The Faculty Focus is a publication for all instructors at the University of Central Florida. This includes full- and part-time faculty and teaching assistants at all UCF campuses. Its purpose is to provide an exchange of ideas on teaching and learning for the university's community of teachers and scholars. It is envisioned that this publication will inspire more dialogue among faculty, whether in hallway discussions, departmental meetings, or in written articles. Toward this latter goal, the Faculty Focus will lead to an annual "Best Practices" edition where some of the ideas that were generated in the bi-semester editions will be expanded and developed into full articles. The annual edition will be peer-reviewed and disseminated regionally. This represents an opportunity for faculty to reach their peers throughout the growing Central Florida community. The Faculty Focus invites you to contribute your ideas on teaching and learning in a short essay <see the guidelines for submission online at www.fctl.ucf.edu/focus/guidelines.htm>. Publication dates will be the middle of the first and last full months of each semester, and submission deadlines will be the Friday of the week prior. MLA format is preferred. Please send your submissions to Faculty Focus, fctl@mail.ucf.edu.

Over the last ten to fifteen years, colleges and universities have greatly expanded the use of web-based technologies in the area of instruction. A wide variety of courses and some degree programs are now taught entirely on the World-Wide-Web, while other courses are taught using a combination of traditional lectures and web-based course components. Although some may consider this to be a pedagogical paradigm shift, it may be viewed more accurately as a technological paradigm shift with philosophical and pedagogical implications. While the development of this new teaching paradigm has produced a number of effects, the most important, perhaps, is the inherent need to explicitly consider one's teaching philosophy.

The new technologies now allow for communication that is time and place independent (asynchronous communication) in the form of e-mails, bulletin board postings, and fora. This type of communication allows for instructor-student and student-student interactions. We also have the ability to communicate in a manner that is place independent (synchronous communication) in the form of chatrooms and instant messaging. This allows the instructor to lecture to an entire class and/or to have private conversations with an individual or groups of students during the lecture. Furthermore, the course management software for distance education courses provides instructors with the ability to track the activity and performance of students. For instance, it is now possible to track the number of times students access the course, the number of times they visit each page of course material (and the duration of each visit), and the number of forum postings read and written.

Although these new technologies can be useful, they should be viewed as additional tools at the disposal of an instructor in the design of a course. The primary driving force behind course design must remain the teaching philosophy of the instructor. Specific tools should be incorporated into the course based on an instructor's teaching philosophy. In other words, course design must be pedagogically not technologically driven. To this end we suggest four technologically-based issues that should be considered as part of a coherent, critical, and current teaching philosophy.

First, we suggest that interactivity in the classroom is key, irrespective of whether the course format uses traditional or web design. Efforts should be made to create interactivity between instructors and students. Furthermore, the development of student-to-student interactions should be supported...continued on page 2

“...The primary driving force behind course design must remain the teaching philosophy of the instructor.”
FACULTY FOCUS

Second, irrespective of the technology incorporated into a course, learning outcomes are the true standard by which course success should be measured. In this new technological era, course components should be selected that are directly related to student learning. Instructors should avoid being seduced by leading-edge technologies that could result in decreased student learning. If, for example, students have difficulties accessing and/or utilizing a new technological tool, it will draw time and attention away from the learning process. We suggest that instructors concentrate on proven, robust and reliable (trail-edge) technologies that will work effectively for all students.

FACULTY FOCUS

Third, instructors must build mechanisms into their courses that allow each course participant to feel engaged in the social context of the course (i.e., that they have a social presence in the course). The use of student and instructor names in synchronous and asynchronous communication, individualized performance feedback, and the use of appropriate personal pronouns during interactions represent methods that can help build social presence for each student. Social presence is not only an issue for web-based course designs, however. We should be equally concerned about creating social presence for a distance-learning student and the anonymous student nodding off in the back of a 500-seat lecture hall. Overall, it is our belief that all instructors need to consider the type and level of social presence their courses afford each student.

FACULTY FOCUS

Fourth, new technology has also influenced students’ expectations regarding the instructor, the course and educational institutions. Expectations regarding convenience, accessibility of instructors, timeliness of responses and feedback need to be considered. In most cases, it is necessary to address these issues in course syllabi and directly discuss them during the first weeks of a course.

FACULTY FOCUS

In conclusion, we strongly believe that recent technological advances have direct implications for an instructor’s teaching philosophy. Now, more than ever, educators need to consider the roles of interactivity, learning outcomes, social presence and student expectations in designing and teaching courses. Furthermore, as technological tools continue to change and develop, instructors must continue to re-evaluate and update their individual teaching philosophy. In the end, pedagogy, not technology, must remain the primary focus of the teaching craft.

Teaching First Year Students: Expanding World-View
Terry Thaxton

Students often come to GEP classes not knowing how to express their world views, and many of them don’t know what their own world view is. Last semester, in ENC 1102 (Composition II), I wanted to teach students not only how to write better, expressing their opinions and thoughts more articulately, I wanted them to design and synthesize their own world view. I didn’t want them to simply regurgitate information they’d gotten off TV and the Internet, I wanted to hear their parents’ opinions or the opinions of their friends. And since terrorism and war had become a theme in our daily lives, I wanted them to learn what they thought about war and terrorism. Composition II is a course that focuses on argument. According to the guidelines of the English Composition Program, students must be able “to read and analyze a text, understanding the implicit and explicit arguments, the intended audience, and the assumption/implications of the argument.” They must also “investigate a problem or issue, conduct primary research, and write a proposal justifying further investigation.” They must “listen to and acknowledge other view points and experiences that surround the topic, articulate others’ positions in analyzing the arguments.” Finally, they must “synthesize and integrate the results of primary and secondary research, apply documentation skills (MLA, APA, CBE), and eliminate non-workable arguments and focus on viable solutions.”

When students are required to use primary research, they are better equipped to think for themselves and to articulate an opinion that is grounded in experience and fact rather than second-hand opinion. As the basis for our research, I used war and its impact on human expression, since the course I taught was a LINC course with Humanities. For the first half of the semester, we looked closely at five major conflicts in which the U.S. has been involved: WWII, WWII, Vietnam, Korean War, and the ongoing Yugoslavian conflicts. At the end of the semester, we looked closely at the current U.S. conflicts. Throughout the entire semester, we looked at the creation of music, dance, painting, drawing, literature, architecture, and film as a result of or in spite of war. The course focuses on researching, composing, thinking, and discussing.

Teaching Related Conferences

Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience
February 10-12, 2003
Atlanta, Georgia
www.sc.edu/fye/conferences/2003west/2003west.pdf

The 24th Annual Sharing Conference: “Establishing & Sustaining Faculty Development Centers”
March 9-11, 2003
Atlanta, Georgia
http://www.uct.edu/Teaching-Resource-Center/SRFIDC/

Lilly Conference on College & University Teaching - West
March 14-15, 2003
Pomona, California
http://www.iats.com/

EDUCAUSE Midwest Regional Conference
March 25-26, 2003
Chicago, Illinois
www.educause.edu/conference/mwrc/2003/program.asp

April 21-25, 2003
Chicago, Illinois
www.aera.net/meeting

Stepping Up to the Plate in Diversity Education: A Best Practices Conference for Educators and Administrators
April 29-30, 2003
Atlanta, Georgia
www.kennesaw.edu/diversity

The SUN Conference on Teaching and Learning
May 7-8, 2003
El Paso, Texas
www.ute.edu/cetal/sun/

CUMREC 2003: Leveraging the Magic of Information and Technology
May 11-14, 2003
Orlando, Florida
www.cumrec.org/cumrec2003/program.asp

The 28th International Conference on Improving University Teaching (IUT)
Pre-Conference Tour June 13-15, 2003
June 16-19, 2003
VAXIO, Sweden
web.jmu.edu/iutconference

2003 AAHE Assessment conference: Richer and more coherent set of assessment practices
June 22-24, 2003
Washington State Convention and Trade Center
Seattle, Washington

Eighth Annual AAHE Summer Academy
July 19-20, 2003
Snowbird, Utah
www.aahe.org/summeracademy

Terry Thaxton is an Instructor / Lecturer in the Department of English. In addition to teaching freshmen composition, she also teaches courses in Poetry, Fiction, Nonfiction, Expository Writing, and Magazine Writing, and this semester she’s teaching in Women’s Studies: “Women and Community Activism.” Also this spring she’s conducting a creative writing workshop at PACE Center for Girls in Orlando.

