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Why a Collaborative Environment Makes Sense in Student-Centered Learning

Lisa Nalbone



Lisa Nalbone, Instructor Foreign Languages, has taught Spanish at UCF for 12 years, most recently developing strategies for collaborative learning at the intermediate level and in a course required by majors/minors in the language. She implements technology when creating collaborative activities.

The sometimes subtle, sometimes not so subtle, shift from teacher-centered to student-centered methodology has challenged me to find more creative ways to engage students in a manner that is meaningful to them, supporting theories that students learn best when they have a stake in what they learn. In teaching various levels of Spanish, one of the strategies I enjoy incorporating deals with collaborative learning. The appeal of this learning environment spans the disciplines and the levels within those disciplines.

After years of asking students to write or talk about common, everyday subjects, I realized in speaking to my students and colleagues that students usually enjoy the challenge of discussing a topic in a new light. For example, instead of asking students to write about their plans after graduating, I simply modify the assignment to make it pertinent to class. I ask them to interview one or two classmates and find out about their plans and then incorporate their findings in the writing assignment. To include the element of technology, depending on the course set-up, the information gathering portion of this type of assignment could be accomplished through NetMeeting (this works especially well in the collaboration classrooms) or through the WebCT forums.

The 'together everyone accomplishes more' idea behind the concept of 'team' certainly applies in this kind of activity that taps into so

many more skill levels than a typical first-person narrative from personal experience. It builds the identity of class as a group of individuals working together rather than students just working for themselves. Students may begin to take ownership in their class and, more important, their learning. You might not be surprised to learn that students "need to go to class because

someone might be depending on me for information and I need to get the information from someone else," instead of going to class for the notes or to fulfill an attendance requirement.

When working from the premise that students rely on each other, the feedback students give me falls into several categories:

- ♦ They are introduced to vocabulary /themes with which they might not be so familiar, thus enhancing their language and overall learning experience.
- ♦ The interview material provides a working outline from the beginning of the assignment.
- ♦ Students like getting to know their classmates better.
- ♦ Classmates use a variety of grammatical structures and verb forms that the writer might not otherwise use. The writer also has to modify these structures to fit in with the reporting aspect.
- ♦ This assignment encourages students to become better listeners.
- ♦ It encourages them to demonstrate forethought in the interview process, to make sure they have enough quality material to include in the final product.
- ♦ Interviews provide a forum for speaking practice.

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While this last item applies specifically to the foreign language environment, we all have students who maintain a level of disconnectedness with the class, who are introverts, who are more apt to work independently, etc. Collaborative activities encourage everyone to participate. Everyone must be involved.

Although this process might seem daunting at the beginning, the best advice I have received is to start small, knowing that a successful shift to student-centered learning is an evolutionary process. By incorporating collaborative activities, I have gained a deeper appreciation for the class both on the merits of the individual students as well as of their accomplishments as they work together.

Dude, How's My Class?

Peter Telep



Peter Telep is a member of the Writer's Guild of America, is a produced television writer, and is the author of over twenty novels ranging from television and film adaptations to science fiction, medical drama, and military action/adventure. He earned his B.A. and M.A. from the University of Central Florida and has been a GTA, Visiting Instructor, and is currently a Permanent Instructor of English at the University of Central Florida.

Have you ever asked your students for their input on how a particular assignment should be graded? Have you ever considered polling your students at the end of each week to see how your course might be improved?

When I first began teaching composition as a GTA, I believed that asking for student input regarding the course or even on a particular assignment would damage my credibility. I could never admit to students that I wasn't sure about the course or materials. I assumed they needed a champion who was as confident as he was unequivocal. Thus, I forged on, grading papers and becoming frustrated when students "just didn't get it." At semester's end, I would pour over my student evaluations, note common strengths and weaknesses, and become more determined to improve next semester.

Of course, like many of you, I shared my triumphs and challenges with my colleagues. During a conversation with Dr. Beth Young, Director of the University Writing Center, I learned that she polled her students weekly to see how well they liked the course and what help they needed regarding particular concepts. She distributed index cards and asked students to respond anonymously. She also discussed the results of the poll with her students and made adjustments to the course as needed. At that time, I was teaching a course with a web component, so I decided to develop a polling sys-

tem via WebCT's quiz function. Every Friday, students logged on anonymously and discussed the course without fear of jeopardizing their grades or alienating themselves from me. Sure, my ego was occasionally bruised, but I was able to make course adjustments that better met the students' needs without sacrificing my credibility. In fact, students commented on how the process made me seem more credible because I was open-minded enough to listen to their suggestions and actually implement them. Moreover, this was my first step in realizing that I did not need to be the sage on the stage with all the answers. And while the students needed me for a grade, I needed them just as much to make the course more effective.

