



Upcoming Workshops

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LUNCHEON

Monday, March 30, 2015

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

Alice Myatt & Angela Green
along with a Faculty Panel from the
Department of Writing & Rhetoric

RSVP Online by Wednesday, March 25.
Please see our website for more details.

LEARNING TOOLS WORKSHOPS For Students

If you have students struggling with managing their time, reading assignments, or need help preparing for mid-terms, please consider referring them to our Learning Tools Workshops. The techniques shown at these workshops help students to reflect on how they learn and practice alternative study techniques for more effective and efficient learning. **Registration is required** as space is limited to 12 per session. They are held in Hill Hall, room 117, at 2pm on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

Time Management

- March 17th & 18th

Test Prep Plans

- March 24th & 25th

Reading Notes

- March 31st & April 1st

<http://cetl.olemiss.edu/learningtools.html>

The Nightmares of a Young Tenure Track Faculty

Excel in teaching or get tenure?

By Martial Longla, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, CETL Advisory Board Member

Assume that you just got a degree in say “Nonsense sciences”. You are a graduate of the University of “Mixtures” that somehow is around the middle of the top 100 Universities. You have never been on the job market. You have never held any full time job. All you have done in your life was to master the mazes of the “Nonsense sciences” and over the course of your studies, transmit them to the students of the University of “Mixtures”. Somehow you have also managed to publish here and there to secure eligibility for tenure track positions.

You are in the same pot with graduates from all over the world. You think you are strong enough; you can get that tenure track position. You apply for about 100 positions or more. Then, you attend job interviews at national conferences, on skype, by phone, and on campuses. When you make it through the initial interviews and are invited to a campus, you are amazed. You have your first contact with students as you demonstrate your teaching skills for the selection committee. You pretend everything is just fine. It is just for one hour. A good actor can bluff at least that long. Then, you have several meetings with various people that try to assess your abilities. Your job is to make sure they conclude what you want. You must get an offer whether or not you are ready for their university. Once you get the job; however, you must ensure you keep it. You must get tenured. To get tenured, you must teach well according to your students.

Unfortunately the course you teach attracts students who have no more interest in it than earning the minimal grade in order to graduate. They clearly tell you, “Man, I just need a C- in this class.” Others add “I don’t need this! I just want to be a high school teacher” as if high school teachers only need to know basic content. They complain to other students, colleagues, and administrators and rate you unfavorably on teaching evaluations for reasons other than your teaching skills.

You struggle with seemingly competing concerns: challenging students and avoiding complaints. As a result, you doubt your expectations and yourself. Should you make the content easier? Are your expectations unreasonable? Should you demand less of students? How can you afford to spend the time wrestling with these issues and manage to address the other requirements for tenure? How can you manage so much as you adjust to a new environment, colleagues, and friends?

A strong mentoring program would go a long way to help new faculty manage the trials and stress associated with starting a career in academe. They need to know where and from whom to seek advice. Sometimes you wish there was someone in whom you could confide, ask questions, reveal uncertainties, and express frustrations about your new career without reprisal. You wish someone could escort you through this tenure process and advise you how to manage the research, the teaching, the service, the unmotivated students, and still remember

Announcements



**Graduate Instructor
Excellence in
Teaching Award**

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is accepting nominations for its annual Graduate Instructor Excellence in Teaching Award. Eligibility: Graduate instructors who are currently teaching or have taught during the current academic year. Nominations due: Wednesday, April 1, 2015. See website for more details. <http://cetl.olemiss.edu/>

MOOC Participation Grants

The Office of the Provost, along with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the Division of Outreach and Continuing Studies, is pleased to announce that \$500 grants have been made available to faculty members to participate in and complete a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) of the applicant's choosing during the 2015 calendar year. Full-time faculty members are eligible to apply for the grant. Please see website for details.

<http://cetl.olemiss.edu/>

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why you chose an academic career. A good mentor is one of the best resources a university can provide its new faculty member.

Faculty Mentoring Programs

By Nancy Wiggers, CETL

Cultivating collegial relationships and transitioning toward membership to a university community are important considerations in any new faculty appointment. However, as Dr. Longla implies above, this can be a "hard row to hoe" in light of the enumerable tasks and concerns associated with chasing tenure, dealing with students, conducting classes, managing departmental politics, and simply contemplating a life outside the confines of the "ivory tower."

Promoting collegial relationships and community membership through mentoring, or pairing new faculty with experienced faculty for guidance, are not new ideas on university campuses. In the past, however, formal programs devoted to mentoring were not as prevalent as they are today. These relationships developed more naturally in university clubs, dining halls, or other spaces where faculty from all disciplines had opportunities to gather. Faculty interest in these spaces dwindled over time. As a result, a focus on mentoring programs emerged to foster professional development and community (Savage, Karp, & Logue, 2004).

Mentoring programs on university campuses come in all shapes and sizes. Some programs are formal, university-wide, and mandated programs, while other programs are informal, voluntary, or restricted to individual departments. Despite the variety, most agree that a good mentoring program establishes mentoring relationships early, provides support and training for those involved, and incorporates assessments to ensure quality (Law, et al., 2014).

Interestingly, some of the most recent literature associated with faculty mentoring stems from the medical and pharmaceutical fields. Law et al. (2014) offer a revised PAIRS Checklist, which outlines a fundamental plan for mentoring programs:

- The purpose is clearly delineated, e.g., acclimatizing new faculty to the environment, facilitating career development, supporting efforts in research, teaching, and service, etc.
- The structure is defined. It includes a program coordinator, procedures, mentor qualifications, and ideally a plan to reward mentors.
- A clear process to implement program goals is articulated. The process includes how mentoring pairs or groups are identified, how mentors are trained for mentoring tasks, and how expectations for the relationship are outlined.
- Appropriate resources are devoted to the plan to ensure its implementation.
- An assessment plan exists to evaluate the extent to which the program meets established goals, satisfies participants, etc., in order to refine the program as needed.

If you have an interest in mentoring, the CETL can serve as a resource for developing new or refining established mentoring programs, assisting mentoring faculty to develop productive mentoring relationships, and providing formative feedback to faculty regarding teaching.

References

Law, A. V., Bottenberg, M. M., Brozick, A. H., Currie, J. D., DiVall, M. V., Haines, S. T., . . . Yablonski, E. (2014). A checklist for the development of faculty mentorship programs. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 78(5), 98-98. doi:10.5688/ajpe78598

Savage, H. E., Karp, R. S., & Logue, R. (2004). Faculty mentorship at colleges and universities. *College Teaching*, 52(1), 21-24. <http://search.ebscohost.com>. (AN 12885855)