

# ACADEMIC PROGRAMS



College of Agricultural,  
Consumer and  
Environmental Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

From the Office of the Associate Dean

Vol. 8 No. 9

## 8 Simple Rules

Sometimes it is difficult to motivate students to invest the time and effort necessary to succeed in a course. To meet this challenge, the authors have assembled a list of eight simple rules for keeping students focused and motivated. These rules are not original, and they aren't just for those who teach "hard and boring" classes. Most of these suggestions apply to any course.

**Rule 1:** Emphasize the most critical concepts continuously. Reiterate these concepts in lectures and assignments throughout the course. Include questions relating to these critical subjects on every exam, thus rewarding students for learning, retaining, and applying this knowledge in a variety of contexts.

**Rule 2:** Provide students with a "visual aid" when possible to explain abstract concepts. Today's students are visual learners. For these students, a simple diagram or flowchart truly can be more valuable than a thousand words in a text or lecture.

**Rule 3:** Rely on logic when applicable. Point out to students which information is merely "fact" that must be memorized and which course material is based upon "logic". Show students how to employ logical thinking to learn and retain new information.

**Rule 4:** Use in-class activities to reinforce newly presented material. After a new concept or subject has been presented via text reading, lecture, or class discussion, allow the students to put the concept into action by completing an in-class assignment. These assignments must be developed to ensure that the students understand the critical concepts underlying the new material. Typically, the most learning takes place when the students are permitted to work in small groups, to refer to their text and notes, and to ask questions of the instructor while completing the assignment. Class attendance also improves.

**Rule 5:** Help students create a "link" when teaching something new. If the students can "link" the new material to something already learned, the odds of learning the new material are greatly increased. Examples of possible "links" include: prior material learned in this course, material learned in prerequisite courses, and "real-life" experiences.

**Rule 6:** Recognize the importance of vocabulary in a course. Students often struggle with new vocabulary in many courses, especially introductory ones. To succeed in these courses, students must become comfortable with new terminology. As subjects are presented, new and/or confusing terms should be identified and introduced to the students. Present "real-world" definitions and alternative terminology, in addition to textbook definitions. Create a glossary on the course website where new terminology is added, explained, and illustrated throughout the course.

**Rule 7:** Treat students with respect. Patronizing behavior may be expected of primary school teachers, and drill sergeant strategies may be effective in military boot camps. However, most college students will not respond well to these techniques. Give students their dignity, and they will give you their best efforts.

**Rule 8:** Hold students to a high standard. If students are not required to maintain a specified level of learning and performance, only the most highly motivated students will devote the time and effort necessary to learn. In contrast, maintaining high standards not only will motivate student learning, it also will be the source of student feelings of accomplishment when those standards are met.

Each of these rules can help motivate even the most lethargic student, but Rules 7 and 8 are the most important. If students are not treated with respect and held to a high standard, scrupulously following the first six rules will have much less impact and might end up being an exercise in futility.

Adapted from an article by Becker and Schneider in *The Teaching Professor*, August/September 2004.

## ACES Career Fair

More than 600 students attended the ACES Career Fair in early October, meeting with nearly 80 companies that provide internship and employment opportunities for ACES students. Thanks to faculty and staff who took time to visit the Career Fair, showing support for our students and our business and industry partners.

## Teaching College #8

Twenty-two faculty and graduate students are completing their participation in the eighth ACES Teaching College. Participants include:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dept</u>	<u>Position</u>
Lia Andrae	FSHN	Grad Student
Ion Baianu	FSHN	Professor
Andrea Beller	ACE	Grad Student
Carrie Bertelsen	ANSC	Grad Student
Kate Branscomb	HCD	Grad Student
Susan Brewer	FSHN	Professor
Susan Helmink	ANSC	Teaching Assoc.
Andrew Isserman	ACE	Professor
Lisa Karr	ANSC	Grad Student
KyungHyun Kim	ABE	Grad Student
Yun Lin	CRSC	Asst. Professor
Amy Lopez	ANSC	Grad Student
Nancy McElwain	HCD	Asst. Professor
Friedrich Kopisch-Obuch	CRSC	Grad Student
Ganti Murthy	ABE	Grad Student
Kirstin Phelps	HCD	Grad Student
Karen Plawecki	FSHN	Teaching Assoc.
Becky Roach	FSHN	Teaching Assoc.
Andrea Stetzer	FSHN	Grad Student
Kelly Swanson	ANSC	Asst. Professor
Hua Wang	FSHN	Grad Student
Wenqiao Yuan	ABE	Grad Student