This semester in my Fiction Writing class, I've continued the process of ongoing student assessment. I created several rubrics for critiquing stories, distributed them to the class, and asked students to make suggestions for improvement before we actually use them in our workshop. Once I receive their suggestions, I revise the material, post it online, and have students comment again to see if we had reached the final draft. Not only have I been seeking their advice to improve the course materials, but I have been modeling the importance of drafting and revision—key skills in any writing course.

Admittedly, it does take some courage to ask students what they think of your course and course materials, and you will undoubtedly receive some comments that are not as useful as others. However, engaging in this process allows you to address challenges early on so that there are no shocking surprises come course evaluation time. Additionally, the process empowers students by making them active participants in how they will be taught and graded. They begin to own the course, trust in you and the materials, and consider the process fair.

But most of all, getting students involved in how you teach the course demonstrates your care and concern for them. I don't know about you, but I became an instructor to change the world—one student at a time.

"The aim of curriculum is to awaken, not 'stock' or 'train' the mind. That goal makes the basic unit of a modern curriculum the question. Given the intimidating, easily trivialized mass of knowledge, what the modern student needs is the ability to see how questions both produce and point beyond knowledge (whether one's own or the expert's). Educational progress would thus be measured as the ability to deepen and broaden one's command of essential questions by marshaling knowledge and arguments to address them."

Grant Wiggins

Confessions of a Working Parent: Balancing Academia and Family

Stacey Tantleff Dunn



Stacey Tantleff Dunn, Associate Professor in Psychology, joined UCF in 1996 from the University of South Florida. Her primary research is in body image and eating behavior. She is greatly interested in the scholarship of teaching and has won both a Graduate Teaching Award and a TIP award.

As a faculty member with a 4 year-old and baby on the way, I can't help but reflect upon how lucky I feel to have a job that truly allows me to balance family and work...at least to some degree. Flexible hours, ample vacation days, and a sense that time spent at work has meaning and value have all made it possible to keep working hard, even when the sweet face of my little girl makes me want to never leave her side.

In many ways, the idea of having it all is a fantasy. After all, trying to do it all results in constant sacrifices. In my first few years at UCF I literally worked all the time. Not because I was a masochistic freak or because I was overcome by fears of not making tenure, but because I loved what I was doing. The fact that my husband was also an assistant professor in the same department with an office next door to mine made it really easy to spend late nights and weekends in the office, trying to figure out how to be a good academician and relishing in the freedoms and challenges of the job. My senior colleagues would tease us that we really needed to develop some hobbies and get out more, but we mutually decided that we were doing what we enjoyed and what felt good, and we had the rest of our lives to find hobbies.

Well, we finally found a "hobby"—making and sustaining a family. We were a little nervous to announce we were pregnant, but we received an enormous outpouring of support. Our colleagues genuinely seemed happy for us, and with the exception of one or two sarcastic comments (e.g., "Nice career move"), we felt optimistic that we could make it all work. It was sort of interesting (okay, it was sexist) that people often asked me how I was going to manage working with a baby and assumed that this would not be an issue for Mike, but people quickly understood that we were a team and were both faced with the challenges of being working parents.

Then came baby. It was quite a transition. At work I felt like I was not giving 100% and therefore was failing. At home I felt like I was not fully present for my daughter when I worried about work. In addition to juggling two roles I loved, I was dealing with the adjustment of going from a workaholic to a guiltaholic.

And then, something miraculous started to happen. My teaching evaluations were still really good. My articles were still getting published. My progress toward tenure seemed right on track. My daughter was thriving and meeting many developmental milestones earlier than expected. I began to realize that the countless hours I spent in class preparation may not have been what made my classes any good. There was more to measuring students' learning than obsessing over their essay exams. Not having endless time to complete various tasks meant I had to get them done more efficiently, not necessarily less effectively. In most of the ways that mattered, I was still doing a good job.

