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Listserv

Sign up to receive our monthly e-mail newsletter and be notified by e-mail of Faculty Center events. Please visit the FCTL website for instructions.

Welcome! Melody Bowdon



Melody is Associate Professor of Writing and Rhetoric and has served as Director of UCF's Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning since 2010. She joined the UCF faculty in 1999. Her scholarship focuses on social media and community engagement in professional and technical communication, gender and technology, and faculty development.

Dear Colleagues:

Happy Fall! Like faculty, staff, and students across campus, we at the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning team are off to an active start for the 2012-2013 academic year. It was our pleasure to welcome over 110 new faculty from across campus in August and our fall activities are well underway, including learning communities for new faculty, graduate teaching associates, adjuncts, and regional faculty members; a new STEM reading group; a Flipping the Classroom course innovation project; and an interdisciplinary book club who is reading Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in its 50th anniversary year. We are excited about *Teaching at UCF*, a publication we launched in August, which includes information about policies and procedures of interest to faculty. This publication is available in PDF form on the Faculty Success tab of our website. We're happy to be partnering with Student Development and Enrollment Services by jointly sponsoring an academic integrity faculty fellow. Amelia Lyons of the Department of History holds office hours at FCTL on Thursdays from 4:30 to 5:30 and by appointment.

There's still plenty of time to get involved in FCTL programming this year. Beyond weekly

workshops and our collaboratively-sponsored annual summer conference, our plans for this year include:

- A series of events beginning this fall designed to help faculty learn about the needs and experiences of student veterans jointly sponsored by the Veteran's Academic Resource Center
- A spring faculty learning community at the Daytona campus
- A spring learning community for adjunct faculty
- A spring faculty development cohort on writing journal articles in the STEM Disciplines
- A spring book club reading *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking* (author Susan Cain), led by Andrew Luchner from Counseling and Psychological Services (formerly the Counseling Center)
- A spring book club reading *Teaching for Understanding at University: Deep Approaches and Distinctive Ways of Thinking* (author Noel Entwistle)
- A summer teaching with technology course innovation project
- A summer "Writing a Journal Article in Twelve Weeks" faculty development cohort
- A summer faculty development cohort on developing strategies for effective peer assessment of teaching

Proposals for the Winter Faculty Development Conference are due November 9. We look forward to joining faculty from all disciplines for this event, which will feature conversations about excellence in teaching and learning across modalities and a faculty forum with Provost Waldrop. Watch for more details. All faculty and staff will be welcome to attend plenary sessions.

As we move toward the close of another busy semester, please keep in mind that FCTL staff members are here to help. If you would like to schedule a one-on-one consultation or class observation, or if you'd like to attend one of the events mentioned above, please contact us at fctl@ucf.edu.

Best wishes, Melody

Instructure Canvas, UCF's Next LMS!

Beth Nettles and Linda Futch



Beth Nettles is an Instructional Development Specialist for UCF's Center for Distributed Learning and is serving as the Project Manager for the LMS Migration. As Project Manager, Beth oversees the planning, scheduling, and documentation of various aspects of the LMS evaluation, selection, and implementation process.



Linda Futch is an Associate Department Head for UCF's Center for Distributed Learning. In this role, Linda oversees instructional design for on-line course development, technical support, and the learning-management system.

UCF's next learning-management system will be Instructure Canvas! This summer, 15 faculty and 619 students participated in pilots of three learning-management systems: Blackboard's Learn 9, Desire2Learn, and Instructure Canvas. Both faculty and students provided feedback on these systems. Pilot faculty reported all systems were an improvement over our current system, Blackboard Vista. However, Canvas was identified as the best system for UCF's online learning requirements. A brief video describing the learning-management system review and selection process is available at <http://engage.ucf.edu/v/p/kZHXTs>.

Instructure is a fairly young company. They designed Canvas from a clean slate with a focus on open educational resources and how students communicate with each other. As a result, Canvas is innovative and completely different from other learning-management systems.

The biggest difference is that Canvas is a native cloud service, running on Amazon Web Services. The benefit to UCF is a stable network with automatic peak load adjustments and no downtime for maintenance. Canvas rolls out updates every two weeks, and users have the option to adopt changes immediately or postpone the change to a future date. If you use Google's Gmail or other applications, you may be familiar with this process. Recently, Canvas updated the grade book, and users were provided a link to opt-in or try the new grade book. Of course, you could switch back to the old grade book, but eventually the old grade book will be phased out in favor of the new and improved grade book.

For our programmers, Canvas integrates seamlessly with innovative web technologies and learning resources. The Canvas API is openly published for ease of integration with third-party systems or for custom development and reporting. Most of the educational tools and powerlinks, like Turnitin and Respondus, will continue to be available in Canvas. Because of Canvas's open API language, Canvas will also be able to integrate other commercial systems like iClicker and UCF's learning systems and technology like Obojobo and Materia. Mobile access is an important requirement, and Instructure

has made this feature prominent in their platform strategy. Canvas includes free mobile apps allowing students to view grade notifications, send and receive messages, participate in discussions, and post video and audio comments from their iPhone or iPad. For faculty, Canvas's SpeedGrader has an iPad mobile app so faculty can quickly and easily review and grade assignments. Android mobile apps are coming soon!

Other Canvas features pilot faculty commented on and liked include

- a clean, intuitive user interface, featuring drag-and-drop functionality
- the ease of navigation within the system
- no client-side Java
- runs in any browser
- easy to migrate old courses and copy content from other courses
- easy-to-use video and audio tools for posting content and feedback on assignments
- faster tools for grading such as speed grader; and
- automatic conversion of word and PDF documents inside Canvas.

Almost fifty faculty members have volunteered to participate in a "soft-rollout" of Canvas this fall. In the meantime, technical teams will work on critical integrations with PeopleSoft and other business processes. Most importantly, all academic courses will be shifted to Canvas starting in the Spring 2013 semester.

Messages from the Center for Distributed Learning (CDL) about the LMS conversion began this fall and will continue until Blackboard Vista is decommissioned in December 2013. To get ready for this shift:

1. CDL will provide a migration process that includes the cleanup of existing content for Canvas;
2. initial training for the faculty teaching in the fall pilot began in August. (Training for everyone else started in October, including open lab sessions with hands-on assistance for migrated and made-from-scratch courses); and
3. archived courses in Blackboard Vista are available to fac-

ulty (not students) through December 2013 when it will be decommissioned. For more information on the migration process, visit <<http://teach.ucf.edu/migration>>.

