

13th Annual UW-La Crosse Conference on Teaching and Learning
Friday, September 2, 2011, Valhalla, Cartwright Center

Conference Schedule

- 8:30** Refreshments available at 8:30
- 9:00** Welcome
Provost Enz Finken
- 9:10** Keynote Address: *Invigorating Student Learning: How Should Students Study?*
Regan Gurung, Professor of Human Development and Psychology, UW-Green Bay
- 10:15** Posters, Demonstrations, Displays, Valhalla A (odd-numbered)
- 11:15** Posters, Demonstrations, Displays, Valhalla A (even-numbered)
- 12:15** Buffet Luncheon, Valhalla B

Presentation Abstracts

Odd-numbered presentations are scheduled from 10:15 – 11:15.

Posters

1

An Authentic and Interactive Program for Writing Emphasis Courses
Ray Block, *Political Science and Public Administration*

I propose an interactive Writing Emphasis (WE) program that will make writing more “authentic” in the sense that students will perform real-world writing tasks that are analogous to those faced by professionals in their respective fields, and I offer recommendations for instructors to evaluate students based on their ability to demonstrate skills and competencies that are specific to their disciplines.

3

Two Birds with One Stone: Teaching Death and Dying through a Writing Emphasis Course
Michael Brennan, *Sociology/Archaeology*

It is often assumed that writing is simply something we ‘do’; a mechanical activity that occurs once critical thinking and analysis have already taken place. At the same time, death is routinely considered a morbid topic; a ‘dark symbol not to be stirred’ (Feifel, 1995: 22). Instead, and against this background, this poster discusses the experiences and possibilities of using a writing emphasis course as a vehicle for teaching death and dying (and vice versa). Examples of strategies for teaching and learning will be shared in ways that are illustrative of three overarching concerns: i) of teaching writing as process and for publication; ii) of using death and dying as a means of teaching diversity; and iii) of teaching death and dying as a life-affirming experience that provides fertile opportunity for reflecting upon our own finitude.

5***"Playing" in Class: Using Manipulatives to Make Abstract Concepts Concrete***Jennifer Butler Modaff, *Communication Studies*

The use of manipulatives can help students develop a strong conceptual foundation in thinking and reasoning. Manipulatives allow for active learning by providing tactile and visual support to the traditional lectures students are accustomed to in higher education. Coupling familiar materials with intangible concepts encourages active student learning and improves overall retention. Materials such as Legos can be used to ground courses like basic research methods and make the course more engaging and accessible.

7***Application of Knowledge: Short Term Gains in "Understanding" Material***Nick Downey, *Biology*

Genetics is a junior level biology course that is a requirement for Biology Majors, as well as for students in several other programs. In this study I looked at students' ability to apply rules for a specific mode of inheritance, epistasis. Beyond the usual lecture and homework assignment, I developed several example problems and podcasts designed to improve student performance. This had a strong short-term effect on exam scores (30% improvement). However, data revealed a long-term retention problem.

9***Effective Teaching Strategies for Graduate Assistants in the Science Laboratory***Faye Ellis, *Biology*

To improve the teaching proficiency of graduate students in the Biology Department, a course was implemented that instructs students on educational tools and methods. Topics covered in the course include, but are not limited to, lecture and question techniques, grade norming, lesson plan and assessment design, and teaching philosophy development.

11***But What Are They Really Learning? Assessing Information Literacy Outcomes in the Communicating Effectively Course***Jennifer Holman and Rachel Slough, *Murphy Library*

To ensure that all students have a foundation in information literacy, librarians reach all *Communicating Effectively* students through a required librarian-taught information literacy session. While librarians work closely with instructors to tailor the lesson to meet student needs, we have no assessment data showing student learning. To build our understanding of student learning, we have been actively assessing learning outcomes in information literacy in the *Communicating Effectively* (CST 110) course. We will share current assessment data and plans for the future.

13***A Model of Active Learning Online: Investigating Student Integration Skills***Jo Arney, *Political Science and Public Administration*

The study explores student learning online by seeking to uncover whether a model of active online learning leads to enhanced integration skills for students. The research was conducted using an online class taught during the Fall 2010 semester. Student essays were scored using an integration rubric developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). A qualitative analysis was also included using Wordle. Results show several components of integration improved during the course of the semester.

