



## Contents

- Part-time Teaching at UCF
- FCTL Support for Adjunct Instructors
- Supporting Your Department's Adjuncts
- Fostering a Professional Partnership
- Adjunct Teaching at UCF
- adjunct
- Trial Lawyer, Author, and Adjunct Professor
- A Serendipitous Journey
- The Essentials in Foreign Language Studies
- Diary of a Visiting Scholar
- Teaching Future Educators
- Not Your Typical Adjunct
- Adjuncts—Bringing Experience and Networking into the Classroom
- Bridging Classrooms, Building Teachers
- Motivational Tools for Online Adjunct Faculty Training Programs
- Teaching as an Adjunct at UCF
- Adjunct Faculty Services at UCF Libraries

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## Part-time Teaching at UCF Tony Waldrop



Tony Waldrop became Provost and Executive Vice President in August 2011. In this position, he oversees academic support services and student services and is responsible for curriculum, academic planning, faculty appointments, faculty development, and promotion and tenure decisions.

I want to take this opportunity to reach out to all of UCF's part-time faculty members and express my thanks for your fine work with our students and your contributions toward the success of UCF. When we look at the employment profile of our part-time faculty, we find they are mostly active professionals and industry experts who teach one or two courses during the fall and spring semesters for a variety of reasons—as service to their field, for their own professional development, or just out of a love for teaching. Our pre-professional programs are greatly enhanced by the expertise and work experience they bring to our students. Another group includes retirees from industry or university careers who offer students their accumulated wisdom and who model for them the virtues of life-long learning and sustained community engagement. Others are aspiring academics and career-changers who are building their credentials and teaching skills hoping to obtain full-time positions, either here at UCF or elsewhere. In fact, many tenured and full-time faculty at UCF began their employment here as part-time teachers, including some of our founding faculty. Another group include UCF administrative faculty and staff members who teach in addition to their full-time duties, a practice that brings them renewal and that generally increases their effectiveness in their full-time positions.

All of the part-time instructors I have just described participate in mutually beneficial relationships with UCF, with our students, and with the Central Florida community; however, other part-time faculty who are highly qualified, dedicated, and effective teachers seeking full-time employment or better pay remain, for many reasons, under-employed. This is the focus of a national conversation in higher education, and it is without a simple solution, but over the last several years, UCF has focused on key programs that rely heavily on these part-time faculty, and we have found the funding necessary to convert many of those positions to full-time instructor lines with benefits. Additionally, we have instituted a promotion process for full-time instructor and lecturer faculty lines, thereby raising the quality of working conditions for instructional staff who are not on research-intensive lines. In the face of ongoing economic pressures and budget uncertainties, we will continue to seek positive change for all members of our instructional team.

I want to encourage all full-time faculty and staff members to reach out and provide excellent support for our part-time instructors. Departments should engage in early and ongoing communication with them about the hiring process and employment expectations. They need the ability to obtain their class rosters, build their webcourses, and plan their semester schedules before their contract semester begins. I know this is often not possible in the case of emergency hires, but we have built business processes that allow them to obtain their login credentials and access to services by August 1 for fall contracts, December 15 for spring contracts, and May 1 for summer contracts. Additionally, they should be invited to participate in department orientations and meetings and pointed to the Faculty Center's orientations and resources for part-time faculty.

Finally, I thank the several part-time faculty who contributed to this *Faculty Focus* edition.

## FCTL Support for Adjunct Instructors

Eric Main



Eric Main is Associate Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning and has been with FCTL since 2001. His B.A. in English Literature is from the University of Florida and his M.A. in the same field is from UCF. His areas of interest at FCTL include programming for adjuncts.

The Faculty Center regularly reviews its programming efforts and effectiveness and tries to respond quickly to needs and perceptions expressed by UCF faculty members. One of our self-assigned, perennial challenges is improving support for UCF's part-time faculty, usually referred to as adjunct instructors. Most adjuncts are very competent or even expert teachers. Many of them are long-term, recurring UCF employees, familiar with our business processes. However, for reasons you can imagine or glean from the articles in this edition, they are a group with a need for special institutional support, yet they are the group that tends to receive the least of it.

Who are UCF adjuncts? For the academic year 2012-2013, we analyzed the teaching staff at UCF by instructional role and found that adjuncts, at over 600 strong, accounted for approximately one-third of the total number of instructors of record at UCF, and they taught 1,864 courses, about 17% of the total course load over that period. They are most heavily represented in the College of Education and Human Performance, followed in declining order by Health and Public Affairs, Nursing, Arts and Humanities, Sciences, Engineering, Hospitality Management, Business, and Medicine. About 60% of them teach upper-level undergraduate courses, 20% graduate courses, 10% lower-level undergraduate, and the remaining 10% teach at multiple levels. Around 41% teach small classes (fewer than 30 students), 43% medium classes (31-100), and 16% large (100+), with a few teaching over 500 students per section. They also teach across all modalities. We did not collect data on adjunct pay rates, but according to self-reported rates at the "Adjunct Project" (See *The Chronicle of Higher Education* <<http://adjunct.chronicle.com/>>), the rates at UCF vary from around \$1,800 to \$4,000 per course. This generally confirms anecdotal reports we've heard here in the Faculty Center.

Currently, the Faculty Center offers two orientation sessions for adjuncts during the week before each semester begins. These are three-hour long, survival-oriented workshops that address a range of resources. Basic topics include logins, rosters, parking, email, etc. Intermediate topics include

campus resources, making student referrals, syllabus construction, academic calendar, FERPA, etc. We can usually only touch on advanced topics like course design, teaching methods and styles, and classroom management. If we have available personnel, sometimes we offer a full Saturday of sessions that go into greater depth. Several departments hold an orientation at or before the beginning of the semester, and some of these invite Faculty Center staff to meet with their adjuncts at this time. We are eager to provide this service and invite departments to request this service. We also offer opportunities during the semester for continuation of professional development for adjuncts, like teaching circles and book clubs held during the evenings. Of course, all adjuncts may schedule individual consultations with Faculty Center staff, and many of our regular appointments are with adjunct faculty.

My colleagues and I at the Faculty Center frequently teach as adjuncts. Our teaching generally helps us provide better support for all faculty. For this reason, some Faculty Centers across the country require their staff to teach as part of their assignment. When I'm not teaching a class, I miss it and find myself often thinking in terms of course improvement, integrating new ideas into a lesson, or assigning an exciting new activity to students. Probably like most of my readers, I find it difficult to socialize without talking about teaching and learning or trying to solve some classroom management scenario. I can't even do chores or drive without frequently having to jot down a new idea or some new connection to make in class.

As you have read in Provost Waldrop's introduction and will read in the following articles, there is a wide variety of adjunct experiences at UCF, and adjuncts benefit the university immensely. However, there is also a wide variability of support for adjuncts. I urge readers to raise this issue in departmental meetings. The following articles by Amanda Raffenaud and Amy Darty offer departmental models for supporting adjuncts, and I invite you to contact the Faculty Center to discuss ideas and possible collaborations for more and improved programming for them.

## Supporting Your Department's Adjuncts

Amanda Raffenaud



Amanda Raffenaud is Instructor for the Department of Health Management and Informatics. In addition to teaching and mentoring students, she takes great interest in supporting the adjuncts in her program because prior to serving as a full-time faculty member, she taught as an adjunct instructor for the HMI department. Amanda received her Master's degree in Health Services Administration from UCF in 2006 and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Public Affairs. Her research interests include health care human resource management, employee motivation, and the health care workforce effects of the Affordable Care Act implementation.

Departments and schools across campus are utilizing adjuncts at a significant rate, as clearly evidenced by the discussions in this edition. This dependence on part-time faculty presents opportunities for deans and chairs to be ever-present in managing and developing UCF's adjunct population. The Department of Health Management and Informatics, in the College of Health and Public Affairs, has established various mechanisms to support departmental adjuncts; these supportive measures, discussed below, have helped to create a strong and supported adjunct population in our department.

Before personally joining the department as a full-time Instructor, I taught for many years as adjunct faculty. I know, first-hand, what it is like to navigate the rigors of academia as part-time faculty. And, as a result of this personal experience, I was driven to rally for our department's adjunct population. After approaching my department chair and asking to take on the role as our department's "adjunct mentor," I was tasked with encouraging and supporting our adjuncts—often up to 30 in a given semester. This role as an adjunct mentor had not been formally established in our department, yet with our growing numbers of adjunct faculty, a need for increased communication and a formal orientation process was evident. This service opportunity was something I was excited to facilitate, even in addition to a full-time teaching load, in hopes that our department's adjuncts would receive the necessary support to succeed. Setting up our adjuncts for success was not just vital to our department's overall success, but for our students' success as well.