Students often come to GEP classes not knowing how to express their world views, and many of them don’t know what their own world view is. Last semester, in ENC 1102 (Composition II), I wanted to teach students not only how to write better, expressing their opinions and thoughts more articulately, I wanted them to design and synthesize their own world view. I didn’t want them to simply regurgitate information they’d gotten off TV and the Internet, I wanted to hear their parents’ opinions or the opinions of their friends. And since terrorism and war had become a theme in our daily lives, I wanted them to learn what they thought about war and terrorism. Composition II is a course that focuses on argument. According to the guidelines of the English Composition Program, students must be able “to read and analyze a text, understanding the implicit and explicit arguments, the intended audience, and the assumption/implications of the argument.” They must also “investigate a problem or issue, conduct primary research, and write a proposal justifying further investigation.” They must “listen to and acknowledge other view points and experiences that surround the topic, articulate others’ positions in analyzing the arguments.” Finally, they must “synthesize and integrate the results of primary and secondary research, apply documentation skills (MLA, APA, CBE), and eliminate non-workable arguments and focus on viable solutions.”

When students are required to use primary research, they are better equipped to think for themselves and to articulate an opinion that is grounded in experience and fact rather than second-hand opinion. As the basis for our research, I used war and its impact on human expression, since the course I taught was a LINC course with Humanities. For the first half of the semester, we looked closely at five major conflicts in which the U.S. has been involved: WWII, WWII, Vietnam, Korean War, and the ongoing Yugoslavian conflicts. At the end of the semester, we looked closely at the current U.S. conflicts. Throughout the entire semester, we looked at the creation of music, dance, painting, drawing, literature, architecture, and film as a result of or in spite of war. The course focuses on researching, composing, thinking, and discussing.
**Faculty Forum**

*February 2003 Forum Question*

In her October 11, 2002 article for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled "We Are Smarter Than Our Students," Dr. Miriam Kalman Harris accuses students of lacking respect for classmates, professors, and learning. She blames a trend she calls "consumer education" which puts education behind student satisfaction.

Several UCF faculty members have reacted to this article, both in favor of Harris' claims regarding student behavior and strongly against her argument. Please read her essay, online at [http://chronicle.com/chronicle/archive.htm](http://chronicle.com/chronicle/archive.htm) if you are registered user, or in here in the Faculty Center, and then weigh in with your response at [http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/forum/](http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/forum/). You may address the article directly or any of the responses by your peers. The most cogent response will earn a prize and recognition in the Faculty Focus.

The March 2003 Forum question will target the role of critical thinking goals in our curricula and will ask you to share your practices with your colleagues. We are pleased to announce that Judy Ruland will present a series of workshops on critical thinking through the Faculty Center from February 10 to March 10. Check our calendar for specifics.

**UCF Service Learning**

We need to hear from you. Please notify the Faculty Center if you are currently (or have recently) incorporated a service learning component in your course. For this request, you may interpret the idea of service learning liberally. The information will be directed to the Campus Compact Grant Committee (UCF’s Service Learning initiative).

**Classroom Observations**

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

**UCF Fit**

The Faculty Center, the Wellness Center, and the Recreation and Wellness Center invite you to join us for 6-weeks of fun and informative workshops and opportunities to get fit! The UCF-FIT Program will offer free nutrition, wellness, and exercise seminars. The purpose of the program is to get you motivated to work and devote more time toward your health and fitness while building community on campus. You may also be eligible to win prizes such as t-shirts and water bottles. Stay tuned for more information about this campus-wide health and fitness program by reading your campus news e-mails this month. You may also call the Faculty Center at 823-3544 to get more information.

Additionally, I place great value on group work, especially in first year classes. I required that students conduct extensive field work with other class members. Each team was chosen based on the events of one of the five conflicts (If defined in the films). Then each team present- ed an oral analysis of the central argument made in independent research and wrote an essay. Also, the team examining World War II watched Sophie's Choice and chose one scene that clearly showed the film's central argument: that war has lasting negative effects on all people. Each week students located and responded to a scholarly article that related to war or to humanities as a result of war. Next, each team located and interviewed at least two veterans of the war their team was exploring. Each team also located and interviewed arts, artifacts, or expressions made or were a part of the war. One of the WWII veterans showed the team members old newspaper, magazines filled with pin-up girls, and a Nazi patch he had taken off a corpse. He let them hold these items and gave them the opportunity to ask him questions.

After the interview, they were highly motivated to focus on one or two aspects of war. That's when I turned them loose on locating articles about the impact of war on the humanities. We discussed the changes that occur because of war, how art, music, literature, government is impacted by war, and how individuals deal with the tragedies of war. This research helped lead each student toward an understanding of problems and issues that arise with war other than the ones that are typically reported in the media. Throughout their investigations, students were reading two novels which we discussed in class: *Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut and *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien. We discussed the problems and issues that are common to war and identified problems that are specific to each war. Students were able to discuss the current world conflicts and were prepared to construct an essay that argued for workable solutions.

The next project required that in teams, with a partner, or individually, students create a visual argument that portrayed their understanding of the current conflict between the U.S. and "terrorism." Finally, students brought their visual arguments to the class and we had a discussion about it. Each team presented an oral analysis of the central argument made in the film. For example, the team examining World War II watched *The Things They Carried* and presented an oral analysis of the central argument made in the film. Students were able to discuss the current world conflicts and were prepared to construct an essay that argued for workable solutions.

**Reflective Writing as a Tool For Perspective Transformation in Adult Students**

Judy Ruland

Dr. Judy Ruland is a Visiting Associate Professor in the School of Nursing since August of 2002. Her research interests include educational program evaluation, learning outcome assessment, the effect of class-room environment on personal engagement and critical thinking, effectiveness of active learning strategies, and the use of writing as a tool for fostering critical thinking. She teaches courses in the RN-BSN track and in the Education Certificate Program.

*Introduction*

Adult learners frequently experience a certain degree of role strain and role conflict as they return to school. They may not see the relevance of the content to their current practice, or may perceive the content to be in conflict with what they previously have learned. It is important for program designers to think about this dilemma when developing programs. It is especially true when adult learners are asked to think in divergent manners that may conflict with their previously established frames of reference.

*Mezirow's (1997) adult learning theory*

Mezirow suggested that adult development is not a succession of age-related stages and steps, but instead results from transformations of perspective in response to unexpected events or disorienting dilemmas [1997; p. 7]. In his reflective learning theory, Mezirow suggests that there will be numerous times in an adult's life when disorienting dilemmas occur. These events are defined as unexpected events that cannot be understood and resolved using the individual's prevailing meaningful perspective, e.g. one's own when cognitive dissonance occurs. This dissonance may be reduced through a critical reflection process.

*USC Service Learning*

The Forum February 2003 Forum Question In her October 11, 2002 article for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled "We Are Smarter Than Our Students," Dr. Miriam Kalman Harris accuses students of lacking respect for classmates, professors, and learning. She blames a trend she calls "consumer education" which puts education behind student satisfaction.

Several UCF faculty members have reacted to this article, both in favor of Harris' claims regarding student behavior and strongly against her argument. Please read her essay, online at [http://chronicle.com/chronicle/archive.htm](http://chronicle.com/chronicle/archive.htm) if you are a registered user or in here in the Faculty Center, and then weigh in with your response at [http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/forum/](http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/forum/). You may address the article directly or any of the responses by your peers.

The March 2003 Forum question will target the role of critical thinking goals in our curricula and will ask you to share your practices with your colleagues. We are pleased to announce that Judy Ruland will present a series of workshops on critical thinking through the Faculty Center from February 10 to March 10. Check our calendar for specifics.

**UCF Service Learning**

We need to hear from you. Please notify the Faculty Center if you are currently (or have recently) incorporated a service learning component in your course. For this request, you may interpret the idea of service learning liberally. The information will be directed to the Campus Compact Grant Committee (UCF’s Service Learning initiative).

**Classroom Observations**

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

**UCF Fit**

The Faculty Center, the Wellness Center, and the Recreation and Wellness Center invite you to join us for 6-weeks of fun and informative workshops and opportunities to get fit! The UCF-FIT Program will offer free nutrition, wellness, and exercise seminars. The purpose of the program is to get you motivated to work and devote more time toward your health and fitness while building community on campus. You may also be eligible to win prizes such as t-shirts and water bottles. Stay tuned for more information about this campus-wide health and fitness program by reading your campus news e-mails this month. You may also call the Faculty Center at 823-3544 to get more information.

Additionally, I place great value on group work, especially in first year classes. I required that students conduct extensive field work with other class members. Each team was chosen based on the events of one of the five conflicts (If defined in the films). Then each team presented an oral analysis of the central argument made in independent research and wrote an essay. Also, the team examining World War II watched Sophie's Choice and chose one scene that clearly showed the film's central argument: that war has lasting negative effects on all people. Each week students located and responded to a scholarly article that related to war or to humanities as a result of war. Next, each team located and interviewed at least two veterans of the war their team was exploring. Each team also located and interviewed arts, artifacts, or expressions made or were a part of the war. One of the WWII veterans showed the team members old newspaper, magazines filled with pin-up girls, and a Nazi patch he had taken off a corpse. He let them hold these items and gave them the opportunity to ask him questions.

