Winter 12-1-1995

Volume 09, Number 01

Richard F. Welch Editor
Kennesaw State University

Reac⚱ing

THROUGH TEACHING

Vassilis Economopoulos--KSC Teacher of the Year

From Greece, with Love

Why did you come to KSC?

It was quite a happy accident, my coming to Kennesaw. My wife had just finished a degree from Georgia State University in math education, specializing in gifted education. She thought there would be more opportunity for her in Atlanta, and there happened to be an opening for me here in the School of Social Science.

When I came here in 1979, the only bachelor's degree being offered was political science. There was no department of psychology or history, and only about 35 faculty in the social science division. Dr. Beggs asked me to head the curriculum committee for the division and to develop the programs in the social science division.

Why did you enter the teaching profession?

I come from a family of teachers. My father, both my sisters, and three uncles were teachers. I never saw myself in anything else.

Vassilis Economopoulos, professor of sociology and recipient of the Teacher of the Year Award, says coming to Kennesaw was a "happy accident." Vassilis came from Greece in 1963 to Florida State University as a Fulbright scholar.

He had received a bachelor's degree in political science and law from Pantios in Athens, Greece, and was working in an import-export company. A professor at his school encouraged Vassilis to apply for the Fulbright.

After receiving his masters at Florida State and teaching a few years at Georgia Southern, he came to Emory University for his Ph.D. After completing his studies, he taught at Georgia College in Millegeville until 1979 when he took a position at Kennesaw. After several years in public schools and the private sector, his wife, Marjorie, has joined Vassilis at Kennesaw, teaching in middle grades mathematics.

In a recent interview, Vassilis talked of his love affair with teaching.

It is really exciting, almost like a calling. You hear preachers talking about callings; that's how I feel about teaching. It's difficult to explain. It is exciting to be with young people, to present ideas, to receive feedback. My teaching is two-way communication, it's not a monologue.

I was talking with one of my former students who came to a Georgia Sociological Association meeting, and she is getting her Ph.D. within a matter of a few months. I was just thrilled to see somebody go through this process. You don't get those kinds of thrills in other kinds of jobs. Teaching's not a job, it's more than that. You don't go into teaching just as a job or to make money. Everybody knows that. It's the excitement of contributing to the development of young people, and that is something other occupations very seldom offer.

Why did you enter sociology?

I did not plan to be a sociologist when I was in undergraduate school. I thought I would be in political science or law since I already had two years of law school. I switched to sociology when I met a particular professor in Greece. Sociology is such a huge area with

Vassilis Econompoulos

a variety of subdivisions. My areas are family and demographics.

I try to keep most of my lectures tied to some kind of reality. There is no way to avoid sociology. We are surrounded by groups and surrounded by forces that directly or indirectly influence our behavior.

For example, last year in demography, students asked, "Who wants to know how many babies are born, how many people die, how many people moved to California?" I had the students check the infant mortality rate. It has been pretty high in the United States, but it has been doing down quite dramatically in the last few years.

The figures the students found showed a remarkable decline from 33,000 infants who died in their first year to 31,000. And the students said, "So what? What does that mean?" I stood up there in a class of about 35 students and told them that what it really means was that 2,000 small people had the opportunity to blow out one candle on a birthday cake. There was a deafening silence. It never occurred to them that we were talking about real people who had died, and that really shook them up.

How do you find the students at KSC?

When I came here, the school had a disproportionately large number of students who were on the junior college level. The enrollment was mostly freshmen and sophomores. Many students would come here, take the basic courses, then drop out. We had a difficult time keeping people.

The school took on a little bit different coloration the past few years as programs developed and particularly with the enrollment increase. It was no longer a junior college; it transformed into a serious four-year college.

We now have more juniors and seniors, and usually juniors and seniors are more serious and approach college a little bit differently compared to the freshmen and sophomores. Another major change I have seen is that the age of the students has gone up. That indicates a degree of maturity that you often don't find among the freshmen and sophomores. They are worried about their careers and what will happen to them after they graduate.

How would you describe your teaching style?

I don't use much technological innovation. In fact, seldom do I use an overhead projector. I prefer to do my own tables on the blackboard, even when I try to show them demographic trends. I would rather take the five minutes to do the table myself, so the students will feel that this is really a school, not like an IBM seminar. All the charts and everything kind of reminds me of Ross Perot; I'd rather do it myself.

My teaching style is very traditional. I start the beginning of the quarter with lectures and then, as time passes, I encourage discussion. Students need to participate.

They can ask all kinds of questions, and when I don't know the answer, I throw it open to the class. I believe students are challenged when they are asked to raise questions and answer each other's questions.

I try to engage the students in the discussion and at the same time provide them with the best information available and the best explanations. Sociology deals with a lot of facts and statistics, but the question is, "What does all this mean?" So that's what I spend my time on, explaining what it all means.

What I found was that students are really hungry for a human being with blood and flesh to sit there and explain some of those things, rather than having some mechanical thing projecting on the wall. I think we need more teachers teaching by themselves to the students rather than using all kinds of devices. I think we over depend on devices. I hope we don't move towards technology forgetting that teaching is much more than just passing along information. If that was the case, I'd put my lectures on a tape, give the tape to the students and come once a month to discuss. But I don't see that as learning.

Learning involves more than looking at a tape. It involves interaction, and students who ask questions—even if they think they are dumb to ask the questions, and they find out that half of the class had the same question. Students often learn more from other students

I Crossed the Road and I was Hit by a Truck:

A Sociologist Does Faculty Development

Lana Wachniak
Director, CETL

I was recently contacted by a conference organizer and asked to participate in a panel session titled "Why the Sociologist Crossed the Road." I reflected on the focus of the topic and came up with a presentation that reflects a bit of what the past year has been like.

When I became the director of CETL, I had little time to plan and reflect on development opportunities before I could implement them. I quickly immersed myself in the extant literature on what faculty members indicate they want in terms of instructional improvement and faculty development. At the same time, I asked colleagues and students what they saw as important topics for workshops and sessions. During my first two quarters, topnotch presenters led outstanding workshops. Few people came.

