

Mediated Learning

A Newsletter by and for the Instructors of The University of Montana



Teaching and Learning Collaborative: Collaboration and Coordination

Sue Samson, Associate Professor, Mansfield Library

Vicki Pengelly, Director of Client Services, Computing and Information Services

In November, the Technology and Learning Collaborative was approved by Provost Muir and endorsed by the Center for Teaching Excellence. As a new member of the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Technology and Learning Collaborative provides the framework for the implementation of instructional technology at UM. Vicki Pengelly, Computing and Information Services, serves as Chair of the Technology and Learning Collaborative. Sue Samson, Mansfield Library, serves on the Board of the

Center for Teaching Excellence as a liaison. The membership¹ includes contributing faculty and staff from across the campus who are engaged in various aspects of developing, delivering or supporting instructional technology.

Do you want to integrate an electronic discussion group into one of your classes? Would you like to have your students

(See COLLABORATIVE, page 4)

Excellent Teaching: An Opinion of an Expert Student

Wes Samson

Senior, Classics

The prospect of writing this work on teaching was given to me on a Friday afternoon. As soon as I heard the subject of the paper, I had a good number of responses in mind, none of them constructive. I also wondered just what I could say about teaching. Then I began to give the paper some thought and reviewed the teachers I've had through high school and now four years at the University. I searched for those teachers that stood out in my mind and then wondered just what made them stand out. I finally settled upon three things that I've seen

used well by some teachers and poorly by others. It is important for the teacher to keep the students relaxed and focused, and this can be done with a sense of humor, a good course plan, and a good course format.

A sense of humor is of prime importance. This is not a suggestion that the classroom should be confused for an improv stage, but letting students relax and laugh a little is very helpful,

(See EXCELLENT TEACHING, page 6)

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Editorial



"I envision the Center as a wide-reaching umbrella organization that provides support and recognition to all campus groups who have a core goal to promote student learning."

Welcome to the first of three issues of *Mediated Learning* for the Spring Semester.

With this issue, we are pleased to announce the expansion of the Center for Teaching Excellence. We are now affiliated with the Technology and Learning Collaborative (TLC). In Autumn 2001, the TLC received approval from Provost Lois Muir to become part of the Center for Teaching Excellence. The TLC provides the framework for the implementation of instructional technology at The University of Montana (see <http://www.umt.edu/tlc>). I am thrilled to welcome the members of the TLC: Vicki Pengelly (Chair), Shawn Clouse, Kim Granath, Bill Knowles, Mike Miller, Peggy Nesbitt, Gordy Pace, Sue Samson, Janet Sedgley, Kathy Thompson, and Bob Wachtel. I encourage you to take advantage of this collection of expert personnel in assisting you with your instructional technology needs in your classroom.

For those of you actually "keeping a scorecard," you may have noticed that we promised that this issue would include Part II of our three-part survey of the elements of curriculum design that are common to documented successful efforts of course designs that not only teach content, but also produce measurable gains in general intellectual skills. We felt that the announcement of the affiliation of the TLC, and the associated article, was a higher priority than the immediate continuation of this series. It will resume in March.

I sincerely hope that the new affiliation of the Technology and Learning Collaborative is only the first of a series of collaborations between the Center for Teaching Excellence and groups of faculty, staff, and students on

campus. I envision the Center as a wide-reaching umbrella organization that provides support and recognition to all campus groups who have a core goal to promote student learning. Please contact me if you have an idea along these lines.

We are also pleased to announce the addition of two new members to our advisory board. Sue Samson of the Mansfield Library will represent the interests of the TLC. Sue is the Humanities Librarian and Information Services Coordinator, and among many other accomplishments, she designed and found funding for the Student Learning Center, a state-of-the-art electronic classroom, for the more than 5,000 students who meet at the Mansfield Library for instruction each academic year.

