The I-Series in Action:
An Interview with Ronald Yaros
By Lisa Rhody, Editor

At the heart of the University’s new General Education (GenEd) Program, scheduled to launch in Fall 2012, I-Series courses challenge students “to investigate significant issues and inspire innovative ideas.” Two I-course instructors have taken time to talk with Lisa Rhody, editor of Teaching and Learning News, about their course’s format, development, and implementation. In this issue, Ronald Yaros, assistant professor of journalism from the Philip Merrill College of Journalism, discusses his course: Information 3.0: Exploring Technological Tools.

As the Director of Explain My News.org and the Lab for Communicating Complexity with Multimedia, Dr. Yaros draws from his research to challenge students with one of journalism’s most pressing questions—how do we use new media to seek, select, and share digital information?—all the while employing those same technologies in the class experience. Dr. Yaros’s articles have been published in Neiman Reports and American Journalism Review. In 2009, he received the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication’s Presidential Citation for Outstanding Service & Dedication, and he is a three-time Emmy Award winner.

Lisa Rhody: Why did you choose to title the course Information 3.0: Exploring Technological Tools?
Ron Yaros: If I called it Web 2.0 or Information 2.0, I felt as though the students might think that we’re going to rehash much of what they al-
From the Director’s Desk:
Cornerstones of Teaching

By Spencer Benson, Director of CTE

In this issue of the Teaching and Learning News, we have articles dealing with teaching, pedagogy, and learning, which are complex, intertwined, and contextually-situated endeavors. The particular situation of I-courses, technology-enhanced courses, and general education changes, presents questions about whether a set of core or underlying principles that are applicable to all teaching and learning situations exist. More than twenty years ago the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) published the brochure, Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education authored by Chickering and Zelda Gamson, who looked at 50 years of good teaching practices. Since then, thousands of campuses have distributed the “Seven Principles” to faculty and others have repeatedly downloaded it from the web. (See the box for the seven principles.)

While the seven principles provide a framework for thinking about teaching and for the construction or revision of courses, we (CTE) wanted to develop something that was easier to remember and could serve as a touchstone for daily teaching tasks, such as developing assignments, organizing course materials, and/or building learning modules or activities. Toward this aim, we have developed a model, which we call “Cornerstones of Good Teaching.” By cornerstones we mean essential, basic principles that provide a firm grounding upon which effective teachers build courses and forge deeper learning and understanding. The three cornerstones—content, engagement, and transparency—are represented in the figure as overlapping, interconnected components. In other words, effective teaching and quality student learning improve when these principles intersect with and inform one another.

The cornerstones of good teaching can be found in any type of course taught in any college or discipline. Every course begins with content, which includes readings, assignments, videos, text books, handouts, the “stuff” that makes up what the course is about. Content needs to be appropriately challenging, engaging, meritorious, and relevant to the course and students’ lives. Engagement, by which we mean course activities and academic products used for student learning, is a cornerstone for sound teaching because good teachers need to go beyond passive acquisition and dissemination of information. Engaged activities require hands-on, minds-on learning and build upon developing and existing student knowledge through faculty-student and student-student interactions. Finally, students’ understanding of expectations for every activity and at every level is a prerequisite for them to learn; therefore, transparency forms the third cornerstone of our model. Achieving transparency is often one of the most difficult aspects of teaching. Too often we assume that we have achieved transparency because what is obvious to us as teachers is not clear and

Principles for Good Practice (Chickering & Gamson, 1987)

- Good Practice encourages student-faculty contact
- Good Practice encourages cooperation among students
- Good Practice encourages active learning
- Good Practice gives prompt feedback
- Good Practice emphasizes time on task
- Good Practice communicates high expectations
- Good Practice respects diverse talents and ways of learning

“Director” continued on page 13....
Teaching with Half the Sky: Using the First Year Book in Academic Writing

By Thomas Geary, Academic Coordinator of the Academic Writing Program

English 101 instructors and students alike have embraced Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn’s *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, the University of Maryland 2010 First Year Book. An effective reading assignment in English 101 engages students, promotes and models scholarly discussion, and offers inquiry into both the subject matter and rhetorical construction of the text; *Half the Sky* meets all of those criteria. Instructors are finding that the versatile text easily adapts to most – if not all – course assignments and that the compelling content and rhetorical strategies employed captivate students.

*Half the Sky* evokes a strong reaction from its target audience, including 101 students. The authors delve into issues of female genital mutilation, maternal deaths, violence, HIV/AIDS, and the sex industry through pathos-filled narration and inquiry. Kristof and WuDunn highlight actions taken by philanthropists and grassroots organizations, many of whom are college-aged. University of Maryland students are not limited to discussion of empowering women through voluntarism and aid programs; they too can become civically engaged. *Half the Sky* generates passionate responses from students. Kara Morillo, who has been teaching English 101 at Maryland for three years, notes, “I was surprised at how enthused my students were about the book! Even the young men who initially snarled at the topic were actively engaging in discussion.”

