Submissions

The *Faculty Focus* is a publication for all instructors at the University of Central Florida. This includes full- and part-time faculty 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. This represents an opportunity for faculty 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/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.

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Faculty Focus

Contents

Teaching Legacy: Voices of Experience
Richard Tucker

Dick Tucker is a Professor of Psychology. He joined UCF in 1972 from Emory University where he completed his Ph.D. He serves as Director of the UCF Initiative on Aging and Longevity. His general interests are in Developmental Psychology, particularly as related to aging issues, and his specific interests include the characteristics of older Canadians in Florida with focus on health care needs and utilization, the effects of lifelong learning on memory self-efficacy, and general issues in successful aging.

With this issue we start a new feature in which we will ask a different senior faculty member at UCF five questions related to their teaching experiences at UCF.

1. **What teaching methods have you found to be most effective for your students?**
Teaching is an interaction between me and the students. I use a very interactive style and don't lecture from a script. I rely on the textbook to give students the kind of information that they'll need for the test; what I present in the classroom is a supplement and a conceptual framework. I try to challenge students by asking them questions, and based on their responses, they help to frame what we cover in the class.

2. **What was your most memorable teaching experience?**
There isn't one memorable experience; there are multiple that stick out. What they all have in common is seeing a light go on. Students just finally understand something; they just see it differently. In their writings, as they talk about their experiences, I've had students who had a mind-transforming experience in thinking about the material.

3. **What single piece of advice would you give to new instructors today?**
Remember that teaching very much involves communication and learning how best to communicate to students. Also, they have to think about what made them excited about the subject matter and what their passion is now. Don't be afraid to share that with the students. I want the students to know my passion for the subject matter; I think it makes a difference to know that you care about what you're teaching and that this isn't just an assignment.

4. **Why did you become a university professor? What kept you in the profession?**
I actually started out thinking I was going into the ministry. I think that notion of "calling" has remained with me. I find in teaching this sense of making a difference, affecting lives, and providing guidance. Things that are very ministerial in a way. That's what's kept me going. If you don't feel you can't make a difference—I don't care what you're doing—then you really stagnate. Higher education is a great place because you can always find that feeling. And if you don't feel it, then it's time to get out.

5. **What changes have you seen over your career with regard to student learning and how have you adapted to them?**
The big change is students' instant access to information, which changes things. I do a lot with email, and I find the immediacy of it makes a difference with students. Using technology to enhance teaching, not to replace it, has been one of the big changes—and most of that has been positive. However, I am concerned about increases in class size and those particular challenges. This is an area where the Faculty Center has been helpful, to try to convince people to see how they can still be effective teachers within the large classroom setting. We can do more than just lecture and give multiple-choice tests.

Creatively Using Classroom Response Systems for GEP
Thomas J. Brueckner
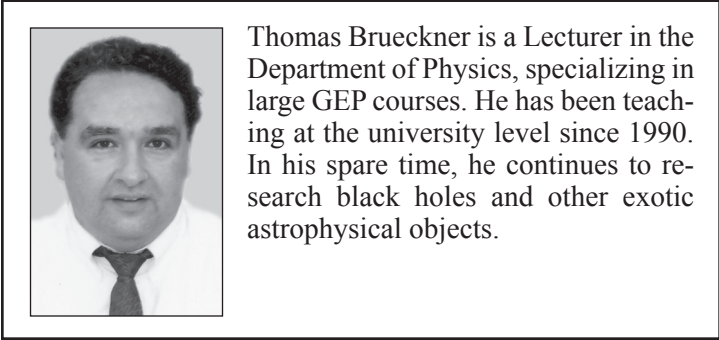
Thomas Brueckner is a Lecturer in the Department of Physics, specializing in large GEP courses. He has been teaching at the university level since 1990. In his spare time, he continues to research black holes and other exotic astrophysical objects.

A few days ago, one of my faculty mates caught me in the hallway and told me that he had observed one of my lectures to a large lecture hall of GEP students. He was quite pleased to see the engagement of the students with the lecture. He specifically mentioned engagement through our use of the "clickers" of our classroom response systems. He has also taught large sections of 300 students and knows how difficult it can be to reach and stay in the state of engagement with so many students at once. I was surprised and delighted to hear my colleague's words.

In truth, when I came to UCF in 2002, "student engagement" was a new vocabulary word for me, a nerdy physics type. But it is an idea that hits the mark. Are students thinking with me, as I lecture? Is the student's mind engaged and ready to roll, or is it stuck in "NEU-TRAL" and on the verge of being asleep at the wheel? One fairly solid engagement tool is the "clicker" system for higher education.

> "My favorite strategy is to call on the student's faculty for higher level thinking."

Classroom response systems are composed of several pieces of equipment: a set of handheld clickers that transmit a student's response to a question; a base unit that receives the signals and processes them; and a laptop or desktop computer with a program that displays the questions on a computer projection system and records the decisions of the students. The clickers are like remote control units for a television, small enough to place in a student's book bag. The receiver is connected to the lecturer's laptop or the lecture hall's desktop. It took me less than 30 minutes the first time I downloaded the software, connected the USB receiver, and started using the clickers just as my students do now in lecture. It was a snap. Adoption for my sections via the UCF bookstore website was as simple as ordering textbooks.