Demonstrations**15*****Teaching Digitally in Person!***Jon Hasenbank, *Mathematics*

Digital ink technology allows for easier class prep, more efficient use of class time, and a permanent digital record of lectures, presentations, and responses to student questions. Share them on D2L after class to reduce the emphasis on passive note-taking during class. Tablet PCs, Smart Notebook, and Microsoft OneNote will be discussed.

17***Using Camtasia to Capture Students' Problem Solving Strategies***Sandy Grunwald, *Chemistry*

What makes a student successful in learning biochemistry metabolism? What strategies do they use to work out problems? What pitfalls do students who are unsuccessful have? These are questions that I needed to answer to help those who struggle greatly with this material. Using the *Camtasia* software program, students' problem solving strategies were captured and thus both quantitative and qualitative assessment data were obtained, which will be used to make informed curricular changes.

19***An Online Information Literacy and Library Instruction Module***Janet Weir and Rachel Slough, *Communication Studies / Murphy Library*

Our students like to use technology to find information. This project makes their introduction to the Murphy Library available using online learning technology. Historically the *Communicating Effectively* course (CST 110) has served as the primary source for information literacy and library skills in the General Education curriculum. This module is designed to be used in the introductory speech communication course for both online and face-to-face courses. The module provides interactive components and evaluation of student learning. Students may revisit the module for reinforcement of the information literacy and library skills they have learned.

21***Online Course Demonstration***Brian Udermann, *Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning*

I will demonstrate my online *Creating a Healthy and Active Lifestyle* course (HPR 105) that I completely revamped and taught for the first time last year. While going through the demonstration I will explain / describe the changes I made in the new course, comparing how the course was originally being offered.

Displays**23*****The Dynamic Role of Social Networking in Politically Significant Events***Jim A. Jorstad, *Academic Technology Services*

There is no question social networking can dynamically and dramatically affect messages. Over a three month period, this research project carefully tracked political messages and how they can be distributed globally though YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. The study tracked Wisconsin politics relating to the state budget bill, collective bargaining, and recall elections. The intent is to help us to better understand how political information is prepared and presented to the viewing audience through social media. Be prepared to be enlightened

25***CATL Workshop Handouts****Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning*

Selected handouts from CATL workshops and presentations. Take a copy of any handouts of interest. Topics include: Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Using Jing in Your Teaching, Writing Course Objectives, Evaluating Group Discussions, Writing Emphasis and Writing in the Major, Inclusive Excellence, and more.

Even-numbered presentations are scheduled from 11:15 – 12:15.

Posters

2

Online Homework in General Education Mathematics and Statistics Courses

Robert Allen, Melissa Bingham, and Theodore Wendt, *Mathematics*

WeBWork is a free online homework system offered by the Mathematical Association of America. The Mathematics Department explored the use of *WeBWork* in the Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 semesters in *Elementary Statistics*, *Applied Calculus*, *Calculus I*, and *Calculus II*. We will discuss the use of *WeBWork* in general education mathematics and statistics courses. In particular, we will present both qualitative and quantitative results from both student and instructor perspectives.

4

Using a Class Activity to Explore Hypothesis Testing and Statistical Significance

Melissa Bingham, *Mathematics*

In the Spring 2011 semester a class activity was used in my *Elementary Statistics* courses to introduce the topics of hypothesis testing and statistical significance. Students explored these topics by looking at a real-world study, while incorporating a coin flipping activity and the concept of chance. Student feedback regarding the usefulness of the activity was collected through a survey. The activity and the results of the survey will be outlined.

6

The Accounting Principles Practice Set: An Unstructured Approach

Kim Lyons (*Accounting*), Betsy Knowles (*Economics*), and Linda Sherony (*Accounting*)

This study explores the use of a practice set in the *Accounting Principles I* class that is unstructured and student centered. In departing from the traditional textbook approach, this accounting problem creates a learning experience that is more complex, personal, and utilizes individual prior knowledge. The goal is to have students learn more and come away with a greater sense of satisfaction with their learning experience. This is no easy task in a required pre-core course.