After the interview, they were highly motivated to focus on one or two aspects of war. That's when I turned them loose on locating articles about the impact of war on the humanities. We discussed the changes that occur because of war, how art, music, literature, government is impacted by war, and how individuals deal with the tragedies of war. This research helped lead each student toward an understanding of problems and issues that arise with war other than the ones that are typically reported in the media. Throughout their investigations, students were reading two novels which we discussed in class: *Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut and *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien. We discussed the problems and issues that are common to war and identified problems that are specific to each war. Students were able to discuss the current world conflicts and were prepared to construct an essay that argued for workable solutions.

The next project required that in teams, with a partner, or individually, students create a visual argument that portrayed their understanding of the current conflict between the U.S. and "terrorism." Finally, students brought their visual arguments to the class and we had a discussion about it. Each team presented an oral analysis of the central argument made in the film. For example, the team examining World War II watched *The Things They Carried* and presented an oral analysis of the central argument made in the film. Students were able to discuss the current world conflicts and were prepared to construct an essay that argued for workable solutions.

**Reflective Writing as a Tool For Perspective Transformation in Adult Students**

Judy Ruland

Dr. Judy Ruland is a Visiting Associate Professor in the School of Nursing since August of 2002. Her research interests include educational program evaluation, learning outcome assessment, the effect of classroom environment on personal engagement and critical thinking, effectiveness of active learning strategies, and the use of writing as a tool for fostering critical thinking. She teaches courses in the RN-BSN track and in the Education Certificate Program.

*Introduction*

Adult learners frequently experience a certain degree of role strain and role conflict as they return to school. They may not see the relevance of the content to their current practice, or may perceive the content to be in conflict with what they previously have learned. It is important for program designers to think about this dilemma when developing programs. It is especially true when adult learners are asked to think in divergent manners that may conflict with their previously established frames of reference.

*Mezirow's (1997) adult learning theory*

Mezirow suggested that adult development is not a succession of age-related stages and steps, but instead results from transformations of perspective in response to unexpected events or disorienting dilemmas [1997; p. 7]. In his reflective learning theory, Mezirow suggests that there will be numerous times in an adult's life when disorienting dilemmas occur. These events are defined as unexpected events that cannot be understood and resolved using the individual's prevailing meaningful perspective, e.g. one's own when cognitive dissonance occurs. This dissonance may be reduced through a critical reflection process.
I have found that the use of several short reflective writing assignments on a weekly basis coupled with a student centered, metacognitive activity program creates an atmosphere of active student engagement that is the essence of metacognitive activity. Metacognition is the self-awareness and control of task demands and the strategies a person engages in before, during, and after performing a task (Brookfield, 1999), or in other words “thinking about one’s thinking while thinking” (Paul, 2001, p.15). Learning activities that offer multiple and regular opportunities for self-reflection and self-examination of an individual’s assumptions prior to participation in a student-centered class discussion have been shown to best foster active engagement in the learning process and the metacognitive growth that is exemplified in transformative learning (Barell, 1995, Mezawor, 1998).

Return to school can be a disorienting dilemma for registered nurse students with previously earned associate degrees in nursing and who may have been practicing for many years. Significant cognitive dissonance occurs as students find themselves questioning their professional beliefs, assumptions, and values that have formerly been the primary determinants of their teaching. Yet, some of the above-mentioned situations may lead the busy adult student to not read before class or to only give the reading assignment a “once-over lightly” type approach rather than critically reading the chapters assigned and thinking about the material presented. They compare to the work situation in which they find themselves and to previously learned material. This phenomenon is somewhat exaggerated under the novel circumstances of returning to school because the adult learner experiences significant life role strain as they attempt to juggle their busy family lives and hectic work schedules with the new demands created by the coursework in which they have enrolled. Such life situations may lead the busy adult student to not read before class or to only give the reading assignment a “once-over lightly” type approach rather than critically reading the chapters assigned and thinking about the material presented. They compare to the work situation in which they find themselves.

This “package” of writing assignments is an important component because it ensures that the adult student critically reads the assignment before coming to class and it creates a climate for learning in which the adult learner is expected to and feels able to express and evaluate meaning perspective in terms of their own assumptions, beliefs, and attitudes. Students personally engage with the material they are reading, gain confidence in their own abilities, and feel supported as experienced professionals who are engaging in a new learning activity.

Implementation

The one-pager analysis of the reading helps to create a classroom environment that becomes an opportunity for well-prepared students to share social control with the faculty facilitator who is experienced in helping students engaged in a process of joint inquiry. The analysis is based on questions provided in the syllabus that push students to evaluate the reading from the perspective of the faculty member engaging in the process. The directions for the exercise clearly instruct the student to write a one pager with the comments of the instructor. Students are told to write a one page single spaced paper that demonstrates thinking. The students are directed to analyze the reading and write questions about its meaning, applicability, value and/or utility for their practice. After reading the one-pagers, the faculty member becomes a better discussion facilitator who is better able to draw out meaningful insights from the students and encourages the students to have an active and comfortable sharing their meaning perspective with their colleagues. It also allows the faculty member to more quickly begin class with the areas of the reading that presented the most confusion, misconception, or interest on the part of the adult learners. I have literately restructured what I had planned for class based on my reading of the students’ one-pagers the night before the class. In large classes it is often a challenge to read the one-pagers before class, a random sampling of the one-pagers is just as helpful a tool. The most important part of this exercise is the student engagement.

How we Learn: While highly effective teachers employ a variety of teaching strategies, students tend to employ only a few learning strategies. This workshop will explore a variety of teaching strategies and determine the value of the methods from the student and faculty perspective. (February 21)

Innovation

February Faculty Center Workshops

Best Teaching Practices: In this 2 hour workshop participants will discuss the book “10 Best Teaching Practices” by Donna Walker Tileston, based on how brain research, learning styles and standards define teaching competencies. The participants will discuss these practices and develop teaching strategies for their own discipline and student body. The main topics include using a variety of teaching strategies that address different learning styles, teaching for long-term memory, integrating higher level thinking skills, and bridging the gap between all learners. (February 3)

Collaborative Learning and Studio Classroom Project: The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning hosts a twelve hour course transformation series for any UCF faculty with an interest in incorporating collaborative learning into the curriculum or teaching in a studio classroom environment. For information about future series, see www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/collab_classrooms (Feb. 7, 21)

Communication in the Classroom: (February 21)

Critical Thinking: What do we really mean? This workshop will explore the assumptions that underpin the concept of critical thinking. Participants will compare their own conceptions of this often used term with definitions from experts in the field. The workshop will examine writing assignments that focus on critical thinking that is specific to individual participants’ disciplines. (February 10, 17)

Developing a Faculty Portfolio: One of the hardest things to do is to document teaching proficiency. This two-hour portfolio workshop will help faculty develop an outline for their portfolio and define the content and layout. (Feb. 6)

How to Assess Performance: (February 11, 25)

We will explore relationships among items of a student rating instrument that measured teaching effectiveness at a large metropolitan university. Using the overall rating of the instructor and course level, college, and other items as predictors, we produced six if-then decision rules that were effective for predicting “Excellent” and “Poor” overall student ratings. We will have time to this session to learn more about student ratings. (February 26)

Syllabus Design: There are small but important things you can do to help your class run smoothly and to reduce student anxiety. You will be provided with suggestions and hints about how to provide important information to your students about what you want them to do, expectations about their performance, and how they can succeed. Bring your best examples, anecdotes, and questions to share with other faculty. (February 17, 18)

Teaching Circles: An opportunity to come together to brainstorm teaching ideas and mentor each other as we implement the projects we’ve explored in the previous series. This workshop begins at 3:30 – 5:00 every Wednesday in the Faculty Center. (February 5, 12, 19, 26)

Test Scoring - Continue to use Social Security Numbers: Come and learn how electronic grading can save you valuable time! A free service to all faculty and GTA’s who need to have NCS Scantron sheets processed. Also, Test Scoring can help you with survey processing for your classes. (February 13, 19)

Check out our calendar at www.fctl.ucf.edu for more information.

Innovation

Reflection on and critiquing of existing assumptions and meaning schemes in relation to new information becomes transformative learning when it leads to a significant restructur- ing of an individual’s learning perspective. Such reflection on and critiquing creates an atmosphere of active student engagement that is the essence of metacognitive activity. Metacognition is the self-awareness and control of task demands and the strategies a person engages in before, during, and after performing a task (Brookfield, 1999), or in other words “thinking about one’s thinking while thinking” (Paul, 2001, p.15). Learning activities that offer multiple and regular opportunities for self-reflection and self-examination of an individual’s assumptions prior to participation in a student-centered class discussion have been shown to best foster active engagement in the learning process and the metacognitive growth that is exemplified in transformative learning (Barell, 1995, Mezawor, 1998).