Acting as our department's adjunct mentor, I support and encourage adjuncts throughout the semester. This includes semester check-ins, usually about once a month, or more often for new adjuncts. Dropping a quick email to inquire how the semester is going is often well received and creates space for

even more detailed conversations about topics such as classroom management techniques or department policy on specific issues. Part of the semester check-in process includes making myself available, even in the evenings, to communicate with adjuncts who work full-time in the field. Acting as a point-of-contact for our adjuncts assures them that when needed, they have a person to connect with on a variety of academic matters. In addition, I make it a priority to share pertinent UCF and/or departmental communication with all our adjuncts. This allows them to be included and stay in the know with relevant information.

An additional facet of serving as an adjunct mentor involves the consistent offering of adjunct orientations. Usually offered on a semester basis, these gatherings are highly attended by our department's adjuncts—both new and seasoned. During these orientations, UCF and departmental policies are discussed. We distribute the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning's *Teaching at UCF* manual, which contains information on important topics, ranging from class roster retrieval and grade submission instructions to parking pass information and faculty ID necessities. Full-time faculty and program directors are always encouraged to attend adjunct orientations in order to meet adjuncts who may teach at night or solely online. And, as a bonus by-product of these orientations, adjuncts have begun to network together, creating a strong support system for each other. This adjunct support system curbs the tendency for adjuncts to feel isolated when plowing through the semester, often unsure of what to do or how to proceed. The benefits of offering adjunct orientations are numerous and appreciated by adjuncts themselves.

Another way our department has striven to set adjuncts up for success is through the creation of "lead content instructors." Lead instructors take initiative on certain content areas/courses and select appropriate textbooks and develop pertinent course objectives. The lead instructors then communicate this course content information to adjuncts who may be teaching the lead's assigned sections. Lead instructors are available to the adjuncts, if needed, to respond to any content-related issues that might come up during the semester. This measure has ensured consistency across course sections, regardless of the instructor of record for each particular section. In addition, both the lead instructor and adjunct are able to support each other in the course development and teaching process.

A final way that our department has endeavored to support our adjunct population is through the development of an inclusive departmental culture. This meshing of full-time and part-time faculty is, in fact, relatively simple. Adjuncts are always invited to participate in our monthly faculty meetings. Their input on curriculum and instruction is greatly appreciated. Additionally, adjuncts are included in departmental events—

from student orientations or graduation celebrations to holiday gatherings for faculty. Their presence at events, especially those that are student-centered, allows for a collective presence of faculty support. Even if adjunct faculty cannot attend departmental events regularly, the invitation and desire of inclusion speaks clearly of the intention to involve adjuncts.

In closing, if your department is brainstorming ways to support adjunct faculty, consider adopting one or more of our department's measures. Establishing an adjunct mentor provides stability for adjuncts and allows for consistent communication to be delivered. Creating lead content instructors provides adjuncts with content instruction and guidance throughout the semester. Developing an inclusive culture invites both full-time and part time faculty to collectively get involved in the department's events. With these notions in mind, adjuncts will likely feel supported and encouraged to carry out your department's mission.

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### **Fostering a Professional Partnership: The Adjunct Support Advantage for the GEP** **Amy Darty**



Amy has taught for the History Department since 1997. She launched UCF's online history courses in 2002, specializing in American History and Western Civilizations. She is also the GEP Coordinator for History, assessing student learning outcomes and mentoring adjunct faculty. Her foci include colonial America, gender, science & technology, medieval Europe, and anthropology/archaeology.

Seventeen years ago, I began teaching for UCF as a GTA, then worked as an adjunct for seven years until being hired as an instructor. During that time, FCTL was founded and grew; however, few development opportunities were specifically available for adjuncts, much less promoted. Instead, I largely developed my teaching skills alone, seizing training as it emerged and gathering scholarship along the way. As UCF expanded, the scope of adjunct work evolved, while support only increased marginally, often reluctantly, and wages and benefits largely stagnated. I teach history online, but, a decade ago, I had to argue for the right to teach online when training for fully online instruction was not offered for adjuncts. These roadblocks are symptomatic of an academic environment that has yet to fully embrace the needs of the adjunct cohort.

In 2012, approximately 10% of General Education Program

(GEP) courses (levels 1000-2000) were taught by adjunct faculty. These adjuncts directly impact the experience of students taking introductory courses, which serve as conduits to majors and minors across campus. Recent articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* increasingly correlate matriculation to upper division coursework with positive experiences in the GEP, much of which is under the tutelage of adjuncts. A recent UCF survey of adjuncts revealed they have mixed opinions about the support they receive, depending on their discipline and department.

Reasons for working as adjuncts vary (job availability, home life situations, specialization); however, limited access to resources during and between terms presents a hurdle to their effectiveness as teachers. With this dynamic in place, disorientation, resigned apathy, last-minute planning, and lack of retention become problems for the departments who rely on their services to supplement or maintain course offerings. If adjuncts are indeed viewed only as peripheral to UCF, it undermines our disciplines and, ultimately, our message about the value of higher education delivered by these individuals. If they are good enough to serve our university, they are inherently valuable educators who observe professional development and support networks as vital components in the functioning of the university system. To this end, I have become an adjunct facilitator as the GEP Coordinator for the History Department, working with them to maintain high standards and developing support for them as both an administrator and peer evaluator.

In the last four years, the History Department has directly addressed these issues while adapting to continually changing department course loads for the GEP. To increase adjunct awareness of department guidelines, pedagogy, and university expectations, I created a webcourse which provides direct, year-round access to the discipline-specific information which they might need. Whether employed in one term or two, for one course or four, our adjuncts are provided with the professional tools they need to negotiate the demands of GEP history instruction. The course provides administrative information related to syllabi, assessment standards and student learning outcomes, publisher resources, grant information, curricular design materials, discussion forums, and links for instructional resources (on campus and online) in one integrated location. Additionally, adjuncts have guided implementation of webcourse materials, integrated components of webcourses' functions within their sections (whether W courses or not), and they can discuss these adaptations with me. Though originally intended to serve just the faculty teaching GEP courses, the webcourse has grown to include all course-level faculty and our graduate teaching assistants. This best serves the pedagogical needs for GEP instruction by ensuring consistent expectations and resources. In the years

since this resource has been provided and expanded, the increase of faculty user activity consistently shows its relevance for support and continuity.

The History Department goes further with adjunct support by directly connecting with these colleagues' instructional lives, an aspect supported by scholarship of teaching and learning studies. We annually observe our adjunct faculty to provide direct feedback about their discipline-specific teaching, classroom management, and student-teacher interactivity. We proactively nurture them and raise awareness about what they do as well as how they do it. It is unusual enough in higher education that, even after four years, I have adjuncts who are surprised yet eager to demonstrate their skills. It is rare indeed that they do not welcome critique and recognition of their methods for sharing the discipline they love.

To accomplish this, we set up observation appointments to visit classrooms (on campus or online) and critique their instruction. Our veteran adjuncts are directly observed once per academic cycle whereas newly minted or emerging adjunct faculty are observed every term for the first two years of instruction. This forms the basis for a dialogue about teaching and learning that can otherwise bypass the world of adjunct instruction, whether through benign neglect or deliberate design. All adjuncts receive reports and comments on their in-class observations, which can be freely discussed or debated. This allows our department to guide faculty, address concerns, provide perspective, and foster a connection to the UCF environment. In turn, I believe this promotes more active classrooms, dynamic instruction, and understanding about the variety of talented adjuncts who serve GEP history students.

Our department also provides support opportunities for adjuncts to develop their personal goals as educators through an in-house teaching resource library in our discipline, GEP assessment data sharing, options for flexible scheduling and course type requests, and a forthcoming Best Practices for Adjuncts cohort experience. Other ideas we have explored include rubric and writing support as well as developing an academic substitute teaching pool. Some of our most experienced adjuncts have mentored their peers and connected on a professional level.

The needs and wants of adjuncts should not be limited in scope based on occupational identity. The awareness within our department that GEP courses driven by student credit hours come with the need for high-quality, well-supported adjuncts is not myth but reality. Improving wages and benefits is one step in valuing our adjuncts. Another step is forging working relationships rather than just contractual exchanges with adjuncts, who are vitally necessary for the courses they teach and to the health of our degree programs. By engag-

ing them in the narrative, providing clarity of purpose, showing interest in their abilities, supporting their endeavors, and treating adjuncts as the professionals they are, we elevate the standard for our department and for those who choose to teach for UCF.

## Adjunct Teaching at UCF

### Chris O'Riordon-Adjah



Chris O'Riordon-Adjah is a professional structural engineer licensed in Florida and Michigan who specializes in bridges and is currently a full-time instructor with the Civil, Environmental and Construction Engineering Department (Structures). He graduated from the University of Central Florida with two Master's degrees: Structural & Geotechnical Engineering with the Civil Engineering Department, and Quality Engineering with the Industrial Engineering Department.

Currently a full-time instructor with the Civil, Environmental and Construction Engineering Department, I started at UCF as an adjunct for two semesters.

