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New England Faculty Development Consortium

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NEFDC EXCHANGE

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The Heart of the Matter: From the NEFDC President

Thomas S. Edwards, Thomas College

The heart is a powerful metaphor in our profession. Parker Palmer's The Courage to Teach begins with the chapter "The Heart of a Teacher." His opening statement: "I am a teacher at heart."

I recently attended a conference focused on retention strategies and barriers to student success. John Gardner, now with the Policy Center on The First Year of College, delivered the keynote. For Gardner, teaching and learning were the keys to success. "Teaching and learning," he concluded, "are at the heart of the matter."

I, too, am a teacher at heart. Most of us are. And as we all know, the heart is both resilient and powerful, which explains why we dedicate so much of our time and energy to follow where it leads us. It also explains why the frustration that sometimes accompanies our work is so keenly felt.

Hovering behind the language of frustration in our day-to-day work, though, is the language of commitment. We are quick to share the former with our colleagues and our partners. We are often much more reticent about the latter. But we know that our commitment is there. We, like our colleagues, are teachers at heart.

We are trained in our profession to be critical, to question (yes, to assess). We value these qualities as evidence of objectivity, of precision, of intellect. At times, however, it comes at a price: we can be less open to other, equally valuable qualities: cooperation, collaboration, support, encouragement.

Good teachers walk a fine line to balance these qualities every day in the classroom. We test the right mix to motivate and help each individual student learn and succeed. We celebrate when we are successful: each of us, without fail, has a favorite story about a student we've helped. We feel keenly when we have failed.

My work with the NEFDC over the years has given me insights into both sides of this spectrum: I learn from the faculty and the administrators among us about what works and doesn't work in promoting student learning. I hear about the challenges faculty and administrators face in their work at the classroom level, at an institutional level, or even within a statewide system that can seem too large to comprehend, much less influence.

What is most remarkable, however, is the collaboration that comes

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Transforming Your Good Idea Into a Compelling Conference Proposal

Judith E. Miller, Clark University

How often have you privately cursed at reviewers who clearly didn't understand, and therefore rejected, your great idea? How often have you faced the unpleasant task of developing a session based on a hurriedly prepared proposal that you now regret? At the fall 2004 NEFDC conference, a small group of hardy souls braved the Friday afternoon snowfall to participate in a workshop on "Transforming your Good Idea into a Compelling Conference Proposal". Virtually all conference proposals contain good ideas, but distilling and communicating those ideas to reviewers can be problematic. Developing a clear and compelling proposal is the first step to both getting onto the conference program of your choice, and presenting an effective session.

The workshop session at the 2004 conference was organized around real proposals submitted to the 2001 conference. After proposals to the 2001 conference had been reviewed, all authors were asked for permission to use their (blinded) proposals in a session of this type. Proposals for use in the workshop were selected from among those for which permission was given. In the 2004 workshop session, the participants reviewed the call for proposals from the 2001 conference, acted in the role of reviewers to review three proposals, and then developed guidelines for proposal preparation.

Workshop participants identified a number of features of the call for proposals that were important for proposal preparation. The call

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In This Issue...

Learning the Infield Fly Rule: Limits of the "Silver Platter" Method

Rob Schadt
Boston University School of Public Health

As a faculty developer you know things are working when faculty development efforts are taking place at your school outside of the programs offered through your office. So was the case during the 2004 fall semester at BUSPH when Michael Siegel, Professor of Social and Behavior Sciences introduced a year-long teaching seminar. Siegel, a nationally known expert in tobacco-related health prevention and a trained MD, is an award winning teacher at the school, capturing the school's top teaching award in 2002. In his introductory seminar Siegel explained his definition of teaching: "To help students take information that they already know and synthesize/organize it in a new way so they have not only a new understanding, but also an understanding they can use." He also chose the session to debunk the long-standing lecture mode of teaching, which he identified as the "Silver Platter" method.

In brief, he described this approach as the instructor telling the students what the instructor thinks the students need to know. In a matter of speaking it is handing the students knowledge on a "silver platter". Insights into the limits of this method will hardly impress readers of this newsletter. Research in this area is well grounded and widely disseminated. Learner centered, active learning paradigms, though widely interpreted have been well described and established at most schools at least in theory, though certainly less in practice. While the logic of active versus passive learning is easy to grasp, opportunities for an experiential understanding of the concepts have been much harder to come by. Siegel made this understanding much more real through a simple teaching exercise.

