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## ***Saving the World: If Not Our Responsibility, Then Whose?*** **Ronnie Hawkins**



Ronnie Hawkins is an Associate Professor in the Philosophy Department. She received her M.D. from the University of Florida, did a residency in

anatomic pathology at Yale, and got her Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Florida. She teaches bioethics, environmental ethics and philosophy, philosophy of science, and existentialism, among other courses. She looks forward to seeing significant paradigm change in human society very soon, and thinks academics have a responsibility to “academicize” the various elephants in our living room so as to guide us toward making good judgments about our future actions.

The August issue of *Faculty Focus* contained two essays addressing Stanley Fish’s talk here in the spring, based on his book *Save the World on Your Own Time*, and both of them make some very good points. Doug Evans quite rightly asserts that, when he teaches History of Christian Thought and Culture, his approach is to instruct and grade on the basis of what Fish would call an “academic” treatment of the material—what the beliefs and rituals of people in particular historical and cultural contexts have been and have become—rather than to “transform” or indoctrinate them into a Christian, or any other, personal belief system. Trudi Morales, on the other hand, raises the very legitimate question, “As a teacher, do I not have an obligation to call a spade a spade?”

Stanley Fish first came to my attention for his role in what has been called the “Sokal hoax,” a curious affair in which physicist Alan Sokal’s parody of postmodernist thought was published

as a serious article in the journal *Social Text*; Fish was at the time executive director of Duke University Press, the journal’s publisher, and found himself in the embarrassing position of defending the apparent gullibility of its editors in thinking Sokal was on their side of what they dubbed the “Science Wars”—a debate about the socially constructed nature of scientific knowledge. Since I missed Fish’s lecture here at UCF, I checked out his book, and, like Evans and Morales, I find much in it both to agree and to disagree with. I see great value in Fish’s concept of academicization: “an idea or a policy is subjected to a certain kind of interrogation—what is its history? how has it changed over time? . . . what are the arguments for and against it?”—an intellectual process whereby “its partisan thrust will have been blunted, for it will become an object of analysis rather than an object of affection” (pgs. 24-25). When I teach ethics, for example, my exam questions ask, not for my own or my students’ opinions, but rather “what did Aristotle (or Kant, or Mill, or perhaps Arne Naess) have to say about how we humans ought to live?” On the other hand, one of my basic assumptions when I enter the classroom is that my students are all capable of functioning as autonomous epistemic and moral agents (an idea that seems strangely lacking in Fish’s book), as are we faculty members, and that developing the skill of reaching a kind of “closure” on the big-picture facts regarding a situation and making a good judgment regarding what actions should be taken on that basis is something that we should both foster and model.

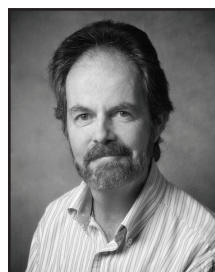
Given his familiarity with the issue of social construction, I was surprised at how much Fish seems to take for granted in the way our present society is constructed socially, how willing he is to accept the “compartmentalization” of knowledge rather than emphasizing our active human role in shaping what we do and questioning our current conceptual framework on the basis of all that has been learned, through the various academic disciplines, over the course of the last century. While he construes our academic “job” to be that of conveying particular bodies of knowledge to our students and equipping them with

“analytical” skills, nowhere do I see a recognition of the importance of “synthesis,” a counterbalancing intellectual activity that has languished over past decades, leaving us knowing more and more about less and less and lacking an adequate grasp of how it all hangs together. Yes, scientific (and other disciplinary) knowledge is, like other forms of human endeavor, something we humans collectively “construct,” and thereby fallible and subject to influence by social forces. What it is “about,” however, is a common reality that we all share and that in fact sustains our human lives: we are biological organisms inhabiting a finite planet, upon which certain sorts of physical regularities and ecological relationships are observable and appear to pertain broadly. The power of a “postmodern” perspective lies in its self-reflexivity: we can come to see ourselves as the agents who are responsible for the ways in which we organize ourselves socially, and who are capable of restructuring our own patterns of living, but not the physical and biological realities on which our lives depend. I would submit that synthesizing our hard-won, discipline-specific knowledge into a coherent vision of the whole, including our human place within it, is now an essential part of our “job” as academics, as is imparting that integrated vision to our larger society as well as to the students in our classes.

So when, for example, I discover Fish largely agreeing with the descriptive framing of our situation by Mark Taylor (even as he disagrees with Taylor’s “prescriptive conclusion”) in his assertion that “[t]he critical activities of the humanities, arts, and sciences are only possible if they are supported by the very economic interests their criticism so often calls into question” (p. 99), I find Fish to be still operating within a dangerously limited field of vision. Our “economic interests” themselves only exist within the context of a certain type of human social reality, and human social organization in any form exists only because it is supported by a biosphere; to suppose the reverse is the case is to put the ontological cart before the ontological horse. Moreover, if we reify these “economic interests” in such a way as to impute agency to them rather than to ourselves, and then proceed to obey “their” dictates, we may end up not only with an increasingly dysfunctional society but an impoverished planet incapable of sustaining human life in any form. Since the humanities, arts and sciences embody our species’ best efforts to understand and grapple with our common predicament, those who work within them are best situated to guide a reconstruction of our social reality in line with an intelligently updated worldview. If “saving the world” isn’t part of our job description, then, pray tell, whose job might it be?

