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FSTC Newsletter

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The Faculty Scholarship & Teaching Center Newsletter

A Note from the Editor

By Dr. Christopher White

Welcome to this third issue of the FSTC Newsletter. The Newsletter is designed to help us, members of the GSU faculty community, stay connected with all the faculty development events and initiatives happening here on campus. The Newsletter also provides a way for faculty to share ideas that might be of general interest to us all as teachers and scholars.

In this issue, you'll meet Teri Sosa, the new Director of the Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center (FSTC), and hear about her plans for the Center as we move towards the beginning of a new semester. Teri has put together a full menu of programming for the spring, with something of interest to all of us in our teaching, research, and service work here at GSU. Teri follows on the pioneering efforts of Raven James and Tony Labriola, former co-Coordiators of the FSTC. Let's welcome Teri and support her efforts to build strong faculty development programming here at GSU!

The issue also features an update from this year's Faculty in Residence, Caron Jacobson, who is helping faculty find ways to build service learning into their teaching. You'll read some reflections by Kerri Morris on the recent University-wide writing symposium led by Berkeley's Dr. Donald McQuade. And rounding out the issue, Ann Vendrely tells us about first year seminars, an exciting new teaching opportunity for fall 2014.

If you or your colleagues are planning any faculty-development related speaker, activity, or workshop, let us know - we'll help you publicize it. Also, if you'd like to propose a short article for a future issue, we would love to hear from you! Email me at cwhite@govst.edu, or Teri Sosa at tsosa@govst.edu. Enjoy!

A Note from the Director

Greetings Colleagues,

Let me introduce myself. My name is Teri Sosa and I am the new Director of the Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center. I come to GSU as a Visiting Associate Professor of Education. Prior to this appointment, I was an Associate Professor at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. But I am originally from Chicago. I hold a doctorate in Instructional Technology from Northern Illinois University and an MBA from Loyola University Chicago.

I am very excited to be back in the Midwest and particularly excited to have the opportunity to build on the good work of the previous Coordinators of the FSTC, Raven James and Tony Labriola.

Together with the Faculty Development Advisory Council, I am planning a variety of interesting programs for the spring. These will include several workshops on service/active learning, conducted by our Faculty in Residence, Caron Jacobson—as well a number of engaging teaching workshops, on writing to learn, teaching veterans, and learn-ins. In addition to these, the FSTC will be hosting research-oriented workshops on topics like the scholarship of teaching and grants. Spring will also bring the return of the popular Rapid Fire Research event. Finally, Diane Dean, who visited us in June, will be returning to GSU to talk to us about today's generation of college students. This is wonderful preparation for FC14!

As you can see, we have a lot of exciting, engaging, and useful faculty development events planned. I will send a full list of faculty development programming, along with dates, in early spring. One of my primary goals moving forward is to improve communication between the Center and faculty with a new calendar, set to roll out next semester. Once it is in place, we'll all have ready access to a permanent calendar of all faculty development events happening around campus.

I hope that you will make it a priority to attend some of these events. I am also hopeful that you will provide feedback about additional programs you would like to see!

Please feel free to contact me (tsosa@govst.edu) with comments, ideas, and suggestions.

Caron Jacobson, Faculty in Residence: Fall 2013 Update Service Learning at GSU

By Caron Jacobson

With the approaching first year class in 2014, there have been efforts all across campus to bring civic engagement to the heart of GSU. The goals I have outlined for my year as Faculty in Residence could not come at a better time as the university expands its student base and engagement with our community.

The first workshop was held on November 20th and the focus was on providing a "Service Learning 101" geared towards faculty interested in building service learning into their courses. Attendees learned what service learning is and is not, what the components and characteristics of service learning are, and how to get started using it in their courses. Cynthia Carr, Lorri Glass, Crystal Blount, Arness Krause, and Ellie Walsh presented projects in their courses to demonstrate examples of how service learning is implemented across a variety of courses. The workshop was a great opportunity to network with other faculty, and all of us walked away with more teaching ideas and a sense of how to work together across disciplines in our efforts towards service learning. I will be narrowing the focus for the next workshop, to be held early in 2014, by providing ideas and examples of how to include students in the development and assessment of service learning courses as well as how to integrate cultural awareness through service learning projects.