I still remember my first day as an adjunct. I had mixed feelings: excited, terrified (sweating palms and trembling), feeling over-prepared and a little exhausted even before the class started. It was a little intimidating when I stood in front of almost 150 students—300 eyes beaming at me.

Did I mention I felt over-prepared? Over-prepared with the course material, but zero-prepared as to what to expect, which leads me into my first issue with adjunct teaching at UCF—preparation.

While I am grateful for the one-day orientation which provided me with the logistics of the technological aspects of the teaching mode and some orientation, this event did not prepare me enough for the “real encounter” with students: class size, communication with such a large audience, how to interact with the students, and how to get everyone involved.

As an adjunct coming in with some real-life experience, I immediately saw the “disconnect” (huge gap!) between the real-world application and in-class theory. This became a little setback, as I was now faced with the decision to either lower my expectations of coverage or attempt to bridge the gap. I tried the latter by indulging students in thinking “outside the box” and regularly asking them to make the connections. But

this approach was perceived as “ridiculous” by some students, because it was not the norm.

Who is your boss? While some full-time instructors still struggle with this question, adjuncts don’t even know where to begin. The educational hierarchy at UCF needs to be explained more thoroughly. For example, do you appeal an issue from the department chair to the associate dean, then to the dean of the college and finally to the college president? But wait a minute; where does the provost come in? And what are the roles of each person? What issues or concerns do you address with whom?

Then we have student conduct. Where, how and when do you even start? Thanks to a wonderful and approachable department staff—and I guess it also helps that I have known them for awhile as an alumnus—I have been able to resolve most conduct issues. However, I can’t begin to count the times I have to run to them with student conduct issues. I have been comfortable asking the necessary questions and knowing exactly where to go and whom to approach; however, some adjuncts have confided to me that they do not share my comfort. For example, what are the steps and procedures for dealing with a student you catch cheating on a test? or what do you do when a student literally threatens you because they think they deserve a better grade? or if a student is disrespectful? I believe that in most cases adjuncts impose very minimal penalties, either due to the lack of definitive procedures, or just for the sake of saving time and not having to deal with the “politics” involved.

Another item of concern is conflicting curricula. I was very privileged as an adjunct to have been given a syllabus as an aid in preparing my lesson plans so that I was in line with not only the department’s expectations but also with the students’ in preparing for the next level. This might be speculation on my part, but I do think some adjuncts believe that they are expected to devise their lesson plans from scratch and have no idea that their departments have minimum requirements that they may cover or not cover.

Last but not least: grade changes and students’ right to appeal their grades. Yes, there is a procedure to change grades, which was absolutely news to me, and a definite YES to students’ right to appeal their grades. Grade changes actually work both ways—a mistake on the part of the instructor or a student’s incomplete work during the semester. Then I learned about how students have the right to appeal their grades. Adjuncts should consult Florida record retention policies before shredding students’ homework or tests.

While adjunct teaching at UCF provides a great opportunity for both the instructor (who brings in some real-life experi-

ence) and students (who benefit from these experiences, thus helping to bridge the gap between the real world and in-class theory), adjuncts need to be prepared, educated, and better oriented on the issues presented above. In summary:

- Prepare adjuncts for the classroom experience (it could be a big class, so speak loudly, write clearly, entertain questions, involve the class, etc.).
- Show them the channels for resources (FCTL and your own department—make your department staff your best friend when it comes to the basic logistics and procedures. They probably know better than anyone else in the department or the college).
- Educate them on their supervisors (the hierarchy) and their roles.
- Educate them on the procedures for addressing student misconduct.
- Educate them on course curricula (expectations by department).
- Educate them on their rights as well as the students’ rights.

The most important lesson I learned as an adjunct is that there is no such thing as asking too many questions. If you don’t ask questions, you won’t know what you need to know. No one makes the assumption that they need to share information just because there might be someone who isn’t “in the loop.” It doesn’t happen now, and won’t happen in the future.



**ad•junct**  
**[aj-uhngkt] noun**  
**Shannon Elswick**



Shannon Elswick brings over 37 years of experience in healthcare to his classrooms. His first job was selling newspapers in the hospital when he was in high school, and he has since held titles ranging from orderly and nursing assistant to chief executive officer and president. Shannon received a BS in Healthcare Administration from Southern Illinois University and a M.S.A. in Healthcare from Central Michigan University. He is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives and has been published on hospitality in healthcare, lean/six sigma and lifestyle medicine.

Not wanting to appear ignorant, I thought I should look up the word that describes my relationship with the university. According to the most common and simple definition, I am something added to another thing but not essential to it. If I believed that, I would certainly not be doing this. Another way to describe me is as someone associated with lesser status, rank and authority in some duty or service. Now I am not shy about duty and service and completely understand lesser authority, but this description did not seem much better. Of course what I really am is a person working at an institution, like a college or university, without having full or permanent status. It is difficult to argue with the accuracy of this description. It is indeed who adjunct instructors are, but it does not adequately describe what we do.

I worked in the healthcare field, hospitals to be exact, for 37 years (and that doesn't count cleaning medical offices and selling newspapers in the hospital while I was still in high school). My first full-time job was as an orderly, and I completed my undergraduate and graduate studies many years ago while I was working as a corpsman in the Navy. So what I know is healthcare in hospitals, and my formal education was decades ago. What in the world was I thinking when I said I would be willing to work at the university without any prior teaching experience?

When my friends ask me about my "retirement," I am quick to let them know that teaching is not nearly as easy as it appears to be from the other side of the lectern. I taught two sections of the same mixed-mode course this summer and routinely put in more than 20 hours a week. I am quite sure my experience is not unique, but here are three things I learned ... in addition to finding my way around in Canvas.

Communicating with students as an instructor is very

different from communicating with staff as the boss. For one thing, students often send emails or text messages close to the deadline for an assignment, so it is really important to stay connected. Also, I learned that communications could come through a variety of channels, so it is not enough to just check Webcourses for messages related to school. The thing I found most interesting was how much more comfortable many of our students are communicating electronically as opposed to in-person or even on the phone. I frankly worry about what success some of our students will find in the real world where interpersonal and verbal communication skills are so important.

In my college years, I never really thought much about what assigning grades was like for my professors. I guess I assumed it was not a big deal to them and they just sort of scanned over our work to get an overall impression. Working with graduate students at UCF has given me a much different perspective on grading. I quickly realized how important it was to document opportunities for improvement in specific terms. Although I did not get this kind of feedback, at least not often, in my college experiences, I know our students deserve better.

The thing that surprised me the most, however, was how much I did not know about the subject I had agreed to teach. I just assumed living it in my work environment for so many years would provide me sufficient knowledge and experience to teach. Of course there were many things I knew which were not discussed in the text and a good number of things in the text I had not learned at work. Consequently, I truly believe I studied more than some of the students this summer.

The point is this: being an adjunct instructor at UCF is not nearly as easy as I thought it would be, and it is certainly more than just working at the university without having full or permanent status. The opportunity this position presents is to share what I have learned, and more importantly what I have experienced, over the decades with a generation of future leaders. The decisions I make today will not immediately affect thousands of employees but could have significant impact on individuals who will perhaps someday have more far-reaching responsibilities than I ever did.

## Trial Lawyer, Author, and Adjunct Professor Patricia Cashman



Patricia Cashman has been an adjunct professor in the Legal Studies Department, College of Health and Public Affairs since 1993, and currently teaches Evidence. She graduated from Northern Illinois University with a B.S. in 1981, and from the University of Florida's Levin College of Law in 1983. She has been a criminal defense attorney for over 29 years and opened her own firm in 2001. Patricia is also the author of *Guide to Criminal Law for Florida*.

I cannot carry a note. I cannot play a musical instrument.

I am a trial lawyer. To be specific, I am a criminal defense attorney. I have been trying cases for almost 30 years. When I was younger, most of my fellow lawyers had three aspirations besides winning trials. They wanted to play in a rock band, write a book, or teach the law. Happy hour often meant long, amusing discussions of possible band names and future book titles, none of which held much interest for me at the time. Then I got a call from UCF, where I had been a volunteer on various projects and programs. Would I be available to teach a class? Yes, I would love to. I began teaching the very next week, and have since been an adjunct professor for twenty years. I hope to continue to do so for another twenty years. Teaching has made me a better lawyer in the courtroom and a better person in our community. An unexpected benefit has been how much I have learned from my students, and how much I continue to learn from my students.

Standing up and giving a lecture was daunting, and creating and grading exams was completely foreign to me, but somehow I knew I enjoyed this teaching process. Teaching is not about the grade; it's about the education. Learning is not confined to the classroom; it's what the students take with them when they pursue their goals. It is so rewarding to meet for dinner a former student who is now attending law school. The first thing that he wants to share with me is, "All those things you told us about being a lawyer make so much sense now." I am so touched by the emails that begin, "You may not remember me, but I took your class and you motivated me to...." Such a heartwarming moment to read a former student's essay on whom she admires in the legal community and find out she wants to be me when she grows up.