Blogging as Teaching

Jay Boyar



Jay Boyar has been a juror for the American Film Institute and is a founder of the Florida Film Critics Circle. His work has been honored by the Associated Press, the Society of Professional Journalists, and the Florida Society of Newspaper Editors, and it has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. The author of *Films to Go: 100 Memorable Movies for Travelers & Others*, Boyar teaches at UCF and is writing a book about film comedy.

Not long ago, a strange thing happened in my classroom. It was early in the class period and I was asking questions to stimulate discussion. What I expected was that the students would initially be slow to respond, with perhaps only one or two hands in the air for the first few questions. If you teach courses with a discussion component, you have probably been there.

But on this particular day, my very first question was greeted by a sea of hands. So was my second question, and my third, and pretty much every question after that. Soon, arguments were breaking out among the students as they passionately (but politely) defended their points.

I've been teaching steadily as an adjunct for about fourteen years, and I'd never seen students jump into a discussion so quickly or sustain that sort of intensity for so long. And certainly not on the *second* day of class.

What was up?

The answer was not that we were dealing with a particularly hot topic. This was a summer-term honors seminar about film adaptations and their literary sources, and the particular subject that day was Hitchcock's 1954 classic, *Rear Window*, and the short story on which it's based. Great material but hardly controversial.

I doubted that the answer was that I'd suddenly become a brilliant teacher or that I was dealing with an especially chatty group. The answer, I suddenly realized, had to do with a blog I'd recently begun writing for my students and on which I had posted some talking points about the two versions of *Rear Window*.

In the past, I had tried writing similar talking points on the board, handing them out on paper or simply announcing them to the class. What made the difference was putting the questions someplace where the students were likely to find them and then actually *think* about them—that is, on the Internet.

Location. Location. Location.

Now I have to back up and say that the idea of using a blog as a teaching tool would never have occurred to me. Even though I've spent most of my professional life as a writer (including a long tenure as the *Orlando Sentinel's* film critic), I wouldn't have put writing and teaching together in that particular way.

I got the idea while attending a retreat led by Dr. Kevin Yee, former Assistant Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. It was one of many ideas he offered. I was intrigued by that one because writing has always come naturally to me.

Still I was wary. I started the blog at the beginning of the Spring 2012 semester when I was teaching four classes, and I only mentioned it to each class once. I told my students that they were not required to visit the blog and that no assignments would be posted on it. (I did, however, warn my students that I'd be writing about *them*.)

My cautiousness about the blog led me to consult with Stephen Schlow, Chair of the Film Department, and Dr. Martin Dupuis, Associate Dean of the Burnett Honors College, who were both very supportive. At that time, I wasn't posting any talking points for discussion, just reflections about film and teaching. Here's part of a typical post from that semester:

"*M*A*S*H* is such an unusual movie that I asked my class to tell me what annoyed them about it.... Some students didn't like the overlapping dialogue (although others did). Some didn't like the episodic nature of the movie.... [One] student, who admitted she's sensitive about such things, simply couldn't look at all the blood."

Some students instantly forgot about the blog. (After all, I *had* said that viewing it was not required.) Even so, by the end of that semester, the blog had registered almost 900 hits. That's not much by commercial-blogging standards, but with a total of only about 75 students involved, it was encouraging.

As the semester was ending, I surveyed my students. Their anonymous comments about the blog ranged from "It was very interesting to get a professor's insight into a class" to "It's rather good, yet sadly easy to forget. Perhaps a few more reminders that it is there?"

Informed and heartened by the responses, I decided to post talking points for a course I taught this past summer, and to require the students to view the blog once a week. As I've said, that was more successful than I'd ever imagined.

As the Fall semester gets underway, I'm considering ways of further integrating the blog into my classes. If you have any suggestions, please send them to me at jay.boyar@ucf.edu. And if you want to know what develops, visit <http://movie-centric.blogspot.com>. Of course, unless you're one of my students, that's optional.

Enhanced Instruction Using "Tech Camp"

Tools

Kelly Robinson



Kelly Robinson is the Public Services Librarian at the Universal Orlando Foundation Library, Rosen College of Hospitality Management. Her research interests include information literacy instruction and social media tools in the library environment.

Any instructor can benefit from incorporating new technologies into his or her pedagogy. To this end, the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning offers enlightening two-day Tech Camp workshops designed for instructors interested in learning about the latest technological tools for enhancing teaching. Along with a dozen faculty, I gathered for the summer 2012 workshop to hear about a variety of free, cloud-based tools, all of which are beneficial for the online or traditional classroom. On day two of the workshop, faculty were able to show off their creations, which included photo slideshows built using software such as Kizoa and Animoto, ePortfolios through Google Sites, and screencasts made with iSpring, Jing, and Camtasia. Each participant was then given a piece of software at the end of Tech Camp in order to put theories learned to practice. The most popular choices in software included Camtasia, a screencasting tool, and Adobe Dreamweaver, a web development tool.

Learning and the Online Classroom

Using these Tech Camp tools to present instructional content in a more dynamic format is not just a way to showcase technology prowess to doubtful students, but also a way to appeal to a large segment of learners and personality styles that can be difficult to reach in the online classroom. For example, the screencasting tools covered in Tech Camp, like iSpring and Jing, turn simple PowerPoints or digital computer screen recordings into dynamic videos that can be directly

embedded into Webcourses or faculty websites. Incorporating screencasts into instruction provides assistance for visual and auditory learners within the online classroom and plays to the theory of "dual cognitive coding." In simplistic terms, it is posited that tools combining text and imagery, like video, force the brain to use both auditory and visual channels, providing for increased learning effectiveness (Michas & Berry, 2000, 555).

Even if one does not ascribe to the oft-debated theory of dual cognitive coding, screencasts aid struggling online learners in several other respects. For instance, the concrete sequential learner's preference for step-by-step instructions is reinforced with precise videos that can be replayed (Wang, 2010, 165). Additionally, screencasts enhance self-guided learning, making them helpful for abstract sequential learners and any student who craves additional reinforcement in his or her studies. By utilizing additional Tech Camp tools like blog, interactive videos using YouTube, and Google Site's ePortfolios, social and experiential teaching methods that are normally found in the traditional classroom can be better incorporated into an online class, playing to modalities favored by abstract random, concrete, and social learners (Kidd, 2010, 70). Moreover, all of these tools are appealing to the concrete random learners' preference toward exploration and creative learning products (Wang, 2010, 166).

Enhancing Library Online Tutorials

As a library faculty member coming from a background in education, I knew that incorporating some of these Tech Camp tools into my instruction would be paramount to improving upon my pedagogy and teaching students the information literacy skills they need to be successful in their academic studies. Students with high-level information literacy skills are able to plan and develop research, search for and evaluate resources effectively, and clearly communicate their findings. However, being one of only two Universal Orlando Foundation Library (Rosen Library) faculty teaching information literacy skills to 3,000 students at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management presents logistical challenges. Only by turning to new technologies for teaching can I effectively reach students and meet the Association of College and Research Libraries' *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* adhered to by UCF Libraries.