A larger goal has sprung out from the development of the first workshop: we need a centralized resource for learning about who is using service learning on campus, and how they are using it. There are a lot of wonderful service learning projects currently going on under our roof, but it's a real challenge finding out about them. So, I will be working closely with Teri Sosa, Director of the Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center, to develop this as well as other resources to support current and future faculty who are interested in incorporating service learning in their teaching.

Reflections on Donald McQuade's Visit

By Dr. Kerri Morris

When I was in graduate school (too many years ago to say out loud), my colleagues and I studied the Writing Across the Curriculum movement in the United States as a key aspect of the discipline of composition. Our research and classroom presentations focused on the origins of composition and WAC, with this history providing an important context within which to study the field.

Elaine Maimon and Donald McQuade were two key players in this history, and because of this influence on my education I chose to make composition and WAC part of my special focus in English studies. I feel especially privileged (and pretty humbled, too) to be a faculty member who provides leadership in WAC at the same institution where Elaine is the president.

Don McQuade's leadership of our fall symposium underlined that sense of privilege. His lecture on Thursday night, October 17, "Teaching in the Age of Twitter" was, well, what can I say, except "inspiring"? He's a charismatic speaker and he brings a contagious enthusiasm and joy to his work. He clearly loves what he teaches and is devoted to his students.

Friday's workshop was no less inspiring. I learned through Don and Elaine's scholarship many years ago that the best way to engage people in the subject of teaching writing is to invite them to write and to think of themselves as writers. It was no surprise then, that Don invited all of us to write at the beginning of the day. We are, in fact, all writers in one way or another.

Two things especially resonated with me from Don's remarks on both days.

- Meet students where they are. We have to find out who our students are and become familiar with what they know in order to empower them. Our students bring specific contexts and worlds and experiences and abilities to our classrooms and we must teach with this background informing our choices and goals. We have to know where they are before we build bridges to invite them to where we want them to be.
- Second, invite students to observe and then draw inferences. Students know more than they (or we, perhaps) acknowledge. They are observers of their world, and we need to draw attention to that in our teaching and formalize those observations. From there, we can draw inferences that inform our behaviors and patterns of thinking.

I'm very glad to report that Don will return to GSU to continue the conversation about WAC on Friday, February 7 in the Hall of Honors. Faculty will have another chance to talk about constructing writing assignments and responding to student writing.

On a final note, I'm pleased to report that we had a small but enthusiastic group in attendance at the Faculty Development Workshop on constructing assignments on November 6. I will also facilitate a workshop on Writing to Learn on January 16, the week before spring classes begin. I hope you will join us.

Interested in Teaching a First Year Seminar Course?

By Dr. Ann Vendrely, Chair, General Education Task Force

Last week the General Education Task Force issued a call for faculty to teach the new First Year Seminar course, FYS 1001: Interdisciplinary Humanities. This course is an important part of the new general education curriculum. We hope you will respond! Focusing on one of the three themes—civic engagement, global citizenship, or sustainability—this interdisciplinary course will incorporate literature, history, and philosophy to help students develop thinking strategies and knowledge.

Each FYS section will have a student (peer) mentor who has completed leadership coursework. Faculty will customize the course based on their interests, the student theme, and other courses in the cohort. The course will also be coordinated with a composition course and another course

that varies by theme.

All full-time faculty in tenure-track or tenured positions are eligible to apply. Selection will be made by the General Education Task Force based on commitment to quality instruction, interest in participating in the learning community, and openness to working with student (peer) mentors. The Task Force will select a diverse group of faculty in order to meet student needs and represent a variety of fields and professional experiences.

A course syllabus has been developed and approved by GSU's University Curriculum Committee. It is currently under review by the Illinois Articulation Initiative.

We hope you will consider this unique opportunity to work with the new first year students next fall. [Click here to view and download a copy of the application](#). Completed applications will be due in February 2014. If you have any questions about the course and/or the application process, please contact Maristela Zell (mzell@govst.edu), Linda Geller (lgeller@govst.edu), John Yunger (jyunger@govst.edu), or Stephen Wagner (swagner2@govst.edu). Please submit your completed application to gened@govst.edu by February 20, 2014.

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