

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS



College of Agricultural,
Consumer and
Environmental Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

From the Office of the Associate Dean

Vol. 7 No. 8

Learner-Centered Teaching Creates Conflicts for Professor

Most of the those writing about learner-centered teaching agree: It puts teachers in new relationships with students, content, and teaching. When teaching focuses on students and learning, five conflicts emerge for the teacher.

Facilitator vs. Evaluator Learner-centered teachers teach students not subjects. In order to teach students, learner-centered teachers need to connect with them and relate to them as individuals. This involves gaining their trust and developing helping relationships. However, learner-centered teachers are not absolved from grading responsibilities. They must still evaluate individual learning.

Loving the Subject vs. Loving the Students Most college faculty became professors because they fell in love with a particular content area. Faculty are motivated to keep learning about their subject area. But learner-centered teachers are challenged to connect with students, to create learning opportunities for them, and to provide feedback about their learning. Demands on time and energy pulling teachers in different directions create the conflict.

Subject Expert vs. Teaching and Learning Expert In order to be viable scholars within their fields, faculty must keep up with the latest developments, and most know the speed with which knowledge is growing and expanding within all our subject areas. At the same time, faculty, who traditionally know very little about learning, must themselves learn a lot.

Caring for Students vs. Caring for Self Learner-centered teaching demands a new level of involvement with students, and it becomes much more likely that teachers will engage with students about their abilities, potential, welfare, and personal development. It takes time and emotional energy to relate to individual students. That decreases the amount of time left to

attend to the teacher's own health and well-being. Teachers cannot be available to students if they are not rested, focused, and centered on themselves.

Individual Mentor vs. Group Learning Leader

Learner-centered teachers care about individual students. Those individual students are part of larger classes that may be ready to move forward before all individual members are. And so the learner-centered teacher faces agonizing decisions about when to move forward in ways that will leave some behind.

From *The Teaching Professor*, December 2002, based on the writings of Douglas Robertson.

Teaching Goals Inventory

The Teaching Goals Inventory was developed by Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross. The details of the development and background on the properties of the inventory are reported in their book *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*.

The Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI) is a self-assessment of instructional goals. Its purpose is threefold: (1) to help college teachers become more aware of what they want to accomplish in individual courses; (2) to help faculty locate Classroom Assessment Techniques they can adapt and use to assess how well they are achieving their teaching and learning goals; and (3) to provide a starting point for discussion of teaching and learning goals among colleagues.

College and University teachers might find it helpful to complete the TGI when they are:

- Developing a new course
- Revising a course
- Writing or re-writing their philosophy of teaching
- Participating in a curriculum review

To take the Teaching Goals Inventory, go to <http://www.uiowa.edu/~centeach/tgi>.

Teaching is

__From the North Central Teaching Symposium, June 2003, by Carol L. Chomsky, University of Minnesota

1. The real challenge in college teaching is not “covering the material for the students”—it’s uncovering the material with the students. –Karl A. Smith
2. I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think. – Socrates
3. The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards. – Anatole France
4. Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three-fourths theater. – Gail Godwin
5. An understanding heart is everything in a teacher, and cannot be esteemed highly enough. One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feeling. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plan and for the soul of the child. – Carl Gustav Jung
6. The teacher said to the students “Come to the edge.” They replied, “We might fall.” The teacher said again, “Come to the edge.” And they responded, “It’s too high.” “Come to the edge,” the teacher demanded. And they came, and the teacher pushed, and they flew. – Apollinaire Guillaume
7. A teacher is one who makes himself progressively unnecessary.— Thomas Carruthers

AP Credit

For the Fall 2003 freshman class in ACES, 197 of the 551 students reported taking at least one Advanced Placement test. Of those taking a test, 121 received credit at the University of Illinois, based on their completion of an AP course and scoring at the level required by UIUC. A total of 45 students took four or more AP tests. The most popular courses for students to receive AP credit were MATH 120 (67 students), PSYCH 100 (31 students) and ENGL 103 (21 students). The highest number of UIUC credits awarded to a student based on AP credit was 40 semester hours.

Exploring the Job Market

What do employers look for in candidates? Of course, the first thing they look for is the ability to do the work involved. But they also look for a number of non-technical skills and qualities. The National Association of Colleges and Employers recently reported the top five skills, in addition to technical competence in the field, that are sought (Job Outlook 2003). They are: 1.) Verbal and written communication skills; 2.) Honesty/integrity; 3.) Teamwork skills; 4.) Interpersonal skills; and 5.) Motivation/initiative.

The same organization also reported the top five places where employers find new hires: 1.) Company’s internship program; 2.) Company’s co-op program; 3.) On-campus interviews; 4.) Employee referrals; and 5.) Career/job fairs.