Using my piece of software, Camtasia, I embarked on a summer mission of improving the instructional content of the Rosen Library tutorials. In an effort to weave information literacy instruction seamlessly into the hospitality curricula, Rosen Library has offered online library tutorials for several years. These tutorials are often combined with more advanced face-to-face library instruction sessions or used as stand-alone assignments by faculty prior to a student research project.

They are customized for several key hospitality industries and have been successful in reaching a large number of students, but were unfortunately text-heavy. However, the new series of *Introduction to Library Research* screencasts that I recently produced using Camtasia and embedded into the library tutorials with YouTube present clear steps on the process of selecting a research topic in a format that will appeal to a large variety of learners, replacing previously text-based content. I will soon also be replacing library screencasts created with free software with screencasts produced with the more robust Camtasia software. This will allow for better sound and video editing, ADA-compliant captions, and a bevy of sound effects that are ideal for adding auditory interest. Most significantly, the Camtasia software has a very short learning curve, allowing me to create nearly a dozen videos in preparation for the fall semester.

Reflections

Instruction must take into account students' personality differences and learning styles, a difficult task for the online educator. Since I currently lack the opportunity to perform a learning-style assessment on students using our tutorials, I must instead rely on what works pedagogically for the greatest number of learners. Screencasts appeal to multiple personality types and learning styles, making them an extremely effective tool for online help content, self-regulated learning, and information delivery. Although it will continue to be a struggle to disseminate information literacy education in a way that reaches the most users, meets teaching standards, and engages students, incorporating the new technologies learned during Tech Camp into my instruction has helped tremendously. As we continue to improve our tutorials to include new screencasts and other Tech Camp tools, we will assess the effectiveness of our changes through a quiz designed to evaluate skills learned directly from the tutorials. The Tech Camp experience has proved not only fun, but pedagogically significant, and I recommend it to any faculty member interested in enhancing their technological know-how and teaching methods.

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Why Faculty Shouldn't Mind Their Own Business

Joyce Nutta



Joyce Nutta is Associate Professor of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Education and Track Coordinator of the ESOL Endorsement and TESOL Ph.D. programs in the College of Education. She holds a bachelor's degree in Mass Communications, a master's degree in Applied Linguistics, and a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition/Instructional Technology. Her research interests include the use of technology to teach foreign/second languages, online learning for teacher education, and the integration of English learner issues into teacher education curricula.

In the past few years I've been getting into my colleagues' business. My business is applied linguistics, a discipline focused on teaching and learning second languages. Obviously, there is plenty to keep me busy in my own field, but I've been pulled toward the intersection of applied linguistics with other areas of study, toward what is known as "interdisciplinarity." The issue that has extended beyond the borders of my field's knowledge base is the academic achievement of PreK–12 students who are "English learners," meaning students who are not fully proficient in English, their second language. Studies are finding, for example, that English learners in the United States lag in mathematics performance compared to their native-speaking peers. Although language is part of the equation (pun intended), this problem can't be solved solely by turning to the expertise of applied linguists like me. My colleagues in Mathematics Education have a stake in this issue, as do faculty specializing in the social or psychological aspects of learning, along with countless other experts.

Addressing English learners' academic achievement brought me outside of my disciplinary comfort zone, working with colleagues from a wide array of fields to revise and expand undergraduate and graduate courses that prepare PreK–12 teachers of various subjects and specializations. Unknowingly at first, I joined a movement in higher education termed interdisciplinarity, which involves developing and offering curriculum and instruction that integrate multiple disciplines to address a theme, problem, or issue. Before these experiences, I viewed interdisciplinarity as the realm of "area studies" programs, but now I know it is much more expansive than that single example. And although working with others takes more time than going solo, seeing my own discipline from the perspective of intellectuals in other fields of study has opened up

unimaginable opportunities. Even better, approaching my colleagues' disciplines with my "beginner's mind" has increased my sense of possibilities for solving intractable dilemmas.

Since my arrival at UCF five years ago, I have worked with instructors of all ranks to revise 77 undergraduate and graduate courses, expanding their content with an infusion of information, activities, and assignments that focus on English learners. Right by my side has been a first-rate team of experts in my field, whom we have dubbed the ESOListas (ESOL stands for English for Speakers of Other Languages). We have sat side-by-side with experts in Mathematics, Science, Reading, Counseling, and many other fields to find points of intersection in our syllabi that foster interdisciplinary exploration. We then read each other's literature, grapple with conflicts and contradictions in our fields, and inevitably end up finding rich commonalities that link the threads of the tapestry we are creating. Great friendships have sprung from these collaborative encounters, and a deepened respect for our colleagues' expertise has ensued.

Now that I've been immersed in the content of so many courses outside my own, I have a much sharper understanding of what my courses can contribute to the entire degree program. I also have revamped my courses' content, building in connections to other disciplines I've learned about and reinforcing what my colleagues are doing in courses that don't begin with my familiar prefixes. All this innovation in curriculum and instruction has inspired my research agenda in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, which led to a new book I coauthored entitled *Preparing Every Teacher to Reach English Learners*, published by Harvard Education Press. This book presents a rationale and time-tested procedures for infusing a focus on culturally and linguistically diverse students in higher education courses and showcases exemplary infused syllabi, including many from my colleagues at UCF.

So, had I remained in my applied linguistics silo and minded my own business, my courses would offer less and my C.V. would be smaller. Worse yet, my students' sense of agency to address intricate contemporary problems would be limited. Despite the extra effort and risk, being a faculty busybody and crossing contested disciplinary borders is definitely worth it!

Office of Emergency Management Ari Schein, Jen Fleischmann, and Jeff Morgan



The UCF Office of Emergency Management staff consists of Ari Schein, Training and Exercises Coordinator; Jen Fleischman, Plans and Programs Coordinator; and Jeff Morgan, Director of Emergency Management (left to right).

Preparing for and responding to emergency situations at UCF isn't reserved just for police officers and fire fighters. The UCF Office of Emergency Management works daily to ensure that the university is prepared to tackle all hazards, from man-made emergencies such as hazardous materials spills or bomb threats, to natural disasters such as hurricanes and other severe weather events. Our mission is to protect the University of Central Florida by facilitating the coordination and integration of all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the university's ability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other man-made crises or disasters.

Our office has three full-time employees: the Director of Emergency Management, the Training and Exercise Coordinator, and the Emergency Plans and Programs Coordinator. Emergency Plans are developed to outline the university's response to potential threats based on an assessment of the hazards that UCF is vulnerable to. The plans are then exercised to practice UCF's response and evaluate areas for improvement.

