Teaching on the Edge:
How Marquee Courses Offer a Model for CORE Education
By Ann Smith, Faculty Fellow, CTE

In response to a call for proposals from Dr. Donna Hamilton, Associate Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies, six Marquee Courses in Science and Technology have been designed to generate an appreciation for and understanding of how science provides solutions to present and future world challenges. “We have come to recognize a national need for an understanding of STEM that cannot be addressed only by educating future scientists. The problem is deeper, more systemic, and solutions must extend to improved education for non-science majors” says Dean Hamilton. As a result of this Marquee initiative 1144 students to date have experienced a new approach to learning science for the general education requirement.

“These courses are taught by some of our some of our top faculty, known internationally for their research and also dedicated to creating courses that truly engage non-science majors in understanding the process of science and how science can be used to address current global challenges,” explains Hamilton. The Marquee faculty members have worked as a team to forge goals for this course initiative, creating a set of courses that teach science in context of students’ issues, future careers, and world problems. “These courses take science out

“Teaching on the Edge” continued on page 4
The twin concepts of academic rigor and challenge have long been part of the way we talk about university learning, but we have lately seen an increase in the discussion of these aspirations. They are among the Strategic Plan’s foundations and aims, and they are part of the Office of Undergraduate Studies’ mission statement. There is, however, a perception that rigor and challenge are not deeply embedded in undergraduate work, and there are reports that students are not academically challenged by their courses.

Though rigor and challenge are terms that are probably not subject to a helpful definition that applies universally (and this brief newsletter column certainly won’t be able to capture much of their nature), it is useful to consider their character in the University’s courses. It is easy to explain what rigor and challenge are not. Simply adding more work does not constitute a meaningful increase in challenge; without careful purpose, it may only increase the amount of time students are expected to commit to their learning. Adding work without a defined learning goal won’t get us very far. Neither does rigor mean requiring that students navigate their learning without any guidance. Teaching a person to swim by throwing him into deep water is generally not good pedagogy.

Rigor and challenge should lead to more learning and more questions than what we might have initially designed. Rigorous and challenging courses mean that we are requiring students to think and learn with some independence and some investment in that thinking and learning well beyond modest expectations. Even if students achieve the course’s learning goals, they may not be able to understand the value, context, or even the meaning of what they have learned. Purposefully difficult assignments potentially guide students to understand not simply the answer to the question, but the importance of the question and that there are other questions to be asked.

Engaging students in learning—which ought to coincide with rigorous courses—requires some connection between them and the course material. We must look for and offer ways of making those connections but cannot actually do the connecting; students must be expected to do that themselves. Entertaining students may be a good beginning for that engagement, but its efficacy goes little beyond that start, and in some cases it may actually limit learning (think of those classes in which we learn much more about the instructor than the concepts). Engaging students works best when it builds upon some of their intrinsic motivations, and our interest in that motivation signals that we are interested in their learning. Effective teaching requires some sense of the kinds of knowledge students have brought to our courses, the ways they approach problems, and what their expectations of the course are. Without attempting to measure those things, we direct our teaching at mythical students.

Imagine two scenarios.

In the first, the instructor begins a course by briefly outlining the history and major questions of the discipline. She then presents a significant amount of information and describes concepts. She asks students to describe those concepts and tests their ability to apply them to problems. As the semester progresses, students are asked to perform those tasks on exams and are rewarded or punished with grades corresponding to their ability to apply concepts to problems.

