
THE MANTLE

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Welcome Back!

Welcome back for the Spring 2015 Semester! We hope that you enjoyed your holiday break. The campus is already buzzing with activities due to intersession and preparations for the new semester despite the frigid temperatures. As you begin your own preparations, please keep in mind that CETL serves as resource for you. We offer programs as well as individual consultations, which are designed to help and guide you toward improved teaching and student engagement. For individual consultations or in-class observations, please contact our office to schedule a time. The Faculty Development Luncheons scheduled this spring address teaching and learning topics associated with distance learning, managing classes, student writing, and student learning.

This spring CETL is hosting four Faculty Development Luncheons. The first luncheon of the series will be held on Tuesday, February 10, 2015. Bob Cummings (Department of Writing & Rhetoric) and Maurice Eftink (Office of the Provost) will lead a discussion on The MOOC Experience. Several faculty that completed MOOCS last year will also be present to share their experiences.

The second luncheon will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2015. Clifford Madsen from Florida State University will be our guest speaker. Dr. Madsen will be giving his presentation on “The Future of Education: Social versus Academic.”

third luncheon to talking about “Leveraging the Power of Peer Feedback: How UM Faculty use Peer-Response with Writing-Enriched Assignments,” this presentation is scheduled for Monday, March 30, 2015.

The final luncheon of the spring series will be a special 90-minute interactive workshop with Kenneth Sufka, Professor of Psychology & Pharmacology. Dr. Sufka will be sharing Evidenced Based Strategies to Promote Student Learning and Academic Success. This luncheon will be held on Wednesday, April 15, 2015.

Articles about each of these presentation topics can be found in the following pages of this newsletter. We hope you will take the time to review this information and plan to attend one or all of these events. These luncheons provide a great opportunity to network with other faculty on campus. We look forward to seeing you!

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How many cites do I have to have? Designing the Sources Portion of your Assignment

Amy E. Gibson (Mark), Head of Instruction, Information Literacy Librarian & Professor

Your students may not have as good of a grasp on what type of research materials they should be using as you would wish. Here are some key elements to address when creating an assignment for a research paper.

How many?

It can be frustrating to faculty who are accustomed to authoring peer reviewed journal articles to put a number on how many references a student needs for a paper. How do you list an explicit number of citations when the true answer is: You need however many sources necessary to successfully demonstrate your research? For some faculty, requiring a specific number of citations can lend an objective measure for grading. Results from focus groups determined that some students find being given a specific number of required sources to be an arbitrary requirement (Mark, 2011). Other students want a minimum number of required sources. The dilemma is that students want a clue about your expectations, some to meet or exceed them; others use your guidelines to determine the minimum amount of effort to make.

What kind?

Scholarly. That's our answer in academia: you need scholarly sources. Assuming this is true for your assignment, there are many reliable sources that students may be missing when we limit our requirements to scholarly or peer review journal articles. For example, engineers are intimately engaged with gray literature because conference papers and technical reports are a great place for recent research. There are online government documents on everything ranging from the New Deal's *Federal Theatre Project* in the American Memory Project to the rat mapping data collection in the *Rat Information Portal* brought to you by the NYC Department of Health and Hygiene. Outside of the government there are other agencies with reliable information and data sets that can add to a student research. A student can start with

an article in *Time Magazine* or *USA Today* which can lead them to a report on electronic nicotine delivery systems (e-cigs). If they only search JSTOR or automatically check the *scholarly articles* choice in a database they can miss research paths which may be more relevant, timely, and, most importantly, more interesting to them.

What is reliable?

All we really want is for students to use reliable sources for their course work. Figuring out how to state *how* students should go about this is difficult. After working with many faculty my best suggestion for language is:

Students are required to use a balance of resources including [choose: academic articles, popular press, books, media, government documents, research reports, and datasets] from library databases, the library catalog, Google, and Google Scholar.

By trying to clarify what is reliable you may end up having to spend more time reviewing the assignment with your students. Let them know that research is process which draws information and ideas from many places, including popular resources. If research is the process, the bibliography represents the final results of that process—the material quoted and ideas of others which have been incorporated.

