

# TEACHING CONCERNS

## The Zen Ten

Mark Edmundson, *Daniels Family NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor*  
(2004-2007), *Department of English*

All happy seminar classes are, as Tolstoy no doubt would have said if he'd taught them, pretty much alike. (The unhappy ones are probably unhappy in their own peculiar ways.) In the happy seminars, you have a well-prepared, articulate instructor, engaged students and a shrewdly designed syllabus. Everyone, or just about everyone, prospers. But even in the most successful seminars, tedium can slide in. The format stays the same. The instructor enters, sits down, offers some introductory remarks, maybe a brief lecture, and then, perhaps pointing to a passage, opens up the discussion.

This can be a very fruitful approach and we've all seen good things come out of it. But slowly, the standard seminar form can get too predictable. The students become dependent on the teacher to get the discussion going. Each session, they need a jump-start and each session you need to hit them with higher voltage. Things become more directed and more determined by the teacher. The same people do most of the talking. Two-thirds of the way through the term, for reasons that aren't quite apparent, the class that was a joy to teach at the start is beginning to look more and more like a chore. Students who used to be there early, ready to go, are sauntering in late and mildly comatose.

One of the things that I've stumbled on to make a fundamentally good seminar better is a trick that I've come to think of as the Zen Ten (or Twenty, If You're Ready). This trick won't, I think, turn a bad class around; it's not major surgery. But it can produce some good results in a class that's already going reasonably well.

It works this way. Rather than starting off with a riff of my own, I direct the students to a passage and a question or two. Teaching Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," I might ask them to ponder what I take to be the most deeply meditative lines in the poem, the ones about rising above one's bodily being and becoming a living soul. I ask them to look at those lines with all the care they can muster, using the interpretive techniques that they've learned in this class and elsewhere. I invite them to sink the lines into the context of the poem and of Wordsworth's work overall. Then I ask them to consider some questions: "Is Wordsworth's poem escapist? Is he running away from something—from life? Or is he—maybe—getting himself ready for a more active, joyous, and generous immersion in experience?"

So far, we're following something like standard operating procedure. Now comes the difference. I tell the students that this is their discussion. I'll listen and take some notes, but for the next ten or twenty minutes, they're on their

(continued on page 2)

UNIVERSITY  
of VIRGINIA

TEACHING RESOURCE CENTER

Promoting excellence in teaching

<http://trc.virginia.edu>  
[trc-uva@virginia.edu](mailto:trc-uva@virginia.edu)  
434-982-2815

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2 Programs and Services
- 3 William McDonald, NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor
- 4 Rethinking Courses: University Teaching Fellows
- 5 Book Review: *Creating Significant Learning Experiences* by L. Dee Fink
- 5 Deadlines
- 6 José D. Fuentes, Cavaliers' Distinguished Teaching Professor
- 7 Workshops
- 8 TRC Graduate Student Assistants

FALL 2005

## Programs & Services

To schedule any of the services described below, please contact the TRC a minimum of one week ahead of time. More information can be found on the TRC website (<http://trc.virginia.edu>).

### INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATION

Trained TRC staff members can consult with you individually about any aspect of your teaching. Typical activities include observing your classroom teaching, analyzing student evaluations, discussing new course design or existing course redesign, and considering new teaching techniques. All consultations are confidential and tailored to your needs.

### TEACHING ANALYSIS POLL (TAP)

Find out what the majority of your students think helps them learn in your course. Time commitment: 25-30 minutes of class time, 30 minutes consultation time. Except in special circumstances, the TRC conducts TAPs only between the fourth and tenth weeks of the semester.

### VIDEOTAPING

Videotape usually makes it easier to analyze your own teaching since you can see your class from an objective point of view. During the 60-minute discussion about the class videotape, a TRC consultant will help you see what works and how to make desired improvements.

### TEACHING TIPS NOW ON-LINE

Explore the TRC's collection of teaching essays and teaching tips contributed by U.Va. faculty and TAs via our new, easy-to-browse "Teaching Tips" page. If you are interested in strategies to engage your students, want to learn about assessment techniques, need some advice to spruce up your lecturing, or simply seek new teaching ideas, you can find pertinent information by clicking "Teaching Tips" on the TRC website.

own. I bring a big clock with me to class (I'm in the reading glasses stage of life) and I give it a semi-theatrical stare. I assure them once again: I won't have anything to say; they'll have to do it on their own.