The weekly e-journal further allows the student the opportunity to critique their practice in terms of newly transformed meaning perspectives and to consciously reflect on their own teaching processes rather than just recount activities. This exercise is carefully explained in the course syllabus and consists of 30 questions to be addressed over the course of the semester. Students are instructed to write more about their thinking and their feelings than to provide specific detail of the activity about which they are writing. In the beginning of the semester, they may feel that what they write is too general and not specific enough to warrant a grade on the activity detail rather than to their response to that situation. After the first several weeks, with guidance, they become more reflective. Because the student is writing about what is very familiar to them, the journal provides a comfortable environment in which to think about familiar things in new ways or in other words it structures meaning perspective transformation. The e-journal also provides a forum for the students to share any issues that may be developing in their newly begun educational process with the faculty member who is then able to intervene more quickly to offer assistance in the learning process.

A Note From The Director

The winter conference at the end of the fall semester was a great indicator of the energy that faculty have, even after a long day. Forty eight faculty and staff, working in teams of 3 - 6, brought energy and collaboration to a high level as they developed their projects to enhance and develop new initiatives in teaching and learning. The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning will provide 120 $800/person grants for faculty members who have submitted proposals by any UCF faculty who has an interest in incorporating or improving collaborative learning and are transforming courses by emphasizing service learning, interdisciplinarity, instructional technology, etc. Faculty members from all colleges are invited to apply (team submissions will be given preference). The RFP is due on February 21st. http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/summer_conf/index.htm

Collaborative Learning and Studio Classroom Project:
The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is calling for submission of proposals by any UCF faculty who has an interest in incorporating or improving collaborative learning and are transforming courses by emphasizing service learning, interdisciplinarity, instructional technology, etc. Faculty members from all colleges are invited to apply (team submissions will be given preference). The RFP is due on February 21st. http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/summer_conf/index.htm

Collaborative Learning and Studio Classroom Project:
The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is calling for submission of proposals by any UCF faculty who has an interest in incorporating or improving collaborative learning and are transforming courses by emphasizing service learning, interdisciplinarity, instructional technology, etc. Faculty members from all colleges are invited to apply (team submissions will be given preference). The RFP is due on February 21st. http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/collab_crsrooms/index.htm

Summer Faculty Development Conference: April 28 - May 1
The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning will provide 120 $800/person grants for faculty members who have submitted proposals by any UCF faculty who has an interest in incorporating or improving collaborative learning and are transforming courses by emphasizing service learning, interdisciplinarity, instructional technology, etc. Faculty members from all colleges are invited to apply (team submissions will be given preference). The RFP is due on February 21st. http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/summer_conf/index.htm

Faculty Center Funding Opportunities

In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as television, we wouldn't have a digital divide to talk about.

The digital divide we should be worrying about is the one that occurs and it happens right at the end of the class. During the last few minutes of each class, students are asked to reflect on what were the most important things learned during the three hour class, and what questions still remain as well as write one-pagers. This session asks the student to reflectively think about their own thinking. It helps them to review what was discussed and to determine gaps in their understanding. I find that it is very helpful to me in my self-evaluation of the effectiveness of both my teaching and of the class discussion. I am frequently surprised when some students select certain areas they consider to be most important. This makes me realize that I never would have considered. It allows me the opportunity to then, after class, clear up misconceptions by sending handouts or clarifications to the class via e-mail on the class list serve. Often what is confusing to one student is probably also confusing to many others in the group.

A Note From The Director

The winter conference at the end of the fall semester was a great indicator of the energy that faculty have, even after a long day. Forty eight faculty and staff, working in teams of 3 - 6, brought energy and collaboration to a high level as they developed their projects to enhance and develop new initiatives in teaching and learning. The main topics for the conference were service learning, interdisciplinarity within a course, or interdisciplinarity across courses, but one or two teams worked on other aspects of curricular development. The faculty and staff of the Faculty Center, OIR, CD&WS, and the Library, provided leadership and encouragement to the student teams then worked in their groups each afternoon from 12:15 - 3:30 p.m. when we had a lively report out session. It was...
This experience was equally as transforming for me as a teacher. The journals and the one-pagers, and resultant class discussion jarred me out of the little grooves of teaching. It brought me back to what is relevant in today's nursing practice and what difficult situations the registered nurse student is experiencing on a daily basis in practice. It dramatically reminded me of the role staffing nurse must play in the education of an adult who has been out of school for some time, and who may be in a leadership position at work, may experience as he/she returns to the supposed ‘student’ and the new position of learner. Obviously, all of this writing leads to a lot of reading on the part of the faculty member. It is fascinating reading, however, and as previously mentioned still effective in large classes.

In the literature, controversy exists related to both the appropriateness of grading journals and the methods to be used (Jarvis, 2001, Kennedy, & Melselwitz, 2002). There are proponents of not grading for grammar or sentence structure and focusing more on the level of reflection. Students are considered to regard faculty feedback as the most important aspect of any writing assignment. I had to work to help the students see that it was the reflection and the work itself that was much more important than what I thought about what they had written. Although, in some cases I was never able to achieve that goal. I used a holistic model of grading focusing primarily on the depth of reflection and less on grammar and mechanics. I did, however, correct mechanics as needed. The free writes were never collected and read by me; instead they were only used in the context of enriching class discussion and peer interaction. The minute papers, down the center of the class, were not returned to students; instead they were simply read by me and reported on if necessary in future e-mailed announcements to students or in the following class session.

I have had mixed reviews from the students. Their course evaluations indicated that on the one hand they gained an enormous amount from the process especially in terms of their own self-awareness, and they felt they had learned a great deal. Several students commented that they felt very well prepared to continue in the remaining courses and to begin their graduate study. The course evaluations indicated that the class discussion was excellent and that they felt very engaged in the learning process. Several commented that it took some adjustment to become comfortable with no lecturing in class, but ultimately they liked the process. At the same time, many students indicated that they felt they were being asked to do more writing than was possible within the “free” and “commercial” packages. Many of them found that the “free” and “commercial” packages were disengaged for their “non-interactive, -ness,” since they merely contained series of animations, schematics, graphs and photographs: a sit-and-watch approach. Are there any taking advantage of what computers can do? These programs did not offer any user input where they were necessary to transform concepts by formulating questions or answers and learning from mistakes.

Two specific programs "qualified" as "interactive" learning modules, though the level of their maturity, sophistication and presentation is quite below that of my kids’ “Blue’s Clues” computer program. I have begun to selectively use them in teaching this course (Spring’02). Student reaction and comments are carefully examined as an assessment, which will be relayed to the software manufacturers.

Alternatively, effort to produce MSE education modules that truly offer interactive learning and virtual experience can be sought via external funding. This is a promising area of investigation and may be one that can be "exciting and fun" once students understand the overall concepts and applications.

References and guidelines used by Dr. Ruland for the one-pagers, and resultant class discussion jarred me out of the little grooves of teaching. They wanted less writing and more feedback from me about what they had written. Research shows that students find activities that force them to reflect on their meaning perspectives to be uncomfortable, and difficult. (Peterson & Jones, 2001). If students’ past learning experiences or their current learning experiences are not the same as what you hope for them to experience, you cannot expect such depth of analysis before attending class, they will not be happy when required to participate in this level of writing (Jarvis, 2001).

In addition to the reflective writing that I have described, this course has several written assignment requirements. These include a formal APA research paper, a written philosophy of nursing, and a professional portfolio. Based on student feedback, in the future I would probably limit the weekly e-journal to an every other week journal and would not require it after mid-semester when they are beginning the work on their formal research paper. I would not eliminate the one-pagers, the free writes or the minute papers at any point in the course.

Increasing Interactive Learning in the MSE Curriculum

Yongho Sohn

While students learn "more" by interaction with faculty rather than with text, (Peterson & Jones, 2001). There is no denying that they do do much more important than what I thought about what they had written. Although, in some cases I was never able to achieve that goal. I used a holistic model of grading focusing primarily on the depth of reflection and less on grammar and mechanics. I did, however, correct mechanics as needed. The free writes were never collected and read by me; instead they were only used in the context of enriching class discussion and peer interaction. The minute papers, down the center of the class, were not returned to students; instead they were simply read by me and reported on if necessary in future e-mailed announcements to students or in the following class session.

I have had mixed reviews from the students. Their course evaluations indicated that on the one hand they gained an enormous amount from the process especially in terms of their own self-awareness, and they felt they had learned a great deal. Several students commented that they felt very well prepared to continue in the remaining courses and to begin their graduate study. The course evaluations indicated that the class discussion was excellent and that they felt very engaged in the learning process. Several commented that it took some adjustment to become comfortable with no lecturing in class, but ultimately they liked the process. At the same time, many students indicated that they felt they were being asked to do more writing than was possible within the “free” and “commercial” packages. Many of them found that the “free” and “commercial” packages were disengaged for their “non-interactive, -ness,” since they merely contained series of animations, schematics, graphs and photographs: a sit-and-watch approach. Are there any taking advantage of what computers can do? These programs did not offer any user input where they were necessary to transform concepts by formulating questions or answers and learning from mistakes.

