

Friday, May 21, 2010

OU hosts International Conference on Teaching and Learning

By Eric Reikowski, media relations assistant

Faculty, staff and administrators from universities around the globe converged on Oakland University's campus May 19 and 20 to take part in the fourth annual International Conference on Teaching and Learning.

Co-hosted by OU and the University of Windsor, the event served as a forum for discussion of a diverse range of higher education topics. This year's conference explored the theme of student engagement.

"This is truly an important initiative for the university to address teaching at the college level," said Scott Crabill, PhD., director of Integrative Studies and Undergraduate Initiatives. He said the conference addressed many ways in which faculty can connect with students to create a more meaningful learning experience.

The conference featured informative presentations from a handful of Oakland faculty members.

Alice Horning PhD., professor of writing and rhetoric and linguistics delivered a presentation on the challenges students have with reading and comprehension.

Part of the difficulty of engaging students is that they fail to read their textbooks, primary sources and online materials in the ways that instructors expect and require, Dr. Horning explained. In her presentation, she discussed evidence of students' reading problems, citing data from standardized tests such as the ACT, as well as data collected from the National Endowment for the Arts. She said that careful studies of students' reading journals provide further insight into their struggles.

"I proposed several strategies for instructors in every discipline to help students read more effectively and efficiently and thus become more fully engaged in their coursework," said Dr. Horning.

Cynthia Miree-Coppin, PhD, associate professor of management, presented the results of a recently conducted study on the impact of Business Library Instruction on freshmen and seniors in Oakland's School of Business Administration (SBA). She also discussed the SBA ACHIEVE program, a professional development initiative designed to give OU business students a competitive edge in finding success as professionals in the business world.

"Given all the things that compete for students' time and attention these days—both in and outside of the classroom—creating programs, courses, assignments and experiences that engage them in the learning process has become crucial to their success," said Dr. Miree-Coppin.

SUMMARY

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