Silence. If I'm feeling anxious—and it's hard not to be with this exercise—I entertain a vision of this silence opening out into a great sterile expanse. When I was in Egypt not long ago, I had a good look at the Sahara Desert: the image re-enters my mind. But the idea is to hang on, breath deeply (Zen) and wait. What you can't do is let your anxiety get the better of you and break the deal. You have to be ready to go the full ten or twenty.

Usually, the first thing that happens is that a couple of students raise their hands. They look plaintively in my direction. Nope. I won't recognize them; it's their discussion. The longest I've ever gone in this way is five minutes—but there's five minutes and there's five minutes. The best thing to do, I've found, is to breathe at a steady rate and intone a self-created mantra.

Eventually, someone will speak. (Well, someone always has.) And—here's where the rewards start—it's often not one of the students that you expect. There's something about this shuffling of the pedagogical deck that brings other people, other voices, to the top. I'm not sure why, but in the three or four years I've been using this gambit, it always has. Every time that I've done this, the conversation has, in time, become rich, varied, lively, and unexpected. The last time I tried it out, a

week or two ago, I learned, simply from being quiet and listening, what William Blake meant by "moral individuality." It's something I'd been trying to figure out for, O, ten years or so. To get to this illuminating point, the students had to do a lot of work—which they did, and on their own.

The Zen Ten is a chance to concentrate on your students, figure out what's on their minds. There's a scene in the film *Pulp Fiction* where John Travolta asks Uma Thurman (Vincent—Our Man in Amsterdam—Vega asks Mrs. Marcellus Wallace) if she actually listens—or just waits for her turn to talk. It's hard, when you're conducting a seminar, not to be scrambling around in your mind figuring out what you're going to say next: this is a chance to take a breath and hear what's going on.

Do the conversations sometimes jump the rails? Sure they do. But even then, when in a discussion of Milton's interest in cosmic design, say, there's a detour into the matter of astrology, I learn a good deal. I find out something about what students care about and what they don't. In general, though, the students are less digressive than I am. They seem to want to prove themselves, to show that they can function as a group of intellectuals at work. And when they've done that once, it sometimes contributes to an esprit that lasts well on into the future. It takes a little nerve to try out the Zen Ten, but I think that students usually see it as evidence of trust and of a genuine desire to listen to them—and for that they can give back in rich ways.

## Honorees, Seven Society Graduate Fellowship for Superb Teaching



John Baltés, *Politics*  
 Patrice M. Calise, *English*  
 Ilke Civelekoglu, *Politics*  
 Amber M. Dexter, *Spanish, Italian and Portuguese*  
 Gina Fiore, *Chemistry*  
 Gavin Thomas Garner, *Mechanical Engineering*  
 Richard Hughes Gibson, *English*  
 José Manuel Hidalgo López, *Spanish, Italian and Portuguese*  
 Karthik Narayanaswamy, *Civil Engineering*  
 Amy Nichols-Belo, *Anthropology*  
 Jonathan Readey, *English*  
 Jesse J. Sabatini, *Chemistry*

## ***William McDonald, NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor***

In 1994 the Teaching Resource Center won a Special Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This grant, together with gifts secured by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, enabled the creation of three rotating U.Va. NEH Distinguished Teaching Professorships (DTPs). Each endowed chair, awarded to an associate or full professor for a three-year period, recognizes excellent undergraduate teaching in the humanities. This year's award went to William McDonald, the Horace W. Goldsmith Distinguished Teaching Professor of German.



In his thirty years at U.Va., Bill McDonald has taught courses from beginning German in the intensive Summer Language Institute to graduate medieval literature courses. Seeing himself as a guide, mood-setter and facilitator in one person, Herr Mac, as his students call him, has worked toward ceding to his students more and more “control” over their learning. Thus he has introduced, for instance, partner exercises, peer tutoring, and tools by which students can assess their work. Focusing on building positive feelings among the students—“even for such an unlikely subject as German grammar,” Bill says—he has found that his students seem less inhibited and more trusting than before. He believes that delectation has an important role in language instruction, and he has refined a lightness, a playfulness, in his pedagogy.