As a sociologist, I asked myself why participation in CETL workshops was limited since I had done my homework and planned sessions when some people could attend them. I had not considered two very important factors: Alternate learning styles and the campus culture.

As faculty members, we constantly hear the phrase "alternate learning styles" as it relates to our students. Since the campus has a large age distribution of students, we encounter individuals who have been socialized to learn through differing pedagogies. Faculty members, too, reflect a community of diverse learners.

Our faculty is made up of Generation X'ers, Baby Boomers and Pre-Boomers. The preferred method of learning often differs by cohort. Preferences range from viewing alternative technologies, such as videos and interactive methodologies, to participating in the expository approach. Within each group, some individuals prefer the hands-on approach provided in small settings, others prefer the anonymity of a large group, and still others prefer a tutorial approach to

> *What are the "drivers," or external factors affecting our campus? What are the internal variables that impact the campus culture?*

learning.

Once I considered these factors, I then had to think about the topics CETL was presenting to colleagues.

Several factors are axiomatic: directives from the central office about post-tenure review, litigiousness, technology infusion that can lead to cultural lag, flat enrollment leading to larger classes, and declining morale for many colleagues. A less visible factor is a loss of a sense of community in the face of numerous changes. Faculty development and instructional improvement programs such as CETL have to be adaptable to meet the needs of faculty in a changing culture.

CETL has attempted to meet the needs of many faculty members by taking into consideration the factors noted above. We offer large, technology based teleconferences open to 200 people and peer consultants who will tutor you individually as you learn how to meander through the Internet. You can learn about Power Point and Page Maker, but also attend a presentation on Teaching Critical Thinking Abilities. A faculty member can contact us to find out who on campus has a similar interest in a substantive area and would like to share his or her knowledge. Faculty members can attend the Conference on College and University Teaching in April and learn how teachers across the system are dealing with large class sizes.

A sense of community is also reinforced through faculty development programs. Leadership Kennesaw State, which has been in existence for 11 years, has a participant who has been a KSC faculty member for thirty years. This Pre-Boomer is sharing his knowledge with several Generation X'ers in the group.

TeacherTalk, which is a luncheon meeting, allows faculty members to meet and share their teaching concerns. New Faculty Orientation extends through the year as freshman faculty members meet quarterly to discuss their challenges and opportunities and to learn more about the campus culture.

Zen and the Art of Faculty Development Grants

Willoughby Jarrell, Political Science

In the mid-80s, I was catching up on some vintage 60s literature when I came across the following passage from Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance:

"The school was what could euphemistically be called a teaching college.

At a teaching college, you teach and you teach with no time for research, no time for contemplation, no time for participation in outside affairs. Just teach and teach and teach until your mind grows dull and your creativity vanishes and you become an automaton saying the same thing over and over to endless waves of innocent students who cannot understand why you are so dull, lose respect and fan this disrespect out into the community. The reason you teach and you teach and you teach is that this is a very clever way of running a college on the cheap while giving false appearances of genuine education."

I sent a copy of this to President Siegel.

Robert Pirsig's statement summed up, in part, what I had been experiencing as a junior college faculty member laboring earnestly to make a successful transition to functioning as a senior college faculty person.

I wanted to do more

Pirsig's statement struck me because I had reached one of those junctures for change when I realized that I wanted to do more than apply a new perspective to the same old course content; the "same old" was wearing thin and needed refurbishing.

Betty Siegel's arrival to lead our

> *On one weekend trip to Moose country, I found the Margaret Chase Smith Library in Skowhegan, Maine. I had not heard much about her since the 1950s and presumed that she had passed away.*

institution had revved up our energy level and activity. .

Within a few years, President Siegel made faculty development grants available. Faculty could now apply for and receive reassigned time for research and reading through our own in-house development grant program.

My initial connection to development grants was to write letters of support for departmental faculty who applied for them. As

a department chair, I also taught courses—lower and upper division—but teaching was not a major portion of my work load.

The courses I did teach, especially the upper-level political thought courses, were important to me to retain and teach well. I had used an eight-week NEH seminar in Anglo-American political thought at Johns Hopkins University to enrich the basic content for my courses and write a publication.

I gained more substance from which to operate as a teacher-scholar. More importantly, those hours spent pouring over material in libraries nurtured my inner energy through introspection. In 1993, I piggybacked on a friend's NEH seminar at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesly College. For six weeks, I read feminist theory and researched sixteenth century women for my American political thought class.

On one weekend trip to Moose country, I found the Margaret Chase Smith Library in Skowhegan, Maine. I had not heard much about her since the 1950s and presumed that she had passed away.

To my great surprise, Margaret Chase Smith was alive, well and gave me an interview. In contrast to her colleague, Eleanor Roosevelt, Sen. Smith had not been enthusiastically mined by research scholars and in fact had barely been written about.

Dealing With Hearing-Impaired Students

Carol Pope, Coordinator of Disabled Student Support Services

Recent advances in technology provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate fully in the academic process. For students with hearing impairments, communication has been a significant barrier to academic success. As a teacher, you can help students with hearing impairments by understanding their specific needs and the aids that can be used to help.

Lip Reading

Some hearing-impaired students rely on lip reading. Successful lip reading is enhanced by proximity to the speaker, good lighting, and clarity of oral presentation. Face the student and speak clearly, but not in an exaggerated manner.

Group discussions can be especially problematic. Try having other students raise their hands before speaking so the hearing-impaired student can locate and focus on the speaker.

Sign Language

Some hearing-impaired students can communicate in class through sign language with an interpreter in class. The interpreter should be situated between the speaker and the student so that the student can see the speaker and the interpreter at the same time.

Try to avoid distracting backgrounds and make sure that the lighting is good. The interpreter needs to have a 10-minute break every hour.