Or so I tried to convince myself. It wasn't until something else started to happen that I truly became at peace with my everlasting balancing act. On the back of my teaching evaluations students were writing that I was "an outstanding role model." Female students at the end of class were saying that they were "inspired" by how I seemed to handle being a working mom. They hoped to someday pull off the same balancing act, but previously weren't sure it were really possible. Even more astounding were the comments from other junior faculty. "Thanks for paving the way" some of them said just months before announcing their own pregnancies. Within a very short time, five other faculty members had babies and nearly all of them frequented my office to show off baby pictures, compare stories, or just talk about the balancing act we're all struggling with.

Overall, I genuinely consider being a parent and a faculty member to be two incredible gifts for which I am eternally grateful. Both take a lot of time, passion, skill, and commitment, and both give back an enormous sense of meaning and fulfillment (albeit in different ways). We at the Faculty Center are really interested to learn more about your own balancing act. Log on to the Faculty Forum so we can talk about and exchange ideas!

Effective Teaching Award Portfolios

Terri Fine



Terri Susan Fine has been on the UCF faculty since 1989. She has served on numerous teaching award committees during that time. Her own interests focus on American politics with an emphasis on women and politics, political parties and public opinion.

During the summer of 2002 I experienced, or rather my car experienced, the unfortunate circumstance of five breakdowns in six weeks. Soon thereafter, I decided to buy a new car. The process was difficult. I had not purchased a car in several years, and I knew that the car dealers "had my number" because I was driving an older car that would have

to be replaced. They knew that I was not "just looking."

I realize in retrospect that looking for a new car is much like sitting on a teaching award committee. During the car shopping process, it was a given that someone was going to get my business much as it is a given that one or more applicants will win a teaching award. There were several unknowns when I went shopping, such as which dealer I would buy from and the make, model, color and accessories that I would eventually purchase. Yet there were several factors that were known before I started the process. First, I would have to be treated with respect. At one dealership, the assistant manager told me at least three times that I must be "emotionally attached" to the car that I was presently driving. I left, took my business elsewhere, and complained in writing to the general manager as well as Honda Motor Corporation. Second, I had to be given a complete picture. At that same dealership, when I asked the price of the car, I was only told that it would be \$339 per month. I was not given the overall price of the car regardless of my financing options. I was also told that the car that I wanted was not available and that swapping with other dealers was not possible. This turned out to be false. Finally, the presentation had to be accurate. At this same dealer, I was told that I had to make an appointment for a different day just to take a test drive. This was not accurate as any other dealer was more than happy to let a prospective buyer take a test drive. In summary, the only way that I would purchase a car would be if the dealer gave me **Complete and Accurate** information presented **Respectfully**, or CAR.

Members of teaching award committees are much like desperate car shoppers. They too want complete and accurate information presented respectfully. They will make the award determination, but will not likely favor your case if there are problems with your file. What makes teaching awards different from other professional awards, such as promotion and tenure, is that there is a limited number of teaching awards. Arguably, anyone applying for promotion or tenure may receive it regardless of how other candidates for the same change in status are regarded by the committee. This is not true for teaching awards. Here are some approaches to abiding by the CAR rule:

1. Be complete. If you state that you were involved in a project, taught a course, presented a paper at a conference, made a presentation to a community group, served on a community board, reviewed a textbook or served as a faculty sponsor for a student group, make sure to include documentation with your file. Documentation can be anything from pages from web sites that include your course material to thank-you notes from publishers and community groups. Committees look for such documentation, and it will distinguish you from those who do not provide it.

2. Be accurate. Make sure that you were involved in whatever activities that you say that you were involved in and provide proof (See #1 above). All too often, a candidate for an award will claim that s/he was involved in a task (such as co-

PI of a grant) only for a member of the committee to already know that such information is false (the person may have worked on the grant, but was not listed, or did not serve as co-PI). Being inaccurate, even once, will cast a shadow over your entire file and will significantly reduce your chances of receiving the award.