In applying his philosophy to what he sees as his most challenging course, German 300, Intensive Grammar, Bill turned to the internet as a way to enable students of widely diverse backgrounds to choose course topics. His students surf German news and cultural sites with the aim of selecting texts that interest them; they then summarize each text and write personal reactions to the articles. As the Goldsmith Distinguished Teaching Professor, Bill is excited about sharing with teachers of other languages his method of engaging students in writing about what they learn through internet sources—and in learning about writing. Then, Bill says, “No classroom participant is at a disadvantage. All can experience a rich spectrum of documents and sounds, . . . all with a world perspective.”

Those interested in more information about the Chair's duties can contact TRC Director Marva Barnett. Questions about the nomination and selection process should be directed to Karen Ryan, Associate Dean of the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, 924-3437.



## ***2004-2005 Teaching Awards***

### **All-University Teaching Awards** (in alphabetical order)

Eugene C. Corbett, MD, *Internal Medicine*  
John C. Harrison, *Law*  
William E. Jackson, *German*  
Meg Graham Keeley, MD, *Pediatrics*  
John Lach, *Electrical and Computer Engineering*  
Ralph Minehart, *Physics*  
Fernando Operé, *Spanish, Italian & Portuguese*  
William B. Quandt, *Politics*  
Howard Singerman, *Art History*

### **Alumni Association Distinguished Professor Award** John D. Arras, *Philosophy*

### **Alumni Board of Trustees Teaching Award** Paul J. E. Kershaw, *History*

### **Cavaliers' Distinguished Teaching Professorship** José D. Fuentes, *Environmental Sciences*

### **Horace W. Goldsmith NEH Distinguished Teaching Professorship** William McDonald, *German*

### **State Council of Higher Education Outstanding Faculty Award** R. Edward Freeman, *Darden*

### **Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards** (Asterisks denote All-University winners)

John D. Baltes, *Politics*  
\*Andrea C. Bobotis, *English*  
\*Dr. Carol Boersma, *Pediatric Medicine*  
Tristan S. Bridges, *Sociology*  
Carmen Armero Garcia, *Spanish, Italian & Portuguese*  
Gilberto Gonzalez, Jr., *Drama*  
\*Michael J. Janik, *Chemical Engineering*  
Benjamin W. Kidd, *Electrical & Computer Engineering*  
Brian Kissel, *Curry School of Education*  
Elizabeth R. Langran, *Curry School of Education*  
Janetta W. Lun, *Psychology*  
\*Scott L. Matthews, *History*  
John B. Murphy, *English*  
Stephen W. Murphy, *Religious Studies*  
Candice L. Odgers, *Psychology*  
Sonna M. Patel, *Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering*  
Amy B. Petersen, *Biology*  
Erin B. Potter, *Environmental Sciences*  
Mark R. Purves, *Slavic*  
Jennifer L. Roche, *Mathematics*  
Scott T. Rohrbaugh, *Physics*  
Chad W. Shorter, *Spanish, Italian & Portuguese*  
Daniel C. Smith, *Chemistry*  
Timothy L. Stinson, *English*  
Courtney E. Tolmie, *Economics*  
Jennifer C. Van Horn, *Art*  
Molly A. Zigler, *Chemistry*  
David L. Zirkle, *Economics*

### **Seven Society Graduate Fellowship for Superb Teaching** Jesse J. Sabatini, *Chemistry*

### **Dr. Frank Finger Graduate Fellowship for Teaching** Jonathan Readey, *English*

### **Class of 1985 Graduate Fellowship for Creative Teaching** Gavin Thomas Garner, *Mechanical Engineering*

## Rethinking Courses

The University Teaching Fellows Program aims to help our most intellectually sound and successful junior faculty members develop into exceptionally fine teachers. The selection committee—comprised of award-winning faculty—seeks to choose junior faculty members who show promise of becoming both eminent researchers and inspiring teachers. In existence since 1992 and funded by the Provost, the UTF Program remains true to its original Lilly Endowment goals to support impressive junior faculty as they refine their teaching expertise while pursuing strong research agendas. The Program centers around ongoing conversations about how faculty communicate their academic disciplines to undergraduates, how various teaching approaches might enhance one's courses, and how research enlivens and inspires teaching. The 2005-06 winners of University Teaching Fellowships will be rethinking these courses:



### **Alev Erisir, *Psychology***

I will create Psychopharmacology, a new mid-level survey course on an integrative topic. Thus this course will be a good portal for students with clinical and social psychology interests to explore the biological aspects of behavior and behavioral

pathology, while those with neuroscience interests will get a chance to explore translational aspects of basic science. Within these very strengths, of course, lie the challenges of teaching a multidisciplinary course to students with diverse backgrounds. Turning those challenges into advantages, facilitating class interaction, and fostering personal skills useful in science careers will be among the issues on which I will be concentrating.



