

# Teaching Matters

The Teaching and Learning Center of the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia

Volume 6, Issue 2

2004 Winter

## Varied, upcoming educational events By Phyllis Blumberg

The Teaching and Learning Center is pleased to announce upcoming, exciting educational opportunities both at USP and in the area. All of the USP events have been planned in response to faculty requests. This is the first time some of these events have been announced. Mark your calendars and register now for these events. The May conference is immediately after graduation.

Tamara Case has rescheduled her getting started with Blackboard workshop to **Tuesday February 23** from 4-5 in GH 208N.

On **Wednesday, March 3**, Joanne Gonzales-Major will return to do an **advanced tools and techniques of on-line course design workshop** in GH 208 N from 9-11. This will be a hands-on workshop where we will individually build a template or course shell for an on-line course. If you are planning to use Blackboard or any distance education activities in your courses, this workshop will be worthwhile for you. Joanne will also give you ideas on how to use technology to augment your traditional courses. Although this is billed as advanced, this workshop is intended for all faculty.

On **Thursday, March 4 from 9-1** in RH 101, we will participate in an interactive workshop on, **"Welcoming Diversity"** given by the National Coalition Building Institute. This group comes highly recommended by other universities for helping faculty to be more sensitive and aware of how cultural and ethnic traditions relate to education and clinical work. Faculty have commented that they do not always know how to interact with our students and clients who come from other cultures. This workshop should help address these issues.

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The Teaching and Learning Center is an educational resource for all USP faculty who are interested in helping their students become more effective learners. It maintains a current collection of books and periodicals relating to teaching and learning and student assessment. The Teaching and Learning Center web page is [www.usip.edu/teching](http://www.usip.edu/teching)

## Varied, upcoming educational events (continued)

On **Tuesday, March 9**, Dr. David Brakke, Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics of James Madison University will consult with us on **general education** issues. Dr. Brakke has helped implement a redefined baccalaureate degree with revised curricula. He serves as part of a national consulting group for curricular and institutional change for the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Plans for his day with us include meetings with groups who are very involved with teaching our current core curriculum, the General Education Steering Committee and administration. He will give a **plenary** for the entire faculty from **1-3 on Tuesday, March 9** in GH A on issues of general education nationally and how we might align our general education with national trends.

MaryEllen Weimer, who came here last year is editor of the widely read newsletter, "The Teaching Professor". For the first time, this newsletter is sponsoring a conference, "**Celebrating Teaching and Promoting Learning**" at the Cherry Hill Hilton, **May 21-23**. The conference features four tracks: 1) flexibility, adaptability, vitality and advocacy. This track will explore new ideas on teaching. 2) learning. This track will describe instructional practices that make learning more likely. 3) the sensible use of technology. This track will focus on how technology can improve your teaching and help manage large classes. 4) teaching as scholarly work. This track will examine the impact that scholarship of teaching and learning has had on the academic culture and the promotion and tenure process. If you register for the conference prior to March 1, the fee is \$339.00. For more details see [www.teachingprofessor.com](http://www.teachingprofessor.com). I am trying to help pay for part of people's registration for the conference to encourage as many USP faculty to go as possible to such a worthwhile event in our region. You can also apply for a Teaching and Learning Travel grants to attend this conference. Some of USP's most innovative teachers' will be on the program.

This Teaching Professor conference is holding three **pre-conference workshops** in Cherry Hill on **Friday, May 21 from 2:30- 4:30**. The cost for each workshop is \$90.00 if registration is done in advance, which is recommended since space is limited. The first workshop is on **faculty and student well being**. Specific ways to improve the climate of teaching and learning will be offered. The second workshop is a primer on **pedagogical scholarship**. Publication options and outlets will be explored as well as looking at previously published work to consider quality issues. If you are interested in attending either of these two workshops, just register with the conference by downloading the registration at <http://www.teachingprofessor.com>

