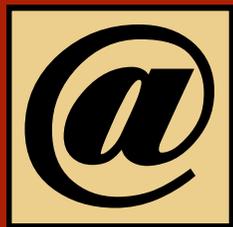


TEACHING



TTU

Fall/Winter 2013

The Newsletter of the
Teaching, Learning,
and Professional
Development Center

Office of the Provost

Division of Undergraduate Education & Student Affairs

A Letter from the Director

Something's always changing around here! Due to problems with Blackboard CE 8, Texas Tech University made a decision to move to Blackboard 9.1 for all fall courses. The TLPDC is heavily involved in supporting faculty members and instructors, and we would love to help you through this change. We are truly excited about all that this new version has to offer and appreciate the many new ways you'll find to engage with students through Blackboard 9.1

And speaking of change, our beloved colleague and administrative assistant, Tina Sansom, retired at the end of July. We will definitely miss Tina but we can't help but be excited for her as she has an opportunity to spend time with her busy, young grandsons and her family. There's a new face in her office and we'd love to introduce you to Kim Leigh. Kim is new to Lubbock and Texas Tech but she brings familiar southern charm and the same helpful spirit you've come to expect from the TLPDC. Please stop by and introduce yourself to Kim!

I love the changes that come with fall as we see the campus bustle again with students, hear the band practicing, and feel the weather cool. We're looking forward to another busy semester and hope to see you around the TLPDC!

~ Suzanne

Highlighted Fall Events

Why Teaching Matters: A Special Coffee
with President Nellis

Wednesday, October 2nd, 10:00 am–11:00 am,
Matador Room, SUB
RSVP required!

3 New Workshop Series:

*High Impact Practices, Teaching Large Classes, &
Readying Ourselves for the New Core Curriculum*
Please check the TLPDC schedule, www.tlpd.ttu.edu

Tenure Academy

Tuesday, November 19th, 1:15–5:00 pm

In this issue:

- Teaching tips from more 2013 Faculty Spotlight Honorees: Drs. Matt Baker, Dean Fontenot, and Mark Webb
- Blackboard and Instructional Design News
- Updates on the TEACH Program and the Groundwork Program
- Service Learning News
- Advising News
- A glimpse at Fall Events

TLPDC 2013 Faculty Spotlight

Teaching Tips from Dr. Matt Baker (*Agricultural Education and Communications*)



I have had the good fortune and high privilege of teaching in higher education for 23 years and each year has become more enjoyable. Teaching affords me the opportunity to integrate the applied research and engagement projects that I have participated in, with the powerful and fundamental concepts of the particular subject matter that I have the good fortune to teach.

Likely the most influential book that I have read on teaching and learning in higher education is Parker Palmer's *The Courage to Teach*. Palmer espoused the importance of teacher immediacy and rapport. As faculty, I believe that this concept gives us license to be our real selves in the classroom and I have found that students respond very favorably to the concept of faculty as real people and our subject matter as dynamic and growing. An adage in teaching and learning is "don't tell me how much you know, until you show me how much you care." I attempt to operationalize immediacy and rapport by getting to know students as people. One-on-one and group conversations (both before

and after class) creates a sense of mutuality and trust between teacher and student and fosters positive relationships among students. A little humor in the classroom, including the ability to laugh with students when an instructional activity does not come off exactly as planned, goes a long way as well. This in turn, invites students into the fabulous world of our subject matter that we so passionately enjoy ourselves.

In an attempt to make their Lubbock-based experience a special time in their life, my wife and I have invited students into our home for dinner on a regular basis. While we are busy preparing food, the "living room" or "back yard" time that the students spend together allows them to develop a deep sense of community. I have especially enjoyed quietly observing this phenomenon among our undergraduate students and international students. When classes grow large, I have found that most students are not bothered by a pot-luck approach.

