

communicating for **LEARNERS**

SUMMER
No.1

*The Center for Teaching and Learning
Summer 2008*

The Science of Learning

Imagine this scenario: You have been teaching a class for three months. All student e-mails have been promptly answered and your office hours are considerably busy with helping students. At the end of the semester, you assess your students, and some of them cannot fully demonstrate their learning. After all the office hours, graphs, charts, and lectures, you find yourself asking, “Where did the learning go?”

Many times students also end the semester asking themselves the same question. Sometimes students take a course that builds upon concepts, methods, or information from a previous course, but the search for what they were previously taught is in vain. The students know they studied and worked hard in the foundation course, yet they cannot identify where their learning has gone. In search of this learning is a field in education that has been gathering academic “steam” for the past two decades—the science of learning. Neurologists, psychologists, and educators are working to determine the scientific or systematic process that explains how students learn to provide a description of the cognitive processes that occur when something is actually “learned.”

One of the leading figures in the science of learning is Dr. Diane Halpern, a professor of psychology at California’s Claremont McKenna College. In March, Dr. Halpern was the keynote speaker at BGSU’s Second Annual Teaching and Learning Fair, during which there was no shortage of helpful material for instructors. Her emphasis was on the concept of teaching for transfer, where instructors were advised to design their courses around the idea that they are providing students with material that can be transferred to other areas of study and/or to their future professional worlds. Halpern explained that in order for this transfer to take place there are certain factors and practices instructors can learn and readily implement into their instructional practice. Some of these factors include knowing about how much access to

information students have today and how to make this access work for instruction. Dr. Halpern went as far as explaining how some instructors are utilizing the science of learning’s implications to effectively integrate the use of Second Life or podcasts into their courses. She also provided specific everyday practices in the classroom that are in line with what science of learning researchers are discovering.

The implications of the science of learning research are widespread and significant, especially with increasing calls for learner-centered teaching. Diane Halpern’s presentation is one avenue worth reviewing to learn more about the science of learning and classroom practices. A video of her keynote, “Applying the Science of Learning in the Classroom and Beyond,” can be accessed via BGSU’s DVSS (dvss.bgsu.edu). A search for “Halpern” will promptly provide access to her presentation. In addition to the keynote video, there are websites, articles and books dedicated to this area of research. Furthermore, the Center for Teaching and Learning would enjoy collaborating with any instructor in finding out more about the science of learning. With some effort, BGSU instructors and students will not be asking, “Where did the learning go?”

For more information on the science of learning, visit any of these resources:

University of Memphis Science of Learning and Life-Long Learning

<http://www.psy.c.memphis.edu/learning/phaseone.shtml>

National Research Council’s, “How People Learn” (online book)

<http://www.nap.edu/html/howpeople1/ch1.html>

Researcher Stephen Downes’ clever and significant commentary concerning the Science of Learning

<http://halfanhour.blogspot.com/2007/02/science-of-learning.html>



visionary STATUS

Maryellen Weimer is one of the distinguished and lauded leaders in the advancement of education. For over two decades she taught Teaching and Learning at Penn State University and has participated in educational conferences all over Canada and the U.S. Her body of research has continually strayed away from traditional content-dominated coverage methods in the classroom. Her work continues to endorse and provide approaches for courses that focus on students significantly and intrinsically learning. Dr. Weimer has published books and articles and contributed to dozens of other publications. Today, she is the editor of a national newsletter for progressive and researched teaching practices in the classroom, *The Teaching Professor*. Her current book in-progress is *Teaching Excellence: A Career-Long Companion for College Teachers*, and she also has a blog that can be read on *The Teaching Professor* website. Maryellen Weimer's dedication to the improvement of teaching and learning in education has earned her prestige and acknowledgement as a visionary.

For more information concerning Maryellen Weimer and her works, please visit:
<http://teachingprofessor.blogspot.com/>
<http://academic.pgcc.edu/~wpeirce/MCCCTR/weimer.htm>

learning community Opportunities

"...(L)earning communities create connections for isolated teachers, establish networks for those pursuing pedagogical issues,... foster multidisciplinary curricula, and begin to bring community to higher education." (Milt Cox, 2004)

"The growth of any craft depends on shared practice and honest dialogue among the people who do it." (Parker Palmer, 1998)

Last year, over 140 Bowling Green State University faculty, staff, and graduate students participated in one or more of the ten learning communities offered at the Center. This year, 11 learning community opportunities will be available for you to apply for membership. All of the communities focus on various areas of scholarship - discovery, integration, application, teaching, and engagement, and these collaborative, supportive, and active learning groups continually provide a strong foundation for members' scholarly work and professional development.

2008-2009 Learning Communities

Core Commitments – Service Learning

Supporting the creation of high quality courses using service-learning pedagogy addressing the development of personal and social responsibility and civic learning

Exploring Life Science Course & Curriculum

Exploring innovative course and curriculum examples and efforts and identifying the best elements of these models; considering how they might be adapted and implemented to promote science learning at BGSU



The Hot Five

The Center presents its top five list of our hottest online resources.

