Faculty Professional Development Course: Why is it formatted the way it is?

I'm going to break from writing about Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles and address a question I was asked at the faculty meetings I had last month; that is, why is our faculty professional development course for teaching online and hybrid structured the way that it is? Why is it not a self-paced, independent study, which might make more sense to busy faculty members who would rather do the training when they have the time rather than a set, seven-week course each semester?

First, let me explain a little something about the reasoning behind the current structure and then I'll answer the question. As many of you know, SVSU hired me to assist the faculty with the transition from the Sloan C courses, which they believed did not provide the quality needed, to a more managed professional development structure. Also, since the Higher Learning Commission is now looking more closely at online and hybrid courses, we also need to ensure that the quality of our courses is at the highest possible level.

As a recent article in TechTrends noted, a definite difference exists between online learning and self-study courses, that being "online learning is about collaboration and community; whereas programmed instruction follows an independent study model" (Lee et al., 2010, p. 24). Our course is definitely online learning in the best sense of the word. We have faculty who collaborate with each other, talk through course ideas with one another, and form a learning community. This is exactly what we hope our students do in online and hybrid course. We focus on our faculty interacting with each other, the facilitator, and the content, which is the model for good online or hybrid instruction. In contrast, an independent study model would not give this full and robust interaction which we seek to model for our faculty and hope that they in turn provide for our students.

The current course was piloted as a four-week course, but the initial participants noted that they felt that more time needed to be devoted to the concepts in the course. Many institutions in our area also provide their faculty with professional development in online and hybrid instruction with instruction ranging from short courses to those lasting up to eight weeks or more, with a managed transition to online or hybrid teaching.

The basic intent of our professional development course is to model good online teaching practices for you (the use of modular design, the use of deadlines, the use of interactive course materials drawn from multiple sites, the use of collaborative work, and the use of technology such as wikis and blogs) because while you have many tools in your on-ground teaching toolkit, unless you get to experience those in your professional development experience online, you may not get another chance to explore these because you are exceptionally busy with your current responsibilities. We must have interaction in this first course, so that we can model it for faculty who need to use it in their courses. Everyone must participate so that all faculty members can see what a properly managed discussion looks like so that when it goes into that to your course, it goes just as smoothly. If our course was a self-study, then a vital piece of what we were trying to show faculty would be lost.

So while we realize that some parts of the professional development experience may be a bit redundant for some of you if you already know bits and pieces of what we discuss in the course, for some others who did not have an opportunity to learn about writing objectives (one piece of what is discussed in the course) in their particular course of study, it is new and must be addressed. Our aim is to give every faculty the same professional development experience at a baseline and then provide advanced courses in special topics such as Universal Design (for which we are hoping to attend a Webinar on January 28th, so please contact me if interested) or interactive learning experiences, or streamlining feedback. We realize that not every professional development experience can be cut and dried, but at the introductory level, which this first course is, it has to be.

In addition to some of the basics of online instructional design, a large part of what is being discussed in this course is how to teach your particular topic in an online format, which is likely new to most faculty members and something we spend a great deal of time discussing. Content is still king, but the way that it is taught in online and hybrid courses is vastly different than the way it is taught in on-ground courses. Online facilitation skills are something that can be helpful to many faculty members because it is a skill that can be used in not only online or hybrid courses, but also web-enhanced courses (those on-ground courses that use VSpace to enhance the learning experience for their students) as well. Many faculty members leave the OL/HY Professional Development course with a new way to approach their on-ground teaching.

I hope this helps explain how our introductory course is structured. I'm always looking for your feedback and am happy to talk with you about your ideas for additional professional development in the areas of online and hybrid professional development. Please feel free to contact me at 984.2025 or sherri@svsu.edu.
New Electronic Reference Sources

Zahnow Library has recently added three new electronic reference sources as part of its transition away from print toward greater access to full-text online reference tools, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and biographical sources.

The new online version of Contemporary Authors replaces nearly 500 print volumes of the same title from our reference collection. This reference classic provides biographical details on approximately 116,000 modern novelists, poets, playwrights, nonfiction writers, journalists, and scriptwriters. Current writers, as well as the most-studied literary figures of the early 20th century, and authors from around the world are included. CA online is continuously updated and searchable by author, title, subject, genre, and full text.

Credo Reference brings together the full text of 525 encyclopedias, dictionaries and biographical sources from over 80 participating publishers, all of which can be searched from a single box. Content covers every major subject, from art to medicine, psychology to history, and technology to literature. Of particular note are a number of interactive and engaging features, including hundreds of animations and videos; audio pronunciations; multilingual interface; statistical tables; and audio files of poems, plays, and music.

