

UWF Welcomes 32 New Faculty to Campus

Please extend a warm welcome to faculty joining the UWF community this fall. The following faculty will begin new tenure-earning or visiting professor positions. A few familiar names in this group are individuals with a long history as visiting instructors at UWF who now hold permanent positions. Welcome to all!

College of Arts and Sciences

Loribeth Alvin, Mathematics & Statistics
 Judy Bennington-Dykes, English
 Angela Blackburn, Nursing
 Phillip Brulotte, Theatre
 Randy Goff, Chemistry
 Rodney Guttmann, Center on Aging / Psychology
 Angela Hahn, School of Allied Health & Life Sciences
 Ying Huang, Communication Arts
 Sheila Murphy, Music
 Paul Nash, Biology
 Chris Nicholson, Chemistry
 Robert Nickles, Advising Center
 Enid Sisskin, School of Allied Health & Life Sciences
 Chuck Stanhope, Advising Center

Brandy Strahan, Nursing
 Aaron Wade, Physics

College of Business

Arnab Biswas, Marketing & Economics
 Kevin Krieger, Accounting & Finance

College of Professional Studies

Katie Collins, School of Education
 Susan Densmore-James, School of Education
 Daniel Drost, Health, Leisure, & Exercise Science
 Karen Evans, School of Education
 Sara Evans, Justice Studies
 Trudi Gaines, School of Education
 Nancy Hastings, Electrical and Computer Technology
 Michael Humble, Social Work
 Melinda Lewis, Social Work
 Patricia Malley, Health, Leisure, & Exercise Science
 Giang-Nguyen Nguyen, School of Education
 Jamie Snyder, Justice Studies
 James Whitworth, Social Work
 Gwendolyn Williams, School of Education

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September 16 Deadline for APAC Assessment Grant Submissions

The Academic Program Assessment Council Assessment Grant Program is intended to promote high-quality assessment of student learning outcomes at the program level at the University of West Florida. The goals of this program are to provide funding to assist faculty and staff with the development and implementation of meaningful program-level assessment practices, encourage professional development associated with the use of assessment evidence to improve student learning, and to assist faculty in transforming effective assessment practices to scholarship of teaching and learning. The grant awards are: **General Education Assessment Grant** (\$4,000), **Department Assessment Grant** (\$1,500), and **Faculty Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Project** (\$1,000). The RFP, application template, and rubric for award evaluation are posted on the Academic Affairs web site (<http://uwf.edu/academic/apac/>) and the CUTLA home page.

Pace Library Opens the Great Good Place

The Great Good Place, a community gathering place for faculty, students, and staff, is now open on the second floor of the Pace Library. The Great Good Place provides seating for 62 people around tall, two-seat bistro tables, four- and six-seat round tables, and one large rectangular table. Four lounge chairs provide space for comfy reading and conversation. A lunch counter area near the entrance is designed to accommodate solitary individuals reading newspapers or using a laptop.

Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to gather in the Great Good Place for collegial conversations. Bring your lunch, a beverage from Starbucks, or make use of the three vending machines and two microwave ovens located in an adjoining room. Don't worry about whether conversations will disturb students at work. The Great Good Place is separate from other library study areas and will have a

normal conversation level of ambient sound. The fourth floor of the library is the designated quiet area.

The design of the Great Good Place is inspired by the community spaces celebrated by UWF Professor Emeritus Ray Oldenburg in two books: *The Great Good Place: Cafés, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community* (1999) and *Celebrating the Third Place: Inspiring Stories about the "Great Good Places" at the Heart of Our Communities* (2001).



Assessment Workshops in October: Creating a Rubric

Claudia Stanny will offer two hands-on workshops on rubric development in October. If you have never created a rubric to use when grading student work, you can learn how to identify rubric criteria and write descriptions for levels of quality. If you would like to create a rubric for a specific assignment or student project, bring a description of the assignment to the workshop. You can apply the principles of rubric development to your assignment during the workshop and leave with a draft of a

CUTLA Resource Page on Rubric Development

<http://uwf.edu/cutla/rubricdevelopment.cfm>

rubric. To accommodate busy faculty schedules, the rubric workshop will be offered once on **October 12 (Wednesday)** and repeated on **October 29 (Tuesday)**. Both work-

shops will be held in the **Nautilus Chamber in the University Commons (2:30 PM – 4:00 PM)**. Faculty can also visit the CUTLA resource page on Rubric Development to learn about how to construct and use a rubric to evaluate student work. The site also includes a set of links to examples of rubrics for a variety of assignments and projects.

