



Newsletter of the Center for Teaching Excellence, Bronx Community College, CUNY FALL 2008

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FACULTY DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Dr. Harriet Shenkman
Faculty Director
Center for Teaching Excellence



Center for Teaching Excellence – Fall 2008 Update

The Center for Teaching Excellence continues to meet the needs of faculty at various phases of their teaching career. We will once again offer a **New Faculty Orientation**, collaborate to offer adjunct workshops and diversity workshops at the CTE facility. A new faculty development offering will be a series of three workshops led by a consultant in social psychology, Dr. Beth Lesen of City College. She will focus her workshop upon **Setting Expectations in the Classroom and Fostering Positive Student/Faculty Interactions**. Please be on the look out for an opportunity to sign up for this important workshop.

The CTE will hold a luncheon in November. We will celebrate teaching and learning and invite a guest speaker, Dr. James Zimmerman, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Associate Director, Research Academy for University Learning at Montclair State University. He will speak and lead discussions on **Bridging Theory, Research and Practice: Aligning Educational Perspectives and Student Learning**.

The **Quantitative Reasoning Across the Curriculum Program** begun during the last academic year will expand its reach by implementing quantitative reasoning modules within Biology, Chemistry, and Business courses. The major goal is to have students improve their capacity to use quantitative reasoning within specific disciplines in order to solve mathematical problems in a disciplinary context. A Website and guidelines will be developed. Prof. Don Read and Dr. Laura Broughton will lead this effort.

In the first phase of the **Continuum of Greatness Initiative**, five faculty, including David Gordon, Kate Culkin, Vincent Bonelli, Shylaja Akkaraju, and Susan Russell, researched the achievements of fifteen honorees and connected their accomplishments to contemporary figures who have demonstrated similar insight or leadership. For example, Henry David Thoreau wrote "Civil Disobedience." His work was studied in jail by Gandhi, and Gandhi was a great influence on Martin Luther King Jr. and his formation of the civil rights passive resistance movement. The interdisciplinary team concluded that although the Hall of Fame commemorates great Americans, it is actually about the universality of the human spirit, and about the optimistic vision that allows people to discover new worlds and innovations to enrich the lives of inhabitants across the globe. Print modules were created by the research group highlighting the contributions of fifteen Hall of Fame honorees and tracing the trajectory of their work over time.

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Upcoming Meetings and

Learning Communities:
Sept. 4, 25, Oct. 23, Nov. 20,
Dec. 4

CTE Advisory Board: 2-4 pm
Sept. 11, Oct. 16, 30, Nov. 13,
Dec. 11

New Faculty Seminars
Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 21, Dec. 5

Creating a Constructive Environment in the Classroom
Oct. 3, Oct. 30, Nov 12.

English Faculty Research Forum
Sept. 9, Oct.7, Nov. 4, Dec 2

Adjunct Faculty Development
Sept. 22, Oct 20

CTE Week and Luncheon
November 6.

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The Department of Education and Reading, under the leadership of Dr. Joseph Todaro and Dr. Grace Cukras, will use these modules as models to incorporate a new educational experience for RDL 01 and RDL 02 students. Education students will also be using this model under the leadership of Ms. Diane D'Alessio.

The major goals for the **Freshman Learning Community** are to improve student performance in basic developmental areas and content areas, to foster a strong positive connection between the students and the college, and to help students make their learning transparent and meaningful. There are eighteen faculty involved and two new faculty members. The community continues to evolve in terms of integrating the curricula and providing collaborative experiences.

An outcome of a series of summer faculty development activities is the new theme of **e-Merging Stories**. At the end of the semester students will make their learning visible in a showcase event. They will use digital media tools to tell stories of student intellectual growth and development. These stories will help to define who individual students are and who they are as part of a learning community. Their multi-media tales will be shared at a culminating festival of student work.

A representative team of faculty from the Learning Community will be presenting at a conference sponsored by the CUNY Provost Council of the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Project in November at Hostos Community College. The conference title is: **Confronting the Hard Questions: What It Takes to Teach and Learn at CUNY**.

The CTE Advisory Board will be planning a variety of activities for faculty. We continue to move forward and to welcome participation and input.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

By Dr. Laura Broughton

Quantitative reasoning skills are essential life tools for our increasing technological society; however, a significant number of citizens have deficiencies in mathematic and reasoning skills. There is an increasing movement across the country to improve quantitative reasoning skills through Mathematics across the Curriculum (MAC) and Quantitative Reasoning (QR) programs.

This past year, Prof. Don Read ran the Perkins Grant which funded Problem Based Learning Workshops on Quantitative Reasoning through the CTE, in which 10 faculty members strove to include activities that reinforced quantitative reasoning skills into their classes.

This year with an extension of the Perkins Grant, faculty from the Biology and Chemistry Departments are focusing their efforts on integrating and reinforcing quantitative reasoning skills into courses that are taught by more than one professor and have multiple sections. Quantitative reasoning and the sciences are a natural fit. By their nature, science courses already contain quantitative reasoning. The goal of this year's Quantitative Reasoning Initiative is to provide more continuity to the teaching and reinforcement of quantitative reasoning skills.

For example, in the Biology Department, Drs. Carlos Liachovitzky and Joe Lee are leading the creation of four modules focusing on the interpretation of graphs for the lectures in Human Anatomy and Physiology I (Biology 23). Rebeca Araya and I are coordinating revisions of the laboratories in the two-course General Biology sequence (Biology 11 and 12). The quantitative skills emphasized will be graph creation and interpretation in General Biology I and graph interpretation and probability in General Biology II. Our strategy is to introduce the skills early and reinforce those skills often throughout the course of the semester.

FRESHMAN LEARNING COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

By Dr. Harriet Shenkman

e-Merging Stories

At the end of the semester, students in the Freshman Learning Community will illustrate their learning in a showcase event. Last semester students displayed their work on posters and through PowerPoint presentations. In the fall semester, we will use digital media tools to tell stories of our intellectual growth and development. These stories will help to define who we are as individual students and who we are as a college community. Our multi-media tales will enable us to share our learning at a culminating festival of student work.

Faculty and Counselor Participants 2007-2008

Neal Phillip (Environmental Science);

Victor Rodriguez (Counseling);

Elizabeth Smith (English);

Georgene Osborne (Reading);

Roman Kossak (Mathematics);

Vaso Thomas (Social Science);

Eldiane Elmeus (Counseling);

Jordi Getman (History);

Nelson Reynoso (Counseling);

Grace Cukras (Reading);

Ted Ingram (Counseling);

Maria Treglia (ESL);

Karla Morales (Counseling);

Sharon Persinger (Mathematics);

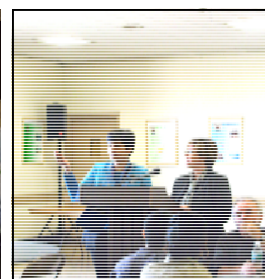
Vrunda Prabhu (Mathematics);

Donna Kessler-Eng (English);

Gilbert Marzan (Social Science);

Melissa Gonzales (Counseling);

Luis Fernandez (Mathematics)



**Creating Student Success
One Cluster At A Time !**

