

The Teaching Scholar

The Newsletter of the Faculty Development Program

The Faculty Development Program

The Faculty Development Program supports faculty at Santa Clara University as teaching scholars. Programs and services promote two general goals:

- To enhance the professional development of Santa Clara University faculty,
- To explore how students learn and to support faculty in cultivating student learning.

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Enhancing The Research-Teaching Nexus

Diane Jonte-Pace

Must we envision teaching and research as eternal adversaries? Many faculty are moving away from viewing teaching as oppositional to research, seeking instead to find creative ways to foster the "research-teaching nexus" (Jenkins 2003). A growing body of literature in higher education examines the integration of teaching and research, reporting significant benefits for both students and faculty.

For faculty, the most immediate and direct benefit involves time: students can help us move forward more efficiently and productively with our research. There are indirect benefits as well: the process of teaching can invigorate scholarship. Through interactions with students I often discover connections I previously overlooked. And most of us know the sense of having contributed to our fields by sending a fine student to an excellent graduate school.

Benefits for students are widely documented. Student-faculty interaction represents one of the primary "educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development" (NSSE 2002). Students involved in faculty research become "more confident as learners and more capable of

thinking independently" (Jenkins 2003). They learn how research within their discipline leads to the creation of knowledge, and they express greater satisfaction with their educational experiences.

Creative innovations in the "teaching-research nexus" are widespread at SCU. I've gathered a few examples from recent conversation with colleagues: Jane Curry in Political Science and Diane Dreher in English have both developed annotated bibliography assignments asking their students to focus on areas they are investigating in their own research. Students learn writing skills, information literacy, critical thinking, and course content. In addition, faculty benefit as scholars: student projects assist Curry and Dreher in staying aware of important developments in their fields. Another integration of research and teaching is Matthew Bell's "grant writing exercise" in a Psychology of Learning course. Students who develop excellent grant proposals are encouraged to submit them for research funding. Matt explains to his students, "If you develop an interest in behavior analysis, you may be able to apply for funding and conduct this research with me. However, the grant writing skills will

be useful to you no matter what career you choose." Everyone benefits in this integration of teaching and research.

Some integrations of teaching and research occur at the level of curricular design. Our Chemistry Department offers a one unit seminar for majors. Students receive copies of faculty *c.v.s* and publications. Faculty discuss with students the goals of their research and the relationship of current to earlier work. Students are well situated to initiate senior research projects that intersect with faculty research interests.

Other SCU faculty integrate pedagogy and research through scholarly

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Services Offered by the Faculty Development Program

- Confidential consultations on scholarship, teaching, and work-life balance
- Confidential classroom visits using “Small Group Instructional Diagnosis”
- Teaching Scholar Symposia
- Pedagogy in Perspective brown bag discussions
- Internal Grants for research, curriculum development, and teaching innovation
- Research Writing Groups
- Grant Writing Groups
- Small resource library of books, videotapes and articles
- Mentoring teams or mentoring partnerships for tenure-stream faculty
- New Faculty Programs in collaboration with the directors of New Faculty Orientation
- New Faculty lunches in collaboration with the Bannan Center for Jesuit Education

Pedagogy in Practice

Is lecturing a "mysterious process" in which the "contents of the professor's notebooks are transferred by means of the fountain pen to the pages of the student's notebook, without passing through the mind of either" (Holt 1931)? Is the lecture an ineffective means of pedagogy, soon to be replaced by discussion-based presentations, group work, Socratic seminars or technologically enhanced problem solving? In this article Fred White defends the college lecture.

In Defense of the College Lecture Fred White, English Department, SCU

Why has the college lecture been getting such a bad rap recently? William Honan, in a recent New York Times piece, “The College Lecture, Long Derided, May Be Fading,” argues that students and faculty alike are cheerily sending the lecture down its road to extinction. No less august an authority than University of Pennsylvania President Judith Rodin insists that the “computerization of intellectual life” has made the lecture obsolete.

I could not disagree more.

As a university professor, I am aware that a sizable number of students will lapse into instant narcosis the moment their professors take the podium. There are usually two reasons for this: poor lecturing or poor listening.

Poor lecturing results from unskilled delivery or from material that fails to engage -- such as rehashing of what's already in the textbooks. Colleges, alas, have their share of poor lecturers, which is a shame because a training program could help otherwise gifted new faculty hone up on this venerable and powerful pedagogical tool.

But poor listening habits are most responsible for bringing down the lecture as a learning tool. The situation is paradoxical, because lecturing is one of the

finest ways I know of for developing listening skills in the first place.

First-year college students need to regard listening as a skill (or an art) that must be exercised daily, and with deliberation. One of the keenest experiences derived from the lecture is that of a rich audio-visual interplay: The lecturer presents an insight; engaged students will not only understand it but also assimilate it, make it their own.