He began by giving us the information we needed to know to pass the test he would later administer. The information is this case was Major League Baseball's Infield Fly Rule. The rulebook states the rule as follows: With men on first and second base or the bases loaded and less than two out, if the batter hits a fly ball in fair territory that could be caught by ordinary effort by an infielder, the batter is automatically out and the runners may remain at their bases or advance at their own peril (after tagging up, if the ball is caught).

After giving us a few minutes to study the rule, he then asked us to put the rule away and gave us a four question multiple-choice test based on the rule. There were fifteen seminar participants in the room. Fourteen of the people had a doctorate; one had a master's degree. Two people got all four questions correct. A majority of people got at least two wrong. So much for the efficiency of the Silver Platter, or in this case, modified lecture method.

Then he asked us to think of ourselves as the rules committee for Major League Baseball and to place ourselves back in the time before the infield fly rule existed. He pointed out several circumstances where there seemed to be an unfair advantage employed by the fielding team. In these situations the defensive team was making double plays on easy-to-field fly balls. Several of these situations were discussed by the group, taking the perspectives of both batting and fielding teams into account for each situation. After some discussion about fairness, it was not difficult for the group to determine a rule to largely eliminate the possibilities for intentionally muffed plays by the defense to turn into easy double plays. Not only was it easy for us to reach a reasoned consensus as a group, but also we realized that we understood the rule we had created, the aptly named "infield fly rule". We understood its purpose; in fact it was not just information, it was knowledge. We no longer had to concentrate on the text of the rule and what it meant. Memorization was no longer necessary. It was something we could call our own. We had made it ours. We had learned the rule by recreating it.

The workshop ended, but Siegel needed to do no more. He had helped us take a concept and to realize how to appreciate the concept in a new way. We came to understand the concept so that we could figure out how to apply it without remembering a definition. The teaching technique: he had transformed his own understanding back into the process that led him (or others) to generate that understanding. At the same time he deepened our understanding of real teaching and learning.

Had we time to take a second test on the rule, it was clear we would have scored significantly higher. More importantly we all enjoyed the ensuing World Series even more.

The NEFDC EXCHANGE
Jeff Halprin, Nichols College, Dudley MA co-editor
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The NEFDC EXCHANGE is published in the Fall and Spring of each academic year. Designed to inform the membership of the activities of the organization and the ideas of members, it depends upon member submissions. Submissions can be sent to either editor, wsearle@acc.commnet.edu or jeffrey.halprin@nichols.edu.

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with the challenges. In November of 2004, I watched more than two hundred faculty and administrators at the fall NEFDC conference walk through Dee Fink's process for integrative course design. It was truly an affirming experience. Teachers at heart, working together, sharing their expertise and their experience. We do well to remind ourselves often about the importance of these values in our professional lives.

There are exciting events upcoming within the New England Faculty Development Consortium that touch on these themes. On June 3rd at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Kate Brinko will lead us through an innovative workshop: "Finding Meaning and Purpose, Integrating our Personal and Professional Lives." Kate is the Director of the Hubbard Center for Faculty and Staff Support at Appalachian State University, and she has much to say about the role of integrity and commitment in our world of work.

On November 4, Gail Mellow, President of LaGuardia Community College in New York, will offer a keynote address at the NEFDC fall conference, "Beyond Tolerance: Diversity and the Challenge of Pedagogy in American Higher Education." Gail is an energizing influence in addressing the changing landscape of higher education. She is eager to share with us her insights about the richness that is present in our classrooms today and how we are challenged to meet it. I would encourage you to find time in your schedule to attend both events.

Commitment and collaboration are key to what we do. Identity and integrity are crucial to how we work. These words carry great meaning and great power for us as professionals, as scholars, as teachers. The challenges we face are not trivial, but the intangible rewards are great. Teaching and learning are at the heart of the matter, and together, we can claim that we are teachers at heart.