In interpersonal communication, you should speak directly to the student without addressing the interpreter directly. There is a natural delay between your oral communication and the signed translation, so be patient. If you would like to learn some basic signs, Continuing Education offers courses in sign language on videotapes which may be checked out on a temporary basis.

Assistive Listening Devices

Students with some residual hearing may choose to use an ALD in the classroom. The ALD amplifies the instructor's voice and reduces extraneous noises. The students may ask you to wear a lapel microphone and transmitter which transmits directly to the students' earphone through a wireless FM system.

Closed/Real Time Captioning

Teachers should try to use videos and films that are encoded with closed captioning. Plan ahead and have a closed caption decoder available to make the captioning appear on the screen. Older videos can be captioned, but the process requires some time for completion. The newest technology is real-time captioning, which employs court-recorder equipment and trained recorders to type data.

TDD

The TDD makes telecommunications accessible to individuals with speech or hearing impairments. Typed messages are sent between TDDs over telephone lines. Teachers who need a TDD may borrow one for the quarter from the Disabled Student Support Services office.

Special Student
A KSC CASE STUDY

Merle King, Computer Science

In computer science, we are still looking for the best ways to present material and test the students. In a programming course, students must learn a new language with a syntax unlike English. Students have to take notes, read a blackboard, watch the instructor interact with a computer on an overhead, type to and observe their own computer screen, and think—all at the same time. For hearing-impaired students, this process can be a challenge, even with the assistance of an interpreter.

I have had several hearing-impaired students in programming classes. Accommodating these students is relatively easy with a little advanced planning. Recruit two good note takers. Don't ask for volunteers. Select students on their note-taking ability, not their willingness to help. The hearing-impaired student cannot take notes and watch an interpreter at the same time, so copies of good notes are absolutely essential. The interpreter can be much more effective if you provide a copy of the textbook and a glossary of terms in advance. Although the interpreter is not required to understand the course content, technical terms are ambiguous in sign language. Having the terms ahead of time will also allow the interpreter and student to develop signs for concepts without having to hand-spell the entire word every time it is used. Don't hesitate to call on hearing-impaired students to answer questions in class.

Make an effort to meet with the hearing-impaired student regularly outside of class to answer any questions, go over the notes and clarify any confusing material, and make sure that the student understands any outside assignments. A little time invested in communication early may avoid later problems and lead to a successful student outcome.

Assessing the Psychology Degree Program

Valerie Lawrence, Psychology

(Excerpts from a presentation by Mary Beth Bickes, KSC Psychology Student, presented to the Psychology Faculty and the Dean of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Full text available from Dr. Lawrence.)

The Psychology faculty at KSC developed a formal assessment plan in 1993 in an effort to keep the major current and of high quality, and in response to an initiative from the University System of Georgia's Regents Office. In developing a formal plan, the Psychology faculty formulated specific student learning outcomes and expected results and two senior exit surveys and two alumni surveys. The content of the surveys was based on the learning outcomes and expected results of the program, and the surveys were designed to be specific to our program.

The first senior exit survey was administered in 1994, and the second was administered in 1995. Seniors were asked to rate their present level of knowledge and skills in areas of psychology. Specifically, seniors provided opinions regarding level of knowledge of experimental, applied, and ethical areas of psychology. Seniors rated level of skill in areas such as written and oral communication, and critical thinking. Seniors gave their opinions regarding quality of teaching by the faculty, advisement, plans for the future, opportunities for involvement in research and applied experiences, the strengths and weaknesses of the psychology program, and specific courses within the program. Finally, demographic data were collected.

The first alumni survey was administered in 1992, and the second alumni survey was administered in 1995. The alumni surveys were based on the same scale and assessed the same knowledge, skills, opinions, and demographic information as the senior exit surveys.

Survey Results

The survey data revealed that the majority of seniors for both surveys (62%, 83% respectively) rated present level of knowledge and awareness of cultural and individual diversity as good or excellent. Good or excellent ratings were also given by most seniors for both surveys when asked to rate level of critical thinking (62%, 92%), written (62%, 96%), and oral communication (62%, 76%) skills. Both seniors and alumni evaluated level of knowledge in experimental, applied and ethical areas of psychology positively with over 50% of seniors and alumni rating their level of knowledge as good or excellent in all areas. Sixty-two percent of alumni rated knowledge in all areas of psychology (experimental, applied, and ethical) as useful in their present employment, and at least 80% of alumni rated knowledge of experimental and applied areas as very useful or invaluable in their graduate program.

Seniors and Alums Very Positive

Seniors and alumni were very positive when evaluating the quality of teaching, with a sizeable majority of seniors (92%) and alumni (72%) rating the quality of teaching as good or excellent. In addition, over 80% of seniors and alumni answered "yes" to the question "would you major in psychology again?". While a majority of 1994 seniors rated opportunities for involvement in research (75%) and applied experiences (63%) as fair, many 1995 seniors rated these opportunities as average (research- 74%, applied- 74%). Similarly, concern was expressed about the availability of faculty to address questions regarding career options by 1994 seniors with 62% of respondents rating availability as fair to average. On the other hand, 52% of 1995 seniors and 68% of alumni surveyed in 1995 rated faculty availability as good to excellent.

When students were asked to rate how much they learned from specific courses in the psychology program, at least 92% of seniors gave the research sequence (quantitative psychology, research methods, and experimental psychology), developmental psychology, theories of personality, and abnormal psychology a good or excellent rating. Similarly, at least 93% of alumni evaluated the research sequence as useful in their job or graduate school. Overall, alumni gave 24 of the 28 psychology classes in the curriculum good or excellent ratings; courses rated less favorably were applied psychology, cross-cultural psychology, human sexuality, and history of psychology. The courses that received the highest ratings by alumni were those that form the basics of psychology.

Students and alumni were in agreement about the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Strengths mentioned most often by both groups were: the quality

6

Setting Up and Using a World Wide Web Server

Gary C. Lewis, Physics

In April 1995 I set up a World Wide Web (WWW) server in the School of Science and Mathematics. Since then I have worked with several faculty members and students to test and configure the system and to develop some demonstration projects using the Web.