One particularly good program, CPS radio-frequency (CP-Srf), runs in parallel with PowerPoint. I use multiple choice format for my questions, usually with a good quality color graphic next to the question. Questions that allow a student to type in a number are possible, though I have not tried them yet. A variety of fonts and styles, font sizes and layouts are available from pull-down menus. JPEG or GIF graphic files are very easy to insert, something like inserting a picture in a PowerPoint file. I can print out the questions and answers as straight ASCII text. For my visually impaired students in the front row, I can print the full color, full screen previews to a color printer, and they are ready to hand to a student at the start of lecture.

With my first PowerPoint slide running in the background, I usually run the attendance function first, in which students electronically sign in their clickers; it takes four button pushes to "join" the session. Then they "vote" any letter A through H to signify attendance. I close the attendance function after a minute or so, and I engage the lesson, which can have as many questions as one needs. I usually have 3-5 questions, and I run them at one or two points in the lecture. Students who arrive late can still join the CPS session between questions. The lesson is engaged and ready to use, but one can "hide" it as a narrow menu bar that floats over the PowerPoint show. I usually move the bar to the bottom of the screen, and park it there, out of the way until I want it. Clicking on the PowerPoint slide moves it along as usual. Clicking on the floating CPS menu bar will call up the next CPS question smoothly. Clicking back and forth between PowerPoint and CPS is flawless.

If a student's clicker is not communicating with the receiver up front, it flashes a red light. If communicating and ready, it flashes green. In the middle of the session, I usually ask for a show of hands. "Anybody have a red light?" There are hardly ever any hands raised, even in a large class of a 150. Anyone who has a red light temporarily will get the green light as soon as the next question comes up. This shows that in-class reliability of the CPSrf is very high.

CPS records straight attendance data separately from the question/answer data. Before and after a session, CPSrf communicates smoothly through the Internet with the eInstruction website, from which it updates rosters in my Powerbook, in which it stores attendance data and question scores for my use and for the use of the students. Students can log in to that website and look at their CPS lesson with answers, graded question by question. Even if they were absent, they can still view the day's questions from home. This website interface also works reliably every time.

My principal praise for the CPSrf is this reliability, which rates far above any other system I have tried. Therefore, I can use it as a tool, knowing it will work predictably, the same each and every time, 24/7, like the proverbial Timex that keeps on ticking. And because it is a reliable tool, I can begin to use it creatively.

That is, when one has learned the nuts and bolts of assembling a lesson, the instructor can concentrate on creative questioning strategy. This is where teaching insight enters the equation. One can use simple recall questions to start class, as a review of a reading assignment: What is Newton's third law

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Spotlight: Faculty Center Artwork

Two UCF Faculty members have been gracious enough to place their works on display at the Faculty Center this year: Kristina Tollefson, who provided hand-woven prayer shawls, and Wilfried Iskat, who provided numerous framed photographs from his personal collection.

Kristina Tollefson
Kristina Tollefson is an Assistant Professor and Resident Costume and Makeup Designer at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. In addition to her work at UCF she has designed costumes for such places as the Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival, Orlando Repertory Theatre, Florida Children's Repertory Theatre and more. Kristina began weaving ten years ago and recently rediscovered her favorite pastime which she combines with her love of Judaism by weaving prayer shawls called tallit.

Kristina's Artist Statement:
During Saturday Shabbat services the Rabbi tells that we should "weave the ideals of Torah into the fabric of our daily lives." I took him a little more literally than most when I began to weave tallit. Tallit, or prayer shawls, are worn in the synagogue during Torah services by Jewish adults. Attached to the tallit are the tzit tzit or knotted fringes that the Torah instructs us to wear. To me, putting on a tallit is like a weekly spiritual hug and I indeed feel as though I am wrapping myself in the words of the Torah. Combining my affection for the symbolism of the tallit with my joy of weaving and my love of fabrics seemed an obvious choice. My tallit combine traditional structure and symbolism with beautiful colors and lustrous yarns to create a contemporary expression of modern Judaism.

Wilfried Iskat
Wilfried is an Associate Professor in the Rosen College of Hospitality. A career in hospitality spanning several continents and all aspects of restaurant and hotel businesses, especially training, led Wilfried to a position as lecturer and dean at a school of hospitality management. Photography is strictly a hobby for Wilfried, who has owned many different cameras and have taken photographs in over 50 countries.

Wilfried's Artist Statement:
Photography has been a hobby for close to 50 years and has accompanied me through various stages in my life. I look to photography not only to capture images about my family, my travels, life around me and being a teacher, but also to learn to understand the science of dealing with light and optics. Photography has given me a reason to walk along the beach, go into the forest or find a new museum that I can use as my background. It also gives me an opportunity to give photographs away as presents, create unusual and distinctive celebratory cards and create keepsakes. Photography provides me the ability to have a creative outlet because I currently do not find the necessary time to engage in another hobby, painting, which also requires me to see events and places that I want to keep a record of.