Taren Grass, Chair of the Graduate Student Association, will represent the interests of students on campus. The Graduate Student Association is an organization created to improve the quality of education for graduate students, communicate and support research interests of graduate students, recommend members for policy making and administrative committees on campus, and overall, advocate graduate student concerns. Taren is a fourth-year graduate student in Pharmacology/Pharmaceutical Sciences.

In closing, please allow me to ask again for your contributions to this newsletter. Do you know a good student who has a unique opinion on excellence in teaching? Do you have an innovative approach in your classroom? Do you have an interesting psychological theory base that drives your teaching methodologies? If so, let me know, and I'll see to it that your contribution gets published in this forum.



School of Education Workshop

Monday, March 11th, 9am-1pm, Gallagher Business Building Boardroom

Dr. Elaine Johnson

"Contextual Teaching and Learning: What it is and why it works"

Dr. Elaine Johnson, a noted authority on brain-compatible teaching and contextual learning, is coauthor of a series of four contextual-learning textbooks for grades 9 through 12, *Literature for Life and Work*. Among Johnson's numerous awards for distinguished teaching are the Charles Wright Academy Inspirational Faculty Award, a University of Chicago Outstanding Teacher Award, and appointment as an Honorary Fellow of Huron College.

Teaching Profile: Beverly Chin, Department of English

Brian Ehlert
Sophomore, Chemistry

Professor Beverly Chin has an outstanding background full of elected positions and awards. She received her B.A. and M.A. in English from Florida State University. For two years she taught high school English during the day and adult education reading courses in the evening. Because she wanted to learn more about reading instruction, she continued her studies and earned her Ph.D. from the University of Oregon in Curriculum and Instruction. As a Graduate Teaching Fellow at the University of Oregon, Chin taught reading methods courses and supervised student teachers. Chin has taught at a number of universities, including the University of New Orleans, Arizona State University, and the University of Central Florida. Chin has been at The University of Montana since 1981 where she currently teaches upper level undergraduate and graduate courses in the English Teaching Program.

Chin has a national reputation in English language arts education. In 1993 she was elected to the presidential team of the National Council of Teachers of English, and served as the president from 1995 to 1996, when the national content standards for English language arts were published. In 1995, she was also elected to serve on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and currently has two more years on that Board. She has been a consultant for the American Overseas Schools. From 1981 to 1993 Chin directed the Montana Writing Project, and will serve as the co-director starting this summer. In October 2001, Chin received the Distinguished Educator Award from the Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts.

Being involved in national and state organizations helps Chin stay current on important national and state issues in the teaching of English language arts. Her work enables her to help beginning and experienced teachers work more effectively and creatively with their own students. Her teaching expertise

is reflected in the books she has written or edited. She has written two General Equivalency Diploma (GED) books: *On Your Own: Writing Process* and *On Your Own: Grammar*. She is the editor for the *Dictionary of Characters in Children's Literature*, the contributing editor for *Chinese American Literature*, and the senior consultant for *Glencoe Literature: The Reader's Choice, Asian American Literature* and *Grammar for Writing*. Chin says that everything she does "is synergistic." Her research, publications, and professional service all relate to her teaching.

Chin attends conferences to learn the latest research and best practices in teacher education. She strives to create a classroom environment in which every student is valued, respected, and engaged. She uses classroom management and structured, practical teaching projects to create this safe, positive learning environment. While doing these projects, the students learn to write lesson plans and teach them to their classmates or to students in middle school or high school. At first Chin starts small, having the students write lesson plans for one to two days. Then she gradually has them write longer and larger units that take two to six weeks. Goldie Golding, a first year Masters student of Chin's, likes this about Chin's style. "Everything builds up to one large assignment. There is no anxiety because you've already worked steps toward that assignment." During this final teaching project, students select a theme for a literature unit or a concept for a language unit. They are then responsible for writing lesson plans for four to six weeks. They are also encouraged to bring in other print and non-print materials that relate to their theme. Fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, film as well as other subjects are integrated to enrich the language or literature unit. After the students have written their lesson plans, they present their lessons as if they were teaching it in an actual classroom. These teaching projects are how Chin evaluates the students, which is another thing



Professor Beverly Chin

"She strives to create a classroom environment in which every student is valued, respected, and engaged."

