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Levels of Learning

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Reflecting back on nearly four decades in higher education, I have come to identify a number of distinctive levels of the teaching-learning process. Most of these levels operate simultaneously and many of them are unrecognized by learners; some are invisible even to us as teachers. In attempting to clarify my own thinking about them, I can identify at least eight of these levels. What follows is my description of them.

First is the obvious level of CONTENT. Most of us think of a university course as about something; it is in regard to this level that students are typically most concerned. Students want to "master the material." The student who misses a class will often ask a fellow student, "What did the instructor cover

yesterday?" or will inquire of the professor directly (while remaining oblivious to the question's discounting nature), "Did you talk about anything important in last Tuesday's class?" "Important" in this context most likely means something that the student is concerned he or she will be responsible to know for the next exam.

The next level is that of CONCEPTS. Explicit attention is often addressed to this level by instructors, as in "You should know the basic concepts of the discipline" or "It is important to grasp these concepts if you want to understand this course." Once named by the teacher, students are likely to view this level of learn-

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Peer-Led Team Learning in Large Lecture Classes - General Chemistry and Organic Chemistry

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For the past five years, the Chemistry Department has used small-group workshops as optional coursework to accompany the beginning large lecture courses (General Chemistry: CH 221, 222, 223, and Organic Chemistry: CH 334, 335, 336). These courses are taught in Hoffmann Hall in fully enrolled sections (general chemistry typically in two full sections each term). Workshops provide an opportunity to break the large class into smaller groups (6-10 students each) that allow for informal interactions. These courses also have labs that meet in sections of 20-24, but those have different, well-focused agendas. Workshops are intended to address the challenging aspects of the main lecture course and explicitly encourage the development of problem-solving skills.

Workshops are optional, and about 30-40% of the class chooses to enroll. The courses are offered in multiple sections every term for both General Chemistry (CH 299) and Organic Chemistry (CH 399) for 1 credit, with P/NP grading only. The courses meet for one two-hour session weekly. The peer leaders are students who have had recent successful experience with the course, and they are specifically trained in the attributes needed to guide students through the materials. The approach is distinctly constructivist; students must work out for themselves, in conversation with others and with appropriate guidance, how to approach and solve challenging problems. Materials are provided by the course instructor, but there are numerous published

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Connecting Educational Communities: Guatemala ~ Portland State University

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In June of 2003, fourteen students and two faculty from the Foreign Language Department traveled to three Mayan communities near Sololá Guatemala in order to establish a partnership between these communities and Portland State University (PSU). Their mission was to pilot a program that would harness the resources of our communities in a mutually beneficial international relationship. Developed as a community-based learning course, *Connecting Educational Communities-Guatemala~PSU* was organized by Spanish instructor Manya Wubbold in response to a request from Guatemalas' Liaison for Indigenous Communities for PSU students who would be willing to work in targeted schools. With the help of Associate Professor Robert Sanders, Ms. Wubbold led this project to a successful conclusion.

Connecting Educational Communities includes many of the traditional elements of foreign language study abroad: formal language classes; cultural and historical lectures by Guatemalan experts; guided readings in Guatemalan history, the politics of education and globalization in Latin America, as well as guided excursions and home stays. However, the acquisition of cultural awareness, appreciation and communication was radically accelerated in this program by its emphasis on applied service in an international civic relationship. As PSU ambassadors, the first group of students were true pioneers taking the University's tradition of community engagement to a new level.

The origins of *Connecting Educational Communities-Guatemala~PSU* are clear. The idea and necessary connections were formed in 1997 when Manya Wubbold went to Guatemala City to work with Casa Alianza, an advocacy group for Guatemalas' forgotten street children. During this period she worked with Julio Cochoy, a student of economic



PSU student pioneers and their Guatemalan hosts

theory at the University of San Carlos. When their participation in the project ended, Manya and Julio returned to their studies knowing somehow they would work together again. After completing his degree, Mr. Cochoy (who is of Mayan descent) was hired by the Guatemalan government to serve as a liaison to indigenous communities. It was in this official capacity that he contacted Manya and they began laying the groundwork for *Connecting Educational Communities*.

The developing world has a tremendous need for the type of partnerships this program exemplifies. American universities have the resources, energy and ideas to help marginalized communities survive in a global economy, while indigenous cultures have much to teach about authentic collaboration and consensus building. Guatemala struggles to supply even the basic needs of its people and their schools in particular suffer from chronic shortages of supplies and expertise. Many do without paper, pencils, pens, crayons, books, etc. while Guatemalan teacher training is limited to a high school education. Knowing this, Manya thought to connect PSU with Guatemalan teachers and their students. This partnership would benefit the schools while providing PSU students with a truly life altering educational experience.