Teaching Tip: Learning-Centered Course Design

Claudia J. Stanny, Director, Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

What is a learning-centered course?

A learning-centered course places the focus of attention on the quality of student learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995). When designing a learning-centered course, instructors select readings, make decisions about how class time will be used, and design assignments, examinations, and other assessments based on the contribution these components make toward achieving the learning goals identified for the course. A learning-centered course differs from a traditional teaching-centered course in several ways (Weimer, 2002).

First, the **balance of control** in a learning-centered class will change. Individuals who are responsible for an outcome prefer to control the factors that contribute to the success of the outcome. In a teaching-centered environment, instructors feel responsible for learning (and feel vulnerable when some students fail to learn) in part because they believe that good learning depends entirely on good teaching. As a result, instructors of teaching-centered courses exert control over many aspects of the course. In contrast, a learning-centered instructor recognizes that students are ultimately responsible for their own learning. Students must engage in assigned learning activities and exert the effort required to learn. If we expect students to take responsibility for their own learning, we might need to give them more control over the way we structure learning experiences. An instructor creating a learning-centered course must balance the conflicting demands associated with each party's need for control. Instructors need to control aspects of the course to ensure that they meet their professional responsibility to create a course that addresses certain learning outcomes. Students need to control aspects of the learning environment to meet individual learning goals and maintain motivation. The location of the balancing point between competing claims of instructors and students for control in a specific course depends on the maturity and metacognition skills of the students. Students vary in their ability to identify appropriate learning goals, regulate their learning strategies, and monitor their progress. The level of control exerted by instructors will be greater in beginning courses populated by students who have less developed metacognition skills.

Second, **how students learn content** is structured differently in a learning-centered course. Teaching-centered courses are content-heavy and encourage rote memorization, which produces memories for

content that are seldom retained for the long term (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Glenberg, Smith, & Green, 1977; Tulving, 1962). A learning-centered course will include activities that promote long-term learning, especially learning that involves higher-order thinking skills. For example, a learning-centered course will include activities in which students create integrated, organized representations of knowledge that students must access while applying disciplinary content to solve realistic problems.

Third, **teachers** in a learner-centered course take on the roles of coach and mentor instead of performing as a "sage on the stage." Instructors with a teaching-centered orientation are more likely to focus on course content and the transmission of information to students. Learning-centered instructors act as a "guide on the side." Both "sages on the stage" and "guides on the side" present content, but learning-centered instructors also design activities that allow students to practice disciplinary skills with the content, provide feedback to students about the quality of their performance, and suggest learning strategies that will help students improve their disciplinary skills and expand their knowledge base (King, 1993).

Fourth, **responsibility for learning** is placed squarely on the shoulders of students in a learning-centered course. Unfortunately, students at the beginning of a college program frequently operate at a level of cognitive development that Perry (1970/1999) characterizes as "dualistic learning." Dualists learners believe that their instructors should be expert authorities who transmit knowledge to them by lecturing about content and identify the correct models and interpretations for students. One of the challenges associated with teaching in a learning-centered environment is the need to create course structures that establish the instructor's authority as an expert guide to the content and skills of the discipline while simultaneously holding students accountable for their own learning. As students advance in academic programs and become more sophisticated learners, they become more comfortable with a learning-centered environment in which students are expected to independently evaluate the quality and credibility of arguments in the discipline.

Finally, faculty and students in a learning-centered course use feedback based on the **assessment and evaluation of student work** for the important

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Learning-Centered Course Design (*continued*)

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purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of learning activities toward reaching course learning outcomes. Students in a learning-centered environment use information from assessments to monitor their progress toward achieving their learning goals and calibrate their activities to improve their expertise. Instructors use information from assessment to evaluate whether assignments and activities in the course are effective in promoting the quality of learning intended. In a learning-centered environment, tests and other evaluations function as learning experiences as well as serving the traditional role of describing and ranking students in terms of expertise achieved (assigning grades).

A learning-centered course is *not a client-centered* course in the sense that “the customer is always right.” Although student needs should inform and influence the design choices an instructor makes, design choices should not be based on superficial “customer satisfaction” needs. Instead, the student-centered aspect of a learning-centered course means that instructors make design decisions based on information about the knowledge and skills students bring to the course with the goal of enabling students to benefit and learn from specific instructional activities. Being learning-centered means that instructors focus on what students ought to do during the course to learn and whether those learning activities actually promote the learning outcomes intended for the course. For example, if a course learning outcome identifies application of theory to problems or analysis and evaluation of evidence as goals, instructors should design class activities, assignments, and assessments that require students to apply theory to problems and analyze and evaluate evidence rather than merely recall and reproduce facts and other memorized content on an exam.

