a big, amorphous, overwhelming task and presents a logical way to proceed from the glimmer of a good idea toward a new course while avoiding too much blundering in the dark. Using this tutorial lets you avoid wasting energy on reinventing the wheel. We provide links to hundreds of activities that can be used either directly or indirectly as templates, plus examples of goals and syllabi that can be used as catalysts for your own work and that were developed by other faculty.

We know that the design strategy in this tutorial works. Workshop participants comment that our course design process helped them to develop rigorous, effective, and innovative courses and to make thoughtful choices about what and how to teach. In a follow-up survey of workshop participants, 90% of respondents followed through to teach the rigorous, goals-based, innovative course that they had begun to develop at the workshop. Furthermore, 80% of respondents found our course design process so useful that they followed it again when designing or redesigning another course.

Who is this tutorial for?: Most of the examples in this tutorial come from undergraduate courses in the geosciences, although some portions have links to examples from undergraduate courses in other disciplines. Despite the focus on geoscience, the process is generic, and we've used simple examples. If you are interested in designing a course outside the geosciences, you should have little trouble using the tutorial.

The tutorial itself

Course context. Teaching a course involves making choices about what an instructor will ask students to do and why. External factors such as course size, context, student demography, and support structure are significant and should influence the choices that need to be made during course design. We begin the tutorial by having you articulate who your students are, what they need during the course, and what they might need in the future.

Setting overarching goals. The heart of the tutorial involves having you set student-focused goals that enable your students, at an appropriate level, to think for themselves in the discipline, not just expose them to what professionals know. You will set goals that focus your course on developing students' abilities to think for themselves and solve problems in the discipline while still addressing mastery of content.

Setting ancillary skills goals. Before proceeding to content and course plan, you will set one or two ancillary skills goals for your students (e.g., improving writing, teamwork, oral presentation).

Choosing content to achieve overarching goals. Every field is awash in more than a semester's worth of content, and every one of us faces decisions about what content to include and what content to omit. You will make decisions about content by considering what general content topics could be used to achieve the overarching goals you have set for your students, rather than by making a laundry list of content that students should be exposed to.

Developing a course plan. A course plan includes not only the goals and the content topics, but also the order of content and concepts in each broad content topic, and how students will receive goal-related practice with increasing independence as they encounter content and concepts. You will choose appropriate classroom, assignment, and assessment strategies that both help students learn effectively and allow you to evaluate whether students have met the goals.

For Faculty Developers: We now have a complete description of how we run our course design workshops, including links to all of the materials we use to run our workshops, a detailed schedule, tips for adapting or adopting our workshop format, and suggestions for how to use our course design tutorial with faculty. You can find these materials on line at http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/coursedesign/tutorial/for_developers.html

This course design tutorial is part of a larger web collection of professional development resources developed for undergraduate geoscience faculty through the NSF-funded program On the Cutting Edge (http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/index.html).

Ad Hoc Committee on Appraising Teaching Effectiveness

Provost Lynn Black charged this committee to review the current university-wide system for assessing teaching effectiveness through a combination of student perceptions [conforming to Policy 803.07 from Section 4.08 of the Academic Affairs Handbook from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (http://www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section4/4.08.phtml)] and additional research-based teaching evaluation methods that:

(a) focus on research-based "best practices" for assessing teacher effectiveness in different teaching contexts (i.e., on-ground, hybrid/blended, online);

(b) permit Colleges and Departments flexibility to assess teacher effectiveness in ways that honor discipline-specific conventions for course content and delivery methods (e.g., lecture, seminar, laboratory);

(c) make a clear distinction between how evaluation data should be used for formative and summative evaluation;

(d) make recommendations as to strategies for assessing differential levels of teaching effectiveness; and

(e) use technology effectively and efficiently to collect, analyze, and disseminate data. This charge includes exploring university-wide options for establishing online evaluations.

Members of the committee were selected to represent faculty across Colleges, ranks, and experience. With the exception of one representative from the Chairs Council and two CETL Associate Directors (both of whom also hold faculty appointments), faculty members on the committee have no administrative assignments. One student representative also serves on the committee.

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee include:
Molly Flageolle, Student Representative
Steve Hagin, Faculty Senate Representative
Scott Lewis, College of Science and Mathematics
Ron Matson, Chairs Council Representative
Tom Pusateri (Chair), CETL Associate Director
Chris Randall, CETL Associate Director
Karen Robinson, College of the Arts
Lois Robley, College of Health and Human Services
Debbie Smith, University College
Susan Kirkpatrick Smith, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Randy Stuart, Coles College of Business
Maurice Wilson, Bagwell College of Education

Committee members are currently reviewing resources and will seek faculty input throughout the academic year, with the goal of submitting a proposal by February 1 for open discussion, review, and approval so that its recommendations may be implemented by Fall 2009.

Faculty will be notified of opportunities to provide input to the committee. Please contact your representative (see above) or Tom Pusateri, Chair of the Committee, for further information.

CETL Faculty Learning Communities

The following KSU faculty members have been selected as Coordinators for 2008-2009 CETL Faculty Learning Communities.

Mary Ann Camann (Nursing)
Study of Student Outcomes Related to Study Abroad Programs and Global Learning

Diana Gregory (Art Education)
Creativity: Essentials Elements and Assessment

Nichole Guillory (Secondary and Middle Grades Education) and Raynice Jean-Sigur (Early Childhood Education)
Building a Shared Knowledge Base Among BCOE Faculty Teaching EDUC 2120 "Exploring Sociocultural Perspectives on Diversity in Educational Contexts"

Wesley Riddle (Center for Student Leadership)
Deeper Understanding of Service-Learning

Leonard Witt (Communication)
Citizen Media Training and Pedagogy: Developing a Well Vetted Plan for KSU

CETL Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Funding Awards

Five projects have been awarded funding in 2008-2009 as part of CETL's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Team initiative:

Teresa Banker (Mathematics Education)
Teaching Strategies Impacting the Learning of Mathematics

Kadian M. Callahan, Tad Watanabe, and Amy F. Hillen (Mathematics & Statistics)
Exploring Preservice Elementary Teachers' Learning in Mathematics Content Course Sequence: Developing Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching and Mathematical Power

Elizabeth Giddens (English)
PEER: Project for Encouraging Excellence through Review

Binbin Jiang, Mary Changler, Judith Patterson, & Tak Cheung Chan (Education Leadership)
A Comparison of the Traditional Approach and the Embedded Approach to Educational Leadership Practicum Experiences

Elke M. Leeds (Accounting)
Fostering Student Retention in Online Learning Programs

Teaching Notes is a publication of the Kennesaw State University Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning.

Kennesaw State University