Overview of the CRTE

- Year of the Syllabus & Accreditation
- Teaching Matters
- Professional Development
- Teaching Portfolios
- Student-Peer Mentoring
- English Language Institute

Improvements in Proficiencies as Reported by Seniors on UCUES 2006

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Teaching Matters:

A workshop series just for graduate students!

- Early October begins with panel of experienced T.A.s (any volunteers? See me!)
- Each semester 4-5 presentations or panels related to improving teaching. Introduced by a graduate student who leads questions following faculty presentation.
- Instructional internships available -- Robert Ochsner will explain later today.

Teaching Support & Assessment

- Grant-writing workshop
- Workshop partnerships with Graduate Division and Career Services

Teaching Portfolios

- I. Identify the various types e-portfolios in the academic context
- II. Understand the processes that go into the construction of a teaching e-portfolio
- III. Begin designing your own e-portfolio for teaching and/or learning purposes

Peer Mentoring Program

"Students helping students. That's what we're all about."

peermentoring.ucmerced.edu
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English Language Institute

- Facilitating the transition of international graduate students into their role as teaching assistants
- Promoting the teaching and learning of students whose first language is not English
  - Providing programs for students
  - Assisting faculty in meeting the needs of this student group

Teaching Diverse Students

Working with Underrepresented Students

Mary S. Smith

- Set context
- Definition of terms
- Implications of students' background on the classroom
- Collaborate on means of support

Put Yourself in Their Shoes - Use Your Imagination

- You have been always been a successful student in your educational career
- Opportunity to study in "dream" location and have a life-changing opportunity
- Language spoken is not the dominant language of your home or even your schooling
- You are not proficient in that language
- No one close to you has ever been there
- Everyone says you'd be crazy not to go

Considerations for Your Decision (with a peer determine)

- Why might you accept?
- Why might you be afraid to accept?
- What challenges would you face?
- What strategies would you use to meet those challenges - before & after going?
- Why might your family encourage you to go?
- Why might they try to keep you from going?
- What fears might they have?
- What expectations might they have on you while you are in your new role?

What factors help assure student success? (with peer(s) determine)

- Support Networks
  - Parents
  - Peers
  - Educational Preparation
- Personal Traits or States
- Universal qualities needed for success

Demographics of UC Merced Incoming Freshmen

- Male - 54%
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- Speak a language other than English at home
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Definition

- Generation 1.5 - *bilingual U.S. resident students who enter U.S. colleges and university by way of K-12 schools* (Harklau, Losey, & Siegel, 1999, p. 1)
- First-Generation - first in family to attend an institution of higher education

Backgrounds of Underrepresented Students

- Identity
- Culture
  - Home
  - School
  - Peers
- Education
  - Home literacy
  - 1st Language & English
  - School Progress & Expectations

Recertification as Proficient in English - Reading & Writing

- Evaluated on tasks appropriate at 4th grade level
- Double the work
  - Learning English
  - Learning subjects being taught in English
  - Moving from context-supported language to decontextualized language (playground, interpersonal L. versus academic L)

First-Generation

- Lack of *tacit knowledge*
  - What to expect
  - How to behave
- Financial resources
- Cultural differences

Recognizing Potential Divides

- How might their backgrounds disadvantage their preparedness to learn?
- How might it provide strengths?
- How might it influence what happens in the classroom?
- What can you do to facilitate their success?

Mentor & Model

- Filling in the *tacit knowledge* gaps - make explicit the "habits of the mind"
- Building their vocabulary for your field - deliberately
- Facing reading & writing challenges - practically

Scaffold their Learning

- Know backgrounds
- Increase opportunities for their success:
  - Increased wait time
  - Give time to think about the answer, share with peer, then answer in larger setting
  - Have students write:
    - Summary of lecture (starting point for clarifying)
    - *Exit Tickets* (means of seeing what is still unknown after Discussion sections or Lab)
- Other Ideas?

See the tips sheet in the folder and send us any additional insights and practices that you find successful.

Remember. Your influence may be key in assuring the successful initiation of students into the world of the Academy.

It's worth your efforts!

Introduction Ice Breaker: *Meet your Neighbor!*

- Name
- Discipline
- Academic and personal interests
- Course assignments
- Hopes and fears about teaching

Objectives for the First Day of Class

from UC Berkeley TA Handbook

- Establish a welcoming classroom environment
- Define objectives for the classroom
- Review syllabus
- Discuss related campus policies
- Introduce yourself, and have students introduce themselves in small groups (or an icebreaker)
- Discuss and establish guidelines for discussion.
- Have students engage with class material.
- Check for any enrollment issues.

Get off to a great start: *Prepare for the First Day of Class*!