Continued from Page 1: Transforming Your Good Idea

described the conference audience as faculty members at every stage of their careers, and from a wide variety of institutions of higher education. Like many such calls for proposals, the NEFDC call highlighted a conference theme ("Faculty Work in a Wired World"), and solicited sessions that "represent the best in research and practice" related to the theme. Two kinds of sessions were solicited: concurrent workshops of 75 minutes, which were specified as interactive; and teaching tips sessions of 20 minutes, described as shorter, topical presentations. Detailed proposal submission guidelines specified the information to include on the title page, the length of the abstract (50 words) and session summary (2 pages), and the content of the session summary (goals and activities of the session, and presenter's experience). Not specified in the call, but useful to know, is that most abstracts are used verbatim in the conference program, and so the abstract should be written as a "marketing" piece that will make your audience want to attend your session.

Participants then reviewed three sample proposals, using the real NEFDC proposal review form. Each proposal was rated with respect to the following criteria: clarity and coherence of the session description; relevance to the interest of NEFDC conference participants; likelihood that the session will provide useful information, skills, and/or ideas; contributions to new or innovative practices for student, faculty, staff, and/or administrator development; likelihood that the session will stimulate active engagement of participants; relevance to the conference theme. Although this review form is not published as part of the call for proposals (perhaps it should be!), its content can be inferred, for the most part, from the call.

Unfortunately, space does not permit reproduction of the three sample proposals. As is the case in a real proposal review process, there was disagreement among the reviewers about the extent to which specific proposals met the criteria. Reviewers were surprised at how common it was for one or more proposal submission guidelines to be violated, in many cases rather egregiously. Ultimately, there was general agreement on the following guidelines for proposal preparation:

1. Start well in advance of the proposal deadline. Taking time in the proposal stage will both increase your chances of acceptance, and result in a better presentation.

2. Read the call for proposals carefully, from beginning to end. Then read it again.

3. Do not try to force-fit an unsuitable topic into the conference theme; instead, find another conference or another topic.

4. Figure out who will be in your audience, and develop a proposal that is appropriate to their interests and experience.

5. If you are uncertain about the submission directions, or about the suitability of your idea, contact the conference chair for guidance.

6. Write the proposal as clearly and concisely as possible. Make it easy for the reviewers to understand both the content and the process of what you propose for your session.

7. Remember that the purpose of a conference presentation is to educate your colleagues. Use what you know about effective teaching to prepare both the proposal and the presentation. Highlight the important points, and leave out the esoteric details.

8. Make sure that the session you propose will fit into the time available, with plenty of time for interaction and discussion. If in doubt, pare it down. (When was the last time you attended a conference session that was too short?)

9. Ask a colleague to review your proposal; give her the request for proposals along with your draft, and ask her to check that you followed it.

10. Submit your proposal in the exact format requested, before the deadline (preferably a day or two, to allow time to work out submission glitches).

We look forward to being inundated with truly excellent proposals for the 2005 fall conference!

Judy Miller is the newly appointed Associate Dean for Special Academic Initiatives at Clark University in Worcester MA. She served as conference chair for the 2001 NEFDC fall conference and as program chair for the 2003 POD annual conference, and has both served as reviewer for, and submitted proposals to, countless other conferences as well.

Discovering New Ways to Teach:

Our Experience in an Instructional Skills Workshop Facilitators Training Program

Patricia Cook and James M. Gentile
Manchester Community College

Walking out of a class we have just taught, most of us make some judgment as to whether the class was a successful one or not. That judgment might be a brief one or one made after talking to a colleague.

Although many of us understand about learning styles inventories, classroom assessment techniques, and the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education, how often do we plan our lessons or even evaluate them with this knowledge in mind? How many of us sit down and put together a comprehensive lesson plan which includes stated objectives, a pre-test assessment, student-centered learning opportunities, and post-test assessment, and which also accommodates different learning styles?

During our semester break this winter, we had the opportunity to participate in an Instructional Skills Workshop Facilitators Training Program. During the workshop, we taught three lessons exemplifying identified best practices (the ISW part), and facilitated several discussions of our colleagues' lessons (the Facilitators Training part).

We knew that we would have to devote the entire week to the training. We knew that the workshop would be comprehensive and beneficial. We knew it would be interactive and allow us to learn, explore, and practice new methods of teaching and learning. What we did not know was how intensive the workshop would be and how significantly it would affect our teaching.

First, the intensive part. Five of us were being trained; that meant each day we would not only be teaching our own lesson but facilitating the lesson of a colleague. It was not easy sitting in a room for eight hours evaluating what works best in the classroom and learning new teaching techniques.