Our office also manages the university's Emergency Notification System, UCF Alert, which comprises indoor notification systems, outdoor notification systems, text message and e-mail systems, and social media, among others. Authorized personnel will activate the UCF Alert system during an emergency to provide you with critical information regarding the event. The system is tested once per semester to verify that all parts of the system are operating correctly. Faculty members can update their contact information through <www.my.ucf.edu> if they do not receive the test message.

During a large-scale emergency situation, the Director of Emergency Management may activate the Emergency Opera-

tions Center (EOC) to coordinate the university's response to the event. An EOC is a command center where we gather critical information to make important timely decisions for UCF. The EOC may be activated to one of three levels—Monitoring, Partial, or Full Activation—based on the scope of the incident. A number of UCF departments work from the EOC to coordinate university resources during the emergency in order to bring the university back to normal operations.

We frequently remind UCF faculty, staff, and students to prepare for *when* an emergency will occur, not *if* an emergency will occur. In order to assist in helping the UCF community to prepare for events, we provide a number of resources.

Training courses like the National Incident Management System and Incident Command System—national programs adopted by all local, state, and federal agencies to ensure seamless integration during response to emergencies—are offered by our office. The courses are available for staff and faculty participants who have a role in emergency response or recovery, or for those interested in expanding their knowledge in emergency management.

We have also placed UCF Emergency Guides in all classrooms and laboratories on the main campus. These flip charts provide you with the building and room number and include a step-by-step guide to handling various emergencies that you may encounter in the classroom. The guides are installed in a standard location across campus classrooms and labs, near the light switch at the main entrance to the room. An electronic copy of the UCF Emergency Guide can be seen at http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html.

The potential for an active shooter situation or another act of violence on campus continues to increase as the university grows in size and recognition. Having a plan to lock down your office area or classroom before one of these events is crucial to increasing your safety. Our office will work with you to help you develop these plans and provide you with additional information on your options for action during these types of incidents.

All types of emergencies happen all the time, so it's everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are prepared. Visit our website at www.emergency.ucf.edu to learn more about UCF's Office of Emergency Management and how you can be better prepared.

Mentoring: From the Perspective of the Mentee

Linda Gibson-Young



Linda Gibson-Young is Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing, where she teaches graduate health assessment, evidence-based research, and nursing educator courses. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Alabama in Birmingham and joined the University of Central Florida in August 2011. She also participated in the New Faculty Orientation 2011–2012 Faculty Learning Community.

An astute woman once said, *“We don't accomplish anything in this world alone... and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one's life and all the weavings of individual threads from one to another that creates something.”*

—Sandra Day O'Connor

In academia, we strive to build purpose within our profession and discipline, but all too often this endeavor is attempted individually. Faculty roles and responsibilities require an intricate balance among strategies including teaching, service, and research. As we seek to acquire this balance, our goals can become intertwined with one or more strategies and lose focus.

There is a time in this endeavor that we must recognize the significance of others and begin to work together at improving this balance. This article will focus on three strategies for developing mentor-mentee partnerships for faculty at UCF.

Strategy 1: Build the mentor-mentee partnership

A mentee is someone who is encouraged, guided, and advised by one with greater experience. Potential candidates accepting this mentee role may include new academic instructors, new assistant professors, new associate professors with less than five years' experience in their field, or other faculty seeking mentoring to advance their academic careers.

Over the years, the mentoring relationship has been used to develop individuals and encourage faculty to reach their highest potential. By developing a mentor-mentee partnership within UCF, both mentor and mentee can receive benefits. Some of these benefits include, but are not limited to

- An expanded view of UCF
- Advice on how to balance teaching, research, and other responsibilities and set professional priorities
- Knowledge of informal rules or potential pitfalls to be avoided
- Knowledge of skills for showcasing one's own work

- Knowing how to build a circle of team players and contacts both within and outside one's department or team; and
- Fresh perspective on long-term career planning.

Strategy 2: Develop common mentor-mentee expectations and goals and strengthen partnership

The mentor-mentee partnership requires sufficient time to build, strengthen, and maintain the relationship. This partnership is not a linear process, but cyclic in form. The cycle of mentoring focuses on actions from the mentee and the mentor and requires continuous contact, including recognizing purpose, engaging, planning, and completion.

This partnership requires much of both parties, and goals and expectations should be identified early. Specified expectations should be acknowledged and agreed upon by both mentor and mentee. A mentee should expect to meet regularly, be informed, work toward tenure and promotion with documented progression, take responsibility for his or her own growth and success, follow through on recommendations, and listen actively and articulate needs.

A mentor should expect to provide information about promotion and tenure processes, if applicable, demystify culture within university and department, provide constructive and supportive feedback on progress, provide encouragement and support, help foster important connections and visibility, and look out for junior faculty interests.

Strategy 3: Work toward achieving goals and aim for success

After the partnership is developed, purposes are formed, and expectations are clear, the mentor-mentee partnership must work toward achieving goals and ultimately success.

A number of factors will contribute to a successful relationship between mentor and mentee, including

- Clear guidelines for the responsibilities of both parties
- Agreed and shared understanding of goals and support
- Dedication towards the principles and values of the goals
- The skills and actions of both the mentor and mentee; and
- Clear communication in both directions.

Once the mentor-mentee partnership has accomplished set goals and optimistically attained success, it is time to reevaluate the relationship. In the end, we seek to empower the mentee to achieve the intricate balance among strategies. It is often found, at this point, that the mentee has attained independence with set goals accomplished.

Formal mentoring programs are utilized by many universities and can be a strong asset for UCF. I am interested in working to build such a program and encourage attracted faculty to

partner in this endeavor. If you are interested in being part of a mentoring work group, please contact FCTL.

Using Goals to Start Organizing Your Academic Path

Amanda Koontz Anthony



Amanda Koontz Anthony is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology; her major areas of interest include social inequalities, culture, identities, and social psychology. Her current research focuses on identity negotiation and market representations of “authenticity.” She also participated in the New Faculty Orientation 2011–2012 Faculty Learning Community.

Coming in as new faculty, there is a wealth of information to process surrounding opportunities and tasks for your academic career. It can be overwhelming, but having a plan for how to organize and prioritize the information can be helpful. While there are many ways to accomplish this, one straightforward way to get started is to categorize the information, events, and your goals according to the same categories the university uses to evaluate our work—teaching, research, and service. The advice for this article comes from my gleaning and consolidating advice offered from academics at all levels of their careers. First, learn and become comfortable with the standards set by your department, college, and the university as soon as possible—these may include annual reviews and items for tenure and promotion. After reviewing these, take time to create two lists: your academic goals and your personal goals.