3. Be respectful. This means that you should respect that the committee is comprised of your peers who are even busier than you (after all, they are sitting on the award committee!). Provide details to any claims that you make. We are all great teachers; saying that you are a great teacher disrespects the committee because it is a general statement that has little substance. Another way to respect the committee is to provide any and all relevant information in the file. In this age of the Internet, it is too easy to tell the reader to seek out another source (such as "see my web page") rather than provide the information in the file. Remember that reading award files takes time. Do not ask the committee to take extra time by perusing your web site or course home page. When you tell the reader to go look something up on the Internet, and the room housing the award files has no computer, you are being disrespectful of the committee members' time.

These tips do not guarantee that you will win a teaching award; however, they will improve your chances because you will make it easier for any committee member to understand and appreciate the merits of your case.

Don't Throw Out the Baby with the Bathwater

Valerie Sims



Valerie Sims is an Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department. She studies human-computer interaction with her many undergraduate and graduate student collaborators. Her favorite video game is Tetris.

Let me begin by saying that I am not anti-technology. In fact, I revel in it. I love my laptop and my stereo system, and I am proud to say that I am a great video game player. I love creating elaborate computer demonstrations to study human-computer interaction and realism in virtual environments. So, you might expect that my class lectures are technologically savvy with beautiful PowerPoint slides, built in mpeg movies, and the utilization of everything a smart classroom can offer. You'd be wrong. I use chalk, and a board of course, ...and a good sense of humor. Why? It works. And, in this era of web classes, PowerPoint slides, and computer demonstrations, it is novel. Yes, novel. My students comment that my classes are unique. They love that I am a bad artist who draws stick figure examples on the board. They laugh at the impromptu jokes that are generated from this less

scripted form of lecture. They empathize when I occasionally misspell a word on the board, or in haste, leave out a key definition. Why? Because they are doing the same things. They are generating notes based on the discussion, and they are learning how to put key concepts together themselves. These may not be perfect notes. They may have omissions and errors, but they reflect active learning. They reflect integration. This type of learning resembles the real world, where everything to be learned is not scripted in gorgeous slides, carefully omitting controversial or "irrelevant" issues. In this type of learning, the students are making their own decisions about what to keep and what to discard, and in doing so, they are becoming savvy consumers of psychology. So, what does this all mean? It means that for the time being, I am going to keep sneezing from all of the chalk, and my students are going to keep taking their own notes. I'm not ready to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

"The only way to help students become ethical people, as opposed to people who merely do what they are told, is to have them construct moral meaning. . . . That's why dropping the tools of traditional discipline, like rewards and consequences, is only the beginning. It's even more crucial that we overcome a preoccupation with getting compliance and instead bring students in on the process of devising and justifying ethical principles."

Alfie Kohn, *Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community*

Mentoring: Building Community and Supporting Success

Alison Morrison-Shetlar

Everyone needs mentoring in some way throughout their lives, be it professional or private. We look to each other for clarity of vision, guidance, and support because without these characteristics we lack goals, ambitions, or satisfaction in our lives. Educational institutions that have developed strong mentoring programs for students and faculty have found that when the mentoring is occurring between and among students and faculty there is an increase in student retention, an increase in faculty success and retention, an increase in collaboration in teaching and research, and a decrease in resentment among colleagues. Mentoring can only be a good thing—right? Well, only if there is investment of time and energy and a commitment to the success of others.

Learning is the basis of mentoring, and must be nurtured and maintained. Mentoring should be a journey for the mentor and mentee, weaving a web of interaction with each other and with the participant's personal ecology. One component of successful mentoring is trust. You have to trust the people that you are mentoring or that mentor you. So, to establish a mentoring relationship, often we look to people with whom we have already built a strong connection. We chose mentors who have achieved what we want to achieve, or whom we

admire for their personal characteristics, or for any number of other reasons. The next step is to build that relationship into a mentoring partnership that will benefit both participants. Mentors should use a variety of methods to support, challenge, and provide vision for the mentee.

Support can come in the form of a safe place where the mentor serves as an enabler for new ideas, thoughts and approaches. It can also mean "to bear the weight of" and "to provide for or maintain," offering an opportunity for the development and success of an individual. We all need to share our successes and concerns with people who can look objectively at our situation and help us see our paths clearly. We must trust the people with whom we talk; otherwise, we cannot clearly articulate our wishes and desires.

Challenge is an essential element of the mentoring process. We should be critical of ourselves and our decisions; thus having someone as a sounding board for our ideas and beliefs is crucial to our success. Also defined as "a test of one's abilities or resources in a demanding but stimulating undertaking," a mentor that challenges her/his mentee to think in new ways can promote informed risk-taking to foster growth.