The Web has tremendous potential for use in education and many institutions already offer a wide range of information. However, the possibility exists for providing course material accessible to students, offering interactive instructional material, and making the Web an integral part of courses.

Access/Security Issues

Providing materials on a public server raises a number of issues of access and security. A Web server is a potential target for break-ins. This means that the system should run with the latest security programs and patches, and that regular attention is needed for system administration and log files. It is also quite possible that some popular pages on the server may overload the network, requiring some restriction of access or removal of the page on a temporary or permanent basis.

Another difficulty lies with information that should be restricted only to students and faculty, or only to faculty. It is possible to restrict access to only computers on campus or individual computers for selected pages on the server. But this does not allow students or faculty to access it from home accounts. It is also possible to set up account and password access for selected areas of the server. This, however, becomes administratively difficult if one wishes to provide access to all of the students in a class.

Information can also be placed in a location that has no links from other pages. Students have the address, but anyone else would have to guess the address. Finally, it is possible to set up a server that only allows access from computers in a single lab. This can be useful for development purposes or for teaching a class in Web use.

Interactivity

There is a range of possibilities for using the Web for interactive instruction. The basic HTML system is oriented around static information, so that interaction is limited to some type of "clickable path" through the information. This can allow a multiple choice question with a different response for each student answer (a rather tedious job in constructing HTML, by the way).

HTML can call up other programs either on the local (browser) machine or on the server, and allow the user to enter text information on a form. This opens the possibility for very interactive systems. Until recently much of this capability has been available primarily on a "roll-your-own" basis, but now several companies are working on very powerful systems for providing interaction, like the Sun "Java" system, which has been adopted by several software companies.

> The home page for the School of Science and Mathematics may be found at: http://science.kennesaw.edu. See the "Getting Started on the Web" pointer on the home page for the School of Science and Mathematics.

In Fall Quarter 1995 we produced a video clip of Dean Davis opening the new science building, which included a morph of the old building into the new. This was quite an educational experience for the people involved. The two-minute video production required several days of work.

In addition to this clip, we are placing several other pieces of video on the server, including some student productions. These video clips are digitized with a Macintosh-based video editing system. The size, quality, and length of these are limited because of transmission speed over the Internet and the capabilities of the machines used for the Web browsers. For example, a clip shown on one-quarter of a computer screen for less than two minutes with moderately good quality can take up over 30 megabytes of highly compressed space. We can cut this down to 2-3 megabytes by using a smaller window and lower quality.

Classroom Applications

At an NSF workshop in 1995, I helped produce two pieces of instructional material that I use as a basis for some interactive projects that I am placing on the server. These use very short video clips and local computer programs (which may have to

Developing a Departmental Course Evaluation Using Faculty and Student Input

Goktug Morcol, Wayne Van Horne, Judith Slater, Lana Wachniak
Department of Public Administration and Human Services

The course evaluation process is essentially a complex process of communication between students and faculty. It must be understood in a broader context that includes the cognitive and emotional assumptions that both faculty and students have about the purpose of evaluations and the meanings of specific questions.

It would be misleading to believe that any one course evaluation is applicable to all courses, departments, or schools or that it can yield purely "objective measures" of teaching effectiveness. In light of this, our departmental evaluation committee set out to get the faculty and students involved in the development of a course evaluation form that would be mutually understood by both.

Delphi surveys

We conducted four iterative Delphi surveys among the faculty in the department between July 1994 and June 1995 to determine if faculty members in the department thought that course evaluations were reliable and valid. The faculty members had favorable opinions about course evaluations in general, but they also had some major reservations.

Extraneous variables, such as the time of day the class is offered, were believed to affect ratings. Students receiving poor grades were seen as being correlated with lower faculty ratings.

Finally, it was felt that students are not able to make sound judg-

ments about classes until they have been away from school for several years and realized the usefulness of the courses.

We then compiled a list of questions, distilled from previous evaluations and research, for a new evaluation form. We provided faculty with a list of these questions and asked them to vote and comment on them. After sharing the results, we discussed them at the next faculty meeting.

In the subsequent Delphi round, we asked them to vote again on the items, taking into consideration the written and oral comments made by all faculty members about the questions. This allowed all of the faculty to participate, and to cull and modify questions so that they were satisfied with the instrument. After the fourth round of responses, the trends in faculty preference of questions became clear.

Students' Input

The next step was to get students' input about the old evaluation questions before drafting the new form. We conducted interviews with three groups of undergraduate students majoring in Public and Social Services and one group of Master's students in the Public Administration program in May 1995.

The most important overall finding was that most students did not understand the purpose of evaluations. Some were cynical about the whole process and felt that it was a waste of time because the

evaluations didn't seem to have any consequences for them, especially since they had already completed the course. Some said that they thought professors didn't bother to read evaluations. As a result of this perception, they said they didn't answer the open-ended questions, which faculty members tend to consider the most valuable part of the evaluation.

Students often saw questions as either more ambiguous or more specific than the faculty intended them to be, and this highlighted the need to clearly word the questions.

This was critical because it meant the evaluation results lacked validity. The questions were meant to measure the effectiveness of courses for every student. But since different students interpreted them differently, the analyses of the questions was like comparing apples to oranges (and sometimes mangos).

Make It Clear

The lack of understanding of the evaluation process by students, and the different meanings they attributed to questions, demonstrated that our communication about evaluations with students was unclear and ineffective.

We realized that to make the evaluation process relevant and worthwhile to students we had to make it as clear to them as possible. To increase the validity of the evaluation, faculty members must clearly explain to students the pur-

Time and Teaching

by Michael Firment
Psychology

To be educated is to be knowledgeable, and to be knowledgeable requires the ability to recall information and skills. How long does a college education last? How long do students retain their knowledge?

If you have ever asked juniors or seniors to talk about a subject that was included in a freshman class, you may have been disappointed by their lack of ability to do so.