In creating your academic goals, consider each of the three areas and specific goals you have for each in conjunction with the university standards. You can set both “realistic” and “above and beyond” professional goals. (As you are getting started, it may take some time to learn the culture of the university.) Also consider your personal goals and interests to help achieve a reasonable work-life balance. To avoid burn-out, it is important to note what is most important for you to not miss or give up. This may be a certain amount of time with family and friends, working out, gardening, and so on. Be sure to highlight this in your personal goals, and make sure you allot time for this activity each week.

Within the teaching category, consider what is reasonable to strive for in your first classes, keeping in mind your teaching philosophy. Setting these goals also helps you plan your course objectives, and then to plan your overall course with both your philosophy and objectives in mind. You can then

determine if workshops or conferences through FCTL or another organization on campus or beyond may be helpful for your improvement. It takes time to learn the student culture (which will affect the revision of your goals), but you should seek help from others who teach similar courses or from faculty in different departments. They will help you learn new and interesting techniques.

In relation to research, it is easy to become overwhelmed by new opportunities. Particularly helpful here is taking time to break down your goals into short-term and long-term. Make sure your short-term goals lead to your long-term goals, such as obtaining a grant. Besides your departmental goals, consider your personal interests and how you will define yourself as a scholar. This will help you prioritize opportunities as you progress. When planning collaborations, try to make sure each project fits within the guidelines of your research goals to prevent stretching yourself too far. Prioritize a balance of new and ongoing projects and consider the most effective way to perform research, such as working on projects with overlapping literature or a focus on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). While we obviously must be flexible, the more concrete the goals, the better, such as a certain number of articles submitted by a certain date, writing 2,000 words per day on an article, or one section of a manuscript completed within two weeks. It can be helpful to do so to prevent the unforeseen “urgent” tasks from taking over your schedule.

In relation to service, be sure you are still participating in the activities that are of interest and importance to you. Ask others about committees or opportunities you can participate in that cross over with your personal goals—and consider the extent of your potential commitment. You may want to ask which committees commonly come open during the year so you can plan accordingly. As with all of the areas, knowing your short- and long-term goals will help you plan efficiently.

In setting these concrete goals and considering how your personal goals coincide with your academic ones, you can determine why you are taking on tasks and where those tasks are taking you. Asking yourself the question of where this project fits within these three areas can help you make choices among all of the opportunities and track your progress. In keeping track of your progress, consider creating one document showing department and college goals in each area and your personal goals. Then, frequently update the lists to include all the activities you believe fit under that area or contribute to your reaching these goals. Be sure to regularly update your short-term goals and compare these with both your long-term and personal goals. While there is no exact science to this, and everyone has their own form of organization, thinking in these terms can be helpful when starting out.

Teaching as Apprenticeship

Vicky Zygouris-Coe



Vicky I. Zygouris-Coe is Associate Professor of Education in the School of Teaching, Learning & Leadership. She has studied and taught in Greece, England, and the United States. Her interests lie in literacy, teacher education, and online learning.

Recently, I worked with a group of 27 math and science teachers and teacher candidates; about two-thirds of them were already teaching in secondary schools and the remaining were applying for teaching positions. The graduate-level class I codisigned with two other colleagues focused on disciplinary literacy in math and science, a topic of great professional and research interest to me. As part of my daily class routines, I shared short one-to-three minute video clips at the beginning of class. I asked students to reflect on the message of the clips throughout the class on their own and with their peers as part of class group activities. Before we left each night, we discussed what they perceived the clip’s message to be and what it had to do with our topic of study. My goal was for them to experience that teaching is not just about content mastery; teaching is an apprenticeship.

I focused on modeling knowledge, skills, and dispositions that I believe are important for these secondary teachers to develop in order to become effective math and science teachers. I selected video clips that dealt with various aspects of mentoring and made sure that each clip paralleled the topic we were examining in class. The mentoring message was always implicit; I spent much time searching for, viewing, and selecting short movie clips that would communicate what we discussed in class each night. One of the movie clips I used was from *The Karate Kid* (2010 edition) with Mr. Hahn as the mentor and Dre Parker as the mentee. The movie centers on the relationship between a handyman/martial arts master who agrees to teach a bullied boy karate; in the process, the mentor helps his mentee discover that there is more to martial arts than fighting. In one of the scenes by the lake, Mr. Hahn is trying to get Dre to empty his mind and focus, but all Dre is interested in is learning about the cobra strike or the “cobra thing” as he calls it. Mr. Hahn responds, “Cobra takes a lifetime; requires great focus.” Dre says, “But I have great focus!” Mr. Hahn, looking surprised and puzzled, suspends Dre over the water and says, “Your focus needs more focus.”

Teaching is not just about delivering knowledge or preparing students to pass exams; teaching is about tapping into the potential of students; creating the environment for them to inquire and experiment; presenting material in effective ways

so they can learn it and transfer it to new situations; modeling how to make connections, question, analyze, produce, and evaluate knowledge; providing scaffolded support; monitoring student progress; and equipping students with tools to continue to learn beyond the classroom walls. In my view, teaching is not a “stand up and deliver” act; it is a complex and demanding apprenticeship process.

The development of this class came at one of the busiest and most demanding times in the year for me. Not only did we have to create this class “from scratch” in a short amount of time, and make sure that we gave these students (who were part of a statewide STEM effort to prepare highly qualified teachers in grades 6–12) an effective preparation and positive experiences in disciplinary literacy in STEM courses, but the course met face-to-face Monday through Thursday over a semester. It was an equally demanding class for my students; as part of the STEM preparation program, they were taking three other graduate classes in addition to mine. I felt that in the short amount of time I had with these STEM teachers, I needed to make the most of it for them. Disciplinary literacy in STEM courses was a new teaching territory for me, and learning how to teach and develop their students’ math, science, and disciplinary literacy knowledge and skills was a new territory for my students. How could I get across the message of literacy within each discipline? How could I help them discover that literacy and content should develop in tandem in math and science courses? How could I invite them to think more about their role as a secondary content area teacher in promoting student learning? I decided to focus on the following four core goals: (a) build STEM teachers’ disciplinary knowledge and skills, (b) model quality instruction in STEM courses that produces student knowledge and excitement to continue to learn about the discipline, (c) create a classroom culture that values and demonstrates inquiry and collaboration, and (d) model learning as an apprenticeship.