I remember showing up to teach for the first time. Challenge one: finding a parking space. Challenge two: finding the classroom. So far, so good.... Next, I stood facing thirty-some students not much younger than myself. Some were older and

wiser, with far more life experience. Luckily, a professor I admired as a mentor had shared his class syllabus and the key exams. I had spent almost ten years selecting juries and arguing cases in courtrooms. Some cases were won, many were lost. I very much wanted to win this new type of case. These "jurors" were going to judge the material I taught and my presentation.

I decided to teach using the Socratic method. I began to question my "jury panel." What legal experience do you have? What do you hope to do with your degree? And then, the inevitable question from one of them, how do you defend "those people?" I explained that defense attorneys preserve the integrity of the system. They make certain that law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges follow the rules. It is a noble profession to defend and uphold our Constitution. After a brief pause, other students jumped in and shared their opinions. A lively discussion was had and the feedback was both surprising and enlightening. Some minds were changed, but the best result was that my students began thinking critically about the justice system, learning the law all the while.

I tried to interact with each and every student. We learned together from the book and our talks about current events in the law. Over the years we discussed the O.J. Simpson trial, we examined the Michael Jackson trial, and we dissected the Casey Anthony trial.

Thoughtful questions from my students cause me to examine my personal views as a defense attorney. I enjoy encouraging them to articulate their beliefs and discover the reasons behind them. At nine o'clock on Thursdays, I leave the UCF campus, both inspired and hopeful that these young (and not-so-young) students will go forth and seek justice for themselves and others. As I mold their future, they continue to inspire me to share my knowledge and real life experiences with the next group of students. I continue to ask myself, "Am I making a difference?" I know the answer is yes.

*Gideon v. Wainwright* holds that state courts are required to provide counsel to criminal defendants who are unable to afford their own attorneys. While my colleagues aspired to be authors, professors, and rock stars, I only wished to uphold this case. I thought it was the clearest path to making a positive impact. Twenty years later, I find myself an adjunct professor and author of a college-level textbook on criminal law. I did not foresee the countless benefits of teaching, but now I've learned to think beyond the courtroom when trying to become a better attorney. I think I shall name my rock band The Gideons.

## A Serendipitous Journey

Richard Biehl



Rick is a software quality architect specializing in healthcare data warehousing. He teaches quality engineering in the IEMS program in CECS, and healthcare data architecture in the Healthcare Informatics Program in COHPA. He holds a Ph.D. in Decision Management from Walden University.

My journey at UCF has been a serendipitous pathway. I first came to the College of Engineering mid-semester four years ago to finish teaching a quality engineering class, the instructor of which had left UCF suddenly to accept a job outside of Central Florida. That 10-week temporary assignment turned into a relationship that continues today. A year later, I entered a relationship with the College of Health & Public Affairs to develop and teach a healthcare data architecture class, the original instructor for which had been downsized out of the College of Business Administration and was no longer available to teach the class that I inherited. I had hoped to enter teaching someday, and these opportunities pulled me into the profession faster and earlier than I had ever intended.

Originally, I thought the difficulty in developing and teaching a class was going to be figuring out how to teach the needed materials, particularly in figuring out where to start. I've learned in these four years that the hard part is actually figuring out where to stop. I find that trying to teach too much is actually a much greater risk for my students than would be teaching badly. It's all important, but I've learned that I make my biggest mistakes when I try to teach too much or to take students too far.

While I was getting my Master's in Educational Change, I was most intrigued by the idea of asking the essential questions in a class (from the works of Wiggins & McTighe in *Understanding by Design*). That idea has resonated with me more recently as I've tried to pare down my classes to those essential elements that I believe my students really need to master. This is where being an adjunct instructor with a full-time job helps me. Since I work in the fields I teach, I imagine all of my final exams as job interviews. What would I ask an applicant to see if they've mastered some field on their resume? What kind of answer do I want my students to be able to give? What kind of story do they need to be able to tell? If an applicant wouldn't need it, then I de-emphasize teaching it.

A perfect example would be teaching quality gurus in my quality engineering class. Twenty years ago we might have spent weeks discussing the personal histories and quality phi-

losophies of Deming, Juran, Feigenbaum, Crosby, Taguchi, or Ishikawa. The quality movement was so new at the time that those pioneers were central to the story of quality. Today, they're part of the history of quality, and applicants aren't expected to recite their principles anymore. Some recognition is good, but detailed knowledge is now no longer expected. As a result, my quality guru lecture takes only a small part of one class period today.

Project management is a very immature discipline in the healthcare information technology sector. Most real-world projects are managed with a list of tasks on a napkin, and maybe with some leadership oversight. My project management class needs to pass on the essentials that my students need to be doing in that sector to be more successful (e.g., project charters, work breakdown structures, and risk management). Trying to teach a lot more than that in one semester is a disservice to those students because they won't be working in a culture where they'll be able to practice more in the workplace, and so they won't retain anything more that I try to push into their heads. By focusing on the essentials and devoting enough time to ensure real mastery of those things, students leave class ready to actually succeed. I want them to be able to do things, not just recall that they've been exposed to things. They can look up how to do resource loading and baseline controlling later, or if we really want them to know that, we should accept the fact that a second semester would be needed to teach it. Packing extra into one semester doesn't improve coverage, teaching, or learning.

Statistical process control is another example where mastery of the essentials is much better than exhaustive exposure. There are dozens of different kinds of control charts covered in most quality engineering texts. There are two or three of those that students will actually use in the real-world in the early years of their careers. I want my students to master those few, and to have heard of the others. If I help them internalize the essentials, they'll become lifelong learners. If they are, they'll know how to look up those other control charts when they eventually need them.

I like being an adjunct. I'm committed to teaching my students what they need to know, not everything I've been taught over my career. Times change, requirements change, and teaching must change also. It takes time. It means that every semester I've got to reevaluate what I'm covering, and that's a lot of work. The process is made easier by the fact that I work in these fields myself. I know how much of what I've learned in the past isn't needed anymore, and I make sure I don't waste my students' time teaching those things. Drucker referred to it as *organized abandonment*, and described it as one of the most important skills that we tend to lack as a society.

## The Essentials in Foreign Language Studies: The Linguistic Aspect of Language Learning

Sadik Y. Wardeh



Sadik Wardeh has served as a French & ESL professor at Valencia College since 1976. He joined the UCF faculty in 2006 and is now a professor in the Department of Modern Languages. His passion is to help students learn the French language no matter how much they know. He is currently developing a system to learn foreign lan-

guages. He encourages students to be active participant learners, change their study habits, and have fun learning this beautiful language. At the end of the course, the student will be more educated, a better person, gentler, and a better citizen.

The purpose of this article is to raise questions about foreign language teaching at all educational levels. What can we do to raise the level of foreign language competence in schools and colleges in America today? Generally, we assume that command of the spoken language is the prime objective in any case. If we are going to teach foreign languages (French, Spanish, or German) effectively (to understand and to speak a second language) at UCF and Valencia College, we should ask ourselves many questions in order to see the big picture.

As an adjunct at UCF for over 10 years and at VC for over 35 years, every semester I teach a beginning course in French. I pose at the beginning of the semester some questions: What is language? How does it work? How do we get started? What are the major components of any language study? How should college students be taught to speak a foreign language? What should they do the first two weeks of classes? How do we improve learning? Is language learned behavior? How is culture reflected in the language? Are there any similarities in sounds, structure, and vocabulary between French and English, for example? What is an accent? Is it a disease? What are “cognates”? Some “cognates” have completely different meanings. For example, French *assister* means to be present at and not to assist.

I believe that an introduction to the nature of language is important in college studies. To understand a language we must understand its grammar and its vocabulary. Fundamental insights about language should certainly prove valuable to anyone studying or teaching a language. Language is everywhere. It permeates our thoughts, mediates our relations with others, and even creeps into our dreams; yet, it is poorly understood. It is mistaken to assume that we know all about a language because we speak it.

First of all, students need to know the answers to these questions before they get started on their journey in foreign language studies. They need to receive instruction on the linguistic aspect of language and the psychology of language learning. The purpose is to start well on a good foundation from day one and work their way up on a path towards language fluency and finish well. Best results will be achieved if they are instructed on the three major components of language:

1. Phonology: the study of sounds in a language
2. Syntax: the study of relationships of words in a sentence
3. Semantics: the study of meaning.

Secondly, as educators, we all know that in learning a new language, we have to learn a set of words, each of which pairs a meaning and a pronunciation. We have to learn how individual words may be combined to form sentences. Accordingly, we will speak of a language as involving a phonological system, a syntactic system, and a semantic system.