(See CHIN, page 4)

Chin

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that Golding enjoys about Chin's classroom. "When she evaluates us, we don't even know we are being evaluated."

The students who take Chin's courses are beginning or experienced teachers, so it is important to Chin to teach them how to be life long learners and how to teach their own students to be life long learners. She also keeps them up to date on the standards, curriculum, and assessments in English language arts. She often looks back to her own teaching experiences in order to set goals for herself and to help her students come up with goals of their own. She wants her students to be able to develop and articulate their own philosophy of teaching. Demonstrating effective teaching practices is also very important to Chin. Chin models strategies that teachers can use to help their own students grow as writers, speakers, listeners, and viewers, as well as become responsible, caring individuals. All these goals are important to Chin. Therefore, she believes she must practice what she teaches.

"As a teacher, you must know your students as well as your subject material. If you know

your students' interests and abilities, then you will be able to reach them as individual learners. Make sure that you stay current on the latest developments in your field. Set your priorities and balance your energies." Chin values reflection. "Ask yourself if the lesson is going well, or if it is not going so well. It is very important to learn to adapt your teaching methods and materials to your students." Chin also values collaborating with colleagues. "Observe other teachers, and see how they teach and what works for them. We need to learn from each other."

Professor Chin has strong, articulate philosophies for teaching, and is very involved in her field. She stays up to date on the latest research by participating in state and national organizations and loves to share the new ideas with her students. Her writing and editing also helps her to stay current in her profession. It is clear that Chin loves her job. She makes it top priority to always be there as a mentor for her students. Chin never forgets why she became a professor, and she sets students as her number one priority.

Collaborative

(Continued from page 1)

introduced to the best ways to access academic research via the Web? Do you want to develop a Web page for class assignments? Would you like to post your reserve materials electronically? Do you want to link the wealth of online library resources to your web page? Would you like to develop a multi-media presentation? Does training in the use of a particular software seem like a good idea? The Technology and Learning Collaborative will connect you with the best support persons to make these things happen.

The intent of the Technology and Learning Center is to provide high-quality instructional technology, coordinate the instructional technology initiatives on campus, and provide training and support in a collaborative environment.

Specifically, the goals include the following:

- to serve as a clearinghouse for information related to instructional technology resources and services (www.umt.edu/tlc);
- to disseminate information to faculty about the resources and support available for instructional technology;
- to offer training sessions and workshops for faculty;
- to coordinate a showcase through which faculty can see how their colleagues are using instructional technology;
- to conduct demonstrations and workshops to help faculty learn about various tools and techniques they might want to use in their classes;

(See COLLABORATIVE, page 5)

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Collaborative

(Continued from page 4)

- to conduct research on new hardware, software, and other resources that may be of benefit to instructional technology;
- to coordinate open forums and brainstorming sessions to discuss resources, needs, strategies and priorities;
- to ensure that projects have well-rounded support by involving all the parties who can best support a given project (librarians, central IT staff, departmental IT staff, courseware experts, et al.); and
- to meet on a regular basis to exchange information about classes, educational materials, technical support and other resources related to instructional technology.

Please contact Vicki Pengelly, x2405, pengellyv@mso.umt.edu, or Sue Samson, x4335, ss@selway.umt.edu with questions, suggestions, or ideas. We look forward to working with you.

