



CTL UPDATE



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Faculty Development Day

Faculty Development Day was hosted by the CAM Research Education Partnership Project and the Center for Teaching and Learning on January 5th, 2009. Stephen Brookfield, PhD from the University of St. Thomas enthralled 70 faculty with his lecture on “Creating Critical Classrooms”. He explored the dynamics of how students learn critical thinking and how to engage them in that process. His books Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher, The Power of Critical Theory, and The Skillful Teacher will become available in the Northwestern Greenwalt Library soon.

Stephen Brookfield’s presentation is posted in the Faculty Resource Room in Moodle. If you have any questions or comments about the presentation just contact Jenna Gall at jgall@nwhealth.edu or x143.

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Journal Article Review

Review done by:
Jenna Gall
Administrative Assistant for Institutional Effectiveness

At the beginning of the winter term, Dr. Stephen Brookfield lectured to 70 faculty on the importance of Creating Critical Classrooms on Faculty Development Day. Some of his topics included: Assumptions of Critical Teaching, Credibility, Authenticity, and Emotional Reality Check, along with two group exercise to practice critical thinking.

Carol B. MacKnight wrote an article discussing the use of web communication tools to conduct critical thinking in classrooms. Faculty has the ability to engaged their students through online learning. The online Café is used at the University of Massachusetts to help faculty engage students in critical thinking discussions and to develop deeper learning within their students. Email has also helped faculty talk to students either one-on-one or as a class to generate a critical thinking question. Students who use presentation tools have the opportunity to sharpen their analytical skills by working together on project planning, peer editing, and research reports.

Many students and faculty need support on how to think and teach using critical thinking. Students must be able to engage in thought provoking questions that go beyond memorizing factual information. It may be beneficial for the teacher to conduct critical thinking within the classrooms before moving into a web communication tool. The students have to have a clear understanding of the goal of the activity and have the ability to do the following: ask the right questions; listen to each other; take turns and share work, help each other learn, respect each other’s ideas, build on each other’s ideas; construct their own understanding; and think in new ways. Faculty also need tools to help with critical thinking in online discussions. Faculty needs to be supportive of the students in the following ways: “maintaining a focused discussion; keeping the discussion intellectually responsible; stimulating the discussion by

Special points of interest:

- **Save the date for upcoming Brown Bag Presentations!**
- **Check out the Teaching and Learning presentations on Moodle!**



*“I am always
doing that which
I can not do, in
order that I may
learn how to do
it”*

~ Pablo Picasso

probing questions that hold students accountable for their thinking, infusing these questions in the minds of students; encouraging full participation; and periodically summarizing what has or needs to be done.” To also help students develop critical thinking, the instructor must engage in a line of questions that will continue to keep the students interested and using the critical thinking skills.

Asking the right questions is a good indicator on the level of depth of thinking that occurs. This process begins with faculty asking the right questions that drive thinking. Faculty needs to supply students with issues following the original question and force students to build on issues of support, reasons, evidence, assumptions, implications, and consequences related to the original question. Some discussion formats include “small group discussions led by an instructor or group leader, buzz groups consisting of two people who discuss issues or problems for a short period of time, and case discussion using real or simulated complex problems to be analyzed in detail and a solution or decision offered.



Teaching critical thinking through an web based communication tool is an important strategy to advance teaching and learning in the classrooms. Students need to be able to use their critical thinking skills in their studies to better prepare them in their future.

MacKnight, Carol B., “Teaching Critical Thinking through Online Discussions.” *Educuse Quarterly*. Number 4 (2000).

Carol B MacKnight is an instructional technologist in the Office of Information Technologies at the University of Massachusetts and is the founder and editor of the Journal of Computing in Higher Education.

All articles reviewed are available in the NWHSU’s Greenwalt Library or in the IE office. If you encounter an interesting article and/or are interested in writing a review, please contact Jenna Gall (x143).

Teaching and Learning Workshops!



