

TLCExchange

The Newsletter of the Teaching and Learning Center of Wake Forest University ▲ Volume 11, Number 2 ▲ Spring 2008

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

SPRING 2008

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to a new year, to a new semester of teaching and learning opportunities, and to a new issue of the TLC Exchange! This year has begun with a host of special events. Currently, the ACE Fellows are holding orientation sessions led by Angela Hattery and Brighid Jensen, each of whom provides information about the program in this issue. Likewise, John Llewellyn shares his reflections on teaching in New Zealand. I am happy to announce that the TLC along with the Dean of the College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the Office of the Provost will hold a Teaching and Learning Fair on 27 February at 2:00-4:00 in Benson 401 A&B. We encourage all of you to attend as it will be a wonderful opportunity to discuss teaching with colleagues from a variety of departments and units. To ensure that you receive a copy of the abstracts, please be sure to RSVP your attendance at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html>. Be sure to note this issue's inserts containing the results of a workshop that Dee Oseroff-Varnell led last semester on Active Learning and Jason Parsley's article on teaching mathematics as a liberal arts course.

With assistance from Dean Best, Scott Claybrook was appointed as our new ITG. Scott, Deborah Snyder, and I invite you to visit our redesigned website at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc>. There you will find many changes, including resources, events, library purchases, and even a new RSVP page for attending panels and workshops. The Faculty Survey that was sent out last semester and subsequently summarized and analyzed by the TLC Advisory Committee is posted on the homepage. If you have not yet had an opportunity to view it, please do so; the results are intriguing. While we continue to add on-line resources, we need your help. If you have suggestions of links, please send them to us at tlc@wfu.edu.

In February we will announce the 2007-2008 recipient(s) of the annual Innovative Teaching Award. Moreover, this issue of the spring 2008 newsletter contains a list of the programs that the TLC will host. There are more than a dozen opportunities for you to join colleagues in discussions, workshops, panels, and presentations. This semester's offerings range from technology to enhancing discussions, from teaching overseas to intercultural connectivity, and from classroom emergency scenarios to expanding writing throughout the curriculum. We welcome suggestions about future events and we especially want to hear from those of you who have published or presented on any aspect to teaching.

Throughout the semester, we will continue to offer monthly faculty appreciation coffee and refreshments. Be sure to look for the annual Ice Cream Social in April. Each of us at the Teaching and Learning Center wish you a terrific semester. Please feel free to drop by and visit us anytime!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Lerner,
History

TEACHING UPSIDE DOWN: WHAT I LEARNED IN NEW ZEALAND

John Llewellyn,
Department of Communication

For the past six months I taught as a visiting faculty member at the Management School at Waikato University in Hamilton, New Zealand. In the week that I have been back, a number of friends, including faculty colleagues, have asked what it was like. As we start a new term, here are my insights for your consideration. These ideas convey three themes: new worries are good for you; you're not in Kansas anymore, Toto; and connections are always worth the effort.

NEW WORRIES

It is easy to forget how deeply we are grounded in our own culture and even our own campus. Going to teach someplace else is a bit scary and very invigo-

rating. Who are these people in front of me? What do they expect? What do my new colleagues expect of me? At first I did not know those answers but over time—by asking and listening—and listening *between* the lines, I made connections with my New Zealand students and colleagues that were enriching then and now.

Wherever and whatever we teach, our first duty is to open doors for our students. We contribute to the advancement of knowledge in our disciplines, to be sure, but we advertise to parents, students and the world at large that we serve our students by leading them to new ways to seeing the world and understanding their place in it. Facing a new body of students in a new society was very sobering; these people trust me to educate them on my subject. Will I let them down? As the term went along it became clear that I was not letting them down. In any event, I was better for the experience of confronting those concerns. Even after twenty years in the classroom, an honest look at one's self as a teacher is valuable and ultimately refreshing.