Such encounters can lead to apprehension concerning the value of our teaching efforts. Fortunately, it is possible to make long term retention of course contents more likely, but to do so may require changes in the structure and contents of our courses.

Long Term Retention

Harry Bahrick at Ohio Wesleyan University conducted a large number of studies dealing with the factors that lead to long term retention of knowledge. He and his co-workers found that students who had five semesters of Spanish could recall 60 percent of their vocabulary, even 25 years after a person's last Spanish course.

With only one semester of Spanish, almost no vocabulary could be recalled after only three years. In another study, when mathematics courses were taken over a period of several years, performance on basic algebra tests did not decline over periods as long as 50 years.

When only one year of high school algebra had been taken, performance on those skills rapidly decreased to chance levels. Bahrick believes that memory longevity is caused by the review and use of knowledge over spaced intervals, a procedure that is much more efficient than massed practice. This phenomenon, the spacing or distributed practice effect, was first studied by Ebbinghaus at the end of the nineteenth century. The spacing effect has since been demonstrated in hundreds of investigations.

To Increase Retention

Bahrick has suggested several ways to use this effect to increase retention of college material. As teachers, we cannot often influence periods of this length. Fortunately, there are several methods that can be accomplished in less time. To insure that the students read the material before class, written assignments (possibly questions and comments) or quizzes can be given.

To make certain that the material is looked at again, cumulative quizzes and tests, detailed reviews of quizzes and tests, assignments using information from earlier portions of the course, and lecture segments concerning the relationship between current material and previous material could be used.

The easiest way to utilize the spacing effect is to give comprehensive tests. However, students, may resist them.

A thorough explanation of the purpose of this testing method may minimize this resistance. Test and quiz reviews are an excellent occasion for learning, and, if they

Developing A Course Evaluation

pose of an evaluation and how it will be used. The evaluation form also should include a written introductory statement highlighting the purpose of the evaluation.

Other results in our focus groups indicate that the course evaluation process will always be somewhat distorted and that those distortions cannot be remedied by improvements in the instrument used. Students told us that they use course evaluations to penalize professors when they receive poor grades in their course. They also said their ratings reflect not the instructor's effectiveness, but their interest in the course topic (which may be low in some required courses, and high in some electives) and their own personal backgrounds and preparation.

After compiling the results from the student focus groups and presenting them to the faculty, we drafted a new course evaluation form. The faculty approved it to be used beginning Fall 1995.

This latest version of our department's course evaluation form is an improvement over the previous one, but it probably is not the final version. We have learned in this process that we should never assume that we have a perfectly "objective" evaluation procedure and that there is always room for improvement.

Cobb Educational Consortium Leadership Academy: A Case Study of Collaboration

Dr. Carol Wilkerson, Foreign Languages

The same week that I was hired as a new faculty member in foreign language I was told that I would volunteer to serve as one of Kennesaw State College's representatives to the Cobb Educational Consortium. I was excited that I would have opportunities to network with educators at Kennesaw's feeder schools. The excitement grew when I was told that this network included what I perceived as competitor schools, the technical schools in Cobb county. However, when I found out that the entire Consortium would retreat for two days to Amicalola Falls, I feared I would spend 48 hours of my life experiencing those bonding activities that I fear and dread—Tell us what animal you would like to be; act out your favorite nursery rhyme from when you were a child. I brought along a thick book, as did my roommate.

My fears quickly dissipated. Our leaders treated us like professionals, waiting to begin the opening session when they realized several folks were caught in traffic waiting for asphalt to dry along the only entrance road. The facilitators were serious, but not doleful. Two of the CEOs spent a significant amount of time with the new members, rather than simply telling us about the Consortium. They made it clear from the opening session that they had placed their personal staff at our disposal; and they underscored their sincerity by including two administrative assistants in our small groups.

Under the leadership of the new Chancellor of the Board of Regents, we Georgia educators are being directed to cooperate with colleagues whom we previously may have seen to be competitors. In the five years I have taught in this state, four in a community college and one in a high school, collaboration and cooperation have not been popular ideas. Loyalty has carried with it an unspoken obligation to guard and defend the local institution, "turf wars," if you will. This past weekend was a refreshing, serendipitous opportunity to set aside titles, degrees, and territorialism in order to focus on teaching, the real reason we all went into this profession.

The participants chose long-term projects that would serve faculty and students across academic institutions, yet would allow for some measurable accomplishment within the academic year The four topics chosen will link an elementary classroom with faculty at various institutions over the internet, attempt to establish parity of technical resources among the institutions, compile available resources for at-risk students at all institutions, and study the use of standardized tests.

Although the Consortium is only four years old, it has already received national attention. Once again, Cobb is on the cutting edge. I feel fortunate to have been volunteered for this experiment in cooperative, collaborative, seamless education.

Web Site for Federal Education Grants

Cynthia Tehrani, Sponsored Programs

The U.S. Department of Education has a new World Wide Web site and gopher site called "What Should I Know About ED Grants."

The first part of the site gives a "cradle-to-grave" overview of the complete discretionary grant life cycle. It addresses such topics as application packages, the Department's application review process, grant funding and administering discretionary grants, reporting to the Department and grant closeout and audit. The second part is a glossary with the 60 most common words and phrases of grant-writing practice as they are used in the Department. The last part points the reader to other sources of federal and non-federal information that will help an applicant or recipient in applying for or administering a grant award from the department.

Web Site Address: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/KnowAbtGrants
Gopher: gopher.ed.gov U.S. Dept of Education Programs-Gen Info Grant-Related Info - Pub. and Notices What Should I Know About ED Grants

Time and Teaching

are given in the class following the test, provide an opportunity for distributed practice. However, just giving the correct answer may not successfully supply the student with the information that he or she needs for each topic covered in the test. Test reviews can be made uncomfortable by disputes over the correctness of answers. Preparing the lectures as the questions are being written or selected provides well-rehearsed answers for such disputes and may also result in better questions.

When assignments are due before class discussion of a topic and afterwards, students will en- counter material more than they might otherwise.