In an apprenticeship learning model, students learn by working alongside an expert who models skilled practice and guides each student through the learning process. To me, as an instructor, it is important to help my students acquire disciplinary literacy knowledge; reflect on math and science as a discipline; identify each discipline’s content, thinking, and literacy demands; learn about how adolescents learn; design effective instruction that capitalizes on inquiry; create a collaborative learning environment; and provide mentoring and coaching both inside and outside the classroom. Yes, there were times when my students were more interested in learning the “cobra thing” first; they wanted to know how to get students in their classes to understand math and science easily and be able to demonstrate their knowledge in assessments. Well, we learned about that, too, but we focused more on the prerequisite steps; for example, assessing students’ background knowledge and

interests; motivating students to learn about math and science; instructing them to develop the knowledge, habits of thinking, and discourse of each discipline; teaching them to read and comprehend the texts of each discipline; modeling how to communicate knowledge; facilitating collaborative inquiry; and assessing student progress.

Over time, by “focusing our focus” on how students learn, how important it is to have instructional and academic rigor, relevance, and relationships by implementing disciplinary literacy learning principles; puzzling over related instructional issues; and problem solving individually and collaboratively, both my students and I finished the semester with more questions than we had started but also with a clearer focus on student learning, quality instruction, and reflection. Mentoring is an integral part of teaching and learning. This class helped me to “focus my focus” on mentoring a group of young, talented STEM educators who will hopefully, in turn, mentor their secondary students in math and science.

Development and Implication of Hybrid Clinical Courses with Problem-Based Learning at the Undergraduate Level

Mohtashem Samsam



Mohtashem Samsam is Assistant Professor at the Burnett School of Biomedical Science in the College of Medicine. His research on neurological and psychiatric disorders informs his methods for teaching medical students.

As a faculty member in the Burnett School of Biomedical Science in the College of Medicine at UCF, I teach fundamentals of human anatomy, neuroanatomy, and neuroscience in a clinically oriented way by discussing normal and pathological anatomy and neuroanatomy. I apply problem-based learning and case-based learning (PBL/CBL) as a component in the laboratory sessions of some of my courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, making them a hybrid type of education—that is, clinically oriented lectures combined with PBL/CBL laboratory sessions. There is an active-learning and self-studying environment in the lecture and laboratory components of our human anatomy course as well. I teach the undergraduate students at a more advanced level by aligning the material and teaching methods on the undergraduate and graduate levels in order to prepare our students early for graduate school and their future careers.

I introduced clinically-oriented regional anatomy education at

the undergraduate level when I joined UCF in 2004. Teaching anatomy by body regions in lecture is very challenging, but, if done appropriately, it can significantly increase the understanding of anatomy and related basic science areas. Clinical application permits a practical way of grasping the idea and enables the students to understand better and have a good reason for learning the material. Our objectives are to have the students understand the foundational concepts of clinical anatomy and neuroscience, to foster critical thinking, to encourage case-based learning and problem-solving strategies, and to facilitate the acquisition of lifelong learning skills. PBL was introduced by Case Western Reserve University Medical Faculty in the 1950s and was then used by many other health-science programs promoting small-group learning and tutorial sessions to better prepare future physicians. PBL represents a major shift in education from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning (Allen D. and Tanner K., 2003). PBL encourages the students and their instructors to design an experience tailor-made to their individual needs. We incorporated the PBL/CBL in small group sessions in our medical program here at UCF. In PBL, both the students and the instructor may become co-learners, co-planners, co-producers, and co-evaluators of a curriculum. It also develops disciplinary knowledge by having the students play an active role in discussing a problem (<http://online.sfsu.edu/rpurser/revise/pages/problem.htm>). PBL provides students with the opportunity to gain theory and content knowledge; students develop advanced cognitive abilities including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills. PBL also helps to improve students' attitudes toward learning (Major CH. and Palmer B., 2001).

We developed a Clinical Neuroscience course (ZOO 4747/5949) in 2010 at the advanced undergraduate and graduate levels that applies PBL/CBL in the laboratory sessions using an advanced medical book. This has significantly increased students' knowledge and performance in the course in spite of the increased the rigor. We invite dozens of our students per semester to share their knowledge gained in these courses with new cohorts of students by serving as volunteer teaching assistants (vTAs) or official TAs. While each class presents some different knowledge and experiences than previous classes, student learning improves through peer-teaching.

Working toward the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, we are in the process of developing and implementing clinical courses that apply PBL in lab or discussion sessions. We are also looking at developing hybrid courses that add PBL components (small-group and active learning) to more traditional courses. Since books and instructional material appropriate for PBL at the undergraduate level are not available at the moment, there is a great potential for exploring this area at

UCF. The goal of our research in teaching and learning here is to create and disseminate our original work and make beneficial contributions to the knowledge and practice of other colleagues in this field. Our goal is to offer our study to the public for a critical review and evaluation by peers in the field, so that others will be able to use these findings and to build upon them.

Clinical application and PBL at the undergraduate level increases our effectiveness by documenting useful insights and practices, such as teaching and learning strategies and materials developed and employed by faculty. Findings from such inquiries will help the next generation of faculty learn more about innovations and research in education and help them teach more effectively. We hope to increase the scientific and educational productivity of UCF and improve the standards of scholarly excellence in teaching through this work (Thompson SB. et al., 2001).

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Impacting Student Success Through Writing

Pavel Zemliansky



Pavel Zemliansky is Associate Professor in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, where he teaches composition, rhetoric, and professional writing. He is also the Director of UCF's Writing Across the Curriculum Program.

As the new academic year begins and as we plan our courses, we think about what teaching techniques and approaches are likely to help our students reach their full potential. Many of us probably plan to use writing in our courses, as a teaching and assessment instrument. We know that writing helps our students both to become better communicators of knowledge and ideas within their disciplines and to learn the course material better.

But contrary to popular belief, writing, especially academic writing, is not a “basic” skill that can be learned easily and quickly. It is a highly complex mental activity. College-level academic writing is highly contextual and situational, and, because of that, it cannot be taught either in high school or in first-year composition courses. Therefore, if we want our students to become competent academic and professional writers, we need to help them build on the foundations that they develop in high school and in first-year composition courses. Such work can be done only through concerted writing instruction in disciplinary courses. In other words, in order to write like engineers, students need to practice writing in engineering courses; in order to write like managers, they need to practice writing in management courses, and so on.

Just as becoming a solid academic writer takes regular practice and guidance, teaching writing in the disciplines also requires a degree of expertise and practice. As academics, we typically learn academic writing through practice and through trial and error, usually in graduate school. We often leave our work as writers unexamined. This lack of critical reflection about our own academic writing habits and processes often leads us to believe that our students will learn academic writing the same way we did. We begin to think that if we simply assign enough papers in our courses, our students will eventually “get it” and become proficient academic writers.