Instructors for the course are: Cleo D'Arcy, Phil Buriak, Shelly Schmidt, Kirby Barrick and graduate assistant, Kirsten Phelps. The course is funded by the Academy of Teaching Excellence, ACES Academic Programs, and the Warren K. Wessels Fund.

## IS-SoTL

Faculty in ACES participated in the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference at Indiana University in October.

*Paper presentations:*

### **Increasing Validity of a Needs Assessment for Faculty Development**

Neil Knobloch & Anna Ball, HCD

### **SoTL in the Discipline of Food Science**

Shelly J. Schmidt and Faye M. Dong, FSHN;  
Wayne T. Iwaoka (University of Hawaii); Grady W. Chism (The Ohio State University)

### **The Influence of Teaching Approaches in the University Classroom on Student Performance and Motivation**

Sheila Settle & Neil A. Knobloch, HCD

### **Relationships Between Students Preferred Learning Styles and Instructional Formats and Media**

Cleo D'Arcy, Darin Eastburn, Bertram Bruce, Muzhgan Nazarova, Crop Sciences

### **Documenting, Measuring, Evaluating and Reporting Teaching Performance to Improve the Teaching Environment**

R. Kirby Barrick, Academic Programs; Cleo D'Arcy, Crop Sciences; Tim Garrow, FSHN

### **The Role of SoTL in the Promotion and Tenure Process? What are the Discipline-Specific Recommendations?**

Faye M. Dong, FSHN; Robert Hughes, HCD;  
R. Kirby Barrick, Academic Programs

### **The Teaching College Course: Institutionalizing the Scholarship of Teaching in a Research Intensive College**

R. Kirby Barrick, Academic Programs; Shelly J. Schmidt, FSHN; Cleo D'Arcy, Crop Sciences, Philip Buriak and Bruce Litchfield, ABE

*Poster presentations:*

### **A Comprehensive Approach to Enhancing the Scholarship of Teaching**

R. Kirby Barrick, Academic Programs

### **Using Quality Circles to Enhance Student Involvement and Course Quality in Large Undergraduate Courses**

Shelly J. Schmidt, Mevanne S. Parmer, Dawn M. Bohn, FSHN

### **Peer Observation as an Assessment Tool for Enhancing the Scholarship of Teaching**

R. Kirby Barrick, Academic Programs

## Student Club Support

The ACES Development Fund in Academic Programs supports a variety of programs including leadership development activities. Funds are made possible through annual donations from ACES alumni. ACES undergraduate student clubs that are Registered Student Organizations and members of ACES Student Council submitted proposals for funding which were reviewed by a committee of undergraduate students. Over \$11,000 is being awarded to 16 ACES clubs this year. Many of the funded proposals will support student participation in regional and national events. Other funded activities include speakers for club meetings, club filed trips, and student exchange programs. Clubs that received funding this year include:

ACE Club  
ACES Global Ambassadors  
Alpha Tau Alpha  
American Society of Ag Engineers  
Association of Food Technologists  
Collegiate 4-H  
Field and Furrow  
Horticulture Club  
Illini Dairy Club  
Illini Equestrians  
Illini Pork Link  
Illini Pullers  
MANRRS  
Pre-Vet Club  
Student Advancement Committee  
Turf Club

## Leadership Support

A major gift to the College of ACES was announced during the annual UI Foundation meeting in October. Helen Davies of Lombard, IL and her late husband, James, have established a deferred gift of more than \$800,000 to support the Leadership Initiatives in ACES. Both Mrs. Davies and her late husband are alumni, earning degrees in Home Economics and General Agriculture, respectively. In addition, their two sons, Jim and John, are also ACES alumni.