The results of last summer's trip were tangible. In addition to bringing 14 suitcases of donated educational supplies, PSU students raised \$2,000 for school refurbishment projects. This money enabled them to paint three schools, purchase parts and labor for windows, doors and latrines, install new sinks and chalkboards in the schools and fund the installation of water filtration systems for the three communities.



Darielle Simms and Ursula Irwin try out their lesson plan on the children of La Escuela Maria Carmen

There is an ongoing need for this type of material support and in order for this project to fulfill its mission, a method will be found to fund supplies. The current plan is to raise money to continue the maintenance and refurbishment work begun in 2003, and to purchase crafts from our Guatemalan partners. We would deal directly with the artisans of the community, paying them a fair market price and returning the crafts in the suitcases formerly used to haul educational supplies. The crafts would be sold during the school year and the difference between Guatemalan purchase prices and Portland sale prices would provide a source of sustainable funding for the material needs of the project.

Reciprocity is critical to authentic partnerships. Just as we have had the opportunity to experience their country and culture, our Guatemalan partners must visit us in order to understand the strengths and limitations of our culture. To that end, we will be bringing two Sololá teachers to Portland in No-

vember. They will attend workshops and observe bilingual classrooms where we believe they can help Portland Public School (PPS) teachers better understand the unique needs of the many indigenous children being served in their classrooms. Since these teachers are also community leaders they will be able to help focus our goals for next year's trip. We already know that *Connecting Educational Communities-2004* will introduce another group of PSU students to the indigenous schools of Guatemala; we will bring educational supplies and the resources to continue our work in the communities; finally, we will bring experienced bilingual PPS teachers who are willing to share their pedagogical skills with their Guatemalan counterparts. By expanding this partnership to include PPS, we strengthen our ties to our own community, making *Connecting Educational Communities* a model for the internationalization of PSU's service learning mission.



Reed Oman gets a lesson in traditional Mayan weaving techniques

CAE Faculty Resource Library Community-Based Learning Resources

PSU faculty are welcome to check out the following books on community-based learning from the Center for Academic Excellence Faculty Resource Library located in room #303 Cramer Hall, 503-725-5642, cae@pdx.edu.

Bonar, Linda; Buchanan, Renee; Fisher, Irene; Wechsler, Ann. *Service Learning in the Curriculum: A Faculty Guide to Course Development*. Lowell Bennion Community Service Center at the University of Utah

Coles, Robert. *The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism*. Houghton Mifflin Company

Cronin, Roberta. *Innovative Community Partnerships: Working Together for Change*. US Department of Justice

Eberly, Donald J.. *National Youth Service: A Democratic Institution for the 21st Century*. National Service Secretariat

Ehrlich, Thomas. *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*. ORYX Press.

Erickson, Joseph; Anderson, Jeffrey. *Learning With the Community: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Teacher Education*. American Association for Higher Education

Guarasci, Richard; Cornwell, Grant H.. *Democratic Education in an Age of Difference: Redefining Citizenship in Higher Education*. Jossey-Bass Inc.

Hellebrandt, Josef; Varona, Lucia T.. *Construyendo Puentes (Building Bridges): Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Spanish*. American Association for Higher Education

Indiana Campus Compact. *Service Learning Tips Sheets: A faculty resource guide*. Corporation for National Service

2003-2004 Scholarship of Teaching & Learning with Technology Awards

The following PSU faculty/faculty teams received the 2003-2004 "Scholarship of Teaching & Learning with Technology Awards." These faculty serve as outstanding examples of scholarship in teaching and an acknowledgment of the importance of technology in academia and its importance in student learning. The award recipients were formally given their awards at the eighth annual Teaching and Learning with Technology Fair on April 8, 2004.

Jon Newton

Professor of Music, jnewton@pdx.edu

"Using Technology to Teach Music Theory"

Jon Newton's music theory course studies the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements in the styles of significant and other 17th and 18th century composers--Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven (<http://web.pdx.edu/%7Ejnewton/mus112.html>). The assigned textbook has some good examples of written music and an accompanying CD, but provides no way to combine display and playback in a useful way. So in this class, Jon utilizes various features of several different audio, notation, and sequencing applications to tie written musical examples to the sounds they represent.

Jon's objective is that students not only be exposed to tonal music, but emerge with an understanding of the underlying concepts that made writing this music possible, and develop facility with these tools that can enhance their abilities as composing and performing musicians. For this, the students need to tie the visual and audible aspects of music together, to see how changes in how music is written affect the quality of its sound.

Now Jon alternates between lessons using the technology and lessons simply done on a blackboard. For lessons in which a concept needs to be clearly demonstrated, the technology-oriented lessons are invaluable. He can tell by student response in class (e.g. the type of questions) that the concepts are much easier to understand. Because he is not spending a lot of the time at either the blackboard or piano, he is able to better highlight and discuss concepts, gleaned out of sometimes dense written music.

sometimes it's daunting, especially if you've never done anything like this before," says student Julia Platt. "But it's the ambition of the project that keeps me interested and motivated. This is a unique opportunity to impact our community, and I want to make the most of it."