A person with experience can often open doors to others who are not as well informed. A person with intelligent foresight can take mentees to thought processes that they may not have considered and provide insights and directions only experience affords. Helping people create a vision for themselves and supporting them to be successful in that vision is one of the most satisfying parts of mentoring.

How can a mentoring program be successful and sustainable? In higher education mentoring has to be seen as an integral part of an organizational culture that values learning. It has to serve the community and benefit the participants. Just like any good educational program, it has to have a focused, clear and concise mission or purpose with well-defined outcomes. Mentoring needs support from the faculty, chairs, deans and university administration; participants at all levels should champion mentoring. If this occurs, everyone involved will benefit by increasing personal and professional satisfaction.

Throughout our lives there are people who have touched us in some way, changed our direction, or challenged our beliefs. These people have taught us things about ourselves and our lives that no other, at that place and time, could have done. In an educational setting these people are your peers, people whom you respect. All of them have an effect on your professional lives. Equally, you have affected people in your professional and private lives by your own personal characteristics. These are serious responsibilities and ones that should be treated with respect and that should incorporate reflection.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee? Both need to be mutually accountable for their roles in the mentoring process. You should only mentor one or two people at a time; too many become a drain on time and ener-

gy and your mentoring will be less effective and certainly not sustainable. Equally as a mentee, you should have one or two mentors with whom you have strong and regular contact. That person is not one to whom you should whine about your fate, but should be there to understand your situation and guide and challenge you with well-informed ideas and suggestions.

Mentors can and probably should change with time. Faculty peers are the most common mentors, especially those who have experience in the institution and know the requirements for success (written or unwritten). New faculty should look for a more seasoned faculty member to be their guide in the tenure and promotion process, the development of a research program, etc. New faculty also look to other new faculty to develop a "like" community where support and affirmation are central to their success. Mid-career and senior faculty may look to their chairs, deans or peers for support and guidance while at the same time being mentors for the more junior faculty. We should all be mentors and mentees for sustainability of mentoring to occur.

Mentoring builds a community of wisdom, and can balance the mind, heart and spirit. Development of a mentoring structure within an academic unit should result in a happier, more productive and satisfied educational community.

"What great teachers appear to have in common is love of their subject, an obvious satisfaction in arousing this love in their students, and an ability to convince them that what they are being taught is deadly serious."

-- J. Epstein, *Masters: Portraits of Great Teachers*

Newly Restructured International Service Center to Implement SEVIS Requirements for International Students and Scholars

Stricter government regulations after September 11th have brought about increased government monitoring of international students. According to Dr. Patricia Bishop, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, "Federal auditors, enforcement agencies and FBI are assigned to college campuses for reviewing our procedures and following up on our students and scholars." In response to this situation, UCF has formed ISC (International Service Center) to replace ISSS (International Student and Scholar Services). They have hired 7 new people, added technology, and changed procedures to meet federal audit requirements. The new ISC intends to reduce redundancy and has trained its staff thoroughly in understanding the SEVIS and NAFSA requirements. Their goal is to track and maintain current status for all international students and scholars on F and J visas at UCF.

International students are very important to UCF as our vision for the research university takes off and the campus

wants to be as welcoming as possible to scholars from around the world. Most of the international students at UCF are enrolled at the graduate level.

Faculty should be aware of the SEVIS requirements, if only to refer students they might be advising or employing as GTA's to the International Service Center when questions arise. The ISC, directed by Dr. Saleha Suleman, is fully prepared to counsel students on how to best comply with SEVIS, so faculty need not be well versed in the details of this automated tracking system. Faculty do need to know however, that SEVIS affects

- ♦ how students should register for classes
- ♦ when they can travel to their native country
- ♦ how they are permitted to be employed on or off campus.

For example, full-time enrollment, (12 credits per semester for undergrads; 9 credits for graduate students) is required of every international student on F and J visas. A full course load is not required in the summer (exceptions are GTA's and GRA's).