After we taught or facilitated, it was difficult to hear and to read the constructive criticisms of our peers. Certainly there were many positive comments, but being teachers we, of course, focused on those comments that were not as positive. On top of that, we then went home and worked on the next day's lesson for three or four hours. Exhausting? Most definitely!

Then, magic started to happen. As participants, we bonded together. We assisted each other and took pride in all of our accomplishments. We learned from each other; strategies used by one were quickly tested by another. And, we encouraged each other. Yes, we could do this! It became challenging and exciting trying new methods of teaching and learning.

We were from different disciplines--English, Math, Accounting, and Allied Health--yet we gained insights on teaching and learning that assist all disciplines. Several of us were chairs and program coordinators; we additionally benefited by acquiring new ways to evaluate classroom teaching.

What did we learn specifically about teaching? Although some college instructors have come out of a teacher training program or have taken courses in education, many others enter the profession simply having completed a graduate degree and perhaps having acted as a teaching assistant during their graduate work. They have never formally learned the basics of constructing a lesson plan, addressing varied student needs, managing a class, and assessing student progress and work

Then, magic started to happen.

An ISW addresses these concerns. Participants learn the basics of constructing an effective lesson, developing for each class to integrate a Bridge, Objectives, Pre-Assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-Assessment, and Closure (the BOPPPS model). They also participate in works on issues such as learning styles, assessment, and general best-practices.

By taking the time to reflect on our teaching during that week in January, we now walk into our classrooms feeling more competent and confident as instructors. This program gave us a reinvigorated sense of ourselves as teachers. Hopefully, many faculty members throughout New England will get a chance to participate in an ISW or an ISW Facilitators Training Program. You'll love it!

The Bad and the Good About Improving Student Retention in Online Learning

Elaine Garofoli
e-Learning and Distance Education Consultant

The Bad News

Let's start with the bad news—student retention in online learning tends to be lower than retention rates of more traditional face-to-face classes, according to Mealy (2000), Kawachi (2002), and Carr (200). What's more, students with disabilities have even lower retention rates (Moisey, 2005).

There are a host of reason why students drop out of a class, program, or institution. They may make a wrong choice of institution, a wrong choice of a field of study, have academic difficulties or financial problems, experience personal problems, have a poor quality student experience, or be unhappy with the social environment (Yorke, cited in Yorke 2003, Davies & Elias, cited in Yorke, 2003)

The Good News

While many of the reasons given above are beyond the scope of individual faculty to rectify, the good news is that there are a myriad of techniques that faculty can implement to successfully increase retention rates.

What You Can Do

Student satisfaction with the overall educational experience is the key to improving retention, according to the Sloan Consortium. To make sure that each student has easy access to a course or program, accurate expectations of that course/program, and sufficient technical abilities to deal with the course media, you may find it helpful to refer to Gagne's nine universal steps of instruction. If you implement these, you will be well on your way to improving student satisfaction and consequently, student retention rates.

1. **Gain attention** e.g. present a good problem, a new situation, use a multimedia advertisement.
2. **Describe the goal:** e.g. describe the goal of a lesson (task,...). State what students will be able to accomplish and how they will be able to use the knowledge, give a demonstration if appropriate.
3. **Stimulate recall of prior knowledge** e.g. remind the student of prior knowledge relevant to the current lesson (facts, rules, procedures or skills). Show how knowledge is connected, provide the student with a framework that helps learning and remembering. Tests can be included.
4. **Present the material to be learned in a consistent presentation style**—e.g. text, graphics, simulations, figures, pictures, sound, etc., chunking information (avoid memory overload, recall information).
5. **Provide guidance for learning** e.g. presentation of content is different from instructions on how to learn. Should be simpler and easier that content. Use of different channel is helpful.
6 **Elicit performance** "practice". Let the learner do something with the newly acquired behavior, practice skills or apply knowledge.
7. **Provide informative feedback**—show correctness of the student's response, analyze learner's behavior (or let him do it), maybe present a good (step-by-step) solution of the problem.
8. **Assess performance**—test if the lesson has been learned. Also give general progress information regularly.
9. **Enhance retention and transfer**—inform the learner about similar problem situations, provide additional practice. Put the learner in a transfer situation. Maybe let the learner review the lesson.

Connecting With Others

There are two dominant national organizations of people who do faculty development work. Both have excellent fall conferences, with many sessions appropriate for faculty members interested in professional development.

