



The Excellence in
Teaching at NGCSU
Newsletter

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2002 Faculty Retreat Schedule

Friday, January 25

- 3:00 - 4:30 Roundtable Discussion—
"Leadership Across the Curriculum—
What We Already Have Established"
- 7:30 - 8:30 Keynote Speaker—"Best
Practices of Leadership Across the
Curriculum"
- 8:30 - Informal Discussions

Saturday, January 26

- 8:00 - 9:30 Breakfast
- 9:30 - 10:00 Remarks—President Nat
Hansford—"The Vision for
Leadership at NGCSU"
- 10:00 - 10:50 Breakout Sessions by
Disciplines—"What Is a Leader?"
- 11:10 - 12:15 Planning Session—
"What Is a Leader?—Planning for
Desired Outcomes in the Leadership
Minor and in Leadership Across the
Curriculum"
- 12:15 - 1:15 Lunch
- 1:30 - 3:00 Planning Session &
Closing—"What Is a Leader?—
Planning for an NGCSU Leadership
Institute"

Faculty Retreat 2002: Leadership Across The Curriculum

by Donna Gessell

Leadership Across the Curriculum is the retreat theme for the NGCSU Fourth Annual Faculty Retreat. The retreat is scheduled for Friday, January 25th and Saturday, January 26th at the Black Mountain Lodge. All faculty members are invited to attend, although overnight reservations are necessary. Particularly, faculty members who teach courses that are included in the two tracks—military and service—of the Leadership Minor are encouraged to attend.

The NGCSU Leadership Task Force, chaired by Dr. Judi Bryant, has defined leadership as "the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation." This definition recognizes three major components of leadership: the Leader, the Led and the Situation. Additionally, the task force has identified nine leadership competencies, listed in the box to the right.

The conference is being planned by a committee chaired by Donna Gessell that includes Toni Bellon and Andy Schaeffer. Keeping in mind that a conference should produce results, the committee has planned a schedule that will involve faculty in planning future directions for the leadership program at NGCSU. The schedule for the conference, listed at left, builds on existing NGCSU leadership programs to plan for desired outcomes in the Leadership Minor and in any course so that Leadership Across the Curriculum becomes a part of the NGCSU culture. The final session looks to an even larger future: by asking the question "What Is a Leader?" conference participants will begin planning for an NGCSU Leadership Institute.

Further information, including conference registration materials, will be circulated by email at the beginning of January.

NGCSU Leadership Competencies:

Communication
Collaboration
Conflict-Resolution
Problem-Solving
Diversity Awareness
Self-Reflection &
Self-Knowledge
Empathy
Ethics and Integrity
Theoretical Knowledge

Please send comments or related articles via campus mail (attention: Donna Gessell, Department of Language and Literature) or via e-mail rdptl@ngcsu.edu for possible inclusion in the next issue of *The Teacher*.

Excellence in Teaching - Award Winning Practices

■ **Barbara Ann Tronsgard**

Technology Utilization

The support from NGCSU in fostering technology utilization for faculty and students has afforded me the opportunity to participate in the development of varying initiatives within The Department of Nursing.

The availability of Gram's grants, funding provided for Technology Education and conferences, and financial support by the Biology Department for International Computer Videoconferencing encouraged finding methods to provide educational experiences for students and faculty with technology.

The initial International Desk Top Computer Videoconference with Northumbria University, UK provided a medium in which the Universities provided a cultural experience of women's health care issues to students and faculty without having to leave Northumbria or Dahlenega. As technology advanced, we were able to add an online educational enhancement component, "Women's Healthy Aging" through WebCT. The students' responses and evaluations have been that of very positive learning experience.

The initiative further encouraged two students from Northumbria University to come and spend a month with our ASN nursing students in the spring of 2001. NGCSU nursing students are now planning to go to England in the spring of 2002.

The opportunity for me to work collaboratively with peers and students using technology has been a tremendous learning experience.

■ **India J. Podsen**

Incorporating Writing

Teaching is an information intensive profession, one that requires expertise in both oral and written expression. In the Education Specialist Program for Teacher Leaders, we have used written expression to accomplish the following objectives:

- Foster critical reflection on teaching and learning through written self-assessment of current knowledge and skills, based on national standards;
- Promote adult learning through the design of individual professional development action plans to meet both individual and school improvement goals;
- Build professional learning communities through collegial inquiry groups, action research teams, and teacher mentoring. The results of these interactions are communicated with peers through oral and written reports, portfolios, reflection logs, professional articles, presentations, workshops, and use of media technology at their schools; and
- Document teaching and professional expertise by developing at least two written entries toward National Board Certification. These commentaries and supporting documentation require critical analyses of content presentation, student work and interaction, profes-

sional collaboration in schools and communities, and overall impact of decision-making on the learning environment.

■ **Ahmad Ghafarian**

Bringing Scholarship into the Classroom

Those who care about people deeply are those who are going to be very successful teachers. Caring means many things—the amount of time spent developing others, providing training, standards, feedback, coaching, guiding, sharing knowledge and giving others the authority to act.

We all know that success is attitude. Furthermore, I believe that success is illustrated by a "can do" attitude. To achieve our desired levels of student satisfaction, we must think in terms of what we "can do." This "can do" attitude is absolutely essential if we are to meet and exceed the expectations of our students.

I generally try to develop this attitude in myself. At the beginning of each semester I pass a questionnaire among my students and ask them several questions:

- What can I do to help you better understand the subject matter?
- What can I do to help you learn better?
- What can I do to facilitate your overall approach to studying?
- What can I do to help you managing your time better?
- What can I do to help you to develop a positive attitude towards the course?
- What can I do to help you to improve your weak points in this course?
- What can I do to help you to establish a trust relation with your instructor?