In the second model, students are challenged to make connections and to articulate their understanding of concepts. These are not uncommon methods, but they are often seen as a means to better performance on conventional assignments. I want to suggest that the ability to make connections (between a course’s various components, between your course and another, between more than one discipline, between their experience and the previous class meeting’s discussion) and explain their understanding of concepts in their own words can be as valuable markers of learning as a high score.
Notes From the CTE Library:
*How to Talk About Hot Topics on Campus*

By Kirsten Crase, Faculty Programs Graduate Assistant, CTE

Having the chance to read a thought-provoking and inspiring book such as this one is a pleasure in and of itself, but it is made all the more enjoyable when the book itself is free, and in fact won as a prize. Such was the case with this book, which I won during the book raffle at the 2008 Lilly-East Conference on College and University Teaching, which I participated in along with a number of other attendees from the University of Maryland. For those considering attending the 2009 Lilly-East Conference, I offer a hearty endorsement of doing so; the chance to win a newly-released book on teaching is but one of the many benefits of attending a Lilly conference.

College campuses have long served as sites where discussions of contested, controversial, and sensitive topics can take place. While this fact is laudable, authors Robert J. Nash, DeMethra LaSha Bradley, and Arthur W. Chickering argue in *How to Talk About Hot Topics on Campus; From Polarization to Moral Conversation* that these discussions are far too often grounded in bitter contestation and a winner-takes-all approach. They propose, as an alternative to this “culture of contestation,” a more thoughtful and purposefully respectful “culture of conversation.” More specifically, they propose the practice of “moral conversation.” Developed primarily by Nash as a means for implementing a course on religion and spirituality for students in an education program, moral conversation is a philosophy and a set of guidelines for conversation on “difficult pluralistic dialogues” that is grounded in compassion, generosity, and openness.

The two opening chapters of the book are written jointly by the three authors and serve as an introduction to the idea of moral conversation and to their larger goal of promoting a spirit of pluralism on college campuses. The authors describe moral conversation as “above all … a mutual sharing of all those wonderful stories that give meaning to people’s lives.” “Moral conversation,” they suggest, “obligates each of the participants to listen actively and respectfully to the stories of others, both to understand and affirm them as well as to discover whatever ‘narrative overlap’ might exist among them.”

Some of the “golden rules” of moral conversation include “a willingness to find the truth in what we oppose and the error in what we espouse [...] at least initially,” and a willingness to embrace conversation that is designed to produce not a “winner” or an agreed-upon “truth” but has the more modest goal of mutual understanding.

The next section consists of chapters written individually by each of the three authors. The chapter by Nash is directed towards faculty and presents a perspective and set of guidelines for applying moral conversation in a classroom setting. The chapter by Bradley offers the perspective of a student affairs professional on the ways in which moral conversation can be used in student affairs work. And lastly, the chapter by Chickering presents the perspective of a senior administrator in working to encourage and facilitate moral conversations across campus. All three chapters are highly accessible, containing numerous examples and anecdotes from the authors’ personal experiences.

While stressing the fact that moral conversation can be employed to discuss any number of contested issues, the authors choose the topics of religion, social class, and politics to use as examples in this work, primarily because, in their perspective, these issues have been less fully and frequently explored than such contested issues as race, gender, and sexuality.

The closing chapter addresses the many benefits, as well as challenges, that accompany moral conversation, and a set of appendices offers

"Hot Topics..." continued on page 8
of the classroom and show how it is applicable to everyday life,” notes Keona Feaster, formerly Coordinator for Academic Advising Services in Letters and Sciences.

Many students are anxious about taking a science or engineering class. The Marquee faculty strive to offer students an understanding of what science is and who the scientists are. The Marquee courses also expose students to science in a way that shows them the relevance of the material to their own lives, and so engages them more deeply, as Robert Hudson, Professor of Atmospheric and Oceanic Science explains. The courses are designed to give students the tools they need to be more comfortable with science so that they can find information for making important decisions in their own context, whether that be in their work, in relation to their future careers, or their everyday lives.

“The English physicist and science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke has said, ‘Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.’ I want students to understand that science is work, and there is a rigorous exploration of that work by a community who reviews, challenges and reviews again each piece of data,” says Robert Briber, Professor and Chair of Material Sciences Engineering, who is currently teaching the Marquee course, Materials of Civilization.

