

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. 7

Web-Loving Students Prodded to Cite Peer-Reviewed Works in Term Papers

By Scott Carlson in *The Chronicle of Higher Education Daily News*, 2/6/03

A report released in February 2003 shows that students in a course at Cornell University have generally used fewer and fewer scholarly materials in their library research in the past six years. But the professor who teaches the course reversed the trend by providing a few clear guidelines in term-paper assignments.

The report, "Effect of the Web on Undergraduate Citation Behavior," appears in the *Portal*, a library journal. Philip M. Davis, a life-sciences librarian at Cornell and author of the report, says the study on which it is based came from the feeling that students were using fewer scholarly materials.

The study, which looked at two separate periods from 1996 to 2001, scrutinized the bibliographies of term papers in an undergraduate microeconomics course. Each year, the researchers looked at 60 to 70 papers. The course's content, assignments, and instructor remained constant until 2001.

In 2001, John M. Abowd, a professor of economics, required students to use at least five peer-reviewed materials in the research and noted that the accuracy of the citations would affect grades. In the years before Mr. Abowd issued that mandate, researchers had seen a precipitous drop in the use of books and an equally steep rise in the use of Web sites. Books composed 30 percent of cited sources in 1996, compared with 16 percent in 1999, with continued declines in the following year. Web sites, meanwhile, grew from about 8 percent of cited sources in 1996 to more than 20 percent in 1999. Most of those Web citations, around 40 percent, came from commercial sites.

However, in 2001, the use of Web sites dropped to around 13 percent of cited sources, from more than 22

percent in 2000, while journals went to 30 percent from 20 percent in those years. Book citations also rose slightly. Over all, students in 2001 were using as many scholarly materials as students had used in 1996.

"They weren't just recommendations," Davis says. To change students' work, "there needs to be some minimum requirements for sources cited, but there also have to be consequences. And the consequence in this case was the grade on the paper."

Brown vs. Board of Education Commemoration

During the 2003-04 academic year, the University of Illinois will be commemorating the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision which broadly defined educational access and serves as a basis for democracy and social justice. The College of ACES will participate in the year-long jubilee by sponsoring, with the campus, a series of programs related to the involvement of African-Americans in Illinois and U.S. agriculture. On November 11, 2003, Dr. Blannie Bowen, the C. Lee Rumberger & Family Chair at The Pennsylvania State University, will deliver a lecture on the contributions of African-Americans to U.S. and Illinois agriculture. The session will begin with a luncheon for ACES faculty, followed by the lecture open to campus at 12:30 p.m. in the Monsanto Conference Center. So mark your calendars now; registration materials will be available in late September.

Dr. Bowen will also present a lecture and discussion for ACES undergraduate and graduate students as well as work with a small group of faculty on the concept of designing a course on agricultural history.

ACES - CHSAS Agreement

For more than a year, faculty in ACES and the faculty and administration of the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (CHSAS) have been working together with two purposes in mind. First, CHSAS faculty and their new principal, David Gilligan, wanted to improve the academic rigor of the agriculture programs of the school. Secondly, CHSAS and ACES have worked closely for a number of years to help ensure that CHSAS students are aware of opportunities in ACES and are adequately prepared for UIUC. The College must continually "sell itself" to urban students who are unaware of career opportunities in the agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences.

The result of the collaborative effort is an agreement between ACES and CHSAS which includes five courses in ACES that will be available for proficiency examination credit for students who apply to ACES from CHSAS. The courses are ACE 161, FSHN 101, HORT 105, HORT 107 (plus a portfolio of work) and ANSCI 100. ACE 100 is also available via the AP test in Economics. The first set of tests will be administered in late spring 2004 for CHSAS students who have applied to UIUC. Only students who enroll in ACES will be awarded credit.

ACES Hosts National Conference

In late July, academic deans and others from 26 states and Puerto Rico gathered on the UIUC campus for the NASULGC Academic Programs Section summer conference. The theme of the conference was Creating Value: Outcomes Assessment for Program Improvement. Dr. Lizanne DeStefano, Associate Dean in Education, was the keynote speaker. Concurrent sessions on student outcomes were presented by speakers from throughout the U.S. Participants gained first-hand knowledge of outcomes assessment policies and practices to use in their home institutions.

ACES New Student Welcome
7:00 p.m., September 10
Krannert Center for
the Performing Arts

Four Teaching Maxims That Endure

1. *The importance of students' feeling that the teacher cares about their learning and them as individuals.* At its center, this is what learner-centered instruction is all about. Having a teacher who cares doesn't cause learning, but it significantly impacts the motivation to learn.
2. *The value of getting students to participate in discussion.* Focus on breaking large classes into small groups so that students will have a chance to talk about the content. Students can learn from and with each other.
3. *The role of testing and grading in student motivation.* It is important to key examinations and grading to the course objectives. If grades are based simply on rote memory of details, teachers are not likely to achieve goals of thinking and later application.
4. *The value of getting feedback to improve a course.* Research documents the value of student input to course improvement.

From *The Teaching Professor*, June/July 2003, based on the writings of W. K. McKeachie.

ACES Career Fair
Thursday, October 2, 9:30-3:30
Illini Union Rooms A, B and C

Faculty Performance Assessment

The ACES Academy of Teaching Excellence has prepared a document to assist faculty and administrators of the College the processes used for performance assessment. A copy of the document is enclosed for your use and consideration.

The Faculty Performance Assessment Guidelines are not intended to replace existing documents. The faculty in ACES indicated via a faculty survey in 2000 that performance assessment procedures were not necessarily clear nor viewed as equitable. The Academy document is intended to help overcome those concerns.