The latest online reference resource is the distinguished Cambridge Histories Online. The Cambridge Histories have become an essential component of the academic research library, and now, for the first time, over 270 of these well-known, used and trusted volumes published since the 1960’s are available online, adding immense value to the texts and enhancing any aspect of historic research. The volumes are grouped into topics, making it quick and easy to search and browse through the historical aspects of over 15 different academic subject areas.

For more information about these and other electronic reference sources, please contact Anita Dey, Head of Reference Services (adey@svsu.edu or ext. 7094).

Classical Music Collection Donated

Shortly before the holidays, Zahnow Library received an impressive donation of nearly 200 CD’s and DVD’s from retired Dow Vice President and former Midland Symphony Orchestra board chair, Dr. Etcyl H. Blair. This initial gift forms the foundation of the Etcyl and Ruth Blair Classical Music Collection, which will grow over time to include an estimated 5,000 high-quality CD and DVD recordings.

In assessing the impact of this remarkable collection, Head of Access Services Thomas Zantow (who also served as the library liaison to the Music Department for many years) notes that "Music performance, whether from the perspective of performing musician or conductor, requires familiarization with diverse interpretations of works. Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is a very different work under the baton of Toscanini as opposed to Ozawa or Karajan or Arrau. Different orchestras have different sounds and approaches to works, the “Philadelphia sound” compared to the Berlin Philharmonic, etc. For solo and chamber music, the artistry of the different performers is critical. The impact of Etcyl Blair’s collection, then, is to provide great depth and breadth to our recorded music collection, greatly enhancing its value to prepare our musicians for performances and auditions."

A self-proclaimed “music nut,” Dr. Blair credits his father’s passion for fiddling and the strong music programs in his hometown of Winfield, Kansas, for getting his lifelong music collection started. He participated in group violin lessons while in the third grade and continued his studies during the depression years. While in high school, his father purchased a concert ticket for him to attend a performance of the American Youth Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. It was Stokowski’s performance of Brahms Symphony #1 that hooked him on classical music and inspired him to build his own music library.

His love of music influenced his decision to come to Dow in 1951. Other companies where he interviewed didn’t have their own orchestras. To find chemistry and music at the same location seemed an irresistible combination. When economic conditions forced Dow to cut its music program in 1958, a group of musicians, including Dr. Blair, formed a board to start a community orchestra, which became the Midland Symphony Orchestra. He played with the MSO until 1966 when he was asked to head Dow’s Agricultural Research Laboratories world-wide.

Since his retirement from Dow in 1986, he has continued to serve the Midland community in many capacities. In addition to serving as chairman and member of the MSO board, he also provides pre-concert lectures for the MSO.

In contemplating the lasting impression of his donation, Dr. Blair looks at it this way. “As the record collection increases in size and content, I would hope that the students and faculty would get to know and appreciate the wonderful world of music that has been composed over the years. Music has played such a key role in the cultural development of all the people of the world. A symphony composed in England is nothing like a symphony composed in Germany or Russia. Yet, each has had an impact on what makes a symphony. One can say the same about a sonata or a concerto.”
# Events & Schedules

## First Year Writing Awards Ceremony
The Robert S. P. Yien First Year Writing Awards Ceremony will be held on Thursday, February 17 at 4:00 p.m. in the Alumni Lounge.

## Executive Speaker Series
Former business owner and SVSU alumnus Pamela J. Dempsey will present a public lecture titled *How to Survive and Thrive in Changing Markets* on Monday, February 7, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m. in the Rhea Miller Recital Hall. Guest lecturer presented by the College of Business and Management.

## Family Business Speaker
From the Center for Family Business, Mark Green will present a lecture entitled *Generational Stack-up: From G1 to GY* on February 10, 2011 at 7:30 a.m. in Curtiss Hall.

