The Center Exchange

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Contents

- Summer and Fall Conferences
  - NEFDC Conference
  - Crossing the Disciplinary Divide
  - The Contemplative Academy
  - Retreat for Academics
- Getting to the Beginning of a Project

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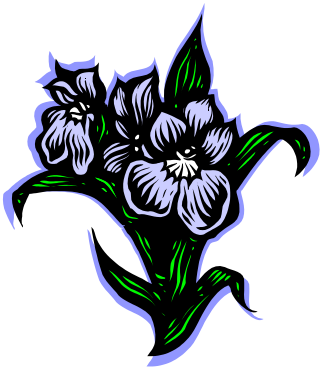

Greetings

Welcome to this special May 2010 edition of *The Center Exchange*. This issue features information on summer and fall conferences and scholarship.

In June the Center will offer a Faculty Course Redesign Camp to promote community building, teaching skills, active learning strategies, universal design for learning, and assessment while generating excitement for your course content. The goal is to produce a syllabus to use next year. In courses with multiple sections we encourage as many of those teaching the course to attend together. Faculty participating in the Course Redesign Camp will receive a $500 stipend and lunch daily. The Camp will run on June 14, 15, and 17, from 9:30–2:30 plus homework. There will be a limit of 10 participants, and participants must attend all three days. The Camp will be held in Foundress 205 and be facilitated by Sue and Chris. If you would like to apply please contact cte@annamaria.edu. If there is adequate faculty interest, a second Faculty Course Redesign Camp will run on June 21, 22, and 24.

The Center's summer hours—Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12:00 to 5:00—will be in effect from May 18 through August 18. Please stop by to see us, or you can reach us via email at cte@annamaria.edu.

Happy Summer!

Sue, Chris, and Carolyn

Note from Sue

I have enjoyed my work as Center Director. I've been honored to have the opportunity to learn with you. Thank you for the support, assistance, and trust you provided me. Although I will miss you and the college, I am looking forward to a new challenge and to starting a new phase of my career. Please keep in touch; I can be reached at my personal email address (skeliason@earthlink.net).

Best wishes,

Sue

Summer and Fall Conferences

Faculty can apply for a scholarship through the Center to attend these local conferences. The scholarship money is for registration fees only. In return for receiving a registration scholarship, you must agree to facilitate a Lunch and Learn to discuss the conference with colleagues during fall 2010.

NEFDC Conference: Teaching for Learning

May 21, 2010, 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center, Westford, MA

Conference Schedule

Keynote speaker: Dr. G. Christian Jernstedt, "How Learning Changes Brains"
Registration and continental breakfast begin at 8:00 a.m.

- Registration and Continental Breakfast
- Welcome Remarks by Dr. Tom Thibodeau, NEFDC President, and Michelle Barthelemy, conference chair
- Concurrent Session I
- Coffee Break
- Concurrent Session II
- Lunch and announcements
- Keynote Address by Dr. G. Christian Jernstedt
- Concurrent Session III
- Poster Session, Wine and Cheese Reception (cash bar)

Keynote Speaker

Dr. G. Christian Jernstedt is Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Dartmouth College, Adjunct Professor of Community and Family Medicine at Dartmouth Medical School, and Director of the Center for Educational Outcomes at Dartmouth. He specializes in human learning.

At Dartmouth, Dr. Jernstedt has taught introductory psychology and undergraduate courses in learning, evaluation research, the brain and technology, and experimental methods. He has received national recognition for his teaching and has received both of Dartmouth's awards for distinguished teaching. In the graduate program at Dartmouth, he has taught courses in learning theory, teaching methods, philosophy of science, and experimental methodology, and he has supervised numerous Ph.D. students. He offers seminars and lectures throughout the country on learning and teaching, potentials of the human mind, and institutional and program assessment and development.

Dr. Jernstedt's research is in the area of learning as it occurs both in formal classroom settings and in the natural environment. This research is directed toward understanding the breadth of learning, including its cognitive, behavioral, and affective aspects. He examines what leads to learning, what happens during learning, and what outcomes emerge from learning experiences. His research has examined classroom and other intentional learning, technologically enhanced learning, service-learning, and experiential learning programs.