Institutions have responded to some of these realities in a number of ways. The drive to find a viable market niche and to respond to new clientele has meant more flexible schedules, evening classes, weekend options, distance learning programs, the formal acknowledgement of learning gained outside of accredited academic institutions, and institutional fixtures (from orientations to the library to course guides) that are more user-friendly. Clearly, colleges have become more aware of trying to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body—of providing levels of access, particularly through newly devised delivery systems that had not existed before.

Most of these institutional changes have been at the edges of faculty experience. They have not usually touched the more protected arena of faculty privilege. Particularly with the inclusion of a greater number of working adult students; however, faculty have been called upon to expand the range and nature of their interactions with students. On a simple level, it has not been unusual for faculty to have increased the hours they are available to students outside of the classroom. More significantly, because of the experiences, goals, dilemmas, and academic strengths and weaknesses that these so-called nontraditional students have brought to our academic worlds, faculty have found themselves taking on more advisory roles, serving as guides and consultants, and helping their students negotiate their way through formerly alien academic terrain to gain the kinds of skills and competencies that we know they need. The inclusion of such a counseling dimension into the very fabric of many of our lives as academic instructors has also meant a subtle but important shift in the nature of communication between faculty and student.

> *"In effect, through interactions with their students, mentors try to model the very kind of learning they hope their students will continue to pursue."*

We have learned to listen with new attentiveness and care, knowing that our ability to understand and respond is directly related to our students' success as learners.

But the most powerful shift occurs when the interrelated movement from providing better institutional access to listening and counseling does touch the very core of the conventional faculty role. And it is here that the potential of a new relationship between students and teacher emerges. As Mandell and Herman (1996) have described such a collaborative stance is at the heart of the role of faculty as mentor. That is, in an institutional context that works for true access (not only for admittance but for the possibility of success), listening becomes a necessary art, and teaching—and the knowledge upon which it is based—becomes an ongoing project of locating and/or creating imaginative learning tools to respond to the academic needs of individual students whose voices we can never disregard.

In the last few years, the word mentoring has taken on a rather hierarchical cast. In such contexts (many of them corporate), mentors are experienced guides who know and can offer expert advice, those who have been especially successful and can show others how to succeed. But the notion of faculty as mentor introduced here emphasizes sharing control and meaningful reciprocity. In fact, it is about the deliberate creation of opportunities for common learning. It also is motivated by the quest to follow the lead offered by an individual student's questions, concerns, or idiosyncratic understanding into new areas of academic exploration, even those that stretch and challenge our own sense of what we know. In this way, mentoring accents the importance of our strengths as academic generalists who have learned to work with problems that cut across the disciplines and themes that are inherently interdisciplinary. Mentoring embeds us in a distinctive approach to teaching and learning that deliberately legitimates the questioning of faculty authority and the claims to knowledge upon which that authority rests. By inviting a student to participate in his/her own learning (for example, through faculty and students creating individualized learning contracts as an integral part of the learning process or working together to design an entire curriculum), and by providing room for a student to gain the new skills necessary to work independently, we offer ourselves as engaged interlocutors who demonstrate that we care deeply about dialog and reflection and about the critical examination of pertinent questions, many of which were not our questions at the start.

In effect, through interactions with their students, mentors try to model the very kind of learning they hope their students will continue to pursue. That is, in a quite powerful and palpable way, the ideal of lifelong learning, usually reserved for students, equally pertains to the faculty mentor. We are always in the process of creating new studies with students, tinkering with old plans, searching for and coordinating effective resources, immersing ourselves in a new question, following the lead of an issue that a student has begun to articulate, making connections with a colleague who may offer a suggestive direction. We are, above all, listening, guiding, trying out new learning strategies, and staying alert to what may become yet another opening.

Perhaps like all more democratic experiments, the experience of faculty as mentor is a rather precarious one. Traditional faculty authority has been based on bodies of knowledge and academic structures that reinforce them. To enter a world of mentoring is to practice with the expectation that through serious and honest discourse and negotiation (and a community of other mentors who can provide support, encouragement, and critical scrutiny), plans for individual studies and curricula can be built that are academically rich and that flow from the lives of our students as parents, workers, scholars, members of a community, and citizens. To gain experience in such a faculty role that emphasizes not separation but connection, dialog, and a reweaving of relationships of authority is, in itself, a new kind of privilege.

of motion? One can set up questions so that a student can discuss a concept with a neighbor and arrive at an answer collaboratively, then click in the answer. My favorite strategy is to call on the student's faculty for higher level thinking. I tend to write a sequence of questions, from basic knowledge recall questions that lead higher and higher to application level computation, analytic level distinctions and synthetic level integration of disparate concepts, like entropy and the information content in a communication channel.

In fact, my faculty mate observed me using CPSrf that way, to call the students higher and higher, all the while keeping them fully engaged. How do I know they were fully engaged? As each question came up in the display, distraction ceased, all eyes were forward, and the entire room went silent. If you have the heart of a teacher, you long for moments like that.

There are still features of CPSrf that I have yet to try, and it is not perfect. I can think of a variety of features that other systems have that would be nice in CPS. There are some quirks in the program here and there, like XML export functions. In addition, I have not tried it out on a Windows laptop, though others have done so. But it is a good tool to keep handy and use every day, even in large GEP classes. Everything works reliably, smoothly and well, allowing the instructor to engage students creatively.