English 101 bridges the gap between personal and scholarly writing, reading, and research. *Half the Sky* more than suffices in guiding students to meet this course objective. Our students quickly realize that *Half the Sky* is unlike their own research in that it lacks citations. Despite the absence of MLA, APA, or Chicago style in-text citations, however, *Half the Sky* features many qualities of a scholarly argument ripe for analysis of source integration and style. The Appendix at the end of the book compiles brief annotations of organizations supporting women. The Notes section contains myriad citations to news sources, reports, journal articles, and research used as evidence throughout the text. Students in English 101 might be overwhelmed by dense scholarly research early in the semester, but *Half the Sky* serves as a conduit to more sophisticated academic argumentation. Students can assess Kristof and WuDunn’s source integration of facts and figures and perhaps model the authors’ uses of evidence in their own essays.

The First Year Book has been utilized especially well for the first two assignments in the Academic Writing Program curriculum: summary and rhetorical analysis. English 101, based in classical rhetoric and inquiry-based argumentation, builds upon engagement and analysis of texts while students progress toward an extensive research argument on an exigent scholarly issue. In the summary assignment, students strengthen their proficiency in paraphrasing and quoting, integrating the two skills into a summary or essay, capturing the main points of a text, and assessing the methods and aims of an author.
Be the Change You Want to See:  
Service-Learning Opportunities for Faculty

By Barbara Jacoby, Senior Scholar, Adele H. Stamp Student Union, Center for Campus Life

This fall, in my new role as Faculty Associate for Service-Learning with the Adele H. Stamp Student Union – Center for Campus Life, I join my colleagues in the Leadership and Community Service-Learning Area in an effort to provide information, support, and assistance across campus and in all disciplines to faculty members who are interested in integrating service-learning into their courses.

You may be wondering, “What is service-learning?” Service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students together engage in activities that meet human and community needs and reflect on their experiences through structured assignments designed to achieve desired learning outcomes. Courses that incorporate service-learning are a natural fit for the Scholarship in Practice Distributive Category in the new General Education Program.

Widely recognized as a high-impact, educational practice, service-learning enhances students’ grasp of academic content by encouraging them to situate disciplines within social contexts, by urging them to consider how disciplines address big, social issues, and by connecting their disciplinary knowledge to practice. Service-learning also benefits our community by offering new energy, broadening the delivery of necessary services or beginning new ones, developing fresh approaches to enduring questions, and creating opportunities to participate in teaching and learning. Faculty members often find that service-learning invigorates their courses and enables them to orient their teaching toward community contexts.

This fall, the Stamp, in collaboration with the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), is pleased to introduce the 2010-2011 Stamp Service-Learning Faculty Fellows program. This program will provide support for up to 10 faculty members to develop a new undergraduate service-learning course or to integrate service-learning in a significant new way into an existing course. All full-time College Park instructional faculty members in any discipline are invited to apply, and no prior knowledge of or experience with service-learning is required. If selected, fellows can expect to build a community of faculty who practice and promote service-learning pedagogy, to construct high-quality, service-learning courses for the new General Education curriculum, and to form partnerships with other faculty and Stamp staff in the interest of enhancing students’ educational experiences outside the classroom. See the blue box on the following page for more information.

In addition to the faculty fellows program, Leadership and Community Service-Learning has resources to assist faculty members who are interested in exploring service-learning for a new or existing course, including:

- sample syllabi
- reflection guides
- individual consultations
- workshops.
- information on community sites,
- and connections to campus, local, and national resources.

To learn more about how service-learning might enrich your teaching or to arrange a presentation about service-learning in your department or college, please contact me at bjacoby@umd.edu, (301) 314-7253.

Clicker Loaner Program

For those who may want to try student response devices, “clickers,” a limited number of loaner sets are available for temporary checkout from the OIT Classroom Support office in Hornbake 0125, x48522, courtesy of the Center for Teaching Excellence.
The Adele H. Stamp Student Union – Center for Campus Life, in collaboration with the Center for Teaching Excellence, is pleased to introduce the 2010-2011 Stamp Service-Learning Faculty Fellows program. This program will provide support for up to 10 faculty members to develop a new undergraduate service-learning course or to integrate service-learning in a significant new way into an existing course. No knowledge of or experience with service-learning is required. For additional information, contact Dr. Barbara Jacoby bja-coby@umd.edu, (301) 314-7253.

The purposes of the program are:
- to develop a cadre of faculty who practice and promote service-learning pedagogy
- to contribute high-quality service-learning courses to the new General Education curriculum
- to develop partnerships between faculty members and Stamp staff to enhance educational experiences for students outside the classroom.

All full-time College Park instructional faculty members in any discipline are invited to apply.

Benefits of the Stamp Service-Learning Faculty Fellows program include:
- $1,500 stipend
- Comprehensive training in service-learning pedagogy and best practices
- One-on-one consultation on designing and teaching a service-learning course in your discipline
- Regular interaction with a community of service-learning faculty colleagues
- Collaboration with staff of the Stamp to create or enhance out-of-class learning experiences for students
- Opportunity to enrich teaching and learning while meeting community needs.

The program begins on January 11, 2011 with a full-day workshop on service-learning course design. Fellows meet monthly during the Spring and Summer 2011 for workshops and conversations leading to the development of a service-learning course to be taught in Fall 2011. Fellows meetings continue during the Fall 2011 semester for guidance and support. Meetings will be arranged to accommodate Fellows’ schedules. Dr. Barbara Jacoby, respected author and national workshop presenter on service-learning, will coordinate the program and work closely with the Fellows.

