



Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Programs

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Course Evaluations

As the end of the semester approaches, keep in mind that Course Evaluations must be completed by your students prior to the last day of class. For those of you new to this process, the Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Programs is here to help you.

Our office keeps evaluation forms on hand at all times for your convenience. We prepare packets of 25 evaluations with a header sheet included inside an envelope. On the outside of the envelope we have written the location of the evaluation drop-box, which is located in Wickes 216. Students may also put evaluations in the drop box on the first floor of the Regional Education Center.

You should ask for a volunteer or assign a trustworthy student to be responsible for the evaluations on the day you choose to have them completed. Once the students fill them out with a pencil or blue/black ink, the selected student should make sure the evaluations are placed in the envelope and taken to the 24 hour drop box after class.

It is also possible that your department will prepare evaluation packets specifically for you, in which case they would be delivered to our office and we would contact you via email to inform you of their arrival. If you receive an email with such a notice, please inform an employee in our office so they know to give you the evaluations prepared by your department instead of the generic evaluations our office has prepared.

If you have any questions regarding the course evaluation procedure, feel free to contact our office

Upcoming Workshops

The Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Programs has two workshops scheduled for the month of April. *Addressing Diversity Issues in the Classroom* will be April 2nd from 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. in the Executive Board Room in Curtiss 157. *Course Design: From Course Description to Assessment* will be April 11 from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. in the Emeriti Room. Adjunct faculty will receive \$25 compensation for the April 2 workshop and \$50 for the April 11 workshop. To register for these workshops please go to www.svsu.edu/workshops.



Valentine's Day Contest

Congratulations to Ray Herek, Adjunct Instructor in the History Department, for winning the Valentine's Day Candy Heart Contest. Ray's guess was 1492, which is the year that Columbus sailed the ocean blue. The actual number was 1575. Thank you to everyone who participated.

From Blackboards to PowerPoint

In the old days, professors used the blackboard to introduce important ideas. These allowed the students to elaborate on important ideas. What typically followed was some kind of brainstorming between the instructor and the students. These days, professors employ a more linear teaching technique in the classroom. This method is planned and lacks in spontaneity, and it can have a stifling affect on the students. This modern tool is PowerPoint.

An article published by The Center for Teaching and Learning at Concordia College argues that PowerPoint can have a stifling affect on the student because, “the student, knowing that the questions that rise up within them (the PowerPoint slides) will probably be answered on the next slide, the tendency is to drift into a comfortable ‘knowledge receptor’ mode and wait until the ‘any questions?’ slide at the end before actively engaging in class. Add to this a darkened room and the pleasant whirr of the projector’s fan and a mild form of hypnosis can be easily induced.” Often students refer to classes taught only through the use of PowerPoint as “death by PowerPoint” (Winn, 2003).

Therefore, it is important to remember a few things about PowerPoint:

- PowerPoint should not be used as a presentation but rather as a presentation aid. “The presenter presents; the teacher teaches.”
- Students who are given an entire PowerPoint, either in the form of a handout or in online format, tend to become passive learners and might consider that all of the important information is on the slide. As a result, such students tend not to complete their readings or take notes on other important information (Reinhardt, 1999).
- PowerPoint lectures tend to be detrimental to classroom participation and engaging the student in critical thinking. Students often have questions about some aspect of the material that will be covered in a later slide. Such questions are frequently rebuffed by the professor saying, “I will be coming to that later,” even though there might be a perfectly good reason to answer the question at that moment. Such rebuffs ignore teachable moments and stultify lively student participation.
- Finally slides, created by professors, are sometimes text intensive and/or they reduce complex matters to a few brief bullets? Text intensive material is boring to students and brief bullets can reduce complex ideas or issues to a few elaborate words (Winn, 2003).

Here are a few solutions to these issues:

- PowerPoint can be an affective teaching tool when accompanied by the use of animation, video clips and imagery.
- PowerPoint can create more in-depth learning and foster student interaction if the slides present thought provoking ideas in lieu of a few bullet points.
- PowerPoint should not be the only teaching aid in the classroom. Classes should be taught using hands-on, active learning, cooperative learning, service learning, etc... Courses taught with a variety of teaching techniques are those which employ best practices.

Sources:

Burke, Deirdre and Apperly, Alan. (2003) PowerPoint and Pedagogy. Learning and Teaching Projects 2003/2004. Retrieved March 9, 2009 from www.wlv.ac.uk/celt.

Reinhardt, L. (1999). Confessions of a ‘Techno-Teacher’. *College Teaching*, 47(2). 48. Retrieved March 9, 2009 from the Academic Journals database.

Winn, J (2003). Avoiding Death by PowerPoint. *Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education & Practice*, 129(3), 115. Retrieved March 9, 2009 from the Academic Journals database.