Then I review their responses and try to accommodate their needs relative to the course, my time, and practicality.

■ **Judy O'Neal**

Relating to Students

There is no more important thing we do than getting to know our students. It is so easy to get caught up in committee meetings, special projects, and professional responsibilities that we must sometimes pause and recall why we chose to be teachers. We are very privileged to have the opportunity to touch the lives of our future and share in its shaping. Sharing our passion for our content area is only part of our responsibility. We must serve as listeners as well as content specialists. Through our listening and dialoguing, we gain a better understanding of who our students really are, what their background and non-academic interests are, and what they hope to accomplish. It is important to show our student that we like them and care about them as individuals. Communicating to them our belief in their ability to succeed reaps tremendous benefits. Let us not forget that NGCSU students are our "raison d'être."

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Student Technology AdvisorRS (STARS) Program

by Irene Kokkala

The Student Technology Advisors (STARS) Program is based on partnerships built between faculty members and computer-knowledgeable students. The students are selected for their skills and breadth of instructional technology knowledge. These STARS students mentor faculty members to develop skills that will allow them to infuse their courses with technology. STARS students are paired up with professors following approval of a project. Projects involve technological course enhancements such as web design, graphics manipulations and development, use of WebCT, and software evaluation. STARS students also serve in an advisory capacity for the development of projects.

Since the beginning of the program six students have participated, including Jess Bloomingdale (1999-2000), Brady Pearson (1999-2000), Saif Altalib (1999-2000), Debbie Martin (2000-present), Justin Montoya (2000-present), and Barbara Seaton (2001-present).

There have been twenty-six projects total: some that were completed and some still in progress. Eighteen major projects have been requested from the following departments: Teacher Education (2), Fine Arts (2), History (2), Language and Literature (4), Mathematics and Computer Science (2), Nursing (3), Physics (1), and Psychology and Sociology (2). Some of the projects include the webpages for the History Department, the Fine Arts Department, *The Voice*, the Faculty Development Advisory Council, and more recently The Study Abroad Program and the NGCSU Writing Center.

If you are interested in proposing a project involving a STARS student, contact Irene Kokkala at ikokkala@ngcsu.edu.



Slides: The STARS Program in Practice

by Catherine M. Chastain

The NGCSU STARS Program has been very useful to my teaching practice. I am an art historian and deal with twenty to thirty images of historical artifacts per class session in all four of my classes. I own thousands of slides, and they constantly get lost, fade, or become cracked. How could I use technology to more effectively manage my slides? I won an NGCSU teaching and Learning with Technology Grant that allowed me to purchase a slide scanner, a flatbed scanner, and an image database software program. I also got a new computer and a digital projector (not yet installed) from departmental funds. A STARS student, Jess Bloomingdale, set all of my equipment up and took me step-by-step through the process of getting images scanned, archived, and into PowerPoint presentations. What a task! When this project was complete, a second student, Debbie Martin, helped me tackle another task, learning how to manipulate images in PhotoShop and incorporate them into webpages. I have been very, very, grateful for the hours they have spent with me helping me get up to speed technologically.

Promoting Math Through Teaching and Learning

by Carol Simmons

Students benefit greatly from research experiences and professional activities in their chosen field of study. Because of the hard work of professors and students in our department, mathematics majors are beginning to have some success in these areas.

Last summer one of our senior mathematics majors attended the Summer Mathematics Institute at Brigham Young University. This weeklong, fully funded seminar exposed the student to many new ideas in mathematics and has served as the basis for her senior project. Another senior mathematics major was selected to be a part of the Governor's Intern program; this student spent her summer preparing statistical analyses of gas marketers for the Georgia Public Service Commission. Both students returned for classes in the fall excited about what they had learned and anxious to share their experiences.

Students in our department are also gaining experience through senior projects. One student explored actuarial mathematics for his senior project and presented the results of his project in an interview with an actuarial firm. This project helped to distinguish the student from other applicants and he was hired by the firm.

In the future we envision that our students will be gaining experience in many areas of mathematics through the following experiences:

- the Mathematics Seminar led by Dr. Paul Patten;
- re-establishment of the Mathematics Association of America Student Chapter;
- senior projects;
- participation at regional and national professional meetings;
- internships; and
- REUs (Research Experiences for Undergraduates).

...continued from Page 2 - Award Winning Practices

■ Toni O. Barnett, Barry D. Friedman, & Barbara Ann Tronsgard *Collaboration*

After a series of three assemblies about "Learning Communities" during the 1999-2000 year, we "took the bait" and committed to a learning community that would involve our classes during the fall semester of 2000. Toni's M.S.N. students and Barry's M.P.A. students brought graduate students from two separate disciplines into a landmark community of scholars at the graduate level, and Barbara Ann's A.S.N. students added to a diverse group. Using WebCT technology, we used the theme of "Health Care, Public Policy, and Ethics." Barry wrote two essays—one about plagiarism and the other about public-policy decisions in the health-care area—and, in each case, their students would comment on Barry's essay on a bulletin board; then, each student would be required to reply to a comment from a student in a different major. The students' interactions were fascinating, and they clearly proceeded to process complex issues productively.

We were so enthusiastic about the outcome that we established another learning community for the spring semester of 2001, and brought in Rufus Larkin's M.S. students in community counseling—thus extending our community of scholars at the graduate level—and Thomas W. De Berry's undergraduates in microeconomics. The interaction was even more stimulating the second time.

We were gratified to give our students a novel opportunity to interact with students in other fields of study and to obtain experience with on-line learning. And the collaboration of the five faculty members created pleasant working relationships that have advantageous ripple effects upon other aspects of our activities at NGCSU.



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