Two specific programs “qualified” as “interactive” learning modules, though the level of their maturity, sophistication and presentation is quite below that of my kids’ “Blue’s Clues” computer program. I have begun to selectively use them in teaching this course (Spring’02). Student reaction and comments are carefully examined as an assessment, which will be relayed to the software manufacturers.

Alternatively, effort to produce MSE education modules that truly offer interactive learning and virtual experience can be sought via external funding. This is a promising area of investigation and may be one that can be “exciting and fun” once students understand the overall concepts and applications.

References and guidelines used by Dr. Ruland for the one-pagers, and resultant class discussion jarred me out of the little grooves of teaching. They wanted less writing and more feedback from me about what they had written. Research shows that students find activities that force them to reflect on their meaning perspectives to be uncomfortable, and difficult. (Peterson & Jones, 2001). If students’ past learning experiences or their current learning experiences are not the same as what you hope for them to experience, you cannot expect such depth of analysis before attending class, they will not be happy when required to participate in this level of writing (Jarvis, 2001).

In addition to the reflective writing that I have described, this course has several written assignment requirements. These include a formal APA research paper, a written philosophy of nursing, and a professional portfolio. Based on student feedback, in the future I would probably limit the weekly e-journal to an every other week journal and would not require it after mid-semester when they are beginning the work on their formal research paper. I would not eliminate the one-pagers, the free writes or the minute papers at any point in the course.

Increasing Interactive Learning in the MSE Curriculum

Yongho Sohn

While students learn “more” by interaction with faculty rather than with text, (Peterson & Jones, 2001). There is no denying that they do do much more important than what I thought about what they had written. Although, in some cases I was never able to achieve that goal. I used a holistic model of grading focusing primarily on the depth of reflection and less on grammar and mechanics. I did, however, correct mechanics as needed. The free writes were never collected and read by me; instead they were only used in the context of enriching class discussion and peer interaction. The minute papers, down the center of the class, were not returned to students; instead they were simply read by me and reported on if necessary in future e-mailed announcements to students or in the following class session.

I have had mixed reviews from the students. Their course evaluations indicated that on the one hand they gained an enormous amount from the process especially in terms of their own self-awareness, and they felt they had learned a great deal. Several students commented that they felt very well prepared to continue in the remaining courses and to begin their graduate study. The course evaluations indicated that the class discussion was excellent and that they felt very engaged in the learning process. Several commented that it took some adjustment to become comfortable with no lecturing in class, but ultimately they liked the process. At the same time, many students indicated that they felt they were being asked to do more writing than was possible within the “free” and “commercial” packages. Many of them found that the “free” and “commercial” packages were disengaged for their “non-interactive, -ness,” since they merely contained series of animations, schematics, graphs and photographs: a sit-and-watch approach. Are there any taking advantage of what computers can do? These programs did not offer any user input where they were necessary to transform concepts by formulating questions or answers and learning from mistakes.

Two specific programs “qualified” as “interactive” learning modules, though the level of their maturity, sophistication and presentation is quite below that of my kids’ “Blue’s Clues” computer program. I have begun to selectively use them in teaching this course (Spring’02). Student reaction and comments are carefully examined as an assessment, which will be relayed to the software manufacturers.

Alternatively, effort to produce MSE education modules that truly offer interactive learning and virtual experience can be sought via external funding. This is a promising area of investigation and may be one that can be “exciting and fun” once students understand the overall concepts and applications.
This experience was equally as transforming for me as a teacher. The journals and the one-pagers, and resultant class discussion jarred me out of the little grooves of teaching I have worn for my 20+ years in the classroom. It brought me back to exactly what is relevant in today’s nurr- ing practice and what difficult situations the registered nurse student is experiencing on a daily basis in practice. It dramat- ically reminded me of the role students play in that the adult who has been out of school for some time, and who may be in a leadership position at work, may experience as he/she returns to the supposed secondary student position of learner. Obviously, all of this writing leads to a lot of reading on the part of the faculty member. It is fascinating reading, however, and as previously mentioned still effective in large classes.

In the literature, contro- versy exists related to both the appropriateness of grading journals and the methods to be used ( Jarvis, 2001, Kennison, & Misselwitz, 2002). There are proponents of not grading for grammar or sentence structure and focusing more on the level of reflection. Students are conditioned to regard faculty feedback as the most important aspect of any writing assignment. I had to work to help the students see that it was the reflection and the work itself, not the grades, for which I care much more than what I thought about what they had written. Although, in some cases I was never able to achieve that goal. I used a holistic model of grading focusing primarily on the depth of reflection and less on grammar and mechanics. I did however correct mechanics as needed. The free writes were never collected and read by me; instead they were only used in the context of enriching class discussion and peer interaction. The minute papers, due to the class size, and of the class, were not returned to students; instead they were simply read by me and reported on if necessary in future e-mailed announce- ments to students or in the following class session.

I have had mixed reviews from the students. Their course evaluations indicated that on the one hand they gained an enormous amount from the process especially in terms of their own self-awareness, and they felt they had learned a great deal. Several students commented that they felt very well prepared to continue in the remaining courses and to begin graduate study. The course evaluations indicated that the class discussion was excellent and that they felt very engaged in the learning process. Several commented that it took some adjustment to become comfortable with no lectur- ing in class, but ultimately they liked the process. At the same time, many students indicated that they felt they were being asked to do more writing than was possible within the “traditional” classroom setting (which we are doing). This may be acceptable if we are certain “that they, their children, or their children’s children would be anything but slaves. Similarly, a serf in 13th century was essentially impregnable. The “cost” to go from slave or serf to land owner was simply beyond reach. Certainly slaves in Egypt in 1000 BC had little expectation of improving their meaning perspectives to be comfortable, and difficult.”

*Research shows that students find activities that force them to reflect on their meaning perspectives to be uncomfortable, and difficult.*

Conclusion

Reflection is a complex process and one that is best learned through structured and monitored practice. This package of fairly simple writing exercises proved to be a powerful tool in the transformation of the students involved. It offered these adult learners the opportunity to shed their anxiety and to practice critical thinking. It demonstrated them to the process of writing, and helped them learn the value of self-reflection. It offered me the opportunity to be a much better classroom teacher and professional colleague/mentor to these adult learners.

References and guidelines used by Dr. Ruland for the one-pagers, and the e-journals are available at <www.fctl.ucf.edu/focus>.

Increasing Interactive Learning in the MSE Curriculum

Yongho Sohn

Yongho Sohn (Ph.D., 98, Purdue University) is an Assistant Professor of Advanced Materials Processing and Analysis Center (AMPAC) and Mechanical, Materials and Aerospace Engineering (MMAE). His research and education activities on high temperature materials and coatings are funded by NSF (CAREER Award), USDOE University Turbine Systems Research (UTSR) and several industrial companies including Siemens-Westinghouse Power Corporation, General Electric Company, Pratt & Whitney and Solar Turbines Incorporated. He teaches introductory materi- als science, an engineering course entitled Structures and Properties of Materials, and a graduate course entitled Diffusion in Solids. His teaching style emphasizes in- class interaction with students, assignments that require critical thinking, hands-on experience, and encouraging students to pursue an advanced degree in materials sci- ence and engineering.

While students learn "more" by interaction with faculty and peers, they do so by doing "something" on their own. Research shows that learning, in general, is difficult for an introductory course in a large classroom. There is a problem I faced teaching EGN 3365, entitled "Structures and Properties of Materials." In this course, students must work closely with the material science principles are introduced, for the first time, to the definition of Materials Science and Engineering (MSE) and related funda- mental concepts. In general, new concepts in this course are presented with a large number of visual aids including schematics, graphs and photographs. Then they are related, preferably quantitatively, to fundamental concepts of basic science such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, thermody- namics and kinetics. The visual aids in general consist of computer generated overhead projection, most of which are static and sometimes sequential "pictures."

Research shows that students find activities that force them to reflect on their meaning perspectives to be uncomfortable, and difficult. (Peter & Jones, 2001). If students’ past learning experiences or if their current learning experiences do not expect such depth of analysis before attending class, they will not be happy when required to participate in this level of writing ( Jarvis, 2001).

In addition to the reflective writing that I have described, this course has several written assignment requirements. The first assignment (due after a few days) is a short essay on "out of context" activities on high temperature materials and coatings are funded by NSF (CAREER Award), USDOE University Turbine Systems Research (UTSR) and several industrial companies including Siemens-Westinghouse Power Corporation, General Electric Company, Pratt & Whitney and Solar Turbines Incorporated. He teaches introductory materi- als science, an engineering course entitled Structures and Properties of Materials, and a graduate course entitled Diffusion in Solids. His teaching style emphasizes in- class interaction with students, assignments that require critical thinking, hands-on experience, and encouraging students to pursue an advanced degree in materials sci- ence and engineering.