Comparing backward course design to teaching-centered course design

With a traditional *teaching-centered course design* process, instructors first select a text and other relevant readings. For example, a course might be organized around the chapters in a selected text book. Instructors decide how much time they will devote to different blocks of content, how they will sequence their lectures, and the number and timing of exams and other assignments. Instructors may identify intended learning outcomes after completing the course design (sometimes years after the initial course de-

sign, in response to a request from a Chair or Dean). Learning outcomes might consist of a list of topics the instructor “covers” in the class. Learning outcomes may be dominated by descriptions of content that students should retain, although some learning outcomes might identify higher-order thinking skills. In a teaching-centered approach, instructors might decide to use an examination or assignment to assign grades to students based on expectations about the number and type of examinations that should be given, constraints on grading time imposed by class size, and expectations about whether students should be required to write a paper. Examinations that emphasize the retention of content might not be aligned well with the more sophisticated learning outcomes identified and might not hold students accountable for developing these higher-order skills.

In contrast, the *backward design* process reverses the order of decisions and activities that teaching-centered instructors follow (Fink, 2003; Maki, 2010). Backward course design begins with articulation of the intended learning outcomes for a course. Guided by these learning goals, the instructor selects reading materials and designs assignments and in-class activities that promote acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and abilities described in the learning outcomes. Assignments and other assessments that instructors use to assign grades in the course should be aligned with the learning outcomes (Fink, 2003; Wulff, 2005). For example, an instructor might assign problem sets as homework to give students practice with these skills. A course with learning outcomes that describe written communication skills will include paper assignments that create opportunities to practice writing and editing work to improve use of language appropriate to the discipline. Introductory courses that emphasize acquisition of content might include a number of examinations that evaluate retention. If students are expected to evaluate evidence and apply models to solve a problem or interpret a real-life situation, instructors should create exam questions that require these thinking skills to select or construct a correct response.

Designing a learning-centered course

Dee Fink (2003, 2004) describes a multistage design process for creating integrated courses that promote significant learning.

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Learning-Centered Course Design (*continued*)

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- Identify critical components of the course: learning goals, teaching and learning activities, assessment procedures, and strategies for providing feedback to students. Instructors who begin design of a course by identifying learning outcomes are more likely to select other course components that align and integrate with learning outcomes, with no disconnects between components.
- Create the overall course structure and sequence of instructional strategies that promote the course learning outcomes.
- Finalize the details of course mechanics. Create a system for assigning grades and write the course syllabus.
- Identify and debug potential problems in managing the course. For example, will students have enough time to complete the background work for an assignment before the assignment is due? Will students have access to the resources needed to complete assignments? Are the required readings available on campus?
- Include formal mechanisms for assessing the learning activities in the course. Good course de-

sign concludes with planning how the instructor will evaluate the effectiveness of assignments and instructional strategies. Not every assignment works perfectly the first time we implement it. Moreover, change over time is inevitable. Disciplinary changes may require changes in course learning outcomes. Changes in the skill sets of new cohorts of students present challenges and may require modified strategies for teaching and learning. Technology may render an existing teaching activity ineffective or irrelevant. New technology may present opportunities for creating new, more effective learning activities. In the absence of continuous self-reflection and evidence-based evaluation of course components, a well-designed course will become obsolete and ineffective.

If you are interested in designing or redesigning a course that is more learning-centered, you can access a free PDF copy of *A Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning* (Fink, 2004) at <http://www.deefinkandassociates.com/resources.html>. Contact Claudia Stanny at the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (cstanny@uwf.edu) if you would like a consultation about designing or redesigning a course.

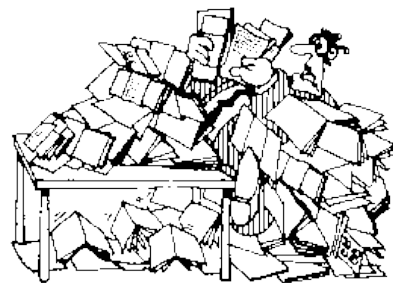
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Information Literacy Resources Teaching Strategies and Assessment Methods

During 2010-2011, Britt McGowan (Pace Library) collaborated with CUTLA to facilitate four workshops on assessment of student learning and teaching strategies to promote student learning on outcomes related to information literacy and the ALC/ALP domains of communication, critical thinking, integrity/values, and project management. The resources developed for these workshops are posted on a set of resource pages, Best Practices in Assessment of Information Literacy hosted on the CUTLA web site. The Connecticut Library Information Literacy Wiki provides a link to these pages as a resource on Information Literacy.