I have incorporated most of these techniques in my classes. They now include cumulative tests and questions and comments due prior to class discussions. Some courses include assignments that are designed to link previous and current chapters.

As I modify lecture notes, I try to include information concerning the relationships of present to past material. My only formal measure of the success of these techniques was finding that material repeated several times during the course are remembered better in tests than other material.

Informally, grades on cumulative finals are somewhat lower than non-cumulative finals, but comprehension of central ideas seems to be better.

Conclusions

I have received several favorable written comments on student evaluations concerning these techniques and no unfavorable comments (no doubt partially due to the pleasant feeling-tone that   William James said accompanied the perception of something familiar).

I have also found that the process of selecting the material to be reviewed to be useful. It forces me to critically examine the relationships between pieces of information in the courses and allows me to better explain those relationships.

Zen and the Art of Faculty Development Grants

An Academic Goldmine

I had stumbled on an academic opportunity that I had to pursue. Though Maine was at the other end of the Appalachian Trail, that trek was more than I could manage with regularity, so I began applying for grants.

My rejected NEH research and travel grant was revised for a KSC faculty development grant. CETL came through with funding. Days would be spent at the Margaret Chase Smith Library where all of her personal and professional documents were carefully catalogued and readily available. If I had a question about something she had done, I could simply ask her about it.

Two trips to the MCS Library materialized in March and late May of 1995. I was frugal. Living is cheap in Skowhegan, and the development grant covered virtually all my expenses. It was pure coincidence and an eerie feeling to be driving into Skowhegan on Memorial Day just as the news was breaking that Margaret Chase Smith had died.

She had steadfastly supported traditional military preparedness throughout her congressional career as well as equal treatment for women in the military. I found it fitting that she would die on Memorial Day. The media were everywhere, but not to the point of interfering with my research. Her memorial service would be held in June and her ashes stored in the Library so that, in the words of one of the staff at the Library, "she could keep an eye on us."

Sometimes as an academic, I am prone to fantasy fueled by the historical and political material I have encountered in my travels. Each time I begin the course on Ancient and Medieval Political Thought, I imagine ancient Greek thinkers sitting by the sea or perched atop hills of olive groves probing and contemplating the nature of human condition.

The capacity to discover, create, re-evaluate, and regenerate is activated. It is not just for the groves of academe; it is for the living. From a KSC development grant directed toward a path-breaking congresswoman from another era, I found focus and renewal.

Setting Up and Using a World Wide Web Server

be downloaded to the browser computer) to provide a high level of interaction. An interesting feature of one of the projects allows students to measure moving objects on their own computer using video clips. By using a local program, and calibrating a scale on the screen using a known length in the video, the students can perform a laboratory exercise with moving objects.

One of our productions involves the measurement of drag forces using a video of the dropping of different numbers of coffee fil-ters . Each drop only requires a few dozen video frames, greatly reducing the information transfer requirements.

Another project involves one of the sections of Science 116, developed under an NSF grant, for Winter Quarter 1996. This quarter, students are doing a time line for the geological history of the Earth and plate tectonics. They use the Web to access information from sources all over the world. Some of the students are working on HTML pages to present this information and on animations illustrating the processes. They are working on local machines (in some cases on their home machines) to develop this material. At the end of the quarter I expect to put some of the material on the Web. The possibility of working on something that may be made generally available so that it can be seen by family and friends is tremendously motivating for some of the students.

The use of the Web in education is very exciting. Students are very interested in it and are already using it as a research tool. In the future I believe that it will become even more significant as an educational tool and an integral part of our instruction.

An Experiment in Cross-Disciplinary Course Delivery Using Technology-supported Instructional Materials

Catherine Beise, CSIS

In Fall 1995, CSIS students who registered for Organizational Issues in Information Systems (IS375, a new course offering) were encouraged to register for Technical Writing (ENGL312), an elective for CSIS majors. These tandem courses attempted to study new approaches to instructional delivery via technology.

A major component of this experiment was to encourage the students to use the Internet, in both courses, as discussion and project design tools. Students were required to subscribe to a local listserv set up as an on-line discussion vehicle for these classes. The use of on-line discussion tools was one of the most exciting aspects of the class. It allowed students to actively interact anytime, anyplace. Students not only responded to questions posed by the instructor, they were also required to pose questions for other students. Everyone gets to read what everyone else has written, and everyone gets to respond to every message.

Advantages of On-Line Teaching

The advantage is that students can reflect on what's been said and more carefully compose their questions and responses. Electronic interactions such as this also can reduce the unintended effects of social differences such as race, gender, and shyness, increasing the focus on the ideas being discussed, participation, diversity of viewpoints, and what students learn because of the active nature of their involvement.

Another exciting feature is the ability to invite on-line guest discussants. I contacted the author of one of the students' readings, a prominent researcher in Information Systems. She subscribed to the list for a few days and participated in that particular module. Although she lives in California, she was able to participate via e-mail. This gave the class an opportunity to benefit from additional expert perspectives on the course materials.

Cautions

There are concerns with this type of instruction. Just as face-to-face discussions must be fa-

Experiment in Technology

continued from page 12 ——————

cilitated to prevent a few individuals from dominating, to keep students on track, and to prevent everyone from talking at once, so must on-line discussions. Domination on-line is less of a problem since everyone can "talk" at once without cutting others off.

The primary facilitation needed on-line is to set ground rules regarding appropriate on-line behavior (i.e., discourage flaming and personal attacks), and to monitor the on-line conversations. This is very difficult because of the volume of e-mail from students during each discussion. I often had to store a batch of comments and try to catch up with them later. The students are sometimes overwhelmed by the volume as well, and rarely do students respond to more than three or four comments. I had intended to give the students more feedback on the quality of their questions and responses, but simply was unable to keep up.

