

ON TEACHING

Office of Instructional Development

Writing Across the Curriculum

Volume 18, Number 7

www.und.nodak.edu/dept/oid

Spring 2009

Teaching Thursday: A Collaborative Venture in Learning by Bill Caraher (History)

“Learning is conversation and . . . blogging lets you have more and better conversations”

-Harold Jarche

For the last two years I’ve maintained a research and teaching blog (<http://mediterraneanworld.typepad.com/>). I started this blog to document my field-work in Cyprus and to keep informed the various stakeholders in that project ranging from faculty colleagues to students, administrators and private donors to our research fund. Since that time, I’ve continued to update it regularly working it into my daily writing discipline. From 7am – 8 am each day, I sit and force myself to articulate at least one of those numerous fleeting ideas that float through my head on a daily basis with the only limit that I place on myself being that I can’t linger for hours on these posts (although sometimes I do) and that it must be somehow related to my professional development. The result has been a little window to my thoughts. At first, I didn’t think anyone would care about what I had to say, but over time and to my surprise, the traffic to my blog has grown from very few visitors (<20 a day) to about a hundred visitors a day

and a small, loyal contingent of repeat visitors.

About a year ago, I began to write some posts on teaching. After the first few posts, I decided that I needed to take a more systematic approach (I need to be compelled by arbitrary rules to do anything rigorously). So, I declared every Thursday to be Teaching Thursday and required myself to make a post on something to do with teaching. Since my blog is visible to the entire internet, I focused almost exclusively on my own reflections on pedagogy rather than anything specific to do with students. To my surprise, these posts immediately struck a chord with my readers and soon attracted comments, responses in other blogs, and even imitators (see for example: <http://kourelis.blogspot.com/search/label/Teaching%20Thursday>). After about six months, I suggested to Anne Kelsch that we could transplant the Teaching Thursday idea to a blog sponsored by the Office of Instructional Development, and she

Continued on page 2

Inside This Issue:

Teaching Thursday	1
Call for Models of Innovative & Best Practices in Teaching & Learning at UND	2
Reflecting on Teaching Colloquium: Call for Proposals	3
Summer Workshops	3
Dates to Note	4

by Anne Kelsch (OID)

When Bill Caraher asked me about collaborating with him on a Teaching Thursday blog, I responded with tempered enthusiasm grounded in pure ignorance. Well, maybe not pure. I knew a blog, or weblog, provided an online forum for discussion and commentary. As a historian, I found the reverse-chronological order of archiving an interesting feature. I had also done some reading on “pedabloggy” (an inelegant term for the pedagogy of blogs) and had organized a December *On Teaching*

Seminar given by Julie Zikmund (Nutrition and Dietetics) on “Teaching in the Blogosphere.” So I had a theoretical understanding of the media, its collaborative nature and potential in terms of teaching, and its limitations. But I had no direct experience. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, this put me significantly behind the curve. Pew’s recent survey results indicate that about 57 million American

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1 (Caraher)

happily agreed to collaborate on this project. It is exciting to watch the Teaching Thursday blog attract authors and readers from across the US and the world.

The role of blogging in my academic life, then, has been to encourage a kind of discipline in thinking and writing that is sometimes hard to find in my scattered life. Blogging daily and making the posts public compels me to refine my ideas more than if they simply resided in a

private journal or, worse still, the disorganized recesses of my mind. This medium then forms a useful middle ground between my professional life, my personal thoughts, and the wider public. In particular, blogging about teaching is an exciting opportunity to make public and visible to a wide range of audiences how much we think about teaching and learning at the University. This includes sharing our discussions of teaching with our students who rarely participate in campus wide conversations on an aspect of university life that can have a lasting impact on their future.

Continued from page 1 (Kelsch)

adults -- 39% of Internet users -- read individually authored blogs. And with motivation ranging from the personal to the political and the professional, about 12 million American adults -- 8% of Internet users-- keep a blog. Clearly, if you are interested in sharing information, the tool has potential.

Two months and over a thousand hits to our blog later, I am an inexpert, confirmed fan. With Bill's mastery (he would deny this) of the software and technicalities, Teaching Thursday is growing into an active "swap meet for the mind." And while I will continue to favor face-to-face dialog around teaching, blogs offer some distinct advantages for reflecting on important issues. Generally bloggers embrace an informal writing style that encourages putting thoughts that we might not typically stop and wrestle with to paper (or screen). And the ease of linking to other blogs and web content encourages both the dissemination of information and discussion across boundaries, such as disciplines and institutions, which often hinder exchange. A blog can help avoid the reinvention of the wheel, and lead to both rapid synthesis and new ideas. The format also allows participation at

many levels, from straight consumption (for the "lurkers" who value what others write, but probably wouldn't write themselves), to brief commentary, to full contribution.