## SE & T Colloquium Series
Lectures will be held from 4:10 - 5:00 p.m. in Pioneer 240. Refreshments served at 4:00 p.m.
- **Tuesday, February 1:** Dr. Stephen Taber, Department of Biology
  - "Parasitoid Feather-Footed Flies and Remarkable Cases of Conspecific Parasitism"

- **Tuesday, February 15:** Dr. Mohammad Saad Alam, Dept. of Electrical & Computer Engineering
  - "Potential Areas of Research and Development in the Emerging Field of Hybrid and Electric Vehicular Systems"

## Performing Arts

### Music
Senior Recital, Erik Gibelyou, Guitar
Wednesday, February 2, 7:30 p.m.
Rhea Miller Recital Hall-No admission charge

Music Majors in Recital
Wednesday, February 9, 7:30 p.m.
Rhea Miller Recital Hall-No admission charge

Senior Recital, Dale Huggard, Clarinet
Wednesday, February 16, 7:30 p.m.
Rhea Miller Recital Hall-No admission charge

Rhea Miller Concert Series: *Table for 5*
Saturday, February 26, 7:30 p.m.
Rhea Miller Recital Hall-No admission charge

Percussion Ensemble Concert
Sunday, February 27, 4:00 p.m.
Rhea Miller Recital Hall-No admission charge

### Theatre
*Ruthless!*
Thursday, February 24; Friday, February 25; and Saturday, February 26: 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, February 27, 3:00 p.m.
Malcolm Field Theatre for Performing Arts
For more information or to order tickets, please contact the SVSU Box Office at 989.964.4261.
Events & Schedules

Visual Arts

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum
The Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum will host the exhibition *Art in Architecture: The Collaborative Spirit of the Interwar Period in Detroit* from February 5 through May 28, 2011. The exhibition will explore the relationship between artists and architects working in the Detroit area from 1918-1941. On display will be a variety of photographs, drawings, and three-dimensional objects from the collections of the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, Cranbrook Educational Community, Detroit Historical Museum, Meadow Brook Hall and private collectors. This exhibition is made possible in part by a grant from the Michigan Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

A reception at the Museum will be held from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 19. All are welcome; please RSVP to 964-7082.

University Gallery
*Upheaval: Recent Paintings by Ben Duke* will be on exhibit through February 5th.

*(Re)calling and (Re)telling: Photographic images by Kesha Bruce, Scott Youngstedt: Photographs of Niger, and Mike Mosher: Some Black People (Paintings and Prints)* will be on display from February 14 through March 5. A public reception for the artists will be held on Thursday, February 17, from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Workshops

Register Online: http://www.svsu.edu/workshops/

Academic Affairs

"Best Classroom Practices in Undergraduate Education"
Friday, February 18, Noon - 1:00 p.m.; SE-221; x2130

Highlights of Research and Creativity

"The Influence of Environmental Enrichment and Therapeutic Interventions on Restoration of Function Following Traumatic Brain Injury" presented by Dr. Jeffery Smith, Field Endowed Chair in Health Science.
Tuesday, February 15, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.; Roberta Allen; x4296

Online Instructional Design

"Online & Hybrid Professional Development Course" 7 week course: 2/7 - 4/3. Call Sheri to Register x2025

"Streamlining the Online Feedback Process"
Tuesday, February 22, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; Z-303; x2025

Office Productivity

"Vmail"
Wednesday, February 9, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; Z-302; x7471

"Newsletters, Flyers & Brochures: Publisher"
Thursday, February 10, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; Z-302; x7471

"Managing Your M:\ Drive On/Off Campus & CD Burning"
Wednesday, February 16, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; Z-302; x7471

"Word 2007, Level II"
Thursday, February 17, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; Z-302; x7471

"Snap Web Survey"
Tuesday, February 22, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; C-243; x7471

"Taking Screenshots: Print Screen, PrintKey, Jing & Snagit"
Friday, February 25, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; C-243; x7471

Sponsored Programs

"Helpful Hints to Manage Grants"
Wednesday, February 9, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.; SE-213; x4295
Thursday, February 10, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.; SE-213; x4295

"Responsible Conduct of Research"
Tuesday, February 22, 11:00 - Noon; SE-213; x4295
Wednesday, February 23, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.; SE-213; x4295

Tools for Online and Distance Education

"Screencasting for Online Course Development: Advanced Camtasia"
Tuesday, February 1, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.; C-243; x7471

"Social Media and Web 2.0"
Friday, February 4, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.; ES-220; x7471

"Video Conferencing"
Friday, February 11, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; C-140; x7471

"Using your Computer to Make Phone Calls: Skype"
Friday, February 18, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.; C-243; x7471

"VSpace Test Center"
Friday, February 18, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.; Z-302; x2730

New Faculty Lunch

"Getting Undergraduates Involved in Research at SVSU"
Friday, February 25, Noon - 1:00 p.m.; Emeriti Room; x4296

Teaching Table

"Faculty-Led Study Abroad"
Tuesday, February 1, Noon - 1:00 p.m.; Emeriti Room; x4296

Library

"Discover Encore!"
Tuesday, February 1, 3:00 - 3:30 p.m.; Z-235; x7054