The third workshop, "**Capitalizing on the Unique Aspects of Science Teaching: Collaboration and Communication in Content-Rich Courses**" seems especially appropriate for many of our faculty. When teaching a science course, a continual dilemma centers on the question "how much is enough?" This workshop will focus on pedagogical alternatives to lecturing about factual information. Several collaborative exercises will encourage participants to focus on questions relevant to courses that they teach. Science courses can present obstacles to effective pedagogy because of the amount of information, but a different perspective might allow science teachers to view these limitations as opportunities. Because of the high number of USP faculty that might benefit from this workshop I have asked the presenters if they would come to USP to give the workshop specifically for us. They have agreed. This workshop is scheduled for **Friday May 14 from 10-1 workshop WDL 119**

The annual Talking About Teaching Day will be held in conjunction with this workshop on **Friday, May 14 at 1PM in WI 208**.

We are fortunate to have so many, varied opportunities for growth and learning in the next few months. I hope many faculty take advantage of these wonderful events and that we are all enriched by these experiences.

## Call for Patricia Leahy Award

The Patricia Leahy Memorial Award that fosters student learning. An endowed faculty award sponsored by Charles W. Gibley, Jr., Ph.D. Formerly called the InnQuations With Learning (OWL) Award

If you have made an innovation to your teaching that fosters student learning, consider applying for a Leahy award

Appropriate innovations: All innovations that have a large impact on student learning will be considered. Examples of large impact on student learning include a more desirable outcome of learning (i.e., better overall scores on tests, more students doing well in the course, or better student products due to changes made by the instructor) especially compared to a previous approach; or a more positive attitude towards learning the material. These innovations might include completely revising a course, revising an entire educational program, integrating several courses or disciplines, greatly changing how students learn or are assessed in a course, or a course with a new approach. The innovation must have had an impact on the students' learning. The faculty must have an understanding of why the innovation had an impact. The number of students who participate in the course cannot be a relevant consideration since the course sizes varies so much at USP. Groups of faculty who have collaborated on the development of a new approach are encouraged to apply. Inter-course or interdisciplinary innovations are encouraged. An innovation need not be a success, but it must have been implemented at least once.

Eligibility: Full-time faculty members who are in at least their third year of employment at USP may apply. The award winner(s) from the previous year are not eligible to apply, but may apply again in the future. The innovation must have been developed by the submitter and implemented within the last two years. The strategy need not be totally original, it can be an adaptation of innovations tried elsewhere.

Submission materials: Each of the following should be submitted as a paper copy and an electronic copy. For the abstracts and summaries use 12 font size and a standard easy to read font.

- Complete Document of Innovation Abstract form so that the innovation will be included in this year's edition. This abstract is limited to two pages. The form is available at [www.usip.edu/teaching/innovations](http://www.usip.edu/teaching/innovations).
- More space can be used to describe aspects of the activity than shown on the form, these are specifications on what to include
- Attach additional materials on any section, if necessary. Supplemental course materials or examples of assignments may be submitted, and are encouraged to further explain your innovation
- $\leq 200$  word summary for publication in the Teaching and Learning Center's Newsletter

**(Deadline for submission: March 8, 2004)**

For more information on the Leahy Award go to [www.usip.edu/teaching/owl/shtml](http://www.usip.edu/teaching/owl/shtml)

## Summary of Previous events: TableTalks

October- November 2003

### Learning-centered teaching will not work with my teaching because...

Q&A session with the faculty learning community on learning-centered teaching

The following concerns and ways to address each were discussed:

- I have a large class
  - Small groups can work with any size class, just need to plan better
  - If you seat students in clusters around the aisles in tiered classrooms, it is easier to get around to listen to them
- Students who are getting grades in the 70's are comfortable with their present grades and do not feel the need to work harder, come to class prepared, etc.
  - These are often the students that get turned on to learning centered activities and do better with this approach
- Some disciplines seem to fit better with a learning-centered approach than others
  - Disciplines where there is an emphasis on concepts, critical thinking and problem solving do seem to work better with learning centered approaches
  - Courses with a high emphasis on factual knowledge seem harder to adapt to these approaches
    - Just in Time Teaching such as in Physics is a good example of a learning centered approach in a science course
- Getting students to work well in groups is difficult
  - Use nonrandom groups assignment made up by instructors
  - Holding each person responsible for the work by asking different ones to demonstrate understanding increases participation
  - Asking students to evaluate each other's participation and effort.

