



Adjunct Faculty Academic Calendar

December:

8-13 Final Exams

17 Grades due to Registrar
by noon

15-19 Adjunct Faculty
Support Programs Office
hours 8AM – 4:30 PM

20-January 4 Winter Break-
Campus closed

January 12, 2015 Classes
begin

Workshops

(Register at: svsu.edu/workshops)

January:

16 Vet-Friendly Classroom
10:00-11:00 Curtiss 116

30 Teach Like a Pirate II
12:30-1:30 SE 201

31 Course Design Part I
10:00-12:00 SE 201

First Day of Class- Questions to Consider

The first day of class is the most important class of the semester. Whatever actions you take on that first day sets the tone for your students and lets them know what your expectations are for the entire semester. Upon reflecting on his expectations and desire to utilize more active learning strategies, Gary Smith (2008) from the University of New Mexico, decided he would engage his students in an understanding that his teaching methods should matter to them and that learning, as a result of their work and his teaching, would help them reach their goals. So he began his first day of class asking his students the following question:

“Thinking of what you want to get out of your college education and this course, which of the following is most important to you?”

1. Acquiring information (facts, principles, concepts)
2. Learning how to use information and knowledge in new situations
3. Developing lifelong learning skills.”

When he polled the students, 2 selected #1 as the most important, 21 selected #2 and 13 chose #3. After a discussion, he found that the 2 students who chose #1 did so because they felt that this option was the most basic and the list of choices seemed hierarchical. More discussion followed where the students agreed that all three options were important. Smith followed this discussion with a PowerPoint slide that read:

“All three of these goals are clearly important. However, let’s think for a moment of how best to accomplish these goals. Learning is not a spectator sport-it takes work; that includes work in the classroom and work that you do outside of the classroom. So, of these three goals, which do you think you can make headway on outside of class by your own reading and studying, and which do you think would be best achieved in class working with your classmates and me?” (p. 2).

The class unanimously agreed that acquiring information (option #1) was easiest to do on one’s own, where the last two options, learning how to use new knowledge and developing lifelong skills were more complicated and could be best accomplished in class. He then pointed out that the last two options were best gained through active learning but, in order for him to facilitate such learning, the students need to come to class prepared.

The results of this discussion on the first day of class were significant. His students complained if he lectured too much and the course learning outcomes improved over those of past semesters indicating greater student success.

This first day activity produced, “student buy-in to why active-learning strategies are used, and to the partnership responsibilities of instructor and student” (p. 2). Even if you don’t plan on using a lot of active learning in your class, it is instructive to consider having a frank discussion with your students regarding their role in the learning process and your role in the teaching process starting day one.

Reference:

Smith, G. (2008, September). First-Day Questions for the Learner-Centered Classroom. *The National Teaching and Learning Forum*, 17(5), 1-4.

Teach Like a Pirate, Part II

Last fall, a number of faculty congregated in Science East 203 for a workshop titled, *Teach Like a Pirate, Part I*. This workshop was based on a book by the same name written by Dave Burgess (2012). The first part of the book addresses the foundations for effective teaching. PIRATE is an acronym for *Passion, Immersion, Rapport, Ask/Analyze, Transformation, and Enthusiasm*, all qualities that Burgess believes faculty should possess in order to be great teachers! *Passion*, he says, can be about the course content or it could be personal or professional. Burgess contends that faculty who are passion-filled can also become more professionally fulfilled as educators. He states that faculty, who are *immersed*, are a part of the learning process, not passive actors. *Rapport* is about developing relationships with your students. He says that a known student is one who will more than likely work to succeed. Also, if we want our students to be engaged, he believes, we need to *ask* questions and *analyze* methods for how to best bring this engagement about. *Transformation* involves framing your course to be exceptional/amazing. Finally, *enthusiasm* is a necessity. If, "you consistently ramp up your enthusiasm level in the classroom, you will be far ahead of the game and a dramatically better teacher. Enthusiasm is that important" (p. 65).

The second part of the book offers a toolkit of ideas that can be used to energize your lessons and engage your students. It is Burgess's contention that as faculty we have a good understanding of content and teaching methods because most professional development programs concentrate on these. But, he states, the essential piece, presentation, is often missing from our practice. To facilitate this piece, Burgess offers an extensive toolkit of presentational "hooks." These "hooks" can be kinesthetic, teaching with music, art or drama, or storytelling, to name a few.

This winter on Friday, January 30th at 12:30, we will once more be congregating in SE 203 to discuss whatever progress we have made in teaching like a pirate, sharing our "hooks" and learning from each other. Please join us. You can register for this and any other workshop by going to www.svsu.edu/workshops.

Reference:

Burgess, D. (2012). *Teach Like a Pirate, Increase Student Engagement, Boost Your Creativity, and Transform Your Life as an Educator*. San Diego, CA: Dave Burgess Consulting, Inc.

"New" Grading Process to Begin This Semester

The Registrar's Office has asked all faculty to now use the online grading system. This system is permanently replacing the system of completing a scantron grading sheet which, in the past, was mailed to your home address.

To access the online grading system, go to my.SVSU.edu. On the right hand side of the page there is a space titled "Self Service" and in this space you should select *Faculty*, then *Faculty Information* and then *Grading/Attendance*. Next you will select the term, in this instance, *Fall 2014*, and finally select the section you want to grade. If you are teaching a section that does not appear, you are not listed as the instructor of record. The typical grades that SVSU records are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D and F. If a student receives an "F" in your course, you must include the student's last date of attendance (mm/dd/yy) or check the *Never Attended* box. Two other types of grades are the "I" for an incomplete or a P/N. If the final grade is an "I" (Incomplete), you must also submit an Incomplete Contract, which can be downloaded from the Registrar's website under *Services/Forms*. If you are teaching a P/N class and your student earned a "P," please enter an "A". If the student earned a "N," enter an "F." If you enter an "F," you must enter the last date of attendance (mm/dd/yy) or check the *Never Attended* box.

Final Grades for Fall 2014 are due on Wednesday, December 17th. If you experience any problems or have a question regarding this process please contact the Registrar's Office at 989-964-4085 or registrar@svsu.edu



Happy Holidays! See you next year!