Students on an F-1 visa will only be allowed to take one distance learning (online) course or 3 online credits per semester counting toward the full-time course load. Students may take additional online courses above the full-time course load. International students in the Engineering and Computer Science programs may only register for 3 credits of FEEDS courses. They may register for more than one FEEDS course if the additional course is designated "L" (for Live FEEDS modality) in which attendance will be taken, for which one live class or exam is mandatory. Generally, **faculty are not required to monitor attendance of international students**; ISC will monitor students' enrollment and status updates. Faculty who advise international students should encourage them not to apply to programs for which more than 25% of the courses are offered online because the SEVIS requirements will make it difficult for those students to complete that program in a timely manner.

Advisers are warned to advise international students on F-1 visas not to register for courses outside their declared field of study. Taking classes outside the major field may be perceived as a violation of SEVIS and could cause the student to lose visa status. Losing visa status can make traveling in and out of the United States difficult for students and can ultimately prevent them from finishing their course of study.

Graduate students who are writing dissertations, taking one hour of thesis or 3 dissertation credits, should submit the special status request form so the ISC can report to SEVIS that they are maintaining their immigration status. Departments should always communicate with ISC with regard to students who are finishing dissertations. If international students intend to take less than a full course load, they must submit a reduced course load form to ISC in order to get consultation and permission to take a reduced course load and maintain their F-1 status.

Faculty should also know that if a student needs to drop a class after the add/drop deadline, they should refer him/her to ISC to get informed advice on how to maintain status. Students intending to drop a class for medical reasons or because of academic difficulty based on language and adjustment to a new academic culture should be referred to ISC. Financial difficulty is not a valid reason for dropping a course of study.

International student on F-1 or J-1 visas can only work 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters and 40 hours per week in the summer. New F-1 and J-1 students are only allowed to enter the United States 30 days prior to the start of a given semester. This is not negotiable with the federal government, so do not expect your graduate research assistants to work the summer before commencing classes.

The bottom line for faculty and program directors is that SEVIS implementation is a federal mandate and the university must comply with SEVIS in order to maintain our eligibility to recruit and bring international students and scholars to UCF. Students and faculty must work through ISC to insure full SEVIS compliance.

UCF-Fit

Attention faculty! Do you want to get in shape this spring? Improve your health? Or make some new friends? Join UCF-Fit. The purpose of the UCF-Fit program is to build community at UCF through fitness and wellness activities. All students, faculty, and staff will earn points for all activities participated in. Incentives will be received as the program progresses and points begin to accumulate.

You design your own program and keep track of your own progress. We give you the tools and resources to accomplish your goals and provide you with the opportunity to make some new friends while doing it—and earn some prizes, too!

All you need to do is sign up, and follow the road to better health.

Look for the UCF-Fit announcements this January.



Final Reminder Summer Conference 2003 Reports

Faculty participants in the Faculty Development Summer Institute 2003 are reminded that their final reports of progress on course/curricular innovations are due to be submitted not later than Friday, January 16, 2004. Please see the template provided to you during the Institute, complete all sections and submit an electronic copy to fctl@mail.ucf.edu. Be sure to include the names of all team members. Please contact our office if any assistance is needed.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Certificate Program

The Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning invites Graduate Teaching Assistants to enroll in our GTA Certificate Program. Students will receive group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors, as well as textbooks and materials. GTA's will attend a 12 week, non-credit program with a \$200 stipend.

Themes

1. Presentation skills and practice
2. Balancing the many roles of TA's
3. Course design and management
4. Delivery of instruction, teaching strategies
5. Learning differences among students
6. Instructional technology (hands on)
7. Giving assessment and soliciting feedback
8. Building a peer support network
9. Professional survival skills, ethics, legal issues

Interested graduate students should register online at www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/gta and follow the instructions. Written approval from department chair or graduate coordinator is required. Participation is limited, so please enroll early.

Two classes will be offered:
Wednesdays (4:30-7:20pm) Jan. 14th - April 7th
Fridays (1:30-4:20pm) Jan. 16th - April 9th.

Please register by January 9th.

Register at www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/gta

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT THE FACULTY CENTER

407-823-3544
fctl@mail.ucf.edu
www.fctl.ucf.edu

Faculty Forum

Don't forget to check out the Faculty Forum, our online faculty discussion board. Sign on and join the discussions!