Words of the language have meanings. A language is characterized by a phonological system. English and French just do not sound alike. They have different phonological systems, different sets of principles determining the pronunciation of sentences. I have often compared the learning of a language to the growth of a tree, with roots and branches seen as structures—means of support for leaves and flowers, even as sentence structure supports vocabulary. Language is alive, it possesses all the qualities of life itself, and its learning can only be a process of combined order and dynamism.

Being able to speak French is one of my greatest joys in life. If you’re anything like me, you can’t learn enough about this beautiful language. I’m truly delighted to have the opportunity to share my knowledge of and love for French with my students at Valencia College since 1976 and at UCF since 2006.

My adventures in teaching French have been challenging, fun, and rewarding, and I am honored that through hard work and a lot of creative energy, I am able to help students raise their scores in French, and more importantly, their self esteem. My goal is to ensure that students learn and find personal meaning and value in the material, no matter at what level they might be.

Thirdly, in learning a new language, students face challenges. They must abandon their old habits of learning and avoid letting too much time go by between periods of study. They need to avoid trying to complete several lessons in one sitting; the day-to-day contact to develop listening and speaking skills can’t be compressed. To meet these challenges, students are urged to learn some basic principles of language learning and

apply these principles especially in the beginning stages of their language studies. Recent research indicates that children learn a foreign language better and faster than adults because of their physical nature. The younger the child is the fresher the muscles are. As we get older the muscles get tougher. When a child is born, he or she is equipped with an innate ability to learn a language. A child learns by hearing, listening, and imitating sounds from people and the environment. Educators in this field reveal to us that adults should do the same as they begin to learn a new language.

One of the complaints most frequently voiced about foreign language learning methods is that drill, drill, and more drill deadens the interest of the student. That's why we need to reorganize our instructional methods and materials so that the intelligence of the student is not insulted. Bright students, though, recognize the need for drill and repetition. Nevertheless, we are still faced with the fact that language study, even at its best, requires time and patience.

Finally, the right path for a learner to become competent in foreign languages at UCF and VC is to see the big picture. Since there is no magic formula, the student must take up a challenge and follow the three "P's"—Practice, Patience, and Persistence.

## Diary of a Visiting Scholar

George Donald



George Donald RSA, RSW, M.Ed. has been a Visiting Scholar in the UCF Visual Arts Department for over 10 years. He teaches Life Drawing and Anatomy. For many years he was a Lecturer at Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland, and was Director of the Centre for Continuing Studies there, welcoming students from all over the world, including from UCF. He is a full-time painter and exhibits extensively in UK and abroad. He is Keeper of the Royal Scottish Academy. When not traveling, he lives and works in the Scottish Borders.

**March:** I receive that all-important letter of invitation to teach once again at UCF from August to October. One would have thought that, after 10 visits, the business of obtaining a visa would be a straightforward routine. Not so. Each year, each visa application brings variations and quirks to trap the unwary. First, I need forms to apply for my DS-2019 (essential for my J-1 visa status), and then forms for

insurance, for financial records, and many more. The work begins. The file thickens!

**April:** The U.S. Embassy online J-1 visa application website is not for the faint-hearted. I have struggled with it over the years. It has a nasty habit of blanking out, just as you are pausing to recall your mother's maiden name, and returning you to the opening page where you began 25 minutes earlier. This year, I am ready for it, with printouts of previously successful bouts. But my palms are still sweaty—no two years' questions are quite the same—and the order they come in changes maliciously. I note my long-deceased father's birth date, and hope I have remembered to write my next-of-kin's telephone number truthfully. This time, I successfully negotiate the 28-page grilling, pay my on-line fee, upload my grim mug-shot, pay Homeland Security fees, and I'm home and dry.

In all other applications, I have been obliged to attend the US Embassy in London in person (an 800-mile round trip for me). This year, uniquely, I am allowed to phone and request a waiver for the interview. I make the call, and learn I am to be let off the long trip. I may courier my passport and forms.

**May:** No reply from the Embassy. No passport. I begin to worry again, especially when the helpline I had called to set up this arrangement now sounds an 'unobtainable' tone when I phone to enquire.

**June:** A leather-clad courier delivers my passport and visa. I am all set. I immediately purchase the cheapest airline ticket I can find online. Dismayed to read *immediately after I had clicked the 'buy' button*, that meals and drinks must be purchased during the flight. An email arrives *the next day*, inviting me to participate as a judge in this year's Walt Disney Art Exhibition. This obliges me to stay on in Orlando a week longer than the date of my new ticket! I make a terribly expensive call to France to ask my Spanish (don't ask!) air agent to change the return date. Some misunderstandings at first (blame my French), but I arrange the changes with only a hefty penalty fee and small-ish re-booking fee and a ticket price hike. I plan to smuggle onboard a wee bottle of wine and a sandwich for transatlantic sustenance.

**July:** Teaching for a week at the Prince's Drawing School, London during (what we Brits call) a heatwave—80 degrees and no air-con! Even the nude model pours with sweat. The school is in Hoxton, a trendy part of town, where it is difficult to pop out for your expensive latte without being accosted by a small army of Japanese *fashionistas* with their photo shoot crew, blocking the narrow graffiti-decorated lanes.

**August:** Departure soon—I put off packing, but choose two small paintings that can fit in to my suitcase for the UCF Vi-

sual Art Department Faculty art show. Bitter experience has taught me not to take a separate portfolio. It only gets stuck in the airport carousel and baffles customs officers.

Joy! On closer inspection of my e-ticket, I discover that the notice about no meals being served on my flight only applies to the tiny propeller-driven leg of the journey from Glasgow to Dublin. There's a big jet and a meal and a window seat waiting for me there. Also (a tiny bit of USA in Ireland), I am whisked through US Customs in Dublin *before* my flight. Smiling US customs officials obviously delighted with their posting convey me through the lanes with none of the usual frowns over my unusual birth-place and the two Iranian visas in my scruffy passport.

I arrive in Orlando and head straight to the beach at Daytona. On the I-4 I am phoned by a worried colleague who advises me to swing by UCF. All is not in order with my papers and my present situation is incompatible with UCF employment regulations. I make it to the International Center in shorts and a silly beach shirt. Here I am recognized by familiar colleagues who have dealt with me often before. The way is made smooth. I sign many more forms.

19th August: First day of teaching. Discover I am unable to go in to the intranet and download my class list. I'm a non-person despite my PID. There is a final form (amongst the 24 forms) to be signed.

I meet my students. As always, a group of talented, eager young people who tolerate my Scottish sense of humor and vaguely medieval turn of phrase (including the Latin terms we are obliged to use to describe bone and muscle).

The delightful thing is, they immediately recognize that, with our close and progressive visual examination of skeletal structures and musculature in the living body, they are working at the interface of science and art...that delicious oxymoron, where expressive freedom is aided by rigor, and objective facts launch imaginative inventiveness.

What a privilege, to teach this stuff!

To date, I still am unable to log in to the intranet.

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## Teaching Future Educators

Carrie Woods



Carrie Woods is an instructor in the College of Health and Public Affairs. She is originally from Rochester, New York, and has been living and teaching in Florida for over twelve years. She has a six-year-old son and enjoys running, reading and spending time with the people she loves.

**M**y experience as an adjunct at UCF for the past seven years has been wonderful. I have to say that I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with undergraduate students, preparing them for a field of work which I am very proud to be in, Deaf Education. I have the luxury of sharing my own experiences of teaching deaf students at a variety of levels and placements over the past twelve years. By imparting my knowledge and experiences with the future educators and professionals in the field, I am able to impact the population of students with whom I work in the K–12 setting.

It is really an amazing feeling to be able to see my college students and middle-school deaf students interact. I am able to arrange for this crossing of paths with the requirements I have in place for my courses. I am grateful for the flexibility to set up my courses so that I can incorporate these very valuable experiences, which, from all of the feedback I receive on both ends, is often the most rewarding and influential part of each course.

From my own experience as a college student, classroom learning and lecture can only cover so much. As an education major, I felt so much more prepared when I was actually immersed in the educational environment and applying the textbook reading to the real life experiences of the classroom. It also gives students who might not be certain of their career goals, and who are “testing the waters,” a chance to be exposed to “the real deal.”

Teaching at both the K–12 and college levels has allowed me to incorporate some unique strategies into my teaching in both settings. As I said, the interactions are beneficial to the college students in that they can apply their learning and experience students in action. The younger students benefit as well; the excitement they bring when it comes to having a one-on-one college mentor or a semester-long college pen pal enhances the learning process on every possible level.

Overall, my position as an adjunct has seasoned my repertoire of teaching practices—I feel more confident as an educator because I keep current in the field, and I am able to share

with and learn from the current and future professionals in the same area of expertise. I look forward to continued growth within my profession, and the caliber of college students with whom I have the chance to interact on a weekly basis at UCF has brightened my outlook on that very hope.