### **Ellen Fuller, *Studies in Women & Gender; Asian & Middle Eastern Languages & Cultures***

My new course, Japan in the World Order, will utilize an interdisciplinary approach to solving the riddle of Japan's relatively minor political standing in

the international arena despite its major economic importance and its efforts to reposition itself (post-Cold War). The course goal is to build a matrix-type theory that relies on multiple units of analysis, moving the debate beyond the more facile East-West binaries such as groupism versus individualism. The study of Japanese culture in relationship to social, political, and economic life will serve as the thematic vehicle, and translations of Japanese scholarly analysis will be compared to western approaches.



### **Nilanga Liyanage, *Physics***

Many students taking modern physics find concepts such as relativity and quantum mechanics counter-intuitive and closer to science fiction than to reality. However, these concepts are routinely tested, demonstrated and utilized in particle physics experiments today. I will focus on developing

a set of application-based modern physics lectures aimed at science majors, with the goal of presenting such advanced, abstract physics concepts in a manner attractive to motivated students. I plan to incorporate these lectures into my current course, Quantum Mechanics (PHYS 355). I also intend to develop a short course, based on the same material, either for the J-term or as a seminar.



### **Christian McMillen, *History***

I'll spend my fellowship year rethinking one of my lecture courses—Native America. The course covers a very long period of time—from the last Ice Age to the present—and a massive geographical scale—all of North America. Because of the course's

time depth and geographical scope, it presents one principal pedagogical challenge: how do I adequately cover such a vast topic while not sacrificing depth? During my fellowship year I will work on redesigning my course so as to emphasize broad themes that transcend both time and space.



### **Margarita Nafpaktitis, *Slavic Languages and Literatures***

My course, America through Russian Eyes, explores ideas of America refracted through another culture's lens, situating those ideas within the dynamic context of contemporary Russian cultural, social, and political

life. It introduces students to non-canonical works by canonical Russian authors, incorporates film, music and other forms of popular culture into discussions and assignments, and emphasizes independent research. I plan to reconfigure the course (which I introduced in Fall 2004) to embrace more theoretically rigorous and comparative questions, to make more extensive use of non-literary sources, and to introduce active-learning techniques that can be effective in a larger lecture course.



### **Hyekyun Rhee, *Nursing***

My project will target the research course required in nursing education: Basic Research Concepts for Health Disciplines (NUIP 416). The goals of this course are to enable students to read research reports critically, to evaluate research quality, and to

determine how research reports apply to nursing practice. The revised course will effectively motivate students by focusing and capitalizing on both the inherent strengths of adult learners and the flexibility of on-line courses. The project will also explore creative, effective approaches to promoting learning relevant to these students' unique situations. These changes will help students take more responsibility for their own learning.



### **Dorothy A. Schafer, *Biology***

My project will focus on Cellular Mechanisms (BIOL 426), a course with flexible content that considers central questions in cell biology. This small-enrollment class is ideally suited for discussion-based learning using current research literature. My goals

are to enhance learning by taking advantage of the expertise of researchers on Grounds as guest lecturers, to explore additional "central questions" as course topics, and to learn techniques for generating engaging discussion among all students, regardless of their abilities." I will also consider strategies to incorporate the best features of this course into Core 1: Molecular and Cell Biology (BIOL 300), the larger-enrollment, basic-cell biology course required of all Biology majors and pre-med students.

**BOOK REVIEW:*****Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses***

by L. Dee Fink. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Reviewed by Alena Nye-Knutson, Former TRC Graduate Student Associate,  
Department of Religious Studies

To improve the quality of higher education, it is necessary to improve the quality of learning. This seemingly obvious point is central to the integrated, goal-oriented approach to course design advocated by L. Dee Fink in *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*. Traditional methods of teaching, he argues, are insufficient because they focus on information, not transformation, and on teaching rather than learning.