## ***Preparing Graduating Seniors for Entry into the "Real" Clinical World Using a Boot Camp Model***

**L. Timothy Worrell  
Melanie McDonough**



Tim Worrell is an Associate Professor in the Department of Health Professions. He joined the faculty on a part-time basis in 1973 and became a full time faculty member in 1976. His clinical specialties include invasive and non-invasive cardiopulmonary diagnostics.



Melanie McDonough has been an Instructor and Director of Clinical Education for the Cardiopulmonary Sciences Program in the Department of Health Professions since 2003 and was an adjunct faculty member for the program from 1995-2003. She is currently serving as President of the Florida Society for Respiratory Care. Her clinical specialties include adult critical care and advanced life support systems.

Students in the UCF Cardiopulmonary Sciences Program who are preparing to graduate and enter the profession of Respiratory Care face an enormous amount of paper-work, credentialing examinations, and state licensure. This can be a daunting experience for many students and there are many mistakes that graduates may make which can affect their ability to gain immediate employment after receiving their diplomas. In an effort to address these issues, the program developed and implemented a series of annual workshops to assist these graduating seniors in this transition from student to licensed clinician. The program is based on a model in which students are engaged in an intense series of lectures and workshops that cover a wide variety of topics revolving around the process of preparing for this major life event. Due to the intense nature of this program, the faculty decided to name it “Respiratory Care Boot Camp.” Students enrolled in this boot camp are immersed in presentations pertinent to newly graduated respiratory therapists facing the first licensing examinations of their careers.

In order to capture the majority of new graduates entering the profession in the Central Florida area, the decision was made to include soon-to-be graduates of all three respiratory care programs in the area. The three institutions responsible for implementing the boot camp are the University of Central Florida, Valencia Community College, and Seminole Community College. All three of these programs graduate

students every year. The boot camp is scheduled approximately one week before graduation so that the information presented will be fresh and current in the minds of these students. It is organized as an all-day (8 hour) event on Friday and Saturday. The students attend information sessions and workshops covering topics such as employment seeking skills, professionalism in the workplace, interviewing and résumé writing strategies, and licensure/credentialing issues. In addition to these content areas, other sessions provide the students with content required by the State of Florida Board of Respiratory Care for all graduates of accredited programs in Respiratory Care applying for licensure in Florida. The required content areas include a two-hour session covering prevention of medical errors, a three-hour session on HIV/AIDS, and a two-hour session on Disaster Preparedness. These three areas must be completed before the graduate can apply to sit for the credentialing exam required for state licensure. An additional series of lectures on a variety of clinical topics is also included in the boot camp. The topics include such items as current concepts in treating thoracic injuries, treatment of pediatric emergencies, and current concepts in mechanical ventilation of the adult. The clinical workshops are presented by area physicians and respiratory care professionals with extensive knowledge and interest in their topics. At the conclusion of each day's sessions, a course evaluation is conducted to determine participant satisfaction. Surveys are conducted with the students, physicians, program faculty and employers in the community. The results of these evaluations have been extremely positive each year.

Upon completion of the boot camp program, graduating seniors feel they are better prepared to pass the national credentialing exams, apply for licensure, interview for a job, and practice safe and effective advanced respiratory therapy. This program has been very successful and has generated much interest throughout the state of Florida. Several other respiratory care programs in the state have inquired about the possibility of involving their students in the Central Florida boot camp. Other respiratory care programs have also inquired about the possibility of reproducing what we have done here within their own programs. The concept of the boot camp may have applications outside of our discipline, and we encourage other disciplines to consider implementing such a program if it seems applicable.

The Faculty Sustainability Alliance is a group of UCF faculty members interested in developing and sharing curriculum innovations around sustainability and UCF's Unifying Theme of the environment and global climate change. If you are interested in participating, our next meeting is Wednesday, November 4, 12:30-1:30 at the Faculty Center, CL1-207. We also encourage you to visit the web site for the Unifying Theme at <http://ut.ucf.edu/> where you will find resources for students and faculty, an events calendar, and a weblog where you and your students can share ideas and resources.

## ***Sustainability, for Real***

**Peter J. Jacques**



Peter Jacques is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science. He received his Ph.D. from Northern Arizona University in Political Science, with an emphasis on global environmental politics and sustainability. He teaches sustainability (PUP4204) and other environmental political science courses. He has published a new book, *Environmental Skepticism: Ecology, Power, and Public Life* this year through Ashgate Press.

In this essay I will make three propositions. If we are to concern ourselves with sustainability in a substantial, non-token way, then:

1. Education and intellectual contributions will be essential for leading and creating sustainable norms/institutions and political-economy and for creating essential social capital and institutions.
2. Education in sustainability involves self-reflection and the acknowledgement of both individual and collective responsibility.
3. Education in sustainability inherently involves asking questions about purpose and meaning—what are we to sustain exactly? Who/what are allowed to be considered important enough to matter? These are key questions well suited to a broad set of pedagogical goals and exercises across disciplines and fields.

Ultimately, sustainability for real is learning to live within the limits of Earth systems, amongst a plurality of human and non-human groups around the world and across time. Clearly, we are faced with tremendous challenge and opportunity right now. There are a number of global and regional structural changes to ecology that are a-historic from the human vantage. We have significantly altered the carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus cycles. We have launched the 6th Great Extinction, largely forced by planet-wide changes in land and water use which hold further implications as we have doubled the human economy and the human population several times in the last 200 years. Within the century, there are probably going to be 50% more people on the earth, most of them desperately poor and suffering in the exploding slums around the world.

