

T&L center

Teaching To Learn & Learning to Teach

December 4, 2006

Volume 2 Issue 3

Inside This Issue

- 1-3 SoTL
- 3 SENCER conference
- 4-5 Featured Teacher
- 6 Global Education Center
- 6-7 Greetings from Library
- 7-8 Reflections on Lana Rakow
- 8-9 UW-Parkside and NTLF
- 9 Lesson Study Grant Award
- 9-10 Teaching Scholar/Fellow
- 10-11 Race is always in the room
- 12 Calendars of Events

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Confessions of an Addict

by Theresa Castor

My first, formal exposure to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) was in the Spring of 2001, my second semester at UWP. I attended a presentation by my colleague, Fay Akindes, who was discussing her Wisconsin Teaching Fellows project on experiential learning and long-term learning in her Intercultural Communication class. As I listened, I learned of an area called SoTL that involves researching teaching within your own classroom to understand better and, hopefully, improve student learning both within one's own classroom and ideally, other classes through public dissemination. A few years later, I was

selected to be UW Parkside's 2003-2004 Wisconsin Teaching Fellow, and I developed a project to investigate student discussion during group exams. The summer prior to carrying out my project, I went to Faculty College at UW Richland Center and then the Wisconsin Summer Institute in Madison. I was introduced to the writings of Lee Shulman, Pat Hutchings, Mary Taylor Hubbard, Randy Bass, Ernest Boyer, and Parker Palmer. I learned about CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques) and backwards design. I learned to think of my teaching and student learning in a systematic, discipline-based intentional way. I learned to think of teaching problems as questions for investigation and discussion. I learned to think of teaching as community property. I became an SoTL addict.

What is SoTL?

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning refers to disciplined inquiry into one's teaching in order to improve student learning. 'Disciplined' highlights how SoTL work is an extension of the knowledge-based inquiry that one engages in within one's own discipline. SoTL researchers use the tools and concepts of their own disciplines in their investigations. For example, as a communication scholar, I have analyzed student interactions during discussions. A Chemistry instructor may design an experimental study to research the impact of a particular teaching practice on student learning. An English professor may examine the narratives or stories students tell regarding their learning. SoTL work is also usually conducted within one's own classroom. In this respect, SoTL work calls for us as teachers to reflect on what and how we are teaching with what kind of impact. SoTL research calls for the gathering of data to answer

questions related to teaching and learning. This last point is significant. While as instructors we may have feelings, hunches, and a sense of what seems to 'work,' SoTL involves systematic research that can provide support for or disprove our hunches. Finally, SoTL, like other knowledge-constructing endeavors in the academy, calls for the public dissemination of one's research. In 'going public,' we subject our research to scrutiny and also share the results of our research so that ideally, SoTL research has an impact not just for a single-instructor but for improving the overall practice of teaching and learning.

Why Should Faculty Participate In SoTL? How Can Faculty Participate?

My selection of the word 'participate' is intentional. It highlights involvement with SoTL without necessarily conducting SoTL projects. Basically, not all faculty need to engage in developing and conducting SoTL projects, but involvement in some way with SoTL work can be a benefit to all faculty. Involvement can range from participating in discussions about or attending presentations on SoTL work to conducting SoTL projects individually or in collaboration with others. I see two main benefits of participating in SoTL.

Instructors can learn more about their teaching. Teaching and SoTL are mutually interconnected. SoTL work is intentional in that, as with other research processes, this work begins with a question or research problem, followed by thought regarding how to answer that question, data gathering, and public dissemination. In informal ways, instructors regularly engage in scholarship of teaching and learning. When we enter the classroom, we may have a question or problem such as how can I get my students to read? Or, why don't students read? Or, how can I help my students to apply theory to practice? Or, how can I help my students gain an appreciation of

this genre of writing or music? We make decisions about our teaching to help students achieve particular learning objectives. SoTL can help in guiding our decisions about teaching.

Second, while a great deal is known generally about teaching, there is not as much research on the teaching of disciplinary knowledge. This is particularly crucial now when public discourse about education is dominated by the theme of accountability. Basically, how do we know what and that our students are learning in higher education? As Lee Shulman during the Spring 2006 OPID conference pointed out, as instructors in higher education, it is important for us as experts within our respective disciplines to be able to answer this question.