Participants in the upcoming forum will be introduced to novel ways of taking part in civic dialogue, including the "World Café" roundtable discussion and a "graffiti board" to share hopes, concerns, and policy ideas. As part of a facts-and-values partnership, students of Democracy, Ethics, and Civic Discourse in the Gene Age aim to provide unique tools to all who attend this upcoming forum for dialogue about the values surrounding the ethical, legal, and scientific implications of the increasingly important issue of genetic privacy.

Now is the time for public policy makers to hear the public's values surrounding genetic privacy. Everyone is invited to share their values, concerns, and opinions about a genetic privacy issue that will be affecting them. Oregon policy makers, notably members of the Advisory Committee on Genetic Privacy and Research (ACGPR), will be invited to attend, observe and/or contribute to what is hoped will be a lively discussion.

Come join this uniquely formatted event and share your own values about genetic privacy with others. For more information, go online to www.geneforum.org

DeLys Ostlund

Associate Professor of Spanish
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Ann Angel & Mark Wubbold

SCA Graduate Assistant & Administrator

"Spanish 404-Bilingual Education and the Spanish Curriculum Archive"

Spanish 404-Bilingual Education is a service learning course that places Spanish language students in Barnes Elementary School in the Beaverton School District, where they work with classroom teachers and their Spanish speaking students. As the culminating experience of the class, every student produces a lesson plan for a unit of Spanish language curriculum appropriate to the age and grade they are working in. This lesson plan is eligible to be adjudicated for the Spanish Curriculum Archive (SCA), which PSU's Spanish Department is developing as a supplemental aid to teachers in Portland Public Schools (PPS). Although there are other archives of Spanish activities (including interactive websites), none of them contains activities aligned with the Oregon Common Curriculum goals for Language Studies benchmarks, thus making the SCA a unique resource to our community.

If a student's lesson plan is selected for the SCA, it is posted to an interactive database published on the Internet and available to all. (<http://www.sca.pdx.edu/>) The website's innovation is that it only contains lesson plans which have been aligned with the benchmarks, so a teacher using these lessons can be assured they meet these Oregon Common Curriculum goals for Languages Studies. This use of technology as a repository for lesson plans can be considered a more natural use of technology in teaching because it serves to both inspire learning and capture knowledge in a way that is accessible to all.

2004 Portland State University Civic Engagement Award Recipients

To showcase and celebrate the civic engagement efforts of PSU faculty, departmental or programmatic units, and community-based partners, the PSU Center for Academic Excellence recognizes exemplary civic engagement efforts. These awards acknowledge the importance of civic engagement in all facets of university life. There are three civic engagement award categories and the following award recipients formally received their awards at the fourth annual Civic Engagement Awards Celebration on May 6, 2004:

Excellence in Partnerships for Student Learning

The following community partners are recognized for the contributions their organization has made towards helping PSU realize its motto, "Let knowledge serve the city." The organizations achieved this by a) facilitating student learning in a community based context; b) providing venues for faculty to advance their community-based scholarship; c) serving as a co-educator with faculty; and d) suggesting creative ways to work with students and faculty in an educational, community development context.

Forest Park Stewardship Program and Ivy Removal Project

Sandy Dietrich, Director

Sandy Dietrich, Director of the Forest Park Stewardship Program and Ivy Removal Project, has worked with PSU students for the last five years. During this time, Sandy had guided about 70 students through a variety of projects that included assessing the impact of ivy on native plants in Forest Park and creating a stand-alone, inquiry-based field guide to the ecosystem of the Balch Creek Canyon. Students are not treated like volunteers, but rather partners in solving important environmental problems. Her enthusiasm, patience and availability for student questions and concerns have been inspirational to students and faculty alike.

Portland International Community School

Rachel Baldwin, Vice Principal

Since 2001, Capstone students have partnered with Portland International Community School (PICS), a small alternative high school serving immigrant and refugee students representing 14 distinct cultures and 11 languages. Students assist with academic tutoring, mentoring, hosting an annual college fair, job, health, & housing assistance, fund-raising, literacy & language training, extra-curricular learning opportunities, web design, and support in practicing constructive behavior. These efforts help PICS students realize their dream of high school graduation. Critical and reflective thinking are especially powerful for PSU students in this culturally diverse community-based learning context.

Excellence in Faculty / Community Engagement

The following four faculty/community partnerships are recognized for their exemplary ability to a) enhance student learning; b) engage in public problem solving; and c) produce scholarship that addresses a community concern. Their effective partnerships and quality of collaboration involves establishing mutually beneficial goals and measurable outcomes for the collaboration, exploring the means for sharing resources, determining communication strategies, recognizing

the synergy afforded by partnership, and developing a partnership that evolved over time.