I like the opportunity the blog provides for people with busy days to pause for a moment and reflect, to exchange and perhaps test their ideas in conversations that they likely would not have had otherwise. And I admire the willingness of my colleagues who put their intellectual capital out there into the open market place and engage other perspectives. I also think that taking part in this endeavor has placed me firmly in the position of being a novice learner, providing needed reminders of confusion students might face in my realm of comfort: the classroom.

Like all technology, the blog is not inherently valuable in and of itself (and a quick search attests to the obvious fact that of those millions of blogs out there, not all are worthy of attention). But with the objective focused on interaction between thoughtful practitioners that fosters better teaching, I am happy to have the media in hand. Visit Teaching Thursday at <http://teachingthursday.org> and see if you agree.

Call for Models of Innovative & Best Practices in Teaching & Learning at UND

There are so many great things happening in our classrooms at UND. And we are asking you to let us know about the successful, effective and/or innovative teaching and learning strategies that you have developed for our students. We started gathering these strategies last spring with the intent of both acknowledging this good work and compiling inspiring models for others. We are sharing them on campus (you'll find last years posted to the OID webpage) to ground ongoing conversations on best teaching practices, and we also hope that over time this collection might grow into something larger for an audience external to UND. The Faculty Instructional Development Committee (FIDC) will evaluate the strategies submitted for inclusion and \$750 will be awarded to faculty whose projects are selected. As with all FIDC funding, eligible faculty include those teaching full- or part-time; tenure-track or non-tenure track; adjunct or professorial faculty.

Application guidelines are posted to the OID webpage (<http://www.und.edu/dept/oid/index.htm>) and applications are due to OID (300 O'Kelly Hall, Stop 7104) by noon on **May 15, 2009**.

If you would like more information, please contact the Office of Instructional Development at 7-3325 or oid@und.edu

Reflecting on Teaching Colloquium: Call For Proposals

OID and the Vice President for Academic Affairs are sponsoring *Reflecting on Teaching: An All-Campus Colloquium on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)*, to be held on **Friday, October 16, 2009** at the UND Memorial Union. This all day colloquium will provide an opportunity for faculty from across campus and the Northern Plains region to engage in discussion about their research on teaching and learning in concurrent panel discussions, forums, workshops, round tables, and individual presentations.

The featured keynote speaker will be John Tagg, Professor of English at Palomar College and a Core Faculty Member with The Collaboration's Institute for Academic Innovation. Mr. Tagg is co-author, with Robert Barr, of "From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Higher Education," (*Change*, 1995) which launched a nationwide discussion of the mission of higher education. Tagg has authored several books on teaching and learning, including *The Learning Paradigm College* (2003). He serves on the Editorial Review Board of the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* and the *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning*.

We invite proposals for concurrent sessions, each of which will be one hour and fifteen minutes in length. Presenters might want to propose a topic and format for an entire session, a 20 minute presentation within a session, or perhaps an idea for a theme or issue that could be developed into a panel with the assistance of the colloquium organizers.

Appropriate topics for any of the above session formats might include, for example: innovative teaching approaches (e.g., experiential/service learning, active learning, problem or case-based learning); assessment of student learning in courses; the journey to effective assessment of programs; classroom research; engaging and motivating students; the purpose and nature of a university education; innovative curricular design (e.g., interdisciplinary collaboration), etc.

Proposals should include name(s), titles and departments of presenters, full mailing address, telephone and e-mail address, presentation title, a 1-2 paragraph description of presentation (including structure, objectives, content, etc.), technology requirements, and whether you have a preferred session time (10:30-11:45, 1:30-2:45, or either). Notification of proposal acceptance will be provided by June 5, 2009

Please submit proposals by May 22, 2009 to OID (Stop 7104 or oid@und.edu)

For further information, contact Anne Kelsch (777-4233 or anne.kelsch@und.edu)

or Melinda Leach (777-3697 or melinda.leach@und.edu)



Last Chance to Sign Up for Summer Workshops

Assignments and Assessments for Significant Learning (Follow up Workshop on Significant Course Design)

May 19, 20 & 21 from 1:00-4:00

This three afternoon workshop facilitated by Anne Kelsch and Joan Hawthorne is intended to help faculty articulate student learning outcomes, and design assignments that advance those outcomes and assessments that gauge them. Registration is open to everyone and faculty who participated in the Creating Significant Learning Through Integrated Course Design Workshop in February are particularly urged to sign up and continue the work they began there.

Participants will receive complimentary copies of books on classroom assessment techniques and rubric design. The extended registration deadline is May 12, 2009. Register for the workshop by emailing oid@und.edu.

Extended WAC Workshop

June 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, & 23 from 1:00-4:30

A six-session afternoon workshop on Writing Across the Curriculum will be offered for faculty in June. This workshop is designed to enable faculty to focus intensively, and in collaboration with colleagues from across campus, on developing or redeveloping the writing component of a particular course or course sequence. Up to 10 faculty can be accommodated in this workshop, and participating faculty will receive stipends of \$600 (subject to standard deductions).