NOT IN KANSAS

In New Zealand you drive down the road (on the other side—once you get the hang of it) and there are advisory signs about what to do in case of earthquake or volcanic eruption. How many of us know the term, "lahar"? New Zealanders do because they must know what to do when a river of mud that flows like water and has the heft of concrete comes their way. My son's class skied on a mountain one week and the next its neighbor erupted, very nearly killing climbers camping near its summit. In New Zealand, the environment is ever-present, beautiful and overpowering. In our time there a car was discovered that had run off the road and into the bush without a trace. The driver and the car had gone missing several decades earlier.

When Americans comment on New Zealand they say two things: it is beautiful and it is very far away. Both statements are true but they do not begin to describe the most interesting features

of living in New Zealand: a frontier mentality rooted in less than 170 years of nationhood; a rugged commitment to pragmatism so that all ideas are tested for results; a "mateship" culture that prizes being a good bloke and sharing a few pints; an environmental awareness in which resources are part and parcel of the national identity and often viewed as sacred or nearly so; an ethic that provides free medical care for all who are in the country legally; and, a depth of passion for sport, especially rugby, that equals and probably surpasses the intensity of ACC basketball. It is also a nation with serious challenges: alcohol and drug abuse (methamphetamine, know there as "P," is a scourge); tensions between rural backblocks values and the imperatives of the 21st century; and, maintaining a coherent national identity while welcoming numerous immigrants from Asia and the Pacific islands seeking better lives. As a nation, New Zealand has the population of Los Angeles (roughly four million) but spread across the area of Colorado (104,000 square miles).

CONNECTIONS ARE WORTH THE EFFORT

One of the New Zealand customs I most enjoyed was found in the pace of collegial interactions. The school had a tea room and by tradition faculty inviting one another out for tea and conversation regularly. I spent 30 minutes a week talking to colleagues in this format. Here at Wake it seems we have to make special arrangements to interact with colleagues, even within the same department. I have had good conversations with people on my hall; often those exchanges happen at an academic convention a thousand miles away. It is good to talk to one another for a host of reasons: friendship, cooperative projects, and intellectual stimulation. I would wish for more of those moments for all of us.

An added feature of New Zealand life was the chance to learn about Maori culture. A handful of my students were Maori and the University of Waikato is the only New Zealand university that expressly incorporates Maori culture into campus life. In fact, the university provides an optional graduation ceremony rooted in Maori protocols open to any student.

The ceremony features welcoming rituals and discourses. Individual recognition comes when students—often in

feathered ceremonial cloaks and accompanied by their families—come forward to receive their diplomas. Families and friends celebrate individual graduates with the performance of hakas, Maori ceremonial dances and chants, or waiatas, songs of praise performed in the traditions of Pacific island cultures. The process honors the graduate and the family; the pageantry is beautiful and heartwarming and expresses the connectedness among individual, family, tribe and culture.

The indigenous people of New Zealand (some label them its first settlers) make up 14% of the nation's population. They are at once in the broader society and still working to maintain the language and traditions of their race. When the semester had ended, at the invitation of a student, I met with tribal elders, toured cultural sites and participated in ceremonies. I do not pretend to understand the depths of Maori culture based on these experiences but I do have an enhanced appreciation of the Maori worldview. It is rooted in a pervasive spirituality and a quiet dignity. Those friendships will endure.

CONCLUSION

It is a complicated process to teach somewhere else for a term, even in one of Wake's overseas programs. Uprooting family, finding a kind friend to look after pets, renting the house and all the other preparatory duties are a litany of hurdles. And yet, our experiences in London at Worrell House four years ago and for the last six months in New Zealand are irreplaceable. Professors are fortunate to have skills that travel well; our family bonds, my commitment to teaching and my research interests have all benefited from the insights that travel has brought.

TLC EVENTS Spring 2008

If you do not already receive e-mail reminders about TLC programs and would like to, please e-mail your request to tlc@wfu.edu. All programs take place in the TLC (Room 330, ZSR Library) unless otherwise indicated. If you are unable to attend an event but would like any handouts prepared by our hosts, contact Ms. Deborah Snyder at x4587 or tlc@wfu.edu. Please RSVP online at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html>.