We are at a monumental place where educators and universities, cities and countries, and well as regions are thinking about sustainability as a fundamental imperative. Students who are introduced to the ideas of sustainability in any of their classes (preferably multiple overlapping experiences) are going to be the intellectuals, citizens and



professionals thinking and working in these regions. If we give them some tools to work with, perhaps they will learn to live within the means of ecological services.

Ignoring the life support systems found in ecology is a danger warned about by scholars who study the rise and fall of civilizations or the rise and decline of “world systems.” Today’s world is different though in that we are more globally connected (and dependent) and use technology in many ways that may help us work through changes or, on the other hand, may cause more environmental vulnerability. We have a serious opportunity and responsibility to help prepare our students for some complex problems that work across groups of people with different knowledge bases and values.

Rather than placing hope in incumbent politicians or captains of industry who have much vested in the status quo, I am confident in the energy and thinking that can occur in our classrooms and in the larger university experience. It is here in that cumulative moment that educators might lend ways to think about problems and create knowledge that our students will take into new terms of office or new industries. One of the most promising ways to introduce sustainability issues is through experiential learning where the curriculum supports and frames student service in the field, where they work with people and connect with organizations working for the public interest. The knowledge they take from our classes to their developing networks that start in college creates social capital, which we know has been eroding in the US. In the development of social capital (simplified as knowledge + social networks), trust and mutual support (indeed compassion) meets with training. Social capital may be the core foundation for institutions (formal/informal rules) we make for ourselves, including how to live within certain limits.

While education may not necessarily solve the problems of sustainability, it builds the capacity for solutions. In Paul Wapner’s words, we may need “wild thinking” to spur on contemplation of new problems, including a reconsideration of the human place on Earth. This means interrogating notions like a human-centered universe or a paradigm that views people (or worse, some people in particular) so separate from ecology that they are “exempt” from its cycles, pressures, limits and conditions, like evolution and demise. This wild thinking may not be “new” thinking; in fact, in sustainability studies, the field is increasingly realizing that indigenous knowledge may hold important ideas that have been ignored, or much worse, annihilated. Wild thinking is also grounded in traditions of thought—think of any recognized iconic genius (e.g., Da Vinci) and we see the new ideas sprouting from fertile soil of listening and learning. That soil is our classroom and curriculum, and the university experience. Wild thinking for us includes working with the UCF Unifying Theme and working cooperatively across UCF to engage student learning through sustainability studies and experiential projects.

Sustainability also confronts us with self-reflection. What we do and how we live connect to how we consume ecologies. In addition we establish social norms that reinforce and justify individual behavior in a social collective. As educators, a “do as I say, not as I do” places responsibility on others much like in the classic “commuter problem” explained well by Steve Vanderheiden in *Atmospheric Justice* (Cambridge, 2008). The problem works like this: as a person who needs to get to work I have several options—let’s say I can drive, take the bus, or ride my bike. The fact that I will contribute only a trivial amount of pollution and congestion leads me to believe that driving my car—more convenient than a bus and less strenuous than a bike—will benefit me the most and will only burden others in a way that is not even noticeable. Thus, my responsibility to pollution and congestion is trivial. Of course, I am not alone in a car culture, and the thinking is nearly universalized, causing significant collective pollution and congestion. It is here that we realize that individual responsibility and collective responsibility go hand-in-hand. That is, if we are to think about sustainability for real, it can not just apply to our students or “someone else.” It is at this point I would call for anyone who lives within a 5 mile radius of campus to try to ride your bike if you are physically able. So long as you don’t get hit by a car, you will be better off in terms of health, and we will all begin to be better off in other cascading ways. Perhaps as we collectively commit to taking more individual responsibility, we can see knock-on political challenges to a car culture, and that would not be trivial. Similar cases can be made for evaluating how we eat, our engagement with materialism and consumer goods, energy consumption, the built environment, and other issues that just might eventually prompt restructuring our communities for more sustainable overall consumption.

I will conclude with the most important proposition. Sustainability is sometimes thought of as being too vague to be meaningful. Really, it is quite the opposite. As an essentially contested term, it is actually so full of meaning that it has multiple, and sometimes irreconcilable meanings to different people. This makes for a perfect educational problem where we have multiple answers and even multiple iterations of problems. We can confront each of these approaches and accomplish core pedagogical goals in testing comprehension, inspiring problem solving and analytical thinking, and considering other perspectives. More importantly we get to ask some really big-picture questions about *what we propose to sustain*. Why do we care if the global economy, or some corollary, is unsustainable? Sustainability is contentious not because we don’t understand general systems theory, or because we don’t have good enough science or history or philosophy to think about key environmental changes. It is contentious because of the general problem-structure of sustainability itself that centers on growth and limits. Infinite economic growth or population growth or growth in consumption in a finite system is a real tough trick. We are, therefore, faced to make choices—what is it that is important enough to be sustained, and how much do “others” matter in this consideration? And—who exactly are “we” in this question? “Others” may

be other communities, countries, generations, non-humans, landscapes—but if we are to work on sustainability, for real, then I propose we will have to get beyond thinking that recycling will be enough to save the world, that humans are the only ones that matter, that our trivial actions don't add up, or that deflecting, denying, or ignoring problems will get us and others on the planet much farther. If you are interested in thinking more about these questions and issues, and may even want to begin exploring how to apply sustainability issues to your courses, we have several options for you through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning:

1. We have a sustainability teaching circle every other Wed, 12:30-1:30, October 14th and 28th.
2. I am serving as Sustainability Fellow with the goal of helping instructors—especially those who may not be trained in environmental affairs—to incorporate sustainability into their courses, and working one-on-one with you.
3. The Office of Experiential Learning can help you engage your students with your curriculum through hands-on projects that fit across a wide band of pedagogical goals (they are at 3-2667).
4. You may propose course innovations on sustainability issues for the Faculty Center Winter and Summer Conferences.