## Not Your Typical Adjunct

### Morgan A. McAfee



Morgan A. McAfee is Adjunct Instructor and Interim Program Coordinator in UCF's College of Education and Human Performance, within the School of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership. She is a proud two-time graduate of UCF, with a B.S. in Legal Studies ('09) and an M.A. in Applied Learning and Instruction ('13), and has been employed with the University in various capacities since 2007.

I am probably not your typical adjunct instructor. I am, however, a proud Knight, having now twice graduated from the University of Central Florida. In the eight years I have been a member of the UCF community, I have witnessed both the significant physical and enrollment growth of the University (there were still dirt parking lots when I started in 2005!), as well as increased opportunities for both students and recent graduates. I am honored to be the beneficiary of such opportunities because the College of Education and Human Performance (CEHP) hired me as an adjunct instructor for an undergraduate course just weeks after I graduated from the Applied Learning and Instruction M.A. program here at UCF.

I have known for many years now that the environment where I wanted to work was the university setting. My path to the CEHP was atypical as my undergraduate degree is in Legal Studies. After graduating, I quickly discovered that law school would not be the key to my own success or happiness. Rather than pursue a career in the law, I realized that the learning process fascinated me, pedagogically and epistemologically speaking. I was curious about what an effective teaching environment does (or does not, in the case of law school) look like, and how I could help others learn to improve their own teaching. So, after a year away, I returned to UCF and enrolled in the College of Education to effectuate that goal. After three years of graduate education, I now proudly teach future teachers and enjoy every minute of it.

In the time I spent completing my M.A., I was provided the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant and was fortunate that my supervising professor allowed me to flex my instruc-

tional muscles and practice my lecturing and presentation skills by teaching the material for her two different undergraduate courses. As a result of this experience, I was asked by the college to teach EDF 4467: Learning Theory and Assessment during Summer B term (just over a month after I graduated). As an individual who is interested in post-secondary teaching as a career, my position as an adjunct has given me the chance to "practice" my craft, as I can teach undergraduates without the pre-requisite of a Ph.D., which I intend to eventually pursue. A Ph.D. program is nothing to take lightly. I know this for a fact, as I have scoured the literature on doctoral education while completing my Master's, so before deciding on a school or program, I have the opportunity to teach at the college level before I make the commitment to academia. My experience as an adjunct has solidified my belief that academia is where I wish to be and that teaching at the college level is what I find most rewarding. The opportunity that I have is invaluable, and the ability to teach undergraduates both face-to-face and in a fully online modality has been rewarding.

My experience working as an adjunct instructor in the CEHP has been nothing short of exceptional. Both the staff and fellow faculty in the college have provided substantial insight and direction, and I have found willing and able support whenever I stumble across a dilemma. I was pleasantly surprised to learn about the organization of course curricula and resources in the college, as each course is led by a single course shepherd responsible for establishing the objectives and major assignments of the course. This structure helps to ensure uniformity in curriculum regardless of the instructor assigned to teach each section of the course. I was formerly employed in a different college on campus where no such organization existed, often leaving adjuncts and instructors to organize and prepare their course with little direction. This resulted in variability of course quality due to the inconsistent learning objectives established by the different instructors assigned to each section. However, upon discovering the course shepherd structure used by the CEHP, I was certainly impressed with the uniformity, structure, and resources available to both adjuncts and full-time instructors for each course they are assigned. Academic freedom is not compromised because instructors (including adjuncts) are still permitted to supplement the learning objectives and assignments set forth by their course shepherd. However, the maintenance of standardized objectives and the provision of a single, specific resource for instructors undoubtedly contribute to a positive teaching and learning experience for instructors and students alike. Needless to say, UCF really does stand for opportunity, and the opportunity I have been fortunate to receive as an adjunct has helped guide my career path and instill confidence in myself as a college instructor.

## Adjuncts—Bringing Experience and Networking into the Classroom

Randal Allen



Randal Allen is Adjunct Professor in the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering department. He is Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) and chairperson for the Central Florida Section of AIAA. He co-authored the textbook *Simulation of Dynamic Systems with MATLAB and Simulink*. He holds degrees from UCF, Stanford, and the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign).

### BACKGROUND

As a student, I was inspired to succeed by my calculus professor. He recognized my ability to learn quickly and recommended volunteering in the tutoring center at the junior college I was attending. At the time, I was tutoring calculus material I just learned that day. Communicating the knowledge I had gained to others deepened my understanding of the material. This was my first, albeit rudimentary, introduction to teaching.

While I have a highly technical education, it wasn't being put to task as my career slowly diverged away from science and engineering over 16 years of industry experience. In the autumn of 2005, I was dissatisfied with my job, and I found myself searching for purpose. Because I missed the technical aspect of my formal education, I sought to make a difference by making a contribution to higher education.

I met Dr. James McBrayer (professor emeritus) from the Mechanical, Materials, and Aerospace Engineering (MMAE) department of UCF while serving the community through a church program. He led me to teaching as an adjunct, a position I began in the spring of 2006. He also led me to accepting the chairperson position for the Central Florida Section of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA/CFS), of which UCF has a student chapter.

As an adjunct professor, I teach from practical experience and application. I enjoy sharing specifically what is important for the students to learn and why they need to learn it. This increases motivation for the student to learn, forming a deeper understanding of the material being covered. For example, when teaching aerodynamics, I draw upon my flight test experience. When teaching mechatronics, I draw upon my hardware and software integration experience. Additionally, I enjoy taking a moment to share mistakes I have made, with the hope that my students don't make the same or similar mistakes.

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Being an employee of Lone Star Aerospace, serving as the chairperson for AIAA/CFS, and teaching as an adjunct professor at UCF provides me with the unique opportunity to connect the local aerospace industry with the MMAE department.

By surveying the leadership of Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control (LMMFC), I learned that computational fluid dynamics (CFD) skills were lacking in UCF students entering the aerospace workforce. Working with Dr. Jayanta Kapat (UCF/MMAE professor), we obtained a student license of CFD software, which was generously donated by CD Adapco. This effort was strongly supported by the College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS) and the MMAE department where a room with computer access was provided for the students to learn how to use the software. At the time, a UCF student and AIAA/UCF chapter president facilitated classes which led to his being gainfully employed by CD Adapco; he is now currently in charge of academic programs.

In 2007, I had the opportunity to actively participate in a flight test at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. My employer rented aircraft time from the Test Pilot School (TPS) in Mojave for the flight test. Shortly thereafter, a dynamics student of mine asked if I knew of any internship opportunities. It just so happened that the TPS was looking for interns. She served an internship that summer and since graduation has worked on fighter jets, electromechanical components, and a space ship. She is now ready to move back to Central Florida to help launch an engineering and technology company.

Through other professional activities either with Lone Star or AIAA, I have met many industry professionals who can share their experiences as guest speakers to enrich the courses. For example, the former commander of NAVAIR's Training System Division (TSD) in Research Park will be speaking to the AIAA/UCF student chapter about his experiences as a former F-18 test pilot. Also, I hope to arrange for the students in flight mechanics to make a field trip to get hands-on experience with aerodynamic control surfaces. Who knows what will come of these opportunities? The answer is whatever the student wishes.

### CALL TO ACTION

Whether the instructor is an adjunct professor or on the tenure track, I encourage all professors to be actively involved with their local professional societies to help connect industry needs with academic course content. Just as I was inspired by my mentors, I seek to mentor and inspire others to learn and grow.

## Bridging Classrooms, Building Teachers

Beth Scanlon



Beth Scanlon teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the College of Education and Human Performance and works as a reading coach at Cypress Creek High School in Orlando. She describes herself as a Knighted-Gator since she received her Master's in English Education from UF and earned her Doctorate from UCF. She is a National Board Certified Teacher and National Writing Project teacher-consultant. She has worked as an educator in Orange County Public Schools for the past 20 years.

When I wanted to pursue my doctorate, my goal was to become a teacher-educator who was able to marry educational research and practice. I thought I would pursue a full-time job at a college when I was finished. Little did I know that adjuncting would become a valuable way to contribute to the development of teachers. As I begin my eighth year adjuncting at UCF in the College of Education and Human Performance, I have had several realizations.

Adjuncting is a privilege. When I started teaching at high school twenty years ago, I recognized the disconnect between the content of my education courses and the reality of facilitating instruction for 150 teens each day. Educational theory and research matter, but as a high-school English teacher I needed to figure out how to practically use the instructional strategies I learned in college. As an adjunct, I am privileged to be that bridge. One of my former students, Laura Kies, class of 2011, shared, "I loved having a concurrent teacher instructing a literacy strategy class because it allowed me to invest in what you were sharing—I believed the strategies worked because you were using them. You were aware of the current student population, a lot of the politics, and the current realm of testing... Having you assured me that what you were sharing would work in a classroom and was worth trying." Teaching is hard work and college cannot prepare students for every aspect of teaching, but as a 20-year veteran I can bring that experience directly to students through adjuncting, and it is a privilege to be entrusted with the work it takes to develop future teachers.