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New website on
Classroom Response Systems

If you are curious about the "clicker" technology, where students use individual wireless keypads to answer questions posed in lecture classes, you may want to visit our new website dedicated to these Classroom Response Systems.

We have comparisons and details on four of the major systems available today, including eInstruction (CPS), OptionPower, Quizdom, and Turning Point.

Classroom Response Systems can improve students' learning by engaging them actively in the learning process. Instructors can employ the systems to gather individual responses from students or to gather anonymous feedback. It is possible to use the technology to give quizzes and tests, to take attendance, and to quantify class participation. Some of the systems provide game formats that encourage debate and team competition.

These and other resources can be found at the website: <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/crs>.

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Observing the Agony of Divorce (It's Also a Good Teaching Tool)
Bruce W. Flower

Bruce Flower is an Instructor in the Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies. He has been on the Legal Studies faculty since 1999 and also serves on the Orange County traffic bench. He practiced law for over 34 years before retiring from practice.

Experiential learning has been an important component of most of my Legal Studies courses. My experiences address one aspect of the learning process that has broad application. My colleagues who are able to introduce students to an experiential engagement may find these suggestions useful.

Very unscientific surveys suggest up to 85% of Legal Studies students aim at legal or law-related careers. Given that statistic, I decided to integrate theory and practice in several of my courses, even though early in my UCF teaching career, I was strongly advised by other faculty not to require off-campus academic engagements of students, as they would turn on me. Well, as a lawyer with reasonably tough skin, I decided to include a courthouse observation component in my Domestic Relations Law class. The results have been at once surprising, predictable, moving, and extraordinarily successful, with most students reporting the off-campus learning component as the one exercise that not only tied the course together, but also gave the students new and deeper insights into themselves, their communities, and the integration of practicing law within judicial and real life contexts.

Specifically, students are required to spend not less than 3 1/2 hours in observing actual court or court–related functions. The teaching strategy is to provide the students first with several weeks of legal theory, how theory is put into practice, statutory provisions, and trends in domestic relations law. Every effort is made to give students a realistic, but not complete, overview of what they will observe.

The observation of different domestic relations procedures will result in a variety of student reactions, keeping in mind there are no "winners" in a divorce case. In fact, recent preliminary literature suggests the surfacing of a myriad of physical problems and other health issues, sometimes decades after and directly related to the emotional trauma of a divorce. There are indications life expectancy actually decreases after a divorce.

Suggested student observations include:
a) Uncontested final hearings (one hour max); the old maxim—"you've seen one, you've seen a thousand" applies.
b) Domestic violence injunction returns (one hour max)— These surprisingly also tend to the routine and boring. Of-

ten the person obtaining the injunction falls in love again with the respondent and fails to appear for the return hearing, which is held within 30 days of the original injunction.

c) Temporary hearings—Usually a case of "he said, she said," with the judge trying to sort things out.

d) Divorce trials—The best lawyers, for the most part, rarely go to trial since they know the law, know the facts, they have control over their clients, and they are able to settle cases in ways that are acceptable to all.

e) Mediation sessions—It is virtually impossible to go to trial without first attempting mediation, which is successful over 80% of the time. Students have the opportunity to observe the nuts and bolts of a divorce involving real people and real issues in a mediation session.

Most students have preconceived notions about what happens in a courthouse and what happens in domestic relations cases. After the academic preparation, the experiential drill begins with the first step of the experiential learning cycle; i.e., having an experience. This is immediately followed by Step 2, a reflection on that experience (What happened? How did I feel during the activity? How did others seem to handle the situation?) For some, just going through courthouse security and walking into the building is a daunting experience. Others, having visited courthouses previously for a variety of reasons, are a little less intimidated. In any event, the idea is to begin the experience before arrival, to integrate preconceptions into the understanding gained. In other words, students are expected to not only have the experience, but also to grasp its meaning. Failure to grasp the meaning of the experience results in a lost opportunity to grow, to change, and to shift perspectives.

Next, students are expected to generalize their own debriefing into concepts. (What do I make of what I observed? How might I apply these insights to future situations? How do others apply them?) Lastly, they are expected to apply their learning in a repeat of the experience or in real life. (What will I do as a result?)

An examination of the experience from an academic perspective is also essential. In so doing, students should be able to compare and contrast theory with what actually happens in the domestic relations environment (usually not the same). Students should be able to identify which elements of the course materials are relevant to the experience, identify the similarities and differences between student perspectives on the observation as discussed in class and as it actually unfolded, and identify challenges or reinforcements to prior understandings.

Since most of our teaching is at the knowledge and comprehension level of Bloom's Taxonomy, this experiential opportunity allows students to move to higher levels within the taxonomy, with the brightest students writing at the synthesis level.

I supply the knowledge and comprehension base and some of the skills of domestic relations law practice. Students will observe the balance of the skills and bring their own attitudes to the table. This direct involvement and resulting conclusions are the lessons.

