Winter 2012

Teaching and Learning Winter 2012 Newsletter

Teaching Excellence: It's the Small Things that Matter

Author: Dr. Jennifer E. Wenson,
Recipient of the 2010-2011 Excellence in Teaching Award

Excellence in teaching can mean a plethora of things to various individuals. However, for Dr. Jennifer E. Wenson, using instructional methods that rely heavily on Andragogy has led to success. The Andragogical and Pedagogical models are at both sides of the teaching spectrum (Knowles, 1980, p.43). Knowles supports the Andragogical model for adult learners based on various assumptions. He assumes the Andragogical model aids in a learner's self-concept, strengthens a student's social role, supports the notion of experience deepening the base of learning, and can increase performance (1980, p.44-45).Pedagogical instruction tends to be rigid, authority-oriented, teacher dominant, and one-way. By using the Andragogical approach as the principle of learning, the classroom atmosphere positively changes. Andragogical facilitation uses a flexible structure, collaborative atmosphere, creative leadership and two-way communication. The classroom based on Andragogy highlights collaboration techniques using various learning styles promoting interaction, communication, and understanding amongst all students. Instructors confident in various learning styles, learning strategies, and perceptual preferences gain the participation of both the traditional and non-traditional learner.

What does the Andragogical classroom actually look like? The nature of leading students presents challenges to instructors. However, the value of the phenomenon makes the complexity worth it. The following describes the model in action. The Socratic method used with enthusiasm coupled with creativity and innovation are teaching techniques to inspire students. Critical thinking is produced by asking questions versus providing the answers. All students names need to be put to memory on day one, allowing social loafing to be non-existent. Effort to call on every student and engage them in the learning process will strengthen the discussions and even lessen Groupthink. Instructor driven Power Points are minimal while walking around the classroom instructing is common place. Validation and help are provided during the process. Students are allowed to call, text, and email the instructor at home, the office, or cell, allowing the student to know the instructor cares about the learning and the person. Exposing the students to rhetorical appeals and expecting them to write and answer using ethos, pathos, and logos provides learning opportunities teacher to student, student to teacher, and peer to peer. Efficacy is achieved.

The hope is....theory and the real world have met each time the class concludes. The future of academia is technology/online, therefore embracing this trend, encouraging twitter, blogging, online and Moodle to strengthen topics is essential. Every class should include an activity such as a game, You Tube, role play, speaker or hand-out to support the concepts being taught. Physically engaging the students attracts auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners, involving all students. The courses need to be structured 'seminar style' with a balance of instructor and student-led discussion and activities. Seminar style is characterized by conversation-driven learning. In-class and out-of-class assignments coupled with utilizing real-world examples through work experience or the media increase participation, enthusiasm, and interest in the topics. Students are given tangible and intangible information for life based upon my tacit and explicit knowledge.

Excellence in teaching does mean a plethora of things to various individuals. However, for Dr. Jennifer E. Wenson, Excellence in teaching is available to all instructors. Why not give these simple ideas a try?

Reference:

Knowles, M.S. (1980). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* (revised and updated). Chicago: Associated Press (Originally published in 1970).

Educational Development Grants: Call for Proposals

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2012 Educational Development Grants:

The Senate charge to the Teaching and Learning Committee is "to promote the teaching and the learning process." In accordance with this charge, the Committee invites the Oakland University faculty and staff to apply for grants in educational development. Funding may be requested for projects whose primary purpose involves one or more of the following:

- Development and/or use of new teaching techniques.
- Development of a new instructional approach.
- Faculty development related to curricular responsibilities.
- Investigation of a teaching/learning problem.
- Evaluation of a method of teaching.

Individual awards will not normally exceed $750. Student labor in conjunction with preparation of teaching materials may be funded. The Committee will not fund preparation for accreditation or program reviews nor will it fund faculty salaries or travel costs. The cost of food, food services and photocopies will not be funded. The grant is not intended to support the purchase of software or hardware unless it is incidental to the development of the educational process.