Dr. Rodin pits lecturing against mentoring, but why not see these modes of teaching as complementary, mutually reinforcing? And if you're going to pit the lecture against the Internet, you'd best begin with the classroom itself. Four walls, linear seating and its resulting protocols (raising your hand to speak, not speaking unless spoken to) - how Old World compared to the multi-sensorial Net! But a gifted lecturer stimulates multi-sensorial response.

It is beyond dispute that educators should search for new ways to engage young minds, just as it is beyond dispute that the Internet is a revolutionary learning tool. But let me mention just a few things about the old-fashioned lecture that I consider equally indispensable.

As an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota in the '60s, most of my courses were lecture-based -- and I almost always loved them, even when the lectures were tedious, even when the professor droned. More often than not, they set off intellectual fireworks in my head. I would write notes excitedly -- not taking dictation (the most useless kind of note taking), but trying to capture insights that were spewing forth from my nascent critical consciousness. This is what it means to listen well in college.

What is more, I knew that I was in the presence of a scholar -- not just a teacher, but someone who actually contributed to the body of knowledge being studied. That is a powerful ethos for an educator to project onto a young adult, especially when the professor, in the course of her lecture, explains to students what her research specifically hopes to accomplish, what the dissenters have had to say, and so on.

Ironically, the least useful classes for me at the time were the discussion sections, conducted by teaching assistants who were knowledgeable for the most part, but lacked the gravitas of professors.

The lecturing professor also conveys a

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Schedule of Events Spring 2003

<p>What's All This About "Active Learning"? Wednesday April 9, 12:00-1:00 Wiegand Room (A & S Bldg.)</p>	<p>Making Research a Priority: Strategies for Individuals and Institutions Wednesday April 23, 3:30-5:00 Wiegand Room (A& S Bldg.)</p>	<p>The National Survey of Student Engagement: What Do Our Students Tell Us About Ourselves? Thursday May 1, 3:30-5:00 Adobe Lodge</p>
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Transforming the Difficult Classroom Diane Jonte-Pace

Although SCU students are usually cooperative and motivated, most faculty have experienced, on occasion, a difficult student or difficult class. Student resistance to our courses can transform teaching from a pleasure into a chore; a disruptive, defiant, or disinterested student can obstruct learning for an entire class.

Two bodies of literature address the problem of difficult students. One, focusing on "classroom incivilities," finds the source of disruptive behavior in faculty interactions with students. The other, focusing on "resistance to theory," locates the problem in controversial subject matter. Both offer valuable strategies for transformation.

Learning theorist Robert Boice suggests two approaches to prevent classroom incivilities: "pedagogical immediacy" and "pro-social motivators." "Immediacy" refers to simple faculty behaviors like smiling, nodding, and leaning forward. More complex forms of immediacy include asking clear questions (and waiting for students to respond) and learning students' names. Pro-social motivators include questions and comments such as "Do you understand?" "Can I help?" or "I think you can do better." Boice argues that faculty who consciously and consistently utilize immediacy rather than distance, and pro-social motivators rather than negative communications, will see a gradual decline in disruptive student behaviors.

Theorists of "resistance in the classroom" argue that certain controversial topics almost invariably elicit student resistance, no matter how often we smile or nod. Although any class can be intel-

lectually or emotionally unsettling for students, those most likely to generate resistance include courses presenting complex theoretical and social critiques.

The theorists of "classroom resistance" propose several strategies:

** Honor and respect diversity of opinion among students. Teach the debates.*

** Provide choices in assignments and readings. If students are able to choose among two or three options, they're less likely to feel coerced.*

** Speak in the language of the students. Use examples and illustrations that make sense to students; use current student opinions as a starting point for the gradual cultivation of more nuanced ideas.*

** Address resistance directly but non-defensively. Encourage criticism, allowing students to write critiques of ideas they find disturbing; later, encourage students to develop critiques of their own positions.*

** Help students shift resistance from the professor to the texts (It's not about us, it's about the ideas).*

** Cultivate non-attachment. A few students may fail to learn, in spite of our best efforts.*

Finally, a strategy of last resort: an intractably difficult student may need to be referred to the Judicial System. Intentional "obstruction or disruption of teaching or research" is a violation of the SCU Student Conduct Code.

Whether difficult classrooms are produced by "distancing pedagogies" or by students' distaste for new ideas and theories, the strategies outlined here may

help transform even the most difficult class.

This material was presented at a "Pedagogy in Perspective" discussion, October 23, 2002, attended by approximately 25 SCU faculty.

References:

Boice, R. (1996). Classroom Incivilities. *Research in Higher Education*, 37, 453-486.