The lessons learned are as diverse as the students. Perhaps a few student quotes will sufficiently summarize:

"The judges were able to see right through the lawyer maneuvering."
"The attorneys were prepared." "The attorneys were horrible."
"Since I came from a loving, close family, I had no idea how gut-wrenching divorces are."
"I learned why I hated my father for so many years and what I have to do to correct that."
"I do not want to practice family law." "I want to practice family law." "I want a better relationship with my parents."
"I realize how important a stable family is." "The spouse is in it for the money."
"The lawyers and the judge really tried to help." "The lawyers were stirring the pot."
"The children are the big losers in all of this."

I often write quotes applicable to the domestic relations environment on the board before class, One of my favorites is, "instead of ... until death do us part, we should practice... until death do your part."

The experiential learning component can be easily implemented in a variety of academic settings. I have included the experiential component in Domestic Relations Law, Law and the Legal System, Contracts, Civil Practice and Procedure, Criminal Procedure, and Administrative Law, all with similar positive results, and I have every reason to think instructors in other disciplines will see equivalent benefits.

New website on Syllabus Information

One of the primary documents in every course is the syllabus, yet few of us receive any suggestions in how to write an effective one.

We offer ideas on using the syllabus to plan your course, examples of typical statements for certain policies on your syllabus, and sample syllabi and other linked resources on the website.

Simply point your browser to: <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/syllabus>.

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the time was how many different ways you can say the same thing, give the same instructions, or tell the same story. In fact, something I learned in this class is that sometimes you can use the right words, but if framed in the wrong way, your message may not get heard.

In a way, learning to write technical documents is kind of like translating information into different languages. First, my group had to learn a language that enabled us to communicate quickly and efficiently with each other, while working out our differences in a constructive manner along the way. Then we had to translate information we understood as a group into a form that was appropriate for our agency contact person. One of our assignments from our professor was to set rules and guidelines for our communication style as a group because, as I'm sure you all know, it is unlikely you will ever find yourself in a group of five people who have the same writing style. Finally, we had to figure out the best way to translate our message into a form that our intended audience would understand, because if we couldn't connect to them, all of our hard work would be for nothing.

So how do you go about creating materials for people in a variety of workplace environments about a subject that some people know little to nothing about? Our group decided to start by asking them what they already knew, in this case what they knew about HIV/AIDS concerns and issues that may come up at work. We created an informal survey and gave it to people in a variety of workplaces. We used our results to give us an idea of the kind of information people already knew, and what they had no idea about, and used this as a guideline of what should go into our brochure. Even the smallest details, like the location of information within the brochure, and the form it would be presented in, down to color and font size was planned out based on how we felt our audience would respond to these seemingly insignificant details.

Attention to detail is another lesson that I am taking away from this course that I never really understood until I had to create something that was going to be used by "real" people. I had grown accustomed, as I am sure many students have, to using tried and true techniques that I knew would appeal to my professors, but real world audiences are usually not made up of college professors, and along that same line, real world presentations aren't usually aimed at an audience full of college students that are at least somewhat informed on the subject you're presenting to them. The work students do in Service-Learning courses cannot be replicated in any other type of class, because the opportunity to reach out to such a large and diverse audience cannot be replicated.

I'd like to close by reading another journal entry, my last journal entry in fact, dated April 12, 2005:

After going through the experience of a Service-Learning course, I can't believe that more courses and professors don't take advantage of this unique opportunity to expose undergraduate students to the challenging and rewarding process of providing their assistance, in the form of creat-

ing technical documents, to a non-profit or other community based organization. It seems so obvious a connection; students who need to complete coursework and would be making documents of this nature anyway, and community organizations which may otherwise not have the resources and technical expertise to create these documents. It is more definitely more work, but it may be a student's only chance to do something like this before they get out into the real world.

Faculty as Mentor

A certain privilege has traditionally been associated with the status of the faculty member: access to specialized knowledge, the prerogative to identify what is important to learn, the right to impart that knowledge to those who come to us to gain it, and the authority to judge if another has acquired appropriate learning. In conventional academic settings, the very expertise of the faculty has been framed by a set of boundaries that separated faculty from students. Faculty held the important knowledge, conveyed it to those who cared to know, and developed criteria for and carried out what was determined to be appropriate evaluation.

The presuppositions of such a model have been opened to debate by a range of issues and realities that now characterize our educational landscape. We live in a world where the question of what is important to know is not easily answered and where the amount of knowledge at least theoretically available to us continues to expand at a phenomenal rate: that is, in a world where such authority is fleeting. Even the supposedly clear and meaningful disciplinary conditions that informed so much of our own education and our identities as academic professions have been thrown into question. No thoughtful faculty person can know enough about what there is to know to make final claims about that knowledge.

Further, the institutions within which we work have dramatically changed. The range of students who enter our classrooms—in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, age, and life experiences-has expanded. It is nearly impossible to prejudge who will sit before us, what they already know, what they want to know, and what tools we might employ to most effectively help them learn. What we had taken for granted before (however appropriately or inappropriately) we cannot assume today.

Service-Learning Showcase Speech, Delivered on Service-Learning Day, 2005

Melody Bowdon and Diana Orem

Melody Bowdon is an Associate Professor in the UCF English Department. Service-learning in technical and professional communication is the focus of her research, teaching, and service. She is co-author with J. Blake Scott of *Service-Learning in Technical and Professional Communication* and she coordinates UCF's Graduate Certificate in Professional Writing.