¹Members of the Technology and Learning Collaborative

Vicki Pengelly, Chair

Director of Client Services, Computing and Information Services

Shawn Clouse, Director of Information Technology, School of Business

Kim Granath, Associate Professor and Electronic Resources Librarian, Mansfield Library

Bill Knowles, Professor and Chair, Department of Radio-Television, School of Journalism

Mike Miller, Webmaster, College of Arts and Sciences

Peggy Nesbitt, Program Specialist, Continuing Education

Gordy Pace, Web Portal Manager, Computing and Information Services

Sue Samson, Associate Professor and Information Services Coordinator, Mansfield Library

Janet Sedgley, Information System Support Specialist, Computing and Information Services

Kathy Thompson, Program Specialist, Client Services, Computing and Information Services

Bob Wachtel, Media Services Coordinator, Mansfield Library

Technology and Learning Collaborative Faculty Training Series

Please call Computing and Information Services at 243-4544 to reserve a place for any or all of these TLC training sessions.

Using Microsoft Office XP for Course Related Tasks

Instructor: Shawn Clouse, Technology Director, School of Business

When: Thurs, Feb 28, 2002, 3:30-4:30 pm

Location: GBB 213 Instructional Lab

This session will give you hands-on experience working with a grade book spreadsheet, developing an email distribution list, and doing an email merge to send grades to students. The email merge feature can solve the problem of how to post student grades without using social security numbers. These tasks will require the use of Excel, Word, and Outlook. You will receive a handout with step-by-step instructions to use as a resource.

Integrate Technology into the Classroom: Mansfield Library Information Resources

Instructor: Sue Samson, Associate Professor and Information Services Coordinator, Mansfield Library

When: Thurs, Mar 28, 2002, 3:30-4:30 pm

Place: Student Learning Center, MLIB 283

Integrate technology into your curriculum and strengthen the research capabilities of your students by utilizing the online resources of the Mansfield Library. This session will focus on access to the library's new web-based catalog, research capabilities of over 100 networked databases, electronic reserves, desktop access to full-text electronic journals and document delivery, and search techniques for locating and evaluating quality Web resources.

(See COLLABORATIVE, page 6)

Workshop Opportunities

Excellent Teaching



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especially in more intense upper division classes. Little things can do it—showing the graffiti scene from Monty Python’s “Life of Brian” in a Latin class, for example. Another professor shows Dilbert cartoons. I know of one who has the habit of telling bad jokes, and an anthropology professor I once had told anecdotes of FUBARed (Fowled Up Beyond All Recognition) situations that he managed to get himself in and out of while in the field. These are just a few examples, but the important thing is that they let the students relax. As the assignment load builds during the semester, students tend to get more and more stressed; paying attention and taking notes is that much more difficult. These flashes of humor can help relax those nerves and let the student take a moment to focus. It helps the student keep from burning out, or, as is said in the Classics Department, from “falling on our swords.”

“By making student participation an integral part of the class, the student becomes much more a part of the learning experience.”

The second important feature is a realistic view of what the course will accomplish. The best teachers from whom I’ve learned the most have had aggressive plans but plans that could be completed and covered during the semester. Completing all of the things that should be learned in the class has always left me with a feeling of accomplishment, that something was learned. At the end of a semester, this sense of completion makes me feel that much better about the class. If the course falls short of

covering what it should, I’m left with a feeling that I missed important ideas that were to be part of the class.

Finally, for smaller classes, the seminar format works beautifully. In my experience I’ve gotten more out of the seminar than the lecture format. Seminars forced me to study and research harder and involve myself more. In short, I feel as if I learn more from a seminar than a lecture. This obviously doesn’t work for larger classes, but teachers of smaller upper division classes should give the seminar form serious consideration. By making student participation an integral part of the class, the student becomes much more a part of the learning experience.

In my experience, these three things have kept me interested and involved in my favorite classes. Even in large lecture classes, teachers who have used those first two ideas have taught classes that I’ve enjoyed. Those flashes of humor have given me the chance to relax and look at the material in a humorous light, and a good course outline has kept the course moving and dynamic. More recently I’ve been introduced to the seminar format, and it is one that I’ve enjoyed immensely. I have had a range of good teachers at The University of Montana who have used a combination of these three ideas to great success.

