



CTL *notes*

the Center for Teaching and Learning

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 it's Center for Teaching and Learning.

Volume 5, Issue 1

September

2008

The CTL Has Gone Green!

At the end of Spring 2008, the LC decided to operate in a more eco-friendly fashion. We will be using only fluorescent lighting, significantly reducing phantom power, and adding more recycling bins to the CTL office as well as at events. The LC is reusing and recycling paper, plastic, and ink cartridges. As some of you noticed, we will no longer be serving boxed lunches at our events, but have replaced them with the new "unboxed" lunch. This will cut back on a significant amount of waste. We will also no longer be serving bottled water, but will provide pitchers of water instead. Don't forget to bring your CTL mug with you. Don't have a mug? Stop by the office to pick one up!

Do you want to find out how your students are experiencing your class? The CTL's Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) program can help.

Any MUM instructor can request a SGID to be scheduled during a class meeting. Last year facilitators conducted more than 50 SGIDs at MUM. Faculty find they can use SGID feedback to fine-tune their teaching and better address their students' learning needs. SGIDs take 20 - 30 minutes of a class period. During this time a SGID facilitator (one of your colleagues who have been trained in SGID facilitation) comes into your class to meet with your students without your being present. Students respond to the following questions: *In what ways has the instruction/instructor helped you learn in this course? Can you suggest some changes in the instruction/course that would better help you learn?* The facilitator captures students' responses in a written report sent to the instructor and is also available to discuss the results. One option is to request a "clicker"-mediated SGID. In this option, students provide feedback through using a remote response system. Students use clickers to confidentially indicate degrees of agreement or disagreement with each suggestion and comment. Please note that the clicker-mediated option is available for classes of no more than 30 students and that meet in a mediated classroom or have a computer cart brought in.

For more information call the CTL at 7-3464 or email us at mumctl@muohio.edu. You can find more information on the SGID process and also download a SGID request form on the CTL website at: <http://www.mid.muohio.edu/ctl/SGID.cfm>

Conversation Dates:

October 7th, November 4th, and December 2nd

All conversations will be on Tuesdays in JHN 136 & 137, from Noon to 1:00 PM.

"Innovate. Integrate. Invest."

...is the theme for this year's
CTL Conversations !

The theme arose out of the excitement of the CTL Leadership Collaborative members for the recent campus developments, most notably the Bachelor of Integrative Studies program.

Wanting to somehow work in the theme of integration, we decided that our programming could help faculty think about developing and enhancing innovations at the classroom and curricular levels, integrate those innovations smoothly with the existing strengths of our campus, and thereby invest ourselves in our students, our campus, and our community's future.

CTL Open House

Miami Middletown's Center for Teaching and Learning has rescheduled our annual Open House to Tuesday, Sept. 30th from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30p.m. in the CTL in Johnston Hall Rm. 11. The Open House will feature posters from CTL funding recipients and a screening of Gail Tayko's documentary about Basic Writing at MUM, "Outside the House of English: 'Developmental' Students and their Instructors Explore 'Student Success.'" Snacks and information about other CTL events and services will be provided.

What better way to kick off the year's thematic events than with a BIS-related conversation? We're calling this event, "A Degree of One's Own: Perspectives on the BIS." The conversation, which will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 7th from 12-1 (JHN 136/137), will feature brief presentations by advisors, instructors, and students, all of whom are currently and directly involved in the BIS program. Following the presentations, attendees will get a chance to ask questions of the panelists and have an open dialogue about the new degree. As always with our Conversations, lunch will be served to the first twenty attendees. Mark your calendars – we hope to see you there!



Five ways of looking at the CTL

As I consider MUM's Center for Teaching and Learning from the perspective of the associate dean's office, the first thing that strikes me is that I have now observed this organization from almost every angle that is possible. I was on the ad hoc steering committee that helped create the center. In fact, I still have a folder in my computer with minutes from meetings during the winter of 2003-2004 when we didn't know whether it was going to be the CTL or the CLT. In the center's first year, I had no official role but was in the audience for every session of its first series of "conversations on teaching"; in its second and third years I was on the Leadership Collaborative; in its fourth year I added responsibilities as co-coordinator. Now, I find that on the campus organization chart the CTL is in one of the boxes with a line drawn between it and my name.

When colleagues in Oxford ask me what it is like to work on the Middletown campus, one thing I always bring up is the culture of intensive engagement with pedagogical issues that characterizes our campus. A stray remark in a hallway or during a meeting can spark an animated discussion of some teaching issue involving everybody within earshot. Last year, attendance at CTL events during the year totaled more than 400 faculty, staff, and students, and more than 100 more from both regional campuses attended the opening workshop, which the CTL planned. MUM faculty members also have an impressive and still-expanding track record in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Perhaps the most familiar part of my new position will be the part that focuses on faculty development, and with respect to teaching and learning, the CTL is the hub of such activity on campus. I am looking forward to its fifth year and my new job of supporting it as associate dean.

Rob Schorman




The B.I.S. Program

The Bachelor of Integrative Studies (BIS) degree is now officially launched! We are teaching three sections of BIS 201, the first of three required integrative seminars for the degree, to newly declared BIS students. We began developing the curriculum for BIS 201 last year as part of the work of creating this new degree, which will only be offered on the regional campuses of Miami. An important feature of the BIS seminars is how they each build on the previous seminar work, with learning outcomes sequenced to address the developing self-authorship of the students as they progress through the program, a central theme of President Hodge's Engaged University.

The "integrative" in BIS refers to the central focus on students learning integrative processes throughout the three seminars. All BIS students are asked to consider their own career development, their involvement in the larger community, and their life and educational experiences in developing a rationale for the components of their specific BIS program. At the same time they are using several disciplinary perspectives within each seminar to respond to a course inquiry. For example, in the three BIS 201 seminars we are currently teaching, the course inquiry is, "What's after rust?" Students will be responding to this question based on the interests of their own concentrations and then sharing the results with the class. A final integrative essay in BIS 201 asks students to pull together the course readings, research inquiry and their own reflective responses to demonstrate the integrative skills they have been developing.

All three seminars, while all focusing on integrative processes, are connected by three other common elements: Self, Others, and Product, with the emphasis on each shifting from 201, 301, and 401, respectively. For our students in BIS 201, the emphasis on "self" means we're incorporating readings on adult development, an "autobiography" assignment, and supportive work to help students develop a "product," the first iteration of a Student Educational Plan (SEP), a document that they will continue to develop throughout the BIS program. We integrate this work on "self" with the extended inquiry students pursue through research teams responding to the course question, including field research in the community, introducing them to consideration of "Others."



The students we are seeing in our first three sections of the BIS201 seminar are as good as we had hoped from spending time with them during extended advising sessions prior to their entering the BIS program. They are mostly "non-traditional" students and are highly motivated and deeply appreciative of the opportunity provided by this degree and are eager to apply their learning to future career and educational goals. The BIS degree allows the students to make more choices in crafting their curricular concentration and educational path than most other degree programs. The students seem to understand that with this increased flexibility comes more responsibility on their part, and they seem ready to take up the challenge to be more self-authored in their school work and in planning their career development. In our first class sessions this fall, students expressed how they see themselves as pioneers helping to craft this degree for those who will follow them. We are pleased to be guides for the journey!

By Mike Hieber and Ellenmarie Wahrab