Sample Service-Learning Projects

Service-learning, although not appropriate for every course, can work well in every discipline. The following examples of service-learning may pique your interest:
- In a course on animal cognition and consciousness, students evaluate behaviors of animals in a shelter.
- Introduction to Chemistry students take and analyze water samples from the Chesapeake Bay, study the causes and effects of the pollutants they contain, and report the information to an environmental protection organization.
- After conducting stress-relieving exercises with residents of a nursing home, kinesiology students assess the results of different regimens.
- Theater majors in an acting course mentor high school students preparing to perform in their class play.
- In a course on the history of immigration in the U.S., students interview recent immigrants and provide the information to organizations who serve them.
Putting Theory into Practice: Things to Try in Class

Originally written by Nora Bellows (2003)
Revised and updated by Sharon Roushdy and Lisa Rhody

By special request, we have reprinted below a list of things to try in class, strategies culled from the tricks of professors and teaching assistants across campus and from teachers elsewhere. These “things to do in class” have as their goal the following:

- to help students adjust to and excel in the University environment and develop specific strategies for learning in different environments;
- to foster a positive learning environment, one that is intellectually challenging and provides students with a method and context for pursuing intellectual interests;
- to encourage students to integrate learning into every aspect of their lives, and, as such to work hard, to take pride in their work, and to take responsibility for their impact in the classroom and in the world;
- to build a classroom community which addresses challenging issues with thoughtful compassion, respect, and tolerance—a community that can be seen as a model for the larger civic community and the community of the world.

Some things work will in smaller discussion classes, or in certain discipline areas, or fit better with a specific teaching style. The list is present as a buffet of items, sample widely and let us know what works in you classes.

We see this as a working document, and invite readers to add their own tips, suggestions, and emendations to this list. You can do so online at http://blog.umd.edu/cte/2010/11/19/putting-theory-into-practice-things-to-try-in-class/ in the comments section.

1. Stress the importance of learning each others’ names using a fun ice breaker that gives students choices about what to share with a class: a student might tell the story of how he got his name, identify an interesting fact about herself that will help everyone remember her, tell a story and have classmates vote about whether it is true or not, tell one fact and one lie and have classmates guess which is which. This method takes at least an hour for a class of 35. By the end of class, everyone knows each other better, generally feels much more comfortable, and can leave class having learned at least a few names. Alternately, or even additionally, consider asking students to write a brief biographical statement on the course ELMS space to introduce themselves. This can serve as a useful touchstone for you and your students during email or synchronous online communication with students. Download from UMEG and bring to class the class roster with student photos.

2. Call attention to good classroom practice(s). Whether during a lab, a lecture, a discussion, or group work, make your expectations of students explicit: complete work to be done; follow proper procedures; use equipment properly; clean up; interact in a respectful manner; and participate in a helpful, consistent, and moderate way. Help students identify positive and negative behaviors as well as their consequences and that they are responsible for their own learning.

3. Direct students to the Writing Center http://www.english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter or the Learning Assistance Center “Grammar Slammer” http://www.jweb.umd.edu/grammar/ for help with basic skills and demonstrate that writing well is important regardless of the specific discipline.

4. Advise students on how much time they will need to study for a particular assignment, text, or text. How much time the research you require will take to complete, and how much time your course, in general,
Blended Learning: Reflecting on the EDUCAUSE Fall Focus Session
By Jennifer Lyn Patterson and Janel Brennan-Tillmann

On September 15-16, the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) held an online fall focus session entitled “Blended Learning: The 21st Century Learning Environment.” The session was geared toward administrators, instructors, and staff who support or are interested in blended learning, instruction held partially face-to-face and partially online. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) and the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) hosted an on-campus gathering of individuals who wanted to participate in the online session, recordings of which EDUCAUSE will release to the public on December 15th at: http://net.educause.edu/Proceedings/1026953.

During the session, which consisted primarily of live lectures broadcasted using Adobe Connect web conferencing software, participants listened to lectures while watching presentation slides. Participants could ask the presenters questions, instant message other session participants, and respond to polling questions by using Adobe Connect text chat tools. In preparation for the focus session, ELI asked participants to read a few articles, including, “Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies,” published in May 2009 by the U.S. Department of Education. One of the report’s key findings is that variations in how online learning is implemented does not significantly affect learning outcomes; however, the report did find that “the expansion of time on task for online learners” (xv) correlates to increased student success, as does the use of a blended approach as opposed to a fully online approach. Additionally, learning effects were found to be greater when online curriculum, conditions, and instructional approach varied drastically from those used in the face-to-face versions of a course (xvi). In other words, blended learning worked best when the online component was not simply a repurposing of the same instructional methods used in classrooms. Finally, the report concludes: “On average, students in online learning conditions performed better than those receiving face-to-face instruction” (ix).