Writing scholar Stephen North once said, “Learning to write is difficult and it takes a long time.” North’s statement reflects the amount of effort and practice needed to become a good academic writer. UCF’s Writing Across the Curriculum Program provides faculty with the support necessary for effective design and implementation of writing instruction in the disci-

plines. Here is what we can do for you:

- We offer individual consultations on writing assignment and course design, assessment of writing, responding to student writing, and other related topics.
- We deliver customized workshops and presentations to departments and programs on any writing-related topic of interest to them.
- We offer teaching tips and strategies of interest to faculty in all disciplines during FCTL’s faculty development conferences and other campus-wide events.
- We help teams of faculty from all disciplines to create and implement writing-related student learning outcomes and writing assignments necessary to achieve those outcomes. We do this work through our WAC Fellows program, which engages teams of disciplinary faculty in writing-across-the-curriculum work over a whole semester. During the 2011–2012 academic year, we helped faculty from seven departments develop discipline-specific writing instruction materials.
- We work on the main campus as well as all regional campuses.

The WAC Program at UCF follows state-of-the-art department-centered and consultant models of writing-across-the-curriculum development. These models empower faculty to help their students learn better through discipline- and course-specific writing practice. By suggesting new and improved methods of writing instruction to you, we do not ask you to do more, but rather to do what you are already doing more efficiently and with more benefits to your students.

If you are interested in helping your students become better learners and writers, contact us. We will discuss your specific goals and begin developing a plan of action that meets your needs, the needs of your students, your department, and your academic discipline.

To find out more about our program, please visit our website at <http://wac.cah.ucf.edu>. The website contains descriptions of all our programs, writing outcomes and assignments developed by colleagues in other departments, and other resources. Stop by the newly renovated “WAC Space” on the first floor of Colbourn Hall. Get in touch with WAC Director Pavel Zemliansky at pzemliansky@ucf.edu or with WAC Coordinator Lindee Owens at lindee.owens@ucf.edu.



Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Lisa Dieker



Lisa Dieker is Professor and Lockheed Martin Eminent Scholar in UCF's College of Education. She received her undergraduate and master's degrees from Eastern Illinois University and her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois. Her primary area of research is collaboration between general and special education at the secondary level with a particular interest in how technology, and specifically how virtual environments, can impact teacher preparation.

el with a particular interest in how technology, and specifically how virtual environments, can impact teacher preparation.

As a recipient of the SoTL award this year, I was asked to share some thoughts in the *Faculty Focus*, and I decided to frame my thoughts with a recent comment made by Lee Shulman about the complex and collaborative nature of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Shulman (2011) states, "Scholarship entails a mission that cannot in principle, be pursued alone. It far exceeds the capacities of any individual or even any one generation" (p. 6). As a person who values collaboration and learning with, and from, others, I am inspired by Shulman's words to continue the collaborative nature of my work within my discipline, my college, and across the university. Further, I know I am privileged to work at UCF, where collaboration is such a strong pillar of our institution.

UCF provides a very unique opportunity that I have rarely seen in other (especially older) universities. Here, building scholarship by working collaboratively across disciplines is surprisingly easy and well supported. For instance, I am currently working on a project related to virtual teacher preparation with faculty from the field of exceptional education, from the UCF Lockheed Martin Mathematics and Science Academy, Computer Science, and the Institute for Simulation and Training. I think scholarship that only stays within one's discipline tends to restrict the expansion of scholarly practice.

When I started in the field of education—and the day I walked onto UCF's campus nine years ago—I was immediately welcomed into both sides of my field, Exceptional Education and General Education. I have co-taught classes with faculty across these disciplines as well as worked on several collaborative grant projects. You might know that this kind of collaboration is unusual. At most institutions, Special Education and General Education programs either choose not to work together or cannot find a way in higher education to do so. The high level of collaboration at UCF is such that I sometimes forget how different it is at other places. What has surprised me even further is how easy it has been at UCF to ground my

work across disciplines outside of education. Being able to work across numerous disciplines while still being grounded in my own has allowed me to really stretch and grow as a scholar.

As you think about how to increase the impact of your scholarship, I urge you to reflect on Shulman's message and not always pursue your scholarly work alone. Below, I offer some tips that might be helpful to other faculty members wanting to increase their impact.

1. Act locally but think nationally and globally. The opportunities to collaborate across disciplines can really launch your scholarship across campus, but I have found at the same time this interdisciplinary work positions you nicely for national and international work.

2. Consider how to take both shared ownership and leadership of various projects within and across disciplines to strengthen and broaden your impact. Such work can result in global connections, national recognition, and awards. Impact increases greatly when it transcends disciplines.

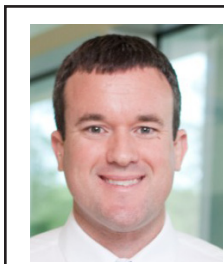
3. I suggest you try to find as much synergy around your work as possible. Keep your passion in the middle of the work and you will make a stronger contribution to the team as well as building a strong foundation for your own research agenda.

4. Last but not least, commit to what you can do, but don't over-commit to things that put you, your family or your primary role at UCF at risk. Balance is hard to maintain at such an exciting and prosperous place. You have seen the slogan, "UCF Stands for Opportunity," to which I like to add, "Never-ending" opportunities. Chose wisely the opportunities that fuel your passion and your overall agenda, but when you can—build your work with a team to make the biggest impact possible.

Doing what you love with great people locally to make a national impact is what I see as the spirit of SoTL. I appreciate the opportunities that UCF provides and the spirit of collaboration that is the backbone of this campus. I have not reached my current level of accomplishments at UCF alone, but through strong collaboration. Being part of a scholarly campus focused on innovation and impact is the true essence of SoTL, and that is what I value the most about UCF.

Engaging Students in the Instant, On-Demand World

Robert Borgon



Robert Borgon is Assistant Professor in the College of Medicine. He teaches Quantitative Biological Methods, Molecular Biology, and Peer Instruction and Laboratory Occupational Training.

The world is moving faster, and in this age of instant-access information, college instructors must work hard to keep up with modern methodologies and technologies. Students access endless amounts of information and share ideas quickly, and classroom teaching must continually evolve to keep up and keep students engaged. The traditional education model can't be completely forgotten, as an engaging lecturer can make all the difference when it comes to learning. But a great teacher can further reach students by using a few simple, powerful tools in and out of the classroom. These techniques increase student access to class material and can have a positive impact on student engagement and learning.

Class Organization: Simply strengthening class organization can improve engagement. The clearer the objectives and expectations, the harder students can work towards those goals. Small investments such as a thorough syllabus that explains policies, a detailed schedule that lists exam dates, and straightforward grading (such as classes out of 1000 points) can have a big impact on student performance.