For additional information about this conference see www.nefdc.org/events.htm.

Crossing the Disciplinary Divide: Innovative Pedagogy & Course Redesign X

Wednesday, June 2 – Friday, June 4, 2010

Conference Overview

The problems of the real world, as with its opportunities, come not in neat, disciplinary packages but as highly unstructured challenges to human thinking. Whether solving the global economic crisis, global warming, sustainable development, or helping students sort out work, relationships, and their life projects, people need wildly varied and complementary learning experiences.

Participants

This conference is for anyone interested in creative teaching methods to enhance learning in higher education. In recent years, it has attracted college educators from all over the country and abroad, as well as administrators, foundation representatives, and members of the broader community involved in university teaching.

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Therese Huston is the founding director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Seattle University. Her new book, *Teaching What You Don't Know,* has already reached many faculty with its practical strategies and its undergirding of solid research. Her other works focus mainly on faculty mentoring, morale, and retention. Therese earned her Ph.D. in cognitive psychology at Carnegie Mellon University and her B.A. in psychology from Carleton College. Each spring, she facilitates a writing retreat on the scholarship of teaching and learning, and she regularly consults with faculty and administrators to identify sustainable ways to improve what we do as teachers and learners.

Registration Information

Conference fee: $350 ($300 each for 2 or more participants from the same institution) includes:

- Two nights lodging* in Fairfield's townhouse complex (two people per townhouse in separate bedrooms)
- Food (six meals)
- Receptions
- Conference materials

** Housing is guaranteed for the first 50 participants.*

Fee excluding housing: $250

For additional information, including the conference schedule, see www.fairfield.edu/documents/academic/cae_conf10.pdf.

The Contemplative Academy

September 24–26, 2010
Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts

This conference will focus on initiatives in contemplative pedagogy taking place in classrooms and institutions of higher education. It will explore how contemplative practices cultivate capacities of attention, equanimity, wisdom, and compassion, which are central to the lives of students and educators.

Contributed papers, poster sessions, and artistic presentations as well as plenary talks and contemplative practice sessions will explore the ways that contemplative practice is serving higher education. As educators integrate these practices into classrooms, studios, and co-curricular initiatives, they are learning how they develop greater mindfulness, open heartedness, and insight.

Attendance and Conference Fees

Attendance is restricted to Association Members. New members may join at the conference attendance rate: $50 for a one-year faculty membership/$30 for a one-year graduate student, part-time, or retired membership.

Conference Fee: $250 regular/ $190 student, part-time, or retired. The fee includes meals from reception Friday evening through mid-morning break on Sunday.

Please visit www.h-net.org/announce/show.cgi?ID=173408 for additional information.

Retreat for Academics

November 11–14, 2010
The Garrison Institute, Garrison, NY
Cost: $600 single room; $450 double room; $350 double room with scholarship (a limited amount of financial assistance is available)

Educators report that deepening their own contemplative practice leads to more successful teaching and helps them design courses with a contemplative component. Our retreats offer instruction in a variety of contemplative practices, including contemplative methods adapted for the classroom. These practices cultivate capacities central to teaching and learning—focused attention, kindness and compassion, and contemplative inquiry—and our retreats include discussions about the relationship of the contemplative perspective to teaching, learning, and knowing. Much of the time is spent in silence, including some silent meals. Our retreats are designed to appeal to participants with a wide range of experience in contemplative practice, from beginners to seasoned practitioners.

If you'd like to include a quantitative literacy component into your courses be sure to review the National Numeracy Network's website at http://serc.carleton.edu/nnn/index.html.

Getting to the Beginning of a Project

by Seth Racusen

The hardest part of the writing process is getting to the beginning. The following strategies will help you to plan to get to the beginning of the creative process, to develop a research agenda, and to write.

