

Spring Perspectives on Teaching

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Arthur & Sonia Labatt Health Sciences Building

OPENING REMARKS & REFRESHMENTS

9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

John Doerksen, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs & Students)

KEYNOTE SESSION

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Room 35

Getting Students to do the Readings

Linda B. Nilson, Clemson University

This keynote addresses a very common phenomenon in higher education all over North America: students not doing the assigned readings. First, we will examine the student-reading problem dispassionately as a multi-faceted consequence of our own and our students' beliefs, values, cognitive abilities, and behaviours. We will also view reading assignments, their difficulty, and their relative costs and benefits through the typical student's eyes. We will then consider how we select reading assignments, how we accommodate reading noncompliance, and how our behaviour impacts student reading. Then, working from this research-based understanding of the problem, we will address what we can and should do about it. By the end, you will be able implement numerous measures that will increase student reading comprehension and compliance, some of which also enhance student evaluations of instruction.



*Dr. Linda B. Nilson is founding director of the Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation (OTEI) at Clemson University, where she also teaches a graduate course in college teaching. She authored **Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors**, the second edition of which was published by Anker in 2003, and **The Graphic Syllabus and the Outcomes Map: Communicating Your Course** (Jossey-Bass, 2007). She also was co-editor of **Enhancing Learning with Laptops in the Classroom** (with Barbara E. Weaver, Jossey-Bass, 2005) and associate editor of Volumes 25 and 26 of **To Improve the Academy** (with Douglas R. Robertson, Anker Publishing, 2007, 2008), the major publication of the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education. She has been serving as editor of Volumes 27 and 28 while preparing the third edition of **Teaching at Its Best** for Jossey-Bass. In addition to writing articles and book chapters, she has presented conference sessions and faculty workshops both nationally and internationally. Before coming to Clemson, Dr. Nilson directed teaching centers at Vanderbilt University and the University of California, Riverside. She began her academic career as a sociology professor at UCLA, where she established and directed her department's TA training program.*

Refreshment Break 10:45 - 11:00 a.m.

PLENARY SESSION

11:00 - 12:15 p.m.

Room 35

Laptops in the Classroom: Constructive or Disruptive Technology?

Facilitator: Linda Nilson (Clemson University)

Panelists: Brock Fenton (Biology), Kim Luton (Sociology), Pascal Munyankesha (French), Graham Smith (Geography)

Increasingly, student use of laptops is becoming a prominent feature in university classrooms. But is this a positive or negative attribute in today's wireless environment? While the possibility for a high degree of active learning exists, many instructors complain of emailing, facebooking, and game playing during class. The panelists will discuss these issues and invite the audience to contribute their own thoughts and experiences.

CONCURRENT SESSION A - CHOOSE ONE SESSION

1:30 - 2:45 p.m.

Session A-1**Room 35****Bringing the World to the Western Classroom: Internationalizing the Curriculum**

Internationalizing the curriculum opens the doors for innovative teaching techniques that promote critical thinking and perspective taking among students, and it challenges instructors, who need to be aware not only of the process of culture learning and strategies to facilitate it, but also of how students will use the knowledge gained in class after the course is over. Past winners of Western's International Curriculum Fund competition will describe the lessons learned from their experiences as they sought to include global perspectives in their courses, and facilitated culture learning during overseas internships and study abroad for their students.

Jack Bend (Pathology)

Development of an Interdisciplinary Graduate and Research Program in Environmental Pathology and Ecosystem Health

Amanda Grzyb (Information & Media Studies)

Communicating Holocaust History: Experiential Learning Component in the Czech Republic and Poland

Rob MacDougall (History)

Science, Technology, and Global History

Tim Newson (Civil & Environmental Engineering)

Civil Engineering & International Development

Session A-2**Room 11****"I Rest My Case": Implementing Case Studies in Science and Engineering****Natasha Patrino (Teaching Support Centre)**

The case method has been used extensively in disciplines like law, business and medicine to bring real world relevance and a sense of immediacy to the fundamental principles being taught. The use of case studies also holds great promise as a pedagogical tool for teaching science because it humanizes our discipline while effectively demonstrating scientific methodology and values. In this interactive session, participants will explore a variety of case study styles and will discuss the benefits and challenges of their application in science and engineering contexts.

Refreshment Break 2:45 - 3:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT SESSION B - CHOOSE ONE SESSION

3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Session B-1**Room 35****Using Threshold Concepts in Teaching: Critical Concepts in the Teaching of the Disciplines****Jennifer Boman (King's University College)**

Threshold concepts refer to conceptual gateways or portals that students in a particular discipline must pass through in order to arrive at transformed understandings (Meyer & Land, 2003). This session will draw from recent research on threshold concepts to explore responses to the following questions. (1) What are the key characteristics of threshold concepts and how can we identify potential threshold concepts in our respective disciplines? (2) How can we help students pass through conceptual gateways and move towards transformed ways of thinking or understanding? (3) How can we use assessment strategies to help capture students' shifts in perspectives?

Session B-2**Room 11****Using Annotated Bibliographies to Enhance Scientific Literacy****Linda Dunn (Western Libraries), Patricia Gray (Biology)**

The search to balance scientific content and literacy is difficult in the best of times. This presentation hopes to offer manageable solutions and exercises using annotated bibliographies to engage students in active learning and to enhance information literacy. We'll look at current literature and studies as they relate to information and scientific literacy in undergraduates, current practices, instructional preparation, and troubleshooting. With an eye on flexibility and breadth of application, we hope to assist instructors in the incorporation of this powerful and effective assessment tool in any class and at any level.

Registration is free. Please register online at www.uwo.ca/tsc

Refreshments will be available at the registration desk outside Room 35 at 8:45 a.m. and during the morning and afternoon breaks.