I set requirements for students' participation: posting a question meant a "C" on the particular assignment, posting a question and making one response meant a "B", and posting a question and making two or more responses meant an "A". This motivated students to get started, but most had no trouble meeting the minimum requirements for an "A". I also set guidelines for what was a "good" discussion question to pose, i.e., cannot be answered with a "Yes" or "No" or straight from the text. In the first session, I posed sample questions and did not grade them on responses. I also set time limits for each discussion, usually several days.

The biggest obstacle was the difficulty for students to access the campus network from off-campus due to its heavy use. I encouraged students to subscribe to a local Internet provider (for $10-$15 per month) to post and check e-mail without having to dial in to the campus network.

I used a listserv for this class because it was convenient and available. The same discussions can be done with e-mail alone, but to simulate the group interaction of the listserv, the instructor and every student must set up an e-mail distribution list that consists of all the students' e-mail addresses.

Recommendations.

The main requirement for the listserv as a discussion tool is familiarity with e-mail. One suggestion is for faculty to begin using e-mail as a way to communicate with students, for example, by exchanging assignments. Let the students know that the focus is on the content of their messages, rather than on the format.

I arranged the listserv through the University System of Georgia OIIT. Ideally, the listserv software program should be loaded and made available locally on a server at KSC, and should be administered by Academic Computing. Once it is set up, any faculty member who is familiar with e-mail should have no problem administering the list.

Distance learning opportunities made possible by a project like this are particularly helpful for non-traditional learners at a commuter campus such as KSC. When course materials are available from home or office, when discussions can be held on-line, and when assignments can be turned electronically from home or office, both the institution and the students have more flexibility in managing their time, scheduling courses, and assigning physical classroom and lab space.

The Multiage, Un-Graded Classroom
K. Victoria Mayer McLain
Early Childhood
Amy Heaston
Georgia Southern University

In today's schools, children are invariably grouped using the narrow criterion of age. However age does not reflect the developmental needs and abilities of learners. As a result, schools are looking at alternative methods of grouping children.

One alternative is multiage, nongraded classrooms. The potential disadvantage of increased teacher workload is minimized by the potential benefits for students.

*The need for retention or transition classes is reduced as children have the opportunity to stay for several school years with a teacher who is familiar with their strengths.

*Students may progress from one level to the next when they are ready and without penalty.

*The development of the whole child is emphasized. Learning opportunities must keep in mind the wide range of development in all these areas.

*A variety of teaching strategies (i.e. small groups, projects) are implemented to accommodate the different learning styles within the classroom.

Not only are academics enhanced in this type of grouping structure, but children also develop more positive attitudes toward school. If children are more positive about school, learning is enhanced. Is this not the goal of teaching?

Dogpaddling on the Internet —————

Brit Williams, CSIS Department

Activities on the Internet can be placed into one of three categories: recreation, research, and pedagogy. If you listen carefully when people describe their exploits on the Internet you will realize that the vast majority of the Internet activity is recreational, which includes on-line shopping.

Research, including personal development, is a distant second. Peagogy is rarely mentioned. When the Internet does manage to find its way into the classroom, it is usually to aid the student's research and not as a part of the instructor's pedagogy.

Most of us are able to remember back before we learned to swim. Today, you may experience similar emotions as you sit beside the sea of the Internet and listen to your friends and peers describe the thrill of surfing to and fro on the World Wide Web (WWW).

You did not learn to swim by jumping off the diving board, and if you want to integrate the Internet into your pedagogy, a WWW browser is probably not the best way to start. In this article, we will examine some elementary 'strokes' on the Internet that will get you started. Come on in. The water's fine and, hey, SURF'S UP!

INTERNET BUILDING BLOCKS

The three basic building blocks of the Internet are electronic mail, file transfer, and remote login. Electronic mail enables the rapid interchange of correspondence between members of the Internet. File transfer is used to exchange computer files between individuals on the Internet and remote login makes it possible for an Internet user to remotely access another Internet user's computer.

Electronic mail has all of the good features of regular mail without any of the bad features. Electronic mail is:

FAST - Delivery time is measured in seconds as opposed to days.

> ## Dogpaddling in the Classroom
>
> In my classes, I usually give two major exams and the final exam. I send the exam to the students via electronic mail and allow them to return their exams via electronic mail, FAX, or in person.
>
> I have also used this technique for final exams, which I post after the last class with instructions that the exam must be returned via electronic mail, FAX, or in person by the end of the final exam period.
>
> Homework is handled in a similar manner. I can give out the assignment and discuss it in class. The assignment is posted to electronic mail after class with instructions that the assignment can be returned via electronic mail, FAX, or in person.

INDEPENDENT OF DISTANCE - An electronic message can be sent to someone in Australia as quickly as one can be sent to someone in the next room.

INEXPENSIVE - Once you have paid the price of being on the Internet, there is no additional per-message incremental cost to send electronic mail anywhere in the world.

EASY TO MANAGE - Electronic messages can easily be answered, forwarded, discarded, saved, or filed.

Also, it is very easy to compose a list of Internet users with a common interest (i.e. a class roll) and send a message to the entire group at one time.

File transfer, also known as FTP for File Transfer Protocol, is a facility that allows an Internet user to retrieve files (i.e. a class syllabus or a homework assignment) that have been designated as publicly accessible. File transfer is time and place independent in that after the owner of the file has placed the file in a publicly accessible location, a person who wants the file can retrieve it at any time (twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week) from any world-wide location on the Internet.

Remote login allows an Internet user to login to any computer on the Internet from any other computer on the Internet. This assumes, of course, that you have an account on the distant computer. This feature makes it possible for you or your students to access the KSC computers from anywhere in the world. If you go to a conference in Amsterdam and the conference provides access to the Internet, then you can use remote login to access the KSC computers to check your electronic mail, correspond with your students, assign homework, etc. If your conference does not provide access to the Internet, a phone call to your department at a local college or university will almost always produce a connection.

Faculty Morale Survey Results
William Rooks, Marketing

Under the direction of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning , Leadership Kennesaw State initiated the Faculty Morale Survey project in the fall of 1994.

During the winter of 1995, the LKS membership and KSC administrators including deans and department chairs were surveyed to identify factors that influence faculty morale, both positively and negatively.