SoTL Initiatives

There are several ways to become involved in SoTL initiatives and to receive support for your involvement. First, you can become involved with UW System Office of Professional and Instructional Development programs and initiatives. The UW System has received quite a bit of recognition for its leadership nation-wide in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. UW System programs include Faculty College in June (which regularly features SoTL-related workshops), the Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars program, OPID Spring conference, and UW Milwaukee Leadership Site initiatives. For information on all these, you can talk with your campus OPID representatives which include myself and Jim Robinson. Also, announcements on all of these initiatives are regularly posted by Jim to the governance listserv and the TLC newsletter.

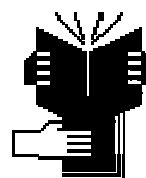
Second, there is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Group sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Center. The purpose of this group is to foster a community focused SoTL. This is the second year of the group. Previously, SoTL groups have existed on campus in

the form of the Critical Thinking Project (2003-2005, a UW-System sponsored initiative led by Jonathan Shailor that engaged in collaborative research on critical thinking) and a reading group (Spring, 2004).

The SoTL group meets monthly (the second Monday of each month, at noon, in the TLC) and focuses on discussing SoTL research. Participants may discuss their own research projects and receive feedback from others. Also, the group focuses on discussing SoTL research. For the next meeting of the SoTL group on December 11, we will discuss Kathleen McKinney's article, "Reflections on Learning Sociology: Analysis of Learning Log Entries" which appeared in the Fall/Winter 2005 issue of *MountainRise* (an online, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the Scholarship of

Teaching and Learning). Future topics will include research on the use of 'clickers' in large-lecture classes, the First Year Experience, and diversity in the college classroom.

I am a researcher and teacher, and this is why I have found the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning so appealing. Also, significant for SoTL work is the notion of community, of sharing one's research with others for public scrutiny and dissemination. It is for these reasons that I became an SoTL addict.



SENCER Regional Conference To Be Held At UW-Parkside

The planning committee for the first regional (WI, IL, IA, and MN) SENCER meeting invites you to submit a proposal for a presentation at the meeting, which will be held on Friday and Saturday, February 9-10, 2007 at UW-Parkside (Kenosha, WI).

The meeting will include workshops, presentations and panel discussions, and it will provide an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with colleagues interested in civic engagement and the work done by SENCER and Campus Compact. The following concurrent sessions will be offered. (i) SENCER 101 for new participants; (ii) Nuts and Bolts of a SENCER Course; how to create one, obstacles, etc. (iii) K-16 Partnerships; (iv) Internationalizing the SENCER curriculum. This is a request for proposals (and posters) for additional concurrent sessions. The poster session will be on display the entire time of the conference.

All information about the meeting, including the meeting overview and the proposal form, can be found on this <http://www.uwmc.uwc.edu/physics/sencer/2007Regionalmtg.html> page. Updated information will be included on the page as the planning committee completes its work.

The meeting is sponsored by the National Center for Science and Civic Engagements and Responsibilities. It is funded by the NSF as a national dissemination project and it is the signature program of the NCSCE; the project's aim is to improve learning in STEM disciplines through innovative courses and programs that include all disciplines. The mission of the Wisconsin Campus Compact <<http://www.uwp.edu/departments/community.partnerships/wicampuscompact/index.cfm>> is to strengthen civic engagement and service-learning partnerships between Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions and the communities they serve.

Featured Teacher

By Megan Mullen

When asked to write a piece on my teaching, my first instinct was to make a bold statement about how much I love to learn and how as a child I would sequester myself away with books, puzzles, crafts and other solitary activities. Of course this is all true. I imagine, though that it's true of many other dedicated teachers as well. So I'd like instead to relate a particular process of discovery that's taken place for me while at UW-Parkside.