1

Shelfari
shelfari.com

A personal online library where users can form groups and hold discussions on books

2

Merlot
merlot.org

Find peer reviewed multimedia teaching and learning materials, and share your own

3

iDictate
idictate.com

Blends technology with human interaction for a low cost transcription service

4

Teacher Professional Development
learner.org

Teacher professional development across the curriculum

5

Shakespeare Library
folger.edu

Advancing knowledge and the arts through various programs on Shakespeare and the modern age

Library eTools for Teaching, Learning, and Research **NEW**

Exploring recent, cutting-edge technologies available through University Libraries and OhioLINK, including how these e-tools will enhance faculty teaching and research as well as bolster student learning

Natural Sciences Scientific Teaching and Reform

Focusing on scientific teaching, faculty will explore: What does the research indicate regarding learning, how can we apply this to our courses, and how do we know it is working?

Publication

Developing original research into oral and written forms of communication, including lectures, articles, book manuscripts and the integration of scholarly research and teaching (geared toward the Humanities and Social Sciences)

Science of STEM Teaching and Learning

Critiquing and discussing research articles, participating in action research, and designing, conducting, and presenting collaborative research projects; for faculty, graduate students, and others interested in science of STEM teaching and learning

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Valuing, encouraging, and engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) by researching and discussing professional practices leading to the development of scholarly teaching and enriched and meaningful student learning

Pedagogy and Scholarship in Second Life **NEW**

Developing effective strategies for pedagogy and scholarship and focusing on ways in which teaching and learning can be enhanced using virtual worlds; for faculty, graduate students, and staff.

Student Engagement and Assessment Using Classroom Response Systems **NEW**

Investigating and exploring strategies of using clicker technologies to increase student engagement, promote active learning, aid in socially constructed learning, and facilitate data collection for pedagogical research

Continued on next page.

Did you know?

Fall is the season of change! Beginning fall semester 2008, The Center for Teaching and Learning's newsletter, Communicating for Learners, ends paper publication and begins online distribution. Joining the newsletter is the Center's Calendar, which is set to launch at the end of summer session. The Calendar is located on the "30 Boxes" website and features professional development event dates and the release dates of Center newsletters. View the Calendar at <http://CenterCalendar.notlong.com>

scheduled workshops

Tools for Learning Workshops

Workshops for learning tools to use in the classroom or for research are held in 201 University Hall.

Extending the Classroom Experience with Podcasting

Tuesday, July 1, 11am-12pm
Friday, July 25, 11am-12pm
Thursday, August 21, 11am-12pm

Using Audio Files in the Classroom

Tuesday, June 24, 11am-12pm
Wednesday, July 16, 11am-12pm
Tuesday, August 12, 12pm-1pm

Assessing Student Learning with Clickers Introduction

Monday, June 23, 1pm-2pm

Assessing Student Learning with Clickers Basics

Tuesday, July 8, 3pm-4pm

Assessing Student Learning with Clickers Advanced

Wednesday, July 23, 1pm-2pm

Using PDF's and Secure Documents in the Classroom

Thursday, June 26, 10am-11am
Thursday, July 17, 10am-11am
Thursday, August 7, 10am-11am

Introduction to Learning 2.0

Wednesday, June 25, 2:00pm-3:30pm
Tuesday, July 29, 1pm-2:30pm
Monday, August 4, 1pm-2:30pm

Identifying Your Teaching Goals Using the Teaching Goals Inventory

Tuesday, July 15, 1:00pm-1:45pm
Wednesday, August 6, 10:15am-11:00am

Formative Assessment Strategies with CATs

Wednesday, July 16, 1pm-2pm
Wednesday, August 6, 11am-12pm

Developing the "Promising Syllabus"

Tuesday, August 19, 1pm-2:30pm
Thursday, August 21, 9am-10:30am

For more information on our workshops or to register, contact the Center at:
cslt@bgsu.edu
419.372.6898

Meet with the Center's Consultants

Do you ever dream of the opportunity to work with students first-hand when using computer programs or developing an assignment for a particular class? Our faculty consultants are available to aid you with such endeavors. The Center's Consultants are graduate and undergraduate students who collaborate with BGSU community members to create a culture of learner-centered teaching. With their constructive feedback and experience in academia, you will find unique ways to help your students excel. Our faculty consultants not only know how to approach the varying undergraduate mindsets, they also know how to effectively utilize computer programs for a variety of teaching and learning strategies. Their expertise of technology covers web design, graphic design, computer programming, managing online applications (ex. blogs and wikis), Microsoft and Adobe programs, and knowledge of Windows and Mac operating systems. To set up an appointment contact the Center for Teaching and Learning by calling 372.6898, by emailing ctlc@bgsu.edu, or by visiting us in 201 University Hall.

learning community Opportunities

Continued from previous page.

Transition to Digital

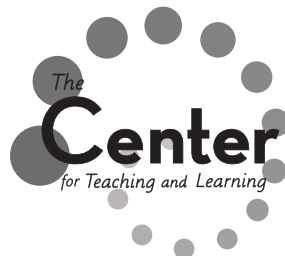
Examining and exploring new tools and technologies related to instructional, program, or departmental goals and advocating for institutional support, as needed

Web 2.0 Pedagogy and Scholarship

Developing learner-centered pedagogic exercises and scholarship based on multiple disciplines using online-based Web 2.0 open source environments, including Second Life for teaching and scholarship

Want to Join a 2008-2009 Learning Community?

Beginning July 1, you can find detailed learning community information and applications on our website: <http://www.bgsu.edu/ctlc> (click on the 08-09 Learning Communities link). Complete an application and send it to the Center by Friday, August 1.



This newsletter is a publication of the Center for Teaching and Learning. Visit us online at www.bgsu.edu/ctlc/ or at our office in 201 University Hall