ACES Student Handbook

__The new ACES Student Handbook has been distributed to departments, and all new students received a copy in ACES 100 and 199. The latest edition is only for 2003-04. Since course re-numbering takes effect in Fall 2004, the 2004-06 handbook will include the new course rubrics and numbers.

Welcome, Jenny Neef

ACES Academic Programs welcomed Jennifer Neef to the staff as Career Services Coordinator. This new position is a replacement for the Graduate Placement Officer position, vacated through the retirement of long-time ACES staff member Carol Johnson.

Jenny is a native of Illinois and holds degrees from Lake Land College, Kansas State University, and Michigan State University. Most recently she served as an Extension Educator in 4-H Youth Development with the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service in Harrison County, Indiana.

Jenny will coordinate major programs for ACES that are designed to help students obtain internships and jobs. Look for her at the ACES Career Fair on October 2 in the Illini Union.

Partner in FIPSE Grant

Andrea Bohn is the UIUC investigator in a seven-university grant funded through the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. The \$204,000 grant is entitled “SUSPROT: Sustainable Crop Protection in Agriculture” and includes four European institutions.

The project is designed to bring students and faculty from the U.S. and EU together in the area of crop and soil sciences to develop a new curriculum in the area of sustainable agriculture. The curriculum will be sensitive to and address cross-Atlantic differences in approaches to land management, social and cultural norms, and the introduction of new technology, such as genetically modified organisms.

The SUSPROT program is designed as an experiential learning process for students and is comprised of two main components: international curriculum and project/research experience. The project experience will be an integral feature of the curriculum and is meant to provide a hands-on approach to concepts learned in the classroom. The program will involve the identification of a set of courses as a core curriculum for both undergraduate and graduate students, development of research and professional internships, development of interactive case studies, the design of a multi-lingual web resource site for the program, and the use of interactive technology to create international student problem-solving teams. All of this leads to another exciting opportunity for international study for ACES students and faculty. Congratulations to Andrea and her colleagues!

Helping Students Adjust to College

Jerry Waldvogel, Professor in the Department of Biology Instruction and Agricultural Education at Clemson University, has developed a web site designed for students to help them adjust to college life. The site includes topics such as time management, study habits, taking notes and reading, and interacting with instructors. Check it out – a great resource for students in need and for advisors to have some ready tips.
<http://www.clemson.edu/collegeskills/intro.htm>

Developing the Questioning Mind

Do you:

- teach so that students develop questioning minds?
- shift the emphasis in instruction from memorizing answers to generating questions?
- teach so that content comes “alive” in the students minds?
- model skilled questioning in a way students can emulate?
- make assignments that generate essential questions?
- encourage students to question their own work, their own thinking, their own relationship to content, to study, and to school?
- model analytic questions for the students?
- model evaluative questions?
- model conceptual and theoretical questions?
- teach students to generate essential questions during a lecture?
- teach students to generate essential questions while reading?
- help students see questions as the driving force in thinking?
- foster new ways of thinking through the asking of new questions?
- teach students to question basic structures in thinking?
- teach students to question the quality of thinking?
- teach students to question themselves as learners?
- teach students to question their egocentrism? their sociocentrism?
- teach students to question systematically and Socratically?

From the Center for Critical Thinking,
www.criticalthinking.org

Brown Vs. Board of Education - 50 years Commemorative

The Contributions of African-Americans
to U.S. and Illinois Agriculture

Dr. Blannie Bowen, Penn State

NOVEMBER 11, 2003

11:30 a.m. Lunch with faculty

12:30 p.m. Seminar

RSVP by November 4th astites@uiuc.edu

Retention and Graduation Rates

The September 1, 2003 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported various data about the major universities in the U.S. So when you are asked a question like “why should I go to UIUC” here are some numbers to share. Just FYI – ACES mirrors campus averages.

Institution	5-year Graduation Rate	Freshman Retention Rate
Big Ten schools:		
Illinois	79%	92%
Michigan	83%	96%
Penn State	81%	92%
Wisconsin	76%	91%
Michigan State	69%	89%
Indiana	69%	88%
Iowa	65%	84%
Purdue	62%	88%
Ohio State	56%	85%
Minnesota	50%	83%
Northwestern	92%	96%
Other land-grant schools:		
Missouri	65%	84%
Iowa State	64%	84%
Kentucky	53%	79%
Nebraska	53%	81%
Kansas State	52%	N/A
Other Illinois schools:		
Illinois State	56%	N/A
Western Illinois	49%	N/A
Southern Illinois-Carbondale	44%	N/A

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