Collaborative

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Multimedia Creation Resources

Instructor: Bob Wachtel, Media Services
Coordinator, Information
Technology Office

When: Thurs, Apr 18, 2002, 3:30-4:30 pm
Place: to be announced

Do you need to show details of small objects to a large class? Should your students be able to identify a special sound that is difficult to bring to the classroom? Do you have a technical process that is difficult to demonstrate in class? Digital Multimedia may

provide a solution to these problems. Attend this workshop to see some creative methods for presenting information via digital technology. Learn where and how you can produce your own Multimedia solutions and what resources are available at The University of Montana for production of these solutions. Included Topics: still image development, motion capture and editing, sound capture and editing, presentation assembly and delivery.

Grant Opportunities in Teaching and Learning

In this column, we highlight funding opportunities specifically related to teaching and learning. A brief abstract is presented, followed by the web site address from which you can obtain further information. Please contact us at cte@selway.umt.edu if you are aware of information that can be presented in the next issue of Mediated Learning.

The U.S. Department of Education, through its Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), is currently soliciting proposals under its Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education. The purpose of this competition is to promote a student-centered, North American dimension to education and training in a wide range of academic and professional disciplines that complements existing forms of bilateral and trilateral exchange programs among the three countries. The Program aims to improve the quality of human resource development in the three countries and to explore ways to prepare students for work throughout North America. Ten new consortium grants will be made. Most grants will be for four years of funding, including a first-year preparatory phase. Grants for the US consortia will likely be on the order of \$200,000 for the four-year period.

Due: 29 March 2002

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/northam/toc.html>

The U.S. Department of Education, through its National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Secondary Analysis Program, is soliciting proposals to encourage the preparation of reports that would not otherwise be available and that apply new approaches to the analysis and reporting of the NAEP and NAEP High School Transcript Studies data. Analyses and reports prepared under this program should potentially be useful to the general public, parents, educators, educational researchers, or policy makers. Priority topics

include (a) projects that use NAEP achievement data alone or in combination with other data sets to assist policy makers and educators who make decisions about curriculum and instruction, (b) projects designed to assist states in analyzing, interpreting and reporting their State-level NAEP results, (c) projects that include the development of analytic procedures that improve precision with which NAEP estimates group and subgroup performance, (d) projects that develop improved sampling procedures for national or state-level NAEP, and (e) projects to analyze and report data using statistical software developed by the project to permit more advanced analytic techniques to be readily applied to NAEP data. The estimated average award is \$85,000.

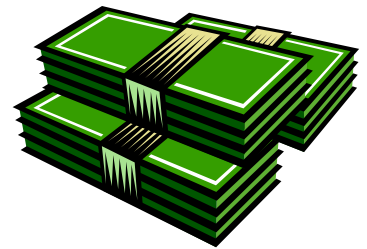
Due: 8 March 2002

<http://ed.gov/GrantApps/#84.902B>

The Division of Research, Evaluation, and Communication of the National Science Foundation, through its Evaluative Research and Evaluation Capacity Building program, seeks proposals that offer unique approaches to evaluation practice in the generation of knowledge for the education community and for broad policymaking within the research and education enterprise. Proposals may focus on evaluations of multiple education programs or projects with similar objectives, may bundle several programs or projects together to examine major science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education themes, may focus on various facets or common elements among programs or projects, or may focus on the development of capacity within the evaluation field. It is anticipated that approximately three million dollars will be available for five to ten awards in FY 2002.

Due: 1 April 2002

<http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?nsf0234>



“In our reports, the most difficult instructional moment for the students—and perhaps therefore for the teacher as well—seems to occur at the transition from the conception of knowledge as a quantitative accretion of discrete rightness...to the conception of knowledge as the qualitative assessment of contextual observations and relationships. In approaching this point of transition the student generally misconstrues what his teacher is doing, and both suffer.” *William G. Perry, Jr.*

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The University of Montana*

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The Center for Teaching Excellence at The University of Montana was established in July, 1999 when it received approval from the Board of Regents. The Center is administered out of Academic Affairs.

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The University of
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