*“Education is the
most powerful
weapon which
you can change
the world”*

*~ Nelson
Mandela*

The Teaching and Learning Workshops were hosted by the CAM Research Education Partnership Project and the Center for Teaching and Learning. The workshops were in January and it was presented by Teaching Consultant Anita Gonzalez, PhD and Associate Education Specialist, Mary Jetter from the University of Minnesota, Center for Teaching and Learning. They conducted three workshops: “Reflections on Teaching and Learning Styles”, “Interactive Lecturing”, and “Facilitating Discussions”.

Dr. Anita Gonzalez and Mary Jetter requested that twenty-seven faculty to fill out a Index of Learning Styles Questionnaire by Richard Felder to be able to participate in the group activities for the first seminar. The group activities and the seminar taught faculty the differences between learning styles of the instructors and the learning styles of the students.

The second seminar, “Interactive Lecturing,” demonstrated how traditional lectures tend to be effective for students whose learning styles are auditory/oral, verbal, linear, reflective, and deductive. Interactive lecturing focuses on students

with a variety of learning styles including those with visual, global, active/experiential, and inductive learning styles.

The last seminar was focused on “Facilitating Class Discussions in Large and Small Classes.” The seminar openly discussed challenges for facilitating discussions and strategies for designing in-class discussions such as paired discussions, problem-solving groups, based groups, and cooperative learning groups.

The presentations are available in the Faculty Resource Room in Moodle and a copy of the Powerpoint can be located in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. If you have any questions or comments about the presentation, please contact Jenna Gall at jgall@nwhealth.edu or x. 143.

Brown Bag Presentations

Dr. Kashif Ahmad will be presenting a Brown Bag Presentation on March 26th from 12-1 in L4. The topic of his presentation is “The Emergence of SoTL and POGIL in University Education.” It explains the importance and implications of scholarship in teaching and learning and its benefits. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL; pronounced so’.tl or S O T and L) is growing movement in post-secondary education. SoTL is scholarly inquiry into student learning which advances the practice of teaching by sharing this research publicly. The second part of the talk would be on a teaching method that is known as POGIL (process oriented guided inquiry learning). This is a technique used by chemistry teachers and is being expanded to other disciplines.

Refreshments will be provided!

Assessment Resources

AAHE Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

#1: The assessment of student learning begins with educational values

Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what’s easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.

Additional Principles of Good Practice can be viewed on the CTLA website. (<http://www.nwhealth.edu/ctl/asmnt/ninepgp.html>)

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Authors: Alexander W. Astin; Trudy W. Banta; K. Patricia Cross; Elaine ElKhawas; Peter T. Ewell; Pat Hutchings; Theodore J. Marchese; Kay M. McClenney; Marcia Mentkowski; Margaret A. Miller; E. Thomas Moran; Barbara D. Wright

CTL Advisory Group

Tanya Anderson	ext. 254	Institutional Effectiveness
Pat Casello	ext. 202	MCAOM/Massage Therapy
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University Assessment Committee

Tanya Anderson	ext. 254	Institutional Effectiveness
Tom Braem	ext. 363	Massage
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Jane Richardson	ext. 288	Chiropractic
Jake Schmitz		Student Senate
Noni Threinen (chair)	ext. 277	Institutional Effectiveness



Please feel free to contact any of the committee members with suggestions or questions!



Dr. Noni H. Threinen
Associate VP of Institutional Effectiveness
2501 West 84th Street
Bloomington, MN 55431
Phone: 952-888-4777 x227
E-mail: nthreinen@nwhealth.edu

Jenna J. Gall
Administrative Assistant
2501 West 84th Street
Bloomington, MN 55431
Phone: 952-888-4777 x.143
E-mail: jgall@nwhealth.edu

What do you think of our new CTLA Update newsletter format? Your feedback will help us to improve this publication. Please email jgall@nwhealth.edu with any comments. Thanks!