Adjuncting is professional community building. Adjuncting has allowed me to work side-by-side with former students and graduates of the English Education program as they begin their teaching careers. Students from my first class at UCF, Erin Dorso, Helen Philpot, and Craig Olson, all class of 2007, as well as students from later years, Krystin Beavers, class of 2008, and Michelle Pascale and Nicole Brichler, class of 2012, work with me at Cypress Creek High School. I have

had a unique opportunity to be a part of their professional community as they develop as teachers. This experience is critical as 40%-50% of new teachers leave the profession in the first 5 years (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). As their former professor, now colleague, I provide a safety net and help them navigate the many obstacles of teaching, such as what to do at 5 a.m. when you wake up sick or how to manage a class of 25 students who do not want to read or write. In my role as reading coach, I troubleshoot with them and work directly in their classroom. We sit side-by-side in our professional learning community meetings and navigate challenges of literacy instruction. Krystin Beavers shared that she initially felt a little pressure working together, but she liked the comfort of having a mentor who challenged her and helped her grow from her experiences. Working together, we are collaborators in the development of readers and writers on our campus.

Adjuncting is continued mentoring. Social media has allowed me to cultivate a professional relationship with my former students once they are in the field. We participate in a professional learning network on Twitter through weekly #Engchats. We connect through blogging about teaching via the weekly Slice of Life challenge hosted by Two Writing Teachers. We are even able to connect on Facebook by participating in discussions of professional books such as Lee Ann Spillane's *Reading Amplified* or Penny Kittle's *Book Love*. Continued mentoring may also be something as simple as sharing professional titles or helping former students navigate the current instructional challenges of integrating Common Core State Standards in English language arts. Amy Dempsey, class of 2010, shared that staying connected through Facebook allows her not only to share her successes with me but also have continued access to me as a resource. Virtual mentoring has been a powerful way to stay connected and nurture beginning teachers.

My weekly treks to UCF are invaluable opportunities to connect future teachers to the hard work of teaching reading and writing that they will be entrusted to do in their careers. Adjuncting is the bridge between the college classroom and my students' future classrooms.

Ingersoll, R., and J. Kralik (February 2004). The Impact of Mentoring on Teacher Retention: What the Research Says. *Research Review Teaching Quality*. Available at <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/50/36/5036.htm>

## Motivational Tools for Online Adjunct Faculty Training Programs

Lisa Martino



Lisa Martino is a graduate of UCF's Career and Technical Education program with a Bachelor's in Technical Education and Industry Training, and a Master's in Career and Technical Education. She is an experienced professional development workshop facilitator, and she teaches business communications and business computer applications.

The need to improve higher education adjunct training for online teachers is apparent. A study whose outcome produced the Maryland Certificate for Online Adjunct Training (COAT) pilot program reveals that the need for such a program is warranted as a result of the increased online course enrollment figures in the United States. Data from the Center for Community College Student Engagement (2009) revealed 67% of all higher-education instructors work as adjuncts (as cited in Shattuck, Dubins, and Zilberman, 2011). With such a high percentage of higher education instructors working as adjuncts, why do we feel disconnected as a group? Training workshops and professional development may connect us as a community of educators; unfortunately, the availability of such programs is limited.

Online adjuncts hired by UCF are required to complete the ADL5000 Advanced Distributed Learning for Technology-Mediated Course Delivery. After the course is complete, the adjuncts receive a Certificate of Completion. This course is primarily informative, especially regarding the Teach Act. However, it focuses on copyright laws and what a teacher can and cannot do online. This is very important, of course, but the opportunity to add other components, such as time management, course construction, preparedness, organization, as well as basic and advanced online platform techniques was lost. The material is limited in content and time.

Additional training workshops are provided on UCF's FCTL website, and we receive schedules for upcoming workshops. Unfortunately since they are typically held when I am working, I cannot attend those events. In addition, I live more than an hour away, so driving to the campus after work is just not feasible. This is disappointing to me and makes me feel disconnected to UCF at times.

A recent study by Pagliari, Batts, and McFadden (2009) revealed that more than 40% of online adjunct instructors did not access additional training over a year's time. What could be the reason? The issue may not be the availability of the training; it may be an accessibility or motivational issue. Ac-

ording to the Shattuck, Dubins, and Zilberman study (2011), results revealed respondents stated two reasons why adjunct faculty training programs were not available at their institution: "lack of staff (62%) and lack of time (31%)". Budgets are always a concern for the administrators of any public educational institution. Time constraints are of particular concern for online adjunct instructors since the majority of us work full-time jobs in addition to teaching these online courses. The question is how do we provide professional development workshops to online adjuncts who work 60+ hours a week? How do we motivate our online adjuncts to attend these workshops? Is it information or motivation?

It is common knowledge that faculty training programs are necessary to assist new teachers to acquire the effective pedagogical skillset they desperately need. These faculty training programs also provide experienced teachers with up-to-date information on new policies and technology. If we are talking about full-time faculty, time and compensation are provided as a motivational tool (if budgets allow). However, we are talking about online adjunct instructors who, most likely, do not have the time or energy to include additional responsibilities during the week. In order to retain effective online adjunct instructors, a program that includes 24/7 accessibility and motivation should be implemented with some type of compensation, whether it includes continuing education credits, certificates of completion, or monetary benefits. Perhaps all three? A program can be developed that tracks the workshop attendance for our online adjuncts. It could then be used as a tool to provide monetary raises if they are hired again in the next semester. If institutions want to keep effective online adjuncts, developing a sense of community with accessible workshops as well as providing compensation for our valuable time may be the answer.

### References

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## Teaching as an Adjunct at UCF

Mathew Jacob



Mathew Jacob hails originally from India and earned his Doctorate in Christian Theology from the Paris Lodron University, Salzburg, Austria. He teaches Humanities in the Department of Philosophy, College of Arts and Humanities. The development of culture in its diversity over the course of human history continues to fascinate him.

One of the most difficult things in life is to teach someone something. Ancient Roman philosopher and politician Marcus Tullius Cicero once said, “The authority of those who teach is often an obstacle to those who want to learn.” Winston Churchill confirmed it by saying, “I am always ready to learn, but I do not always like being taught.” These two statements summarize the task of teachers in today’s global-age academic environments. Only the degree of intensity of these statements varies from person to person. Teachers have to hit the right balance and have to constantly attempt to make their students better citizens who benefit the common good without realizing that they are being taught. Anybody who can reach perfection in this task is a good teacher, which at least for me, is also the ultimate challenge of a teacher.

My teaching experience is pretty diverse. I taught in Europe, India, and Africa before I started teaching at UCF. The smoothest transition, for me, into the role of a teacher was here at UCF, that too being an adjunct. The Department of Philosophy, from Chair to the USPS staff, has welcomed me with warmth and been of utmost support, backing and help. As an adjunct, I am proud to be part of the professional team at the Department of Philosophy.

Oftentimes adjuncts come to the university just to teach, and they return to their domains once their job is done. UCF, beyond that, also provides a forum for the adjuncts to come together and discuss issues and challenges they face while teaching. This initiative is through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. Often, solutions or suggestions to tackle issues have emerged through those meetings. If not, there are colleagues always to hear your concerns. Appreciations are on record!

Having the second-largest UG student body of the United States, a professor at UCF can contribute enormously to the growth of this great nation. One can imagine similar alumni of UCF in various strategic positions in the US and in the world at large. This, at the same time, is a challenge. Various ethnicities, accents, colors, economic standards, gender orientations, moral/ethical ideals, family backgrounds, even being a south-

erner or a northerner, etc., are visible among the UCF student body. As an adjunct I was able to reorganize myself and my value systems in a truly multi-cultural context. Different individuals of the student body can perceive one simple idea, a concept, or even a word differently. The challenge of a teacher becomes bigger when the students need to be introduced to concepts that they are not comfortable with but that are universally and academically inexorable. The same is staggeringly true when the teacher is of a different background. In short, UCF offers enormous opportunities and challenges to a teacher, if one accepts these opportunities or challenges positively. I discovered that a more compassionate and genuine attitude towards the student body can help the teacher overcome these barriers considerably, and thereby one can achieve a better teaching-learning experience. This is the only way a teacher can inspire the next generation to reach to a more colorful and vivid multi-cultural human identity. Isn’t it the aim of the academic discipline Humanities? My convictions say, yes! I am fortunate to teach Humanities at UCF as an adjunct.

A couple of areas where adjuncts can be helped further, I think, are the following:

A general two-hour orientation at the beginning of each semester may be a good idea. Multimedia equipment often differs from classroom to classroom. Instead of leaving adjuncts to always discover for themselves the operation of these devices, they can be better oriented. During this orientation changes made to Canvas during the previous semester can be briefed or questions like “how can one constantly make use of digital libraries more efficiently” be answered. Canvas is an amazing teaching-learning tool with enormous possibilities, but without constant updates, one can easily become bewildered.