COURSE PREPARATION ASSIGNMENTS: A STRATEGY FOR CREATING DISCUSSION-BASED COURSES

Date: Wednesday, January 23

Time: 12:00 P.M.

Location: Benson 344 F

Host: David Yamane (Sociology)

ALTHOUGH MANY OF US would like to get beyond lecturing, we often lack concrete strategies for doing so. In his paper "Course Preparation Assignments: A Strategy for Creating Discussion-Based Courses," David Yamane explores one critical strategy when creating a discussion-based course: the success of such a course is predicated on students reading and thinking about the course material (receiving "first exposure") prior to attending class so that class time can be devoted to more substantively engaging activities grounded in guided discussion. Dr. Yamane will discuss elements of his paper, which is included in the spring 2007 edition of the TLC Exchange and is currently on the TLC website at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/resources/exchange.html>, and will welcome and encourage discussion by attendees.

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Friday, January 18, if you want to reserve a lunch provided by the TLC, and be sure to specify your choice of a beef, chicken, or vegetarian sandwich, or of a fruit plate.

ENRICHING STUDIES ABROAD

Date: Tuesday, February 5

Time: 12:00 P.M.

Location: Room 204, ZSR Library

Host: Steve Folmar (Anthropology)

AS WAKE FOREST increasingly engages with culturally diverse educational programs, many questions regarding how to foster deeper immersion into other cultures arise. The opportunities and challenges associated with learning in other cultures are pertinent to students and teachers alike. This seminar focuses on exploring with interested faculty members how better to prepare ourselves and to engage in learning about the cultures we visit and how those cultures inform the topics we teach to our students. The specific goals of this seminar are: 1) to recognize our (faculty) strengths and weaknesses in study abroad offerings and 2) to identify

a small group of faculty interested in increasing their own and the University's level of cultural competency. Our host invites you to partake in this discussion and extends a special invitation to faculty that have taught in other cultural settings or who intend to do so!

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, January 30, if you want to reserve a lunch provided by the TLC, and be sure to specify your choice of a beef, chicken, or vegetarian sandwich, or of a fruit plate.

TEACHING OVERSEAS

Date: Monday, February 11

Time: 12:00 P.M.

Location: Autumn Room, Reynolda Hall
Hosts: Kline Harrison (Associate Provost for International Affairs), David Phillips (East Asian Languages), Susan Rupp (History)

INCREASINGLY, overseas programs form an integral part of the total educational experience at Wake Forest by providing unique academic and experiential opportunities for both students and faculty. Join your colleagues as they reflect on their experiences teaching overseas and share their insights about the similarities and differences of teaching and learning in a different country. Our hosts will welcome your comments and questions. We extend a special invitation to our new faculty! Lunch will be available for faculty who reply by Wednesday, February 6 (choices are listed below; be sure to specify your selection).

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, February 6, in order to reserve a lunch provided by the TLC, and be sure to indicate your choice of a chicken, vegetarian, or beef sandwich, or of a fruit plate.

TEACHING AND LEARNING FAIR

Date: Wednesday, February 27

Time: 2:00-4:00 P.M.

Location: Benson 401 A&B

OPEN to faculty and graduate students, this event is designed to offer practical and interactive presentations to assist the novice and experienced faculty alike by enhancing their effectiveness as educators. Presenters will share their best practices, introduce emerging new cur-

ricular tools, explain and demonstrate tried-and-true pedagogic approaches to stimulate learning and to provide exposure to new vistas and emerging concepts in education. It will be an opportunity to see what colleagues in different departments do in their classes.

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, February 20, in order to reserve a hard copy of abstracts submitted by fair presenters.

BLOGS AND WIKIS AT ZSR

DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

Time: 3:00 P.M.