November 2003

### Transitioning from student centeredness to patient- centered care Michele Mulhall

- Student-centered teaching puts the student at the center and makes them feel that they will always be seen as the most important. Yet when they become health professionals, they are not the center, the patient or client is the most important person
- Traditionally students entered clinical experiences expecting to be a dependent consumer (because that is how they were treated as students), this is not realistic in clinical settings
- The National Academy of Sciences has established ten rules for health care reform (<http://www4.nas.edu/onpi/webextra.nsf/44bf87db309563a0852566d63bb/717a437322ba309b>)
- These rules closely parallel the characteristics of learning centered teaching that USP has developed. These two documents were developed without knowledge of the other.
- In many cases one could substitute the word patient for student in the learning centered teaching characteristics and then see how the two systems parallel each students should have an easy time transitioning to patient-centered care
  - Learning centered teaching should empower students to become caregivers
  - Faculty need to make explicit why this type of teaching is so important for health professionals
- Asking students to reflect on their learning and learning activities both in the classroom and in the clinical experiences helps them to become more patient focused

**Spring 2004 TableTalk and Workshop Series**

<b>Date-Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Presenters</b>
Monday January 5 4-5PM	RH 101	Group problem solving sessions in recitation	Fred Schaefer and Madhu Mahalingam
Tuesday January 13 12-1PM	WCR	Group problem solving sessions in recitation	Fred Schaefer and Madhu Mahalingam
Monday January 19 4-5PM	WCR	What does Middle States want us to do with learning outcomes?	Peter Miller
Tuesday January 27 12-1PM	WCR	What does Middle States want us to do with learning outcomes?	Peter Miller
Monday February 2 4-5PM	WCR	A generic template for learning outcomes	Margaret Kasschau & Lois Peck
Tuesday February 10 12-1PM	WCR	A generic template for learning outcomes	Margaret Kasschau & Lois Peck
Monday February 16 4-5PM	WCR	Making Theory Interactive	Paula Kramer
Tuesday February 24 12-1PM	WCR	Making Theory Interactive	Paula Kramer
Tuesday, March 9 12-1PM	WCR	Improving your students' information skills	Leslie Bowman
Monday March 15 4-5PM	WCR	Advances in our General Education Curriculum	Reynold Verret and General Education Steering Committee
Tuesday March 23 12-1PM	WCR	Advances in our General Education Curriculum	Reynold Verret and General Education Steering Committee
Monday March 29 4-5PM	WCR	Progress Report on changes to Student Discipline, Student Judiciary Review	Tim Rupe and Barbara Little
Tuesday April 6 12-1PM	WCR	Progress Report on changes to Student Discipline, Student Judiciary Review	Tim Rupe and Barbara Little
Monday April 12 4-5PM	GH 110 B	Cantasia – The easiest way to create videos of computer on-screen activities	Jeanette McVeigh
Tuesday April 20 12-1PM	GH 110 B	Cantasia – The easiest way to create videos of computer on-screen activities	Jeanette McVeigh
Monday April 26 4-5PM	WCR	Competency and Proficiency Exams in Writing and Computers	Roy Schriftman and Bob Manbeck
Tuesday May 4 12-1PM	WCR	Competency and Proficiency Exams in Writing and Computers	Roy Schriftman and Bob Manbeck