The Creative Process

- Pay attention to the creative process. That means paying attention to where you work well and where you do not work well. Do you prefer lightness or darkness, large tables or small tables, expansive or clearly confined spaces, quiet or background noise, mornings, afternoons, or evenings? Do you work best alone or in the company of others? Do you work best at home or somewhere else? Do you work best in the same place or are you portable?
- Do you prefer to begin on a keyboard or a pad of paper? Does it help you to diagram your ideas, outline your thoughts, or just begin writing? Pay attention to your writing processes. Let yourself begin writing.
- Can you find at least fifteen minutes each day to focus on writing? Where do you find that focus?

Developing a Research Agenda

- Your research agenda may come from your teaching, your professional work, your own "studies," your interests in the world. Faculty at Anna Maria have a diversity of research interests.
- Read some journals that interest you to see if your agenda is represented. Scan a range of journals and media to reflect on what concerns others are pursuing.
- Focused reflection may be helpful to generate an agenda or to prioritize among multiple interests.
- If you are working on multiple projects determine which one holds a deeper interest for you. Also consider which project would be easier to write, and how much fieldwork, library research, or other preparation would be necessary.
- Consider which project may be most beneficial to you professionally.
- Talk it over with friends, your division chair, or your friendly mentor.

Writing

- Joan Bolker wrote a famous work in this field titled *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising, and Finishing Your Doctoral Thesis.* After enticing us with that title, Dr. Bolker clarifies that more than fifteen minutes is needed to write a dissertation, but that if we dedicate at least fifteen minutes of focused time every day to the dissertation, then we can finish it. That principle holds true for all writing projects.
- The advice of Dr. Bolker and others is to remove any obstacles that you perceive impede your writing. Reduce stress. Walk. Run. Eat well. Work in places conducive to work. Brainstorm. Outline. Develop ideas. Pay attention to the creative process. Pay attention to what's bothering you. Write first about what's bothering you, then turn to your project.
- And then write! Anything you produce counts (notes, outlines, rough drafts)! Write!

Links on Writing

- University of Wisconsin–Madison, Writing Center
  http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/
- California State University, Style Manuals and Writing Guides
  www.calstatela.edu/library/styleman.htm
- Eugene Volokh, Academic Legal Writing
  www.law.ucla.edu/volokh/writing/
- Newcastle University, Academic Writing Guide
  www.ncl.ac.uk/students/insessional/assets/documents/Academic_Writing_Guide.pdf
- Books on Writing Well
  www.crim.cam.ac.uk/library/pdf/books_on_writing_well.pdf
- Confident Writing Blog
  http://confidentwriting.com/
- Emily Hanlon: The Fiction Writer's Journey
  www.thefictionwritersjourney.com/
- A Writer's Place
  www.awritersplace.net/

Links on Scholarship

- Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, Scholarly Writing Resource Guide
  www.law.csuohio.edu/lawlibrary/resources/lawpubs/ScholarlyWritingGuide.html
- Nicholson, S. (2006). Writing Your First Scholarly Article: A Guide for Budding Authors in Librarianship. *Information Technology and Libraries, 25*(2) 108–111.
  www.bibliomining.com/nicholson/firstarticle.htm
- Robert Lucas, Institute for Scholarly Productivity, "Hints for Publishing Scholarly Writing"
  www.ord.emich.edu/publications/publications_subdir/handbook/handbook_subdir/17publishing.html
- DOs and DON'Ts for Scholarly Writing in Lit and Humanities
  www.unca.edu/mla/Gillum%20notes%20from%20workshop.pdf
- Gina Hiatt, "Reducing Over-Complexity in Your Scholarly Writing"
  http://tomprofblog.mit.edu/2008/02/28/851-reducing-over-complexity-in-your-scholarly-writing/
- On Academic Publishing
  http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_publishing

The *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* is looking for book reviewers.
See www.wsc.ma.edu/mhj/reviewers.html for the list of books and for guidelines. Offered are volumes that have historical ties, but many have sociological, scientific, or cultural links as well. If you find something you might like to read yourself, why not review it?