Of course the best solution is to bring your class in for a library session where both the teacher and a librarian are there to guide students through the research process.

Check out my blog @ <http://www.libraries.olemiss.edu/blogs/information-literacy-blog>

Mark, Amy E. (2011). Format as a False Judge of Credibility: Messages from Librarians and Faculty and Student Responses. *Communications in Information Literacy*, 5(1), 21-37.

Leveraging the Power of Peer Feedback: How UM Faculty use Peer-Response with Writing-Enriched Assignments

Alice Myatt & Angela Green, Department of Writing & Rhetoric

On Monday, March 30th CETL will host a faculty luncheon featuring the topic of using peer response activities with writing-enriched assignments. Workshop speakers will be Dr. Alice Johnston Myatt and Dr. Angela Green of the Department of Writing and Rhetoric; a panel of faculty from across the University's campus who incorporate peer response activities in their classrooms will also be part of the program.

Gather a group of faculty together from almost any discipline and begin talking about student writing and there is sure to be no lack of opinion and commentary on the need to help students improve their writing skills. Mention the words "in-class peer review" (also referred to a peer feedback or response) and often, reactions will include emphatic rejection of such and possibly some version of "the worst experience I ever had with peer-review." Even when faculty understand and support the integration of peer-review activities for writing assignments, many will cite increased demands on their time or concerns over plagiarism as reasons for avoiding the use of peer review and/or writing-intensive assignments.

Yet, research and scholarship support the role such peer-to-peer activities have in improving student writing and expanding writers' grasp of audience and purpose. In fact, when managed effectively, incorporating peer-review activities usually decreases faculty time spent on grading writing assignments and improves students' overall academic performance. While the inclusion of peer response activities gained popularity in the decade of the 1980s and continues to be an enduring featuring of most writing-intensive courses, composition scholars Anne Ruggles Gere and Kory Ching trace the origins of peer review back to the late 1800s, and as with most classroom-based practices, a certain amount of mythology has developed even as research-based scholarship of its efficacy role in advancing student-writing skills.

This workshop explores the myths and realities

of using peer feedback with writing-enriched assignments, and the presenters share proven strategies – including faculty experiences – for designing and using peer-based activities. Additionally, Drs. Myatt and Green will share strategies for teaching students how to be effective peer responders as well as offering gateway activities (based on the scholarship of George Hillocks) that will assist students to learn about and benefit from the peer response activities they engage in.

Additionally, attendees will learn about Writing and Rhetoric's faculty seed grant program, which is administered by Dr. Green. Joining her will be past and current faculty seed grant recipients, who will share insights into the writing-enriched assignments they have developed as part of their participation in the seed grant program. The purpose of the program is to encourage faculty to integrate writing into the curriculum in ways that teach students not only that writing styles and discourse conventions differ by discipline, but also that writing itself is inseparable from the "ways of knowing" of a particular discipline. Dr. Green notes that critical thinking is inextricably linked with the ability to write effectively in any field, and students need both reinforcement of the general principles of writing that cross all disciplines and explicit instruction in the writing in their majors.

In order to build a culture where writing is considered the normal way of learning any subject, faculty will be encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities and benefit from the support of trained Graduate Writing Fellows who have received instruction on responding to student writing.

Faculty interested in learning more about the faculty seed grant program or in reviewing the resources for effective peer response activities are encouraged to explore the Writing-enriched webpages located at rhetoric.olemiss.edu, or they may contact the Department of Writing and Rhetoric at 662-915-2121.

Evidenced Based Strategies to Promote Student Learning and Academic Success

Kenneth Sufka, Professor, Department of Psychology

Any faculty who has taught classes for more than a few years has surely seen a decline in college student academic preparedness. The majority of students in my General Psychology class report having studied very little to earn high grades in High School. Further, they note with frustration, these study strategies fail to produce similar results with college-level material. It seems fewer students are earning a college GPA equal to or higher than their HS-GPA.