Nelson, C. (Ed.). (1986). *Theory in the Classroom*, University of Illinois. Also see *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy* and the journal *Multiculturalism and Diversity in Higher Education*.

How Do Your Students Find Information? Ask Them and Promote Information Literacy. Gail Gradowski Research Librarian, SCU

In this information age, lifelong learning requires information literacy. Observing how comfortable our students appear to be with the computer, one might conclude that they are adept at using the computer to find information. But is that true? As a reference and instruction librarian, I spend a great deal of my time assisting students, from freshmen through graduate, in finding information for their research. What I have observed is that students are, indeed, very comfortable using the computer, especially if they are searching the web with Yahoo or Google. What they very often can NOT do,

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College Lecture continued

personality and is not just an oral conduit for information that could have been obtained from a website or book. Even in formal, no-feedback-from-class lectures inside cavernous auditoriums, a skilled lecturer often is quirky, charismatic, surprisingly inventive; in short, memorable.

To give just one example: My anthropology professor, E. Adamson Hoebel, lecturing in a 500-seat auditorium, used to sing tribal songs to us in their respective native languages; would enact a ritual dance; would augment his lecture with slides and recordings. Three lectures a week, and every one of them ended with applause from us brain-bedazzled sophomores.

All of the newer strategies (mentoring, conferencing, small-group interaction) are valuable, but that is no excuse for abandoning the lecture, which humanizes learning in a way that computerized learning cannot.

Listening to lectures is not passive -- it is active, and it is interactive, to use the arch-buzzword of computerdom. We interface with the lecturer's brain to assimilate understanding in our own brains. Note-taking is an excellent strategy for linking one with the other.

The name of the game is intellectual excitement: That isn't just a teacher up there lecturing, but a shaper of knowledge itself. Students are not just the passive, plebian receptors of this knowledge but a new breed of assimilators -- and soon it is going to be their turn.

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References

Hamilton Holt, 1931, cited in "The College Lecture, Long Derided, May Be Fading" by William Honan, *New York Times*, August 14, 2002.

Information Literacy continued

though, is find relevant information in the library catalog, Oscar, or any of the sophisticated subject databases, like PsycInfo, ERIC, MLA, Sociological Abstracts. Their information seeking skills are, in fact, very limited.

So, I have a suggestion for those of you who assign research projects. Ask *Where* and *How* students found their information. Some faculty have done this by simply asking their students who are turning in a bibliography, especially an annotated bibliography, to include a couple of sentences describing how they found each source. Requiring students to think about and report on the process of finding information will in itself help increase their information literacy. You will be making them better information seekers. You may find it illuminating as well.

Contact ggradowski@scu.edu, x5438, for further information.

Research-Teaching Nexus continued

inquiry into the process of teaching and learning itself -- Boyer (1990) has called this the "scholarship of teaching." Pedro Hernandez-Ramos has written on teaching and learning with technology. Carol Giancarlo publishes on critical thinking. Susan DeLaPaz studies historical learning among culturally diverse students. Jeanne Gunner's research is on composition and writing instruction. Sukhi Singh has written on interactive approaches to engineering education. And Shelby McIntyre has published on the substantial learning effects that result from having students write test questions in marketing courses. See the faculty development website for these citations.

Not everyone agrees that scholarship and teaching can be integrated. Critics of this position fall into two camps. One group claims that the job of the university is solely to educate students, and that burying oneself in research is a selfish escape

from an honorable task. The other group argues that the role of the scholar is to contribute to knowledge in the discipline, and that teaching pulls us away from this important vocation. To my mind, however, teaching provides an opportunity to frame courses around questions I want to address in my research: teaching and research are most effective when they're connected.

Are there ways we can enhance the integration of scholarship and teaching at SCU? I've listed a few proposals below:

* *A Faculty-Student Research Assistant Program built on the federally funded Work-Study program.*

* *A lecture by a representative of the Carnegie Foundation for the Scholarship of Teaching.*

* *A reading group focused on the integration of research and teaching.*

* *An award or grant to support innovative strategies in the integration of scholarship and teaching.*

Innovative ways of promoting the "research-teaching nexus" are already widespread at SCU. Our dual identity as "teaching-scholars" gives us a vocabulary for the balance and integration that can benefit both faculty and students. I invite your reactions to the proposals above and encourage you to think further about how SCU can enhance the research-teaching nexus.

References

Boyer, E. (1990). *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Jenkins, A. et al. (2003). *Reshaping Teaching in Higher Education: Linking Teaching and Research*. Stylus.

NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement), 2002. Institutional Benchmark Report, <http://www.scu.edu/ir/instrsch/scuonly/NSSE>

See the Faculty Development website for other ideas about scholarship, teaching and learning:
www.scu.edu/facultydevelopment