The University of Maryland at the 3rd Meeting of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Nearly forty representatives of the University of Maryland participated in the third annual meeting of the International Society of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSoTL) in Washington during the weekend of November 9-12. University administrators, faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students took part in panel discussions, delivered presentations, and offered posters on the study and practice of teaching and learning for the approximately 850 attendees from more than a dozen nations. In collaboration with our peers at Georgetown University, Howard University, George Mason University, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the University of Maryland contributed to the organization and support of this nascent but thriving conference.

The society’s annual meeting includes rich investigations of the nature of learning, the educational work of the disciplines, and the practice of scholarly teaching. Participants devote significant work to refining what it means to initiate research in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), and they present their own work as scholars and investigators of teaching and learning.

“ISSOTL” continued on page 7
From the Director: Global Literacy

Global literacy, global learning, global awareness, global education, international learning, international education, international competencies, and global village. Buzzwords and calls to action the educational community hears on a regular basis. All have different meanings that overlap and—depending on who is talking and the context of the discourse—may refer to different educational matters. They all have in common an increasing awareness that everyone, especially students, needs to have global knowledge, skills, and appreciations that empower them to successfully compete in a world more tightly interconnected than any other time in human history. An example of the impact of the interconnected nature of the world is illustrated by the arrest of terrorist suspects in England. Within hours, airline passengers throughout the US, from Maine to Kansas to California had to give up all liquids at airport security checkpoints; the way we travel was changed in a matter of hours.

Every student needs a global dimension embedded within his or her education. The knowledge, skills, and appreciation that students need to be successful in the 21st century include an understanding of the geography and politics of the world, an understanding of the interdependence of the world, and the global dimensions of certain problems (e.g., global warming, war, fresh water needs, over-fishing,) and an appreciation of the impacts new technologies (e.g., wireless communication, and internet accessible data) have on societies and individual lives. The skills our students need to operate in a global world include broader language abilities, the ability to use and embrace emerging technologies, and the ability to see issues and problems and solutions in global as well as local contexts, to name a few. It is critically important in today’s global society that all students recognize that the world is made up of different cultures, ideologies, and perspectives, and that they develop an understanding and appreciation of these differences and their importance.

November 12-17 is International Education Week, and there are numerous activities on campus to highlight and celebrate the inter-
Notes for Spring Syllabi

Faculty Handbook of Policies & Resources

- Can I reschedule a final exam?
- What are the University’s guidelines for attendance policies?
- In what cases am I required to submit early warning grades?
- Do I need approval to sell my own textbook to students taking my course?
- What must be included in my course syllabi?

This guide offers a brief introduction to the University’s policies, procedures, and resources related to teaching, advising and mentoring. It is available at the following address: http://www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/InstructionalGuide.htm

The Honor Pledge

The Student Honor Council encourages instructors to include the following information in course syllabi:

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.shc.umd.edu.

To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

Subscribe to Teaching & Learning News

For more than fifteen years TLN has included articles, notes, and schedules to keep the campus informed about new technologies, available grants, fellowship notices, workshops and roundtables, distinguished lectures, assessment, learning outcomes, classroom management strategies, consultation programs, new conferences, established programs, award winners, grant recipients, University policies on teaching, and other valuable information for faculty and graduate teaching assistants. Most important, it always suggests ways to enhance teaching for better learning.

Subscribing to the TLN listserv list takes about twenty seconds and means that you will receive approximately five emails a year, notifying you that a new issue of the only regular campus-wide publication on teaching and learning has arrived. If you are one of the many who already read, please share your feedback with us via cte@umd.edu.

Visit http://www.cte.umd.edu/TLNMailingList/
An Interview with Uche Akobundu, Department of Nutrition and Food Science

Teaching & Learning News: Tell us a little about your teaching experience. What sorts of classes have you taught? Have you worked as a professor’s T.A. or as an autonomous instructor? Both?

Uche Akobundu: I have collaborated with several professors as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) to facilitate discussion sessions associated with both introductory and community nutrition courses. The course I have worked with most recently for three semesters is a 400-level course in community nutrition. I collaborate with the instructor (my advisor, Dr. Nadine Sahyoun) to craft the lesson plans, assignments, exams, and service learning components of this course. I am also responsible for the weekly discussion section and have the opportunity to lecture a few times during the semester.