Science is a distinct process of review and re-review and it involves a community of players. As a result many of the Marquee courses involve problem based learning and collaborative work. In Marquee courses students get involved in their learning. Faculty get students’ attention through their interest in the problems posed. Marquee courses might ask, for example, how the weather affects the commodity market. Or, Wesley Lawson, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, may walk into his “Engineering Issues in Medicine” course wearing a device and ask, “What does this medical device do? How will this device improve the quality of life for a patient?” Students then begin to work through the process of science. In Physics 105 students complete an energy audit of University buildings, using the access they have been granted to the University metering system. Taking the role of scientists, students in Marquee courses are expected to work in teams, communicate, discuss, and struggle with real problems that truly affect their lives. They are expected to communicate their findings with presentations, reports, and poster sessions. “Marquee courses often have a social aspect. We expect students to gain a social awareness and see where science fits in,” says Steven Rolston, Professor of Physics.

The Marquee faculty members have worked as a team to develop a philosophy for the Marquee courses, as well as a set of learning goals. Early in the project collaborative efforts included a day-long workshop during which Dr. Jay Labov of the National Academy of Science encouraged the group to actively involve students in learning science. The National Academy has challenged research scientists to teach science the way science is practiced, using proven active learning strategies. All of the Marquee faculty members have structured their courses away from the traditional lecture mode of teaching science to instead engage students in understanding the process of science. Big problems are put forward, as in the “Pollinator Crisis” in David Hawthorne’s new version of BSCI 120. Hawthorne asks his students to consider what is happening to the honey bee population and how this in turn is threatening our food supply. Then he reaches through this problem to teach students about insects and their role on our planet. In one class session students are presented with two articles discussing the same factual information related to the risks and benefits of using a particular pesticide; one is authored by a beekeeping society and one prepared by the pesticide manufacture. Asking the students to assess the scientific information in each article is a useful learning experience that teaches students

“With the big challenges such as the global energy crisis, we want students to understand what the issues are.”

Steven Rolston, Professor of Physics

“Interacting with the Marquee faculty with genuine desire to educate is very inspiring. More importantly, the Marquee group has alerted me to the importance of addressing contemporary issues in my classes.”

Romel Del Rosario Gomez
Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering
about bias in print and media and gives them tools to assess the credibility of scientific information. “We want students to understand how science can attack a problem,” says Jordan Goodman, Professor of Physics. “When there is controversy involved, we want students to be able to determine what about that controversy is related to science and what is not.”

Many students expect that science is about indisputable facts and will offer them “correct answers” to their questions. In the Marquee courses, however, students learn about the complexity of problems. Very often in traditional science courses students are taught about scientific discoveries and laws that have already been established. “Scientists are not interested in this” says Briber. “Scientists are not tied to any accepted body of knowledge…in fact they are happier when they are challenging standard ideas.” Professor William Dorland agrees. “Marquee courses teach to the edge of the discipline. This is where we work as science researchers. To learn about this is to learn about what science is,” attests Dorland, Associate Professor of Physics and the incoming Director of University Honors.

Marquee faculty members agree that teaching within this program has been rewarding and transformative. “I can’t go back to teaching the way I taught before,” Hawthorne says. “I am not sure why we ever teach graduate classes in a traditional manner…. But now I will teach mine like my Marquee course, getting students involved in the process of science.” Briber observes that “traditionally when teaching engineers, we teach theory in the first years and the application much later. We assumed that engineers would muster through the theory years because of their interest in the engineering degree – but after teaching in Marquee, where I interweave application with engineering principles, I see that this makes for a more interesting course. We have also been re-thinking our introductory engineering courses along this line.”

Marquee has been a model project for bringing the innovation and creativity of our top science and engineering research faculty to the design and teaching of CORE classes. The approach of teaching science as it is practiced gets at the core of a research university. The Marquee approach may provide models for other disciplines; as scholars and researchers we all work at the edge of our disciplines, creating new knowledge and bringing new insights to our fields, and Marquee courses expect students to understand the edges of our knowledge, places where our disciplines are going. In Dorland’s words, “The Marquee project could serve as a model for teaching CORE at a research university where we want students to understand what the excitement is all about!”