Disastrous Teaching Experience Teaches Many Lessons

I arrived at my most recent teaching position with 17 years of teaching experience. I considered myself a successful teacher, one with good classroom rapport with students. I felt confident; I was overconfident. At my new university I met my Waterloo.

I had to recognize very grudgingly that I was not the excellent teacher I thought I was. There was still a lot about teaching that I needed to learn. In retrospect, I believe I made a number of mistakes. Here's a list of some of the worst.

- I assumed that students are as motivated as I am. In reality, most students, especially in introductory or remedial courses like the ones I was teaching, couldn't care less about the context. In the case of math, they come believing that the content is boring and that they will never be good at it.

- I criticized the book and insisted that student use their class notes instead. Most students feel insecure. They need as many things to hold onto as possible. The book is one of them. If I discredit the book, I am taking away what they believe is their life preserver. Now I make the book our companion. I use it whenever possible and regularly encourage students to consult in it class.

- I did not take attendance. My rationale? I believed these kids were adults. They would understand that it was their responsibility to be in class. If they didn't attend, that was their problem. Now I take attendance every day and make it a part of the grade. Checking attendance sends a strong message. It says being in class is important—it matters.

- Patience. When students make stupid mistakes, I used to take it personally and become very angry. Students are very easily intimidated; an angry reply is almost sure to turn them off and discourage them from asking questions ever again. It is very hard to make students feel at ease so that they will ask the questions that they need to.

- Forbidden words. I carefully avoid words and phrases like easy, simple, straightforward, trivial, elementary, basic stuff, and you should know this. What is easy for me is not easy for students; that is why I am standing in front of the class.

- High homework standards. Require detailed

explanations and justifications in homework and tests. Set standards from day one. If a project is unacceptable, I return it and let students resubmit. If it's unacceptable next time, they have earned a zero.

- Tough Love. Treat students with respect, but don't pamper them. Students know the difference. I have learned that you can care for them and still be very demanding.

- Use the student evaluations. Learn from students's comments on the forms. As imperfect as they are, the student evaluations are still a very good source of student feedback. Some of their comments are non-sense, or worse, spiteful, but most are done seriously and contain very useful feedback.

From *The Teaching Professor*, January 2003, based on an article by Juan Tolosa, Richard Stockton University.

Academy of Teaching Excellence Room

The ACES Academy of Teaching Excellence room is open daily for faculty to use. From small group meetings related to teaching and learning, to viewing and analyzing a video tape of your teaching, to checking out resources on many topics, you are encouraged to utilize this excellent resource. Stop by 115 ACES Library, Information and Alumni Center soon! New acquisitions include the following books on teaching and learning, donated by Academy members and the Academy for Teaching Excellence endowment.

<u>Author/Editor</u>	<u>Title</u>
Dunkel, Norbert Schuh, John H.	Advising Student Groups and Organizations
Gardner, John N. Van der Veer, Gretchen and Associates	The Senior Year Experience
Gordon, Virginia N. Habley, Wesley R. and Associates	Academic Advising
Timpson, William M. Canette, Silvia Sara	Teaching Diversity: Challenges and Complexities,
Borrayo, Evelinn Yang, Raymond	Identities and Integrity
Upcraft, M. Lee Gardner, John N. and Associates	The Freshman Year Experience

Student Grades, Privacy and Federal Laws

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (FERPA), is a federal law that governs educational records. It grants specific rights to students and regulates how institutions must handle educational records, including grades. The main focus of FERPA is to give students rights to see their records and to protect against disclosures of certain information without the student's consent or specific legal authorization.

Discussing Student Performance with Parents. You may not discuss a student's performance or grade in your class with the student's parent unless you have written permission from the student or other provisions of the law are met. Under FERPA, parents are not entitled to information in the student record unless the parents can prove that the student is legally their dependent or the student has given consent to the disclosure.

References. Also, you may not provide a verbal or written reference for a student that discusses the student's educational performance unless you have written permission from the student.

Posting Grades. You may not post grades in a manner that enables anyone other than the student seeking to know her or his grade to connect class performance with students.

Social Security Numbers. While UIUC is moving away from the use of the Social Security Number (SSN), you may still have access to SSNs on class rosters and on final grade collection lists, or you may

see it on UI Direct screens. It is most commonly used as an aid to differentiating students with similar names. However, the SSN is not considered public or directory information either by the University or by the definitions included in FERPA. No SSN may be released to a third party without written permission from the student or an approval pursuant to a specific provision of the University's SSN policy.

Directory Information Part of any educational record includes directory information that may be disclosed without specific permission. However, each student has the right to restrict the release of directory information. Students who request suppression of directory information may do so because of serious, even dangerous, circumstances and it is critical that their absolute privacy be protected in every situation.

Students who have requested that all records be withheld may not be listed on posted class lists or in departmental staff/student directories. Their names should not appear on departmental web sites, newsletters, or other departmental communications. If they are teaching assistants, their names may not be listed in the Timetable.

Instructors should become familiar with students' rights as defined by FERPA by referring to the Student Code of Policies

www.uiuc.edu/admin_manual/code

More information about how FERPA affects your role as an instructor is available on the web at www.oar.uiuc.edu/staff/records/FERPA.html or in the Campus Administrative Manual. A tutorial on these matters that can be found at www.oar.uiuc.edu/staff/systems/ferpa_trng

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS is a publication of the College of ACES, Academic Programs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Permission is granted to reprint all or any part of this publication, with appropriate credit to the source and the authors of individual contributions. Academic Programs is also accessible at: <http://www.aces.uiuc.edu/academics/faculty/teaching.html>

101 Mumford Hall, MC-710
1301 W. Gregory Drive
Urbana, IL 61801