Due to the rapidly expanding and constantly variable amount of information now available in almost every field, Fink contends that it is both impossible and impractical to continue teaching according to a content-based paradigm. The most vital lesson students now need to learn is how to *continue* learning long after course-work is over—in essence, how to become “self-directed learners” (161). Fink avoids offering up teaching “tips” and instead outlines a new teaching “strategy,” which he believes can, over time, transfigure higher education from the foundation up. This process begins, according to Fink, where all courses begin—with the syllabus (130).

The concept of “significant learning” seems, at first glance, too subjective and slippery to be used as the measuring stick against which all higher education should be assessed and rebuilt. Perhaps anticipating this criticism, Chapter One is devoted to explaining exactly what Fink means by this phrase and how he thinks it is possible both to create and measure “significant learning.” Learning, he maintains, requires both a *process* and a measurable *outcome*. “Significant” learning, then, indicates a student who is both engaged in the process and who experiences valuable lasting change (e.g., professional development, enhanced awareness, personal enrichment, leadership abilities, and so on). While his definitions of the proper goal or measurable outcome of learning remain somewhat abstract, Fink convincingly argues that an improved process necessarily leads to improved outcomes. The key then is to *design the desired outcomes into the process*.

Alongside his argument for significant learning, a secondary goal of the book is to organize existing research on pedagogy into a coherent and practically applicable teaching philosophy centered on Fink’s notion of integrated course design. Chapters Two through Five define a new pedagogical taxonomy more appropriate to his proposed learning-centered paradigm (27). This taxonomy

(continued on page 6)

***TRC Library: Catalogue of Holdings Now Online***

In addition to numerous articles, the TRC Library contains over 800 books and videos on topics from effective teaching and learning to planning successful academic careers. Whether you’re looking for a book on active learning, a sample teaching portfolio, or a video of a recent workshop, such as the Fall 2004 Course Design workshops facilitated by L. Dee Fink (author of the current book under review), you can find it here.

The library continues to grow—recent additions include Ken Bain’s *What the Best College Professors Do* (2004) and the National Research Council’s *How People Learn* (2000), among others. To find out what’s available, stop by and browse our shelves or consult the complete catalogue of our library holdings now online at <http://trc.virginia.edu/Library/>.

# Deadlines!

Please note that several deadlines occur early in the spring semester. Unless otherwise noted, for more information, see the TRC website (<http://trc.virginia.edu>) or contact the TRC at 982-2815 or [trc-ua@virginia.edu](mailto:trc-ua@virginia.edu).

**UNIVERSITY SEMINARS (USEMS)**

Deadline: Friday, December 2, 2005 for both Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 proposals. University Seminars give first-year students the opportunity to study with faculty members in a seminar that encourages intense interaction and discussion. Seminars meet for two hours once a week and carry two hours of credit. Proposals for USEMS should be approved by departmental Chairs (Arts and Sciences) or by the Dean in other schools and submitted on the appropriate form to the Office of the Provost, PO Box 400308, Booker House. For more information, contact Beth DeBow ([bdebow@virginia.edu](mailto:bdebow@virginia.edu); 982-2334).

**TEACHING + TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE (TTI)**

This program, funded by the Provost and ITC, sponsors up to four faculty fellows with projects integrating teaching and technology. Program guidelines and RFP at <http://nmc.itc.virginia.edu/tti/>.

**OUTSTANDING FACULTY AND GTA TEACHING AWARDS and CAVALIERS’ DISTINGUISHED TEACHING PROFESSORSHIP**

Deadline: Monday, February 13, 2006. The Provost’s Office and the Teaching Resource Center are proud to administer this program of a dozen faculty teaching awards, 28 school/department-wide Graduate Teaching Assistant awards, and four All-University GTA teaching awards.

**PROFESSORS AS WRITERS PROGRAM**

Deadline: Monday, September 19, 2005. The Teaching Resource Center solicits proposals for our new Writing Fund Grants as part of the pilot program, Professors as Writers (PAW). Designed to support U.Va. faculty in their academic and professional writing and funded by the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement, PAW was developed in response to faculty concerns about writing and publishing. More details

(continued on page 7)

(continued from page 5)

enumerates six dimensions of significant learning, and consequently, of integrated course design: Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, Human/Social Dimension, Caring/Valuing, and Learning How to Learn (30). Fink recommends that instructors begin planning their courses not with a list of topics, but by asking themselves, “What do I hope students will have learned, that will still be there and have value several years after the course is over?” (63). The answers to this question help define for each course what is most significant and become the learning goals around which the syllabus is designed.