This development of community seems to release a great deal of the natural tension that exists in more formalized classroom settings. I find that when this tension is released, it is easier for both me and the students to open up and make connections between course content and our collective experiences. For off-campus students, creating immediacy and rapport is more challenging. Online discussions are essential to developing relationships. I have also tried a "coffee house" approach, being available via Skype or on other videoconference platforms at regularly scheduled times, with only limited success. I have found our off-campus learners are really busy with careers and family commitments, and do not take time to participate in videoconference chats that are not required.

Depending on program design, short-term, intensive face-to-face experiences are powerful tools which promote the concept of teacher immediacy and rapport. This previous December, the last thing I really wanted to do was to travel to College Station to participate in an intensive face-to-face seminar with our joint doctoral students (especially being on campus when Johnny Football came marching home with his Heisman Trophy), however the bonding experience proved to be both powerful and effective.

I will close this musing by thanking all of the dedicated staff members at the TLPDC who have provided encouragement and much-needed technical support to me during my 13 years at Texas Tech. As an institution, they are our "collective consciousness" in this enterprise of teaching and learning. The TLPDC also serves as the conduit for bringing faculty together, which allows us to learn from one another. Through its dedicated leadership (including Rosslyn Smith, Ed Anderson, Debbie Laverie and Suzanne Tapp) its programs continue to inspire and challenge me in new ways, and for this I am thankful.

The Groundwork Program

In July, the TLPDC successfully piloted a new graduate student development mini-program called the Groundwork Program, designed for all graduate students, regardless of experience or official teaching appointment. 40 participants from 27 different disciplines engaged in 2 ½ days of teaching-focused activities that included sessions on syllabus and learning outcomes creation, classroom management, rapport, and active learning strategies. They also participated in microteaching activities, reflection, and reading discussions in small groups. Former TEACH Consultant Ken Griffith and several former TEACH Fellows (Nicolle Mayo, Rachel Furey, Richard Driver, Jason Triche, Robin Haislett, Travis Roach, and Dylan Christenson) also assisted with the program.

Response to the program was overwhelmingly positive, with feedback including comments such as, "The instructors/counselors were great role models who practiced what they preached and made everything we learned real for us by actually teaching at a high level. The coursework covered all the dollar issues and did so effectively. The grouping allowed us to meet with students/instructors from other disciplines and expand our minds and our repertoire." Stay tuned to the TLPDC for more news on the next offering of Groundwork!

TEACH Program News

The TEACH (Teaching Effectiveness And Career enHancement) Program at the TLPDC assists doctoral students in further developing their teaching skills and preparing for future faculty roles. TEACH Fellows receive individualized feedback from pedagogical consultants through classroom videotapings and student feedback, and engage in reflective practice through peer observations, the development of a professional teaching portfolio and project, and workshop attendance. This highly selective and intensive program offers its fellows \$500 per semester for their active participation, and has been featured as a model of graduate student development on the nationally-known MERLOT ELIXR case story website (<http://elixr.merlot.org/case-stories>). Many former fellows have also found great success on the difficult academic job market as a result of their participation in the program.

The TEACH Program Faculty Selection Committee recently selected the 2013-14 cohort from the largest and most competitive application pool in the program's twelve-year history. We are pleased to welcome 16 new TEACH Fellows from a vast array of disciplines, including Biology, English, Mechanical Engineering, HDFS, Marriage and Family Therapy, Physics, Animal and Food Science, Music, Civil Engineering, Marketing, Electrical Engineering, Psychology, and Media and Communications.

We are also excited to welcome a new peer consultant to the program: Robin Haislett from Media and Communication. As a former TEACH Fellow and a thoughtful, enthusiastic instructor, we know she will have much to offer our new Fellows!

For more information about the TEACH Program, visit the TLPDC website at www.tlpd.ttu.edu/teach, or contact Dr. Allison Boye at allison.p.boy@ttu.edu.

