

C.E.T.L. Newsletter

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Volume 3, Number 2

Summer 2003

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CETL congratulates Dr. Lonzy Lewis, recipient of the 2002-2003 Aldridge-McMillan Achievement Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching and the Vulcan Teaching Excellence Award.

Director's Word

STUDENT CENTERED AND QUALITY DRIVEN: CETL'S SCHOLARLY TEACHING AND THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING INITIATIVES

On August 1, 2002, Dr. Walter D. Broadnax, former Dean of the School of Public Affairs at American University in Washington, D.C., assumed the position as the second president of Clark Atlanta University. Dr. Broadnax articulated his intention to create a *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven University* in meetings with university administrators, faculty, staff and students during the summer and fall 2002.

In his inaugural address on March 21, 2003, President Broadnax elaborated further on his *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven* mantra and placed it in the context of challenges facing the University and indeed, higher education of African American and other minorities. In the process, Dr. Broadnax addressed some of the issues that are pertinent to CETL's role as the faculty development center of the University.

President Broadnax emphasized that the enterprise of the University is "... the development of young people, young men and women who, along with their parents, have sacrificed in order to attend this institution." He noted that the "breakdown in the human condition," manifested in the diminished interpersonal contact, "has begun to adversely affect the quality of services provided by businesses as well as colleges and universities." As a result, he challenged the CAU family "to make our campus a veritable refuge from this erosion of values."

According to Dr. Broadnax, to be a *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven University*, "We have to be a university that intimately and unequivocally embraces the notion that our students are the true reason for our being here. Inclusive of that is the responsibility of providing them with a quality academic environment that is without equal in all aspects, including instruction received from faculty, student

services, the academic process and extracurricular activities."

A *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven University* also requires a shift in the prevailing paradigm of the university beginning with the administration, faculty, and staff, treating students as valued customers and including making our campus creed "... living ideology which each of us embraces with conviction and pride."

Underlying President Broadnax's *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven* mantra is his understanding of the historical importance of struggle to the black experience and the challenges facing black higher education.

Acknowledging the "arduous trials" he will encounter as president of CAU, Dr. Broadnax is guided by the words of Frederick Douglass: "If there's no struggle, there is no progress." Further, he points out, "... the very existence of our people has been tethered to a legacy of struggle." Today, that struggle is manifested in the attacks on affirmative action, the growing gender disparity among African Americans and the declining number of African Americans attending college.

The director and staff at CETL are committed to making Clark Atlanta University a *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven University*. CETL's faculty development program for the period 2003-06, as articulated in its grant proposal to the Bush-Hewlett Foundation, is directed to improve teaching effectiveness of faculty members. As President Broadnax argues, "we must continually raise the bar that we set for ourselves."

CETL's focus on Scholarly Teaching (ST) and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is indeed *Student-Centered and Quality-Driven*. In the Bush-Hewlett proposal, Scholarly Teaching is defined as "... knowing about teaching and learning, pedagogy and andragogy, instructional design, teaching and learning styles, methods of assessment, as well as implementation, impact and reflective critique."¹

At Clark Atlanta University we

have distilled this definition to a functional one that focuses on the essentials of our original Teaching and Learning Across the Curriculum initiative.

Specifically, for CAU, Scholarly Teaching involves a studied approach to: (1) developing effective syllabi and assessment of student learning; (2) incorporating oral communication into the curriculum; (3) incorporating written communication into the curriculum; (4) incorporating critical thinking into the curriculum; and (5) incorporating technology into the curriculum. Hence, under the current grant initiative, Scholarly Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning will be used synonymously and interchangeably.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at CAU will encourage faculty to move to the level of research and reflection as related to effective teaching and learning. It will further encourage faculty to "... frame and systemically investigate questions related to student learning – conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth – and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it.

At CAU this engagement will focus on CAU and the teaching of African American and other minority students. The public discourse that will emerge from this initiative will likewise focus on these populations and include the scholarly productions from CAU and other HBCUs and MSIs.

¹ Taken from *Expertise and the Scholarship of Teaching*, Ronald Smith in *Scholarship Revisited: Perspectives on Scholarship of Teaching*, Ed., Carolin Kreber, Jossey-Bass Publication, P. 70.

“Faculty development activities should have as their primary purpose . . . the improvement of student Learning.”

CAU Strategic Academic Plan

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Student Centered/Quality Driven requires that faculty members be aware of and refer students as necessary to the resources available, at the university and elsewhere, to supplement classroom instruction. One of the best kept secrets on campus is the Center for Academic Achievement. Below the director, Ms. Phyllis Thakis, explains the various academic support services the CAA has available for students.