My first full-time teaching job, at the University of New Hampshire, echoed my own undergraduate experience, with student body that was overwhelmingly "traditional" aged, white, middle class, and enrolled full-time. There were a lot of red brick buildings with white trim, idyllic hillsides, and a ubiquitous fraternity/sorority scene about which I nursed a nagging grudge. I was completely at home there, my only real difficulties being the shift from the role of student to that of teacher and awareness that my contract there was terminal. But I suspect that the relative comfort level prevented me from fully grasping some of the things I needed to know about my students and myself—indeed about people in general.

I accepted the position at Parkside with mixed feelings. I knew I would need the job security and health insurance, though I was apprehensive about making yet another long-distance move, having transitioned from Texas to New Hampshire two years earlier and from New York to Texas five years before that. And I had no idea what to expect at this small college that neither I nor most people I knew had ever heard of before. I suspected it would be an awkward fit. When I met my first semester's students, I was certain this was the case. In terms of both outward appearance and the individual needs I was

to discover, these were the most diverse groups of students I'd ever met.

The sense of awkwardness and discomfort has not dissipated in the more than eight years I've spent here, either; in fact it takes on new dimensions just about every day. However I now attribute it to the constant reminders I get about the array of personal situations defining the human condition—not least, the many kinds of struggles students face as they try to get through college. For example, I once had to make office appointments mandatory for all students in my survey course in order for one student to talk with me away from the watchful eye of her abusive boyfriend (that student drank herself to death a few years later). Another student had to drop my course in order to care for her toddler child, who had been molested at the only affordable daycare facility. And I watched as another student began the slow death of a diabetic without insulin. Her below-minimum-wage job left her unable to afford nearly as much insulin as she needed.

The last of these stories hit home for me, with my three and a half-decade history of unstable diabetes and the life-altering complexities that accompany that (though I'm fortunate enough not to know a life without access to decent health care). None of my own college teachers ever knew about my situation. I hid it from them due to a mixture of embarrassment and denial (and I'm certain this is how many of my students are dealing with their own situations). But I wonder, if my teachers had known, could they actually have understood? I have yet to meet someone who does—even among the many caring people in my life. I believe understanding that you *can't* fully understand things you haven't actually experienced is one key to ethical living writ large—and therefore to good teaching (or at least an honorable attempt at it). This understanding surely applies to various

manifestations of cultural marginalization as well, such as poverty and differences of gender, race, or religion.

More and more, I comprehend the reality that no teacher, no matter how capable or well-intentioned, can either anticipate or truly comprehend the personal situations students carry with them into the classroom. So one of my goals as a teacher is to design courses, even whole curricula, that maximize the number of personal situations that can be accommodated without “special” provisions. I’ve been pleased to learn that others are also working toward such a goal—under the rubric of “universal design.” I’ve barely scratched the surface of what I’d like to know or do in this area, but some of what I’ve begun to explore includes:

- Developing the competency-based curriculum of the Humanities Program in ways that address the needs of “adult” or “non-traditional” students by both absorbing a wide array of transfer credits and offering flexibly scheduled courses.
- Developing syllabi and attendance policies for my courses in both Communication and Humanities that discourage casual absenteeism while still allowing students with legitimate personal difficulties to complete course work successfully.
- Teaching and testing in ways that coordinate with a variety of learning styles (while also helping

students develop strategies for handling teaching that doesn’t coordinate with their specific learning styles).

- Seeking and developing examples of teaching strategies, classroom activities, and scheduling practices that allow teachers to address their responsibilities regardless of obstacles ranging from travel obligations to childcare or parent care needs to physical accommodations.

These are all projects I wish to pursue in the near future along with my *extraordinarily interesting* and completely unrelated research on the history of cable television and my hunger for just reading and watching stuff, and going on big and small travel adventures of various kinds. And not surprisingly, all of this goes to the fundamental reason why I became a college teacher: I love to discover new information and ideas. The college level is particularly appealing because my overarching goal, agenda, and motivation are to engage as many students and colleagues as possible in this ongoing process.



Correction

In the September 25, 2006 newsletter, Volume 2, Issue 1, in the Featured Teachers section, Joy Wolf was incorrectly identified as an Assistant Professor in the Geography Department. Her correct title is Associate Professor. We are sorry for any confusion this may have caused.