Service Learning News

Service learning and other forms of experiential learning such as undergraduate research continue to grow and be a positive focus amongst Texas Tech administrators. As you may have already heard, there is a new center at Texas Tech, the Center for Active Learning and Undergraduate Engagement (CALUE). CALUE is "committed to supporting and increasing undergraduate participation in active learning at Texas Tech University" ([CALUE website 8/8/13](#)). CALUE now provides a centralized support system for faculty, staff and undergraduates who are interested in participating in service learning, undergraduate research, internships, and study abroad.

With the expansion of the Service Learning Program, the TLPDC is pleased to support CALUE and continues to support faculty who are interested in service learning or experiential learning pedagogies through consultations, workshops and programs such as the Service Learning Faculty Fellows. This year we are pleased to announce that this is the largest cohort of Faculty Fellows since the program's inception. We welcome the following faculty as members of the 2013-2014 Service Learning Faculty Fellows: Linda Donahue (Theatre & Dance), Lauren Gollahon (Biological Sciences), Carole Janisch (Education), Conrad Lyford (Agricultural & Applied Economics), Mark McGinley (Honors), Ron Milam (History), Sara Trojan (Animal & Food Science), and Allison Whitney (English).

Find our full schedule of events
and other great resources
on our website at
www.tlpd.ttu.edu

Teaching Tips from Dr. Dean Fontenot (College of Engineering)

- **Make it relevant:** if students see the relevance in what they are learning in the classroom, they are more likely to embrace the learning and make it their own.
- Students gain valuable experience by **engaging with their community**. Service Learning classes give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in a real world environment and to understand how they can continue to give back to their community.
- Students often do not realize that they are creative because they think that creativity is found only in the arts, but creativity is found in any profession. Find ways to help students see the creative and innovative side of their chosen careers.



Instructional Design and Blackboard Highlights

As you may be aware, Texas Tech experienced significant problems this summer with Blackboard CE8. The university has made a decision to migrate *ALL* courses to Blackboard 9.1. While the migration of fall courses is well underway, it's not too early to begin migrating courses for the spring. If you have not had an opportunity to familiarize yourself with this newer version of Blackboard, we encourage you to attend training sessions at the TLPDC. There are training sessions offered weekly but the TLPDC is also pleased to provide Blackboard users with the opportunity to view sessions online at <http://www.tlpd.ttu.edu/content/asp/blackboard/BBTrainingSessions.asp>.

If you have questions regarding the Blackboard migration or would like to know how to get started in the migration of your Spring courses, please visit the Blackboard@TTU Support website at <http://www.tlpd.ttu.edu/content/asp/blackboard/about.asp>.



Teaching Tips from Dr. Mark Webb (*Philosophy*)

- There is no substitute for work. Time spent preparing, both for the semester and for each class day, will head off unexpected problems.
- There is also no substitute for flexibility. As the course progresses, it's essential to keep monitoring how well you are succeeding at getting your content across, and if it looks like you're not succeeding, make appropriate changes.
- Remember your students come from lots of different life-situations and different backgrounds. You have to meet them where they are, as much as you can without compromising standards.

Advising News

In collaboration with the Committee on Academic Advising and Retention, the TLPDC continues to support and encourage excellence in advising at TTU through workshops and events such as the NACADA webinars, Advising Roundtables, and sessions featuring recipients of the President's Excellence in Advising Award. The following are some of the sessions targeted for advisors this fall:

- Addressing Disruptive & Dangerous Student Behavior with Dr. Brian Van Brunt (9.17.13)
- NACADA Webinar: Emerging Issues in Academic Advising Theory (9.25.13)
- Building Bridges in Advising (10.2.13)
- NACADA Webinar: The Peer Advantage: Creating Meaningful Connections (11.14.13)
- NACADA Webinar: Developing Intercultural Communication Skills for Academic Advising (12.11.13)

Also, be sure to stay tuned for information on nominations for the 2014 President's Excellence in Advising Award!

We hope to see you at the TLPDC this fall!

Visit us: University Library, first floor, North wing

Call us: 742-0133

Find us online: www.tlpd.ttu.edu

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