Donna Boudreau, Assistant Professor, Speech and Hearing Sciences Program

Jennifer Larsen, Director, Language & Literacy Program, Hearing & Speech Institute

Sitton Elementary School, First Grade Teachers & Special Education Staff

Through a partnership with the Hearing and Speech Institute, staff from Sitton Elementary School, PSU faculty member Donna Boudreau, and graduate students in the Speech and Hearing Sciences program have developed *What's the Story*, an after-school literacy enrichment program for at-risk children. Each term, 15 first graders participate in a two hour program, two days per week focusing on reading and writing skills. This program has been beneficial in providing a community-based learning opportunity for students, serving an outreach mission of the community agency, and providing support to children experiencing difficulties in literacy acquisition. This collaboration has led to the development of an applied research study to evaluate the effectiveness of specific components of the program, which has conceptualized through ongoing conversations between the faculty member, students, and community partners.

Marion Dresner, Program Director, Teachers in the Woods Program, Center for Science Education

Dan Shively, Coordinator, Mt. Hood National Forest

Steve Day, Science Coordinator, Beaverton School District

Greg Patch, Coordinator, Grants Pass School District

Andy Moldenke, Ecologist

PSU's Teachers in the Woods Program has provided professional development for over 260 middle and high school science teachers. The program provides science teachers with an opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in ecological field studies during an intensive five-week summer course and fall workshops with the expectation that they will then integrate multi-year student field science projects in their schools.

Through this partnership, the Forest Service receives assistance in monitoring natural resource management activities while teachers learn ecological field-study techniques and practical field protocols. During this time teachers also forge community partnerships of their own to bring a real-world context to their future students' field projects. They now work with 35 teachers a year who participate in fieldwork in a total of seven National Forests and National Parks throughout the Pacific Northwest. They have received two substantial National Science Foundation grants.

Over the years, participants in the program have consistently shown not only an increase in their ecological knowledge and skill in applying field techniques, but also motivation and excitement for bringing real-world science into their classrooms. Their students have shown improvements in their attitudes towards science, knowledge and skills in science inquiry.

Rolla E. Lewis, Associate Professor, Counselor Education,
Graduate School of Education

David Douglas School District, Carol Schaeffer, Director of
Student Services

The PSU-David Douglas School District Community Collaboration embodies university-wide efforts that promote civic awareness. A large part of school counselor educators' work focuses on promoting social justice and taking civic action. Successful civic action means counselor educators must leave the university and enter the community. Entering the community means listening and recognizing that local knowledge can inform professional practice just as university knowledge can inform local practices. Counselor educator conversations with administrators and school counselors in the school district began with the assertion: "PSU is not here to colonize. We want to learn from you and work with you in the service of children and families; we also recognize that our work within the district may influence what you do, just as your work will influence what we do." In other words, let's define a co-evolutionary mutually beneficial collaborative project with well-articulated goals.

The Collaboration represents a partnership that has developed and evolved over time - since 1998 it has provided over 24,000 hours of service and will continue to progress as long as it exists. Some of the measurable outcomes for the Collaboration include: the counseling services provided at the After-School Clinic, the Effective Teaching hours, and close to 3000 intern hours of service each year to the David Douglas School District.

Michael Taylor, Assistant Professor, Child and Family
Studies

Jen Klapperich & Zoe Hayes-Marshall, Students, Child and
Family Studies

InAct Recovery Program, Rose Lee Jaffe & Aria Jackson

PSU students were instrumental in establishing, funding, and developing the InAct childcare program through a community-based practicum in Child and Family Studies (CFS) at PSU. The childcare program at InAct, Inc., a Portland chemical dependency and mental health treatment agency, opened in November 2003 enabling InAct clients to focus on treatment activities while providing their children with a safe and positive environment, free of charge. Seeing the great need for on-site childcare, Child and Family Studies students Jen Klapperich and Zoe Hayes-Marshall worked for six months

writing a plan, soliciting donations and grants, painting and furnishing the room, and later providing childcare themselves.

Goals for students in the Child and Family Studies program include recognizing forces that can hinder the positive development of children and assuming the role of change agent regarding issues and community needs that affect children, youth and their families. The CFS students, faculty and community partners have advanced these goals and demonstrated excellence in civic engagement through establishing a childcare program at the InAct recovery program.

Excellence in Departmental Civic Engagement

The following centers are recognized for making their engagement with community a central aspect of their aggregate approach to student learning and scholarship. They achieve this by a) utilizing community-based learning to facilitate students' integration of community work and reflection into their academic study; b) encouraging the scholarship of engagement where participatory action or applied research is pursued; and c) providing support to key departmental initiatives which engage the community in efforts to fulfill the University's mission.