A New Global Education Center in the School of Business and Technology

By Jay Sounderpandian

Starting this semester, the Global Education Center (GEC), newly created in the School of Business and Technology, will address the needs of global education in the school. Professor Jay Sounderpandian has been appointed as the director of the center, and Professor Jamie Wang as the associate director.

The GEC will focus on:

1. Developing partnerships with foreign universities to promote student and faculty exchange programs
2. Developing partnerships with foreign universities to promote student projects and faculty research.
3. Developing joint degree programs with foreign universities
4. Recruiting foreign students
5. Arranging Travel Study courses
6. Inviting international scholars to UW-Parkside campus

The GEC is currently exploring partnerships with two universities in India and will soon explore universities in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. It is expecting a visiting professor from Japan in Spring

2007, and trying to recruit an MBA student from Italy.

A travel study to China is being offered as a Spring 2007 course.

Students enrolled in the course will visit Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing over a period of two weeks. Interested students should contact Jay Sounderpandian. The travel fee for the course is \$2700 which covers airfare, hotel accommodation, local transportation and most of the meals.

Undergraduate students may qualify for financial aid in the form of grants. Those interested in applying for financial aid should contact Dr. Consuelo Clemens [595-2701, consuelo.clemens@uwp.edu.]

The GEC will work with the Center for International Studies (CIS) to coordinate its activities with those of the CIS. Additionally, other campus bodies and anyone who has ideas to address global education initiatives are encouraged to contact the GEC. Contact information: Jay Sounderpandian, 595-2194, sounderp@uwp.edu; Jamie Wang, 595-2436, wangz@uwp.edu.



Greetings from the University Library's Interim Director

By Vanaja Menon

During my interview with administrators, faculty and staff in July, one of them referred to the library as a jewel on campus. What makes this library so special? The Library has a collection of almost 395,000 volumes and a rapidly growing list of electronic resources that are available through the Internet. Over the last three years the "universal borrowing" service made it possible and convenient for our faculty and students to directly borrow from any

UW System Library without ever leaving this campus, thus greatly increasing the richness of the collection and supporting and furthering the vision "One System, One Library". Most importantly, we have a small, but excellent and knowledgeable staff to assist you with your teaching and research needs.

The Library connects the users with the world of knowledge: books, journals, e-journals, E-Books, databases, archival records, microforms, videos, cds, DVDs,

digital resources and much more. The academic library is many things to many people. Over the last several years the “library as a place” concept has grown in popularity and many libraries are rethinking the layout and design of their space. We have modified our space to appreciate and accommodate different learning styles. There are quiet study areas for those who like it quiet, group study rooms for those who work on collaborative projects, plenty of open tables for those who like to spread out or study with their friends, even a few study carrels for those who prefer to study alone and like some privacy. Throughout the library, you will see attractive and comfortable furniture groupings to make you feel totally at home. Today’s academic library is a gathering place for the campus, it is an extension of the class room where formal and informal discourse takes place between faculty and students. Librarians partner with faculty to help students learn research skills, make the best use of relevant resources, efficiently navigate the Internet and learn how to evaluate these resources, “google” if they must, but with a clear understanding of what they would

find and thus facilitating their critical thinking skills. Please bring your students, explore the collection, and talk to the librarians about an instruction session. One of our faculty members aptly and eloquently referred to the library instruction session for her class as “your help in our mutual journey to enhance student learning”. My colleagues and I hope that you will use the rich resources and expertise of our librarians. I am a strong believer in providing excellent customer service and easy access to our vast resources while creating a welcoming and user-centered environment with a strong commitment to diversity. I welcome your comments and suggestions and look forward to meeting many of you in the near future (email: menon@uwp.edu; Tel: 595-2167).

Vanaja Menon is the new Interim Library Director. She came to UWP from UWM, where she was the Assistant Director for Public services. She holds a MA in Indian Language and Literature/Comparative Literature from the University of Kerala, India and a MA in Library Science from the University of Chicago.