CAU's CENTER FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

by

**Ms. Phyllis Thakis, Director
Center for Academic Achievement**

The Center for Academic Achievement (CAA) is the academic support arm of the University. The primary mission of the Center for Academic Achievement is to provide to the CAU community expanded, integrated support in the area of communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and study skills), as well as to furnish assistance in the academic disciplines through tutorials and supplemental instruction.

The Center is located in the lower level of Kresge Hall. In addition to the **FREE** small group and one-on-one tutorial assistance offered through CAA's writing, speech, study skills, tutorial, and supplemental instruction components, the Center has two state-of-the-art multimedia labs, complete with internet access, available for CAU student use.

The CAA vision is threefold:

π To deliver the range of academic support services each CAU student needs to succeed in her or his collegial endeavors.

π To reach each CAU student who needs such services so that she or he can persevere to graduate and/or to meet her or his postsecondary goals.

π To provide academic support in a climate of respect for the individual, including sensitivity for cultural, linguistic, and learning styles diversity.

By providing an array of academic support services to Clark Atlanta University students, this unit supports the University's educational process at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, contributes to the overall effectiveness of learning, and promotes wise and efficient use of resources by offering developmental and enrichment activities based on an assessment of students' learning needs. These activities are developed in relationship to and in support of the regular academic program.

The provision of integrated instructional support through the various components of the Center is its major strength. These services are rendered by competent, professional, dedicated staff in a pleasant environment conducive to learning. CAA is unique in the University community in that it delivers academic support to all CAU students through **both** technological **and** human resources.

Student-Centered/Quality-Driven, the Center for Academic Achievement welcomes walk in students as well as students referred by faculty.

SPECIALIZED WRITING AS AN APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

by

**Dr. Alice E. Stephens, Associate Professor
Mass Media Arts Department**

One can say that critical effective writing is one of the crucial foundations of not only the communication arts, but also most if not all courses taught at the University. As a faculty member in the Mass Media Arts Department and instructor in the Radio/Television/ Film concentration, I observed over the years that a persistent weakness showed up in many of the otherwise technically proficient projects produced by our students. This weakness could be traced to problems in writing effective production proposals, treatments, and scripts -- the foundation of any film or video project.

The script can be said to be the crucial foundation upon which all media productions are built. There is no production in the mediums of radio, television, and film that does not include writing. In my travel grant application to attend the 2002 Austin Screenwriting Conference, I successfully made the case that the principles that control the writing process are present in the specialized writing of scriptwriting.

Even though scripts are written in formats that differ significantly from those used for writing in other college courses, e.g., the essay, research report, etc., there are basic skills which must be mastered, including organization of ideas, use of correct grammar and punctuation, ability to translate experiences and emotions into written visual equivalents, and the necessary skill of revision. In addition, scriptwriters have to employ skills related to effective story development, conceptualization of conflict and grasp of the dramatic situation, character development, and plot construction. A challenge for scriptwriters is that they must create characters that the listeners or viewers care about. Also, final copies of scripts must be in the correct form and be technically flawless.

In my classes, I have used strategies that make scriptwriting less overwhelming and allow for practice of the component elements. These strategies have resulted in more effective scripts. In particular, I have successfully used a strategy that bridges familiar writing (i.e., writing a short story) with the less familiar required format of scriptwriting by having students transform their short story into aural writing (i.e., writing a radio play) which is in turn transformed into visual writing (i.e., a silent film script). At the end of this process, students have only to merge a few lines of dialogue with the visual description and they have a first draft of their script.

I found support for this practice of using the bridging strategy in the presentations at the 2002 Austin Screenwriters Conference. I believe this type of strategy (*bridging familiar writing with new and more challenging writing formats*) is one that can be used across disciplines.

"A windmill is eternally at work to accomplish one end, although it shifts with every variation of the weathercock, and assumes ten different positions in a day."

--Charles Caleb Colton

CETL offers mini-grants of \$500 each to assist faculty in developing multimedia and/or interactive products such as Web pages, presentation (PowerPoint) units, etc., to be used in undergraduate courses. To be eligible for a Technology Mini-grant, applicants, including all members of a team application, must participate (and be able to document participation) in one or more of the following: 1. CETL Learning Across the Curriculum Workshops; 2. CETL Technology Workshop; 3. DLITE Technology Workshop. Below is a report by Dr. Medha Talpade, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology, recipient of a Technology Mini-grant.