The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education is primarily four-year college and university professionals. Link up with POD at www.podnetwork.org. POD's 30th annual conference—**A Gathering By The Waters**—will be in Milwaukee starting October 27th.

The National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development is an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges, and is primarily two-year college professionals. Link up with NCSPOD at www.ncspod.org. NCSPOD's 28th annual conference—**Building Bridges**—will be in Montreal starting November 9th.

Learning Disabilities in Higher Education: An Overview of Profiles and Practices

Paul Petritis
Landmark College

This article is the second in a two-part series that provides some basic information to help faulty work with students who have learning disabilities. The fall issue of this newsletter presented the first article.

LD Profiles: Some Representative Diagnoses

Several profiles are associated with the idea of learning disabilities. The widely-recognized language-based disorders such as Dyslexia and other difficulties with learning to read or write were covered in part one of this series.

This article examines attention-based disorders, commonly grouped under the ADHD rubric (which is, technically speaking, a behavioral disorder), with sub-categories of inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity and difficulties with the executive functions, making up another share. We also discuss a third group that includes the increasingly recognized disorder of Non-Verbal Learning Disability (NVLD), which according to current conventions in nomenclature is categorized under the generic phrase of "learning disability, not otherwise specified."

Learning Disabilities: Some Academic Signs

ADHD. Some signs of attention-based difficulties may include distractibility or fidgetiness in class, a pattern of impulsive comments or actions, and difficulties keeping appointments or meeting dues dates for academic assignments despite having a command of the necessary academic skills. A more significant sign may be the sense of general disorganization found among the learner's notebooks and papers, or an apparent lack of skill in managing and using academic tools, setting up personal schemes for organizing workflow, or managing the workspace so as to maximize learning.

Attentional disorders are tricky to grasp and difficult to appreciate. Despite common cultural misunderstandings, these are not conditions that will be outgrown, nor will they be overcome by trying harder. Ritalin alone is not usually the answer, although recent studies have suggested that stimulant medication does indeed appear to be of help to 8 out of 10 with the ADHD diagnosis.

More to the point, developments in the understanding of ADHD have called the popular hyperactive stereotype into question, and the reality of ADHD is really rather counter-intuitive: ADHD appears to derive from difficulties in channeling needed energy, so that what appears to be an excess of liveliness, or distractibility, or impulsivity, may actually be a compensatory pattern of behaviors– rather than too much energy. It seems likely that hyperactivity and related symptoms of ADHD may come from trying to rev the internal engines and bring together needed bodily resources for quieting oneself, for focusing, and for engaging in learning.

One area of growing interest in the field of ADHD is inquiry into the specific difficulties associated with the Executive Functions (EF). Russell Barkley, noted researcher and author of ADHD and the Nature of Self-Control (Guilford Press; 1997), identifies EF difficulties as those that impact the cognitive abilities which might otherwise allow one to maintain contextual awareness in learning situations, and to engage naturally in reflective self-talk and metacognitive assessment.

In other words, difficulties with EF apparently interfere with those reflective, insightful processes and behaviors commonly associate with deep learning. That said, individuals with EF difficulties do tend to benefit from (and also seem to greatly appreciate) formal learning opportunities that are designed to include structured metacognitive processes, as well as direction and encouragement in applying their reflective thinking skills as a way to enhance and consolidate what they have learned.

Non-verbal LD (NVLD):

In a number of important ways, the NVLD profile shares characteristics with the ADHD profile, such as the need for an organized educational approach, the need to establish clear boundaries for the social context of learning and a need for opportunities to engage in structured reflection to promote deep learning.

In addition, individuals with the NVLD profile tend to experience marked difficulties with social pragmatics and informal discourse. They may struggle with nonverbal communication, subtle social cues or the contextual undertones that animate ordinary conversation. They may miss opportunities to draw inferences from abstract content. In addition, those with the NVLD profile may have some difficulties in solving problems that are built using visual-spatial information and may also respond less flexibly than average learners when confronted with novel learning situations or innovative ideas. At the same time, individuals with NVLD tend to display significant verbal strengths and may show excellence in areas such as spelling, applying familiar rhetorical effectively

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forms in new contexts and questioning embedded assumptions in discussion, which is an identifiable step in some popular rubrics of critical thinking.