The significance of the Department of Education’s findings resonated with participants from the University of Maryland in the ELI focus session, as many felt that the session would have benefited by putting the report’s findings into practice. For example, participants might have benefited from more “time on task,” and the focus session might have been more engaging to participants if its materials and instructional approach had varied significantly from the typical, face-to-face conference presentation format. Overall, session presenters prepared polished lectures in advance and did not stop frequently enough to solicit audience input or feedback. Dissatisfied by the way the session was presented, many on-campus participants found their attention wandering to email and other online distractions. The general consensus seemed to be that the focus session would have been more relevant for participants if it was more participant-centered, requiring more active engagement and interactive exchanges between participants.

The workshop’s success was in the creative and thoughtful ideas participants shared afterwards amongst themselves. For instance, one UMCP participant suggested that presenters post their recorded lectures prior...
Announcing the 2010-2011 Lilly Faculty Fellows

During the upcoming year, the Lilly Faculty Fellows will be exploring the expected learning outcomes, best practices and guidelines for the new General Education distribution requirement, “Cultural Competencies.”

Valerie Anishchenkova  
Department of Arabic

Richard Bell  
Department of History

Erve Chambers  
Department of Anthropology

Noah Drezner  
Department of Education Leadership, Higher Education, and International Education

Daniella Fridl  
Department of Government and Politics

Sherick Hughes  
Department of Education Curriculum and Instruction

Roberta Lavine  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Meina Liu  
Department of Communications

Connie North  
Department of Education Leadership, Higher Education, and International Education

Tony Whitehead  
Department of Anthropology

Eric Zakim  
School of Language, Literatures, and Cultures

(Missing from photo: Roberta Lavine, and Valerie Anishchenkova)
“Interview” continued from page 1...

ready know about today’s technology. So, the reason why I use 3.0, and what I explain on the first day of class, is that we are going to look at the current state of technology as it infiltrates our lives—all different dimensions of our lives—work, play, school. But we will spend most of the semester talking about what this all means to society, where this is all going, and what we may expect when they graduate and beyond in terms of new, innovative technologies.

**LR:** I-courses are intended to draw students from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines with a range of knowledge bases. How do you contend with that in your course?

**RY:** I think I’m really very fortunate in the sense that I have absolutely no problem integrating technology with the field of study or the major of everyone in the class. And I do that by having them write consistently, systematically every week—up to a thousand words per week some weeks. It is a lot of writing. In fact, I tell my students they are starting their final paper the first week of class because it is a cumulative assignment that will continue to build and relate technology to their particular area or discipline. I don’t know if that works for everyone. I know that it may not, but for me it is ideal and that is how I synthesize it. Whether it’s medicine, music, art, or biochemistry, there is technology in every one of those disciplines. Once students elaborate on how they see technology influence their field, both currently and in the future, then I think that the key thing is for the peers to read each others’ work and to get an even broader approach to how technology exists in society. I don’t view it as something I could teach as a lecture every week with one focused narrow approach. Technology today is so broad and so complex from social networking to the privacy of medical records to phone use… All these different aspects of technology are just so complex, and it is good for everyone to bring to the table their own aspect of how technology affects their discipline. I think the review of each others’ work enhances learning.

**LR:** How do you pull everything back together so that at some point it does all cohere?

**RY:** It is a hybrid course, and most of the activity, meaning collaboration, goes on outside of class. So when they are using a new ELMS application called Pronto, which is just like MSN messenger or Yahoo students can actually collaborate with anyone in class. The application has only the class enrolled in that particular real time interface, so students discuss assignments and work on assignments in real time without having to meet face-to-face. Students do most of the work out of class. This is early in the semester, and we’re talking about different aspects of the Web. I assigned nine teams of four students. Each team had to read a research study related to some aspect of the Web. One is about loneliness, depression, and how some students may or may not use the Web for those emotional dimensions of life. Jenny Priess from the iSchool also wrote a nice article that I distributed that to the team saying, “Look at the etiquette situation and how she approached it.” All the teams have to look beyond that one study to find additional examples that expand or elaborate on that particular topic. So, here we have the Web as the theme this week and everyone is applying the Web to their own specific discipline. We’ve got nine separate things going on at the same time, but I think the cohesion is the fact that the topic is specifically about the Web and about how it delivers information.

**LR:** Has anything surprised you about teaching this course this semester? Is it different from how you would have expected it to go?

**RY:** I didn’t know exactly what to expect. I did teach a hybrid version of this course before, but I made changes to the new Information 3.0 course, which employs its own unique set of tools. These are brand new
tools that did not exist a few years ago, so we are responding to new technologies, for instance: Google docs, Google maps, and smart phones, which are used to collect information out of the field. Later on in the semester, students are going to use their smart phone to collect multimedia from people in their discipline and share it with others in the class. I guess the surprise is that some people are very comfortable with this technology; some are intimidated by it; some have anxiety over it. What I really didn’t expect for this younger audience, who one would presume would be accustomed to technology, what was the variety in their comfort levels and in their ability to utilize the technology. I adjusted by having to assess that comfort in class, and I have to address it, especially with those who are not yet completely comfortable with anything more than just texting. I’m probably spending a little bit more time than I expected explaining the nuts and bolts. For instance, how a cell phone works—the fact that it is a radio transmitter, which it goes from cell to cell through a tower—some students don’t even know those basics. So, I am finding myself explaining a little bit more about how it works but other than that we are still focusing on the concepts.