The Marquee courses are large lecture CORE science courses. Four are new courses, two have been revised from previous offerings to meet the marquee goals. The Marquee faculty have been involved in every step of the project, including talking with advisors about their courses. Part of the aspiration for these courses is for students to understand that science can be learned in a context that is meaningful to their lives. The Marquee group recently presented their work at the national conference for Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities and were recognized with a post-conference award. The Marquee faculty will also be presenting their innovations for science education at the Reinvention Center Conference in Washington DC this fall.

The Marquee faculty group is now working on serious assessment projects to determine the impact of the initiatives upon student understanding of what science is and what limitations science has. Dean Hamilton considers this an important program in defining models for CORE courses as the campus moves forward in meeting the goals of the University strategic plan.
Changing Higher Education in Hong Kong: Meeting General Education Needs for the 21st Century

by Spencer Benson, Director of CTE, on sabbatical 2008-2009

As many of you know or may remember from the last newsletter, I am spending my sabbatical in Hong Kong working with the Hong Kong General Education Initiative (http://www.hkgei.org/). This initiative is both exciting and daunting for many reasons, the primary one being that all eight of the Hong Kong public universities in 2012 will migrate from their current 3-year British style system to an international 4-year system. This change is more than simply extending the university program by a year; it is coupled with changing the secondary education system of Hong Kong.

The change eliminates 7th form in secondary education and replaces it with a first year of university education. Currently in Hong Kong the British style secondary education is used such that secondary education is seven years (grades 6-13) after which students attended university for three years. This change in the Hong Kong educational system is the so-called 3-3-4 reform. The reform was authorized in 2004-2005 by the central government of Hong Kong and is an important watershed for Hong Kong education as well as a unique opportunity for universities to reshape undergraduate education in Hong Kong.

The administrative and educational challenges are deep and many, and I will highlight only some of the ones that my Fulbright colleagues and I have discussed. As outsiders our perspectives are biased and we lack the deeper historical, political, social, and personal contexts to fully understand the multifaceted aspects of this change. In addition my view is influenced by a US perspective where general education is the norm and has more than a century of historical development. Yet, even with this rich and long history of general education, in the US general education continues to be a challenge for both faculty and students. Currently there is much national discussion and dialogue about what general education should be and accomplish in the 21st century both in the US and Hong Kong. A general consensus among US educators is that few universities have gotten general education right. In part this is because the world and the nature of students are changing at an unprecedented rate, as has the need for new and diverse skills and competencies.

One advantage Hong Kong institutions have is that the 3-3-4 initiative provides a unique opportunity to reshape undergraduate education rather than tweaking existing in-place systems. Several Hong Kong institutions have historically had general education programs in place and prior to the 1997 handover of the country several of the institutions offered four-year programs that were based on a US model. Following the 1997 handover all public universities were required to adopt 3-year programs, which will now be replaced in 2012 with 4-year programs. An important complexity is that the incoming student cohort in 2012 will be dual in nature, including students coming in from form-7 (the old program) into a three year program and students coming in from form-6 (the new program) into a four year program. The new four-year university programs will include a general education program requirement for all incoming form-6 students. For all of the publicly funded universities there is increased accountability with respect to student learning, mandated by the University Grants Commission (UGC) that oversees funding for Hong Kong’s public universities. This mandate for increased accountability should sound very familiar; courses, programs and institutions are being asked by the government to develop student learning outcomes and appropriate measures.

Each of the eight Hong Kong universities faces similar but different challenges. Each will
Upcoming Teaching and Learning Events

**Distinguished Guest Speaker: Milton Cox**
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.    Thursday, November 13    Room 1103, Biosciences Research Building

In this session Milton Cox, director of the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching at Miami University and director of the Lilly Conference on College Teaching, will discuss Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence model. He will look at the results in his courses, and help you consider and design how you might engage in classroom research by exploring the model in your courses, and advance your scholarly teaching.

