KEEPING ADJUNCT FACULTY
inthe Loop

October 2012

Adjunct Faculty Academic Calendar

November:

21-25 Thanksgiving Recess, **No Classes**

December:

8 Fall 2012 Classes End

10-15 Final Exams

14 Commencement

19 Grades Due to Registrar by Noon

October Workshops

(Register at: *svsu.edu/workshops*)

17 TV Studio Overview
2:00 – 3:00 pm
C-150

19 Gradebook 2
10:00 – 11:30am Z-302

19 Active Learning
12:00 – 1:00 pm SE-203

19 Campaigning for Information Literacy: Resources for Researching Elections
2:00 – 2:30 pm Z-111

23 Managing Your M:\ Drive On/Off Campus & CD Burning
1:00 – 2:00pm C-147

!! FIFTH ANNUAL !!
Count the Candy Corn in the Head Contest
Ends October 24th
Winners Announced Oct. 25th

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!!
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6
Presidential Election

Office of ADJUNCT FACULTY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The 5 Elements of Collaborative Learning

Studies have overwhelmingly pointed to the benefits of Collaborative Learning, but relatively few higher-education instructors employ it in their classroom. Do you? According to researchers Dr. Theodore Panitz, EdD, and Patricia Panitz, MLS, Collaborative Learning, or CL, is more than a classroom technique, it is a personal philosophy. When it works well, CL "respects and highlights individual group members' abilities and contributions."

Panitz and Panitz also point out that CL is based on consensus building through the cooperation of group members, rather than competition in which individuals try to do better than their fellow group members. Collaborative learning stresses the social nature of learning and the need to train students how to work collaboratively in order to resolve conflicts, interact appropriately and actively involve all group members. To be considered collaborative learning, Panitz and Panitz explain that five elements must be present.

Five Elements of Collaborative Learning

1. **Positive interdependence**
2. **Face-to-face promotive interaction**
3. **Individual accountability**
4. **Interpersonal and small group skills**
5. **Group processing**

The November 2 session, "Learn Over Lunch – Encouraging Collaborative Learning", 12:00 – 1:00pm, in SE-201, explores CL and how to use it in the classroom. For starters, as a pedagogy CL involves the entire spectrum of learning activities, including elements of cooperative learning, in which groups of students work together in or out of class. It can be as simple and informal as pairs working together in a "Think-Pair-Share" activity or could involve larger groups of students, say four or five, working within the "Jig Saw" method:

- **Think-Pair-Share** – Students consider a question on their own before discussing their ideas with another student to come up with a consensus. Each pair of students then share their agreed upon ideas with the entire class. You may have to adjust some of the groups to accommodate an odd number of students. And, here's a good tip: Each pair of students should have a different question to consider. You can cover a lot of material in a single class with this simple collaborative learning technique.

- **Jig Saw** – Students become "experts" on a concept and are responsible for teaching it to the other group members. Groups subdivide a topic and members work together with those from other groups who have the same topic. They then return to their original groups and explain their topic. It has been suggested that collaborative learning involves giving more mature groups of students control of the learning process, including establishing criteria for grading and group procedures, defining the final product, and presenting the group's results.

Panitz, T. &Panitz,P. (1998). Ways to Collaborative Teaching in Higher Education. In James J.F. Forest. *University Teaching: International Perspectives*(161-202). New York: Garland Publishers.

Adjunct Faculty Profile

Walter Malec
2011 Anderson Award Winner
Physics Instructor

Years at SVSU: 10
Undergrad: USCG Academy
Graduate: MIT & PTI at NYU
Home: Midland, MI

In the Loop: What keeps you coming back to SVSU to teach?

Walter Malec: Above all else, it is the students. It is gratifying to watch them mature and learn to appreciate the physical world. Whatever I can contribute to that process is worth it.

ITL: Any advice for new adjunct faculty members?

WM: Treat the students as your customers. Apply the customer service principles from business to your teaching. Teach them as if they'll one day work with you.

ITL: How do you keep students in your classroom focused?

WM: I use real-life examples of the principles we're studying, along with videos, interactive figures, and Power-Point. I "pay" students extra credit points to help with demos or if they catch me making an error in class.

ITL: How do you reduce stress during mid-terms and finals?

WM: We review before each test the material to be covered (and sometimes I give clues as to some of the questions). Each test is individually graded with partial credit available if the student shows his/her work.

ITL: What is a good teaching day at SVSU?

WM: Every day. The best days are when the "light comes on" in a student's eyes. Then, I know that learning has taken place. It's what we are here to do.

Applying Active Learning in the College Classroom

Ask five professors to define "active learning" and you're likely to hear five different definitions, maybe even more. For some, the concept might seem redundant, since it is impossible to learn anything passively.

To learn more about Active Learning and how you can apply it in your classroom, attend the "Active Learning" session on Friday, October 19, 12:00-1:00pm in SE-203.

In general terms, active learning differs from "standard" modes of instruction in which teachers do most of the talking and students are passive. According to Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson, co-authors of "Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education," (1987) learning should never be considered a spectator sport. In an active learning classroom, students engage material through reading, writing, talking, listening, and reflecting.

Using active learning does not mean the lecture format is abandoned altogether, but it does take class time to create. For instance, lecturers using active learning pause every fifteen minutes or so to give students a few minutes to work with the information they're providing. Students are commonly asked by their instructor to respond to a question, compare notes with a neighbor, or write a short summary of big ideas and important concepts.

Chickering and Gamson also point out that active learning can take place outside of the classroom. The authors point to the thousands of internships, independent studies, and cooperative job programs in the United States as examples of active learning outside the classroom.

One example of active learning takes place at the University of Michigan's Residential College. Teams of students work with university faculty on a "long-term original research project in the social sciences."

Would you like to share your experiences with active learning in your classroom? If so, let us know. Email Charles Davenport at chdavenp@svsu.edu.

Chickering, Arthur & Gamson, Zelda (March, 1987). Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education. *AAHE Bulletin*.

Mid-Terms: Preparing Your Students & Yourself

Your students aren't the only ones feeling stressed out at this point in the semester. You may find yourself under a lot of pressure, as well, making sure your students are as prepared as they can be, getting exams written in time, and then grading and returning them in the next week or so.

Here are three tips you, and maybe even your students, can follow to help you prepare for grading (or taking) mid-terms:

1. A well-rested brain is alert and aware. You probably tell your students to get a good night's sleep the night before the test, so why not follow your own advice? If you're grading exams, go to bed early and wake up an hour or two earlier than normal. Your grading will go much more quickly and accurately if you are well-rested. As you grade late into the night, the equivalent of cramming, your grading gradually slows to a crawl.
2. Stay away from the sugar. It's a sure-fire recipe for a hard crash. Besides, it'll just make you jumpy, irritable, and unable to focus. Instead, an hour before you start grading, try eating a good meal with protein. It will help balance your energy and can reduce the harmful side effects of a poor diet.
3. Before you sit down and start grading the piles of exams on your dining room table, gather all of the supplies you will need to correct the exam and have them close at hand and ready to use.