**LR:** What do you get out of teaching this course?

**RY:** This is extremely important to journalism, “This” being how people are seeking, selecting, and sharing information, which is the core of my own research in the interest of preserving journalism as an industry. If we don’t understand that process better, we’re going to end up being journalists who are just disseminating information. Of course, we now talk about interacting with the community and the audience, and user-generated content, and the multiple sources that the audience has. So, what am I getting out of it? I understand a lot better how students utilize technology, what their information needs are, the extent to which they engage in various information, and how they do it. Teaching this course helps me to look at the future for journalism and to see how we might be able to tap this audience to provide a more robust journalistic approach to news. The biggest concern is with a lot of unsubstantiated opinions and unsupported information in the blogs and other media. This course gives me an opportunity to discuss with the students why it is important to be ethical and accurate, and how one goes about assessing that the information is valid and reliable. We’re doing that as we speak this week. What I’m getting out of it is a way for me to convince students that not every piece of information they find on the Web is something that they should take at face value. You should be critical of everything, and that’s really helping me to understand journalism and where it is going.

**LR:** Has this course changed how you assess student learning? In other words, have you had to adapt the way that you treat student feedback, in order to meet the needs of this class?

**RY:** In my mind and in my teaching there is a desire for me to see how this hybrid model is successful, and perhaps even better for what I am teaching. It is only the 2nd semester, but all the indications are that the students like it. They are surprised by it; they say, “Wow, I’ve never really experienced a class like this before…” When I was a graduate student I became familiar with Teaching as Research (TAR). There was a group at Wisconsin that came out of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) that was part of a 5 year NSF (National Science Foundation) grant that looked at the value of TAR. I was involved with that and what TAR means is systematic assessment of students, not only their learning, but what they think they are getting out of the class, how they think they could learn better, and to do it almost on a weekly basis. So, by the time I get to the final evaluation there are no surprises. I have already completed that process about 12 times.

**LR:** So you do in-between, weekly, self evaluations?

**RY:** Well, it’s a separate anonymous assessment through ELMS. I don’t really know who it is, and there is no grade assigned. It is separate from their blog posts.

“In my mind and in my teaching there is a desire for me to see how this hybrid model is successful, and perhaps even better for what I am teaching. It is only the 2nd semester, but all the indications are that the students like it.
Do you feel that asking for student input through evaluations improves student engagement?

RY: Number one, I think they feel as though I’m listening to their needs. I tell them not everything they write is going to be addressed. Some of the suggestions are interesting, but the main thing is to just know that they feel as though they are getting what they need from the class. Another main reason why I do that is because I have no written exams. 50% of their grades are based on their blogging, and 50% is their in-class quizzes and other assignments that I give them throughout the semester. Regular evaluations show students that I am willing and able to communicate with them. If they have questions or doubts about what their grades are based on, I want to catch that quickly and say, “Ok, let’s review the rubric with which I’m using on your blog assessment to make sure you know why you got this grade, or why you are going to get that grade in the future because this is what I’m looking for…” I just think that with a new approach, that’s just the nature of the beast. I’m not the only I-course professor doing this. There are a lot of others who have been taking more surveys. When you have a brand new course, you really don’t know everything yet about it as you are developing it. Student feedback is paramount. So, I think that assessment is different from what it used to be.

LR: Do you feel that increases the amount of administration and work that you’re doing for the course?

RY: It is a lot of work. Anyone who does not like to read blogs should not be teaching this course. Last semester, we literally read every word, and it took several hours each week. At the same time I’m not preparing any exams. There are no midterms, no final, and we’re not grading them. There are no essay exams per say, and if you look at the time it would take to implement those traditional tests, it would be significant. So, I have one TA, and I tell the students that on a weekly basis we will rotate. You won’t know which blogs we’re going to focus on, but we will rotate blogs; we will definitely assign specific grades, but not every blog will be read every week.

LR: How do students react to that?

RY: Well, they are a little bit anxious, just because they still have to produce the best possible writing each week. Ultimately, toward the end of the semester especially, I do take a closer look at almost every blog, because I have to assign the total effort that they put forth during the semester. But, it’s just that I don’t have to read everything every week. The TA and I share that responsibility, so it does reduce the workload. We have 36 students, so that would mean half of that each week.

LR: If you could give one piece of advice to a faculty member who was starting their first I-course, what would it be?