The Multicultural Center

The Multicultural Center's continuing focus is on community-oriented programming and student participation in co-curricular activity outside the confines of PSU. Since its rebirth a couple of years ago, the Center has embarked on a steady and durable campaign to forge and strengthen links with community groups, action agencies and grassroots social organizations. In keeping with Portland State University's motto of "Let Knowledge Serve the City", the Multicultural Center's main thrust has been to engage and collaborate with lesser-known, highly effective, local non-profit entities whose objectives dovetail roundly with the Multicultural Center's mission of broad social awareness and student learning.

The Women's Resource Center

The Women's Resource Center is an engaged department; community involvement is central to the Center's work. The Center views community involvement as both students learning from working with the community and community groups' participation in the Center's projects and events. The Center's work to engage community is exemplary because students are involved in all stages of community involvement and are encouraged to reflect and evaluate their work regularly. Examples of the Center's work with community include events, sharing resources such as trainings and videos, and community advisors and mentors for students.

T.I.P.S (Teaching Improvement Process) for GTAs

Teaching Assistants sharing their ideas on teaching, learning, and GA development.

So You Want to be a Teacher, But You Don't Have Enough Opportunities to Teach

Sandy Hodges, Graduate Teaching Assistant, Psychology, *shodges@pdx.edu*

I will never forget the day I realized that I would graduate from PSU and in all likelihood apply for teaching positions without having taught a single class of my own. I was terrified. Two years later, however, I am getting ready to graduate, still have not taught a class of my own, and yet feel confident that I will do well in my teaching career. Sound strange? I will admit that I thought such a thing would not be possible either, but with the help of some great teachers and mentors, and a little creativity, I found that I was able to learn a great deal about teaching. Below are some things I found helpful in preparing for a career in teaching without teaching a class of my own.

1. Observe and reflect on teachers around you.

When you see an example of teaching you like, or even ones you don't, write about it. What was the situation and how did the teacher handle it? What did you like about the teacher's actions? What would you have done differently and why? Any time you see something that catches your eye write about it. Some people to observe include: the faculty you TA for, the faculty in the classes you are taking, mentors, and other students teaching each other.

Don't forget to include materials as well. If you see a syllabus you like, take a few minutes to write down what you liked about it. These reflections will come in handy when the time comes for you to plan your own class presentations, materials, teaching portfolio, and interactions with your own students.

2. Offer to guest lecture or lead review sessions.

Many teachers are happy to have graduate students present a topic in their class, or even lecture for the entire period. This gives the students in the class a chance to see another perspective, and allows you a chance to practice your teaching and presentation skills. You might approach the faculty you assist, your advisor, professors of classes you have taken, and other professors in your department. Don't forget to reflect on and write about your experiences.

3. Look outside your home department. There are many opportunities to learn about teaching skills at PSU, so don't hesitate to look around. One place to begin your search is to look for classes in other departments that may be relevant to your teaching. For example, the Speech Communication department offers a class on public speaking. The Psychology department offers classes on learning, and cognition, and EPFA offers a class on teaching adult learners. You could also take some classes from the Chicano/Latino Studies, Black Studies, or the International Studies departments to learn how students from a variety of cultures view the classroom.

There are also seminar classes (IST 510: Graduate Assistant Professional Development) offered through Interdisciplinary Studies specifically for graduate assistants. They include topics such as instructional communication, grading and evaluation, discussion and group work facilitation, diversity in the classroom, and portfolio development. These classes are designed for all graduate assistants who are interested in teaching, not just those who are currently teaching a class; they were an excellent starting point for me, and I learned a great deal from them.

In addition to classes, there are other opportunities to learn about and be exposed to teaching methods, such as the Carnegie Campus Conversation Teaching Excellence Series and the Professional Development Brownbag, a weekly meeting of graduate students interested in teaching careers in higher education. All of these programs offer a variety of teaching tips and examples, and will provide you with an opportunity to get to know others who are also interested in teaching.

4. Put together a portfolio. Developing a teaching portfolio not only allows you to see how much you have already accomplished in preparation for teaching, but also helps you identify what areas you would like to improve upon or learn more about. Putting together a teaching philosophy forces you to examine what you truly believe about good teaching and the kind of teacher you want to become, which in turn effects how you observe and reflect upon what you are learning about teaching. (For more on teaching portfolios, see the spring 2003 *Faculty Focus* article, "The Professional and Teaching Portfolio: What Is It and Why Would I Need One?" by Graduate Mentor Patti Haack.)

5. Create samples. When the time comes for you to teach a class of your own, you will need to prepare a variety of things such as lesson plans, syllabi, exams, grading rubrics, and so forth. Now is the perfect time to design some prototypes. Show your work to instructors or other graduate assistants and capture their feedback. Reflect on the feedback and make any changes and adjustments to your work. Take some time to write down what each person had to say, and why you made any changes or not. This will give you a head start for when you prepare for your first class, and will be a great addition to your teaching portfolio.