While students learn "more" by interaction with faculty and peers, they do so by doing "something" on their own. Research shows that learning, in general, is difficult for an introductory course in a large classroom. There is a problem I faced teaching EGN 3365, entitled "Structures and Properties of Materials." In this course, students must work closely with the material science principles are introduced, for the first time, to the definition of Materials Science and Engineering (MSE) and related funda- mental concepts. In general, new concepts in this course are presented with a large number of visual aids including schematics, graphs and photographs. Then they are related, preferably quantitatively, to fundamental concepts of basic science such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, thermody- namics and kinetics. The visual aids in general consist of computer generated overhead projection, most of which are static and sometimes sequential "pictures."

Considering how interactive computers can be (e.g., think of the latest computer games or my kids’ “Blue’s Clues” computer program for that matter), there is a definite need to explore this potential. Two specific programs “qualified” as “interactive” learning modules, though the level of their maturity, sophistication and presentation is quite below what of my kids’ “Blue’s Clues” computer program for that matter), there is a definite need to explore this potential. Two specific programs “qualified” as “interactive” learning modules, though the level of their maturity, sophistication and presentation is quite below what
teams then worked in their groups each afternoon from 12:15 - 3:30 p.m. when we had a lively report out session. It was ... for the summer conference and can be found at the bottom of the Faculty Center website at <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu>.

aspects of curricular development. The faculty and staff of the Faculty Center, OIR, CD&WS, and the Library, provided ... effective in teaching these topics with multimedia or web supports, as well as in large or small class settings. The main topics for the conference were: interdisciplinarity within a course, or interdisciplinarity across courses, but one or two teams worked on other

The winter conference at the end of the fall semester was a great indicator of the energy that faculty have, even after a long
class and in their writing.”

that you plan a few semesters in advance by consulting with your chair and the Faculty Center.

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is calling for submission of proposals by any UCF faculty who has

Faculty members from all colleges are invited to apply (team submissions will be given preference). The RFP is
due on February 21st.

http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/summer_conf/index.htm

Collaborative Learning and Studio Classroom Project: The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is calling for submission of proposals by any UCF faculty who has an interest in incorporating or improving collaborative learning. Fall and spring semester dates are 2/7, 2/21, 3/7, and 4/4. The RFP is due January 31st.

This series is held during the fall and spring semesters. If you have a desire to teach in the studio environment or to transform your teaching environment to facilitate student-centered activities, it is recommended that you plan a few semesters in advance by consulting with your chair and the Faculty Center.

http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/collab_classrooms/index.htm

The weekly e-journal further allows the student the opportunity to critique their practice in terms of newly trans-formed meaning perspectives and to consciously reflect on their learning processes rather than just recounting activities. This exercise is carefully explained in the course syllabus and requires students to write reflective essays on the class list-serve. Often what is confusing to one student is probably also confusing to many others in the group.

So how should the “digital divide” figure in our planning as we think about moving from the marketplace to the market-space? Probably not at all. The $600 cost to become a “have” is in the range of $200 to $500. The cost to go from a computer “have not” to a computer “have” is about $600. To be sure, Internet connectivity can come from many places that price somewhat-but not appreciably if we are willing to settle for 56
cps dial-up. It is also the case that over 95 percent of the households in the United States have a telephone. Unlike the cases of the Egyptian slave or the French serf, there is a very real prospect that one can plan from a “have” computer, cable “have” to a computer “have.” In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as televisions, we wouldn’t have a digital divide to talk about.

The “cost” to go from a television “have not” to a television “have” is in the range of $200 to $500. The cost to go from a computer “have not” to a computer “have” is about $600. To be sure, Internet connectivity can come from many places that price somewhat-but not appreciably if we are willing to settle for 56
cps dial-up. It is also the case that over 95 percent of the households in the United States have a telephone. Unlike the cases of the Egyptian slave or the French serf, there is a very real prospect that one can plan from a “have” computer, cable “have” to a computer “have.” In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as televisions, we wouldn’t have a digital divide to talk about.

reflection, not the faculty grading of the one-pager.

The short “one-minute sheet” is the last in-class reflection that occurs right at the end of class. During the last few minutes of each class, students are asked to reflect on what were the most important things learned during the three hour class, and what questions still remain as we live out the semester. This session asks the students to reflectively think about their own thinking. It forces them to review what was discussed and determine gaps in their understanding. I find that it is very helpful to me in my self-evaluation of the effectiveness of both my teaching and of the class discussion. I am frequently surprised when some students select areas of concern that are considered to be most important by the students that I never would have considered.

So how should the “digital divide” figure in our planning as we think about moving from the marketplace to the market-space? Probably not at all. The $600 cost to become a “have” is in the range of $200 to $500. The cost to go from a computer “have not” to a computer “have” is about $600. To be sure, Internet connectivity can come from many places that price somewhat-but not appreciably if we are willing to settle for 56
cps dial-up. It is also the case that over 95 percent of the households in the United States have a telephone. Unlike the cases of the Egyptian slave or the French serf, there is a very real prospect that one can plan from a “have” computer, cable “have” to a computer “have.” In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as televisions, we wouldn’t have a digital divide to talk about.

So how should the “digital divide” figure in our planning as we think about moving from the marketplace to the market-space? Probably not at all. The $600 cost to become a “have” is in the range of $200 to $500. The cost to go from a computer “have not” to a computer “have” is about $600. To be sure, Internet connectivity can come from many places that price somewhat-but not appreciably if we are willing to settle for 56
cps dial-up. It is also the case that over 95 percent of the households in the United States have a telephone. Unlike the cases of the Egyptian slave or the French serf, there is a very real prospect that one can plan from a “have” computer, cable “have” to a computer “have.” In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as televisions, we wouldn’t have a digital divide to talk about.

So how should the “digital divide” figure in our planning as we think about moving from the marketplace to the market-space? Probably not at all. The $600 cost to become a “have” is in the range of $200 to $500. The cost to go from a computer “have not” to a computer “have” is about $600. To be sure, Internet connectivity can come from many places that price somewhat-but not appreciably if we are willing to settle for 56
cps dial-up. It is also the case that over 95 percent of the households in the United States have a telephone. Unlike the cases of the Egyptian slave or the French serf, there is a very real prospect that one can plan from a “have” computer, cable “have” to a computer “have.” In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as televisions, we wouldn’t have a digital divide to talk about.

So how should the “digital divide” figure in our planning as we think about moving from the marketplace to the market-space? Probably not at all. The $600 cost to become a “have” is in the range of $200 to $500. The cost to go from a computer “have not” to a computer “have” is about $600. To be sure, Internet connectivity can come from many places that price somewhat-but not appreciably if we are willing to settle for 56
cps dial-up. It is also the case that over 95 percent of the households in the United States have a telephone. Unlike the cases of the Egyptian slave or the French serf, there is a very real prospect that one can plan from a “have” computer, cable “have” to a computer “have.” In fact, if consumers valued computers as much as televisions, we wouldn’t have a digital divide to talk about.
While highly effective teachers employ a variety of teaching strategies, students tend to employ only a few learning strategies. This workshop will explore a variety of teaching strategies and how we can encourage students to discover new pathways to learning. (February 4, 14)

Increase Student Engagement through Discussion: We will examine the various purposes and management techniques of class discussions with emphasis on effective questioning to increase student commitment. (February 28)

Interactive Teaching: Participants will experience interactive classroom techniques that may be used in any size class. By being actively involved, faculty will be able to determine the value of the methods from the student and faculty perspective. (February 20) UCF Daytona Beach

Scholarship of Teaching: The criteria set out in "Scholarship Assessed" by Glassick, Huber and Maeroff, will help faculty determine the criteria for the scholarship of teaching. Use this workshop as a brainstorming session for your ideas and for making contacts across campus. (February 12)

Student Perceptions of Excellent and Poor College Teaching: We will explore relationships among items of a student rating instrument that measured teaching effectiveness at a large metropolitan university. Using the overall rating of the instructor and course level, college, year, and other items as predictors, we produced six if-then decision rules that were effective for predicting "Excellent" and "Poor overall student ratings. (February 26)

Syllabus Design: There are small but important things you can do to help your class run more smoothly and to reduce student anxiety. You will be provided with suggestions and hints about how to provide important information to your students about what you want them to do, your expectations about their performance, and how they can succeed. Bring your best examples, anecdotes, and questions to share with other faculty. (February 17, 18)

Teaching Circles: An opportunity to come together to brainstorm teaching ideas and mentor each other as we implement the ideas in our classrooms. Teaching Circles will meet from 3:30 – 5:00 every Wednesday in the Faculty Center. (February 5, 12, 19, 26)

Test Scoring - Continu to use Social Security Numbers: Come and learn how electronic grading can save you valuable time! A free service to all faculty and GTA’s who need to have NCS Scantron sheets processed. Also, Test Scoring can help you with survey processing for your classes. (February 13, 19)

Check out our calendar at www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/collab_classrooms for more information.