Accommodations: What Educators Can Do

There are many steps educators may take to assist students with learning disabilities and related difficulties. Typical accommodations for attention-based difficulties, including ADHD and EF difficulties:

• Provide clear expectations for class behavior and simple written guidelines.

• Schedule interim due dates for long-range assignments, and formally assess these interim aspects.

• Offer encouragement to the learner.

• Use the learner's name deliberately during class.

• Build some variety and novelty into the course design and keep this in balance with clear, consistent approaches to learning, meeting due dates, participating positively, and assessing and evaluating student performance.

Typical accommodations for individuals with the NVLD profile:

• Offer many of the accommodations that might also be offered to those with LD, ADHD or EF difficulties, and…

• Provide clear feedback, guidance and encouragement to help improve pragmatics (social skills & social awareness).

• Create individualized opportunities (including rote learning approaches if appropriate) to help build required background knowledge before introducing new topics or novel ideas to the class.

• Encourage the learner with an NVLD profile to talk through spatial arrays that are supposed to help support understanding of course content such as charts and diagrams which may reveal the deeper meaning of certain ideas.

A Plus Side to Learning Disabilities

Learning disabilities, ADHD and NVLD are profiles that now comprise part of the post-secondary fabric. A deeper understanding of (as well as appreciation for) these profiles may help to shed light on learning more generally for higher education. Increasingly what may be required to support these students as they work to perform at their highest levels is regarded in some professional circles simply as effective instruction. These practices when practiced consistently may benefit most learners, not just those with LD profiles.

Linda Hecker, Christine Grele and Christie Herbert, faculty members of Landmark College, contributed to the development of these articles.

NEFDC FALL CONFERENCE

"Beyond Tolerance: Diversity and the Challenge of Pedagogy in American Higher Education"

Featuring Dr. Gail Mellow, President, LaGuardia Community College

Friday, November 4, 2005
Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center
Westford, Massachusetts

Dr. Gail Mellow, a social psychologist with extensive experience in higher education, is president of LaGuardia Community College, one of the most diverse community colleges in the country. It brings together 13,500 credit and 28,000 non-credit students hailing from over 150 different countries and speaking over 110 different languages. Dr. Mellow is a community college graduate, and has served in various capacities at colleges throughout the East Coast. A scholar of the community college movement, she is the author more than thirty professional articles and co-author of two books.

The Objective is to Engage Them

Keith Barker
University of Connecticut

As we are all educators, I guess that the title of this article is an obvious statement, but it seems to me that there are two major aspects to this: (1) the role of objectives; (2) the engagement factor. The former is one that I, as a faculty developer, struggle to persuade instructors to seriously incorporate into their courses, whereas the latter is what many faculty struggle to include, often with little success, into their classes.

I have contended that "if we do not help students understand what they need to do to be successful, they will find it hard to be so." Critics sometimes call this 'spoon feeding' as it seems to them that students should be able to deduce what is necessary to succeed. I believe, as a colleague of mine once said of her students—"they shouldn't be expected to be able to read my mind"!

So we encourage, cajole, and demonstrate the need for clear objectives, written as learning objectives from the student's point of view. Our Instructional Design unit has found that faculty find this, surprisingly, most difficult. One colleague took 6 weeks to hone the learning objectives for his course, though others took much less time. It would appear that many faculty have not thought through what it is that they expect students to learn or to be able to do. Granularity plays an important role, as the variation from overall course objectives to individual class objectives can be dramatic. But both play a role.

Students should be apprised of what the overall course is designed to provide them. I find that a set of student competencies is often better understood by them than the conventional objectives format. It is similarly important that each class period should contain a structure or scaffold that holds the week's topic together. Faculty members who provide weekly objectives or topics often find that students can more easily relate to the sometimes-complex interconnectivity of the material than when they take delivery of a linear sequence of notes in a "traditional" class.

Consequently, students feel an attachment to, a synergy with, and an engagement in the process of learning -- not just as a repository of transmitted information. Bloom was right. His 50-year old cognitive taxonomy follows a path of engagement. Once beyond the knowledge, the learner has to comprehend and apply—clearly a form of engagement—and subsequently analyze and synthesize. If faculty declare brief learning objectives for each class and go more often into the higher activities of Bloom's taxonomy, students cannot help but get engaged.