Technology Mini-Grant Report

Description: Using the WebCT to post syllabi, chapter outlines, video clips (if possible), PowerPoint lecture summaries, discussion board, and chat room as a web-based technique to facilitate learning of course materials.

In addition to the above, the APA-style software will be used to allow students and instructors to correct errors on their research papers. Use of such a software will encourage students to learn the APA guidelines and allow students to check their errors by themselves and also save the instructor time correcting those errors. Students in my lab class (n=40) write 4 research papers during the semester. Each paper takes about 30 minutes to grade. Thus, this software will allow the instructor to conduct research and teach students more effectively, promote objectivity, and increase the focus on research design.

Students in the lab will also be using the interactive COGLAB package <http://coglab.wadsworth.com/>. This comes with the text for an additional \$2. Thus, no funds are requested for this technological software. However, incorporation of this technology will enable the student to understand and interact with basic principles of psychology, collect data, analyze the data and present the research in a paper.

Anticipated student outcomes:

Better scores on tests as compared to those of last year, more research project presentations by lab students.

Report

1. The Web was used to post syllabi, chapter outlines, PowerPoint lecture summaries, and discussion topics.
2. The Web was used to post a survey. Results were compiled, coded, analyzed, and presented in a research paper by students.

3. A computer-based interactive package was used by students to collect and analyze data. This computer exercise was uploaded on 2 computers in the Carson Lee Room, Knowles Hall.
4. The SPSS was used by students to analyze the above data and conduct parametric and nonparametric analyses.
5. The APA Software was uploaded on 2 computers in the Carson Lee Room, Knowles Hall. This was used by students of Experimental Lab.

Student Outcomes

1. Test scores on quasi-experimental designs topic were analyzed.

Test scores as a function of Web only, Web + lecture were analyzed using the SPSS. Results of pair-wise t-tests indicated that there were no significant differences between the scores on items as a result of instructional method used; $t(21) = 1.88, p = .074$. An independent t-test conducted on scores revealed the same results; $t(46) = 1.41, p = .166$. Thus, the Web can be used as a teaching tool as effectively as an in-class lecture.

2. The results of the Web survey are given below. These results, compiled within 1 week, constituted ¼ of the lab assignments.

Results (happiness survey)

Total number of participants: 20
 Age: Mean= 22.15; SD= 4.42
 Gender: 9 females, 11 males
 Classification: 43 % seniors, 24% juniors, 19% sophomores, 5% freshman
 SES: 29% --family income of 70,000 +
 10% -- family income of 50,000 to 70,000
 24% -- family income of 30,000 to 50,000
 15% -- family income below 30,000
 other—would not reveal SES

Frequency of worship—40% often, 25% sometimes, 35% never
 Frequency of prayer—80 % often, 10% sometimes, 10% never
 Belief in God—95% yes, 5% no
 Friends—95% yes, 5% no
 Presence of Significant Other—35% yes, 65% no

Last week I was happy because

Material acquisition	Relation-ship	Goal/success	other
6	6	11	8

Last few months I was happy because

Material acquisition	Relation-ship	Goal/success	other
4	12	10	8

I was happiest because

Material acquisition	Relation-ship	Goal/success	other
3	13	7	6

Belief in God/Prayer $r(20) = .609, p < .01$
 Friends/ happiest (material causes) $r = -.546, p < .01$

The chi-square results indicate that individuals reported being the happiest due to relationships rather than due to material acquisition, $\chi^2(1, N=20) = 6.25, p < .05$.

3. Data collected by students is attached. Students reported enjoying the new experience and the data collection method.
4. SPSS analyses conducted by students are attached. Students conducted the following analyses: Correlation (Spearman and Pearson), Regression, z-test, t-tests (paired and independent groups with equal and unequal n), chi-square, and Analysis of variance.
5. The proposals using the APA software are attached. Significant improvement in the reference section was found.
6. The following presentations were made by students using the SPSS package and the materials posted on the web (on class syllabus) on how to write a research paper:

Talpade, M., Mitchell, L. (March 2003). Interpersonal understanding of perceived similarities as it relates to relationship satisfaction among close couples. Paper published in the **proceedings of the CEPO symposium at the conference of the South Eastern Psychological Association**, New Orleans, LA.

Talpade, M., Garvin, S. (March 2003). Job status as a moderator of job facet and global job satisfaction. Paper published in the **proceedings of the CEPO symposium at the conference of the South Eastern Psychological Association**, New Orleans, LA.

Talpade, M., Roswess, S., Gibson, S., Hall, H. (March 2003). Observation of handwashing behaviors in public restrooms of different racial groups. Paper published in the **proceedings of the CEPO symposium at the conference of the South Eastern Psychological Association**, New Orleans, LA.