<http://forum.fctl.ucf.edu/forum/>

Classroom Observations

The Center is offering faculty an opportunity to have their teaching peer-observed. Simply contact the Center and let us know when you would like someone to come to your class. This is not an evaluation but rather an informal way to have an external review of your teaching. We also offer videotaping of the class if you wish.



Course Innovation Projects Spring 2004 Request for Proposals

**Please submit by Wednesday, January 28, 2004
in the Faculty Center, CL1-207
or FAX 407.823.2355**

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is calling for the submission of proposals by any UCF faculty who has an interest in improving a course. The following themes are suggested.

1. Assessment and the documentation of teaching and learning
2. Active and collaborative learning
3. Problem-based learning
4. Service learning
5. Employing new technologies in the learning environment
6. Teaching in a studio classroom
7. Other _____

Faculty will participate in several workshops (12 contact hours) and receive support from staff in the Faculty Center and other support units as they develop new approaches and materials for their classes. The workshops will include a series of hands-on experiences designed to help explore teaching techniques and learning activities that have proven effective. Additionally, faculty will receive support specific to their project needs. By completing the workshops and producing a final project for dissemination, faculty will receive a \$500 stipend.

Friday Workshops

Dates: Feb. 6, Feb. 20, March 19 and April 2
Time: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Location: CL1-207

All applications will be evaluated using the following criteria.

- Project focus
- Viability of project
- Benefit to University in terms of quality and productivity
- Specific plans for accountability of outcomes

The participants will also become part of an ongoing research project on effective teaching and learning. Faculty will be requested to share data on the effectiveness of activities and environments on student learning for potential publication. Participants may also use any data collected in their classroom for their own publication.

Please complete the RFP (available at http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/faculty_dev) and submit it to the Faculty Center as soon as possible.

**University of Central Florida
Division of Graduate Studies
UCF Program Announcement**

Awards for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Research

The Division of Graduate Studies is pleased to announce the availability of new awards for excellence in graduate student teaching and for excellence in thesis and dissertation research. Specifically, four new awards have been established for graduate students, as follows:

- ♦ **Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant:** This award recognizes excellence by Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) who are responsible for a laboratory or other similar teaching assignment under the direction of a faculty member who serves as the instructor of record. It focuses on the quality of the assistance provided by the GTA to the lead instructor and students in the class.
- ♦ **Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching:** This award recognizes excellence in teaching by Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) who have independent teaching responsibilities. It focuses on the quality of the student's teaching activities and the academic contributions to those activities.

- ♦ **Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis:** This award recognizes excellence in the master's thesis. It focuses on the quality and contribution of the completed master's thesis.
- ♦ **Award for the Outstanding Dissertation:** This award recognizes excellence in the doctoral dissertation. It focuses on the quality and contribution of the completed dissertation.

These recognitions will be awarded for the first time within the current academic year. Application materials must be submitted by Friday, February 6, 2004, and award recipients will be announced at the Research Forum to be hosted by the Graduate Student Association and the Division of Graduate Studies on March 22-23, 2004. University-level award winners will receive \$1,000 cash awards.

Detailed information regarding the eligibility requirements, application processes, submission materials, and deadlines will be forthcoming from the Division of Graduate Studies soon. Watch for this information on the graduate website at www.graduate.ucf.edu.

Summer Faculty Development Conference 2004

April 26, 27, 28, 29, 2004

RFP: Due 5 p.m., Friday, February 20, 2004

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning will provide 120 \$800/person grants for faculty members who are transforming courses or programs by emphasizing the Scholarship of Teaching (SoTL), assessment of learning outcomes, service learning, interdisciplinarity, or other innovations. Faculty will receive assistance for the completion of a project that modifies their face-to-face or web-enhanced courses or programs for the purpose of improving teaching, learning, assessment, and scholarship. Faculty members from all colleges are invited to apply.

This year's themes include:

- ♦ SoTL
- ♦ Service Learning
- ♦ Interdisciplinarity
- ♦ Diversity
- ♦ Engaging students, assessment, instructional technology, etc.
- ♦ Other

Final decisions will be provided to all applicants by March 26, 2004.



UCF Relay For Life 2004

The Relay for Life is the American Cancer Society's signature event and the number one non-profit special event in the country. UCF will host the Relay on April 3rd and 4th at the UCF track. If you are not on a team but would like to be, come join our team at the Faculty Center. For more information go to <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/relayforlife/>.