1) Build community through introductions and ice breakers to know your students as people & learners
2) Share policies to communicate basic expectations
3) Emphasize opportunities for learning beyond the classroom

Preparing for the First Day of Class

Segment 1: *How* and *why* will you build community?

- Introduce yourself and share a bit about yourself.
- Use an 'icebreaker' to take roll and begin to learn each others' names, etc.
- Establish community beyond simply learning names (e.g. background interests, previous courses, expectations from the course)

Preparing for the First Day of Class

Segment 2: *How* and *why* will you share policies & expectations?

- Cooperatively establish classroom rules for conducting discussions
- Discuss academic honesty expectations (rules for group work, policy overview, etc.)
- Have students review the syllabus and answer questions (even if they have reviewed it previously)

Preparing for the First Day of Class

Segment 3: *How* and *why* will you communicate opportunities for learning beyond the classroom?

- Explain the value of office hours – invite, encourage, or require students to attend
- Discuss tutoring, mentoring, non-credit workshops, seminars, and similar academic-support sessions
- Identify relevant student clubs and organizations

Activity

Goal: Working individually and then in groups, develop a lesson plan for the first day of class

- Individually brainstorm ideas for why and how you will achieve the outcomes for your assigned segment
- Then, working in groups of about four introduce all ideas
- Develop a plan for your segment based on consensus about best practices for achieving those outcomes
- Designate one person as the recorder of discussion
- Final product should be a description of why and how you will instruct your segment

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1:30-2:00

A1. Dealing with disruptive students and ensuring community/ COB 113
A2. Conducting discussion sections (for TAs in NS and SofE)/COB 116
A3. Organizing group-work sessions (for TAs in SSHA)/COB 105

2:05-2:45

B1. Designing reliable assessments of student learning/COB 113
B2. Conducting discussion sections (for TAs in SSHA)/COB 116
B3. Organizing group-work sessions (for TAs in NS and SofE) COB 105

2:50-3:20

C1. Dealing with disruptive students and ensuring community/COB 113
C2. Using e-portfolios for course, professional, and evaluation purposes/COB 116
C3. Referring students to the right academic-support services (tutoring, mentoring, counseling, learning disabilities, etc.)/COB 105

Academic Integrity: The Foundation of the Academic Enterprise

Panel Participants

- Le Trice Curl, Student Affairs
- Tom Hothem, Writing Program
- Laura Martin, NS and CRTE
- Trevor Albertson, SSHA

Academic Integrity

Panel Questions

- What are some of the most effective ways to promote academic integrity?
- In your experience, what are common ways UCM students misunderstand the academic integrity policy?
- What makes addressing academic dishonesty difficult, and how can we take action?

Classroom Issues: Quick prevention tips!

from U of Minnesota TA Handbook

- Include academic honesty policy in syllabus
- Establish reasonable collaboration rules
- Try to know your students
- Alternate seating during exams
- Clarify, in advance of the exam, when and how electronic devices should be used
- Circulate around the room rather than being in a fixed location
- On assignments and exams have students show their work rather than one outcome
- Take action!

Faculty Introductions

- Name
- Discipline
- Academic and personal interests
- Course assignments
- Questions about teaching at UCM?

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- Topics could include teaching with new technologies, leading effective discussion sections and / or laboratories, engaging students in learning, developing a teaching portfolio, and integrating teaching and research

Faculty Development

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  - September 16/17: "Will this Syllabus Meet WASC Accreditation Standards? You Be the Judge!"
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Mary S. Smith

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- Lack of *tacit knowledge*
  - What to expect
  - How to behave
- Financial resources
  - Safety & security & leisure to study
  - Life Experiences
- Cultural differences
  - Family expectations
  - University expectations

Recognizing Potential Divides

- How might their backgrounds disadvantage their preparedness to learn?
- How might it provide strengths?
- How might their background create a disconnect with your teaching or expectations?
- What can you do (or have you done) to facilitate their success?

Research your classroom

- Teaching for your students & your discipline
- What have you observed among your students
- What questions have come to mind
- What evidence do you have in your classroom
- Solutions optimally are local

"Easy to implement" steps

- Learn students' backgrounds
- Create threaded lectures
- Increase your wait time
- Maximize opportunities for them to answer correctly (think/write down, pair/share)
- Introduce vocabulary explicitly & expect them to use it
- Demonstrate your own academic practices - overtly
- Have *entrance* or *exit* tickets - where they summarize the lecture or write what still puzzles

Example of focusing students on content

- Begin with a question or problem
  - Allow 5 min. for pairs to conclude & then summarize
- Give 1st lecture segment (10-15 min. to capitalize on attention span)
- Second task posed by lecturer
  - Give individual time to think/write, then pair/share
- Repeat until final summary

Induction implies …

- Legitimate peripheral participation in *Communities of Practice* (Lave & Wenger) - initiation, showing the ropes
- Mentoring or demonstrating the target attitudes and behaviors
- Bridging the gap between what is known and unknown, what is present and what is lacking

Rethinking the Syllabus

- Discussion: What defines an effective and successful syllabus?
- Activity: Review sample syllabi

Outcomes for this Presentation

Faculty will better understand…

- the functions of a syllabus.
- that our accreditation agency (WASC) will expect student learning outcomes in all syllabi.
- what a student learning outcome is.
- how student learning outcomes can benefit you, your students, and your course.