Reflection on and critiquing of existing assumptions and meaning schemes in relation to new information becomes transformative learning when it leads to a significant restructur- ing of an individual's transformative perspective. Such reflection on and critiquing creates an atmosphere of active student engagement that is the essence of metacognitive activity. Metacognition is the self-communication about task demands and cognitive strate- gies a person engages in before, during, and after performing a task (Brookfield, 1999), or in other words "thinking about one's thinking while thinking" (Paul, 2001, p.15). Learning activities that offer multiple, and regular opportunities for self-reflection and self-evaluation of an individual's assumptions prior to participation in a student-centered class discussion have been shown to best foster active engagement in the learn- ing process and the metacognitive growth that is exemplified in transformative learning (Barell, 1999).

"Such reflection creates an atmosphere of active student engagement that is the essence of metacognitive activity."

Innovation
I have found that the use of several short reflective writing assignments on a weekly basis coupled with a student cen- tered, teacher facilitated approach can be quite effective. This approach requires faculty to read and reflect on the writing assignments of students, and to respond in a timely manner. Students are also encouraged to read and reflect on the writings of their peers. This "package" of writing assignments is important because it ensures that the adult learner critically reads the assignment before coming to class and it creates a climate for learning in which the adult learner is expected to and feels safe to express and evaluate meaning perspective in terms of personal assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and actions. Students person- ally engage with the material and these are reading, gain con- fidence in their own abilities, and feel supported as experi- enced professionals who are engaging in a new learning activity.

Implementation
The one-pager analysis of the reading helps to create a class- room environment that becomes an opportunity for well-pre- pared students to share social control with the faculty facili- tator while engaging in a process of joint inquiry. The analy- sis is based on questions provided in the syllabus that push adult learners to look at the reading from their perspective prac- tical. The directions for the exercise clearly instruct the student to NOT write a summary of what they have read. Instead, students are told to write a one page single spaced paper that demonstrates thinking. The students are directed to analyze the reading and write questions about its meaning, applicability, value and/or utility for their perspective. After reading the one-pagers, the faculty member becomes a better discussion facilitator who is better able to draw out meaning- ful reflections from students who have engaged with writing and sharing their meaning perspective with their col- leagues. It also allows the faculty member to immediately begin class with the areas of the reading that presented the most confusion, misconception, or interest on the part of the adult learners. I have literally restructured what I had planned for class based on my reading of the students' one pagers the night before. One advantage is that the students may not have the time to read all the one-pagers before class, a random sampling of the one pagers is just as helpful a tool. The most important part of this exercise is the student reading.
Interdisciplinarity

One of the Faculty Center's pedagogical initiatives centers on the theme of interdisciplinarity. We recognize that the kinds of problems upon which higher education focuses its discipline-specific and collective efforts arise from complex, dynamic, and interdependent relationships between peoples and between people and their environments. And we recognize that learners, as problem solvers, need deep and broad understandings of their environments and the interwoven systems and the ways humans influence and negotiate complex systems. We therefore propose coordinated efforts among faculty and among departments to effectively address these problems and to effectively teach future problem solvers. The Faculty Center will present many perspectives on this theme in future publications, workshops, and course transformation opportunities. Working with other support units and university administration, the Faculty Center will help facilitate the interdisciplinarity initiative as well as the preparation, organization, and registration for linking courses, formerly the LINC program. Your suggestions and participation are needed. Please contact us if you are interested.

UCF Service Learning

We need to hear from you. Please notify the Faculty Center if you are currently (or have recently) incorporated a service learning component in your course. For this request, you may interpret the idea of service learning liberally. The information will be directed to the Campus Compact Grant Committee (UCF's Service Learning initiative).

Classroom Observations

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

UCF-Fit

The Faculty Center, the Wellness Center, and the Recreation and Wellness Center invite you to join us for 6-weeks of fun and informative workshops and opportunities to get fit! The UCF-FIT Program will offer free nutrition, wellness, and exercise seminars. The purpose of the program is to get you motivated to work out and devote more time toward your health and fitness while building community on campus. You may also be eligible to win prizes such as t-shirts and water bottles. Stay tuned for more information about this campus-wide health and fitness program by reading your campus news e-mails this month. You may also call the Faculty Center at 823-3544 to get more information.

Faculty Forum

February 2003 Forum Question

In her October 11, 2002 article for The Chronicle of Higher Education entitled "We Are Smarter Than Our Students," Dr. Miriam Kalman Harris accuses students of lacking respect for classmat es, professors, and learning. She blames a trend she calls "consumer education" which puts education behind student satisfaction.

Several UCF faculty members have reacted to this article, both in favor of Harris' claims regarding student behavior and strongly against her argument. Please read her essay, online at <http://chronicle.com/chronicle/archive.htm> if you are a registered user or here in the Faculty Center, and then weigh in with your response at <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/forum>. You may address the article directly or any of the responses by your peers. The most cogent response will earn a prize and recognition in the Faculty Focus.

The March 2003 Forum question will target the role of critical thinking goals in our curricula and will ask you to share your practices with your colleagues. We are pleased to announce that Judy Ruland will present a series of workshops on critical thinking through the Faculty Center from February 10 to March 10. Check our calendar for specifics.

UCF Relay For Life 2003

The Relay for Life is the American Cancer Society’s signature event and the number one non-profit special event in the country. UCF will host the Relay on April 4th and 5th at the UCF track. If you are not on a team but would like to, come join "Cloio’s Chroniclers" at the Faculty Center. For more information go to <http://www.cancer.org/docroot/GLU/GLU_1.asp> or see our webpage at <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/events/relayforlife/>

As part of its fund raising program for the Relay, the Faculty Center will sponsor a garage sale on March 8th. If you would like to donate items for the garage sale, please contact us at 823-3544 by March 6th.

Additionally, Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Ruth Marshall, and Judy Welch are currently weaving a special quilt, which will be offered by chance drawing to be held on April 4th. For more information contact the Faculty Center.

Additionally, I place great value on group work, especially in first year classes. I required that students conduct extensive field work with other class members. Each team was assigned a team based on the events of one of the five conflicts (4 films and the films). Then each team presented an oral analysis of the central argument made in the film. Next, the team examining World War II watched Sophie's Choice and chose one scene that clearly showed the film's central argument: that war has lasting negative effects on all people. Each week students located and responded to a scholarly article that related to war or to humanities as a result of war. Next, each team located and interviewed at least two veterans of the war their team was exploring. Each team also located products, artifacts, or expressions that resulted or were a part of the war. One of the WWII veterans showed the team members old newspapers, magazines filled with pin-up girls, and a Nazi patch he had taken off a corpse. He let them hold these items and gave them the opportunity to ask him questions.

After the interview, they were highly motivated to focus on one or two aspects of war. That's when I turned them loose on locating articles about the impact of war on the humanities. They discussed issues and changes that occurred because of war, how art, music, literature, government is impacted by war, and how individuals deal with the tragedies of war. This research helped lead each student toward an understanding of problems and issues that arise with war other than the ones that are typically reported in the media. Throughout their investigations, students were reading two novels which we discussed in class: Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut and The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien. We discussed the problems and issues that are common to war and identified problems that are specific to each war. Students were able to discuss the current world conflicts and were prepared to construct an essay that argued for workable solutions.

The next project required that in teams, with a partner, or individually, students create a visual argument that portrayed their understanding of the current conflict between the U.S. and "terrorism." Finally, students brought their visual arguments to the class and examined someone else's visual argument to each student, who then wrote an analysis of the explicit and implicit arguments.

The novels aided students in personalizing the issues; the articles helped them understand the various opinions on the issues; the writing helped them articulate their own opinions and the oral presentations taught them that affecting the students the most—here they saw up close how war impacted individual lives. Sure, they moaned about having to set up appointments for interviews; they complained about not having a good time when all team members could go to the interview; they whined about having to drive to an interview. But after the interviews, I had a classroom full of students who knew at least one person who had been deeply affected by war—a room full of adults, each with his/her own opinion, listening to opposing viewpoints, interested in not only the impact of war on the U.S., but the affect of war on our lives.

Reflective Writing as a Tool for Perspective Transformation in Adult Students

Judy Ruland

Dr. Judy Ruland is a Visiting Associate Professor in the School of Nursing since August of 2002. Her research interests include educational program evaluation, learning outcome assessment, the effect of class-room environment on personal growth, engagement and critical thinking, effectiveness of active learning strategies, and the use of writing as a tool for fostering critical thinking. She teaches courses in the RN-BSN track and in the Education Certificate Program.