## ***Making Movies: An Alternative Approach for Presenting Research***

**William B. Russell III**



William B. Russell III is Assistant Professor of Social Science Education in the Department of Teaching and Learning Principles. He serves as the Social Science Education Ph.D. coordinator and teaches social science education courses. William also serves as the executive director for The International Society for the

Social Studies ([www.theISSS.org](http://www.theISSS.org)) and is the editor of *The Journal of Social Studies Research* ([www.theJSSR.com](http://www.theJSSR.com)). He has authored three books and over twenty-five peer-reviewed journal articles related to social studies education.

**A**CTION! Research related activities and assignments are a core component of most college classes. The research related activities and assignments are traditionally presented in research paper form and/or class presentation. The class presentation typically is accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation. These strategies have been found to be efficient and effective, but, to many students, they are considered boring and redundant. Students are conditioned to write research papers and often expect a research paper and class presentation to be a staple of any college course.

Thus, I started implementing an alternative approach for presenting research in an attempt to motivate, excite, and stimulate my students all while promoting critical thinking, furthering content knowledge, and sharpening technological skills. I did this by allowing students to present research as a movie, documentary, and/or educational video. Students would research a topic and make a cinematic masterpiece. Having students make a movie is interesting; however, it is not a simple project. Making a movie requires students to learn the technological skills needed to create a movie, but also requires a vast amount of research, writing, and organizational skills, as well as creativity.

Making movies provides an additional skill set to students. In addition, the relevant technology allows the content to be delivered via a medium that is stimulating to the eyes and ears. Hollywood movie makers conduct vast amounts of research for their films, whether the research is about the content, time period, setting, or characters. Moreover, documentary film makers take research to another level. One could think of a documentary film (e.g. *Bowling for Columbine*) as a visual research paper. Ideally, this is what students will be doing in my class, but on a much smaller scale and, of course, budget.

The technology is user-friendly and the process, once familiar, is quite simple. I allow students to select a topic of interest to them and related to the course (with my approval). Once a topic has been selected, students conduct research in the same fashion as if they were writing a paper and/or planning a presentation. Students then organize their objectives, thoughts, supporting evidence, etc., as a script and/or a storyboard. Once this is complete, students have the equivalent of a rough draft. Students then capture live video footage or still images that correspond with the content of the movie. Students record a narrative and add music that strengthens the movie and heightens the viewer's senses and emotions. The images, narrative, music, and/or live footage should further the viewers' knowledge and understanding of the topic, while enhancing the viewing experience.

For this activity, I encourage students to use Windows Movie Maker, which is standard on all computers with Windows XP or newer and can be downloaded from the Microsoft website ([www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)). However, for individuals who do not have Windows Movie Maker, other options include iMovie for Mac users and Adobe Premiere. Movie Maker is user-friendly and allows individuals the freedom to import various types of media, edit that media, and publish the final product in numerous formats. Using Movie Maker is extremely easy and is similar to making a PowerPoint presentation; however, for those not familiar with Movie Maker, see the teacher-friendly Windows Movie Maker help section.

Overall, students are obtaining valuable research, organizational, writing, and technological skills, all while exploring their creative side. The movie-making experience fosters creativity and research via a medium that is relevant to students' everyday lives. The results have not only been

academically stronger, but more original and enjoyable. Furthermore, many of my teaching evaluations include positive comments regarding this alternative approach to presenting research. As well, this provides my face-to-face and online students an equal opportunity to present research in a manner in which they find practical, enjoyable, and relevant.

THAT'S A WRAP!

## ***Interactive Expeditions—Experiential Teaching and Learning Using an Immersive, Real Time Video Platform***

**Phil Peters**

**Rani Vajravelu**



Phil Peters is an Associate Professor of Production Design in the School of Visual Art and Design. He was raised in Arizona where he developed his passion for the desert southwest and returns as often as possible. He holds a BA degree in design from Humboldt State University and a MFA degree in design

from the University of Montana. Phil's career as a film production designer and computer game producer/designer spans over twenty five years. His designs include the Emmy winning series *Northern Exposure* and numerous other film and television projects in both the United States and Australia.



Rani Vajravelu is an Instructor in the Biology Department. She has a Ph.D. in Botany and has been teaching at UCF since 1999. Her passion for teaching Ethnobotany has led to the development of two new courses: Culinary Botany Across the Cultures and Medicinal Botany. Rani has just published

a new book, *Ethnobotany: A Modern Perspective*.

During the summer of 2009, Mr. Phil Peters from Digital Media (presently Visual Art & Design) and Dr. Rani Vajravelu from Biological Sciences teamed up to develop an interdisciplinary project called "Interactive India: Harmony with Plants and People." This was a unique research and development project focused on offering experiential teaching and learning of field-based courses through an immersive, real-time, interactive video platform that links geographically remote expedition teams with any web-connected student/participant worldwide.