Dr. Judy Welch, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, and Dr. Ruth Marshall are making another quilt as a gift for the Relay for Life. We are offering the quilt in a drawing which will be made on Friday evening, April 3th at our Relay booth. If you would like to place your name in the bowl for the drawing to receive the quilt, please stop by the Faculty Center.

Proceeds go to Relay for Life
Donations are welcome, but not required
Stop by the Faculty Center (CL1-207) and enter now!



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

New Final Grade Roster

COURSE NUMBER SECTION PAGE DATE

PAGE CODE

CREDIT HOURS

FOR OFFICE

COURSE COMPLETION RECORD:
(For F, I or U grades only - select one)

Cannot Determine Stop By Stop After Completed Course GRADE +/- OTHERS

Mark this column if you cannot confirm when a student stopped completing course activities

Mark this column if the student's last course activity was ON or BEFORE the date indicated

Mark this column if the student's last course activity was AFTER the date indicated

Mark this column if the student COMPLETED the course and earned an "F," "I," or "U"

Complete this section ONLY IF a student receives an "F," "I," or "U"

Printed date will change each grading cycle

Additional Notes:

- Course Completion Records will be used to determine the student or institution's obligation in returning Title IV financial aid funds
- Errors and omissions on forms will be given to the Dean for follow-up
- "F" and "U" grades may be earned (if the student completed the course) or affected by a student's absence (stopped completing course requirements By or After a designated date)
- Check that ALL students have a grade marked and bubbled, with Course Completion indicated for students with an "F," "I," or "U".

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME

INSTRUCTOR'S SIGNATURE

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Unit of Academic Development and Retention
Division of Student Development and Enrollment Services

Teaching-Related Conferences**The Hawaii International Conference on Education**

January 3-6, 2004
Honolulu, Hawaii
<http://www.hiceducation.org/>

Teaching for Wisdom
The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching & Learning

February 19-20, 2004
St. Paul, Minnesota
<http://www.collab.org>

SITE 2004--Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference

March 1-6, 2004
Atlanta, Georgia
<http://www.aace.org/conf/site/>

Association for American Colleges and Universities:
The Network for Academic Renewal Conference

Valuing General Education and Assessment: Campus-Wide Collaboration for Engaged Liberal Education

March 4-6, 2004
Long Beach, California
<http://www.aacu.org/meetings/generaleducation/index.cfm>

2004 AAHE Learning to Change Conference
Learning in 3-D: Democratic Process, Diverse Campus, Digital Environment
American Association for Higher Learning

April 1-4, 2004
San Diego, California
<http://www.aahe.org/convenings.htm>

2004 AERA Annual Meeting
American Educational Research Association

April 12-16, 2004
San Diego, California
<http://www.aera.net/meeting/>

Educause Southeast Regional 2004

June 7-9, 2004
Atlanta, Georgia
<http://www.educause.edu/>

CALICO 2004

June 9-13, 2004
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
<http://www.calico.org/>

Syllabus 2004 11th Annual Education Technology Conference

July 18-22, 2004
San Francisco, California
<http://www.syllabus.com/>

Educause 2004

October 19-22, 2004
Orlando, Florida
<http://www.educause.edu/>

E-Learn 2004-World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education

November 2-6, 2004
Washington, District of Columbia
<http://www.aace.org/conf/eLearn/>

National Lilly Conference on College & University Teaching

November 18-21, 2004
Oxford, Ohio
<http://www.iats.com/conferences/schedule.shtml>

Submissions

The *Faculty Focus* is a publication for all instructors at the University of Central Florida. This includes full- 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. Toward this latter goal, the *Faculty Focus* will lead to an annual "Best Practices" edition where some of the ideas that were generated in the bi-semester editions will be expanded and developed into full articles. The annual edition will be peer-reviewed and disseminated regionally. This represents an opportunity for faculty to reach their peers throughout the growing Central Florida 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 <www.fctl.ucf.edu/focus/guidelines.htm>. Publication dates will be the middle of the first and last full months of each semester, and submission deadlines will be the Friday of the week prior. MLA format is preferred. Please send your submissions to *Faculty Focus*, fctl@mail.ucf.edu.

Faculty Center
CL1-207, 407-823-3544

Check us out Online!



www.fctl.ucf.edu

***Faculty
Center***

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