Location: Room 204, ZSR Library
Hosts: Christa Colyer (Chair/Associate Professor of Chemistry), Stephanie Pellet – (Romance Languages) and H. David "Giz" Womack (Manager of Technology Training for the Z. Smith Reynolds Library)

THE Z. SMITH REYNOLDS LIBRARY is now pleased to offer the Wake Forest community blog and wikis. Join us to learn more about these resources see how blogs and wikis are already being used in the classroom at WFU. Participants will not only see example of academic blogs and wikis currently being used in classes at WFU, but also learn how to create and edit a blog or wiki hosted on the ZSR Library server.

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Friday, March 28. Light refreshments will be served.

END-OF-YEAR BLOWOUT/FACULTY APPRECIATION ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Date: Wednesday, April 9

Time: 2:00-4:00 P.M.

Location: Teaching and Learning Center

JOIN US for our fourth annual ICE CREAM SOCIAL! No program, no speeches, just an informal opportunity to enjoy great conversation and a delicious cold treat with fellow Wake Forest faculty! Please feel free to arrive and depart as your schedule dictates. We look forward to seeing you there! RSVP is not required.

WHY NOT AN INTERDISCIPLINARY WRITING MINOR?

Date: Tuesday, April 15

Time: 12:00 P.M.

Location: Room 204, ZSR Library

Host: Tom McGohey (The Writing Center)

GUESS WHO'S teaching writing at WFU? It's not just the English Department. You might be surprised at how many of your colleagues across the campus use writing in all sorts of challenging and creative ways to help their students master the material of their discipline. How might we all – professors and students – benefit by bringing together this wealth of experience and expertise? Please join us in an open forum discussion to consider how the courses many of you are already teaching might contribute to an Interdisciplinary Writing Minor. Whether you have lots of experience using writing in the classroom or have just been curious about how writing might change your teaching, please come offer your own views on the advantages of an Interdisciplinary Writing Minor.

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, April 9, if you want to reserve a lunch provided by the TLC, and be sure to specify your choice of a beef, chicken, or vegetarian sandwich, or of a fruit plate.

INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLBOX: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW!

Date: Monday, April 21

Time: 12:00 P.M.

Location: Room 204, ZSR Library

Host: Jolie Tingen (Instructional Technology Analyst, Departments of Music, Theatre, and Dance)

THE INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLBOX is a new, online resource for faculty on the instructional benefits of using new technologies such as wikis, blogs, and podcasting. Join us to learn more about this resource and how it can simplify the process of learning about new technologies and promote meaningful learning.

Please RSVP on-line at <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/events.html> no later than Wednesday, April 16, if you want to reserve a lunch provided by the TLC, and be sure to specify your choice of a beef, chicken, or vegetarian sandwich, or of a fruit plate.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER
EXAM WEEK COFFEE-AND-COOKIE
BREAK FOR FACULTY**

Date: Monday, May 5-Thursdays, May 8

Time: 8:00am-12:00pm

Location: Teaching and Learning Center, Room 330, ZSR Library

FACULTY are cordially invited to stop by each morning during finals week for coffee, cookies, and other treats. Feel free to enjoy your treats in the Center or take them with you (to-go cups will be available, or bring your own). No RSVP required!

ACE FELLOWS AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

THIS YEAR'S ACE FELLOWS program has some new and exciting changes. First, new faces. With the departure of Dr. Betsy Taylor from the Pro Humanitate Center, Professor Angela Hattery (Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies) assumes the role of director. Timing. With so many changes, the seminar was rescheduled from its usual fall semester calendar to the spring. Content. Moving beyond the exclusive focus on service learning, this year's seminar combines sessions on service learning with sessions on public /civic engagement. This offers faculty a wider vision on developing pedagogies that take students beyond the confines of Wake Forest gates. This year's ACE Fellows include: Pat Lord (Biology), Alessandra Beasley (Communication), Susan Borwick and Jacqui Carrasco (Music) and Simeon Ilesanmi (Religion). We've incorporated guest speakers from UNC-Chapel Hill, Appalachian State University, and Elon University as well as several in-house experts. Supported by Associate Provost Michele Gillespie, the office of the Dean, and the TLC, we have an exciting program underway and encourage you to look for an update and to apply to participate in next year's program.