With some creativity and a little persistence, you will be amazed at the number of opportunities for professional development available to GAs at PSU, and at how much you can learn and apply even without a class of your own to teach.

FIRST - Faculty Institutional Research and Scholarship Teams

*A new program sponsored by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning
and the Center for Academic Excellence*

FIRST - Faculty Institutional Research and Scholarship Teams is a new program beginning in September 2004 sponsored by the Office of Institutional Research (OIRP) and the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE). FIRST provide opportunities for Portland State faculty to engage in discussions of institutional direction and identity. The program hopes to sponsor new teams each academic year, with topics varying according to institutional needs and concerns. Each team will consist of three to five people and will produce a brief white paper that will be received by the President and Provost, and by faculty governance structures and other campus groups as specified in each team description. Each FIRST team will be assigned a CAE Graduate Assistant who will be available for three hours a week and will have access to CAE and OIRP staff as needed. Funding of up to \$3000 per team will be available. Projects for the 2004-2005 academic year are described below.

Institutional Assessment

Many Portland State faculty engage in classroom or program assessment; most departments have developed learning objectives and assessment plans, and some have conducted student learning assessments that have led to program improvements. Information on this activity has been recorded on the Departmental Profile website (<http://www.programreview.pdx.edu/assessment>). But what does it all add up to? Does all our assessment work so far also add to our institutional self-knowledge? Are there characteristics of our assessment work that can be identified and described? This FIRST team will study the information available on the Departmental Profile website and elsewhere, looking for general knowledge about or insight into Portland State's educational values and practices. By the end of the winter term 2005, the team will present a white paper to the Assessment Resource Network and by the Educational Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate. OIRP will also ask this team to review the selection of Departmental Profile assessment pages to be included in the accreditation self-study materials on the Institutional Portfolio; that review, which will be informal, will be requested at the end of fall term.

Curricular Philosophy

Portland State has garnered national attention for curricular innovation, largely due to our focus on civic engagement and the design of the University Studies program. Why have these innovations appeared here? Are they expressions of the curricular heart of the institution and its faculty? This FIRST team will reflect on whether the Portland State faculty is drawn together by a central philosophical tendency regarding curriculum, and whether our existing curriculum appropriately reflects these central philosophies. The team will examine presentations on curriculum on the Institutional Portfolio, the University Studies website, and on departmental websites to explore what aspects of Portland State's curriculum align with the institution's stated mission, values, and vision. By the end of the winter term 2005, the team will present a white paper to the University Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Council, and the Educational Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate. OIRP will also ask this team to review the manner in which Portland State's curriculum is represented on the Institutional Portfolio; that review, which will be informal, will be requested at the end of fall term.

Interested faculty should submit their FIRST 2004-2005 application by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 28, 2004 to the Center for Academic Excellence. Applications can be emailed to caestaff@pdx.edu and/or delivered in hard copy to the CAE in 303 Cramer Hall. FIRST application details can be found at the following web address: <http://www.cae.pdx.edu/FIRST.htm>. Applications are welcome from individual faculty or from groups of faculty who propose to work together. Groups may write one application for the group, but must provide contact information for each group member. Applications will be reviewed by the CAE and OIRP directors and staff, and selected faculty will be notified by June 11, 2004. CAE staff will communicate with all teams this summer to organize team meeting schedules for fall term.

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Levels of Learning - Michael A. Toth

ing as simply a more refined or abstract version of content. They seem to have relatively little difficulty shifting the focus of their learning from knowing about the Marshall Plan to the concept of international policy, although it may have to be pointed out—more than once or twice—for them to do so.

Third is a level clearly more abstract and a bit harder to grasp; this is the level of PRINCIPLES. A principle usually summarizes a pattern exhibited in diverse concrete instances. A student can study the concrete events that together combined to create America's Great Depression of the 1930's; abstracted from those events and useful to explain what happened might be the principles of supply and demand. From a sociological perspective we might assign some of the heightened awareness of the poverty of the period to the principle of relative deprivation. Such principles would find more expression in economics and sociology than history; accordingly, we tend to think of the disciplines of economics and sociology as more abstract than history.

These first three levels represent the explicit or manifest aspects of any course being taught; they are what the course appears to be concentrated upon. But there are several additional levels that are more implicit and covert than these. Learning at these additional levels tends to occur while the students' conscious attention is addressed to the first three; it is, so to speak, something that happens while the student's intellectual back is turned.