This project is an excellent example of interdisciplinary collaboration that accomplished the research and teaching goals of two faculty members who had different needs in their discipline. We individually share our experiences with this project.

### **Phil Peters writes about this project:**

My research in the Department of Digital Media has centered on the development of Interactive Expeditions (INTX) for the past 3 summers. Of all, the Interactive India project was the most ambitious expedition prototype to date. During July 2009, we prepared non-stop for our three-week trip to India. From August 4th-24th, our real-time roving webcasts traversed the Delhi region and later moved on to Rishikesh in the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains. The six interactive webcasts streamed high-quality live, interactive video through our global network directly to students at multiple universities, professionals, and the general public in India and the United States.

This was made possible through a partnership between the UCF Department of Digital Media and TracStar Systems Inc.—the world's industry-leader for mobile broadband satellite antennas based here in Orlando. The goal of our research and development project was to take our mobile webcasting platform much closer to commercialization.

The Interactive India expedition had the following objectives:

- Strengthen the relationship between the university and private industry partner by assisting TracStar with its global business initiative for expansion into India.
- Evaluate the educational impact of Interactive Expeditions' technology on the distance learning market by creating training models and empirically evaluating their effectiveness.
- Test the mobility of Interactive Expedition's equipment, personnel, and deployment procedures in a developing country under adverse circumstances to determine best practices that can be applied to future expeditions.
- Continue the productization of the Online Portal and in-field wireless Teacher's Tablet software.
- Continue refinement of the Field Kit engineering for optimal mobility and durability.
- Create and foster a multi-university collaborative learning environment that is necessary to prove the profitability of our commercial model.

Our project has effectively demonstrated the following:

- Real-time e-Learning classroom environment from a remote location,
- Live, two-way audio/video and chat,
- "Untethered" mobile, in-field audio/video configuration,
- International remote webcast capability, and
- Simultaneous media recording and archiving for future use.



Through our strategic partnership between TracStar Systems and UCF, my research team has delivered not only a proof-of-concept, but also the feasibility and framework for a successful business model. Multiple scenarios exist for developing the entrepreneurial potential of this project. As with any project, it is the quality and the commitment of the team that makes it all possible. For the past two years, Department of Digital Media graduate students have been gaining invaluable experience and launching their digital media careers here in Central Florida through participation in this project. The team is currently working out of UCF's newly formed Center for Emerging Media in Downtown Orlando. UCF truly does "stand for opportunity," and Interactive Expeditions is a growing success story for UCF.

#### **Rani Vajravelu writes about this project:**

"I wish I could show you this plant right now" is something I oftentellmyBOT3800students. ThiscoursecalledEthnobotany focuses on the cultural connections of plants with indigenous people's lives as food, beverage, medicine, fiber, and more. I always missed the fun of bringing live field experiences to a course of this nature that lacked a lab component. This was a dream impossible for me and my students because most of the plants I was referring to were indigenous to exotic lands; one can only see these plants in the field if one travelled across several thousand miles. Obviously, this can not happen in a large indoor classroom without adding the cost and time.

My deep-set passion for bringing the outdoor experience to my classes introduced me to an exciting summer project that was started by Phil Peters. Together we developed a model project where future students could be exposed to live, field experiences that are centered anywhere in the world. When the option of transporting an entire set of students to the field is not feasible, a better alternative would be to bring the field to the students with the help of technology.

Once the team agreed to work together on a common goal, we individually focused on developing the project. My role as the "content expert and on-line host" put me in charge of developing the course content for live, field-based lectures and the web content for online resources. I prepared the lesson plans and arranged interviews with local experts for six, 90-minute webcasts that would go live through the satellite. The online contents were maintained with the help of two graduate students, Alex Katsaros and Adam Lanz from the Digital Media department.

While delivering lectures, I was connected to the virtual audience from all over the world; most of them were from U.K., Spain, India, and the United States through a device called Teacher's Tablet. About 200 participants were logged on each time, and about 50% of them actively interacted with each other and with me by asking questions. Phil and I had set up separate sessions during lectures for taking audience questions. Throughout the interactive time, I could pick the questions one at a time as in a real classroom, and I could answer them back immediately. Through this technology

device, I could also see and hear the participants as they interacted with me.

India was chosen for this project because, as a developing country, most of the rural areas are still intact for field work. The use of herbal medicine is still widespread in many parts of India. A 5,000 year-old medical system called Ayurveda is primarily based on herbal sources like Rauwolfia and Withania that have become part of Western medicine as well. Many of these plants are intricately tied with India's rich culture and history and still grow wild at the Himalayan foothills. This is an example where I would have told my students, "I wish I could show you this plant right now." Instead, I said "here is the plant we are talking about" by showing the plant in the field while the students and I were separated by 10,000 miles and 9.5 hours of time difference.

The excitement of sharing this unique experience was mutual between the teacher and the students as I understood from reading the chat session that went on live at the same time. This experiential and immersive teaching and learning experience proved valuable in my model ethnobotany course and will fit in very well for similar courses that need field-based knowledge from any remote location.