Diana Orem recently graduated from UCF with a B.S. in Psychology. As an undergraduate, she was involved in research focused on neuropsychological aspects of schizophrenia and wrote her undergraduate thesis on the relationship between stress and memory function. She is involved in research assessing Service-Learning in the state of Florida. She will begin work on her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology this fall.

During the spring semester of 2005, Psychology major Diana Orem completed a Service-Learning section of ENC 3241, Writing for Technical Professionals, with Dr. Melody Bowdon. She gave the following speech to the more than 200 students, faculty members, administrators, and community partners who attended UCF's 2005 Service-Learning Student Showcase.

My name is Diana Orem, and I was in Dr. Bowdon's Technical Writing class this spring 2005, and I worked on a project with the East Central Florida AIDS Network on combating AIDS stigma in the workplace.

I want to talk to you about my experiences in a Service-Learning course, and I'd like to begin by reading you a real journal entry that I wrote as part of an assignment to keep a class journal. This was my first journal entry in fact, dated January 10, 2005:

Service-Learning has provided an answer to the age-old question put forth by all students: "When am I ever going to use this in real life?" Getting the opportunity to contribute to a non-profit organization using writing definitely perks up my motivation. As a psychology major (this is my last semester) pursuing higher education (Ph.D.), I feel I stand to gain a lot of practical and professional knowledge and experience in this course; especially if I'm involved in a project related to my field.

I'm pleased to know that the work I do in this class will most likely have a "real-world" purpose. I must admit that I've never been big on community service, but the reason is that I've never encountered a situation where academic services were solicited. I feel that writing is one of my strengths as a student and I know that my future career will involve a lot of writing. I know this class will involve a lot of work, but I'm starting to realize that "work" starts to seem less tedious when you get to work on something you're passionate about. My goal is to get involved in a project that is related to psychology and work with a group of people with similar interests and goals.

I wrote that entry three months ago, on the first day of classes of the spring semester. I have to admit, going into this class on the first day, I didn't even know what Service-Learning was until I read chapter one of our book. I took this class to fulfill a requirement so that I could graduate with a B.S. instead of a B.A., but I think the journal entry I read clearly reflects my initial motivation to get as much as I could out of this course because it offered me an opportunity that is rare to the undergraduate: to do something REAL. And when I think about the fact that I almost graduated from this university without getting the chance to do a project like this I realize that I would have really missed out, because Service-Learning courses do not just fulfill a credit to get you out of college, they prepare you for life after college. As a graduating senior, I feel as though I've finally been able to put the skills and knowledge I've acquired over the past four years to the test on one challenge that began on the first day of class and produced what you see on display here today.

The project I worked on was creating materials to promote awareness of stigma against people living with HIV/AIDS in the workplace. My group consisted of myself and 4 other members, and together we came up with the idea for targeting stigma in the workplace, because we wanted to choose a topic that we felt was sometimes overlooked in the larger campaign against stigma faced by PLWH/A's in general. We decided that creating a brochure would be an effective way to get our message out to a wide audience. Our vision is that companies in Central Florida will be made aware of this issue and choose to adopt our materials and incorporate them into standard job orientation procedures or when conducting anti-discrimination workshops. We believe that if we can educate employers and employees of some of the basic facts about HIV/AIDS transmission, as well as privacy laws and disability laws that currently protect PLWH/A's, we may be able to help prevent stigma that arises from basic misinformation and prejudices people may currently believe.

Of course, the finished product of the work undertaken in a Service-Learning class doesn't really tell the whole story of what it took to get there, so that's what I'd like to talk about. If I had to choose one thing that I feel I've learned more about in the class than anything else, it would be communication. Communicating effectively with my group members, my professor, the agency, and most importantly the target audience of our project has been a challenge I was not expecting when I enrolled in this course. I thought "Technical Writing" would be just that, creating documents that would be used for informational and instructional purposes. What I failed to realize at

The Alchemy of Teaching & Research

Tammie J. Kaufman

Tammie Kaufman is an Assistant Professor in the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. She has a diverse background in the hospitality industry and is in her eighth year of university teaching. Her research interests include consumer motivational aspects of vacation club management and heritage tourism.

Computers were newly installed in my classroom in 2005 and I wanted to figure out a way to effectively incorporate them into my teaching. The course I chose to innovate toward this end was Introduction to Hospitality Management. The stated course objective reads that this course will explore the many segments of the Hospitality Industry and provide the student with an overview of the various facets of services within the field and the diversity of career options available. With this objective in mind, I decided that utilizing the computers to increase the students' awareness of careers in the hospitality industry would be the most logical.

This is where my idea began and ended. Like many professors I have taken no formalized education classes. Most ideas that I bring to my class are introduced as group exercises, and I look to see, based on the reaction in class, whether students enjoyed the exercise or not. I was not sure how to measure the effectiveness of the idea and whether or not it was truly accomplishing the goal that I had set. My doctorate included several classes in multivariate statistical, qualitative research, theory construction, and research methodology. These tools I had reserved for my ongoing research in my discipline, not realizing the valuable toolbox that I had already available for my teaching effectiveness.