Online Course Content: In my classes, all content such as PowerPoints, lecture recordings, homework, and reading assignments are posted online. Additionally, any handwritten notes from the document camera or on the chalkboard are scanned or photographed and posted immediately after class. This allows students to focus on what is being said rather than hurriedly scribbling notes during class.

Recording Lectures: Attending lecture and taking good notes is essential to learning, but students can lose focus, not understand a concept, miss details, write down notes incorrectly, or miss class due to unforeseen circumstances. To reach more students, I record my lectures on a small USB-capable recorder and post them immediately on Webcourses after class. In a survey, about 25% of the class stated they rarely attended lecture but still listened to the recordings. What was surprising was that nearly 75% of students said they attended class and re-listened to the recordings. Clearly the students feel re-listening to the lecture is beneficial.

Video Capture: Tegrity lecture capturing is being implemented at the College of Medicine this spring, which should be a great improvement over traditional lecture recording as it captures video, PowerPoints, and notes.

Message Board: A class message board allows students to interact with one another and ask and answer questions at all hours, and reduces e-mails that often ask the same questions. I use Piazza.com, a well-designed message board with an excellent interface and many advanced features. New posts are immediately e-mailed to the class, and students can click a link directly to the message. Instructors can endorse student responses by clicking "good answer." Additionally, Piazza can be set up to let students post "anonymously," which allows students to ask questions that they might not otherwise ask. Students can also use it to form study groups, instructors can poll the class, and there is phone app to increase access.

E-mail, Office Hours, and Discussion Sections: Contact hours can greatly improve student motivation, learning, and understanding of advanced content. Taking the time to write a thorough e-mail reply can mean a lot, especially at a large university. Office Hours are important for one-on-one conversations and advising, and Discussion Sections held in a less formal environment encourage more students to attend and ask questions, which can further understanding of class content. Students also appreciate fast e-mail and message board response times.

Exam Review: Actively reviewing exams is essential to learning, and I hold Exam Review Sessions where students can see their exams, take notes, and ask me questions. Also, exam scores are released quickly and grade distributions are posted online.

Homework and Sample Questions: I provide several homework assignments and hundreds of sample questions to students to get them to apply the content learned in class. This reduces last-minute studying for exams, improves critical thinking, and gives students an idea about the level of understanding that is expected in the course.

E-mail/Online Turn-in: Students can submit handwritten assignments by scanning or photographing them with their phones and e-mailing them to me. Reports are submitted to Turnitin.com, which reduces paper, allows for multiple graders to provide immediate feedback, increases grading consistency across TAs, and checks for plagiarism.

Undergraduate TAs: Undergraduates who performed well in my course return to help teach the content to the next group of students and help with assignments. They are very energetic and helpful, and can relate to the students well. Additionally,

SARC tutors and Supplemental Instruction can greatly assist student learning.

Lecture Breaks: During long lectures I am always sure to include at least one bonus question, relevant video, or even a humorous science comic. This gives students a chance to re-focus before introducing new concepts.

Grade Calculator: One of the my students' favorite course tools is a Grade Calculator I've made in Excel. Students know exactly where they are at any point in the semester, and how many points they need on the final exam to earn a specific grade. This removes any guesswork and keeps students up-to-date on their progress throughout the semester.

Other Methods and Technologies: There's always something new on the horizon, and it's good to have an open mind when it comes to new technology. Canvas will be implemented campus-wide this spring, and Tegrity in the College of Medicine. Skype and Google Chat can be used to hold Office Hours to connect with students off campus. Voice-over PowerPoints can be used to supplement lectures. I use ExamView to create large test banks and easily print multiple versions. Clickers can be used to keep the students' attention during lectures. Finally, there is a recent movement to "flip the classroom," which involves students using technology to learn outside of the classroom, and using class time for discussions.

Overall, students love the opportunity to learn, and a multi-pronged approach to engagement offers multiple avenues to success. The more access students have to the instructor and class content the more they will be engaged, the harder they will work, the better they will perform, and the more they will learn.

Influential Teaching

Lee-Anne T. Spalding



Lee-Anne Spalding has taught a variety of courses in the College of Education at UCF since 2004. She is a two-time graduate of UCF and plans to graduate a third time from UCF with her doctoral degree in December 2012.

Being a lifelong learner who enjoys the pursuit of knowledge and relishes student successes, I have enjoyed the last eighteen years I have worked at my passion of teaching. Each day I teach, I learn from the many individuals I have been fortunate enough to educate and from the amazing minds of my peers who surround me with unwavering support. My enthusiasm for this profession has not waned. The time I have spent working with young children, veteran teachers, and now pre-service teachers at the University of Central Florida has been my chosen life's work. Having recently been awarded the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award, I have reflected upon what exactly has contributed to my success.

Early in my teaching career, a mentor of mine stated that I was a *born teacher*. At the young age of twenty-two I was not sure that I understood what she meant. As time went by, I was introduced to many different educators, schools, and school systems via teaching, consulting, and the coordination of interns. I began to see the attributes I possessed in other effective teachers. The *born teacher* statement began to make much more sense, and I vowed to be sure that my undergraduate students not only heard about what a highly effective teacher was but that they experienced it every time they entered my classroom at UCF.

Attributes that high-quality, effective teachers possess are numerous. According to Ruddell and Unrau (2010), *influential* teachers display the following characteristics that I believe have contributed to my own success: energy, passion, commitment, flexibility, understanding, enthusiasm, attentiveness, relevance, and communication skills. Teachers who make a difference know their content, truly know their students, and know how to share the content with students in a comprehensible manner (Cummins, 2012). Upon entering the teaching profession, former students have shared with me that my courses provided practical and beneficial information that aided their transition into the workforce, but that most of all it was my smile and attitude that they greatly appreciated; the rapport I established had made an indelible mark.

Over the last eight years at UCF, I have sought to keep up relationships with students long after they left our fine institution.

I have visited their classrooms, read to their students, and sent copious e-mails of encouragement to let them know I am rooting for their success. In January of this year, a student I taught five years ago e-mailed me from her kindergarten classroom at North Lake Park Community School with this message: *You have forever touched my life and hold a special place in my heart. You didn't just teach me, you inspired me and made me a better person.* I don't know of a better feeling than having a positive influence like this on another person. I hope to continue to model the attributes of an influential teacher to aid my students in becoming highly effective teachers that in turn have a positive impact on their students. This is my true reward; I am truly blessed to be a teacher!

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Halloween Party 2012
October 31st at the Faculty Center, CL1-207
1:00 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

Bring a treat to share!

Costumes are welcomed but optional.

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.



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