As an engineer, I find class and laboratory activities easy to match to Bloom's taxonomy, but I have advised many colleagues in other disciplines to think this way. As Strum and Ward put it "we cannot know when we have reached our destination if we don't know where we are heading". Give students a chance to know where they are going, how they can be successful, and don't expect them to read the devious minds of an academic instructor. As a faculty developer, it is my task to bring this message loud and clear to help our colleagues who are struggling to engage this passive generation.

NEFDC Information

Have you visited the NEFDC web site lately? It is new and improved, thanks to the work of Board member Rob Schadt from Boston University. Information on the annual fall conference, the Spring Roundup for Faculty Development Professionals, contact information for the board, membership forms, and related data is all available online. Take advantage of this valuable resource and bookmark us at www.nefdc.org

NEFDC Membership Meeting and Board Meetings

The Annual Meeting of the members of NEFDC will be held at the Fall Conference on Friday, November 4, 2005 at the Westford Regency Inn and Conference Center in Westford, Massachusetts. If there are items you wish to discuss, or you need more information, please contact the President of NEFDC, Tom Edwards.

The NEFDC Board will meet next on June 2, 2005 at the University of Connecticut. If you are interested in getting information to the Board, or in making a presentation at a Board meeting, please contact the Board through the NEFDC web site.

WebHelps

Bill Searle and Jeff Halprin

Each issue we will feature several websites that NEFDC members find useful. As we deal with increasingly complex issues, knowing how to find information others have developed saves us enormous amounts of time. We will start you off this issue with these four. Send yours in – swamp us - we'd be happy to print extra pages!

Problem-Based Learning. You've heard of it. Interested? Well, check out Samford University's site, which has excellent resources. Samford has been involved with pbl for a relatively long time. http://www.samford.edu/pbl/index.html

Want more on PBL? Try Maricopa County Community College's problem-based learning site at http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/pbl/sources.html. Maricopa has many links to other sources of information.

Parker Palmer. You remember that guy—the one some 450+ of you went to listen to at the NEFDC fall conference in 2003? Several people have asked if there is a source for his articles on line. Yes! Scottsdale Community College has downloadable versions of many at http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/events/afc99/articles.html

Teaching Goals. Several articles in this newsletter talk about goals and objectives in teaching. Our fall keynote speaker talked about intentional teaching. How about starting with the venerable Teaching Goals Inventory? Can't find a copy? How about an online one you can take, have scored and printed out at your desk? Thanks to The University of Iowa, http://www.uiowa.edu/~centeach/tgi/index.html

Killing Student Participation in Class

Last issue we asked for your ways to kill student participation. It appears that at least several colleges actually had meetings when faculty got together to discuss responses. Hey! That is a great idea. Hmmm.

Anyway, here are some of the responses we got:

- never ask a question you don't know the answer to
- never make it safe for students to venture an answer by stating, for example, "if we all knew the answer, then it wouldn't be a question – so try out an answer, you can't be wrong"
- make it unsafe for a student to ask a question by grading them for student participation
- never give students more than 10 seconds to think of an answer
- never give students time to talk to other students to get an answer to a question
- never put students in groups to discuss a problem and give a group response
- ask for student participation only at the end of class
- make students respond to things that aren't important
- lecture for most of the time, then jam in a couple of questions for students at the end
- always ask the same students to respond
- stand in front of the room and ask
- don't learn the names of your students
- call on people arbitrarily
- always ask questions you know the answer to
- when students don't give the answer you want, correct them
- correct students publicly, in front of the class, preferably with a reference to what the student should have gotten out of the reading for that class
- smirk at a student's response
- use a classroom with traditional student desks. Students learned in first grade to keep quiet.

And, this is just a sample! It appears that we have hundreds of "favorite ways" to kill student participation. Thanks for your ideas. Look for future questions. Grab lunch with some colleagues and students and bat around ideas.

COPPER: Communities of Practice:
Pooling Educational Resources to Support the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Donna Killian Duffy
Middlesex Community College

The Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) was initiated in 1998 by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The Teaching Academy Program focuses on colleges that make a public commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). This program is structured differently at institutions, but the main activity involves furthering the scholarship of teaching and learning on campuses.

In 2003, the Carnegie Foundation and AAHE expanded the Teaching Academy to a model of Campus Program Leadership Clusters. Each of the twelve clusters selected represent a group of institutions committed to collective design, documentation, and dissemination of work in the scholarship of teaching and learning. COPPER (Communities of Practice: Pooling Educational Resources to support the scholarship of teaching and learning) has members from eight diverse institutions, six of them in New England.