RY: Disclose to the students, “This is experimental.” We’re looking for new ways to enhance teaching and learning, and you should feel comfortable doing that. Most professors, including me, want to walk into that room and make sure that everyone thinks that we are the expert. We have knowledge to transfer, a defined very specific syllabus. When you are developing any new course, an I-course in particular, I think that it is just important to know that there are just some things that have to be experimented with before you commit to them. Tell the students, “Here is the framework of the major issues we’re going to discuss. We just want you to know that there is going to be some modifications along the way and there might be some different ways that you are going to learn. We just want you to be prepared for that.” What I tell my students is that if you’re looking for that walk in, listen to the lecture, and take the final exam type of course, this is not the one for you. There are courses like that and would be best for your learning style, but here, I want you to push yourself a little bit to help you to understand that technology is probably playing a bigger role in your life than you recognize, and that is for us to assess.
Because it weaves together narration, inquiry, and actions, \textit{Half the Sky} is a challenging text to summarize. Instructors have found that in aiming to concisely convey the most significant claims and evidence from a single chapter of \textit{Half the Sky} in approximately 250 words, students put considerable thought into every word choice. Jenna Nissnan writes, “Every sentence is crucial toward advancing their point.” Failure to point out significant inquiries or note Kristof and WuDunn’s move to the action stasis in each chapter results in an incomplete summary. Capturing the essence of a chapter’s narration is equally challenging. In her summer English 101 course, Beth Colson found that her students summarizing chapter 1, “Emancipating Twenty-First-Century Slaves,” immersed themselves in the story of Meena Hasina. Colson realized that in relaying too much of the story chronologically and not focusing on the intended audience, a student could overlook the chapter’s overarching structure or inquiries. Too much of a move in the opposite direction – noting the claims and inquiries but not detailing Hasina’s story – overlooks the evidence of the argument, the “showing” and not just “telling.” Discussion of how one successfully summarizes narration and captures only the most exigent claims became significant for Colson’s class.

The second major assignment in English 101, rhetorical analysis, requires students to utilize rhetorical terminology such as rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos), stasis theory, and exigence to discover the most salient aspects of an argument or pair of arguments. Students might explain how \textit{Half the Sky} builds exigence for its action arguments through narration and how each chapter progresses through the stases from issues of definition and cause and effect to action and jurisdiction. They could assess the similar arrangement of most chapters of the book or discuss the impact of visuals on the intended audience. Colson’s class analyzed the text for refutations, concessions, and enthymemes. Chapter 11, “Microcredit: The Financial Revolution,” for example, utilizes concessions to state a value claim about the importance of spending on education even in impoverished countries; Kristof and WuDunn criticize the purchase of “fun” items like beer, sweets, and cigarettes when a reallocation of finances could help solve the low education rates.

In summarizing or rhetorically analyzing \textit{Half the Sky}, students might find that the content matter hits close to home. Lisa Kiely, Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Director of the First Year Book Program, writes, “Many experiences of the women in the book may be similar to the experiences of some of our students.” Kiely has set up a Web site of resources for students, and 101 instructors have been challenged to make this book about current issues in the developing world evidently relevant to contemporary American students. One way that Kara Morillo has alleviated these problems is by teaching \textit{Half the Sky} alongside “Knowing Our History,” a scholarly report by Professor Ira Berlin’s spring 2009 History 429 students. The report, featured in the Academic Writing Program’s self-published textbook, uncovers the role slavery played in building the University of Maryland campus. Morillo writes, “While it is a broad and sensitive topic to digest, I explained that the system of slavery (transatlantic and sex-trade) is a result of the dehumanization of groups of people to be sold as objects. An informed comparison should allow students to understand this topic. … [I]t is probably one of the first (or only) learning environments students will learn about this topic.” Using \textit{Half the Sky} in a compare and contrast situation results in sophisticated class conversations about a scholarly issue that continues to have profound effects worldwide; certainly this exercise is not limited to English 101 classes but could prove useful across the curriculum.

Because English 101 courses are always populated by freshmen, the Academic Writing Program integrates the First Year Book into its curriculum annually. We strive to continue to find innovative ways of using the \textit{Half the Sky} and other First Year Books in English 101 and encourage conversation with instructors from other programs on campus.
Announcing the 2010-2011 Lilly Graduate Fellows

Amanda Berger, Department of Family Science
Steven Buzinski, Department of Psychology
Paul Dean, Department of Sociology
Theresa A. Donofrio, Department of Communication
Abram Fox, Department of Art History and Archaeology
Lynne Heighton, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
Ali Fuad Selvi, Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Lenea Stocker, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

“From the Director of CTE.” continued from page 2

transparent to our students. How often have you diligently explained your expectations for an assignment or student product, and then received student work that seems completely off topic because what you thought you said and what the student heard differ? This can be especially prevalent in larger classes, with complex questions, and for instructions on how the course operates.

A student in one of my classes after seeing the cornerstone model provided a set of interesting insights. As he pointed out, student anxiety occurs when there is content and engagement but a lack of transparency; student apathy occurs when there is transparency and engagement but insufficient, irrelevant, or inadequate content. Furthermore, student boredom develops when content and transparency are present, but little effort is placed on making the course engaging. In my own teaching I use these three cornerstones whenever I develop lectures, assignments, or assessments by asking three simple questions: 1.) Is this content relevant and appropriate? 2.) How will the activity foster student engagement? 3.) Do the students fully understand what I am asking and what I am expecting? Remembering to ask these three questions is easy and it has helped to improve my teaching and student learning in my classes.
“Things to try,” continued from page 6