Talpade, M., Jackson, T. (March 2003). Early puberty phenomenon: Nutrition theory revisited. Paper presented at the **conference of the South Eastern Psychological Association**, New Orleans, LA.

Talpade, M., Cain, L. (March, 2003). Customer service of administrative staff as a function of dress: An observational study. Paper published in the **proceedings of the Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.**

Technology Mini-Grant Report (Continued from Page 3)

Talpade, M., Wiggins, A. (April 2003). Customer service in the malls as a function of casual versus formal dress. Paper published in the **proceedings of the Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.**

Talpade, M., Beckett, M. (April 2003). Effect of Mnemonic Aids on Recall with Stress as a Moderator. Paper published in the **proceedings of the Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.**

Talpade, M., Ward, T. (April 2003). Coping across time. Paper published in the **proceedings of the Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.**

Talpade, M., Brooks, M. (April 2002). The effects of complexion on individual perspectives of self, success, and attractiveness. Paper published in the **proceedings of the Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.**

Talpade, M., Parker, K. (April 2003). Portrayal of happiness on primetime television. Paper published in the **proceedings of the Atlanta University Center Psychology Conference at Spelman College, Atlanta, GA.**

Student-Centered Teaching with Pedestal Phrases

There are some key phrases that may be useful in cultivating student-centered relationships. These *pedestal* phrases are particularly useful at the beginning of the semester when professors are trying to lay the foundations for teaching and learning in a class. They could also be used all year long. The main consideration is that they help to improve relationships with students.

- “*May I?*” asks permission and gives authority to students;
- “*As you know*” implies knowledge;
- “*I would appreciate it*” indicates a student has power to accept or reject;
- “*Please*” is a great relationship lubricator;
- “A person of your standing” shows students respect.

ATTENTION ALPHA KAPPA MUANS!

CETL needs to identify CAU administrators, faculty, and staff who are members (active or inactive) of Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society. Please contact our office at (404) 758-1677.

AN EIGHT-STEP PLAN FOR THE FIRST DAY

At CETL’s office, located at 1125 Fountain Drive, just about a five-minute drive from CAU’s main campus, there is a variety of resources available for faculty members to use in enhancing teaching effectiveness. In addition to a (grossly underutilized) computer lab, CETL has a Reading Room with a collection of over 100 items, including The Chronicle of Higher Education, books, journals, and brochures. One such brochure, the Professor in the Classroom, includes numerous features and tips for improving teaching effectiveness. One issue addresses the importance of first impressions students have about a teacher and details “An Eight-Step Plan for the First Day,” which is consistent with the Student-Centered and Quality-Driven focus of the University. The steps are summarized below

- First, professors should emphasize the biggest benefit of the course. “It should be the biggest personal advantage students can expect to gain from the course.” Professors should also indicate that they plan to work hard to deliver this benefit to students.
- Second, professors should elaborate on this benefit in specific ways and, positively and enthusiastically, indicate all other benefits students can expect. The brochure notes that different benefits will be attractive to different students and cautions against negative regulations and requirements.
- Third, all statements made should be supported by facts or proof. This could be accomplished by relating the positive feedback and success stories of former students and the use of statistics to support claims.
- Fourth, students should be made aware of the specific ways those who do not take full advantage of the course would lose. This should be done without instilling fear, but pointing out the realities students face.
- Fifth, at this juncture it is useful to summarize all that has been said, rephrasing all the major benefits identified.
- Sixth, students should be urged, individually and collectively, to work and study. “If we fail to ask students individually for such a commitment, many will believe that what was said applies to classmates—but not to them.”
- Seventh, students need to be reminded that they are beginning the academic year with a clean slate.
- Eight, professors should teach a lesson. The objective here is to ensure that all students learn something on the first day of class that can be of immediate use.

The article ends by warning against certain pitfalls. For example, professors should exercise care in qualifying the message of the first day. “We shouldn’t indicate that some students will do well and that some won’t. Nor should we indicate that we’re certain that some will take full advantage of the opportunities our class offers while others will not—or that we have high expectations for some and low expectations for others.” Further, professors should avoid the mistake of trying to make students know who is in charge and that they tough and mean business. Such practices may turn off some students and create bad impressions. “And it’s insulting to the vast majority of students who believe they don’t deserve to be treated in such a way.”

A Student-Centered and Quality-Driven approach to teaching recognizes the importance of the first day of class. The opinions students form are influenced by our actions and bad opinions can be a deterrent to student learning.

SOURCE: The Professor in the Classroom, Vol. 8, No. 1, Sept. 2001.