Reflections on the Lana Rakow Mini-Conference: Evaluating Teaching as if Learning Mattered

By Jonathan Shailor

On November 10, Dr. Lana Rakow (Dean for Community Engagement, University of North Dakota) offered a thought-provoking presentation to a packed room at the Teaching and Learning Center. Her talk was titled *Evaluating Teaching as if Learning Mattered*. Dr. Rakow invited faculty and teaching staff to engage in a series of critical reflections about current practices, and to consider the possible costs and benefits of various alternatives. Central to her presentation was the distinction between *formative evaluation* (used by the instructor as a means toward improving

his or her own teaching), and *summative evaluation* (used by colleagues and administrators for the purpose of making decisions about retention, tenure, promotion, and merit salary increases). Dr. Rakow also raised some pertinent issues regarding student evaluations. For example: when we interpret student evaluations as a measure of student learning, we are making a gross logical error. Student evaluations measure student satisfaction with the learning experience, not the degree or quality of learning itself. Other measures need to be used or developed for this purpose.

Another consideration was the construction of student evaluations. Many faculty and teaching staff at UW-Parkside have expressed discontent with the current form of evaluations, both in terms of the questions that are asked (and how they are asked), and the questions that are not asked. One alternative was presented in the materials distributed by Dr. Rakow: a *Student Assessment of Teaching* instrument included an up-front series of questions that invited students to reflect upon whether or not they attended class, prepared for class, participated in class, completed assignments, and asked

the instructor for feedback when it was needed. Although this kind of self-reflection is not built into the instruments currently used on our campus, some participants in the seminar thought that something like this might be a good way of prompting students to engage in a more thoughtful and balanced reflection on their learning experience. Near the end of the meeting, members of the Committee on Teaching and Learning suggested that the level of interest in Dr. Rakow's presentation indicated a need for further discussion of these issues during the upcoming spring semester.

UW-Parkside Faculty Has Access to NTLF This Year

By Jim Robinson



O PID has reviewed the *National Teaching and Learning Forum* (NTLF) and determined it was worth providing a one year license to UW-System institutions. I send each issue to you via the governance listserv as a .pdf attachment and hard copies are available for you in the Teaching & Learning Center. Visit their website at: <http://www.ntlf.com>. If you would like the login and password, I have it to disseminate.

The National Teaching and Learning Forum began publication in the fall of 1991 as a joint venture with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. Its publisher, Dr. James Rhem, has expressed his goal of creating a "a conversation about teaching" through the Forum's "anecdotes that make a point, to serious arguments for a particular point of view, to familiar essays in which a faculty member distills wisdom from experience".

Some of the topics in this periodical could be considered provocatively progressive. For example, in the March 2006 issue Elizabeth Barkley's solution for student engagement and empowerment was to redesign the curricula such that it reflected contemporary multicultural content. She dropped the attendance requirement and "gave students the choice of attending class or learning the material from lecture notes that I put on reserve in the library." She offered "Blended Delivery", a method in which students choose "how they want to involve themselves in the class, selecting a point on a continuum that ranges from completely traditional, on-campus participation to completely online". Furthermore, in her class students can choose from a variety of modules such that the course content for each individual student might be significantly different yet the learning outcomes for the course must be met by all.

It occurred to me that the ideas expressed could stimulate many valuable ideas and viewpoints about the educational domain in which we all are committing our time and our life's energy. For example, would such a course design be too time consuming to create and

support? Would it facilitate or hinder class discussions? Would one consider it to be inappropriate or an improvement for a particular course or discipline? Should one incorporate Blended Delivery to encourage students to maximize their potential through extrinsic, meaningful motivation or ought it to be considered as pandering to the “customer’s wishes”?

From that one article came so many questions. So many ideas from which one could pick and choose to either modify or directly test out in the classroom.

Yet I need your help. I encourage you to read the NTLF and discuss some of the concepts addressed with your colleagues. In the future, I will request you to evaluate how useful this resource was to you. Next year I will need to make a budget decision as to whether to maintain the Forum’s availability to the campus or terminate it with the end of OPID funding. Without any feedback from you that will become a tacit decision.

Lesson Study Grant Awarded

By Jim Robinson

On Thursday, October 26 another e-mail hit my inbox – I was CC’ed on this one. Bill Cerbin, Director of the College Lesson Study Project, was providing notification that the Lesson Study Training Grant application submitted by Helen Rosenberg, Associate Professor in Sociology, has been approved. How excellent!