### ***A Course in Creativity***

**Sybil St. Claire**



Sybil St. Claire is a Lecturer in the Department of Theatre. She is an American Association of University Women Fellow, and was voted Outstanding Professor of the Year at Santa Fe College. She is the recipient of an Outstanding Research and Creativity award at UCF, and the Drew Randall Courage and Passion award at Goddard College. As a teaching artist she has worked with Semester at Sea, Arts in Medicine, Theatre for the Deaf, and Theatre for Social Change.

A few years ago I was fortunate enough to be asked to help design a brand new graduate track for UCF, an MFA in Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA). We were clear from the beginning that we wanted the program to take a three-pronged approach, developing equally the artist, the scholar, and the educator in our students. To this end, we developed courses such as Theatre for Social Change, Dramatic Literature for Children, and Methods of Teaching Drama. Into this mix we threw a wild card course called Contemporary Topics in TYA. This class changed from year to year allowing for evolution in the field and for the expertise/interest of both the instructor and the students. One year the course might focus on Digital Storytelling, the next on Arts in Medicine, etc.

When the time came for me to teach this course, I wasn't at all sure where to take it. However, as the MFA in TYA had grown, it had become clear to me that we, like all graduate programs, were asking our students for essentially everything they possessed (and more); however, we were not teaching them how to give back to themselves. Which led me to the question, how do you teach others to nurture themselves so they can continue to give? From this question grew the idea to offer a course in Creativity. In designing the course, I took my inspiration from *The Artist's Way*, a book by Julia Cameron. This book is essentially a 12-step program for those who are trying to reclaim their artist. Ms. Cameron's basic tenets revolve around the idea that we are all artists and expressing ourselves creatively is essential to our health, happiness and harmony, yet we live in a time that devalues this higher aspect of our humanity.

**The class itself was simply called "A Course in Creativity." We met once a week for three hours and students were asked to undertake a wide variety of activities that involved self-reflection and self-disclosure. Drawing from learning theory that suggests we remember 10% of what we hear and 90% of what we do, negative self talk was examined through journaling, autobiographical investigation (geared towards unearthing lifelong patterns) was conducted through the creation of digital Life Stories, and personal workplace and lifestyle preferences were discussed seminar style utilizing a battery of open-ended psychological questions. Students were also required to keep a Creativity Notebook, to walk at least 20 minutes a day, and to make and keep Artist Dates (special times set aside to nurture their artist). These "dates" encompassed everything from spending time at museums to building sandcastles at the beach.**

Initially, the students were astounded by how difficult it was to find time for themselves, and they struggled with feelings of guilt, but soon they found they couldn't live without these dates and were thrilled to be able to bill it as "homework." They had begun a romance of sorts with themselves and quickly realized this relationship, like all relationships, required attention if it was to flourish. One student put it this way, "These little moments to do something that I want to do have become a cherished part of my week. I look forward to these dates and even the idea that they are coming up makes me a more productive person, as well as a happier person." While another wrote in her Creativity Notebook, "I suddenly feel like a real person again instead of a grad school machine."

In addition to these weekly rituals, students engaged in a series of projects. They were asked to build a Creativity Monster, which represented that which kept them from being creative. Sometimes these monsters were self-imposed. For instance, one student put together a 3-D sculpture that featured a bottle lying on its side with pills spilling out of it. On each pill she had written disparaging words others had said to her that she had internalized. Words like "stupid,"

"lazy," and "no talent." In her accompanying narrative she wrote, "The worst part is I have prescribed these words to myself." Many students took these monsters and hung "out of work" signs on them, or simply destroyed them after the fact. While others found that the act of representing their insecurities and fears in such a concrete form had somehow demystified them, rendering them insignificant.

Other projects included creating Power Masks, Toxic Relationship Collages, and Abundance Collages. Collages were not necessarily created from magazine clippings. Students dug into this project through multiple mediums using film, sculpture, painting, fabric, and writing. One student's toxic relationship collage explored how she had spent years cutting herself in an attempt to ease her pain. Through creating and sharing these collages students began to gain clarity on what was important to them, what and who they needed to stay away from, and how they wanted their futures to unfold. Personally, I was astounded and humbled by their brutal honesty, their growth (not just as artists but as human beings), and by their trust in the process, in the group, and in me.

Though my research has not been exhaustive I have been unable to find another graduate program that offers a class like this. I was fortunate to be afforded the chance to work with students who already claimed themselves as artists, yet I feel strongly that a class like this would benefit many other graduate programs, as well as undergraduate programs, regardless of their focus. Taking care of ourselves by proxy makes us better teachers, lawyers, psychologists, business leaders, doctors, etc. In facing our insecurities, and in learning how to make deposits into our own emotional bank accounts, we cannot help but become happier, healthier people who are equipped not only to give to ourselves but to give to others.

One of my students summed it up best in a final self-reflection paper, "This process has been far more difficult than I imagined but I have a new confidence in myself now and am simply more aware. Aware of my past, aware of my hopes and challenges, aware of how I put myself down, aware of how I can lift myself up—aware of me—and that is a scary and exciting place to be."



## ***The Rules of Parenting Applied to the Classroom***

**Reid Oetjen**



Reid Oetjen is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Management and Informatics and has been at the University of Central Florida since fall 2008. In addition to being a FCTL Faculty Fellow, Reid is a member of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Steering Committee, and also a member of the Student Conduct

Board. His research focuses on issues in long-term care, group practice management, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

As the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning Faculty Fellow for classroom management, I have been tasked with developing some new resources to help others throughout the university. After much thought, research, pondering, and trial and error, I have found that the best methods for classroom management are those that I have learned as a parent. You don't have to be a parent to use these simple rules; you just have to have had parents..., which should apply to most everyone.