TLN: What sorts of relationships exist between your research and the courses you have taught? Do you look for connections between your work as a graduate student and your work as a classroom teacher?

UA: I have been fortunate to have taught discussion sections on subject matter related to my research. During my experience facilitating discussion sections for an introductory nutrition course, I was able to use information from the class as the foundation of the nutrition education materials I developed for program participants in the research study I was working on at the time.

In addition to my current teaching assistantship, I also work with my advisor on a program evaluation project. I find that in our research, we constantly revisit the basic principles of program evaluation practice taught in the community nutrition course when providing a rationale to project collaborators for the study design we developed.

TLN: What moments from your experience as a teacher are you likely to remember for a long time? What makes that scene or those scenes memorable? How have they affected your teaching?

UA: Memorable moments in teaching that I have experienced include working with students to tackle concepts in the courses that challenge them and witnessing the ‘aha!’ moments that follow. This occurs most often when I am able to connect the concept to an issue or topic that is personally relevant to the student. I find these experiences important because they reinforce my zeal for teaching! The study of community nutrition requires that students understand the biochemical principles of the discipline and the complexity of issues that impact the health of communities, in order to develop programmatic solutions to the nutritional issues they are studying. This often involves a paradigm shift for the students in our class. Thus, seeing them advance in their understanding of these issues over the course of the semester is quite satisfying.

Other memorable moments in teaching occur every year when I work with students to implement an annual food drive for the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) located in Washington DC. For some of the students who deliver the donated goods to the CAFB, this is their first visit to a food bank and first encounter with assisting persons at risk of poor nutrition. I enjoy working with students to expand their horizons and extend their learning from the classroom to the community. I find that many come away with an appreciation for the range of issues for which community nutrition is applied and a desire to pursue consider community nutrition as a career path.

“Akobundu...” continued on page 9

Reviewed by Mateo Munoz

Each year more than 25,000 undergraduate students enroll at the University of Maryland College Park. These students come from a broad range of class, racial, ethnic and national backgrounds. As faculty members, lecturers and graduate teaching assistants we often face the challenge of accommodating the learning needs of a diverse group of students. For example, some students come to college with the necessary skills to negotiate institutions like the university to get the outcomes they desire. Still other students arrive largely unprepared to negotiate with professors, administrators and the institution at large. Where do students develop the skill to interact with and negotiate societal institutions like the educational system?

Lareau weaves a categorical argument that divides the child rearing practices of middle class, working class, and poor families into two distinct “cultural logics” of parenting, concerted cultivation and natural growth. These two models of child rearing are characterized and differentiated by the organization of daily life, language, and interactions with institutions. In the case of middle-class families, concerted cultivation was the dominant “cultural logic” consisting of child-parent negotiation through verbal communication, and extracurricular activities. The poor and working class families utilized the “cultural logic” of natural growth characterized by extended kinship networks as a source of entertainment and respect for parental authority. Lareau argues that concerted cultivation as opposed to natural growth unequally prepares middle class children to be successful in societal institutions, primarily schools, in a way that reproduces social inequality. The focus here is on class based cultural practices and the ways family background intimately affects educational, occupational, and financial outcomes.

In addition to the textured descriptions, analytical innovation, and rich empirical data in Unequal Childhoods, Lareau provides rigorous detail of her methodological approach in the appendix that will likely serve as an important research tool in graduate and undergraduate sociology courses.
Upcoming Grant Opportunities for Teaching & Learning

Improvement of Instruction Grants

The Office of Undergraduate Studies and the Center for Teaching Excellence sponsor the Improvement of Instruction Grants (IIG) program during the academic year. IIG selection criteria give priority to proposals that contribute to the University’s efforts to improve undergraduate teaching and learning, and we solicit projects that have the potential to produce the greatest impact. Previous Improvement of Instruction Grants have underwritten exciting initiatives at the University of Maryland; these projects have fostered the development of valuable and effective educational programs. Individual faculty members, as well as departmental or interdisciplinary clusters, are invited to apply.

Previous Grants can be viewed at http://cte.umd.edu/grants/iigabstracts/2006-2007abstracts/index.html. Proposals will be due early in the spring semester, so visit the CTE website for deadlines in January.