**Teaching At-Risk Students**
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.    Thursday, November 20    Maryland Room, Marie Mount Hall

We will discuss strategies for identifying patterns of risk for poor academic work and for helping at-risk students with their performance in your course. We will consider diagnostic measures, concept inventories, thoughtful strategies for studying, and methods for identifying conceptual connections across a course’s materials. Our objective is to share ways to support effective teaching and deep learning for students who are less likely to succeed than most of their classmates (e.g., those with low GPAs, those with insufficient preparation for courses, and those with ineffective study habits).

**Freshman Connection Faculty Community**
12:00-1:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 19, 1103 Bioscience**
**Thursday, December 4, 0100 Marie Mount Hall**

**Distinguished Scholar Teacher Lecture Series**

“Mice, Gazelles and Elephants: The Menagerie of U.S. Business Dynamics”
John Haltiwanger, Dept. of Economics
4 p.m. Wednesday, November 12
Orem Alumni Hall - C

“Constitutional Collapse: The Faulty Founding (and Other Strange Tales) of Contemporary American Politics”
Stephen Elkin, Dept. of Government
4 p.m. Thursday, November 20
Orem Alumni Hall - C
The distinction, here, is student agency in her own learning. And being a responsible agent is enhanced by rigor and challenge. If the aim of the course is demonstrated comprehension, and not engaged understanding, the motivation to exert intellectual effort seems less likely. However, if a course’s challenge is at least partly authored by students, active members of the class’s community, the stakes are higher, and the reason to engage with available rigor increases.

These are preliminary thoughts, and their purpose is to instigate reflection on what rigor and challenge might look like. Consider the ways these abstractions might find a way into our classes, and reflect on the ways existing rigor and challenge might be shared with among colleagues.

One final note. We might benefit most by recollecting the challenges of our own undergraduate experiences. What courses pushed us? In what ways? How did we respond as students? Our students are never ourselves, but our memories of student-hood are always part of our approach to teaching.

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**“Rigor and Challenge” continued from page 2**

The University Teaching and Learning Program (UTLP) assists graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) in their professional development as college teachers. At the heart of the UTLP is the philosophy that teaching, like research, is a scholarly activity that requires intellectual engagement and public conversation. ULTPers thus fulfill a set of requirements that asks them to discuss teaching and learning in higher education, to be mentored by a faculty member, to develop a larger teaching and learning project, and to craft a teaching portfolio. ULTPers have a common commitment to improving undergraduate education and an eagerness to make their classes the best they can.

When ULTPers complete the program they are recognized at an annual reception and receive both transcript notation and a certificate acknowledging their participation in the program, tangible evidence of their thoughtful engagement with issues central to college teaching.

Supported by the Office of the Provost, the UTLP is administered by the Center for Teaching Excellence. For more information, please contact ULTP coordinator Henrike Lehnguth at lehnguth@umd.edu or call (301) 314-1283.
Reflections from a CTE Teaching Portfolio Retreat
By Ashley Zauderer, 2007 and 2008 CTE Teaching Portfolio Retreat Participant

Why should I attend a Teaching Portfolio Workshop?

When I was a kid, anytime that I would come home and complain about somebody to my mom, she would wisely and simply answer, “Well, now you know how not to be.” By the time we reach graduate school, we all have experienced being in a classroom with an excellent teacher who motivates and inspires, as well as a teacher who is quite simply... terrible. Unless we make the effort to deliberately consider the kind of teacher we do not want to become, and make strides to change and improve, we may easily fall into the same patterns of teaching we observed to have failed.

The CTE Teaching Portfolio Workshop is a great opportunity for graduate students at the University of Maryland to make such reflections, and to express their thoughts concretely. I participated in two workshops because I found the first one to be so beneficial and helpful I wanted to repeat the experience the following year.

