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CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Teaching Portfolios: Why & How

by Dr. Susan Mossing, *CETL Associate Director*

Creating teaching portfolios are a useful practice for two reasons: the self-reflective process that the teacher undergoes and the product that is the end result. While the product is useful primarily for teachers looking to advance their careers (e.g., graduate students and pre-tenured professors), the process is useful for everyone.

The process of creating a teaching portfolio begins by assembling and organizing documents developed over several years and across several courses. From there, each component piece is analyzed for its support of specific learning goals, and reflections that document those associations are written. The final component, which is developed specifically for the teaching portfolio, is the teaching philosophy – what you believe about how people learn and what you do as a teacher to create the environment and conditions that facilitates learning. Your teaching philosophy serves to integrate; it is the glue that binds the component pieces.

On October 2nd, the Center invited Dr. Paul Quick from the University of Georgia's Center for Teaching and Learning to talk about teaching portfolios. His [PowerPoint Presentation](#) is available online. (www.olemiss.edu/depts/cetl/special_events.html)

We hope that his presentation piqued your interest in teaching portfolios. If you are interested in creating a teaching portfolio, we would like to help you with that process. Call Sarah at 915-1391 to set up an appointment to talk about it. We can also help you revise or develop any of the pieces that would be included in a teaching portfolio, such as your syllabus, learning objectives, assessments, teaching methods or teaching philosophy.

Please remember that the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is here to assist you. Call us to set up an individual consultation to learn more.

"The mission of the Center is to promote exemplary teaching and effective learning at The University of Mississippi. The Center serves the University by being a resource, providing a forum for the discussion of research, implementing ideas for practices central to the teaching and learning processes, and facilitating professional development for faculty to empower students for lifelong learning."

You're Invited!

All Faculty and Teaching Staff are invited to a **Faculty Development Luncheon** - Wednesday, October 31, 2012 at 11:45 AM in the Union Ballroom.

Current Trends in Instructional Technology - Mr. Jimmy Ball, Deputy Chief Information Officer for Academic Technology, Academic Computing. Attendees can expect to learn about today's instructional technology support services, how instructional technology decisions are made, and potential future trends of instructional technology services.

Reserve your seat today! Link: [RSVP](#)

Sign up now - **Online.**

On the Lighter Side

The "Rush Job" Calendar

NEG	FRI	FRI	FRI	THU	WED	TUE
8	7	6	5	4	3	2
16	15	14	12	11	10	9
23	22	21	20	19	18	17
32	30	28	27	26	25	24
39	38	37	36	35	34	33

This is a special calendar for handling rush jobs. All rush jobs are wanted yesterday. With this calendar a job can be ordered on the 7th and delivered on the 3rd.

Most jobs are required by Friday, so there are three Fridays in every week.

There are eight new days added to each month to allow for end-of-the-month panic jobs.

There is no 1st of the month - thus avoiding late delivery of the previous month's last-minute panic jobs.

Monday morning blues are abolished along with non-productive Saturdays and Sundays.

A new day - Negotiation Day - has been introduced keeping the other days free for uninterrupted panic.

Two Models for Peer Assisted Learning: SI and PLTL

by Dr. Nancy Wiggers, Learning Specialist

Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) emphasizes the social and metacognitive aspects of the learning process via peer leaders, small groups, and effective learning strategies. Supplemental Instruction (SI) and Peer-led Team Learning (PLTL) are two models of this learning approach.

Supplemental Instruction (SI) focuses on increasing student success and retention in historically difficult courses, identified as those with high rates of drops, failures, and withdrawals. SI sessions allow students to work in small groups in order to compare notes, review and apply important concepts presented in class as well as develop strategies for studying. The sessions are facilitated by a trained SI leader, a student who has taken the course, earned a high grade, and merited the professor's recommendation. The SI leaders attend lectures and take notes along with the enrolled students. Afterwards, they develop at least three-four weekly sessions where they organize students into small groups for collaborative review activities and effective study strategies over the most difficult material.

SI sessions are available to all students enrolled in a SI-supported course. Attendance is completely voluntary. Though attendance is tracked and correlated with grades, there is no extrinsic penalty or reward for attendance.

Peer-led Team Learning (PLTL) is a program designed to support undergrad STEM courses. Like SI, this model utilizes small student groups led by trained peer leaders who facilitate collaborative activities and discussion of course content.

PLTL groups are limited to 6-8 students and one peer leader. Once they opt to participate in the groups, students are assigned to a specific PLTL weekly group meeting. In this model, student attendance is required. PLTL leaders do not plan review activities for the weekly group sessions. Instead, the course professor creates assignments and activities specifically for the PLTL leaders to use in the sessions.

Variations on the same PAL theme, SI and PLTL result in better retention rates and higher grades for students who participate in them. For more information regarding SI and PLTL, please refer to the following:

Essential Peer-led Team Learning. David K. Gosser, Jr. and Hope Hartman URL: <https://pltlteam.wiki.zoho.com/homepage.html>

The International Center for Supplemental Instruction URL: <http://www.umkc.edu/asm/si/overview.shtml>

Attention New Faculty!

Please join us Friday, October 12, 2012 at 3:00 PM in 117 Hill Hall for an informal presentation about the Ole Miss Community. Dr. Sparky Reardon, Dean of Students will be leading the presentation which has been designed specifically for new faculty. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Ole Miss and meet other faculty new to the campus. Refreshments will be provided. **RSVP here.**



*Please note – this event is open to new faculty only. Thank you.

Working with Academically At-Risk Students

by Rebekah Reysen, M.Ed., Learning Specialist

Over the course of my career I have worked with many college students who are considered to be "academically at risk," a label that varies in definition depending on the university. At the University of Mississippi, students who do not receive at least a cumulative 2.0 GPA are at risk of not being able to graduate due to academic issues. My job as a learning specialist is to help understand the reasons that contribute to poor academic performance as well as help students overcome barriers to academic success. Knowing how to help each individual student is not

always clear at first, but I truly enjoy my job and learn a lot from every one of my students! I have come to realize that no two students are alike and that each individual who steps into to my office has his or her own unique story.

Reasons why students do not maintain a high enough GPA to graduate vary substantially. Some may be tempted to evaluate this population as “not working hard enough.” Although this is the case for a percentage of individuals of any population, I have talked to many students who are experiencing major life concerns that are inhibiting their academic performance. These issues can include mental-health related concerns such as depression, anxiety, social phobia, an unexpected pregnancy, rape, family concerns, grief, illness, and schizophrenia. Working with such students has helped me become much more aware of what goes on “beneath the surface” for many of our students. I have a great admiration for those who, despite all of the personal issues they are experiencing, are strong, resilient, and courageous enough to be able to push forward in their degree programs in the face of adversity.

At the CETL we have counselors and counselors-in-training who are equipped to help students who are struggling with personal issues. If you become concerned about a student and are wondering what could be behind low grades, feel contact us. As fellow instructors, faculty, and staff, you have probably already served as a great “counselor” to many of your students!

This newsletter is produced and distributed by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.