The final chapter, by far the most abstract, delves into Fink’s own teaching

philosophy and leaves readers with his thoughts on spirituality, citizenship and community. The most helpful section of the entire book, however, is saved for the excellent step-by-step course “Decision Guide” to be found in Appendix A. These six pages are the distilled essence of Fink’s course design strategy. Modeling his own process, the appendix offers his readers an opportunity to peruse Fink’s desired outcome. In keeping with Fink’s concept of learning-centered backward design, I recommend starting with the appendix to help identify what you find most significant, then working your way backward through the book.

## *Cavaliers’ Distinguished Teaching Professor*



The Cavaliers’ Distinguished Teaching Professorship was established in 1991 to recognize an eminent scholar for outstanding teaching of undergraduates. In addition to receiving a monetary award, Cavaliers’ DTPs teach a University Seminar (USEM) and work with the Teaching Resource Center to promote the general enhancement of teaching at the University. *Teaching Concerns* highlights this year’s winner, José D. Fuentes of the Department of Environmental Sciences

Guided by a belief that balancing theory and application is fundamental to understanding and mastering any subject, José uses a three-pronged approach to promote interactive teaching. First, he conveys “basic theory to students in a manner that makes connections between theory and practical applications” by showing graphic or schematic representations of ideas before introducing formal theories. Next, he emphasizes experiential learning, inviting students to gather their own information to explain course concepts. Through field projects, for example, students learn why clouds form in certain ways or which ones produce precipitation and why. José’s third principle of teaching—accessibility—underlies the other two. He writes, “I value interacting with students and enjoy discussing my course material with them. I treat my students as if they are my colleagues.” Using this approach, José hopes “to inspire younger generations to greet science as enthusiastically as I do.” This enthusiasm and openness to students’ ideas “made all the difference in my [own] academic life,” remarks one of José’s former students, now a doctoral student at Yale.

During his tenure as DTP, José will work on two related projects: developing and teaching a new USEM, “Environmental Disasters,” and forging discussions on teaching science and engineering effectively with newer U.Va. faculty. Both projects emphasize building connections and sharing innovative teaching techniques. Among other ideas, José is considering teaching the USEM course in Spanish to encourage foreign language majors to take his class.

# Workshops!

Refreshments are served at all TRC workshops. For more details on these and to find more recently scheduled workshops, see "Workshops" on the TRC website, (<http://trc.virginia.edu>) or contact the TRC at 982-2815 or [trc-uva@virginia.edu](mailto:trc-uva@virginia.edu).

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE SPEAKING VOICE

**Kate Burke**, Department of Drama, Past President of the Voice and Speech Trainers Association

Monday, September 19, 3:00-5:00 pm  
South Meeting Room, Newcomb Hall

**Pre-registration required:** Enrollment is limited to 20 participants.



Many individuals study the pronunciation of a second language far more carefully than the pronunciation of their native language. This workshop presents practical exercises geared toward a stronger vocal presence in public. Participants will identify and refine specific vowel and consonant sounds, learn useful warm-ups, and repeat resonance (vocal placement) exercises. Not intended as a simple fix for vocal problems, this workshop introduces

concepts of vocal awareness and offers techniques for developing that awareness over the long term. Both newcomers and those who have previously participated in the workshop are welcome. To pre-register, call or e-mail the TRC.

## CREATING A LEARNING-CENTERED SYLLABUS

**Rae Jean B. Goodman**, Director of Teaching and Learning and Professor of Economics

**Peter Gray**, Director of Academic Assessment, both from the U.S. Naval Academy  
Friday, October 21, 1:00-3:45 pm  
South Meeting Room, Newcomb Hall



A *learning-centered syllabus* focuses on student learning and the learning process and, therefore, shifts the course focus from teaching to learning. In this workshop, participants will learn how to construct a syllabus that will facilitate significant learning and communicate to students what they are expected to learn. The workshop will focus, first, on constructing learning outcomes based on significant learning goals, and, second, on using the syllabus to link goals, teaching and learning activities, and feedback and assessment processes. By the end of the workshop, participants will have created a framework for a *learning-centered syllabus* for their courses.