will require of them on a daily and weekly basis.
5. Make supplemental study aids available to students through hand-outs, online, or in an ELMS space or have students develop and post their own study aids to ELMS.
6. Explain to students how to read the text(s) you’ve assigned for the course. Model your own reading, taking notes, and/or classification process. Show students how to use post-it and other markers in their books as a way to increase learning, retention, and study.
7. In the syllabus establish a limited number of ground rules regarding absence, late work, testing procedures, grading, and general decorum, and stick to them. Establish class policies that fit the following criteria: 1. Definable, 2. Reasonable, 3. Enforceable. Don’t set rules if you are unwilling or unable to enforce them.
8. Frequently remind students to come to your office hours if they have questions, want advice on an assignment, need help, or want ideas for further study. Consider having a participation assignment where they have to find your office and sign a sheet on the door, or make at least one office hour visit mandatory.
9. Offer students concrete strategies for effective learning that take into account the special challenges of large lecture classes, hybrid, blended-learning, or online classes.
10. Offer to students specific ways of learning effectively and participating in classroom situations where they are no longer invisible. Again, offer your own strategies as possibilities.
11. Advise students about the protocols of talking to professors in conferences, over e-mail, and in other professional situations.
12. In an effort to help students master the material, consider giving sample test questions and modeling a method for answering these questions using example test answers and explaining what works about those answers. This can be done via ELMS using the anonymous quiz feature.
13. Explain the difference between legitimate collaboration and academic dishonesty. Help students understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty by explaining it in terms outside the context of the classroom. Help students understand that academic dishonesty hurts all of us when people don’t learn and master the material in their discipline by their own legitimate efforts.
14. Start the lecture or class discussion with an interesting puzzle, a provocative quote, an important passage from the reading, a burning question in the field, a paradox surrounding a particular issue, a salient picture or a cartoon on a slide in order to focus on the day’s topic.
15. Elicit student questions and concerns at the beginning of the class and consider listing these on the board to be answered during the hour.
16. Have students write out their expectations for their work in your course / all their courses / their college career. Studies show that students who identify goals and concrete steps toward achieving those goals are more successful and, unsurprisingly, more likely to achieve their local and global goals.
17. Vary the way you present information in your class. Consider moving from material that is more familiar (their own experiences) to material that is less so, and then back to the familiar by way of guided reflection (e.g. One might say, “Take a moment to think about what we have covered today. How has our discussion deepened your understanding of our topic?”).
18. Guide students to extend their learning particular subject by
identifying community resources, local and area plays, concerts, state fair(s), government agencies and libraries, businesses, outdoor spaces, parks, monuments, museums, and other departments on campus.

19. Clarify the purpose of each assignment by explaining your rationale, by asking students to generate the rationale for themselves, or by sharing your teaching philosophy in general as it relates to a particular lesson.

20. Explore the complexities of an issue by having students research and present—in group work or student panel format—different ways of looking at the same idea, same text, same concept, issue, or data.

21. Use role-playing or games as a way to help students solve problems and explore issues less formally.

22. Give students two passages of material containing alternate views to compare and contrast. Alternately, distribute a list of the unsolved problems, dilemmas, or great questions in your discipline and invite students to claim one as their own to investigate.

23. Take advantage of technology: set up an ELMS space students can go to for the course calendar, for student contact information, or to expand discussion.

24. Call or write a note/email to students who are absent.

25. Be redundant. Students should hear, read, or see key material at least three times.

26. Allow students to demonstrate progress in learning: consider using a summary quiz for the day’s work, a written reaction to the day’s material, clicker questions, or a one-minute paper.

27. Use “topic assessments” and other non-graded feedback to let students know how they are doing. Return their answers with an “answer sheet” that includes a model answer, percentage of correct and incorrect answers, and an outline of why students who did not do well made their mistakes in a “common mistakes” section. This format encourages students to dialogue with their own work. They have to figure out whether they did well or not and why.

28. Use an “agenda” or lesson outline to organize the day’s material. Give visible structure by posting the day’s “menu” on a chalkboard, overhead, or handout then stick to it.

29. Require all your students to meet with you in conference at least once during the semester.

30. Develop wallet-sized cards with important University of Maryland telephone numbers listed: your office, your department head, your teaching assistant, lab assistant, Writing Center, Grammar Hotline, Learning Assistance Center, student Support Services, Counseling Center, library information number(s), etc.

31. Check to see if a student is having problems with an academic or campus matter and direct those who are to appropriate offices or resources. Call the student’s advisor, college, or coach in order to work with others to help a student in trouble.

32. Remind students about what they need to do to receive the best grades in your course.

33. Have students keep three-week, three-times-a-week journals in which they comment, ask questions, and answer questions about course topics. This can be done as personal blog.

34. Invite students to critique each other’s work for readability or content.

35. Invite students to ask questions and wait for another student in the class to provide the answer. Probe students’ responses to questions and their comments.

36. Put students into pairs or group “learning cells” to quiz each other over material for the day.

37. Grade quizzes and exercises in class as a way to jump-start discussion and to model excellent answers.

38. Have students write questions on index cards to be collected and answered the next class meeting. This can also be done as a forum in ELMS.

39. Consider collaborative assignments in which several students must work together. Ask students to hand
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.

The Center for Teaching Excellence is proud to announce that the 2011 Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching – D.C. will be held this year at the Bethesda Hyatt Regency. This conference, which brings together faculty from a variety of disciplines and at various stages of their academic careers, will explore the theme, “Evidenced Based Teaching & Learning.” Within the major conference theme of Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning, there are again four major subthemes to focus our discussions: Advancing Active Learning; Creating Communities of Learners; Preparing Future Faculty; Teaching Responsibly with Technology. Past participants have included K-12 educators, graduate students, and higher education faculty and administrators.