Introduction

Adult learners frequently experience a certain degree of role strain and role conflict as they return to school because they may not see the relevance of the course content to their current practice, or may perceive the content to be too easy. Many also feel uncomfortable with the increased academic rigor and, in a way, feel dumb. Adults have been labeled as "information consumers" who are educated in a "consumption society" and are not expected to develop critical thinking skills or engage in divergent thinking. Adult learners are asked to think in divergent manners that may conflict with their previously established frames of reference.

Mezirow's (1997) adult learning theory is centered on the process by which an individual's meaning perspective (or frame of reference) is changed or transformed. Mezirow ... or in other words when cognitive dissonance occurs. This dissonance may be reduced through a critical reflection process.

The novels aided students in personalizing the issues; the articles helped them understand the various opinions on the issues; the writing helped them articulate their own opinions and the oral presentations taught them that affecting the students the most—here they saw up close how war impacted individual lives. Sure, they moaned about having to set up appointments for interviews; they complained about not hav-
ported. With respect to course designs that use the web, the immediacy of synchronous computer-mediated communication should be recognized and included as a routine component. Asynchronous computer-mediated communication should be used to address issues where the need for immediacy is not present. With the advent of new technologies, instructors must fully consider the importance of interactivity and work to utilize any tools that can serve to increase the level of interactivity in a course.

Second, irrespective of the technology incorporated into a course, learning outcomes are the true standard by which course success should be measured. In this new technological era, course components should be selected that are directly related to student learning. Instructors should avoid being seduced by leading-edge technologies that could result in decreased student learning. If, for example, students have difficulties accepting and/or utilizing a new technological tool, it will draw time and attention away from the learning process. We suggest that instructors concentrate on proven, robust and reliable (trailing-edge) technologies that will work effectively for all students.

Third, instructors must build mechanisms into their courses that allow each course participant to feel engaged in the social context of the course (i.e., that they have a social presence in the course). The use of student and instructor names in synchronous and asynchronous communication, individualized performance feedback, and the use of appropriate personal pronouns during interactions represent methods that can help to build social presence for each student. Social presence is not only an issue for web-based course designs, however. We should also be equally concerned about creating social presence for a distance-learning student and the anonymous student nodding off in the back of a 500-seat lecture hall. Overall, it is our belief that all instructors need to consider the type and level of social presence their courses afford each student.

Fourth, new technology has also influenced students’ expectations regarding the instructor, the course and educational institutions. Expectations regarding convenience, accessibility of instructors, timeliness of responses and feedback need to be considered. In most cases, it is necessary to address these issues in course syllabi and directly discuss them during the first weeks of a course.

In conclusion, we strongly believe that recent technological advances have direct implications for an instructor’s teaching philosophy. Now, more than ever, educators need to consider the roles of interactivity, learning outcomes, social presence and student expectations in designing and teaching courses. Furthermore, as technological tools continue to change and develop, instructors must continue to re-evaluate and update their individual teaching philosophy. In the end, pedagogy, not technology, must remain the primary focus of the teaching craft.

Students often come to GEP classes not knowing how to express their world views, and many of them don’t know what their own world view is. Last semester, in ENC 1102 (Composition II), I wanted to teach students not only how to write better, expressing their opinions and thoughts more articulately, I wanted them to design and synthesize their own world view. I didn’t want them to simply regurgitate information they’d gotten off TV and the Internet, but I want to hear their parents’ opinions or the opinions of their friends. And since terrorism and war had become a theme in our daily lives, I wanted them to learn what they thought about war and terrorism. Composition II is a course that focuses on argument. According to the guidelines of the English Composition Program, students must be able to “read and analyze a text, understanding the implicit and explicit arguments, the intended audience, and the assumptions/implications of the argument.” They must also “investigate a problem or issue, conduct primary research, and write a propositional justifying further investigation.” They must “listen to and acknowledge other view points and experiences that sur- round the topic, articulate others’ positions in analyzing the arguments.” Finally, they must “synthesize and integrate the results of primary and secondary research, apply documentation skills (MLA, APA, CBE), and eliminate non-workable arguments and focus on viable solutions.”

When students are required to use primary research, they are better equipped to think for themselves and to articulate an opinion that is grounded in experience and fact rather than second-hand opinion. As the basis for our research, I used war and its impact on human expression, since the course I taught was a LINC course with Humanities. For the first half of the semester, we looked closely at five major conflicts in which the U.S. has been involved: WWI, WWII, Vietnam, Korean War, and the ongoing Yugoslavian conflicts. At the end of the semester, we looked closely at the current U.S. conflicts. Throughout the entire semester, we looked at the creation of music, dance, painting, drawing, literature, architecture, and film as a result of or in spite of war. The course focuses on researching, composing, thinking, and discussing.

Teaching First Year Students: Expanding World-View
Terry Thaxton

Terry Thaxton is an Instructor / Lecturer in the Department of English. In addition to teaching freshman composition, she also teaches courses in Poetry, Fiction, Nonfiction, Expository Writing, and Magazine Writing, and this semester she’s teaching in Women’s Studies: “Women and Community Activism.” Also this spring she’s conducting a creative writing workshop at PACE Center for Girls in Orlando.

Teaching Related Conferences

Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience
Atlanta, Georgia
www.sc.edu/fye/conferences/2003west/2003west.pdf

The 24th Annual Sharing Conference: ’Establishing & Sustaining Faculty Development Centers’
March 9-11, 2003
Atlanta, Georgia
http://www.utc.edu/Teaching-Resource-Center/SRFIDC/

Lilly Conference on College & University Teaching - West
March 14-15, 2003
Pomona, California
http://www.iats.com/

EDUCAUZE Midwest Regional Conference
March 25-26, 2003
Chicago, Illinois
www.educause.edu/conference/mwrc/2003/program.asp

April 21-25, 2003
Chicago, Illinois
www.aera.net/meeting

Stepping Up to the Plate in Diversity Education: A Best Practices Conference for Educators and Administrators
April 29-30, 2003
Atlanta, Georgia
www.kennesaw.edu/diversity

The SUN Conference on Teaching and Learning
May 7-8, 2003
El Paso, Texas
www.utep.edu/ceatal/sun/

The 28th International Conference on Improving University Teaching (IUT)
Pre-Conference Tour June 13-15, 2003
June 16-19, 2003
VAXJO, Sweden
web.jmu.edu/iutconference

2003 AAHE Assessment conference: Richer and more coherent set of assessment practices
June 22-24, 2003
Washington State Convention and Trade Center
Seattle, Washington

Eighth Annual AAHE Summer Academy
July 10-20, 2003
Snowbird, Utah
www.aah.org/summeracademy

Students often come to GEP classes not knowing how to express their world views, and many of them don’t know what their own world view is. Last semester, in ENC 1102 (Composition II), I wanted to teach students not only how to write better, expressing their opinions and thoughts more articulately, I wanted them to design and synthesize their own world view. I didn’t want them to simply regurgitate information they’d gotten off TV and the Internet, but I want to hear their parents’ opinions or the opinions of their friends. And since terrorism and war had become a theme in our daily lives, I wanted them to learn what they thought about war and terrorism. Composition II is a course that focuses on argument. According to the guidelines of the English Composition Program, students must be able to “read and analyze a text, understanding the implicit and explicit arguments, the intended audience, and the assumption/impli-}
Over the last ten to fifteen years, colleges and universities have greatly expanded the use of web-based technologies in the area of instruction. A wide variety of courses and some degree programs are now taught entirely on the World-Wide-Web, while other courses are taught using a combination of traditional lectures and web-based course components. Although some may consider this to be a pedagogical paradigm shift, it may be viewed more accurately as a technological paradigm shift with philosophical and pedagogical implications. While the development of this new teaching paradigm has produced a number of effects, the most important, perhaps, is the inherent need to explicitly consider one’s teaching philosophy.

The new technologies now allow for communication that is time and place independent (asynchronous communication) in the form of e-mails, bulletin board postings, and fora. This type of communication allows for instructor-student and student-student interactions. We also have the ability to communicate in a manner that is place independent (synchronous communication) in the form of chatrooms and instant messaging. This allows the instructor to lecture to an entire class and/or to have private conversations with an individual or groups of students during the lecture. Furthermore, the course management software for distance education courses provides instructors with the ability to track the activity and performance of students. For instance, it is now possible to track the number of times students access the course, the number of times they visit each page of course material (and the duration of each visit), and the number of forum postings read and written.

Although these new technologies can be useful, they should be viewed as additional tools at the disposal of an instructor in the design of a course. The primary driving force behind course design must remain the teaching philosophy of the instructor. Specific tools should be incorporated into the course based on an instructor’s teaching philosophy. In other words, course design must be pedagogically not technologically driven. To this end we suggest four technologically-based issues that should be considered as part of a coherent, critical, and current teaching philosophy.

First, we suggest that interactivity in the classroom is key, irrespective of whether the course format uses traditional or web design. Efforts should be made to create interactivity between instructors and students. Furthermore, the development of student-to-student interactions should be supported.