Brigid Jensen joined Wake Forest in September as the Assistant Director of Student Development and Coordinator of Volunteer Services. In this role, Brigid works to promote both on and off campus service opportunities for students, faculty and staff. She fosters and strengthens relationships with local nonprofit agencies in an effort to increase community engagement. Brigid also advises the Volunteer Service Corps

(VSC), a student organization that connects Wake Forest's students, faculty, and staff with meaningful service opportunities. The VSC recently launched their new website (<http://vsc.groups.wfu.edu/>) which includes a special area for faculty interested in integrating service into the classroom. There is also a service opportunities database on the website where potential volunteers can search for an opportunity that meets their specific service interests. Brigid will be working with the ACE Fellows program this spring and will help link participants with service opportunities that match the goals of their service-learning course.

If you are interested in learning more about service opportunities or would like help publicizing a service initiative, please contact Brigid at jensenbm@wfu.edu or X4549.

**WAKE FOREST
UNIVERSITY
TEACHING AND
LEARNING CENTER**

The Teaching and Learning Center was established in 1997 with a dual purpose: meeting faculty-identified needs for teaching support and promoting dialogue about teaching. Faculty are encouraged to fill out a Faculty Information Form available from the Center designed to help us target specific needs and concerns which are then the topics for brown bag lunch discussion and workshops throughout the academic year.

The Teaching and Learning Center also offers a number of voluntary and confidential evaluation services outside the traditional departmental evaluation process. These have included mid-term evaluations, videotaping, peer class visitations, and a faculty mentoring program.

To learn more about the Teaching and Learning Center, and/or to discuss the programs and services the TLC offers, please contact the TLC Director Jeff Lerner at Ext. 4559 (lernerjd@wfu.edu) or TLC Coordinator Deborah Snyder at Ext. 4587 (snyderdw@wfu.edu). The Teaching and Learning Center is open Monday-Wednesday until 4:30 P.M., Thursday until 3:00 P.M., and Friday by appointment. The Director will hold

office hours from 9:30-11:30am, Monday and Friday. The Center is located in room 330, Z. Smith Reynolds Library.

The TLC Advisory Committee is elected annually. Committee members for the 2007-2008 academic year are: Sharon Andrews (fall semester, Theatre), Leah McCoy (Education), Gordon McCray (Calloway), Wayne Silver (Biology), Sarah Barbour (Romance Languages), and Peter Siavelis (Political Science).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLASSROOM VISITS AND MENTORING

If you would like to get feedback on your teaching from one of your peers, there are now several ways to do so.

Peer Classroom Visits

Inspired by a suggestion by Alyssa Lerner in the Department of German and Russian, the Teaching and Learning Center coordinates voluntary faculty classroom visits. These are friendly visits, meant to help newer faculty members without pressure; generally the observer will be a colleague of similar rank, but from a different department. Unlike the classroom visits that your department may require as part of your yearly review, feedback will be very informal, as agreed upon by the participants.

If you would like to have a faculty member from another department visit your class, or if you would like to visit someone else's class, please send an e-mail to Deborah Snyder. (snyderdw@wfu.edu). Let her know your department preference and teaching schedule.

Mid-Term Evaluations and Videotaping

If you prefer a more structured evaluation of a particular class, the TLC can arrange a mid-term evaluation. A faculty member visits your class during the semester and interviews students about their expectations and experiences, without the instructor present. Afterwards the course instructor and colleague meet to discuss the students' responses.

The TLC can also videotape your classes, or you may borrow our camera to do it yourself.

If you would like more information about either of these options, please see our web page <http://www.wfu.edu/tlc/about/services.html>. Allow two weeks notice for mid-term evaluations.