The proposals for presentations are due by January 10, 2011 and are available online at http://lillyconferences.com/dc/proposals.shtml. The link will also be available through CTE’s web page. CTE awards travel grants to graduate students who wish to attend the Lilly Conference. Support is awarded first to students who will be presenting.

Work with a Faculty 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.

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in, separately and privately but as part of the project, an assessment of their own and their classmates’ level of participation in the group.

40. Give students a take-home problem relating to the day’s lecture or discussion or post one on your ELMS class space between class meetings.

41. Help students use their classmates as resources by setting up smaller “study groups” of students who can work together in and out of the classroom: set up a buddy system so students can contact each other about assignments and course work; arrange helping trios of students to assist each other in learning and growing; form small groups for getting acquainted; mix and form new groups several times. This can also be done through ELMS, by having a peer help forum.

42. Solicit suggestions from students outside lectures and programs relevant to the course. Publish their suggestions on an ELMS space or in a handout in the form of a calendar of events that students can attend (even if they extend beyond the semester or year).

43. Use mid-semester evaluations as a way to improve teaching and learning by asking students to articulate what they think works and what additions or changes they would like to see. Publish your response to the evaluations, explaining why you agree with a suggested change and when it will be implemented or why you disagree with a suggested change.

44. Show students that you take end-of-semester course evaluations seriously by introducing them carefully, explaining why the evaluations are useful to you, and how you (and your department) use such evaluations. If the department evaluation does not ask the questions you want answers to, append your own questionnaire to the department’s and encourage students to do the on-line course evaluation. You may want to supplement with your own end of the course feedback form.

The University Teaching and Learning Program (UTLP)

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. UTLPers 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. UTLPers have a common commitment to improving undergraduate education and an eagerness to make their classes the best they can. When UTLPers 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 Graduate School, the UTLP is administered by the Center for Teaching Excellence. For more information, please contact UTLP coordinator Alexis Williams at ayw@umd.edu or call (301) 314-1283.
to the event. Audience members could review posted materials asynchronously and respond with topics and questions for later, real-time discussion between presenters and audience members. Then, when focus session participants gathered together online, presenters and audience members could have a dialogue about participants’ proposed topics. After the web event, members of the on-campus communities could generate material for further discussion and share their comments and questions with the entire online community using the Adobe Connect space.

Another thoughtful insight came from a UMCP professor of computer science, who noted that session presenters tended to focus on either implementation theories or implementation practices. He suggested it might have been more effective had presenters tied the theories they espoused to specific practices and vice versa, thereby drawing explicit connections between theory and practice for session participants. If session presenters and participants were able to review the presentations in advance, then one potentially fruitful conversation could have been about ways theories overlap with practice.

ELI provides a wealth of information about teaching and learning technologies and practices in higher education. Since the University of Maryland is a member institution, faculty and staff can access ELI’s online resources and receive discounts when registering for their events. For more information, visit: http://www.educause.edu/eli.

Work Cited

CTE-UGST Spring Workshop Schedule on the 2012 General Education Implementation

All workshops will be held in the Maryland Room, Marie Mount Hall from 12:00 to 1:30 PM, except on April 7th, as noted below.

Wednesday, February 16th: I-Course Development
Thursday, February 24th: Understanding Plural Societies and Cultural Competence
Thursday, March 10th: Scholarship in Practice
Wednesday, March 16th: Big Idea Pedagogies—The I-Courses
Thursday, April 7th: Education Abroad in BRB 1103
Thursday, April 21th: Graduate Lilly Fellows 2010-2011 Project

CTE is Moving in 2011!

In 2011, the Center for Teaching Excellence will move to 2301 Marie Mount Hall, but you can always find us on the web at the same address: http://www.cte.umd.edu. Or, if you like, follow us on Facebook (CTE) or Twitter (CTE_UMD) where we announce the latest information on workshops and CTE-related events.

Faculty Handbook of Policies and 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

Subscribe to Teaching & Learning News
~ 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.
## CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>16, Wednesday</td>
<td>4 PM</td>
<td>Distinguished Scholar-Teacher William Dorland: “The End of the Oil Economy”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>Workshop: “Cultural Competence”</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>10, Friday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>Distinguished Scholar-Teacher Chris Vadala: “A Saxophonist’s Journey: Influences and Icons”</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>4-6, Tues.-Thurs.</td>
<td>all day</td>
<td>GTA Portfolio Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-12, Mon.-Wed.</td>
<td>all day</td>
<td>GTA Portfolio Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>16, Wednesday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>CTE-UGST Workshop: “I-Course Development”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>CTE-UGST Workshop: “Plural Societies and Cultural Competence”</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>10, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>CTE-UGST Workshop: “Scholarship in Practice”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16, Wednesday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>CTE-UGST Workshop: “Big Idea Pedagogies—The I-Courses”</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>7, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>Workshop: “Education Abroad”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21, Thursday</td>
<td>12 noon</td>
<td>Workshop: “Graduate Lilly Fellows Project”</td>
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CTE is MOVING in 2011

Don’t get lost along the way! Follow the latest news and upcoming events by checking our website:
http://www.cte.umd.edu
You can also follow us on Twitter (CTE_UMD) or find us on Facebook!