What are the functions of a syllabus?

- acts as a contract between faculty and students
- communicates expectations & policies to students
- establishes the standards for assessment & grading
- helps transfer responsibility for learning to the student
- helps establish positive course tone

What is in a good syllabus?

- Description of the course including goals – what the instructor will do
- Student learning outcomes – what the students will be able to do intellectually or skill-wise to demonstrate they have met course goals
- Assignments and resources clearly matched or 'aligned' to outcomes
- Assessments clearly aligned to outcomes
- Important policies that support outcomes achievement (ex. academic honesty)

What makes a good learning outcome?

- Written from the perspective, "Students will be able to…"
- Includes an action verb describing specifically what students will be able to do
  - Ex. compare and contrast, critique, predict, synthesize
  - Bloom's taxonomy – great verb resource!
- Describe student ability in a *measurable* way.
- Be understandable to students!

What are some example outcomes?

- Students will demonstrate the ability to *recognize* and *reproduce* various genres of academic writing, *attending to* the proper writing conventions. (M. Truong, Writing 1.)
- Students will demonstrate that you can *explain* why and how ethics applies to the practice of socio-cultural anthropology and to our role as citizens. (R. DeLugan, Anthropology 1)
- Given a reasonable mathematical problem, students will be able to *devise* an algorithm to solve it numerically. (F. Blanchette, Math 131.)

Activity: Draft & Critique an Outcome

Think (2 minutes):

- Individually draft a learning outcome for a course you are teaching.

Pair (5 minutes):

- Identify a partner
- Critique each other's drafts.

Share (3 minutes): What have we learned?

How can we help students be more aware of learning outcomes?

- Have students review syllabus
  - Students read in class & recap elements from memory
  - Have students record three skills they hope to learn then read syllabus and compare to course learning outcomes
  - Assign as homework & give a quick quiz the next day
  - Assign as homework to turn in a signed document saying they have read and understood it
- Reference outcomes in lectures, activities, homework, assessments, projects, labs, etc. – *WASC expects this*.
- Have students assess their own achievement of these outcomes
  - specific assignments
  - course learning portfolio

What are some benefits of learning outcomes for student learning?

- Increase transparency & support specific skill development – students don't have to guess what they should be able to do.
- Provides students with rationale for the work asked to do.
- Helps build an integrated picture of what the course is about.
- Helps them learn to be independent learners.

What are some benefits of learning outcomes for teaching?

- Asking *what do I want students to learn to do*, rather than, *what should I teach* helps..
  - focus & integrate course content
  - prioritize content
  - develop learning activities and assessments
- Shifts burden of learning to students (paradigm shift)
- Communicates to others what your course is about
- Generates evidence of 'teaching excellence'

Resources

- Center website: http://crte.ucmerced.edu
- WASC Academic Resources Conference Website: http://wascarc.org/#workshops and http://wascarc.org/#presenters
- Driscol, Amy and Woods, Swarup. *Developing Outcomes-Based Assessment for Learner-Centered Education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2007.

Assignment Design

- Discussion focus: What and how do you want your students to learn?
- Objective #1: Connecting the syllabus to classroom activities
- Objective #2: Using learning outcomes to modify curriculum

Assignment development questions

- How might students interpret the assignment?
- What are the assignments objectives?
- What does the assignment value?
- How will outcomes be measured?
- Develop a rubric
- Explain your expectations

Demonstrating Teaching Excellence

- Gregg Camfield, SSHA
- Jeff Wright, SE
- Jared Stanley, Writing Program
- Laura Martin, NS & Center

Panel Questions

- How would you define teaching excellence?
- From your experiences, what are some of the most effective ways to demonstrate teaching excellence?
- If UC Merced were to position itself as distinctively a Teaching One university, what would that entail?
- Beyond student surveys, what are some ways to involve undergraduates more directly in the assessment of teaching practices?

Center Support for Achieving Excellence in Teaching & Learning

- Center grant opportunities
- Funded participation in WASC or other Teaching & Learning workshops
- Support for external grant development
- Center workshops, consultations and other services

Center for Research on Teaching Excellence -- Faculty Development Opportunities

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