> *"How could I determine that the students had a better understanding of the hospitality careers? Survey them!"*

The epiphany occurred to me as I created a goal for the computer exercise, after I had determined what the objective would be. My objective would be to broaden the students' understanding of careers in the hospitality industry through the use of the computer in the classroom. The goal would be to have the students find careers in the hospitality industry through using a collection of hospitality career search engines on the computer. As I wrote down the goal, it occurred to me that this was feeling like a research project. That is when my research training kicked in, and I re-thought how I would measure the objective and goal that I had set in place. How could I determine that the students had a better understanding of the hospitality careers? Survey them!

With the giddiness of a child with a new toy, I brought in my research training and created a survey instrument to decipher whether my goal was met and how to make improvements.

First, I thought of the students enrolled in the class itself. It continues to be a collection of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, both hospitality majors/minors and non-majors. In my survey I made certain that I had all categories available so I could review and see if I needed to make the assignment more complex or simplify it based on their year in school and their level of interest in the subject matter. I also knew that, given the experimental nature of the exercise, I needed to give opportunities for the students to voice feedback in open ended questions.

The advantage of having a survey guiding me in the class exercise with the computers was that it helped me focus and better gauge the effectiveness of the exercise while it was in process. I made mental notes of additional questions that should be added to the survey. The exercise was successful because, as always, students enjoy a break from the ordinary class lecture. However, as with any class exercise, I saw room for improvement.

After a few days I surveyed the students in class and I entered the data in SPSS. What I found out was that they had valuable suggestions that will help me improve the exercise in the open feed back section, and in the close-ended section of the survey, I found a way to make the exercise more meaningful given the diverse audience.

What I found is that the non-majors thought that the exercise was more helpful than the majors/minors did. This made me realize that, while I was introducing new career options to the non-majors via the computer exercise, to the majors/minors it was "old hat." The information gave me the feedback I needed to improve the exercise and truly meet the objective that I had set of broadening the student's understanding of careers in the hospitality industry through the use of the computers in the classroom.

The update to this exercise that I will incorporate in future classes will be to place students in groups based on whether or not they are hospitality majors/minors. The majors/minors will be given a more extensive computer exercise where they can utilize their prior experience, and the non-majors will be given the same exercise that was previously performed in class. Each will present to the class the results of what was found on the computer, ensuring that both groups get a broader understanding of the hospitality careers available.

Of course I will survey the students again to see if I am meeting my objective for the exercise. With this new-found knowledge of the connection of research and teaching, and how to use my research training in improving my teaching, I will continue to find ways in my other classes to make certain that all students have a chance to reach their fullest potential.

Permutations of the "Learning Cycle"
Kevin Yee

Kevin Yee is an Academic Support Coordinator at the Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning, where he pursues his interests in interactive teaching, language and culture in the classroom, GTA development, and outreach to adjunct faculty. His research lately has focused on international faculty members and GTAs teaching in the American post-secondary setting.

In our non-credit graduate-level offering called "Preparation for College Teaching" given each semester, we face a thorny problem many professors have to grapple with: to what extent should students' first introduction to material come from the instructor as opposed to students encountering the ideas in their own reading before lecture? There are really only two choices. One method calls for the instructor to provide the introduction and framework for a given set of material, with the idea being that additional reading afterward serves as a review and a deepening of the knowledge. The other route is to ask students to read about a topic prior to it being discussed in class.

The latter option has the advantage that students will, at least in theory, come to each class session armed with good foundational knowledge upon which the instructor can build. Alternately, they arrive full of inquisitiveness if the reading provokes thought. Even in the worst-case scenario, if the reading manages to confuse the students, they still come to class engaged and bursting with questions. But there are potential risks too. What if students do not actually do the reading? Can instructors trust that students will pull the proper ideas out of the reading if they haven't been given a context ahead of time?

Despite these concerns, we structured our Summer 2005 course in the fashion of the second option. Among other reasons, we wanted to appeal to the students' desire to learn rather than try to assume they wouldn't learn without direct tutelage. We enjoyed a semester of highly engaged students actively examining teaching practices, curricular decisions, and classroom interactions even right there in our own class, which was intentionally held up as a model for discussion and dissection. As the course ended students were effusive with their praise but also did not hold back when offering suggestions for improvement. Surprisingly, they spoke with a nearly unified voice in calling for a different model of content delivery, with several claiming they would have benefited from having the material introduced in class before they went home to engage it with their reading. A few even used the vocabulary of a "flaw" in our course design.

Consequently, we shifted in Fall 2005 to the other model, and now hold class discussions on new topics before the students encounter that material in their readings. We contextualize as best we can, massaging the curriculum constantly to squeeze out maximum interactions and student engagement. To our surprise, we've found that this group of students does not display the same enthusiasm as the summer group. They seem less prepared in the face to face discussions, do not incorporate much of the readings into their postings to the electronic discussion board, and do not show the same energy and enthusiasm of the prior group. While each assembly of individuals inevitably yields a unique dynamic, the differences were so dramatic when compared to the most recent class that we struggled to find causes. Like so many problems in education, this one seemed to have more than one possible culprit. It's likely that the change from summer semester to fall semester accounts for some of the differing results; students have less time to dedicate to our class during the fall. But the switch in the nature of the content delivery is also a prime candidate to explain the results.