The deadline for applications is 5:00 P.M. on Friday, March 16, 2012.

Completed applications should be emailed to Rob Sidelinger, (sideling@oakland.edu). The form should be downloaded from the Teaching & Learning Committee website, filled out electronically and sent as an attachment.

Additionally, the electronic version must be followed by an identical, signed hard copy sent via campus mail to Rob Sidelinger, Communication & Journalism, 306A Wilson Hall. This hard copy of the application requires the signature of the department or unit head. The due date for the signed, hard copy is also 5:00 PM, Friday, March 16, 2012.

Each award recipient must file a final report at the conclusion of the project describing its purpose, activities and outcomes. The reports are due by March 1, 2013. Questions and comments may be directed to Rob Sidelinger, (sideling@oakland.edu).

http://www2.oakland.edu/tlcommittee/educationaldevelopmentgrant.cfm

Upcoming Events

March

18th-20th 2012 — The 22nd Annual Equity in the Classroom Conference at Saginaw Valley State University in Saginaw, MI. The conference fees are covered for Oakland University faculty, staff, and students. Travel stipends will be offered to five faculty interested in attending the conference. To reserve your stipend contact Scott Crabill at slcrabil@oakland.edu or (248) 370-3247. For more information about the conference, and to register for this event visit the website at http://svsu.edu/equityconference.

May

9th-10th — Sixth Annual International Conference on Teaching & Learning: Excellence in Teaching and Learning, at Oakland University. The conference is a mixture of interactive workshops, presentations by our featured speaker, keynote addresses, and concurrent sessions offered by faculty from Oakland University and the University of Windsor. The Sixth Annual Conference on Teaching and Learning is truly international in spirit. Intended for faculty, administrators and full-time graduate students, it explores current issues and challenges in teaching and learning in higher education. For more information contact Scott Crabill at x3229 or slcrabil@oakland.edu. Or visit conference website http://cleo.uwindsor.ca/oakland/

June

8th—eCornucopia 2012: Creativity Through Technology - 8:00am-4:30pm
Oakland Room in the Oakland Center. This one-day conference features two tracks, one will focus on *Creativity in the Classroom* with faculty presentations about creative pedagogical methods and student assignments. The other track, *Technology that Enables Creativity*, will cover discussions and demonstrations about specific technological applications that support creativity. The keynote speaker this year is Mike Pegg, Senior Product Marketing Manager, Developer Platforms at Google. For more information contact ddunderw@oakland.edu or visit our website at http://www2.oakland.edu/elis/conference.cfm?countrytabs=0

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

By Judith Ableser—Director CETL

Excellence in teaching ultimately focuses on excellence in student learning. How can we support our students to be successful in the classroom? What approaches engage students? How do we know if students are truly learning? What learning outcomes should we be focusing on? How can we prepare students to develop knowledge, skills and dispositions that will assist them to become successful in their university experience, career, community and life?

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides ongoing support to all full and part-time faculty at Oakland University to explore and address such questions. The mission of the Center is two-fold: To support faculty efforts to improve teaching by creating learning environments in which our diverse student body achieves maximal learning potential, and, to promote a culture throughout the university which values and rewards effective teaching, and respects and supports individual differences among learners.

The Center was established in 2011, championed by the Provost, Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and numerous other committed faculty, including the guidance of Interim Director, David Lau. In December 2011, Judith Ableser began as the full-time Director and works closely with Assistant Suzanne Flattery.

CETL provides workshops twice a month on a range of topics to enhance faculty teaching and student learning. Coffee and Conversations (twice monthly) are opportunities for faculty to meet informally to share issues, challenges and success in the classroom. The Center supports seven Faculty Learning Communities and Research Initiatives that meet regularly throughout the year. CETL promotes conferences in Teaching and Learning and is proud to be the host of the Sixth Annual Conference in Teaching and Learning on May 9-10th here at Oakland University.