Creating value for member colleges

By traversing the boundaries that are perceived to exist between different levels of higher education, COPPER seeks to focus on the common mission of student learning. Through national meetings twice a year sponsored by AAHE and the Carnegie Foundation, monthly conference calls, a working Summer Institute, a website **http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/carnegie/default.htm** and a COPPER blog **http://middlesex.blogs.com/** the COPPER cluster is attempting to create a community of practice to create strategies for addressing issues such as diversity concerns and assessment of student outcomes.

By studying how an approach may work in five diverse community colleges, a small liberal arts college, and two state colleges, cluster members can develop a broader understanding of which approaches are most effective.

Through consultation with Dr. William Snyder, coauthor of Cultivating Communities of Practice (2002), COPPER is focusing on specific ways the cluster creates value for its member colleges. One approach is through documenting how activities in the group lead to new capabilities and results. The Carnegie COPPER Summer Institute in June 2004 generated numerous connections among cluster members. In one example, an Instructional Development member at Middlesex CC attended a session on Learning Communities. She was intrigued by the Teaching Online Community initiative at Northern Essex CC and participated in the community in the fall semester. Plans are now unfolding for faculty members from both Middlesex and Northern Essex to collaborate in an online teaching community in fall 2005. This approach serves an important need for experienced online faculty to gain new ideas instead of always serving as "models" at their own institutions, and builds a network for sharing what works in online environments.

The COPPER blog provides a meeting place for interested participants to share ideas and to exchange resources. It is a way COPPER can connect with the extended group of faculty members in the cluster, as well as with others who are not engaged directly in cluster work. In one lively exchange, professors posted ideas on the blog about balancing work, scholarship, and personal life. A concrete result of the exchanges was an expanded range of strategies and the creation of a supportive network to deal with a shared challenge.

The COPPER blog and the Summer Institute are two ways that anyone can join in SoTL discussions. Visit the blog and post a comment, or consider attending the next Summer Institute on June 8-10 in Lowell, MA. Pat Hutchings, Vice President of the Carnegie Foundation and Mary-Jane McCarthy, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Middlesex, will host a pre-conference workshop entitled "Meeting Institutional Goals through SoTL and Communities of Practice" on June 8th for Presidents and Chief Academic Officers. Pat will also deliver the keynote address for the conference. Detailed information about the Summer Institute is available at **http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/carnegie/default.htm.**

8th Annual Spring Roundup

Finding Meaning and Purpose: Integrating Our Personal and Professional Selves

FRIDAY, 3 JUNE 2005
University of Connecticut

Special Keynote Event, facilitated by Kate Brinko, Director of Faculty and Academic Development, Appalachian State University

Whether we are new in our campus roles or seasoned veterans, we are faced daily with opportunities—and requests—to engage in work that is less meaningful and that does not nourish our spirit. For many of us, it is a challenge to keep our professional lives in alignment with our higher purposes. How do we meet course, departmental, and institutional demands and still maintain our professional integrity? How do we bring meaning and deep satisfaction to our work? Using music, free writing, and other creative forms, this interactive session will explore issues of work and meaning and discover new directions for professional growth.

Program: The main elements of the program consist of a two hour experiential workshop led by Kate Brinko, followed by an extended networking lunch and breakout discussions in the afternoon. The day will end with a brief wrap up session which will integrate the themes of the day's discussions, and provide a forum to discuss future programming ideas. Breakout discussions will focus on a topic of interest, such as Starting Out in Faculty Development, Faculty Development Programming, Working with Administrators, and Exploring Educational Technology at UConn's Institute for Teaching and Learning.

Registration (includes light breakfast and lunch): $45 (members) / $80 (non-members).

Deadline: registrations must be received by **May 25, 2005**.

There is very limited on-site registration!

Complete information at http://nefdc.org/events.htm

NEFDC EXCHANGE
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Fall Conference Nov. 4, 2005 – Beyond Tolerance:
Diversity and the Challenge of Pedagogy in American Higher Education

Board of Directors

The fifteen members of the Board of the NEFDC serve staggered three-year terms. Board Members are available for and welcome opportunities to meet and consult with members of the NEFDC and others who are interested in faculty development. We welcome nominations and self nominations for seats on the Board.

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