What I think of as this "second tier" of learning begins with the fourth level of NUCLEAR or CORE THEMES. Beyond the content, concepts, and principles of every discipline lie what Arthur Lovejoy has called its "component elements." In my own discipline, Robert Nisbet captured five such component elements in his identification of the "unit ideas" or essential themes of the sociological tradition. Nisbet saw these unit ideas--community, authority, status, the sacred, and alienation--as underlying the entire discipline, both defining and effectively unifying it at the same time. While there may not be universal agreement as to a particular discipline's nuclear or core themes, most instructors would agree there is some common set of ideas that students should acquire through their exposure to the discipline. However incompletely articulated, such core themes or unit ideas are almost always present in every discipline from the introductory course on.

A fifth level is that of PROCESS and METHODS. This refers to both the general process (e.g., critical analysis or the systematic application of inductive reasoning) and the specific methods appropriate to a particular discipline (e.g., empiricism or, even more particularly, experimental design). It is at this level that the student experiences how something comes to be known, accepted, or believed by those within the discipline and begins to become practiced in the epistemologies that sustain that discipline's claims to credibility. In many disciplines, one or both of these may be taught directly

in, for example, a methods or laboratory course.

A sixth level is that of the PERSPECTIVE of the discipline itself. This is the unique orientation or angle of analysis that gives the particular discipline its distinctive and unique character. In some disciplines it has been explicitly named, as in C. Wright Mill's famous description of "the sociological imagination" or in economists' classic assumption of "rational man," but this may not be true for all disciplines. But whether or not it is specified and described, it is often unwittingly amalgamated as a cumulative result of continued experience and exposure. Again it bears noting that such perspectives are not always universal or unitary within any specific discipline. And, as with themes, perspectives are much more the experientially constructed possessions of the initiated than of the novice.

The last two levels may actually be more akin to meta-levels. One is that of ISSUES and CONTROVERSIES within and about the discipline itself. Within any given discipline there is unlikely to be complete agreement at any of these six levels: on-going arguments and debates characterize the intellectual process, and there are continuing disagreements about what a discipline should consist of (content), how it should define its terms (concepts), what consistencies it can claim (principles), what procedures and techniques supply it with veracity (process and methods), the ways in which it views--or should view--the world (perspective).

There is finally a curious eighth level--that of the MEDIUM. This refers to the heuristic approach, of the instructor him or herself. That is, the teacher as a particular individual presents a distinct way of grappling with, and of knowing and assimilating the content and the other six levels named above. Often the teacher does this in ways that she or he is not fully aware; this is one level about which the learner may, in fact, be more cognizant and perceptive than the teacher. We are increasingly sensitive to the different ways of knowing that different people present, not only in their individual styles, but also within the learned assumptions of words, attitudes, and actions of the groups in which they locate their significant identities.

The more explicitly we can identify what we want to teach at each of these levels the more likely students will be able to learn at each of these levels. Perhaps even more importantly, an awareness of these different levels can help to inform us in deciding what, after all, we are really trying to do in our particular corner of that great big shop we call higher education, and whether or not we're doing it well.

Continued from Page One

Peer-Led Team Learning in Large Lecture Classes - Carl C. Wamser

resources with representative problems (see the websites referenced at the end this article).

Assessment of the influence of the workshops has been facilitated somewhat by the fact that only a fraction of the class enrolls; this creates a natural (but not ideal) control group. Data from workshop and non-workshop students in the full-year organic chemistry course have been monitored over the past five years using three criteria. Student success is simply the fraction of students, compared to all those who start the course, who attain a grade of C- or higher. Student persistence is the fraction of students who complete all three terms of the course in sequence that year successfully (where success is defined as previously). Student performance is the actual percentage of course points accumulated, for all those students who complete the course. We also have data for student scores on a standardized exam from the American Chemical Society, with percentile rankings against a nationwide group of hundreds of students who have taken the same exam. The data imply that workshop students do significantly better in all three categories, as illustrated in the table below.

	Success C- or higher (D or lower)	Persistence all 3 terms	Performance course % ACS %-ile
Workshop	83 % (17 %)	53 %	71 % 85 %-ile
Non-workshop	68 % (32 %)	28 %	64 % 80 %-ile

A detailed comparison of the characteristics of the two groups makes the analysis a little more complicated. Workshop students self-select into their group, and therefore could be considered to have greater motivation. Furthermore, we find that the workshop students carry a slightly higher grade-point average (GPA) in all other courses taken at PSU. Therefore we have compared student grades outside of the course (PSU GPA) with course performance (in percentage of total points). Workshop students maintain an edge over non-workshop students in keeping their organic chemistry course grade close to their overall grades. Preliminary analysis indicates that the workshop experience adds about 5 percentage points to a student's grade, with the effect somewhat larger for students who come into the course with lower GPAs. The data are being worked up for publication shortly.