## Spring Workshop Schedule

<b>Date-Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Presenters</b>
Monday February 23 4 – 5PM	GH 208 N	Getting started with Blackboard: The Basics	Tamara Case
Wednesday March 3 9 – 11 AM	GH 208 N	Advanced tools and techniques of on-line course design	JoAnne Gonzales-Major Immaculata University
Thursday March 4 9 – 1 PM	RH 101	Welcoming Diversity	National Coalition Building Institute
Thursday March 9 1 – 3PM	GH A	Issues in general education: Nationally at USP	David Brakke James Madison University
Friday May 14 9-3 10-1	WDL 119	Talking about Teaching Day including Capitalizing on the Unique aspects of Science teaching collaboration and communication in content rich courses	Ike Shibley Tami Mysliwiec Maureen Dunbar Berks Lehigh Valley College of Penn State University
Friday May 21 Sunday May 23	Cherry Hill, NJ	The Teaching Professor Conference	

### Call for Nominations for Adjunct and Part-time Faculty Awards

Students, faculty members, or chairs may make nominations. The deadline for submission is Friday, April 30. Awards are made on an annual basis and if an adjunct faculty was nominated during the fall 2003 semester, that nomination is still being considered. Nominations should describe the person's

- Enthusiasm for teaching/content
- Organization/presentation
- Motivation/current ness
- Impact
- Accessibility

The list of eligible faculty and the submission form may be obtained from the Teaching and Learning Center.

## RSVP for Spring Workshops

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_ Extension \_\_\_\_\_

I am planning to attend to the workshop on

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| _____ February 23 | Blackboard: The basics  |
| _____ March 3     | Tools and Techniques of on-line course design   |
| _____ March 4     | Welcoming Diversity   |
| _____ March 9     | Plenary session on Issues in General Education  |
| _____ May 14      | Capitalizing on the unique aspects of science teaching: collaboration and communication in content rich courses |

For budget-planning purposes please indicate if you would like to attend The Teaching Professor Conference "Celebrating Teaching and Promoting Learning" May 21 – 23 in Cherry Hill.

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| _____ | I am planning to attend and have the money for the conference registration from departmental or grant funds |
| _____ | I am planning to attend but need some assistance with the registration fee                                  |

Please return this form to:

Mary Rafferty  
C/o The Teaching and Learning Center  
Box 68

**Summary of Previous events: TableTalks  
continued**

**December, 2003**

**Making your students evaluations work for  
you  
Micki Cohen**

- Save all evaluations including the written comments
- Prior to filing them make notes as to unique circumstances that might have influenced your evaluations or your perceptions
- Do a qualitative analysis of the comments to look for trends
- When you have a problem with a course or with evaluations, note your plan for solving the problem. Follow up on how well plan changed the course
- Collapse a 5 point scale into a 3 point scale
- Report the modal response and the range if all in the good range and not the mean
- With small classes use frequencies not percentages
- Group questions in to how well students evaluated the course and how well they evaluated the instructor. The topic and time of the course really influences some ratings
- Think about the story you want to tell
  - Pattern of improvement
  - Not much room for improvement
  - Innovation, first time tried method, versus more mature course
- Ask for formative feedback early in the semester so that changes can be made

**December 2003**

**Concept Maps  
2003 Leahy Award Winner,  
Peter Miller**

- Concept maps are visual representations of knowledge
- Good concept maps reflect organized knowledge and deep learning
- Students can easily identify the concepts but have a much harder time describing the links between the concepts
- Meaningful learning takes place when students have to determine links and cross-links between concepts
- Forcing students to use the concept mapping software such as, "Inspiration" leads to better organized, cleaner and easier to read maps
- Use a rubric to assess students' concept maps
  - Criteria might include organization, hierarchy, linkages, integration and discovery
- Never let students see the professor's concept map. Students should not feel that there is only one correct map
- When one uses concept maps one must accept that there are multiple constructions of knowledge and different perceptions of reality
- Concept map grades do not correlate well with multiple choice test grades (different representations of knowledge)
- Developing concept maps promotes critical thinking and problem-solving ability