8

Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Improving Data Visualization among Students

Taggert Brooks, Betsy Knowles, and Laurie Strangman, *Economics*

Over the period of two semesters we have investigated the base level of student understanding of data and data visualization. We will share our findings and offer suggestions for faculty teaching courses which require students to understand, interpret, and communicate data.

10***Can a Science Writing Assignment Improve Biology Students' Scientific Self-Efficacy?***Meredith Thomsen, *Biology*

Scientific self-efficacy – the belief that one can successfully complete scientific tasks – is a critical predictor of student retention in the STEM disciplines, including biology. Here, I describe a science writing assignment for Ecology, for which students “translated” a science article for a general audience. The assignment built on several in-class exercises, and a question and answer session with a freelance science writer via Skype. Student papers were published online in a class blog. The assignment thus incorporated two of the three dimensions of biological self efficacy: the methods of biology and the ability to apply concepts and skills.

12***New and Lesser-Known Tools in Desire2Learn***Cari Mathwig Ramseier, *Academic Technology Services*

Checklists, rubrics, user progress reports, ePortfolios... these are some of the lesser-known or new tools that are available in D2L. This poster will highlight what these tools are and how you can use them to help you better and more easily assess your students (and help your students understand what and how they are doing as well.)

Demonstrations**14*****SmartPens and Student Engagement***Jorge Aguilar-Sanchez, *Modern Languages*

During this presentation colleagues and students can see how SmartPens are used to help students to engage in the at-home review of material presented in class. I will also demonstrate how SmartPens can be used to interact with PowerPoint presentations, Word Documents, Excel, and other software to make feedback of students' work more engaging and meaningful to the learning process.

16***Creating Pencasts for Face-to-Face or Online Classes***James Murray, *Economics*

The LiveScribe SmartPen is a ballpoint pen with a microphone and a tiny camera that records what you write and what you speak or hear. Among many other things, it can be used to create videos of an instructor writing in a notebook, while explaining what he is writing. These videos, called "pencasts," are actually more interactive than a simple video, in that viewers can click anywhere on the notebook page to jump to this point in the pencast. In this demonstration, I will show how to create a pencast to share with students, show examples of the finished product that I have used in *Global Macroeconomics* (ECO 120), and discuss pedagogical reasons for using pencasts.

18**Teaching Writing Online**Natalie Eschenbaum, *English*

In one way at least, the online environment might be the best way to teach a course in writing. You can design a course that requires everything students contribute to be written. In this session, I will direct a laptop tour of my online *College Writing I* (ENG 110) course. Special attention will be paid to the values (and difficulties) of writing lecture narratives, assessing discussion board contributions, and managing online writing workshops.

20**Prezi: A New Tool for Presenting**Maggie McDermott, *Marketing*

This presentation will give a brief overview of *Prezi*, a web-based presentation software, that can be used instead of PowerPoint. *Prezi* is a free program that allows for seamless integration of webpages and YouTube video clips. After using *Prezi* in the classroom for a semester, I will share student feedback and lessons learned thus far.

22**Course Design: The Impact of the Online Instructor Training**Kristin Koepke, *Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning*

An Online Instructor Training program at UW-La Crosse provides a three-week asynchronous training offered through D2L about how to design, deliver, and facilitate online courses. This presentation will share the results of a study conducted with 2010 and 2011 training participants regarding how the training impacted the trainee's attitudes towards common conceptions of online education, and give commentary about the impact of such trainings to the overall pedagogical approaches in both online and face-to-face courses for instructors that participate in such training. The areas of the training deemed influential in the study will be demonstrated in the session.

Display**24****Mediasite, Skype and the World Series of Poker**Terry Wirkus, *Academic Technology Services*

Utilizing two of the technological tools in our toolbox, Charley Swayne's *Critical Thinking* course has connected with expert thinkers from around the world. By integrating Skype with Mediasite we've compiled a library of interviews with leaders in business, education and the World Series of Poker. Take away some ideas on how you can integrate these technology tools in your course and discipline to advance your teaching and increase the learning of your students.