Peer-led team learning (PLTL) is a national initiative that now encompasses several different disciplines. PLTL has been funded by the National Science Foundation nationwide and at PSU. The national PLTL project has the following informative web site, <http://www.pltl.org>, as does the PSU PLTL effort, <http://chem.pdx.edu/~wamserc/ChemWorkshops/>. Much of the success of this program is due to the superb peer leaders; their dedication and skills have been impressive.

CAE Faculty Resource Library Teaching & Learning Resources

PSU faculty are welcome to check out the following books on teaching and learning from the Center for Academic Excellence Faculty Resource Library located in room #303 Cramer Hall, 503-725-5642, cae@pdx.edu.

Davis, Todd M., Hilman Murrell, Patricia. *Turning Teaching into Learning - The Role of Student Responsibility in the Collegiate Experience*. Association for the Study of Higher Education

Gedalof, Allan J.. *The Green Guide No. 1: Teaching Large Classes*. Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Guillaume, Andrea M.. *Classroom Teaching: A Primer for New Professionals*. Merrill-Prentice Hall

Guillaume, Andrea M.. *Student Assisted Teaching*. Merrill-Prentice Hall.

Johnson, David, Johnson, Roger, Smith, Karl. *Cooperative Learning: Increasing College Faculty Instructional Productivity*. The George Washington University.

Logan, Regina Lopata, Fromberg, Robert. *Peers in the Classroom: Case Studies in Adult Higher Education*. New Forums Press, Inc.

Stanley, Christine A., Porter, M. Erin. *Engaging Large Classes: Strategies and Techniques for College Faculty*. Anker

Stein, Ruth Federman; Hurd, Sandra. *Using Student Teams In The Classroom: A Faculty Guide*. Anker Publishing Company

Thousand, Jacqueline S., Villa, Richard A., Nevin, Ann A.. *Creativity and Collaborative Learning: Practical Guide to Empowering Students and Teachers*. Paul H Brookes Publishing Company

Whitman, Neil A.. *Peer Teaching-To Teach is to Learn Twice*. Association for the Study of Higher Education

FACULTY FOCUS

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The deadline for receipt of articles and announcements you wish to submit for possible publication in the upcoming issue of the *FACULTY FOCUS* is Monday, October 25, 2004. Your article should be no longer than 800 words. Please submit a Microsoft Word formatted copy on disk or emailed to the Center for Academic Excellence: 303 Cramer Hall, cae@pdx.edu, 725-5642. Please include your title, department or college and your e-mail address. Once a decision is made about your submission, the Editor will contact you.

Teacher Education Committee (TEC)

Greg Jacob, TEC Chair and Assistant Professor of English, jacobg@pdx.edu

The Teacher Education Committee (TEC) is key university-wide committee that is engaged in many on-going activities that few faculty and staff at PSU are aware of. TEC serves in an advisory capacity to coordinate activities of the schools, colleges, and departments of the University that are directly involved in teacher education. The TEC provides a direct communication link between the Graduate School of Education (GSE), the unit directly responsible for teacher education, and those departments across the university involved in the education of teacher candidates. Faculty from 13 different departments and schools serve on TEC, which meets once a month for two hours. Committee members have worked to strengthen undergraduate opportunities for students interested in teaching in primary, middle and secondary schools by identifying concerns and articulating educational pathways which include both coursework and field experiences. The charge of TEC is as challenging and engaging as the priorities and goals set forth each academic year by the members

at a planning retreat, usually during the summer or early fall. Last year TEC asked how content areas can be successfully incorporated into the Continuing Licensure program; offered Teaching as a Career (ED 199) that was piloted during spring term 2002 to provide an opportunity for undergraduates who may be interested in teaching to explore themes of schooling, learning, and teaching; created subcommittees to look into current prerequisites and admission requirements for the Graduate School of Education and to identify courses across all departments that may be appropriate for undergraduate students interested in the field of education.

This academic year TEC is trying to find better connections between content departments and Continuing Licensure requirements, to strengthen connections with secondary advisors and supervisors, and to continue to explore university-wide pathways and advising. Our meetings are open and faculty are welcome to visit. Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month.

Mark Your Calendars!

FOCUS ON FACULTY 2004

Tuesday, September 21st

8:30 am - 2:00 pm

3rd Floor of Cramer Hall

You are invited to join others from across the PSU campus to participate in a variety of activities which showcase the talents of our faculty and staff at PSU.

September 21st is a day to Focus on Faculty. Stop by the 3rd floor of Cramer Hall anytime between 8:30 am and 2:00 pm to join in discussions and mini-workshops around current issues in teaching and learning in higher education.

Sponsored by:

The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) and The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE)

If you are interested in presenting a short session at the Focus on Faculty 2004, please contact us to discuss your session idea or submit a session proposal to the Center for Academic Excellence at 303 Cramer Hall or cae@pdx.edu by **June 11, 2004**.