The workshops typically last a couple days and include a succinct, yet thorough introduction by CTE staff, numerous opportunities to interact with graduate students from different departments and ample time devoted to reflecting and writing.

Prior to attending this workshop, I had only heard of art students and elementary school teachers having portfolios. I had never considered making my own teaching portfolio and was hesitant about attending my first workshop. I did not know why I needed a portfolio and did not want to waste time away from my other obligations.

Why do I need a teaching portfolio?

If you are considering teaching at any point in your career, in addition to your curriculum vitae, you will find a teaching portfolio to be a helpful tool to communicate your teaching experiences and ideas about the learning process. Many colleges and universities may ask for your portfolio when you apply for a job, or at the very least, a statement of teaching philosophy. The CTE staff encourages a living document – one that you can tailor to suit specific job applications. Your portfolio may include sample lesson plans, ideas for new classes, graded work and student evaluation forms. In the workshop, the CTE staff introduces traditional paper versions as well as tools for managing your portfolio electronically on the web.

“Teaching Portfolio...” continued on page 11

CTE Teaching Portfolio Retreat
Application Deadline: December 10

If you plan to teach at the university level, you will need a statement of teaching philosophy and a teaching portfolio. Starting Monday, November 17, CTE will begin accepting applications to participate in one of two two-and-a-half-day teaching portfolio retreats for graduate teaching assistants. The first Graduate Teaching Assistant Portfolio Retreat will be held Wednesday, January 7, 2009 through Friday, January 9, 2009. The second Graduate Teaching Assistant Portfolio Retreat will be held Wednesday, January 14, 2009 through Friday, January 16, 2009. Each retreat is limited to 12 participants. Applicants will be selected on the basis of the following criteria: timeliness, teaching experience, and strength of application materials. The deadline for submitting an application is Wednesday, December 10. We expect to announce acceptance decisions by mid-December.

For further information, please visit CTE’s website at http://www.cte.umd.edu or contact Kirsten Crase at klcrase@umd.edu.
Introducing the First CTE-Lilly Graduate Teaching Fellows

This year the Center for Teaching Excellence and the Graduate School piloted the first CTE-Lilly Graduate Teaching Fellows Program. The program is modeled after the very successful CTE-Lilly Fellows program for faculty, which has been in existence for nearly two decades and provides an opportunity for graduate students from across campus to meet regularly during the academic year to discuss and address pedagogical and educational issues in undergraduate teaching as at the University of Maryland.

This fall eight senior graduate students, each with at least two years of teaching experience, were selected through a highly competitive application process to be the very first CTE-Lilly Graduate Teaching Fellows. The selected fellows will receive a stipend and are expected to develop a sustained conversation about teaching and learning and together construct and implement a project, initiative or event relevant to the improvement of the educational culture at the University of Maryland.

The Graduate School and the Center for Teaching Excellence are pleased to announce the 2008-2009 CTE-Lilly Graduate Teaching Fellows:

- **Alaina Brenick**, Human Development
- **Justin Brody**, Mathematics
- **Heather Brown**, English
- **Stephanie DiPietro**, Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Gus Grissom**, History
- **Patrick Grzanka**, American Studies
- **Scott Roberts**, Psychology
- **Heidi Scott**, English

Lilly-East Conference Call
& Lilly-East Travel Grants for Graduate Students

Proposal Deadline December 8

The 2009 Lilly-East Conference is scheduled for April 15 through 17, 2009, 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 8, 2008. For more information about the conference, including proposal submission and guidelines, visit: [http://www.udel.edu/lillyeast/](http://www.udel.edu/lillyeast/).

CTE will fund graduate teaching assistants whose proposals are accepted. To apply for the Lilly-East travel grant, visit our website ([www.cte.umd.edu](http://www.cte.umd.edu)) in January 2009.
Will the workshop be worth my time?