Participants in these workshops shared examples of assignments



and activities that instructors can use in their courses to promote information literacy learning outcomes and methods for assessing these learning outcomes. A link to the Association of College & Research Libraries identifies and describes the ACRL standards and student learning outcomes for information literacy.

CUTLA Resources on Information Literacy

http://uwf.edu/cutla/best_practice_information_literacy.cfm

Pace Library Tutorials of Information Literacy Skills

<http://library.uwf.edu/tutorials/>

Connecticut Library Information Literacy Wiki

<http://ctinformationliteracyhome.pbworks.com/w/page/38789909/Best-Practices-in-Information-Literacy-Assessment>

Academic Programs Assessment Council News

SACS-COC Update

The University of West Florida submitted its Fifth Year Interim Report, including a QEP Impact Report, to SACS-COC in March. UWF is a member of the second cohort of institutions that submitted this new, mid-cycle report to SACS-COC. The QEP Impact Report was the final step for the current QEP (*Creating Communities of Learners through Active Learning and Student Engagement: Focus on Project Management*). SACS-COC accepted this report without further comment, which sets the stage to begin campus discussion of the appropriate theme for the next QEP, associated with the reaffirmation visit scheduled for 2015. The diligent work of chairs and faculty to engage in systematic and meaningful assessment of program-level student learning was recognized in the

SACS reviewers' acceptance of the report on the assessment of student learning (Standard 3.3.1), included in the Fifth Year Interim Report.

APAC Peer Review Pilot Project

This summer five departments participated in a pilot project for peer review of departmental assessment activities. The departments of History, Communication Arts, Environmental Science, Philosophy, and Accounting & Finance shared their annual assessment reports and provided one another with collegial feedback on the identification of learning outcomes, use of meaningful direct measures, evidence of the collection and use of assessment for continuous improvement, and commitment to ongoing, systematic assessment. Participants shared rubrics and other best practices that will improved future assessment work.

Calendar of Events for Fall Term 2011

Faculty Fridays

Meet for collegiality and lunch followed by a program on topics related to teaching and faculty career issues.

Faculty Friday workshops begin with lunch and conversation. The program generally begins about 20 minutes later.

September 16, 2011

Newly Tenured? Time to Plan a Sabbatical Proposal!

**Nautilus Chamber
University Commons
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Members of the Growth and Development Committee will facilitate a discussion about planning for a sabbatical or other professional development leave and preparing a compelling application. Faculty and staff who are interested in applying for sabbaticals or other professional leave are encouraged to attend.

September 30, 2011

Teaching in Honors

**Yeager Library
BLDG 50 (Room 221)
noon – 2:00 PM**

Interested in teaching in the Honors Program? Greg Tomso, Associate Director of Honors and Greg Lanier, Director of Honors will answer questions about engag-

ing students in an Honors course and teaching in the Honors Program.

October 21, 2011

Funding Your Research: External and Internal Grant Programs

**Nautilus Chamber
University Commons
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Representatives from the Office of Sponsored Research and the Scholarly & Creative Activities Committee will discuss opportunities to obtain external and internal funding for research and other scholarly work.

November 4, 2011

Mentoring Student Research

**Nautilus Chamber
University Commons
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Pamela Vaughan, Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research will facilitate a panel discussion on how to mentor undergraduate students in disciplinary research. Panelists will include faculty members from a variety of disciplines with extensive experience working with undergraduate students on research.

Creating and Using a Rubric

A good rubric will make grading more efficient and consistent. Faculty can also use rubric data for program-level assessment of student learning outcomes. Attendees in this hands-on workshop will learn how to create a rubric to evaluate student work for a course assignment. We will discuss how to identify rubric elements and write descriptions for

different levels of work quality. Bring a description of a course assignment or grading key and leave with a draft of a rubric.

Workshop offered twice:

October 12, 2011

**Nautilus Chamber (Room 255), University Commons
2:30 PM–4:00 PM**

October 25, 2010

**Nautilus Chamber (Room 255), University Commons
2:30 PM–4:00 PM**

Teaching Partners Organizational Meeting

Teaching Partners promotes the exchange of effective and innovative teaching strategies.

Identify a Teaching Partner and learn about mutual mentoring and peer classroom observation. This session will include a workshop on how to plan and conduct a peer classroom observation. Attendees will participate in a simulated classroom observation and practice providing tactful and helpful formative feedback.

September 22, 2011

**Nautilus Chamber
University Commons
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM**

Submit an Application for Teaching Partners:

uwf.edu/cutla/teaching_partners.cfm

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