Helen will be working with co-investigators Anne Statham and Teresa Reinders. The focus of their work is the challenge of getting students to examine everyday issues through a sociological lens. From the grant Abstract:

Students tend to generalize from their own experiences and have difficulty getting beyond their personal biases to

apply different perspectives to real life situations....We would like to learn how to get students beyond their personal experiences and everyday understandings of social phenomena to think about various perspectives in understanding why people act as they do.... We would like to learn ways to enhance students' abilities to make the connection between learning theory and understanding experience. As part of our lesson study training, we hope to develop skills to aid students in making the theory-experience connection.

Congratulations Helen, Anne and Teresa. I look forward with interest to the day when they will share their findings.

Wisconsin Teaching Scholar and Teaching Fellow for 2007-2008 Selected

By Jim Robinson

The 2006-2007 OPID Teaching Scholar is Vera Kolb, Professor of Chemistry. Each Scholar in the program undertakes a scholarly teaching project aimed at advancing our understanding of what works to improve student learning and of how SoTL work can be done most effectively. Vera’s research focus will be to develop an analysis strategy called “retro-synthesis”. She

states, “It teaches students how to think “backwards”, and how to mentally break up the target molecule into the smaller sub-targets, and so on, until they reach the starting materials.”

Congratulations Vera!

The 2006-2007 OPID Teaching Fellow is Cathy Folker, Assistant Professor in Business.

Fellows design a SoTL project aimed at understanding the effects of a “best practice” on student learning. At the end of their fellowship year, Teaching Fellows are expected to disseminate the results of their project in a public forum. Cathy’s focus will be

to create “a community based learning project that can be completed by students at various levels and in which the community partner feels that it has received a benefit as well as the students benefiting from the project.” Congratulations Cathy!

Race is always in the room

By Fay Akindes

The master's thesis of UW-Parkside alumnus Dannie Moore inspired a brown-bag discussion on Wednesday, Nov. 8 in the Galbraith Room to consider the question, “How does race enter the classroom?” Moore’s thesis, *The Experiences of African American Males on a Predominantly White Campus*, was written at Eastern Illinois University where the former Black Student Union president received a master’s degree in spring. His work resonates at UW-Parkside where Equity Scorecard reports an alarmingly low number of African American males completing their degrees. Moore’s thesis raised important questions for the Center for Ethnic Studies (CES) that co-sponsored the brown-bag with the Center for Teaching and Learning. The discussion was conceptualized, organized and facilitated by CES members **Farida Khan** (economics) and **Jonathan Shailor** (communication).

Here is a summary of the brown-bag discussion, beginning with the five faculty participants.

Simon Akindes, Teacher Education
When Simon Akindes enters his predominantly white female classroom, he wonders what goes through his students’ minds. He is totally conscious that as a black man, he represents stereotypes that are difficult to uproot. His identity is complicated because he is also an immigrant from Benin, West Africa that speaks with an accent. Equally difficult to uproot are stereotypes many white students have of African American children in urban schools. He shared anonymous comments from student-teacher journals that exposed students’ deeply ingrained racism that seemed to be little affected by classroom discussions and readings. These journal entries gave Akindes “a depressing sense of failure.” Students may be exposed to multiculturalism in the classroom, but racist assumptions often prevail.

Bob Canary, English

The issue of authority has always bothered Bob Canary who strives to build a sense of trust with students. He works at cultivating relationships with students where “teasing” eases into honest criticism of their writings. He admits the challenge of building trust with minority students. “I wouldn’t trust me – I’m an old white guy from the fifties,” he said. When teaching experimental classes, such as Interracial Romance and Gangsta Rap & Gangster Films, he is reminded that he is out of his realm and “the possibility of doing something stupid” is high. Teaching these classes, however, is an attempt to meet students in *their* realm and to make accessible the learning of literature.