Absolutely! As a graduate student, we have to balance our own classwork and research. I found the workshop to be a very efficient and useful period of time, both the first and second time I attended. The CTE staff summarizes the main points that are helpful to you – showing you examples of portfolios and statements of teaching philosophy. Even though you will be given several hours each day during the workshop to reflect, brainstorm and write, I have found that most students needed even more time. I personally found that the greatest benefit of the workshop was having a condensed, devoted period of time to concentrate and reflect on teaching and to put your thoughts in writing.

I would highly recommend making the time to attend a workshop before you graduate.

### Improvement of Instruction Grants

**Application process begins soon**

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/2007-2008abstracts/index.html](http://cte.umd.edu/grants/iigabstracts/2007-2008abstracts/index.html).

Proposals will be due early in the spring semester, so visit the CTE website in December for deadlines and application information.

### CTE’s 2008–2009 Clicker Pedagogy Forum

**Purpose:** Occasional discussion of clickers and pedagogy, reports on effective use and discussion of limits for teaching and learning. Participants from all departments welcome; experienced users and novices encouraged to participate.

**Description:** As an extension of the many conversations we have had with faculty using clickers, CTE is convening a series on the pedagogical implications of clickers.

We will solicit effective practices from participants, share general principles for teaching with clickers, and address the preliminary findings of those who have used and written about clickers. These forums will be open to all who have taught with clickers or are interested in trying them out, and our emphasis will be exclusively pedagogical. That is, we will talk about ways the effective implementation of clickers might support better learning in undergraduate courses.

Discussions of technical issues (e.g., managing participant lists, exporting reports) will be limited to the most easily answered questions. Other questions should be brought to the attention of the OIT helpdesk.

**Schedule:** We will hold these brown bag forums at 12:00 on the first Friday of the month during the fall semester, beginning September 5.
The Graduate School, in partnership with the Center for Teaching Excellence, is pleased to announce a new program to support the professional development of international graduate students. This pilot initiative, the International Teaching Fellows program, pairs international graduate teaching assistants (IGTAs) who have recently joined the University with faculty mentors who will consult with the Fellows to facilitate their development as future faculty and as University of Maryland teaching assistants. The International Teaching Fellows will also meet as a learning community, under the guidance of CTE. They will write, share, and discuss reflections on teaching and will investigate strategies for improving their understanding of effective undergraduate education. Fellows will dedicate approximately 20 hours per semester to the program. TAs selected will receive a $500 supplemental stipend upon program completion.

The International Teaching Fellowship (ITF) is an honorific program. GTAs are nominated by their graduate directors.

Fellow: Tannistha Samanta, Sociology
Mentor: Peter Mallios, English

Fellow: Anthony Adawu, Curriculum and Instruction
Mentor: James Greenberg, Curriculum and Instruction

Fellow: Kyungjin Yoo, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Mentor: Gabi Strauch, School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Fellow: Wei Gao, Human Development
Mentor: Marci Marinelli, Psychology

Graduate Teaching Assistant Development Grants
Application Deadline December 1

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.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Development Grants are made possible by the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Graduate School, and the Office of the Provost. 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, 2008.

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
have to address the logistic issue of a double entry class in 2012; each has the challenge of developing and staffing the general education courses that will be required for all students in the four year program; each faces the thorny issue of how to deal with the two different concurrent student cohorts without alienating or privileging one of the cohorts; and each will need to address the issue of how to construct and implement a general education program that meets the needs of 21st century students while maintaining the identity and historical characteristics of the university. Having visited five of the eight universities it is clear that each has its own history, characteristics, mission and student profiles. For example, Hong Kong University is more than a century old and considered one of the premier research universities in Asia. Chinese University of Hong Kong is the second oldest university in Hong Kong and was founded 1957 with the mission of bridging Hong Kong and the mainland China and is comprised of five collegiate colleges. Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the City University of Hong Kong were vocational schools that were of grant university status in 1994 and 1995 respectively and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology has a focus in applied science, engineering and business, and was founded in 1991 based on a US research university model.