## Get Ready for ExplorACES!

ExplorACES 2005 will showcase ACES *student accomplishments* and the exciting opportunities that come with our science-based academic programs in the biological, physical, social and economic sciences. Students will play prominent roles in planning, developing and staffing exhibits, as well as promoting and managing the event.

The target audience for this event will be high school students, junior college transfer prospects and students in the upper middle grades who are beginning to think seriously about preparing for college. A concerted effort will be made to draw visitors (potential students and their families) from all over the state, including Chicago and the suburbs.

Alumni and residents of the local community will be invited to join us, but the emphasis will be on student-to prospective-student interactions... and on showing prospects the fun and interesting things they would have the ability to do here.

Through exhibits and activities at ExplorACES, we want to show (not just tell!) prospective students that ACES will be a good fit for them if they:

- Are serious about succeeding in a rigorous, science-based program
- Want to have fun and make lifelong friends along the way
- Are seeking a welcoming and supportive environment of peers
- Want to work with faculty mentors from the start of their college careers
- Feel strongly about taking an active role in charting their own futures.

In keeping with the desire to help prospective students visualize themselves as a part of the ACES family, exhibits will be held in several buildings that are familiar to ACES students. This will allow recruits an opportunity to get a feel for the kinds of labs, classrooms and other facilities they might expect to use if they choose to attend Illinois.

**Attention faculty** - you can help students identify and create exhibits and demonstrations that will help showcase our college and programs. In fact, they need your help. Consider adding an ExplorACES project to the syllabus for your Spring course. Or work with your undergraduate research students. Or your Honors students. Start now – and think big!

# ACES Senior Survey

May 2004 ACES graduating seniors were asked to complete the Senior Survey, with the choice of responding on-line or by completing the paper instrument. A total of 192 usable responses (of approximately 430 graduates) were received.

Senior were asked to assess themselves on seven ability areas—the seven core competencies of the ACES undergraduate curriculum. Here are the results by response category, % and (n).

## May 2004 ACES Senior Survey

Please assess yourself on the following abilities when you entered UIUC (A) and as you are exiting UIUC (B).

		Very Weak (1)	Weak (2)	Neutral (3)	Strong (4)	Very Strong (5)	Response Average
<b>Expertise in your major</b>							
	<b>A</b>	9% (17)	26% (50)	44% (84)	20% (38)	2% (3)	2.79
	<b>B</b>	1% (2)	1% (1)	6% (12)	52% (100)	40% (77)	4.30
<b>History, culture, society and the arts</b>							
	<b>A</b>	4% (8)	23% (45)	50% (96)	20% (39)	2% (4)	2.93
	<b>B</b>	1% (2)	6% (11)	32% (61)	50% (96)	12% (22)	3.65
<b>Critical thinking and problem solving</b>							
	<b>A</b>	3% (6)	8% (15)	40% (76)	44% (84)	6% (11)	3.41
	<b>B</b>	2% (3)	1% (2)	11% (19)	54% (105)	32% (61)	4.14
<b>Communication</b>							
	<b>A</b>	2% (4)	13% (25)	37% (71)	40% (77)	8% (15)	3.39
	<b>B</b>	2% (3)	1% (2)	9% (17)	49% (94)	40% (76)	4.24
<b>Leadership and personal development</b>							
	<b>A</b>	3% (5)	15% (28)	35% (67)	37% (71)	10% (21)	3.39
	<b>B</b>	2% (3)	3% (5)	9% (18)	37% (71)	50% (95)	4.30
<b>Computer technology</b>							
	<b>A</b>	7% (13)	23% (44)	44% (84)	23% (44)	4% (7)	2.94
	<b>B</b>	3% (5)	1% (2)	27% (51)	54% (103)	16% (31)	3.80
<b>Scientific inquiry</b>							
	<b>A</b>	3% (6)	18% (35)	48% (93)	28% (54)	2% (4)	3.08
	<b>B</b>	3% (5)	3% (6)	27% (51)	47% (91)	20% (39)	3.80

Percents may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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