## Summary of Previous events: TableTalks continued

January 2004

### Group problem solving sessions in recitation Fred Schaefer and Madhu Mahalingam

- General Chemistry now requires students to attend a recitation per week
- Students work in small groups in these recitations solving problems
- Groups are heterogeneous based on how well they did in Math SAT's for first semester groups and chemistry grades from first semester for the second semester's groups
- These recitation activities have helped more students to earn B and C grades, but has not reduced the number of F grades, nor increased the number of A grades
- Students like the problem solving activities
- Students assess each other in their small groups
- Fred and Madhu are conducting research on the impact of these recitation problem-solving sessions on the chemistry achievement. It seems to be influenced by many factors and not a straight forward model of how or what is working

January 2004

### What does Middle States want us to do with learning outcomes? Peter Miller

- Middle States now has new standards for accreditation. There are 14 standards.
- There is a heavy emphasis on assessment within each standard. We must particularly focus on institutional assessment and assessment of student learning.
- Assessment must be conducted to lead to changes and improvements at the institution
  - Assessment data must drive changes in educational programs
- We need to have multiple methods using direct and indirect measures of student learning.
  - Direct measures include products that students produce to demonstrate their learning
  - Indirect measures include surveys and reports developed by the faculty
- We need to show alignment at all levels of the institution from the mission of the university through the strategic plan to educational programs and specific courses
- Learning outcomes must be consistent at the program and course levels and finally institutional levels
- In 2007 we will need to show further assessment data and to show that planning and the budget are all tied together
- Assessment needs to occur throughout all aspects of the university at all times and not just in time for a self study report

**Faculty Enrichment Workshops January 2004**  
**Selected workshops**

**Preparing for and succeeding in your AFE**  
**Margaret Kasschau and Micki Cohen**

- At our request, Micki repeated much of what she said her earlier TableTalk (reported on in this newsletter)
- Start a folder or box to file everything done during the year
  - Put in letters of appointments to committees
  - Put in thank you notes for serving on task forces, from students, etc.
- Do not put into your AFE work that all faculty are expected to engage in like Faculty Council meetings. However committees for the councils or sub-councils should be listed and counts as service
- Many people use last year's AFE as the starting point for this year's AFE. Don't let scholarly activities linger on repeated AFE's without showing progress
  - An article in preparation one year, should be submitted the next year
- Develop 3-5 year goals
- Self-assessment of teaching should talk about long term progress, plans for improvement, how this year fits in with a total picture and your understanding of why you got the student evaluations you got (good or bad)
- Some activities might appear to count in various places (e.g. ,scholarly work on your teaching) . Describe this activity in one section of your AFE and make reference to this activity in the other sections, but don't describe it again
- Many chairs are striving for a more concise AFE from faculty using a consistent format

**Introduction to online course development**  
**Joanne Gonzales-Major,**  
**Immaculata University**

- Conceptions of time such as time in class or time load from traditional courses do not apply to online courses
- Students need to understand their expectations right from the beginning, should be stated very clearly in online courses
- As with other forms of learning-centered teaching, but especially with online instruction, students may complain that the instructors are not doing their job because the students are doing the work. Actually the instructor's job is more up-front before the class begins
- 4 main types of online learning
  - web-presence- contains information about the course
  - web-enhanced- course materials provided online, communication between students and faculty or among students occurs online
  - web-centric or hybrid – course decreases in class face time for web-based communication and activities
  - online course – course is entirely online. Students can access anytime (within beginning and ending limits) anywhere
- for 1 session put everything students need including assignments, discussion questions, etc. on 1 web page
  - reason for this is that the more students have to download the greater their frustration
- streamline the number of places students have to look for course materials
- consider using previously developed and available online materials for aspects of your course
  - textbook publishers often have good materials that fit with textbook
  - other resources to look for materials include BlueWell, Merlot