### *Set Limits*

As a product of an upbringing by strict parents, rule number one is to set limits. Children (and human beings, in general) crave limits—it is one way that parents show their children that they care and love them. As a child, I did not always agree with this statement, but as a fairly new parent I have found that setting limits is critical to building a strong foundation of trust and respect. In the classroom, you need to clearly define the limits for your students. For instance, I invite my students to participate in class and debate controversial topics; however, I require that they follow a strict code of etiquette.

### *Establish Expectations*

Establishing clear expectations and guidelines and communicating them to children is important; otherwise, you will almost always be disappointed with the outcome. The same rule can be utilized when managing employees or working with students. You need to set clear expectations and guidelines regarding acceptable behavior; otherwise, you leave it up to interpretation by individual students.

You will want to establish clear expectations regarding academic achievement, integrity, classroom behavior, including classroom preparation, and communication standards. One of the best methods for achieving this is to send each student an email with the class expectations prior to the first meeting. Items to include are (1) preparation for class, (2) in-class behavior, (3) academic integrity as it applies to exams and other coursework, (4) and my responsibilities as

their professor in each of these areas.

### *Less is More*

Creating rules for the sake of rules is useless. Young children are no different than young adults, or older adults for that matter. Most of us can only remember four to five pieces of information at a time. As such, don't overload your students with meaningless rules, but choose the ones that are most important. For instance, I require students to use correct grammar and spelling in all written communication; however, whether they choose to use Arial or Times New Roman font is entirely their choice.

### *Answering the Why?*

Kids are infamous for their constant ability to ask "why!" If you ever spend time with a young child or recall when you were very young and inquisitive, you will quickly notice how often the word "why" comes up. The reason children ask "why?" is that they want to know how something works or the reason they are doing a particular task.

Students are no different than young children; they want to know why you want them to write a research paper or an essay on a particular topic. I find I get fewer complaints and more buy-in from students when I show how each assignment in the class applies to the real world in which the student will soon be working. For instance, I assign students in my long-term care class to write a one-page memo. When students work in the field healthcare administration, they will often write short memos to their subordinates; thus, writing concise and effective memos is an important skill.

### *Stick to Your Guns*

I had the fortunate (or perhaps unfortunate!) experience of having a mother who had an iron will. Once she laid down the gauntlet, there was no turning back. This same rule can be applied to the classroom in terms of your expectations for classroom behavior, deadlines, and the like. For instance, if you require your students to attend class and participate as part of their grade, make sure that you appropriately award points or deduct points from their participation grade; otherwise, they will assume that you do not enforce the other rules that you have established.

Here, again, it is helpful to relate your expectations to real world rules/expectations in your field of study. In the real world, if you don't show up or show up unprepared, you don't get second chances and there are real world consequences, such as a poor performance review or perhaps termination. The goal of any rule in the classroom should not be to punish, but to teach students and to help them learn by consequences.

### *Conclusion*

Just like parenting, I am continuously learning better methods and techniques—it's a lifelong learning process. As such, I offer these tips that have been useful to me, but by no means are they the only way to manage the classroom environment.

If you have questions or thoughts regarding any of the classroom management techniques mentioned, I invite you to the bi-weekly classroom discussions on classroom management at Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning.

## ***Writing for Professional Publications: A Chance to Share***

**Jeffrey Kaplan**



Jeffrey S. Kaplan is an Associate Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning Principles in the College of Education and a FCTL Advisory Board Member. He is the Director of the National Writing Project at UCF, Chapter Counselor for Kappa Delta Pi, and Associate Faculty Fellow for the UCF Academy for Teaching, Learning and Leadership.

As the Faculty Fellow for Writing for Professional Publications (2009-2010), I have the distinct privilege of working with many faculty members from across the university and in many disciplines. In the short period that I have occupied this chair, many faculty members have entered the Faculty Center, each looking for answers to their own questions about writing for professional publications.

Nothing gives me greater pleasure as an academic than to help colleagues find the right words, ideas and journals to share their expertise and research with a broader audience. Whether their manuscript will appear in a newsletter or a refereed publication, I enjoy helping colleagues nurture their desire to share beyond their immediate realm, a desire that is underscored by the need to put into words what they so deeply believe to be true and right for their own discipline. Writing can be the most fundamental obstacle that any emerging scholar must face when staring into the halls of academe. They think of the mountains of things they must do to achieve promotion and tenure—or just survive the daily push of living and teaching—and so, often, writing for professional publications is pushed to “the side” in favor of more immediate concerns. Yet, one cannot escape how important writing and publishing is to one’s academic career. It is the validation of our teaching and ultimately, of our own profession.

With this in mind, here are some techniques to help college educators become the productive academics that they wish to be. What follows are some “habits of mind” to help develop the skills to write for professional publications.

### **Writing and Writing Daily**

In our hectic lives, it is sometimes often difficult to find the time “to write.” Teaching, committees, and just plain

living often get in the way. Yet, when writing becomes part and parcel of your daily routine, it becomes an extension of who you are and what you do. Thus, I encourage all to set aside time, each and every day, to write. Even if it is just a little, you are expressing yourself on paper, clarifying your thoughts, and moving towards publication.