One could speculate this to be the collateral damage incurred with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 intended to address flat or falling K-12 test scores in the U.S. Aspects of the NCLB legislation included a) frequent testing, b) standardized tests and c) high-stakes testing. Student's inability to meet proficiency measures had devastating consequences on schools and their staff. A small number of schools and districts resorted to now widely publicized cheating scandals. Many others simply practiced "teaching to the test." I would hope that teaching and testing at colleges and universities bear little resemblance to such practices.

Drew Appleby, Psychology Professor Emeritus at IUPUI, suggests there are fundamental differences in the student-teacher relationship between High School and university settings that affect teaching and learning practices. High School teachers often assume students are neither sufficiently mature nor responsible to learn on their own and the educational environment is structured accordingly leading to passive learning. Students receive constant verbal reminders, come to class unprepared, obtain knowledge via lecture methods, and are told what to read, what to learn and what they will be tested on. Our assumptions at the university level are that students are mature (or maturing) and capable of being actively engaged their learning. Most university teaching

environments are structured around these assumptions.

How do faculty approach this transitional challenge facing students today? Some take the approach that "college is not for everyone" and employ a Darwinian principle of natural selection. College students will either figure out how to earn better grades and succeed in college or they will find themselves on academic suspension and looking for work.

Another approach is to guide students in this transition and teach the strategies and skills necessary to master course material, earn better grades and complete their college degree.



There is a growing body of research in the field of student learning and a number of excellent review and meta-analytic papers recently published on this subject. The empirical literature is clear on the study techniques that produce terrible exam performance. Massed study sessions, re-reading and highlighting are common study strategies reported among college students today that, sadly, are three of the worst in mastering course content. The empirical literature is also clear on study strategies that produce robust learning. Spaced study sessions, retrieval practice and concept mapping are three excellent examples that seemingly few college students practice today.

My workshop discusses the empirical evidence of several strategies that promote course content mastery and student success. Further, the workshop is structured around a framework that allows faculty to meaningfully interact with students in a manner that identifies problem areas in study strategies and techniques and sets students on a path to classroom success. I have found this "diagnostic rubric" to be wonderfully successful in helping my students make the transition necessary to master college-level course content and earn better grades.

The Future of Education: Social versus Academic

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will host Dr. Clifford Madsen from Florida State University as a guest speaker at our Faculty Development Luncheon on Wednesday, March 4, 2015.

Dr. Madsen, the Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of Music, is Coordinator of Music Education/Music Therapy/Contemporary Media and teaches in the areas of music education, music therapy, research, and psychology of music at Florida State University. He serves on various international and national editorial and research boards and is widely published throughout scholarly journals in music education and therapy.

In addition, he has authored and co-authored many books and is perhaps best known for *Teaching/Discipline: A Positive Approach to Educational Development* (which has been published since 1970, is now going into its 5th edition and is available in several languages), *Experimental Research in Music*, *Competency Based Music Education*, *Applications of Research in Music Behavior*, and *Vision 2020: The Housewright Symposium on the Future of Music Education*.

At the March 4th Luncheon Dr. Madsen will talk about how academic concerns appear paramount throughout our society with increased emphasis on tests, accountability, home schooling and so on. Yet in most situations it is precisely an individual's or group's inability to positively interact that causes the gravest problems. Even when very bright students at the college level fail it is usually because of what Dr. Madsen defines as social issues not because they lack the intellectual ability to succeed.

This session will present a somewhat radical point of view that all education ought to re-emphasize the cooperative and leadership skills associated with social aspects of getting along, paying attention, and the self-management skills necessary to remaining in school as opposed to primarily emphasizing only academic achievement.

Dr. Madsen received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Brigham Young University and his Ph.D. from The Florida State University. He was appointed to the FSU faculty in 1961.



Graduate Instructor Excellence in Teaching Award

The Graduate Instructor Excellence in Teaching Award was inaugurated in 2008 to recognize the importance of the teaching role performed by graduate students.

- **Submission Deadline:** April 1, 2015
- **Eligibility:** Graduate instructors who are currently teaching or have taught during the current academic year.
- **Nominations:** The graduate instructor must be nominated by a department, a faculty member, or a set of students from the nominee's class. Complete nomination packets should be sent to the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, 105 Hill Hall.



See website for selection criteria - <http://cetl.olemiss.edu/award-gradinstructor.html>