A second area is parking. Usually adjuncts come to the university on select days just for their window of teaching. Adjuncts may be given discounted parking decals or parking may be made completely free at parking lots near to their departments. In the context of current adjunct salaries this may not be unethical either.

Another happy thing I am obliged to acknowledge is that I got promoted from the Adjunct line to the Visiting Lecturer line at the beginning of the Fall semester 2013. Academics fascinate me day after day. The horizon of *sapientia* is swelling fast, and if one can be part of that healthy knowledge-swelling process, that is pure bliss. At UCF, I realize this truth all the more!

## Adjunct Faculty Services at UCF Libraries

Barbara Tierney



Barbara Tierney is Head of Research & Information Services for UCF Libraries. Prior to joining the UCF community in January 2013, Barbara served as Head of Research & Information Services for the University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

UCF Libraries <<http://library.ucf.edu/>> welcome Adjunct Faculty to take advantage of the outstanding Library resources and services available to them!

To identify the librarian assigned to your discipline or to your campus, click on either the UCF Libraries Subject Librarian web page <<http://library.ucf.edu/SubjectLibrarians/>> or the Branch and Regional Libraries web page <<http://library.ucf.edu/BranchCampuses/Locations/>>

Librarians are available to assist you and your students with curriculum and research assignments. They are available in person, online, and by phone for consultation on how to find the best information for research projects and academic assignments. To request an appointment for a face-to-face, in-depth research consultation with a librarian, fill-out an online consultation application <<http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/ResearchConsultations/Default.php>>

Are you ready to assign a research paper to your students and want to make sure that they start this process by using the most relevant databases available and devising the best search strategies? Schedule a library research instruction session by completing an online “Instruction Request” form: <<http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/LIRequest.php>>. Librarians can assist you by providing library research instruction sessions for your students during one of your regular class periods (your class would probably meet in one of the library classrooms that day.)

Librarians also will create course-specific web-based Research Guides for your students to reinforce and augment the research element of your assignments. Go to <<http://guides.ucf.edu/index.php?gid=1091>> to view online Research Guides that librarians have created to date.

Are you fine-tuning your Canvas webcourse and want to insert streaming video links? The UCF Libraries provide access to a number of outstanding streaming video collections in a variety of subject areas. Entire videos, playlists, or clips can be embedded or linked within your course or web page. Go to

UCF Libraries’ “Streaming video options for faculty” <<http://guides.ucf.edu/facultystreaming>> for detailed instructions.

In addition, your Librarian can provide you with assistance in your own research endeavors by guiding you to the best databases and indexes for your discipline and showing you professional tricks of the trade for the most productive ways of searching the literature using those databases.

Do you need to know where to publish and what your author rights are? Do you know the high-impact journals for your discipline and how to access the author guidelines for them? Do you need to find out who has cited your work to update your portfolio? Contact your Librarian and he/she will help you to identify suitable journals in which to publish your work and connect you to specialized library staff who will walk you through the ins and outs of scholarly communication.

For more detailed information about scholarly communication go to UCF Libraries’ “21st Century Digital Scholarship Lifecycle” model (<<http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/UCFResearchLifecycle.pdf>> and view the lifecycle’s blue button icons, which illustrate library assistance within the scholarly communication process. Your librarian will connect you to scholarly publishing information and specialized library staff who will assist you with discovery services, literature reviewing, citation management tools, data management plans, dataset metadata, citation metrics, and long-term data preservation that are provided by the UCF Libraries’ Scholarly Communication Unit.

Do you want to check out books (and other resources) to inform your research? Adjunct faculty who currently are employed by UCF qualify for faculty borrowing privileges. Newly hired adjunct faculty who provide the library’s Circulation Desk with their employment contract listing their dates of employment will be given temporary faculty borrowing privileges pending verification via the Human Resources employee database. Adjunct faculty can contact the Circulation Department (407-823-2580) if they have any questions about their library privileges. Also click into the Research Guide for New Faculty <<http://guides.ucf.edu/content.php?pid=383364&sid=3141396>> for additional information.

Too busy to hunt for library books and other resources in person? Our Document Delivery service is free to faculty, staff, and graduate students. Simply submit your request for items owned by the UCF Libraries via your Interlibrary Loan account <<http://library.ucf.edu/ILL/>>. Library staff will pull the requested material and either send the articles directly to your ILLiad account or have the book ready for you to pick up at the Circulation Desk. Interlibrary Loan also will borrow resources for you from other libraries.

Adjuncts who teach on UCF Regional or Rosen Campuses are encouraged to contact their local UCF Campus Librarians in order to benefit from all the same great services as offered in Orlando. <<http://library.ucf.edu/BranchCampuses/Locations/>>

Let UCF Libraries help to enhance your teaching and research!

## Adjunct Resources in the Faculty Center

Lyons, Richard E., Marcella L. Kysilka, and George E. Pawlas. *The Adjunct Professor's Guide to Success: Surviving and Thriving in the College Classroom*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999. Print.

Review by Lissa Pompos

*The Adjunct Professor's Guide to Success* provides an overview of the three main phases of the adjunct experience—securing a teaching assignment and preparing for the course, planning and delivering course content, and evaluating the overall experience. Although the authors describe their intended audience as “nonteaching professionals” including “businesspeople, attorneys, medical professionals, and others” (xiii), much of the advice offered in this book applies to full-time adjuncts and new teachers, too.

The guide begins with a discussion of the potential benefits of adjunct work and the process of obtaining a teaching position. Next, the authors list questions adjuncts should ask when “orienting” themselves to the campus and describe the characteristics of both “traditional” and “nontraditional” students. The authors outline common sections of a course syllabus and describe strategies adjuncts can use while in the classroom, such as effective “first class” activities, soliciting student feedback, managing course materials, and communicating with students. With a shift to teaching styles, the authors discuss common instructor-directed methods and student-directed methods. The authors describe how to develop, administer, and analyze traditional exams and design alternative assessments. As a complement to “first class” strategies, the authors provide tips for an effective “last class” meeting. The guide closes with a discussion of evaluating your own teaching and developing your future teaching career.

Each chapter begins with a list of “Focus Questions” and concludes with three sections: a “Through the Adjuncts’ Eyes” narrative, “Tips for Thriving,” and a bulleted list summarizing the key points of the chapter. This consistent organization makes the book an easy read and segments the discussion into

manageable chunks.

Because the guide was published in 1999, it lacks discussion of current teaching technologies and online teaching pedagogy. However, the authors do include appendices to supplement descriptions of print materials; the model syllabi and icebreaker activities provided are still relevant and useful. Overall, this guide is a convenient reference text for new adjuncts navigating the teaching experience.

Lyons, Richard E. *Success Strategies for Adjunct Faculty*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2004. Print.

Review by William Dorner

Lyons’ follow-up to his fundamental *The Adjunct Professor's Guide to Success* contains fourteen chapters, each of which opens with a statement from an adjunct professor and addresses a topic relevant to teaching as an adjunct. Each featured instructor represents a different institution, including large public universities, small private colleges, and for-profit schools.

In a similar vein to Lyons’ earlier collaboration, topics covered include planning, starting, and managing your course, incorporating different methods of learning, using technology in your teaching, examining strategies for examinations and assessment, self-evaluating your teaching’s effectiveness, and maintaining and expanding your career as an instructor. Such topics serve as the focal points for chapters, and Lyons discusses each as relevant to an adjunct position.

*Success Strategies for Adjunct Faculty* builds on earlier work by incorporating further discussion points that have become more relevant in the intervening years, especially in the area of technology integration. His Chapter 9, “Infusing Technology into Your Teaching,” includes a section on teaching online class sections, which Lyons calls “an entirely new way of thinking about how and what you teach” (175). Though clearly out of date with the current situation of distributed learning, additions such as this reflect Lyons’ continued efforts to provide useful and relevant strategies to adjunct instructors.

## In Memoriam

Remembering colleagues who passed away recently:

Debora Cordeiro-Rosa, College of Arts and Humanities  
Dwight Kiel, College of Sciences

We miss you.

## ***Submissions***

The *Faculty Focus* is a publication for all instructors at the University of Central Florida. This includes full-time and part-time faculty and teaching assistants at all UCF campuses. Its purpose is to provide an exchange of ideas on teaching and learning for the university's community of teachers and scholars. It is envisioned that this publication will inspire more dialogue among faculty whether in hallway discussions, departmental meetings, or in written articles. This represents an opportunity for faculty members to reach their peers throughout the growing UCF community. The *Faculty Focus* invites you to contribute your ideas on teaching and learning in a short essay.

See the guidelines for submission online at <<http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/Publications/FacultyFocus/submission.php>>. Please send your submissions to [fctl@ucf.edu](mailto:fctl@ucf.edu).



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Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning  
P.O. Box 160066 CB1-207  
Orlando, FL 32816-0066  
407-823-3544