**Faculty Enrichment Workshops January 2004**  
**Selected workshops**  
**continued**

**Issues regarding peer and self-assessment**  
**Peter Miller**

- Peer assessment reflect the idea that there are multiple truths or perspectives about performance
  - Triangulation of data, sources of data
- Peer assessment is a component of professional practice
- Peer assessment increases motivation and responsibility for learning
- Need to decide what want peer to assess
  - Products
    - Written products
    - Oral presentation
    - Quality of product- clarity, organization, etc.
    - Personal learning by peer
  - Learning processes
    - Responsibility
    - Equitable participation
    - Professionalism
    - Interpersonal skills
    - Flexibility
- Can assess different ways
  - Rating scales
  - Allocation of points added or subtracted to group grade depending on peer assessment
  - Descriptive comments
- Students can be part of process of making instrument they will use in assessing peers, determine criteria
- If the form has many specific criteria on which peers assess each other, the range of scores obtained will be broader, but students might write fewer comments

**Assessing students through rubrics**  
**Lois Peck and Andrew Peterson**

- Rubrics are scoring guides that evaluate performance based on the sum of a full range of criteria and not a single score
  - Can arrive at a percent score by forming a fraction as the total score a student received over the total number possible
- Rubrics make objective and explicit evaluations that might have been subjective and implicit
- Rubrics define categories on which the student will be evaluated and levels of performance
- Steps in rubric development
  - Determine learning outcomes
  - Each rubric item should focus on different skill
  - Keep rubric items to < 15 items
  - Evaluate only measurable criteria
  - Develop the top level of performance first on each criteria, then develop the lowest level
    - Write the highest level, then circle the words that can vary. These words will change as you develop the lower levels
  - People often use an even number of performance levels to avoid the neutral assessment
  - use student work to develop the performance criteria
- Common criteria might include: conceptual understanding, procedural knowledge, problem solving strategies, communication
- The web has many rubrics for many disciplines that can be used or modified for specific purposes

**Faculty Enrichment Workshops January 2004**  
**Selected workshops**  
**continued**

**Giving lectures where students learn more**  
**Phyllis Blumberg**

- Learning as information processing
  - Information must be encoded into memory to be learned
  - Maintenance or rote repetition as a rehearsal strategy leads to surface, isolated learning
  - Elaborative rehearsal expands the information and relates it to other concepts and leads to deep learning
- Preconceptions of discipline plays a large role in learning
  - If accurate it becomes the foundation for building new knowledge
  - If inaccurate, or incorrect, long lasting learning cannot take place
- To develop competence in an area of inquiry, students must:
  - Have a deep foundation of factual knowledge
  - Understand facts and ideas in the context of a conceptual framework
  - Organize knowledge in ways that facilitate retrieval and application
- A “meta-cognitive” approach to instruction can help students learn to take control of their own learning by defining goals and monitoring progress in achieving them
- Break up a lecture into smaller blocks with an active activity in between, such as a classroom assessment technique, asking students to do something with what was just lectured on ( make a chart or discuss an idea with a peer)

**Call for 2004 Edition of**  
**The Document of Innovations in Teaching and Learning at the University of the Sciences**

The Teaching and Learning Center of USP will produce the fifth annual document of educational innovations within the university. The aim of these innovations is to improve teaching and learning within our educational programs. This document is disseminated throughout the campus to give increased recognition to individual faculty who strive to improve teaching and learning within our educational programs. All faculty, including full time, part time or adjunct, graduate student instructors, and staff who do formal or informal teaching or supervising clinical experiences are eligible to submit a description of their innovation. Each innovation will be summarized in a one-two page standard abstract form available at [www.usip.edu/teaching/innovations](http://www.usip.edu/teaching/innovations).

More space can be used to describe aspects of the activity than shown on the form, these are specifications on what to include. The total abstract should fit on two letter-sized pages. Use 12-font size and a standard easy to read font. Faculty who submit a nomination for the Leahy Award in 2004 will automatically be included in this edition.

Faculty who received Teaching and Learning Center grants will be encouraged to describe the innovation they implemented as a result of the grant.

**Deadline for submission is May 17, 2004.** All submissions must be sent electronically or with a disk copy.