One particularly likely explanation: the students in summer were more engaged because having to struggle with the material before any introduction or contextualization by the instructors may have made it more difficult for them, but also more vibrant and more interesting at the same time. By not having the material clearly explained, they faced cognitive dissonance, a known motivator for learning under certain conditions. The inconsistencies (dissonance) between attitudes, beliefs, and practices they encountered by doing readings and activities without an instructor's roadmap may have led to frustration, but it turns out to have been a particularly useful brand of frustration. It motivated them, and they came to each

> *"It motivated them, and they came to each class feeling highly engaged."*

class feeling highly engaged. Perhaps we ought to be looking not to eliminate all frustrations from the student experience, but to maximize the right kinds of frustration.

Both models are built upon variations of constructivist foundations, with the intent that students will construct new ideas based on their past knowledge and experience. While the variant characterized by instructor-introduced content worked less effectively for us, it utilizes a belief that students will build on previously-acquired knowledge just as much as the other mode of content delivery.

It's become clear only in hindsight that the student complaints and frustrations from the summer course should not have been perceived as weaknesses in the course, but rather evidence of its greatest strength. Only highly engaged students would be cognizant enough about the meta-narrative (our class was about teaching itself) to voice their suggestions and concerns, and only students learning deeply from the course would reach this level of engagement. The lesson for us seems to be that having students perceive the course to be flawed, at least in this one way, is a "problem" devoutly to be wished.

Innovations for Hospitality Managerial Accounting
Kristopher Shoemaker

Kris Shoemaker is an Adjunct Instructor in the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. Kris's career in hospitality started in 1978 washing dishes for Days Inn. Kris is also the Assistant Business Manager at the Orange County Convention Center and the immediate past president of the Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals Mid-Florida Chapter. Kris believes in life-long learning and has several certifications in the hospitality and accounting areas.

I have been teaching Managerial Accounting for the Hospitality Industry since the Fall 2001 semester. The topic itself is not interesting to most students university-wide, or even to hospitality students whose interests lean more towards the operational vs. the bookkeeping side of the hospitality business. The students are hospitality students who must take this required accounting class. To that end, I had been struggling with several aspects of the instructing the students, such as 1) ideas on how to make the class more hands-on; 2) how to make the class more interactive; and 3) how to expand the students' computer skills in the use of Excel.

Two of my course goals are to develop my student's analytical skills in the area of Managerial Accounting and their ability to work productively with others and to develop leadership skills. In order to accomplish these goals, I had to make the class more hands-on, so I have created worksheets for each chapter. I have the students work the problems with each other in a team and then help me work the problems for the class by explaining how they would solve it. This change allowed the students to learn form each other and to participate in the class. Since I also have the students do team projects, this practice allows the team to work together to see their strengths and weaknesses before working on the team project for a grade. The results from the change seem to be positive with one challenge left to overcome—it does not work well in a fixed seating classroom.

To make the class more interactive, I have implemented a "pass the chalk" (actually it is a small foam rubber ball) game where I toss the ball to one student to answer a question and they toss it to a student of their choice to answer the next one. This change transferred the burden of calling on a student from me to the class and has made the classroom a bit more exciting as sometimes they toss the ball back to me. This change also keeps the students on their toes and resets their "attention clocks."

Another course goal is to develop my student's skill in using technology. To do so, I have set aside class time to go over the basic Excel skills needed to do the projects in class. I also meet with students after class to go over Excel issues. This aspect is still a "work in progress" as I am redesigning the Fall 2005 syllabus to include time in the computer lab. This change is extremely important as our students need to be able to use Excel when they graduate in order to be functional on their first day at their new job; and quite honestly, the students to date have not displayed much knowledge or ability in the use of Excel. I also require the students to use PowerPoint to give a five minute presentation on the team project.

While I started looking for assistance in the three areas previously noted, I was pleased to find a couple of other items I could change to make my class better. I have implemented a "one minute review" in the 4th or 5th week, when I have the students take time to answer three basic questions about how I am doing and what I could improve upon. Oddly enough, the students wanted more homework and worksheets, and less slides and lecture, which reinforced the observation of needing more "hands-on" type material. I have also developed a rubric showing how I grade projects which will be included in future syllabi. By providing the rubric in advance, I will focus the students' attention on certain elements, and the rubric will provide me with logical and defensible grading criteria.

Teaching Related Conferences

College Teaching and Learning Conference
January 2-6, 2006
Lake Buena Vista, Florida
http://www.wapress.com/DWMain.htm

Learning Community Commons: Creating a Culture of Success in Math and Science
February 15-17, 2006
Miami, Florida
http://www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/eventInfo.asp?eid=158

Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference
March 1-2, 2006
West Lafayette, IN
http://www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/showcase/index.cfm

SITE 2006 Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education
March 20-24, 2006
Orlando, Florida
http://www.aace.org/conf/site

International Conference on College Teaching and Learning
April 10-14, 2006
Jacksonville, Florida
http://www.teachlearn.org

The Teaching Professor Conference 2006
May 19-21, 2006
Nashville, TN
http://www.teachingprofessor.com/2006_Conference