

Adjunct Faculty Academic Calendar

March:

4-10 Spring Break – No Classes

April:

27 Classes End

29 Final Exams Begin

May:

4 Final Exams End

8 Grades Due to Registrar by Noon

11 Commencement

Workshops

(register at: svsu.edu/workshops)

Thursday, February 7, 2013

The Collision Between International Student Culture & Your Classroom
 4:00 – 5:00 pm: Z-303

Friday, February 8, 2013

VSpace Advanced
 1:00 – 3:00 pm: Z-302

Friday, February 15, 2013

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

Saturday, February 16, 2013

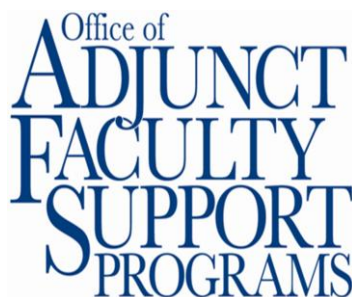
Course Design: Part II
 9:00 – 11:00 am: SE-203

Thursday, February 21, 2013

Creating Graphics for Learning and Retention
 1:30 – 3:00 pm: C-147

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Helping International Students with Their Written Work
 4:00 – 5:00 pm: Z-303



What Works for First-Year Students: Why Students Must Unlearn To Learn

The past two issues of *In the Loop* focused on the personal, social and academic changes first-year students face as they enter college, as well as the challenges instructors are likely to encounter when teaching first-year students. The importance of helping students develop confidence and self-efficacy, or the feeling that they can master the tools needed to succeed academically, cannot be overstated. However, as counter-intuitive as it may sound, in his article “Must We Unlearn To Learn Well?” Patrick Kim Cheng Low, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Organization Behavior at the University of South Australia, points to a growing body of evidence that supports the notion that to learn well, students must be willing to unlearn what they have already know.

First-year students at SVSU are no exception. Before entering your classroom, you can count on each of your first-year students to have deeply ingrained beliefs and preconceived notions about the world around them. You can also expect they will bring with them a set of learning habits, study skills, and academic tools that may have served them well in high school. However, Dr. Low points out that unlearning in the classroom should not be confused with forgetting or “putting out of one’s knowledge or memory.” To unlearn is also the dismantling of prior knowledge and breaking away from old habits. Learning, or (re)learning, takes place after the dismantling and breaking away.

Through research conducted on three discussion-based focus groups, Dr. Low was able to derive 12 ways of unlearning. In order of priority, the five most effective methods are included in the table below:

Rank	Method
1	Developing the Un-Trapped Mind: Requires students to be open-minded. This can be accomplished through free-wheeling brainstorm sessions in small groups and large groups in the classroom.
2	Being Detached: Students may be emotionally attached to their “old ways” without realizing it. Being detached means letting go of stereotypes and biases, and maybe ego, too.
3	Being Creative: When students use the right-side of their brains, they come up with new ideas. Infusing your lessons with music, visuals, kinesthetic learning, and art develops an atmosphere of creativity.
4	Applying the What-Ifs: This is similar to the Socratic method of teaching. Students come up with “What-If” questions that aren’t just speculative; they challenge what they are already thinking.
5	Avoiding Group-Think: When working collaboratively, some students may find it easier to go along with the group. Ask each student to explain in writing one idea that did not make to the group list.

The other unlearning strategies discussed by Dr. Low include: Avoiding Negative Thinking; Meditating, Asking Questions; and Listening to Criticisms.

Low, Patrick Kim Cheng, Ph.D. “Must We Learn To Unlearn Well?” *Educational Research*. International Research Journals. 2011. www.interestjournals.org/ER.

Adjunct Faculty Profile



Annette M. Lynch
Basic Skills Math Coordinator
Adjunct Math Instructor

Years at SVSU: 20

Undergrad: BS Education/CMU

Graduate: SVSU

Home: Bay City, MI

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

Annette M. Lynch: I look forward to working with a diverse group of young people every semester. Hopefully, I can alleviate some of their anxiety and frustration when it comes to understanding math.

ITL: Any advice for new adjunct faculty members?

AML: You need to make a connection with your students. Learn their first names. Create a safe and friendly atmosphere in your classroom so students can feel comfortable approaching you with any questions or concerns.

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

AML: I have my students participate in solving practice problems during class and make it a habit to walk around the room to be sure they are staying on task. There is also a quiz on most class days so they know they need to pay attention.

ITL: How do you reduce stress?

AML: I give a review the week before the final that covers everything they need to know for the final exam. That helps minimize their stress level.

ITL: A good teaching day is . . . ?

AML: When I see the expression on a student's face that tells me: "I get it!"

Engineering Equity: Women and Stereotype Threat in STEM

According to a recent article in the newsletter *Engineering Equity Extension Service*, published by the National Association of Engineers, women are often a minority in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) courses. This may cause women in STEM courses to feel as though their performance is a litmus test for the intelligence of all women.

This "stereotype threat" occurs when members of negatively stereotyped groups, such as women in STEM courses, face the possibility that their performance in the classroom may reinforce the negative stereotype that women are not as

talented in engineering, math or physics. Stereotype threat can be acute during tests, causing test anxiety to increase. Strategies to overcome stereotype threat include:

- Maintain positive interactions with all of your students.
- Be aware of gender biases in teaching and advising practices
- Explain that effort is the most important component of success and that all students will have to work hard to succeed.
- Encourage students to visit the Academic Achievement Center.
- Create a classroom that minimizes competition.

Black History Month at SVSU: At the Crossroads of Freedom & Equity

This year's Black History Month is special because February 4, 2013, marks the 100th celebration of the birth of civil rights icon Rosa Parks. In 1955, on a bus in Montgomery, AL, she refused to give up her seat to white man, giving rise to the civil rights movement. Parks eventually moved to Detroit, MI, where for two decades she worked for Rep. John Conyers, D-Detroit.

A number of events are planned at SVSU during Black History Month. On February 26, at 7:00pm in the Malcolm Field Theatre, Judge Greg Mathis, a Detroit native and retired 36th District Court Judge will share his inspiring story of his own life in and out of jail. His keynote address is free and is sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Services and the

Division of Student Affairs. Other events at SVSU include:

Feb. 18, 6:30pm: Girl Talk. . . The Open Diaries. *An empowerment program for young women featuring poems, testimonials and monologues.* (Thompson Student Activities Room)

Feb. 20, 11:00am - 1:30pm: Taste of Soul. *Soul food cooked up right by faculty, staff and local chefs.* (Marketplace at Doan)

Feb. 25, 6:00pm: Life After SVSU. *Students have the opportunity to connect with SVSU African-American alumni, along with a panel discussion.* (Curtiss Hall Seminar Rooms)

Feb. 13 & 27, 1:00-4:00pm: Black HIV/AIDS Awareness. BASIS/Sacred Heart provides prevention information. (Curtiss 112, Student Counseling Ctr.)

Campus Alert

SVSU students, faculty, and staff can sign up for the Emergency Notification System to receive notifications of campus closings due to adverse weather conditions or other emergencies. Participants can receive notifications via cell phone, text message, and email. To register, go to:
www.svsu.edu/universitypolice/emergency