



CTL *notes*

A Monthly Newsletter

The CTL logo is a mature tree, symbolizing the developed roots and continued growth of Miami University Middletown's excellence in teaching and learning under the canopy of its Center for Teaching and Learning.

Important Dates

December 7 — Conversation

Universal Design for Learning

January 9 — Conversation

Online Learning and Access to Education

Conversations are scheduled from 12:00 - 1:00 in 120 Johnston Hall

Ways to Access the CTL

Current happenings and news items can be found at www.mid.muohio.edu/ctl. So add us to your favorites; we are just a click away!

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IDEAS WANTED: MUM/MRDD PARTNERSHIP

Over fifteen staff, students, and faculty met for a CTL-sponsored roundtable discussion on November 15 to explore ways campus members might involve themselves in the MUM/MRDD (Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities) partnership and to discuss ways this involvement might benefit everyone who participates.

Kim Braunig, a facilities supervisor for Butler County MRDD, described the project, which entails the production and marketing of creative works by mentally and physically disabled people. "Instead of putting screws in a bag, instead of gluing cardboard together," Braunig explained, client/artists at MRDD would generate fine arts and product (sculptures, paintings, postcards, coffee mugs) to earn income and develop their sense of self-worth. Along with other members of the MRDD program, Braunig had come to campus to encourage the MUM community to contribute "ideas, technology, time."

Participants from the Middletown campus considered ways their interactions with MRDD's clients could enhance the teaching/learning process and appreciation for diversity, how the community would gain from work accomplished through the partnership, and ways faculty's, student's, and staff's particular interests/areas/disciplines could contribute. Anyone who wishes to learn more about the partnership or become involved with the project should contact Cathy Bishop Clark at bishopcu@muohio.edu.

January CTL Conversation

"Online Learning and Access to Education"

In this interactive session, Beth Uhler, Andrea Han, Amy Fisher, and Janet Hurn will lead discussion on the barriers we have faced and our students currently face in our pursuit of education. We will explore the ways MUM has attempted to dissolve these barriers, paying specific attention to how online technologies (e.g., email, Blackboard, iPods, online lectures) have been and can be used to improve access to education. We will also discuss how online technologies can inhibit access to education and whether this should impact teachers' use of these technologies.

~FREE LUNCH FOR FIRST 20 WHO ARRIVE~

December CTL Conversation “Universal Design for Learning”

Presenters Jean Lynch and Cindy Lewiecki-Wilson will lead a one-hour, interactive workshop on Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL grew out of the accessibility movement of the ADA and adapts the architectural philosophy of planning for diverse users to the classroom. UDL encourages a teaching philosophy that anticipates diversity in the classroom as an ordinary and everyday occurrence. UDL principles encourage instructors to develop flexible teaching practices so as to make courses accessible to a range of diverse learners who may have different learning needs and preferences, rather than only making adjustments in response to student with disabilities. This workshop will provide participants with information about UDL, practical examples of UDL adaptations, and the opportunity to redesign a favorite classroom assignment. Participants will share their redesigns and discuss planning a class for diverse users.

~FREE LUNCH FOR FIRST 20 WHO ARRIVE~
~Please note the change in day: Thursday, not Tuesday~

Roundtable Update: Honors Extension Contracts

On October 30, the CTL sponsored a special roundtable discussion on Honors Extension Contracts. These contracts allow students to enhance their educational experiences in individual courses through additional research and one-on-one time with professors toward an “Honors” designation on their college transcripts.

Among the 14 people who attend the discussion were students Alicia Campbell, Courtney Curtner, and Jeff Sams, students currently engaged in Honors work in English and Art courses. Also on hand were Professors Corinne Miller and Starla Evilsizor, who are facilitating Honors opportunities in their own classes.

The discussion focused on the form and content of the students’ specific projects, on issues involved with inviting and selecting students to engage in Honors work, on how teachers and students can work together to design the projects, and on the opportunities such work allows for deepened consideration of subject matter that might otherwise be ignored or dealt with rather swiftly in mainstream curriculum.

BOK Book Available from the CTL Library

As you may well already know, President Hodge is scheduled to join us for a discussion of Derek Bok’s “*Our Underachieving Colleges*” as part of a CTL Conversation on Teaching on February 8, 2007.

The CTL now has several copies of Bok’s book in its library. If you would like to borrow one of these texts in preparation for Dr. Hodge’s visit, please come by the CTL during one of our staffing hours. You can walk off not only with a copy of the book, but also a sort of new-age coffee cup (coffee may be included or tea!) with the CTL label as well.

Conversation Update: Community Service

Sixteen faculty, students, and staff meet on November 7 for a CTL Conversation on Community Engagement. Speakers Cathy Bishop-Clark, Eric Melbye, and Mira Smith informed participants of organizations on campus, such as the Coop/Internship Program, the MUM/MRDD Partnership, and the Committee on Community Engagement, that help students and faculty tie curricula to student concerns.

The presenters also relayed stories about their own involvement with such projects and ways community engagement can invigorate teaching and enhance the relevance of course materials, reposition teachers as facilitators of student-generated projects, complicate both students’ and teachers’ consideration of course matter, provide credential-producing experiences and additional financial resources for students, maintain links between alumni and our educational programs, serve as recruitment activities.

Discussing possible projects through a variety of disciplines, including Botany, Business, English, and Computer Information Technology, the conversation focused on how community engagement could, as Eric Melbye said, “expand notions of *classroom*” in ways that produce new understandings of subject matter and new educational opportunities for not only students, but also for the broader communities they represent.