For more information about this workshop, or to apply, please contact Shane Winterhalter (777-6381 or shanewinterhalter@mail.und.nodak.edu) as soon as possible.

ON TEACHING
Office of Instructional Development
O'Kelly Hall, Room 300
221 Centennial Drive Stop 7104
Grand Forks, ND 58202-7104

Dates to Note:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| May 12 | Deadline for Assignments and Assessments for Significant Learning Workshop |
| May 15 | Deadline for Model of Innovative and Best Practices proposals |
| May 22 | Deadline for <i>Reflecting on Teaching</i> proposals |
| October 16 | Reflecting on Teaching: An All-Campus Colloquium on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) |

On Teaching is published six times a year as a service to UND faculty.

Director: Anne Kelsch. Editor: Shane Winterhalter. OID/UWP Staff: Jeanne Boppre and Jana Hollands.

2009 Summer Instructional Development Professorships

OID and the Faculty Instructional Development Committee (FIDC) each year award a number of Summer Instructional Development Professorships (SIDP) to faculty working on innovative instructional projects. The Professorships are intended to support instructional development that has the potential to improve the quality of teaching at UND and goes beyond normal course development. In 2009 preference was given to projects that focused on student engagement. Below you will see described some of the many ways that our colleagues are working to enhance their classes through various strategies that are known to promote significant learning and deeper student engagement.

Congratulations to the following faculty who have been awarded Summer Instructional Development Professorships:

Amanda Boyd, Assistant Professor, Languages

“Facilitating Active Learning in First-Year German-Language Instruction”

Eric Burin, Associate Professor, History

“Engaging Diversity: African-American History to 1877”

Tami Carmichael, Associate Professor, Humanities & Integrated Studies

“Reconstructing Integrated Studies Courses: Creating Relevancy through Current Events and New Media”

Kyle Conway, Assistant Professor, English (Communication Program)

“An Inquiry-Based Approach to Understanding Media and Media History”

Brett Goodwin, Associate Professor, Biology

“Developing Case Studies for a New Course: Modeling in Biology”

Jin-Kyu Jung, Assistant Professor, Geography

“Urban Expedition: Exploring the City of Grand Forks through the Participatory and Active-Learning Process”

Andrew Knight, Assistant Professor, Music

“Development of an Online Introductory-Level Class in Music Therapy”

Steven Light, Associate Professor, Political Science & Public Administration

“Bringing Research into the Classroom: A New Course on Indian Gaming Law and Policy”

Sarah Mosher, Assistant Professor, Languages

“Business French in a Cultural Context as a Model of Engaged, Problem-Based Learning”

Sarah Robinson, Clinical Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences & Disorders

“Capturing Video of Children with Language Disorders to Facilitate Instruction in Assessment and Intervention”

Joseph J. Vacek, Assistant Professor, Aviation

“Avoiding Academic Bulimia: Developing an Interactive Process-Based Approach to Teaching Law”

2009 Mini-Project Grant Professorships

Mini-Project Grants are designed to support faculty working on significant teaching or assessment projects that go beyond normal course preparation and can be completed in 1-2 weeks of full-time summer work. Projects may relate to individual classes or to departmental or programmatic needs, and are evaluated in terms of their potential impact on student learning, as well as the significance of the need or opportunity addressed. This year's mini-projects ranged from instructional design (for example creating case studies and simulations) to embracing new technology (such as Second Life and Wimba) to enhance student learning.

The following faculty have been awarded a two-week or one-week Mini-Project Grant Professorship to work on their projects this summer:

Olaf Berwald, Assistant Professor, Languages

“German Film: A Co-Creative and Critical Approach”

Heidi Czerwicz, Assistant Professor, English

Elizabeth Harris, Associate Professor, English

“Team-Teaching to Improve Both Class and Instructors”

David Flynn, Associate Professor, Economics

“Banking & Financial Crisis”

Alan Frazier, Assistant Professor, Aviation

“Public Safety Aviation Course Development”

Yun Ji, Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering

Wayne Seames, Professor, Chemical Engineering – advisory capacity

“Team Teaching as Undergraduate Engineering Course: ChE 408, Process Dynamics and Control”

Brenda Kallio, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

“Using Virtual Worlds as a Means to Increase Student Engagement & Learning”

Patrick Luber, Professor, Art

Donovan Widmer, Assistant Professor, Art

“Student and Faculty Handbook”

Seong-Hyun Nam, Associate Professor, Management

“Developing Spreadsheet-Based Modeling Exercises for Online MBA Students”

Kate Scheurer, Assistant Professor, Political Science & Public Administration

“US Supreme Court Simulation”

Cheryl Terrance, Associate Professor, Psychology

“Case-Study Development for Women and the Law: Psychological Perspectives”