## JANUARY TEACHING WORKSHOP

Tuesday, January 17, 2006, 9:00 am-3:30 pm  
Ruffner Hall

Please note that this year, due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, our annual workshop will fall on the Tuesday before most courses begin. As always, these sessions will cover a variety of issues of interest to all members of the University's teaching community and provide a great opportunity for a reenergizing start to the Spring Semester. Plan to join us! **Pre-registration is recommended.**

(Deadlines continued)

available at <http://trc.virginia.edu/Programs/PAW/>.

## TEACHING + TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT PARTNERS (TTSP)

Deadline: Friday, February 24, 2006.  
The TTSP Program, funded by the Provost and ITC, trains a graduate student to provide faculty within a department or school with technical support in using new technologies for teaching innovation. The program will select four departments to join in 2006. Schools and departments with a substantial undergraduate population are eligible. Program description at <http://nmc.itc.virginia.edu/tti/>.

## UNIVERSITY TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS

Deadline: Monday, March 13, 2006.  
With summer grants of \$7,000 and ongoing, interdisciplinary discussions, the University Teaching Fellows Program aims to help our most intellectually sound and successful junior faculty members develop into exceptionally fine teachers.

## TOMORROW'S PROFESSOR TODAY

Applications considered beginning May 12, 2006. Co-sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Tomorrow's Professor Today is a certificate-bearing program open to a limited number of graduate and postdoctoral students considering an academic career. Program description at <http://trc.virginia.edu/Programs/TPT>

## EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIPS

Deadline: early June 2006. Funded by the Provost and by the Deans of Arts & Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, the Excellence in Diversity Fellowship Program supports in-coming tenure track faculty in developing productive long-term careers at U.Va. The program fosters ongoing interdisciplinary discussions between Fellows and senior colleagues and offers \$1000 grants for professional development.

## 2005-2006 Graduate Student Associates

### Teaching Resource Center *Full-time staff*

**Marva Barnett**  
Director (*French*)

**Judith Reagan**  
Associate Director (*Drama*)

**Dorothe Bach**  
Faculty Consultant (*German*)

**Deandra Little**  
Faculty Consultant (*English*)

**Michael Palmer**  
Faculty Consultant (*Chemistry*)

**Elizabeth Wittner**  
ITA Program Coordinator  
(ESOL)

**Freda Fretwell**  
Administrative Assistant

**Pat Fuller**  
Coordinator

### **Cedar Riener**



Cedar Riener is a Ph.D. candidate in the Psychology Department. His research centers on visual perception and how the body informs our perception of distance. In his department, Cedar has served as a grader, led both discussion sections and labs, and was awarded a Distinguished Teaching Fellowship to teach "The Science of Illusions," a course integrating all of psychology using "illusions" as a guiding metaphor. If he had free time, he would enjoy playing basketball, soccer, and running, but in the meantime he enjoys chasing his two-year-old twin boys.

### **Courtney Cook Spearman**



While working in London for an Internet hosting company, Courtney Cook Spearman was forever changed by the gardens of England and the pansies on her windowsill. She came to U.Va. to learn about landscape architecture and architectural history, and is now in her fourth year of Masters' degree work for these two programs. She is interested in improving the quality of participation in small group discussions, and in helping new graduate students navigate the initially rocky terrain of graduate school. When not following academic pursuits, Courtney enjoys traveling with her husband, Jim, in search of delicious food and wine and pulling weeds from her neglected garden.

### **Carey Sargent**



A PhD candidate in sociology, Carey Sargent is primarily interested in how racial, class and gender inequalities are reproduced through cultural institutions. As a drummer and local rock musician, her research looks at the role of music in the formation of social identities and boundaries. Through mentoring student-athletes and teaching sociology, she attempts to enable students to think critically about the world around them, to translate between their personal experiences and larger social issues, and to see the possibilities for greater human freedom. Teaching, researching, and performing are the sources of creativity and motivation in her life, along with her partner, friends and family.



**UNIVERSITY  
of VIRGINIA**

**TEACHING RESOURCE CENTER**

Hotel D, 24 East Range

University of Virginia

PO Box 400136

Charlottesville, VA 22904-4136