Carmel Ruffolo, biological sciences
As a scientist, Carmel Ruffolo does not see any intersections of race with biology. The study of biology, she says, is a level playing field: “we are all homo-sapiens,” she said. “We’re all a bag of meat that microbes can attack.” She says it is difficult to bring race into the classroom when you must impart scientific knowledge and also when there is a lack of diversity in the classroom. She has tried, however, to include global examples in the classroom. When studying diseases she has used the example of a Hispanic community that consumes unpasteurized milk in their cheese. Consequently this community has a high level of gastrointestinal disease. Such examples serve to remind students that there are different ways of living that affect the study of science.

Ed Schmitt, history
Teaching African American history situates race in the forefront of Ed Schmitt’s classroom but, he admits, it is only recently that he has encouraged students to personalize history in their contemporary lives. By doing so, he is venturing into unknown territory that relinquishes some of his power and control in the classroom. He shared the experience of a heated discussion in class concerning the

controversy over Olympic gold medal speed-skater Showny Davis and his refusal to participate in the U.S. relay race. The incident created a racial division in the classroom. Despite feeling a loss of control, Schmitt learned that structuring discussions and establishing ground rules can reduce tension. **Zhemín (Jamie) Wang**, business

Until recently Zhemín (Jamie) Wang viewed accounting as technical and, possibly, the last field that could possibly relate to race. Yet in preparing for the brown-bag he realized he was mistaken. While corporate America is actively recruiting minority employees, he wonders why there is only one African American student in a class of 60 students. He identified three issues regarding minority students in accounting at UW-Parkside: under representation, under performance, and limited interaction with white students. He acknowledged that issues of race and ethnic differences are new to him, and recognizes the necessity of understanding these issues to create access to a business education.

After each faculty had spoken, facilitators encouraged the participants to pose questions to each other. Simon questioned whether a lack of diversity among students was adequate reason not to address race in the classroom. He also questioned the absence of race in the teaching of biological sciences, since there is a history of scientific studies used to support racist policies specifically against blacks, such as the measuring of brain sizes to prove superiority and inferiority. Carmel answered that scientific studies were a “true melting pot” and that there is “color-blind collaborating,” particularly in her home country of Australia. Ed noted the history of scientific studies used as a political tool by those in power.

Ed questioned Bob about being a white male professor teaching the courses that he does. Bob said he pretends not to be uncomfortable and confessed that “I worry about this all the time.”

Audience participants entered the discussion. Criminal justice professor **Kiesha Warren-Gordon** noted that she *claims* her identity as an African American woman at the start of a new class. Associate Provost **Jerry Greenfield** reflected on how the construction of race in Brazil is remarkably different from the U.S., suggesting the need to consider race in a global context. He questioned why the *white* students in Jamie’s accounting class

were not interacting with the black students. He also said “If we’re pretending that race doesn’t exist, everybody knows we’re pretending.” Communication professor **Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz** shared a student’s assumption that it was racist to talk about cultural difference and preferable to pretend race doesn’t exist. Teacher education professor **Linda Crafton** noted the responsibility teachers have in selecting curriculum materials that are inclusive and critical. Who is silenced? Who has a voice? Who is represented? And who is not? Academic adviser **Brandon Clark** recalled a comment made at the recent teacher education forum to diversify recruitment. Students of color, he said, may not always talk in class, but they are paying attention. If there is a difference in how a professor interacts with white students and students of color, the difference does not go unnoticed.

Threaded throughout the discussion were these themes:

* **Race is always present, though we may not always acknowledge or be conscious of its presence.** As professors, we have the power and responsibility to acknowledge race in course content and discussions, and to influence interracial student communication.

* **Assumptions of race and racism are deep-rooted.** Addressing these assumptions in one or a few classes may not be sufficient in dislodging deep-rooted, life-long assumptions, but it is a beginning. Professors may need a support system among colleagues especially at times when it seems our teaching efforts are in vain.

* **Addressing race in the classroom is risky.** Professors may lose control of the classroom. Students will respond in unpredictable and emotional ways. But, as **Roseann Mason** says, to avoid race matters is even riskier.