Lilly-East Travel Grants for Graduate Students

The 2007 Lilly East Conference is scheduled for April 12 through 14, 2007, and will be hosted at the University of Delaware. Lilly Conferences combine interactive workshop sessions, discussions, and feature presentations, with opportunities for informal discussion about excellence in college and university teaching and learning. They bring together faculty and graduate students from across disciplines and types of academic institutions.

Conference Proposals are due on December 1, 2006. For more information about the conference, including proposal submission and guidelines, visit: http://www.udel.edu/lillyeast/.

CTE will fund graduate teaching assistants whose proposals are accepted. To apply for the Lilly-East travel grant, visit http://cte.umd.edu/grants/LillyGrantApplication.html.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Development Grants

Graduate Teaching Assistant Development Grants help departments and colleges improve their development, support, and recognition of graduate teaching assistants. The purpose of these grants is to advance graduate teaching assistant professional development, thereby enhancing undergraduate student learning.

Grant criteria, suggested project areas, and supported proposals are available at http://cte.umd.edu/grants/TAGrants/index.html.

Applications are due on December 1, 2006.

If you have questions or need more information about these grants, or to find out about CTE’s University Teaching and Learning Program, please contact Henrike Lehnguth by phone at (301) 314-1283 or by email at lehnguth@umd.edu.
University of Maryland participants presented work on teaching with financial markets labs, critical thinking in a multi-disciplinary course on medicinal plants, collaborative work on dissertations based in SoTL, learning outcomes and scholarly teaching, internationalizing undergraduate teaching and learning, assessment and accountability at research universities, undergraduate students conducting SoTL, signature pedagogies in American Studies, learning microbiology across courses, accountability for and efficacy of teaching practices, the work of undergraduate teaching assistants, College Park Scholars’ work as a learning community, the use of clickers in the humanities, and black feminist thought in an undergraduate course. Provost Bill Destler opened the Saturday plenary with a thoughtful welcome from the University, and Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean for Undergraduate Studies Donna Hamilton participated in two conference sessions. This University is very fortunate to have this level of meaningful interest in teaching and learning from its administration and faculty.

In keeping with their efforts to host an international conference, the organizers from Georgetown University, led by Randy Bass of Georgetown’s Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship, have collected a series of syntheses from each session and will make these responsive summaries available by way of the conference blog (http://lamp.georgetown.edu/issotl/). Here, those interested in the meeting’s conversations but unable to attend are afforded a sense of the participants’ work.

CTE encourages you to review these syntheses and reflect on your own contributions to a studied reflection on teaching and learning. While SoTL very much remains an emerging and often contested field, compelling work is underway, and a great deal of this conference’s materials suggests ways to enhance our teaching and our student’s learning.

Information on the fourth annual ISSoTL conference in Sydney, Australia, July 2-5 2007 is now available at http://www.indiana.edu/~issotl07/.

Global literacy can be defined here as an active understanding of the global dimension of human existence. Fostering global literacy will require that international/global perspectives, examples, and awareness be embedded throughout the curriculum, from first-year seminars to senior projects. As you think about and begin work on your spring courses, ask yourself, “is there an international/global perspective or example in my course”? If the answer is no, then ask how you might integrate an international or global perspective or example into the course. When students consistently and regularly encounter international/global components in multiple courses, their understanding and appreciation of the global nature of the world—their global literacy—increases, which in turn enables them to make connections between their lives and others’ lives around the globe. And they are better able to understand the problems that face the world as a whole. Certainly all of our students need to be “globally literate” in order to be successful in their careers and to be conscientious, knowledgeable citizens. To achieve this goal we all need to continue to ensure that every student experiences an international education that includes not only theory but practice, through travel via study abroad, class activities that foster international learning, and peer communities and activities that capitalize on the robust international nature of the Maryland community.
University Teaching and Learning Program

The University Teaching and Learning Program (UTLP) is an elite cohort of graduate teaching assistants who come together informally to discuss aspects of teaching and learning, engage in mentoring relationships, and create their teaching portfolios. UTLPers have a common commitment to improving undergraduate education and an eagerness to make their classes the best that they can be.