### **Writing and Outlining**

A sure-fire technique to spur your writing is to write outlines—write outlines of what you want to say and how you want to say it. If you know you are writing a research paper, write an outline of your paper and each day, as you have time, simply, begin to fill in the “blanks.” You will find that having an outline keeps your mind focused, your writing defined, and your ideas organized.

### **Writing and Sharing**

Nothing happens in isolation—not even good writing. Editors, reviewers, and readers all contribute towards making writing and publishing an inevitable event. I always encourage academics to find colleagues with whom you can share your writing. Having someone else ‘eyeball’ your work, sharpens your own instincts and hones your own abilities to see your words as others see it—fresh, unbiased, and anew.

### **Writing and Reading**

All good writers are voracious readers. They read anything they can—from pop culture to academic journals—all in the name of developing their fluency, flexibility and fluidity. Reading helps writers absorb the conventions of acceptable discourse, and consequently, the more academic journals one reads, the more one begins to adopt the style of the journal for which they want to write.

### **Writing and Colleagues**

Another popular habit that I have adopted to improve my own writing and understanding of my discipline (teacher education) is to read peer-reviewed journal articles daily and then to respond by email (or phone call) to the authors. I have developed a habit of mind whereby I am continually enriching my understanding of my academic discipline by engaging my colleagues from across the country and the world about their good work. (And your colleagues will be delighted that someone has read their good work!)

### **Writing and Researching**

Every discipline has its own demands and idiosyncrasies. All disciplines, though, demand academic research. As a teacher educator, I view everything I do as “potential research.” Whether I am teaching a class or workshop, serving on a committee, or writing a grant, I view every opportunity as a potential writing opportunity.

Simply, I try to make what I do at the university as one—as part of a unified whole where I am constantly asking myself how can I take my experiences—whether practical, conceptual or theoretical—and turn them into an academic piece of writing.

### Writing and Searching

A good teacher always searches for opportunities. So too does a good writer. I am constantly looking for “places to share my ideas and research.” Themed issues are always a smart place to submit. Often, editors are looking for pieces that fit a particular issue or topic and you might have the manuscript that fits their bill. Moreover, I would also encourage you to share your ideas for an upcoming theme issue with the editor before you submit—that way you will have an idea before you write if your idea for a manuscript is feasible for the proposed themed issue.

### Writing and Rewriting

One should never plagiarize oneself, but one should always look to see how one can best take their good writing and rework it for several different publications. In teacher education, there are journals which speak to classroom teachers and journals which speak to academic researchers. Each is important to the teaching profession and each speaks in its own unique voice. Perhaps your discipline has the same. I would always encourage academicians to write for many different publications, sharing their smart ideas and concepts in a variety of published forms and styles.

### Writing and Presenting

Often, college teachers fall into the trap of presenting without publishing. They present a great idea or piece of academic research at a state or national conference, but never manage to put their good work into writing and submit for publication. To avoid this all too common error, I encourage all college educators to make writing about their presentation their first priority—even before the PowerPoint and handouts are done. Let your thoughts flow about what it is that you wish to present, and then, let this writing be the basis for your handout and presentation.

### Writing and Writing Quickly

Finally, never let fear govern your writing. If you hesitate to put words to paper (or computer screen) because you feel that everything you say must be “perfect” upon immediate conception, nothing will ever get it done. You will spend your academic days staring at a blank screen, wishing for the gods to deliver divine inspiration only to realize that they have brought you perspiration, instead.

My best advice is to develop a habit of mind where you learn to write quickly and freely, allowing your first draft to be just that—a first draft. Often, though, you will be amazed at how much you know and how well you can articulate your knowledge. Besides, now you have something you can share, debate, defend and revise—one step further than you were when you were staring dreamily at a blank screen.

### Writing and Then Some

These ideas are not a cure-all for learning to write for professional publications. But, they are a start—and that is what the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is designed to be—a place to start to discuss your writing for professional

publications.

***Every Monday, I will be holding a Writing for Professional Publication Teaching Circle at the Faculty Center (2PM, CL 1 207) where colleagues from across the campus (and by Internet hookup as well) are welcome to come and share their thoughts, ideas, and yes, manuscripts, about writing for professional publications.***

I look forward to working with you and helping you become the academician you were meant to be. Until then, happy writing.

## ***SoTL Research Project Workshop Series Request for Proposals***

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is calling for the submission of proposals by any UCF full-time faculty member who has an interest in designing and implementing a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research project (see <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/sotl/>) during the period Spring 2010-Spring 2011.

Faculty will participate in five workshops and a minimum of one individual consultation (18 contact hours). Except for the spring 2010 semester, the workshop schedule will be agreed upon by the participants. Faculty members will receive support from FCTL staff and UCF researchers as they develop and implement their SoTL projects. Participants will be requested to share data on the effectiveness of activities and environments on student learning for potential joint publication. If you have questions, please contact Eric Main at [emain@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:emain@mail.ucf.edu).

The proposal must contain

1. Title of the research project, Principle Investigator (PI) and Co-PIs (if needed).
2. Details of the research to be performed including the research question.
3. Resources needed for successful completion of the research project.

Those who are unsure of their research question are invited to contact us prior to the proposal deadline for assistance with formulating research interests into a question.

Submissions due Friday, January 22, 2010 at 5:00 PM to the Faculty Center, CL1-207, or FAX 407-823-2355.

Participants will be selected and contacted by Wednesday, January 27, 2010.



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## ***Submissions***

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

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



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