* **Understanding how race enters the classroom is an on-going process.** What the brown-bag discussion made clear is the need for continued dialogue about issues of race in academe. The CES is currently organizing a follow-up forum in Spring with student participants, including Dannie Moore (now a Ph.D. student at Marquette), and student facilitators trained by Shailor, director of UW-Parkside’s Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

-- Fay Akindes, CES interim director and associate professor of communication

UW-PARKSIDE

Teaching and Learning Center
University of Wisconsin-Parkside
900 Wood Road, P.O. Box 2000
Kenosha, WI 53143

Phone: 262.595.2068

E-Mail: tlc@uwp.edu

TLC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Teaching and Learning Center/245 Wyllie

- Dec. 8, 3-5 p.m.: Pathway To Publications
- Dec. 11, 12-1 p.m.: SoTL Meeting

TLC HOURS

Mon. through Fri.,
8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

OVER THE BREAK-JANUARY WORKSHOP SESSIONS

- January 9--** **9:30-11 a.m.:** Teaching Toolbox: <http://uwp.edu/~robinson/toolbox.htm>
11-12:30 p.m.: PowerPoint Fundamentals-
To sign up, contact Jim Robinson: robinson@uwp.edu or 595-2068
1-2:30 p.m.: D2L Course Preparation-
To sign up, contact Pat Eaton: eaton@uwp.edu or 595-2531
- January 10--** **9:30-11 a.m.:** D2L Course Preparation-
To sign up, contact Pat Eaton: eaton@uwp.edu or 595-2531
1-2:30 p.m.: Teaching Toolbox: <http://uwp.edu/~robinson/toolbox.htm>
2:30-4:00 p.m.: PowerPoint Fundamentals-
To sign up, contact Jim Robinson: robinson@uwp.edu or 595-2068

Schedule of Upcoming Teaching/Learning Events

- ⇒ **Jan. 17-20, 2007:** The Real Test: Liberal Education & Democracy's Big Questions/New Orleans, LA
- ⇒ **Feb. 5-6, 2007:** Texas Computer Education Association's Educational Technology Research Symposium/Austin, TX
- ⇒ **Feb. 22-23, 2007:** Shifting Landscapes: Assessment, Retention and Learning/Albuquerque, NM
- ⇒ **Mar. 1-3, 2007:** General Education & Assessment: Engaging Critical Questions, Fostering Critical Learning/Miami, FL
- ⇒ **Mar. 4-7, 2007:** Innovations Conference of the League for Innovation/New Orleans, LA
- ⇒ **Mar. 7-10, 2007:** The Chair Academy's 16th Annual International Conference-Celebrating the Diversity of Leadership/Jacksonville, FL
- ⇒ **Mar. 11-13, 2007:** Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium/Chattanooga, TN
- ⇒ **Mar. 16-17, 2007:** 19th Annual Lilly-West Conference-Blueprints for Student Learning/Cal Poly Pomona
- ⇒ **Mar. 26-30, 2007:** SITE 2007, 18th International Conference of the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education/San Antonio, TX-AAACE
- ⇒ **Apr. 2-5, 2007:** 18th International Conference on College Teaching and Learning/Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
- ⇒ **Apr. 3-4, 2007:** Purdue University's Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference/West Lafayette, IN
- ⇒ **May 18-20, 2007:** The Teaching Professor Conference: Learning To Teach Across a Career/Atlanta, GA
- ⇒ **May 20-23, 2007:** International Conference on Teaching & Leadership/Austin, Texas
- ⇒ **June 3-7, 2007:** 29th Annual Summer Institute on College Teaching/Williamsburg, VA
- ⇒ **June 20-24, 2007:** 2007 Greater Expectations Institute: Campus Leadership for Student Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement/Burlington, VT

OPID CALENDAR/2006

- ❖ Jan. 31, 2007: Conference Development Grants- Final Reports for Fall 2006 due
- ❖ Feb. 1, 2007: Underkofler Awards Review Committee-Appointments due
- ❖ Feb. 15, 2007: Underkofler Awards-Nominations due
- ❖ Mar. 15, 2007: Regents Teaching Excellence Awards-Nominations due
- ❖ Mar. 23-24, 2007: OPID Spring Conference for 2007
- ❖ Apr. 13, 2007: Faculty College 2007-Nominations due
- ❖ May 29-Jun 1, 2007: Faculty College 2007 at UW-Richland