In attending various meetings and workshops on education, general education and faculty development I have observed a remarkable level of similarity in the faculty concerns which are identical to some of the institutions a distribution model is being developed where students will select courses from various discipline areas – such as the humanities, sciences, social science – similar to UM’s current CORE program. At other institutions the approach is to have students take courses from various broader intellectual categories, such as global issues, science and technology, the environment, rational thinking, values in society, etc. These broad area courses are often interdisciplinary or pan-disciplinary and meant to link disciplines rather than expose student to a specific discipline field. This model can be likened to UM’s 2020 Perspectives in the proposed reform of general education. One difference from UM’s general education is a Hong Kong requirement for oral and written competency in three languages – Cantonese, Mandarin and English – for all students. None of the institutions have a “diversity requirement” or a foundation of mathematics requirement. All of the institutions will have a requirement for a course(s) on Chinese culture. At Chinese University there will be a common general education course that is similar to a great books course and will be required of all students in each of the five collegiate colleges.

Across all the universities there are or will be calls for new general education courses that will include a requirement for innovations in pedagogy, increased student engagement and alignment with the general education learning outcomes. There will be a significant increase in the hiring of new faculty; estimates run as high as 40 percent in certain discipline areas. Significant
funding is being provided for the development of these new courses and for new faculty hires. At City University all of the course proposals are being vetted by external faculty. One challenge that has not been clearly addressed is how to monitor whether the general education courses and programs will meet their stated learning outcomes. Generally outcome assessment has focused on the course level rather than the program level. However, external pressures are strongly encouraging universities to assess and monitor program outcomes for quality control and continued improvement.

Higher education is truly a global enterprise; not only are universities conduits for the international exchange of ideas, students, and faculty but institutions also share the same challenges, issues and problems that surround teaching and learning, despite significant differences in culture, funding, regulations and administrative infrastructures. This commonality of goals and challenges suggests that students and faculty fundamentally are the same everywhere, although there are certainly important social and cultural differences. However, as globalization shrinks the world through wider access and speed of connections, even these social and differences are being reduced. For example, an oft-heard comment is that today’s Hong Kong students are replacing their quiet reserve and deference to faculty with a more western attitude and willingness to speak up in class, coupled with an increased consumer attitude with respect to expectations.

None-the-less there are cultural differences and one cannot simply assume that transplanting western-style high engagement pedagogy will necessarily meet with easy success. While Hong Kong students are less likely to engage in in-class discussion or group work they are much more likely to engage professors outside of class time and there is a cultural expectation of student mentorship among the faculty. At Hong Kong University the level of student engagement in extra-curricular (non-credit) academic activities is very high and student life appears to have significant and integrated academic aspect to it. This might account for the absence of retention issues, with retention and graduation rates above 95 percent. My colleagues at the other Hong Kong universities report similar types and levels of student engagement and retention levels.

Finally, one of the great advantages of being in a different culture is that it allows one to reflect on what is good and not-so-good about one’s own culture. It also reminds us of the importance of ensuring that all students and faculty have opportunities to experience a different culture and this type of inward and outward reflection.

With regards from Hong Kong,

Spencer

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?
- What must be included in my course syllabi?
- Do I need approval to sell my own textbook to students taking my course?

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
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.

Try Clickers for a Day

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 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).”
### CALENDAR

**November**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>Grant Writing (Graduate Students only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12, Wednesday</td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Distinguished Scholar-Teacher Lecture: John Haltiwanger “Mice, Gazelles and Elephants: The Menagerie of U.S. Business Dynamics”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>Distinguished Guest Speaker: Milton Cox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20, Thursday</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Teaching At-Risk Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20, Thursday</td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Distinguished Scholar-Teacher Lecture: Stephen Elkin “Constitutional Collapse: The Faulty Founding (and Other Strange Tales) of Contemporary American Politics”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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~ [http://www.cte.umd.edu/contactus/TLN­MailingList.html](http://www.cte.umd.edu/contactus/TLN­MailingList.html) ~

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.