Individual consultations and classroom observations are a vital part of the Center. Faculty members are encouraged to contact the Director to discuss any issues they may face ranging from concerns on course evaluations, seeking feedback on their teaching, brainstorming new approaches, reviewing their syllabi, developing learning outcomes, revising and aligning assessments and assignments, curriculum and program development, or dealing with any other challenges. All sessions and reports are strictly confidential and shared only with the individual faculty member. It is at the discretion of the faculty member to decide if they wish to share this information with their chair, department head or dean.

Beginning in the fall of 2012, CETL will focus on mentoring new faculty members and coaching advancing and developing faculty by providing ongoing Faculty Development Institutes in which faculty meet over a full semester or year.

In addition to providing support for individual growth and change, CETL will work for institutional reform for teaching and learning. The Center is forming an Advisory Board and a Student Forum in order to hear the voice of all the stakeholders across the campus. CETL works in collaboration with the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning.

Oakland University has some outstanding faculty. CETL recognizes and celebrates their contributions by honoring them as Faculty Fellows, highlighting their publications, encouraging them to lead workshops and mentoring others.

Please check out CETL's website for further information in all these areas at www.oakland.edu/CETL and/or contact the Director, Judy Ableser at ablser@oakland.edu. Together we can make a positive

http://www2.oakland.edu/tlcommittee/index.cfm

Winter 2012 Faculty Workshop

Developing Savvy Readers in Every Discipline

Learn how your students can become more effective and successful readers in the classroom!

WHEN: Thursday, March 15, 2012, 11:30-1:00
WHERE: Heritage Room in the Oakland Center

We'll provide pizza and pop. Alice Horning, Marilyn Borner, Bill Byrne and Fritz McDonald will present students' reading problems and how to help students become savvy readers. Good reading is essential because it supports learning formal academic voice through implicit learning, enables the growth of strong vocabulary essential to good reading, develops five types of reading behaviors (use of strategies, metacognition, monitoring, goal setting, and prior knowledge), and can reveal how students can learn to be savvy readers in every discipline.

Seats are Limited! Please RSVP by Monday, March 12. ***For questions and RSVPs, please contact*** *Rob Sidelinger, sideling@oakland.edu or x4126.*

FALL WORKSHOP REPORT - by Julia E. Rodriguez

The fall TLC workshop on November 15, 2011 "Incorporating Research Tools and Materials in Moodle and Scholarship: Quick and Easy Techniques" was a success. The workshop was full and participants were excited to learn about enhancing their courses with new content.

The presentation started with an overview of the new Library OneSearch tool (located on the library homepage) which uses one box to search across the library's resources, including the catalog and many of library databases. The results include materials ranked by relevance regardless of their format. Library OneSearch facilitates the easy discovery of relevant and timely resources by bringing together articles from the databases, as well as catalog records (books, journal titles, etc.) and incorporating public domain material through the HathiTrust, among others.

Workshop participants then moved into the e-LIS computer lab to learn how to use the new library widget tool for Moodle. Using this tool, faculty can create customized Moodle blocks displaying course-specific research resources linked directly in their classes.

Following an easy step-by-step guide (http://library.oakland.edu/information/services/web_services/moodle_widget.php) faculty can choose to include the Library OneSearch box, course pages or research guides, and a link to course reserves into their Moodle courses.

Participants also learned how to use Refworks to create custom reading lists to embed in Moodle. Refworks is a web-based bibliographic management system that facilitates the collection of citations through direct exporting options in most of the library databases. Other techniques shared were how to set up RSS feeds to include the latest news headlines from relevant websites and saving searches and creating alerts in the databases. See Research Tools on the library's Faculty Overview page. (http://library.oakland.edu/services/faculty/facultyoverview_researchtools.htm).

The workshop gave participants time to try the tools hands-on and it quickly became apparent that additional workshops of this nature were desired. For more information contact: Julia Rodriguez, juliar@oakland,edu., or Mariela Gunn, gunn@oakland.edu.

THE SENATE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

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