LKS members identified 55 positive and 61 negative factors. Seven KSC administrators responded, with 38 positive and 37 negative factors.

The combined 191 factors produced five categories (administration, colleagues, department chair, students, and other).

In the spring, all fulltime and part time faculty members were surveyed. Two hundred and three usable surveys were returned, a 39.8% response rate. Almost 64% of respondents indicated that their personal level of morale was very high, high or average (within schools, the percentages were: Nursing (82%), Business (77%), AHSS (60%), Science & Math (57%), and Education (56%).

Five areas impacting morale were studied. Three (Colleagues, Department Chair, and Students) were perceived positively.

The "Other" area was perceived slightly negative with KSC image being the strongest contributor. The area of "Administration" was seen as negative. The dominant factors were faculty salary and workload.

Assessing the Psychology Degree Program—

of the faculty (59% of respondents), the research sequence (57%), the preparation for graduate school (22%), and the variety of classes (21%). Weaknesses mentioned most often were: limited course offerings in applied areas (55%), little participation in directed research study experiences (55%), limited career options with an undergraduate degree (50%), variety of classes (31%), and advisement (21%).

The surveys revealed that seniors and alumni are quite satisfied with the quality of teaching in our department, with their choice of psychology as a major, and with their knowledge and skills; also, students perceive the program as strong. Consistent with the demographic trend in higher education reported by Dollar (1991), a majority of our respondents are non-traditional females. Our psychology majors are employed in a variety of jobs. Some examples are counselors or program coordinators for various social service agencies and customer relations specialists or sales representatives for various companies. Also, our majors are enrolled in a range of graduate and professional programs for which they feel well prepared. Some examples are master's degree programs in counseling psychology, master's degree programs in social work, and doctoral programs in psychology.

Based upon results of this assessment, our faculty may need to focus more attention on advisement regarding career options with an undergraduate degree. Our faculty may need to highlight non-clinical occupational opportunities, so students are able to make in-

formed decisions regarding career options with an undergraduate psychology degree.

Also, based on this assessment, our faculty needs to focus on providing more applied and research opportunities. The department is currently reviewing applied experiences in its program as part of the semester conversion process. The faculty in the department has in recent years begun focusing on involving students in greater numbers in research projects.

Our department has taken this developmental approach to assessment, and the four surveys reported represent our initial step toward a comprehensive evaluation of our major. Future plans include incorporation of a test of research methods of psychology and data from a capstone course into our assessment program. Our next evaluation will include data gathered from multiple measures, which should increase the validity of our assessment results.

Learning Outcomes and Expected Results of the Degree Programs in Psychology

The Psychology major will have:

1. An understanding of the scientific method as it is used to study behavior. Demonstrate an ability to apply scientific methods in the evaluation of existing research or the design of original research.

2. An understanding of non-empirical approaches (e.g., phenomenological, experiential) used to study behavior. Demonstrate an ability to apply non-empirical methods in understanding behavior.

3. Competence in scientific writing. Demonstrate the appropriate

Vassilis Econompoulos

than they do from the professor. But for this to happen, it is the professor's responsibility to bring up the issues. It's the teacher's responsibility to make the students teachers for other students.

What advice would you give a first-year teacher at KSC?

The first year of teaching is a hard one. I remember the first time I started teaching. It was 1967, and I went to the class with about 20 pages of notes. I finished them within about 20 minutes, and had another hour to go. The advice I have is just take it easy the first year and do your homework. Don't show up in the class without really preparing. Try, as much as you can, to raise the interest level of the students, so they can participate. You find out that students can actually lead you to a lot of what you want to express. In most cases, they will bring up the same questions that you have, and discuss the points you want to make.

Also have a keen ear to hear what they are asking about, what areas they are having difficultly understanding. Get involved in teaching and service because that's where you tie the academics with the practical.

———

Vassilis wrote in his narrative for the Teacher of the Year Award, "Over the years, I have been guided by the principle that the good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge. We do not live to learn. We learn to live the good life."

Psychology Learning Outcomes ——

use of APA style in written assignments.

4. Competence in skills needed to make oral presentations of theoretical and empirical work. Make oral presentations in a manner appropriate to that expected at professional meetings.

5. An understanding of statistical concepts and reasoning used in psychological research. Demonstrate an appropriate use and interpretation of descriptive and inferential statistics.

6. An understanding of the variability in human and/or animal behavior. Demonstrate an ability to identify and comprehend pertinent issues related to variability in behavior.

7. An understanding of individual and social perspectives on human behavior. Demonstrate an ability to identify and comprehend pertinent issues related to individual differences and social factors in analyzing and interpreting human behavior.

8. A knowledge of the scientific areas of study in psychology. Identify, describe, and comprehend the major issues and theoretical approaches related to scientific areas of study.

9. A knowledge of the applied areas of study in psychology. Identify, describe, and comprehend the major issues and theoretical approaches related to applied areas of study.

10. An understanding of the major ethical issues related to research and application in psychology. Identify, comprehend, and discuss the major elements of the Ethical Principles of Psychologists as published by the American Psychological Association.

Reaching
THROUGH TEACHING
Volume 9, Number 1 Fall-Winter 1996

Giving guidance and vision to CETL is the Faculty Development Committee:

A. G. Adebayo, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of History
Jo Allen Bradham, Ph.D.	Professor of English
Mary Bumgarner, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of Economics
Vassilis Economopoulos, Ph.D.	Professor of Sociology
Kathie Garbe, Ph.D.	Associate Professor HPER
Jackie Givens, M.P.A.	Coordinator of Sponsored Programs
Margaret Kosowski, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of Nursing
Patricia Reggio, Ph.D.	Professor of Chemistry
Tom Scott, Ph.D.	Professor of History
Barbara Swindell, M.F.A.	Associate Professor of Art
Lana Wachniak, Ph.D.	Director of CETL
Richard Welch, Ph.D.	Editor
Lynn Moss	Secretary