Supported by the Office of the Provost, UTLP is administered by the Center for Teaching Excellence and coordinated by Henrike Lehnguth, CTE’s Coordinator of Graduate Programs and a doctoral student in American Studies. For more information about the UTLP, contact her at lehnguth@umd.edu.

WORK WITH A CTE FACULTY TEACHING CONSULTANT

The Faculty Teaching Consultation Division is designed to help provide support for campus instructors who would like to improve their teaching. Teachers work one-on-one with a Faculty Teaching Consultant, based on their own goals. The requesting teacher determines the issues to be explored, and the consultant provides an outside perspective, peer support for a plan of action, and suggestions for additional resources.

Consultations can address any number of areas, including, among other issues, assessment, active learning, collaborative learning, lecturing, instructional technology, syllabus construction, rubrics for grading, and scholarship in teaching and learning.

Any faculty member who teaches for the University of Maryland at College Park can request a teaching consultation, and they are completely confidential. For more information, contact the Center for Teaching Excellence at 301-405-9356 or via email at cte@umd.edu.

Online Teaching Resource Packets

CTE has made available a valuable teaching resource for the campus community. Visit http://cte.umd.edu/PODresources.htm to review a number of brief essays published by the POD (Professional and Organizational Development) Network.

These POD packets address current, relevant topics in higher education teaching and learning. Each is composed of past “Essays on Teaching Excellence,” a POD Network publication series.

Written by expert scholar-practitioners, these thoughtful and succinct essays can be used as readings for faculty development workshops, seminars, individual consultations, and classes on college teaching.

EXAMPLES OF AVAILABLE PACKETS:
- The Learning Process
- Change, Renewal, and the Professoriate
- Technology and Related Issues
- Improvement of Teaching and Assessment
- Alternatives to Traditional Teaching Methods and Learning Strategies
- The Student/Teacher Relationship
- Defining and Characterizing Teaching
- Motivating Students
- Cooperative/Collaborative Learning, Small Groups
- Critical Thinking
- Diversity Issues
- Grading, Testing and Assessment
- Introductory Courses/General Education

Online Teaching Resource Packets
The Program for the Professionalization of International Graduate Teaching Assistants (PITA)

The Program for the Professionalization of International Graduate Teaching Assistants is a one-year pilot mentoring program that pairs each novice IGTA with a faculty mentor outside of his/her department. CTE is beginning implementation of PITA during the 2006-2007 year, and proposed requirements include regular meetings between mentor and mentee, group professional societies, to further our efforts. We anticipate that these activities will prepare us well for the professoriate and beyond.

TLN: What sorts of mentors have you had? What elements of their mentorship have been the most effective for you?

UA: I have been very fortunate to have several wonderful mentors not only advisors, at every level of my academic journey. One of the best mentors I have had has to be my current advisor, Dr. Sahyoun. The elements of her mentorship that I have found most effective include her collaborative and creative approach to improving student engagement and learning in her class. I have learned several strategies for effective teaching from working with her to develop the course, as well as from observing her lecture and facilitate group discussions. She provides useful feedback to me on my teaching and suggestions overcoming any challenges to instruction I face.

TLN: Can you share one or two suggestions for new teachers, perhaps some guidance that seems particularly important but might be overlooked?

UA: I think that new teachers should understand that their function is not only to impart information but also to serve as examples of a professional in their discipline. The GTA should seek out opportunities to impart values for model conduct in the classroom (i.e., academic honesty, teamwork, respect for others and the diversity of viewpoints on issues within a class) as well as outside of it (i.e., civic engagement at the university and community level). I feel that the interaction of the GTA with students, while short (between a single semester and several semesters), can still have a substantial impact on their professional development.
Are you interested in the student response devices known as clickers? CTE has a loaner program. You can borrow a set of radio frequency (RF) clickers and a laptop equipped with the RF receiver which makes any classroom with an LCD projector a clicker classroom.

For more information about classroom response technology, visit http://www.clickers.umd.edu, see the November-December 2005 issue of Teaching & Learning News, or contact CTE at cte@umd.edu.

The University of Maryland’s Center for Teaching Excellence is an initiative of the Office of the Associate Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies.

CTE supports departments, faculty, and graduate students by offering resources and assistance as part of a campus-wide effort to improve teaching and learning.